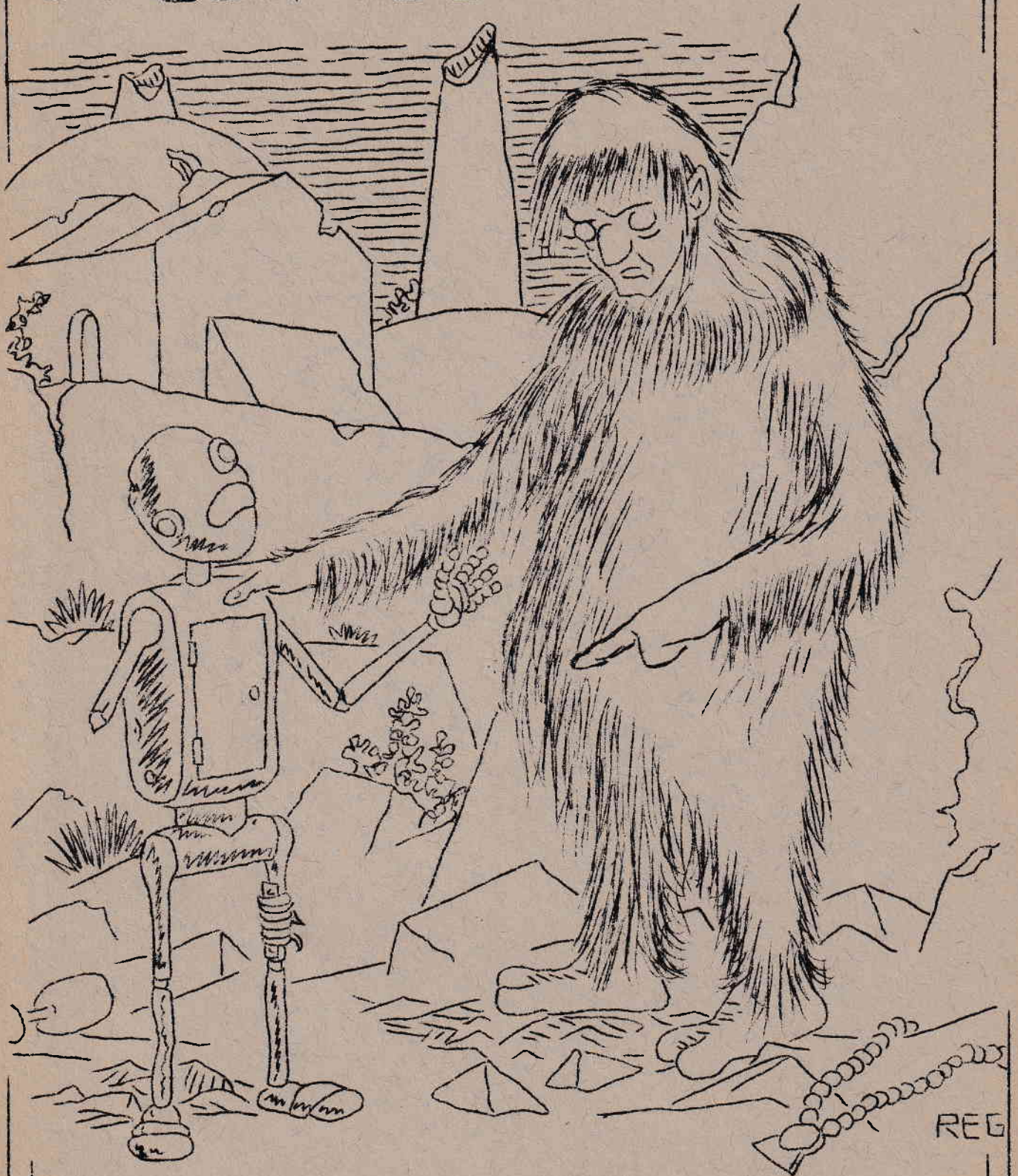
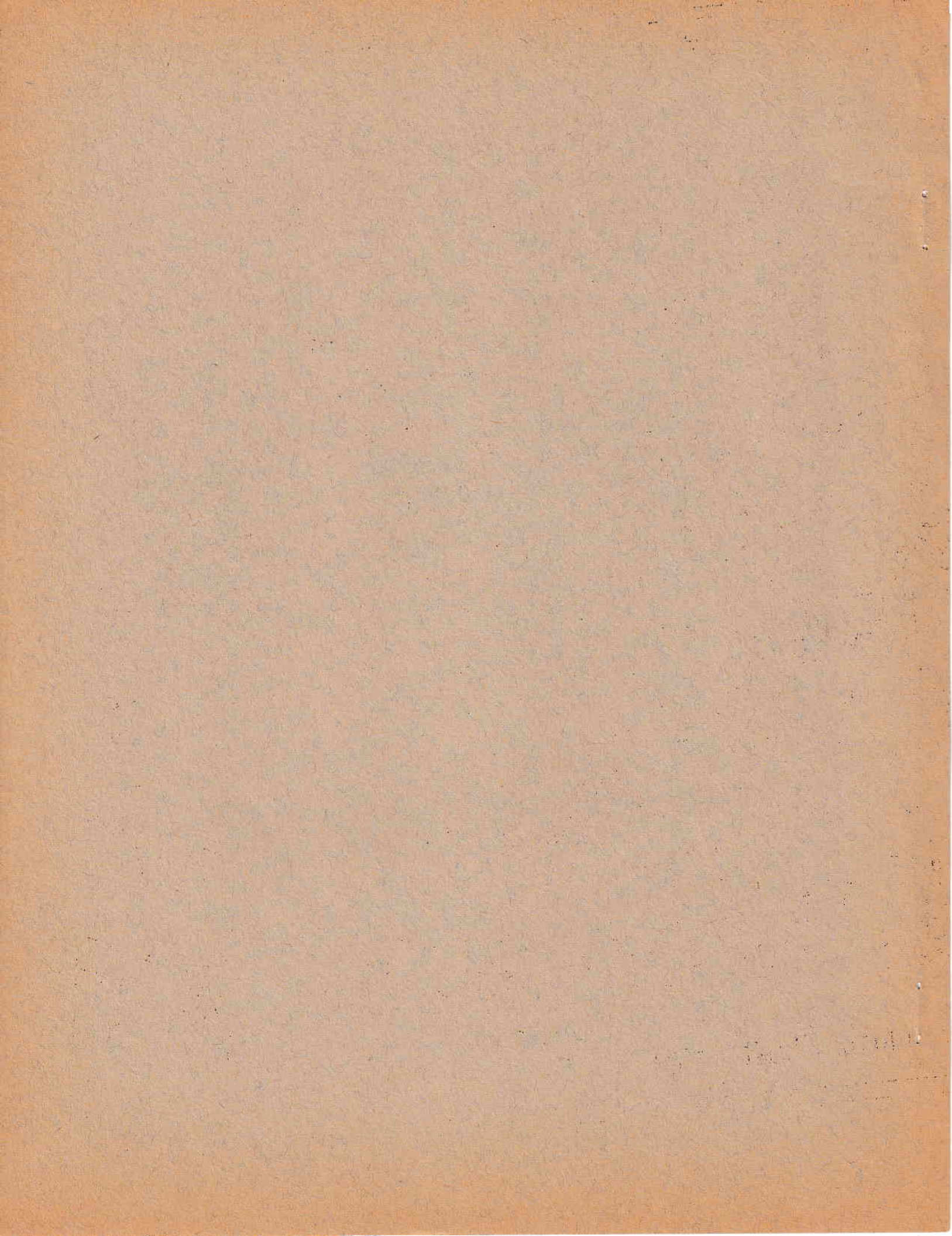


Isca⁺ri⁺ot⁺



Law No.1: Thou Shalt Not Kill



ISCARIOT

VOLUME 3 . . . NUMBER II

MARCH 1964

MANAGING EDITOR
Al Andrews
1659 Lakewood Drive
Birmingham 16, Ala.

PUBLISHER
Richard Ambrose
Luttrell Hall
Jax State College
Jacksonville, Ala

ISCARIOT is published quarterly for distribution through THE SOUTHERN FAN-
DOM PRESS ALLIANCE.

ISCARIOT is published by said co-
editors. All material should be sub-
mitted to the managing editor and an
acknowledgement of all submitted
material will be promptly sent to all
contributors.



REG

- - - ART CREDITS - - -

Al Andrews - art in Slaughter Row
Robert Gilbert - art in Mumbling Masses, Toppled Tops, & Cover

- - - CONTENTS - - -

| | | |
|-----------------------------|----------------|----|
| New Policy | Al | 2 |
| The Telling of Toppled Tops | Bill Plott | 3 |
| Slaughter Row | Al | 9 |
| Once Upon a Saga | Dale L. Walker | 15 |
| Remarquez les Ghouls | Dick | 19 |
| Mumbling Masses | Al | 22 |

REASONS WHY YOU ARE RECEIVING ISCARIOT

- () - Letter Of Comment
- () - Contribution Appreciated
- () - MONEY - now stands at 15¢ an issue
- () - Contributor
- () - Contribution Received
- () - Letter Of Comment Requested
- () - Zine reviewed
- () - Trade _____

ISCARIOT'S NEW POLICY

This announcement may come as a surprise to many, but it has been formulating itself in my mind for a number of months. This policy-change can best be explained perhaps by simply giving you the basic reason for it, without any long drawn-out ramifications. For several months I have felt a growing dissatisfaction with ISCARIOT; not with the publication or desire to pub same, but with the total effect of its contents. To overcome this dissatisfaction I felt keenly the need for a new direction for ISCARIOT contents-wise. After careful consideration, we (both Dick and myself) have decided on a new policy for ISCARIOT which we feel will make it more vital and interesting to sf&f fandom and which will satisfy our desire for a new direction.

