

[See [below](#) for previous issues]

# The OUSFG Newsletter

## Hilary Term 1998

TERMCARD

at [the end of this newsletter](#)

WEBSITE

<http://users.ox.ac.uk/~ousfg/> (but then you knew that or you wouldn't be here)

NEWSGROUP

[ox.clubs.ousfg](mailto:ox.clubs.ousfg) (how much more simple could it be?)

Regular meetings are every **Sunday** and **Wednesday**. [The Sunday book-fest and even-week Wednesday dicussion meetings (oh, except Wednesday 4th week-see term card), can be found at: **Alex Williams' Room, Old Old Hall 5, LMH**. Odd-week Wednesdays are video meetings, starting with *Twelve Monkeys* on 21st January, at: **Ruth O'Reilly's Room, 21:10, back part of Balliol** - see the printed termcard for the door code.] Check the [termcard](#) for all venue/time details: the website will have updates.

Our first confirmed speaker this term is

[Diana Wynne Jones](#)

Most of her books are targeted at children by the publishers, but this is as pointless for writer and reader as publishing strictures usually are. Adults love the sophistication of the novels, while occasionally declaring them too much for children. We all know how fallible adults can be... Now there are officially teenage and adult books - *Fire and Hemlock* among the former, and *Deep Secret* (just Printed in hardback) among the latter.

As always, please submit suggestions

- for embarrassing the committee;
- for revealing your own grasp of SF before the gathered gonks of the discussion meeting;
- for videos to be shown

to me, [cen@ecs.ox.ac.uk](mailto:cen@ecs.ox.ac.uk), or why not spoil the traditional transliteration of "Newsletter Editor" to "Newsletter Creator" by writing an article? If left to my own devices, being a reactive rather than a proactive type, I'll continue to be the irritating instrument of the Core Committee (Duncan Martin, Eleanor Joslin and Ian Snell).

## H.K. (Kid) Cliplip Corner

The judges of the Philip K. Dick Award and the Philadelphia Science Fiction Society have (8th January) announced the final ballot for the 1997 award.

The six nominated works on that list:

- William Barton, *Acts of Conscience* (Warner Aspect)
- Stepan Chapman, *The Troika* (Ministry of Whimsy Press)
- Susan R. Matthews, *An Exchange of Hostages* (Avonova)
- Richard Paul Russo, *Carlucci's Heart* (Ace)
- Denise Vitola, *Opalite Moon* (Ace)
- Catherine Wells, *Mother Grimm* (Roc)

The Troika although published by this obscure bunch with the cool name has had rave reviews from all over SFdom (including Interzone), which of course is no guarantee of winning the PKD award.

The Arthur C. Clarke Award is issued for the year the award is made, not the year stuff was printed in the States as for the PKD, and some of the nominees for 1998 are:

- *Titan*, by Stephen Baxter
- *Glimmering*, by Elizabeth Hand
- *Days*, by James Lovegrove
- *Nymphomation*, by Jeff Noon
- *The Sparrow*, by Mary Doria Russell
- *The Family Tree*, by Sheri S. Tepper

Drunken TV-Blubbies (not to be mistaken for Ragdoll's fiercely-protected Teletubbies, which are paragons of kiddie heaven): Drinky-Winky, Topsy, GaGa and Throw. That explains everything.

## Third Rock in Third Week

Should you be a sensitive soul, busy shaving the whales and jumping up and down angrily near Oxfordshire's premier cat farms, perhaps you should start boycotting *Third Rock from the Sun* now, before the rush. The Ark Trust has put the show on its "Foe Paw" list (and what's wrong with "Fox Paw" all of a sudden?) for the show where "upon hitting a chipmunk with his car, Dick has a life-changing experience causing him to adopt a cruelty-free lifestyle, which is ultimately renounced as an 'insane kick.'" So even aliens who are notoriously conspicuous by their conformity to ridiculous parameters cannot escape PC chiding for it. I would have thought this self-righteous bunch could have congratulated itself for knowing that banal sentimentality followed by callousness was wrong, rather than deciding that Dick was the perfect lodestone for public attitudes. Americans!

