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Different Worlds

THE MAGAZINE FOR ADVENTURERS

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David Dixon

DIFFERENT VIEWS



Send your letters & comments to:

Different Worlds
2814-19th Street
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JOIN THE CLUB

Your magazine has been really useful for game information and ideas for our club. Issue 38 has been great for the *Call Of Cthulhu*, *Traveller*, and *Champions* campaigns being run. Because of the magazine one member is trying to decide whether to run a *Stormbringer* or a *Palladium* campaign.

The FSU Wargaming Club
Tallahassee FL

DO YOU REALLY WANT TO HURT ME?

As a woman gamer I found nearly all of Mr. Pulsipher's articles on "Women & Gaming" (*DW#38*) to be on the mark. However, I do have some additional remarks.

He barely mentions women's disinterest in wargaming's subject matter. For me this is a big point. Since wargames by definition focus on amoral killing, it's difficult for a woman brought up to be nurturing to get involved unless it is treated very light-heartedly. Add to that male b.s. attitudes, ruthless competitiveness, and the lack of anyone willing to teach strategy, it's no wonder most women

(and many men) don't like wargames.

The worst aspects of wargaming's male chauvinism can sometimes spill over into some gaming universes. The designers of these games have decided to ignore historical actualities such as crippling taxes, a rigid class structure, difficulty of travel, paranoia against anyone "different," and a brutal selfish nobility, yet have retained medieval notions as to a woman's place in society. In these games, female characters are nearly always servants, sexual partners of male characters, or victims to be rescued from the bad guys. It's no wonder women drop out of some games. There's too much sexism in the real world for a woman to want to encounter it in a gaming world.

Finally, Mr. Pulsipher mentions society-induced passiveness as a reason women might not play games, and implies that a woman need merely work a little harder to compete. That ain't necessarily so. In role-playing at least, full participation requires free expression of ideas and comments. In a recent study it was found that in conversations

"JUST THINK OF IT... THE WORLD'S FOREMOST ADVENTURE GAMER..."



TOMASIC

between men and women who knew each other slightly, 75% of the interruptions came from the men. When the couples knew each other well, the figure jumped to 95%. I still remember one frustrating game where I tried five times consecutively to make a point, and each time I was interrupted by the male players. Is it any wonder I finally gave up? (By the way, further interruptions noted that the men rarely interrupted each other.) I suggest that for women to get as much enjoyment out of the game as men, a conscious effort must be made by the players (backed by the full authority of the gamemaster) to let everyone speak their peace.

For women who have been subject to this rudeness of constant interruptions, I suggest taking over the job of gamemaster. It's wonderful how men start listening to you when the lives of their characters may depend on it.

Diane Grier
Port Angeles WA

WISHING WELL

Two months is a remarkably fast period to relocate a magazine. I congratulate you on your speed.

David Dugger
Tallahassee FL

DITILLIO REVIEWS & GAME CREDITS

Larry DiTillio's review of *Toon* which appeared in *DW#38* was

so flattering that I am chagrined to point out even the most minute of errors. The simple fact is that most of the facets of *Toon* which DiTillio liked best were the contribution of Warren Spector, the game's developer. They include the "Fifty Percent Rule," the exhortations to the players, and most of the game's atmospheric writing. I am a believer in the "auteur theory" of game criticism, which holds that a designer should be held largely responsible for his games, regardless of the contributions of others. Nonetheless, Warren's contribution to *Toon* was so great, so pervasive, and of such high quality that I can only be embarrassed when the game is praised so highly and its success attributed to me.

Greg Costikyan
Jersey City NJ

In *DW#39*, Larry DiTillio reviewed our adventures of *Octopussy* and *You Only Live Twice*. We appreciate Mr. DiTillio's well thought out opinions and would not think to refute anything he wrote but we do want the right person to get credit for the design of the adventures. Both adventures were designed by Neil Randall, one of our best freelancers. He was mistakenly identified as Neil Sullivan in the review.

Robert Kern
Victory Games
New York NY



I DON'T CARE IF YOU'VE GOT AN ELDER SIGN - PUT IT BACK - NOW!!



COLIN UPTON

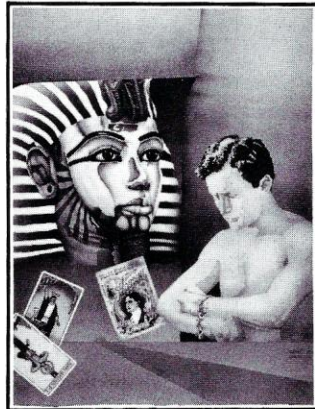


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EDITORIAL

The
Adventurer



AVAILABLE THRU SLEUTH

You are reading the first issue of *Different Worlds* produced entirely at Sleuth Publications, Ltd. The last issue, though distributed by Sleuth, was 80% produced at Chaosium, Inc.

During the magazine's tenure at Chaosium, we noticed that there were a good many gamers who lived in—what we affectionately termed—the "boonies" and who did not have access to a nearby game store where they could pick up new games and accessories as well as the old classics and those from obscure little publishers. For those unfortunates Chaosium therefore had a little mail-order catalog to announce and make available its new products as well as whatever was in print of the old. But it did not have an extensive mail-order program.

Sleuth, on the other hand, has been selling an extensive line of Sherlock Holmes games, books, and associated paraphernalia for many years. Among the miscellaneous trinkets they have available are Sherlock Holmes bookmarks and T-shirts, maps of London, other mystery books, puzzles, and games. Sleuth's main selling vehicle is *Sleuth Times*, a Sherlockian irregular that includes a large catalogue section. The latest issue can be gotten for \$2 postpaid thru Sleuth Publications, Ltd., 2814-19th Street, San Francisco CA 94110. A 4-issue subscription is available for \$6.

Henceforth, for those unfortunate enough to live far from a game store and willing to pay a little more for mail-order service, Sleuth is making available thru *Different Worlds* many of the new games announced in the "New Games" column as well as many of the games featured in its articles and reviews. Use the order form on the insert card or on p. 39. As an additional service, related books and games of special interest to gamers and armchair adventurers will also be made available. Look for them under the "Adventurer's Library" banner.

Let me tell you a story from Sleuth's mail-order department about a fan of the author Sax Rohmer who was looking for the book *Master Of Villainy*:

A Biography of Sax Rohmer (available thru Sleuth, order POP-032-8, \$10.00) who had requested his local book store to order it for him. When he called a month later, the store claimed it had lost the order (euphemism for "forgot") and would try again. When he called a month after that, the store said the publisher wasn't in their computer data base and they wouldn't be able to make the order for him. The luckless unfortunate finally called the publisher directly. He was told that the last twenty copies of the book were shipped off to California that morning and that a reprint won't be available for several months. Crestfallen, yet determined, the fan asked where the books were sent. He was told they were shipped to Sleuth Publications, Ltd., and was given the phone number that was on the purchase order. He immediately called Sleuth and ordered the book. Before the dumbfounded person who answered the phone could say anything (Sleuth had yet to advertise the book and the shipment had not arrived yet either, of course), the caller explained his little adventure in tracking down the last known copies available and could Sleuth ship the book as soon as it arrived? It was, and Sleuth had another satisfied mail-order customer.

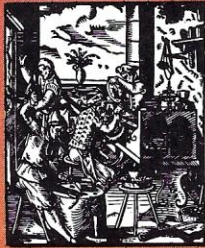
Happy gaming,

Tadashi Ehara

Coming next issue



The Adventures of
DOC SAVAGE



METAL MARVELS

To paint & play with

RUNEQUEST MINIATURES

By Ral Partha and Trollkin Forge

Reviewed by John T. Sapienza, Jr.

Competing lines of "Official" figures from two competing companies may be a bit confusing at first, but they are easily explained. The figures sold by Trollkin Forge in individual blister packs bearing the cover painting from the Avalon Hill Game Company edition, for \$1.39 each, represent inhabitants of the world of Glorantha. This is why most of the adventurer figures are identified by the name of Gloranthan cults featured in the second edition volume, *Cults Of Praxis*. (This material will be released for the third edition of *RuneQuest* in a supplement called *Gods Of Glorantha*.) The figures were made by Citadel in Britain under license from Chaosium, and are now being imported and sold by Trollkin Forge. I don't know the sculptor.

The Ral Partha figures are by Bob Charette, and are under license in the U.S. There are now two boxes costing \$9 each, one of monsters and one of adventurers. This time we'll look at the adventurers, and save the monsters for a later column. Both lines of adventurers are in the same 25mm scale, and thus the two complement each other more than compete. You might as well ignore the labels and choose figures by what you like.

Speaking generally, the Trollkin figures have a Greek flavor. This is because Glorantha is modelled on the Bronze Age cultures, and Greek armor and weapons fit the description. The Ral Partha figures, on the other hand, are not set in a particular culture and thus are more generalized. Both are done with pleasing skill and attention to

detail, are well cast with a minimum of flash, and deserve a close look by *RuneQuest* players.

The Daka Fall Adventurer (101) in the Trollkin line stands holding his spear up in challenge, as he holds his round shield at the ready. He wears chainmail, cloak and boots, with a sword sheathed across his back. His helm is crowned by a tall pair of antelope horns.

The Storm Bull Adventurer (102) holds a one-handed axe and round shield and wears chainmail and a helm with two short horns, and looks basically like the traditional Viking. He has a sheathed sword at his belt and a hafted weapon over his back that may be a two-handed axe. A typical adventurer, he carries many sacks and pouches. (This is typical of Citadel figures.)

The Waha Adventurer (103) is back to the Greek theme in helmet design, with chainmail plus bracers and greaves. He carries a one-handed axe and a crescent shield.

The Eiritha Adventuress (104) is full dressed but lightly armored, with a chainmail shirt plus greaves, and is armed with a hefty two-handed battleaxe.

The Humakt Adventurer (105) wears a full Greek helm and a round shield slung over his back. He holds a rather short, heavy two-handed sword. He has chainmail plus bracers and greaves.

The Seven Mothers (Lunar) Adventurer (106) has a round shield and very thick scimitar (you can always file it thinner if you want). He wears chainmail, a flat helmet, trousers and cloak. He has a short bow and quiver over his back.

The Pavis Adventurer (107) wears a full Greek helm, chainmail, bracers and greaves. He wears backpack and pouches and a small round shield, and is swinging a two-handed axe.

The Yelmalio Adventurer (108) wears an open Greek helm,

plate hauberk plus greaves, and a cloak. He holds a large round shield and a spare javelin in his left hand, and is throwing a javelin with his right.

The Issaries Adventurer (109) holds a large two-handed club. He has a full Greek helm pushed up so you can see his face; his armor is hidden in his tunic and cloak, but he has greaves on his legs. A large round shield is slung over his back and he has a sword sheathed at his waist.

The Chalana Arroy Adventuress (110) wears leather armor with greaves but no helm, and carries a shield and staff. This is a cult of healers and thus is not heavily armored or weaponed. It's a lovely figure.

The Llankhor Mhy Adventurer (201) is another Viking type in an open helm (but without horns) and chainmail. He has a short sword and round shield and carries a bow over his back and a profusion of pouches around his body.

The Non-Cultist Adventurer (210) is heavily armored in full Greek helm, plus hauberk and greaves. He carries a large round shield and is hefting a broadsword.

The Baboon Adventurer (206) is an example of one of the intelligent nonhuman races of Glorantha. Like his human counterparts, the baboon wears an open helm and chainmail and is armed with a two-handed spear.

Similar is the Duck Adventurer (207), whose helmet, breastplate, shield and sword are cut down in size to match his diminutive height.

The Dark Troll (102) is modeled on an ogre theme, a large heavyset human-like figure with a large nose and fang-like teeth. He wears a plate hauberk but no helmet, and carries a heavy one-handed axe and round shield.

The Ral Partha adventurers are box 10-401, which includes ten full-size figures and six tiny familiars. The first two create an amusing irony—while Trollkin is using the cover painting from the third edition of *RuneQuest*, on its blister packs, which shows two adventurers, a man and a woman, Ral Partha has sculpted the two adventurers and included them inside its box. The man wears studded leather armor (or brigandine, it's hard to be sure) plus scale for the chest and abdomen, and bracers and greaves, with an open helm. He carries a round shield and broadsword, with a sheath over his back, and a dagger and hand axe at his belt. This figure is a good example of the mixtures of armor depict-

ed in the *RuneQuest* rules for a greater feel of realism. The woman wears about the same amount of armor, including scale basic protection with bracers and greaves. She has no shield because she uses a two-handed spear. She would actually be wearing a helmet in the field, but this was left off for prettiness in the painting to let her long hair flow, and the miniature follows suit.

The Barbarian Adventurer has a fine Celtic look in the face, clothing, and headband and armbands. He wears a light leather armor and cloak and has a broadsword without shield. This would make a fine thief or rogue figure. The Gloranthan Adventurer, on the other hand, is heavily armored in a mixture of armor types and open helm. He carries an ornamented round shield and a stylized sword that looks a bit like a long spear-head on a handle.

The remaining human is a sorcerer, regally dressed in formal robes and cloak with a jeweled clasp, and wearing what is either a fancy hat or a coronet. He holds a staff in his left hand while gesturing with his right. This is a nicely sculpted figure, although I feel that a *RuneQuest* sorcerer is going to be more heavily armed than its D&D equivalent. While the *RuneQuest* rules penalize mages who are heavily encumbered while casting spells, they also permit mages to train with weapons. With this figure goes a choice of six familiars: a snake, a rat, a frog, a bird, a monkey, and a cat. It's a nice extra feature.

The box contains two elves, a male and a female. They are lightly equipped and armored, in what is probably light leather (the male also has a chainmail shirt). The female is in the process of drawing her sword. The male has just shot an arrow from his bow.

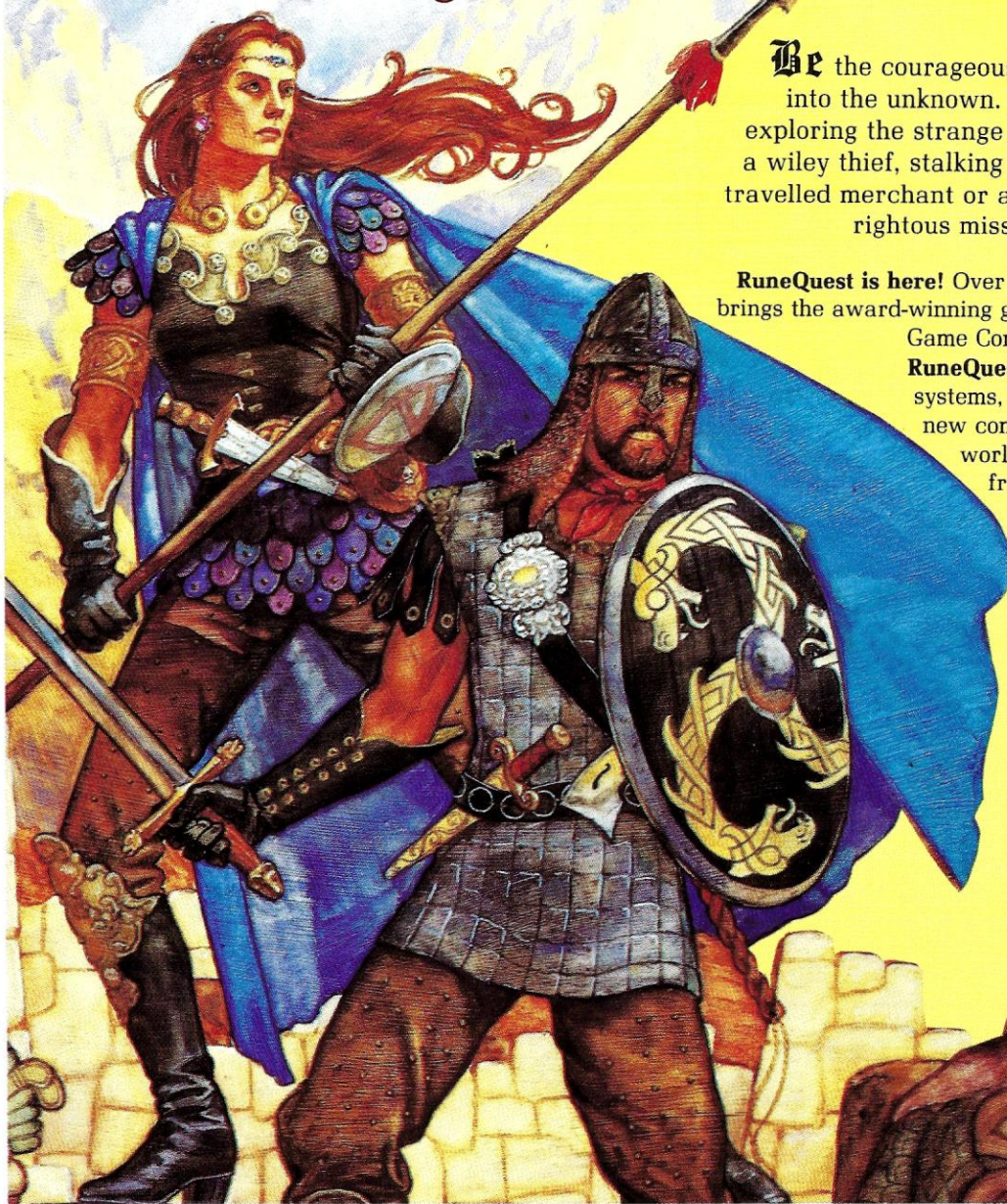
The dwarf, as you would expect, is fully armored in a suit of chainmail and an open helm. He holds an ornamented two-handed battleaxe. The duck wears a lighter outfit of chainmail and open helm, and carries a buckler and a short-sword. The dark troll is modeled on a more porcine source than the Citadel equivalent. He carries a large spiked club over his shoulder and has his round shield still slung at his side, apparently expecting no immediate trouble. He wears an open helm and plate hauberk. The inspiration for this figure seems to be the dark troll cartoons from *Wyrm's Footnotes*, with strength and dignity added.

Ral Partha Rune Questers



Available thru Sleuth (RP-10-401 \$9.00)

RuneQuest



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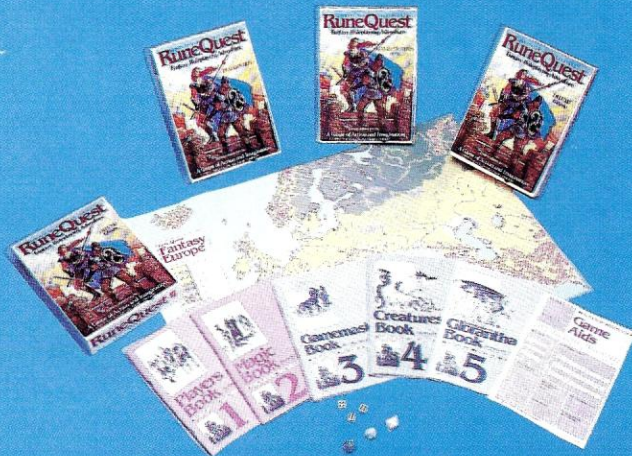
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SECRET SOCIETIES PART 4

THE CHINESE SECRET SOCIETIES

By E.S. ERKES

No nation has produced as many secret societies as China. The number and variety of organizations, even the ones we know of, are staggering. Their names, in English, are striking, fantastic, even delightful: Reflections of the Green Lamp, Crouching Tiger Society, Harmony within the Multitude, Milky Way Sect, Cow's Head Society, the Flying Dragon Mountain. In the general period from 1890-1930, it was almost impossible to keep track of the different societies, particularly in the large urban centers: A famous group called the Red Spears gave birth to offshoots like the White Spears, the Yellow Spears, the Black Spears, and so forth. To study the Chinese secret societies, it would be best—and necessary, to do the subject justice—to take all of them as a group.

Secret societies had seemingly always existed in China. A well-known group called the White Lotus could trace its origins to the 12th century AD, and almost certainly other groups had preceded it. China, after all, was the very model of a society where secret societies could thrive: A huge kingdom ruled centrally by a faraway dynasty; socially it knew only the strict

orthodoxy of Confucianism, which governed all relations between people, including and especially family relations. In such a rigidly stratified world, secret organizations were bound to appear, and they did: For centuries in China, these groups represented not only the lone political opposition to the ruling dynasty, but also the only sources of non-Confucian thought and

behavior. Feminism, for example, became an orthodoxy of its own for the societies, because the servile role of women in Chinese society was so firmly defined by Confucianism.

