

DIFFERENT WORLDS

JUNE/JULY 1979

ISSUE 3

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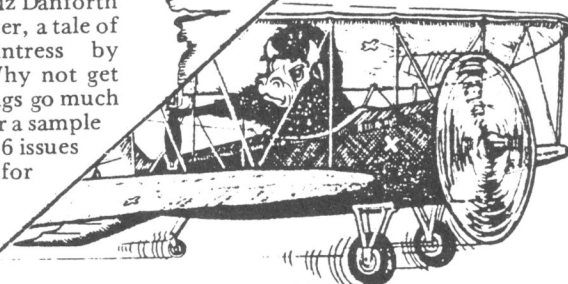
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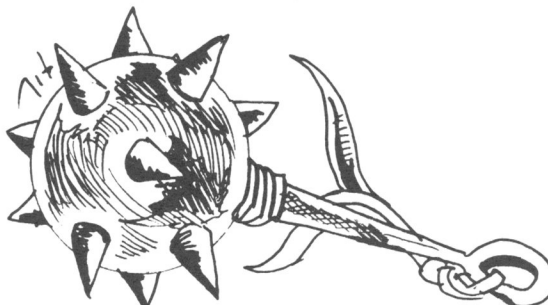
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ARTISTS THIS ISSUE

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SUBSCRIPTION RATES ARE GOING UP!
(SEE PAGE 32)

PUBLISHER'S STATEMENT

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don, W6 0JD. Display advertising rates and trade enquiries available on request. Basic ad rate is \$150 per page. Payment in US funds only. Submissions for consideration for publication in DIFFERENT WORLDS are accepted and encouraged. Articles should be double spaced with one inch margins all around. Artwork should be accompanied by a self-addressed stamped envelope for their return. All submissions become the property of the Chaosium, rights revert to the author or artist upon publication or rejection of article or artwork. Remuneration for articles is 1 cent per word of published matter. Artwork is paid at a \$20 per printed page rate (¼ page gets paid \$5). Color covers are paid \$50. Tadashi Ehara editor. Lynn Willis, Steve Perrin, Greg Stafford associate editors. Charles Krank contributing editor.

Editorial

PLAYERS WANTED

From time to time we receive letters bemoaning the lack of people to play games with. There are several avenues one can pursue in locating gaming partners or groups. There are magazines like *The Dragon* and *The General* that list game players. Your local game store should be helpful in furnishing contacts—most have bulletin boards for notices of people looking for other players. The most effective way of meeting people is by attending a local game convention. The major purpose of game cons is to get gamers together and have fun. People who live anywhere except the most rural of areas should have very little difficulty in finding a nearby con.

If you wish, *Different Worlds* will run notices for our readers that are looking for other gamers. Send us your name, address (with zip!) and/or phone number (with area code!). If you only send a phone number you must at least give your city, state and zip. Give the RPG systems that you are interested in (if you are also interested in playing other types of games, add "general games" or "board wargames"). Let us know the number of issues in which you want the notice to appear—maximum of six to keep the list updated. If you wish to remain listed after the six issues, send in another card. If you do not specify the number of appearances, it will run only once. This service will be open to anyone and is free until further notice. People who can facilitate more players—send in your notices! Get people together and get gaming! Help your eager fellows by providing an outlet for their fantasies!

PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE

The comments on the first issue are in. Most liked it; praises were lavished. Some did not like it for the most part and criticisms were lashed accordingly. A few missed the point entirely and their comments did not seem to make any sense. Representative letters have been published in this issue—see "Different Views." I will leave it up to you to comment on their comments. Admittedly, there were a few problems with the first issue and these can all be attributed to inexperience. We hope we have corrected all of them to your satisfaction.

We present in this issue "My Life and Role-Playing" by two of the most important RPG designers today, Dave Arneson and Steve Perrin. Their history of themselves are quite illu-

minating; creativity exists in everyone. To be creative requires nothing but the ability to think, the strength to feel and the time to contemplate. But to do something with one's creative-ness requires initiative and willingness to venture. The coupling of these abilities generates greatness and admiration. We have all in the past had a "great idea." Did you act upon it? Did you do something about it? The importance is in the doing. So go design your game, write your article, develop your ideas. You too can be a Dave Arneson or a Steve Perrin. Dickens wrote, "An idea must be spoken to a little before it will explain itself." So the pursuit of accomplishment only requires a little force of confidence before it can culminate into a tangible creation, something that can be admired and respected.

The outstanding artwork that adorns our cover is by the soon-to-be-illustrious Tom Clark. He won the first prize in an art contest at the Fantasy Film Celebrity Convention, 1978. The judges were Frank Kelly Freas and Boris Vallejo!

We thank Gigi for her latest goings-on in the hobby. We appreciate her insight and inventiveness. Readers please note that opinions expressed in her letters are those of the writer only and do not necessarily reflect the stet views of this magazine.

Dennis B. Sustare's description of his *Bunnies & Burrows* campaign is the most detailed yet. We hope he hasn't given away any big secrets to his players!

John T. Sapienza is the most honored name in the APAs. He has a complementary article on mages in the works. You can be sure he will be a frequent contributor to *Different Worlds*. He promised!

As you can see, we simply did not have enough room for the *RuneQuest/Dungeons & Dragons* conversion articles and the Beginner's Brew column this issue. Look for them in the next issue.

Tentatively, in the next issue, we will have the above mentioned two articles as well as an article on *Star Trek* role-playing, an extensive enchanted weapons table by the above mentioned Mr. Sapienza, a preview of Chaosium's upcoming *HeroQuest*, the return of "The Way of the Gamer," and (as usual) more!

Happy gaming,

Tadashi
Ehara



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"Tokasi Benkai leapt high into the air to avoid the slashing No-dachi of the Dai-Oni. Twisting as he landed, the brave Samurai brought his flashing katana down on the monster's neck only to see the sword shatter on the demon's enchanted hide. Undaunted, the warrior dropped into atemi-waza stance, coolly regarding his foe. The oni smiled a toothy grin and made a mystic pass with his hand. Benkai groaned inwardly as he felt the very Earth turn traitor beneath his feet. With a wicked laugh, the oni advanced. Attempting to close with the monster, the Samurai slipped on the magically slick ground. The oni's great sword swept up and . . ."



BUSHIDO

A Review

by Steven L. Lortz



Bushido is a fantasy RPG recreating the legendary world of Medieval Japan. Written by Paul Hume and Bob Charrette, it consists of two 8½"x5½", saddle stapled booklets packaged in a zip-lock bag. Book 1, entitled *The Heroes of Nippon*, is seventy-two pages long and includes the character generation, combat, and magic resolution systems, along with a section on manners and morals, an example character, and a character reference sheet. The second volume is called *The Land of Nippon*. Sixty pages long, it contains the NPC response system, encounter systems for court life and pitched battle as well as general adventuring, population systems, campaign rules and an example scenario. Both booklets contain an excellent map of the Home Islands rendered on a scale of five miles to the hex. Bob Charrette executed the small number of high quality illustrations which grace the game's pages.

The rules themselves are well written and logically ordered, though the authors chose not to employ a formal system of organization. If a player has a question, he can generally use the tables of contents to get within a few pages of the rule he's looking for. The text adequately explains the tables and charts, but the lack of a consolidated table section slows play. Another minor flaw exists in that the authors use quite a few exotic abbreviations without listing their meanings in one accessible place.

Players design their characters by distributing an allotted number of points among six basic Attributes; Strength, Wit, Will, Deftness, Speed, and Health; and then modifying the attribute values according to the character's profession. These attribute values are used to determine further characteristics such as carrying capacity, number of improvable skills, magical power, learning rate, hit points, and various saving throws. The professions open to characters in *Bushido* approximate the character classes of RPGs based on the *D&D* system. Many basic skills and peaceful arts are available to any character, but the choice of profession—warrior, martial-artist, magic-user, scholar-monk, or ninja—limits a character to a particular range of combat and magic skills. As in RPGs based on the *RuneQuest* system, a character's expertise in a specific skill is indicated as a percent probability. When a player needs to determine a character's degree of success in performing some action, he attempts to roll the character's Basic Chance of Success or less on a D20. The Basic Chance of Success is found by dividing the character's percent probability in the appropriate

skill by five and rounding fractions down. The magic rules combine a spell point system with the Basic Chance of Success, and a warrior's ability to strike a blow is modified to reflect the tactical situation.

The rules govern a character's personal progress through a combination of specific expertise and general experience level systems. A character can increase his percent probability in a skill by devoting game time to study. To a limited extent, a character can also increase his hit points and skills within his profession by going up in level, which is done by accumulating both the familiar experience points and a number of "On" points which quantify the character's "face" or renown. The authors keep the game in hand by limiting the number of levels to six.

The *Bushido* rules provide seven scales for the conduct of a campaign. Courtly life advances at the stately pace of one month per move while a basic unit of study consumes a game week. Overland travel occurs at twenty-four hours per move, but this scale is broken down into diurnal and nocturnal segments for encounter purposes. If a character is involved in pitched warfare, the tide of battle and the character's encounters are assessed at hourly intervals, while interior movement occurs at a rate of ten minutes per move and melee is conducted on a six-second scale. Moves on the six-second scale are called "combat turns," and their structure is easily the most complex aspect of the game. The combat turn is divided into several "action phases," the exact number of which depends on the highest Deftness, Speed, and the type of action being performed then determines the relative order of the characters' actions. The rules give no structure for moves other than combat turns.

By introducing On points, which are required for going up in level, Hume and Charrette have placed *Bushido* outside of the "kill and pillage" category of RPGs. Intended to simulate the motivational dynamics of individuals within a shame culture, the acquisition of On encourages players to steer their characters into social and political, as well as combat situations, and does much to generate the authentic flavor of the game. The extensive but judicious use of Japanese terminology also supports the illusion of adventuring around in Medieval Japan. The system devised for waging large scale battles is a real gem and gets to the heart of a warrior's role in a feudal society. It's in the press of full-fledged war where the poltroon is meted death and disgrace. The only major system the authors appear to have overlooked is a set of rules to govern wa-

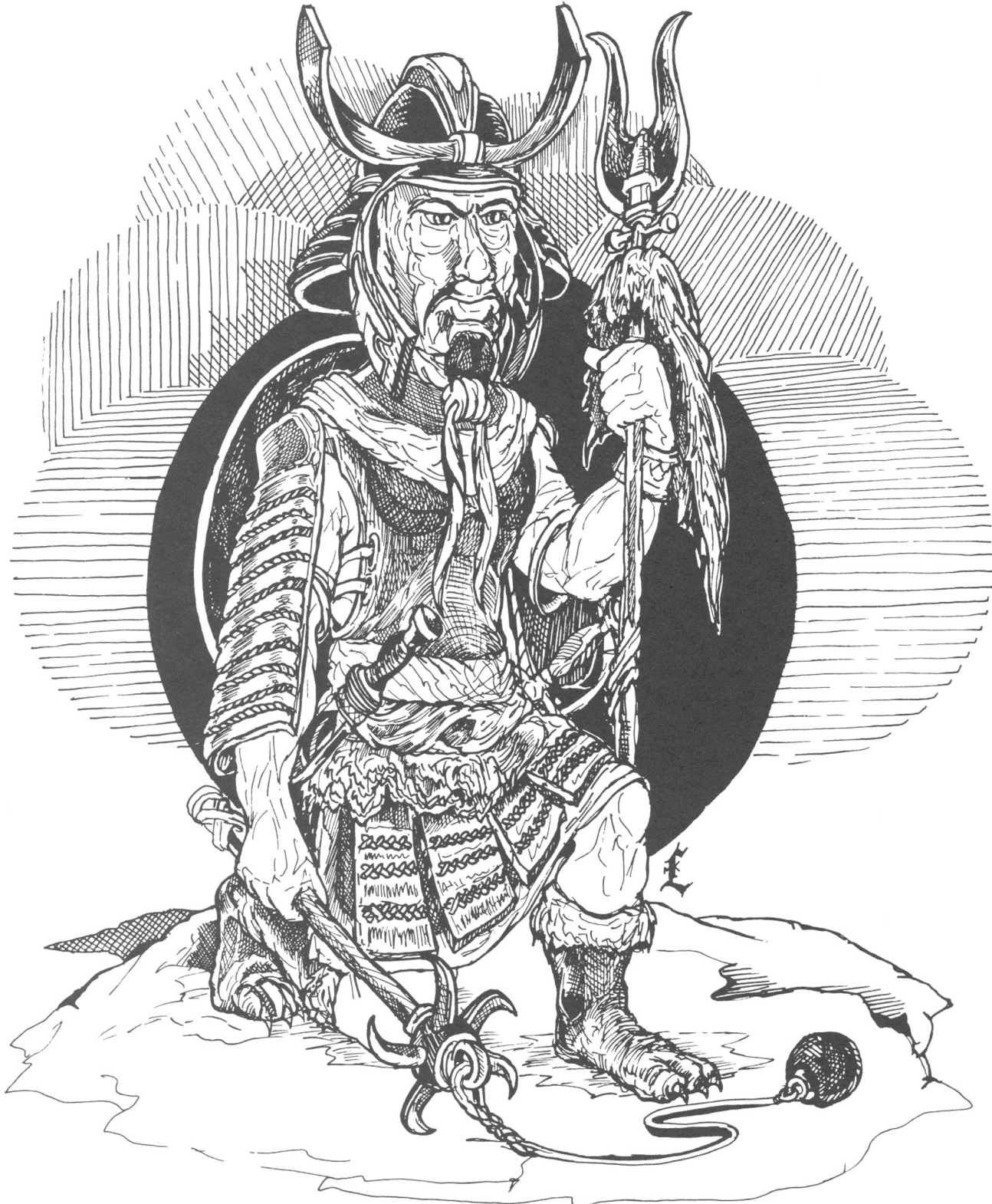
terborne movement and combat. This is unfortunate since piracy was an integral part of some historical clans' life-styles.

RuneQuest and *Dungeons & Dragons* typify two styles of role-play which are very different in mechanics and philosophy; specific expertise versus general experience levels, character specialization versus character classes, spell points versus Vancian magic, and static versus dynamic hit points. In *Bushido*, Hume and Charrette have produced a well-knit integration of elements from each of these styles and provided a fairly complete and playable social milieu for the characters to operate within. For these reasons, I highly recommend *Bushido* to people who are interested in running a fantasy campaign based primarily on the Japanese mythos and to people who are

interested in the art of RPG design. However, the Basic Chance of Success mechanism is a reversal of the die rolling conventions of both *RuneQuest* and *Dungeons & Dragons*, so some work would be required before a person could adapt material from *Bushido* into a campaign based on either of these two systems.



Bushido is available for \$10 at many dealers or direct from TYR Gamemakers Ltd.; PO Box 414; Arlington, Virginia 22210.





DIFFERENT WORLDS Special Feature

My Life and Role-Playing 3

DAVE ARNESON

Well, here he is, the man who started it all. Since he needs no introduction, read on!

Blackmoor . . .

Once upon a time in a deep dark basement in the Midwest a small group of wargamers assembled to fight out a 20mm Napoleonic Battle for a campaign that had been going on for some years. What their eyes beheld was not a neatly drawn map of central Europe with hundreds of figures deployed but rather a medieval castle model surrounded by a small town and scattered woods. Thus aroused, and suspecting that the Strategic Campaign's referee intended to use real terrain again (something that had not been done for some time) or rather that, horror upon horror, a Brownstein.

Presenting each with 4"x5" cards upon which were various cryptic headings, classifications and numbers, the assembled players embarked upon the exploration of an underground labyrinth which lay beneath the castle and town. With a minimum of coercion from the referee (me) play began and shortly a new phenomenon appeared in the Mid-

west; Fantasy Role Playing Adventures.

Surried ranks of Napoleonic Cavalry and Infantry disappeared for quite some time and the first Fantasy referee quickly found that the refereeing of such a game devoured incredible amounts of time. One player would, in fact, call in after reaching his guard job and play by phone for hours. Persons would "stop" by to play day after day. Some two to three months later (It's all just sort of a blur now!) the first referee collapsed in silly giggling and announced the destruction of the entire world, or some such nonsense. Well, he needed a rest but by then various dungeons were appearing, a space campaign was begun, others were allowed to use the original dungeon and referee with it, and so role playing went on in Blackmoor and elsewhere.

Blackmoor was not the first RPG game that I was in. Not by a long shot. Some years previously, I had been involved in a Napoleonic battle in the town of Brownstein, where as a local student leader, I tried to rally resistance to thwart a French attack (I ended up arrested by the Prussian General because I was "Too fanatical"). Prior to that I found myself as a professor at a South American University trying to pass out leaflets to overthrow "El Chiefe." That time I had come prepared with various

identity cards and at the end of the game was flying over the city in a government helicopter, dropping leaflets, loaded down with \$100,000 to buy off a non-existent attack by a neighboring country, and leaving the secret police far away). And lo, even before that (mid -60s), there was a strange little Medieval battle where each person represented a heir to the throne faced with a barbarian attack. That time, we actually all united to wipe out the blighters but there were a few tense moments. And so it goes back in time to an Ancient battle where a Druid priest suddenly phasered an attacking elephant (the one piece of magic in the game, and his last shot) which almost led to the lynching of the referee (me in this case).

How did it all start in Blackmoor? I can't really say. I had spent the previous day watching about five monster movies on Creature Feature weekend (ch. 5), reading a Conan book (I cannot recall which one but I always thought they were much the same) and stuffing myself with popcorn, doodling on a piece of graph paper. I was also quite tired of my Nappy Campaign with all its rigid rules, etc., and was perhaps rebelling against it too (in fact I'm sure I was!!).

Rules? What rules!?!? Chainmail to handle the combat at first. A system of magic based on ANIMAL-Type, VEGE-

TABLE-Type or MINERAL-Type with a hodge-podge of spells, populating the Dungeon fairly logically (Orcs and minions on one level, etc.), Magical Artifacts, Encounter Tables when the adventurers wanted to go off after bigger and better things, and so on. Is it any wonder I burned myself out! When stuff didn't work out, different things were tried, Greg Svenson, Pete Gaylord, John Snider and others began refereeing. Finally, a trip to Wisconsin and the first out of state adventure in Blackmoor, followed by screams of "we gotta have the rules!!!" Another trip, more correspondence, long distance calls (gads—the expense!), rules were actually written down (but closely guarded by the referee and subject to change without notice if things got out of hand). And on and on . . .

Why did it catch on so quickly? Because it offered almost pure escapism and the ability, in the game, to do anything and everything you wanted too! Gads! Who wouldn't get hooked on game playing nirvana like that after years of charts, tables, painting figures, etc. . . It was like a breath of fresh air. So by word of mouth, correspondence and phone calls, it grew and grew. There was no planned growth because the growth was not foreseen, the clamour for more rules was not met when material was assembled and then published to meet the demand. There was no time to wait on matters, money would not have remained available as others planned similar projects and so we struck while the iron was hot. And also, the rules suffered from the fact that they were hastily put together, in fact, my final draft version never was used because of various deadlines that had been set. But, good lord, the demand and interest was astounding, you had to be there to believe it or not believe it!

Today there is a tendency to not appreciate the fact that D&D was not that sure of being a success. Both Guidon Games and AH had rejected it, there were no other games like it on the market, it was a gamble and not a too likely looking one at that. There were no investors standing about with bags of money or established markets, there were only a few Dungeon fanatics with a gleam in their eyes working their tails off for we knew not what reasons. So BANG, there it was and off it went like a berserk Dragon and you can all tell me where it has ended up today.

Where is it headed?? Computers, Video games, and the like are where the game future lies today. Nothing can ever replace a good Dungeonmaster but then

how many people want to play compared to how many "Good" Dungeonmasters? A well thought out program, with adequate memory, and good graphics (Pictures, not words) will be a step above the herd of DMs and provide that standardization that has been talked about. Oh, local groups will still be in business, bigger than ever, and the good DMs will still be incomparable, but for the great unwashed, the electronic age will be what they see and get. Enjoy!

As to personal facts, I am 32 years old, single, college educated (class of '71), took ROTC (flunked the physical at the end), am a member of the First Minnesota Volunteer Infantry at Fort Snelling Minnesota (I play Civil War soldier once a month!), am a conservative politically, and head up a Study Group for the Way International, a Biblical research teaching group. I am a Civil War buff, Napoleonic Naval buff, and like to go fishing in the summer. I have published several books and games, my first one being *Don't Give Up the Ship* in 1971 with Guidon games about Napoleonic Naval Warfare (very staid and traditional, no RPG involved—rotten seller). I am at present, a free lance game designer and am planning a book on the State of Minnesota in the Ameri-

Both Guidon Games and AH had rejected it, there were no other games like it on the market

can Civil War. I am not a sadistic and cruel DM, my fairness and the unbiased manner in which I obliterate expeditions slowly one character at a time is known by all my players. I also still try to DM once a month as well as at conventions, any more than that would just get me hooked again and burn me out. One of these days, I hope to get married and settle down here in Minnesota. Why Minnesota, 'cause I like the weather, it's not dull. Where else can you have four seasons in one week!!! It's like having an insane DM with crazy dice and a faulty weather effects chart!!!!!!

