

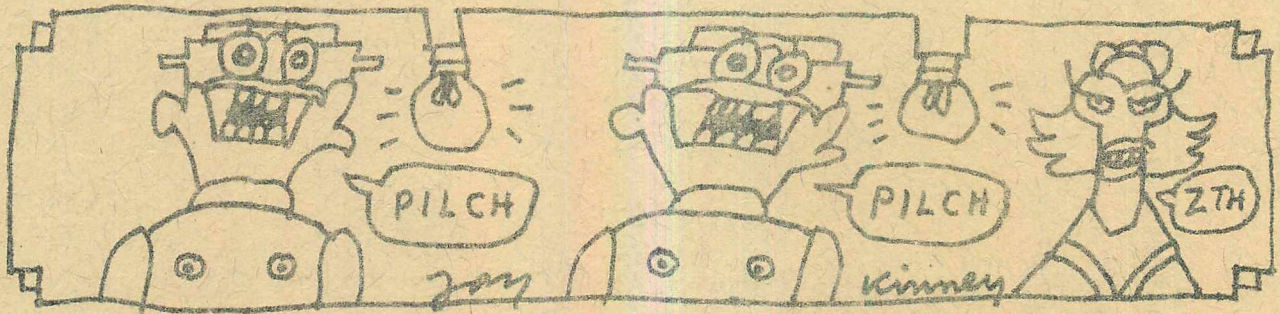
MOTA



THE
GREAT
SPECKLED
HUGHES
BIRD

Jaim STEFFAN⁷⁴

JULY 1979



GIMME MORE

Strange as it may seem, me editorials for MOTA have become a minor point of controversy. In particular the comments have to do with the length of my editorials, which admittedly have been none too consistent. One issue my bit may run on for three pages while in the next issue I might only ramble for a paragraph. This varying length keeps you guessing, tests your memory, and puts adventure into your otherwise dull life. Nevertheless, complaints have come in: a number of you have asked for more written material by me, Terry "Woo Woo" Hughes.

The number is six.

The most recent such encouragement came from the mouth of Frank Lunney at the 1976 Disclave which took place over Memorial Day weekend. Actually, Frank wasn't all that keen on seeing more wordage by me except that he wanted me to write a convention report that would mention his name. He wanted to let people know he is still alive and doing as well as can be expected. I think he also wanted me to mention his name so that he could get that wonderful feeling everyone gets upon seeing your own name in print. It always looks impressive no matter how spottily reproduced. Frank said that, after all, I was writing so little for the fanzine that I must be suffering from a paucity of ideas. What, he implied, could be a better idea for a piece than writing a conreport which mentions Frank Lunney?

Passing Frank a bottle of beer, I tried to explain to him the reason is a lack of pages, not a lack of ideas. Economic considerations impose a page limit on MOTA so my editorial is the first place I slash pages, with the lettercolumn the second to feel the axe. All of which is done so that I can use as many delightful articles/essays/stories with illustrations as possible while still giving the fanzine a certain theme and letting everyone know I'm still around. That's why I sometimes restrict myself to a single paragraph. I finished my comments about the same time he finished his beer, but I don't know how much of this I got across to Frank because he was intently studying his beer until he could see the bottom of the bottle. As we left the con suite to search for the Neo-American Church, he asked me whether or not I was going to do a conreport in the next MOTA. I mumbled that maybe I would do a Disclave write-up and, if so, it would definitely mention the name of Frank Lunney. We both smiled.

But I didn't do one afterall.

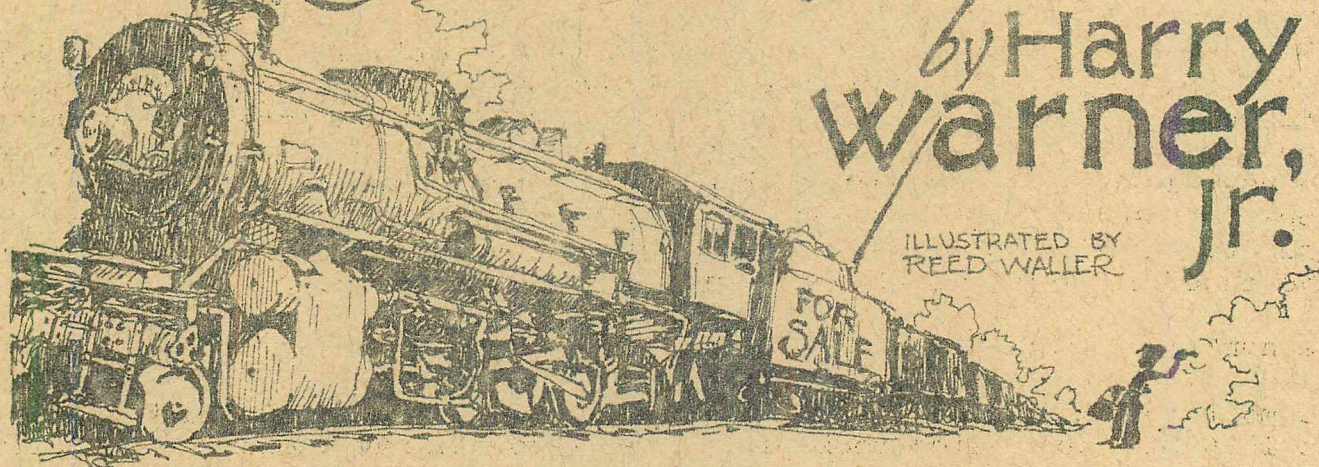
As I said, Frank was one of six readers who asked for more material by me in MOTA. Those six comprise roughly 3% of my mailing list. There are a couple of conclusions to be drawn from their requests.

The first is that five of those who asked for more Terry Hughes material
(continued on page 19)

All My RAILROADING Yesterdays!

by Harry
warner,
Jr.

ILLUSTRATED BY
REED WALLER



Most fans are aware that writing locs is not my full-time occupation. Many fans know that I work for the Hagerstown newspapers. But even if I've been a fan forever, I haven't been a journalist quite that long. Hardly anyone in fandom remembers that I used to work for the railroad. I try to forget that fact, for that matter.

Hagerstown's prosperity came from its railroads. When I was growing up, it had both freight and passenger service from the B & O, Pennsylvania, Norfolk & Western and Western Maryland Railway, all of which connected with one another here. I had an uncle who became assistant chief dispatcher for one of them, and there was great rejoicing within the family when I found a job one day as a clerk for the Pennsy. I withdrew from the celebration. It was nice to keep up a family tradition, I knew intellectually. But as a boy, I'd never wanted to grow up to be a railroader or anything else. I didn't like the idea of working, even in boyhood.