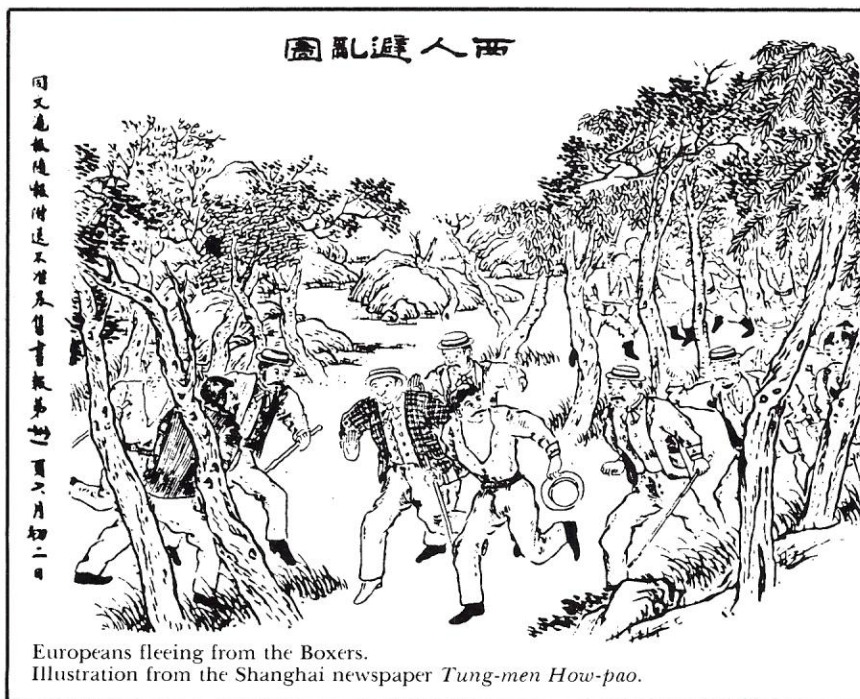
The 19th century saw the country ruled by the unpopular Manchu dynasty, and it was around this time that the secret societies began to grow in size and militancy. By about 1840, peasant revolts, usually incited by one of the secret societies, were regular occurrences. The Manchus began to persecute certain of the societies without great effect. It was at this approximate time that the single greatest catalyst for the growth of the societies began.

That the ruling dynasty was foreign—Manchus, and Manchuria, are not Chinese—had made the Chinese sensitive to the presence of foreigners. But by the midpoint of the century, China was being flooded with foreigners from the West. Trade in opium and every other conceivable commodity had brought thousands of Westerners into the country. Missionaries established Christian churches and began trying to convert the populace. Cities grew uncontrollably with the trade as millions of poor peasants moved into them; most typical was Shanghai, which became known as the "Chinese Chicago." Innumerable secret societies formed in Shanghai.

Obviously, each of these societies was different in some way from the others, so it's not possible to be too specific when discussing them as a whole. But there were enough general characteristics to make note of: For example, amulets of invulnerability were common. These amulets were usually inscribed with the names of various deities and star-spirits, and it was not uncommon for bearers to charge at gunfire. Mysticism varied with each group: Generally speaking, the greater the amount of Buddhist influence on a society, the more prone it was to invoke the supernatural.

One almost constant characteristic was the extremely ceremonial character of secret society functions. The initiation ceremony for the Triad (also known as The Society of Heaven and Earth), the largest of China's societies, goes on for dozens of pages. An incredible variety of oaths for an incredible variety of social situations had to be memorized. Perhaps the most optimistic was a series of quatrains to prevent Triad members from being robbed or attacked while traveling on foot at night.

The secret forms of communication in the Chinese societies are as extensive and complex as any in the world. The following is an actual method of recognition used by the Triad in the early 1920s:



When carrying a stick or umbrella between the first and the 20th of the Chinese month one finger should be on the side of the stick to the front, but from the 21st to the end of the month two fingers should be to the front.

There was an elaborate method of communication with the arranging of teacups. And also with offering cigarettes and matches (or in some instances opium pipes), a complex hand-sign language, and a peculiar slang ("to wash the body" meant to kill, "to wash the face" meant to behead, and "to lure into the great sea" meant to kill by drowning).

The most famous of the Chinese secret societies were the Boxers, or more properly, the Righteous Harmony Fists. The Boxers sprang up in North China in the 1890s, taking their membership from the dispossessed and resentful peasantry in that area, and directing their hostility at the Western foreigners, particularly the missionaries. The Boxers achieved huge numbers with the probable help of the Manchu authorities; unlike the other societies, the Boxers cooperated with the dynasty against the Westerners, a move which sometimes led to violent clashes with rival societies.

The Boxers got their name from their alleged training methods. They were said to have performed the motions and gestures of boxing for several days before their full initiation into the order; these exercises were supposed to prepare them for the killing and hunting-down of foreigners. Ultimately, the story went, the training was supposed to enable them, at some point in the future, to "become proficient in the magical methods by which the wind and the rain are summoned, clouds are made to disperse, and mists to disappear." In addition, youthful members of the order were often hypnotized ceremonially. Chain letters were given to neutral peasants, with the notice:

If you can copy this ten times and give the copies to others, your whole village will be safe . . . If you do not copy, you will be killed.

Equally important to the Boxers was the dissemination of anti-Western propaganda. Stories circulated to the effect that foreigners, especially priests, mutilated the eyes and intestines of Chinese children; since there were so many orphanages run by Western missionaries, this was a potentially explosive charge. Other tales asserted that the foreigners were practicing hideous and demonic forms of alchemy; given the ancient Chinese traditions of alchemy, this was another potent rumor. The societies themselves are known to have in some cases used alchemy and other rituals: Blood-drinking was a common element in

most initiations; the Triad was enamored with numerology, and gave "sacred properties" to various numbers; many societies retained their own mediums and fortune-tellers. These aspects of the Chinese societies always remained hidden to the public.

The Boxers' greatest surge in popularity came in 1898, after four imperial powers—Britain, France, Germany, and Russia—had secured permanent military bases to protect their commercial activities. At this point the Boxers deviated from the usual practice of attacking Christian churches and expanded their choice of targets: Now they attacked factories, telegraph installations, and every other kind of Western technology they encountered. To the Boxers, technology represented the most available symbol of Western domination, and so it was a logical target; in addition, technology was in direct conflict with the traditional secret-society mysticism.

Having achieved huge numbers, in 1900 the Boxers occupied Peking and laid siege the city. The uprising was brought to a predictable end by an expeditionary force from the Western powers, who afterward imposed a huge indemnity on China. The only lasting effect of the Boxers was the expansion of the popular base of secret-society membership.

The Boxer Rebellion had politicized the societies as never before. Several others aided or joined with the Boxers in the effort, and many others were generally favorable towards the Boxers; the expulsion of foreigners was a common goal. The cooperation of the secret societies would occur again when the Manchus were finally overthrown in 1911, during the Japanese occupation from 1931-45, and at the time of the Communist revolution in 1949.

The other great trend for the societies in this century has been their increasing association with organized crime. This inclination has been ever more significant, because it created ties to overseas Chinese, thereby enabling the societies to survive the onset of Communist rule in Mainland China. They still exist today within China, but in greatly truncated forms. From time to time Communist newspapers still print reports of "counter-revolutionary sects" that persist in keeping superstition alive. From the information available, the few still active engage for the most part in healing and mysticism. The Communist authorities attempt to link the societies to the Taiwan government, a charge which almost certainly has no truth in it. When discovered, the societies are ruthlessly suppressed, and it is safe to say that the day of the secret society in China has passed. As for the large communities of non-Communist Chinese in Hong Kong, Taiwan, Singa-

pore, and elsewhere, it is said that the societies have survived and are still in existence. But we know almost nothing about how they operate, or to what degree they have become ordinary organized-crime families; we can only speculate.

The Chinese secret societies are important for their variety and openness; an average Chinese in the early part of this century, assuming he lived in a fair-sized population center and was opposed to the Manchu dynasty, could have chosen from an enormous variety of organizations. Each of them would have its slight differences from the others, each would have its own code and secret language, each would be radical or social or mystical depending on its outlook. If there were only a regional grievance, he could join groups like the Red Beards, who fought the Russians in Manchuria, or the Black Flags, who fought the French in Indochina. If he was a professional criminal, there were societies formed by people like himself solely for criminal activities like the opium trade. Or, he could simply be initiated into his father's society when he came of age, as was common.

The Chinese societies were also probably the most historically significant of any country's. Because they were so pervasive their influence was highly visible: The first strikes in Chinese history were organized by the societies. Almost all peasant revolts in modern China were instigated by them. The openness leads one to speculate about how much we really know about the societies.

For adventure campaigns, the Chinese societies were would be ideal for a scenario involving secret societies within secret societies: characters would investigate one group only to find another concealed within it, with the process only ending at the storyteller's discretion; an imaginative one could create a fascinating and confounding scenario based on this premise.

Generally, a gamemaster could fit a Chinese group into almost any real-world scenario: Given their extensive history and worldwide geographical reach, they could be realistically brought into any situation. It would probably be best if the gamemaster left them on the fringes of the action, if only to avoid comparisons to kung-fu movies which would inevitably develop if a Chinese society were in the center of, say, a *Mercenaries, Spies and Private Eyes* campaign; these, like all secret societies, are most effective and most menacing when seen only dimly.

Bibliography

Jean Chesneaux, *Secret Societies in China*, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1971. □

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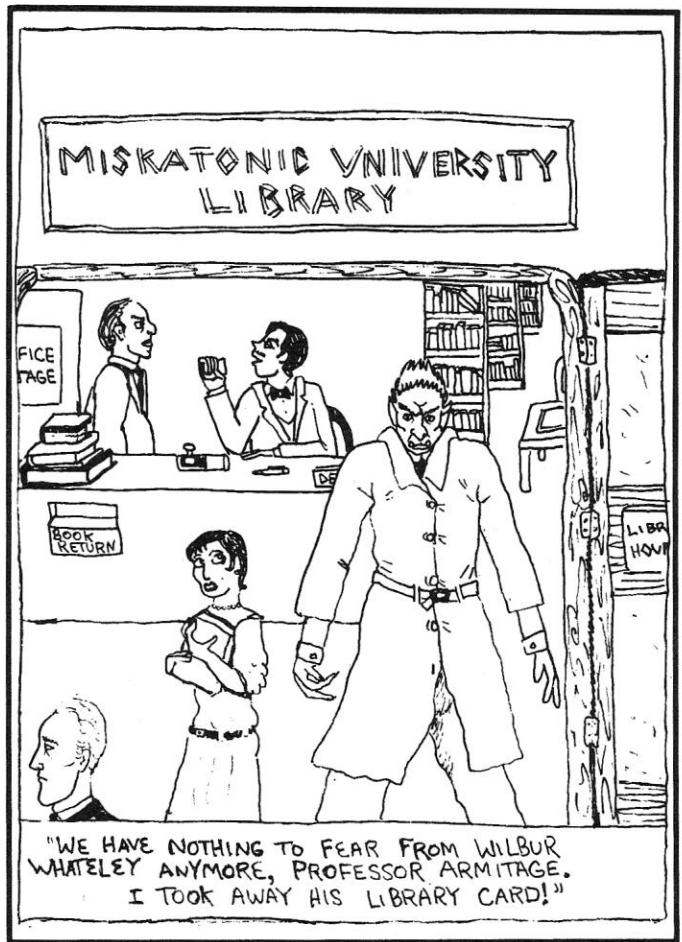
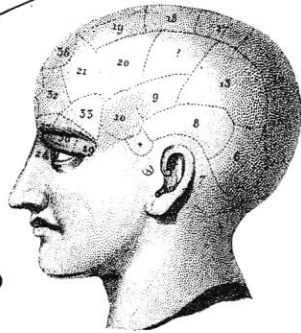
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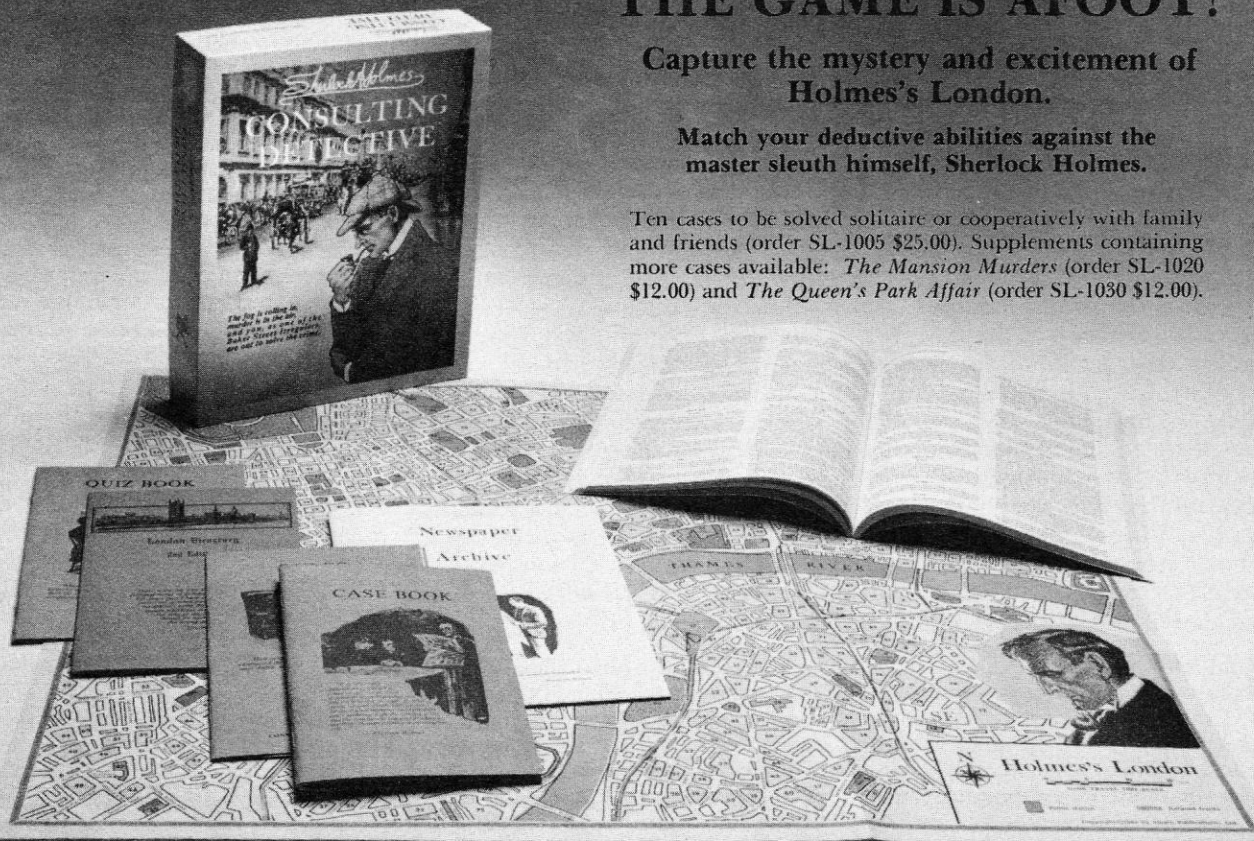


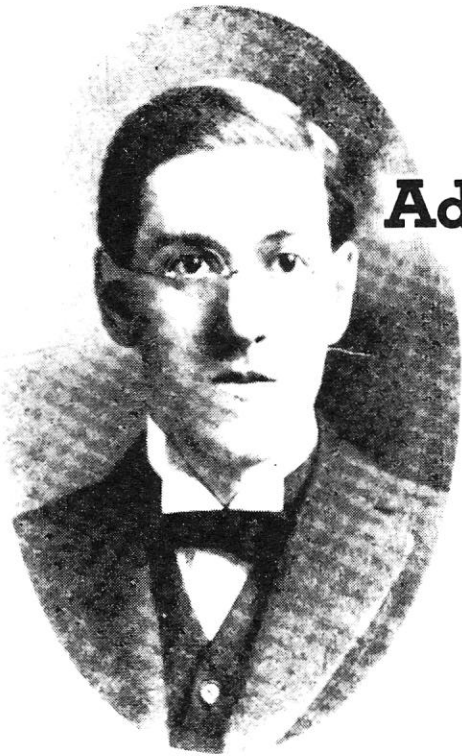
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Adventuring in the Worlds of H.P. LOVECRAFT

Part I: The Cthulhu Mythos

By Keith Herber

Illustrated by Reed Stover

H.P. Lovecraft was born in 1890 and, with the exception of a short stay in New York, lived his entire life of forty-seven years in his native Providence, Rhode Island. Dwelling with one or the other of his two aunts—his only living relatives—he passed a near-pauper's existence, subsisting on a dwindling patrimony and earning most of what little money he did as a free-lance revisionist for other authors. Over a period of twenty years (1917-1937) he produced, under his own name, a mere fifty stories of varying lengths, a number of which did not even see publication until after his death. Relegated to the pages of the 'pulp' magazines of the era—such as *Weird Tales* and *Astounding Stories*—Lovecraft found difficulty pleasing even those editors. Discouraged by their frequent 'rejections,' he wrote less and less as he grew older, at the same time continuing to critique the work of other, less experienced authors while maintaining a regular correspondence with over fifty individuals including Robert E. Howard, Clark Ashton Smith, Robert Bloch, August Derleth, Fritz Leiber, C.L. Moore, Frank Belknap Long, Henry Kuttner and others. Many of these younger writers had first written to HPL as fans praising his work and while a number of them went on to far greater heights of fame and success, they have all at one time or another acknowledged their debt to his work. Even successful authors of the day such as Stephen King and Ray Bradbury speak of their regard for the "Rhode Island recluse." Nearly fifty years after his death his collected works are still published by Arkham House and have been frequently reprinted in the paperback collections and anthologies of horror as his posthumous fame continues to grow. While disparaged by such notable critics as Edmund Wilson and Isaac Asimov, Lovecraft has also been hailed by figures as eminent as Jean Cocteau and Stephen Vincent Benet. In Lovecraft's own opinion, he wrote but one "good" story in his entire career, that single tale "The Colour Out of Space." Despite the wide variance of opinion regarding his work, to writers and aficionados of the weird, the phrase is: "Poe and Lovecraft."

In 1981, Chaosium released the adventure role-playing game *Call Of Cthulhu* designed to allow its players to explore the eerie worlds created by H.P. Lovecraft and to uncover the mysteries surrounding what has come to be known as the Cthulhu Mythos. Adventure has a different meaning in this game and refers not

only to action and physical risk but also to the danger that comes from delving too deeply into mysteries perhaps forbidden to the knowledge of mankind. There certainly exist many possibilities for excitement while prowling about ancient and sinister houses or while uncovering a secret and degenerate cult armed with the latest weapons, but the

potential for a terrifying confrontation with the unknown may lie in a situation as innocent as the reading of a moldering book recently discovered in the locked, rare-book collection of the local university's library.

Knowledge of the situation facing someone in a *Call Of Cthulhu* adventure is of primary importance, as many of the *outré* beings and monsters are so powerful as to be nearly indestructible to 'normal' means. A cryptic spell may be required to hurl the being back to its outer realm, or a specific object needed to destroy the thing. More often the investigators will simply learn how to avoid the worst of the situation and may be able to do no more than seal off the beasts' lair or destroy only the smallest, most active part of an insane and inhuman cult. To gain this necessary information the individuals may find it necessary to refer to such ancient and ungodly tomes as the dread *Necronomicon*, written in 730 AD by the mad Arab, Abdul Alhazred; or the forbidden *Book of Eibon*, attributed to a great wizard thought to have once lived in now lost and forgotten Hyperborea. Still darker secrets may lie hidden in the questionably-translated *Pnakotic Fragments*, hinted at by some to be of pre-human origin. These books hold some of the vague and near-incomprehensible secrets of the Cthulhu Mythos—rumors of alien races and beings that roamed the planet before the coming of human life and prophecies that hint these things will once again claim the Earth their province, slaughtering and destroying all of mankind in a not too distant future "when the stars are right."

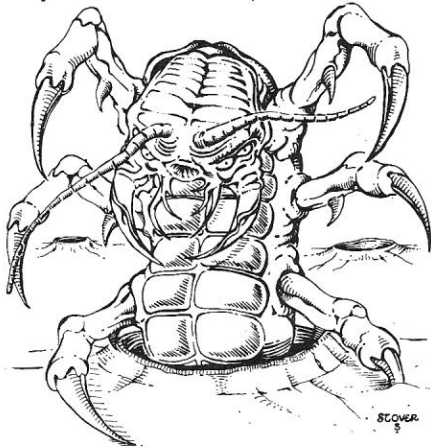
This knowledge, while invaluable to those who would explore the Mythos, does not however, come without its price. As an individual learns more and more of the frightful secrets hidden in blasphemous books and among the shards of collapsed, non-human civilizations, the devastating truth of mankind's infinitesimal role in the cosmos and his ultimate fate in time and space begins to impinge upon the person's mind, ultimately affecting his sanity.

The idea of an individual's sanity is unique to the *Call Of Cthulhu* game and is particularly effective in simulating the growing feeling of lurking dread and fear that so strongly pervades all of Lovecraft's stories. As the players discover more and more of the secrets of the Mythos their sanity begins to decrease proportionate to the specific amount of knowledge they have gained. Large sudden losses of sanity can cause a player to lose his mind, the possible results of this running the gamut from temporary insanity—expressed as mildly as a short spell of fainting—all the way up to a major psychotic break. Permanent residency in a padded cell is the only possible future for a character who suffers this last described mental breakdown. Some other, milder forms of insanity are long-lasting but can be cured by the successful use of psychoanalysis, one of the many skills available to investigators of the Cthulhu Mythos.

One of the major precepts employed by Lovecraft to his own writing was that the "weird" story should reflect a very normal situation with the sudden and unexpected intrusion into this setting by a single violation of natural law. The characters of *Call Of Cthulhu* live in such a world. Set in the 1920s, the players take the roles of reporters, journalists, scientists, or others, each possessing a range of personal and professional skills that are, to an extent, chosen by the player himself. Such characters are usually drawn from the Mythos by a variety of devices—an archaeologist may chance upon a fragment from a pre-human culture as yet unrecognized by science; a reporter called to the scene of a murder may discover startling evidence ignored by the police in the form of a slimy track that leads to the edge of a nearby wharf; an old friend disappears suddenly then turns up a raving lunatic that must be confined for his own safety; a character discovers an old family diary that hints of certain 'oddities' in his or her own blood line. Beginnings such as these will usually lead the adventurers to uncover deep mysteries and begin for their careers that will lead them to discover dark secrets as yet unguessed at by the vast majority of mankind.

