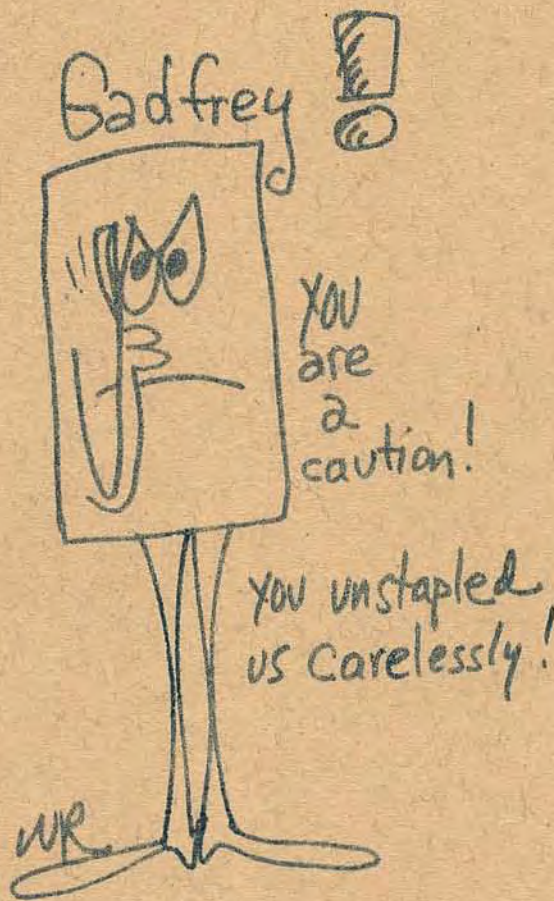


MOTA 8





"Wit and humor, eh? Well, I'll come as close to filling this with wit and humor as you will to bringing out the next MOTA in 6 weeks, anyway."

-- Buck Coulson

"Every 6 weeks? You've got to be kidding!"

-- Grant Canfield

"We got and enjoyed Mota, but I'll believe your one every 6 weeks when I see it."

-- Lesleigh Luttrell

"Publisher's Weekly announces your intentions to revive your 'fanzine' Motha, or something like that, on a 'regular' basis. I say, I'll see it when I believe it, or something like that. I'm looking forward to seeing the next Moota, or whatever, but I am not holding my breath."

-- Grant Canfield (again)

"Oh yeah?" was my immediate snappy comeback. With encouragement like that from my good friends, how could I possibly fail to meet my deadline? So here I am right on schedule with the 8th issue of MOTA, the lemon freshened fanzine. (Just whose schedule I don't know...)

I'm a soft-spoken person. This trait comes from years of mumbling things, which if said loudly would no doubt have resulted in much abuse, both verbal and physical, being directed towards me. Nevertheless, the time has come for me to speak out, loudly and in a clear typeface, on an issue. Namely the 1974 Hugo award for best fanwriter.

Fandom, how could you?

While this may come as a great shock to most of you, the truth is I did not win the fanwriter hugo at Discon this year. That I have not won one in any previous year only goes to prove that I should have received one this time. Oh, I know that part of the reason I have never won one before is because I was never one of the nominees. Those memories are too painful to recall; let them rest in peace. It's too late to undo those wrongs, just as it is probably too late to change the results of

(cont'd on page 14)



FRATRAT AND JOSEPH K.

AND THE TERRIBLE TALE OF TERRIBLE GILBERT:

A CASE OF OVERINDULGENCE

BY

JIM TURNER

*For wel sit it, the sothe for to seyne
A woful wight to han a drery feere,
And to a sorwful tale, a sory chere.*

-- Geoffrey Chaucer

*Seventy-five per cent of what I write is true.
The rest is lies.*

-- Hunter S. Thompson

And where to begin? 1967 was a dull, dead year and I am not sure it has quite ended yet. There are many things that bring 1967 back to me: student teaching...quitting school...predicting to my Nixonian friends that someday they'd be sorry they no longer had Johnson to kick around. Going out last night to pick up a case of beer for my underage neighbor recalled the everlasting desperate fear that someday there would be a time when I wouldn't have anybody available to pick up my booze when I needed it and needed it bad. But, most of all, 1967 means the night of Terrible Gilbert and Joseph K. and Fratrat, slouching side by side on the road to Bethel to be stillborn.

