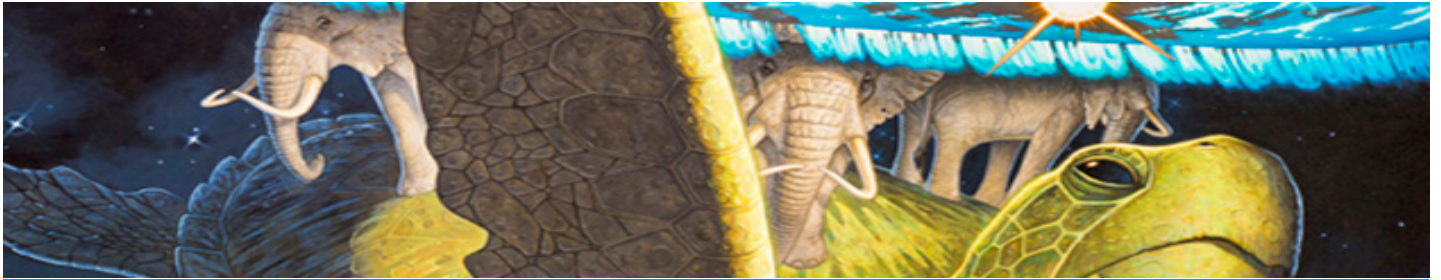


Terry Pratchett is celebrated by critics and devoted readers alike as one of the UK's most brilliant fantasy writers and an inveterate humourist with a knack of creating unforgettable characters. Writing with verve, poignancy and daring, Pratchett is known for his signature style as much as for the bold criticism deftly embedded in his comedic writing. Pratchett made use of comedy to communicate wider truths about what makes people human, pointing out stereotypes and ideals with a sharply poised pen. In honour of Sir Terry, who passed away in March, gender forum proudly presents this special issue dedicated to his unforgettable works.

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Special Issue: Terry Pratchett

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Editorial

[Lucas Boulding: "I can't be having with that": The Ethical Implications of Professional Witchcraft in Pratchett's Fiction](#)

Abstract: Pratchett's fiction is often taken to have an existentialist slant, focusing on the importance of the integrity of the individual, and it is argued that this forms the moral centre of the Discworld stories. However, it soon becomes clear when one looks at the Witches sequence of novels that there are other major well-springs of ethical thought in Pratchett's oeuvre that go beyond the insistence on the individual conscience. These ethical bonds are created in communal spaces, rooted in ordinary life and implicate the apparently highly individualistic characters in their frequently impoverished and working-class communities. One way of showing this is to examine the standards and ideals to which being a professional commits these characters. Drawing on popular representations of witchcraft from Murray to Graves, from modern Wiccans to Renaissance midwives, Pratchett sketches a view of professional witchcraft that commits Granny Weatherwax, Nanny Ogg, Tiffany Aching (and many others) to the good of their communities, without regard for their own safety or sanity. Pratchett's insistence on the democratic and demotic as moral ideals foregrounds the work of the witches of Lancre as heroes of quotidian life.

Author's Bio: Lucas is currently a PhD student at the University of Kent. His research focuses on the dystopian novels of Margaret Atwood, looking at them from the perspective of virtue ethics. So far it encompasses mad scientists, food, and genetic manipulation. He has presented papers on several aspects of Atwood's fiction, including ChickieNobs and the LongPen. Lucas graduated with a BA in English from Magdalene College, Cambridge in 2011, and completed his MA in English Literature: 1850-Present and the AKC at King's College London in 2012.

[Audrey Taylor: Trapped: Fairytale in Pratchett and Lackey](#)

Abstract: This article examines Terry Pratchett's "Witches Abroad" and Mercedes Lackey's "The Fairy Godmother". Both books look at stories from the other side, they actualise the (sometimes) cliché that stories are powerful, and can shape people. In "The Fairy Godmother" and "Witches Abroad", stories have taken over. Tales have power of their own, and will shape the surrounding people or circumstances to suit, regardless of what the characters themselves think of it. Taking the concept that stories have power a step forward and literalising that power allows both Pratchett and Lackey to explore fairy tales from a different, feminist, perspective.

