

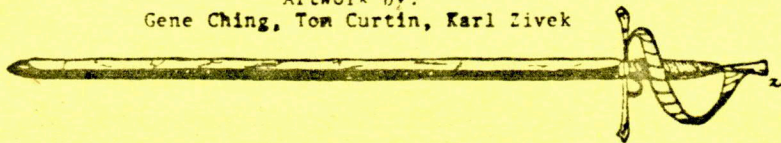
# abyss 10

DECEMBER 1980

## CONTENTS

EDITORIAL NOTES.....	2
DETERMINING MONSTER CHARACTERISTICS..... Glenn More	3
NMI: SWORD OF THE MARAUDER..... T. Curtin & Q. Avery	3
STATISTICS ON THE YSGARTH CAMPAIGN..... Bill Hedges	4
NMI: HUSH PUPPIES..... Lew Bryson	4
THE THERAPEUTIC ASPECTS OF D&D..... Tom Curtin	5
NMI: DELIMITER RING..... Lew Bryson	5
ELEMENTAL STAVES OF YSGARTH..... Frederick Shaw	5
SIMPLE REALISM: A NEW DAMAGE SYSTEM..... Carl Jones	6
NMI: DRAIN GRENADES..... Tom Curtin	7
CLERICS IN DUNGEONS AND DRAGONS..... Ronald Pehr	8
NMI: BLASTOGAUNTLETS..... Tom Curtin	10
MALEFIC MUSINGS..... Dave Nalle	10
NMI: HARP OF ILLUSIONING..... Paul Santos	11
SUMMONING HOSTILES..... Tom Curtin	11
NEW VISION SPELLS FOR THE BLIND..... Jon Schuller	12
SORCEPY DETAILED..... Dave Nalle	12
NMI: RING OF MISTS..... Tam Chang	15
ARTIFICERS, A NPC CLASS..... Jon Schuller	16
THE ROLE OF ASSASSINS..... Frederick Shaw	18
NMI: THE HELM OF LIGHTNING ATTRACTION..... Tom Curtin	19

Artwork by:  
Gene Ching, Tom Curtin, Karl Zivek



ABYSS is published roughly quarterly by Ragnarok Enterprises. Subscriptions are 4 issues for \$2.50, 8 issues for \$5.00, and 12 issues for \$7.50. Single copies are \$.75 each. Back issues 7, 8, and 9 are available for \$1.00 per copy. Write for overseas rates or dealer rates.

ABYSS welcomes submissions of any Fantasy or Role-Playing material. Payment is in credit for Ragnarok Enterprises products at a rate of .2 cents per word. This will be applied as subscription credit for ABYSS unless other arrangements are made. All submissions should be sent to ABYSS, 1402 21st St. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036. We take no responsibility for unsolicited manuscripts. All contents copyright 1980. Rights revert to contributors on publication.

EDITORIAL NOTES

At first I thought I wasn't going to be able to fill this issue. Then I was baraged with articles and the issue filled up remarkably quickly. This leaves me with only one gripe. It follows.

We need more subscribers for ABYSS. If we are to move forward with this publishing attempt we will have to get more copies sold so that I can have the monetary base necessary to continue to publish ABYSS.

Therefore, if you think ABYSS is worthwhile, write about 3 dozen of your friends and tell them how wonderful ABYSS is and how they just have to subscribe right now, and for the next 50 years.

If enough of you manage to do this we might be able to raise circulation, and that means more pages, more articles, and more issues. In the meanwhile I will continue to plod along as we've been going, keeping ABYSS alive and looking forward to the day that we may flourish. That part is up to you.

Dave Nalle,  
Lancaster, PA  
November, 1980

ABYSS STAFF

Editor/Publisher: Dave Nalle  
 Art Editor: Karl Zivek  
 Contributing Editors: Tom Curtin  
                             Lew Bryson  
                             Rick Shaw  
                             Jon Schuller

ART CREDITS

PAGE	ARTIST
Front Cover	Karl Zivek
2	Gene Ching
4	Gene Ching
8	Gene Ching
9	Gene Ching
15	Gene Ching
16	Tom Curtin
18	Gene Ching



© 1980 by Gene Ching

DETERMINING MONSTER CHARACTERISTICS

GLENN MOORE

In many FRPing systems monsters are assigned Hit Points and other important characteristics almost arbitrarily, by estimation and the whim of the DM. It is far more reasonable to determine these characteristics, such as attack damage and defensive ability by the size and mass of the creature. Such things as armor and magical attacks can then be worked out by the DM. This allows the DM to take any natural creature or imagined creature and find out what its characteristics would be like in realistic terms.

Given below is a table for doing this. It gives Hit Points, Attack Damage and NYR Defense Rating as determined from creature size. The HP and Damages given are suitable to AD&D and NYR. NYR Damage Class is given.

SC	HT(in)	WT(lbs)	HP	DAMAGE			NYR DR	NYR DC
				PUNCH	CLAW	BITE		
1	13	1	3	1	1	1	50	1
2	21	4	5	1	1D2	1	35	1
3	27	9	8	1	1D2	1	29	1
4	33	16	10	1	1D2	1D2	25	2
5	38	25	13	1	1D3	1D2	22	2
6	43	36	15	1D2	1D3	1D2	20	3
7	48	49	18	1D2	1D4	1D2	19	3
8	52	64	20	1D2	1D4	1D3	18	4
9	56	81	23	1D2	1D4	1D3	17	4
10	60	100	25	1D3	1D6	1D3	16	5
11	64	121	28	1D3	1D6	1D3	15	5
12	68	144	30	1D3	1D6	1D4	14	6
13	72	169	33	1D3	1D6	1D4	14	6
14	75	196	35	1D4	1D8	1D4	13	6
15	79	225	38	1D4	1D8	1D4	13	7
16	83	256	40	1D4	1D8	1D6	13	7
17	86	289	43	1D4	1D8	1D6	12	8
18	89	324	45	1D4	1D10	1D6	12	8
19	93	361	48	1D6	1D10	1D8	11	9
20	96	400	50	1D6	1D10	1D8	11	9
25	111	625	63	1D6	1D12	1D10	10	12
30	126	900	75	1D8	2D8	1D12	9	14
35	139	1225	88	1D8	3D6	1D12	8	16
40	152	1600	100	1D10	1D20	2D8	8	19
45	164	2025	113	1D12	1D20	3D6	7	21
50	176	2500	125	1D12	2D12	1D20	7	23
60	199	3600	150	2D8	3D10	2D12	6	26
70	221	4900	175	3D6	3D12	5D6	6	28
80	241	6400	200	1D20	4D10	3D10	6	30
90	261	8100	225	2D12	4D12	3D12	5	33
100	280	10000	250	2D12	5D10	5D8	5	35
120	316	14400	300	3D10	6D10	7D6	5	37
140	351	19600	350	3D12	7D10	4D12	4	40
160	383	25600	400	2D20	8D10	5D12	4	42
180	415	32400	450	6D8	9D10	6D10	4	44
200	445	40000	500	5D10	5D20	7D10	3	47

From this table the basic characteristics of any monster can be found. It is not intended for use on human PCs, however. SC is NYR Size Class, and makes no difference in other systems. NYR Damage Class is an addition to the New Ysgarth Rules, described later in this issue by Carl Jones.

A typical monster from this system would be an Ogre, 8ft. tall, SC of 20, with 50HP, Fists for 1D6, and bite for 1D8. His DR would be 11, and his DC would be 9. With a DC of 9, his club would strike for 2D8 per round.