I have never known anyone quite exactly like the lad I call "Joseph K." Picture to yourself the face of Alfred E. Newman, crowned by a ghastly fright wig of red spikes tastefully greased. Erase the look of easy-going stupidity and replace it with a curious stare half of smugness and the rest blind panic. All of this was cramped into a face from which protruded two beady eyeballs that Fate made for him out of jellied cornstarch. A shrink I know swore Joseph K. was a first: a pure nasal retentive personality. I don't know about that, but I do know that he went to a whorehouse in Waynesville, Missouri, armed with his brown briefcase, containing his toothbrush, a can of Right Guard and a package of Trojans. The whore was so shocked she forgot to rob him.

Joseph K. was part of a crowd of people out to reform the campus of the University of Missouri and the city of Columbia in general just as soon as they made sure all was right in the world. Remember that this was in the Precambrian time before Dr. Reuben had made it socially respect-

able, even hip, to jack off. And so they were driven to good works for the want of any other acceptable form of self-abuse. So they founded a magazine which, out of consideration for the few staff members still in town and for the fewer still who are still speaking to me, I will call that magazine ANTIDOTE.

And such was the forging of a dreadful work. For from the first stirrings of their magazine, until he skipped the state with its entire treasury, the editor of ANTIDOTE was Terrible Gilbert.

I never really knew Terrible Gilbert. I don't think we ever exchanged so much as hellogoodbyandfuckyou (a common greeting of those longago gonzo days.) The first time I saw him, he was sitting at a table in the Student Union with Joseph K. Terrible Gilbert had a bigger briefcase than Joseph K. He had a face full of zits, an immaculate blue blazer with shiney brass buttons. He had a bright paisley tie. He had stay-press pants tucked into dirty, muddy, runover paratrooper jump boots. It was seven-thirty in the morning. I had tramped across a cold windy campus for a cancelled seven-forty Geography 6 lecture. It wasn't just cold outside. I was looking for a brass monkey who might want to trade balls with me. I had known Joseph K. from the dorm a year before. He waved me over. They were eating oatmeal. I gagged politely and went on, looking for a radiator I could hover over until the bars opened at eight.

Later I learned that they were plotting the theft of some turkeys from a University farm for a big Thanksgiving dinner they were planning to invite everybody in the world to. After they ate the turkeys they discovered that they had lifted them from a project studying the effects of ghastly poultry diseases.

The one and only issue of ANTIDOTE came out that spring. In fandom, it would have been called an insurgent crudzine. ANTIDOTE then dipped in to its till for a big office party in the last days of Final Week.

Enter Fratrat, whom I knew slightly from student government. I do not know if he ever became an official Greek or not. He was constantly pledging and depledging or being unfrocked for some unknown reason. He was from the South and if he had been in James Dickey's DELIVERANCE, it would have been his fate to be buggered too. He was tall and pale and nervous. When I knew him, he was dating a great Amazon of a girl, born to a horned helmet and cast iron falsies. I saw her drink a whole quart of I.W. Harper once. Fratrat could get drunk on Scotch tape. He was the most palatable of these three and did not deserve what happened to him. I think his life must have been one long middle class embarassment.

When the great ANTIDOTE party came about on a hot Friday night, I was at the apartment of Joseph K. for reasons I have now sublimated. It was a marvelous apartment, all neat and clean. His magazines were arrayed in three neat piles on his coffeetable. There was a stack of TIME, NEWSWEEK and that crowd. The middle pile of professional journals. The third was PLAYBOY, the twelve last issues arranged in order of publication. All edges were even. There was exactly four inches between each pile. I did not have the heart to check and see if the pages of the copies of PLAYBOY were stuck together. I doubt that they were. Joseph K. was very neat. I am sure he was a soap-in-the-shower man.

Joseph K. had not gone to the party. He feared that it would be gross and loud and that somebody would puke on him. They might even puke on his briefcase. Joseph K. was telling me how gross I was. I drank my beer and sweated a lot. Terrible Gilbert, of course, was presiding over the party, at the house of one of the other staffers. Fratrat was not at the party. Fratrat had a takehome final due the next morning. Fratrat had gone home to St. Louis the night before, knowing that if he stayed in town, he would go to the party and forget all about his final and wind up well along Shit Creek without a paddle. No one expected him to show up. But, unknown to friend and foe alike, Fratrat had found his final to be easier than expected. At the moment I sat drinking beer with Joseph K., Fratrat was speeding down Interstate 70 with Budweiser on his mind.

The phone rang about ten-thirty. It was Terrible Gilbert.

Terrible Gilbert was in terrible trouble. He was very drunk and he was getting very sleepy. Under no conditions could he spend the night at the house where the party was going on. They were threatening to throw him out in the driveway if he passed out there. He was too drunk to walk home. Joseph K. had to come and get him and drive him home. Otherwise he would lie in the driveway and birds would shit on him and roving bands of mendicant ruffians crazed on hemp and the savage hypnotizing strains of degenerate nigger bebop would cut off his dong and send it to his girlfriend a piece at a time with crude and suggestive letters. They were certain to do that even with the postage rates as high as they were. Joseph K. had to save him. Joseph K. just had to.