RPG adventures I have had aplenty. In John Snider's first SciFi RPG, I played the leader of an empire that made Darth Vader look like a Boy Scout and the Imperial Storm Troops like the buffoons they seem to be (certainly can't shoot straight). Of course my troops were a little too inflexible in their training, but they all died well. Often my explorer-character managed to run into such creatures as Electro-Bear (no I don't know quite what he(?) was either!) and guns that talked. One of the

more interesting moments was when my intellect was sucked into a firing computer and I tried to shoot down my own expedition's ship! He ended up a confirmed alcoholic hooked on some wierd wine he found stored in the underground bunker. (Rich too!!)

The Empire (no, I had a lot of little ships, no Death Stars!) had its biggest problems with another player-character explorer based on the Stainless Steel Rat (of whom I had not read about, and so wide open to his antics) who I should have bought off. As it was, half the fleet couldn't find a trace of him, a whole Star Base was destroyed and I was becoming irrational on the subject of getting him (and then doing various unpleasant things with him). Other than that, aside from a few moments of stark terror, I had a good time.

I have played in various' of Mr. David Wesely's Brownstien games and didn't lose too often (never won either). I am in fact now playing the Japanese Ambassador to Chile in late 1942 seeing which faction I can support in the upcoming Coup. So far, I have purchased a fishing boat, tractor, plywood, gray paint, and some garbage cans (no, I'm not building a battleship!) in the game and also a brothel, otherwise it's too early to know what I'm up to.

Then there was a short Civil War game where I raided St. Louis with three men while holding off the Union fleet with a phony Ironclad. Otherwise such things as hunting an enemy general with a cannon were fun, but that would be a little complicated to relate. This was unique since it was a straight war-game campaign with RPG on the command level for what we were all really fighting for (fame, money, whatever) be it Union or Reb.

In other veins, I have refereed several non-fantasy games like Dave's first South American Revolution games, calling them Braunstiens. Most had their insane moments like the attack on the bank/treasury by the Navy and their AT gun. Or the time the terrorists attacked the King's heavily guarded convoy and destroyed the Comic Book Collection (although losing their leader to return fire as the pages drifted to earth). I must say that I never approved of dropping mortar rounds on mobs or using nerve gas as roadblocks. Ah well

The first Western games set up by Duane Jenkins in '72 or '73 were always a ball. I loved playing the enthusiastic but incompetent El Pauncho. My failure to rob the church poor box was offset by beating the Sheriff at poker in the weekly game at my secret hideout.



Naturally he cleaned out the camp with a posse, but this was in turn offset by robbing the church on Sunday at cannon point. The low point was blowing up the jail to rescue a member of my gang but getting captured when the ingrate did not want to leave. The town was most upset (not about the jail or church but about accidentally destroying the, eh... "Social Club" next to the jail). There was the cattle stampede I started that ran over my gang but why bore you. Other players had duller roles as cavalymen, indians, bandits, the Lone Ranger, Pa Cartwheel and his son Moose, etc... but what the heck, RPG should be fun, not work!!

Well I guess the point I am trying to make with all this rambling is that here in the Twin Cities, Role Playing has always been popular. Whether it's a 1-for-1 WW II Battle using the Korn's rules or WW I Air Battles using Mike Carr's rules, there has been no lack of innovation. Dave Wesely really gave the RPG gaming around here its best boost away from traditional body counts, when you could actually win one of his Brown-

stiens without killing someone! Applying a fantasy setting to RPG was merely another outgrowth of an already established tradition (abet one without any real rules) in various non-fantasy settings.

COMMERCIAL

In my own new rules for Medieval Japan (*Samurai!*), as well as my new fantasy rules (*Adventures in Fantasy*), the body count approach to success and experience is far from being the best one, or even the only way to Fame. Education, experience by doing the job and using the skill, success by courtly manners, and poetry is possible.

Fantasy gaming may have given RPG their biggest boost to date but RPG is likely to be found quite bit farther afield than that in the future. So long as the basic precepts of RPG are followed, then I think it will continue to grow in popularity.

PHILOSOPHY ON RPG

RPG is, I feel, a game where the individual character can enhance his abilities

and station within the game through the characters used in play. Not just in the ability to kill, but also trade, magic skill, amassing power, etc. Not having a single set of characteristics that never change from game to game.

That's what I feel a RPG should have as its very heart. Many so called RPGs only pay lip service to it by including characters that can never develop but are always the same. That's not RPG in my book (or my games either!!). Ha! Ha!

STEVE PERRIN

Well, he finally comes through with his own version of how everything started for him. Lucky us!

My Life is Role Playing

How many of you out there grew up with a large circle of "imaginary" playmates to play your solitary games with? They each had distinctive names and personalities, right? Sure were a lot easier to handle than real playmates, weren't they?

In my misspent youth I took great delight in assuming other identities and being Superman, or an obscure, but heroic, knight, or a cowboy, soldier, or what have you. Each identity had a distinct but similar personality. I did my best to inveigle what a few playmates I had into taking on other identities to complement my own. It caught on well enough with them that they took their play in entirely different directions, but retained the names I'd given them.

Now, of course, I'm Stefan de Lorraine, a Knight and Count in the Society for Creative Anachronism. But that's entirely different, isn't it?

Back in my preteens I had vast collections of toy soldiers, and most of them had separate identities and personalities (transferred over from the imaginary playmates mentioned above). One or two of them even represented me in one of my various identities.

Now I have approximately 300 miniature figures of men and monsters, several of which are "personality figures" representing specific characters I play in FRP games. But that's entirely different, isn't it?

It isn't, of course. I was role playing as a child and I'm role playing now. The only difference is that I now play by rules, and if I'd know there were rules when I was a preteen, I would have played with them then, and there would

never have been a hiatus of approximately six years between packing or giving away my toy soldiers and discovering *Tactics II* at the dorms at San Francisco State.

Any game is role-playing. Chess is abstract, FRP tries for reality, most board games fall somewhere in between, but it's all playing someone, from Grand Commander to novice swordsman, in an escape from a reality which can be far more hum than drum.

Shortly after the day I first lined up the Blue Army to take on the Red on the *Tactics II* board, I embarked on my first major departure in Role Playing since I discovered girls. A lady of my acquaintance was going into the Peace Corps. Some friends of hers were practical Medievalists who had built shields and fighting gear. Why not have a tournament to celebrate her leavetaking? What other member of the Peace Corps could say they had a good-bye tournament?

So Diana Paxson sent out the invitations, and on May 1, 1966, a collection of people met in approximations of medieval costume (I wore the fake fur lining of my raincoat belted fur side out around my waist and Ace bandages on my legs for leggings. . .) to have a tournament, and had a lot of fun being Sir so-and-so and Lady so-and-so. In June the second event was held, and the name was chosen (Had to tell the Oakland Park Department something), the Berkeley Society for Creative Anachronism.

By the third event in September I had my own fighting gear and Stefan de Lorraine was born. In a couple of years I had been married at the second Twelfth Night celebration (making my marriage to Luise of the Phoenix the longest existing marriage in the Society) and was thoroughly intermixed in the politics and social life of the Kingdom of the West.

In the West we are less involved in the concept of "personas" than other areas in the Society, but Stefan de Lorraine has a definite personality, irrespective of any putative medieval heritage or cultural background. I was King of the Kingdom, and Seneschal of the West for three years. I captained the Forces of Chaos, a potent mercenary fighting force whose alumni include about one half the Dukes of the West and the current (as of this writing) King, my *RuneQuest* co-author Steve Henderson.

After my one victory, I tended to finish in the semi-finals.

As my career as Seneschal was fading, I picked up an old interest and be-

came active in the San Francisco Bay Area Naval Gamers (SF-BANG) and started a new round of Role-Playing, playing ships. I spent most of my time refereeing alongside its founder, Jim Brown, and wrote or rewrote most of the rules at one time or another. It was my first experience at writing rules instead of just playing by them (although my time as Seneschal gave me lots of experience on how rules could be bent and rewritten. . .) and I glorified in it. One Saturday a month I played god in Volterra, the "best of all possible wargaming worlds," and the rest of the time I was Stefan de Lorraine, a simple mercenary captain and trainer of kings.

But in 1974 my wrist, which I had injured in high school, began to pain me greatly. I was told that I would have to have an operation to get rid of the arthritis and correct the never-healed break in the navicular bone. I stopped fighting in the SCA lists, for it grew too painful to swing a sword.

At virtually the same time, Steve Henderson and I walked into a local game store and discovered a boxed set of books for a game called *Dungeons & Dragons*. The rest of the story of the discovery is familiar to everyone, I'm sure, because you've all lived through

*Now I both play and design,
constantly trying to have fun and
playtest at the same time.*

some aspect of it. I won't rehash it.

We had the same problems understanding what the rules were trying to say as everyone else, but, having been writing rules to clarify another wargame for years, we never thought it necessary to write for information. We just made up the rules we needed as we went along. When the first issue of the *Strategic Review* came out and we found we'd been doing it "wrong", we were fascinated. We continued doing it our way. . .

In 1976, Clint Bigglestone got the idea of having DunDraCon, a D&D convention for local players. We thought we might get a response from some of the local gamers in the Bay Area, and maybe even some people up from LA, where Lee Gold's A&E was going into its 8th issue.

As an attraction, he arranged through a mutual friend to have Fritz Leiber attend as Guest of Honor, and give permission to us to run a "Leiber dungeon," loosely keyed into the Grey Mouser and Fafhrd stories.

The hassles this caused when Fritz

told Gary Gygax he didn't know about the con, because he hadn't realized that E. Gary was asking about our con, I will not go into.

What I will mention is the *Perrin Conventions*; a compilation of methods of dealing with holes in the D&D rules which many of us had developed, but I took the time to write up for the convention. This was a natural step along for me, from my experience writing rules for SF-BANG. After looking them over a few times, I found I was actually writing rules, not just elaborations, and I could even write my own rules!

The Conventions caught on quite gratifyingly. I am always amazed when someone I never saw before suddenly lights up when he realizes that I am the one who wrote those rules. I was most surprised in Ann Arbor Michigan, at ORIGINS '78. I was dragooned onto a panel on Role Playing holding people like Ed Simbalist, Dave Arneson, Larry Kanterman, and couple of lads from GDW and Judges Guild. The gentleman who introduced me did so not as the author of *RuneQuest* (which admittedly had just come out) but as the author of the *Perrin Conventions*! All the way to Michigan, my. . .

For honesty's sake, I will point out that I didn't fight too hard when they dragooned me onto the panel. They had a hard time shutting me up.

How did I come to write *RuneQuest*? Greg Stafford asked me to join Art and Ray Turney and Hendrik Pfeiffer in working on a set of Role-Playing rules directly connected to Dragon Pass. I already had many ideas for "improvements" to the D&D system, and leapt at the chance to put them into *RuneQuest* (which I named).

Within a couple of months, Art had gone south to go back to college, and Hendrik had started college, leaving Ray and me to hold the fort.

I dragged in a series of friends to help out, and the final crew shook down to Ray, me, Steve Henderson, and Warren James. Just where each idea came from is hard to say, but Ray and I carried most of the ball with ideas, Warren did a lot of playtesting, and Steve edited like mad, being invaluable for organization and pruning prolixity.

Of course, without Greg Stafford hovering over us and saying, "gonna be ready for ORIGINS?", we'd still be sorting through mounds of paper and trying new slants on things. Some will say we should have done just that, but you never would have seen the rules.

In any case, it all worked together and *RuneQuest* got out in time for

ORIGINS, and now the baby has flown (or fallen) from the nest. We are all really gratified and thoroughly boggled at the response it's gotten.

So now I am a Game Designer, yet another Role. Now I both play and design, constantly trying to have fun and playtest at the same time. For the most part I succeed, but life was probably simpler before.

Would I go back? Undo my participation in the FRP fandango? Did you expect me to say yes?

FRP provides a creative outlet, in play as well as rules writing and world creating, that I have not found anywhere else. I think I just second all of you who read this when I say, "My life is Role Playing!"



RESEARCH AND RULES

by Steve Marsh

The temptation to write rules is one of the sweetest in the world. Giving in to it can be delightful. Giving in to it can also cump a very messy pile of crap on your head.

The first level of research is encountering. Example: a person sees KoBudo Nunchatku (numchucks) in action and think, "hey, that would be just the thing to write about!" Unfortunately, that sometimes is all the research done.

Consider: you've just seen something and want to write rules defining it. You could just sit down and intuitively put it onto paper and work it through with some logic. Some people can pull off this kind of writing with ease and accuracy. Most of us cannot. What follows is a set of ideas about rules-writing. They come from Research and much negative personal experience.

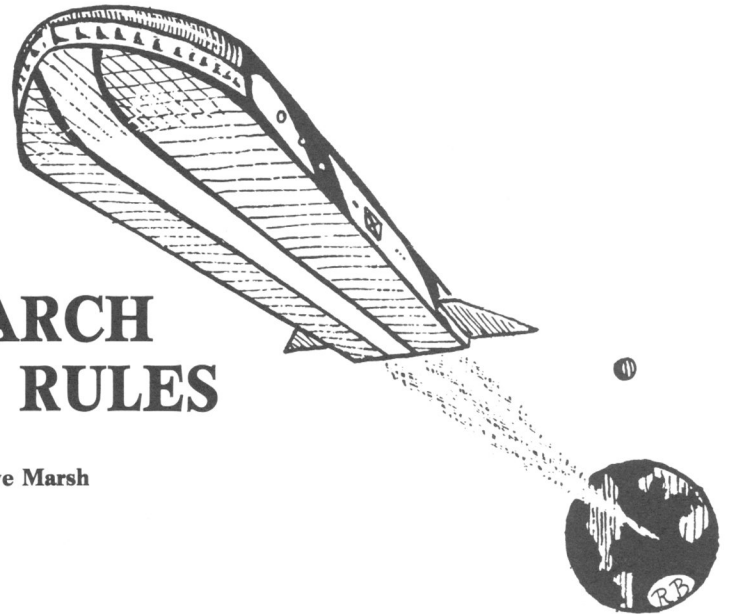
1) DEFINE THE THING TO BE WRITTEN ABOUT.

Now, redefine it in terms of already established equivalents. This helps you avoid first-order mistakes of scale (like the hawk that does more damage than the lion, or the 1st level spell that. . .). With nunchatku, one might compare them to knives, or maces, or similar weapons.

2) DEFINE THE USER/SITUATION.

Redefine the concept in terms of game equivalents. With nunchatku, the usual demonstrator has had 5-6 years of experience. How far does a character get in 5 game years? Doing this helps to avoid errors of placement and attribute. i.e. Does a sword have a special bonus against plate, or is the effect of it due in this instance to the fact that an 8th level fighter is using it?

OK, so far you've channelled your intuition. But if you want good rules, you must do more.



3) GET ACQUAINTED WITH THE MATERIAL.

This means (a) see it in use (or simulate it for magic), and (b) check its historical evolution. This section could have been titled, Do Some Research.

4) SIMULATE THE RULES IN YOUR PRESENT FRAMEWORK.

You must define the framework into which this rules section will fit, and you must be able to manipulate the framework. For instance, after you had looked at the development and uses of nunchatku, you would consider how it works against plate armor. . .after knowing what plate armor is.

5) UNDERSTAND THE WHYS.

Know why your intuition says what it says. That is what theory is all about.

Now present the rules. If you have covered these points, the reader will understand what you're talking about (even if they haven't seen nunchatku in action), and they will know why nunchatku do what they do, and they will know how nunchatku will act in situations not covered in the written rules. Wellwritten, conceived, and researched rules will never embarrass you later.

The above results from study as to why people misunderstood personal writings of yours truly, and from analyzing the sloppiness of many rules sets. The process can be used to adapt a weapon, a monster, or an entire rulesbook for role-playing use. When combined with research of some depth (more than one quick peek), this method can add a great deal to any set of rules.



SPECIALTY MAGES

PART 3

by Mike Gunderloy

With this issue, we conclude this series on "The Specialty Mages." Look for Mike in future issues of Different Worlds.

THE MAGES OF LIGHTNING

These are the first to take power for the sake of power, those who spurned the search for knowledge. They are the angry ones, the slayers and spitters, quick to anger and to kill. They care for no god and no man, only for the treasures of the world, prizing the electrum produced of gold and silver by their bolts above all other things. Alignment is strictly Amoral.

Level 1 Spells

Read Magic, Detect Magic: As D&D Magic User.

Spark: Produces a 1' long spark doing 2D4 damage to any it hits (no save). R=Must start at mage's finger.

Short: Short circuits the brain of one target, causing him to remain stationary for 1D6 hours. R=60'.

Shock Arrow: Causes a 2' long lightning bolt to be projected as an arrow from a composite bow +2. Does 1D6 per three levels of mage (rounded up). R=150'.

Guardshock: Cast on a metal weapon, this does 1D4 of shock damage per melee round to any but the owner who attempt to use it. R=touch, D=2 hours.

Level 2 Spells

Nerve Jolt: Affects one target, causing a violent muscle spasm. All spells being thrown by the target automatically klutz and all hand-held items are dropped. Save at -2. R=240'.

Line: The caster is enabled to draw a glowing blue line on the floor. The line may be up to 5' long plus 6" per level of caster. The first person to cross the takes the caster's level in D3 shock damage. Takes 5 minutes to cast. D=until triggered.

Protection from Lightning: One target gets +1 save vs. lightning and -1 pip per die of lightning/shock damage. R=touch, D=1 hour.

Wall of Shock: As Wall of Fire.

Shockball: A 5' radius ball of electrical energy doing the caster's level in D4 damage. R=120'.

Level 3 Spells

Dispel Magic, Lightning Bolt: As D&D Magic User.

The Excellent Guardian: Set up in advance by placing two

rocks up to 60' apart. They are triggered similarly to a Magic Mouth spell to send a lightning bolt doing 5 times the caster's level in D8 damage between themselves. Takes 5 minutes to cast. D=until triggered.

Call Lightning: If there are clouds of any sort about, the mage can call down a lightning bolt of twice his own level in D6 damage to strike the ground. R=360'. Roll 2D6: 7+ indicates that the bolt is on target, otherwise it is off by 2D4 times 10' in a random direction.

Capture Field: Dancing lines of electrical force form a cage around one victim (man-sized or less). He takes 5D8 damage if he moves through the sides of the cage (but not if he teleports out or leaves in a similar manner).

Create Bolt: Creates a 30'x2' lightning bolt that follows the caster's mental commands. It can attack in two ways: it can hit and detonate completely for the caster's level in D4 damage or it can deliver a shock for 1D8 damage each melee round. Only harmed by antimagic devices and spells. D=3 days or until detonated.

Level 4 Spells

Ion Spray: A lightning bolt which will also work underwater.

Blue Bolts: A spell which produces small (3'x2") lightning bolts, 1 per every two levels of the caster. They may be separately targetted, they have only the same chance to destroy items as crossbow bolts, they do 1D8 of damage each, and they will work underwater. R=150' (90' underwater).

Silver Stars: Energy shirukens doing 1D6 of damage each. 1 is produced per level of caster. They may be split among several targets, are detonated by impact, and will not harm most items. R=120'.

Ball Lightning: Produces a 30' radius electrical blast when it hits. All caught within this area take ½ the caster's level in D8 damage. Those who are well insulated take only ½ damage; normal armour (robes, leather) take full damage, well grounded (chainmail, plate) take double damage. When thrown, produces a pellet that tracks its intended target. If the pellet passes within 10' of a grounded mass of metal, it will swerve to hit it, and detonate. Arc welds the joints of armour caught in the blast (magic armour saves at 20 minus twice its bonus). R=240' when cast.

Lightning Trap: Creates a circulating current in any piece of flat metal. Anyone passing by who is hostile to the caster will be hit by all of the current in a shock doing the

caster's level in D8 damage. Takes 1 hour to cast. D=until triggered.

Level 5 Spells

Conjure Elemental: of lightning. Does 4D6 shock damage per blow.

Brainbolt: Short circuits the mind of one target, acting as a Feeblemind spell but with a normal save.

Shatter Crystal: A lightning bolt that harms nothing but crystalline objects, which it automatically shatters if it hits.

Red Bolt: A screaming red lightning bolt. It does no damage to living things, but will disintegrate any 100 lbs. of inanimate matter that it hits.

Level 6 Spells

Sword of Lightning: Creates a glowing green sword in the caster's hand. It is +1 and anything he hits with it must save vs. magic or be stunned for 3D6 melee rounds. D=2 minutes.

Immunity: Makes one person completely immune to lightning and shock damage. R=touch, D=1D6 plus caster's level turns.

Summon Clouds: Summons a cloud from which the mage can call lightning if he has the spell to do so. Since it is his cloud, only 6+ is needed on the 2D6 for the lightning to hit. 5 minute delay.

Brain to Ash: As Stone to Flesh.

Spark Spray: A 90'x30' cone of blue sparks doing the caster's level in D6 damage to all caught within. R=must start at caster's finger.