Author's Bio: Dr. Audrey Taylor lectures on English Literature at the University of Bedfordshire. Her PhD from Anglia Ruskin University was on the secondary world fantasies of Patricia A. McKillip. She is an HEA Associate Fellow and member of the British Science Fiction Association.

[Katherine Lashley: Monstrous Women: Feminism in Terry Pratchett's Monstrous Regiment](#)

Abstract: This paper analyzes the treatment of equal rights for women in Terry Pratchett's Discworld novel, Monstrous Regiment. Throughout the novel, the main female character, Polly, and several other recruits, are women but disguise themselves as young men in order to join the army. The theories of bisociation, simulacra, and Lacan's the real are used in order to analyze how the comedy within this

fantasy novel is created and how it aids the reader in recognizing the Lacanian real. Messages of the real within the text include ideas surrounding gender: how men have delineated gender for men and women and how these dictates have limited women's rights.

Author's Bio: Katherine Lashley is a Ph.D. candidate in English at Morgan State University. Her dissertation analyzes gender and disability in young adult dystopias. She teaches first year writing at Towson University.

Imola Bulgozdi: ["Some Genetics Are Passed on Via the Soul:" The Curious Case of Susan Sto-Helit](#)

Abstract: While Terry Pratchett created several memorable female characters, this article focuses on Susan Sto-Helit, Death's granddaughter, who, due to the fact that she saves the world in all the three novels she is featured in ("Soul Music", "Hogfather" and "Thief of Time"), definitely qualifies as a heroine. Therefore, I find it quite surprising that Gideon Haberkorn's article, "Cultural Palimpsests: Terry Pratchett's New Fantasy Heroes" (2008) repeatedly excludes her from the discussion as hardly part of the evolution of the barbarian hero, and because of "the complicated way in which Susan and several others of Pratchett's female protagonists interact with the hero discourse, especially that of the fantasy hero." In my view, the figure of Susan definitely deserves attention since her relationship to the hero-discourse and her unique position on Discworld, as mostly human and part immortal, are intertwined with Pratchett's refusal to work with gender stereotypes. The article investigates Susan's character development and coming to terms with her special skills that partly enable her to become a heroine, her possession of both typically male and female characteristics and the way she uses them in different situations, as well as the question of her humanity and the power that seems to come with being not completely immortal like Death. The question whether her ability to "give life" is linked to her being a woman is also addressed.

Author's Bio: Imola Bulgozdi is an assistant professor teaching American Literature and Cultural Studies at the University of Debrecen, Hungary. She specializes in the cultural embedding of the creative process of Southern women writers, also branching off to the comparative analysis of Southern novels and their film adaptations. Her publications include "Probing the Limits of the Self" (in Eudora Welty's Delta Wedding, 2008) and "The New Criticism and Southernness: A Case for Cultural Studies" (in The New Criticism: Formalist Literary Theory in America, 2013). She is a devoted reader of fantasy and science fiction, as attested by her publications in this field: "'Barbarian Heroing' and Its Parody: New Perspectives on Masculinity" (in Conan Meets the Academy, 2012), "Artificial Intelligence and Gender Performativity in William Gibson's Idoru" (in Navigating Cybercultures, 2013) and "Knowledge and Masculinity: Male Archetypes in Fahrenheit 451" (in Critical Insights- Fahrenheit 451, 2013).

Morgan Daniels (Review): [Fighting for Recognition: Identity, Masculinity, and the Act of Violence in Professional Wrestling](#)

Anja Wieden (Review): [Narrating Victimhood. Gender, Religion and the Making of Place in Post-War Croatia](#)

Editorial

by Laura-Marie von Czarnowsky, University of Cologne

Terry Pratchett is celebrated by critics and devoted readers alike as one of the UK's most brilliant fantasy writers and an inveterate humourist with a knack of creating unforgettable characters. Writing with verve, poignancy and daring, Pratchett is known for his signature style as much as for the bold criticism deftly embedded in his comedic writing. Pratchett made use of comedy to communicate wider truths about what makes people human, pointing out stereotypes and ideals with a sharply poised pen. In honour of Sir Terry, who passed away in March, *gender forum* proudly presents this special issue dedicated to his unforgettable works.

