“I can't be having with that”: The Ethical Implications of Professional Witchcraft in Pratchett's Fiction

by Lucas Boulding, University of Kent, UK

> Granny was an old-fashioned witch. She didn't do good for people, she did right by them. But Nanny knew that people don't always appreciate right. Like old Pollitt the other day, when he fell off his horse. What he wanted was a painkiller. What he needed was the few seconds of agony as Granny popped the joint back into place. The trouble was, people remembered the pain. (Pratchett “The Sea and Little Fishes” 235)

1 It is commonly argued that the touchstone of Terry Pratchett's ethics is the individual, construed within a broad existentialist framework, such that the “only true morality is based on the value of the individual” (Mendlesohn 248). That is the central claim of Farah Mendlesohn's contribution to *Terry Pratchett: Guilty of Literature.* While the four essays that comprise “Ethics and the Good Life” in *Philosophy and Terry Pratchett* all approach Pratchett's fiction from different philosophical perspectives, including virtue ethics and Kantian ethics, what the writers celebrate in Pratchett's fiction is the choice of the individual. One example is Susanne Foster's essay, which uses Pratchett's writing to critique Aristotle's virtue ethics for being overly prescriptive, and for not giving enough focus to individual conceptions of the good life (193). However, these views neglect sources of value beyond individual choice which are vital to the understanding of Pratchett's moral schema. The importance of professional ethics in the Discworld novels forces us to revise, to some extent, the existentialist understanding of Pratchett's ethics, and to be more open to the community as a positive source of value in the novels. Witchcraft as practised by Granny Weatherwax, Nanny Ogg, and Tiffany Aching, amongst others, demonstrates how professional values, external to the individual, commit these characters to “the good and best interests of the person to be served” (Pellegrino 62). In the case of witchcraft, these values are made doubly interesting by the gendered nature of the profession, and the 'white knowledge' that informs our understanding of their professional practice (qtd. in Manninen 82). [1]

2 Pratchett has reflected in a number of ways on the characteristics of his writing over the years; the concept of “narrative causality” (otherwise known as “narrativium”) is perhaps the most famous of these (Pratchett, *Witches Abroad* 8; Pratchett, Stewart, and Cohen, *The Science of the Discworld* 10). Narrative causality shapes events on the Discworld in ostensibly predictable ways, and resembles, at least passingly, the dread hand of Fate, against which one can struggle but to become only more engaged. In the case of witches, the influence of narrative causality can be traced to Shakespeare, Robert Graves, and Margaret Murray amongst others. Individual characters in the novels are temporarily swept up from their normal lives and pulled against their will into the narrative arc of a quite different story, often in the genre of the fairy tale; in the case of *Witches Abroad,* this is Cinderella, and numerous characters find themselves relegated to playing roles for which they are unsuited. As Andy Sawyer puts it, “[w]hat operates our universe is cause and effect…[w]hat operates

Discworld is narrative and personification" (168). This claim makes Pratchett's fiction particularly important to those interested in problems of ethics in literature. Virtue ethicists of all stripes have insisted on the narrative character of ethical problems over and against duty or consequence based views; this is summed up in Alasdair MacIntyre's claim that "to adopt a stance on the virtues will be to adopt a stance on the narrative character of human life" (143–144). By reflecting on how stories shape our ethical sensibilities, we can ourselves become better at and more engaged with practical reasoning, and see that our sources of value are diverse and shared. They do not spring from choice alone, but from our identity defined in much broader terms than those suggested by an existentialist insistence on individual will and self-definition:

> I define who I am by defining where I speak from, in the family tree, in social space, in the geography of social statuses and functions, in my intimate relations to the ones I love, and also crucially in the space of moral and spiritual orientation within which my most important defining relations are lived out. (Taylor 35)

Individuality on the virtue ethics picture, then, is more complicated and more involved than that argued for through existentialist means.

