

the unsteady progress of

SCIENCE FICTION

in

OUR FAIR CITY

To those intrigued enough to read on. Greetings! This message is brought to you by a non-existent Society and this alas is the only Science Fiction concept that it has managed to spread. Nevertheless if SF fans cannot have confidence in the future who can? This therefore is an attempt to recruit support for a University of London Science Fiction Society. It is set down with boundless confidence in the lunacy of others.

The title of this newsheet comes from a short story by Robert Heinlein where it is the title of a newspaper column used by the central character to combat a corrupt and inefficient administration. The administration of the proposed ULU Science Fiction Society is not so much corrupt (chance would be a fine thing) or inefficient as totally chaotic. I could tell you stirring tales of the efforts by students of UC, QEC and RHC to organise an inaugural event but I fear that you would be moved to tears (of laughter).

Despite this there is hope. Outside the University there are fans with elements of efficiency in their character. Over the next year they have mustered the time, effort and low cunning to hire hotels, universities and aircraft for conventions in Coventry, Birmingham, Antwerp and Melbourne.

Within the University itself the success of the UC Society has shown that there is an untapped interest in SF amongst students. Also the Society at QEC has shown that such a society can be run well in a smaller College.

Unfortunately such societies often perish when the activists who formed them leave University. As indeed did the Oxford society founded by Brian Aldiss until it was conjured from the grave one dark and stormy night after a slumber of twenty years.

Hence the need for a coordinating body within London University to ensure the survival of such societies and to allow students from

smaller colleges to take part in their activities. Surely here of all places we can find sufficient maniacs and drunks to run a really good society.

This newsheet is intended to bring together interested people from different Colleges so that some events can be organised. At worst we should at least be able to run a recruiting campaign in all the London Colleges next year. Toward these ends can anyone who is interested in joining such a society please write to me at the following address.

Martin Easterbrook,
Student Pigeon Holes,
Royal Holloway College,
Egham Hill,
Egham,
Surrey.

By the way for those of you who may wonder , Egham is'nt the end of the world but you can see it from here.

Even if you have'nt time to become involved in the actual organisation of the Society it would still be usefull for you to get in touch so that we can put people in the same Colleges in contact with each other. All SF organisations are really social clubs for people who happen to share a common interest and more clubs and societies start this way than by deliberate intent.

If anyone out there is already part of a group or has information which would interest other fons then I beg you (and I mean this most sincerely friends) do send in a contribution for the next issue of this newsheet.

Eventually we hope to have a page contributed by each college as this should help to produce more cohesion than might otherwise be expected from the rather scattered arrangement of the London colleges.

LEGAL NOTE : - The use of the term "London University" within this document

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shall be deemed to apply to any college or polytechnic or other organisation that might be interested in joining the Society.

Well now that the commercial break is over , here is some of the sort of rubbish (I mean vital information) that you might find interesting. If not please send in a contribution yourself if only to stop the same things being churned out next month. We reserve the right to be deliberately awful to force other people to send something.

PRESENT UNIVERSITY SOCIETIES

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UNIVERSITY COLLEGE - This is the largest of the College societies. It has organised lectures by Samuel Delaney and Chris Priest as well as a number of Discos. Cynics have attributed their large membership to last years lady president Shirley who proved equally able to lure audiences and lecturers along to their meetings.

This years president Phil Appleby may have a lot more difficulty if he tries to use the same tactics.

QUEEN ELIZABETH COLLEGE - This is the other London SF society and therefore the second largest. However according to their president, Phil Shaw, they try harder. So far this year they have organised lectures by Chris Priest and Harry Harrison. Their committee are a determined bunch as proved by them living in a tent outside Newcastle to attend last years British convention.

They also run a book lending service to their members which proves their courage (if not their sanity).

ROYAL HOLLOWAY COLLEGE - So far this society is even more non-existent than the ULU society but it does at least have a name. If anyone is interested in joining "The Institute for Impure Science" they should again contact me through the student union pigeon holes. Remember membership of two imaginary societies costs no more than membership of one.

THE STANHOPE INSTITUTE - This although you may not have heard of it is an adult education centre linked with London University. It has run an evening class in Science Fiction for the past 5 years. Some of the students have been retaking the course for the past 4. The course is run by Philip Strick (whose ambition is to produce a film of Dan Dare written by James Ballard) and Chris Priest (Britain's answer to Larry Niven).