The artwork for this special issue has been kindly provided by English artist Paul Kidby, whose work has been featured as the sleeve covers of Pratchett's novels since 2002 and has illustrated many Discworld publications including *The Art of Discworld* and best-selling *The Last Hero*. For this issue, Kidby has granted *gender forum* use of his visualisation of the "Great A'Tuin" (2005), [1] Pratchett's sky turtle that carries the Discworld on the backs of four large elephants. In this well rounded secondary world, Pratchett presents a rich cast of female characters and the various ways in which they perform gender is at the heart of this special issue.

The issue opens with Lucas Boulding's "'I can't be having with that': The Ethical Implications of Professional Witchcraft in Pratchett's Fiction". Evoking Pratchett's indomitable Granny Weatherwax, Lucas Boulding notes that while Pratchett's fiction is often taken to have an existentialist slant, it soon becomes clear when one looks at the *Witches* novels that there are other major well-springs of ethical thought in Pratchett's oeuvre that go beyond the insistence on the individual conscience. These ethical bonds are created in communal spaces, rooted in ordinary life and implicate the apparently highly individualistic characters in their frequently impoverished and working-class communities. One way of showing this is to examine the standards and ideals to which being a professional commits these characters. Drawing on popular representations of witchcraft from Murray to Graves, from modern Wiccans to Renaissance midwives, Pratchett sketches a view of professional witchcraft that commits Granny Weatherwax, Nanny Ogg, Tiffany Aching (and many others) to the good of their communities.

Aubrey Taylor too focuses on Pratchett's witch sequence and draws comparisons to Mercedes Lackey's novels with regards to the compulsory power of fairy tale narratives and the gender stereotypes associated with them. In her essay "Trapped: Fairytale in Pratchett and Lackey", Taylor thus examines Pratchett's *Witches Abroad* and Lackey's *The Fairy Godmother*. Both books actualise the cliché that stories are powerful, and can shape people. In *The Fairy Godmother* and *Witches Abroad*, stories have taken over. Tales have power of their own, and will shape the surrounding people or circumstances to suit, regardless of what the characters themselves think of it.

Taking the concept that stories have power of their own a step forward, both Pratchett and Lackey use of that literalisation to explore fairy tales from a feminist perspective.

A feminist reading is also at the core of Katherine Lashley's contribution "Monstrous Women: Feminism in Terry Pratchett's *Monstrous Regiment*". Lashley analyses the treatment of equal rights for women in *Monstrous Regiment*, in which the main female character, Polly, and several other recruits, disguise themselves as young men in order to join the army. The theories of bisociation, simulacra, and Lacan's the real are used in order to analyse how the comedy within this fantasy novel is created and how it aids the reader in recognizing the real. Messages of the real within the text include ideas surrounding gender: how men have delineated and prescribed gender norms for both men and women and how these dictates have consequently limited women's rights.

The special issue is rounded off by Imola Bulgozdi's "Some Genetics Are Passed on Via the Soul": The Curious Case of Susan Sto-Helit". Bulgozdi analyses Susan's position in Pratchett's canon and her marginalisation in Pratchett scholarship. Arguing that Susan, who is Death's granddaughter and saves the world in all the three novels she is featured in (*Soul Music*, *Hogfather* and *Thief of Time*), definitely qualifies as a heroine, Bulgozdi questions her marginalisation in Gideon Haberkorn's article "Cultural Palimpsests: Terry Pratchett's New Fantasy Heroes" (2008). Haberkorn repeatedly excludes Susan from the discussion and Bulgozdi finds that the figure of Susan deserves attention since her relationship to the hero-discourse and her unique position on Discworld, as mostly human and part immortal, are intertwined with Pratchett's refusal to work with gender stereotypes.

In *Wyrd Sisters*, the first of Pratchett's wildly successful witch novels, Nanny Ogg advises young Magrat Garlick that "[w]hen you break rules, break 'em good and hard" (190). All four articles in this issue show that Pratchett too heartily broke with rules and established notions of how people ought to behave, think, and perform. Pratchett's humorous writing presents strict gender norms as being both restrictive and surmountable, and his fiction easily and clearly subverts gender and genre-specific stereotypes.

Works Cited

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Pratchett, Terry. *Wyrd Sisters*. London: Corgi, 1998.

Notes

1) *gender forum* is only using a smaller section of the painting. For the full image please visit Paul Kidby's homepage. Artwork(c)Paul Kidby, www.paulkidby.net