There are no material rewards for those who choose to risk their lives and

minds discovering the eldritch horrors hidden in the darkest corners of the world. There are no caches of treasure that await discovery by fearless and intrepid explorers, nor does fame and glory come to those who should defeat some being from 'outside.' Those individuals who would speak publicly of what they have learned will soon find themselves ridiculed or even worse. Exploring the Cthulhu Mythos is a more or less solitary pursuit, small groups of adventurers only rarely coming into contact with others who may have some knowledge of the Mythos' secrets. Even these individuals are usually unwilling to speak too freely of what they know and some, having lost their minds, may prove to be actual worshipers of the hideous Other Gods or Great Old Ones. Those who would choose to learn too much about the Mythos are driven mad, anyone gaining near complete knowledge losing all of his sanity permanently. The only motivation to continue the exploration of these mysteries is that of



human curiosity; a desire to know the truth, regardless of the cost. This motivation is common to both the players of the game and the protagonists of the stories.

As mentioned before, actual confrontation with the awful beings of the Mythos can be extremely hazardous—even the least of the 'terrestrial' monsters being a fair match for the average single, armed adventurer. Greater horrors exist in the form of highly intelligent alien beings of terrible aspect and native dimensions outside our own, a circumstance that often renders them nearly immune to earthly weaponry. The most terrible entities include the Great Old Ones, extra-terrestrials of cosmic age and immense power, so awful that all one can hope to do is escape from them with some of his mind left intact. Direct conflict with the monsters of the Mythos is not only dangerous physically, but also psychologically as sanity losses, similar to those charged for gaining actual knowledge of the Mythos, are often suffered when facing these things. These lost

sanity points can be regained by defeating the being confronted, but this is not always possible and those who insist on continually trying to solve these adventures strictly by force will be short-lived. There is room—and a definite need—for the individual skilled in firearms as insane or otherwise devolved humans are often encountered within the course of an adventure; but unless the characters are backed up with a certain amount of appropriate knowledge and preparation, they will be ill-equipped to deal with the awesome, unfathomable horrors that usually lurk near the center of the mystery.

Lovecraft regarded his writings as excursions into what he called "cosmic horror" as opposed to the type exemplified by the term "Gothic horror." Although adventures involving werewolves, vampires, ghosts, and other such 'normal monsters' can and have been incorporated into *Call Of Cthulhu* adventures, the game is perhaps best when confining itself to exploring the particularly unique creations of H.P. Lovecraft and the growing number of writers who continue to contribute stories, ideas, and various gods and creatures to the Mythos. A confrontation with one of the more earthly and mundane creations of horror fiction might be frightening—or truly terrifying—but, in the tradition of this type of fiction, the adventurers may be expected to act in a heroic manner, destroying whatever great evil has confronted and threatened them. This is not so in *Call of Cthulhu*—the greatest of the beings of the Mythos are so powerful and so alien as to nearly transcend human understanding. They are certainly inimical to mankind, but distant, perhaps without any real conception of our existence at all. Additionally, it is difficult to appear heroic while running, screaming, from a dark, hidden hole in the side of a hill; or when discovered curled up in front of a decaying tomb, in a fetal position, drooling and babbling nonsense. Lovecraft's horrors are far stronger and less easily-faced than those monsters faced in the stories of many other authors.

Among HPL's numerous creations were the Deep Ones—scaled amphibious beings that live in offshore colonies, the most significant of these located on a dark reef off the coast of the decaying Massachusetts town of Innsmouth. The people of this town are possessed of blood tainted by that of a degenerate cult of Polynesians, brought back to this place decades ago by a local sea-captain who had made strange discoveries around the distant island of Ponape. As these individuals pass maturity they begin to develop the scales and gills of the aquatic Deep Ones, eventually returning to the sea where they may reside, without dying,

awaiting the time when the black city of R'lyeh will rise from the slime of the ocean's floor and dead Cthulhu will awake to stride forth once again. Lovecraft also wrote of the ghouls—dog-like beings that inhabit the older cemeteries of the world where their fetid and stinking tunnels lace the ground beneath the graves from which they obtain their unwholesome fare. He also wrote of the Old Ones who somehow, in a distant past, winged their way across the aether of space to arrive on the barren planet of Earth, here to begin the creation of a race of slave beasts and other life-forms which, through evolution, may have given rise to the human species. Dark gods, such as Nyarlathotep, have visited the Earth at different times and places, sometimes to head a cult in ancient Egypt in the form of Thoth, or another time in the guise of Satan, to persuade and lead the witch-cults that once proliferated in Europe; and still later, in the 20th century, where it is said that he has revealed certain 'secrets' to specific individuals—all in response to the wishes and desires of the blind god, Azathoth.

Lovecraft obtained much of his inspiration—and occasionally even a complete story—from exceptionally vivid dreams that he had been subject to ever since childhood. Beings such as the rubbery and faceless Nightgaunts

were the product of childhood nightmares while some adult, complete tales, such as the "Statement of Randolph Carter," came to him in his sleep. Before Lovecraft came to write the stories later known as the Cthulhu Mythos, he penned a series of tales dealing with his dreams finally culminating in a novel called *The Dream Quest of Unknown Kadath*. In this story a sleeping Randolph Carter enters and explores the Dreamworld, a place wherein live many creatures of fantasy and myth. While exploring the darker corners of this land he encounters a number of the deities later made famous by the Cthulhu Mythos stories. The world of dreams has so far been only lightly explored in the *Call Of Cthulhu* game but Chaosium promises in the near future to produce a game—or supplement—that will allow adventurers to enter this enchanted and oftentimes nightmarish world.

H.P. Lovecraft, though perhaps still not as well known as other, more prolific writers, still stands as one of the major contributors to the body of weird fiction. Although the end of his life found him in poverty and near-obscurety, his singular understanding of what may truly frighten an individual has influenced much of the horror fiction and film produced since his time. The novels of Stephen King, Peter Straub,

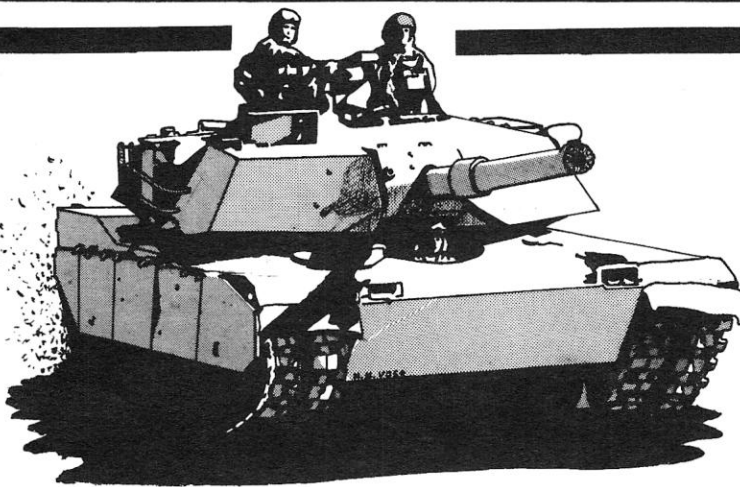
and others, along with such latter-day classic movies as *The Thing* and *The Invasion of the Body Snatchers*, all owe much of the terror they convey to the original conceptions and unique viewpoint of Howard Phillips Lovecraft. □

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Part II: Dreamworld



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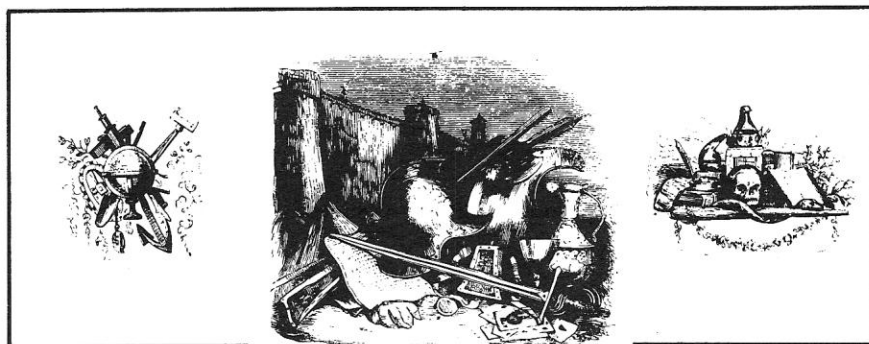
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ADVENTURE GAME CAMPAIGNS

How to Start Easily & Quickly

By George Emery

In this article are guidelines, tips, and an idea of the time involved to help you start an adventure gaming campaign. Most of the information here applies to the common genres of sword & sorcery, wild west, post-holocaust, and space fiction. I have not covered spy and comic-book hero games thoroughly because they have a somewhat different design nature for campaigns.

Players enjoy a game that is rich in detail. Obtaining this degree of detail is time consuming and the immediate playability will be traded off for detail. Also the details designed before play will be decreased by the ability of a gamemaster to improvise during play. Toward decreasing a gamemaster's design work, I will present techniques that help increase the detail during play without increasing the work before play.

Many people have floundered in their first attempt, or worse, went ahead with an inadequately prepared campaign (myself included); this is a frustrating experience and can sour potential players and gamemasters alike. To aid you in avoiding disasters like those, I have written this article which is chock-full of information gleaned from years of adventure gaming.

The Big Picture

Right, so how does one begin? Usually you will have some idea of the overall effect that you desire or some special

feature to incorporate into the campaign. One way to start is to decide how many towns, cities, communities, or star systems you can handle during one design session and then decide the political, military, social, and economic ties between them. Another way is to draw or purchase the map(s) necessary, decide the interaction of regions, and finally add the details. Most important, don't try to do everything at once or nothing will get done. The time to get this groundwork finished runs 2-3 weeks.

For the first week, you should concentrate on placing the terrain, cities, political boundaries, places of mystery (explained later), and how the land is used. I give the following map areas and sizes for what can be easily handled in your first campaign map.

I recommend a mapped area covering 250x250 miles, up to three major cities, and maybe 10-15 smaller communities for a sword & sorcery campaign. Remember that this always depends on how densely populated and detailed the particular area is. For the

wild-west campaign, you will find some research into authentic maps of the period very useful; working on one state (or region similar to a state) at a time is easiest. The post-holocaust campaign operates best when designed with around 15 individual communities in an area of 200x200 miles usually centered on the remains of a medium-to-large city. Space fiction has too many variables to give a simple rule of thumb, but I'll try: one star system for a prime population area (e.g., Sol-Earth system) and 5-15 star systems if this is on the fringes of colonization. Overall, the dimensions of any campaign map must be at least 25-50 inches on a side.

Basic map drawing takes little time, but placing the details suitable for campaign use may be more work than you will want to do at first. Purchasing a ready-made campaign map saves time, but may not produce the effect you desired.

Remember that a perfect map is not all of the campaign; a good description of the society and environment will make even a poor or non-existent map worthwhile. There are some gamemasters whose maps are more concept than geography. In compiling the descriptions of your world, ask yourself some basic questions like: what does the judicial system consist of? How independent are various regions and how seriously does that affect regional politics? What is the weather? Where did the populace originate? When are the holidays? May the populace move freely? What can be seen standing at various viewpoints?

A good campaign has a detailed history for the last couple of generations. Player-characters may or may not know much of this history, but it is a certainty that they will get a glimpse of it during play so there is ample reason to go to the trouble of devising a history. The main things to include in it are treaties, wars, major criminal acts, and inventions. Players enjoy having information of this sort so they may participate in making history of their own. You will run your campaign smoother if you have a history or central theme playing through your mind.

Titles (Prince, Sir, Boy, Lady, etc.) can enliven a campaign. If titles are prevalent in the social structure of your campaign, do not forget to include titles for people of unknown status. How do you address the richly dressed man who has just entered the ballroom? He could be a king, but there are no obvious clues, and you must be careful not to offend him by assuming too low of a title nor lose face from addressing a merchant with, "Sire..." To simplify matters, a set of dummy titles would evolve in such a society.

There is one last thing that needs

attending before the cities and place of mystery are added: random encounters. Again, there are ways of dealing with random encounters, but they all involve deciding what creatures will occur in your campaign (events could be encountered as well). Normally, a die roll to see whether an encounter has taken place is done before the creature encountered is determined. The most common form of creature determination is a table with percentage chances of the creature being encountered. Another common form is an event deck; that is, all the creatures listed on 3" by 5" cards and a card drawn when an encounter has occurred. A method that is seldom used is the gamemaster just choosing the encounter. This last method required judicious use, because gamemasters may pick creatures with the sole intention of killing characters and that does not make for good play if done regularly.

City Generation

Designing a city for any fantasy campaign is tiring, if not a real pain. A quick, easy, minimal work method is called for in generating a city. I have discovered the method described here eliminates most of the tedium and,

once the initial setup is finished, allows one city to easily be designed in a week.

Start by drawing a map of the streets and special building sites. Draw in the buildings, but only label the ones that have been pre-designed: governmental offices, town walls, castles, and religious buildings are some examples. These pre-designed, special buildings will need to be detailed, so take care not to attempt too many of them. The city may now sit until the player-characters actually move around in the city; there is no need to do any more work on this particular city unless you have the spare time. However, there is still some work to do before play begins.

It is time to prepare 50-200 3" x 5" cards (or some other suitable medium). The cards will be split into two decks of unequal size. One deck, called the building deck, will have shops, taverns, hotels, residences, etc. and the other, called the people deck, contains generalized information concerning the proprietor/owner, size of establishment, and customers. A list of possible items to be included in the buildings deck for various fantasy campaigns is given in table 1; items that are necessary to the function of the building should also be listed in this deck. The people

deck gives the gaming stats of the personnel, some possible names for the principal gamemaster-characters, a range for the number of rabble/extras/crowd/common folk to be found on the premises, and comments on the typical behavior of gamemaster-characters. The gamemaster-characters will not have the trade skills listed since these will usually be determined by the type of building that a gamemaster-character is found in; however, specific skills not associated with the building would be listed. In table 2 are some examples of both kinds of cards.

The buildings deck may be of any size, but a minimum of forty cards is usually required to provide some variety. The people deck really cannot be done with less than ten cards, since there should be some range of competency in the gamemaster-characters, but probably will never have more than thirty. It also is helpful to number the cards so that you can make notes like building deck, #24—people deck, #13 on the city map's buildings. The decks may be used for all your cities; don't worry about making a new set for each city, just add more cards to the decks as needed.

To use, when player-characters enter

Table 1

The universal list has buildings that are common to all genres.

Universal

expensive hotel/inn
average hotel/inn
cheap hotel/inn
expensive restaurant/bar
average restaurant/bar
cheap restaurant/bar
expensive boutique
average boutique
expensive residence
average residence
cheap residence
theatre
physician/chiropractor
brothel
church/chapel

Wild West

blacksmith
general store
slaughterhouse
bank
bakery
barber
beauty shop
stable/livery
cartwright
stagecoach stop
veterinarian
gunsmith
lawyer
locksmith
cattleyard
railyard

Post-Holocaust

automobile shop/garage/sales
hair shop
department store
supermarket
pet store
sporting goods store
lawyer office
grocery store
construction site
parking garage
gift shop
fuel station
engineering firm
utility company (phone, electric, gas, water)
power substation
book store
record store
camera store
building materials outlet
electronics store/repair shop
entertainment shop
bank
bakery
furniture store
travel agency
library
metal working shop
radio/TV station/antenna
locksmith
wholesaler/warehouse
pharmacy
health spa/raquet club
laundermat
plastics fabrication shop
museum/gallery

Space Fiction

(contains about the same items as the post-holocaust list, plus these...)

robotics shop
industrial sales outlet
personal transportation store
energy weaponsmith
hibernation chambers
environmental suits tailors

Swords & Sorcery

jewelsmith
glassworks
armourer
blacksmith
stable/livery
foundry
bakery
cobble
greengrocer
cartwright
chiurgen
warehouse
candlemaker
scribe
sage

a city for the first time, just start pulling cards from the building deck at random (or choosing with a look to the surrounding buildings), noting on your city map the building card number, and replace the cards that have been drawn unless there is to be only one of that building the city. If the player-characters enter a building, draw a card from the people deck to instantly populate it with gamemaster-characters that have names, purposes, and skills. Again, note the number of the card on the city map along with the names of the gamemaster-characters. If you have time and room, make any pertinent notes about the encounter for future reference. Remember that if there is

some building or group of gamemaster-characters that you want the players to encounter, then throw that in. Likewise, you have the option to wing it during these explorations if the city is too mundane.

To speed things up when something significant happens, generic floorplans should be drawn for each of the types of buildings in the building deck. Obviously, only one or two drawings are needed for all the retail stores and offices since they tend to have the same sort of layout, only different contents. Thus about 15-20 floorplans (not including the special pre-designed buildings mentioned earlier) are needed to design an infinite number of cities.

15-20 floorplans may seem to be too many to attempt at first, but believe me it is easier than 50-100 unique floorplans for a small town!

The Place of Mystery

In many campaigns there is a 'dungeon.' This is not always an actual dungeon, but it is a place for adventurers to try their luck at gaining a fortune, do heroic deeds, look for some special artifact, or just have an adventure. To avoid the misnomer 'dungeon' I describe it as the place of mystery. The place of mystery can be large (a nation) or small (a single building), above ground or below, or simply unexplored territory.

There should be at least one place of mystery in every campaign (preferably several). Some tried-and-true examples are: a giant ants' hill, goblin/orc stronghold, barrow-wight mounds, dark forest, dragon lair, castle-in-the-clouds, Indian territory, the town of Hole-in-the-Wall, the university grounds, a mutated forest, a building with an automatic security system, a Bermuda triangle area, unexplored planet, space pirates' haven, derelict spaceship, and abandoned alien facilities. Currently there are many commercial products available for immediate use. If a commercial product is purchased, I strongly recommend alterations to make it a unique item. Mix and match ideas as you see fit.

It is a good idea to make the place of mystery have some sense of belonging to the surrounding countryside, otherwise players will not take your campaign seriously. What keeps the monsters fed when there are no adventurers? Is there a local political policy regarding the place? Randomness may have a place in design, but too much will be crippling to the pleasure of play. If it is a secret place, then it must be well hidden or difficult to reach.

The idea of a place of mystery is an important one and should not be ignored. The development time varies directly with the size and complexity. For a median, I'd set aside three-four weeks.

Scenarios

Scenarios are a way to get a game moving. If your players' characters have been avoiding a place of mystery, a scenario can 'nudge' them in the right direction. When you want to play the game, but haven't completed a whole campaign, some form of scenario would definitely be appropriate. Or you may throw in a scenario just as an option for the players. Some adventure games rely on a string of scenarios . . . notably the comic-book-hero and spy genres.

Table 2

BUILDINGS DECK

#5

Robotics Shop
wash-up basin
industrial utilities
technical manuals
hydraulic press & fluids
machine tools
robots & parts
automatic test equip.
basic mech tools
electronic tools

#42

Average Residence
household goods
transportation
food
furniture
clothing
security devices
4-10 ft. fence
printed matter

#22

Cobbler
leather
tacks
wooden tools
shoes/boots
knives
leather punches

PEOPLE DECK

#14

expert owner/operator
3 average employees
1-2 customers
small establishment
front for drug ring
group will fight if threatened
names: Lee Lamb, Ace McCullough, Randy Coe, Edward C. Jefferson

#2

above average partner
average partner
5-10 average employees
10-20 customers/rabble
medium establishment
tough guys #3 & #4 will be among the customers
names: Lily O'Valle, Kern Gordall, Jay Miller, Alexander Thrush, Mike Yamamoto, Jacques Oakman, Raynard Hillery

#8

average owner/operator
1-6 customers, below average
small establishment
names: Sarah Lee, Emma Kurtz, Vera Smith, Kathy Lundgren, Nana Juarez, Kay Juniper, Frita Sturm

A good use of a scenario is in the first time players begin in your campaign. A scenario takes care of how to keep players together for a while and allows for play to begin easily.

There are many things that can be done using scenarios, but I feel they are of such an individualistic nature that there are no guidelines. You may keep them small at first and gradually increase their scope as the players and characters gain experience in your campaign. It is entirely possible to run a campaign without using scenarios. Scenario development time may take as long as a month.

Playing It

Everybody has created his characters, the players have agreed on meeting times, and your 'baby' is ready to be trod on. Now what? Well, assuming you've arranged some creative way for the player-characters to begin, play and see what happens. In this first session try to get the players to view characters as individuals and to have a feel for your campaign. Explain what is happening when you scramble for charts, dice and rules if this is the first for any of the players. It helps for future games because good players will help remind you of some forgotten rule, keep a poor player in line, and help new players

learn the game. Keep an even, not overly fast pace for this trial run; save the fancy stuff for later.