While I was employed by the Pennsylvania Railroad, the big boss in Hagerstown was H. K. Geeoven. He looked and acted something like a taller Edward G. Robinson. Even though he hired me, he obviously hated me on sight and I felt a similar emotion toward him. When I asked at the job interview if I would be working daytime or the night shift, he launched a ten-minute tirade at me about no-good kids who aren't grateful to have found work and won't wait until they report for work for the first time to find out if it's a day or night shift. Our relationship went downhill from that point. But to be fair, I must admit that Geeoven was considerate of his employees. The first night I was to work as passenger ticket clerk,

I asked him what I should do if someone pointed a gun at me and demanded all the money. He stared hard at me, squirmed, frowned, thought for a while, and finally grunted: "Hell, give him the money."

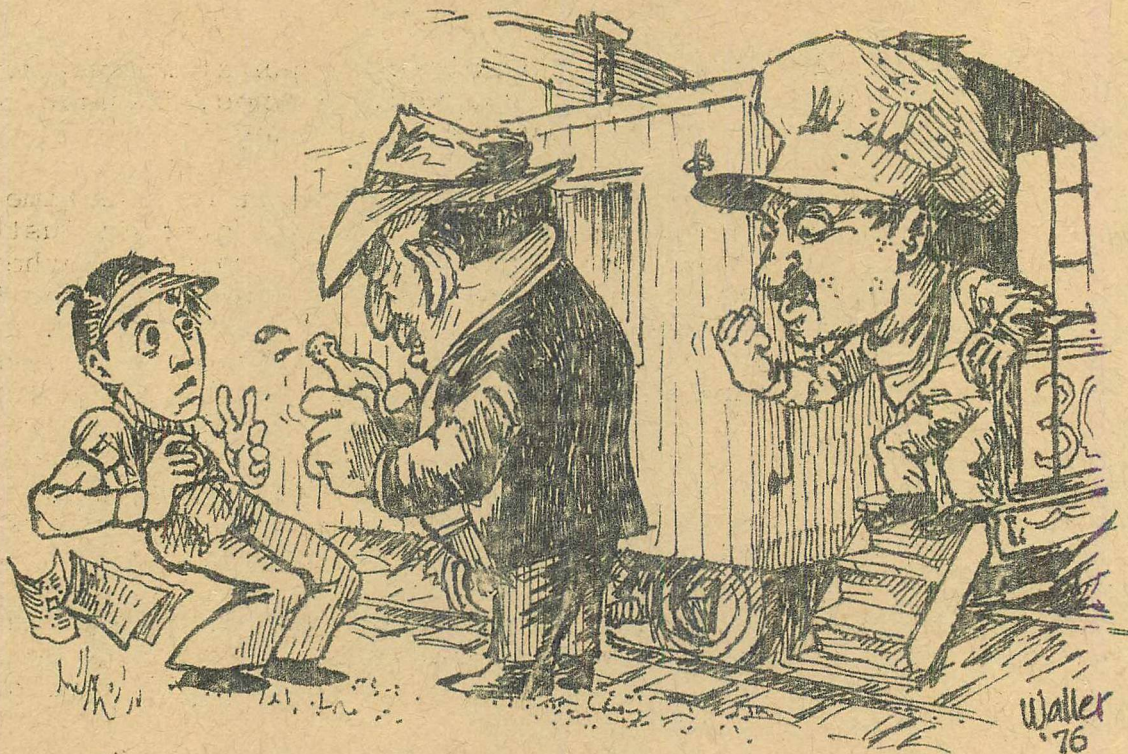
I worked part of the time in the freight station, part of the time in the passenger station. I found conditions in the freight station just about the same as they had been a quarter-century earlier, when my mother had been a clerk there for a while. She'd frequently told me how one December, the girls typed a little note and slipped it into an invoice for a shipment of candy: "Don't forget the freight office girls at Christmas." Someone in the railroad administration heard about the note and fired every girl who had been on duty that day, to save the time and trouble of determining who was really responsible. My mother's job was saved because she'd been home sick on the day in question. My freight station duties were mostly incomprehensible to me, and I doubt if they had any real use to anyone else. The only thing I really enjoyed was the task of adding up the net weights of all the freight cars that had moved through Hagers-town each day. The poundage totals were so huge that they made me think of astronomical matters in my beloved science fiction. I could do the work mechanically, and there was no conceivable way anyone could have discovered any mistakes I might have made.

But life was much more exciting in the passenger station. Geeoven wasn't around so much, I was in constant contact with the public, and if I goofed, that fact became quickly evident.

It didn't take long to learn the important things about ticket agenting. For instance, if a female voice asked over the telephone whether a train had arrived on time, you told her that it had come in a half-hour later than the actual moment, because it was probably a trainman's wife, wondering if her husband had stopped at a watering hole instead of coming straight home. You always stomped your feet as loudly as possible when going up to the second floor bathroom because Geeoven kept running up there in hopes of catching the employees who goofed off in it, and it was hard on their nerves if they heard someone coming up the stairs as quietly as he did, in addition to causing them to dispose of perfectly good cigars and cigarettes in a hurry.

I think I was the inventor of one method of simplifying my job. If someone came to the ticket window and asked for a ticket to North Cupcake, Nevada, I was supposed to get out the enormous monthly publication which contained all the timetables and fares for every railroad in the nation, determine from its pages the shortest and quickest method of reaching the destination, and write one of those two-foot-long tickets, with a separate section for each railroad involved in the long journey. Such customers invariably showed up fifteen seconds before departure time for the train they wanted to catch to start the journey. World War Two was in progress at the time. I quickly developed a knack for looking worried when I got such a customer, glancing over the racks of printed tickets to the nearby towns and major cities elsewhere in the nation, snapping my fingers in despair, and saying: "I knew it! We just sold yesterday the last ticket we had to North Cupcake. And there's no telling when new ones will come in because of the paper shortage. But I was talking to the agent in Harrisburg, Pa., about my problem this morning and he said he still has a few. So I'll just sell you a ticket to Harrisburg and you can tell the agent up there where you want to go."

