

MOONSHINE

STANLEY WOOLSTON MAKES LIKE AN EDITOR

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1953-05
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Len Woolst, originator of Moonshine, likes to look in on things to see how things are going. He is a hard worker and he is a writer. He is a writer who writes in a way that is not only interesting but also useful. He is a writer who writes in a way that is not only interesting but also useful. He is a writer who writes in a way that is not only interesting but also useful.

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the loose screw edition

3. STANLEY WOOLSTON MAKES LIKE AN EDITOR

Len Moffatt, originator of Moonshine, likes to look in on FAPA to see how things are going. So it wasn't hard to get him to write something. To the folks who wrote suggesting that Len is the one most suited to edit this zine, you can imagine he's back again and I'm merely the "filler." Actually I'm a bit lonely holding down this zine alone. I have a hope that Len will be won back any year now.

Since Len wrote his piece, there has been two Outlander meetings, one at my place and another over 30 miles away in Los Angeles, at the home of Alan Hershey. Alan, his wife and son are wonderful hosts and wonderful people. Except I got jealous of David, the babe; he got two meals to my one.

Alan was coy with his invitation, too. He sent a post-card, without a return address. But though I didn't know where he had moved I got there anyway. I'm sly that way.

This reminds me of the recent message from Rotzler, in his most recent FAPazine. He thinks I should have enough brains to use his old address if he doesn't put it on a card. Well, it so happened, Will, that I knew your addresses, but didn't know if you were at home or at school. Maybe you were expelled, for all I knew.

I'm pleased at the individuality in the latest mailing. Maybe FAPA would be boring if taken weekly, but as it is there are plenty of different viewpoints. It reminds me of dozens of bull-sessions going on at the same time.

In the "pocket book" editions there have been quite a few items I'm looking forward to reading or rereading. That item on Li'l Abner, for example. Already I've begun to read 7 Arts... The twin-
ned When Worlds Collide and sequel will be grabbed, though I have the first one in book form and have read both. Also Huxley's Brave New World. These are books I'd suggest for most fans, if they have not read them. They're exciting and tell stories. Most early s-f I've read has faded, but not these. I suspect, on rereading, their political and sociological sides will stand out stronger in my mind today.

The two articles by Leota Nyhus have been in my possession long enough for me to almost forget them. They'll show the old FAPA what the youngfan might think about. Not that Leota pretends to be a fan; her three kids keep her close to the house, and she has been away from my piles of mags and books for years. But she still discusses s-f items with me, such as in book reviews. She tells me Mosher, who wrote Space Patrol, died in an accident a few days ago. The Damsite article suggests that atompowered stations might not be common in this part of the country for a while, anyway. We can reserve the atom-power for where it's needed: interplanetary and interstellar travel...

P.S.--Leota's my younger sister.

LEN'S DEN

(continued)

LEN MOFFATT

THE DEN'S LIBRARY

Future Tense edited by Kendell Foster Crossen (Greenberg; Publisher, N. Y. 364 pp. \$3.50)

This anthology is an improvement over Crossen's previous collection for Greenberg (Adventures in Tomorrow, 1951), which was by no means a poor collection itself.

His Introduction cries out for more subjective writers, for more "angry men" who use their stories to satirize, point up, and otherwise ridicule the foibles of their times. I'll go along with this, though I think there are more "angry men" writing stf than Crossen thinks. I'll even go along with his definition of literature--which, at last, includes stf--but I can't agree with his statement that "...two of the finest writers (if not the finest) in science-fiction today are Ward Moore and Ray Bradbury." Certainly Bradbury is one of the finest writers we know, but he doesn't write science-fiction. He doesn't even pretend to write science-fiction. Of course it is all a matter of definition.....

As for Ward Moore, perhaps I haven't read enough of him. I would begin my list of fine stf writers with names like Heinlein and Sturgeon, to mention but two.