Animate Dead: As D&D Magic User.

Level 7 Spells

Multibolt: Produces the caster's level of 1'x1" lightning bolts which can be individually targetted and do 1D8 of damage each. R=240'.

Gold Stars: Energy shirukens doing 1D6 of damage each. Produces 1 per level of caster, they may be seperately targetted, detonating only on impact with flesh (thus they may be safely handled with gloves and set up as traps), and do not harm most items. They disappear in 3 days if not detonated. R=180'.

Amber Bolt: A 30'x1' amber lightning bolt. If it hits a living target he must save vs. magic or lose 3D4 off of all attributes. If Strength, Constitution, or Intelligence drop to zero or less, the victim dies, otherwise the effects wear off after 1D6 hours.

Delayed Bolt: The mage enchants a section of wall to throw a Lightning Bolt in any direction that he pleases. Can be set for any delay up to 6 hours.

Level 8 Spells

Green Bolt: A green Lightning Bolt that can be keyed by the caster to affect only one type of material (e.g., flesh, stone or metal). Save at -4.

Stunbolt: A brilliant white lightning bolt which affects a single target as Power Word—Stun. R=240'.

Doombolt: A deathly black lightning bolt which destroys everything within a 30' radius when it detonates. Save for Level 1-4 is 17, Level 5-7 is 15, Level 8+ is 13. Roll 2D6: 2=within 30' of caster, 3-6=2D4x10' short, 7-9=on target, 10-12=2D4x10' long. R=240'.

Growthbolt: A shrieking orange lightning bolt. Anything that it hits is expanded to triple its normal size, provided that it is not already over 60' in any dimension. R=240', D=1D8 hours.

Strengthbolt: A brown lightning bolt which does not harm living things but cracks, crumbles and destroys a 10' square section of wall up to 3' stone or equivalent in strength. R=60'.

Level 9 Spells

Black Lightning: A 60'x5' bolt with multiple effects, all of which must be checked every time the spell is thrown: Save at -4 or lose 3 points from each characteristic; save or take the caster's level in D8 lightning damage; save or take the caster's level in D6 sonic damage; save or lose 1D6 life levels; save or be stunned for 1D10 melee rounds; save at +2 or be annihilated. Each time that the mage casts this spell he must sacrifice 80K EP or run a ¼ chance of having his soul eaten for power to feed the spell. R=240'.

Create Storm: Immediately creates a storm cloud from which the mage can draw a lightning bolt doing twice his level in D8 damage every other melee round. For the bolt to hit, 5+ must be rolled on 2D6. R=480'.

Demon Bolt: As a regular lightning bolt, but save is at -6 and it cuts through magic resistance at +25%.

Stalker Bolt: Castable on any target the mage can see by any means. Creates a lightning bolt doing the caster's level in D10 damage which will stalk that target at 360' per turn. D=until it hits or is dispelled.

Level 10 Spell

Wish, Permanent Spell: As D&D Magic User.

Shockspit: Once cast, this spell lies in readiness until the ability is used. When he wishes, the mage can breathe a 100'x5' bolt of lightning doing his level in D8 damage and with a -6 save. He may do this in addition to spellcasting in the same melee round.

Gray Lightning: A 120'x5' bolt that drains ½ the caster's level in life levels from its victim(s). The caster gets a sudden burst of energy. The bolt glows white as the levels are passed through it. 10% chance of backfiring. If the victim kills the caster, the lost levels are regained at the rate of 1 per hour. R=120'.

Shockcloud: Produces a cloud of the same dimensions and general properties as Cloudkill, but instead of being poisonous, the interior is filled with a myriad sparks. The sparks do 6D10 damage to all who enter per turn. Leaves a burnt spot on the ground when finally dissipated.

THE MAGES OF CRYSTAL

These are the builders and the nurturers, those who vowed to fight the lightning mages and their bolts of destruction. They seek to preserve and cherish the static beauties of nature, and to create more beauty in the undying medium of crystal. They fight the Lightning Mages whenever they can, for they are aghast at the senseless ruin wrought by the blasters of the world. However, though they appreciate the beauty of eternal nature, they are not very much in favor of life, for all life seems bent on consuming nature like some form of reckless blight. Still, they will "Live and let live" and their alignment is generally Lawful/Good.

Level 1 Spells

Read Magic, Detect Magic, Light: As D&D Magic User.

Protection from Evil, Shield: These are the same as the corresponding D&D Magic User spells, except that they (and all such defensive spells) produce a barely visible, but tangible, crystalline shell when used by a Crystal Mage.

Crystal Field: Caster only. A shield which totally stops all natural attacks only (meteors, hail, forest fires, etc.). D=1 hour.

Splinter: Creates a bolt of blue crystal, which is projected as an arrow from a composite bow +3. Produces one bolt per two levels of the caster, all of which must be aimed at the same target.

Stop Thoughts: Crystallizes the thoughts of one target, causing him to remain as still as crystal. R=60', D=1D6 hours.

Crystallize I: Causes any small (5 pounds or less) object of natural origin to turn to eternal crystal, in colors resembling the object as once it was, although translucent. No effect on living things or magic items. R=touch. Takes 1 full hour to cast.

Level 2 Spells

Invisibility, Detect Invisible: As D&D Magic User.

Crystal Garden: Grows a field of growing crystals 20'+1' per level of caster in diameter in an instant. The garden holds all up to 12HD. R=30', D=1 minute.

Talking Crystal: Creates a 2" high lump of green crystal which functions as a Magic Mouth spell.

Shield Eater: An insatiable spark of crystalline essence that devours all shield spells within 240'. D=6 turns.

Slipperiness: Covers a 10' square area of the floor with very slippery polished crystal. R=60', D=3+1D6 melee rounds.

Protection from Crystal: Gives one target +1 save vs. crystal-based and crystallization attacks and -1 pip per die of damage from such attacks. R=touch, D=1 day.

Wall of Crystal: As Wall of Ice, but damage done when broken through is via shards of the crystal.

Crystallize II: As crystallize I, plus will work on any material except living beings and magic items, affects up to 10 pound objects. Takes 30 minutes to cast.

Level 3 Spells

Dispel Magic, Prot/Normal Missiles: As D&D Magic User.

Capture Box: Creates a box of crystal about one target (man-sized or less). It requires at least Hill Giant strength to break the box, and anyone breaking through the wall takes 4D8 of damage from shards of crystal. Does not block Teleport or similar means of leaving. R=60', D=1 hour.

Refraction Shield: Causes all light-based weapons to refract into hundreds of harmless pieces. Covers one target. R=10', D=1 hour.

Crystal Javelin: Creates a pulsating green javelin of crystal in the caster's hand. It does the caster's level in D8 damage to anyone it hits (no save) and then vanishes. It must be thrown and score a hit as a regular javelin to do any damage.

Crystal Filaments: Fill a 10' cube, stopping progress of all up to 15HD. Those breaking through take 1D6 damage. R=30', D=10 minutes.

Crystallize III: As Crystallize II, plus also affects magical items, gets up to 50 pounds. Takes 10 minutes to cast.

Level 4 Spells

Crystal Storm: As Ice Storm.

Crystal Ball: Creates a crystal ball which lasts for 1 viewing in the mage's hand. 5% chance of insanity for 1D6 days when using.

The Deadly Needle: Creates a 1" long transparent crystal needle which if inserted in someone's skin will work its way to his heart and kill him in 1D6 days. Targets gets a save



at -5, as the needle may be dissolved by his body.

Black Shards: A spell which produces 3" long crystal shards, 1 for every two levels the caster has obtained. They may be individually targetted, have only the same chance to destroy items as crossbow bolts, do 1D8 points of damage each, and may be thrown underwater. R=150' (90' underwater).

Crystal Stars: Crystal shirukens doing 1D4 of damage each. Produces 1 star per level of caster. They splinter on impact, will not harm most items, and force those hit to save or be paralysed for 1D10 melee rounds. May be individually targetted. R=120'.

Crystallize IV: As Crystallize III, but affects up to 150 pounds of material and takes only 5 minutes to cast.

Level 5 Spells

Magic Jar: As D&D Magic User, but the "jar" must be a lump of crystal.

Shield II: As Shield, but AC 2 vs. missiles and AC 0 otherwise.

Reflect Gaze: Causes a small sheet of reflective crystal to appear in front of the eyes of one victim. R=60', D=1 melee round.

Bones to Crystal: Affects one target, incapacitates him immediately. He will die in 1D12 hours as the crystal shatters due to stress. R=60'.

Reflect Light: A field that has a 90% chance of reflecting a light-based weapon to its source. R=5', D=1 minute.

Conjure Elemental: of Crystal. Its blows do 1D8 of damage each and the target must save or crystallize.

Temper Touch: Protects any one friable object completely from all lightning and sonic attacks. R=touch, D=1 day.

Crystallize V: As Crystallize IV, but also affects living objects and any object up to 500 lbs. (or any one live thing). R=10', can be cast in 1 melee round.

Level 6 Spells

Anti-Magic Shell: As D&D Magic User.

Crystal Spheres: This spell produces 4" diameter green crystal spheres, one per level of caster. They are the same density as air. They are shattered by any contact rougher than

brushing against a wall, and when shattered become a horde of splinters doing 3D8 damage per sphere (no save). R=60', D=until shattered or dispelled.

The Crystal Pillar: Causes a 10' diameter, 100' high pillar of crystal to grow from the ground at the rate of 10' up per minute. R=360', D=1 hour.

Censor Sphere: Puts a 1' radius transparent sphere about the head of one person. It selectively opaques out all visual hazards, including Symbols, lasers, gaze weapons, and Prismatic Walls. R=touch, D=12 turns.

Immunity: One target becomes completely immune to all crystal-based, crystallizing, and paralyzing attacks. R=touch, D=1D6 plus caster's level turns.

Crystallize VI: As Crystallize V, but affects up to 750 lbs. of material and is a 100'x5' line effect.

Level 7 Spells

Crystallize Time: Self only, gives one hour of subjective time in .01 seconds, cannot be used to attack or to prepare attacks.

The Crystal Barrier: As Wall of Crystal, but cannot be passed by those with less than Storm Giant strength, who take 5D6 damage when passing through.

Pellucid Pipes: Produces a set of crystalline Pan's pipes in the caster's hands. He is able to play a melody which will selectively entrance any person(s) within 90' for as long as he plays plus an additional 1D12 turns. Those who save must save again every round until they enter the trance.

Crystallize VII: As Crystallize V but affects up to 1000 lbs. of material and is a 90'x30' cone effect.

Level 8 Spell

Crystallize Form: When cast on any object, locks it into the shape it is in then, preventing all polymorphs, shape-changes, and so on. R=360', D=1 hour.

Crystalline Tapestry: A 10'x10' wall of glittering yellow crystal shards, stopping 75% of all offensive spells. Missiles passing through are -2 to hit, and all beings passing through must roll 16+ on a D20 or be crystallized. R=60', D=1 hour.

Crystal Skin: Turns the skin of one person into AC-5 crystal. This has no effects on his other abilities, but any critical hit has a 50% chance of shattering the crystal and doing 10D10 points of damage. R=30', D=1 day.

Encase: Encases one target in a 20' cube of pale blue crystal, which dissipates after 1 hour leaving the target unharmed. No save, but no effect on targets greater than 20' in any dimension. R=60'.

Level 9 Spells

Prismatic Wall: As D&D Magic User.

Anti-radiation Shell: A 60' diameter sphere which reflects all harmful radiation in a random direction and can be moved by the caster at 120' per turn. R=240', D=1 hour.

Shield III: As Shield, but AC-2 vs. missiles and AC0 otherwise.

Anti-Teleport Shell: A 60' radius spherical effect. Anyone attempting to teleport to or from this area will get no results. D=1 day.

Prismatic Bolt: A 5' long crystal shard, colored as one type of Prismatic Wall and having the same effect on its target. R=240'. Caster's choice as to color.

Level 10 Spells

Timestop, Wish, Permanent Spell: As D&D Magic User.

Poly-Air: This spell binds a mass of air into a metallic polymer

somewhat harder than Orichalcum. Affects up to 10 cubic feet of air (Although if the spell is made permanent, 9/10 of this dissipates). R=30', D=1 hour.

Phase Crystal: Creates a Wall of Crystal that is totally resistant to all physical force but can be passed by the caster at any time without leaving a hole and without difficulty.

THE MAGES OF ACID

These are the servants of the Snailgod, the consumer in the dark, the spreader of slime and disease, the one who gnaws, the lover of undead. They hate the Wind Mages and the Ravenlord above all others, and are constantly striving to blot them from the face of the Earth and the Skies above. When not fighting the Ravenlord's minions, they take pleasure in corrupting and dissolving whatever they can, and spread foul putrescence across the world.

These are actually closer to clerics than to the mages of today, but nevertheless they still use edged weapons. Alignment varies, for their God cares little for such things, lusting only after the death of the Raven. They are never good, though.

Level 1 Spells

Detect Magic, Detect Evil, Read Magic, Web: As D&D Magic User.

Light, Cure Light Wounds, Cause Light Wounds: As D&D Cleric.

Detect Raven: Detects any creatures of the Ravenlord within 120'.

Repulse Ravens I: Repulses any creature of the Ravenlord up to 2D6 Hit Points for 5 turns plus level of caster.

Speak with Snails: Allows the user to converse with all snails (see below). D=1 hour.

Tanglefoot: 30'x10'x3' deep Web spell.

Mental Corrode: Stops the mental processes of 2D8 up to 1+1 HD, 2D6 up to 2+1HD, 1D6 up to 3+1HD, or 1 up to 5+1HD. R=240', D=12 turns.

Bind Person: A mental web. Holds 1 person static for 1D6 hours. R=120'.

Level 2 Spells

Silence, Speak with Animals, Find Traps, Bless: As D&D Cleric.

Curse: As D&D Cleric, but castable only on creatures and servants of the Ravenlord.

Snail Charm: As Snake Charm, but affects only Snails.

Wave: An acid blast. Travels 40' from the caster and is 10'x10'. Does 1D10 plus level of of caster.

Burning Nettle: A pointy web with acid properties. Does 2D6 to those bursting through, otherwise as web.

Cloud: A corrosive darkness blocking vision and doing 1D4 per three levels of the mage to all within its 40' diameter area.

Protection from Acid: Gives +1 save vs. acid and -1 pip per die of acid damage to one target. D=1 hour, R=touch.

Level 3 Spells

Dispel Magic: As D&D Magic User.

Cure Disease, Cause Disease, Speak with Dead, Prayer, Neutralize Poison: As D&D Cleric.

Acid Web: Does 1D6 per level of caster. Fills a 10'x10'x10' cube. R=240', D=1 turn.

Bind Persons: Holds 1D4 thinking creatures. D=6 plus level of caster turns. R=120'. For each person less than 4 save is at -1.

Bolt: 5'x60' bolt of fuming acid, can travel a maximum of 120'. Does 1D8 per level of caster.

Level 4 Spells

Speak with Plants, Cause Serious Wounds, Create Water: As D&D Cleric.

Repulse Ravens II: Repulses any creature of the Ravenlord up to 4D6 Hit Points for 7 plus caster's level turns.

Turn Pools to Snails: 1 HD of Snails per level of caster can be created from any stagnant body of water.

Polymorph Self to Snail: of own HD. D=level of hours.

Bile: A 1''x12' series of columns, one of that size is spaced out every 6'' for 30 yards in any shape desired. The barrier cannot be passed by any of less than 4th level. Does 1D12 damage when passed, double or triple that for large creatures. Lasts as long as it is concentrated on.

Ooze: A 1''x50'x12' high sheet of sticky flaming acid. Does 1D6 per level of caster to all it touches. Moves 30' per turn. R=20', D=1D4 turns.

Haze: A cloud of corrosion, similar to Cloudkill in its properties, which does 5D6 damage per turn. 40' diameter, D=until dispelled.

Occloud: Catalysis occurs, leaving a hole in people's sight. Similar to Massmorph for 1D10 turns.

Level 5 Spells

Quest, Finger of Death, Create Food: As D&D Cleric.

Raise Dead: Works only on creatures and Servants of the Snailgod, otherwise as D&D Cleric.

Contact Snail Incarnations: As D&D Magic User spell Contact Higher Planes.

Dispel Raven: Does caster's level in D6 damage to any creature of the Ravenlord, no save. R=120'.

Pass: Instant Corrosion. Destroys 10' of soft stone, 5' of hardwood, or 2' of metal, obsidian, and such. R=touch.

Pool: A 20' pool of consumption that does 4D6 per level of caster to any within it. R=1', D=until dispelled.

Black Bile Barrier: As Bile, but lasts for 6 turns after concentration ends and also acts as a double strength death poison (save twice or die).

Create Elemental: of Acid. Does 2D6 plus death poison per strike.

Level 6 Spells

Animate Objects, Find the Path, Word of Recall, Speak with Monsters: As D&D Cleric.

Spines of the Snail: A blade barrier that moves up to 30' per turn, does 4D10 damage plus 3D10 poison damage (no save).

Conjure the Eaters of the Lord: Summons 2D8 Type II Snails.

Acid Hail: Brings down globs of acid doing 4D10 damage (no save). Covers a 30' cube. R=120', D=1 turn.

Rock to Sludge: Affects 300 square feet to a depth of 30''. As Rock to Mud but Sludge is also acid doing 1 point of damage per level of caster per round.

Flesh to Corruption: Like Stone to Flesh but turns those who fail to save into a pile of corruption. Resurrection chances of victims are lowered by 15%.

Immunity: Gives one person total immunity to all acids and poisons. R=touch, D=1D6 plus level of caster turns.

Level 7 Spells

Earthquake, Astral Spell, Symbol, Restoration: As D&D Cleric.

Acid Word: Any up to 12th level who hear this must save or die as their brains are dissolved. If they save, they are



stunned for 1D12 rounds.

Repulse Ravens III: Repulses any creature of the Ravenlord up to 6D6 hit points for 9 plus level of caster turns.

The Rotting Touch: A spell cast by the mage upon his own hand. The next creature he touches with that hand will rot away, dying in one day (no save) unless cured.

Acid Blast: A 90'x30' cone of acid spews from the mage's finger, doing his level in D8 damage to all it touches and eating about 1' into most materials. Fumes stun all of 6HD or less within 120' of the cone (no save).

Level 8 Spells

Raise Dead Fully: Works only on creatures and servants of the Snailgod, otherwise as cleric. Affects others as Raise Dead.

Specific Acid: A bolt of acid 60'x5' extending at most 120' from the caster. Does caster's level in D8 damage (no save). Can be keyed to affect only one type of material (e.g., flesh, stone, or steel) by the caster.

Devastate: A blight which strikes stone and metal, causing a 30' cube to rot away in one day. R=120', D=until dispelled or until nothing is left.

The Groaning Cloud: A very dense (literally can be cut with a knife) sickly green cloud. Eats away everything at 8D8 per turn to the accompaniment of a ghastly groaning. 60'x60'x60', moves at creator's direction, D=1 day.

Level 9 Spells

Full Restoration: As Restoration, but restores as many levels as there are available from some creature of the Ravenlord who is at hand to drain from and does not drain the mage.

Stalker Bolt: As Bolt, but no maximum range, and will tirelessly follow a specified target until it hits or is dispelled. It moves at 480' per turn.

Create Slime: Creates an amount of Green Slime with the same HD as the caster. R=60'.

Acid Trap: Cast on floor, wall, etc., produces a 5' diameter green-black circle of discoloration. Anyone of hostile intent to the caster passing by the circle triggers it, causing it to turn into a Bolt.

Level 10 Spells

Permanent Spell: As D&D Magic User.

Miracle: Usable once a week, drains the mage completely for 1 week, does anything within reason.

Repulse Ravens IV: Repulses any creature of the Ravenlord up to 8D6 hit points for 11 plus caster's level turns.

Create Antilife: Turns any one creature from life into antilife (see below). R=120', D=until dispelled.

ANTILIFE

Antilife is a totally different biology, based on a reversal of normal life—all that is poisonous to normal life is wholesome to antilife and vice versa. Thus poisoned weapons add their damage to the monster's hits and so on. Antilife monsters generally have warty green skin, glowing red eyes, no hair, and a poisonous smell. They are inimical to normal life and will attack all normal beings with as much cunning as possible. Being exceptionally hardy, all antilife monsters automatically get 8 hit points per HD.

SNAILS

As referred to in these rules, snails are not harmless little soft creatures with spiral shells. Rather, they are the spawn of the Snailgod himself. Though not equal to his special Sons of the Slime in power, they are yet potent in their own right.

Snails have no shell, being more like slugs with spiny, slimy backs. They have a rude intelligence, being able to recognize other servants of their Lord and fight with and for them. In general, any Acid Mage can control and command all Snails of Type less than or equal to 1/2 his own level.