NMI: SWORD OF THE MARAUDER

TOM CURTIN AND QUINN AVERY

This is to all appearances a standard broadsword, but in rather bad condition, nicked up, scratched, and the like. It is +4/+3, however, and has one unusual power. The sword automatically does triple damage when it strikes any female humanoid, or any humanoid child who is adolescent, or younger. It also gets double damage on any unarmed or armored foe, or any humanoid who is senile, immobile, feeble, or mentally retarded.

STATISTICS ON THE YSGARTH CAMPAIGN

BILL HEDGES

We recently did a statistical breakdown of the Ysgarth Campaign, and as it is one of the best developed and longest running campaigns in the country these figures might be of interest to other campaigns.

ALIGNMENT

Lawful	14%	Good	13%	Alignment in Ysgarth tends towards C/N or N/N, although all other aspects of alignment are well represented.
Neutral	42%	Neutral	62%	
Chaotic	44%	Evil	25%	

CHARACTER CLASS

Fighter	40.8%	Warrior Classes	56.13%	The campaign seems to be largely dominated by Warrior type characters, followed at some distance by Mage classes. Although they hold the 2nd percentage position, with Mystic at 5.9%, Clerics as a group trail far behind the other two character class groups. Some of this may be due to the diversity of Mage classes and to the versatility of some fighter classes. In the top 10 classes, 3 are Warrior types, 5 are Mage types, and 2 are Cleric types.
Mystic	5.9%	Mage Classes	32.26%	
Berserker	5.3%	Cleric Classes	11.61%	
Wizard	5.3%			
Necromancer	4.6%			
Sorcerer	3.9%			
Enchanter	3.9%			
Pyromancer	3.3%			
Paladin	2.6%			
Prelate	2.6%			
Assasin	2.0%			
Bard	2.0%			
Thaumaturge	2.0%			
Physician	2.0%			
All Others	9.2%			

RELIGION

Odin	17.0%	Aesir	26.7%	These figures show a marked dominance of Norse oriented gods, with a total of 38.9% between the various different groups of gods worshipped by the vikings.
Set	7.9%	Egyptian	14.4%	
Thor	6.8%	Vanir	10.0%	
Mordiggan	3.4%	Persian	8.9%	The next most popular group is the gods of ancient Egypt, led, oddly enough by Set, a god of darkness and Evil. Gilrod, who placed 6th in the top 10 gods is a Player Character god, native to the campaign, who through his power and fame was elevated to godhood. In the future, Gilrod is expected to become more popular as his champion Tottengjager has slain the champion of Odin in Ptolemeias, and Odin is banished from the city for 5 game years.
Mannan	3.4%	Irish	5.6%	
Gilrod	3.4%	Greek	5.6%	
Njord	3.4%	Welsh	3.3%	
Thanatos	3.4%	Lovecraft	2.2%	
Mithras	3.4%	Jottun	2.2%	
Horus	3.4%	Moorcock	2.2%	
Ahriman	3.4%	Other	18.9%	
Van	3.4%			
Ra	2.3%			
Aranrhud	2.3%			
Heimdall	2.3%			
Shiva	2.3%			
Ba'al	2.3%			
Other Gods	26.2%			



© 1980 Gary Arndt

CONCLUSION

The average character on Ysgarth would be a N/N fighter who worshiped Odin, and might have slight Chaotic leanings. Not too surprisingly, a fair number of actual characters match this exact description. The most notable one is Unferth Utlagian Skjoldung, played by Dave Nalle.

NMI: HUSH PUPPIES

LEW BRYSON

These are small grenades which work on the principle that "silence is golden". They have a small switch on them for activation. This is the only thing which mars their otherwise perfect golden, spherical forms. Once the switch is activated, they are dormant for 30 seconds. Then they cause all within a 10 yard radius to be completely silent. All noise in the area is suppressed for a period of 15 minutes. Then the sphere vaporizes with a small pop. They are about the size and weight of a softball, and easily thrown.

## THE THERAPEUTIC ASPECTS OF D&amp;D

TOM CURTIN

Depression and anxiety begin to take their toll. You're a college senior and almost out the door into the cold, cold world. The deans have it in for you after that charming display of anatomy you indulged in during your last lost weekend. Besides that you've got three bank loans out but no signs of impending employment, not to mention the \$468 the library is asking in overdue fines. All this plus finals and root canal surgery in two weeks. The 7,762 pages of back reading rounds out the picture and makes your life complete.

Never fear, I have the temporary remedy for these pressing problems. It is my belief that a few good nights of D&D can cure the deepest seizure of depression (of course, alcohol does help). D&D is a fascinating and novel game. It's the only game I know where you can literally get away with murder, or if you're thirsty, kill for a beer. And now that rock 'n' roll has come to the good old world of Ysgarth (In the guise of the Berserker Bard, Elvish Costello), you die hard rockers can sell your soul for rock 'n' roll. The possibilities are endless. Your characters don't have to worry about defaulting on bank loans... hell, they can just skip the plane. And deans. HA! Your character doesn't have to be polite to anyone... unless they're bigger than him (That's why you call dragons "Sir").

For me D&D is a little oasis of chaos in the mundane world of good and order. I really feel rejuvenated after frying some deserving and obnoxious hobbit. It's my favorite sport. In a good long D&D game my depressions, anxieties, and doubts vanish as I fiedishly collapse the tavern roof on the local yokels.

I must admit that some members of our campaign do get carried away in their continuing efforts to work out the week's frustrations. On one such occasion one poor Ork took an unlimited amount of abuse. They captured this poor creature, and started to interrogate him mercilessly. They would slice his face up and immediately heal the damage with a gem of regeneration. It was cruel, but we all relished the poor Ork's trauma. This episode was a great way to work off the tensions of an Astronomy quiz.

D&D is the best outlet for a week of failures and the attendant feeling of helplessness. It is a chance to clear your mind and start out fresh. So go out there and do some disgusting and humiliating things to a family of stone trolls. You'll feel better in no time.

## NMI: DELIMITER RING

LEW BRYSON

This is a plain iron ring which is magical, but cannot be analysed. If it is put on it cannot be removed, but its effects will soon become very clear. From then on any Magic Item used by the wearer will be Delimited on its first use. This means that when it is activated all of the charges will be released at once, so a wand of 1D8 fireballs with 14 charges would release all 14 fireballs at once when used. The Magic Item is then unable to be recharged. Items with unlimited uses should have a number of charges assigned, between 20 and 100, and these should all be used up and it should be drained permanently. If the ring is cut off the effect stays with the person who first put it on. This is a great way to cut down on annoying Magic Items in a campaign.

## ELEMENTAL STAVES OF YSGARTH

FREDERICK SHAW

In the NYR run Ysgarth Campaign, one of the most sought after magical items is the magic sword or axe. Most players and even DMs overlook the possibilities of a good quarterstaff as a defensive or offensive weapon. Among the ancient tales of Ysgarth, we often hear of the fabled Staff of Faldvg or tales of lesser Staves of Wizardry, Sorcery and Thaumaturgy. Another group of staves deals with the elemental powers of nature. The most powerful of these represent the Lords of the four elemental planes of the Moorcockian Mythos. These are the Staves of Strasha, Misha, Kakatal, and Grome. The powers of these items are listed below.

STAFF OF MISHA, "Lord of the Air"

This staff is +5/+5 with +3 added to defensive ability. It hits two times a round for 2D6 each time. At longer distances it can shoot a lightning bolt for 3D12 each round. The bearer is protected from lightning, sonic attacks, and can summon and control one 16 die Air Elemental per week. The staff is sentient.