This collection contains seven reprints (mostly from Startling Stories), and seven new stories. The reprints, first, as follows:

Plagiarist, by Peter Phillips. To re-phrase Shakespeare, all of the world's in a stage of regimentation. One of the players objects to his role, so the other players object to him. Fortunately, there are other worlds, other stages... Peter Phillips is one of England's finest writers of stf.

(continued)

Len's Den (continued)

The Ambassadors, by Anthony Boucher. Mars is either heaven or hell, depending on whether you are a werewolf or a wereape! High class comedy relief.

Dream's End, by Henry Kuttner. If this nice little nightmare doesn't give you a couple of chills, you have no imagination, and should go back to reading westerns!

We the People, by Ward Moore. Mediocre burlesque of political conventions and politicos.

Throwback, by Miriam Allen deFord. Another regimented future tale, but it lacks originality. The dull, conform-or-die ending left me cold.

Things of Distinction, by Crossen himself. He makes no apologies for including one of his own stories, and there's no reason why he should. A hilarious take-off on the advertising business. How would you sell hats to creatures with no heads? That problem is solved, but the hero is presented with an even tougher one!

Scarlet Dream, by C. L. Moore. A rehash of Shambleau. I preferred the original.

The new stories:

Cyclops, by H. F. Heard. Vivid presentation of a gruesome future, gruesome from our viewpoint.

The Battle of the S...S, by Bruce Elliott. Rhoye meets Ghorrl....urp! La focey.

The Island of Five Colors, by Martin Gardner. Who started these Klein bottle endings anyway?

Baby Killers, by Rose Bedrick Elliott. Well-written but not enough plot-o.

Beanstalk, by James Blish. A very human "superman" story. This and Plagiarist are the best in the book. It's a long one for an anthology too, at least 30,000 words.

Incubation, by John D. MacDonald. Still another regimented future tale, but this one has MacDonald's originality, and the saving grace of a hopeful ending.

Love Story, by Christopher Monig. The children of America revolt, and get their come-uppance in a hilarious manner. A perfect build-up to a "belly laugh" ending, bringing the book to a happy conclusion, happy for the reader, if not for the characters involved.

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Len's Den (continued)

Ballroom in the Skies, by John D. MacDonald (Greenberg: Publisher, N. Y. 206 pp. \$2.75)

As with his Vine of the Dreamers, MacDonald's theme for this novel is the Fortean one that Earth is controlled by "super beings". However, he presents a vastly different development of this theme.

The protagonist is a bitter, idealistic veteran of World War III, a man who is trying to bring peace to a world on the verge of another great war.

Communism is dead, Russia has been partitioned into smaller nations, Europe as a whole is dead, and the United States is now a secondary nation. Pak-India (India, Burma, Siam, Ceylon and the Malay Peninsula) is the top-dog democracy. Three Fascist-inspired associates--South America, China, and Irania (Arabia, Egypt, most of North Africa)--are ready to wage war on Pak-India anytime.

But there is hope for peace, and that hope is almost realized in Chapter One. Almost, but not quite. Something happens which keeps the nations from making an agreement, and our hero finds himself battering his head against a stone wall, so to speak. Eventually he discovers that it is not the governments of Earth who are responsible for man's failure to avert wars.

You may not like the idea of humanity being controlled for the purpose of making wars and strife inevitable--especially in this story which favors the controllers' viewpoint!--but you will find it exciting and entertaining reading. Very vivid writing.

HORSING AROUND WITH OPERAS

I suppose you have heard of the new N. Y. stage production, My Darlin' Aida, which is unto Aida as Carmen Jones is unto Carmen. This modern version of Aida takes place in the Old South, I understand, with Verdi's music rearranged, a similar plot--only Aida is a mulatto slave girl on a plantation instead of an Ethiopian slave in an Egyptian court.

Now this modernization of classic old operas is OK, if it isn't carried to extremes. Brings good music to the general public's attention; might help to create more interest in the original operas upon which the modern musical shows are based.

