

# Fan - Danger

A STORMY PETREL UNTO YE

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W I G G L E   O U T   O F   T H I S   O N E ,   A C K Y !  
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(Note: This is the text of a letter written by me December 28, and sent to Rex Ward for publication in Fandom Speaks. Since Ward has not only folded his magazine but quit fandom and FAPA I decided to stick it in here. The references to statements by Ackerman and Speer are of course concerning things they said or did not say in Fandom Speaks, but I daresay most of you received that magazine.)

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Ackerman's deliberate refusal to objectify his reasons for the attempted boycott of Ziff-Davis' fanzine column leaves me wondering if perhaps I do after all know the true reasons underlying the dislike so many fans have for Palmer. For some time now I've held several rather radical opinions on this matter, but have rather hoped that they were erroneous. Now I'm not so sure.

You must remember that the anti-palmer feeling far antedates the advent of the Shaver material. When I first became active in fandom in mid-1942, it was almost as necessary to be publically anti-Palmer as it is for a man in the deep South to be a Democrat. Anti-Palmer and anti-Amazing stuff can be found in fanzines as early as 1939, and by 1942 anyone having the crust to admit to reading the Ziff-Davis twins was considered either too young to know any better or else a stupid fool. (It of course was legitimate then as now to collect these magazines.) Anyone doubting these statements has only to refer to a representative sampling of the better fanzines of the early forties to see what I mean, particularly ones such as SOUTHERN STAR or FANTASITE which carried prozine review columns.)

Since the Shaver stuff started sometime in 1944, it is evident that Palmer was held in low esteem by a sizeable segment of fandom for reasons which have nothing whatever to do with Shaver. And it seems to me highly probable that these same reasons are very likely the ones back of the recent overt attempts to boycott the magazine, that the definitely questionable aspects of Shaverism merely serve to furnish the anti-Palmer boys with more publishable ammunition than the real reasons.

Let's look at some of these reasons, and see if perhaps I can make them stick.

I'd say offhand that one of the biggest causes for the anti-Palmer feeling in fandom is just plain old jealousy. Palmer at one time was a fan, a fan who did considerable pro writing, but a fan nevertheless. In the early 1930's, Palmer and Ackerman held equal positions on the staff of FANTASY MAGAZINE, each conducting a column. Today Palmer is unquestionably a successful man. I don't know how much salary he makes, but would be very much surprised if between salary and bonuses he earns less than \$10,000 per year. Moreover, a man who is known to have taken a failed magazine with a circulation of 30,000 and raise it to 200,000 can unquestionably get a good job with any pulp house any time he wants it. That's the kind of editor a publisher is willing to pay real money.

On the other hand, just who is Forrest J Ackerman today? A 52-year-old boy, living off the government, his folks, and what money he can free-lance out of side-line book dealing and manuscript agenting. I don't mean to say that there is necessarily anything to Ackerman's discredit that he so lives. But there can be little question that, from an equal start, Palmer has left Ackerman so far behind him that Ackie can't even see the dust any more. A situation like that would make anyone jealous.

And when you look over a roster of fans past and present, and see how small a percentage turn their fine minds and broad mental horizons to any sort of account, it makes envy a most tenable hypothesis.

Another probable cause for all this dislike of Palmer is colesely allied to jealousy. Fans as a whole take themselves far too seriously and tend to feel that their words should have a disproportionate amount of weight. If anyone has the temerity to satirize or ridicule fans and their foibles he very quickly becomes rather heartily disliked in fandom. (Ask me; I know!) And the fan who takes the utterances of his fellows lightly is seldom very popular.

Bearing this situation in mind, consider what happened to Palmer. Here he was, a fan, taking over the editorship of AMAZING STORIES. Oh boy, thought fandom, now we can have a magazine just like we want. But Palmer had sense enough to realise that his job came first. He could have edited a magazine for the fans ---and run it into a failure and himself out of a job inside of a year. Or he could have edited a commercially successful magazine, which he did.

Here is a list of fans who took jobs editing professional science fiction magazines: Frederick Pohl, R. W. Lowndes, Charles Hornig, D. A. Wollheim, and Ray Palmer. All these men except Palmer published magazines the fans liked. And all these men except Palmer failed to make the grade as stf editors. The fact that Wollheim is making a comeback as editor of Avon Fantasy Reader does not alter this situation. Nor should Ziff-Davis' probable greater financial strength as a business be given too much weight, since after all a truly successful magazine would have made its publisher successful too.