Joseph K. was not sure. Terrible Gilbert had a notoriously unstable stomach. What had Terrible Gilbert had for dinner?

(One of the first things you had to learn at the University of Missouri then was that, in the matter of drinking, if something had to come up, you would be wise to have something down there. One wretched young man back in the dorm became known as "Admiral Puke." He had a great fondness for lima beans and donuts. He had lived next door to Joseph K. Joseph K. was very apprehensive.)

Terrible Gilbert had had chili and donuts. "Admiral Puke!" hissed Joseph K.

But he went anyway.

He dropped me off at the dorm on his way. He was worried and drank three cans of beer on the way. Joseph K. was a diabetic and drank only when he needed to. "I don't know why I'm doing this," he said. "It could kill me."

"That's pretty scary," I said. "You better have another drink." I helpfully popped the can for him.

At this point I drop out of the story. I saw Joseph K. during summer school a couple of months later and got the rest of the story from him. His hand was shaking as he told me about it. Sometimes he would stammer and douse me lightly with spit and Diet Pepsi. He had forgotten his briefcase.

"I got out there, Turner," he said. "I was crazy. I shouldn't have done it. I deserve it all. But it was terrible what happened to Frat-

rat. I don't know who he is.

"I found the house and there he was lying out there on the lawn. He had tried to organize the whole thing as a costume party but he was the only one in costume. He had on this big cowboy hat and blue jeans and some loud shirt and some goddamn toy pistol he got at Katz. He was the ghost of John Wesley Harding. He had painted his face and hands, Turner, with grease paint and he was dead white and he was lying out there praying to die. They told me he had bitten some girl on the ass and they had thrown him out. He was begging me to take him home.

"Anyway, I told him what I'd do to him if he barfed all over my car. I had just cleaned that goddamn car and I told him that if he grossed it out, I wouldn't just kill him. I told him I'd break chicken bones into little sharp splinters and stick them in the balls of his fingers. I told him I'd do it until he begged for a coal oil enema. He told me he couldn't promise me anything. He said he already felt a little sick.

"I put him in the trunk. We crammed him in there. We sort of draped him over the spare tire. I left the lid open a few inches and told him that if he thought he was going to puke, to stick his head out of the crack and do his dodahs out there on the street. He didn't quite fit the trunk. No matter how we worked him there was always one foot sticking out the trunk. I got a bright idea. He was wearing a big red bandana. I took that off and tied it around his ankle, the one that was sticking out, so people behind me would know not to run into me and squash his fucking foot."

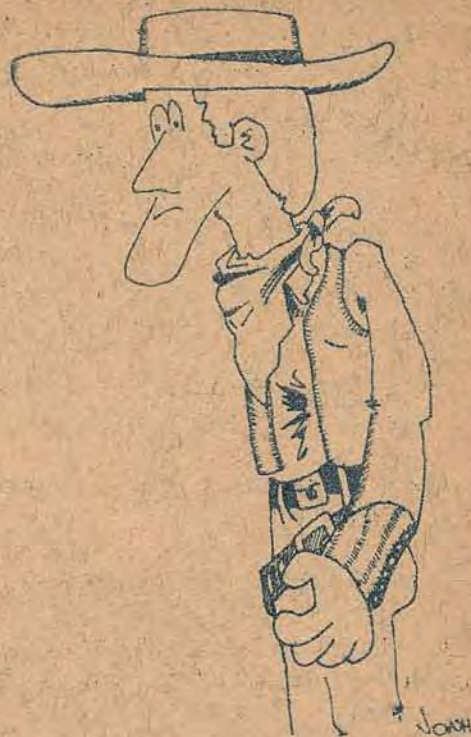
"That's pretty good," I said. "I never would have thought of that."

"I like it too," Joseph K. said. "Anyway, we took off and I drove pretty slow and tried not to take anymore of the bumps than I had to.

"Now I found out later that Fratrat was just getting back to town and was looking for the party. He wasn't sure of the address but he was pretty sure he knew the general area of town so he was cruising around looking and he spotted my car. People always spot my car because of the licence plate. MIT 69."

"Do you still have that plate?" I asked. "That's the same one you had the year before."

He explained his father was a bigshot in the licence bureau and so he got that same number all the time. He was very proud of that licence number and had it welded to his car so no one could rip it off. He



was looking forward to driving it around town when 1969 came along. "Anyway," Joseph K. continued, "Fratrat spotted my car and figured I was on my way to the party and so he started following me.