3 The claim for the centrality of individual choice is typically referred to three Discworld characters: Death, Commander Vimes, and Granny Weatherwax. Mendlesohn uses Granny as the paradigm case, quoting her assertion in *Carpe Jugulum* that:

> You might be right, you might be wrong, but you had to *choose*, knowing that the rightness or wrongness might never be clear or even that you were deciding between two sorts of wrong, that there was no *right* anywhere. And always, *always*, you did it by yourself. (Pratchett, *Carpe Jugulum* 73)

While morphology may have something to do with the range of choices that you have (for instance, one's ability to play B.S. Johnson's Organ), Mendlesohn suggests that the ethical emphasis is placed on the authenticity of one's choices, and the necessity of sometimes choosing between impossible alternatives against one's own self-interest. Granny's power is said to come from her denial of her shadow aspect. She repeatedly and explicitly resists heeding the "clang of the oven door", and this stands as a sign of the authenticity of her choices, meaning that she specifically chooses to act against the prevailing Brother's Grimm-based laws of narrative causality that shape the stories of which she is part (Pratchett, *Maskerade 14; Carpe Jugulum* 26). The same conclusion is reached in *Folklore of the Discworld,* though reached in a different way, when a discussion on wicked witches turns to the case of Black Aliss, describing her as "not exactly a bad witch, but so powerful that one couldn't really tell the difference, and deeply affected by narrative patterns similar to those which the Brothers Grimm recorded on Earth" (Pratchett and Simpson 231–234). Through self-control, Granny has mastered her internal impulses to be evil. Because of these Grimm-based narrative patterns, we fully expect the figure of the witch to be both of evil and, ultimately, incompetent: a villain prone to being foiled by the third and youngest son, or perhaps a pair of orphans abandoned in the forest. As the vampire Countess puts it in *Carpe Jugulum,* "Witches should be on our side" (26). These narrative impulses are a very real part of Granny's facticity, and arise from her gender, her evident power, her desire to meddle in the affairs of others, and as an inheritance from her ancestor, Alison Weatherwax.

The existentialist critics see this as the cornerstone of Pratchett's “coherent ethical schema based on a belief in choice and individual responsibility”, as a triumph of the will of Esmerelda Weatherwax over her facticity (Mendlesohn 239).

4 But this is only one interpretation of Granny's relation to herself; Karen Sayer argues that Granny's story is really a “psychomachia”, in which virtue constantly vies with vice for control of her self (Sayer 140). Whereas Mendlesohn sees this as a reaffirmation of her individual identity, for Sayer it instead points to her deep involvement with her community, and how profoundly she has been shaped not by her own choices, but by the expectations and hopes and needs of those around her, culminating in the subjugation and denial of her self, or at least of the self as is required for existentialist authenticity. A morality which derives solely from individuality is incompatible with Granny's “lifetime of ought” (Pratchett, *Carpe Jugulum* 199). Likewise, Sayer sees the rural setting, the focus on the body and materiality, and the sustaining interdependence of farming folk – summed up in the vast tribe of Oggs – as a creatively feminine space that rejects, simultaneously, traditional constraints upon femininity by offering acknowledgement and celebration of the professionalism of these women. Having a witch in the family is a boast, and raises the status of all who are related to them – which may be why so many Oggs are in key positions in Lancre. While the model of maiden, mother, and crone may be one way of viewing the various trios of witches (universally headed by Granny), “women's sexuality is not constructed simply – there are various models of motherhood (Magrat and Gytha), maidenhood (Granny, Agnes, and Magrat) and of being a crone (Gytha and Esme)” (Sayer 151). The profession of witchcraft offers freedom from traditional rural narratives for women, and reflects the fact that, according to Pratchett, witches are immune from stories – though this remark is not quite consonant with the tale of Black Aliss or the events of *Witches Abroad.* Perhaps it could be construed as meaning that they are immune to stories except for those that they themselves are complicit in making, or those that they believe to be true of themselves.

