



# CAVALIER ATTITUDE

An Old School Roleplaying Zine

Volume I, Issue 1

Louis "sirlou" Kahn • [starryknightpress.com](http://starryknightpress.com) • [@starryknightRPG](https://twitter.com/starryknightRPG) • [@starryknightpress](https://www.facebook.com/starryknightpress)

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## WELCOME!

An introduction from the author and publisher, Louis "sirlou" Kahn, telling you what you can expect to see gracing the pages of this zine.

Page 1

## CURRENT TOPICS

This article discusses the best ways to introduce new players to the concepts and ideas involved in role-playing games, and how OSRIC is great for this task.

Page 2

## KNAVE'S GALÈRE

Each issue we bring you a new set of six hearty souls ready to take on whatever your campaign can dish out!

Page 7



"Classic Campaigns" by Luigi Castellani

## Welcome to Cavalier Attitude!

Hello and welcome to the very first issue of my webzine: **Cavalier Attitude**. As the masthead says, this zine will focus on the *Old School Revival* (OSR) in fantasy role-playing. The Oldschool System Reference and Index Compilation™ (OSRIC) is my personal retro-clone of choice, but I will cover other systems as well.

If you are reading this its more than likely you purchased it along with one of my modules (thank you!), but if not let me introduce myself.

I am Louis "sirlou" Kahn and **Starry Knight Press** is the publishing imprint under which I publish the modules and supplements I write.

I have been playing role-playing games (RPGs) for forty years. I started as a kid in the late 1970's, when my best friend's brother introduced us to RPGs through the Holmes edition boxed set of *Dungeons & Dragons*™. It was kismet, and I have been hooked ever since!

I have played all sorts of RPGs since then, in real life and online, I have immersed myself in MMOs like *DDO*™ and *World of Warcraft*™, but no matter what other games I've played, I always come back to early D&D. That is the sweet spot for me, and I am guessing it is for you as well!

*Louis "sirlou" Kahn*

### Introducing Players to RPGs via OSR and Zero-Level Player Characters

When I thought about writing an article about OSR role-playing, at first I was at a loss as to what to write about. I am an avid role-player, strong proponent of OSR gaming, and a prolific publisher of OSR modules and supplements. So any number of topics leapt to mind. I considered drafting a scholarly treatise on thaumaturgy or an article on the rationale and justification for OSR thieves to use bows or then again perhaps it was time to finish the unreleased OSR character class I'd been working on.

But then I stopped and asked myself, what is it about OSR and the earlier edition of the world's most famous role-playing game that really grabs me and has held me entranced for forty years?

For me, it is that sense of wonder I had when I first cracked open the Basic boxed set back in the late 1970's. It was evident in the fervor with which my friends and I squabbled over whose turn it was to read the *AD&D Player's Handbook*. As kids from non-affluent families, we'd banded together to buy our copies of the AD&D rulebooks and shared them equally...sort of. That sense of wonder remains, for me, primarily in the way I learned to role-play. I learned to play by observing my (virtual) surroundings, questioning the game master, using my logic and reasoning to try to solve the puzzles I was confronted with, and then by describing my actions to the game master.

The earliest editions of the game relied more on the description of your

actions, which I excelled at, versus the current edition which relies heavily on "ability checks", the names, purposes and modifiers thereto I cannot seem to get to stick in my *groggnard* head.

*"I do want to try a role playing game, but I'm not sure about all those rules."*

For me then, the spirit of *how* we played the game back in the day is what was magical. This is what the OSR retro-clones try to capture, to match the gaming experiences I remember from my youth when I began playing Basic Dungeons & Dragons™ four decades ago. This is why I so enjoy OSR, as to me and many other *vintage* players it seems to be a rebirth of the style of gaming that we most enjoy!

So, in choosing what to write about, I decided to draw on my recent experiences introducing new players to OSR gaming, both those who had never played an RPG and those who had only played modern editions. I have done this several times in the last couple years using the OSRIC system.

I want to share a particular experience with you, which sums up why I love role-playing and OSR systems in particular.