The inordinately swollen egos characteristic of so many fans just haven't been able to stand the fact that a man formerly of their number has made a great commercial success of himself, and that by flouting their advice! What a blow to all these self-acclaimed experts! No wonder they hate his guts. The errors and fallacies of the Shaver mythos have merely given them ammunition for their popguns.

If I am wrong, how do you propose to explain away the difference in attitude towards Amazing and Fantastic Adventures, and that held towards other non-Street and Smith pulps? Take files of the Ziff-Davis twins, TMS, Captain Future, Planet, and Startling for 1941 and 1942 (a good two years before Shaver was ever heard of), read them, and compare all these stories objectively. You will find that they are all cut pretty much off the same bolt of cloth--more or less juvenile adventure stories in other-worldly settings. Then take a complete file of fanzines for these same two years and set down the derogatory remarks about all these magazines. You'll see that there are more nasty cracks at Ziff-Davis than at all the others put together.

If I am wrong, how is it that fandom is not trying to boycott Weird Tales and its Shonokins? Isn't this too a facet of what Speer calls "the unending pull back toward superstition"? And aren't we still, as he says, "the ones best suited to fight it on this front?"

ful of originals loaned to it by Campbell, who has publicly said in various fanzines (SPACEWAYS for one) that fandom can have no ~~xxxxxx~~ effect on the editing of ASTOUNDING, and who has otherwise made it pretty clear that he cares nothing for fandom; and then contemptuously dismisses vast quantities of largess from Palmer as a "bribe"?

Speer is unbelievable when he prates so glibly of "Palmer's long campaign to buy his way into power among us". Isn't it fairly obvious that Palmer is still a fan at heart, and that he would like nothing better than for fandom to treat him as one--instead of making an issue out of the way he earns his living? For some inexplicable reason, Palmer still values the esteem of fandom--else why would he bother to deal with us at all in the teeth of nearly a decade of sturdy anti-Palmerism? After all, he knows far better than many fans seem to of how insignificant 200 or 500 or even 1000 fans are on his circulation of 200,000.

Palmer most certainly has directed some mighty rough remarks at fandom. Can any fair minded person consider the wellnigh constant barrage fandom has thrown at Palmer since 1939 and still say that Palmer has not had more than ample provocation?

Another factor in connection with Palmer should make some fans heartily ashamed of themselves. In most circles of life, people are genuinely pleased when their friends make a lucky stroke and go on to a success of some sort or another. This is all the more true when the fortunate person is handicapped in some way that limits him severely in choosing a possible occupation. I don't know Palmer at all, but even I have enough feeling of good will towards my fellow humans to be very glad that this crippled man has won to a position of success. Whatever Palmer's faults, I sincerely admire him for having enough positive virtues and courage and perseverance to overcome a very real physical handicap and make a worthwhile and normal life for himself.

It seems devastatingly revealing that Palmer's former fan associates are unable to feel similarly towards one who at one time was their close friend.

Well, I'm still looking for that objectification of the reasons for the anti-Palmer feeling. But don't forget, they must not only cover the case against Shaverism, but they must explain the pre-Shaver attitudes as well. And insofar as this objectification deals with Shaversim, it should show clearly what practical results might be hoped for by fandom's boycotting Z-D. As it stands to date, the entire attempt looks remarkably like the old ostrich technique. (And while I'm at it, I wonder if Speer was not a bit carried away by his typewriter, or if he really thinks that all fandom can be untied about anything--considering Michelasm, the pro-Scientist movement, Deglerism, yes, and Shaverism.) ((Colly, Jack, I hope I'm not putting words in your mouth! I wrote the original letter with FANDOM SPEAKS in front of me, but I can't imagine ~~xxxx~~ your saying what I seem to have thought you said.))

Until I see a real objectification, I'll feel I've shown the real reasons why some fans are anti-Palmer. I also think I've demonstrated that some of you should be heartily ashamed of yourselves.

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ROSES ARE RED; MOUSTACHES ARE GREY. AL STOLE FAPA'S MONEY,  
AND RAN FAR AWAY.....  
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FAN-DANGO is published quarterly or less often by F T Laney for FAPA.  
Unless the contrary is indicated, he wrote all the contents.

((Fan-Dango is fast becoming a bone-yard. The lead article got squeezed out of FANDOM SPEAKS, and now here is one that was written for the #2 WILD HAIR.))