"Shit like that makes me nervous. I mean, for God's sake, when a car starts following you, you never know what kind of crap is going to drop on you. I tried to lose him but he kept getting closer and closer all the time and had his head out of the window yelling at me. I never could understand a word he was saying. I was sure he was threatening to castrate me or that he was going to hold me down and shit in my armpits or tear my heart out and wipe his ass with it."

"Personally," I said, "I would have just followed you home and, after you went in, I would have just wiped my ass on your doorknob."

His face lit up. "So you were the one who did that to all those people in the dorm!"

"Finish the story," I said.

"Well, Fratrat was chasing me down Stewart Road right up to the place where it crosses the railroad tracks down by Providence Road. I was doing close to sixty and Fratrat was tailgating me just as we hit the tracks.

"That was the last straw for Terrible Gilbert back there in the trunk."

"No," I said.

"Yeah, up flew the lid of the trunk and Terrible Gilbert rose up like some hideous white zombie, wearing his cowboy hat and waving that goddamn toy pistol and puking like a sonofabitch.

"For just one second he rose up to his full height. Fratrat told me he popped up like a jack-in-the-box and then he turned inside out."

"Inside out?" I asked.

"Inside out," said Joseph K. "He was puking like a fiend. Fratrat said some of it was green but most of it was dark red with lots of beer foam. The wind blew it out in a fine spray that completely coated his windshield and half of the roof. There were lumps, big white lumps in it that I figure must have been pieces of donut. Fratrat told me he was pretty shocked."

"But what did Fratrat do?" I asked. "He must have at least been at a loss for words. Not many etiquette books even hint at situations like that."

"Oh, I asked him about that," Joseph K. explained. "He said he screamed and went off the road into a ditch and did \$150 worth of damage to the front of his car. He was pretty pissed off when I saw him that Monday."

"I bet. What happened then?"

"I dropped Terrible Gilbert off in front of his house and left him lying out there on the lawn. Then I found an all night car wash and cleaned out my car. I hope the bastard choked."

I had to leave then. Terrible Gilbert skipped town with the magazine's money that summer. Joseph K. left town last year and is now one of the nation's leading collectors of old car licence plates and railroad maps. I never saw or heard of Fratrat again. With his luck, the poor geek probably went off to Vietnam and got greased.

Maybe next time I'll tell you about Ron Strathman, the Living, Breathing, All-in-Technicolor, Real Life Don Martin Character and how he introduced Colt 45 Malt Liquor to the University of Missouri and how, through him, I had the make put on me by a man in a red Nazi helmet.

+ Jim Turner +

TID BITS

Here are some changes of address I have received:

John Berry, c/o Ted White, 1014 N. Tuckahoe, Falls Church, VA 22046

Dave Burton, c/o Disc Records, 4500 16 St., Moline, IL 61265

Doug Carroll, PO box 595, Camdem, AR 71701

Gary Deindorfer, c/o General Delivery, Kingston, NJ 08528

Calvin Demmon, 9040 149 St., #102, Edmonton, Alberta, CANADA

Dave Hicks, Langmuir Laboratory, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY 14850

Jonh Ingham, 4A Salisbury Road, West Ealing, W.13., United Kingdom

Joe Pearson, 5401 Red Oak Dr., Hollywood, CA 90068

Bob Shaw, 31 Beechwood Dr., Ulverston, Cumbria LA12 9PN, U.K.

Steve Stiles & Barry Smotroff, 141-55 85th Rd., #4D, Jamaica, NY

Roger Vanous, 5460 7 St. NE, Apt. 325, Minneapolis, MN 55421

SPECIAL THANKS go to:

Frank Lunney, Lesleigh Luttrell, and Joyce Katz for helping me to update the 2-year old addresses on my mailing list.

Colleen Brown for helping to collate my fanzine.

Dan Steffan for doing all the hand-stencilling in the last issue. He says he doesn't trust me with sharp objects.

Ted White for the use of his mighty QWERTYUIOPress for my fanzine.



HARRY WARNER, JR.
423 Summit Avenue
Hagerstown, MD 21740

It's nice to see Mota following the example set by Dracula, Planet of the Apes, and various other things and people that Return, Live, have Sons of, or otherwise foil old mortality. If you waited your turn, this

loc would reach you after approximately the same interval that came between your two most recent issues. I'm that far back on loc obligations, as a result of a moratorium on the things I declared in order to write the first draft of the fan history of the 1940's. I mean, the 1950's; at least, I hope I didn't accidentally devote 140,000 words to the wrong decade. But I have this mad notion that I accomplish more when I write a prompt loc on a new arrival, as if this somehow causes the stacks waiting for comments to shrink faster.