STAFF OF GROME, "The Earth Lord"

This staff is "3"/"5, and adds 3 to defensive ability. It hits twice per round, each hit doing 1D20. At missile range it can shoot one earth dart per round for 2D8. The bearer can assimilate with the earth, pass through stone and earth walls, and summon and control one 16 die earth elemental once per week. The staff is sentient.

STAFF OF STRAASHA, "Lord of the Waters"

This staff is +2/+4, and adds 2 to defensive ability. It hits twice per round, each hit doing 1D10. Its missile attack is a bolt of water for 2D10, or a blinding spray of salty water. The bolt of water can be fired as darts, each doing 1D4 and hitting separately. It will fire the user's level in bolts. The bearer can merge with and breathe water. He can move freely and at double speed while submerged. He can also summon the usual 16 die elemental and control it. The staff is sentient, and the missile attacks come directly from it, not dependant on the availability of free water in the area.

STAFF OF KAKATAL, "Lord of Fire"

This last staff is perhaps the most powerful of the lot. It is +5/+5, and adds 4 to defensive ability. It hits for 2D8 two times a round, or can shoot a fireball of 3D10, or a coldfire ball of 1D20, each round. The user is immune to heat and fire, and the staff can throw the spells flameform, firevision, fireburst, fire travel, and wall of fire(2D10). In addition, it can summon and control the expected fire elemental once per week. It is also sentient.

SIMPLE REALISM: A NEW DAMAGE SYSTEM

CARL JONES

I propose an alternative to the unwieldy systems for handling damage by either plusses as in D&D, or a multiplier as in the NYR. Instead, I propose that a weapon have a certain base damage, rolled with a particular die or set of die, but that the range of the die used be changed depending on the Strength and size of the user.

For this you need a standard strength of 0 to 24, rolled with modifiable 3D6. You need the NYR Size Class(Square root of weight). You need weapons with established die ranges.

What the system means is that a character is assigned a Damage Class determined from SC and STR. This is compared to the base damage of his weapon, and the result is the die which that weapon actually does in his hands. Thus, a weapon which does a lot of damage for a huge 18 STR fighter may do far less for a small 8 STR thief. This can be extended to include magical weapons which do unusual damage, but should not be applied to non-hand-to-hand or thrown attacks.

DAMAGE CLASS

STR	SC																	DC	Heaviest Weapon
	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23		
3	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	2				2	2 lbs
6	1	2	2	2	2	2	3	3	3	3	3	4	4	4				4	4 lbs
9	2	2	3	3	3	4	4	4	5	5	5	5	6	6				6	7 lbs
12	3	3	4	4	4	5	5	6	6	6	7	7	8	8				8	11 lbs
15	4	4	5	5	6	6	7	7	8	8	9	9	10	10				10	16 lbs
18	4	5	6	6	7	7	8	8	9	10	10	11	11	12				12	22 lbs
21	5	6	6	7	8	8	9	10	11	11	12	13	13	14				14	29 lbs
24	6	6	7	8	9	10	10	11	12	13	14	14	15	16				16	37 lbs
																		18	46 lbs

From these two tables we have DC and Heaviest Weapon. Heaviest Weapon indicates the maximum weight a weapon can be for the character to use it without minuses. Each additional 50% of the total weight makes the weapon minus one. Thus a character with a DC of 4 who is using a 7 pound broadsword would be -2 to hit with it. A Short Sword weighs about 3lbs, a broadsword about 7, a 1 $\frac{1}{2}$  hand sword about 9, and a 2 handed sword about 12.

DC is then taken to the next table where it is compared with the base damage of the weapon to find the true damage.

BASE DAMAGE	MAX DAMAGE	DC	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
D3	3	1	1	1	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
D4	4	1	1	1	2	3	4	6	8	10	12	14	16	18	20	22	24
D6	6	1	2	3	4	6	8	10	12	14	16	18	20	22	24	26	28
D8	8	2	3	4	6	8	10	12	14	16	18	20	22	24	26	28	30
D10	10	3	4	6	8	10	12	14	16	18	20	22	24	26	28	30	32
D12	12	4	6	8	10	12	14	16	18	20	22	24	26	28	30	32	34
D8+D6	14	6	8	10	12	14	16	18	20	22	24	26	28	30	32	34	36
2D8	16	8	10	12	14	16	18	20	22	24	26	28	30	32	34	36	38
3D6	18	10	12	14	16	18	20	22	24	26	28	30	32	34	36	38	40
1D20	20	12	14	16	18	20	22	24	26	28	30	32	34	36	38	40	42
D10+D12	22	14	16	18	20	22	24	26	28	30	32	34	36	38	40	42	44
2D12	24	16	18	20	22	24	26	28	30	32	34	36	38	40	42	44	46
D10+2D8	26	18	20	22	24	26	28	30	32	34	36	38	40	42	44	46	48
D8+2D10	28	20	22	24	26	28	30	32	34	36	38	40	42	44	46	48	50
3D10	30	22	24	26	28	30	32	34	36	38	40	42	44	46	48	50	52

All true damages on this table are given in terms of their maximum which can be converted to a die roll by comparing the first two columns on the left. Max Damage is the maximum, and comparable to the given TD. Base Damage is the Die Roll. Look up the TD on the Max Damage table and find the parallel die roll.

Given next is a table for finding the weight of a non-magical weapon according to the damage which it does. This is only approximate. The weight/use relationship indicates that some of the figures given above, such as DC 1 getting 1D20 on a 28 rated weapon is only a hypothetical situation, unless in the case of a magical weapon.

To approximate rolls with a max over 30 use as few die as possible, and try to keep them all within 2 of each other's maximum value. For example, 46 should be D10+3D12, not something like D6+4D10. This is to keep the average as close to correct as possible. The average of the 1st is 25 and the average of the 2nd is 25.5. The ideal average is 23, so the first is slightly closer.

WEAPON DAMAGE MAX	PROBABLE WEIGHT(lbs)
2	1-
4	2-
6	4-
8	7-
10	11-
12	16-
14	22-
16	29-

Combining all of these tables we can find an example: Jokesh, a fighter with a 17 STR, and a SC of 15 has a DC of 9. His heaviest weapon would weigh 16 pounds, so he chooses to use a 2 Handed Sword which does 1D12 base, and weighs 14 pounds. Comparing Base Damage and DC we find a 20, which means that that weapon hits for 1D20 in his hands.

This system comes out as a combination of the bonus system and the multiplier system, but is easier to use and quite a bit more realistic.

NMI: DRAIN GRENADES

TOM CURTIN

When these glass spheres are thrown, they explode on impact, and create a field which will drain any living being's fatigue by 4D12, and knock 1D3 off CON and STR for 4 hours. All within 50ft are drained by it.