--oOo--

(We have an entirely fantastic situation around which to weave this experiment in writing. As our story opens, we have an organization known as the LASFS---which in itself puts this effort away off in the realm of faery fantasy. It seems that back in the dim dark past, someone named Al Ashley said repeatedly to all who would listen to him that the membership of the LASFS was 80% queer--at least 80%, maybe even 90%. ((He has since denied having said this. You know our Al.)) Trying to this little man out of his fixation, I got hold of the club membership records and found that of all LASFS members in the past four years 20% were definitely queer, 30% were doubtful, and 50% presumably normal. Being of a somewhat malicious nature, I wrote a couple of articles exposing this dire situation, and that sterling fellow Charles Burbee put them in the club's official organ, which he edited. The repercussions were terrific. As an end result of this and other troubles, both Burbee and Laney found themselves out of the LASFS, and the LASFS found itself without an official organ.)

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I knew that I never should have tried to collect the money Al Ashley owes FAPA, because it made Al Ashley mad to be asked for this dough before the statute of limitations had run its course, and when this rugged individualist looses his vengeance the air is filled with mushroom shaped clouds. "I'll undercut you in ways you never dreamed of," he said.

He was right.

In my wildest moments I never imagined that this dime-store Svengali could jerk my psyche from its fleshly tenement and project me, a startled gob of ectoplasm, into Dale Hart's apartment. In a way, it was interesting, because Dale had a stencil rolled into his typewriter and was staring at it blankly. Not only could I read over his shoulder, with a start I realised I could read the churning maelstrom of his thoughts.

Here we go, with a ghostly transcription:

SHANGRI LA #5. 10¢ EACH/6 FOR 50¢  
EDITORIAL

Boy what a job. Here I am, not only stepping into the shoes of the best editor LA fandom ever produced, but faced with trying to build up the reputation of the LASFS. What a mess. Gonna be tough trying to compete with Wild Hair too. What to do...Burbee..Laney..Burbee..Laney ....queers in fandom....Burbee..Laney. Wonder how it would sound if I built up Burbee and tore down Laney...say, that's the way to do it! Laney is unpopular anyway, and everybody like Burbee....solid idea...

CHARLES BURBEE WAS A GOOD EDITOR. HE PUT OUT A GOOD MAGAZINE.....I LIKE THE BURB STYLE OF WRITING. I SUPPOSE YOU COULD CALL ME A FAN OF HIS... (and so on for half a page)....

There. I've still got to slide over this about his being canned out of the editorship. I'd like to say he was canned on account of Laney's articles, but I dunno. Fandom mustn't realise how seriously the LASFS took this indictment...anyway, the club hasn't got any queers in it to speak of...well maybe it has, but if I recognised the fact I'd have to quit the club and I don't want to do

ATOM BOMBS AND HOTTENTOTS. Harold Cheney pulled one of the slickest side-steps FAPA has seen for some time when the howls of the pack forced him to clarify his statement that the destruction of Rome was as big a blow to civilization as atomic war. There is considerable likelihood that the Esquimaux and other aborigines will not be struck. And I suppose it is permissible to liken them to the Northern Barbarians who eventually evolved into our own civilization.

However, I don't think the comparison is entirely valid. Not only was there far less differential between the semi-civilised Northerners and Rome than there is between the Hottentots and us, but it must be remembered that Rome's untechnological civilization was far more suited for primitives to ape, particularly when we consider that the fall of Rome did not include the annihilation of its inhabitants; thousands upon thousands of whom lived on to temper the savagery of the invaders with their knowledge of civilized arts.

We might also consider for a moment what kind of people these barbarians were. Not only were they highly intelligent, but they were a rising race, a race which pretty much under its own impetus had taken great strides towards becoming civilized. They were a far cry indeed from the primitives of the Far North and of the interior of Australia, who are scarcely removed from the Stone Age, and who have neither developed nor retrogressed appreciably during the time they have been known. And the Goths and Huns had not fallen away from civilization, as have the tribes of Africa. (In Mashonaland, for example, are a number of ruined cities dating from a native African civilization which waxed and waned pretty much all by itself some 2000 years ago.) Can we reasonably assume that these various primitives of today have the emotional drives which lead men towards civilization?

It took between eight and ten centuries at the very least for civilization to recover from the fall of Rome. Considering the points I've just tried to make does it seem likely that aboriginal survivors of the bomb can do as well? Doesn't it seem more probable that the world would slip back into stone age conditions for many millenia; to start the slow crawl back towards civilization only when random mutations have once again produced a species temperamentally and otherwise fitted to be civilized?