Game-time of characters is a difficult thing to handle satisfactorily. Setting a rigid calendar, keyed to real-time, is fine if you can keep the players (and yourself) on schedule. Using only the time the characters have used in actual play will work, but often does not allow characters to age. Currently, I favor using the time a character experiences in play and then, when the character is in a safe location, use a scale of four times real-time. The character is assumed to be living an ordinary, safe lifestyle during this downtime scale; it is used for character healing, learning and improvement. The four times real-time rate allows characters to age and have more campaign events occur. There are difficulties with this method, chiefly that individual characters may be active at different game-times. I'm sure you see the care necessary in selecting an appropriate method for keeping character-time if you are going to bother with it at all.

A day or two later, review the rule-book and the events that occurred during play to find any trouble spots. Make notes of how to remedy them in future sessions. Be forewarned that players can be terribly brilliant with their characters. Try to channel this

brilliance into the proper area; a town will burn to the ground, major murderers won't be bothered by the local constabulary, and players will complain constantly about bad game-mastership due to a gamemaster incorrectly handling player aspirations and suggestions for improvement.

I've given you the information vital for painlessly starting a campaign in two-four months. Future additions to the mapped area will take even less time, since you will have the framework complete. Therefore, once play has commenced, the players will leave time for you to design before they explore too much and need more territory to roam in.

Good campaigns and players will result in tales worth telling. It used to be that nearly all campaigns were sword & sorcery; these days a gamemaster has many choices and can pick a genre that feels best. The people that I regularly game with have the following campaigns: two space fiction, two or three sword & sorcery, one comic-book hero, and one post-holocaust. We have all specialized in what each of us does best. How do we play so many campaigns? To be honest, we don't. But that just gives us more time to perfect what we have. So take this article to heart, go out and start a campaign. You'll be glad you did. □



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BOOK REVIEWS



SEPHER HA-RAZIM: The Book of the Mysteries

By Michael A. Morgan
(Scholars Press, \$8.95)

Reviewed by William Hamblin

Medieval magicians in Western Europe are nearly unanimous in their claim that their spells and knowledge were derived from ancient and arcane magical books, often called grimoires, which were often thought to have originated in the East. Although many of these supposedly ancient sources are now lost, or perhaps never really existed at all, it is certain that there was indeed a Jewish and Arabic magical tradition which was transmitted at least in part to the Western Europeans by means of translations of Hebrew and Arabic magical books into Latin, for the most part by wizards of medieval Spain where for a number of centuries Latin, Arab, and Jewish cultures intermixed.

One of the earliest and most important Hebrew magical books is the *Sepher ha-Razim*, or "Book of the Mysteries," which seems to have been composed (at least in the current form—the origin of the spells may be much earlier) sometime around 300 A.D. No complete manuscript copy of this work has survived, but from a number of fragments and partial copies the original text has been reconstructed by Mordecai Margalioth from seven major manuscripts and dozens of Hebrew fragments. An Arabic version of this work appeared sometime after the 8th century A.D. Finally, there is a complete Latin translation, *Liber Razielis Angeli*, or "The Book of the Angel Raziel." Thus this early Hebrew work served as the source of magic spells utilized throughout the Islamic and Christian civilizations during much of the Middle Ages.

The *Sepher ha-Razim*, which has recently been translated into English with notes and an introduction by Michael A. Morgan, can serve as an interesting sourcebook for adventure gaming. It is claimed that the book was revealed to Noah by the angel Raziel (hence the Latin name mentioned above), and that Noah wrote it down on sapphire tablets and enclosed it in a golden box. It was transmitted down through the ages

and eventually fell into the hands of Solomon who used it to compel demons to do his bidding.

The *Sepher ha-Razim* consists of a cosmological tour through the seven heavens, a listing of the names of the major angels of power in each heaven, and descriptions of the ceremonies and spells required to bind these angels to do the magician's will. Each group of angels has power over different aspects of the world, such as healing, warfare, the weather, foreseeing the future, the dead, love, riches, etc. By knowing the correct ceremony and spell and the secret names of the angels the wizard can compel the angels to perform magical acts for him.

The book contains complete ceremonies and incantations for dozens of spells, ranging from curing a headache, giving someone insomnia, winning love, starting a fire, and winning at horseracing, to killing an enemy, summoning spirits of the dead, interpreting dreams, foreseeing the future, protection in battle and controlling dangerous animals.

Here is an example of a spell (p. 38): "If you wish to question a ghost; stand facing a tomb and repeat the names of the angels of the fifth encampment (while holding) in your hand a new flask (containing) oil and honey mixed together and say thus: 'I adjure you O spirit of the ram bearer (Hermes?) who dwells among the graves upon the bones of the dead, that you will accept from my hand this offering and do my will and bring me (the spirit of) N son of N who is dead. Raise him up so that he will speak to me without fear and tell me true things without concealment. Let me not be afraid of him and let him tell me (for) my question, (the answer) I need from him.' He should appear immediately. But if he does not, repeat the adjuration a second time (and) up to three times. When he appears set the flask before him, and after this speak your words while holding a twig of myrtle in your hand. If you wish to release him, strike him three times with the myrtle and pour out the oil and honey, and break the cup, and throw the myrtle from your hand, and return home by a different route." Another spell follows

which allows the magician to bind the ghost to go somewhere and do his bidding.

For a gamemaster setting his campaigns in a semi-historical version of the Medieval West this work can be extremely important as an actual book which wizards in the campaign can search for use as a source for magical spells in the game. On the other hand, any gamemaster or player can find an excellent source of inspiration for magic in adventure gaming no matter what game system or scenario they might be using. Too often magic is thought of simply as something that can be turned on and off like a light switch, while even a brief reading of the *Sepher ha-Razim* shows that medieval man saw magic as a complex activity requiring extensive spiritual preparations, the proper magic implements, complex ceremonies, and a knowledge of the secret names of power.

There are two related articles by Charles S.F. Burnett which might be useful to those interested in the forms of medieval magic. Both of them are found in scholarly journals which can probably only be obtained from libraries of major universities. The first is "Scandinavian Runes in a Latin Magical Treatise," *Speculum* vol. 53 no.2, 1983, pp. 419-429, which gives a Latin text with an Eng-

lish translation which describes the powers of the signs of the zodiac and other astrological information, relating it to Scandinavian runes as being ancient magical letters. It is an interesting mixture of Arabic, Latin and Norse magic.

The other article by the same author is "Hermann of Carinthia and the *Kitab al-Istamatis*: Further evidence for the transmission of Hermetic Magic" in the *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* vol. 44, 1981, pp. 167-9. This article gives the Latin text for summoning a demon, an English translation, and then traces the spell back to an Arabic original in the *Kitab al-Instamatis*. It includes an extensive bibliography with references to a number of interesting works, and clearly demonstrates how magical spells could become corrupted in transmission and translation. The reception and use of faulty spells by wizards in adventure gaming could lead to a number of interesting situations. For example a wizard might find a magical text which correctly gives the spell for summoning a demon, but incorrectly translates the part for releasing the demon. Thus the poor wizard who tries the spell will be able to conjure up a demon and then find to his great dismay that he can't send it back. □

Doctors, Diviners, and Magicians of Ancient China BIOGRAPHIES OF FANG-SHIH

By Kenneth J. DeWoskin
(Columbia University Press, \$12.50)

Reviewed by
William A. Barton

The *fang-shih* (pronounced something like 'fong-scher') were diviners, sages, and opportunists of ancient China, who flourished in the period 200 B.C.-A.D. 500. These influential individuals were considered learned in the esoteric arts, and were respected, courted, and feared by ruler and their advisors. DeWoskin provides a solid academic study of these personalities that is also accessible to the interested layman. For gamers who can handle an academic work, the true value in this book are the trans-

lated biographies of the *fang-shih* that DeWoskin has taken from various Chinese histories. For example, the story of Liu Ken: the recluse Liu was arrested by a local official, Shih Ch'i, who demanded that he demonstrate his reputed powers or be executed. Liu summoned up Shih's deceased relatives who proceeded to berate the official for improper respect towards his ancestor (a truly reprehensible act in Confucian China). When Shih begged to be forgiven, Liu ignored him and vanished with the ancestor spirits, never to be seen again. Other such stories abound, all showing how a culture treats its "magic-users" and how they interact with the population and the ruling class. Interestingly, these Chinese conjurers were concerned mostly with divination and weather control, a welcome relief from the usual fantasy game "magic-as-a-

weapon-system" approach. DeWoskin, in his introductory chapter, points out several underlying elements in the stories and gives us an overview of Chinese beliefs about the

supernatural. DeWoskin writes in an academic tone, but is rarely pedantic and jargon-laden. The price for this book is a bit steep—look for it in a good college library. □

ENGINEERING IN THE ANCIENT WORLD

By J.G. Landels
(UC Press, \$4.95)

Reviewed by
William A. Barton

This short but information-packed book is an excellent source for a thoughtful game designer. Landels discusses the machines and engineering feats of the ancient Greeks and Romans, accomplishments unrivalled until the Renaissance period. The topics covered include energy sources, water supplies, cranes, catapults, ships, land transportation, and classical writers on technical matters. The chapter on ships and sea transportation is invaluable for campaigns with a nautical flavor. If you have a lot of mechanically-inclined Dwarfs in a campaign, the

chapter on energy sources is handy in designing mines and factories. The chapter on catapults is almost enough to make you run out and build one yourself. If you like to design cities, read the chapter on water supplies to see how you can really make it hard on yourself.

A drawback to this otherwise valuable work is the occasional tendency for Landels to become somewhat technical in parts. If you are uncomfortable with engineering writing, you'll have to push yourself a bit, but the effort will be rewarded, especially later in the catapult chapter. The other fault that I could find is that Landels doesn't treat metal-working. (For this, look in a large library for R.J. Forbes' *Studies in Ancient Technology*.) If you want to go further in the subject of ancient technology, Landels has an excellent bibliography. □

COURTSHIP RITE

By Donald Kingsbury
(Timescape, \$3.95, 309pp)

Reviewed by David Dunham

Most of the books we've reviewed in this column have been applicable to only one genre of gaming, be it fantasy, modern, or science fiction. *Courtship Rite* transports you to a world fascinating for both science-fiction and fantasy gamers.

The book is set on the planet Geta, a harsh world where humans are not native. Place names such as Valley of Ten Thousand Graves, Wailing Mountains, Swollen Tongue, and Sorrow are testament to humanity's struggles to survive. Some of the profane (native) plants are edible, but all are poisonous unless treated. Luckily the Eight Sacred Plants (including wheat and soybeans) flourish, and are immune to Getan pests. There are no animals larger than insects, so the only source of meat and leather is the humans themselves. Their whole culture revolves around this fact. One of the characters has a coat made from her father, and has pieces of his flesh, salted, for when she needs extra energy. But meat is a famine food for most clans (except at funeral feasts). Only in hard times are people expected to go to a temple and make their Contribution-to-the-Race. Just who

goes is determined by kalothi, a concept which pervades Getan society. Kalothi cannot be translated, but corresponds roughly to value to society, or esteem. Criminals (whose noses are cut off) are low in kalothi, successful leaders have much kalothi.

The main characters of the story are the maran-Kaiel family, ordered by the Prime Predictor of the Kaiel clan to complete their marriage by marrying a heretic from the coast. They don't want to marry a vegetarian who believes that the God of the Sky is a mere moon, and that the maelot (an insect) is the ancestor of man, so they woo her with the Death Rite. Besides they've already picked out the woman they want as the sixth member of their marriage.

Meanwhile, they are busily furthering the clan goal of leadership over all of Geta. This is not an easy task, since the Kaiel conquer by bargaining, which requires that their government be better than that of other ruling clans such as the Stgal and the Mnankrei. They are aided by some of the inventions that are just beginning to sweep across Geta: the ray-voice (radio) and the bicycle. An unexpected heritage from the past gives the Kaiel new weapons and new understanding of the struggle. The politics grows convoluted, and includes secret participants. The conflict builds up to an open war which promises to be far more horrify-

ing than any Geta has ever seen.

While the personal or political aspects would make *Courtship Rite* a good book, it's the rich tapestry of Getan culture that makes it a great book. There's always the grim problem of starvation, and people are continually being tested for kalothi. But the Getans have become adept at survival, and many of their tests are games like chess or Kol, a game symbolic of life on Geta, which can only be won by taking a risk and breaking the rules. People ornament themselves richly, scarring their bodies in fanciful designs and shaving parts of their heads. I'd guess that Geta is a hot planet, since there's a lot of emphasis placed on bathing. While some Getan customs may seem a bit strange—I'm not sure I would consider honeyed bee-crisps a delicacy—Kingsbury weaves them all together into a consistent, satisfying whole.

The clans are a foundation of Getan life. Each clan has its unique characteristic. The o'Tghalie are mathematicians, the Mnankrei sea traders, the Ivieth travellers who run the inns and are hired as messengers and porters, the all-female Liethe servants to the Priests. We see the Kaiel in the greatest detail. The Kaiel are a ruling clan, skillful negotiators. They are magicians of breeding, biochemistry, and genetic manipulation. Most of their children are born in creches, where they are continually being tested for kalothi. Those who fail are culled for the soup kettle. Their government is a meritocracy. Anybody can put predictions into their archives. Their accuracy is the basis for election of a new Prime Predictor. Thus Kaiel leaders are selected for their ability to forecast accurately and take action to make their predictions come true. The Kaiel also establish personal constitu-

encies among the other clans, the size of which determine their voting strengths in issues brought before the whole clan.

Technology is highest in the biological field, though Getans have photography and electronics. But most people consider technology to be magic only priests can hope to understand. Interestingly, the Getan word for priest is the same as for leader and biologist. The lack of technology leads to many of the cultural practices, such as keeping track of time by sun-heights.

Geta may pose a puzzle for science-fiction gaming enthusiasts. How do you assign a Tech Level to a planet which relies on human muscle for the bulk of its energy, but splices genes and uses the laser? But it's a perfect example of a planet long ago colonized and since left to develop on its own. It would certainly surprise visitors with its capabilities, since it appears to have a primitive technology but in fact has the use, if not manufacturing capability, of a sophisticated one. And events late in the book give us a clue as to how Getans might treat outsiders.

The non-technological culture is perfect for use in a fantasy setting. You can even turn the science into recently discovered magic of the ancients. The place and personal names are also easily borrowed.

One of the strengths of *Courtship Rite* is occasionally a weakness: there's too much here to fully explain. I'd love to know just what the Mnankrei Time Wizards are, for example. But any faults are trivial compared to the characterizations, the plot, the detail (the chapter quotations are almost all from Getans sources). *Courtship Rite* is an outstanding book, the best I've read in the last twelve months. □





MORE MYTHOS MADNESS

FOR Chaosium's CALL OF CTHULHU

By Michael Szymanski
Illustrated by
Mark Bondurant

In the dim mists of time there lurks still another eldritch deity of the Cthulhu Mythos. Like its fellows, it is deadly dangerous; and in many ways it could be the most horrible of them all. Read on, if you dare, and be warned to use this knowledge wisely!

UBBO-SATHLA The Unbegotten Source



Description: Ubbo-Sathla is a vast, amorphous bulk devoid of head, organs or limbs; a bloated, amoebic mountain of ceaseless fermentation reposing at the heart of a trackless primordial swamp. From its bubbling flanks are spawned an unending variety of abominable monstrosities, of which some were destined to evolve

into the basic forms of terrene life—and any creature which approaches too near its deathless progenitor will be drawn back into the pulsing mass that is the Source and the End.

The present-day location of Ubbo-Sathla is unknown, but can be presumed to be underground. If encountered, it will be found in a shallow lake of steaming slime around which caper its ravaging spawn. Scattered around it in the thick muck of the lake are an unknown number of strange tablets; legend has it these star-wrought tablets bear the Ultimate knowledge, set down by a race of gods who passed from existence long before Earth was formed—and it seems to be Ubbo-Sathla's sole task to guard them, even though it is utterly mindless.

Cult: Ubbo-Sathla is worshipped—from a distance—only by individual madmen who seek the dreadful knowledge inscribed upon the star tablets. None have ever benefitted from their worship, but a great many indeed have suffered for it.

Characteristics: If summoned or encountered, Ubbo-Sathla will do nothing; it does not need to. Beginning on the first round it is summoned (or first seen), it will excrete 1D8 Spawn of Ubbo-Sathla per round until it is dismissed. At any given time, there are at least six pseudopods sprouting from the parent mass, ranging from 10 to 30 feet in length; these ropey semi-transparent

members lash about aimlessly, striking any human or Spawn who gets in the way. On a successful hit, the victim will sustain damage from either crushing or battering, and will also suffer the effects of devolution or reverse evolution. This process will proceed at a rate of 10,000 years for each successful hit.

A roll of 10% or less on this attack indicates that the victim is entangled by the pseudopod; the rate of devolution will now be 10,000 years per round, until the victim is reduced to a mass of protoplasm to be absorbed into Ubbo-Sathla. To escape this fate, the investigator must pit his/her STR against the pseudopod's STR of 20; this can be attempted once per round.

If encountered in its lair, Ubbo-Sathla will be surrounded by 1D100 x 100 of its foul Spawn, and if it is summoned, it will bring 1D20 of the horrid things with it.

Characteristics	Average
STR	80
CON	120
SIZ	125
INT	0
POW	50
DEX	N/A

Average Hit Points: 103.

Move: 0.

Weapon	Attack %	Damage
Pseudopod	50%	1D6+devolution

Armor: None, but all normal weapons will do no damage at all, while enchanted weapons will do minimal damage. Also, because Ubbo-Sathla is the blasphemous embodiment of life, it can regenerate any damage at the rate of 1D6 points per round. Spells will do full damage against this vile entity, and any points lost cannot be regenerated.

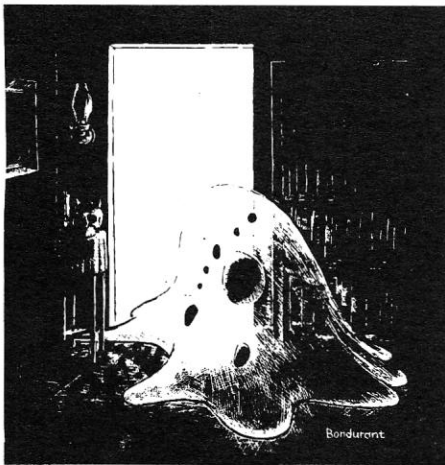
Spells: None; Ubbo-Sathla is incapable of spell-casting. It exists only to produce its hideous Spawn.

SAN: Confronting Ubbo-Sathla demands that the investigator make a SAN roll or lose 1D100 points of SAN. Even if his roll is successful, there is still a 1D10 points loss of Sanity.

THE SPAWN OF UBBO-SATHLA

These abominable creations take many forms. For gaming purposes, the Keeper should use the characteristics of the Lesser Servitor Races as a guideline when creating such creatures, aided by the dark twists of his or her own imagination. Combinations of traits from two or three of these beings will provide the appropriate hybrid sloughed off by Ubbo-Sathla.

It should be noted that the prototype Spawn of Ubbo-Sathla also represents the final stage of human devolution before absorption by the Unbegotten



Source. It is basically a formless blob of protoplasm functioning at the most primitive level, and is more or less a miniature version of Ubbo-Sathla. Characteristics for such a creature are as follows:

Characteristics		Average
STR	3D6+2	13
CON	4D6	15
SIZ	3D6	11
INT	1D6	4
POW	2D6	9
DEX	3D6	10

Move: 8.

Weapon	Attack %	Damage
Pseudopod	45%	1D3
Engulf	25%	1D3 per round

Armor: None, but only fire, spells or enchanted weapons will do damage.

Spells: None.

SAN: Seeing a Spawn of any variety calls for a SAN roll or the loss of 1D10 SAN points. On a successful roll, the loss is 1D10 SAN points.

THE ORB OF EONS



This artifact is directly associated with Ubbo-Sathla, and represents a grave danger to the investigator who makes use of it.

The Orb is a smooth, milky crystal with slightly flattened poles; the heart of this cloudy sphere glows and dims with an irregular pulse, though there is no detectable source for this illumination.

Anyone who stares into the Orb will drift into a dream-like state in which he

or she will travel back through time, reliving past lives in reverse—but this is no dream! To break off this journey, the investigator must match his/her POW against the Orb's POW of 20 on the Resistance Chart. Those who fail will continue their journey against their will; this POW struggle may be attempted once per round, but each failure means the permanent loss of 1 POW point.

The investigator who fails to break the orb's hold will travel far back into the dim and misty path, reliving the lives of alien, unhuman beings who roamed the Earth before Man. Eventually, this hapless victim will come before Ubbo-Sathla as a mindless, amoebic prototype Spawn with no memory of its human existence. The investigator will vanish without a trace, and it will seem as though he or she never existed.

Such is the fate of those who would seek out Ubbo-Sathla, who is the Source and the End. Thus is revealed the unnatural nature of the Unbegotten Source, another dark horror of the Cthulhu Mythos.

By Peter Gilham

Illustrated by
Patrick Zircher



DENIZENS OF YADDITH

Lesser Independent Race

Description: "He was, as many a night before, walking amidst throngs of clawed snouted beings . . . and as he looked down he saw that his body was like those of the others—rugose, partly squamous, and curiously articulated in a fashion mainly insect-like yet not without a caricaturish resemblance to the human outline. The silver key was still in his grasp, though held by a noxious-looking claw."