There were dangers in the passenger station. The first day I worked



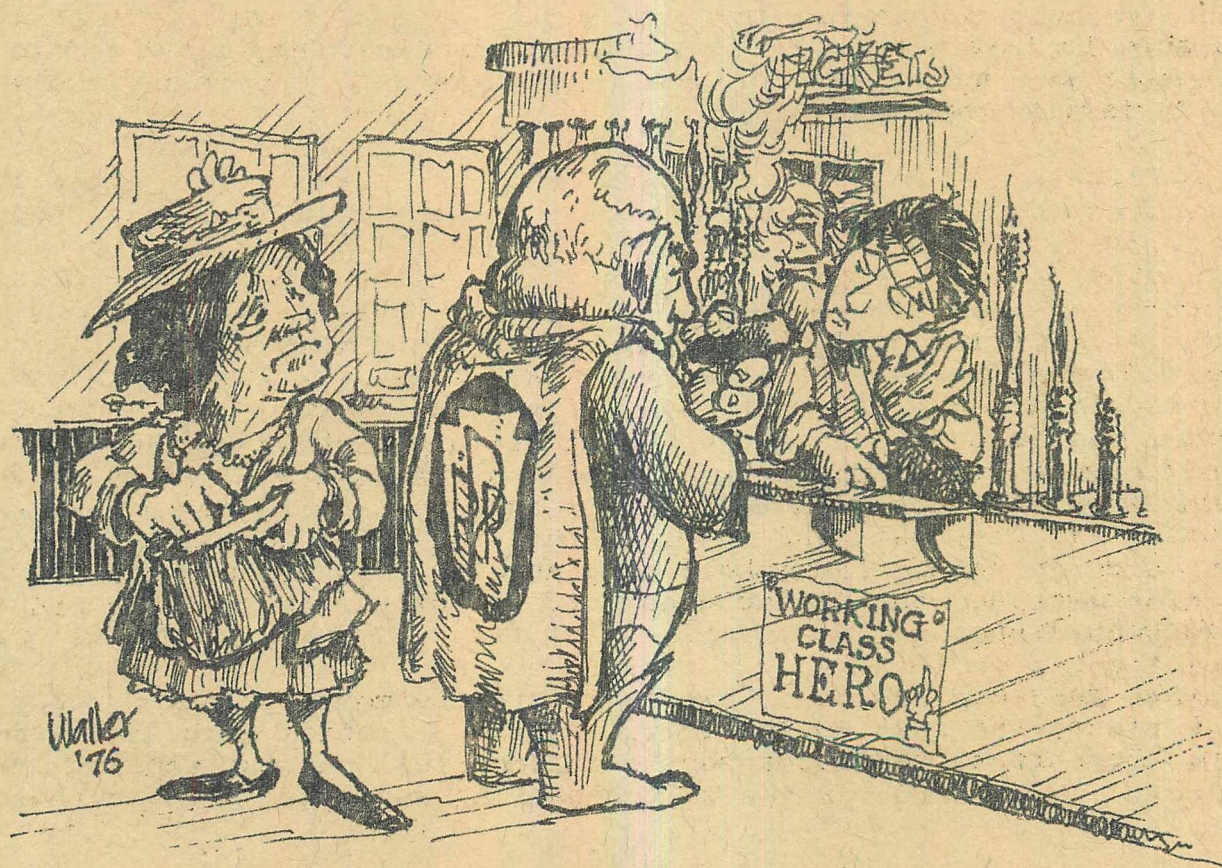
there, the agent in charge came up \$20 short when he balanced his accounts at the end of the shift. He dropped a strong hint to the effect that I was to blame and that it was only fair for me to pay half the missing money even if I wasn't. I hadn't handled any money at all, as a new employee, I didn't contribute, and I don't know to this day if he really had made a mistake or was trying to pick up a few bucks from a greenhorn. The building wasn't in the best of condition, as I discovered one day when an entire windowframe, glass and all, came crashing down on a chair I'd vacated only a moment before, from a height of perhaps fifteen feet. Tremendous cockroaches maintained light housekeeping behind the file boxes that lined the walls. They were the kind of cockroaches that jumped at you when disturbed instead of running away. The baggage clerk was a prince of a fellow, but he suffered the minor disability of illiteracy. He was fine between trains, when he sat staring at all the lost and misdirected bags, but I was forced to help him out when a passenger train arrived. One night, a particularly heavy suitcase was too much for me, my ankle gave way as I was trying to carry it, and I couldn't walk the next day. This resulted in a 70-mile housecall from a railroad doctor, who came all the way from Harrisburg to help me become ambulatory as soon as possible. It was less trouble, I learned, for the railroad to send a physician on a 140-mile round trip to an injured employee than to undertake the job of filling out the stacks of Interstate Commerce Commission forms involved whenever an employee injured in the line of duty was unable to work more than three days in a row.

I never did understand some railroad ways of doing things. Freight station forms were made out in quadruplicate, with the help of carbon paper which was used over and over again. The first time I wrote a bill of lading, I got a scolding from a veteran clerk. I hadn't let the edges of the carbon papers stick out a little from the end of the form. "How can you get the carbons out again without wasting a lot of time?" he asked me. He grabbed for the form and the carbons fell out, scattering over the floor. Then there was the telephone line which was used in the pas-

senger station to make pullman reservations. It must have served every railroad station on every line east of Reno. You sat there listening for a break in the conversation, and if someone paused to take breath, you began to pump a lever like mad, just as a couple of hundred other agents were doing over most of the continent, in the hope of breaking in and getting your customer his berth or compartment.

Occasionally I encountered someone famous. One night Louis Armstrong purchased a ticket from me and there were too many other customers for me to chat or retain from the encounter any memory except that of his smile. A case of mistaken identity involved a couple of dozen puny youths who lounged around the platform between trains one afternoon. We employees took it for granted that they were just another batch of potential draftees who were returning home after receiving 4-F classifications at an induction center. Then we learned that they were the Philadelphia Phillies, whose healthy players had all been drafted. One night someone gave me a hard time, demanding a pass on the grounds that he was vice-president of the railroad. He couldn't supply satisfactory identification and finally gave me money along with black looks for a ticket. Several days later I was told that it really had been the vice-president. The promotion and raise in salary that traditionally comes to an employee who protects a corporation's interests in this manner didn't come my way. In fact, the Pennsylvania Railroad reacted in quite different manner. Geeoven, who was a Coke fiend, drinking a couple bottles an hour, resorted to something stronger when part of the blast from Philadelphia bounced off me and singed him on its rebound.

It's interesting to speculate how my life might have gone if I'd made a permanent career as a railroader. Would I have stayed in fandom, without the practice that I got in writing from the later newspaper job? Would



I have stayed in Hagerstown, after all four railroads ended passenger service here, sharply curtailed employment, and caused many workers to transfer to other cities?

But the end came one night when I was on duty at the passenger station and a freight car was inexplicably deposited on the siding beside the building. I learned that it contained all the provisions for a large work crew that was assigned to this area and that I must unload it, for obscure reasons involving union rules and work schedules. At that time, I weighed 110 pounds, and not an ounce of it was muscle. Everything on that freight car was sealed up in huge wooden crates. I tried to shove one out the door, theorizing that it would come apart when it hit the concrete station platform four feet below. I couldn't budge it. The only tool I possessed to open the crates and remove their contents piecemeal was a nailfile, which proved inadequate. I made up my mind, only slightly worried over my fate if all those big bruisers on the work crew found out who had caused them to go without breakfast the next morning. Bright and early, I looked up Geeoven and told him I was quitting. The old freight station rocked on its foundations. "You should have stuck it out," the chief clerk told me when Geeoven finally finished his explanation of how he would blacklist me and prevent me from ever finding work anywhere in Hagerstown. A few years later, that chief clerk quit as abruptly as I'd done, less than a year from retirement.