Re-reading Arnie Katz' article, I was moved to wonder what a study of fans' reasons for changing addresses would show. Mundane people seem to move for one of three reasons: the need for more space for a growing family, a change in economic status which makes the old home unsuited to current needs or status, or transfer to a different area by employer. I don't think most fannish changes of address fall into any of these categories. Very few fans get the kinds of job that force them to maintain the image of an expensive neighborhood or move from one part of the nation to another because of promotions. Even fewer fans have more than a couple of kids, whether they're married or unmarried. Most fans, I think, would stay put if blacks or Italians or Republicans started to move into their block for the first time. I get the impression that a large number of fannish moves are motivated by little more than the desire for change, to explore a different area.

I think I related in mailing comments (to Burbee) a slightly different experience of my own. I was in the hospital for an operation. The first thing I noticed when I came out of the anesthetic and looked down over my sheet-covered form to try to figure out how much was left, the first thing I noticed, as I was saying, was this embarrassing hump in the sheet where my legs joined the rest of me. I knew such things occasionally happen for non-sexual reasons, such as when the trap is sprung, but it worried me terribly, because I thought maybe the surgeon

had gotten some nerves crossed and it might be permanent. I put one hand exploringly under the sheet and just as I had discovered that it was awfully clammy in addition to being big, a nurse came into the room. Before I could ask her to call the doctor, she noticed the hump in the sheet, too. I was still groggy and didn't react in time to stop her when she reached right under the sheet and grabbed at that spot. "That icebag must have slipped," she told me. "It won't do you any good there."

The front cover is dazzling. I think I might have preferred it in black ink, so the dizzying wealth of fine detail would be more vivid. But it's impressive enough even when it conforms to your ink pattern for the remainder of the issue. (Another horrible thought: What if a half-century from now, the original is lost, and blue ink won't reproduce on the copying equipment of fans who want to reproduce it for the 380-page first volume of "The Best of Grant Canfield's Art"? Can you imagine any 21st century fan striving to reproduce this by manual stylus techniques?

(Harry, I think that most of the moving a fan does is done in his/her college age years, and it's probably true for mundanes as well. This because by the time a fan has been out of school for several years, he/she has entirely too many books, magazines and fanzines to make further moves impractical. Inertia will out.

I am eagerly awaiting the opportunity to read your fanhistory of the 1950's, especially since your one on the 1940's was so interesting. I do hope you give a comprehensive view of the fanzines of that period. There were many fine fanzines of the 1950's and I must admit that I get rather annoyed when reading or listening to a discussion about them that an excellent fanzine of the period, A BAS, remains unmentioned. It's not that the fanzines frequently mentioned aren't fine, for they truly are, it's just that it isn't right for fanzines of equal calibre to be neglected. Do you have a target date for completing the book?)

ERIC MAYER
R. D. No. 1
Falls, PA 18615

Reading Arnie Katz's article I was reminded of how I didn't bump into Arnie the other day. I was just sitting out on my back porch, glancing through MOTA and who shouldn't come along but Arnie. "Well," I said, "Fancy not seeing you here." We had a long conversation about various faanish things. I'm afraid I monopolized the conversation. Arnie couldn't get a word in edgewise, but I was left with the conviction that he agreed with most everything I'd said. "Nice of you not to drop by," I said, at last. "Don't come back soon."

Charles Burbee didn't visit me either, but that's another story. I've just been enjoying THE INCOMPLEAT BURBEE and his MOTA article proves that, if anything, his writing's getting better. This is a really hilarious article. Top notch. One of the best I've read in a fanzine. But if I woke up one morning with a cock the size of a beer can I could write funny too.

It's like I said, I don't live in a fabulous faanish area and these kinds of wonderous things just don't happen to me.

JIM MEADOWS III
Room 211, Allen
Trueblood Hall
So. Illinois University
Carbondale, IL 62901

Oh Terry, so you're back. Did you remember to get the cling peaches?

It is rather a pity that you won't trade with trekzines, as that is what I publish. You and Bill Kunkel are exactly what's wrong with fandom: no sense of open-mindedness.

I myself have no qualms with trading with any zine, even sercon and comics fandom. I'd even trade for Leo Margoulie mystery prozines if he was willing. I'm not proud; or overly-critical.