*Species II* was made. Having seen *Species* (an OUSFG video last term), I can understand why it has been sold to television (USA Network) instead of having a showy cinema release.

*The Postman*, another addition to the current genre of several-hours-long films, is not doing too well in the States, where the gargantuan movie and Kevin Costner seemed a winning combo. David Brin published a piece in the *LA Times* (6th Jan) defending his scenario, which was a bit sweet for the critics. Obviously they don't prioritise their toothkits as top Item to Save when the Holocaust Hits. Costner was reputedly also annoyed that the film was rated R rather than PG-13. Looks as if *Earth* doesn't stand an ember's chance in Waterworld of being filmed in the foreseeable future.

from the new Babylon 5 Collectible Card Game: "But if attrited to the point where desperation becomes an option, they may decide to take the risk" Hmm. That sounds grim and ungram. In the U.S., B5 Season Five begins today, Wed. 1st Week. *In the Beginning* has been shown.

## Guest Liar Spot

[placed here to illuminate the above]

'Gravity is an illusion caused by millions of microscopically tiny ants which continually attempt to drag you into their subterranean lair.' - Mr. Colin McChesney.

## Secrets of a Bond Maid

(A Gorian account in the style of Cosmopolitan)

or

## Smart Girls Get Gor

*Haven't you ever wondered whether there was more that you could do for your lord and master? Or what he is really looking for from you? From the fruits of my experience, while all men vary, there are some basic techniques that will ensure that your master gets more from you every time.*

1. Take your time. A man needs to work himself up to the peak of his powers before he is ready to take you. Men need to feed together, drink large amount and will often enjoy combat before they are ready to come to the furs. You should not attempt to participate in this - your master needs his space. He needs the camaraderie and testosterone provided by the company of other men. It is often welcome for you to aid such gatherings however. Try to indicate support for your master in any

- combat which occurs. You should keep the meat and drink flowing in order to free the men for rowdy pursuits and bonding
2. Obey. It is your masters right to be completely in control of your relationship. You do not need to make suggestions or try and steer things and neither should you. He knows what is right. Also, you should not attempt to refuse him his rights at any time. Only he can decree when and where any taking should occur and this is according to the natural order. You should not attempt to force things but neither should you be backward. His right to your body is absolute and you should not attempt to gainsay that or you could come to regret it!
  3. Don't get jealous. It is very unlikely that you will be the only maid in whom your master enjoys taking pleasure. However, you must remember that men delight in diversity and need to express their full range of potency. Inevitably they will find that certain of their desires may be quenched better in the flesh of another. This is natural and healthy and you will find that as a result your master will become stronger and more forceful in his taking of you.
  4. It is also likely that your master will bestow you occasionally on guests or warriors who rest in his halls. Although obviously you would prefer the furs of your lord, it is all too easy to see this treatment as a reproof on yourself, suggesting that you are no longer adequate for his desires. This is not necessarily the case however. By allowing his warriors to sample your flesh, your master is in effect boasting of you to them. Look, he is saying, am I not mighty and merciless. They will judge him by your quality, and so you should always give of your best.
  5. It is likely that you will pass the greater part of the day on your own, or in the company of other bond maids. This is time which should not be wasted. Talk to the other girls, sharing tips with them for providing your lord with what he needs. They may have tried different techniques which they will often teach you if you show willing to share what you have learned of your masters desires. It will help all of you to be more effective in giving him service.
  6. Keep your body in shape. Your master will get more out of you if you are well toned and keep your stamina up. Try to eat sensibly and keep your weight low - your master will find you more attractive if there is little wasted flesh. Try to exercise daily, concentrating on toning the thighs and buttocks. Again, your companions may well have tips on maintaining a form pleasing to your master.
  7. You should suggest to your master's steward that measures are taken to prevent conception. Your master does not require you to procreate and any pregnancy would render you unfit to provide service to him. Should problems occur however make the steward aware as soon as possible and often the problem can be dealt with quickly and quietly before the problem becomes evident to your master. This is considered to be your responsibility and you should make sure you do not neglect it - don't trust to luck!

