

Credit #1

comes to you from Tom Perry, PO Box E, Sugar Loaf, NY 10981.
To get this fanzine, you must be a virgin or have been one at one time.
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When making cheese, remember: Edam is made backwards. --Dean Grennell

Time was when the credit was the standard transgalactic unit of currency. You could use credits to buy anything from a thout to a starship. And sure as Hugo Gernsback predicted radar, it has all come true. My wallet like yours is full of credit cards, which you can use to buy anything anywhere. (You can use yours, that is.) I don't know if any SF writer of yesteryear really had modern high-tech money in mind when s/he talked about buying a ticket to Aldebaran with a fistful of credits -- at least, I always conjured up a picture of something very like dollars, only with different words and pictures on them -- and I certainly don't recall schematics of the magnetic stripe readers that read the data on our cards and check to see if we have enough "credit" left on the card to charge this particular purchase. Nor do I recall seeing the concept of the "debit card," which will automatically subtract the price from our bank accounts even as we buy. But I do remember that Heinlein equipped one of his heroes, Donald Harvey of Between Planets, with something called a "letter of credit." I had never heard of such a thing when I first read the book, so he must have made it up. And now, today, in this wonderful world of the future, banks do indeed offer letters of credit! They even call them that.

However, this fanzine is not named CREDIT in honor of the foresightedness of SF writers in predicting credit cards, International Monetary Credits, or letters of credit. The real name of this fanzine is CREDENTIALS. I am putting it out not only so that I can preserve a line of communication to my friends, and keep in touch with all those people in fandom without whom life would not be worth living, and broadcast my thoughts throughout the microcosm, but also, incidentally, so that I can cite credentials under the FAPA constitution when my time comes to join. Future issues will appear whenever I am #1 on a waiting list and lack credentials. Don't let that keep you from writing long letters of comment, though.

There will be a letter column.

Fan Visits

I visited Terry Hughes at his home after CORFLU (see the "Con Reports" section, below) and had a good time. Then, for my second Fan Visit this year already, I visited Dick Wilson at his home in Fort Pierce, Florida.

Dick is one of the oldtime Futurians and is credited in both FanCyclopedia I and II with the invention of the word gafia. When I discovered I was working only a hundred miles or so from the creator of the word that describes most of my fannish career, I had to meet him. So on Saturday, May 3, 1986, I drove up to Fort Pierce to spend an afternoon discussing gafia with its inventor.

Dick used to publish a fanzine called ESCAPE. He gave me copies of two issues, both dated before I was born. Escapology apparently derives from a book by Cedric Belfrage named Away From It All--an Escapologist's Notebook, cited by Kornbluth in his column in ESCAPE, but Dick said there was also a song in that period with the title "Let's Get Away From It All." Can any trufan provide the words and music? I would like to establish the tradition of singing this song at the beginning and ending of every fannish convention. It may be an uphill battle, since I hardly ever go to one, but I don't expect to let a little thing like that slow down my crusade.

Dick said casually that the acronym gafia was probably invented by Speer. He could shed no light on the manner in which the word's meaning was inverted. Originally gafia meant getting away from mundane world through fanac, but somewhere along the way it changed to mean getting away from fandom. I have always thought that a supremely fannish switcheroo. The invented world of fandom becomes so real that we must escape from it into mundane life.

I must say that the record-keeping on such an important fannish phrase seems to leave a lot to be desired. In fact, it looks pret-ty sloppy to me. That may have been all very well when fandom was just a hobby. Now that it is big business, we're going to have to run a tauter ship. FanCyclopedia III is reportedly being done by a committee, instead of being one of these understaffed one-person efforts like FanCy I and II, and has a budget of thousands of dollars, so perhaps we can expect the definitive derivation to emerge from that operation.

On my way back to the road home, Dick and I stopped by his office. He rents a corner of a real-estate sales office to write in. It seems to be a good deal all around: Dick gets the use of the lights, electricity, air conditioning and copying machine, while the Realtor must be the only one in the region who can say, "Here's my desk, my secretary's, the accountant's, and down at the end, the science-fiction writer's." That's gotta be worth something.

Con Reports

I went to TROPICON, which is put on in the Fort Lauderdale area by Joe Siclari and a fan club whose name I would get wrong if I tried to cite it. I saw Lee Hoffman there, the first time we've met at a con since SUNCON in 1977. She describes herself as a confan now, doing little fanning other than attending cons.

I also went to CORFLU, put on by rich brown and others who spell their names with initial majuscule letters. (How odd!) Sizewise, this con for fanzine fans was about equal to the early cons you read about -- 70 or 80 people in all was, I believe, the final total. Everyone's badge said that the wearer was Richard Bergeron, although to my knowledge this was in no case true.

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First Class

There was someone there pretending to be Terry Carr, although Terry Carr has long hair and this person did not. "I decided the sixties were over," said this imposter. Later on he dropped an ominous hint that he had cheated when, as Master of Ceremonies, he had named the Guest of Honor. "By long tradition," as they say of this three-year-old con, the GoH is chosen at random from the attending membership. Our Terry had reached into a bowl of names and picked one out, but he suggested that he may not have picked the name he pronounced. That name was Teresa Neilsen Hayden, a suspiciously meritorious selection, and our Terry seemed to confirm the breakdown of long tradition when he said, "I just felt it was time that talent, intelligence and industry played a part in choosing the Guest of Honor."

As a result, Teresa had to make the GoH speech (by long tradition, the GoH speech is made by the GoH). She told us all to turn off our tape recorders and put away our notebooks, so this reporter cannot recount the text of her delightful speech here, but I guess it would be okay to quote a line from someone in the crowd. Teresa offered a devastating one-sentence characterization of the fanzine HOLIER THAN THOU. Dan Steffan, sitting next to the podium, explained her remark. (Dodgast it, Teresa, why couldn't you let us quote verbatim? Who do you think you are, FDR?) Teresa rolled eyes skyward and said, "Yes, Dan, that was the implication." Someone in the audience (you, Avedon?) defended Dan's explicatory outburst by saying of him: "Dan was interpreting for the hard of thinking."

This issue of CREDIT was written on TYPESTAR, which is solely responsible for all spelling, typographical and judgmental errors.

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