ISCARIOT'S NEW POLICY

Hereafter (starting with this issue #11.) ISCARIOT will devote the bulk of its contents to articles and columns dealing with THE LITERATURE KNOWN AS SCIENCE FICTION AND FANTASY. Yet this is not a confining category, for we shall endeavor to secure and publish material dealing with sf&f literature from many different aspects, points of view and approaches. Following are some examples of the various types of material we will use. (And we invite suggestions of any other approaches and types from our readers.)

Book Reviews. Discussions of Book-Series (for example, ERBs, Asimov, Heinlein and many others.). General Surveys of Mags No Longer Pubbed -- with accompanying check-list. Trends in SF&F -- past or present. Articles on Authors, Artists or Publishers. The Influence of SF and/or Fantasy on things, i.e. modes, books, TV, movies, architecture, science, military, politics, etc. The Influences of Various Fields on SF&F. Studies of Types of and Themes in SF&F. Collaborator-Authors (their methods, works, etc.) SF&F Characters. "Lands" Created in SF&F Literature. SF&F Record and Movie Reviews. Review of an Outstanding or "Special" Issue of any SF or Fantasy Mag. -- past or present. The list could well nigh be endless.

Under this new policy, ISCARIOT will very seldom (if at all) use any fiction or poetry. If someone wishes to submit material of fiction or poetry it would be best to query us first as to the subject matter contained in the piece.

However, ISCARIOT will retain some of its present features. They are the Mailing-Comments (SLAUGHTER ROW), the Letter-Column (THE MUMBLING MASSES and any subject is fair game therein, sf&f or otherwise.), the Editorial (REVELATIONS), and, at Dick's discretion, his feature series, REMARQUEZ LES GHOULS. The latter is definitely connected with the field of Fantasy, so well fits our new policy.

Artwork dealing with any aspect of sf or fantasy or fandom we will still use and appreciate submission of same.

the telling of the toppled tops

BY BILL PLOTT

Where were you in 1953?

That was the year the Yankees won their fifth straight pennant. That was the year the Korean conflict finally came to an end, and it was the year that Eugene O'Neil died. In 1953 I was in the fifth grade. It would be another year before I discovered s-f and began cutting my teeth on the Winston juveniles, even though I had paved the way the year before by reading the first of many Hardy boys mysteries.

Nineteen-fifty-three was in the height of the great s-f boom. Titles appeared and disappeared with incredible rapidity. Some of them lasted an issue, some of them several issues. A few, building a steady readership at the turn of the decade, are still going today.

In the spring of '53 Fiction House brought out another new title to add to the many already on the newstands -- Tops In Science Fiction. Its editor was Jack O'Sullivan, a name not unknown to regular readers of that company's magazines.

Tops lasted for only two reprint issues but those two issues offered anew several very fine stories from the pulps of the '40s.

The initial issue was pulp size with a garish BEM-girl-hero cover. And typical of this type of illustration the hero wore proper space equipment while the girl was scantily clothed without oxygen accouterments in the hands of a hideous green improbability.

Of the eight stories in that first offering, only two could really be considered bad. Six good yarns out of eight is not a badly spent quarter.

Leading off the first issue was a 1941 Leigh Brackett reprint. Yes, it was space opera -- space opera as only Brackett can write it. A blood-and-thunder adventure from the first page to the last with a typical Brackett hero -- a guy whom you know is the Good Guy, yet he is pretty much of a bastard in general..

"Citadel of Lost Ships" concerns an asteroid called Romany, composed of the fused hulks of old space ships. The inhabitants are gypsies of space who have landed there and added their weight and population to the entity. Roy Campbell, a "space rover," leads the gypsies in the fight for freedom and strides up a romance with an attractive gypsy girl as you might expect.

Following Brackett is Raymond Van Houten whose name is vaguely familiar. His short story, "The Last Martian," is probably the best written from a literary point-of-view of all of the tales in both issues. It is also brilliantly illustrated by Frank Kelly Freas.

The only survivor of an earth expedition finds himself stranded with the tenants of a dying civilization. The story is told largely from the viewpoint of Tectn, a Martian care taker of a Polar-cap water station. He discovers the earthmen Harrison Clark, who is near death, and nourishes him back to health. Clark speaks only briefly to the reader in a beautifully constructed story.

The first story I ever read by Nelson Bond was a one-page condensation which appeared in one of the Scholastic magazines when I was in junior high school. That story stuck with me as a favorite for many years. Now I have another story by Bond worth remembering.

"Castaways of Eros" is a Swiss Family Robinson type novelette concerning the homesteading of an inhabitable planetoid. An error in the claims department awards homesteading rights unwittingly to two separate families. As is to be expected a colonization feud develops with each group attempting to fulfill the requirements for ownership by the time the inspection teams arrives.

The two families are united eventually by the romance of a son and daughter from each family and by a mutual-fight against an outsider who seems to have an inside track to the real estate due to certain legal technicalities.

The conclusion is somewhat evident but Bond tells the story in an entertaining manner that holds the reader's interest until the end.

"Castaways" reads like it might have come from Boy's Life magazine. In fact I strongly suspected that until a few scattered "hells" and "damn's" altered that possibility. It was copyrighted in 1943 by Love Romances Publishing Company, and I'll leave it's origin to a more detailed reviewer.

After three good yarns my hopes were high, but all good things must end. The next two stories dampened my enthusiasm considerably. "The First Man On the Moon" and "Task To Lahri" by Alfred Copel and Ross Rocklyne respectively were the worst stories to appear in either issue of Tops.

The former is a typical gimmick story where one man kills his companion in order not to share the limelight of being the first man on the moon. Ironically he is defedatd by the very goal he seeks to acheive. As the blurb states: "He is not the first man on the moon but rather the first murderer."

"Task To Lahri" is poor space opera. Three men go to Lahri to investigate a piracy conspiracy. One of them is a Bad Guy who goes to destroy the Lahri. The other two are the Good Guy and his Sidekick who try to prevent the dasterdly scheme. Leigh Brackett is much more convincing.

No reprint collection would be complete without a Ray Bradbury story, and usually it comes from The Martian Chronicles. The reprint in Tops is "The Million Year Picnic", a story that even anti-Bradbury forces must concede is good. If you've read it, you know it's great. If you haven't read it -- why are you sitting on your haunches thinking about it?

"The Rocketeers Have Shaggy Ears" by Keith Bennett is one of my favorites in the first issue. The Theme is not particularly new: a scouting party crashes and must make "the long march" back to the main base on an alien planet under its initial exploration.



You know how these stories are. The march begins. Strange beasts and primitive peoples peril the trip until only a handful return. And that's the plot in a nutshell. Yet Bennett tells the story in as entertaining a style as you could ask for. The editorial blurb expresses the spirit of it all: "Some time there will be a legend like this. Some time from Venus or Mars, the tale of the first great march will be relayed back to Earth." It's a good story, a damn good story.

Isaac Asimov has one serious main fault: he doesn't write enough s-f these days. "Black Friar of the Flame" is space opera at its enchanting best. It is equal to Brackett's yarn for sheer enjoyment.

Again the theme isn't new (it may have been in 1942 but it isn't now). Earth is under the rule of the reptilian conquerors, the Lhasinuics. The shrine of the Black Flame kept by the philosophical Loarists is the only concrete remnant of the glory of old earth.

Russell Tymball, one of the leaders of the underground movement to free mankind from the shackles of its reptilian overlords, manages to spur the passive loarists into being the stimulant for a human uprising. From there it is strictly strike-a-blow-for-freedom-and -good-old-earth-boys as Asimov takes us on an exciting liberation of "these green hills of earth."

The second issue of Toys appeared in the fall of '53 and it's physical resemblance to the first issue was in name only. The stories were reprints as before, but from there it was as different as spring and fall.

Volume one, number two was digest size. The cover was a beautiful piece of Kelly Freas work illustrating the Leigh Brackett and Ray Bradbury classic, "Loreli of the Red Mist."

Originally copyrighted in 1946, "Loreli" is available today in a Gold Medal paperback called Three Times Infinity, edited by Leo Margulies. As Buck Coulson pointed out in Yandro a few months ago, it's hard to see what Bradbury contributed to this novelette. The style is Brackett's and it's a sword-and-sorcery tale of the first water. There is a science fiction element involved in the plot but that is merely the catalyst that springs the reader into another world of Conan proportions. The hero, by the way, is Conan but he is not the Robert E. Howard character, he is another of the same given name.

Hugh Stark, another Brackett Good Foy with an unseamy reputation, has robbed a payroll ship and is dodging the crafty space patrol. His ship is downed and death is imminent when he is whisked into the body of Conan by the sorcery of the beautiful

6

-but-evil Rann, a priestess of Felga. From then until the finish it's blood and thunder second to none.

Frederic Brown's "And the Gods Laughed" was originally published in 1944 when its plot was probably fresher and more original. However, like previously mentioned stories, the craftsmanship of the author makes it fine reading today despite the defect of the plot.

I think the editorial blurb sums the story up very well: "Quite a space yarn Hank was spinning. Weird earrings wearing their Ganymede owners. It was a laugh until the spacetug crew got to wondering if those earrings might still be on the march!"

They were, as you've no doubt guessed by now. I think Brown Brown's alien in this story is quite original even if his theme is perhaps a trifle time worn. It's a very fine story, quite well written in the manner of his great short story "Arena" from Astounding.