(From "Through the Gates of the Silver Key," by H.P. Lovecraft and E. Hoffman Price)

Notes: This race of tapir-snouted creatures inhabited the planet Yaddith in a far galaxy in the distant past. They appear to have died out when Yaddith was laid waste by the gigantic Dholes, and are most likely to be encountered by travelers in space and time.

Some members of this alien species are known to be sorcerers, and the race achieved a highly advanced technology, including the development of "light-wave envelopes"—machines capable of traversing the gulfs of space.

These creatures can attack with their vicious claws, but probably possess a variety of advanced weapons.

Characteristics		Average
STR	2D6+6	13
CON	4D6	14
SIZ	2D6+9	16
INT	3D6+6	16-17
POW	4D6	14
DEX	3D6	10-11

Average Hit Points: 15.

Move: 6.

Weapon	Attack %	Damage
Claw	45%	1D4+1D6

Armor: 1-point hide.

Spells: Those creatures with 18 or more POW points know at least 1D4 spells.

SAN: There is a SAN loss of 1D8 points for seeing a Denizen of Yaddith, unless a SAN roll is made, in which case there is no loss.

ELDER GODS Outer Gods



Description: "The brilliant explosion of light . . . seemed to emanate from the eastern sky like a bolt of incredibly powerful lightning; a tremendous discharge of energy in the shape of light, so that for one awful moment everything was revealed—before lightning-like appendages descended as from the heart of the blinding pillar of light itself, one seizing the mass in the waters . . . and casting it far out to sea, the other taking that second thing from the lawn and hurling it . . . into the sky, where it vanished among the eternal stars." (From "The Return of Hastur," by August Derleth)

Notes: The only named Elder God is Nodens, lord of the Great Abyss (q.v.);

the others are beings of less importance or power and are nameless.

The Elder Gods are less malignant towards mankind than are the Other Gods and the Great Old Ones, but tend to involve themselves less in the affairs of man, and are thus neutrally inclined. However the Elder Gods may occasionally intervene in a struggle against the Great Old Ones. They have no cult on earth, and dwell in or near the star Betelgeuse.

Like Nodens, the Elder Gods can attempt to dismiss a foe, though the foe will not be dismissed if it rolls under POW. If this power fails, the Elder Gods will usually depart.

Elder Gods may attack with a burning appendage.

Characteristics	Average
STR 4D20+20	62
CON 1D100+20	70
SIZ 1D100+50	100
INT 4D20	42
POW 1D100	50
DEX 3D6+6	16-17

Average Hit Points: 85.

Move: 10/20 flying.

Weapon	Attack %	Damage
Appendage	75%	8D6

Armor: None. However, anything touching an Elder God takes 1D8 points of damage from the being's burning body. Thus bullets melt before harming an Elder God, and all other physical weapons are damaged when they strike it.

Spells: Elder God can cast Elder Sign and Contact Nodens for the cost of one magic point each, and can automatically summon 1D6 Nightgaunts per magic point expended. They may also be able to summon other servitor beings at the Keeper's discretion.

SAN: There is a SAN loss of 1D20 points for viewing an Elder God. If a SAN roll is successful, one point is still lost.



SHUGORAN
Lesser Servitor Race

Description: Shugoran are vaguely humanoid in outline, but with small wings and a trunk-like proboscis. Their hide is black and can be seen to resemble that of a catfish if closely examined.

Notes: These creatures are known to serve or aid Tcho-Tcho people of south-east Asia, where they are held

in awe as a kind of "bogyman" figure. Their wings are too small for flight, but are probably used as fins or flippers when swimming.

A shugoran has two forms of attack, both using its proboscis.

First, the suction it produces may be played over a victim at a range of up to 15 feet. Anyone attacked like this cannot breathe and must begin the drowning procedure. The attack procedure will continue, automatically succeeding on each round after the first "hit," until the creature is distracted or its victim is dead. A person cannot attack while unable to breathe, except by use of firearms.

The second method of attack is used in close combat. The shugoran attempts to fasten the end of its proboscis over its victim's mouth and then sucks his lungs out. The victim automatically dies on the round following a successful hit.

Characteristics	Average
STR 1D6+6	9-10
CON 2D6+6	13
SIZ 2D6+3	10
INT 3D6	10-11
POW 3D6	10-11
DEX 2D6+6	13

Average Hit Points: 11-12.

Move: 8/10 swimming.

Weapon	Attack %	Damage
Suck	55%	Begin drowning procedure
Proboscis	40%	Death following round

Armor: 3-point hide.

Spells: None.

SAN: 1D6 points of SAN are lost if a SAN roll fails on seeing a shugoran.

SPAWN OF YOG-SOTHOTH

Greater Servitor Race

Based on the stats given in
The RuneQuest Bestiary



Description: "Oh, oh, great Gawd . . . that . . . that . . . Bigger'n a barn . . . all made o' squirmin' ropes . . . hull thing

sort o' shaped like a hen's egg bigger'n anything, with dozens of legs like hogs-heads that haff shut up when they step . . . nothin' solid about it—all like jelly, an' made o' sep'rit wrigglin' ropes pushed clost together . . . great bulgin' eyes all over it . . . ten or twenty maouths or trunks a-stickin' aout all along the sides, big as stovepipes, an' all a-tossin' an' openin' an' shuttin' . . . all grey, with kinder blue or purple rings . . . an' Gawd in Heaven—that haff face on top! . . ."

(From "The Dunwich Horror," by H.P. Lovecraft)

Notes: The Spawn of Yog-Sothoth is the result of a mating between Yog-Sothoth and a human female. This hybrid creature may take a totally monstrous form (as described above), or it may be basically human in appearance, with only a few inhuman features which may easily be concealed. Some of these creatures are invisible. Thus the exact appearance of each individual Spawn is up to the Keeper.

For the first fifteen or so years of its life the Spawn is reared by the sorcerer who originally summoned Yog-Sothoth. During this time it will be growing rapidly and must be provided with large amounts of fresh meat. All the while it will be trying to gain knowledge of the Cthulhu Mythos in an attempt to discover the process by which Yog-Sothoth will be allowed permanent access to our world.

If killed, the bodies of these monsters dissolve into a pool of slime.

The stats below are for a fifteen-year-old Spawn. For each five years of age, the creature gains 2D6 in both STR and SIZ. APP only applies to humanoid Spawn.

The attack mode listed is for claws. However, the exact nature of the Spawn's attack depends on its physical appearance, but is likely to include tentacles, mouths or suckers, or a number of these.

Characteristics	Average
STR 6D6	21
CON 3D6	10-11
SIZ 6D6	21
INT 4D6	14
POW 2D6+12	19
DEX 3D6	10-11
APP 3D6	10-11

Average Hit Points: 16.

Move: 6, plus 1 per five years of age.

Weapon	Attack %	Damage
Claw	55%	3D6

Armor: None. Invisible Spawn quarter their opponent's chances to hit.

Spells: All Spawn know at least 1D4 spells per five years of age.

SAN: Viewing a Spawn of Yog-Sothoth costs 1D20 points of SAN. A successful SAN roll indicates the loss of only 1D3 points. □

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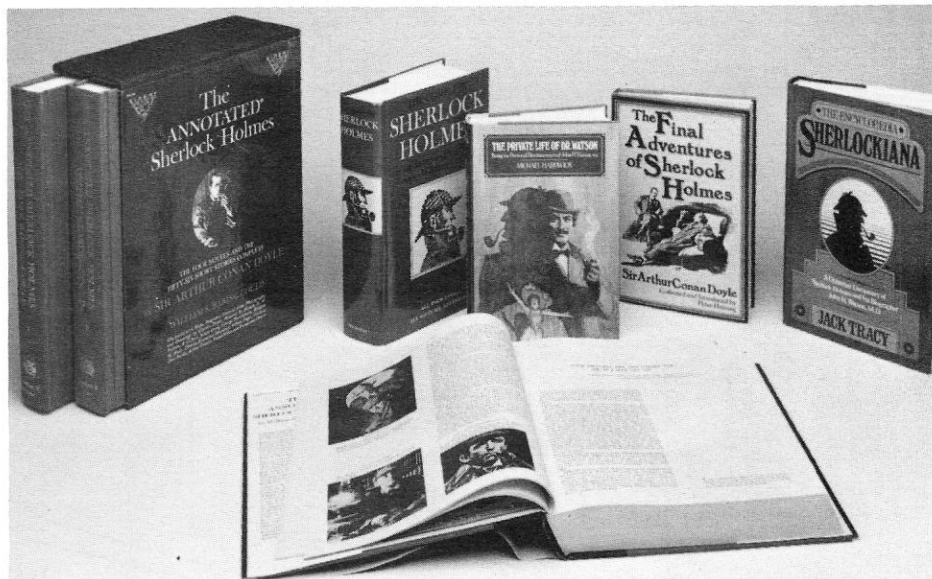
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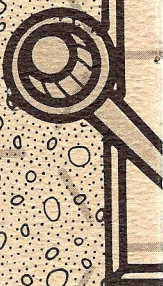
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SUPER MAP 2

By Michael Gray

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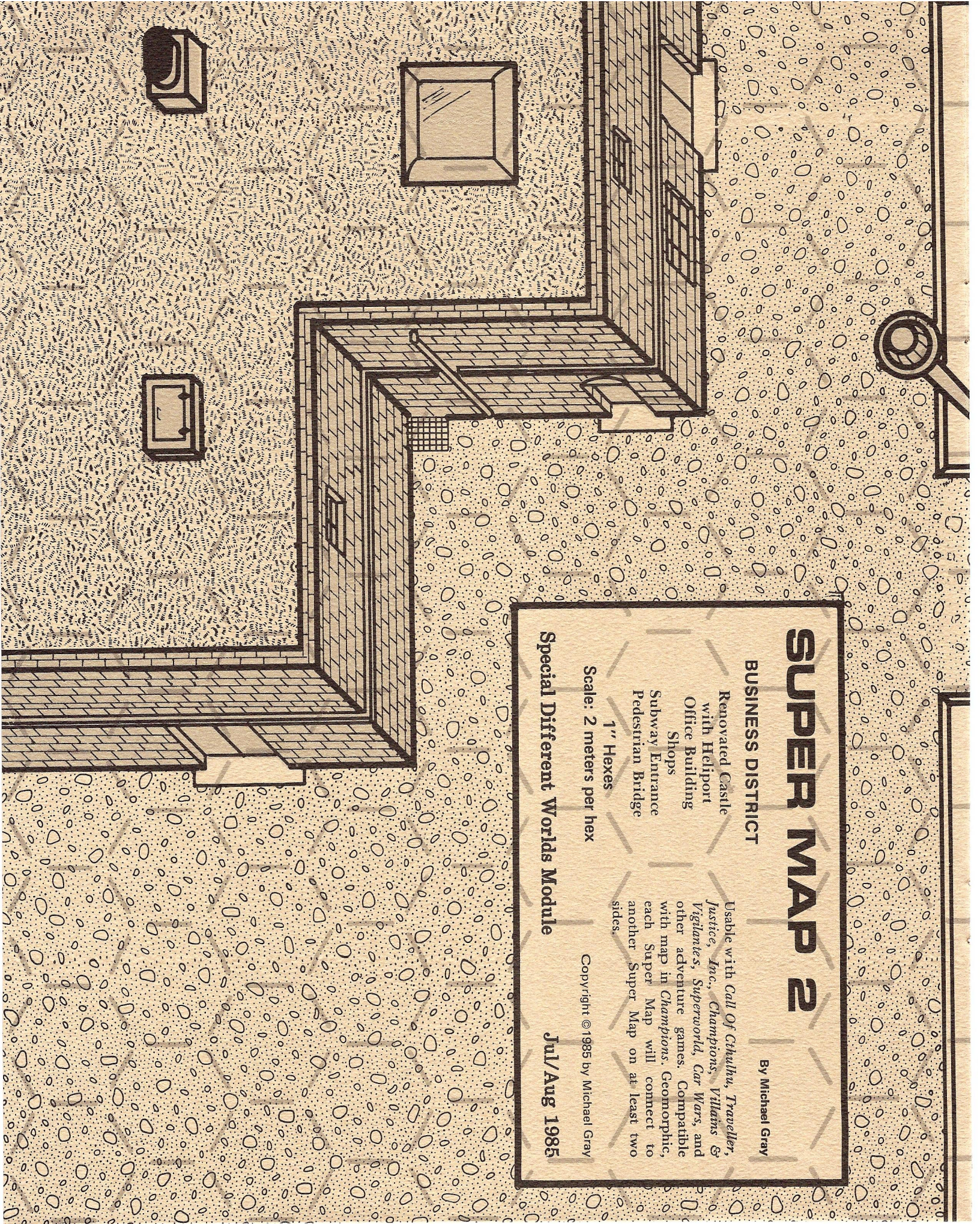
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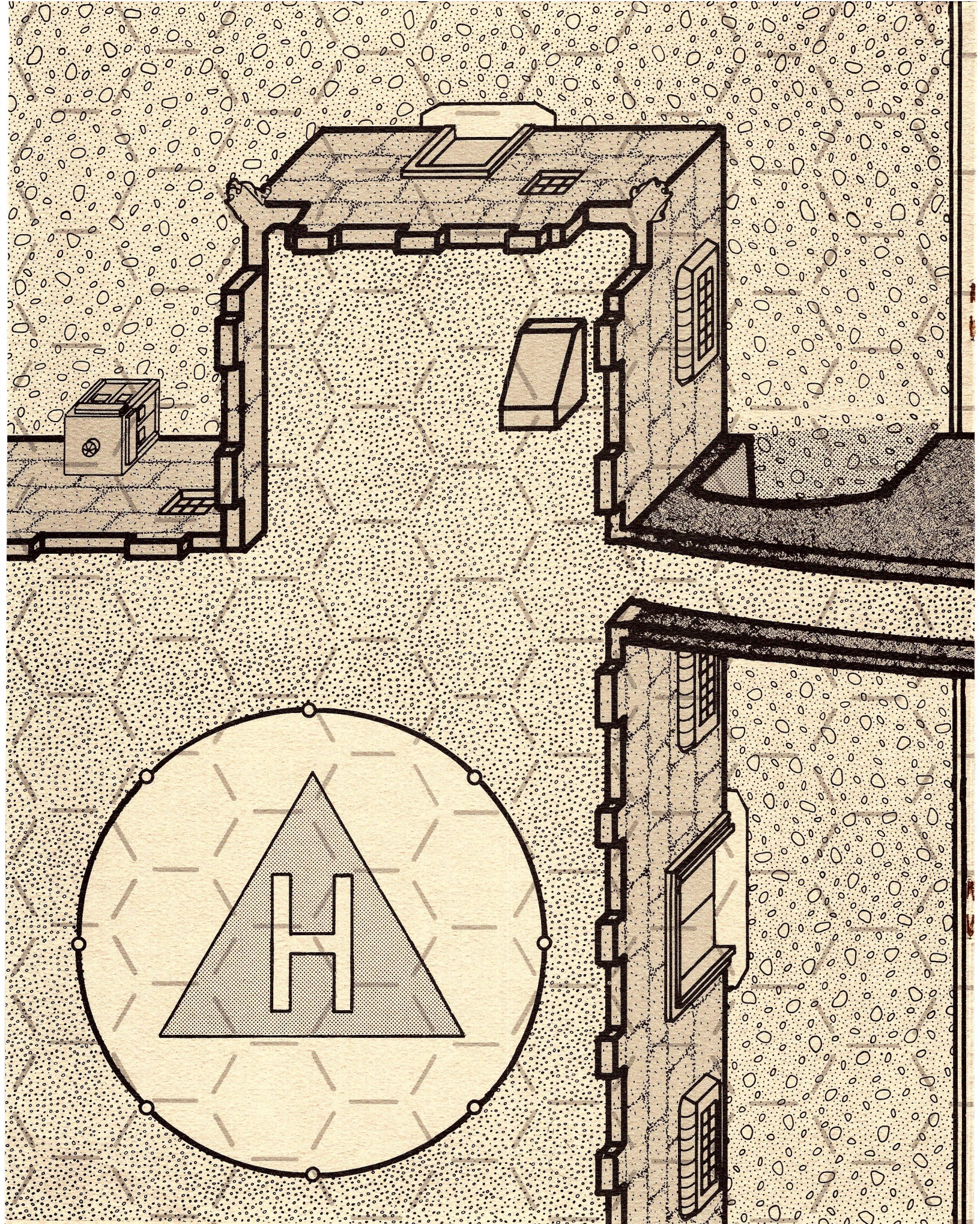
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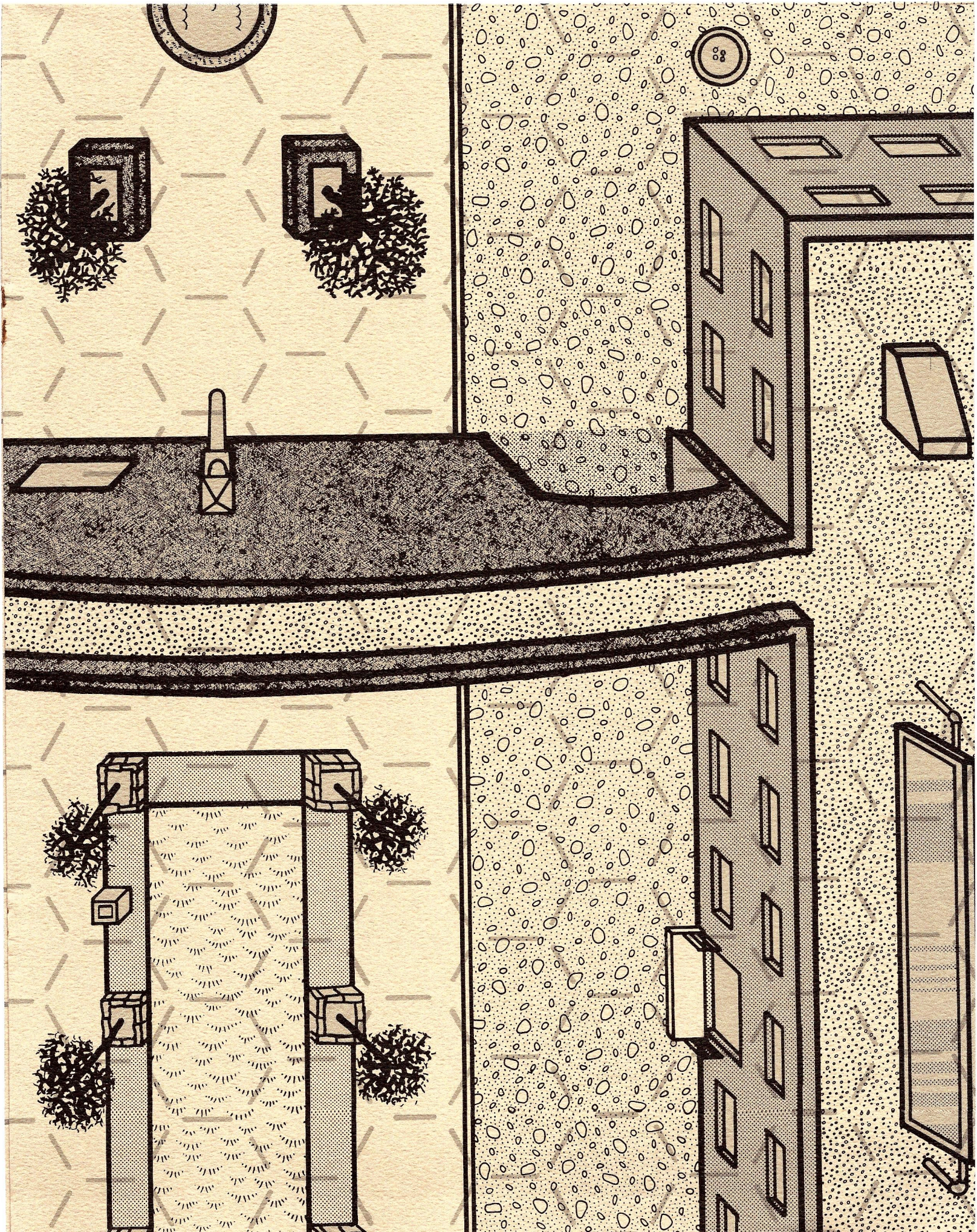
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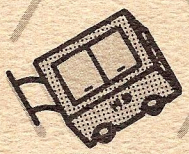
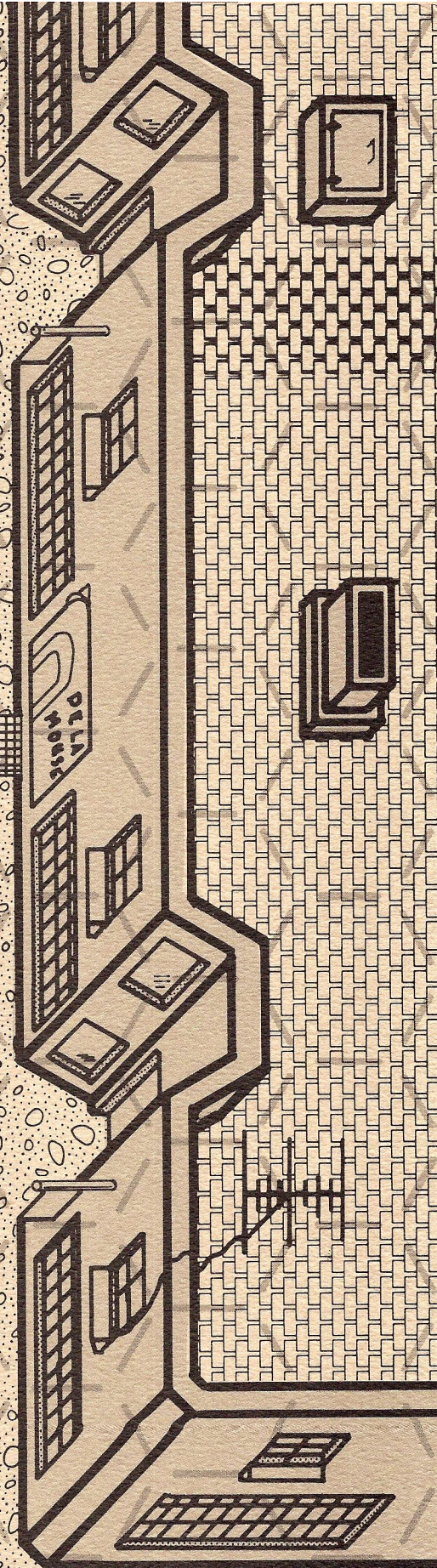
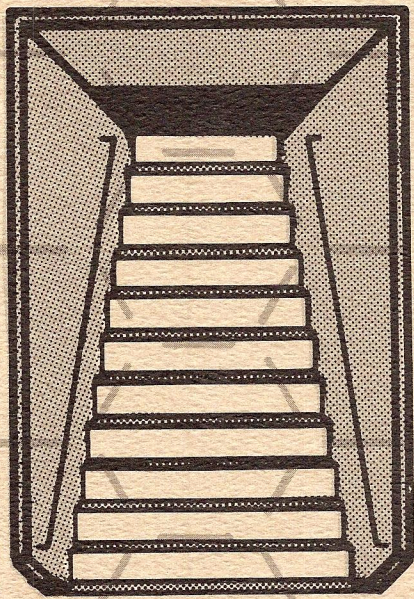
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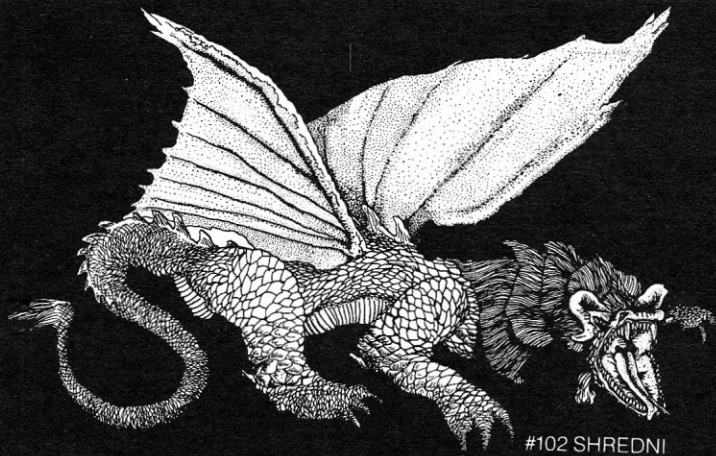
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GAME REVIEWS