Clerics have always been the character class of last resort in DUNGEONS & DRAGONS (D&D). It is the class for characters who were rolled up with poor characteristics. This was because there was no disadvantage to playing a Cleric with a low Wisdom, but having a low Prime Requisite did incur penalties in other classes. Further, Clerics had lower experience cost to gain levels than Fighters or Mages, yet fought better than the latter. The Cleric was clearly a compromise class, created as a somewhat hastily worked out classes which had evolved from the Fantasy Supplement in the CHAINMAIL rules, the precursor to D&D. The introduction of Thieves in GRAYHAWK, with an even lower experience cost still left Clerics the easy compromise choice, because Thieves couldn't carry heavy armor and had fewer Hit Points. These facts were especially significant because of the large defensive advantages conferred by D&D armor with little penalty. In addition, the Hit Die system made every single Hit Point of critical value. So Clerics were an extremely cost-efficient character class: relatively good Hit Points, armor, use of spells, low experience cost, and you didn't even need a good Prime Requisite. While cost-efficiency is a good way to design a machine, it shouldn't be a reason to select a character class in a Fantasy Role Playing Game (FRPG). A character class should be justified by being interesting and balanced, not just in that the rolled statistics are not distinguished enough to mark it as suited to any other class.



© 1980 by GENE CHONG.

Advanced D&D redressed the fault somewhat. Wisdom was given an impact on the abilities of a Cleric character. Presumably, players choose to be Clerics for reasons other than not being suited to anything else. But, the high combat potential of the class is still there for a low experience cost. The tactical trade off of high Hit Points and spells for being forbidden to bear bladed weapons still exists as well. Although AD&D defined the spells more precisely and added a few new ones, the differentiation between Clerical miracles and standard sorcery is still not defined, so that Clerics are just an alternate Mage class. The rules state that Clerics get their spells granted directly by deities, but they seem to acquire and cast them just as Mages do.

Clerics don't role-play well because of this. They fight with the fighters and cast spells with the spell-casters. They lack flavor, style, and the uniqueness which would make them a desirable class on their own merit. Others apparently agree with me, since newer FRPGs dispense with Clerics as a separate character class (e.g. THE FANTASY TRIP, ADVENTURES IN FANTASY, HIGH FANTASY, RUNEQUEST, DRAGONQUEST, and quasi-FRPG such as DEATHMAZE).

While I play a variant form of D&D, and I like Clerics, I have modified the parameters of the character class. In some ways they are weaker than the D&D rules suggest, and less cost-efficient. My intent is to make them more balanced against other characters, both within the numerical strictures of the rules, and as I imagine their place in the fantasy world.

The two chief areas of all FRPGs are combat and magic. How I fit Clerics into these is addressed below.

1) Clerics should use the lowest rung on the combat matrix, akin to Mages. They should have low experience to gain levels, and that rapid gain in levels raises them above a mage on the combat table. Mages are assumed to fight poorly because they spend all of their time learning spells and do not practice combat. Likewise, Clerics are presumably being devout much of the time, and ministering to their flock. Mages and Clerics probably practice fighting about as much as each other. Further, it is assumed that Mages are not physically robust, from mental exertion and lack of exercise. This same assumption should apply to Clerics who spend as much time as Mages in study and meditation. Neither class gets nearly the physical training of a Fighter. In addition, fighting is easy to learn, so the burly and muscular types would gravitate towards it, leaving the weaker ones for the other classes. Mages and Clerics should be about equal as Fighters, behind other classes like true Fighters, Thieves, and Monks, all of whom are more combat oriented in concept.



2) Clerics should have the same Hit Points as Mages. Again this is predicated on the Mage and Cleric following the same pattern of physical weakness. Why should a Cleric be more difficult to kill than a Monk, rigorously trained to hardship, or an active Thief? If HP were awarded by Godly favor, then Clerics would have more than Fighters, and as they don't, that theory can be ruled out. Preserving their ability to wear armor, Clerics are still ahead of many classes in a fight, and their spell-casting ability balances off well against the combat ability of a Fighter. This makes the class fairly well off and equivalent in power to other classes.

3) Clerics should be limited in weapons. You might point out the rule about forbidding edged weapons, but that is a Christian concept. Other religions have different hang-ups. The limiting should be logical and determined by the religion. It should be a requirement of his religion. Say a single weapon is viewed as holy enough for priests to use, for example a sacrificial knife, or something else related to ritual or myth. In fact, most Clerics wouldn't use weapons at all. Their place is not in combat, but in the back lines, succoring the faithful, with healing, detection, and other non-combative spells. Since there is a lot of combat in D&D games, they may need to be able to defend themselves, so that ability would be present. For those who use a lot of different weapons, Clerics might be allowed to add on another appropriate one with each rung in the combat matrix. To add spice, require the use of a weapon blessed by the local Clerical big-shot. If you lose or break that "holy weapon", penance, either devotional or monetary might be required to that Grand Poobah for a replacement.

4) In systems where Mages use Spell Points, Mana, or the like, keep Clerics on a set number of spells as in D&D. Spell Points imply a power coming from the Mage or the cosmos. In contrast Clerics are getting their power as a grant of their god. There is no loss in power with use. It requires concentration for Clerical spells, but not stamina or psychic power. I favor the use of Spell Points for mages to keep them separated from Clerics and to add variety to the game. This will mean that Mages have more spells than Clerics, but that is the way it is in D&D already.

5) Clerics needn't learn spells in the manner of Mages. He should have full knowledge of those spells allowed at his level. He is not out to seek or develop knowledge. He is just applying the power of his deity. What he can do depends on his stature as a holy man, not his knowledge or research. He should be limited only in the number of miracles or spells he can perform a day, dependant on his level and standing with his god and faith.

6) Most Clerical spells are not of a hostile or combat nature. This is as it should be. For role-playing purposes, Clerics are going to be the support crew, helpers, scholars, and healers. Their spells should reflect this. D&D does this to some extent, but I propose a further modification: Let there be no saving throw against Clerical miracles. This is a radical change, but an acceptable one if you delete certain spells and replace them with more beneficent ones. There is no reason to save against curing and similar spells. This can be used to establish another division between Mages and Clerics. The former are manipulating physical forces and victims of their spells have the capacity and desire to resist the effects of that manipulation and "save vs. magic". Clerics are getting it straight from the Front Office. Nobody can gainsay the will of the gods, no matter how weak the vessel which is carrying it. The balance here is the limit on the number



© 1983 by Gary N. Jones

of spells a Cleric is allowed per day and the basically non-offensive nature of most of them. An alternative in systems with a klutz factor or percent chance of a spell going wrong, is to except Clerics from this risk. It is rather petty for the gods to let a miracle to go wrong, unless they have a reason. Either of these ideas will separate Clerics from Mages. The gods work in mysterious ways their wonders to perform, but the mills of the gods grind exceeding fine, hence the greater chance of a Clerical miracle going right than of a Mage spell working perfectly.

7) Clerical spells should have effects depending in quantity upon the Cleric's level, while Mage effects should depend upon the power of the spell and the amount the Mage chooses to augment it. Clerics become dearer

to their god as they go up levels, so they should gain more divine favor and make better miracles. Where an acolyte could heal a swordcut, the High-Priest might be able to head someone with 3rd degree Dragonfire burns over 99% of their body with the same prayer. In contrast, a Mage's results would be the same for the same amount of input no matter what their level, though they might be able to put more into it if they wished at higher level.

These suggested modifications to the Cleric character class in D&D can be used with the standard D&D combat matrix and spell lists, or with any modifications and additions (Klutz factors, Spell Points, etc.) that players who have altered the system are using. Most of the readers of this magazine are probably using a variant rule structure of some sort which would allow the easy incorporation of these rules. For a guideline a list of the spells I allow Clerics to use.

FIRST ORDER: Detection of Magic  
 Detection of Evil  
 Detection of Undead  
 Detection of Life  
 Detection of Age  
 Detection of Poison

THIRD ORDER: Know Thy Enemy-gives knowledge of foe's profession, level and intent.  
 Analyze-divine revelation about an object.