Type	AC	Move	HD	Spit	Bite
I	8	7	1D8	1D4 (30')	1D3
II	7	8	2D8	1D6 (45')	1D6
III	6	9	3D8	1D8 (60')	2D6
IV	5	10	4D8	2D6 (75')	3D6
V	4	11	5D8	2D8 (90')	4D6
VI	3	12	6D8	2D10 (105')	5D6+
VII	2	12	7D8	2D12 (120')	6D6+
VIII	1	12	8D8	2D20 (135')	7D6+
IX	0	12	9D8	Death (150')	8D6+
X	0	12	10D8	2xDeath (150')	9D6+

Spit: The Snail can spit poison needles that do the indicated poison damage plus 1 point of penetration damage with the indicated range.

Bite: Does the indicated damage. Those shown as "+" swallow as a purple worm on any hit 2 or better than needed.

2xDeath Poison: Save twice or die.

THE MAGES OF WIND

These are the special servers of the Ravenlord, eater of carrion, pecker of eyes, slayer of chicks, bane of Snails in the air and on the ground. Though the Ravenlord is a dark God,

the war on the Snails in his only "evil" point, and these mages have taken it upon themselves to cleanse the world of all the foul manifestations of the slime in any form. When not directly confronting the Snailgod's followers, they will be seeking knowledge of how to cleanse the world, or working towards purifying some unwholesome place.

Though these are more akin to the Clerics than to mages in some ways, their spells, weapons, and so on are as shown in Part 1 (*Different Worlds 1*). Alignment varies, since the Ravenlord is an old god who cares not about such things, only about the meat of the Snail! They are never totally evil, though.

Level 1 Spells

Detect Magic, Detect Evil, Read Magic: As D&D Magic User.

Light, Cure Light Wounds, Cause Light Wounds: As D&D Cleric.

Detect Snails: Detects any creature of the Snailgod. R=120'.

Repulse Snails I: Repulses any creature of the Snailgod up to 2D6 hit points for 5 plus the caster's level turns.

Speak with Birds: As the name implies. D=1 hour.

Fly: Castable on self only, otherwise as D&D Magic User. Works by growing a set of raven wings.

Gust: Creates a small gust of wind. Will blow out a torch, knock arrows off course (-2 to hit), or knock a hat off of someone's head. R=120'.

Whisper Wind: A whispering wind flies about the target's head, sapping his will and immobilizing him for 1D6 hours. This trance is easily broken from the outside. R=120'.

Message Wind: A gust of wind carries any short message to any other creature of the Ravenlord that the mage knows. It moves at 960' per turn.

Breeze I: A 10 mph breeze is summoned. R=480', D=1D6 plus caster's level turns.

Wind Veering I: Changes a wind 1 direction (example N to NW) in an area centered on the mage and 1000' across. D=1 hour.

Level 2 Spells

Silence, Speak with Animals, Bless: As D&D Cleric.

Whisper Wind II: As Whisper Wind, but affects 1D6 people. For every person over 1 affected, reduce duration by 1/2 hour.

Curse: Affects servants and creatures of the Snailgod only, otherwise as D&D Cleric.

Predict Weather, Find Traps: As D&D Cleric.

Cleanse: A wind sweeps over a 60' (plus 10' per level attained hereafter) square area, removing all slimes, rots, poisons, and acids up to 1/2 the mage's own HD.

Carry Voice: The mage may speak to anyone within 600', the winds carrying his words and not making them heard in the intervening space. D=10 minutes.

Auditory Illusion: As Phantasmal forces, but for sound only.

Protection from Sonics: Gives one person +1 save vs. sonic damage and -1 pip per die taken from it. R=touch, D=1 day.

Breeze II: As Breeze I, but summons a 20 mph wind.

Wind Veering II: As Wind Veering I, but changes the wind direction by up to two compass points (example N to E).

Level 3 Spells

Dispel Magic: As D&D Magic User.

Cure Disease, Cause Disease, Prayer, Speak with Dead: As D&D Cleric.

Wings of the Raven: One target grows raven wings and can fly at 180' per turn for the caster's level in turns.

Buffet: Causes the wind to buffet one target for 4D4 points of

damage. R=300'.

Windspear: A 5'x60' blast of wind, which picks up sand, rocks, and so on, doing 1D8 per level of caster. R=120'.

Scurry: A scurrying wind which flies in circles about 1' off of the ground. Radius=30' plus 10' per level of caster. Reduces agility and dexterity of all in the area by 1D6. R=60', D=1 turn.

Wind Veering III: As Wind Veering I, but changes the direction of the wind by up to 3 compass points (example N to SE).

Breeze III: As Breeze I, but the summoned wind is 30 mph, which is powerful enough to halve the speed of most creatures that it is thrown against.

Level 4 Spells

Remove Curse, Neutralize Poison, Speak with Plants, Cure Serious Wounds: As D&D Cleric.

Create Water: As D&D Cleric. Done by extracting moisture from the air.

Turn Clouds to Ravens: Produces ravens, up to 1 HD per level of mage.

Polymorph Self to Raven: Of own HD. D=level of hours.

Gaseous Form: Self only, turns body and equipment into a cloud of gas which moves at 120' per turn. The mage takes only ¼ damage from spells in this form and is immune to weapons, but cannot cast spells. D=1 hour.

Repulse Snails II: Repulses any creature of the Snailgod up to 4D6 hit points for 7 plus caster's level turns.

Sonic Blast: A 60'x20' cone of sonic energy, doing the caster's level in D6 damage. R=must start from finger.

Create Wind: Creates a wind strong enough to knock people from their feet or propel a ship. R=240', D=3 melees rounds if used offensively, otherwise 1 day.

Frenzy: A sweeping wind which lifts up all loose items in a circle 30', plus 10' per level of mage in diameter, reducing vision in the area by 90% and stopping all missile weapons. R=90', D=1D8 turns.

Wind Veering IV: The mage may control the direction of the wind completely, otherwise as Wind Veering I.

Level 5 Spells

Quest, Finger of Death, Create Food: As D&D Cleric.

Raise Dead: Works only on creatures and servants of the Ravenlord, otherwise as D&D Cleric.

Contact Raven Incarnations: As D&D Magic User spell Contact Higher Plane.

Bird Plague: As D&D Insect Plague, but also does 1 point of damage (1D6 damage if save failed).

Wings of the Wind: Allows one target to fly at 1200' per turn. There is a 25% chance of crashing if the user spellcasts at that speed. D=6 hours.

Sonic Ball: As Fireball, but does Sonic damage instead of fire damage. Shatters crystalline objects.

Create Elemental: of Air only.

Oxygen to Nitrogen: Affects a 30' cube, prevents breathing. R=120', D=6 turns.

Wind Barrier: A circling wall of wind up to 10' in diameter per level of caster. Movement through the wall is impossible, but it does not affect spellcasting. R=240', D=as long as concentration is maintained.

Level 6 Spells

Animate Objects, Find the Path, Word of Recall, Speak with Monsters: As D&D Cleric.

Claws of the Raven: A Blade Barrier, moves at 30' per turn, does 7D10 points of damage (no save).

Mass Flight: All in a 20'x20' area can fly (as Fly spell).

Conjure the Hunters of the Lord: 2D8 ravens of HD=2D8, AC7, fly at 240' per turn. beak does 1D6, claws do 1D4 are summoned to follow the mage's commands for 2D6 turns.

Flesh to Air: As Flesh to Stone.

Immunity: Gives one person immunity to sonic and wind damage. R=touch, D=1D6 plus caster's level turns.

Level 7 Spells

Earthquake, Wind Walk, Holy Word, Astral Spell, Symbol, Restoration: As D&D Cleric.

Cloudquake: Changes solid clouds to mushy, mushy to soft, soft to clear air. Otherwise as Earthquake.

Parts Clouds: over a 1 mile square area.

Summon Storm: As D&D Druid and Magic User Control Weather combined, plus the user can call down one 6D6 lightning bolt per turn.

Repulse Snails III: Repulses any creature of the Snailgod up to 6D6 hit points for 9 plus caster's level turns.

Power Word—Deafen: As D&D Power Word—Blind.

Level 8 Spells

Raise Dead Fully: As D&D Cleric, but only works fully on creatures and servants of the Ravenlord, affects all others as Raise Dead.

Cloak of Cloud: Causes clouds and fog to settle over a 1 mile square area. D=1 day.

Summon Cloud: Summons a solid cloud to be ridden by the mage, he can control it for 1 day.

Hurricane: Intense wind, blows everything less than 20HD over, does 2D8 per level of mage to all in range, rips most everything to shreds. Drains the caster of all powers for 3 days. R=480'.

Level 9 Spells

Full Restoration: As D&D Restoration, but restores as many levels as there are available from some creature of the Snailgod who is at hand to drain from, and does not drain the mage.

Purify: Removes all slimes, molds, poisons, acids, etc., in a 30' cube up to thrice the mage's own HD. R=30'.

Disperse: Blows all beings within a 240' square 1 D6 miles away without harming them. R=480'.

Level 10 Spells

Repulse Snails IV: Repulses any creature of the Snailgod up to 8D6 hit points for 11 plus caster's level turns.

Miracle: Usable once per week, drains the mage for 1 week, does anything within reason.

Air Walking: Affects 1D8 targets, as Waterwalking but on air, D=1 day or cancelled whenever the caster wishes.

Dissipation: Automatically dispels any cloud, mist, enchanted monster or magical wall. R=50'.

Summon Avatar of the Lord: Summons an avatar of the Ravenlord, does not give control. The avatar appears as a 25' tall raven, HD=35D8, AC2, flies at 480' per turn, bite does 6D10 and claws do 2D8. He can change size at will and acts as a 20th level wind mage.



Role-Playing HOW TO DO IT

(AN IMMODEST PROPOSAL)

By Clint Bigglestone

"Oh Great Spirit, let me not judge another man until I have walked a mile in his moccasins."

—(Probably) apocryphal American Indian saying

Much has been written and spoken in the last five years on the subject of role-playing games. Sadly, it mostly seems to consist of long discussions with regard to the damage done by fireballs, the propriety of inventing 47 different varieties of dragon, or even wrangling over whose reworking or what variation of which original (or maybe not-so-original) rules are best. Somewhere in here we all seem to have lost sight of the key thing about the games we play—the role-playing.

The first issue of *Different Worlds* was full of autobiographical details of individual lives and their relationship with RPGs. The major thing which stood out about all these articles, as I see it, was that no two people appear to agree on exactly what "role-playing" is. Therefore, I offer the following highly immodest proposal in an attempt to define "role-playing," as well as give people some hints on how it is done.

ART OF ROLE-PLAYING

"Role-playing," like all good acting, is the art of being that whom you are not.

Now, do I expect you to put aside your entire cultural and familial background in one stroke? Am I expecting your fangs to drip with chaotic-evil slime-like saliva, or your pointed ears to ring with words heard in your immortal elven youth? Of course not. There is no way any of us may make an absolute switch to another personality short of certifiable insanity. Even if we try our best, some residue of our own selves will

remain.

However, there is a technique (a method of acting, if you will) which seems to have been shared by the best players I know, which has allowed them to adapt well to other personalities (for gaming purposes). This technique also allows this adaptation to take place over an extended period of time, thus causing a minimum dislocation to the player's own personality. The purpose of this article is to acquaint the novice player with this technique.

CREATE THE CHARACTER

First, create your character. In all role-playing games with which I am familiar (except for *Bushido* and *Melee/Wizard*) this is done by throwing a number of dice and applying the results to various named characteristics. In *Bushido* you are given a total number of points to apply to these characteristics as you desire—a method of creating exactly the type of character you want, rather than forcing you to depend on the roll of the dice. However, no matter whether points are assigned deliberately, or by a random roll of the dice, the player is stuck with the results of that assignment. These characteristic scores will dictate almost everything which that character is or does from now until its death or retirement, and the player has to learn to live with them.

First of all, these characteristic scores may dictate the character type (magic-user, cleric, fighter, etc.) in many games, or at least indicate strongly the probable path that the character will take (ala

RuneQuest). But they have an even greater impact on the character's personality if they deviate from the average to any degree.

Think for a minute. People who are skinny and weak, but rather bright, are likely to look down upon (but secretly envy) those who are more physically endowed than they. If you've got a puny little mage, play him as being very supercilious toward fighters, then have his life's ambition be to find and use a copy of the magical tome "*Secrets of Charles Atlas Revealed*." You might even send the little twerp on quest for it. Or maybe the little guy's just a coward because he's so little, or maybe he's the banty-rooster type and makes up for his size by being pushy and aggressive.

What I'm getting at here is that a person's physical and mental gifts will have as much of an impact upon their personality as their cultural heritage. Before the character is even named, work out a relationship (in terms of both conscious and sub-conscious thought processes) between the character's characteristic scores and what impact they have had on the character's life. Is the character tall or short, fat or thin, beautiful or ugly, smart or dumb, wise or foolish, healthy or sickly, or somewhere between these extremes. And how does that character perceive him or her self in light of those characteristics?

At this point, I have to speak to those of you who can't seem to play anything except superior characters, without a weakness in the lot. I have news for you—they aren't as much fun to play as the "handicapped" ones, be-

cause there's no challenge in them. It's the limitations you have to work with, and work around, that make role-playing so much fun. Remember, Superman always wins, almost never works up a sweat while doing it, and is one of the most boring comic strips around.

Besides, it has been my experience that with super-characters, players aren't really role-playing because the characters are actually just a shadow of the player as his or her idealized self. Such characters have no depth, but they do reveal an awful lot about the person playing them (or about their daydreams, anyway).

CULTURAL BACKGROUND

Second, you have to decide about the cultural background of your new character. Next to the absolute characteristics with which that character was "born," the cultural background will have the most impact on the character's behavior and personality. For instance, the following folk are "lawful good," but they probably wouldn't consider each other to be so:

1. The American Indians who torture a captured enemy to allow him the chance to prove his bravery.
2. The Japanese who allow and expect a respected enemy to commit seppuku (ritual suicide).
3. The South Pacific islander who eats his dead enemy's heart so that he may inherit that enemy's courage.

Imagine, if you will, the culture shock when any two of the above meet. Or, imagine what happens when someone from the upper class of one culture meets someone from the lower class of the same culture, because they may often have widely divergent value systems. This diversity of cultural values is one of the things which makes role-playing fascinating (let's face it, the characters mean very little if they aren't interacting with some other character, even a non-player character, or NPC).

So, how do we learn about different cultures, and classes within those cultures, so we know how to play characters from them? Well, the best way is to have lived in them, but very few of us can do that. What we can do instead is read, watch motion pictures and television, read, go to plays and lectures, and read. It also helps to get to know people from as many diverse cultures as possible.

Above all, be flexible. Don't reject a culture and its values because those values are different from yours. You are

looking to make your characters, most of them, into something you are not, and second hand experience is better than no experience at all. Besides, if you really get to know how others think, and why they think the way they do, you can put the experience to work in "real life," along with enabling you to conduct the affairs of some tin-lead beings who spend 95% of their time in your briefcase.

Once you have your character's thought processes, cultural background, motivations, inhibitions (if any!), etc., worked out, it's time to play with it. Now you actually get to role-play!

BEING SOMEONE ELSE

Most of us are not born actors and actresses, and we need to get used to the idea of being someone else rather slowly. The best way seems to be to do it like this:

1. First, pick out one or two charac-

ters who are almost like you, but not quite. Take them through a few runs until you are comfortable with foibles which are not your own. Now is the time to learn the most important fact of all with regard to RPGs. *You must remember, at all times and all situations, that it is just a game!* Those wizards, elves, clerics, et al, aren't real people! You must not get so caught up in their "lives" that you lose track of, or develop complications in your own. These pencil-and-paper and/or tin-lead folk exist to entertain you and your friends and expand your experience horizon. Do not, under any circumstances, let them run your life.

If you become too attached to a character, to the point that it would emotionally affect you if something happened to that character, then get rid of that character! Kill it off, retire it to running an inn for indigent NPCs, give it away, but do something. The penalty for not doing so is to lose track of the



fact that the second half of the term "role-playing game" is the word "game." GMs in situations where people have lost control over their alternate personality are called "psychiatrists" and most of them make lousy referees.

2. As you become secure in the knowledge that you can successfully handle a slightly different you, introduce a character or two who is no different from you than the others, but has a different moral orientation. Try playing a lawful-evil or two, or maybe a lawful- (or chaotic-) good type, instead of the chaotic (or lawful) person you really are. Get used to playing people like this for a while and you will be ready for the next big step, which is . . .

3. Playing a character whose sex differs from yours.

Let's face it, two individuals of the same gender from two different cultures often have more in common with each other than two individuals of the same culture but different genders.

When you take this step, and it's a big one, don't go it alone. Talk to your spouse, lover, sibling, parent, friend, etc., about what it's like to be of their sex. Ask how "they" react to common situations, remarks, conflicts, etc. Find out what are those common circumstances for "them?" For those of you who are straight/gay, take the same steps with regard to communicating with your gay/straight friends and relatives. That way, not only do you get to know how to play your character, you also get to spend a little time (a few steps maybe) in the other person's mocasins.

Whatever you do, in playing any type of character, don't rely on stereotypes (not even from comedy) for your models. They're seldom accurate, and almost always demeaning.

4. Now you get to take another big step (assuming you've successfully negotiated number 3, above)—you get to play someone with a personality much apart from your own. Start with "larger-than-life" types, because broad exaggeration is much easier to play than deep-but-subtle differences.

If you are an introvert, play a loud-mouth extrovert. Are you the 98 pound weakling described above? Then play a character with a little less strength (and almost as much brain) as the Incredible Hulk. Wouldn't hurt a fly? Then play a chaotic-evil character with the same verve and dedication as does Idi Amin (only stick to pencil-and-paper evil, it's safer).

5. Having successfully navigated the shoals of the two-dimensional character,

you next hit the big time. Now you want to develop one or more characters with whom you have little or nothing in common. Your characteristics, cultural background and moral outlook should all be different, and your character(s) should look, act, think and probably smell much different from you.

Do not fall for the silly fallacy that you have to be playing such characters because "deep down inside you are really like that." This is an argument which you will encounter at least once during your role-playing career, usually from someone who reads *Psychology Today* because it's hip, but doesn't understand it any more than they understood "psychology 1a and 1b" back when they were polisci or business administration majors. Ignore this argument, for by its logic Charleton Heston must be an amalgam of El Cid, Moses and Cardinal Richelieu, having played all three roles in motion pictures.

GOING THROUGH CHANGES

Okay, we've got you started playing characters in a RPG, you've gotten used to those characters, and you have several games under your belt. Bully! Now some fiend of a GM is going to come along and shatter your secure little world by changing one of your characters in some magical fashion.

This can happen in a variety of ways, running from a sharp increase or reduction in a single characteristic, all the way to an enforced change in gender, sexual orientation, morality, religion, race, or any combination of the above. Don't panic, you needed that. Now you will be forced to do something which your modern classroom education probably hasn't prepared you for—you have to think fast and adapt to rapid changes.

Most people experience a period of confusion following such a happenstance, so you let your character do the same. While the character is mentally (and verbally) saying "who, what, why, huh, etc.," (not to mention lots of unpublishable-in-a-family-magazine-about-RPGs words) you take the time to think about the predicament the character is in.

Match the new situation to the character's personality and background. Then, when in situations which necessitate an altered response, make that new response logical with regard to that fund of information. Under no circumstances should you discard the character because of such a change. Remember, we all go through changes in our lifetimes, and while few of us acquire a new gen-

der, become elves, or turn into bright day-glo orange trolls, our own changes can be pretty shattering. Most of us do not discard ourselves upon experiencing such changes, and our characters should be allowed to be at least as tough mentally as we are.

Another thing which will alter the personality of a character, although not usually so permanently, is the acquisition of an item with its own personality and characteristics—especially where they dominate or overshadow those of the character. The fun in playing this situation lies in personality clashes between the character and the item, the character (now influenced by the item) and the beings with whom the character normally interacts (its friends and business associates), and directly between the item and those beings. (Occasionally this domination goes so far as to cause a person to introduce his character like this: "Hello, I'm the greatsword Fiend-splitter and this is my human, Fred.")

When you are in this situation, do the same thing for the weapon as you did for the character who has been taken over—work out its personality from its powers, background, purpose, etc., and play it. Often the GM can help you with this.

GM—PLAYING A WORLD

Eventually, you will make the really big step in role-playing—you will become a GM. Being a GM isn't too different from being a player, except it's about two orders of magnitude more work. A GM, you see, is required to do all of the above for an entire world, and every sentient being and object with which he populates it. The various nasties, townfolk, rustics, nobles, elves, gnomes, little men, etc., aren't going to be much fun to interact with if they only exist in one or two dimensions. So you're going to have to put a lot of thought into why all those NPCs are doing what they're doing, going where they're going, etc.

