

# Puff the Magic Dragon

Words & Music by Leonard Lipton and Peter Yarrow, © 1959 all rights reserved  
Singing along with Peter, Paul & Mommy @ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z15pxWUXvLY>

A C#m/G D A  
Puff the magic dragon lived by the sea, and,  
D A B7 E  
Frolicked in the autumn mist in a land called Honali.  
A C#m/G D A  
Little Jackie Paper loved that rascal Puff, and,  
D A F#m B7 E A  
Brought him strings and sealing wax and other fancy stuff.

A C#m/G D A  
His head was bent in sorrow, green scales fell like rain.  
D A F#m B7 E  
Puff no longer went to play along the cherry lane.  
A C#m/G D A  
Without his lifelong friend, Puff could not be brave;  
D A F#m B7 E A  
So Puff, that mighty dragon, sadly slipped into his cave.

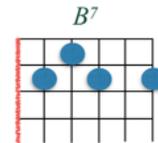
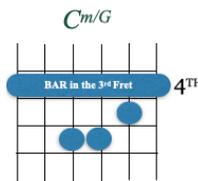
## CHORUS

E A C#m/G D A  
Oh, Puff the magic dragon lived by the sea, and,  
D A F#m B7 E  
Frolicked in the autumn mist in a land called Honali.  
A C#m/G D A  
Puff the magic dragon lived by the sea, and,  
D A F#m B7 E A E  
Frolicked in the autumn mist in a land called Honali.

## CHORUS



A C#m/G D A  
Together they would travel on a boat with billowed sail;  
D A F#m B7 E  
Jackie kept a lookout perched on Puff's gigantic tail.  
A C#m/G D A  
Noble kings and princes would bow whene'er they came;  
D A F#m B7 E A  
Pirate ships would lower their flags when Puff roared out his name.



## CHORUS

A C#m/G D A  
A dragon lives forever, but not so little boys.  
D A F#m B7 E  
Painted wings and giant's rings make way for other toys.  
A C#m/G D A  
One gray night it happened, Jackie Paper came no more, and,  
D A F#m B7 E A  
Puff, that mighty dragon, he ceased his fearless roar.

# History



Lenny Lipton  
Photo credit

[oztypewriter.blogspot.com](http://oztypewriter.blogspot.com)

The lyrics for "Puff, the Magic Dragon" are based on a 1959 poem by Leonard (Lenny) Lipton, then a 19-year-old Cornell University student.

Lipton was inspired by an Ogden Nash poem titled "Custard the Dragon", about a "realio, trulio little pet dragon".

Lipton's used Cornell friend and housemate Peter Yarrow's typewriter to get the poem out of his head. He then forgot about it until years later, when a friend called and told him Yarrow was looking for him. On making contact, Yarrow gave Lipton half the songwriting credit, and he still gets royalties from the song.

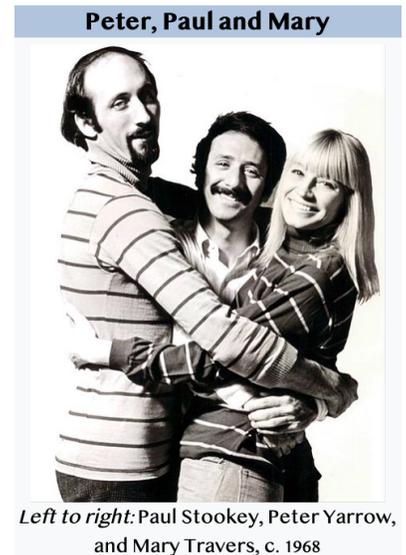
The line "A dragon lives forever, but not so little boys" has been changed to "A dragon lives forever, but not so girls and boys", as a nod to, and a travesty of our times. There is a definite foundational difference between boys and girls. Each can and may do what ever the other is doing, but to use that truth to extrapolate that there is no difference in their makeup is a foolishness that merits resistance. Thus, the version in this sheet and in Peter, Paul and Mary's singing of the song mercifully ignores recent attempts at revision.

One stanza of the original poem was left in Yarrow's typewriter in 1958 has since been lost.

In 1961, Peter Yarrow joined Paul Stookey and Mary Travers to form Peter, Paul and Mary. The group incorporated the song into their live performances before recording it in 1962. The trio's 1962 recording of "Puff the Magic Dragon" entered the top 40 of the Billboard Hot 100 charts on March 30, 1963 and peaked at No. 2, kept out of the No. 1 spot by "I Will Follow Him" by Little Peggy March. It topped Billboard's Adult Contemporary charts. It also reached number ten on Billboard's R&B chart. In Canada, the song reached No. 4 in April 1963.

*Stats from Barry's Hits of All Decades Pop rock n roll Music Chart Hits*

*Narrative from Wikipedia Rick Larson at [asyougosongs.com](http://asyougosongs.com)*



Left to right: Paul Stookey, Peter Yarrow, and Mary Travers, c. 1968

Photo credit Wikipedia