SECOND ORDER: Detection of Traps  
 Detection of Ambushes  
 Detection of Alignment  
 The Augury

FOURTH ORDER: Detection of Treasure- (This requires a monetary sacrifice, regardless of success or failure)

Fi FIFTH ORDER: The Commune

Each of these spells has a standard range on 120', except Analyze, which requires handling the object, and Know Thy Enemy, which has a range of only 12'. The Augury allows limited precognition, roughly 1 minute. The Commune is as in D&D. However, the gods are mysterious. Their signs and portents are not always clear, even to the initiate. So, the success of these spells is dependant on the faithfulness and perception of the Cleric using them, as well as his standing with his god.

NMI: BLASTOGAUNTLETS

TOM CURTIN

These mighty gauntlets of punching are activated on concussion. All the player knows is that they punch for a lot of damage. What they do is explode for 5D20 to the object struck. Unfortunately, the same amount of damage will be taken by the hand and forearm of the wearer, and he will take 1/2 that damage overall from the shock of the explosion. Most hands can not withstand 5D20, so these may lead to a lot of 1 armed bandits roaming the dungeons.

MALEFIC MUSINGS

DAVE NALLE

There are almost 1,000,000 people out there somewhere who play some form of Fantasy Role Playing Game. This is a pleasing thought. 950,000 of those people play only AD&D or D&D, and 900,000 of them have never even heard of another system. These thoughts are not pleasing.

Something is wrong. Worthy rule systems like RUNEQUEST, TUNNELS & TROLLS, CHIVALRY & SORCERY, THE NEW YSGARTH RULES, and dozens of others are not reaching a huge and hungry market, a market which buys every one of TSR's dungeon modules, no matter how random or ill-concieved, and most of whom know nothing of designing an adventure, much less a world. All of these systems together reach only some 5% of the FRPers in the world. Now, this may be because they are not attractive to the AD&D audience, who many APA writers are now theorizing to be mostly socially deviant adolescents temporarily diverted from immolating the neighbor's dog to romping on trolls and ogres. On the other hand, it may just be a problem of att-

itude, recognition, and a new form of bigotry.

The hundreds of thousands of FRPers out there who have never dained to seek out or consider alternatives to AD&D are bad enough, but they are being kept in their ignorance by some few who have looked on C&S, or RQ, and said, "Who needs these imitations, we play AD&D, the original and real FRPG." This attitude is stupid. It is almost as stupid as it is common. At every convention I meet blank stares and muttered, "You're playing what? I only play D&D." Or more depressing, some confused novice D&Der looks on in mystification, and when invited to join in says, "I don't know how," unwilling to take the time to learn, when the easy fruit of D&D are already in his grasp.

This problem can be solved, and more people can begin to play RQ, C&S, T&T, NYR and the others. You can go out, and grab some smart kid, or some old fantasy fan, and instead of showing him D&D, start him out on something new. He's never played anything else, so the closed-mindedness that has worked for D&D so long will work for us, when he grabs a few friends and begins to spread some other role-playing system around.

Activism is the key. A willingness and commitment to get things moving and stimulate some, as yet, uncaptured mind. If the 50,000 of us who have moved beyond D&D did this, if only with a variant system, our ranks, and the ranks of FRPing would swell, and someday the RQers and T&Ters would catch up with the AD&Ders, and maybe ABYSS's circulation would increase.

NMI: HARP OF ILLUSIONING

PAUL SANTOS

This is a very rare Bardic Magic Item. It allows a bard who is playing it to create illusions in the same manner as a Thaumaturge under the NYR illusion system(also in DIFFERENT WORLDS). He can create no illusion with the harp than is greater than 3/4 his own level as a Bard. It looks like a normal harp, and will work with any normal Bardic spell.

SUMMONING HOSTILES

TOM CURTIN

*"This is another fine mess you've gotten us into Ollie!"*

In my experience as a FRPer I have found that the ability to summon elementals is very useful. It can be a lucrative business. Your character can just sit back and collect all the goodies while that big, dumb Djinn you just summoned does a job on that nasty red dragon. Why get your hands dirty when you've got friends, right? After all, you're not being paid to die. And if that Djinn dies in the effort, there are plenty more where he came from. Although most PCs make an effort to limit their use of summoned beings, my experience as a DM has changed my point of view. I used to ignore my DM's gripes as indigestion or something, but now I must join in the griping chorus. Some PCs indulge in summonings in a lackadaisical, Carte Blanche manner. This cheats the DM who designed the adventure as a challenge to the characters, not to a runaway Sheitan. Second, the overuse of elementals cheats the players out of the excitement and adventure which had been planned for them.

Most element oriented mages, like Geomancers, Pyromancers, Hydromancers, and Windmasters, have only a small chance of summoning a hostile elemental, even if they klutz the spell. They are more likely just to get a fizzle. Thus, there is little danger and much profit in summonings. Look at this situation in a different way. Say you're a 25th level Djinn and you were just summoned by this rude, obnoxious, upstart Dwarf Pyromancer. He wants you to wrestle with a huge Tangletree. Personally, if I were the Djinn, I'd rather do a tango on the bimbo's head than tangle with certain death.

My suggestion would make most Elemental Mages and people with scrolls or magic items of summoning think twice before passing the buck to some luckless elemental. If the Mage doesn't klutz on the summoning, then there should be another roll made on a D100 to see if he summoned an ill-tempered elemental hostile to summoning pipsqueeks. There should be about a 15% chance that the elemental will be hostile. If the summoner rolls 16 or better all is well, but if he rolls 15 or less, roll a D12 and consult the table below for the kind of mayhem the unhappy elemental will create on his arrival.

ROLL	RESULT
1, 2, 3	The elemental will serve reluctantly, unless there is a chance of mortal injury, and provided he get an appropriate cut of the rewards and treasure.
4, 5	The elemental will ignore the party and wander off on his own business.
6, 7, 8, 9	The elemental will try to capture his summoner and drag him back to be tortured at the appropriate elemental stronghold, for example, Nihlas Asfar, the "City of Brass", where the Djinn live.
10, 11	The elemental will go berserk on the party, attacking it with fury, or even ally with whatever the party is fighting, if that seems appropriate.
12	The elemental will summon a host of other elementals to help him kill or capture the party.

With this system elemental summoning may become somewhat more playable, with risks to balance its great benefits, and the possibility for some rather exacting role-playing.

**NEW VISION SPELLS FOR THE BLIND**

JON SCHULLER

Now there is hope for those unfortunate characters who have had their eyes ripped out by Zaedukrom, gouged out by a Harpy, melted with acid, or seared out with red-hot poker. There may even be hope for those characters who are born blind. Throwing many spells does not require sight, and magic can easily replace the loss of one's ocular orbs. The spells given below are ideally suited for blinded mages.

**MINDSEE**-This spell allows a blind character to see with his mind. He will receive images in black and white, or with one additional color per level of casting. His Eyesight is equal to his level, and range is about 1/4 of what it would normally be. There is no outward manifestation, however, if he is examined with infravision his eye-sockets will seem to glow white. Level:7, CT:8 CR, Duration:Level x 3 hours.

**EYES OF ARGUS**-This spell, when cast in conjunction with Mindsee, extends the range of vision to a full circle around the subject. The duration is the same as Mindsee. Level:5, CT:12 CR. Sighted persons who have mindsee or this spell with it must save each turn against being disoriented.

**SONAR VISION**-This allows the caster to see through sound waves. His EYE becomes equal to his HEA. The range is 2 x his level in yards. He can also tell the density of objects. He cannot see color. Level:6, CT:5 CR, Duration:1 HR.