5 The mistake in the existentialist argument, in so far as there is one, is in seeing Granny's choice as something that she does in a single moment as an individual. Without wishing to recapitulate the whole virtue ethical position, it is easy to see that a focus on individual choice distorts Pratchett's fundamentally democratic ethical schema.

> I wrote [the 1971 version of *The Carpet People*] in the days when I thought fantasy was all battles and kings. Now I'm inclined to think that the *real* concerns of fantasy ought to be about not having battles, and doing *without* kings. (Pratchett qtd in James 31–32)

The Witches sequence, with its stress on the importance of ordinary human life over and against supernatural nonsense, centres upon a kind of ordinary heroism that is tied to professional commitment and care for the community. This is one reason why the witches are the arbiters of morality from the margins of their communities, while the wizards of Unseen University blunder around, eat a lot, and never seem to get much done. Pratchett put it in terms of a “visit from the Equal Opportunities people”, pointing out that, “in the fantasy world, magic done by women is usually of poor quality, third-rate, negative stuff, while the wizards are usually cerebral, clever, powerful, and wise” (Pratchett and Wood). Pratchett's near-inversion of this topos speaks to his desire to move fantasy

away from individualist heroes and divinely appointed kings – which are fantasy stock in trade, made near universal by the influence of Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings* – and towards the co-operative efforts of normal life, which achieve epic qualities by celebrating the quotidian. You cannot be a witch without "a zest for life, a clear-headed grasp of psychology, a gift for natural medicine, and an absolute refusal to be overawed by any situation" (Pratchett, "Imaginary Worlds, Real Stories"). Cheese-making, pickling, and demonstrating a new way to stop people choking, are seen as on a par with the most dangerous magical talents – they might not make you magical, but these, and rural, domestic, bodily and material talents like these, are the talents that form the bedrock of witchcraft (*A Hat Full of Sky* 11).

6 Pratchett frequently repeats the claim that witches are by temperament solitary, and are reluctant to gather together. But when it comes down to it not even Esme Weatherwax, acknowledged as the most powerful witch on the Disc, triumphs on her own in these stories. Nanny Ogg is not a bit player enabling Granny Weatherwax's heroics, but a powerful witch in a different mould, and without whom no novel in the Witches sequence would have turned out in triumph. Granny may say that she does it always by herself, but her self is shot through with the expectations, voices, and hopes of her whole community – that is what it means to be a witch, and indeed a person more generally, though being a witch creates special demands on an individual in the name of community. In many of the novels featuring the witches, this profusion of internalized communal needs is obscured by the lack of first person perspective. In the Tiffany Aching stories, we can see how, although Tiffany is alone in facing the Queen, the hiver, or the Wintersmith, she brings with her a whole host of Second, Third, and, occasionally, Fourth Thoughts, which make constant reference to the communal nature of her values, and indeed personify how deliberation, a process of consultation, is an essential characteristic of ethical thought. [2] When she shows the hiver the way to death, she describes how she is made up of "everyone I've ever met who's changed the way I think" (*A Hat Full of Sky* 11). Even though there is no one else standing on the black sand making the choice, they are present in Tiffany; when she thinks she will die, she regrets not thinking about other people, meaning her family. But her Nac Mac Feegle guide and protector, Rob Anybody, rightly insists that, to the contrary, she thought about saving the hiver and saving the people at the Witch Trials. As the Big Man of the Nac Mac Feegle, and married to Jeannie, the Kelda, Rob is a living embodiment of how the internalisation of communal expectation shapes one's moral priorities.

7 A second feature of Tiffany's Second Thoughts about her ethical choices are that she talks about them as if they have already been made – that is, the consequence of being who she is means that she can only choose in a particular way. This is at the heart of what virtue means to virtue ethicists, who see it not as something to be manifested on a particular occasion, but to really *be* characteristic of a person at a fundamental level. When Tiffany decides that she must lure the hiver up into the mountains because it is the right thing to do, Granny replies that indeed, Tiffany does not have a choice, "[b]ut neither have I. That's why I *will* come with you" (Pratchett, *A Hat Full of Sky* 10). Their individual choices are circumscribed by the type of people that they are, and to look to the moment of choice as the moment that, as it were, shows the presence of the ethical, is a mistake. Granny

Weatherwax's insistence that she is a beginner – “Just starting…every day, just starting” (Pratchett, *Carpe Jugulum* 82) – suggests that becoming a real witch is not about one-time heroic performances, but about a continual quotidian life of making the right choice, in the most trivial and the most serious circumstances.