But imagine what will happen if everybody and his uncle start producing modern versions of operas. The changes in the titles alone might be enough to start Messrs. Verdi, Puccinni, Mozart, etc. gyrating in their graves.

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Len's Den (concluded)

I can foresee such titles as The Union Barber of Savannah. Naturally if the hero of an opera is a barber, he's going to be a union man or else.

Cavalleria Rusticana might become Country Manners, double-billed--as usual--with My Pal Paul Yachy.

Don Giovanni could easily be retitled Naughty Johnny. Already we have Carmen Jones--so why not Manon Murphy?

And I suppose La Forza del Destino would become better known as The Fickle Finger of Fate.....

FANQUET V AND WESTERCON VI

The fifth annual Fanquet, sponsored by the Los Angeles Science-Fantasy Society, will be held at the usual place, The Unique Cafe in L. A., for the usual reason--to honor the new writer who has sold the most during the previous year(i.e. 1952). The winner this year is Albert Hernhuter.

The Sixth Annual West Coast Science Fiction Conference, otherwise known as Westercon VI, sponsored this year by the above mentioned LASFS, will be held at the Hotel Commodore in L. A., on the last two days of May.

The Fanquet is Saturday evening, February 28, and will probably be history by the time you read this. But if you want information about the Westercon, write to the LASFS at 1305 W. Ingraham, Los Angeles 14, California.

AT THIS WRITING

which is February 3, 1953, the most recent Outlander meeting was held here at the Moffatt House. Outlanders and guests present included Rick Sneary, Stan Woolston, Shirley Booher, Rory Faulkner, Wendy Ackerman, Wendy's son, Mike, Perry Ackerman, Ross Rocklyne, Alan and Mary Hershey--and baby David Martin Hershey, Mrs. Rae Moffatt, Anna and Len Moffatt. We played "20 Questions", recording same on wire. (If you have a wire recorder and want to exchange wires with the Outlander Society, drop us a line--or a wire, hrrmm?) Tacos, ice cream, etc. were served. Next meeting at Woolstonian Manor in Garden Grove, Calif.

South Gate in '58!

--Len J. Moffatt

THE WONDERFUL DAM-SITE

by Leota Nyhus

A thing of strength, beauty and wonder is Hoover dam. It's still Boulder dam to the state of Arizona. Whatever the name, it's a mecca for tourists willing to "size up" an engineering miracle.

The first sight leaves a lasting impression of Man's ingenuity. How, you ask yourself, could mere humans dare to harness an untamable river--force it through four tunnels fifty feet in diameter through solid rock for a mile before returning it to the river bed--toss up two Coffer dams to keep the river bed clear while the preparatory work of scraping a hundred feet down to bedrock was completed?

This was the start. Then forms were built and the pouring of cement commenced. This pouring kept up for two years without a stop. The sixteen ton buckets were lowered over the canyon rim by cables that were later to lower whole railroad cars to the foot of the dam.

After two years the dam was 727 feet tall, 650 feet thick at the base, tapering to 45 feet at the top. A two-lane highway traverses the 1280-foot rim.

There are four intake towers each 403 feet high in niches out 260 feet above the old river bed.

The powerhouse is a V-shaped structure at the base of the dam on the downstream side. The roof is $4\frac{1}{2}$ feet thick to resist falling rock from the cliffs above.

There are to be 17 generators in all, nine of which were installed at a cost of two million dollars when I saw it in 1947. All construction was completed on March 1, 1936, two years in advance of the allotted time.

Lake Mead, created by blocking up water from the Colorado river, is now 115 miles long and is 585 feet deep at the dam. The lake has been stocked with bass, perch, catfish and trout--insurance that many a fish story will be told about the dam.

All in all, this is a remarkable feat for the puny Homo Sapiens.

the end

In TWS, December 1952, this dam was the locale of Dave Dryfoos' "Sign of Homo Sap."