**SORCERY DETAILED**

DAVE NALLE

One of the most potentially fascinating classes is that of the Sorcerer, who deals with demons and summoning. I treated the class briefly in ABYSS #5/6, and promised to do more descriptions of demon princes and their powers. That treatment was inadequate and lacked the detail needed to make the class really playable and useful on an adventure. This article will give some of the promised demons and set the class in its rightful place, so that Thazaydon, and his apprentices Riff, Dorkwaste, and Suckalotte will know what they are doing.

Demons and summonings can be divided up into three groups. These are Lesser, Prime and Greater. Each group of demons has its own summoning, which can be used in general for that groups. The groups denote degree of power. In addition to casting the summoning, the name of the demon wanted must be used. If the name is not used, a random demon from that group will come in answer. Each summoning must be learned separately, and it also costs Skill Points to learn demon names, though this is usually not much.

Other spells are also involved. A pentacle can be created to help hold the demon, and a battle of wills between Summoner and demon ensues on his arrival to bind him to the Sorcerer's control. Once the demon is bound, the sorcerer can learn his name, sort of like a phone-number, for future use.

**PENTACLE OF BINDING**

This spell, which involves the drawing of the traditional 5 pointed star on the summoning area, is used to aid the Sorcerer in controlling the demon. It is a psychic fortress of sorts with a Strength of the Caster's level times his Willpower, divided by 3 (CL x WIL/3). This value is added to what will be called his Sorcery Index. Level:6.

**WILL ENHANCEMENT**

This is a skill, not a spell, which is learnable by Sorcerers. It has the effect of raising the character's WIL, when he engages in some sort of battle of wills. It is used in determining Sorcery Index. It is advisable that a Sorcerer learn at least several levels of this skill. It counts as a spell towards distribution and Magic Index. Cost:5/Level.

**SORCERY INDEX(SI)**

This is a rating of a Sorcerer's will and domination ability. It is equal to his WIL x his level of Will Enhancement. When a pentacle is being used, the strength of the pentacle is added to it.

**DEMON WILL RATING(WR)**

This is the value, or characteristic for the demon which indicates his ability to possess a summoner. It is the counteractive power to SI. It is equal to the demon's level times his WIL. Most demons have WIL of 14 or more.

**WILL BATTLE**

This is initiated on the arrival of the demon, and if the sorcerer wins, the summoning is successful and the demon is in his control. He may then erase the pentacle, and control the demon for the duration of the summoning. If the demon wins, he takes possession of the sorcerer's body, and will use it to devious and often fatal ends.

Will battle is resolved by comparison of the wills of the two combatants, using this formula:  $SI-WR = \%$  chance of successful binding. Thus a high level Sorcerer with a SI of 220 would have no problem binding an imp with a WR of 30 or so.

It should be noted that the pentacle affects the SI of the summoner, and that like any other NYR spell, the power can be increased.

**LESSER SUMMONING**

This, the least of the summoning spells, calls up the class of demons generally referred to as Imps. These beings are of low power, and minor use. The spell itself is level 3, and lasts for 1 hour. It costs 1 Skill Point to learn the name of an Imp. No imp will have a WR less than 10 or greater than 75. WR should be determined by usefulness of the Imp, and the corresponding level. They are of levels 1 to 5.

Each imp has different powers, though some may be duplicates of each other. They usually have no more than one special ability, though some of the most powerful may have two related ones. They are all single-minded and of little wit. They are idiosyncratic, and if they possess a person he will act very odd. They usually appear 1 to 30 inches tall, with leathery skin, and wings. All can fly and teleport at will.

Imp powers are usually akin to a spell, so an imp will exist for almost every common spell. In general the best imp will not be able to do more than about 3D6 damage with his power. They can use their power about once a minute on the average. Some typical imps are fire-imps, who do 1D4 flame damage at will, and can light anything on fire. Each level adds 1 die to their damage up to 5D4 at 5th level. Imps of temptation, who work as a charm spell, and with a -4 at 5th level are also common.

Imps are notably cowardly and complaining. They are also sneaky and treacherous. They like to grumble and cause problems.

**PRIME SUMMONING**

This is the same as the lesser summoning, but it is 10th level. It summons several types of true demons who have been detailed in ABYSS, among them elemental demons, demon legion types, Night-Horrors, and the like. It is the summoning for D&D demons type I-V. Each of these types of demons has its own abilities, and there are a number of members of each group. Each one has its own name, and the cost to learn these is equal to 1/4 the level of the demon. These types of demons are usually used to fight, or for similar purposes, and do not have the abilities of Imps, or the powers of Greater Demons. These demons are of level 6 to 15, and should have WRs determined from their level, ranging from around 75 to around 250. When they possess a person he usually becomes very violent and berserkly hostile. Prime demons in service are surly and inefficient whenever possible. The summoning lasts for 1 hour. They are often lazy and wilful.

**GREATER SUMMONING**

This calls demons of more note than those of the Prime class. It works on the more powerful combat demons such as Demon Assassins, and on Demon Princes. In general these beings are much harder to control, even if bound, and Will Battle will be reinitiated by them about once per 10 minute turn, with the chance of binding reduced 5% each time. The actual summoning is level 16. These demons are of level 16 or higher, with WRs of at least 250, and possibly as much as 1000, in the case of the most awesome. This class includes the demons given in issue 5/6 of ABYSS, and the demons of the Abyss given in issue #8.

As was explained in the previous article, these demons mainly grant powers for limited periods, these powers corresponding to various spells appropriate to their nature. Each demon has 1 to 3 grantable powers, though for certain considerations more can be done. They can also be ordered to fight, but the pentacle must then be removed, and they will enter into successive will battles to take over the sorcerer.

The exception to the limitations on the powers of greater demons is that they may grant almost anything if they are paid back by the agreement, signed in blood, that the soul of the sorcerer will be theirs on his death, or within 7 years. Contrary to popular myth, these contracts are hard to default on or find loopholes in. They are also rigidly enforced.

The WRs for the three demons given in ABYSS 5/6 would be: Baal-425, Valefor-340, and Saburak-300. Most of the other material given on demons in the previous article is still valid, especially when combined with this article.

**CASTING TIME**

Pentacle of Binding takes 20 minutes to draw and cast. Lesser Summoning takes 3 rounds. Prime Summoning takes 6 rounds. Greater Summoning takes 12 rounds.

**EXAMPLES**

Chrovas Disag, a 12th level Sorcerer with level 8 Will Enhancement, and a Will of 14, attempts to summon a 5th level Ice Imp. Chrovas has a SI of 112, and has cast his pentacle, with a strength of 56, so his total SI is 168. The Imp, Khratakaz, has a WR of 70, so Chrovas' chance of binding him is 98%, a fairly sure thing. Bummer, he rolls a 99, and is possessed. He grabs the nearest apprentice, and freezes him solid. Then he goes out to find an ice-box to hide in.

Garddan Yvangarl, a 22nd level Sorcerer with level 15 Will Enhancement, and a Will of 16 establishes a double strength Pentacle, by taking twice as long to do it. His pentacle has a strength of 235, and his base SI is 240, so he feels safe in summoning Saburak. He has a total SI of 475, 175 more than Saburak's WR, so the demon is bound. Garddan is not stupid enough to let the demon out of the pentacle, inspite of its furious requests, and manages to convince it to give him to plague the town of Lyntwn with boils until it pays him his fee for ridding it of rats. Then he dismisses the demon.