I got the job with the newspaper several weeks later. I was as happy there at first as I could have been in any job where I was expected to do some work. But in December of that first year in journalism, I came down with intestinal flu, a severe attack that put me in bed for two weeks. Excruciating cramps in my stomach and the worried look of my physician made it an unhappy Christmas Day until mid-afternoon when my mother came in my room with an odd look on her face. Someone had just telephoned, thinking I might be interested in knowing that Geeoven had dropped dead on Christmas morning.

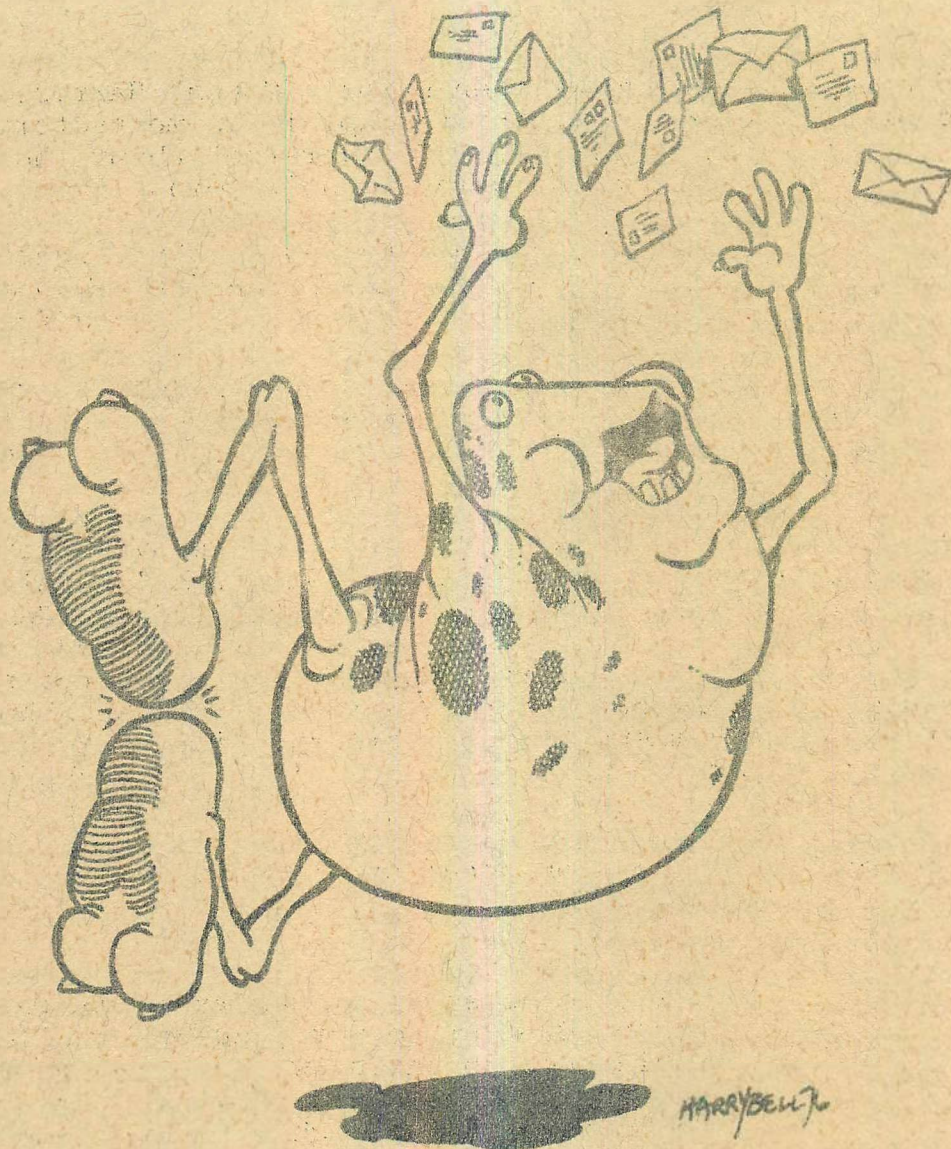
I was able to take some solid nourishment that evening, I got out of bed on December 26, and by the following day I was well enough to look at my other Christmas presents.

+ Harry Warner, Jr. +

For a jolly old time, vote England in '79!

As most of you are already aware, Great Britain is bidding for the 1979 World Science Fiction Convention. Fandom has a long history in the British Isles. It has been the site of successful world (and regional) conventions in the past, and the fans there have the knowledge and capability to do so again. Remember: England has given us UFO and SPACE: 1999, but let's give them the worldcon anyway. I fully support their bid in my enfeebled manner.

To further this end and to , hopefully, promote more contact between U.S. and U.K. fans, the next MOTA (#19) will have a special emphasis on Anglo-fandom. Be sure to reserve a copy at the mailbox nearest you.



HOMER EOFAN
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Dear Editor:

I have just read your "fanzine" MOTA (is that "neutron" spelled backwards?) and I am hoping someone will enlighten me. The "fanzine" contains an enigma, a puzzle, and perhaps you, or your "readers" can supply an answer.

I read the story by "LeeH Youngfan" and it involved a "Trailways" bus, a "chinese" restaurant, and a "Dairy" queen. Mr. Youngfan writes an entertaining story but a baffling one; Try as I did, peer closely between the lines as I did, examine carefully every clue as I did, I simply couldn't figure out the identity of "a certain Elderly Gentleman." Perhaps some body who knows the "secret" will help me. I hate to put down a good story and yet not understand all of it.

Also, please, what is the meaning of "MSG" in the sentence "As I squinched down to hide behind a 55-gallon drum of M.S.G., the Elderly Gentleman burst through the door ..." ?? Is "MSG" a chemical preservative used to retard spoilage of the Peking duck served in that "chinese" restaurant?

I'm sorry, Mr. "Editor", but this story is as puzzling as the other story

you printed a few issues ago written by Mr. "Chuch" Harris. I wish there was a guide or a book or some thing to explain to me esoteric terms like "Kehli," "space ship" and "Sirrah." I understood about the horse all right. I know horses coming and going, mostly going.

(I want to point out to those readers who have not yet reached puberty that Mr. Homer Eofan and his world famous collection of quotation marks amazingly have the same address as the highly talented science fiction author Wilson Tucker.

In keeping with my policy of sending copies of all comments on their material to the contributors, I sent a xerox of the above to Lee Hoffman, who replied so speedily that I am able to include it in this letter column.)