"Grifter's Asteroid" by Harold C. Rosse is a fairly good story. It isn't particularly bad, but it isn't worth rushing out to buy five mint copies of either. It concerns two con men who meet their match in the restaurant proprietor of Asteroid P-42.

"Sword of Johnny Damokles" by Hugh Frazier Parker was some what of a disappointment -- probably because the title led me to expect sword and sorcery. Instead it's space opera. If you are familiar with the Greek legend of Damocles's sword, you have a pretty good idea of what this yarn is all about. This is the poorest story in the second issue but it isn't as low on the totem pole as "The First Man On the Moon" or "Task to Lahri" in the first issue.

The final story in the second issue is "Saboteurs of Space" by Robert Abernathy. It's good and gives Tops a total of 9 very good stories and one mediocre story out of a total of 13. I don't think those statistics are to be sneered at even if the stories are reprints.

"Saboteurs" is about Mury, a Martyr, and Randle, his cowardly accomplice, and their attempt to sabotage the ship bearing a power cylinder to the dead cities of the earth. They are stopped and earth's salvation is preserved. There is a possible moral to this story, I suppose, inasmuch as a devoted martyr should exercise more care in selecting his flunkies even when the choice is lean and limited. Another excellent yarn to wrap up a fine mag that lasted only two issues.

Since I've already discussed the covers of the two issues, I feel that a discussion of the interior artwork is mandatory. I've always heard that the pulps gave the artists more room in which to work and thus offered better illos in general. Well, if

that is true, Tops must be an exception to the rule. "The pulp art was largely poor except for two particularly good Kelly Freas spreads. Freas, however, also did at least two very poor jobs of illustrating in Tops. The contrast between the good and bad Freas in this mag makes for an interesting study.

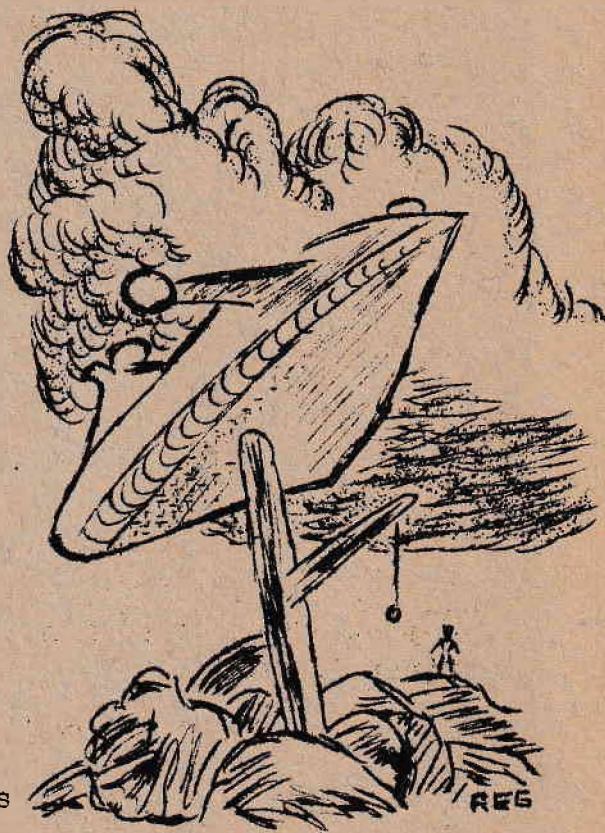
Artwork in the digest issue was by Freas and Emsch. The former, as I mentioned above, did the cover for this issue. He also did the interior work for "Loreli of the Red Mist." and it's exceedingly beautiful work. He did some six illos for this story, three of them full pages, and each would make a beautiful black and white original when framed.

The single illo for "And the Gods Laughed" appears to be by Emsch and is a more than adequate piece of work. Emsch also illoed "Grifter's Asteroid" but you'd never know it if it were not signed. Until I discovered the signature, I thought it was the work of Edd Cartier -- that's how un-Emsch-ish it is?

There is a very fine full page illo for "The Sword of Johnny Demokles" but it isn't signed and I don't recognize the style.

The final story, Abernathy's "Saboteurs of Space," contains two fine Emsch drawings. One of them is a full page job that is simply great. The second issue contains some of the finest artwork I've seen in any single s-f mag. There is nothing out today that can compare with it.

And thus ends the story of Tops In Science Fiction, a magazine with a short life but a sparkling contribution.



Slaughter Row

FANZINE REVIEWS

BY AL ANDREWS



"But what's Friday
got to do with it?"

STF 0 (#3, Harkness) Well, Jim, you led the pack this time with 23 pages. By in large, I think they were pages well spent.

The cover was nice ("So all right, I like gurls!"). I knew Joe Staton could write -- and well --, but I didn't know that he was a talented artist also. There's nothing like having a double-threat man on your team. Sapiro's SEMANTICS appeared to be a workmen like job, but I haven't finished reading it. I'm maybe just not in the mood. Beggs' HOUSE IN THE ZOO is quite good (for fmz material) and I am not surprised that Beggs has proed some stories, for there are flashes of a pro in ZOO. I imagine this yarn was one that kept dogging him, and tho

he knew it wouldn't sell (the theme has been done time and time again). So he finally had to put it on paper to get it off his mind. GRAVESIDE SERVICE by Ameen I just plain didn't get....so what's Guy's problem. Outside of that disturbing and distressing fact, the writing was well done and seldom had a "strained" quality, which so many fan-writers fall prey to. I got a chuckle out of Turner's parody of "The Night Before Christmas".

The let-col held some pregnant thoughts. One was Staton's view that fandom would and could continue without sf. I disagree. While it is true that there are elements in fandom that are not sf-orientated and have no desire to be so, the large majority hold sf as the tie that binds. One reason is because sf has become a "tradition" to fandom; perhaps, not worshipped to the letter, but yet honored as a tradition. This is mainly due to the fact that it was sf (more specifically, fans thereof) that was the foundation on which fandom was built. There are segments of fandom that neither read nor collect sf ("I know that is a ripping revelation, Rick-bhaby, but it is true."), but they are interesting to the main body of fandom from the standpoint of their "oddity" or for the simple reason that it was fandom that spawned them.

STF has improved greatly over that awesome, but awful, first issue. The repro is good and strong and very readable. There is a nice balance of variety material-wise. I would like to see all the SFPA zines give more through coverage or more commenting space in their mailing-comments, because I feel that the ml-coms are one of the things that makes pubbing an-apa-zine worthwhile. This is why I try to give you fellows and your zines a good bit of space in ISCARIOT. STF may become one of the leaders in the SFPA. With its 3rd issue it has began to really move.

WARLOCK (#1, Montgomery.) Next cover, Larry; I am sure that the original held more detail work, but when you transfer it to stencil you lose a good bit of the detail. Nevertheless, a neat and sense-o-wonder cover. I don't know why you switched to the title of **WARLOCK**, but I like it. Somehow "Spectre" has been over-used and fails to engender within me the ghruilly feeling of awe for the weird and unknown. You ought to hunker down in Ole Richard's **ENCYCLOPEDIA OF THE OCCULT** (a massive, charming volume) and dig up some info on the term "warlock", then regale us with such ancient lore. And, of course, after you've boned up on the term "warlock" you can come up with some weird reason for changing your journal to **WARLOCK**. Naturally we'll all know you're lying like a Persian rug, but it is the fannish thing to do.

As you know, I've had the privilege of reading some of Terry Ange's prose and poetry, and while I grant that it is competently written, must she always be so tragic and fatalistic? Ghreat Ghru, man, can't the earnest hero win once in a while? Her Greek tragedy bit is getting a bit tedious. Like, "Come on, Terry darling, write us one where our hero wins!" While it is true, that conflict is the needed basis for every story, it does not necessarily follow that the conflict cannot be finally resolved by victory for the forces of Ghood.

WARLOCK is a slim zine, but you've handled it well by making the layout wide and spacious which give the zine a bigger look than its actual size.

Enjoyed Benyo's Phil-Con report. The basic facts, but concise and fast paced.

I like **WARLOCK** and look forward to future issues.



"Very Funny"

OUTRE is continued here,
in case you're hunting for it.

But **OUTRE** is quite readable. Does anybody know why hecto processes always use the purple color? I should think dark green would just as legible, but easier on the eyes. Come to think about it, I think I have seen some green and some black (which came out a din grey),

but the green was very faint. So why does purple work better on hecto than other colors? I think I even saw a zine hectoed in orange once. (Oh, it's not so bad, once your stomach stops churning and you've lain down with ice-packs on your eyes for several days.)

Another quality that helped your zine was its orderly layout. I've often contemplated double-spacing between paragraphs, but I keep getting the feeling that it tends to break up the continuity of a piece. Heckto, BUT GHOOD.

OUTRE (#2, McDaniels.) **OUTRE** #1. was something of a missappointment, but #2. is better. I know many faneds frown on Hectoed zine as a bane. And generally I to feel that way about them, but this hecto work, Kent, has the saving grace of being **READABLE**. And that is one quality that is sure to strike the spark of love in a reader's heart. I've have roundly cursed some hectoed zines due to their sloppy appearance and almost total unreadablness

T.A.S.M. (#1. Hulan) Well, it is a far cry from the mighty LOKI of yore, but I am glad to see that you valued your SFPA membership and got a zine in to keep that membership active....and it is darn good to hear from you again, Dave.

Grrrr, you always seem to find ISCARIOT enjoyable, but seldom comment over a line or two. It doesn't burn me, but it is disappointing, because I would value your comments a great deal. Perhaps our change of material policy, which begins with this issue, will elicit more comments from you I hope so.