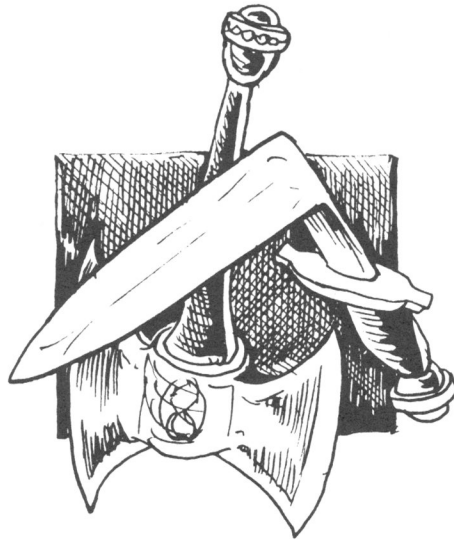
Another chore a GM has with regard to the role-playing aspects of the game is making sure that the players role-play their characters. It's the GM's duty to guide players in handling the reactions of their characters if the players are unsure of themselves. The good GM does this by asking questions with regard to the characters' responses to different situations ("What does your samurai think about doing to the stable-hand who stepped on his sword? Is he going to do it? Does your hobbit master-thief's mother really wear combat boots and

what does he think of the ogre who just said she does?"). As a GM, you should never make a flat statement about the actions and reactions of a character who is not your own. It's not your job to make that character grow, just to help it grow by providing the opportunity.

ROLE-PLAYING AND RELIGION

I've saved the sticky part until last. Religion. I've read about religious wars, they sound awful, and I'm not interested in starting one in miniature—either as an author or as a GM.

Because religion is almost totally a matter of faith, and is an emotional rather than rational belief, no one should even pretend to tell anyone else how to play the adherent, priest, paladin or fanatic of any religion. But I will say that no matter what religion(s) you play, my previous comments about not using stereotypes as a guide goes double here. Religion, if it is highly important to a character, will have a profound impact on every other facet of that character's personality, and will govern more



than anything else the company that character will keep. Religion transcends all considerations of race, size, color and economic and social status. Finally, arguments over religion will kill an otherwise successful gaming group faster than anything else I know of.

It's a wise player and GM who knows when it is time stop playing and re-enter the "real" world. That should be done whenever a player, or players, have stopped being able to distinguish between the actions of other players and the actions of the characters of those players. In other words, the game should end the minute the players start taking the character's remarks personally.

So when you role-play touchy subjects, even if the other guy seems to have tongue planted firmly in cheek, you should approach those subjects with sufficient reverence to forstall any adverse reaction until you are secure in the attitudes of the other players.

That too is "role-playing," and we do it every day in real life.



Quick Plugs

CALIBAN: Arduin Dungeon 1

This is the first of a series of "dungeons" based on the *Arduin Grimoire* Trilogy of rulebooks. Designed by Dave Hargrave, it consists of a 25 page rulebook (8½"x11" format) and 16 cards, 8 new magik treasures and 8 new monsters. Gives a *Design Rating* of Character Levels 8 or greater and alleges to be compatible with most FRP systems. Fairly extensive with four levels and ten rooms per level. Special Caliban Trap Matrix at the end. Available for \$6.50 plus \$.50 for postage & handling from Grimoire Games, 2428 Ellsworth (102), Berkeley, CA 94704. California residents add 6% sales tax.

MILITIA & MERCENARIES

RuneQuest Source Pack Gamma

This is the third in the series of computer-generated *RuneQuest* character books. 96 characters are broken down to seven sections: a page of unattached officers, a page of random warhorses, and seven squads of soldiers. This is the most useful set yet as they are humans and can be used in a variety of different ways. By Ray Turney, it is available

from the Chaosium, PO Box 6302, Albany, CA 94706, for \$2 postpaid in the US & Canada. California residents add appropriate 6% or 6½% sales tax.

IN SEARCH OF THE UNKNOWN: Dungeon Module B1

This module contains more than the usual dungeon adventure. It is designed as an instructional aid for beginning Dungeon Masters and players. Written by Mike Carr, it fills the need for instructions to enable novices to start playing with a minimum of preparation. In their standard format, it is 32 pages long with two maps that are, for some reason, printed in hard-to-read light blue. This module now comes with all the *Basic Dungeons & Dragons* sets replacing the *Dungeon Geomorphs* and the *Monsters & Treasures Assortment*. It is available separately for \$5.49 plus \$1 for postage & handling from TSR Games, PO Box 756, Lake Geneva, WI 53147.

WYRMS FOOTNOTES 6

Chaosium's official house organ (which organ?), this issue contains mostly *RuneQuest*/Glorantha material. Home of the Dark Troll jokes, it is edited by Greg Stafford, and is a must for *RQ*/Dragon Pass fans. Cover price: \$1.75. Five issue subscription for \$7. From the Chaosium, PO Box 6302, Albany, CA 94706.

QUICK QUINCY GAZETTE 12

A potpourri of FRP articles. Subs are 5 for \$2. Order from and make checks out to Howard Mahler, 42-65 Kissena Blvd (506), Flushing, NY 11355.

WARGAMING 4

After a long absence, this issue contains mostly miniatures and RP material. \$1.75 from Fantasy Games Unlimited, PO Box 182, Roslyn, NY 11576.

APA-DUD 22

Publication of the New York Dungeons & Dragons Amateur Publishing Association. Much more of a mish-mash than other APAs. Contact Robert Sacks, 4861 Broadway (5-V), New York, NY 10034. Collations are held first Saturday of every month, 11 am, at the Compleat Strategist, 11 E 33rd St, New York, NY 10016.

THE APPRENTICE 3

The Canadian magazine of medieval fantasy gaming. \$1 for sample issue or 6 issue sub for \$5.50 from David Berman, 24 Seguin St, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada K1J 6P3.



◎ DIFFERENT WORLDS ◎

Presents the World of

Druid's Valley

A Bunnies & Burrows Campaign

by **B. Dennis Sustare**

Bunnies and Burrows, published by Fantasy Games Unlimited, is a fantasy role-play game inspired by the novel *Watership Down* (now a popular animated motion picture). The players assume the roles of intelligent rabbits, and are faced with the problems of survival and character development in an often hostile world. A rabbit may pursue any of eight professions, related to their inherent and acquired abilities in their primary characteristics: one may be a Fighter (Strength), Runner (Speed), Herbalist (Smell), Scout (Intelligence), Seer (Wisdom), Maverick (Dexterity), Empath (Constitution), or Storyteller (Charisma). Cooperation among a party is perhaps even more valuable than with human adventurers in *D&D* or *RuneQuest*, since individual rabbits (especially beginning ones) are so vulnerable; often one finds *B&B* players to be more close-knit and less glory-seeking. This is a serious game (though certainly not without its hilarious moments!), and has all the rich potential of humanoid fantasy role-play. Although there is no magic as such, each profession allows progress to specialty-powers that are formidable indeed. If you enjoyed *Watership Down*, then give *Bunnies and Burrows* a try. See if you can overcome the threats of bobcats, traps, hawks, and the most dangerous enemy of all, other rabbits!

Druid's Valley is the setting for a continuing campaign of *Bunnies and Burrows*. The valley is bounded by sheer cliffs to the north and west, by the mysterious and terrifying Misty Marsh to the east, and by a large, fast-moving river (often called Big River) to the south. Recently, eight new rabbits (player-characters)

entered the valley by crossing Big River on a slippery log, after having been cast out by their home warren to the south when over-crowding had resulted in pests and disease. These young bucks and does forlornly began their search for a new home; after foraging in the grassy area near the river bank, they became fearful of predators and scampered northeast to take cover in the brush. They startled a weasel as they entered, and gained confidence when the weasel ran off, perhaps being reticent to attack so large a group of rabbits, in spite of their youth and inexperience. After searching the brush for awhile, finding no herbs but discovering the steep bluff that forms the edge of Grassy Top, the rabbits were met Ginger, a Scout from Wintercalm Warren. He was friendly, and led them to the entrance of the warren.

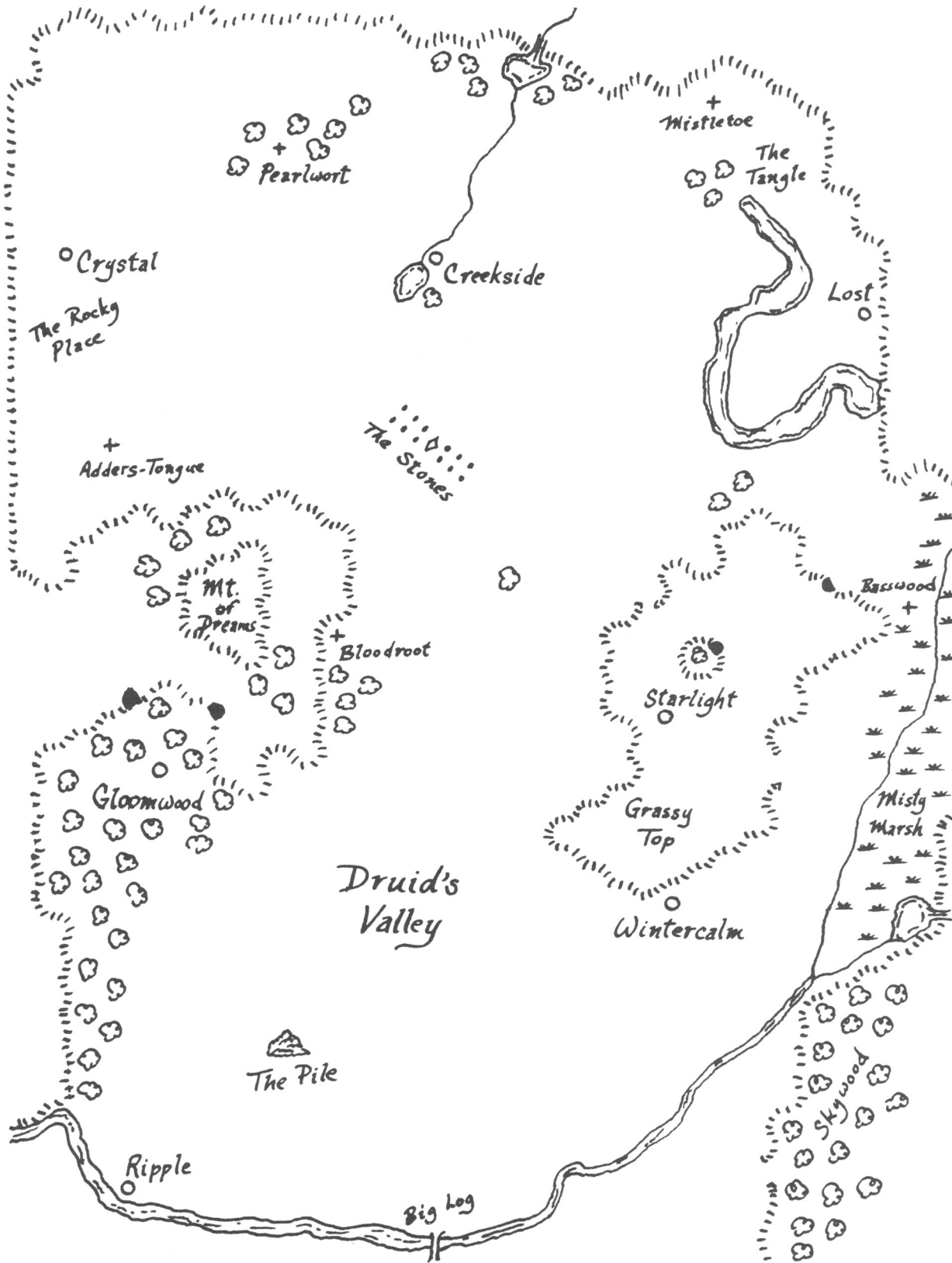
Actually, these rabbits did not all enter the game at the same time. When a player begins the game, his/her rabbit crosses the log over Big River and undergoes a wandering adventure until locating and joining a warren (a wise thing to do for a beginning rabbit!). In this way, I can keep secret much of the background knowledge of the area, and in fact some of the attributes of the warren they are living in. Note that the arrangement of the map makes it most likely that a new rabbit will find either Wintercalm or Ripple before other warrens. As it happens, every new rabbit in my game has entered Wintercalm (except one that died very soon), which worked them into the grand scheme of things without the Gamemaster having to be overtly coercive.

The names of the young rabbits who had thus entered play were Jimmy, Snow, Dewberry, Isaac, Fawn, Foxtail, Toadflax, and Chloe. They discovered that Ginger was a mem-

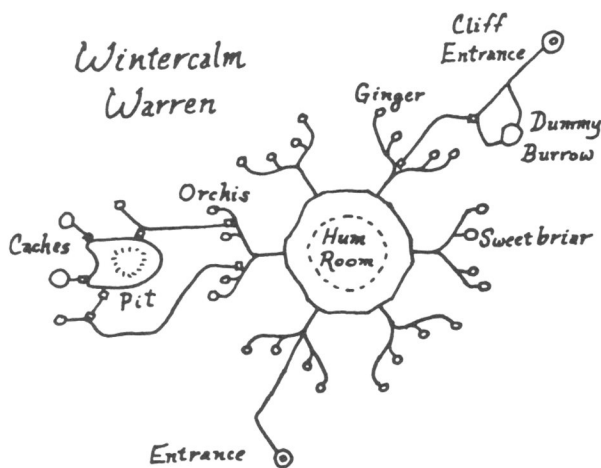
ber of the Owsla, or ruling rabbits of Wintercalm. There were two other Owsla-members: Sweetbriar, a Runner, and Orchis, who also claimed to be a Runner, and in fact was very swift, but was secretly a high-level Seer. There were also six young bucks and five young does in the warren (see Appendix for their names). The new rabbits noted an air of peace and tranquility among their new friends, in marked contrast to their old warren. That evening they were surprised when all the rabbits collected in a large central chamber, to engage in a strange practice of communal humming, for which they could ascribe no function, though the activity was pleasant enough. As their

stay in Wintercalm continued, the player-characters found that the rabbits here seemed unafraid of elil (predators) or other warrens. Further, they had no interest in war or the accumulation of wealth. The players used this warren as a home base from which to explore the remainder of the valley.

In their early adventures, the rabbits typically went in a group of five or six (a "thousand" to rabbits, who can't count above four; this size of party reflected the number of players who usually got together for a game). Initially, they investigated the eastern and western edges of Grassy Top, losing two rabbits in the process. To the west, they ran into the weasel



again, and in the ensuing battle both Foxtail and the weasel were killed. A little farther on, they found a wasp nest and a pit trap in close proximity; though there were injuries, no rabbits were killed. To the east, a party located a route to the top of Grassy Top, but were challenged by a rabbit from Starlight Warren and told to turn back. Being of a fundamentally aggressive nature by this time, the players' rabbits decided to ignore the challenge, and they attacked the young Starlight scout. When he disengaged and ran back to the warren, they pursued, finding the southeast entrance to Starlight Warren. Probing down the entrance passage, they found the way apparently blocked by a pit. At this obstacle, one of the player surprised me; she had her rabbit, Toadflax, jump into the pit, although she had no idea how deep it was or what lay at the bottom. Toadflax had already been wounded, so that falling on the stakes at the bottom of the pit was adequately fatal. The rest of the party turned back, and returned to Wintercalm to mourn the death of their comrade.



Starlight Warren controls Grassy Top, and carefully guards the two approaches to the plateau. The warren is well organized, and fearful of threats from Gloomwood and other warrens. The warren itself is designed for a strong defense, and includes numerous traps in the runways, which are kept set and in good working order by three high-level members of their Owsla: Five-Finger, a Maverick, and Fawn-Lily and Raspberry, both Scouts. Any rabbits invading their territory are likely to be strongly attacked. There are valuable plants on Grassy Top, including a source of Slumberleaf Dust (used by their Herbalist, Alfalfa, as well as by other rabbits, in the defense of the warren) and the apple tree that grows in the sinkhole in the center of the plateau (which is incidentally an entrance to an elaborate cave system). Starlight Warren just wants to be left alone, and they have the force to rather effectively back up those desires.

On a later excursion, the rabbits proceeded closer to the Misty Marsh, and had an amusing (for the GM) run-in with a live trap and a bobcat. Although they had to abandon Dewberry in the live trap to flee the bobcat, they were surprised when they returned and found Dewberry unharmed. Continuing on, they met a large turtle ("moving rock") that oddly enough could speak the rabbit language. Since then, the rabbits have met a number of different animals in this area, and have been scared away on several occasions, without once suspecting the truth. A solitary rabbit, Basswood, makes his home at the edge of the Misty Marsh, very near an entrance to the Cave of Dreams. He is a Maverick who loves practical jokes. Two of his

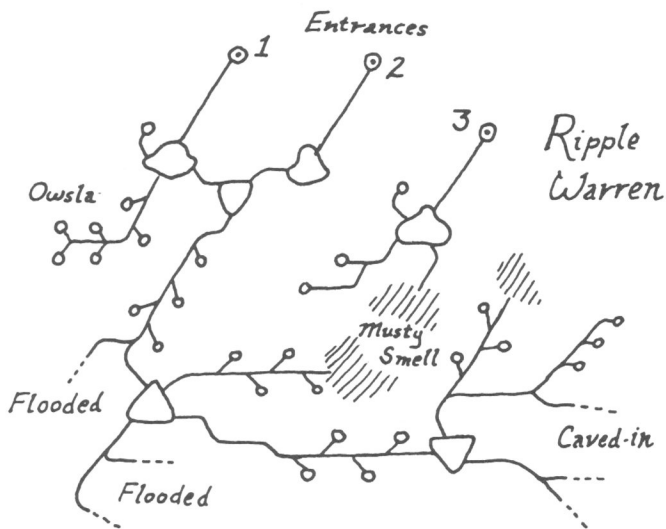
favorite stunts, that allow him to use his masterful disguises, are to imitate a predator to scare rabbits, or to imitate a neutral animal and talk with rabbits or join them on their adventure. Both the "bobcat" and the "turtle" that the rabbits encountered were merely Basswood in disguise. He likes to steal items from rabbits, to add to his collection (not to accumulate wealth). Although some of the players' rabbits have found an entrance to Basswood's burrow, for some reason they have never dared to enter, and so have missed the opportunity to perhaps acquire some of the treasures that lie therein.

The rabbits have ventured into the Cave of Dreams, certainly a very hazardous enterprise. This cave system underlies most of Druid's Valley, with two entrances in Gloomwood and one on the Mountain of Dreams, as well as the entrance near Basswood's burrow and the apple tree sinkhole (called Apple Hall in the cave). The northern part of the valley contains several ponds and a small stream that flow into the cave, though these would be rather drastic and dangerous routes of entry. Additionally, there is a crevice far to the northwest (near Crystal Warren) through which a large flight of bats enters and leaves. So far, no rabbit has gone very far through the cave; not even far enough to get lost yet! They have not encountered the most hazardous predators, nor found the most valuable treasures (including several "man-things"); no-one even suspects that the most important secret in Druid's Valley (in fact, the key to the name itself) lies deeply buried within the Cave of Dreams. (Actually, this is appropriate; my long-range plans include a series of adventures once the players get their rabbits to the very highest levels in their professions. Naturally, I want to shield the inexperienced rabbits from these problems that will clearly be too tough for them to handle.)

The next warren that the rabbits located was Ripple Warren, so named by its proximity to a stretch of mid rapids in Big River. In contrast to Starlight, this warren did not seem to be guarded at all, and the first rabbits encountered were dull and rather stupid. The player-characters, though wary at first, entered the warren and conversed with the residents. They found that Ripple once had a much larger population; many chambers are now abandoned and there is an unpleasant musty smell in several runways. Three tunnels are blocked by cave-ins, with three more impassable due to flooding. Although a warren's Owsla usually consists of the best rabbits, here in Ripple the Owsla rabbits have singularly low Wisdom and Intelligence. One of the adventurers picked up an herbaceous scent that was unknown to him while he was passing through Ripple. Squawroot (a Fighter and head of the Owsla) made the party hurry on and would not discuss the herb. The other two Owsla members, Wormseed and Innocence, tried to persuade the party to remain and join Ripple, but the adventurers unanimously felt their lot was better in Wintercalm, and declined the invitation. The next time they visited Ripple, they detected the scent of a young doe, Soapwort, leaving the warren and proceeding to the northwest, towards Gloomwood. They never again saw Soapwort; Ripple had once more grown smaller.

The unknown herb in Ripple Warren is dumbweed. Feeding upon this is addictive, and lowers a rabbit's Wisdom and Intelligence with time. All the rabbits feed upon the dumbweed. Their stock is mysteriously replenished as long as they periodically send young rabbits off to enter Gloomwood; these rabbits never return.

As rumors and hints increase, the players have become more curious and apprehensive with regards to the forest called Gloomwood. They eventually decided to proceed with an investigation of the area. On going into the stand of woods to the east of the Mountain of Dreams, they met a solitary rab-



bit, Bloodroot (a high-level Storyteller). He was very friendly, and he has since entertained them on several occasions with his imaginative tales. *It is fortunate that thus far no rabbit has visited Bloodroot by himself. When a rabbit comes alone, Bloodroot will enthrall him and then take him to his death, each by a different method (e.g., via traps, predators, off a cliff, into a whirlpool). Not a very nice guy!* The rabbits finally entered the forest, and readily discovered Gloomwood Warren. They have had two fights with the Gloomwood rabbits; in the first, they killed a young buck, Linden, without losses to themselves. In the second, they were less fortunate, and met Pennyroyal, an Herbalist, with Crowfoot, a Fighter (both Owsla members). Chloe was killed before the others fled to safety. The players are now convinced of the dangers from Gloomwood, but do not feel themselves strong enough for a mass battle. They are also fairly certain of a dark connection between Gloomwood and Ripple.