*While men do vary and you may have to adapt to a variety of situations whilst indentured, following some of these simple suggestions will go some way to ensuring that you provide your master with a truly quality service.*

This contribution to post-feminist criticism was written by our Member from the only remaining all-female Oxford college. She has obviously taken to heart Gorean Master John Norman's sophisticated take on SF and sex in this decade-old letter:

"As you know most science-fiction fans are still very young. Most have certainly not reached their full sexual maturity. Similarly, the sorts of things to which many of them are attracted, e.g. space ships, ray guns, etc, or, say, magic, sorcerers, dragons, etc, are quite alien to the Gorean books, which are, on the whole at least, extremely realistic. Similarly, the Gorean books are not simple action novels. They are also intellectual novels, philosophical and psychological novels. This puts them in a different category from the average science-fiction or adventure fantasy story... [i.e.] The Gorean books are written for highly intelligent, highly sexed adults."

*And, as if by pressure, an article appeared...*

## **Revelations II**

Greetings, all. I have decided to regale you all with my impressions of last term, [and I wish he had done this instead of going off on the tiresome Tanaqui tangent -Ed], not because I want you to read them, not because you want to read them, but because such is the command of our great Myr Weaver. Though last term saw me meeting famous authors (and stealing their coins, and singing them the 'Fuck Off' song), increased responsibility for me (invisibility and librarianship), and even my involvement in the first inter-OUSFG coupling for some time [and Fred the Spider's intra-OUSFG couplings: are they not legendary? -Ed], surely the event with the most far-reaching consequences, not only for myself but for all humanity was the revelation of the 10 Commandments of Tanaqui Channelled.

Whilst in a completely tranquil mental fugue induced by rapidly approaching dead-lines for work that was utterly meaningless to me, I was visited by a Presence. It said 'Lay down your Fourier Transforms, and take up a pen, and write the new law.' And lo, I did, and from my hitherto fruitless pen sprang a list of commandments, handed down from Tanqui Channelled via the Presence, and made manifest on my humble squared paper.

These are interpretations of the fact that, though Myr (and how humble, to take the name Myr when She is the greatest of all) Weaver inspires reverence in all (sufficiently enlightened people) who encounter Her, She

repeatedly denies Her divinity. Thus She tells us, with Her whole life as one intricate parable for our instruction, that we should strive to be as unlike Her as possible. Here, set down for you all, as revealed to me, are the TEN COMMANDMENTS OF TANAQUI.

[That paragraph defies feasible editing - not only is it rubbish about humility, but it's a title conferred on aliens and the gender-difficult by James Tiptree Jnr. And Myr Williams uses a gendered pronoun -Ed]

- I. Just as Tanaqui is forever youthful in appearance, and sprightly in action, so should we abuse our bodies and minds, that we may become prematurely haggard and decrepit.
- II. Just as Tanaqui is obsessively organised, so should we be haphazard and vague.
- III. Just as Tanaqui is charming and pleasant to those She favours, so should we fear Her, and hold Her in awe.
- IV. Just as Tanaqui is outwardly coherent, lucid and sensible, though technically mad, so should we strive to present ourselves as wacky lunatics, whilst remaining depressingly sane.
- V. Just as Tanaqui spurns all caffeinated beverages in favour of her delicately scented herbal teas, so should we consume tea in vast quantities.
- VI. Just as Tanaqui has two degrees in a subject she loves, so should we have chosen courses we despise, and remain constantly on the verge of failing them.
- VII. Just as Tanaqui spends Her many spare hours reading books for Her pleasure and education, so should we fritter away our precious time in activities neither useful nor constructive.
- VIII. Just as Tanaqui loves the cold, so should we wrap up warmly in coats, scarves and jumpers, and huddle together for warmth.
- IX. Just as Tanaqui looks with righteous loathing on all products of the 'bab van, so should we consume such whenever the opportunity presents itself.
- X. Just as Tanaqui is a repository of interesting information on a multitude of topics, and imparts it where appropriate, so should we seek to retain only trivia, and avoid imparting that which we do know where it might be relevant or useful.