(So Bill Kunkel and I are what's wrong with fandom, eh? Well, I think you may be going a bit overboard there, Jim. I mean we try hard but I doubt if we've been all that successful... Seriously, Jim, the reason I refuse to trade with fanzines that are devoted solely to Star Trek or to amateur fiction is that I really don't read them or want them. I've tried on numerous occasions, but they've failed to hold my interest. Putting out fanzines is costly both in time and in money, as you are aware, and I feel that when he trades with me such a publisher is wasting both of those commodities. Instead he should send the issues to a fan who will enjoy them. I know I certainly would rather not send my fanzine to someone who is not enjoying it. So, Jim, it's a courtesy, not a plot.

Leo Margoulie?)

PETER ROBERTS
6 Westbourne Park Villas
London W2.
United Kingdom

I don't think you could build a BNF for \$600. A fugghead, maybe, but they're already available free (just say the magic words - STAR TREK!). Actually you'd be bloody lucky to buy a ream of paper for that much nowadays.

I had good intentions of producing an EGG until I visited the local stationers and Dave Rowe tells me that BLUNT has folded because it's become too expensive to produce. Alas, alackaday.

Well, there you go. I certainly didn't expect a MOTA this morning - and from Ole Virginia too. I so 'straughted 'long o' it I ax ole John Brosnan 'bouten it: he know all sich things, 'cause he 'mos' a hunderd years old, an' seed evil sperits, an' got s'oripins up his chimley, an' knowed conjure; an' he ax me what wuz de signification, an' I tell him dat Marse Terry an' his MOTA come foolin' 'long me when I sleep jes like as natchel as ef I see hit sho 'nough. An' he say I done conjured; dat de pos'man, he done trick me. Dat skeered me! You fannish fans, marster, don' b'lieve nuttin like dat; y'all got too much sense, 'cause y'all kin read; but we ain' know no better.

Well, I'll leave you to your mint juleps. Have fun.

(I'm afraid that your accent makes some of what you say a trifle hard to understand, mate. Just what part of the United Kingdom are you from? Is that paragraph in your letter what people mean by a cockney accent? I had planned on sipping a cool mint julep beneath an old magnolia when I first moved to this area, but in all this time I have yet to do so. Thanks for reminding me.

I hope that economic conditions don't force you to fold the enjoyable EEG.)

GARY HUBBARD
apt 2
208 Hubbard Court
Westland, MI 48185

I suppose the main reason I am replying to your fanzine is because of the Naked Lady Grant Canfield drew on the cover. I am a prime-ass A-1 sucker for anything that involves naked (or nearly naked) ladies. And with the kind of packaging techniques that are used nowadays--what with everything from ball point pens to mustard plasters being put in packages with a photo of some moist-lipped alluring broad on the front--you can imagine the problems that I am up against. Like, what am I going to do with four packages of panty hose and a brassiere?

This Furacin is interesting stuff, and Charles Burbee may have stumbled onto something without knowing it. I mean, he may have personally found that a cock the size of a beer can was somewhat distressing, but what of all the other pin dicks in the world who wish they were packing a cannon? Could Furacin do as much for them? Why it would be a boon to Mankind if someone could come up with something to enlarge dicks. I'm sure that William Rotsler himself would tell you that there is a crying need for giant cocks in his business alone.

IAN MAULE
13 Weardale Ave.
Forest Hall
Newcastle on Tyne
NE12 OHX
United Kingdom

Burbee's piece was as usual extremely funny and all too believable. I've got a doctor friend who couldn't restrain himself on reading it and I too must admit to chuckling on occasions. While I was reading it a couple of incidents flashed through my mind although they aren't strictly connected with the treatment of illnesses by doctors. In one case there

appeared in my mind the time when I was four years old and had to receive penicillin injections in my posterior. I screamed blue murder until the nurse happened to place my treasured Superman model in my hand whilst I bent over a stool in the kitchen and jabbed me while my mind was elsewhere. Ever since that day the Man of Steel has just been a pain in the ass to my way of thinking.

MIKE GLICKSOHN
141 High Park Ave.
Toronto, Ontario
M6P 2S3 Canada

The Burbee bit is as good a piece of writing as the Canfield cover is a piece of arting. I've never had a social disease, although I was once asked by a doctor if a rash I had might possibly be such. I was forced to admit that there was no such chance, dammit. Nor

has my penis ever been mistaken for a twelve ounce beer can. Or even a ten ounce beer can. It might possibly be confused with one of those bottles they serve Canadian Club in on airplanes nowadays, although the taste would probably give it away. I'm working on the mental image of Burbee stretched horizontally over a glass of water doing push-ups. I hope he remembered Archimedes at the time? (And no remarks about the Archimedean screw, if you please.)