Gloomwood's rabbits only venture from the dim recesses of their forest on their infrequent trips to the south, during which they deliver supplies of dumbweed to Ripple Warren. Gloomwood has the evil practice of capturing wandering rabbits plus the "contributions" from Ripple, having them perform special tasks and rituals, and finally sacrificing them to the great owl of the Mountain of Dreams. The warren itself is an intricate maze of tunnels, with many opportunities for becoming lost. Other than their powerful Owsla, led by Crowfoot, an old but crafty and potent Fighter doe, this confusing system of runways is their primary defense.

Putting aside the problem of Gloomwood for now, and augmented by new player-characters (Farsight and Slumberroot), the rabbits pressed farther north in Druid's Valley. They gained some valuable (if rather obscure) information when they chanced upon an old wild pig who was dying from disease and internal parasites. Unable to cure him, they talked with him at length and heard stories about what could be found in this end of the valley. *I presented this information almost as a GM might provide a treasure map in RuneQuest or some other fantasy role-playing game. I gave the players lots of clues, without really solving the puzzles for them. I felt this was of great assistance in their subsequent northern contacts, and heightened, rather than detracted from, their adventures.* Just after the death of the pig, the rabbits made their way to the northwest and engaged three rabbits from Creekside Warren. This warren is closely by The Stones, a group of rocks noted for their unlikely regularity. After very nearly going into combat, friendly relations were established with Creekside. The

rabbits learned that the former leader of the warren, named Temple, was an old rabbit of some profession other than the eight standard ones. He has been dead for a year (apparently, since his body was never found, though bloodstains with his smell were discovered the day of his disappearance). By some magical means, Temple was able to use The Stones for traveling to unknown places. Several rabbits of Creekside (especially Dogwood, the leader of their Owsla) were intrigued by Temple's tales of travel, and have been trying to learn the secrets of The Stones. After one brief experiment, without success, the players' rabbits have not tried to use The Stones; sometimes I feel they may have forgotten about them! Sooner or later they are bound to get curious again.

In the northeast corner of the valley is the Tangle, a nearly impenetrable maze of thorns and brambles. This is the only route to Lost Warren, about which the rabbits have heard baffling tales from the dying pig. The rabbits of Lost Warren never leave its vicinity, and always hide from intruders. These rabbits are very different from the norm in appearance and behavior; some have said that they do not truly live. They have no names and claim no professions. There are no young does or bucks in the warren. The origin and history of this warren remain a mystery. Living at the edge of the Tangle is Mistletoe, a Killbuck who is quite mad. At times he is calm and is willing to tell stories about the wars. Often he berserks, and will fight until he kills something. He is well-armed, and lives with his fighting hare in a common burrow under the brambles. Perhaps it is more than coincidence that Mistletoe and the Lost Warren are so closely sited. The player-characters have not yet explored this section of the valley.

As the adventurers dare to go farther west, they enter an area that is extremely rugged, with many boulders and rock-piles; a likely place for snakes. On three occasions they have sighted a large rabbit watching them from concealment. Each time they unsuccessfully tried to pursue him, and lost both tracks and scent among the rocks. He seems to be a solitary rabbit; they have been unable to find his burrow. *This rabbit is Adder's-Tongue, an Empath and a member of the secret Society of Lepia. He is something like a spy, studying this area and the rabbits in it for some unknown reason. His burrow is well hidden among the rocks, and contains the largely decayed body of a dead marmot, making it unlikely that a rabbit would stay in the burrow long enough to find the plugs that conceal the runways to Adder's-Tongue's chamber. The many rocks in the soil make digging, such as to create a new passage, very difficult and time-consuming.*

Still farther in among the rocks, the rabbits came upon a chaotic jumble of stones they have called The Rocky Place. Well concealed here is perhaps the most dangerous warren in the valley, Crystal Warren. In their first encounter, the rabbits met a group of five (a "thousand") from the warren, and they talked at a distance, each group rather fearful of the other. The members of Crystal tried to convince the best fighters among the adventurers to enter the warren. In an attempt to gain more information, Snow agreed to this, and was subjected to jeers and threats from his friends. Snow lived in Crystal for several days, and then staged a setting of his apparent capture by a predator before he stole back to Wintercalm. He was able to learn that Crystal is large and growing. The warren is trying to establish a specialized fighting force. Each rabbit combines his or her profession with that of Fighter, producing some unusual fighting types. The warren has been attracting certain riff-raff rabbits that want to join the "gang." They are led by Buckthorn, a powerful Fighter-Scout, whose ambition is to destroy her brother's warren, Gloomwood (she is the sister of Lilac, in Gloomwood's Owsla), and then conquer the entire

valley. Snow also learned of the warren's organization, allowing them control over many rabbits in spite of their restrictions on counting. The warren is divided into "Burrows," each with its own Captain, a Flanker, and four Footmen (when at full strength). Each Burrow is divided into two "Flanks" of three rabbits each; they are receiving training so that a Flank may fight as a well-coordinated team, and thus be much more formidable than three separately fighting rabbits.

At this stage, the players are still deciding what approach to take. They want to attack Crystal Warren before its strength becomes too great. Already they have seen how effective even a single Flank can be. They had a party of five (including some from Creekside) attempting to reconnoiter The Rocky Place and were jumped by Chainfern's Flank. In short order, the Crystal rabbits killed Fuzzy and Jimmy, and seriously wounded Elf-Cap and Isaac before the survivors could escape. None of the three Crystal rabbits were killed.

They know they will need allies for this task, but have been unable to persuade other Wintercald rabbits to join in against a common threat. They have rejected the notion of alliance with Gloomwood. They now consider their best bet is to team up with Starlight Warren for the coming war. This is approximately where the game stands to date. *(Games became somewhat less frequent as we began playing Starships and Spacemen and RuneQuest very often. Now our space RP has drastically tapered, probably only temporarily, and interest in Bunnies and Burrows is again strong. I anticipate perhaps six to twelve more adventures before the Crystal Wars begin in earnest.)*

—B. Dennis Sustare

APPENDIX

Several Persons have asked me how they should name their rabbits. It may be helpful to see a listing of the rabbits

that live in the warrens in my game.

WINTERCALM: Owsla—Orchis (Seer), Ginger (Scout), Sweetbriar (Runner); also Agaricus, Leatherwood, Dandelion, Longear, Brindle, Whisker, Bracken, Lady-slipper, Smoothleg, Dawnflower, and Silky. (plus the player-characters)

RIPPLE: Owsla—Squawroot (Fighter), Wormseed (Maverick), Innocence (Runner); also Silver, Phlox, Shooting Star, Soapwort.

GLOOMWOOD: Owsla—Crowfoot (Fighter), Lilac (Scout), Juneberry (Storyteller), Pennyroyal (Herbalist); also Polypody, Red-Eye, Shell-Bark, Sorrel, Linden, Silverweed.

STARLIGHT: Owsla—Daisy (Empath), Fawn-Lily (Scout), Raspberry (Scout), Alfalfa (Herbalist), Five-Finger (Maverick); also Sleeper, Acorn, Spruce, Inky-Cap, Lily, Whisper, Newroot, and Speckle.

CREEKSIDE: Owsla—Dogwood (Scout), Dewberry (Seer; there is also a player-character with this name), May Apple (Empath); also Elf-Cap, Three-Time, Fuzzy, Feather, Woodsia.

CRYSTAL: Owsla—Toothwort (Ftr-Mav), Buckthorn (Ftr-Sct), Stonecrop (Ftr-Run); also Edelweiss (Ftr-Emp), Spider (Ftr-Mav), Chainfern (Ftr-Run), Morel, Grayfoot, Two-Spot, Mossy, Mist, Crabgrass, Blueseeds, Wander, Ulmus, Pigweed, Deeproot, Splinter, Sandspur, and Corylus.



GAME GONS

June 1-3, 1979 MICHICON VIII
Oakland Univ, Rochester, Michigan
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June 16-17, 1979 DINO-CON
Dunfey's Royal Coach Motor Inn,
San Mateo, California
La Brie Enterprises
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June 22-24, 1979 ORIGINS '79
Widener College, Chester, Pennsylvania
Origins '79
PO Box 282
Radnor, PA 19087

June 30, July 1, 1979 NANCON 88-II
Houston Marriott, Texas
Nan's Toys and Games
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5015 Westheimer
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August 16-19, 1979 GENCON XII
University of Wisconsin-Parkside
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PO Box 756
Lake Geneva, WI 53147





THE THREE FEATHERED RIVALS CULT

By Raymond Turney

from an idea by Mark Chilenskas



The Three Feathered Rivals cult worships three great spirits, represented by the three great birds of Prax: Sun Hawk, associated with the runes of truth and fire; the Raven, associated with the runes of illusion and darkness; Thunder Bird, associated with the runes of mobility and air. As might be guessed from the collection of runes this cult is associated with, it has an unusual history.

The Gods of the Cult Before Time Began

The gods of this cult accomplished nothing of note, except surviving, in the God Time. For a minor deity, surviving the Gods War and the Great Dark was a major feat.

The History of the Cult Since Time Began

This cult is relatively recent, being only about two hundred years old. It was at that time that the three gods of this cult decided they were tired of being minor deities, and they would never become major deities without an angle. Combining their worship was that angle.

At the same time, a Grey Lord named Vashan fell in love with an actress named Sifara. Falling in love with an actress is a terrible thing for a Grey Lord to do, as actresses are not only disreputable but traditionally associated with illusion while the Grey Lords worship knowledge.

Rejected by his fellow Grey Lords and torn apart by his own feelings, Vashan was ripe for a religious vision that would justify his love and incidentally lead to the founding of the Three Feathered Rivals cult. The Three Feathered Rivals sent him the following vision of the world, accompanied by feelings of wonder and ecstasy, and the illusion of knowing the true reality.

The Three Feathered Rivals Vision

The world is one, and yet several, just as the heart of a man is both one heart and yet along with the stomach, feet, mind, etc., only a part of one man. A god we cannot name created the world we know by imposing the framework of space and time upon it. As we cannot imagine a world without space and time, so we cannot comprehend the work of this

god, the god of gods. Fortunately, the god of gods, in the world but not of it, is indifferent to the cares of humans and neither desires nor appreciates direct worship. The Three Feathered Rivals cult worships him through his three major aspects.

The three aspects are complementary, but not compatible. Truth (Sun Hawk) can see through Illusion (Raven), thus driving it away. Unfortunately, Truth clung to mindlessly will be turned into Illusion by the forces of Change (Thunder Bird). Change is in turn inspired by the pursuit of Illusion, but cannot finally conquer Illusion, as the process of turning illusion into truth creates still other illusions as a by product. Of course, with the new illusions the chase starts again.

The quest of Change after unrealized Illusions is the source of the continuous change people see in the world.

The Founding of the Cult

As the gods who sent the vision anticipated, Vashan seized on the vision to justify his love. When the other Grey Lords were told about it they were less than enthusiastic, and excommunicated him as a heretic. Having failed to convince the other Grey Lords, Vashan was reduced to founding a new cult.

His love was returned and Sifara became his wife and first convert. Luckily, he proved to have talents outside the study and eventually became an asset to the troupe of strolling players she worked with. In the meantime, he had a hard life.

After he became one of their better scriptwriters, and she became a star, they began to make converts to their eccentric religion and the cult was on its way.

The Holy Country already had a full pantheon of gods, and with a powerful cult like the Grey Lords against them, the new cult had an uphill struggle in the Holy Country. Even now, the Three Feathered Rivals in the Holy Country is confined to actors and musicians, thieves, political refugees and other such chronically disaffected persons.

The cult reached a turning point when Kollonai the Mystic brought it to Prax, along with his troupe of entertainers. Kollonai made the identification of the sacred birds of Prax

with the rather nebulous forces of Truth, Change and Illusion. He also managed to make it a respectable cult in Prax, including the tribes represented as the off-board "barbarian horde" in *White Bear and Red Moon*, but excluding Sartar.

Current Size of the Cult

This cult might be called a small medium size cult, with about 1% of the Praxian population as serious worshippers, though most Praxians observe its yearly High Holy Day. It also has a couple of thousand worshippers in the Holy Country, and a small scattering of worshippers elsewhere.

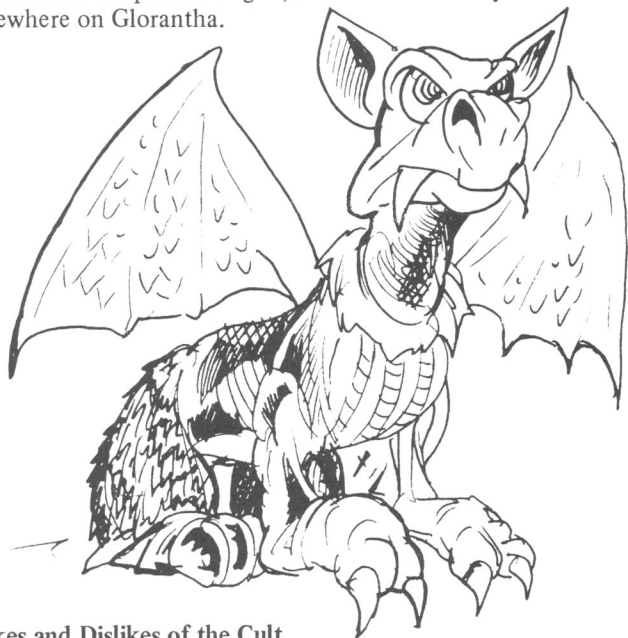
Relations with Authorities

In the Holy Country, some members of this cult have not only worshipped change, they've tried to bring it about. As a result, the authorities in the Holy Country don't like it.

In Prax the Three Feathered Rivals is a normal, accepted cult, not as powerful as Orlanth but just as respectable.

The Sartar authorities have had few contacts with it, and therefore few problems. If Thunder Bird worshippers will acknowledge the supremacy of Orlanth, they don't care much one way or the other.

The Lunar Empire doesn't understand it, but has not yet got around to persecuting it, and the cult is as yet unknown elsewhere on Glorantha.



Likes and Dislikes of the Cult

Starting with Vashan, the Grey Lords have had it in for Three Feathered Rivals types. This hatred is mutual. Nobles from the Holy Country are also hated as props of a regime persecuting the cult.

The meaning of this hatred can be anything from an unwillingness to run with the hated person leading to a spear in the back, depending on circumstances.

Traders, most of whom worship Issaries and hold to a kind of stuffy respectability are disliked or pitied.

BECOMING A LAY MEMBER

In Prax, anyone who attends the weekly ceremonies of any of the three subcults for six weeks running can become a member of that subcult. Since the cult is persecuted in the Holy Country, there is no such things as lay membership there. Anyone unwilling to become an initiate is not trustworthy enough to know of cult activity. Where the cult is not persecuted, Prax custom is followed, where it is persecuted, that of the Holy Country is used.

Obligations of Lay Membership

No member of the Three Feathered Rivals cult can detect anything by magic. This is the result of a curse Lankhor Mhy, the god of the Grey Lords, imposed on Vashan and his followers when Vashan betrayed Lankhor Mhy by founding a new cult. Detect spells will not work, period.

A Three Feathered Rivals worshipper must sacrifice 1 POW point per week at the ceremonies of the subcult(s) of his choice. This POW point is regained at the usual rate for POW used in casting spells. He must maintain the cult hatreds and never voluntarily help a Grey Lord or Holy Country noble. As the alchemists guild is full of Grey Lords, it will not accept him.

Advantages of Lay Membership

The members of the Sun Hawk subcult can buy the following skills at half price: Speak Sartarite; Speak Lunar; Speak Trade Talk; Speak FireSpeech; Write Trade Talk; Oratory. He can also learn the Lightwall spell for half the normal cost in Lunars.

The member of the Raven subcult can buy the following skills at half price: Acting; Singing; Play Bagpipes; Play Hand Drum; Play Lur Horn; Play Lyre. The member of the Raven subcult can learn the Detection Blank spell for half the normal cost in Lunars. He can also learn the special Image and Avoidance spells described in the Unusual spells section.

The members of the Thunder Bird subcult can buy Self Bow, Oratory and Medium Shield training at half price. The members of the Thunder Bird subcult can learn the Mobility spell for half the normal cost in Lunars.

BECOMING AN INITIATE OR RUNE PRIEST

In the Holy Country, an initiate is any character privy to cult activities, including worship. He is obliged to be a lay member of at least one other cult because he needs a cover. In Prax, an initiate worships only the Three Feathered Rivals.

In order for a character to become a candidate for initiation into the Three Feathered Rivals, at least two current members of the cult must vouch for him. He must then swear that he has no intention of harming the cult, or any of the other members of his chapter, in front of an initiate of the Sun Hawk subcult with the truthsaying ability mentioned below. If the Sun Hawk initiate believes him, he must then survive the initiation ritual for his subcult.

For the Sun Hawk subcult, a character must drink a portion of poison, potency level 1D20. If it doesn't kill him, this potion will reproduce Vashan's original vision and also give him the ability to tell whether or not someone is lying to him on a roll of poison potency times 5 or less on D100. If he survives the potion, he is a member of the cult.

Initiation into the cult of the Raven is the same except that the potion increases acting skill by the poison potency times 5.

Initiation into the cult of Thunder Bird is similar to initiation into Sun Hawk, except that the ability given is to foretell the weather up to 24 hours in advance.

Notes on the poison: New initiates will be taught to make a random potency batch of the same poison they just drank. The vision and the side effects depend of POW supplied by the god for the initiation ritual, so drinking another dose of the same poison or giving it to a character not being initiated will not increase anything, but may be lethal.

Obligations of Being an Initiate

An initiate must tithe 10% of his earnings to the cult. He

also has the same obligations as a lay member, except that he must give 2 POW points/week instead of 1. Initiates are expected to guard or otherwise assist their priests upon request.

Advantages of Becoming an Initiate

An initiate has the same privileges as a lay member. He can also buy DEX training at a price of 500 L per point of DEX gained if a member of the Raven subcult, 1000 L if a member of either of the other two subcults.

An initiate may become a priest at any time he attains a POW characteristic of 18 or higher. Also, an initiate may obtain one use of a Rune Magic spell that would be re-useable for a Rune Priest of his subcult, by sacrificing the number of POW points a Rune Priest would have to sacrifice to get it. Should the initiate become a Rune Priest before using the spell he sacrificed for, it is added to his Rune Magic spell list and it becomes a normal Rune Magic spell.

An initiate in the Raven subcult may learn Camouflage, Hide in Cover, Spot Hidden Items and Spot Traps at half normal cost.

An initiate in the Sun Hawk subcult may learn up to 6 point Power Restoring potion making at the listed cost without joining the Alchemists Guild. He can also brew potency 1D20 plant based poison for the initiation ceremony. Since he cannot join the Alchemists Guild, he cannot learn to make other potions.

An initiate can learn the Ecstasy and Contentment special battle magic spells, and will cast them/have them cast upon him in the regular ceremonies.

Becoming a Rune Priest

Any initiate with a POW of 18 or higher is qualified to become a Rune Priest of his subcult(s) if he wishes to be.

Obligations of the Rune Priest

A Rune Priest must give 20% of his income to the cult. He must obey his High Priest. Since this cult lacks rich temples and cannot afford to support him, he must work for a living. Between being a priest and working for a living, a character has a tough time finding time for training of any kind. In a given month, a character can find time to take training if and only if the player makes a roll of the POW characteristic or less on D100. In that case, the character can manage 1000 L worth of training that month. This training may be in any skill taught by a cult member.

Advantages of Being a Rune Priest

Rune Priests of any subcult(s) have access to all of the one point standard Rune Magic spells. They cannot learn two or three point Rune Magic spells.

The Sun Hawk Priest can learn the following special Rune Magic spells: Summon Small Salamander (1 pt.); Truthspeak; Worship Circle.

The Raven Priest can learn any of the following special Rune Magic spells: Summon Small Shade (1 pt.); Concealment (1 pt.); Screening; Hallucination; Worship Circle.

The Thunder Bird Priest can learn any of the following Rune Magic spells: Summon Small Sylph; Wind Control; Cloudcall; Rainmaking; Worship Circle.

Becoming a High Priest

A High Priest must be initiated into all three subcults, and have at least 15 points of Rune Magic Spells.

Becoming a Rune Lord

A Rune Lord of the cult must be initiated into at least

one of the subcults, and know 5 skills at 90% level, of which at least 2 must be weapon or shield use. The remainder may be: any fighting skills, Riding, any thievery skills, Oratory, Acting, Singing, Playing a Musical Instrument, Speaking a Language, or Juggling.