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WHAT FAPA IS TO ME. What with the great influx of new members, it is not altogether untimely that some of the members of longer standing should endeavor to point out to the newcomers what it is that makes FAPA attractive to them. This is one man's opinion:

FAPA is not a clearing house for general type fanzines. We have always had a few of them, of course, but they are not typical, and they are not what keeps us active year after year. While we may still enjoy them, to most of us they represent a phase of fandom we have passed through.

And to a lot of us, it is the fantasy AMATEUR PRESS ASSOCIATION. We tend to look with jaundiced eye upon pleas to emphasize the Fantasy end of the organization's title. This was underlined when we voted down, a couple of years ago, an attempt to require a definite percentage of fantasy content in each submission.

And since most of us want the fun without the work, we take a very dim view of Goslet's

suggestion of an unlimited membership. That's general fandom. We're willing to turn out 70 or 75 copies, but feel that beyond that point the ~~Grudgery~~ outweighs the pleasure. Those of us who don't feel that way about it turn out general fanzines like DREAM QUEST or FAIDOM SPEAKS or FANTASY ADVERTISER.

On the positive side, FAPA is a lot of things to me. Warner's charming and Popysian accounts of himself, his nostalgic "When We Were Very Young", his generally sound articles on almost everything. Speer's amazing collection of quotations (have any of you realised what a worthwhile anthology of these ten years have built up?), his socio-political articles and appraisals (You can admire the overwhelming if sometimes pedantic marshalling of data which is Speer's writing style even if you often differ violently with his conclusions), his stick man and other cartoons, his genius for usually interesting minutia (known to the cognoscenti as hair-splitting), and above all, his brilliant railing reviews. DBThompson's terrific articles on this and that, through the lines of which peep a guy that you just knew you'd like enormously if you ever met him personally. Norm Stanley's utterly utter compilation of weird stuff out of the readers' columns of yesteryear, served with a garnish of serious articles and mailing reviews equal to Speer at his best. Hissor Koenig's bludgeoning sarcasm, and, in nostalgic retrospect, the way he used to take us browsing along his bookshelves as he chatted about editions, and bindings, and other bibliominutia. Milt Rothman in all his manifestations except the mathematician/physicist, a facet which throws me for a loop. Grane and Wesson, especially when Burtie starts throwing these barbed reviews, or Wesson gets lyrical about her Pappy-San. 4e and his unique little GLOM of cullings from obscure sources, which I admire more as the successful accomplishment of his magazine's policy rather than for the intrinsic merit of the contents, a good part of which are somewhat removed from my spheres of interest. And I'll defy Al Ashley, and say right here in front of Speer and everybody that I've always enjoyed Everett's stuff, even TIMEBINDER, although much of my enjoyment stemmed from my being able to cut loose at some of the stuff it contained. And I've never yet seen anything written by Burtie that I didn't just love, particularly when he tells us of that fookless little man he created one time when his god complex had a frozen bearing. (Or maybe you think Al Ashley exists!)

The foregoing, plus a lot of similar stuff which escapes me at the moment (like Hurter's column in CanFan and Chan Davis in his less mathematical facets), are the things that I look for first in my mailings. This is the stuff that keeps me in FAPA; this is the stuff I try to emulate when I publish for the mailings.

Of our newer members, some have gotten the idea right off. I'd particularly like to congratulate Read Boggs for SKY HOOK and Don Bratton for GOS'AK--two first issues which are every bit as good as the stuff our veteran FAPs have been turning out for years. And the #8 H-1661 of Rusty's is equally good. If Don Wilson would halve the space he devotes to prozines and double the space he gives to strictly FAPA-type discussions, he'd be right in there with Boggs and Bratton and Hevelin. Harold Cheney deserves praise for his adroit sidestep, even though stuff like that "pullease, pulleese turn the page" and the Snearyesque spelling mar his mag badly. And I'd like to toss some special kind of orchid to Walt Jeslot, whose SNIX seems to me to have shown the most improvement of any FAPazine during the past couple of years.

Well. There's one man's opinion. Let's see what some of you other newcomers can do.

AND OF COURSE THERE'S ROTSLER. I had intended, in the preceding item, to single Bill Rotsler and his MASQUE out for special mention, but I got into my infallibility facet and omitted him altogether. Ah, this composing on the stencil!