(The response to my last issue was most heartening. I had to edit these letters pretty drastically in order to keep my policy of thin issues. I also received interesting letters from: Bob Shaw, Pete Presford, Mike Gorra, Paul Anderson, Buck Coulson, Jonh Ingham, Dave Hicks, John Brosnan, John Carl, Bbob Stewart, Sheryl Birkhead, Beverly Reams, and Ted White. And Joe Pearson and Gary Deindorfer. THANK YOU ALL!!!

(Editorial, cont'd from page 1)

this year's balloting. Someone else has those silver rocketships.

One of you is probably waiting to point out that I was not on the ballot again this year. Yes, I realize this fact. I kept hoping that it was all some gross oversight and that a tremendous groundswell might take place. Then I would win the award by a write-in landslide. I sat back and waited.

I'm still waiting.

A small minority of fans might well challenge my claim for the hugo by saying that I was not eligible. They seem to think that the mere fact that I didn't write a word for general circulation during the year 1973 disqualified me. Mere technicalities. Such nitpickers annoy me no end. It all strikes me as a "What have you done for me lately?" attitude.

Is it so easy for you to forget all the things I did in the name of fandom? Think of all the times you have laughed uproariously at something I have written. Think hard! Remember such fresh jokes as "Why did the trufan cross the road?" If you are still having difficulties remembering, it is probably because the humor was too far over your head at the time. Nothing for you to be overly ashamed of. Do memories really fade faster than a dittoed fanzine?

The ballots are in and I have this empty feeling inside. This year's fanwriter award is sitting on someone else's desk at this very minute. General fandom has spoken.

The bastards.

+ Terry Hughes +



DISCONversations

by

TERRY HUGHES

There goes another one. Now I won't have to take another for at least a year. Worldcons are strange things and they have strange effects on fans. A fan will spend a good part of the year preparing for the world science fiction convention, and then he will spend an even longer time recovering from it. Although I could have sworn the cons held in Toronto and in Los Angeles couldn't possibly have taken place that long ago, the worldcon I went to this year was held in Washington, DC.

Some wise old fan once said that everyone attends a different convention, and the rest of fandom has been repeating his words ever since. Conventions are places where many, many people meet and many, many things take place. Too many to really be listed in a chronological order. (Anyone who can jot down into his little notebook the events as they happen really doesn't know what to do at a convention.) So I'm not going to recount my convention in a linear fashion; there is far too much of a haze over my mind for that. Instead I am going to simply mention some of the occurrences which I think you will enjoy, while omitting those which would shock and astonish even Jim Turner.

First of all there was the Thursday night party in the balcony of the banquet hall. Bob Tucker claimed that this spacious chamber was his hotel suite, but I tend to doubt him even though I know trufans never lie...very much. Although people would pass in and out (depending on how much they drank), while I was there the faces seemed to belong to Tucker, Norm Clarke, my brother Craig, Lesleigh Luttrell, Will Straw, Jay Kinney, Hank Luttrell, Jerry Kaufman, John Berry, Buck Coulson, and several others whom I will recall undoubtedly after this issue is mailed out. Down on the ground floor of this huge room a group of fans were rehearsing for something call 2002: A Space Opera, and from the sound of it they needed the rehearsal desperately. In between sips of his bourbon Norm Clarke was telling me of his joy at the sudden availability of U.S. hard liquor, since it seems Canadian law requires a weaker proof. I couldn't help but notice that he was wincing fairly often. At first I thought it was his reaction to all that alcohol, but then I realized that if the "music" was annoying to someone like me, then those off-key sounds must be actually painful to someone with a musician's ear like Norm. Needless to say, I did not attend the actual performance of that opera.

Lots of entertaining conversations took place at that party, but since it was Tucker's room, he was involved in many of them. At one point Bob turned to me and asked, "Terry, do you know who's going to win the masquerade?"

"No," I answered in my expansive fashion.

"Naked ladies, that's who. And do you know why?"

"No," I repeated.

"Because I am one of the judges," explained Bob Tucker.

That was how I attained enlightenment. I then related to Bob a story about the 1972 L.A.Con. Bill Rotsler had told me that one evening the lovely lady he was with got bored waiting for the elevator so she lifted up her clothing, exposing her unencumbered protuberances. She was planning to surprise the occupants of the elevatory but she changed her mind at the last minute and so things were back to normal when the elevator doors opened. *sigh* I don't want to even think about all the hours I spent riding up and down in those things at that Los Angeles hotel after he told me that story. Just in case, you know.