SPECIAL BATTLE MAGIC SPELLS

IMAGE CREATION: Creates an image of a humanoid figure, the actions of which will be the actions of the caster of the spell. The image may look different, as when the caster is stranded in the middle of a band of trolls and really wants to look like a troll till he can get out of the area. The image may be cast over the caster as in the example above, or anywhere else within 80 meters. If the Image is hit, it goes away. During the round the enemy took to hit the image and blow it away, the image will provide anything within with 5% of defence per point of SIZ the image is larger than the thing inside. The maximum SIZ of the image is 21, as this spell was developed to provide actors with a thorough disguise. Casting the spell requires no motion which would give away the fact that a character is casting the spell. Thus actors can recast the spell before its ten melee rounds are up while



still on stage. This spell is passive, with a range of 80 meters, a cost of 1000 L, and a cost of 1 POW point to cast. It lasts 10 melee rounds.

AVOIDANCE: Any entity looking upon the character upon whom this is cast must use his POW to overcome the POW of the caster at the time this spell was cast. If he fails to overcome the caster's POW, he will turn away to attack someone else or go elsewhere. This spell will not distract any enemy the user is attacking physically. This spell is active, costs 4 POW points to cast and 1500 L to learn. It has 80 meters range. It lasts 10 melee rounds.

ECSTASY: Brings about a feeling of ecstatic joy. Will only work inside a Worship Circle. Lasts 10 melee rounds. A character cannot cast it upon himself. Costs 500 L to learn, 1 POW point to cast.



CONTENTMENT: Brings about a feeling of calm and peace within. Works only inside a Worship Circle. Not compatible with Ecstasy. Duration: 10 melee rounds. A character cannot cast it upon himself. Cost 500 L to learn, 1 POW point to cast.

SPECIAL RUNE MAGIC SPELLS

SUMMON SMALL SALAMANDER: 1 point as described in *RuneQuest*.

TRUTHSPEAK: The entity on whom this is cast will, if the spell works, speak only the truth for 15 minutes. Making him talk is another matter. Range: 160 meters. Cost: 1 point.

WORSHIP CIRCLE: Spell used in setting up a place of worship. This spell uses four wands as props, exactly as does the Warding spell. The area covered is defined by extensions from the positioning of the wands, but must be 81 sq. meters or less per point of the spell. Each point of the spell also provides 1 point of Detection Blank, shielding the activities inside from detection by magic. As a final fillip, if left in place for a week or longer, a Worship Circle serves as a temple for purposes of regaining Rune Magic spells.

SUMMON SMALL SHADE: 1 point, as described in *RuneQuest*.

CONCEALMENT: The same spell described in *RuneQuest*, reduced to 1 point because concealment is a Raven specialty.

SCREENING: A variant of the Warding spell, it covers the same area, but instead of combining Disruption with Countermagic, it combines 1 point of Detection Blank with the ability to cover the area contained within with static (i.e., non-moving) illusions. The keening noise is left out. Frequently used to conceal temples, or loot waiting to be fenced.

HALLUCINATION: If the spell works, the entity or entities on whom it is cast will have visual, auditory and gustatory hallucinations as desired by the caster and must act

accordingly. Hallucinations will not cause a character to knowingly injure himself, and even while hallucinating, a character always knows where his body is.

This spell costs 1 Rune Magic point sacrificed per entity affected. It has a range of 160 meters and a duration of 15 minutes. With 2 or more points of Hallucination, it is possible to attack more than one enemy at the same time.

When the effect of the hallucinations is disputed, use the following procedure. A character first learns this spell with a 25% chance of guessing the right hallucination to get what he wants. If the character makes the roll, the player gets what he wants and the character gets a chance to go up in guessing hallucinations as if it were a normal combat skill. If the player blows the roll, whatever the referee rules stands.

SUMMON SMALL SYLPH: 1 point as described in *RuneQuest*.

WIND CONTROL: Allows the caster to change the wind one point on the compass, and raise or lower the velocity by 10 mph. Wind will remain affected that way for 15 minutes, after which it will return to its natural state. Range: 160 meters. Cost: 1 point. Stackable.

CLOUDCALL: Allow the caster to call clouds to the area he is standing at, at a rate of 5 kilometers for every 15 minutes. The spell is stackable, so that a 1 point Cloudcall calls clouds from 5 kilometers around, 2 points, 10 kilometers, etc. Of course, it has a duration of 15 minutes per point of the spell so that clouds more than 15 minutes away will eventually reach the caster.

RAINMAKING: If clouds are in the sky, whether through Cloudcall or in the normal course of events, this will make them yield water at a rate of roughly 3 centimeters per day per point of the spell. Cost: 1 point. Stackable.

Leaving the Cult

What happens to a character who leaves the cult varies with his rank and which subcult he is affiliated with. Nothing happens to lay members who leave the cult.

Sun Hawk initiates who choose to leave the cult will blow their INT roll once at a time of maximum convenience to the referee, or if your campaign doesn't use INT rolls, fail in a Perception skill, such as Sense Ambush, again at a time convenient to the referee.

Raven initiates will fail in either Perception at a time convenient to the referee if they leave the cult.

Thunder Bird initiates will fumble, again at a time convenient for the referee, if they leave the cult.

Rune Priests or Rune Lords are subject to the same penalties initiates are if they leave the cult, but twice over. Or, sometimes the gods just equip their next tough enemy with Shield 4. Of course, they lose all Rune Magic spells, etc., also.

Author's note

Thanks are offered to Mark Chilenskaskas for the idea of combining the Three Feathered Rivals into one cult, and for his work previously published in *Alarums & Excursions*.



A LETTER FROM GIGI

by Gigi D'Am

Dear Tadashi,

Congratulations, dear, on the premier issue of *Different Worlds!* We RPGers have been waiting a long time for a professional magazine like yours. Gigi has no doubt that *DW* will become as widely-known and as respected as *Fire & Movement*. I did find a number of typos, though, and that cover was difficult to read. Don't be shy about communicating!

I must wonder about your list of notable notables in RPG. Correct me if I'm wrong, but not one of those nice TSR people contributed to the "My Life and Role-Playing" article. Why was that?

I did see ELISE GYGAX (I think) on the back of *White Dwarf 11* wearing some sort of metallic teddy. Very sexy! (And why did *White Dwarf* have only 16 pages of articles this issue? They are longer pages, but goodness me!) DAVID BERMAN's *The Apprentice 3* says that *White Dwarf* is the best of the slicks anywhere: you don't use clay-coated interior pages, Tadashi, but I thought that your cover was very smooth indeed. Send him a copy of *DW* quick!

Bulletin from My Friend Rumour: I understand that one of Heritage's production problems may have something to do with a recent raid by the Department of Immigration . . . ARNOLD HENDRIK is now Heritage's manager of publishing . . . MICHAEL MATHENY will author their *Lord of the Rings* RPG, to be published sometime late this year. That's a big (no, BIG) responsibility, Michael: good luck and blessings from Gigi.

CHARLES VASEY and J. G. BARNARD report in *Perfidious Albion* that "a successful legal action against one of the hobby's more notable Stentors." Do you know the parties? This is driving me crazy: no one seems to know who the litigants are, not even formerly successful Rumour. If someone will blat the secret to me privately, I'll send him/her a personally signed thank-you note. You will forward mail to me, won't you Tadashi?

RUSTY LAMONT's "Name Generator" in *The Dungeoneer 10* doesn't tell how to use the idea. Can we have a sequel, please?

ISAAC ASIMOV's SF mag (April) had a long article on simulation gaming

by JOHN M. FORD, mentioning all the front-line companies including Chaosium. It did seem to me that he wrote down at his audience, though, even assuming that they knew nothing of statistics. Is this the 20th century or not? Ei-



ARK '79

ther those readers or those writers are going to have to get with it! (If you want to see a real generation gap, try to get over-40 BNFs to game a little bit . . . too busy expanding frontiers, I guess.)

SPI has upped its corporate image by moving its editorial offices to Park Avenue and deported the shipping trolls to New Jersey. Their first RPG, *Commando*, nonetheless will appear sometime this summer. And ERIC GOLDBERG's FRP game/module *Dragonslayer* is in the works. How exciting! (Eric, dear, please leave out the jokes, or we'll have a terminal case of *Swords & Sorcery*!)

GREG COSTIKYAN is heading a group designing an FRP called *High Fantasy*. This ambitious project proposes a length of 400,000-600,000 words (the upper limit is about as long as the *Ring Trilogy*!). These are probably SPI-style words, so that means 200-300 SPI-style pages. Think big. They are looking for GMs and blindtesters. If you feel like transferring your world to their system, or otherwise participating, contact the *High Fantasy* Design Group, c/o Stephen Tihor, 32 Washington Square West, New York, NY 10011. This is a freelance effort, and negotiation with SPI and GDW, among others, is underway. (But, gee, guys: the prospectus sounds awfully like *RuneQuest*, and IT came out last year.)

Speaking of huge RPGs, STEVE JACKSON's *The Fantasy Trip: In the Labyrinth* will be in print soon . . . as soon as it's decided whether to print a super-duper version with figures and counters for \$30, or a smaller package at \$20. Gigi, whose dollars do not equal her hours, votes for the latter.

DAVE ARNESON's recent interviews never mention G*** G****. These professional feuds are so juicy! And I agree entirely with Dave that designers, not companies, should receive all those awards at ORIGINS. Designers get little enough.

The other day my palmist told me that P. E. I. BONEWITS' *Real Magic* has been reprinted by Creative Arts Book Co. (833 Bancroft, Berkeley, CA 94710, \$6.95). Even has a picture of his diploma in Magic from UC-Berkeley. (Tada-shi, since P. E. I. B. also wrote *Authentic Thaumaturgy*, you should be helping him with a plug, not waiting for someone else to do it!)

Animal Encounters, another *Traveller* supplement, is now out! And GDW will issue the first number of *The Journal of the Travellers' Aid Society* sometime around ORIGINS: it will concentrate on *Traveller* material and SF games in general. Hope it's more lively than *The Grenadier*, or *The Space Gamer* won't even breathe hard.

Were you interested to see who was invited to TSR's "First Official Invitational AD&D Masters Tournament"—and who wasn't? *The Dragon* has run yet another article on pole arms: Gigi will jump up and down with excitement as soon as she wakes. However, GARY GYGAX pulled a hat trick by knifing *The Apprentice*, *The Phoenix*, and Rich Berg of SPI in one issue. There is no doubt that Gary writes the most stimulating pieces in *The Dragon*.

But enough of TSR-study, as it leaves me feeling like a Kremlinologist. Did you know that FGU is readying an RPG about pirates? It's supposed to be out

before Christmas . . . Excalibre will publish a boxing game, as well as DAVE ARNESON's long-awaited new fantasy game, for ORIGINS. (Thanks again, Rumour!)

European gamers take note: WALTER LUC HAAS's *Cheesehole News 33-35* and *Europa-Hobbies (Jan. '79)* have appeared at last. *CN* carries short reviews of the items Walter stocks (the *AD&D* handbook got ½ page, *Tower for Tyrants* got an inch). *EH* has the complete list of things he sells, and instructions for how to order them. He still stocks some out-of-print items like *The Dragon 4-6* and *Wyrms' Footnotes 3*. European gamers can contact Walter at Postfach, CH-4024 Basel 24, Switzerland.

The smog is getting too thick to write much more. I'm putting on my aqua-lung to get a little air. Meanwhile, who was that "leading east coast publisher," and who was he talking about when he called them "Terribly Stupid Rules?" Some nerve.

Love,

Gigi



DIFFERENT WORLDS



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Different Views



(Are they ever!)



COMMENTS ON THE FIRST ISSUE

Dear Greg,

Different Worlds: “Beginner’s Brew” did not interest me (I’m not a beginner). “Specialty Mages”—I do not play *D&D* any more so I don’t care for *D&D* articles. “My Life and Role-Playing” was interesting. I have not read the “Archaeon” article yet. “The Cult of Geo” was GREAT! I hope to see a lot more cults in *DW*. “Role-Playing” I did not really enjoy. “The Quest for the Sacred Melita” was very good and I hope to see more articles of that type. I did NOT like the cover and the artwork wasn’t nearly as good as *Wyrms*’ *Footnotes*.

Jack Everitt
Greenlawn, NY

Dear Tadashi,

I just finished reading *Different Worlds*’ premier issue. I was highly impressed, overall—it’s off to a good start. The essays I found interesting: it’s hard to say what a beginner would feel about all this talk, but it does give a lot of background thinking on the hobby. I am particularly happy at the fact that you are listing major fanzines for the information of your readers. This is an excellent way to make friends.

John T. Sapienza, Jr.
Washington, DC

Dear Tadashi,

Different Worlds was a good first issue. The Ed Simbalist “Archaeon” article was my favorite. “Geo” and “Melita” were amusing.

Now the cover. That was the ugliest 4-color fantasy cover I’ve seen since Heritage’s infamous *Armies of the Dark Ages*. The picture by itself had too many different things, while the lettering, banners, etc., made it incredibly cluttered. From any distance it is a meaningless visual noise and magazine rack sales should suffer.

Mark Swanson
Arlington, MA

Dear Tadashi,

I enjoyed the first issue of *Different Worlds*. Keep up the good work. Really liked “My Life and Role-Playing.”

Howard Mahler
Flushing, NY

Dear Greg,

I must say I am discouraged by *Different Worlds* . . . The black and white illos were mostly fairly nice, and I enjoyed B. Dennis Sustare’s article. Did you really have to have all the repetitious descriptions of “how I started *D&D*, and I am still playing it?”???????? I am not a Gyax/TSR fan by any stretch of the imagination. But the “Specialty Mages” article is only applicable to *D&D*, and even then the spells are too powerful for the original scope of the magic user player character. Really, do we need another *D&D* magazine (do we even need one)? Yes, I know that those are the best selling rules, the most established rules, and that you want to avoid the “house organ” feel that the *drag on* has by including a good deal of non-Chaosium oriented material. None the less, it would be better if all articles had application outside of straight *D&D*.

When I look back on the first issue of *Different Worlds*, I really can’t say that I remember anything really useful or promising for the future, except that the company has done good work in the past. I’m sorry to be so negative, but I am hoping that by giving the specific criticisms I have the product will improve to at least the level of *Wyrms*’ *Footnotes* (see, there is a ’zine with a good deal of flavor). It has ideas for cults and gods that can be used in any universe, including Gyax *D&D*. It has a history of trolls, and ditto above. It has hobby news (only what you are thinking about publishing, but it is still interesting hobby news), varied and interesting lettering throughout the issue, errata to games, gee, this is a magazine I can recommend to my friends as worth

reading and maybe even worth rereading it myself. Even if it is a “house organ with fanzine format.”

R. Mark Chilenskas
Arlington, MA

Dear Mr. Ehara,

Let me congratulate you and everyone else involved with the production of *Different Worlds 1*. Any qualms I harbored (oh my god, another gaming magazine, etc.) dissolved as I paged through the issue and found real live Design, Illustrations and Things of Interest. Too often potential firecrackers reach the public rather damp from poor writing, editing and layout. Although it is too early to read the future of *DW*, I wish it a long and progressive life.

Dwight M. Kiyono
Oakland, CA

Sirs:

Bravo, bravissimo! I don’t think there’s anything you could have done to make the first issue better: but of especial note is that, were it not for the small print, I would never have known that *DW* was a “house organ” of the CHAOSium—you are as impartial and as eclectic as any independent publication, and far more so than any other magazine affiliated with a game company. Keep it up.

Wesley D. Ives
Raleigh, NC

ON SPECIALTY MAGES

Dear Tadashi,

Mike Gunderloy’s specialty mages is a great idea. I do have some detail criticism, however, for you to think over. The mages get better armor, better melee weapons (but presumably they don’t hit any better), and they get more spells than standard *D&D* mages. Mike picked up my spell chart from *A&E 28*, which I have no complaints about as I consider it one of the few truly rational arrangements. But unless standard mages are converted to getting spells at the same rate, they are going to be badly underpowered by comparison to the specialist. Mike will doubtlessly counter this criticism by saying that the spells available to specialty mages are much fewer and possibly less powerful than those for the general *D&D* MU, but I am still worried by an apparent lack of balance in the arrangement.

John T. Sapienza, Jr.
Washington, DC



A New Cleric Cure System

by John T. Sapienza, Jr.

This article appeared, in substantially different form, in issues 40 and 42 of *Alarums & Excursions* and issues 34 and 36 of *The Wild Hunt*, and is copyright © 1978 by the author.

The *Dungeons & Dragons* system of wounds and cures is based on a theory of generalized bodily health status. Unlike *RuneQuest* and other specific location systems, D&D assigns points representing a character's life force to the body as a whole. As long as the body contains at least one hit point, it can continue to function normally, but at zero hit points it is dead. Cure spells restore hit points to a living body, while resurrection spells restore life and either a minimum of hit points (Raise Dead) or all hit points (Raise Dead Fully), while the "reversed" resurrection spells drain all the victim's hit points at once, causing death.

This suggests that there is, or logically should be, a relationship between the cure spells and the resurrection spells, which could be more fully spelled out in the clerical spell system. In addition, the present rules are oddly irregular in terms of the cleric's increase in ability to cure wounds. The basic cure spell is available at first spell order, while the double-strength cure is pushed up to fourth order. This leaves the player puzzled on what to choose for a cleric's first fourth order spell, since the results obtained seem hardly worth the cost of a used-up fourth order spell when all you receive is two dice of cure. (The same puzzlement also applies, if less strongly, in campaigns where the cleric gets the use of all spells at a given spell order, instead of having to learn each spell individually.) It would be more reasonable to have the cure spells appear more regularly, in a manner that approximately parallels the growth of the damage spells for mages.

It seems to me that a useful arrangement would be to integrate the cure and resurrection systems by using a points lost /points cured method. This is specifically intended to provide an intermediate stage between life and death in which a character can be recovered without the need for a high-order resurrection spell. Whether you will want such a system depends on how many permanent kills you think desirable in your campaign. A high kill ratio means players constantly having to start new low-level characters, while low kill ratio means continuing characters who are around long enough to develop interesting careers, even if they get knocked out of action periodically. I personally prefer the latter approach.

The method to achieve this is a negative hit point system. Under the present rules, a character is fully effective at one hit point and dead at zero hit points. There is no provision

for disablement in this, since it is not possible to specify a range of hit points within which a character is alive but out of action, when it is not uncommon for a character to start off with only one or two hit points at first level. (It is possible to specify disablement at a specified fraction of total hit points, but you eventually end up with a high level character having an unreasonably large number of hit points within which he or she is disabled, when the same number of points might be the total hit points of a first or second level character.)

But a disabled-but-not-dead range can be incorporated in D&D by redefining hit points a bit. Let hit points represent the character's ability to function at full effectiveness. Zero hit points would represent unconsciousness, from which the character would awaken later at one hit point due to the body's natural healing process. Negative hit points would represent serious damage, but not death, within a limited range. A character would still be alive as long as the negative hit points did not exceed his or her constitution rating. Under this system, constitution would be directly used as the character's margin of survival, which would become less and less after each resurrection from full death.

Once a character's hit points fall below zero, the character is both unconscious and dying, at the rate of one hit point lost every melee round thereafter. A cure done on a character in this condition does the number of points of cure rolled, and stops the further loss of hit points. But the character remains unconscious until sufficient cures have been done (or sufficient time has passed for the body's natural rate of self-cure to work) to raise the character to positive hit points again.

This negative hit points system creates a justification for characters being effective at even one hit point by providing a grey area between full effectiveness and complete ineffectiveness (death) within which the character is declining but salvageable. If the party loses the fight, the bodies will lie there and quietly die, but if the party wins there will be a possibility of recovering people who have been bashed down by the enemy, without needing a raise dead spell from a (frequently unavailable) high level cleric. It makes it possible for low level parties to take on something interesting, instead of cowering from every monster until their cleric gets high enough in level to be useful.

The question of the proper amount of power for clerics brings us to The Cleric Problem. Clerics are a combination of fighting and magic, and you might think that would make this a highly popular class. But the opposite is true, for most people consider clerics

inept as fighters and insufficiently exciting as spellusers, despite their very low experience point (EP) requirements for promotion. Clerics seem inept as fighters because of their lower size hit dice, their less effective weapons, and their slower rate of promotion on the combat table (their rise to higher combat classes at the rate of one per four levels, compared to one per three levels for fighters). And clerical magic is less spectacular than the mage's spells because, under the original D&D rules, clerics lacked any powerful low order spells other than Hold Person (no clerical counterpart to Fireball or Lightning Bolt). Lawful clerics lacked an equivalent of Magic Missile (reversed Cure Light Wounds), which has been allowed to chaotic clerics by some game masters (GMs) while the chaotic Finger of Death spell had a very easy saving throw (vs. Death Ray instead of vs. magic). The *Advanced D&D* rules give clerics more offensive spells, but only at very close range—touch. The question, therefore, is how can you make clerics interesting to play while keeping game balance.