LEE HOFFMAN
350 N.W. Harbor Blvd.
Port Charlotte, FL 33952

As to Homer E., I can sympathize with his befuddlement, although I hardly share in it. The clues as to the Elderly Gentleman's identity were subtly planted throughout the story. Were Mr. E. a devotee of the mystery genre, he would certainly have been able to distinguish them and puzzle out the Secret. (I recommend he look into the field of mysteries as educational reading matter. I would particularly suggest the classic Charles Horne series.)

M.S.G., of course, is the common technical term for Mighty Suspicious Gunk.

NORM CLARKE
9 Bancroft
Aylmer East, Quebec
Canada

Well, let's see if I can write another goddam Letter of Comment to Terry Hughes' old fanzine. Once again the ribbon is twisted (and so am I) but is that going to stop me? Maybe. How does one start? Maybe fannish loc-technique will come back to me if I simply close my eyes, nod off and begin...

Dear Terry:

My typer ribbon is twisted. Hoping you are the same, ahahaha. (Yes, that's a good start.) Well, here are the comments ... but first, a Glass of Whiskey. By that I mean, of course, an American shot-glass stolen from a bar in Cambridge, Mass. or Baltimore or maybe Daytona Beach but not from Arlington VA, where there are no such things (shot-glasses or bars).

Ah yes: speaking of Daytona Beach, I am depressed to read of Ms. Hoffwoman's meeting with that Elderly Gentleman. I am depressed because I wanted to report to Mota about the Elderly Gent in Florida. (I presume that LeeH Youngfan and I are talking about the same Elderly Gentleman.)

I have already written at great length, in lilapa, about the classic meeting of that Elderly Gentleman and this Mid-Eld Hipoid. Response so far has been encouraging (inasmuch as there has been no response).

This ~~EXACTLY~~ Old Bastard and I met in a Motel room in Daytona Beach -- quite by accident, you understand -- and we discussed "Sci-Fi" for several hours, quite to the amazement of all those gathered to witness the event, some of whom passed out.

The Ancient Scribe invited me, as I was hoofing his ass out the door, to come with him to meet the legendary recluse of Okefenokee. "She lives on the West Coast, you know," he added invitingly. "So do I," I replied, in-

stantly producing a map of Quebec, "West Coasts are boring."

As though to prove my point, I went immediately to Tampa, looked around, and strode -- well, fell -- onto an Air Canada flight to Toronto. When the plane landed (after a Bomb Scare, caused by me when I opened my soprano sax case in order to take out a bottle of Frank's Louisiana Hot Sauce) I was subjected to intensive interrogation. The Border Guards didn't want to let me into Canada, I guess because I look so Mexican.

Someday, when lilapa folds, you will read the full true story of my meeting with that Old ~~Boat~~ Gentleperson there in Daytona Beach, Flahdah. And maybe someday the truth will be told of Hoffperson's visit to Aylmer, Quebec. And, boy, wait till Georgina Ellis tells you about BoSh in Calgary.

CHUCK HARRIS
32 Lake Crescent
Daventry, Northants
England

"That's a lovely letter from Robert Bloch," Sue said.

"Umm," I ummed, "perceptive, realistic, discerninga superb sense of critical judgement. You just can't beat Bob for the old true evaluation."

"I bet that if Bloch worked for Victor Gollancz, he wouldn't say your dialogue seemed unreal."

"Or that my theme had been handled better by Robert A Heinlein in "Universe."

"I dunno," she said. "Why can't they just write 'Go Screw' on the rejection slip instead of offering a free literary criticism. And who told Bloch about you and Tucker in the bushes?"

"I was not," I said, "NOT in the bushes with Tucker. Shure, I'm all in favour of a grope now and again -- but not in the bushes back of back of the geriatric ward..."

"Instead of harping on Tucker and the bushes," she said, "you could be revising The Epic again. Do you realise all these people are Household Names now? Harry Warner said that, statistically, every neofan should find that at least 50% of his acquaintances will be Big Name Authors or Kings of Mundane in the next ten years. Take another look at that dog-eared QUANDRY heap; all those tiny struggling faans busting out of their chrysalises to bestride prodrom like colossi -- Tucker, Bloch, Lee Hoffman, WAW, White, Bosh ... and see what the Sunday Times said about him ... Grennell, Snoopwhistle, Rotsler. Hell! every damn one of them except Cholly Harris. You won't write, you can't draw, you won't edit, and you sold, you sold, YOU SOLD YOUR LOVELY PERFECT GESTETNER MIMEO. Apart from a timid pauper -- and how apt -- that Bob Silverberg named for you in "Unfamiliar Territory" your only claim for immortality is that you were made Sixth Fandom's Avon Representative, and where's the Hugo for that."

"Good lad, Silverberg," I said. "Good judge of women too. Got a tendency to refer to those glorious founts of womanhood as jugs instead of knockers but that's just New World crudeness....but you are right, Sue. I will start again. I will deserve the faith you have in me; I will try harder. This very afternoon I will revise Chapter Six again with special attention to the dialogue and the plot line. I will prove that even if I haven't

got talent, at least I have persistence."

But I didn't: I got my woolly hat and my scarf, and I went to the football match and watched Leeds United beat the everloving hell out of Leicester Town.

I have been besotted with LeeH since the early Paleozoic and was delighted with "A Traveling Giant Calls". This is pure gold and damn few faneds are that lucky with material. I don't save many fmz but I shall keep this until the staples fall out. Apart from the story itself, I liked all the little insights: the carrot juice, the cat and the '43 ASF and all. LeeH, Ellie Bloch, and Shirley Maclaine are the three Stateside women I'd like to spend the night with -- simultaneously -- talking our way down a couple of bottles of cheap white plonk.

BoSh was better than I've ever seen him before. I don't know if my sense of wonder has been refurbished but this was a delight to read. Everything he does now seems so slick and professional, building up to a natural climax with no apparent effort at all. I hope that one day he'll collect some of his fannish pieces and try them on Gollancz too. This piece, the one about the car which did 85 miles to the gallon, the pound note in the ticket box, and a lot more would all appeal to a wider audience.

MIKE GLICKSOHN
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Canada M6P 2S3

Canada's niggardly showing in the beer-swilling sweepstakes is scarcely my fault as I drink mostly scotch or gin while at home. My only beerdrinking is done at conventions, and this inflates the US per capita consumption statistics at the loss of my own country's face. Your guess at Australia's

amazing showing is probably correct, but even so one has to take one's hat off to the thirsty antipodeans. (If you don't they think you're making fun of them.)

Once more I have to stand in awe of you, Mister Hughes, sir. You've managed to get yet another piece of absolutely first class brilliant writing from a fan who's been relatively gaffiated for years. This piece by LeeH is certainly a candidate for Best Of The Year honours (I just added it to my list) and may well become one of the classic pieces of fannish humour of all time. Alex (Gilliland) has added perfect illustrations which capture not only the essence of Bob's remarkable physical appearance but also his basic character to a T. It's hard to praise the overall result too highly.

