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THAT SHAPELY FANZINE:

COMMUNICATOR

FALL '50

ETTERIANA

COVER DESIGN BY ANTI-FAN WILLIAM WANDZELAK

reserved table

Last issue of Conny I was typing merrily away on my lead article, as I am pleased to call it, when lo and behold! Suddenly my story is done, and I'm faced with the blankness of two inches of blue stencil. Hardly enough, I figure, to do anything with, so I just decide to add some to my article. I wind up with the suggestion that a boycott be ran against those zines which improperly identify reprint material. Which shows the danger of two inches of blank blue stencil, cause normally I'm not that foolish. I, personally, don't give a damn whether you boycott the zines or not--if you like to read them, you're welcome to them, and more. All I can do, or rather, all I should have done in an article of that type, is to point out the facts as I see them, letting you act on your own from that time on. I still feel that those zines are playing everyone for suckers, readers as well as authors.

Which prelude more or less leads into the main theme of this editorial, the putting of thoughts down on paper, as well as the getting of the thoughts to put down. The putting down of the thoughts is a technical process of which I still have a good bit to learn. My main problem lies in description of things, particularly Bohemianish ideas concerning, as "All About Eve" had it, "Fire and Music." Technique, however, is rather useless without the ideas to waste it on; so I'll postpone discussion of that until some future issue, if I ever get around to it.

About the best way I've found to get ideas is to sit down at the typer and write about almost anything not worth writing about. Good, unrelated ideas by the dozen flash by. Of course, at the time those ideas start rolling, I'm much too busy typing to stop and note them down, and besides, what I'm typing looks like it might not be so bad after all. Finishing whatever it is I've been working on, I start to note down some of those so-wonderful thoughts only to find that I can't remember a single darned one. And usually, just to add the proper finishing touches, the whatever-it-was that I was typing turns out to be an awful pot-boiler.

Just sitting in front of the typewriter sometimes helps, as docs sitting down and writing an idea lead; something running along like this: Well now here you are sitting in front of this machine with all the keys and pretty symbols and numbers on it and what are you going to do just sit there or are you going to get down to work and get some good ideas on paper, you know good and well that you can write this sort of stuff for page after page because you've done it before but the real idea old boy is to come up with a good story idea. Now let's see, what will it be this time, a story, a plot, a characterization, satire, irony, humor, fantasy, article, maybe a good refute of Roscoe might be in shape right about this time. Come on now, let's not hedge around about this thing, you want to get that old idea factory to perking. Maybe that item you saw in the paper last night about the girls giving this military school all that trouble could lead into something--let's say that it is now about 1986 and instead of a military school it's a space cadet's school and these girls are flirting with the boys mailly because it is every girl's dream to go to Venus and the only way you can get there is by knowing one of the space pilots and there's nothing like starting in young--but that's the pot-boiler to end all pot-boilers, have to wait till the slicks are really avid on stf to sell that, no good pulp would touch it. Then there is the possibility that.... and I could, as I said, go on for several pages like that. More often than

regarding basics

There is, so we are told by hundreds of people, no room for the "dressed-up Western" in adult science fiction. By my reading, and by my talk, I generally agree. I particularly agree after seeing the near-perfect example cited on the backcover of issue number one of Galaxy.

And yet, it would seem that there would be some sort of a niche available for the pure adventure yarn in stf--even in good stf. After all, the scope of the West is limited. The mountains are only so high (tho I don't know of any ranches, even fictional ones, that make use of the highest unless Pecos Bill had a ranch on top of Long's Peak) and the gravity is unvaryingly the same and there are only so many varieties of wild animals, predatory animals, and tame animals to deal with. And don't any of you old Western readers quibble with my use of the word tame when applied to an old brush-popping longhorn, or the cowhand either. Isn't there room for genuine extrapolation of possible Western-type adventure on strange soil, as well as there is room for some of these blooming detective yarns such as World of A, Gulf, Needle, The House that Stood Still, and gosh knows how many other "good" science-fiction yarns? And how about these detective stf yarns; remember back ten years or so when Campbell was saying that such were impossible by definition? As long as the story is genuine, an attempt to trace out a pattern of life under other possible circumstances, it is more than welcome to me.

