

Handwriting Analysis: Art And Science

By CORINNE ABATT

The importance of linking psychology and graphology is the thread that runs through a new book, "Handwriting and the Human Mind," by John Silvi of Livonia.

The book, printed by Harlo Press of Detroit, will be in hard cover during the first week in September.

Silvi says it will be available through him, Harlo Press and certain bookstores in the metropolitan area. Dr. Anton Brenner, professor of educational psychology at Eastern Michigan University, has written an analytical — sometimes critical — foreword to the book by his friend.

Silvi, who has been studying, lecturing and doing handwriting analysis for 23 years, says of the foreword, "Dr. Brenner and I are both licensed at the opening of handwriting analysis. You can see the man is angry in his foreword. He is as angry as I am."

Dr. Brenner, formerly with the Merrill-Palmer Institute for Family Life and Human Development and internationally known in his field, comments:

"This is a unique book, a first in the history of American handwriting

analysis. It should have been written a long time ago...

"Silvi is a keen observer of people and handwriting, gifted with an unusual perceptual and psychological awareness and differentiating skill, with imagination and a philosophical bent."

"He uses as building blocks... 'character traits' like will power, determination, imagination, persistence, etc. He anchors each trait firmly and deeply in psychology... Silvi's publication fills a great void that existed until now."

Silvi's displeasure with the carnival approach to what he considers very serious business doesn't come through strongly in the book. He is much more concerned with an in-depth positive approach to analysis and in many ways cautions his readers against flippancy, top-of-the-head judgments.

While the basics may be simple, the final interpretation is far from that. The book intends to establish the relationship between the written strokes and the writer's mind.

Silvi likes to compare handwriting to finger prints: No two identical ones have ever been found. He asks his readers, many of whom

I am firmly convinced that a person's handwriting is a reflection of that person's mind.

John Silvi



are bound to be serious students of handwriting analysis, to look at each trait in light of all of the other traits in handwriting.

In other words, imagination by itself may be useless unless it is coupled with something that will make it a usable power. Human qualities sometimes considered undesirable may be combined with something which creates a balance.

Silvi tells of the man who has a fading I-bar stroke running to a knife edge — a sign of sarcasm. But the same writing shows humility and diplomacy combining for a good balance. The beginning student could have grabbed at the sarcasm and misread the person.

During a period of tragedy, the handwriting may show depression. In

some cases, an analyst would ask for a specimen made before the event took place.

Silvi sees handwriting analysis as a useful tool in working with drug addicts.

While he doesn't believe a tendency for drug use can be found in handwriting, the analysis of someone already on drugs could prove beneficial

in determining how to handle the person.

Those interested in handwriting will find Silvi's logical approach to analysis easy to follow and remember. A loop is an enclosure. A lower loop is a circle back, as the writer moves forward, he reaches back. Tenacity is indicated by the hook backwards at the end of a stroke.

This is just the sort of thing which Silvi wishes to combat — this parlor game analysis. So if you want to find out who is to do with tenacity, aggressiveness, persistence, generosity and more, upon it's indicated in the handwriting, it will take more than a cursory study of Silvi's and other books. The trait of independence in handwriting could prove to be a stumbling block — more important is how it relates to the other traits.

Different from many books on handwriting on the market, this one is heavy on the analysis and explanation and light on handwriting samples.

The reader may want to have a couple of samples of his own to look at as he goes through.

Wait! Those t bars; they tell a lot. But when related properly to other things...

Man Of Many Careers

Acrobat, Driver, Salesman, Author

By CORINNE ABATT

With the publication of his book, "Handwriting and the Human Mind," John Silvi may be on the way to his fifth, sixth or seventh full-time career.

Man of many talents and enthusiasm for life, the sandy haired, robust Silvi, who claims he is over 25, wrote the book to reinforce the stand that handwriting analysis is a valuable tool. The book is an effort to establish a solid relationship between a person's handwriting and his mind.

Silvi's interest began 23 years ago when a friend introduced him to a handwriting analyst. His first reaction he says was a casual: "Aw, come on now."

When she sent him her analysis, he says, "I was totally shocked... and hooked."

Presently Silvi, 1846 Levan, Livonia, is sales manager for Bell Equipment Co. of Troy which sells sanitation trucks. He takes the advance interest in his book as an indicator of a time when — lecturing, consultation and teaching about handwriting may become a full time occupation.

Character analysis is his specialty. "I would rather be involved in helping people to become better people, to understand themselves."

Silvi's colorful life began in Rome, Italy. The family moved to Canada when he was three. By the time he was 18, he and a group of friends had become relatively good at acrobatics and gymnastics at the local YMCA.

They joined the Russell Brothers Circus, and in the course of 14 or 15 years Silvi was an aerial gymnast and acrobat with several different circuses.

"We would go wherever the pay was highest. During the winters he and his troupe would perform in vaudeville.