**DISMISSAL**

The sorcerer may dismiss a demon back to hell at any time, but it gets one last chance at Will Battle before leaving, with -10 on the SI of the Sorcerer.

**RANDOM SUMMONING AND NAMES**

Any summoning can be cast without using a name, but the demon who arrives will be of the right class, but with an effectively doubled WR. Once he is bound, he must reveal his name if asked, so that the sorcerer can use him in the future.

Sorcerers will sell each other the names of demons, but not of their best ones, and not cheaply. Some common Imps are widely known, and often summoned.

**NEW GREATER DEMONS**

**ABRAXAS**  
 LVL:18 ST:-2 Attacks:Whip for 4D8  
 HP:160 AC:8  
 AR:14 WR:425  
 DR:10

Abraxas is a minor prince who was very popular in the middle ages. He appears as a fat-bellied, long nosed man with a tail and tentacle feet. He wears a crown.

He has unusual powers over numbers and geometry, and can duplicate any item, though it may not retain magical powers, or the same powers. He also has power over time, and can give a limited aspect of this to a summoner.

**BELIAL**  
 LVL:22 ST:-5 Attacks:Breathe fire for 3D20  
 HP:150 AC:5  
 AR:10 WR:600  
 DR:10

Belial appears as a beautiful boy riding in a chariot drawn by two golden dragons. He has powers over flames, but his main power is in illusion and deception. He is a King in Hell, and called the "father of lies". He is one of the top demons in Hell.

His grants to followers include increasing charisma, flame resistance, and special ability with illusions.

**PAZZUZU**  
 LVL:18 ST:-3 Attacks:2 Claws for 2D12 each  
 HP:175 AC:12  
 AR:15 WR:300  
 DR:15

Pazzuzu is the demon popularized in "The Exorcist". That is a good place to see what posession can be like. Pazzuzu appears as a giant locust, but somewhat humanoid in form. He has control over insects and winds.

He can call down a plague of any form of bug for a summoner, or grant limited control over insects or wind.

**CONCLUSION**

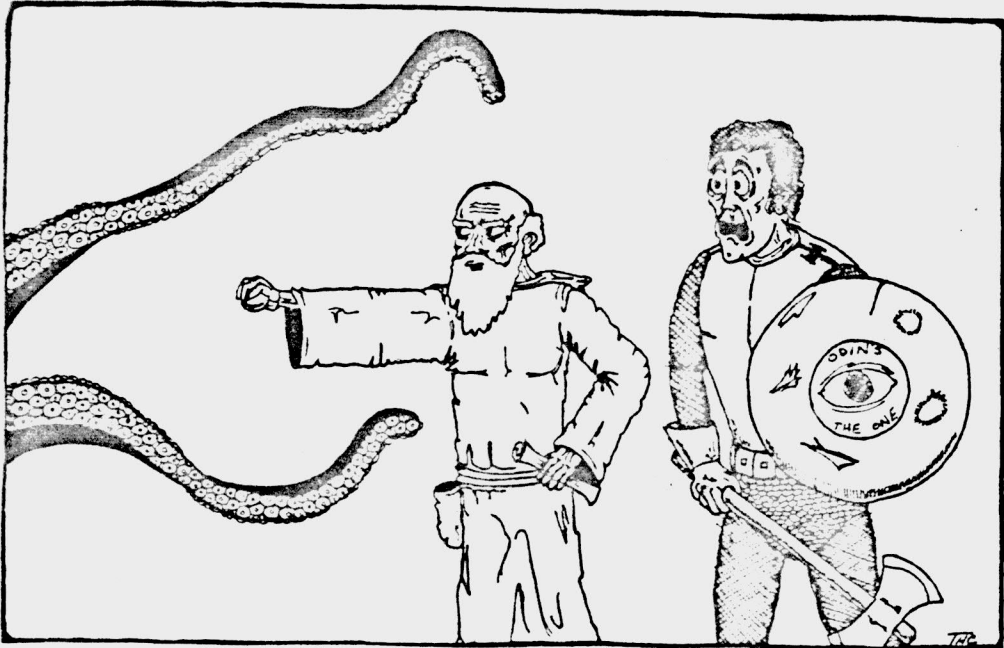
This system leaves a lot of room for DM invention, but gives the essential guidelines for a very valuable class. The exact nature, powers, and personality of demons and imps is up to the DM. It is recommended that certain ones be well detailed, and assigned names by the DM, which sound suitably demonic. This system, with a little inventiveness can add what is probably the most historically realistic Mage class to your campaign.

**NMI: RING OF MISTS TAM CHANG**

This ring allows the wearer to create any natural form of mist emanating from the ring, from light ground mist, to walls of the thickest fog. He can create up to the equivalent of a 50ft cube of the thickest fog each day.



© 1990 by Gene Jones



NO YOU OLD FOOL!!! THAT'S YOUR BREATHE WATER GEM!!!

**ARTIFICERS, A NPC CLASS**

**JON SCHULLER**

In order to improve their chances in battle, rich PCs often want to buy magic items from NPC makers of these items, called Artificers. These smith/mages, belong to the Enchanters Guild, but deal primarily with the enchantment of objects. They should be used exclusively as an NPC class, and are not in any way intended to be used as PCs, as a PC artificer can become outrageously powerful.

They are described here in terms of the NYR magic system in which they fit, basically the same sub-system as Enchanters. Also given are price determination guidelines and Magic Item level determination, so that prices and values can be determined.

There are only a few basic Artificer spells, but in addition they usually learn spells of other classes which are popular in making MI. The spells are:

**CREATE MATRIX**-This spell makes an item magical and receptive to holding a power. The matrix will accept the imprint of a spell or up to the caster's level spells, and hold them as a pattern for its duration. If the item is recharged with the matrix in force, it will be able to re-create the original power for one charge. Level:5, CT:10MN, Dur:1WK. If a power is made permanent, the matrix for that power is also made permanent, but not the matrix for any non-permanent powers, thus each power must be made permanent separately.

**PERMANENCE**-This makes a matrix continue to hold pattern for an indefinite period. It does not make the active power last, so if all the charges in an item with a permanent matrix are used, it will not work until recharged. Level:15, CT:1HR, Dur:P

**GENERATION**-This allows a matrix to regenerate its power spontaneously after a certain interval, allowing the power to work, say once a week. This spell is of varying levels, depending on the interval needed. They are given below. Generation and Charging cannot be combined in one item.



Recharge Interval	Level
1/Month	1
1/Week	2
1/Day	3
1/Hour	5
1/Turn	10
1/Minute	20
1/Round	40

It takes 15MN to cast this spell, no matter what the level, and the duration is that of the matrix on which it is cast. Generation must be cast once per matrix in an item. It works in this manner. The item is imprinted with a spell on a matrix. This is made permanent. Generation causes it to absorb mana at a given rate, and when it reaches full power it may be discharged once. This is used for such things as Staff of Fireball 1/day, and the like. Keep note of the level given here, as it comes into play in determining item level and cost as given later in this piece.

