



## 'I am Providence'

Providence plays host this week to the shade of H.P. Lovecraft, the writer of horror stories who is more widely read and revered today than he ever was in his lifetime.

Born in 1890, Lovecraft lived almost his entire life on Providence's College Hill. The city was the setting for many of his short stories. One of his few novels, "The Case of Charles Dexter Ward" (1927), takes place in Providence. In the late 1920s Lovecraft sought to save from demolition the Brick Row, a set of warehouses, circa 1810, along the Providence River. His very long letters to the editor of The Journal failed to preserve the structures — now the site of the popular Memorial Park.

Most Lovecraft tales, which sit nervously at the intersection of antiquarian and otherworldly concerns, ran in pulp magazines, mainly for teens, with titles like "Weird Tales."

A fan club arose and after Lovecraft's death his popularity grew, especially in Europe, where he is read almost as avidly as one of his literary forebears, Edgar Allan Poe.

A conference, or celebration of Lovecraft, called NecronomiCon, began yesterday and runs through Sunday. Most of the lectures and panels exploring his life and work will be at the Biltmore Hotel. Art exhibits picking up on his macabre themes will be hosted by the Providence Art Club, Brown University's Granoff Center for the Creative Arts, and Julian's restaurant on Broadway. (For details, please visit [www.necronomicon-providence.com](http://www.necronomicon-providence.com).)

We welcome Lovecraft's devotees to the city, for a love of Lovecraft is very much a love for Providence. His gravestone at Swan Point Cemetery is famously inscribed "I am Providence."