In your comments on CANTICLES you mentioned that the SFPA only required two pages of fan-written material per mailing; I thought three pages was the requirement. Not that I find such a requirement difficult to meet, what with handling the let-col and ml-coms of ISCARIOT, but I was just wondering about the requirement. Of course, I could stop and look it up in our By-Laws, but I'm lazy.

I don't think you mentioned this point, but someone in the ml did, and I wanted to comment on it, so diz seems like a good place. It is this matter of running or not of the ml-coms in copies that go to fandom in general and to other apas. The ml-coms are run in all copies of ISCARIOT, regardless of whether the copies are intended for the SFPA or general circulation. I don't figure that a non-SFPAer is getting anything extra, because if he doesn't get the SFPA ml then the ml-coms are fairly meaningless to him. Granted, I could save some paper by running ml-coms in only the SFPA copies, but it just doesn't seem worth the trouble. And if the general fan does read the ml-coms there is always the possibility that something there will spur him to send in a good LOC. So, I sort of wonder what is the merit of putting ml-coms in only the SFPA copies?

SCIMITAR (#1. Proctor) Welcome to the SFPA, George.

I was wondering about the predominance of the purple color in hecto work, then lo & behold here is a hecto job in black. Well, it is quite legible, so I guess it is all in knowing how; maybe in the past I have just had the misfortune to see only miserable examples of hecto work.

Like the cover, George. I can't say why in any particular, but I just think it is an interesting cover. A Moorish castle is it not, as oppose to the European style.

"1222 Hades Avenue" by Mike Randall broke me up! From beginning to end I couldn't decide whether Randall was actually writing this as a try at legitimate sf or was writing a satire on cruddy sf of the worst kind. If it was intended as satire, it was a huge success. As satire, it was a beautiful piece, because it was written in parts "straight" without overloading it with humor, but all the old cliches were thrown in neatly. Honestly, it is the funniest piece of fan-fiction I've read this year in any zine. It was certainly the high point of the issue. (By the way, IF ----mind you, I say IF---- Randall wrote this piece as a try at legitimate sf, then I am sorry about the foregoing comments. BUT I can't help it; IT IS JUST PLAIN HILARIOUS!)

Thanks for giving ISCARIOT the top rating; we will try and keep our zine on the top level.

SPORADIC (#9. Plott) SPORE never fails to delight me, and I think this is due in



"It's your jungle—
help keep it clean!"

large measure to Bill's skill in making matter interesting by adroitly balancing it with careful (tho it is no doubt natural to him) measures of humor, wit, information, pace and charming affableness. Aside from the through fun of reading of the happenings, travels and views of Plott-onia, there were a few other features that caught my eye. Jeff Patton's "Wasp" was clever and Miz Fletcher's illo on the final page was amusing....the flu-bug victory over Ole Santa, I take it. If this be so, tell Doris she may well expect reprisals from the 25th of December Church of Commercialism for her heresy. After all, Santa

is the most outstanding and honored immortal god of our 20th Century, and nearly all children are for years imbued with his worship.

Ah ha, I see now it was in your comments on CANTICLES that the matter of deletion of ml-cons was touched upon, but I've commented on that point in my TSAM section, so I won't belabor the point.

In re ISCARIOT's let-col and its two faults you pointed out. To the first, the difficulty in distinguishing between my comments and those made by Dick, I cannot plead guilty. Dick seldom makes comments in the let-col, because I realize that two commentators there would create general confusion. The only time he does comment in the let-col is when I leave him space to do so and request his comments. In cases where a question is asked that only he can accurately answer I leave him space on the stencil and request that he comment. Yet I don't see how it would be difficult to distinguish his comments from mine, because he always identifies his comment at the beginning with the following designation: ((Dick)). (See pages 15 and 20 of ISCARIOT #9. for examples.) I think that makes identification pretty easy.

To the second fault, that of too much Andrews in the let-col, I plead ABSOLUTELY GUILTY. But, unless there is a deluge of protest, I'll probably continue to be just as guilty of the same offence; in fact, the let-col in this issue bears in abundance this self same fault. So why do I continue to commit it? Well, I think there are several reasons, which I freely admit will probably be valid to no one but myself. First, is that I take each LOC as a personal letter, as well as a LOC. Therefore, I feel impelled to offer a few comments thereon. I do endeavor, however, to quote the reader's thought or view in full context before I comment, if I am going to comment on it at length.



"Elods!.... they just don't understand about the Caverns."

The second reason is probably equally as odd and invalid as the first. But being the ghrully individual that I am, I like to view both sides of the coin, so when I feel that a reader has printed one side of the coin and done so effectively I endeavor to display the otherside with I hope equal effect. I am not arguring, condemning, ridiculing or fighting; I am merely endeavoring to give balance to a controversial subject.

And finally, I APPRECIATE and ENJOY each and every LOC, regardless what position the writer may take on any subject or issue. I don't have to agree with a point of view to find it interesting and worthy of commenting on. So it is that I appreciate these views, ideas and slants and enjoy commenting on them to the best of my ability.

Let me say, in closing, that the foregoing is not intended in any way as a defence of my intrusion in the let-col, but is simply an explanation of why my intrusions are found there.

CLIFFHANGER

(#4. Norwood) The Gibson cover is fan-nishly good. If you're gonna run all your nl-comments together on all the zines, wouldn't it be a good idea to underline each title? That way it would be easier for us to refer back to your specific comment on a particular zine.

All three serials are of interest, Rick, but a bit unweildy and a bit tiring when you have three thrown at you at one time. If you have difficulty in getting outside contribution to round out CLIFFHANGERS, why not just choose one serial and do maybe four pages on it and then continue to run it until it is completed? Maybe you could get some illos from time to time to go with the serial. The serials in themselves aren't poor writing and are fun and enjoyment to read, but three at once does jade one and a trio causes each to be so short that one tends to lose interest in between episodes. Personally, my choice would be to concentrate on UNDER ONE MOON, but the other two would also be interesting, if you like one of them better or find one of them easier to write.

Always enjoy CLIFFHANGERS, Rick, so keep them coming.

* A SPECIAL REVIEW: GALACTIC OUTPOST # 1. Editor - Richard # 0
* Benyo, 118 South Street, J1. Thorpe, Penn. 18229. 25¢ or #
* a contribution. Assistant Editor - Russ Falkendo. *

I don't usually review any non-SFPA zines in ISCARIOT, but Richard being a correspondent of mine and this being his first iss, I decided to offer some comments thereon.

First issues I usually look upon with utter horror and mumble in my best disgruntled old-fan manner, "He'll never make it." One agonizing feature of first issues that bring out that dire prediction is poor repro, i.e. spotty, sloppy and unbearably amateurish. So it is that Benyo's GO is a joyous surprise. Its repro is strong, clear and black.

While GO has a definite neoish flavor, it shows a considerable amount of promise. The main lack is artwork and strong feature-material, but this should be rectified with time as GO becomes

*The Eternal *
(French) Faan



"You and I out in
space.... alone...
..... mon cheri."

known around fandom. This first-iss contains a variety of types of material such as Part 1. of a serial, a short story, book-reviews, friz-revs, let-col, plus some other columns; but they are fairly brief. What would have helped a great deal on this issue would have been a fairly long (say 4 or 5 pages) sf article and one that was "strong" by "strong" I mean an article that is effectively written, in that it has a definite effect upon the reader, and contains valid points of criticism, information or elucidation. Then the shorter articles or columns could have been used to "fill" around or as interesting related side-points to the feature article.

A couple of personal pointers, Richard. Welcome all contributions, without this "The editor's choice on publishing material shall be final." jazz. People know you are only going to publish the material you like, and to state a known and accepted fact sounds a bit snobbish or snooty. Invite contributors, but don't expect them to pay the postage on the material you reject. That is your expense and you must bear it. They give you their time, talent and pay postage on the material to send it to you. Courtesy demands that you pay the return postage. Pro-zines require return-postage, but neither you nor I are pro, but are fan editors dependent solely on the generosity of other fans to contribute material to our publications. Requiring return-postage from the contributors will cause them to take the attitude of "To heck with him!"

All in all, GO is a good reprood, well-planned first-iss, and I wish GO much success and that it may go forward to become one of the glorious glitters in the heavens of fanzine-fandom.

* COLLECTOR'S NOTE * On Dec. 8/63 nineteen Indians representing tribes from the United States, Canada and Mexico took part in a ceremony commemorating the 300th anniversary of the John Elliot Bible. With the help of Joe Nesutan, an English-speaking Indian, Eliot translated the Bible into the language of the Massachusetts Indians, completing it in 1663. It was the first Bible printed in the U.S. It was entitled "MAMUSSE WUNNEETUPANATAMWE UPBIBLUM GOD naneeswe NUKKONE TESTAMENT MEQUOSHKINNUMUK kah wonk WUSKU TESTAMENT." ---- THE WHOLE HOLY HIS BIBLE GOD both OLD TESTAMENT and also NEW TESTAMENT. The 1st verse of the 23rd Psalm, for example, reads: "Ehovah a nuilohkormoonukoowaeneun, wanneteag woh nukquen-nashikoe," that is, "Jehovah is my Shepherd. I shall lack nothing." The last man who could actually read the Eliot Indian Bible died in 1895, yet collectors gladly pay up to \$7,500 for a copy of the translation, even though it can no longer be read by anyone.

Did you ever stop to think.....maybe there is a Bible fandom.