I suggest that the solution is to raise the EP requirements for clerics and give them a limited offensive magic capacity. Specifically, I recommend reversing the EP tables for fighter and cleric, thus putting the cleric between fighter and mage in EP requirements. This is proper for a class that is really a combination of fighter and spelluser, and would provide better game balance. Note that by reversing the EP tables for fighters and clerics we greatly increase the clerical EP requirements, and they would really creep up to higher fighting ability if they still had to go up four levels to reach higher combat classes. I therefore suggest making both fighters and clerics go up combat classes every three levels, thieves every four levels, and mages every five levels. Fighters would top out at CC6, clerics at CC5, and thieves and mages at CC4. Since clerics are charged higher EP than fighters under this system, there is less of a game balance argument for restraining them to blunt weapons and I suggest allowing clerics to use any weapon they want, consistent with the requirements of their religion. (Remember that the prohibition on using edged weapons was a medieval christian concept, and need not apply to clerics of other religions, anyway.) This would make clerics more acceptable as warrior-priests than under the current system.

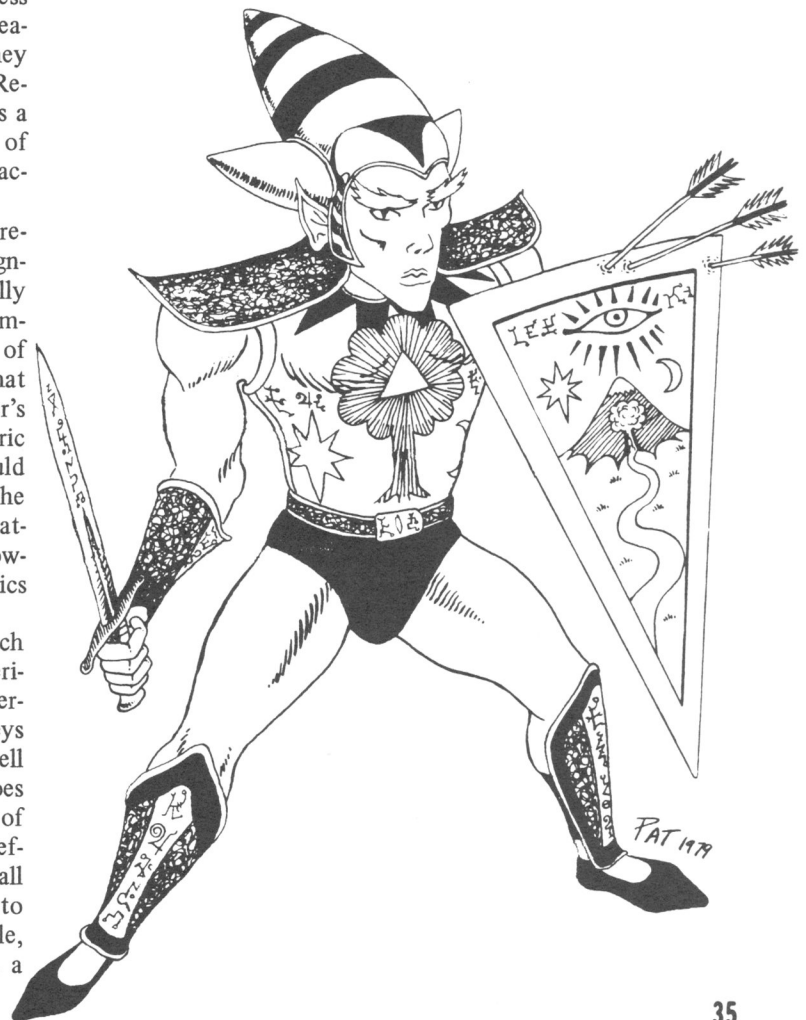
On the clerical magic side, I would make the clerical reversible healing spells available to all clerics, regardless of alignment. The reasoning behind this is that the spells are basically the same thing, a force useable in either healing mode or damage mode. This power is mastered by all clerics, regardless of their religion, as part of becoming a cleric. The only thing that governs their application of this power is their clerical order's discipline, and a practical fact of life: Every time a cleric throws a spell in damage mode, it uses up a spell that could have been used in healing mode to maintain the strength of the party. This will keep lawful and most neutral clerics from attempting to compete with the mages in being magical firepowers, although chaotic will be chaotic. But this will give clerics some noticeable combat magic when needed.

Note that I have set the power of these spells at much less than the spells available to the mage at the same experience level; they are about half the damage of the more powerful mage's spells. The system for clerical offensive power keys the damage done to the spell order, so that a third order spell does 3D8 in damage points to its target, a fifth order spell does 5D8, etc. (I set the damage at first order to 2D4 instead of 1D8 purely in order to insure a minimum of two points of effect). By comparison, the more powerful damage spells for all but the highest level mages are those that key damage done to the level of the mage—Fireball, Lightning Bolt, Magic Missile, and their privately researched analogs. Thus, for example, a

fifth level mage throwing a Fireball does 5D8 damage with a third order spell, and that to an area instead of merely a single target, with the damage going up by one die per level gained by the mage. The clerical damage with a third order spell would be fixed at 3D8 damage, and is thus much more limited. In addition, I recommend that clerics should have no offensive area spells, reserving that capacity to the mage for game balance. In exchange for these limitations, I have made the clerical offensive spells throwable at a distance, instead of the present touch range limit. Range varies with the cleric's level, at ten feet (three meters) range per level. This is an increase in offensive ability, but is still limited in range as compared with the long range of the mage's spells. All clerical spells in damage mode do half damage if the victim saves.

CURE MINOR WOUNDS, 1st Order. Effect: 2D4 hit points. This spell can raise a character up from negative hit points, but will not raise dead. While it begins at more damage than a Magic Missile spell, it remains fixed in power, unlike the mage's spell, which grows in power as the mage goes up levels.

CURE WEAK POISON, 2nd Order. Effect: 2D4 hit points, plus neutralization of the poison in the victim's body, preventing further damage. This is a higher order spell than Cure Minor Wounds because it both cures hit points and neutralizes the further effect of the poison. The reversed use of this spell does 2D4 hit points of damage and will counter the effect of a Cure Weak Poison spell, causing the poison to work again. Or it will double the effect of the poison, if it has not been cured (thus making a cure require either two Cure Weak Poison spells or one Cure Strong Poison spell). But in either case there must already be poison in the victim for the spell to effect it, as the



spell does not create poison.

CURE HOLD PERSON, 2nd Order. Effect: This frees a victim of paralyzation from most sources, including monster attack, wands of paralyzation, and the Hold Person spell (either the clerical or mage's version). The reversed mode will paralyze a single person (no effect on a save) for two melee rounds for every level of the cleric, but it affects only intelligent hominoids of medium (human) size or smaller. This spell does not affect the undead, demons, and similar creatures. The effect is broken if the victim is attacked with either weapons or magic; a good kick will give the victim a new saving throw, but at -2. Normal saving throws apply to this spell.

CURE MAJOR WOUNDS, 3rd Order. Effect: 3D8 hit points. This spell can raise a character up from negative hit points, but will not raise dead.

CURE DISEASE, 3rd Order. Effect: 2D8 hit points, plus cure of the disease in the victim's body, preventing further damage. The damage mode of this spell does 2D8 damage points (half on a save) and a minor disease of the GM's choice (1D8 damage on a save), with a save against each effect. Note that once a disease (or a poison) has been cured by means of the requisite spell, additional hit points may be restored to the victim by means of the Cure Minor or Cure Major Wounds spells (with a limit of one cure spell of any kind per hour per character), as this is a generalized cure system and the body is not particular about how its hit point restoration comes about. The purpose of the separate spells to cure poison and to cure disease is to end the continuing bodily damage that those conditions produce.

CURE STRONG POISON, 4th Order. Effect: 3D8 hit points cured, plus neutralization of the poison in the victim's body. This provides a good guarantee of saving the victim's life by the rapid restoration of lost hit points at the same time the poison damage is stopped. It could also be used by the GM as a requirement for curing certain poisons, if desired.

CURE HOLD MONSTER, 4th Order. Effect: This frees a victim of paralyzation from any source, including Power Word Stun and Hold Monster spell (either the clerical or mage's version), which cannot be cured by the Cure Hold Person spell. This spell affects all creatures regardless of race (other than the undead, demons, and similar creatures). Those creatures that can be affected by the Hold Person spell save against Hold Monster at -2, while for other creatures the normal saving throw applies. The spell in Hold mode will paralyze a single victim (no effect on a save) for two rounds for every level of the cleric against "monsters," or four rounds for every level of the cleric against "persons." The paralyzation is broken if the victim is attacked with either weapons or magic; a good kick will give the victim a new saving throw, but at -2 for "monsters" and -4 for "persons."

CURE CRITICAL DAMAGE, 5th Order. Effect: 5D8 hit points, plus cure of any poison or disease in the victim's body. Or it will cure blindness, deafness, or feeblemind, but at only 2D4 hit points cured. While Cure Minor and Cure Major will pull a victim out of the grey area from zero hit points and minus points down to the victim's constitution rating, Cure Critical can raise the victim from the dead if necessary. A person raised from below constitution points by this spell is raised only by the number of points (5D8) rolled, however, and must make a constitution check using the constitution table in the

D&D rules. A successful roll means the character is alive again, but one point is deducted from his or her constitution rating for the raise from the dead. An unsuccessful constitution roll means the character is still dead, and must wait another day before another attempt can be made. This is a significant limit, because the victim must not have been dead longer in days than the level of the cleric attempting the Cure Critical. Each attempt, even if unsuccessful, costs the character one point of constitution. The reversed version operates like a stronger Cause Disease, doing 5D8 hit points (half on a save) and a disease of the GM's choice (2D8 on a save), with a save against each effect. This is a major miracle, and appears at fifth spell order because it is the highest spell order achieved by most clerics. It is the culmination of the progressions of the lower order spells in this series. Note that while the use of this spell in damage mode is very powerful, it is not a sure kill (there is no Finger of Death in this system) against characters of the same level or slightly below the level of a cleric high enough to be able to use this spell, since it first becomes available at ninth level.

REPLACEMENT, 6th Order. Effect: This spell restores lost limbs, or counteracts withering of limbs or magical aging, and the like. Lost ears or fingers are restored immediately, while a hand or foot takes a day and an arm or leg takes a week to grow back. Note that while the cure wounds spells will replace hit points and rejoin the flesh, they cannot rejoin or replace lost limbs. In damage mode this spell will wither a randomly selected area of the victim's body (1D20 roll): Right Hand 1-2, Right Arm 3-4, Left Hand 5-6, Left Arm 7-8, Right Foot 9-10, Right Leg 11-12, Left Foot 13-14, Left Leg 15-16, Body 17-19, Head 20. Withering of hand, arm, foot, or leg means effective loss of the use of that area, or 3D8 general damage on a save. Withering of the body is difficult to manage in practical gaming terms short of death, so treat a roll for Body as 6D8 general damage, 3D8 on a save. Withering of the head is death,



6D8 on a save, since it is the most critical area not only in terms of its being the seat of the mind but also its vulnerability to damage.

RESTORATION, 7th Order. Effect: This spell restores one lost experience level to the victim of an undead attack or the like. Other cure spells do not have this effect. In damage mode, it does no hit points but drains one experience level, with no effect on a save. This is a nasty offensive spell, but it doesn't generally prevent the victim from attacking.

COMPLETE CURE, 7th Order. Effect: This spell completely restores all lost hit points to a live character, cures disease and poison of any kind, and will raise the dead. It is, in effect, the replacement of Raise Dead Fully. The only limit is that the character cannot have been dead longer in weeks than the cleric's level. If the victim makes the constitution roll, all hit points are restored, and no constitution point is lost. If the constitution roll is not made, the character is still raised from the dead, but loses one point of constitution and receives only one-half of his or her total hit points. (Note that this spell will not restore lost limbs, however.) If used on an unwounded character, this spell will restore one point of constitution. In damage mode, this spell does 7D8 hit points (half on a save), a major disease (3D8 on a save), and a loss of one constitution point (none on a save), with a save against each effect.

The structure of this system provides a logical way for determining the proper spell order for new spells. You could, for example, have a second order spell in the cure wounds series, and it would do 2D8 hit points by interpolation of the existing Cure Minor and Cure Major Wounds spells. Spells that do more than cure points are rated according to how much they do in addition. Thus, the two Cure Poison spells and the Cure Disease spell are rated as doing the point value of the next lower spell order because in addition to points they provide another factor. In damage mode the two Cure Poison spells are somewhat less effective than other kinds of spells since there must be poison from another source before their "poison damage" mode can function. On the other hand, the Cure Disease spell in damage mode presents a problem of balance for the GM. I have set it so that it does 2D8 damage (half on a save) plus an unspecified disease (1D8 damage on a save), with a separate save for each. The problem is what kind of disease is appropriate at this spell order, since obviously mummy rot is not going to be produced by a third order spell.

I suggest that restraint be used, and that the disease be one that does only a limited amount of continuing damage be imposed with this spell. It should not seriously disable the victim, but could do 1D8 when cast and not saved against, plus 1D4 per movement turn thereafter until cured. The same problem applies, of course, to the cause disease function of the damage mode of the Cure Critical Damage and Complete Cure spells. They should do greater damage, in proportion to the spell order used. I recommend that Cure Critical Damage, as the first of the really major spells in this series, do 2D8 when cast and not saved against, plus 1D8 per movement turn thereafter until cured, and that the victim's abilities be reduced by -3 to hit in melee and for spellusers an interference in power produce a +3 on the saving throw of their opponents for spells the victim throws thereafter until cured. And for Complete Cure, I recommend that the cause disease function of the damage mode do 3D8 when cast and not saved against, plus 2D6 per movement turn thereafter until cured, and that the victim's abilities be reduced by -6 to hit in melee and that for



spellusers an interference in power produce a +6 on the saving throw of their opponents for spells the victim throws thereafter until cured.

Notice that none of these three levels of cause disease function produces an instant death effect. This is an important part of balancing the power of this function against the other functions of the spell, since they also produce direct hit point damage from their cause wounds function. Thus, the effect is quite powerful and in keeping with the high level of the cleric able to throw the spell without going overboard on the disease caused. Of course, a GM who wanted to incorporate a major cause disease spell could fit it into the system easily by prorating power according to spell order. A spell that did nothing but cause mummy rot could fit at fifth order, for example. I avoided this approach because I felt that a cure disease spell should be split into two functions: curing the disease itself, and curing the damage done by the disease in hit points. It's all a question of balance, trying to make sure that the total damage done by all the spell's functions in the round it is thrown does not exceed spell order=damage dice, with some common sense used on any residual effects. I deviated from the strict $n=n$ approach for the fifth, sixth, and seventh order spells in this system because there are only seven spell orders available

for clerics in the D&D system, unlike the nine for mages, and it seemed that there needed to be some compensation built in to keep the clerics from falling farther behind the mages in proportion at high levels. Of course, the mage will be more powerful in magic than the cleric by definition, since the clerical function is divided into two areas, melee and magic, instead of concentrating exclusively on magic as the mage does.

The clerical Hold spells also fit into the same system for determining the proper spell order. You will notice that, unlike their equivalent spells on the mage's side, the clerical spells affect only one subject. For this reason, they are one spell order lower than the mage's spells having similar effects (in damage mode). They also specify that the effect is not absolute, and can be broken if the victim is seriously disturbed. This is a balancing effect that I recommend also be applied to the mage's equivalent spells, because this spell if successful totally disables its victim (unlike most spells of these spell orders, which merely weaken their victims by reducing their hit points). Notice that the Hold Monster spell in this system is the logical extension of the Hold Person spell. That is, it is a more powerful version of the same spell, and this allows it to either affect a creature that cannot be hit by the lesser spell, or to have a greater effect on those creatures that are subject to the lesser spell.

Some players who are accustomed to the existing division of clerics into "good" and "evil" may feel uncomfortable with this reallocation of powers. The original D&D system made "good" clerics medics who fought, while "evil" clerics were a variety of mage that also fought, and there was a clear line dividing the guys in the white hats and those in the black. The reason I dropped this is simple—there is no workable definition of what is good and what is evil, outside of extreme cases. It seems to me that a better approach is to define clerics as a class of defined powers, regardless of alignment, just as mages are. This strikes a better game balance, too, since it is now possible for "evil"

clerics (defined as the guys on the other side) to keep their fighters going by curing the fallen the same way as the normal player-characters do. To do so is not a demonstration of good or evil, merely one of pragmatism, since it is the best way of insuring your party's survival, regardless of which alignment you are serving.

A footnote on EP may be in order here. If I was not clear when I recommended "reversing" the EP tables for fighters and clerics, the scales I was referring to were doubling series up to eighth level (with some rounding to insure that the separation between classes is even at high levels), with the amount of EP required at L8 being the increment for levels thereafter. Those who want to slow up advancement at high levels even further may want to start adding at L9 instead of L8, thus doubling the increments between high levels. A simpler solution, it seems to me, is to use the L8 increments and use discretion in the amount of EP awarded in gaming.

LEVEL	CHARACTER CLASS			
	Thief	Fighter	Cleric	Mage
2	1.2k	1.5k	2k	2.5k
3	2.5k	3k	4k	5k
4	5k	6k	8k	10k
5	10k	12k	16k	20k
6	20k	25k	32k	40k
7	40k	50k	63k	75k
8	75k	100k	125k	150k
9	150k	200k	250k	300k
10	225k	300k	375k	450k



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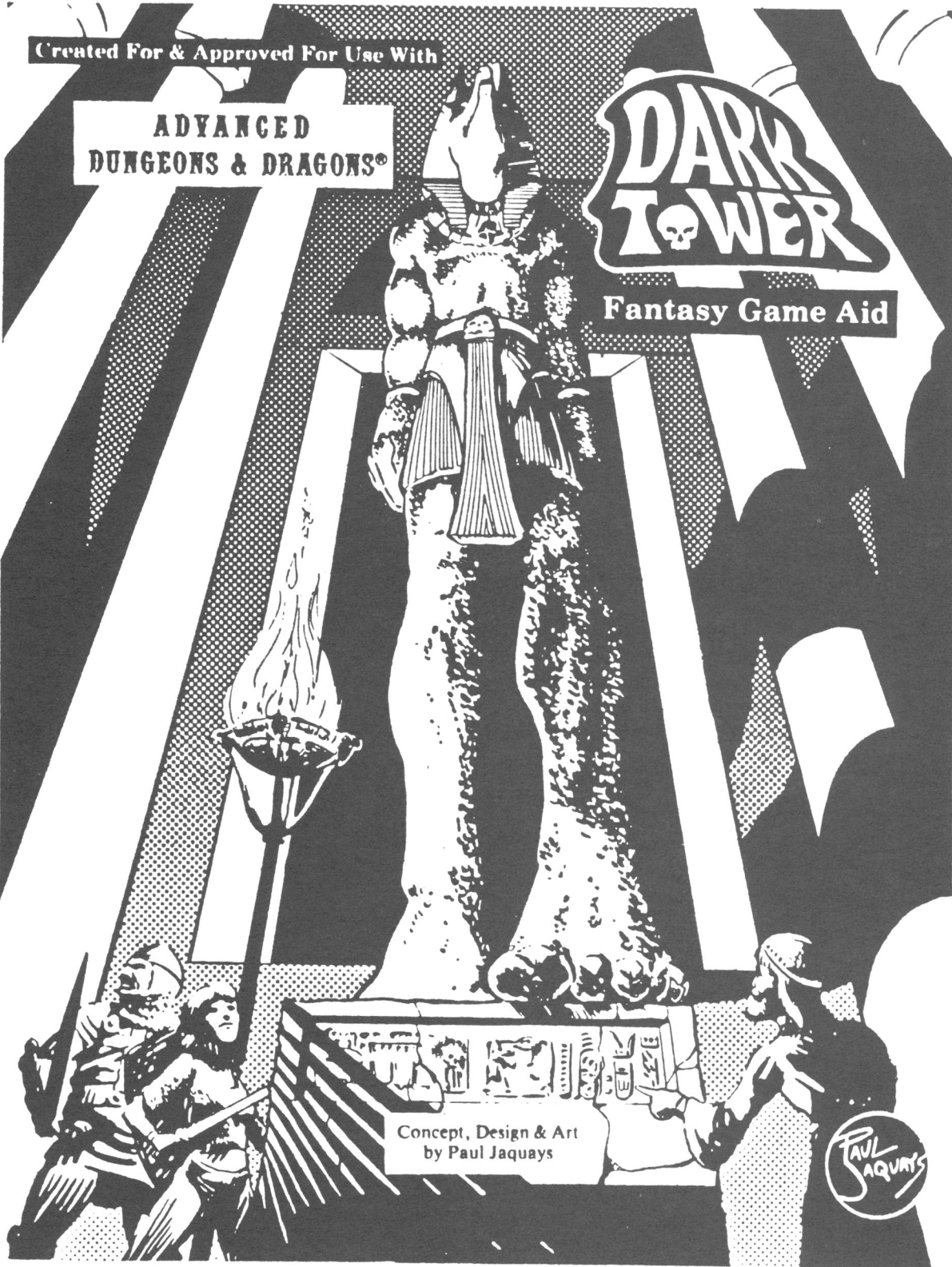
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