We were all gathered around the dining room table at my best friend's parent's house, in the exact same

place I had learned to play Dungeons & Dragons™ forty years before, and the moment was not lost on me. We were all together because my friend's parent was dying. There are only so many hours you can sit by a bedside, wringing your hands, or cleaning and running errands, before burn out sets in. I had just written and published a new adventure and I was hoping, if I was lucky, it would take everyone's mind off their worries, if only for a little while.

It had been a long journey since our childhood, but there I sat, preparing to lead a group of players through an adventure, some of them playing such a game for the very first time.

"I do want to try a role playing game," one woman spoke up, "but I'm not sure about all those rules." She looked at my pile of rulebooks with trepidation. "Do I have to read all that?" Her sentiments were echoed by a couple others, some of whom had only played newer editions and thought earlier editions might be clunky or old fashioned.

Knowing how old school gaming works, I reassured them, "It's fine. I'll explain how it works as we go along. It's not hard, and the way we play mostly relies on problem solving skills. You'll be good at it! You'll be fine".

We played through the evening and late into the night. Although novices, the players relied on their intuition and intellect as they described for me what they would do and how they were interacting with the environments I described. We talked it out; using minis and maps as aids. I interpreted their actions and rolled a few appropriate dice as needed.

They loved it!

## CURRENT TOPICS (cont.)

A couple folks sketched their characters for me, and the younger ones begged their parents to let them stay up and keep playing.

When the adventure was concluded, the party had completed their quest, evil was defeated, the champions of light had prevailed, everyone had enjoyed themselves, everyone was able to contribute, and, if for just a few hours, all of our spirits were lifted.

The above experience is a good example of why I use OSR rules to introduce people to role-playing. In my opinion, the OSR way of play is more conducive to teaching people how to role-play than the current incarnation, with its method of ability checks. New players often do not understand what "player abilities" are, versus their own skills and thoughts. I feel it adds a layer of obfuscation and a perceived need to memorize rules that takes novices out of the immersive game experience. I think 5E is a great system, it has brought many more people into our hobby and I am very happy so many people enjoy it. However, I believe it can be overwhelming to newbies.

With my most recent experiences to draw upon, I decided to write a supplement folks could use to quickly teach new players about role-playing with OSRIC. What I came up with was a system of "Rules for Zero Level Player Character Creation", and an adventure: "*The Way O' The Fae*".

The module starts with a group of players who are all friends in the small village of Breyburgh. This excerpt sums up the adventure: "You've spent your whole life among the stolid, staid and downright stubborn people of Breyburgh. Your escape has always been just a dream, until now!

Something strange is afoot in the village of Breyburgh. The cats in the village have gone missing. First one or two, which could be explained by forest predators, but now all the cats in the village are gone...and no one knows why. Now a visiting mage's cat is missing and he's offering a reward to find it. This is the chance you've been waiting your whole life for! It's your time to shine; if you and your companions can find this mage's cat you just might become *The Heroes of Breyburgh*".



"Spellbook" by Daniel Waltham

That module was well received and I found people really enjoyed the zero level player character aspect. So with that in mind, I decided to expand upon the rules for zero level player character creation in my new book: "*SR1 Zero Level Player Rules and The Lair of The Toad*". I created a revised, detailed and in depth system for creating zero level player characters.

It is a straight forward set of rules for creating characters that have an *origin* related to their prospective class, a shared background, and reasons for knowing the other members of their group. They are friendly neophytes on the cusp of choosing their adventuring profession.

The system consist of rules for character creation, a set of zero-level spiritual and arcane spells (known as *benedictions* and *cantrips*), and an adventuring party of six

pre-generated zero level PCs.

The players begin in one of three distinct career paths, called *archetypes*, featuring the *fighter* (including fighter subclasses), the *stealth* (thieves and assassins), and the *spell caster* (clerics and mages, and their subclasses) archetypes.

The book also includes an introductory dungeon to start these shiny new PCs on their road to greatness. In "*Lair of The Toad*", the players are hired to retrieve a lost heirloom ring for an elven seer who lost it in the sewers.

In both "*The Way O' The Fae*" and "*The Lair of the Toad*", the completion of the main quest line provides the players with sufficient experience to advance to the first level of experience, so they may choose an adventuring career path.

My goal was to provide a well thought out system for creating a new adventuring party forged from a close knit group, and not just random strangers "meeting in a bar". In this way, players can form their own versions of the tightly knit crews they watch in Wizards of the Coast's "Dice Camera Action" or Geek & Sundry's "Critical Roll".