Once Upon a Saga

1

dale I. walker

* * * * *

Morton N. Cohen, in his detailed and excellent biography of Henry Rider Haggard (Rider Haggard, His Life and Works, Walker and Company, N.Y., 1960) assures us there is an 'upsurge of interest' in Haggard's books these days. There are eight of Sir Rider's titles in print in this country, says Mr. Cohen, four times that many in England, and what's more 'with the single exception of Rudyard Kipling, Haggard outsells all his contemporary story-tellers, including Stevenson and Doyle.'

Now anyone who has ever followed the adventures of that old macumazahn Allan Quatermain, if only in King Solomon's Mines, would hardly detract from Mr. Cohen's statements. Haggard certainly deserves 'rediscovery' by this generation--indeed, it is news to me that his popularity ever waned. But a point can be made, I think, against the 'outsells all his contemporary story-tellers' remark unless the biographer means his British contemporaries. Haggard's life (1856-1925) encompassed half the 19th and a quarter of the 20th centuries and Edgar Rice Burroughs (1875-1950) shared fifty common years with the Sage of Ditchingham...at least 13 years in which both were writing prolifically and successfully. Mr. Cohen opens the door himself for consideration of Burroughs when he

15

writes of Haggard and other 'contemporary story-tellers.' If there's one category ERB fits, this is it.

Burroughs was seven when Haggard's first book was published and Haggard 58 when ERB made hard covers for the first time. When the Englishman died in 1925 (Having written 58 best-sellers, about 35 of which were fiction works), ERB had already written the first ten Tarzan books, the first five Mars books, the first two of the Pellucidar series plus at least six miscellaneous novels. If we think of the two as contemporaries (and 20th Century Authors seems to think so, giving the edge to Haggard could match our man from Tarzama in sales or, for that matter, come close. In the November 29, 1963 LIFE article 'Tarzan of the Paperbacks', Paul Mendel says 'From 1914 until roughly 1940 Burroughs was a splendid phenomenon in publishing. His books, the first of which appeared exactly 50 years ago next June, sold 35 million copies in the face of concerted critical antagonism...' The Burroughs phenomenon, as you need not be reminded, goes on today in such a nostalgic torrent of books that even those sour critics seem to be mellowing. I don't know how many ERB books Canaveral or Dover has sold but Mendel says Ballantine (12 Tarzan, 10 Mars titles so far) is producing a second printing of 300,000 copies per title, and Ace Books (I have 30 various ERB titles) 110,000 per title in a second printing. This gives us some thing like 10,000,000 copies in these two paperback editions alone. It's hard to believe Haggard ever matched this and certainly falls far short today. Only his She and King Solomon's Mines have been consistently in print since they took the world by storm in the 1880's.

I notice, by the way, that Ballantine has two Haggard novels in stock (K.S.M. and Allan Quatermain). With any luck, BB Inc. might give us a 60¢ Eric Brighteyes, Nada the Lily or any of the lesser-known Haggards and thereby start another revival.

Much could, and perhaps should, be said about Haggard and Burroughs as two great contemporary 'story-tellers'. The two had some interesting things in common--including a similar snubbing by the critics--but the best of which was the creation of a memorable fiction hero. Allan Quatermain and Tarzan. One wishes the white hunter could have extended his travels with Sir Henry and Dr. Good a bit...perhaps to Opar...for Lord Graystoke. One believes, would have gotten on famously with them.

* * * * *

For many years--especially in those sterile times when ERB's books were hard to find--I suffered under a delicious delusion regarding Haggard and Burroughs. There is a book listed in the ERBibliography entitled H.R.H., The Rider. Now I ask you,

what do you think it's about? Burroughs Bibliophile John Harwood recently told me after I summoned the nerve to ask an expert. 'As for the initials H.R.H.', he wrote, 'these three letters stand for His Royal Highness". The hero of the story is a prince who exchanges places with a highwayman called "The Rider."'

* * * * *

In the summer of about 1949 I was scrounging a Seattle bookstall and ran across two titles that stirred my teenaged adrenalin. Both wore yellowed and flaky dustcovers but both were in a state of pristine newness---the spines cracked lovingly when I opened them and some pages were uncut, my friends, obviously unread. One was A Princess of Mars, the other Tanar of Pellucidar. the bookseller, ignorant of such rarities, charged me a dollar each and fixed me, as he rang up the sale, with one of those scoffing 'Crazy Buck Rogers stuff' stares.

That was a long time ago and in those days, it seemed to me, Edgar Rice Burroughs, with only a year yet to live, was at the very nadir of his reputation. I had discovered him through the comic pages first, then the movies (which, despite a stereo and wide-screened jungle, have never been quite so appealing) and through an old Dell paperback of Tarzan and the Lost Empire which I thumbed to an early death. By then I began wondering about the author---what kind of man could write stories like these?

Biographical information was scant, to say the least. I found scattered and standardized paragraphs here and there (one fleeting reference I recall in a biography of Jules Verne might have been the first mention ERB ever received by a serious writer) and then the July 29, 1939 SATURDAY EVENING POST. This lengthy article about Burroughs, 'How to Become a Great Writer' by Alva Johnson, seems still the foundation for much that is written about ERB. Now John Harwood's The Literature of Burroughsiana lists hundreds of articles about ERB, many of them available to one even in those days.

But the worst thing was the singular dearth of Burroughs books. His own company in Tarzana offered a few, G & D a few more, but most of the 60-odd canonical titles attributed to him seemed available only through used book dealers---most of them much wiser than my Seattle friend. As for the oddments: Girl From Hollywood, Apache Kid, Mad King, The Mucker, Outlaw of Torn etc. These were unreachable fruit. I even doubted some of them existed.

The Burroughs revival is said to have begun in Downey, California in 1961 when a librarian removed a Tarzan book from

the shelves because someone prudishley suggested Tarzan and Jane's marriage was a common-law arrangement. The wire services picked up on the story and the distressed voice of ERB Inc (the now retired General Manager Paul Rothmund) was added to the teapot-tempest: 'Read The Return' the voice urged, ' they were married and Janes father performed the ceremony---an ordained minister at that!'

Since those first faint and funny rumblings in Downey, falling just before the 50th anniversary of ERB's first published story, there has been such a state of developments in the interim that someone could and ought to write a book.

In the pages of ISCARIOT in coming months, I hope to lay down a few facts about the re-birth of Tarzan, John Carter and the other several worlds of Edgar Rice Burroughs. In the 12th issue of ISCARIOT I particularly want to talk about Rev. Henry Hardy Heins and his scholarly and magnificent 'Golden Anniversary Bibliography of E.R.B.'; something about Burroughs fanzines: the Burroughs Bibliophiles; the singular adventure of the expired copyrights and something about those tantalizing 'hertofore-unpublished-and-only recently-discovered' manuscripts of Edgar Rice Burroughs.

Published in the 11th issue of ISCARIOT --- March 1964

Subsequent articles by Dale Walker published by ISCARIOT on ERB may be obtained by writing: Al Andrews
There must be enclosed a 1659 Lakewood Drive
clearly self-addressed, Birmingham, Alabama
stamped envelope. 35216

Remarquez les Ghouls

A COMMENTARY ON THE SUPERNATURAL

No. 8

Richard Ambrose

If as is usually the case, mythology is taken to mean the genealogy, history and powers of gods whose lives are imagined to resemble those of human beings, in short the livelihood of any given people, then it is very hard to give a brief general view of the Tiki-like mythology of Oceania. The divisions of Oceania (Polynesia, Micronesia, Melanesia, and Indonesia) all have their separate beliefs as to divine powers. Sometimes, in the different islands of an archipelago, in the different districts of an island, even in a single tribe, the same god is endowed with different attributes, or combines with his the attributes which belong to different gods. Thus the Ngendei of the Fiji islands is the supporter of the world (naturally when he moved earthquakes would occur), but at the same time he is the divinity of good harvests and of sterility, the revealer of fire, and the king of the land of the dead like the Polynesian Māhiuki, the creator of the gods. It also happens that within different parts of micronesia and quite possibly other divisions of Oceania, some gods are attributed different forms and it's not uncommon for the sex of god to change.

On the other hand different gods in different populations receive the same attributes. Thus, the creation of the world is usually attributed to Tangarua (does this sound familiar) in Polynesia, but to Laulaati in the Loyalty islands, to two diities in New Hebrides, to a prophet in New Guinea and to the god Ove in the Fiji islands. In the Fiji islands the creation is also attributed to several goddesses, particularly to Tuli, the daughter of Tangarua, looked upon as the creatress of the world in the Samoan islands.

Now that I've thoroughly confused everyone, including myself and if you've enough stamina to continue reading, I will attempt to introduce some order into this confusion. I think the best way to do this is to leave the names of the gods to one side as well as their individuality and concentrate on the characteristics of a definite group.

The sea is an element of their environment which is especially important to islanders.-- it feeds them, transports them, controls their climate to a limited extent, provides their livelihood and molds their religions. For this reason the

sea is accepted as a primeval fact for which no explanation is sought. The people could not envision life without the sea, as we probably could not envision life without land. In the beginning there was a vast sea over which sailed a god (Society Islands, Marquesas (Melville's Isles)), or a god soared above it (Samoa) or it was covered by skies inhabited by one or several deities (Society Islands, Tonga).

Still there are in existence myths which attempt to explain the origin of the sea. One type makes it derive from a divine origin -- it was the result of Ta'arua's sweat in his efforts at creation.....both the sea and sweat have a quantity of salt in solution and the taste would be the test. In Samoa it came from the breakage of the ink sac in the primeval octopus -- this I won't attempt to account for because although the islanders knew of the octopus habit of excreting a fluid into the water, the fluid was a black color.