Twilight: 2000/Time & Time Again/Heroes Unlimited/
Knight Hawks/Lost Worlds/The Mountain Environment/
Ascent to Anektor/The Horrible Secret of Monhegan Island/
The Circle and M.E.T.E./The Snow King's Bride/
Casino Galactica/The Vanished/Telengard



TWILIGHT:2000

By Frank Chadwick
(GDW, \$18)

Reviewed by
Stephen M. DeSante

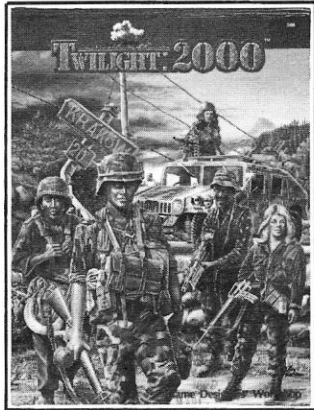
Twilight: 2000 is the long-awaited after-the-holocaust adventure game from GDW. It is the first adventure game GDW has published since *Traveller* way back in 1977. Player-characters represent survivors of the last NATO offensive against the Warsaw Pact. *Twilight*, therefore, has the distinction of being the first adventure game set in Poland.

Comparisons with *Traveller* are inevitable. GDW has apparently learned quite a bit in the past seven years. Whereas the original *Traveller* was bedeviled with primitive design concepts and cumbersome game mechanics, *Twilight* is a sharp, crisp game. The only features it shares with its uglier cousin are a too vaguely described setting and the fact that it is selling like the proverbial hotcakes. *Twilight* was one of the biggest sellers of the past Christmas season.

The game consists of two rule booklets, an equipment book, a gamemaster's chartbook, a player's chart, plus several character sheets and character generation worksheets, and finally, a beginning scenario. The game also includes four six-sided dice and one ten-sided die, as well as a lovely color map of war-ravaged Poland.

The physical components of the game are well done, and the efficient organization of the various booklets and charts greatly aids the setup and running of the game. During playtesting for this review it was always very easy to find the appropriate chart or reference a rule requiring clarification. Good organization is a critical key to any game, and *Twilight* has it.

The character generation worksheets are very useful; in



particular they contain the formulae for calculating the character's various attributes and skills. Rolling up a character is not a complex process, but it is a long one. Average time for rolling up a character seems to run between 90 to 120 minutes, albeit this time includes the "purchase" of the character's equipment.

Twilight utilizes six Basic Attributes. These are all 4d6-4 rolls, giving an attribute range of 1 - 20 (a roll of "0" may be rerolled). From these Basic Attributes are calculated Hit Capacity, Throw Range, Weight, Load (Encumbrance), Months of Combat Experience, Radiation Exposure, Coolness Under Fire, Age, Rank, and the number of skill points.

None of the above items are especially hard to calculate, but the total sum of them can become overwhelming. This is where the formulae on the character generation worksheet come in handy.

One problem with the character generation system is the "equality" built into it. For example, a character with low Basic Attributes will get a high number of Months in Combat (which means more skill points) and vice versa. This is a great way to balance out a group of characters, but it makes absolutely no sense whatever, especially in the violent ambiance of this game. Low attribute individuals will be the least likely to survive in such an environment, let alone the "veterans" of such a group.

A second problem is the rank tables. For my playtest group, I generated 16 characters. Of those 16, three were captains and five were sergeant-majors! While I'm not necessarily known as a good dice roller, the rank tables tend

to favor these grades of officers and NCOs, giving any group a surplus of chiefs and a surfeit of Indians. This is not too serious a problem, however, as the gamemaster can always alter a rank (that's what I did). Just be forewarned.

There are three types of skill points in *Twilight*: Military, Education, and Background. These skill points may be used to purchase percentages in certain skills. All characters start off with 300 Background skill points. Education skill points are based on the character's Education (a Basic Attribute) while Military skill points are based on the character's level of military service.

Generally, one skill point will purchase one percent in a skill until a character goes above 50%, then it usually costs two skill points to further increase the skill by 1%. Some skills may be purchased with any of the three types of skill points. Most important of these are weapon skills, which can only be purchased with Military skill points.

All characters start with certain base percentages in six skills, and may receive further bonuses in certain skills depending upon which specialty and service branch they enter. Generally speaking, it's very easy to reach 50 percent in a skill, but very costly to raise it much above it.

After calculating these skill percentages, the characters may now purchase equipment. They calculate their equipment purchase allowance and then use this money to purchase equipment. The allowance is based on the number of months the character has been in combat, with officers getting to double their allowance. The characters have little difficulty equipping themselves. Indeed, their main problem will be hauling all the equipment they can buy.

This points out a minor problem with the game system. The characters are too skill poor while being too equipment rich. Logically, it should be the other way around. After all, they have survived at least two years at the front and should be damn good with small arms, etc. While, with the breakdown of their supply lines caused by the nuclear exchange, there should be a shortage of usable equipment.

To remedy this problem, the gamemaster could ignore the

rule which doesn't allow characters to purchase skill percentages of over 80% in non-language skills, and the gamemaster should allow characters to convert some of their equipment "money" into skill points. I suggest a ratio of 25 "dollars" to 1 skill point, which may be used to purchase any skill percentage.

The combat system is a very slick, skill-driven procedure. Large scale fire fights (say involving a dozen characters and a couple vehicles) can be resolved very quickly. The damage rules for both characters and vehicles are probably the best to appear in a modern arms game. Indeed, in terms of playability and realism, the combat system of *Twilight* stands head and shoulders above any other post-holocaust game this reviewer is acquainted with. Or above any other game on modern combat, for that matter.

A nice feature of the combat system is the Coolness Under Fire number for each character. Based on the number of months a character has been in combat, this number indicates how many rounds a character will "hesitate" during a Combat Turn. This is an easy way to simulate combat experience (or lack of it) during a fire fight.

One prominent characteristic of the combat system is its utter deadliness. It is very easy for characters to die in *Twilight*. And wounded characters take a long time getting back up to snuff (no one ever said the modern battlefield was a safe place). Individuals who take a heavy machinegun round in the gut usually die and the combat system is very realistic on this point. I don't advise players getting too attached to their characters.

Twilight provides some very useful hard data on the various weapons of NATO and the Warsaw Pact. It's good to see all the research GDW put into its Third World War series of board-games being applied to an adventure game. This should make the game a must buy for many people who only want a modern combat game and not necessarily one dealing with a post-holocaust world. It can easily be converted into something dealing with any modern, weapons-oriented situation.

Which brings me to my biggest problem with *Twilight*. The

GAME RATINGS

- ☆☆☆☆ Superb
- ☆☆☆ Mighty Fine
- ☆☆ Good
- ☆ Flop

reason the game can be changed so easily is because so little of the post-holocaust universe is outlined. Aside from a few pages of timeline describing the course of the Third World War and the scanty information contained in the beginning scenario, there is no information about the great, big post-holocaust world.

I just couldn't catch the sense of this world; what currents are moving it forward and shaping its future, and the future (if any) of the characters. Can the great decline be reversed? Can a poor farm boy from Wiggins, Mississippi, one day become Overlord of Lower Gdansk? The rules state "The only thing constant will be change." Come on guys, I knew that before I bought the game. Give me some details, please!

Of course all the post-holocaust games I've played were basically shoot-'em-ups. But they all provided the players

with a firm background on who was who and what was what out there. Not so with *Twilight*. The players aren't given a place to "hang their hats," unless the gamemaster burns a lot of midnight oil.

Hopefully, GDW will support *Twilight* with supplements to flesh out its universe (if *Traveller* is any indication, I have no fear of that). It would be a shame to leave such a nice game system out in the cold.

All things considered, *Twilight: 2000* is worth buying for its combat system alone. Anyone expecting a fully developed post-holocaust world, however, will be disappointed with what GDW supplies. They may do better if they consider the game more as a supplement to an ongoing campaign than as a game in and of itself.

Available thru Sleuth (order GD-500).



TIME & TIME AGAIN

By H.N. Voss and W.P. Worzel (Timeline, \$18)

Reviewed by William Hamblin

"March with Xenophon, sail with Magellan, . . . argue with Socrates, . . . pirate with Drake, . . . sack Troy, defend Rome, burn Alexandria, . . . sip tea in the Tokugawa Shogunate, . . . ride with Genghis Khan"—these are a but a very few of the innumerable possible scenarios offered by Timeline's new adventure game, *Time & Time Again* (TTA).

In recent years the adventure gaming industry has expanded beyond its initial realm of sword & sorcery fantasy games into areas such as science fiction, spy thrillers, murder mysteries, gothic horror, and pulp adventure, to name but a few. In fact, various types of games are now available for every genre of adventure literature and film (except perhaps the romance/love story) and many major films and novels have served as direct sources for new games. With the advent of time-travel games, gamers can now directly access the limitless adventures of history.

TTA is not the first time-travel game to appear on the market, but in some ways it is quite unique. The premise is that after "World War III," a world government was established to restore order. The principles of time travel were also discovered and monopolized by the World Government which established a "Bureau of Temporal Affairs" (BTA). Under the

auspices of the World Government the BTA recruits and trains "Vultiguers" (French, "Jumper") as time travelers are called, organizes them into teams, and supervises their missions into the past.

What is unique about TTA's approach to time is that they have a detailed and well thought out concept of the physics of time travel, which includes the following rules: "You can't go into the future (it doesn't exist yet)"; "You can't change the past"; "Only organic material can be sent into the past"; "You can't meet yourself in the past." These "laws" of time travel set the fundamental tone for the entire game. There can never be a war occurring between "Time Lords" each seeking to change the past for their own benefit in the present. You can't go into the past and kill your grandfather (but can you become your own grandfather as in the movie *Time-Rider*?). Nor can you take back laser weapons, a tank, an A-

bomb or machine-guns to dominate peoples of the past with superior technology. What the adventurer must do, then is to interact with the past on its own terms. Since the Vultiguers can never dominate the past, they must become part of the past rather than attempting to manipulate it for the purposes of the future. Thus history itself becomes the focus of the game—where the action of the scenarios will be played out—rather than the science-fiction future where time travel is known.

The central goal of BTA missions is scientific, to do what no historian has even been able to do—observe history in the making. However, most players of the game will not be the scientists and historians sent into the past to study and observe, but the para-military Vultiguers whose purpose is to assist, protect and generally do the dirty work for the observers. Specific missions include establishing contacts and bases in the past (learning a dead language or exploring a blank spot in history), observing the functioning of past societies, escorting and protecting an observer, rescuing other time travelers who are in danger, sojourning in the past for extended periods, and special top-secret missions known as "eradication"—the elimination of time travelers who have somehow gone beserk in the past. Vultiguers are also allowed "Free Jumps" when they may go where they wish and do exactly as they please (within the rules of the BTA). For example, one of the scenarios included with the game centers around attempts to rescue an Egyptologist who has been observing the court of ancient Egypt at Thebes in 1352 BC, and who has suddenly found himself caught up in a palace coup following the death of Tutankhamen, which occurred a year earlier than historical records indicated.

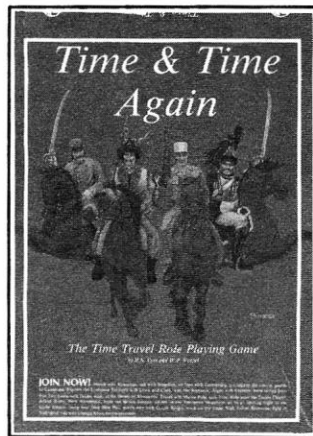
TTA consists of a boxed set of two large books and a number of supplementary sheets. Book I, which often reads like novel, details the background of the BTA, the theory of time travel, the various goals pursued by Vultiguers in the past, characteristics of players, and an extensive combat system which nicely integrates unarmed, armed, missile and firearm combat into a unified, realistic yet playable system. Book II contains a general discussion of the wide varieties of climate, terrain, animals, economy, technology, transportation, governments, and social customs, which can be in various places and ages of the past. There are also a number of pull-out sheets summarizing the major rules, and scenarios on the fall of

Saigon, trading in Birka (a Viking town), and a political coup in ancient Egypt. The game is nicely illustrated with charts, tables, maps, and original drawing, as well as numerous delightful old lithographs of scenes from many different cultures in the past.

The major potential problem I see with the game is that in a sense it is not quite ready to play as it is. No historical civilization—where the significant action of the game must occur—is fully described in the game. This means that the gamemaster is required to do some independent preparation, by reading up on the historical period of a scenario (the authors, realizing this, have included guidelines on preparing scenarios for play). However, since generations of historians have been researching almost every aspect of the past, a nearly limitless source of background material and potential scenarios are available at any public library or bookstore. In addition, Timeline has plans to publish supplements describing some of the major civilizations of the past with scenarios to be played in each culture.

Thus, in a sense, this potential weakness becomes one of the great strengths of the game. There exists in thousands of easily accessible books a virtually limitless number of vivid and detailed scenarios to choose from. Historians and archaeologists have reconstructed maps for hundreds of ancient cities which can serve admirably as maps for scenarios. Photos and drawings of architectural remains can be utilized by a gamemaster to show players exactly what they are seeking when they walk down a street in ancient Rome. Fascinating gamemaster-characters exist in the thousands—rulers, warriors, merchants, philosophers, saints and sinners, all described in detail in biographies and historical works. Additionally, well-written and researched historical novels can serve as an admirable source for background and scenario ideas.

Time & Time Again also offers the potential to be integrated with other game systems. By means of time travel, a character developed under *Time & Time Again* rules can make his "Jump" into the past by means of scenarios for other games. Thus with some adaptation and imagination the same Vultiguer could become imbroiled in espionage in the 1980's, be a pirate in the Caribbean Sea, a samurai in Japan, a detective in Victorian London, or even seek the evil



cultists of Cthulhu. Thousands of adventures are waiting to be experienced. All you need is the Time.

Available thru Sleuth (order TL-3001).



☆☆☆ HEROES UNLIMITED

By Kevin Siebieda
(Palladium, \$14.95)

Reviewed by
Russell Grant Collins

Another in the recent flood of superhero games, *Heroes Unlimited* is based on the system first presented in the *Palladium Role-Playing Game*. It is a very skill-based system with less emphasis placed on the superpowers than in any of the other such games I've seen.

Character generation involves rolling three six-sided dice for the following attributes: IQ, Mental Endurance, Mental Affinity, Physical Strength, Physical Prowess, Physical Endurance, Physical Beauty, and Speed. You then roll on the Random Power Table to determine your origin type; if you roll Mutant, Experiment, or Alien, you also roll for a Super Power on a second table. (For no explicable reason, these powers are scrambled on the table and there is an alphabetical list right next to it, for those who want easy reference; why didn't they simply put the table in alphabetical order in the first place?) After you have finished determining your power, which usually involves a few more rolls and perhaps a choice or two depending on your Random Power, you roll for your Educational Level which determines how many and which skills you can select for your character (a high school student, for example, cannot take Medical Skills).

If you notice, there's a lot of rolling of dice in this system of character generation. I admit

that my personal preference lies in allowing players to design their own characters rather than generating them randomly; I've had to play too many characters that turned out poorly and quickly died. That's a personal preference and even Siembieda allows fierce diehards like me to select powers with the permission and approval of the gamemaster.

The Bionics, Robots, and Hardware rules are quite good, with almost the only rolls needed being determination of sponsoring organization, relationship with sponsoring organization, and budget. The player then designs the character (or his equipment) within that budget, very similar to *Champions* or *Superworld*. Psionics is also good because the player again gets to select which basic powers he has from a list. The Mutant, Alien, and Experiment categories, however, are different only in that most Mutants look funny, most Aliens look really funny and have advanced technology, and Experiments have neither of these capabilities. Each character in these categories gets one power (although Mutants can be Psionics and Aliens any of the other categories instead if they roll lucky). There is a problem here, especially when there appears to be no attempt to make the powers equal. Intangibility, for example, is Kitty Pride without her ability to disrupt machinery or walk on air (and an added vulnerability to gas), whereas Alter Physical Structure: Fire turns the character into the Human Torch complete with his Nova Blast (although with possibly lethal consequences to the character who uses it). Another problem with this game is that the powers are too defined; every character with a given power is exactly like every other character with that power, as far as the working of that power is concerned at least.

The experience system is based on *Dungeons & Dragons*—various actions are worth experience (as in most other adventure games) and after earning a certain number of points, a character goes up a level, at which point all his skills and abilities get better at once and he gains more hit points. I can certainly see the appeal of that. In *Dungeons & Dragons* (and related systems), it is easy to compare two characters by looking at their experience level, but in *RuneQuest*, for example, one character might have a better capability with a bow and the other more expertise at casting simple spells, so who's the further advanced character? Nonetheless, I prefer skill-based systems, like this one, to allow gain

in some areas without corresponding gains in others, perhaps even at the detriment of others. Besides, why does it take more experience to gain levels as an Alien or a Mutant than as an Experiment? Why are Bionics levels the most costly to gain and Experiments the least? And most importantly, what does a dead character do with the 500-700 points he gains for self-sacrifice?

Another thing that the designer borrowed from *D&D* is alignments, but he certainly did a better job than that game did. The alignments are divided into three groups: Good, Evil, and Selfish (read Neutral). Good is further divided into Principled (Lawful) and Scrupulous (Chaotic), Evil into Aberrant (Lawful), Mischreant (Neutral), and Diabolic (Chaotic), and Selfish into Unprincipled (Lawful) and Anarchist (Chaotic). (Note that these are my own correlations and others might disagree.) These alignments are better than those in *D&D* because they are outlined with 13 or 14 rules of thumb, covering things like keeping promises, torturing prisoners, and betraying allies. Also, I don't see any penalty for going from Principled to Scrupulous or from Aberrant to Anarchist, except for possible experience loss from not maintaining a consistent character.

The combat system is extremely simple—if a character has skill in a form of combat, then he hits with a roll of four or better on a

20-sided die, unless his opponent parries or dodges (doing either by rolling better than the attacker rolled—one can only parry once and not everything can be parried, but a dodge costs a person his next attack in any case) or has body armor of some sort (which raises the roll needed to hit). A natural 20 does double damage; it is also what an unskilled combatant needs to hit (but it isn't clear whether he does double damage in this case). There are also rules on pulling punches, death blows, and rolling with a punch.