**CHARGE**-This is an alternative to Generation. It gives an item a set number of uses from the matrix, which may or may not be permanent. The charges will stay in the item as long as the matrix, though over very long periods they may begin to bleed off. The table for determining

Charges	Level
1	2
3	4
6	6
10	8
15	10
21	12
28	14
36	16
45	18
55	20

the level of the spell dependant on the number of charges is given to the left. Each level step is not a different spell to learn, unlike the generation intervals. The spell has a level to learn of 8, but the level given at the left determines the cost to cast it. The CT is 5MN. The cost to cast this spell is not determined in the same way as with other spells. The cost to charge is found by this formula: Level of Charges x (Level of Power x 20) / TAL. In other words, the level to the left times 20 times the level of the spell held in the matrix all divided by the caster's TAL. For example, an Artificer with a TAL of 15 tries to charge an item holding a matrix for Sleep, a level 3 spell. The formula would be (for 6 charges):  $6 \times (3 \times 20) / 15 = 24$ , the equivalent of an 8th level spell for him.

**TRIGGER**-This is the only spell remaining. Once an item is created with a power, there must be an impetus to release the power. There are three triggers, act, word, and thought. Act, Level 5, requires the bearer of the item to do something with it to set off the charge, say to strike it on the ground. Word, level 9, sets up a particular word as the trigger for the item. Thought, level 13, allows the bearer to release the power by thought command. All take 5MN to cast, and last as long as the matrix on which they are cast.

Note that items with multiple powers are possible, and that except for the matrix, which will hold a number of powers up to the caster's level, all other spells must be cast once for each power.

The only remaining matters are level, cost, and a few more spells. Some spells commonly used by artificers in their work are given below. These are all concerned with bonuses.

**ACCURACY**-This 2nd level spell gives a plus to hit of one to any artifact, and fills one matrix. It cannot be cast at higher level to gain more than +5 total.

**DAMAGE**-This 4th level spell works in all ways as above, but increases damage.

**DEFLECTION**-This 6th level spell works as the two given above, but it increases defensive ability in hand to hand combat.

These three spells are used mainly in weapons, in order to make them better. The same effects can also be gained through non-magical smith skills which will be detailed in a forthcoming article.

To find the level of an item, take the Level of the Powers contained totalled, and multiply it by the Level of either the generation or the charge. Add to this the levels of any bonus spells thrown in (i.e., +5 on damage is +13 levels). This figure divided by 2 is the level of the item.

The cost of an item can be found by comparing its level on the table to the right. Costs are given in Kymric Marks, which are roughly equal to an Imperial Gold Piece.

These costs are designed for our campaign, and so you can adjust them to suit yours. They are also rough, at common intervals. The precise formula is  $\text{Level}^2 \times 1500$ . If you have more money in your campaign raise the 1500, and if you have less, lower it. Prices should also be subject to fluctuation of +1D20%. If a PC chooses to sell an item, assume the price to be the base -1D20% for wear and similar assessments.

LEVEL	COST
1	1500
3	13500
6	54000
10	150000
15	337500
21	661500
28	1176000
36	1944000
45	3037500
55	4537500

EXAMPLE: Graun the 12th level artificer with a TAL of 15 decides to make a sword. It will be +4/+3, and have the power to flame for 1D6 once per each hour. This requires a 3 slot matrix, and as he has 12, there is no problem. He is going to make the flame once per minute, and permanent. He will need Create Matrix first. For the 1st Matrix he needs Accuracy at +4, 4th level, and permanence at level 15. No trigger is needed, as bonuses are continual. For the 2nd Matrix he needs Damage at +3, 8th level, and permanence at level 15. For the Flame he needs the Flame spell for 1D6, a level 3 spell, 15th level permanence, and Generation at 5th level. This will all take him some time, and yield an item with a level of  $4+8+(3 \times 5)/2=14$ . He can sell this item for at least 294,000M.

This is a coherent and complete system for designing Magic Items, but it should be noted that there is more to Artificing. For example, they must learn skills in smithing in addition to magic, and they must also deal with the possibility of mistakes and klutzes like any mage. All this will be explained in a later article.

## THE ROLE OF ASSASSINS

FREDERICK SHAW

In NYR the role of the assassin is ambiguously defined in terms of how the player should run the character. Inherently a loner, the assassin is really just a glorified fighter with a few obscure skills of little real value to the rest of the party. In our campaign assassins make up a minority of 2% and are rarely able to use their special skills on an adventure. Instead, they are often called on to terminate a quarrel between two other PCs. The usual method of termination is extermination, almost always outside of the adventure.

Unfortunately for the assassin, death often awaits him on his next adventure in retribution for just doing his job. This curtails the amount of killing outside of the game and loses an interesting aspect of FRPing.

What the assassin so desperately needs is protection. This is where the Assassins Guild comes into play. The Assassin's status in his culture as well as his rights as an individual are guaranteed and protected by his Guild. Of course, this only applies when he is performing a contracted job, not for freelance work or personal plans of revenge. For him to be able to work at all there must be several laws defined in which he must be able to work.

1. He must be completely neutral and impartial in the performance of his job.
2. He must operate under a legal contract verified by the guild and recorded by a notary scribe.
3. If the Assassin is successful and not caught, he is not to be held responsible for the crime, and revenge upon him for it will be considered a criminal action as if he were an uninvolved bystander.
4. If he is caught in the act of assassination he is on his own, and not exempted from right of retribution.



5. If he fails in his assignment, but manages to escape, he may not be attacked by injured parties without penalty of the law, but the contract is nullified, and any advance is forfeit.

6. If both the assassination and an attempt to escape fail, then he is fully at the mercy of the intended victim, and he deserves whatever he gets.

Of course, any assassin's contract is freely negotiated and he has the right to refuse any job for any reason. The Assassin's Guild takes 10% of all payment as a commission. It is possible for a temple assassin to be part of both his church and the guild, assuming both the High Priest and the Guild Master approve. The Assassin's Guild is chartered by the Guild Lord of Ptolemeias, the Saexwolda of the Saexe Empire, and the Ard-Ri of Gaeldoch. It is ignored by the Kymric High-King of Morganwc.

**NMI: THE HELM OF LIGHTNING ATTRACTION**

**TOM CURTIN**

This peculiar helm has an antenna projecting from the top of it, and two matching gauntlets which are attached to it by electrical wires. The antenna attracts lightning. Half of this lightning is absorbed and stored by the helm. The rest is channeled into the wearer's brain. The damage to the brain is 1 point off of Intelligence for every 50 points of damage, cumulative. The gauntlets are able to discharge the stored electricity for 1D12 each as long as there is enough stored up in the helm to do so. The helm can store 80 points of electricity. After that any additional is overflow which goes into the brain. This item makes for mindless electro-zombies.



**RAGNAROK ENTERPRISES**  
 1402 21st St. N.W.  
 Washington, DC 20036

**NEW  
 YSGARTH  
 RULES**

We are pleased to announce the availability of the NYR, a completely updated and revised version of the Ysgarth Rules featuring more material at a lower price. The rules are 90 pages long with everything you need to run a campaign in the NYR FRPing system.

Included are 30 character classes, 130+ character skills, over 450 spells fully described, as well as monster and treasure descriptions, rules for creating characters, for combat, and for magic. Also featured are guidelines for designing worlds and adventures.

The rules are by Dave Nalle, assisted by Tom Curtin, Lew Bryson, Wayne Mitten, John Bover, and Henry Dove. It is one of the most developed rule systems on the market, the product of 5 years of FRPing.

The 90 page 8 1/2 x 11 rule book sells for \$5.00, plus P&H of \$1.00. Expect delivery in 2 to 6 weeks. Dealers inquire for discount. Overseas add \$4.00 for P&H.

அறிவு

1402 21st St. N.W.  
Washington, DC 20036

STAMP

MAIL TO:

FIRST CLASS MAIL

FIRST CLASS MAIL