Take heed, ye heathen, for the age of Tanaqui has begun, and will never end...

*H. K. (Kid) Cliplip.*

## **Mark's Bit**

*Here's something I found on Usenet that was going to make up a "50p to stop" spot in my talk. It's a cut-and-paste of the descriptive passages of The Eight Doctors by Terrance Dicks. - Mark Boyes*

Jamie was a large, brightly lit, ultra-modern control room, with a slight tendency towards overweight. Beneath the mop of curly hair, the face was round, full-lipped and sensual, with a gentle, rather comical face, and a shock of untidy black hair. He was very much older. He wore the dress of an old police box materialized out of place. Inside the laboratory of the police box was an impossibly large control room, dominated by a sprig of celery...

In his present form he was very kind, in his sixties, though in reality he was male and she was very fond of him. But he did seem to have a knack of wandering into the little scanner screen, almost hopping up and down until it reached the eminence, unwanted though it was, of Lord High President of Gallifrey.

Sarah looked thoughtfully at him. At times like this, she realized she knew very little about the Doctor, who she said was her grandfather.

They had seen many wonders, and undergone many strange adventures. Such is the adaptability of the TARDIS. (The Doctor had brought her a number of rather nerve-shattering experiences. But despite her initial timidity, she was female. Probably he just had a rather sheltered upbringing.

There were three people in the mistaken belief that it was bigger on the outside.

...a very tall, very angry man sprang out. He was wearing an old black coat, and a shock of untidy black hair. He was very much older. He wore check trousers, a frock-coat and a long black tie. He had flowing white hair and an open-necked shirt. The whole ensemble was finished off with a mysterious traveler through Time and Relative Dimensions In Space. Then had begun to seem more and more like a kind of velvet trouser-suit with elaborately puffed sleeves. Her name was Nyssa, and she came originally from a planet called Earth. Inwardly it was slowly coming to a life of Space/Time travel. Though they still hoped to see their home worlds again. Nyssa had left Traken after the tragic death of her time, had had a rather sheltered upbringing. Her travels with the Doctor seemed to be growing younger rather than older. In his present form he was very fond of him. But he did himself.

He had flowing white hair and a very long time ago, they had followed her home. To their amazement, they had now adjusted to a halt.

The Doctor had been a bit of a Victorian antique dealer, who had lost his life during a terrifying adventure with the occasional rumblings of thunder. A square blue police box with a slight tendency towards overweight. Beneath the mop of curly hair, the face was round, full-lipped and sensual, with a battered, broad-rimmed hat jammed onto a tangle of curly hair. An extraordinarily long scarf was wound round his neck. He shook his fist at the lowering night sky and shouted, "All right! Come on out! Just show yourselves, I dare you!" A slender, dark-haired girl followed him out of

nowhere, and suddenly a rather slight, fair-haired young man and a proud, imperious face, with more than a touch of ruthless cunning. The three others were more ordinary in appearance.

Suddenly the police box was an impossibly large control room, dominated by a sprig of celery in the TARDIS's guidance circuitry. Although it could travel in Space and Time. In return they expected him to discover that it was all the time to be growing younger rather than older.

## Yer Actual Termcard Whatsit

This term is **Banquet term**. This event occurs in 7th week and **you need to book**.

Sundays are always library meetings, which seem to have become "Bring some wine, no matter how dodgy, sugar and cinnamon are options - & chilli sauce if it's a particularly harsh offence to viticulture" night, then Settlers of Catan morning. These happen in HK (Kid) Cliplip's room in LMH. Technically, that's Old Old Hall 5. Practically, that's the room on the right of the LMH forecourt, behind the serried bikes, to the left of the external stairway, and there's a Hellsoc sticker on the window to tell you which one is the Portal to OUSFG. We are not Hellsoc... it's a basement.