Unfortunately the course is fully booked for this year but if you happen to be in the area and you are curious about the sort of lunatics who go in for this sort of thing then you should drop into the "Bantam Cock" at the back of Euston Tower at 9 o'clock during this term.

HORLEY - (Horley ?) . This is just a bit outside central London but it has been sufficiently enlightened to start up their own SF evening class run by one of last years students at the Stanhope Institute. This shows that the fascination with SF is growing in the most unusual places. The class runs on Thursday nights and the organiser , Dai Walters still has space for more students. If you know anyone in that area tell them to enquire about the class there. (Own up someone must live in Horley.)

THE CENTRE OF LONDON

THE "ONE TUN" - this is the pub that has succeeded the "White Horse" and "The Globe" as the main fan meeting place in London. It would not be at all surprising if all the fans in London found themselves in the same pub just by chance but to make sure that everyone can find their way home the meetings are held in the same place on the first Thursday of every month. The "One Tun" is in Saffron Hill and is within easy walking distance of the previous meeting place "The Globe". The meetings carry on a tradition started in 1937 by Arthur C. Clarke and others when the meetings began as a writers workshop.

Anyone coming along should ask for members of the above mentioned groups or for Frank Arnold who keeps the visitors book and will introduce newcomers.

THIS MONTHS NEWS

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The INSTITUTE OF CONTEMPORARY ARTS is running a series of lectures and films to make up a Science Fiction season of events.

Details of the season are usually published in "Sennet's" events diary but there are some particularly good events that you will probably need to book in advance.

FILMS

Farenheit 451	4 March	Discussed by John Brunner
The Birds	11 March	Discussed by Tom Hutchinson

LECTURES

Thomas M. Disch	5 March	Science Fiction and Cheese
Philip.K.Dick	19 March	The man, the android and the machine.

Tickets are about 60p but as some of the lecturers have flown over from the United States the price is still good value for money .

The season has been organised with the help of the Science Fiction Foundation , a body dedicated to improving the image of SF in ~~scientific~~ ~~xxxxxxx~~ academic circles.

CONVENTION NEWS

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The next British Science Fiction Convention will be SEACON 75 and will be held in Coventry over the Easter weekend. For details and printed progress reports write to "SEACON 75" , 19 Ranmoor Gardens, Harrow, Middx. HA1 1UQ. You should enclose £2-50 as a registration fee and for printed information.

The Committee apologize for the cost but the money is needed to keep their printer in paper , ink and luxury.

FANZINES

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A surprising number of fans produce their own magazines containing reviews, fiction, poetry and articles. These range in quality from duplicated

sheets like this to very professional productions with their own artwork.

SONF ? - This contains a mixture of articles and reviews together with a promising foray into fiction by the author ,Howie Rosenblum, one of the few 2'nd generation fans around.Howie works for the London School of Hygiene and tropical medicine which probably makes him the first person to publish a fanzine ffrom London University.

BLACK HOLE - This is the fanzine of the Leeds University SF society and contains reports of their events throughout the year as well as reviews and fiction.The Leeds group is thriving with a membership of 125.They have originated the great idea of inviting authors to lecture them in pairs. So far they have had Bob Shaw and Samuel Delaney a combination which apparently produced a wild and enjoyable evening.

OTHER UNIVERSITY SOCIETIES
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STRATHCLYDE - Way up north in barbarian country a fan called Bob Shaw (yes there are two of them) is taking time of from defending the battlements against the Picts to run a Strathclyde SF society.

ASTON - The Aston group is strongly connected with the extremely active Bimingham group of fans.The Birmingham group has even managed to run their own convention for the past 4 years.

OXFORD - A group at oxford has been in existence for some time ~~is~~ now.It publishes a magazine called SFINK which is probably the best magazine of amatuer foction around at the moment.One of the aims of a London group must be to put an end to this state of affairs.

TAILPIECE
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As stated above it is going to take participation from most of the colleges to keep this thing running.This is intended to be a newsheet not a fanzine so you don't need to be this years great new writing discovery to produce something relevant.The main thing at the moment is to build up contact between people interested in forming a Society.

Our motto is "WE DON'T WANT IT GOOD WE WANT IT THURSDAY."