Of course, science fiction is rather in a dog-hole right now anyway. (Listen to who's talking. The ex-reader--along with most of the rest of you.) The ideas have seemed old in the stories I've read. No more Nightfalls, Twilights, Fears, First Contacts, or even Slans, By His Own Bootstraps, or Final Blackouts. The only, or almost the only bright spots left were the Shiras stories, and our anti-scientifictionist Bradbury. I'll even add L. Ron Hubbard's To the Stars, the series which I alone seem to like: The Conquest of Space series; throwing in Thunder and Roses for good measure. The writing has obviously improved, but the ideas haven't.

The Thought Variants aren't, not any more.

I don't pretend to have the solution. I've been rather poor on ideas ever since I turned nine or so. But I think that there are some very mundane ways to open up new vistas to science-fiction writers. That way is just by getting down to basics. Remember The Roads Must Roll, Nerves, the Venus Equilateral series? Simply adventure stories of men doing their job in an unfamiliar, to us, setting. That is the same thing that no end of rocket stories have been about, until we got good and plenty tired of that particular series. That was even the basic of Destination Moon--and compare it, with that thought in mind, with Rocket Ship X. So maybe there are some more stories of that same type which could be written. Guys building these wonderful new buildings of the future; how are they built, how do they handle the material, what dangers are involved, etc. (Might be along the same idea as the short "Christ in Concrete.") Road construction: how about a Killoozer of the future?

There aren't too many stories of that type that can be written, but a few of the type might turn out to be a building ground. Ideas, at times, tend to pile one on top of another. That is the reason for series stories and series characters; that and the fact that a market will usually buy a sub-par story, simply because it is part and parcel of the whole. I think that stf could use a few more basics from which to start new flights of fancy. That's the only way it can catch up with this upstart, Science.

without meeting a fan

GEORGE EARLEY

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During the past summer, this writer was out in Denver, Colorado, spending six weeks at Lowry AF Base for some ROTC training. Inasmuch as I planned to visit various fans as well as editors etc. on the trip both to and from Denver, Bob asked me to try and remember as much as I could and to write up any interesting things that I learned for an article similar to the previous one on the Bellecon.

On the way to Denver I stopped in Chicago and went out to Evanston to visit Bea Mahaffey and RAP at the OW office. As it was Saturday, the office wasn't open, but Bea met me at the train station and showed me around the Clark Pubbing Office from which comes FATE, OW, and now IMAGINATION. At the same time I met Marge Budwig, associate editor, and learned that RAP had taken a bad fall and was in the hospital paralyzed from the waist down. Most of the time (I had very little) was spent reminiscing about the Cinvention and the Bellecon as well as the old days of the Cincy Fantasy Group. It was a most enjoyable time.

During my stay in Denver, I had my weekends free and tried to contact the fans in that town as well as in other nearby towns. During a visit to Colorado Springs I contacted author and fan Stan Mullen by phone (it was raining and he lives in the wilderness so we never got together) and had a very nice talk with him. He gave me the addresses of several fans in Denver as well as the news that Heinlein had just returned to the Springs tho Stan didn't know his address. Returning to Denver, I spent much time and some money on stamps and phone calls trying to contact the fans there. Invariable they were out when I called and as I received no reply to my cards I can only assume that they have slid down quite a ways since the days when the Denvention was held there. It was too bad that we couldn't get together for I discovered several fans in our unit, and we held several lengthy and interesting bull sessions during out free time.

Returning to Chicago after camp was over, I arrived on a Tuesday and spent until late Thursday afternoon seeing the sights as well as some of the SF folks. First thing was a return trip to Evanston to visit OW etc. ((meaning Bea, I assume)) and see if RAP was better. I found things in a bit of a turmoil since IMAGINATION had just come out ant the deros (or something) were delaying publication of the current issue of OW. (It was a month late). While there, I met Bill Hamling of Fantastic Adventures, as well as Dr. Budwig, Marge's tall, good-looking husband. Both swell guys. RAP was better, I learned; in fact, he had just returned home from the hospital and had walked into his house aided only by two canes. He sure is a hard guy to keep down. Also managed to sneak a look at some of the forthcoming stories, illos, and covers for future issues of the two fiction mags. Some of them look damn fine; guess RAP will continue to get my 35 cents every time OW or MADGE comes out. I was a bit dubious last year when I previewed the first issue at the Cinvention. Shaver had left a bad taste from his AS days and I was afraid that we'd continue to get a load of that "mystery" crap. But RAP has consistently improved the mag--despite S. J. Byrne--and I think that it is a permanent addition to the SF mag field.