MY OPINION OF S-F

by Leota Nyhus

I like Planet, Startling, Wonder, Fantastic, Cap Future stories—mainly because they aren't over my head.

I like to think about the future in terms of inter-planetary travel and exploration, of other dimensions, time machines, of intelligent beings on distant worlds. However, things have to be kept fairly simple; when a story gets too technical I flounder like a ship on shore.

It is not my practice to follow certain authors, as no one can write a completely new characterization and plot issue after issue.

My introduction to s-f was through my brother. He has a large collection that overflows three book cases and several piles from floor to near ceiling. After reading my first story, "The Golden Atom," I was a confirmed reader. That, needless to say, was several years ago.¹

More recently read was Pat Frank's "Mr. Adam," and van Vogt's "Slan."

Both were good but "Slan" ended much too abruptly. All loose ends should be tied up. No story should give the reader the feeling that the next page is missing at the end.

Yes, the reading of these magazines and books has given me pleasure and food for thought, as the announcement on the radio the other evening about a new gun for destruction with sound waves did. I know that in some story of s-f a gun with the same principle was used.²

The inventors should read more science-fiction for ideas.

— the end —

*This is Fantastic Adventures, not the more recent title by Z-D.
1. Long enough to forget complete title was "Girl in the Golden Atom," by Ray Cummings, reprinted in Famous Fantastic
I believe.

2. How many can you name?

PLATITUDES AND ATTITUDES

by Stan Woolston

A human being is a platitude-making critter. He wonders about something, perhaps investigates, and makes a decision about it. After that there's a good chance he will seek reasons to uphold his initial conclusion. That is probably why a person's various beliefs (political and religious, for example) stay fairly constant year after year.

If the practice of reasoning out things was practiced there might be more clearing up of the beliefs that aren't necessarily sound. Prejudices are habits that are strengthened by indolence and the constant memorization of old beliefs.

With the war and the post-depression years as an excuse and activator, a whole school of authors has developed the habit of spreading gloom around. To many of them war and death seem to be the norm, and suspicion the predominating atmosphere. Certain critics seem to enjoy these stories of dark thoughts, and give the authors a pat on the back for their outpourings, labeling it "honest" and maybe "has a message." I suppose they mean the critic feels a sympathy and affinity for the views of these writers. If the story shows people as no more than lusty beasts, and removes all feeling of purpose in life, then it gets the stamp of approval of some of these critics.

This reminds me of "1984." I never got into this very far; its grimness somehow has nothing to relieve its gloompressure. In other stories of general gloom, such as "Final Blackout" and "The Twenty-Fifth Hour," there were notes of realism and other elements that raised their tones a bit from utter degradation. (Incidentally, I believe "Twenty-Fifth Hour" was published in Famous Fantastic Mysteries a few years ago; there are other stories with the same title.)

In both these stories the matter of the disorientation of a people is portrayed, but they are understandable, real-seeming people beside much of the stuff written by many of the authors. War was at the heart of the action in both of these stories, and as a theme this can be very powerful. In the latter one the feeling of loneliness, with friendships practically unknown and cannibalism raised to a necessity for survival--and I'll probably remember this until my mind blows a fuse from senility.

In the mood of the world today we hear of the threat of possibly imminent destruction by a force of atom-bombers, or a plague with no apparent source grown from germ cultures for the purpose, or radioactive dust. The newscasters seem to realize the force of their dark predictions; they speak very dramatically. They also seem fond of speaking about future war on foreign ground that will drain away our economic wealth until we retreat into the national boundaries and huddle there, hoping we won't be attacked.

This sort of thing should warn us, but there is little attempt to decentralize or to activate a civilian defense organization. Apparently these dire warnings aren't causing an all-out attempt to study and activate the needed defenses if the worse comes about.

Quite a few of the groaners seem to think we have no chance. And it makes me mad that there isn't more evidence to refute them. We act as if they were at least partially right. If they are right, why should we fight? There wouldn't be much chance for survival.