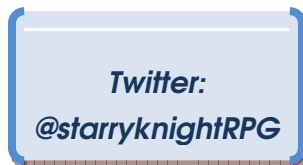
I have had a lot of success and a great deal of fun introducing new players and seasoned veterans to the OSR world through the use of my OSRIC based zero level player adventures. It pleases me because it shows, despite the massive popularity of the newest edition of D&D, that our Old School way of playing still has a great deal to offer the RPG community!

Louis "sirlou" Kahn

# THE INN

## Social Media Posts: The Best of SKP's socials!

I'm pretty active on social media, mostly on *Twitter*, but also on *Instagram*. There is a great community of RPG players online, and there is an especially vibrant group of crafters, writers, artists and other creators sharing ideas. It is a great support network and a fertile ground for RPG creators. Each issue I intend to use this section to highlight some of the most interesting of my recent social media interactions.



# OLD SCHOOL ART

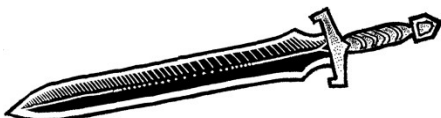
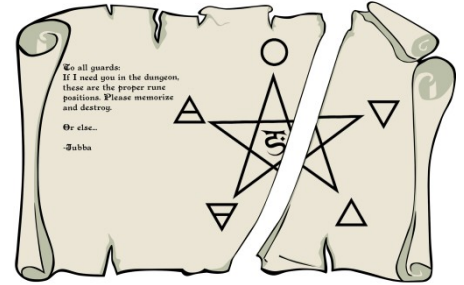
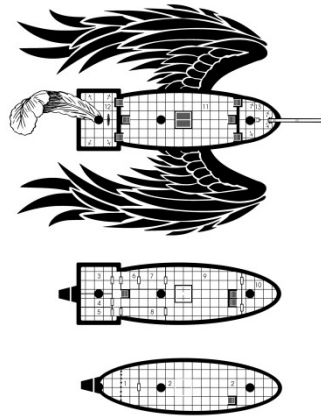
## Showcasing Old School Art From My Products

If you've bought my modules, or followed me on social media, you know I love Old School Dungeons & Dragons™ art!

Work by the likes of Erol Otus, Clyde Caldwell, Larry Elmore, David C. Sutherland III, Bill Willingham, Jeff Easley, Jeff Dee, Will McLean, David A. Trampier, Fred Fields – they all fueled my imagination and inspired my love of RPGs and fantasy!

In my work I like to include artwork by independent artists and work I create myself (both from scratch and from remixing public domain work) which I hope will inspire the RPG artists of tomorrow!

So in this section I will feature images that have recently appeared in my supplements, modules, one-shots and rules compendiums. I hope you enjoy them as much as I do!



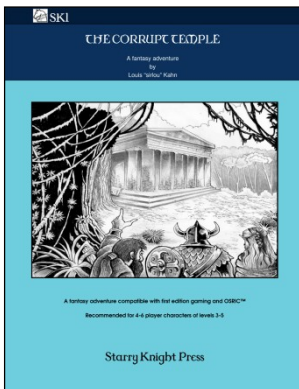
Artist attributions may  
be found on page 8

# MARKET SQUARE

## Synopses and Covers From My Recently Published Books

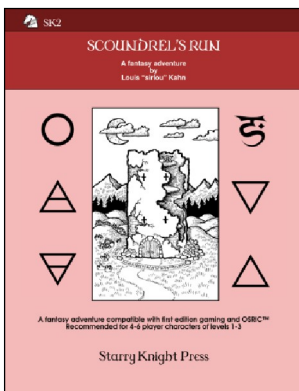
I'm fairly prolific when it comes to my writing. I set a goal for myself to write one fantasy RPG product per month, for the 12 months of 2017, and I am on schedule. Each issue I will highlight my most recently published products. Here's what I've done so far in 2017!