While we were all assembled on the balcony quite a bit of alcohol was consumed...and not just by Bob Tucker. Everyone was joining in on the "Smooooth" tradition. Why even Buck Coulson took a drink. Adding that to the fact Buck had written a poem about a month earlier for the Tucker Fund newsletter made me feel uncertain about the stability of fandom. The Tucker Fund is bringing out strange reactions in some fans.

Moving out of the balcony, I want to say that for me one of the best things about the convention was the chance to get together with several of my dear friends from the old fannish group that used to be in Columbia, Missouri. Hank & Lesleigh Luttrell arrived the Tuesday before the con and stayed with Craig and me. On Thursday afternoon Rick Stoker, Doug Carroll and his sister Kim arrived. Very late Thursday night Chris Couch wandered into the hotel. This assemblage of persons of dubious character made up the MoSFA group at this worldcon. Of the many funny stories that were told, my favorite was when Hank first saw Doug's sister Kim. Hank said, "It's hard to believe she's your sister."

"Of course she is. What do you mean?" asked Doug.

"Well, she's so pretty and you're so...so..."

"Listen, Luttrell, your sisters are pretty and you are ugly." Doug shot back.

Lesleigh smiled brilliantly and replied, "Yes, but on him it looks good."

Then there was the night Craig, Kim, Rick and Doug finished off a full bottle of tequila. Kim passed out so I didn't see her the rest of that night, but the others. Oh my. Craig spent the night smiling and staring out through bloodred eyes. Rick Stoker was always lying on someone's bed gesturing and talking about how he wasn't so very drunk. Doug was making similar boasts until he fell out of his wheelchair. I don't know about the rest of them, but Craig hasn't had any tequila since.

Steve Stiles came to the convention armed with a load of Fanoclast T-shirts with a Rotsler cartoon silk-screened on them. No one knew about their serious defect until it was too late. The heat of the

convention hotel made people sweat, and that moisture caused the ink to bleed through the shirts and onto their respective expanses of flesh. So a group of fans were walking around with a Rotsler cartoon tattooed on their chests. I assume the ink washed off, although I admit I haven't asked any of those people to show me his/her chest.

There were of course bad parts to the convention as well. First to come to mind was the absence of Boyd Raeburn, Grant & Catherine Canfield, Bill Rotsler, and others whom I had counted on seeing once again. I suppose the concommittee can't be blamed for that, but they should be held responsible for not issuing a guide to cheap restaurants in the area. Most of the restaurants near the hotel are some of this city's most expensive, and fans simply can't afford to pay such prices for every meal. This has been a common courtesy done by previous cons and definitely should have been done at this con. On the whole, however, the convention ran smoothly due to a lot of work by the concomm. The fact that the airconditioning was not functioning adequately at the awards dinner made things physically uncomfortable. Andy Offutt was the toastmaster and his timing was definitely off. The jokes fell flat repeatedly and at times he was so verbose as to be totally confusing. In conversations I've had with him Andy has been both charming and witty. I can only guess that the importance of being the toastmaster at a worldcon unnerved him. Certainly his previous speeches must have been enjoyable, but just as certainly this one was not. The audience grew very restless and things went on forever.

I didn't see much of the masquerade. When Colleen Brown and I wandered in there was a group bagpipers on the stage. I quickly left, with Colleen fast on my heels. Jim Turner might have enjoyed this since he frequently played his bagpipe albums at full blast on his stereo at 2 a.m. back in Columbia. Jim even has an album of jazz bagpipe music. I however don't own a single bagpipe album and don't plan to acquire any. Whatever happened to the days of rock bands?

A group of us left the hotel to go back to Falls Church to Rich and Colleen Brown's. Steve Stiles asked Rich why were there sections of the road paved with wooden beams rather than asphalt. Rich told him that those were historic streets and that they were being kept in their original condition; they were wooden streets from colonial times said Rich. I don't know if Steve believed Rich or not but Colleen told him that they were really just part of the subway construction and would soon be repaired. Anyone who accepts what Rich says as the truth must have a very befuddled mind.

This stencil is running out and the stories and events of the convention have only started to unfold. I won't have the chance to tell you about the actions and sayings of Norm Clarke, Neal Goldfarb, Leigh Edmonds, Valma Brown, Mike Gorra, Jay Kinney, Eli Cohen, Loren MacGregor, and the many others who I had fun being with. It is useless to try to list everyone I saw, so I will just sit back and replay my memory.

Discon II was a good convention.

+ Terry Hughes +

Oct. 1974

MOTA #8, the fannish 6-weekly, is available from Terry Hughes, 866 N. Frederick St., Arlington, Virginia 22205, USA, for trades, letters of comment, and contributions of art or articles. All the above are highly encouraged.

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