The scenario, "Betrayal," is a good one to start off a new campaign with, as it gives the characters a better reason to be together than most scenarios from other companies. The book is rounded off with rules on creating supervillains and henchmen, organizations, insanity, alcoholism, drug addiction, animals, and the law as it pertains to superheroes and villains (all in the space of seven pages—not the most in-depth treatment possible). There are also two pages on world hot-spots including possible international conflicts that the heroes can interfere in.

All in all, I cannot recommend this game over any of the other superhero games currently on the market. Only a super-completist should pick it up.

Available thru Sleuth (order PA-500).

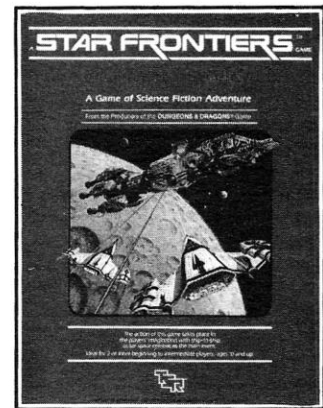
☆☆☆☆ KNIGHT HAWKS

Edited By Steve Winter
(TSR Hobbies, \$12)

Reviewed by Tony Watson

When *Star Frontiers*, TSR's entry into the realm of science-fiction adventure games appeared, a main criticism leveled at the design concerned the almost total absence of rules for starship and related star-faring activities. Starships were treated as a mere means of conveyance between star systems; there was no way to design ships, conduct space combat or enter into interstellar trade. Without starship related skills, player-characters could not assume the traditional science-fiction adventure roles of starship pilot or gunner, nor the captain of a struggling tramp freighter. In short, *Star Frontiers* was missing a major element in any science-fiction adventure milieu.

With their new game, *Knight Hawks*, TSR has managed to fill that void rather impressively. As well as serving as a stand alone



science-fiction boardgame, *Knight Hawks* provides the starship construction and combat rules, along with the character skills pertaining to starship life that weren't in the *Star Frontiers: Alpha Dawn* game.

Like its predecessor, *Knight Hawks* has a large number of colorful and attractive components; TSR seems to be offering the gaming public a considerable bargain. The list of game equipment is extensive and includes: a 64-page Campaign Book, a 16-page boardgame rulebook, a

16-page adventure, a 22½" x 35" full-color map printed on both sides, 285 die-cut color counters, and a pair of ten-sided dice.

The most important of these items is the Campaign Book. It is the core of the package's adventure gaming rules, and contains information on starship design and equipment. Using these rules, the player, or game-master, can create the sort of ship required by the scenario at hand. The design process follows a modular approach, somewhat like that in GDW's *Traveller*. A hull of the appropriate size is purchased and then fitted out with drives, weaponry, detection and communication equipment, as well as cargo loading devices and several classes of passenger accommodations if desired. The list is quite extensive, especially in the weapons category, with over fifteen types of beam and missile weapons as well as several different sorts of passive and active defenses.

Computers are an integral part of a ship design, although gamers will have to refer to their copy of *Star Frontiers: Alpha Dawn* for the list of computer types, since it isn't repeated here. New programs are introduced to cover starship operations. Also included are several different kinds of specialized equipment, such as mining robots, digging shuttles and processing facilities for ships engaged in mining, and solar collectors and farming robots for agricultural ships.

Overall, the ship design sequence works well. Just about everything a ship designer is likely to need appears in the rules. Most things are explained well; the detection and communication equipment is more comprehensively dealt with than in *Traveller*, for example. But the system, does suffer from the lack of a defined and consistent method describing ship's fittings in terms of volume (as in *Traveller's* tonnage system) that makes it difficult for ship designers to readily determine what will fit into a given hull.

Once ships are constructed they need crews, and a good science-fiction game needs the means of generating characters with spaceship skills. Rather than modify the existing skill system from the *Alpha Dawn* rules *Knight Hawks* builds upon it. Spaceship skills are available to characters of any Primary Skill Area and are founded on existing character skills; for example, a character with Technician 6 and Computer 2 qualifies for a first-level pilot skill, with the option to apply future experience points toward further expertise in piloting. This means that characters created using the *Alpha Dawn*

rules are not outdated and have just as much chance to qualify for spacer skills as those rolled up after the appearance of *Knight Hawks*. There are four spaceship skills: piloting, astrogation, engineering, and gunnery, each of which has several subskills and six levels of expertise. Once again, character skill levels affect the percentage chance of completing a specific task.

The Campaign Book is rounded out with sections on personal space equipment (spacesuits, small vehicles and tools), spaceship movement, including take-off, landing and interstellar jumping, and rules for conducting boarding actions using the combat system set down in the *Alpha Dawn* rules. The material on economic activity provides valuable guidelines on getting a bank loan to finance spaceships and trading ventures, perhaps the best to appear yet touching on such considerations as collateral and interest rates. There are rules for setting up and operating a passenger line as well as engaging in commodity speculation and freight hauling. Unfortunately, the price tables for the various goods available are fixed, proscribing the sort of boom or bust speculation possible in the *Traveller* trade system. To its credit *Knight Hawks* offers some of the best rules yet in a science-fiction game to deal with mining operations for revenue raising.

Knight Hawks is actually two games in one. While there is certainly an emphasis on the

adventure-gaming aspect (and this will be the package's main appeal), a science-fiction boardgame on ship-to-ship combat is also included. The boardgame serves as an adjunct to the adventure game; the ship-to-ship rules are used to resolve any battles that the player-characters may become involved in. It is also playable as a stand-alone game, or as a strategic background for a campaign.

The spaceship combat rules are contained in the 16-page tactical operations manual. The rules describe how to maneuver ships over the map, conduct fire, the effects of defenses and how to determine damage. The rules are divided into basic and advanced sections, the latter offering a greater variety of weaponry, defenses, a new combat table and a more detailed and satisfying method of damage determination. The system is sound and playable, if not innovative.

Most of the game's 285 counters represent the various starship classes of the United Planetary Federation and the evil Sathar empire; each counter lists the ship type and provides a nicely rendered depiction of the vessel. One side of the 22½" x 35" mapsheet is a dark hexfield for fighting out starship battles (the other consists of several attractively rendered deckplans for use with the boarding and close combat rules). The Campaign Book contains rules for fighting out a strategic space wargame of the

Second Sathar, using the ship-to-ship combat system to resolve battles. Along with the strategic map, these elements of the game can be used to create a background with plenty of possibilities for adventure.

This is reflected in another of the game's components, the 16-page "Warriors of White Light" adventure module. The stated purpose of this module is to introduce the spaceship rules, illustrate how the *Knight Hawks* material meshes with the *Alpha Dawn* game, and support a campaign. The module contains a brief on the White Light star system, ship rosters, gamemaster-character listings and notes for the gamemaster. The players are new inductees into the Royal Marines of the planet Clarion; six scenario outlines comprise a sort of mini-campaign that offers varied situations and an opportunity for the characters to gain skills and experience while the players learn the *Knight Hawks* system.

Knight Hawks is a credit to the TSR design staff and a valuable addition to the *Star Frontiers* game system. Those players who are involved in a *Star Frontiers* campaign will certainly wish to expand spaceward with the *Knight Hawks* material; those gamers who have been reluctant to consider the *Star Frontiers* system because of the lack of spaceship rules, may wish to give it a second look.

Available thru Sleuth (order TS-7011).



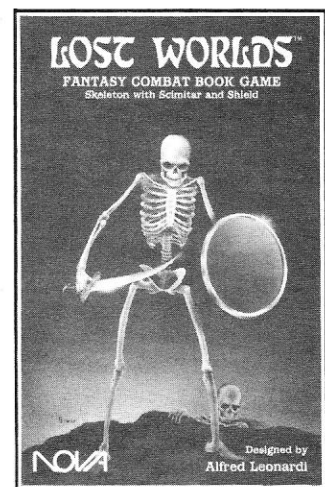
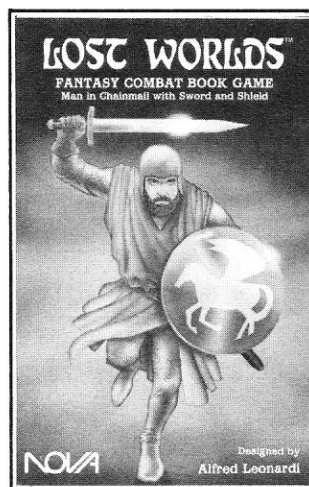
LOST WORLDS

By Alfred Leonardi
(Nova, \$6 each)

Reviewed by Larry DiTillio

The skeleton faces you, scimitar held high, round shield protecting his body. You know he means business. What should you do? Charge him, attempt a swing, protect yourself and close? You grip your broadsword tightly, lifting your own shield for protection. You've knocked him off-balance but his sword crashes down, dazing you. You've barely escaped unscathed and you make a mental note to be as little more cautious in the future. If you survive.

Lost Worlds is from Nova, the talented folks who gave you *Ace of Aces*. *Lost Worlds*, as is obvious, is a game of one-on-one combat in the fantasy tradition. *Lost Worlds* is like *Ace of Aces*, but uses character sheets on which stats for the combatants are given all and possible maneu-



vers listed. The characters which players play in the first two booklets are "a Man with a Broadsword and Shield" and "a Skeleton with Scimitar and Shield." Both are based on Ral Partha figures and a discount coupon for ten cents off the appropriate figure comes in the booklets. The game is played thus: Each player picks a char-

acter and takes the appropriate character sheet. The booklet showing the character is given to your opponent. The character sheet is used to choose a maneuver. The player then turns to the proper page for that maneuver. The opponent does the same. Each player then finds the number his opponent gave him on the page and this sends him to

the resolution page. On this page, the player will see an illustration of his opponent which shows either what his opponent is doing or if he has scored on his opponent. Again, it's exactly like *Ace of Aces*, but there is a difference. In *Lost Worlds* players do not necessarily wind up on the same page, as in *Ace of Aces*. This can cause confusion for those familiar with *Ace of Aces*, but this confusion is soon dispelled.

The booklets in *Lost Worlds* are digest-sized, 8 1/2" x 5 1/2", and the illustrations are in black-and-white. Each page has two numbers, an odd number showing the illustration and an even number showing the "Movement Parchment." On the movement parchment are several columns of even numbers with a corresponding odd number that tells which page to go to. Most of the page is given to the illustrations, which are done by Arne Starr. I like the illustrations, they're clean, well-drawn and nicely animated. They also give you a good basis for choosing a maneuver. Each illustration also has one more facet—a line or two of text which gives the restrictions your opponent is under for his next move. This simulates the effects of what has happened in the preceding turn, e.g., if struck off balance, a player may only block or make some sort of dodge in the next turn. Each player reads the restrictions to his opponent and again the restrictions are helpful in choosing a maneuver.

The character sheet is divided into eight boxes for close range maneuvers and an additional box for extended-range maneuvers. Most of the fighting is done at close range (makes sense, right?), but the players begin at extended range and may perform maneuvers at close range which bring them back to extended range. The close range possibilities are downswing, sideswing, thrust, fake, protected attacks, special, shield block and jump. Each maneuver is further subdivided into a number of color-coded bars so that a player can for example make a high or low thrust or jump up, away, duck, or dodge. The color-coding refers to the restrictions, so for example, a player who was told to "do no blue" next turn, could not make a low sideswing or thrust. Extended range maneuvers enable a player to charge, swing or thrust, block and close or dodge and jump back. Every maneuver has its appropriate page number and a damage modifier, either plus, minus, or zero. When a score is indicated the player checks the damage modifier and adds or subtracts it from the

given score, e.g., if a skeleton's downward smash scores 3 on the opponent, the plus 3 damage modifier for that maneuver is added and the opponent takes 6 points of damage. Damage is taken off the character's body point total which is also on the character sheet. When body points reach zero or below, the fight is over and the affected character is unconscious. If body points got to -5 or below the character has been killed. There are a set of special maneuvers for each character which adds a little individual flavor to the combatants, e.g., the skeleton can duck and pick up a bone or two. Each maneuver is fully explained on the back of the character sheet, so that decisions can be made with some rationale, rather than just picking something because it sounds good. Also on the character sheets is the character's height and the number of attacks he is capable of (this refers only to the multi-player game). Height can act as a further damage modifier if one character is taller/shorter than the other.

There is also space to record experience points (these are equivalent to the body point total of a character you have defeated and can be used to make your character tougher) and pick a name for your character. The game is designed for characters to improve as they win fights, but if a

character is killed in a fight, a new character must be started. Due to this fact, it's advisable to xerox the character sheet to keep track of continuing characters or keep records on separate pieces of paper.

Lost Worlds further provides a multi-player option in which a group (each player with his own character sheet and booklet) can whack away at each other. I haven't had an opportunity to try this option, but it looks like fun. In terms of balance in the first two booklets, the Man has a little edge on the Skeleton in terms of body points (he has only 12, ol' bony has 7) and damage modifiers (the Man's are generally a point higher than the Skeleton's). Nevertheless, a skeleton is not doomed to defeat for wise swordplay can more than compensate for Mr. Broadsword's edges. Indeed the Skeleton has won more than his share of bouts in the games I have played.

Lost Worlds takes almost three minutes to learn to play and fights last anywhere from five to ten minutes, depending on boldness and tactical expertise. Sometimes how you wound up in one place or another is not always clear, but in the main the *Lost Worlds* system makes perfect sense and is expertly designed. Nova has a whole series of different character booklets and sheets, all compatible with each other.

Lost Worlds can be played anywhere by most anyone and it's very, very enjoyable. In fact, for me it outshines *Ace of Aces* because it's easier to understand what you're doing in the relatively cleaner arena of one-to-one combat. The only drawback to *Lost Worlds* is its price. At \$6 per booklet, gamers might think twice about buying it. I know I did. Fortunately, I bought the game anyway and it's easily worth the price in game enjoyment. Fights are always different and results are often wildly amusing. *Lost Worlds* may even be useful in adventure games, for a different style of combat, though I don't guarantee it can work easily. What I do guarantee is that *Lost Worlds* is a definite winner. If you like the thrill of toe-to-toe hack 'n' slash you'll love the game, so bite the bullet on the seemingly high price and get it.

Available thru Sleuth (order NO-1001 for "Armed Human," NO-1002 for "Skeleton Fighter," NO-1003 for "Dwarf Fighter," NO-1004 for "Giant Goblin," NO-1005 for "Woman in Chains," NO-1006 for "Troll," NO-1007 for "Barbarian," NO-1008 for "Magician," NO-1009 for "Wraith," NO-1010 for "Cold Drake," NO-1011 for "Halfling," NO-1012 for "Lizardman," NO-1013 for "Unicorn").



THE MOUNTAIN ENVIRONMENT



ASCENT TO ANEKTHOR

Both By J. Andrew Keith (Gamelords, \$5.95 each)

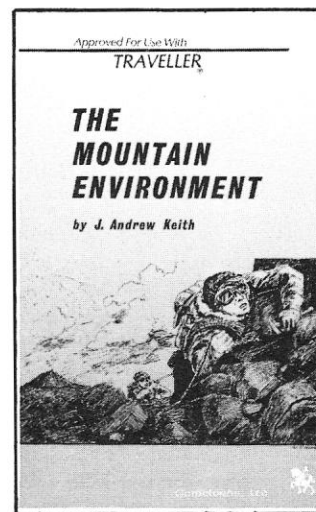
Reviewed by Arlen P. Walker

The Mountain Environment is from Gamelords' Environments for Adventure series, a series of books outlining special rules for harsh environments.

The first 18 pages of this book deal with the definition of mountaineering as a game skill, along with three cascade skills—'mixed,' rock, and ice climbing—and their use in an extended range adventure. This includes the effects the skills have on the chances of falling, and a special set of endurance rules for use during climbs.

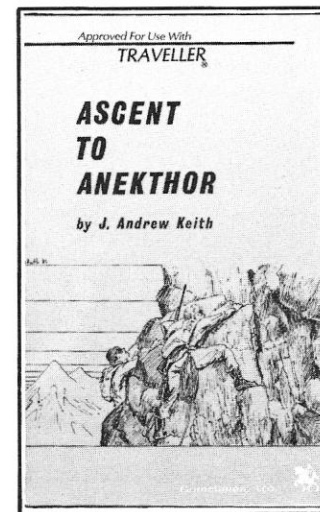
The next 14 pages cover the creation of mountainous terrain, as well as the procedure used to create and run an adventure.

A mountain is broken down into a number of segments, or 'faces.' Each face requires its own



skill roll, and there may be several between the start of the climb and the summit, depending on the height of the peak. It is possible to take an entire play-session to climb a single mountain if the gamemaster has completely detailed the terrain and encounters. The aim of this book seems to be to take mountain climbing out of the "roll two dice and proceed on" school of playing.

As you climb a mountain, air pressure decreases. How high



can your group climb before they require oxygen? What weather changes will occur as the pressure drops? These are all questions which need to be answered if a realistic climb is to be simulated, and the section on mountainous terrain concludes with a discussion of weather and atmospheric pressure.

The next 6 pages detail the type of terrain hazards you may encounter while climbing. Each hazard is given its official name, followed by a description of it

and its effects on a climb. Climber's jargon is thick here, but the terms are defined. Pay attention and you too can sound like an expert climber.

The remainder of the book contains an extensive equipment list, the sample mountain, and some ideas for scenarios utilizing mountain climbs.

The mountain-climbing system presented here is rather complicated, but not unplayably so. The biggest problem I had with it was the lack of guidance given to a prospective game-master in presenting the mountain to the players.

The map of a mountain with all its faces is necessary for a gamemaster, but it obviously will contain information the players should not know. Admittedly, they may have a complete survey map of the mountain to work from, but they might also be coming upon it cold, so to speak, without having been warned of it. In the latter case, some of the faces will not be seen by them and should not be known to them.

Neither is there guidance here on what hazards an experienced climber would expect to find in a climb, based on adjacent terrain, and what hazards might be completely unexpected. A game-master inexperienced with climbing could quite easily omit something in describing the mountain to the players which the experienced climber would have seen simply because he was looking specifically for it. This lack of adequate description might cause the players to choose an incorrect approach.

Ascent to Anekthor is the companion adventure to *The Mountain Environment*. It requires only the basic books plus the mountain rules to run, and it takes place in the Drexilthar Subsector of the GDW *Traveller* universe.

The adventure begins with a challenge: a race to the top of Anekthor, a mountain which has never been climbed by any human. Three groups will be involved in the race, each starting from a different position at the base of the mountain.

A complete map of Anekthor is included, along with animal encounter tables and descriptions. The Latin names provided for the animals are excellent, and the animals themselves are not unreasonable.

There is trouble aplenty involved in climbing a mountain no human has conquered before. The cold, the thin atmosphere, the falls; each will take its toll on groups foolhardy enough to begin this ascent. The players should be grateful that nature is their only threat. Or are things

ever that simple in a Gamelords module?

With so many science-fiction games on the market now, it's only fair to include some sort of information on the adaptability of science-fiction gaming aids to other games. A *Traveller* supplement, *The Mountain Environment* naturally depends on the *Traveller* rules system, but with some effort it could be converted to another system. If you've converted *Traveller* books before, this might be worth the effort in order to play the companion adventure.

Ascent to Anekthor could easily be converted to another system were it not so heavily dependant upon the rules presented in its companion volume. The scenario idea from *Ascent*



THE HORRIBLE SECRET OF MONHEGAN ISLAND

By Gary Pilkington
(Grenadier, \$7)

Reviewed by John Dark

Until now, only two companies have published scenarios for *Call Of Cthulhu*. Chaosium has traditionally produced high-quality, slickly-done scenario packs. TOME has produced less excellent, but less expensive scenarios, with a unique personality. Grenadier has joined these select ranks with the publication of *Monhegan Island*. This scenario booklet is fairly slick, though with an odd type-style, and is 48 pages long. The middle 8 pages contain stats for unimportant gamemaster-characters, maps, and some detailed 25mm floor plans of the Martinson house. The extreme detail of these floor plans (which even show uncut bread on the breadboard) is unsurprising when you consider who manufactured the booklet.

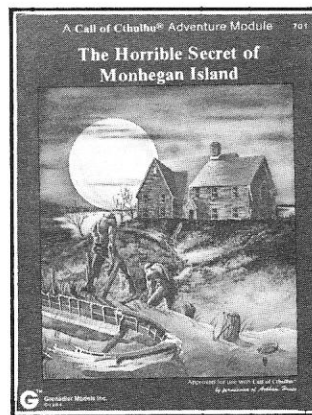
The art is unexciting, but not embarrassing. The picture of a Deep One carrying off a buxom young woman on page 20 is a treat—it looks like it came right out of *Weird Tales*. The artwork is intermediate in quality between Chaosium's excellent material and TOME's generally inferior, almost fannish, art.

Two short, one-evening scenarios are contained in *Monhegan Island*. The title scenario deals with mad cultists and a suspected murder on an isolated New England island. This scenario ends with a cute twist. The second scenario, which

might be rewritten for a rules system which includes a comprehensive set of mountaineering rules, but unless you are familiar with climbers' terminology the explanations from the environment book will be necessary.

If you are tired of watching your players flit through space and want them to crawl around on a planet for a while, this two-volume set will provide an interesting adventure. If all you want are space battles, skip them. Those who play one of the other science-fiction games might do worse than take the time and effort to convert them, but only if they desperately want a planet-based adventure.