(Judging from the response to my editorial, it seems that no one will admit to drinking beer in Canada. Boyd Raeburn sent me a letter in which he defended Norm Clarke by saying that Norm is far too interested in whiskey to bother with beer and that Boyd himself sometimes manages one whole bottle of beer a week. Norm Clarke sent me a letter saying much the same thing. It seems I have slandered them so I apologize and freely admit that neither one of them would recognize a bottle of beer if it bit him on the ankle. Both Boyd and Norm that Will Straw is not a beer drinker either, but rather a quaffer of hard liquor. I have yet to hear directly from Will himself -- maybe a bottle of beer bit him.

With claims like these, no wonder Canada came in fourth out of four. Maybe it should have been fifth, a fifth of whiskey that is. At least the English will admit to beer-drinking -- right, Leroy? Leroy? Hey, Leroy!)

LEROY KETTLE
43 Chesholm Rd.
London, N.16
United Kingdom

-- being degenitalised. Nevertheless, the scrotum of
an adult fan which has been dipped into hot --

Oh, hello, it's Terry Hughes, isn't it? The guy who
sticks the staples in Amazing. Sorry, I was just prac-
ticing my Put The Balls Back Into Fandom speech for the

BBC Dying Minorities programme. This letter caught me a bit by surprise
actually. I suppose I'll have to finish it now though. Just a moment
while I put the pinking shears and sealing wax away. But I'll leave the
ice-cubes if you don't mind as they ease the pain a bit.

I suppose I'm writing about Mota 16 am I? I hope you know -- I'm not too
sure. I'd rather write a letter before I send it. If I wait until after
you've received it I tend to have difficulty in knowing what it's all
about. Still, you probably know. And that's what counts, isn't it? I
mean if you don't know I might as well stick my head up an aardvark's bum
as write.

And now listen here, Huges. If you will go round flinging goblets to the
ground challenging the alcoholic virility of the English, you can expect
to find people over here queuing up to be sick upon you in the unlikely
event that you should ever win TAFF. Not that I particularly care, as
drink is for drinking and not for boasting about, but people like Charnock,
whose reputation as a writer and musician is totally supported in his
little mind by perpetual inebriation of the cheapest kind, do give a shit.
But I feel a few "facts" ought to be put right. In Australia most of the
beer evaporates while the ex-convicts are out shooting aboes, biting the
balls off kangaroos or boasting about how much beer they drink. The rest
is used to replenish the sheep-dips in times of particularly virulent out-
breaks of foot and mouth. New Zealand, to take the second-runner in your
list, is so far away that they can cheat on any statistics (particularly
how far they are away) and no one could prove otherwise. This leaves
England. Or Britain, as you indiscriminately include Bob Shaw and Greg
Pickersgill as English. Never mind, says I.

Anyway, next time I go out for a swift gallon or two down the local, I'll
keep an eye open for the busy bugger who's noting the quantities per head
that we drink. Or is that an Americanism? Does head mean toilet in this
case? Do they mean gallons flushed away after being urinised by the di-
gestive system? This changes matters a little as Peter Roberts, for in-
stance, has never been to the toilet in his life. Everything he's ever
eaten or drunk is still there oozing around inside him. Everything he
consumes is totally bio-degradeable, and, in fact, at nights he himself
turns into a pool of non-animal fat which has nightmares about being human.

Where was I? Oh yes, let's have no more knocking British drinking habits
by Americans whose experience of real beer drinking is probably confined
to reading The Ginger Man in a digest version or mixing two parts Xenium
to one part water in a shot glass. Be warned, Hug, or I'll tell what I
know about you, the inflatable coelocanth and the popsicles.

(That was no coelocanth, that was my wife. Or was it my coenocyte?)

ERIC LINDSAY
6 Hillcrest Ave.
Faulconbridge NSW 2776
Australia

Liked the cover (of #15), since it is a scene I
have to otherwise imagine, Australian conventions
not yet having been taken over by StarTrek fans.
Besides, we don't don't have elevators, you have
to slide down a fireman's pole and ride up in
the freight elevator.

WILLIAM ROTSLER
P.O. Box 3126
Los Angeles, CA 90028

Grant Canfield's article was most interesting. I once wrote gags for Big Time Cartoonists, back in the mid-Fifties, selling to Post, New Yorker, True, Colliers, et al. (Et Al includes Army Laffs, Detroit Athletic Club News, et al.) Was

a hobby & fun.

Grant has a good, clean, versatile style. Distinctive, too, which is NECESSARY in that game. I also predict he will get this year's fan artist Hugo.

I was "in" on the Vertex-Canfield problems only in that I got Pfeil's side of it. I tried to smooth things out--which was probably the reason his letters were as mild as they were (for him). He was and is a most curious person. I like him, but he was certainly not easy to know or like. He's an ex-Hells Angel biker, past & present stock car racer, spent some time in jail (until he decided to get out of the Angels instead of spending his life being arrested) and is a Very Rough Customer. He once resigned an editorship (not at Vertex) by punching the top man in the mouth & decking him.

He goes along quite well when he thinks he is being treated fairly. But he had no help at Vertex--none--and tried to read everything that came in, to give it a personalized letter of rejection & suggestion. That made him late and people--including my own SFWA--got on his ass and that made him mad. There was justice on both sides, but I think the SFWA acted on member complaints without ever asking Don's side. (I personally witnessed a number of gross & hard-to-believe screwups by Big Names--everything from huffy letters following a week after submission asking Where's My Check? to outrageously unprofessional tactics. And that's from some Known Names.) One complaint, funneled through me, produced a windstorm--we reduced a Giant Stack of mss. to a handfull in ten minutes or so on the basis of "Is the author well-known or a friend of yours?" (Meaning me.) That was because the SFWA said he was holding mss. too long, a complaint by one author who said she had sent in something X weeks before when it was, by log book, less than half that.

So Grant hit Don wrong. I'm sorry on both counts. I'm also somewhat sorry I got various fan artists involved at all. Not only wasn't the money for cartoons very much, but I was put in the middle. I got many TOTALLY unprofessional portfolios from highly untalented artists (the kind you pull part way out & stick right back in!) and almost NOTHING from the "good people". The fan artists--with the exception of Barr & Austin--did not fare well on a professional level. One assignment was given to one fan artist...time went by...we get a call, at the last minute, from another fan artist saying she had been given the assignment by #1 artist and what was she to do? #1 artist hadn't even told us about it, asked our permission, or even came close to any deadline. As a result we just didn't have time for anything and stuck in a "stock" shot from the files. There were many other non-professional acts involved. I couldn't get artists to submit covers, for example, even transparencies of existing work to hold for consideration. Nothing. I gave up.

But Grant is a good man, artist, cartoonist & fan. Vote for him.