Around 1931-32, he was said to hold the record for the highest flyaway somersault. The feat was done from aerial rings, and he landed on a small pad on the ground.

While he was still in the circus, Silvi got into professional wrestling. A Chicago newspaper writer described his panther-like approach and he was eventually dubbed "the panther man." He wrestled in the junior heavyweight class, 135 to 200 pounds. Some of his opponents, such as Louis Klein, are still wrestling. Both as a wrestler and circus performer, Silvi traveled the country.

The traveling life finally came to an end when Silvi got tired of seeing his family at infrequent intervals and his sons looking at him almost as if he was a stranger.

He says, "Contrary to what people believe, the circus is a very lonely life.

"People who go to the circus see the performance, the rhinestones, the spangles, the glitter. When it's over, they go back to their homes and the performer goes to a hotel room by himself.

"As a performer, all you see is large groups of faces; you never get to know anybody. I got tired of it. I wanted a home life."

In addition to being a circus and vaudeville performer and wrestler, Silvi during the 1930s was a professional race car driver and motorcycle rider.

He brushes conversation about these days aside. "But we didn't go nearly as fast as they do now."

"The cars we drove had no roll bars, no seat belts, and we didn't wear crash helmets."

Somewhere along in his daredevil years, Silvi saw somebody pull a car with his teeth — a cable from the front bumper to the mouth.

Since he had strong teeth, Silvi decided to try it. Pretty soon, he was doing all kinds of surprising teeth power feats. He has a picture of a much publicized contest at Detroit's old Motor City Speedway. The challenge was to see who could cross the finish line first, a modified stock car doing four laps or Silvi pulling a full side automobile and driver with his teeth for 250 feet. The winner was never proclaimed. Silvi and the stock car crossed the finish line at the same time.

He looks at the picture for a moment and

says, "I've got all my teeth but one, and I could still do that."

Good luck has run with him all his life. He's never broken a bone — cracked a rib, maybe, but no serious falls. One time he was taken off the track in an ambulance after a crack-up, but no broken bones.

Though he is far too busy with the present to spend much time thinking about the past, there is a certain pride in his accomplishments. He enjoys describing his experiences, and at the same time is almost embarrassed by the attention he receives.

In the acrobatic days, the greatest fear was not that he or one of his fellow performers would make a mistake, but rather equipment failure.

He gets his rings and bar from the basement, spreads the heavy chrome plating ring on the floor.

"Once in a while I go down and grab hold of the rings — it really feels good.

"We always put our rigging up ourselves. We never allowed anyone else to touch it.

This is true of all performers. Still, any hook is liable to snap and any link of the chain could break. I've been plenty frightened about that. We didn't work with a net, but those who were doing more difficult things did."

He doesn't mention that he was light heavyweight wrestling champion of Canada, and only in the final moment of a long visit to his home does he show his published sheet music. He wrote the words and music for a ballad, "Where Are You Now."

He has done many more, mostly ballads. A few hymns, but only one was published.

Many were written while he was wrestling and at the same time being scoutmaster for a troop of 65 boys in Detroit.

In his free moments he was posing as a model for artists and sculptors.

There may be more careers for John Silvi; He's that type of guy. But one thing is certain: All of them will have the house on Levan as home base.

Both he and his wife, Elinore, whom he married two years ago are completely happy in the attractive house with the well-tended lawn and garden.

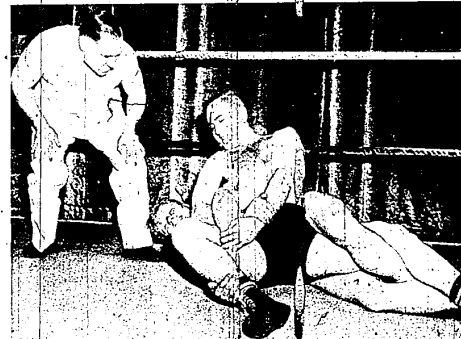
"I will be here until I die," Silvi says smiling. "I just love it here, right here in this neighborhood. This is the finest neighborhood I have ever lived in in my life."

Mrs. Silvi, sitting on the couch in the family room, looking out over the garden, agrees saying this will be home forever.

They will travel together. They will attend conventions and take vacations, but their next week, Jack who also lives in Livonia, and Donald, Redford resident and Silvi has three sons, James, who will move into the same neighborhood as his former auto racer.



A RACE DRIVER in the 1930s, he drove a Plymouth Special.



"THE PANTHER MAN" in his wrestling career, Silvi works on opponent Louis Klein, who is still wrestling.



AS A STUNT man, Silvi pulled a car with his teeth.



THE HOLD-UP was performed in fun by John Silvi (lower left) and a troupe of young acrobats in the mid-1930s.

SILVI (below) was a member of a circus troupe when this was taken on a beach in Plymouth, Mass.