After leaving 1144 Ashland Avenue (that's their address and if you're ever

Evanston you'll have one gay time finding it since the street runs about two blocks and then disappears for longer than I'd care to walk) I went in search of Rog Phillips in the hopes of spending a convivial evening with him. Unfortunately, repeated attempts to reach him were fruitless so I returned to Chicago and went to see "Treasure Island", "Moon" not being in town.

Wednesday I trekked out to Shasta Pubs and spent several hours with Mel Korshak. They have a nice roomy place out in the suburbs away from all the noise and high rents. The place had just been redecorated and I spent some time seeing all the improvements that had been put in, of which Mel was justly proud. Then we chatted a while about SF in the movies and especially about "Who Goes There?" which was just purchased by RKO. Most of our speculation revolved about the problem of the monster and we finally decided that the best solution would be not to let the audience see the monster and to rely upon actor reaction to it to picture it to the audience. Essentially the same thing was done in the story with only a vague description being furnished of the "thing." Previewed a couple of short stories destined for inclusion in an anthology of Frederic Brown stories while I was out there. If the rest of the collection is up to those two, I'll gladly buy a copy.

Leaving Mel, we ((?)) visited the Chicago Fair, hoping to see some of the spectacular shows that the chamber of commerce had been blowing about. Unfortunately the fair was a tourist trap furnishing lousy entertainment and little of interest to the SF fan. The "Theater of the Atom" was educational on a 4th grade level, and the M. C. had a line of patter that was supposed to be cute but which would insult a moron. I know 'cause I sat next to one. ((The other half of the "we"?))

Thursday I packed, checked out of the hotel and then went to "crash" Ziff-Davis in an attempt to see Howard Browne and register a few complaints about AS. Boldly charging into 185 N. Wabash, I took the elevator to the 22d floor and requested an interview with the great man. While reclining in a plush chair and perusing AS (with some qualms) I was spotted by Bill Hamling. Possessed of a better memory than I'd have if our positions were reversed, he remembered me and ushered me up to Mr. Browne's office.

After introducing myself and telling him I was an SF fan, I sat down and started asking questions about the tales I'd heard of AS going slick. Here Mr. Browne became most mournful as he confessed that said plans had collapsed due to the present difference of opinion between ourselves and the North Koreans. Paper prices had gone up and the "slick" AS was out. That this was a real blow was revealed when I learned of the quality of material purchased by him and destined for the slick mag, which would now have to be spread through AS and FA. For instance, there is a 3 part article by Willy Ley which will probably begin about the time that this report sees print. There are stories by Hubbard, Frederic Brown, Sturgeon, and others of the top authors. So shed a tear for what might have been and another for what will continue to be, for the powers-that-be have decreed that the "bang-bang or zap-zap" type of SF will get the most readers, so AS will have more, not less, of the Western-type SF stories. One change that Browne has been able to get through is a change in cover policy. One look at the November issue of AS should show that. It is one of the best covers that they have had in many a year. The busty female is on the way out, and if everything goes well, the January 51 issue will be the last of that type. December's is a painting of the Collasus of Rhodes while the January one shows the typical busty gal riding, of all things, a flying saucer! I have to give Browne a lot of credit for the way that he is handling both mags. He's turned

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from detective stories and screen writing to SF, a field that is new and strange to him, and I think that he's doing a wonderful job despite many handicaps. All in all, I spent an hour and a half with him, talking and visiting the art department, and I was really made to feel at home. He really cares what the average fan feels about his mags and seems to want to do everything that he can to promote better feelings between fans and AS and FA. That's something a certain editor in New York could profit by, unless he's too busy being "audited."