ALAN LANKIN
1117 New Pear St.
Vineland, NJ 08360

While on the subject of art, I might mention that it's interesting to see artists writing for a change. I tried to write but everyone said I should stick

to drawing. That's odd because everyone who has seen my drawings say I should stick to writing. Now all you need is an all writers issue with writers doing the illos. On second thought, maybe you better not.

TOM PERRY The cover is right up to Harry Bell standards. Though
25, Locks Rd. it did cause some confusion when my wife was describing
Locks Heath over the phone what had arrived in the envelope from
Hants SO3 6NS Terry Hughes. "It's named LITERARY GEMS," she said.
England "Nonsense, it's named MOTA -- what are you, blind?" The
 ensuing discussion almost caused a divorce. I would
 complain more heartily but we tend to get two or three
divorces a week for various causes, mostly because I have such a vile
temper and a way of misconstruing what's said to me. Once back in the
U.S. I was sitting at my desk and Alix said something in another part of
the house and I said, "What?" and she replied, "I'm not talking to you."
Not talking to me, eh? I thought, going into a boil. All right, baby,
I won't talk to you either! I maintained this for a couple of hours with-
out her noticing and then finally she came in and said something casually
to me. "I thought you weren't speaking to me," I snarled. "Whatever
gave you that idea?" she asked. "You said you weren't, back around one
o'clock, remember? You can't get away with that stuff around me, baby."
When she finally remembered her words she laughed. "I only meant I was
talking to someone else at the time," she said. "I was talking to the
baby." "Oh," I said. I hope this anecdote doesn't make me sound hot
tempered or anything. Actually it was her fault for being ambiguous.

Anyway, the cover was good, but the staples were the usual lousy MOTA
staples. I speak as one who has spent part of the morning restapling
back pages onto old MOTAs. If you didn't have such a good fanzine I'd
let them deteriorate into bushels of disconnected pages. I have however
started stapling a third staple between the standard two provided by the
publisher, this one facing back to front, in an effort to keep the back
page attached to the others.

DAVE ROMM I don't see what you have against recycling used
17 Highland Ave. staples. Right now, sitting just to the left of
Middletown, NY 10940 this very typewriter, is a Cherry Flavored Su-
 crets box chock full of used staples. There are
 many things you can do with used staples, not
the least of which is brag about them in locs. As far as I'm concerned,
it was all worth it a few weeks ago. A friend of mine, a fan who shall
remain nameless because you probably haven't heard of him anyway, was
over, and saw the Sucrets box and asked what was in it. "Staples," I
replied.

"Well," he said authoritatively, "I don't know if it would be worth it.
Getting those staples individually back in a stapler seems like a waste
of time. It might not even come out that well. In fact, I..."

I interrupted, "You don't understand. They're already used." He gave me
such a look. That look was worth 2 years of sweating and slaving over a
cold staple-remover. Knowing this fan, he immediately went home to start
his own collection so he can brag.

*(I also heard from Dave Jenrette, Robert Bloch, Bill Kunkel, John Thiel,
Bruce D. Arthurs, Geoffrey Mayer, Eric Bentcliffe, Grant Canfield, Karen
Pearlton, and Jim Lang. More may still be en route. Thanks!)*

NOTHING TO FEAR BUT..



It was only a short while ago that I realized that I was nothing more than a walking mass of fears. That dreadful knowledge had been withheld from me until I read a section of a new book, The People's Almanac, by David Wallechinsky and Irving Wallace. The chapter I read, which dealt with phobias, revealed that every living human being was simply a bundle of irrational fears. And what was worse, it listed the names of several dozen fears (from acrophobia to zoophobia), out of which the reader was invited to pick the ones most applicable to himself.

I found that I was a craven example of almost every one.

When this revelation burst upon me, I was immediately lost in black despair. Oh, I had always known that I possessed fears, but when they were nameless it was much easier to ignore and minimize them. They weren't overwhelming. Now, it appeared, everything was reversed: I felt that my fears possessed me.

And (Argh!) I found that even this last sensation had a name: phobophobia. When I received this final impetus, I fell into a dark and horrible land of worry.

I probably would have still been wandering over this evil terrain if the book had not offered one single ray of hope. It detailed a method whereby one could overcome his fears. The method was outlined by Dr. Charlotte Zitrin, of the Jewish Hospital in Long Island. I quote:

"If the patient is afraid of dogs, we tell him, 'Imagine you are across the street and half a block away from a gentle dog on a leash.' Then we make it a larger dog. Then one not on a leash. Then we instruct the patient to go out and see a friend who has a dog or go to a pet shop and examine a dog. This works."

With these words of salvation resounding in my brain, I determined to rid myself of all the puerile fears that oppressed me. I would become a new, whole man.

I decided to start out small. The first fear that came to mind, naturally enough, was mysophobia, the fear of germs.

I began to apply D. Zitrin's method.

First, I imagined a friend holding a germ on a leash on the opposite side of the street, half a block away. A very small germ, and a docile one. No sweat. That image didn't bother me at all. Next, I thought about a larger germ, hairy and unkempt, without a leash, standing in front of a drugstore window, eyeing me covertly. Even that didn't faze me. Finally, I conjured up a germ that looked like something I had seen in a Gahan Wilson cartoon, and pictured it bearing down on me like an express train. Miraculously, I stood my ground. After that, I knew I was cured. Just to prove it, though, I undertook the last step in the Zitrin Method and went looking for the real thing.

A week later, after a suitable incubation period, I found myself in the hospital. I had pneumonia, leprosy, terminal intercrural itch, and several diseases the Defense Department swore were all safely locked away. Only with the aid of many of the world's best doctors was I able to survive. But when I was released, I was still eager to banish my inane phobias. I knew the technique worked, because, after all, I was now no longer afraid of germs. Nearly dead from them, true; but not afraid.