Anyway, it looks from here as though Bill is blazing an entirely new trail. It would be nice if MASQUE had more reading matter in proportion to the artwork, and since a usually authoritative source tells me that Bill is not averse to getting first-class material, I'd like to suggest that some of you non-publishing members might find MASQUE a wonderful outlet for your better stuff. You can imagine the presentation Bill would give you.

And I, at least, would like to see more of Rotsler's writing. His self-introduction in particular makes me think he could very easily develop into a rich man's Burbee with a little practise.

---oo0oo---

BOGGS, EEEVANS, and THOMPSON: three of a kind. I hope none of these gentlemen object to my linking their names in public this way, but it so happens that each of them said something about jazz and/or Satchmo that I want to talk about a little.

(First, though, I'd like to take issue with Boggs' remark that "one must be emotionally unstable to appreciate jazz to the full". That savors unpleasantly of the sort of chip-on-the-shoulder stuff that got me in touch with a lot of FAPA's back in 1943 and 44. Take it from me, bud, don't get off on that sort of tangent. It will just serve to spoil FAPA for you. I found this out the hard way. I'd not mention it at all, except that I noticed three or four other places in SKY HOOK where the same tone crept out. In my own case, a lot of it was due to faulty writing style; I could cite dozens of places in the Fan-Dango of four or five years ago where I sound supercilious and snotty and plain knock-it-off-my-shoulder-if-you-dare; yet I can remember quite vividly how I felt about the matter in question and I didn't feel that way at all. Anyway, it isn't worthy of you, particularly when SKY HOOK is far and away the best of the new FAPA titles.

Of course, lots of emotionally unstable people go gaga over jazz, just as they do over any other art form. On the other hand, the prime appeal of most art forms is to the emotions rather than to the intellect, and even if you take issue with that statement I doubt if you can object much to my pointing out that one can be emotional without being unstable about it.

Jess Stacey may or may not be unstable. Having seen the gentleman once over a decade ago, I couldn't say. The chances are, however, that he is a pretty solid citizen since he held down the piano chair with Benny Goodman for five or six years. Particularly with a driving perfectionist like Goodman, this implies amenability to strict artistic discipline; all as punctuality at rehearsals, personal neatness, dependability, and other related traits all of which point pretty strongly to integration and stability.

As to his bursting into tears, this is not so hard to understand when you consider that (despite reams of hogwash written by Dorothy Baker and others along this same line) the real jazz musician is at bottom a creative artist who takes his art mighty seriously. He is constantly torn between the inner creative desires and the wishes of the crowd, who care not a rap for jazz or art-forms of any sort and want to have played arrangements of the current hits which are not so far removed from the basic melody but that a moron could recognise them. This is, to say the least, a frustrating situation. You can imagine how Tos-



canini would feel if asked to play "Civilization". Being a fairly commercial gentleman, he'd probably play it if it looked like his bread and butter depended on it, but his personal feelings in the matter can well be imagined. Jazzmen, particularly white jazzmen, are up against the same situation. (Negroes don't seem to worry as much as whites about whether or not the music is pretty, or whether or not it is on the hit parade. If it rocks, they like it.) If the feeling for jazz is not strong, the musician goes all out commercial--like the late Hal Kemp who started out with a hot band, abandoned it when it did not pay off at the box office, and went on to name and fame with a strictly commercial group. If he really has the jazz fever he may do like Muggsy Spanier; play the jazz he loves on records and jigs, passing up the really big dough. It is highly doubtful if Muggsy has ever made much above minimum Union scale; indeed, much of the time he has been buried as a sideman for Ted Lewis, who always seems to hire him back after his latest attempt to lead a Chicago-type jazz band has gone bleecie at the box office. And a lot of the boys compromise. When they can, they play jazz, but if they have to help make something like "Sleepy Lagoon" a smash hit they do it. This is not to say they like playing corn.

So here is Jess Stacy, fortyish and with twenty-five years more or less of professional music behind him, twenty-five years in which he's played a whole lot more commercial than he has jazz. And here is Louis Armstrong, fabulous, pretty much of a demi-god to most jazzmen. And from the artistic, pure jazz point of view, Louis hasn't done so well the past fifteen years either. His bands have gotten progressively bigger and more raucous, he has featured himself less and less, and he has featured jazz less and less--recording mostly hit parade and novelty material, though of course in a more or less jazz treatment.