According to another version, the sea came later than the earth, and at first it was only a little bit of salt water which somebody kept shut up and hidden. Others tried to get it from him, but when they lifted the lid the water flowed out and caused a flood.

The existence of the sky is usually taken as a primordial fact, just as with the sea. But in the Marshall Islands we find the following legend. When the deity Los had created the world, the plants and the animals, a sea-gull flew up and formed the dome of the sky as a spider weaves its web.

Here is an odd fact: although myths about the origin of the sky are very rare, there exists a host of them to explain one of its most obvious physical properties, namely, its distance from the earth, or in other words the fact that it stays in the air without support. According to a belief in Celebes in Indonesia, the sky was originally close to the earth, so close that it stood on the leaves of certain plants. The flattened palm tree and many tropical flat leaved plants would probably account for this. Legends of central Polynesia, and especially of Samoa, show a transition towards another idea, according to which the separation of heaven and earth is a cosmic event prompted by such and such a god or several gods. This belief, far more widespread than the former, occurs over a large area.

The personification of sky and earth, in eastern Indonesia gives the myth a most romantic form. Rangi, the sky, in love with Paba, the Earth, who was beneath his, came down to her in the time of primeval darkness and immobility. Their close embrace crushed the host of gods to whom they had given birth, and all the beings placed between them; nothing could ripen or bear fruit. To escape this awkward situation, the gods

determined to separate the Sky from the Earth. In one version the Sky himself urges his children to break their union. Once the separation was achieved, light spread over the terrestrial world.

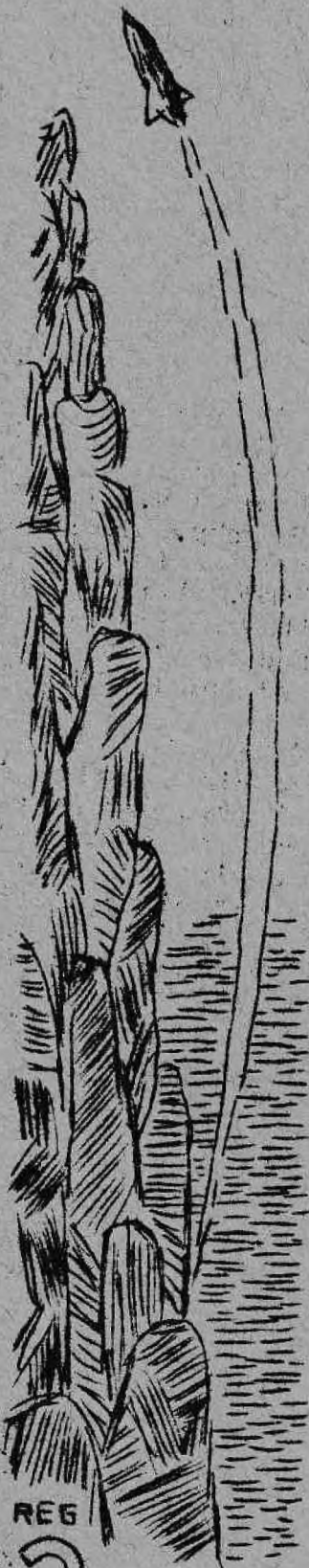
Most of the legends dealing with the origin of the earth make it come out of the sea, but they have variants which contradict one another. Sometimes the earth simply came out of the sea (New Zealand), or from a rock which existed in the sea (Minahassa); or, again, a deity, sometimes a snake (Admiralty Islands) floating on the sea creates the earth there (Marshall Islands). How's this for variety! Owing to constant identification of gods dwelling in heaven with birds, the god who throws a rock into the sea is sometimes replaced by a bird who drops an egg (Hawaii).

Certain peculiarities of the land also were explained by myths, especially the unevenness of the ground. According to natives of Borneo, the valleys were hollowed out by a crab which fell from heaven and tore up the earth with its pincers. In the north-west of Borneo, when the two birds made heaven and earth from the two eggs they took out of the sea, the dimensions of the earth were larger than those of the sky. To adjust this, they crushed in the earth, and this caused the foldings which made mountains and valleys. In New Zealand, when the isle had been drawn up like a big fish by Maui with the help of his brothers, they, contrary to Maui's instructions, began to cut up the fish. The valleys are the cuts made by their knives.

An examination of the great myths of Oceania, in my opinion, does not constitute mythology, which according to the dictionary is the study of myths. A myth is not just any sort of legend, not even a legend in which superhuman individuals take part, but an explanatory legend, meant to give the cause or origin of such and such a fact of actual experience. While legends are the primitive form of novels and history, myths are the original and living form of the philosophy of nations.

THE MUMBLING ASSES

READERS AND AL



MIKE DECKINGER, 14 Salem Court, Metuchen, New Jersey:

Mrs. Fletcher's cover on ISCARIOT is far less complex than her explanation for it. I'd have preferred her to present it bluntly, and leave any interpretations to the minds of the readers. It might be interesting to see how someone viewing it for the first time would interpret her meaning.

**** PERHAPS YOU HAVE A POINT, MIKE. HOWEVER, IN ALL FAIRNESS TO MRS. FLETCHER, I REQUESTED THAT SHE DO A DELINEATION OF CONCEPT PIECE. I SIMPLY THOUGHT IT MIGHT BE INTERESTING FOR THE READER TO HAVE A CHANCE TO COMPARE HIS CONCEPT OF THE SYMBOLICAL COVER TO THAT OF THE ARTIST'S. CERTAINLY, THERE WAS NO INTENT TO FORCE OR IMPOSE UPON ANYONE ANY PARTICULAR REACTION TO THE COVER. ****

Rob Williams reflections were made more poignant because upon until a short while ago I suffered from the same malady that he does. I still have the collecting itch in me, I suppose I always will, but not to the same exhaustive extent that I did previously. Finance and space shortage have managed to lessen my collecting urge.

**** THE COLLECTING ITCH, THAWARTED BY THE LACK OF SPACE AND LOOT THE STORY OF MY LIFE. ****

I've read several Burroughs books and the only impression I've received is tedium. Burroughs neither excites me nor sets my heart a-pounding with the thrill of exotic adventures PELLUCIDAR bored me more than most, because of the frequent absurdities and literal deficiencies Burroughs displays. I simply can not become involved in books with outre characters behaving like the chattering monkeys of Tarzan. I've found Burroughs to be overrated, uninteresting and only of value as a curio. I've been buying all the pb versions of ERB stories ACE and BALLANTINE have been issuing, but only because I'm a completist and as long as it's sf or related I'll take it.

**** I'M NOT GUNG-HO ERB MYSELF. IN SPOTS AND THE QUANTITY OF ERB'S WORK IS OF INTEREST, BUT ERB FOUND A SUCCESSFUL FORMULA AND MAD-DENINGLY SELDOM DEVIATED FROM IT. ****

REG

22

Underlining your editorial interjections does indeed make them stand out from the body of the accompanying letter, but it appear that you're shouting at the reader. I think merely advancing your points would be sufficient, without resorting to any verbal screams.

**** YOUR LAST SENTENCE INCISIVELY STRIKES AT THE VERY CORE OF MY PROBLEM, BUT UNFORTUNATELY, YOU DIDN'T OFFER A SOLUTION. I AGREE THAT "merely advancing (my) points would be sufficient", BUT THE PROBLEM IS TO DEVISE SOME WAY TO SUFFICIENTLY DIFFERENTIATE MY COMMENTS FROM THOSE OF THE LETTER-WRITER. I WASN'T TOO KEEN ON THE UNDERLINING METHOD MYSELF, FOR I FORESAW THE POSSIBLE DANGER OF GIVING SOMEONE THE IMPRESSION THAT I WAS TRYING TO EMPHASIZE MY COMMENTS OVER THOSE OF THE LETTER-WRITER (AN UTTERLY SILLY AND CHILDISH PLOY WHICH I NEVER ENTERTAINED FOR A MOMENT), BUT SINCE THE UNDERLINING METHOD DID SERVE MY PURPOSE I GAVE IT A TRY. NOW I AM TRYING ANOTHER METHOD, WHICH I HOPE WILL NOT BE OFFENSIVE TO ANYONE. IS THIS METHOD BETTER, MIKE? ****

I too am surprised that so many people missed the essential point to THE IDIOT. I thought it was plain as punch that the main character had a trace of voodoo orientation mixed up in him somewhere, and was using it to carry out his plans. Was it really that confusing? ****WELL, NOT TO ME. ****

The Justice Weekly ads are sad because they represent unnatural cravings that must be satisfied with so transparent a subterfuge. These characters placing the ads are apparently near a point of desperation when it comes to finding partners, and they have to advertise for other persons in order to get their kicks. They just might as well walk along the streets carrying placards reading: SADISTS WANTED, MASOCHISTS WANTED, etc. etc.

**** THE QUESTION IS "DOES IT PAY TO ADVERTISE?" ****

EDWARD C. PAYNE, 171 Colby Street, Hartford, Connecticut 06106.

You talk of a possible policy-change in ISCARIOT. It seems to me that reading between the lines I've come to smell this abrewing. Those later issues do not have the kick that #1 did, for instance. Is it possible that your hitch with the SFPA has been the cause?