### First Week: VIDEO MEETING

Wednesday 21st January: *Twelve Monkeys & The Relic*.

"The future is history", followed by "history is full of cunning passages". The tagline for the former, as well as the grafitto of the title critters was irritatingly ubiquitous at the time the film was released. The latter tagline is nicked from T.S.Eliot, as this is more your basic screamy flick, not Gilliam-great.

### Second Week: DISCUSSION MEETING

Wednesday 28th January: *Duelling Dualism: Orson Scott Card Puppet Theatre*.

At least, we hope we can force Adrian Cox to reprise this popular audience-participation show. Bring a sock or other convincing representation of a famous author. No marks for claiming that within a Camel cigarette-butt resides the essence of Michael Marshall Smith - that was last term.

### Third Week: VIDEO MEETING

Wednesday 4th February: *Third Rock in Third Week & Monty Python: Holy Grail*.

The award-winning comedies return by popular demand even of those who have seen them. A lot.

### Fourth Week: SPEAKER MEETING

Wednesday 11th February, 20:00, St. John's North Quad Lecture Room: [Diana Wynne Jones](#).

This term's chance to meet a Great Literary Figure.

Diana last came to visit us back in 1992. Now a fresh generation of OUSFG, addicted to her excellent realisations of the worlds' wonders, have ensured her return. Come and meet the writer revered by Neil Gaiman, and convey your own appreciation of her genius. A small charge may be imposed on non-members.

**Fifth Week: VIDEO MEETING**

Wednesday 18th February: *Fifth Element* in Fifth Week & *Simpsons: Dark Secrets*.

This time we will show the Simpsons X-Files parody, rather than the Simpson Murder Mysteries.

**Sixth Week: DISCUSSION MEETING**

Wednesday 25th February: *666th Week "The Occult & Young People" Xtian Text*.

HK (Kid) Cliplip uses this seminal Christian pamphlet to prove that bad things can happen even to the Saved if they are immersed as kids or draw fish in the dirt before reaching the age of majority.

**Seventh Week: VIDEO MEETING**

Wednesday 4th March: *Seven* in 7th Week & *Adam & Joe Show & Mars Attacks*.

We might only show the Adam and Joe parody of *Seven*, or we might hold off the Martians this term

**Saturday 7th March**

**Banquet** which should be in St Hilda's about 19.00

**Eighth Week: DISCUSSION MEETING/ TRADITIONAL SILLY GAMES NIGHT**

Wednesday 11th March: *Eight Doctors for Eighth Week*.

Thane of Trivia Mark Boyes expounds upon Dr. Who until/unless made to play a silly game or two.

## Some Old Newsletters

Here are some random newsletters from the ancient and revered days when [OUSFG](#) had cyberpresidents. 'Txixt then and now, while an OUSFG president has been just the thing if you want to know exactly what is meant by a [metonym](#), they are unlikely to be good companions on the infobahn.

- [Early Michaelmas Term 1993](#)
- [Late Michaelmas Term 1993](#)
- [Early Hilary Term 1993](#)
- [Late Trinity Term 1993](#)
- [Late Hilary Term 1994](#)
- [Hilary Term 1996](#)
- [Michaelmas Term 1996](#)

And rather more recently...

- [Trinity Term 1997](#)
- [Michaelmas Term 1997](#)

Today, we can announce a great step forward: a literate [cybercommittee](#)! This is just what one would want from the forward-looking SF group that brought you [Sfinx](#) and the [Bloomsbury Good Reading Guide to Science Fiction and Fantasy](#). Mark my words: in a couple of years' time, everyone will be hopping on the cybermetonym bandwagon.

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<http://users.ox.ac.uk/~ousfg/misc/newsletter-98ht1.html>  
21st January 1998; converted to HTML by  
[Tim Adye](#), <[T.J.Adye@rl.ac.uk](mailto:T.J.Adye@rl.ac.uk)>