Then all of a sudden here is Louis with a small, intimate group, playing just exactly what he wants to just exactly how he wants to before a couple or three hundred ~~affician~~ jazz-lovers. Don't you see how, particularly to someone like Stacey, this is a supreme moment of triumph over frustration, a sort of fulfillment?

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DBT wonders about the "specific factors which contribute to ole Satch's generally-acknowledged superiority in his field", and he has gotten me to wondering if it is possible for me to set down a few of them objectively. I'm not at all sure I can do it, but here goes for a stab at it anyway.

In the first place, just as Dyerott points out, one either does or does not like certain types of music, opi, artists. Though it is of course possible to set down objective factors which make one performance of a certain type of music better than another performance of the same type, it is mighty difficult to objectify why one type of music is or is not superior to another type. In fact, I'm not so sure but what it is impossible, because in the last analysis music appeals to us because we like it. If we like it we like it, and if we don't we don't, regardless of what the authorities in the field may try to tell us. In other words, musical taste is almost entirely subjective, and there just isn't much we can do about it. I might mention in passing that I have yet to meet a music lover who doesn't cherish something or other which he knows is utterly inferior but which he still likes anyway. (My own secret shame along this line is Roy Eldridge's "Little Jazz Boogie" on Decca 23471--completely derivative, screeching, tasteless; a dime-a-dozen flagwaver which isn't even a very good sample of its class. I could spend half a page telling you why this side isn't fit to listen to--but I still love it.)



Well, let's try to objectify Armstrong.

In the first place, he is a great original creative artist, not so much from the point of writing original compositions as from his highly original way of interpreting what someone else has written. A case in point is Fletcher Henderson's Orchestra, the first large negro band to record prolifically. From 1922 until 1925 Henderson played musicianly arrangements which meant nothing, spotted with occasional solos which also meant nothing. Many of his musicians were men who later became great jazzmen in their own right, notably Joe Smith and Charley Green and Coleman Hawkins. But until 1925 none of them were anything. Then Louis' fame reached New York and he was hired for six or seven months. The first records Louis made with Henderson are really funny. The band goes rick-a-tick-ing along in a monotonous rut, and all of a sudden that golden horn breaks loose like a clean wind blowing away the fog. By 1926, with Louis gone back to Chicago, Henderson's whole band jumped like crazy. They'd gotten away from their monotonous on-the-beat tempo; the arrangements wove in and out of the beat just like Louis played, and instead of the obvious old beat up chords Henderson started throwing in all sorts of spine-tingling inversions and off-trail progressions. The soloists too had caught the fever; Joe Smith, who up until then had just played pretty got hot like a little red wagon, dragging on the beat and then rushing ahead and anticipating it; Coleman Hawkins who had always sounded like a poor man's Rudy Wiedorf following along the way Armstrong had pointed until he made the tenor sax a jazz instrument, something it had never been.

(I muffed this; I should have said that Armstrong is not only original but that he set the patterns which nearly all jazz has grown out of.)

Technically Armstrong is one of the greatest musicians ever to have lived. His tone is not only pure and true at any point in its phenomenally wide range, but he can duplicate or surpass any virtuoso feat his instrument is capable of performing. Even in the very highest register his tone never falters or flattens out, and he can play lightning fast passages with almost impossibly intricate fingering or slow majestic phrases with equal facility. He has complete control of his instrument and almost never blows a false note. (And, unlike many jazzmen, he is a fluent sight reader.)

Armstrong's musical memory is fabulous. He can hear a number once and he knows it, and he seems never to forget anything. He has a roguish trick of tossing in bars from operas in his improvised solos.

His taste is impeccable. Florid though he sometimes is, it is the right note in the right place; his improvisations sound as though he had visualised the whole solo before he started. It is a hard thing to put into words how you can tell if a passage is "right" or not--but if you're listening to it there's never any doubt.

Armstrong's great personal warmth and joie de vivre bubbles through everything he plays or sings. Some musicians sound as though they were just going through the motions, but Louis means every note.

Power, feeling, imagination, technique, originality, beauty, joy, sadness, tone.....heck, I'm not getting anywhere. I was afraid I couldn't.