**** YES, THE POLICY-CHANGE IS NOT A SUDDEN DECISION, BUT THE CULMINATION OF A GRADUALLY SOLIDIFYING DECISION. MY ASSOCIATION WITH THE SFPA WAS THE MAIN REASON Iscariot WAS FIRST PUBBED, AND THE SFPA REMAINS THE MAIN REASON WHY IT IS STILL PUBBED. I IMAGINE IF THE SFPA SHOULD FOLD, THEN Iscariot WOULD SOON FOLLOW SUIT. Iscariot IS PUBBED FIRST BECAUSE OF MY INTEREST IN THE SFPA; ITS CIRCULATION IN GENERAL FANDOM IS SECONDARY. ****

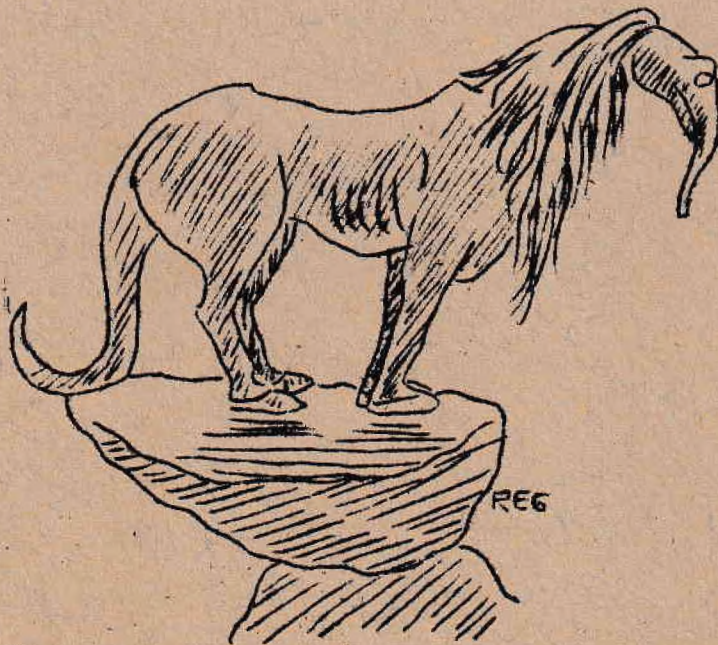
What is Dick Ambrose majoring in? **** WELL, SINCE HE INTENDS TO BE A MARINE BIOLOGIST, I IMAGINE HE IS MAJORING IN BIOLOGY HIS FRESHMAN YEAR. **** How can he put so much into ISCARIOT and go to college also? Maybe he had better, for the present, devote his literary talents to the college publications. **** I DON'T KNOW HOW DICK MANAGES TO CARRY THE DOUBLE LOAD OF COLLEGE AND PUBBING Iscariot, I'M JUST VERY THANKFUL THAT HE DOES SO. BUT DICK KNOWS THAT WHENEVER PUBBING Iscariot BECOMES TOO MUCH OF A LOAD ALL HE HAS TO DO IS SIMPLY AND PLAINLY SAY SO. HOWEVER, I'LL THANK YOU, TRAITOR-PAYNE, TO KEEP YOUR HERETICAL THOUGHTS TO

YOURSELF. MAY DERO-RAYS CONSUME YE, SIR, FOR SUCH UNFANNISH
 BLASPHEMY AS TO SUGGEST THAT A TRU-BLU PHAN LIKE SIR RICHARD OF
 RED-STENCIL SHOULD DISSIPATE HIS GHRU-GIVEN FANNISH TALENTS UPON
 SUCH DISGRACEFULLY MUNDANE AND NON-ESSENTIAL CRUDZINES AS COLLEGE
 PUBLICATIONS AND TO EVEN SUBTLELY INTIMATE THAT IN DOING SO, HE
 SHOULD FORSAKE HIS GLORIOUS POSITION IN THE PAGES OF Iscariot IS
 A GREVIOUS SIN INDEED. IT'S LOOSE TALK OF THAT DANGEROUS ILK THAT
 CAN CAUSE FANDOM TO RISE AGAINST YOU IN WRATH AND BRING UPON YOU
 HORRENDOUS RETALIATION SUCH AS SEEING TO IT THAT YOUR SUB TO
 "Green Lantern Comics" IS GRABBLLED. WHY, GREAT ROSCOE, MAN, YOU
 MIGHT HAVE THE VERY HEART OF YOUR LIFE RIPPED FROM YOU THE
 FORFEIT OF YOUR FIRST EDITION, MIET, IN D/W COPY OF "Son of G-Man
 on Shark Island". ****

Why is he the Publisher only? Why not Assistant Editor as
 well? **** BEATS ME. FOR THE FIRST FEW ISSUES DICK IS LISTED AS
 THE ASSISTANT EDITOR, BUT LATELY HE DECIDED TO LIST HIMSELF AS
 ONLY THE PUBLISHER. BUT REGARDLESS OF HOW DICK CHOOSES TO LIST
 HIMSELF, HE STILL HAS THE RIGHT TO VETO ANY PIECE OF COPY THAT
 IS SUBMITTED TO Iscariot. MAINLY, I THINK HIS REASON FOR LISTING
 HIMSELF AS HE DOES IS THAT WE SORT OF DIVIDE UP THE WORK OF PUTTING
 OUT THE ZINE I HANDLE THE EDITING END AND FINANCES, AND HE
 HANDLES THE PUBLISHING END AND LAYOUTS, ART, ETC. PERSONALLY, HE
 CAN LIST HIMSELF AS ALL-HIGH GRAND DRAGON OF THE 7TH LEVEL FOR ALL
 I CARE; I'M JUST GLAD TO HAVE HIM AS AN EQUAL PARTNER IN PUTTING
 OUT Iscariot. ****

***** THANKS, ED, FOR A FINE LETTER. I ENJOYED ALL YOUR
 COMMENTS, BUT JUST REPRINTED A FEW OF THEM HERE.

* "Sticks and stones may break my bones ... but I still read *
 * BATMAN! *



 * from the ERB CASEBOOK
 * of Dale L. Walker....
 * "Eager Rots Borreen
 * was the founder of the
 * Borreen Bibliophiles
 * and insofar as I know,
 * edited a small zine
 * called THE NEW YORKER
 * in which he foisted off
 * all sorts of wild and
 * hairy political ideas.
 * He's famous, of course,
 * for creating NAZRAT of
 * MOOSRAB, an Arabic
 * sword-and-turban hero
 * this character was
 * subsequently stolen by
 * some pro and, well, you
 * know the rest."

LANDON C. CHESNEY, 804 Juniper Street, Atlanta 8, Georgia:

Esteemed Colleague, **** BLESS YOU, MY CHILD. ****

Once more I find that I am forced to retreat from my standard posture of sneering cynicism. The ever-rising excellence of your handsome little publication moves me to commend both you and your staff **** GOSH, NOW WE GOT A STAFF! **** on making note-worthy contributions to the field of fannish journalism. My most immediate comments pertain to the cover **** #9 **** (very very good) and to the section given over to the masses who mumble. Very neat editing here -- the humor you cleverly extracted from comments re Deckinger's Idiot was handled most effectively. **** THANK YOU, MOST KIND SIR. ****

The innovation of underlining your remarks to distinguish from those of the readership is hereby awarded 13.7 gold stars. (My highest rating, incidentally, and not, as you facetiously reported, 987. A rating system based on 987 gold stars would be absurd, Andrews. What are you trying to do -- make me out a dolt and a bufoon? **** WELL, THE THOUGHT HAD CROSSED MY MIND, BUT.... ****) My only quibble here would be that the added emphasis afforded by said method tends, psychologically, to lend the editor's sage observations more weight than those of the erstwhile corresponding body. **** QUITE TRUE. I TO SENSED THIS DANGER AND I HOPE THIS NEW METHOD WILL ELIMINATE SAID DANGER. WHAT THINKEST THOU? I'M STILL OPEN TO SUGGESTIONS OF A BETTER METHOD WITHOUT GOING TO THE TROUBLESOME EXTREMES OF TWO-COLOR REPRO OR USING TO KINDS OF TYPE. ****

Seriously, the idea of answering and/or commenting upon the several elements of the letter as they are presented is much more interesting and valid than the conventional method of tagging on the editorial comments at the conclusion. Make that er, um, 13.8 gold stars. **** LET'S SEE, I GOT 13.7 LAST TIME AND 13.7, PLUS AN ADDITIONAL 13.8, THIS TIME. THAT GIVES ME A GRAND TOTAL OF 41.2 GOLD STARS. HUMMMM, ANYBODY KNOW THE GOING-PRICE FOR GOLD STARS ON THE OPEN-MARKET? ****

I am afraid I will be forced to apologize for the tone of my commentary regarding matters theological in fanzines. **** NO APOLOGY NEEDED; THIS IS A WIDE-OPEN LET-COL. **** It appeared, on a second and more objective reading, that I was directing my comments more or less toward Iscariot. In actuality I had been mulling over the problem in fandom as a whole for some time when, on receiving Iscariot #8, I came across your and Mike's related comments. These, in turn, inspired what was intended to be an "open letter to fandom" type thing, but, owing to my inept grasp of ideogrammatical manipulation, wound up appearing as personally directed protest. **** DESPITE YOUR DEPRECATORY REMARKS, I KNOW YOU ARE AS ABOUT INEPT IN THE AREA OF IDEAS AND EXPRESSION THEREOF AS A FISH WHO CLAIMS HE CAN'T SWIM. BUT THE POINT IS THAT THIS LET-COL OF Iscariot's WELCOMES ALL SHADES OF VIEWS (PERSONAL PROTESTS OR GENERALIZATIONS) ON ANY SUBJECT THAT IS OF INTEREST SF-ORIENTATED OR OTHERWISE. ****

In an oblique sort of way this phenomenon points up, however, the crux of my tirade -- poorly stated or no. That is -- the eternal problem of misunderstanding. While most any subject you'd care to name is fraught with this kind of peril: that of religion