8 One other way that the importance of community can be shown in the Witch sequence is by reference to the profession of witchcraft itself, and more specifically by examining the 'white knowledge' sources of Pratchett's witchcraft. Inspired by the concept of white noise, white knowledge is “the sort of stuff that fills up your brain without you really knowing where it came from”, otherwise expressed as a reference that “a generally well-read (well-reviewed, well-listened) person has a sporting chance of picking up” (Pratchett qtd in Manninen 82). The Brothers Grimm and Shakespeare have already been mentioned as having a significant narrative causality bending effect, and one can see that, more than that, they generate a sort of white knowledge about witches. Nanny Ogg expresses it perfectly when she remarks on the vampires turning into magpies that “Vampires can turn into things…everyone knows that, who knows anything about vampires” (Pratchett, *Carpe Jugulum* 407). The white knowledge sources of Pratchett's witches give us further grounds for nuancing the existentialist emphasis on individual choice as the primary constituent of Pratchett's ethics, because they show us a profession founded on self-denial and hard work that put aside self-interest for public good, the good of those who seek and who need professional assistance. As Edmund Pellegrino puts it:

> What the professions 'declare' is a claim to special knowledge and an allegiance to something beyond self-interest. They make this declaration publicly in their codes and Oaths, and privately every time they offer their services to persons in need of them. Their 'act of profession' is a solemn promise of competence, a voluntary entrance into a covenantal trust relationship. It is thus interpreted by those to whom the declaration is made. (Pellegrino 62)

The white knowledge that forms our views of the profession of witchcraft on the Disc declares just such a relationship between the people of a steading and a witch. The practice of the Witch Trials, which appear in “The Sea and Little Fishes” as well as in *A Hat Full Of Sky* and in a solo-contest variant in *Lords and Ladies*, establish a certainty about the knowledge of witchcraft which is not formalised by oaths, but by the wearing of a hat, the performance of various duties, and the willingness to be at the disposal of one's community.

9 What every person in the Discworld knows is that if you see a woman in a black pointy hat, she is a witch, and from her you can expect a number of things, for example: help, if you should need it; a damn hard stare and perhaps a cutting word if you are being an idiot; a useful way of disposing of old clothes, “especially if there's any decent lace or fine linen with a bit of wear left in it (you wouldn't believe the trouble occult forces can cause with that kind of stuff, it's amazin')” (Pratchett et al. 107). These expectations, a vital part of the “covenental trust relationship”, shape a witch's personal practice, and certain witches become adept at particular aspects of witchcraft – for instance, Nanny is selected as the greatest midwife of all time, but if you need someone to sit up with the dying and play Cripple Mr Onion with Death, then you turn to Granny Weatherwax. But these roles are shaped, in

their turn, by our white knowledge awareness of the historic opportunities available to women, particularly those during the late Middle Ages and early modern periods. From the rise of the medical profession until fairly recently, midwives and female medical practitioners were represented by the medical profession as dangerous meddlers who put their patients at risk, comparable to “Wicked Jewes”, “Pragmaticall Barbers” and “wandring Mountebancks” and the medicinal practice of these women served as a lightning rod for violent out bursts of misogyny: “Toothelesse-women, fudling Gossips, and Chare-women, talkative Midwives, &c. In summe…the scum of Mankind” (Richard Whitlock, qtd in Porter 197–198). This misogynistic view informed the epidemic of witch trials and witch burnings across Europe, and explains to some extent why, in countries where, for instance, sexual relations with the devil did not loom large in the popular imagination, there were no such incidents and where witchcraft is not heavily gendered (Wiesner 274). Though chronically under-documented, mounting research has revised the picture of incompetent and dangerous midwives putting mothers and babies at risk through unsanitary practices into a balanced picture that presents the experience of these early medical practitioners as valuable and important. Women played a central role in health and the administration of justice, particularly in impoverished rural communities. As Mary Fissel reports,