This attitude is encouraged by too many people who turn to parroting doom predictions to hide their feelings of failure. Some probably want the country to fail.

If it would cause action to try to prevent some of the predicted dooms, these views would have some use. Science needs doubt as a sort of tonic to tone it up, but there is little tonic value in constant bellyaching.

Is there anything realistic in the idea of a future dictatorship that will beat the individual into less than dust? Well, maybe. If there will be a future dictatorship, it would probably have its roots in our world today.

Always it is the individual that tends to fight tyranny. The individualist speaks out forcefully for freedom, and not as a gift but as something he is willing to push for. Always--including now--there are certain things lined up to limit his individuality.

There is censorship of entertainment, which tends to suggest the individual isn't grown up enough to make his own decisions.

There is the use of publicity and name-calling as a tool to prevent the individual from speaking out against the policies of "the government."

There is rule-making for the sake of rule-making, or possibly as a political tool to guarantee votes.

All of this, and the work of the pollsters, seem to be an attempt to group people, and make them into predictable and thereby controllable units. The attempt to ridicule some people into silence before they can express their own views and thus have them evaluated by the public, seems to be a growing characteristic in recent years. These things suggest a totalitarian trend to me.

There is a sort of mental gerrymandering going on by politicians who attempt to guide our thoughts.

If the persons with individual viewpoints were to speak out, it would help cut down the influence of the lobbyists and other organized influence-groups. This wouldn't be a masterful plan to solve all the world's problems, but without individual expression the tendency would grow more and more in the direction of a government class.

And to me that would be another system than that under which this country has operated for the first part of its existence.

All views expressed in this article are those of the article's author at the time of writing, except as much as he fumbles all over the place when trying to put them on stencil. Yep, I'm inclined to rewrite it as I go, and as a result every retyping gives a new version. But with this stencilling it's set down for posterity.

jsw

ONE FAN'S OUTLOOK

by Stan Woolston

I'M SURE you'll be fascinated to learn that "Space" will be the theme of the Summer program that is to be put on by the local library here in Garden Grove in June, July and August. Yep, science fiction will be the material for the kids that will congregate at the Library for story-reading sessions and other things.

This weekly program will start before the schools will be out, and an influx of new science fiction books are being accumulated to go along with the interest in things out-of-this-world. The librarian asked me to lend her the painting I have by Frank R. Paul, of two flying balls over a futuristic city. This painting was used as a cover pic for Wonder Stories some time in the '30s.

Incidentally, along with this program the enrollees will be given a "space pass" which is "good for unlimited travel on all regular inter-planetary and galactic flights."

Perhaps the librarian will let me stick up signs with such important messages "FAPA--where old fans go to die," or "South Gate in '58." Well, she asked me for advice on the program and displays, to give the library room a suitably science-fictional air...

What About Tomorrow's Home?

I've been reading for some time how the future home will be "functional" and "livable", and now I learn that it's to have a place for the family's hobbies. And that it's suggested the hobby be made into a paying thing.

This is progress? I seem to remember that in the early days, before the "industrial revolution" revolted, the idea of a family business within the home was a common thing.

I'm much more attracted to the idea of the portable home--the house-trailer. In such a place it would be nice to have an area for the hobby. If it pays off, swell. Maybe writing would be the best passtime for most s-f fans; a typewriter wouldn't take much space in the portable house--and with a mimeo and a few other things it would be handy for fanpubbing. Yep, I think maybe these hobby-house fans have something.

Another advantage? There are several. You can get away from neighbors or lawn-mowing simply by driving away. And this would be an excellent answer to the visiting relative problem.

With modern trailers the ventillation is good, so if your hobby is making home brew it should be safe enough. Or maybe a safer hobby would be shrinking heads, or binding books in human skin. With a little tool-work you could build a dome atop the trailer and convert it into a star-gazing lookout spot--or for looking for flying saucers.

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