But drop around and let me play you POTATO HEAD and WEST END and KNOCKING A JUG and EXACTLY LIKE YOU and I SURRENDER DEAR and BASIN STREET and ST. JAMES INFIRMARY and MUGGLIES and HEEBIE-JEEBIES....you'll see what I mean!

what...they said they canned him on account of sending money to the club...that's the stuff...lay the blame on Ackerman. Him and his boycott...club boycotts Palmer 100%. Well, of course there was that story that was sent to Palmer...but what the hell, a man's got to eat. Besides it was a stinker...it wouldn't have sold. And Willmorth HAD to send fantasy advertiser to Amazing; golly, he needs all the circulation he can get. So what if he was director of the LASFS when the club voted a 100% ban on Palmer. He's a serious constructive fan, he isn't like Laney and Burbee...hmmm...hmmm...how do I say this...

...IN DISREGARD OF THE DECISION, REACHED BY VOTE, NOT TO SEND THE MAG THERE, CHAS BURBEE DECLARED THAT HE IS GOING TO SEND THAT ISSUE AND ALL FUTURE ISSUES TO AMAZING'S REVIEW COLUMN.....(on and on)

There by cracky. 4e has lost most of his prestige over this Amazing boycott; let him take the blame for some more...gee, Acky, you make the cutest scapegoat....

Now for Laney...that guy is a devil to answer...his stuff stinks, too much purple verbiage...boy, what couldn't a semantics shark do to a Laney article...gee, I wish semantics had something to do with poetry; maybe I could feed Laney some shredded up old articles of his....boy it may stink but it is still tough to try to answer...figures, figures, figures...cold old statistics...jeeps every time I read that first article it almost makes me quit the club...dammit, are there really that many queers in fandom?...well, heck, if a guy reads science fiction he can't really be far off the beam....HEY...why don't I agree with Laney, but just make out that the club quit being queer a couple of years ago...

I REGARD LANEY'S TWO BLASTS AS ILL TIMED AND MISDIRECTED. LET ME EXPLAIN ILL TIMED FIRST. HE WAITED UNTIL THE CLUB'S QUESTIONABLE ELEMENT HAD PASSED AWAY....(a fierce pounding of typewriter keys)....NEVER HAVE I OPENED THE DOOR TO THE CLUBROOM AND BEEN MET WITH A FLUTTER OF BUTTERFLY HANDS...

...By God, they'd BETTER not try to make me! I'm 5'10" and 180 pounds and any queer gets funny with me I'll pull his backbone out by the roots like it was the string in an orange!...hmmm, wonder if any of 'em ever tried to make Laney...hahahah...naw, he's skinny but he's pretty aggressive, he'd probably raise hell if they did...most of these fairies now, they're not real men...they'd be scared to tackle anybody that wasn't little and timid like Al Ashley...wups, woolgathering doesn't write editorials...

...PALE LILIES FAST  
FADING OUT OF THE MEMORY EVEN...

oh nuts...here goes my hat over the windmill...

WHEN I SAY MISDIRECTED, I MEAN THAT HE ATTACKED US WHERE WE WERE NOT ESPECIALLY VULNERABLE...

...boy!...I never knew before how hard it is to type 50 words a minute with my fingers crossed...

WHY DIDN'T HE SAY  
THAT MEETINGS WERE OFTEN DULL?....

yeah, so dull most of the fairies wandered away in disgust...that club's gotten so bad it can't even hold its better grade pansies...well, let's see...Laney doesn't dare name names...except maybe for that one guy that served a prison sentence for being a queer....the rest of it is hard to prove...heck, I'll just name some of the people who've been around lately...I'd better not mention that guy that kept trying to make SDR...wow, I'd better forget about him...and his friends too...so what if I leave out half the names, it's still a complete list...besides, maybe some of the queers owe dues...

(A FURIOUS NAMING OF NAMES).

There. I wonder if any of these guys were on the list. ((If you must know, Dale, of the fifteen males you listed, two are definitely known homosexuals and two more are doubtful. You didn't name any of our lesbians.))

...SO SEND ME SOME MATERIAL...

..There...I hope I never have to write a tough editorial like that again....I almost knocked myself out of the LASTS that time...if I ever let myself face the facts about the club I'd quit just like Laney and Burbee and the rest of the WILD HAIRS did....

----- oo oo 0 oo oo -----

Dear Mr. Hart:

That's an excellent idea. Why don't you quit the LASTS? You're far too good a man to be throwing yourself away on that bunch. How'd you like to guest-edit the next WILD HAIR?

I'm not kidding; that's a serious invitation.

Yours for more infrequent fan clubs,

F Towner.

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V O T E   A S   Y O U   P L E A S E   B U T   V O T E  
- - - -   - -   - - - -   - - - -   - - - -   - - - - -for Laney and Burb.