> [a]lmost everyone in early modern Europe was brought into the world by women and ushered out of it by women. Women's hands birthed babies, cut umbilical cords, and swaddled newborns. Women's hands treated the sick, comforted the dying, and laid out bodies, readying them for burial. (Fissell 1).

10 Pratchett's depiction of witches brings out elements from both pictures, though rather more from the second, emphasising the practicality and centrality of these figures in their communities which would cease to function without them. Many of the witches show an inherited fear of being hunted and burned by the local populace – a fear that is re-enacted in the penultimate Tiffany Aching novel, *I Shall Wear Midnight* – and the older witches partly conceal their professions by pretending to be simply old women. Rather than using fancy crystal balls to see the future, they use old glass fishing floats or pools of ink. They shun the dress-up of the new age and modern pagan movements in favour of hard-wearing fabrics. Pratchett jokingly, and simultaneously seriously, compares the figure of the “wise woman” with the “District Nurse”, pointing to their central roles in the community, but also to “a certain strength of character, practical experience and the ability to take charge of a situation” (Pratchett and Simpson 229). They ‘take responsibility’ for a particular area, both geographically and in terms of a specialisation. What all this indicates is that witchcraft in Pratchett's writing can rightly be thought of as a profession, which, considering witchcraft's demise at the hands of the misogyny of the incipient medical profession – perhaps the paradigm of modern professions – is somewhat ironic.

11 As mentioned at the start of this essay, the three characters battened onto by the existentialist reading are Death, Commander Vimes, and Granny Weatherwax. Each of these is said to wrestle with their own personal darkness and emerge triumphantly. However, these characters each have a significant stake in their professions. Commander Vimes, the head of the Ankh-Morpork City Watch, is, like Granny, the pinnacle of his profession, and, again like Granny, he is deeply attached to his

community, able to navigate the city with his eyes closed because his feet recognise the distinct types of paving stone used in Ankh-Morpork. He has so internalized the codes of behaviour that his profession demands that he has become an avatar of it, the Watch incarnate – so that when he is asked “Who watches the watchmen?” he can legitimately reply that *he* does. Death, while not thought of as being a professional, takes an apprentice in *Mort* and works as a hired farm hand in *Reaper Man*, and thus builds the experience of being a professional himself: “WHAT CAN THE HARVEST HOPE FOR, IF NOT FOR THE CARE OF THE REAPER MAN?” (Pratchett, *Reaper Man* 264) In explaining how virtue ethics is at the heart of the concept of professions, Pellegrino sets out the defining features of a profession as opposed to a job or a career: the professional promises to care for the person in front of them, in specific ways depending on their deficit – a doctor heals the sick, a priest brings spiritual enlightenment, a teacher imparts knowledge. They are, in their very construction, orientated to communal goods which arise out of shared human vulnerability. Central human goods “cannot be found in a life without shortage, risk, need and limitation. Their nature and their goodness are constituted by the fragile nature of human life” (Nussbaum 341). Each of these professions is said to aim at a single good – a doctor aims at the health of the patient, for instance – and this is one way in which witchcraft diverges from both Death and the Watch. These two professions can be seen to be orientated towards a sole good, namely, the care for dead souls and the maintenance of peace in Ankh-Morpork. However, instead of discrediting Pratchett's witchcraft, this may point to some shortcomings in Pellegrino's account of the professions, and shows further the white knowledge roots of Pratchett's portrayal of witchcraft.