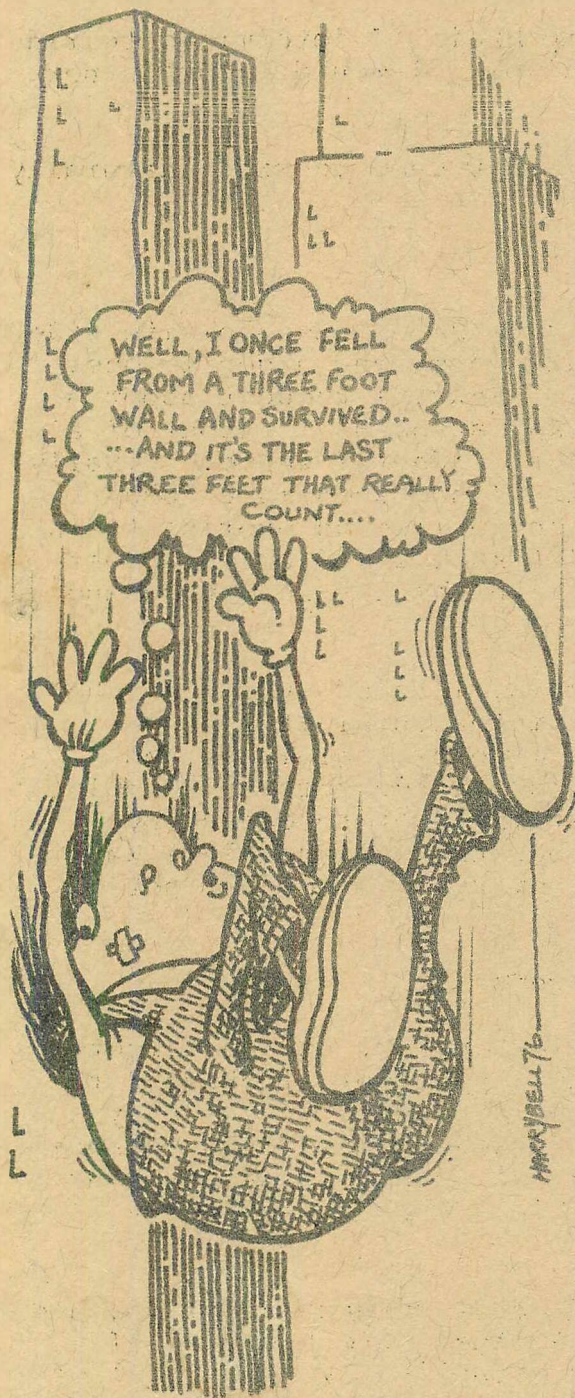
I went to work on acrophobia, the fear of heights.

I imagined myself standing in a hotel lobby, looking out at the street. Fine, no fear. I began to work my way up, floor by floor, looking outside at each landing. Still, there was none of the anxiety I usually associated with heights. On the sixth floor, I was stopped by a beckoning figure in an open doorway. I went to her and spent a pleasant hour proving to myself that I did not have gynephobia. Then I resumed my mental climb.

I reached the penthouse, exited onto the roof, cast my gaze downward, and astonished myself with my bravery and calm. Another cure had been effected. However, I thought it best to firmly establish my clean bill of mental health with an actual trial, once again in accordance with the Zitrin Technique.

I climbed, in actuality, to the top of the tallest building in Providence. There, I performed two galliards and a pas-de-deux on the lightning rod. Soon, I was hurtling reluctantly through the air. Eventually, I landed.

This unfortunate occurrence brought to the surface other fears that had lurked deep within me. I had been unwilling to perform the leap because there were people below: this was topophobia, or stage fright. I had



landed in an open square at the base of the building and found that I had agoraphobia, fear of open spaces. Also, algophobia (fear of pain), hematophobia (fear of blood), optophobia (fear of opening one's eyes), ochlophobia and xenophobia (fear of crowds and strangers), and tropophobia (fear of moving).

When the ambulance came, I experienced claustrophobia and could not bear to be put in it. The doctors manhandled me so badly that I developed iatrophobia, fear of doctors. My hospital was such an unwelcome sight (it was the same one I had recently vacated) that I became clinophobic, fearful of beds. I thought I would die, so I developed thanatophobia (fear of death) and necrophobia (fear of dead bodies). It got to the point where I couldn't stand to be alone (autophobia) and dreaded the night (nyctophobia).

With much mental effort, I finally managed, after days of tribulation, to shove these big, awesome fears to the back of my mind. I decided to make one last stab at self-help by attacking arachibutryophobia, the fear of peanut butter sticking to the roof of one's mouth. Surely, nothing could go wrong here.

For hours, I revelled in visions of myself eating peanut butter with grace and ease, among friends, family and loved ones. Never once did I experience any stickyness or discomfort. When I felt ready to tackle the experience in reality, I called to the nurse -- with a Zitrin-like zest -- for two jars of Jif (my favorite) and got ready to enjoy them.

I ended up with peanut butter completely covering my bodycast and hair (my only exposed feature, aside from my lips). The nurses never once stopped complaining while they cleaned.

After much travail, I emerged from the hospital, body and soul held together with baling wire. I knew

that in this condition, I could afford no more self-help, and so I resolved to learn to live with my fears. My new goal in life was simple and clear, and only peripherally connected with fears. It was to impress upon Dr. Zitrin, by cruel and nefarious means, a harsh and lingering Difilippo-phobia.

+ Paul Di Filippo +

Fathering children is not a eunuch accomplishment.

(continued from page 3 - GIMME MORE)

have Impeccable Taste and are obviously people with highly cultivated critical appreciation of the most discriminating sort.

However, I am more than a little reluctant to draw the second conclusion which is based on the fact that if 3% of you asked for more material by me, then 97% of the mailing list didn't.

Ninety-seven percent.

You bastards.

#

The alert readers among you have no doubt noticed that this is the special All Color issue of MOTA. I figured what the hell why not use some color change kits and give everyone a treat. Even though this involved lots of duplicate stencil cutting (two or more for each page), I think the end results have been worth the effort. Obviously all the consonants are in blue while the vowels are printed bright red. In order to make things easier for those of you who like to spot such things, all the typing errors this issue are in black ink.

Well, this about wraps up another issue of RIVERSIDE QUARTERLY and so I will just wish all of ----- Wait a minute! This just was discovered and I feel it will be of interest to all of you:

Dateline: Washington, D.C. Another will to the estate of the late
Howard Hughes has been found. From early
indications this may well be the real will that Hughes left. It reads
in part:

"....and to my illegitimate --- but cute -- grandson, Terry Hughes, I hereby leave \$4,037,555.93 and my favorite Kleenex box under the provisions that he never says the word "grunties" in public and that he limits the 18th issue of his fanzine to twenty pages."

The entire world -- with the exception of Cleveland, Ohio -- is anxiously awaiting for this new heir to the Hughes fortune to present himself.

If you'll excuse me, I've got to go make a telephone call...

+Terry Hughes+

This is the 18th issue of MOTA,
the fanzine that dares to ask:
"If you were driving from Falls
Church, Virginia, to La Mirada,
California, in a 1971 Ford van
at a constant rate of 55 miles per
hour and were tossing out a page
of an issue of MOTA every 2.3
seconds from the car window, how
long would it be before you were
arrested for littering?"

This is also the July 1976 issue
(Happy Bicentennial!) of MOTA, the
fanzine that dares to ask its
readers to address mail to Terry
Hughes, 4739 Washington Blvd.,
Arlington, Virginia 22205, USA.

Our circulation used to be 12,000
but we don't get around much anymore.
Copies of MOTA may be had.

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He who hesitates...ah,...usha,...uh,
...well...oh yeah,...forgets.

.....

[Don't you hope there is no check
up above? I sure do.]

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