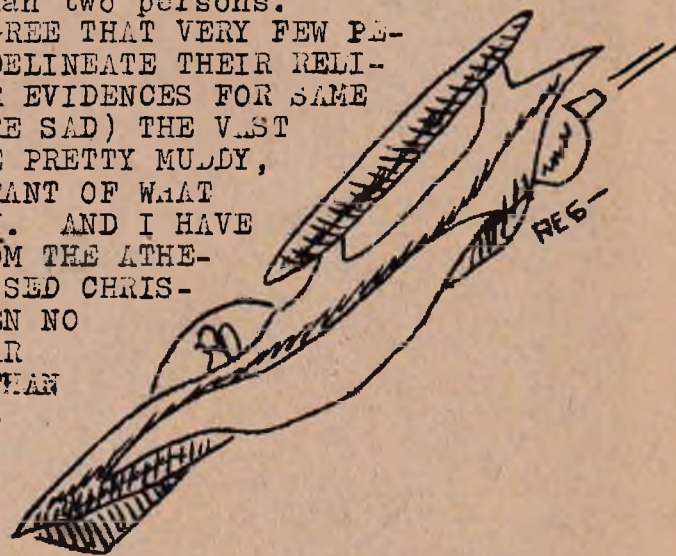
is particularly delicate owing to its inherent metaphysical and/or emotional construction. **** IN RE YOUR LAST SENTENCE, I SEEK NOT TO CONTEND, BUT RATHER TO CLARIFY, AS IT WERE. I HAVE NO QUARREL WITH YOUR USE OF THE TERM "metaphysical", IF BY ITS USE YOU MEAN IT AS "REFERRING OR PERTAINING TO METAPHYSICS". I MAKE THIS POINT BEACUSE RELIGION CAN WELL BE SAID TO BE "METAPHYSICS" SINCE RELIGION IS THE BRANCH OF PHILOSOPHY THAT ENDEAVORS TO EXPLAIN REALITY AND KNOWLEDGE AND STUDY AND DEFINE THE REAL NATURE OF THE UNIVERSE AND WORLD IN WHICH WE LIVE. ADDITIONALLY, THIS CLARIFICATION CARRIES THE HOPE OF PRECLUDING ANY MISCONCEPTIONS THAT BY "metaphysical" IS MEANT SOMETHING ON SUCH AN ABSTRACT PLANE THAT IT IS BEYOND THE REACH OF REASON, LOGIC AND SENSIBLE THOUGHT.

NEITHER WOULD I ARGUE WITH YOUR USE OF THE TERM "emotional", BUT LET US REMEMBER THAT EMOTIONS ARE A GIFT, BLESSING, ADVANTAGE (THE CONNOTATION IS YOUR CHOICE) OF THE HUMAN ANIMAL, FOR IF WE REMOVE THE EMOTIONS OF A HUMAN CREATURE WE HAVE LEFT ONLY A DREARY, DRAB, BLAND AND UNBEARABLY DULL HULK OF PROTOPLASM. UNDENIABLY, EMOTIONS CAN BE MISUSED (AND HAVE AND ARE GROSSLY MISUSED BY SOME ORGANIZATIONS AND SYSTEMS, BOTH SECULAR AND RELIGIOUS), BUT LET NO ONE MISCONSTRUE SO AS TO UNDERSTAND EMOTIONS OR THE QUALITY THEREOF ("emotional") TO BE BASICALLY "WRONG, MISLEADING OR UNREASONABLE". THE EMOTIONAL CONTENT OF MAN MAY BE MISDIRECTED BY FALSE AND HARMFUL PRINCIPLES, BUT THAT THAT IS A SAFEGUARD PROVIDED BY RELIGION. I PERSONALLY (YES, "PERSONALLY", BUT I CAN WELL SUPPORT MY "PERSONALLY" WITH OBJECTIVE EVIDENCES, IF SO CALLED FOR) FIND HONEST AND TRUE CHRISTIANITY TO BE THE RELIGIOUS SYSTEM MOST BENEFICAL IN THAT SAFEGUARDING AND RIGHTLY DIRECTING THE USE OF MAN'S EMOTIONAL CONTENT.

Your points in defense of written arguement -- as opposed to or in conjunction with verbal discourse -- are well taken and very true. However, my contention is this: very few people, very few, are adequately prepared to resort to the written medium in order to express -- not so much their views but why they hold those views -- on a subject which has confounded some of history's most brilliant attempts at elucidation. The ideal situation, I stoutly maintain, is discussion, and I might have the audacity to add, between no more than two persons.

**** I GRANT AND SADLY AGREE THAT VERY FEW PEOPLE ARE ADEQUATELY PREPARED TO DELINEATE THEIR RELIGIOUS VIEWS AND THE FOUNDATION OR EVIDENCES FOR SAME IN WRITING, IN FACT (AND EVEN MORE SAD) THE VAST MAJORITY OF PEOPLE I HAVE MET ARE PRETTY MUDDY, UNCLEAR, AMBIGUOUS AND EVEN IGNORANT OF WHAT THEY BELIEVE, NOT TO SPEAK OF WHY. AND I HAVE FOUND THIS CONDITION EXISTING FROM THE ATHEIST TO THE AGNOSTIC TO THE PROFESSED CHRISTIAN. A VERBAL DISCUSSION BETWEEN NO MORE THAN TWO PERSONS CAN FALL FAR SHORT OF THAT "ideal situation" THAN EVEN THE MOST THORNY OF DISSERTATIONS.

BUT AS THE EDITOR OF AN OPEN LET-COL I MERELY HAVE TO TRANSCRIBE WHAT COMES. ****



My reason for saying this -- and the crux of my whole proposition -- can be illustrated by examining a point you introduced, that of semantics.

You took me to task for resorting to semantic trickery in unintentionally referring to one's religious convictions as "personal". **** THE PRODUCT OF THE SEMANTICS WAS "trickery" IN ITSELF, BUT I FREELY GRANTED THAT IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN "unintentional" ON YOUR PART, I.E. THE PRODUCT OF THE SEMANTIC INVOLVED ESCAPED YOUR NOTICE. SO, I DIDN'T TAKE YOU TO TASK FOR "resorting" TO ANYTHING; I MERELY ENDEAVORED TO SHOW WHAT THE OTHER SIDE OF THE COIN WOULD LOOK LIKE WITH THE UNINTENTIONAL VEIL OF SEMANTICAL IMPLICATION REMOVED. LIKE, YOU'RE A FAIR & SQUARE WORD-WINDER. **** You defended your proposition by saying, "If we were to consider those 'religious convictions' as definite tenets of an organized religious body, numbering in the hundreds of thousands world-wide, we tend to remove ourselves from under the burden of the term 'personal'..." Not so, I cry, for having isolated a respectable number of souls from this hypothetical group who can even tell you what definite tenets they (as a body) hold formally (as opposed to other groups), I will defy even them to come into a complete point-for-point agreement on their religious views in toto. Invariably you will find an interesting mixture of obvious superstition and very strong elements of social and environmental prejudices salted in amongst the formal expostulations of the so-called 'established' belief system to which everyone in a given group supposedly subscribes. Therefore, religion is in the final analysis an intensely personal matter. And, being of such a nature, it can only be really intelligently discussed or presented, if you will, in an exceedingly small (or personal) gathering. We are all victims of the semantic coloration of words you mentioned and it is this very fact which prompted my rather extended discourse in the first place.

****I THINK I CAN PRODUCE RELIGIONISTS THAT WOULD DISPROVE YOUR PREMISE, BUT I AM RELUCTANT TO OFFER TO DO SO BECAUSE OF YOUR PHRASE: "a complete point-for-point agreement on their religious views in toto". IT IS "point-for-point" AND "in toto" THAT BOTHERS ME. AN INTELLIGENT CHRISTIAN DOES NOT STATE HIS BELIEFS BY SING-SONGING SOME "CREED", BUT RATHER EXPLAINS HIS BELIEFS AND THE REASONING AND EVIDENCE, SCRIPTURALLY AND SECULARLY, FOR HIS BELIEFS. THEREFORE, TWO OR MORE PERSONS OF THIS GROUP WOULD NOT USE THE SAME, EXACT WORDING, EXPRESSIONS OR PHRASEOLOGY. DUE TO THIS DIFFERENCE YOU MIGHT CLAIM THAT THE DIFFERENCE CONSTITUTES IMPORTANT SHADIAL MEANINGS AND CONNOTATIONS. IT WOULD BE, PERHAPS, SOMEWHAT LIKE SAYING: "TURN OUT THE LIGHTS BEFORE LEAVING THIS ROOM" AND "EXTINGUISH ALL ILLUMINATION BEFORE VACATING THE PREMISES". BASICALLY THE MEANING AND IMPORT IS THE SAME, BUT ONE COULD MAKE A CASE FOR A "DIFFERENCE" BY EMPLOYING THE CLAIM OF SHADIAL MEANING AND CONNOTATIONS. NEVERTHELESS, I GRANT THAT THE SITUATION YOU DESCRIBED DOES EXIST IN THE GREAT MAJORITY OF CHRISTENDOM, BUT I MERELY CLAIM THAT THERE ARE CHRISTIANS WHO DO NOT FASHION THEIR RELIGION TO FIT PERSONAL PREJUDICES AND SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS, THEREFORE NOT ALL RELIGION IS OF A "PERSONAL" NATURE AS IN THE FOREGOING CONTEXT. ****

Thanks Mike, Ed and Chez, your letters are appreciated. Come again you three, and let's hear from you other fans out there.

ISCARIOT

11

FROM ○○

BOX 368
ANNISTON
ALABAMA

PRINTED MATTER
RETURN REQ○

TO ○○