12 While Ankh-Morpork, a bustling metropolis, has Igors galore, inventors, alchemists, engineers, and numerous other guild-professionals, the kingdom of Lancre, and, for instance, the village of Bad Ass, does not. The closest Igor is likely in Uberwald. Neither are justices of the peace present at all times, and nor are there dedicated watchers to sit up with the dead, nor layers-out, nor midwives – or rather, there are not individuals each of whom takes one of these jobs. The figure of the witch fulfils all these roles, and though, as previously mentioned, they specialise to some degree, depending on the kind of witch that they are, the expectation is that a witch will be capable in all these fields – the good at which witchcraft aims is thus the remedy of human frailty itself, where melioration is appropriate. Though it might be argued that witchcraft serves too diffuse an end to qualify as a profession, it is clear that witches comprehend the virtues of multiple professional disciplines and aim them towards the good of their communities. It is this aim that makes Granny's frequent statement that it is not a matter of doing what is good or bad but what is right, not in itself terrifyingly paternalistic, but valuable – the recognition that the code of witchcraft does have defining limits that the professionals who practice witchcraft agree upon. Their profession in fact commits them to being particularly good human beings, and to ensuring that the good life be available for others by redressing wrongs – such as domestic violence – and ensuring that vulnerable people are cared for, as when Nanny organises help for a recent widow: “Dropping a cut of meat on her [widow Scrope's] doorstep once a week wouldn't come amiss, eh? And she'll probably want extra help come harvest. I knows I can depend on you all. Now, off you go...” (Pratchett, *Lord and Ladies* 64) That the witches aim at what is good for the

community is evident in their role in defending their community from supernatural assault, the role that is least talked about by witches and which may not even be acknowledged by the community that is so protected – they may not even remember that they were in mortal danger. The witches seem to go without specific reward for these selfless acts of protection, but the provision of their clothes and sustenance, their homes and the status accorded to them, all indicate a recognition of the centrality of the practice of witchcraft.

13 Looking at a case study may be helpful in showing how the various practices required of witches point to a sufficiently solid good. In *Lords and Ladies*, Granny is challenged to a duel by Diamanda, an up and coming young witch. It is a staring contest, in which they must out-stare the sun.

> The duel beinge ninety minutes advanced, a small boy child upon a sudden ran across the square and stept within the magic circle, wherup he fell down with a terrible scream and also a flash. The olde witche looked around, got out of her chair, picked him up and carried him to his grandmother, then went back to her seat, whilom the young which never averted her eyes from the Sunne. But the other young witches stopped the duel averring, Look, Diamanda has wonne, the reason being, Weatherwax looked away. Whereupon the child's grandmother said in a loude voice, Oh yes? Pulle the other onne, it have got bells on. This is not a conteft about power, you stupid girls, it is a conteft about witchcraft, do you not even begin to know what being a witch IS? / Is a witch someone who would look round when she heard a child scream? / And the townspeople said, Yess! (Pratchett, *Lords and Ladies* 101–102)

In this incident, the test is designed to show who is the most powerful witch. Granny agrees to it because being the most powerful witch is integral to being who she is. It is done in public, in the centre of the village, so that everyone will know who is the best witch, and this is central to the project. Part of the professional covenant that is agreed upon is that respect has to be earned, and this is done in part to facilitate resolving disputes between witches. The witch trials in “The Sea and Little Fishes” is another such event; no-one is left unsure who is the best witch, though the contest has no explicit standards or measures. However, this duel is not a true test of witchcraft, because witchcraft is fundamentally about community and not about individual power; the trial is resolved when Granny turns away from her power-play and towards caring for the child. The crowd approve this definition as it articulates their expectations of what it is to be a witch. This remains true even once we discover that Nanny Ogg enticed her grandchild into the middle of the contest with sweets – because it is also true that Nanny did so for the good of the community, not for the good of Esme Weatherwax. The witches frequently use deception, in the form of folk psychology, to get people to do the right thing – and the special nature of knowing things that normal people do not know is another part of being a professional. Expertise sets professionals apart. Granny's cures, supposedly effected by miraculous potions, are in fact often attributable to simple psychology or used as misdirection. This is known as 'headology'. Granny is particularly skilled at this aspect of witchcraft, and it may, in fact be her primary skill. It assures her victory in the Witch Trials in “The Sea and Little Fishes” even though she does not enter; she wins by being unexpectedly nice. When Miss Level tries to convince Mr and Mrs Raddle to move their privy away from the well to stop them getting bacterial infections, they do nothing. When Granny tells them instead that the disease “was caused by goblins who were attracted to the smell”, they immediately take action (Pratchett, *A Hat Full Of Sky* 242). A witch has to know, not just what