And so I left Chicago and travelled on to New York City, arriving there on a Friday. I didn't get to see any editors, didn't really have time to try, but I did see "Destination Moon"--twice--and had a nice visit with Hannes Bok. There is a swell guy as well as a damn fine artist. We talked of many things till the wee small hours and generally had a fine time. Hannes has a monstrous collection of records, including studio recordings--originals, that is--of much of the background music for a number of fine pictures. Two records that I remember particularly were the recordings from the pictures "King Kong" and "She". Inspected numbers of Bok originals and sighed because of lack of funds to buy a few. I think I'll have to start a fund, or found a cult to get the money to buy such things.

The next day I visited the Haydn Planetarium and saw their "Trip to the Moon" show. Pretty tame stuff after seeing "Destination Moon." From there I journeyed on home to Washington, saw "Moon" again, and came out here to school.

In closing, I'd like to request that any readers having copies of movie reviews of "Moon" that appeared in their local papers and who don't intend to keep them can ship them to me as I'm endeavoring to collect as many reviews as possible. So if you can, just stick them in an envelope and send them to: George W. Earley, Syme's Hall, Miami University, Oxford, Ohio. I'll appreciate any and all donations, and thanks.

Send 'em now. I'm sure George would also like some letters--he likes to write 'em

Cont. from page 2

not, that method will turn up a good article idea. Darn seldom does it turn up fiction, but I'm not currently looking for fiction ideas. Usually, however, I don't use this method--it is work, after a fashion, and the amount of crud that turns up!

Humor, I usually turn out while walking down the street. And that's an awful place to think of funny incidents when you're the type that laughs at the funny incidents you dream up. People give you that sort of queer look--the same kind you get when they see the latest Startling tucked under your arm.

There is another almost infallible method, for me. That is to go to a pub where I'm an utter stranger to everyone, and start drinking bottle beer. Of course, this requires supplying myself with pencil and paper first--an item I've often forgotten. Along toward the end of the second bottle, barring fortuitous acquaintances, I start writing. What I write usually needs a good bit of polishing, but usually it gets written. The notes on this editorial came from one such session, where I stopped off for about twenty minutes on my way home from work.

It's about time I went out and wrote a couple of articles.

hypodermic

7

spaceship 0

Still not reading fan-written stf, guys, so can't say much about your zine. Much better reproduction, and what I did read--part of "Cancelled" was passable. Think your idea of not circulating the regular issue in FAPA is an excellent one, am looking forward to some real FAPA issues.

skylark 8

Kenndey made a nice stab at an epic in "Jonathon", the story about the silent snowman. At the end, however, 'twas only a stab. (A word about fiction--it's one thing when it is merely plot, another when it is pure writing. Spaceship fiction is plot, "Jonathon" is honest-to-gosh (almost) writing.) " Did reasonably lousy on your quiz, missing six out of ten.

horizons 43

If I still used the non-stop paragraphing technique, or even the non-paragraphing technique in this mailing review column, I would lead into this with a waving of banners and a blaring of trumpets. I'm trying to figure out some paragraphing method to cover situations like this--hopeless task. " Thought, myself, upon joining FAPA, that it would be a great treat to receive a tremendous--or at least sizeable--bundle of fanzines once every three months in the mail. You, Harry, and a few of the other oldtimers, should remember the item, "Suspense", in the Summer '44 (mailed Win 45) Sustaining Program. Said item is descriptive of my reactions on receiving the mailing, tho I'm somewhat more careful than the hero of the above about who catches me. " I'm all for your first proposal--that of doubling the page-size requirements for postmailers--neutral on the personal mailing provision, and think that your third provision could be somewhat better handled by simply increasing the credential requirements to either (a) two issues of a (or different) fanzine or (b) three pieces of material published in at least two different fanzines published in different cities, the credentials having been obtained within the preceding twelve months. Further, no combination of credentials (e.g., two articles & one publication) would be accepted. Further, if credential (b) is used, no more than one of the three pieces required could be self-published. " Thanks for your kind words on Conny. I, too, hope that I can remain active for as long as Juffus, but I don't have the faintest idea that I can be either as active or as excellent. I expected, when I started, that I would be lucky if I got something in every-other mailing. This, Conny 3, makes my fourth production in three mailings. I'm astounded! " Re the SAPS-FAPA merger idea: might not some FAPAns retire in disgust [SAPS ain't gonna like me] after seeing what hath been wrought? Some of the more objectionable SAPS, might, of course, also disappear after a couple of doses of FAPA, so maybe it would work out all right. Sure wish it would come about, cause the are some good items in SAPS which it just isn't worth joining the organization to get. " "And Gone Tomorrow" is excellent, please keep it going. There are at least two dozen fans once in FAPA, now out, about whom I would like to know much more.