Yes, friends and constituents, the next mailing will be the fourth of the present administration. That means that it will be the election mailing. That means it is not too soon to think about holding office.

Burbie and I allowed our names to go on the ballot last time simply because we felt FAPA is too fine an organization to see fall by the wayside through the apathy of one or two members. We were on the spot and it seemed that we could serve. We believed that FAPA would respond to an efficient administration.

Events have proved us to be right. From a tottering group, with spasmodic mailings and a dwindling membership, FAPA has grown in nine months to the sturdy group it once was--with roster and an impatient waiting list. In our modest way, we feel this is due in great part to the fact that each mailing has come out on time to the day and to the further fact that Ackerman and we have handled each bit of business that came up with dispatch and, we like to think, intelligent efficiency. At least, we have done our best.

A group such as ours is at the mercy of incompetent officers, as the term of 1946-47 amply showed. And a guy can be a fine fellow and a sterling character, and still be a foulup as an officer. We don't believe fandom to be a way of life, and we most certainly are not reverent towards its finer aspects, but we do believe that our service has shown us to be worthy of reelection.

Consequently, we are filing again--Burbie for vice-president and Laney for official editor. If elected, we will function the same as this year--dividing the duties of both offices equitably between us. Our platform is a simple one: IF ELECTED, WE WILL GET EACH MAILING OUT ON TIME TO THE DAY, the same as this year.

We'd also, as members, like to see other candidates file. We are particularly anxious for Jack Speer to file for the secretary-treasurership last year's snafu did him out of and Ackerman's fine work this year has surely earned him the presidency if he wants it. But the more that file, the better we'll like it.

This is the sort of thing you may occasionally have to contend with when I find myself forced to fill up a page in order to keep from wasting the back of a sheet of paper. FAN-DANGO was complete at 11 pages, so if this turns out to bore you, just comfort yourself with the thought that it would have been blank anyway.

About my memoirs: Through the untiring devotion, selfless industry, and general all-round sterling worth of Charles Burbee, the genial factotum of the Goosed Goblin Mimeograph, you are enabled to see slightly over half of this opus in this mailing. The Burb took pity on my struggles with the ex-Ashley mimeograph, and in a frenetic outbreak of mimeography poured 60 pages of my deathless prose through his electric machine.

I had intended to run the rest of it myself in time for this mailing, but this and that intervened. So you'll get the balance of it next time.

One thing that held me up was a ghastly experience with Al Ashley, in which I was compelled to view that former friend's ~~ghastly~~ soul face to face. (The bit of censorship in the last sentence shows why I've as yet been unable to write the proper addendum to my memoirs to give a true picture of Mr. Ashley. I'll calm down eventually, no doubt.)

But I will say this. I want to apologise to E E Evans for any remarks I may ever have made about a pose of saintly patience. Evans has known Ashley for some fifteen years and the fact that he was able to put up with him for that length of time shows Everett, despite other flaws and good points he may or may not possess, has a stock of genuine patience far exceeding that of many people, including me. If I can be proved wrong on other matters, I will make an equally public and equally voluntary apology therefor.

Now to more pleasant matters.

I have a lot of plans for FAN-DANGO which will start materialising during the next year, provided I retain my present level of interest in FAPA. (And I have no doubt but what I will.)

Probably in the next issue will be a report of certain of my recent activities. I will not say just now what these have been. However, these activities are of a seriously constructive nature which all seriously constructive fans (which I am definitely not) will applaud. They have involved my consulting my lawyer a couple of times, and the report on them will be written in part by two big name fans. Excuse Two Big Name Fans. Intrigued?

My one remaining regular correspondent, Jack Speer, and I have been discussing the obeying of laws with which one does not personally concur. I intend shortly to publish my half of this discussion to date with the idea that Jack may be induced to do likewise and that a FAPA-wide discussion may ensue.

And before too much longer I intend to start serialising EXCERPTS FROM THE JOURNAL OF MINNIE T. LANEY. In 1910, -11, and -12, my mother accompanied my father on his field trips into the heart of the Appalachian mountaineer country. He was on temporary loan from the U. S. Geological Survey to the State Geological Surveys of North Carolina and Tennessee for a survey of the copper deposits of those states. My mamma kept a journal which I found to be utterly fascinating. She had intended to write a book about the sociology of the mountaineers, and consequently made extremely detailed notes which she has given permission for me to publish. Truly offtrail stuff!