people expect of her, but what those she attends to think in general, and manipulating this for good ends is the definition of headology. The most impressive display of this talent is the demonstration that, while wizards can create fireballs, Granny sets wood on fire by staring at it until it bursts into flames “out of sheer embarrassment” (Pratchett, *Witches Abroad* 30).

14 Pellegrino's account of professions is partly dependent on the explicit and public declaration of oaths and codes of conduct, which witchcraft lacks. However, the donning of a uniform takes the place of the public oaths and ceremonial acceptance of codes of conduct that manifest in the training of physicians. The act of putting on the hat, as Tiffany Aching discovers, the act of wearing it in public, is a vital part of being a witch, and it is in acknowledgement of moving from being an apprentice to being a fully-fledged professional that Tiffany allows herself to wear a midnight dress and to don a hat. Pellegrino explains this by arguing that professionals adopt their professional virtues in deep and abiding ways, such that it colours their own lives. If their lives remain untouched by their work then they are bad or deficient professionals. “But a girl starting out in life might well say to herself, 'Is this it? You worked hard and denied yourself things and what you got at the end of it was hard work and self-denial?'” (Pratchett, “The Sea and Little Fishes”) Tiffany, and indeed all the other young witches except Diamanda absorb the silently declared oaths that demand these sacrifices and willingly take them on. As being a doctor requires that you treat the patient in front of you, no matter how horrendous a human being they are and no matter the lateness of the hour, or being a judge demands that you hold abhorrent and violent people as equal with innocent citizens in the eyes of the law during a trial, professionalism commits its practitioners to circumstances that are beyond many people. The value of the profession, and the necessity of the remedy for the human vulnerability out of which the profession arises, motivates individuals with suitable temperaments to choose these hard lives over easier, less controversial ones.

15 Choice plays an undeniably significant role in the moral schema spelled out by Pratchett across the Discworld novels – but his ethics comprehends more than choice derived purely from individual identity, and in reference purely to the individual will. Without tracing the moral forebears of the Discworld, which I think include many of the Greek thinkers parodied in *Small Gods* – Stoicism, Epicureanism, Cynicism – the case of professional ethics shows that there are other significant springs of moral thought in Pratchett which inflect and nuance the emphasis on the individual. As Mendlesohn and James write,

> [i]f the Discworld has gone from strength to strength…it is not because [the novels] are funny (although they are) or because the characters have become so interesting, but because Pratchett has used the storylines and the characters to poke and prod at the 'givens' of our own world, of the stories we tell about it, and of the fantasy worlds many of his colleagues write (Mendlesohn and James 181).

Where other fantasy series may be morally monolithic (Mendlesohn singles out David Edding's *Belgariad*), Pratchett's morality, like his humour, comes from diverse views and perspectives, and this requires more than the disparate voices of lone individuals.

Works Cited

Fissell, Mary E. "Introduction: Women, Health, and Healing in Early Modern Europe." *Bulletin of the History of Medicine.* 82.1 (2008): 1–17.

Foster, Susanne E. "Millennium Hand and Shrimp: On the Importance of Being in the Right Trouser Leg of Time." *Philosophy and Terry Pratchett.* Eds. Jacob M. Held and James B. South. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014. 179-203.

James, Edward. "Weaving the Carpet." *Terry Pratchett: Guilty Of Literature.* Eds. Andrew M. Butler, Edward James, and Farah Mendlesohn. Baltimore, MD: Old Earth Books, 2004. 31-40.