light 45

Postage on the Spring mailing was \$.18. Over a year it has run, starting with the Summer 49 mailing, 30, 18, 30, 18, & 18.

spacewarp 41

I'm left speechless with this issue of the famed Spacewarp. Except for Rapp's absence, it is the same zine with the same line-up it has been having recently, but what a change! It was kind of dull, the best items being the columns, the best column being Fanzine Scope.

the talisman 2

I, for one, prefer the litho issues, Roy, but certainly not to the tune of 50, or even 25, dollars per issue. The contents are what really count and in this issue, as last time, your zine is right up there on top. Afraid your editorial may leave a few FAPA members in curiosity, the supplemental page telling the story of the reproduction situation being left out of the FAPA edition--or at least out of my copy. " I'd like to pick out some item as the best, but find it pretty well impossible, the issue being well-matched in quality.

snake pit 2

Letter to Boggs effective, the best statement being "the idea is not the medium in which it is presented". "Dianetics = Squals Ahead" is so-so. Norns, for your information, is a roughly equivalent word for "engram" and since both terms are defined by Hubbard when he uses them, I can see no valid objection to using either. Your interpretation of people not "really" wanting to come out of reverie even tho they beg to come up is correct. I've been begged not to make a person run over an incident again, and have so pleaded myself (once), and it is fairly obvious that the person didn't come up to present time because he realized that it was, to be trite, for his own good not to. Also, you say that Hubbard's statement that clears are very moral is a "flaw" in the book since investigation might prove otherwise, and since it is merely what the author says. In that case the whole book is one great big flaw, since it is all merely what the author says. **AT LEAST HE INVITES INVESTIGATION**, what more can you ask? As to the definition of good, he covers that in the text. ^{his interpretation} of "good" from traits of his fictional characters, stories are stories, they have to have certain ingredients, their characters have to have certain qualities--what they are doesn't matter particularly, except that they must be believable--and the giving of a character some not particularly "good" qualities in a single story doesn't necessarily mean that the writer favors that quality. If he does it consistently in a few un-related stories, he probably either admires or abhors the quality; but if he doesn't vary his characters, you'll accuse him of writing the same old story with wooden characters. The Doc Methuselah "potboilers" and the Conquest of Space series contain a good many examples of what I believe Ron means by "good". Of course, tho, they don't fit in with your thesis. No further comment.

RGB (1)

For that, I am told, is the title of the magazine listed on the records as "Hello". Enjoyed the last two pages of engrams.

celephais 3

Nice introduction to yourself, Bill, keep them coming. How about going into detail on the changes you've noted in Fan Dango?

moonshine 18

Enjoyable. Sneary wasn't bad; not up to the par of Milt's article, but none-the-less interesting. Moonshine seems to be one of those zines that I enjoy while reading, and later can't find out the reasons why. Must be the atmosphere.

futusun 60 Why these varying titles Coswal? "Sunrise Surprise of the Season": Told you earlier that I was sorry to see your review column go ker-floocy, and here you pull this off! 'Twas the policy of Michelists, as I remember, to hold off their zines till after the regular mailing so they could get the jump on everyone else in the mailing review columns. It was a policy that my old FAPA mailings says was somewhat frowned upon. I would frown upon it even more now, when the OE is doing it, without even waiting to do it in a postmailing. You're inconsistent, Coswal. In the identical paper question, you choose to follow the constitution literally, ignoring precedent. You follow precedent in putting self-financed material in the CO. You follow more-recent precedent in deciding to start your ultra-modern review column, ignoring the earlier decision that such practices could be improved upon. You choose to follow the letter of the law insofar as who gets copies of the mailing. Please, decide to do things either one way or the other, and GET OFF THAT FENCE.