### SK1 The Corrupt Temple



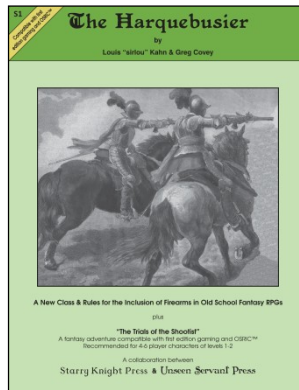
**Synopsis:** The Jarlburgh Valley is under siege. Lord Kanin has put out a call for able bodied adventurers to end the evil menacing his lands. Will you answer the call?

### SK2 Scoundrel's Run



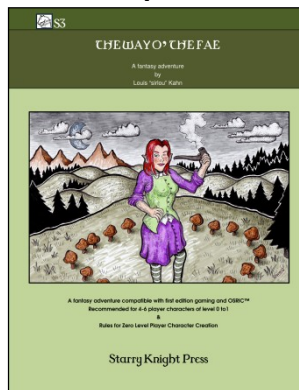
**Synopsis:** Marauders wander the Alderburgh valley, striking fear in the populace. Will you aid the High Justiciar in defended the valley?

### S1 The Harquebusier



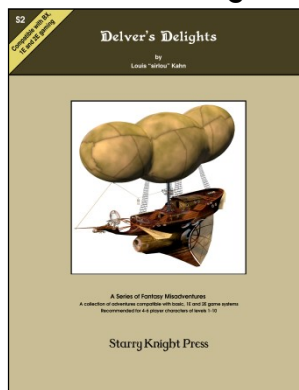
**Synopsis:** A new class and rules for the inclusion of firearms in your Old School RPGs, plus an introductory adventure.

### S2 The Way O' The Fae



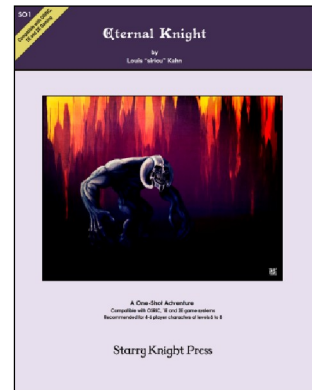
**Synopsis:** All the cats in Breyburgh have gone missing! If you can find them you'll be the *Hero of Breyburgh!*

### S3 Delver's Delights



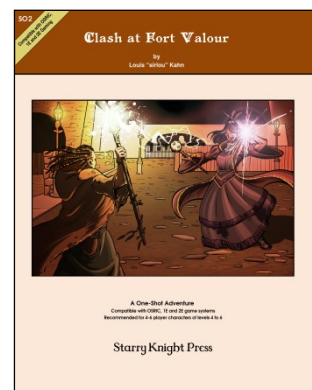
**Synopsis:** This supplement contains a series of four fantasy misadventures, compatible with BECMI, 1E and 2E.

### SO1 Eternal Knight



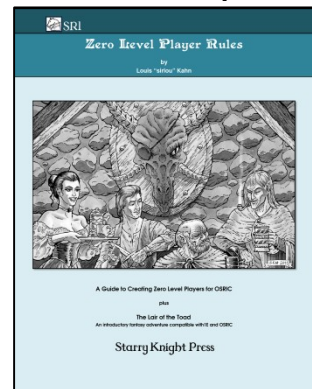
**Synopsis:** Demons have disturbed a paladin's eternal rest! Can you help a noble knight to rest in peace?

### SO2 Clash at Fort Valour



**Synopsis:** Can the heroes help defend the village of Fort Valour from an all out attack by evil forces?

### SR1 Zero Level Player Rules



**Synopsis:** Detailed rules for creating zero level PCs and an introductory module.



# SUBMISSIONS

## We Are Seeking Submissions of Old School Content

OR

## I Am Writing RPG Fiction and You Can Too (Just Do It)!

I remember, back in the day, I would read TSR's Dragon Magazine™ and Dungeon Magazine™ and think, "These people are so lucky! How did they ever get their work published in these hallowed tomes?"

In fact, it was my childhood dream to publish my work in one of those magazines, but as a callow youth and later a busy young professional, I never got up the gumption or made the time to make those dreams happen.