MacIntyre, Alasdair. *After Virtue*. 3rd edn. London: Duckworth, 2007.

Manninen, Tuomas W. "Lessons in Headology and Critical Thinking." *Philosophy and Terry Pratchett.* Eds. Jacob M. Held and James B. South. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014. 75-102.

Mendlesohn, Farah. "Faith and Ethics." *Terry Pratchett: Guilty Of Literature*. Eds. Andrew M. Butler, Edward James, and Farah Mendlesohn. Baltimore, MD: Old Earth Books, 2004. 239-260.

Mendlesohn, Farah, and Edward James. *A Short History of Fantasy*. London: Middlesex University Press, 2009.

Nussbaum, Martha. *The Fragility of Goodness: Luck and Ethics in Greek Tragedy and Philosophy.* rev. edn. Cambridge: CUP, 2001.

Pellegrino, Edmund D. "Professing Medicine, Virtue Based Ethics and the Retrieval of Professionalism." *Working Virtue: Virtue Ethics and Contemporary Moral Problems.* Eds. Rebecca L. Walker and Philip J. Ivanhoe. Oxford: OUP, 2009.

Porter, Roy. *The Greatest Benefit of Mankind.* London: HarperCollins, 1997.

Pratchett, Terry. *A Hat Full of Sky.* New edition. RHCP Digital, 2010.

---. *Carpe Jugulum.* New edition. London: Corgi, 1999.

---. *Equal Rites.* London: Corgi, 2012.

---. "Imaginary Worlds, Real Stories." *Folklore*. 111.2 (2000): 159-168.

---. *I Shall Wear Midnight.* London: Corgi Childrens, 2012.

---. *Lords and Ladies.* London: Corgi, 2013.

---. *Maskerade.* New edition. London: Corgi, 1996.

---. *Mort*. London: Corgi, 2012.

---. *Nanny Ogg's Cookbook.* New edition. London: Corgi, 2001.

---. *Reaper Man.* London: Corgi, 2012.

---. *Small Gods.* New Ed edition. London: Corgi, 1993.

---. "The Sea and Little Fishes." *A Blink of the Screen: Collected Short Fiction*. London: Doubleday, 2012. 218–267.

---. *Wintersmith*. New Ed edition. London: Corgi Childrens, 2007.

---. *Witches Abroad*. New edition. London: Corgi, 2005.

---. *Wyrd Sisters*. New edition. London: Corgi, 2004.

Pratchett, Terry, and Jacqueline Simpson. *The Folklore of the Discworld.* London: Corgi, 2009.

Pratchett, Terry, and Ed Wood. "Why Gandalf Never Married". *Xyster. 11*. N.p., 1985.

Sawyer, Andy. "Narrativium and Lies-to-Children: 'Palatable Instruction' in 'The Science Of Discworld'." *Hungarian Journal of English and American Studies (HJEAS)* (2000): 155–178.

Sayer, Karen. "The Witches." *Terry Pratchett: Guilty Of Literature.* Eds. Andrew M. Butler, Edward James, and Farah Mendlesohn. Baltimore, MD: Old Earth Books, 2004.

Taylor, Charles. *Sources of the Self.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992.

Wiesner, Merry E. *Women and Gender in Early Modern Europe.* 2nd ed. Cambridge: CUP, 2000.

Notes

1) 'White knowledge' refers to the formation of background assumptions, and will be further explained in context below.

2) Tiffany acknowledges various levels of consciousness, and describes these levels as her Thoughts, since they often present different views to her normal consciousness. A footnote in *A Hat Full of Sky* describes First Thoughts as everyday and Second Thoughts are reflections about how you think. "Third Thoughts are thoughts that watch the world and think all by themselves. They're rare and often troublesome. Listening to them is part of witchcraft" (61). By *I Shall Wear Midnight*, she begins to experience an even deeper level of insight, the "very rare Fourth Thoughts" which "sometimes led to her walk into door" (252; 11).