the fantasy amateur 52 The only really noteworthy item this time was the absence of some names from the membership list. I hope that, in one case at least, it was merely an oversight which will be corrected in due time. The FAPA Index project was covered in Bobolings, be glad to see it come out.

official ballot for FAPA offices Noted and voted.

the postmailings....

contour? I had intended to get this in the regular mailing, but wound up with only 66 identical copies. Somewhere in the issue I mentioned Conny Ek. It should, of course, have read Conny Eka.

spacewarp 42 Whee. As much fun as Masque V. Best item: "Syllabus for a Fanzine." Good from head to toe, and much too long and interesting to go into involved comment upon here. I read Harry's comparison of Conny with SusPro, or at least with Speer in general, and what do I find while reading Speer's "Sublimation"? The Tanrydoon club. And that after I'd just finished Islandia (2d reading) and had started using Islandian numbering. Shades of Johnlang!

skyhook 9 No marginal notations, for some gosh-awful reason. What can I say except that the wait was too long? Very good, and most interesting.

neo 1 Will have to look into this "Dreams that Money Can Buy. Again, an interesting zine. It seems that the postmailings have more meat than the regular mailing this time, but are drawing less comment from me. Maybe, Harry, by not reviewing them, the editors would be more careful to submit them to the regular mailing. Or does anyone except the guys with review columns care whether or not their own effort receives any attention?

leer 2 "Ray Bradbury--non-Scientist" is more than true. Maybe that is why Bradbury is one of the best-liked authors writing for sf magazines, and

one of the authors selling to the slicks--no formula stories. " Hawaii sounds like fun. The guy I hang around with down at work is a native Hawaiian, and he, too, makes the place sound good. An ideal place for Slan Center.

mag without a name(?) Exceeded my expectations by an exceedingly large amount. Good Gallet, and interesting Dunk.

bobolings | The "Void, etc." notation on the voting results includes those cards marked "enter my vote for the candidate with the next highest total" or similar statements in the case of the Sec-Treas balloting, there being no such person, but does not in the case of the OE, since there was one other individual with the "next highest total". " I fouled up on my micelicespice interlineation. It should have ended "ain't it nice" instead of just plain "ain't it".

- Best personal fanzine....Horizons
- Best general fanzine.....The Talisman
- Best special fanzine.....Spacewarp 42
- Mailing as a whole.....Worth a years membership all by itself.

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I was rather disapointed when I bought the latest(November) Esquire, having bought it at least partially for the Bradburyarn, to find that I read it before in The Martian Chronicles. Ah ha! thought I, even here I get unidentified reprints. It was, I discovered upon digging out my magnifying glass reserved for such wdk, identified as a reprint. Attention, however, was not called to that fact. Then it ocured to me that very few fans would buy Esquire simply for that tale, and to the great majority of Esquire readers, that story will be as new and as unexpected as a smile from Vishinsky. If Bradbury can help sell quality fantasy, thru reprints or what-have-you, more power to him. I do, however wish it had been a new tale. After all, even tho I can appreciate the fact that the yarn is new to many readers, I can't get much enjoyment out of their reading it. I'm the one that missed the blasted story. My complaint is not about the reprinting of the story, only that Bradbury doesn't write enough new ones.

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This has been CONTOUR etteriana. For those of you not up on your Islandian, that means issue number three. CONTOUR, known more familiarly as Conny, is published by the Hodgepodge Press on the mimeographs of Franklin Kherkof for the members of the Fantasy Amateur Press Association and for free distribution to those fans who let me know now and then that they want to keep on receiving it. It is edited by Bob Pavlat at 6001 43rd Avenue, Hyattsville, Maryland, who has also been known to do some of the editorial jobs at work. This issue was intended for the 53rd FAPA mailing, and is, to my deep regret, a postmailing. Manuscripts on the finer things of fandom ("Fire and Music") are now being sought inactively.

>Actually, it's being included in the 54th mailing

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My public thanks for the back issues of the new series of Operation Fantast received from Capt Kenneth F. Slater when he heard of the CL, and for the info on other items as well as copies of some. Thanks a lot Ken.