**"You're Never Weird  
On the Internet (Almost)"  
by Felicia Day**

*Just buy it, you'll thank me!*  
[feliciadaybook.com](http://feliciadaybook.com)

Flash forward to 2016, and I am reading a really great book entitled "You're Never Weird On the Internet (Almost)" by the incomparable Felicia Day. As I closed the book I thought long and hard on the epic loot Felicia had just dropped – I *can* live out my dream of publishing fantasy books and the only one stopping me is...*me!*

So I got out of my own way, sat down and decided to start writing. I thought about all the great TSR fantasy adventures that I had loved as a kid: *Keep on the Borderlands*, *Palace of the Silver Princess*, *The Hidden Shrine of Tamoachan*, *The Ghost Tower of Inverness*, *Aerie of the Slave Lords*,

*Against The Giants*, the *drow* series, the *Dragonlance* modules...and so many more!

I let the spirit of the game that I had loved for four decades wash over me, and all became clear. I found my first idea: what sort of temple would a group of priests devoted to an aquatic goddess build on land, and wouldn't it be fun to explore an underwater themed dungeon?

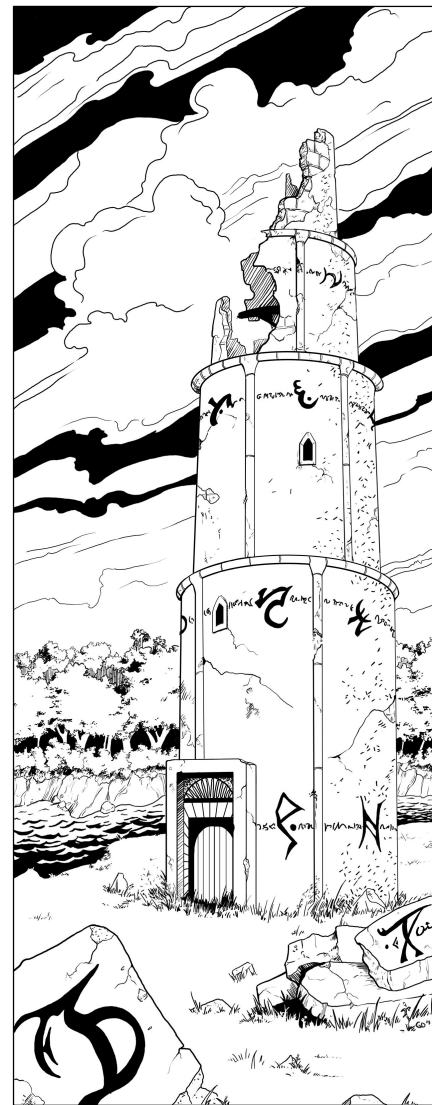
Thus was born *The Corrupt Temple*, my first published module. I think it is an inventive and enjoyable dungeon crawl, set in a unique setting, and located in a valley full of areas for further adventures.

Since then, the ideas have continued to flow freely! I have published eight more products and my campaign world has grown to encompass four separate city states. I now have two separate campaign tracks going simultaneously. I have six more RPG products currently in progress. I have a 2018 expansion planned for the southern part of the campaign world, with all new lands and adventures to explore!

I want you (yes, *you* dear reader) to have the same experience I did. I hope to inspire folks to write their own adventures and tell their own stories. I want to help you do that, if I can, in these pages.

So...if you have an idea for a short story, article, character class, magic item, or what have you, please contact us for our submission policies.

You can email us at:  
[starryknightpress@gmail.com](mailto:starryknightpress@gmail.com)



"A Ruined Tower" by Gary Dupuis

**Artist credits:** Jacob Blackmon (ghost); Luigi Castellani (Classic campaigns), Gary Dupuis (tower). Jeff Preston: (dwarf, "108 Terrible Character Portraits", by Jeff Preston, used under [CC BY 3.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0/)); Steve Robertson (kobold); Daniel Waltham, (longsword, leprechaun, book); and Louis "sirlou" Kahn (logos, waterspout, airship, parchment).



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## Is the newest edition missing the mark for you?



**If you're like us, you yearn for the days of yore!**

Or maybe you're new to the role-playing hobby, you've heard about the huge legacy of old adventures and rules systems and your interest is piqued. Regardless of your OSR experience, you're in luck, because we live to serve your "Old School" gaming fix!

Whether you'd like to try a Basic adventure from the early days of fantasy gaming, a 1E adventure from the foundational period of role-playing games, or a 2E adventure from the height of the original RPG craze...we've got you covered.

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