Available thru Sleuth (order GL-1986 and GL-1987 respectively).



is ostensibly for beginners, takes the investigators into the back-



ORGANIZATION BOOK 1: THE CIRCLE AND M.E.T.E.

By Aaron Allston
(Hero Games, \$5.95)

Reviewed by
Russell Grant Collins

Hero Games has released what is promised to be the first of a series of supplements for *Champions*, each detailing one or two organizations which tend to spring up in most comic-book worlds. For each group, a map is given of its headquarters, important gamemaster-characters are detailed, information is given on how the group will react to outsiders (such as the heroes undoubtedly will be at first) a few suggestions are made about scenarios that can be run using the background provided, and advice is given on how to fit the group into your campaign.

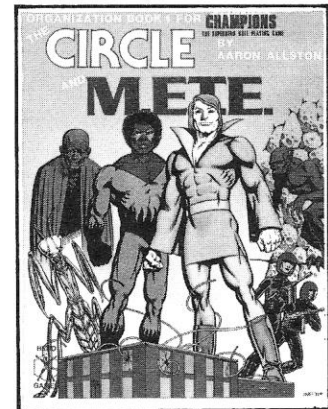
In this volume, two organizations are detailed. The first is called The Circle, a band of

woods to hunt down a crazy professor. There is a twist in this scenario as well, but it is pretty obvious and the players should be able to figure it out easily—being hugely unsurprised when the "surprise" ending occurs. At the end of the scenario booklet are sample player-characters, one of whom is author to the book *Black Mass Transit*, an arcane tome which should find its way into every occultist's library. Sadly, these scenarios are just not very interesting. Like Oakland, Calif., there's no "there" here. Both Chaosium and TOME unfailingly provide more fascinating scenarios with more exceptional possibilities.

Monhegan Island has another flaw. The scenarios are completely based on the out-of-date first edition of *Call Of Cthulhu*. Keepers owning the newer edition are likely to find the references and stats obsolete and confusing.

To sum up, *Monhegan Island* has nothing outstandingly bad with it. But there's nothing outstanding about it at all. Perhaps it is unfair to say that it's just the sort of scenario one would expect a miniatures company to come out with—but it is. If you lack any of the Chaosium or TOME scenario packs, you are advised to fill any need for canned scenarios by purchasing them first. Buy *Monhegan Island* only to complete your collection or if you have a dire need for a scenario in a hurry.

Available thru Sleuth (order GR-701).



magic-users led by an ancient sorcerer known as the Master. The gamemaster-characters provided are all superheroes whose powers have the special effect of being magical. They meet in an underground garden in an abandoned subway tunnel that most people find only by accident. The Master is not detailed; his exact powers are up to the individual gamemaster. This helps give him more of an air of mystery, even to those players who

read through books like this that they shouldn't unless they plan to gamemaster.

The Metropolitan Extra-Terrestrial Enclave is a scientific organization dedicated to the assistance and study of aliens. As such, in addition to a few non-super staff-members, most of whom fall into the normal human level and are hence not detailed at all, the characters are aliens, including the Mighty Pinchus of *Cardboard Hero Superhero Set 1* fame. This is the group to go to if the resident Nonhuman gets badly injured in a fight. Let's face it, most hospitals don't carry green plasma and could be more harmful than help-

ful. The scenario suggestions here don't seem as creative as the ones for *The Circle*, but perhaps this is understandable, considering the backgrounds.

I feel that this is an excellent idea for a supplement, much more usable than the usual scenario module which can only be used once with a given group of players. Even after the scenario suggestions given here have been used, there are still many possible adventures which could involve one of these organizations. Most comic-book worlds have organizations like these, which we can now have in our *Champions*, or (with a little work translating characters) in

Villains & Vigilantes, or *Super-world* campaigns. Since this supplement came out right before Hero Games and Chaosium agreed to cross-stat their super adventures, some work is still needed, but I feel that this is worth the effort because of the on-going usefulness of these organizations.

Even the *Champions* gamemaster should be aware that the scenarios are actually for the most part scenario suggestions, which will require a good deal of work on the part of the gamemaster. This is understandable, when you consider that each scenario so treated could easily have been expanded to take up

the entire book, rendering it a one-use supplement. Also, this enables the gamemaster to more easily personalize his scenario. I wish, though, that they had included a few of the Hunteds of the characters provided, especially in the case of the magic-users.

All in all, I'd recommend this book to anyone who runs a superhero campaign and would like to have a group like either of these. I hope the people of Hero Games hurry out with future books in the series. How about some organizations for the other side of the law, like Hydra or the Monitor?

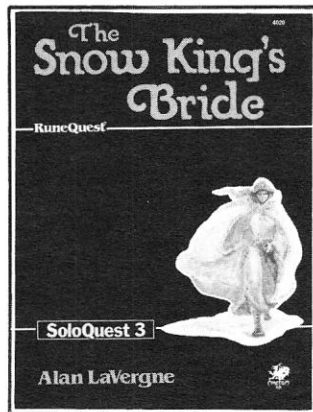
Available thru Sleuth (order HE-1101).

☆☆☆ THE SNOW KING'S BRIDE

By Alan LaVergne
(Chaosium, \$6)

Reviewed by Steve List

The third in an improving series of solo adventures for *RuneQuest*, *The Snow King's Bride* is to some degree more involved and less repeatable than the others. In *Scorpion Hall*, the second one, a character or series of characters was expected to make repeated forays into an ancient stronghold, and the results of any given encounter could modify the text of the book in the event of a subsequent entry into the same area. In *Bride*, the object is for a single adventurer to escort the daughter of a minor noble cross-country to her prearranged wedding. It is of course possible for the character to fail in his task, losing his life, and possibly that of the "delicate" (SIZ 17, DEX 8) damsel in the process. Assuming the lady survives an unsuccessful journey, the player could trot up a new character to essay the task. Equally possible is for the player to use new characters, or even the same one, to make multiple attempts whether or not any of the previous ones succeeded. Non-player characters and monsters are all restored to pristine conditions, with the drawback that the player cannot purge from his mind knowledge of events. In my own case, my character was killed extremely early in the trip. Starting over, I was naturally able to avoid that first fatal mistake and reach my destination, maiden in tow (and still maidenly, though a dalliance *en route* is provided for), by always adopting the prudent course if possible and meeting aggression with naked metal when necessary. This made



for a dull journey, and I am tempted to try it again just to explore the alternatives (what if I had picked up the jewel in the snowbank . . .), i.e., treat it as an adventure rather than a mundane bodyguard job in which preservation of the client was paramount.

The adventure is packaged as a 48-page book of 202 numbered paragraphs and some introductory material, with numerous illustrations to pique one's curiosity about encounters not encountered. The introduction states it is for characters in the 70-90% skill range (presumably meaning weapon skills) with some stored Power. This seems about right. My test character was a Humakt Initiate of about that level, and his early demise was due to poor thinking on my part rather than deficiencies in the character attributes. Overriding Humakt, I resurrected him to resume the adventure at that point and found him acceptable but hardly overwhelming in dealing with the physical obstacles that followed. I had learned my lesson well, and took no unnecessary chances the rest of my trip.

The structure is the more or less standard sequence of numbered paragraphs. The player starts at number 1 and moves to

following ones according to choices and/or dice rolls made. Since it is rare that any two consecutive paragraphs will lie on the same page, when one's eye inevitably wanders, one may see things (an illustration or non-player character stats) totally irrelevant to the current activity. This could, if not controlled by the player, lead to a loss of surprise later on, but usually serves to awaken curiosity or arouse dread at what might lie ahead. In this sense, it could be considered

as "reliable rumors."

The Snow King's Bride is an excellent adventure, one that puts a premium on thought and role-playing rather than mere exercise of brute force. Its quality, in terms of entertainment value, exploitation of the game system, and employment of the diverse body of knowledge of the *RuneQuest* universe, make it a standard to be emulated by subsequent designs.

Available thru Sleuth (order CH-4020).

☆☆☆ CASINO GALACTICA

By Steven B. Todd
(FGU, \$5)

Reviewed by William A. Barton

You've just finished up the last session of your latest scenario for your local science-fiction gaming group. The player-characters have made a huge haul and are looking for someplace to spend it—or are simply desperately in need of R&R. Where to send them next? Why not try *Casino Galactica*, FGU's newest adventure setting for its *Space Opera* game? *Casino Galactica* is a high-class resort facility in *Space Opera's* United Federation—a place where the well-to-do can go for rest, relaxation, excitement or adventure, as it pleases them. And there's enough intrigue, suspense, romance and danger bubbling just below the resort's glittery surface to keep an average group of adventurers involved for quite some time.

While designed specifically for *Space Opera*, the resort facilities, grounds, staff and guests are described in enough detail that *Casino Galactica* could just as easily be used as a source book for adventure for any one of the various science-fiction adventure



games now available. I could easily see an average group of *Traveller* players choosing *Casino Galactica* as a place to spend their (probably) ill-gained loot. A party of *Star Trek* merchants, especially of the Merchant Prince variety, would fit in well here (or regular *Star Fleet* officers on leave with a bit put back for some gambling action). And while some of the situations and characters depicted in the book are a bit too adult for the average *Star Frontiers* game, a few alterations by the gamemasters of the above games, as well as others such as *Other Suns*, *Star Patrol*, *To Challenge Tomorrow*, *FTL 2448*, etc., should seriously consider giving *Casino Galactica* a close look, too.

Casino Galactica is located on Arcturus VI in the *Space Opera* universe (the gamemaster is referred to FGU's *Star Sector Atlas 1* for planetary data, if he doesn't wish to relocate the luxury resort elsewhere). It is owned by a human named Cosmo Filroy, a wealthy businessman and head of Filroy Enterprises, which also runs Filroy Spaceways, A Star Line with routes from the major planets of the Federation of Arcturus. Filroy has built up the resort in the six years since he bought the property to the status of most popular resort on the planet and a favorite of the wealthy of the entire sector. The resort also seems to be a hotbed of espionage (several agents of BOSS and BRINT, as well as a few enemy agents are currently in residence), as well as a center for the activities—ranging from slightly shady to out-and-out illegal—of Filroy and various members of his staff. There's plenty of dirt to be uncovered beneath the exterior shine of the resort, for those so inclined.

The scenario book deals with the major personalities of the resort staff, including descriptions and *Space Opera* game stats, and gives game stats and a sentence or two about several of the minor staff characters. Guests are portrayed similarly and include millionaire industrialist Hubert Huntleyworth III (currently in deep trouble with his board of directors), Conchita Columbia (practitioner of the galaxy's oldest profession), Professor of Temporal Physics Dr. Fielding Price, and Capellan nobleman Throk N. Garka (militant member of the anti-Federation party). Among the resort staff and guests alone are the potential for a number of scenario possibilities. My only complaints here are the lack, except for a couple token humanoids, of any nonhumans at all among the staff and guests (all of whom are depressingly human), in spite of the illustrations showing several different aliens enjoying the facilities; and a few of the names of characters—"Oddjob," for example, as the name of a hulking bouncer. Even so, the characters presented are intriguing enough to compensate for these minor omissions or transgressions.

The book also includes complete maps and floor plans of the resort grounds and facilities, including casino, night club, suites, offices, security areas, revolving restaurants and other entertainments. I noted a few problems here, in that occasionally the written descriptions of certain areas didn't quite match the maps or were contradictory to one another. For example, on the

concourse level floor plan page, it states that the central tower over the reception area houses the luxury penthouses, administrative offices and owner's suite, while the text claims that these are located in the Arcturus hotel directory above the casino complex. Also, on the grounds map, the ski lift (#14) has been omitted entirely. Again, these are minor points and can easily be fixed by the gamemaster, but they are annoying.

Notes on various forms of entertainment available (casino gambling, grav-ball betting, night club acts, the Subliminal Imagery Device—a *Brainstorm*-like mental fantasy inducer); encounter tables for the various complex areas; the flora and fauna around the resort; and five

mini-scenarios, plus six more brief adventure ideas, round out the package. Although the scenario ideas are a bit sketchy—and three even take the adventurers off Arcturus VI for most of the action—altogether they and the wealth of background detail provided make *Casino Galactica* a gaming aid full of adventure potential for all but the duller group of player-characters or the least imaginative of gamemasters. An inexperienced gamemaster may not want to tackle the possibilities of *Casino Galactica* as his first scenario, but once he has a few under his belt, he should find this one excellent, if for nothing more than a change of pace from the usual starship shoot-out or alien blasting. And it's not the kind of scenario/set-

ting that can only be played once and then must be tossed aside; there's enough material here for any number of repeat visits—as long as players don't shoot the resort up the first time they set foot there.

As a rule, I don't like scenario books that are mainly settings with few or no concrete adventure guidelines. However, *Casino Galactica* has just the right blend of elements to make it the best such scenario setting since FASA's *Action Aboard* book of adventure aboard the luxury liner *King Richard*. A must for any nonroutine science-fiction campaign!

Available thru Sleuth (order FG-7130).



THE VANISHED

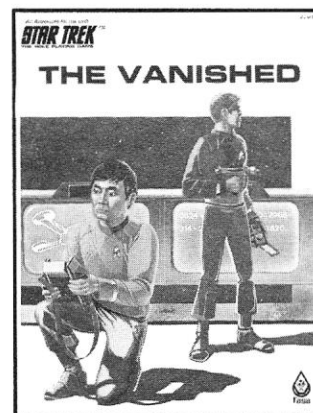
By Guy W. McLimore, Jr. and George Poehlein (FASA, \$7)

Reviewed by Frederick Paul Kiesche III

The Vanished is FASA's first published adventure for their highly successful *Star Trek: The Role Playing Game* other than the adventures which came with the game box. The adventure is set deep in an unpopulated section of Federation space where the Federation Deepspace Research Facility #39 floats; one of the many experimental research stations that are isolated from the more populated areas for a number of reasons—the experiments might prove to be dangerous, might be highly secret, or they might be affected by external factors present in populous areas (such as gravity waves, electromagnetic radiation, high communications and traffic patterns). In many ways FDR#39 resembles Space Station Regula One from the film *Star Trek II: The Wrath of Khan*.

While passing FDR#39 on a routine mission, the *Enterprise* (or another suitable Federation starship) makes contact to see if all is well. A FDR station is generally isolated for months on end, with personnel on board serving for year-long terms with few breaks. Therefore, all ships passing within "hailing distance" must check to see if things are going well and if any assistance is needed. In the midst of a rather bored reply on the part of the station's communications officer, contact is lost—in mid-word!

This sets the stage for the mystery that the player-characters must investigate. They must beam over to the station



(there are no docking ports or shuttle bays to allow a ship to enter the station), and try to determine what has caused the abrupt break in communications. Hampering the efforts of the characters are a number of problems: There is a magnetic storm in the area, which is wreaking havoc with communications (they are lost shortly after the characters beam over to the station), sensors (which are totally useless), and the transporter (it has to be shut down until the storm dies down—in fact the characters are barely able to beam over in the first place!), the characters are effectively trapped on the station for a period of about two hours—cut off from any help from the other ship at all ("Scotty! Beam my ass out of here!"). They are forced to use whatever resources they have carried aboard or can find on the research station in order to solve the mystery at hand. Finally, while on board the station, the characters will come up against two more problems—but to say anything more would give away several clever surprises!

In order to save the suspense and mystery for any potential players that may be reading this, I will not reveal any more details

of the plot. Suffice to say that Messrs. McLimore and Poehlein have done a fine job of not only plotting out the adventure, but on the reasons why what has happened has happened. *The Vanished* is less rigidly plotted than most of FASA's published adventures for *Traveller*, where certain things must absolutely happen in order for the adventure to proceed. This allows for the gamemaster to give the characters more flexibility in their game plan for the course of the adventure. Of course, the gamemaster must also be fast on his or her feet, if the characters take a "wrong turn"...

Also included in the adventure is a complete description of the Federation Deepspace Research Facility, including the usual high-quality FASA blueprints (detail practically down to the memos on people's desks!); a description of all the experiments in progress; and a listing of the stats for the researchers and station personnel (in case you want to bring the station in for another adventure). The authors have also included advice to the gamemaster in the form of suggestions on how to run the adventure in a tournament situation (of limited use to most people). Finally, we have details of some of the aforementioned surprises. All of this extra work makes *The Vanished* an example of how good an adventure should be—it is able to be used not only as a *ST:TRPG* adventure as written, but has detail which can be added to *ST:TRPG* in general.

All in all, Messrs. McLimore and Poehlein did a fine job on *The Vanished*. In fact, I would say that this adventure could stand with the best of the original television episodes, although it probably would have given the producers

headaches to build FDR#39! Only one problem cropped up—there are several glaring typographical errors in the adventure booklet. FASA should definitely take better pains to ensure accurate copy; what is the sense of keeping a

publishing deadline if nobody will be able to understand what you have printed? Other than that, a fine job. I look forward to seeing more work from these gentlemen.

Available thru Sleuth (order FA-2201).



TELENGARD

By Orion Software
(Avalon Hill, \$28)

Reviewed by Troy Christensen

There are many computer games on the market today that advertise epic adventure and true adventure gaming atmosphere. I have, however, found only a few games that really meet up to the actual experience. *Telengard* is wildly exciting and totally infectious, a person simply can't sit down for an hour; they will find themselves wanting to play all night.

Telengard is like an adventure game in that you have a character with attribute scores, hit points, an armor class, and different equipment. Each character created can use a sword or cast any spell within his spell range. As the character increases in levels so will his hit points, spell points, and chances to hit.

In *Telengard*, the player can only operate one character at a time; this is somewhat limiting and can sometimes be a little frustrating. After the program loads, creates all its monsters, and designs the dungeon, the player is asked if he wants to start a new character or use an old one. If the player asks for a new character, the program asks for the character's name and then proceeds to show the player a number of different stats. When the player decides upon the one he wants he pushes the return key which loads the shown attributes into the program. The player then sees his character shown on a two-dimensional map with a staircase to the north and corridors leading east and west. In the *Telengard* version for the Commodore 64 the graphics are rich and very colorful. The walls are composed of red bricks, the gold appears to be bright yellow globs and all the monsters are uniquely detailed. In other versions, especially the Apple, the graphics are non-existent, with the character and the monster looking like keyboard 'symbols' (i.e. '*').

The player moves the character around the screen by pressing different keys, an 'A' moves the character west, the 'W' moves the character north, the 'S' makes the character not move for that



round. The 'X' moves the character south and the 'D' moves the character east. Other keys are used to attack and cast spells. I found that once I got used to this arrangement I didn't ever need to look in the book nor lose out on any turns.

Once the character is underground, he goes off into the tunnels looking for gold and treasure. The dungeon in *Telengard* is fifty levels deep with each level containing at least one thousand rooms; there are at least 50,000 rooms to explore! Along the way the character will find stairs leading up and down, he will also find teleportation gates, pits, magical water fountains, safes, evil altars, and random treasure. Stairs leading up on the first level will lead to an inn where the character can cash in his gold for experience points, cure all his hit points, and regain all his used spell points. Once a character enters an inn all monsters which might have been chasing him are gone. When the character reenters the dungeon he will find himself in the same part of the dungeon.

As characters adventure down in the dungeon they will kill monsters with their sword or sorcery and they will find gold and treasure, this he can use to gain more experience and attain higher levels. Higher levels lead to awesome spells and the ability to attack larger monsters and survive. The deeper a character goes in a dungeon the worse the monsters will become. However, in lower levels characters will also find great magic and gold, more gold than anyone could imagine. In one room alone, one of my characters found 1,450,565 gold pieces, a +12 ring of pro-

tection, +19 sword and +22 armor. Of course also in that room my character had to attack and kill a 23rd level dragon which could breathe fire worth up to 300 points of damage.

Telengard is a fantastic game, the graphics are splendid and a player will never find himself bored or unchallenged by what is presented. *Telengard* however, does have some problems. The scrolling in the game is very slow and players must wait each time a character is moved. It also seems that much of the magic in the game is far more for show & tell than for actual use. Magical items can be found equalling pluses up into the high 40s. Swords that are equal to +30 or higher are commonly found laying around dungeons and other magical devices don't seem to perform as the rules suggest. A ring of protection is supposed to keep monsters from hitting the character, however, I have had a +23 Ring of Protection and still been hit by orcs or kobolds. Players of this game will also find out that no character is totally safe from death. Players will run through hundreds of characters and even find some of

their highest level guys fall to small monsters (with high levels) or will come up to a dragon of medium level and be torched into oblivion.

Telengard comes packaged in a sturdy box, with an easy 24-page manual, a poster, separate instructions for loading, and a disk. *Telengard* is one of the finest computer games around today, it is inexpensive, full of excitement and it has the ability to intrigue both the inexperienced and experienced alike. *Telengard* reminds me of a mixture of adventure games like *Dungeons & Dragons*, *Rune-Quest*, and the boardgame *Dungeon*. I would strongly recommend this game to anyone who has a Commodore 64 and who enjoys adventure gaming. I don't think anyone will find this game disappointing or boring.

Available thru Sleuth (order AH-42401 for Commodore 64 64K, Atari 400 & 800 48K, TRS-80 Models I & III 32K, or PET 2001 32K tape; AH-42452 for Apple II or II+ with Apple-soft 48K disk; AH-42453 for Atari 800 48K disk). □

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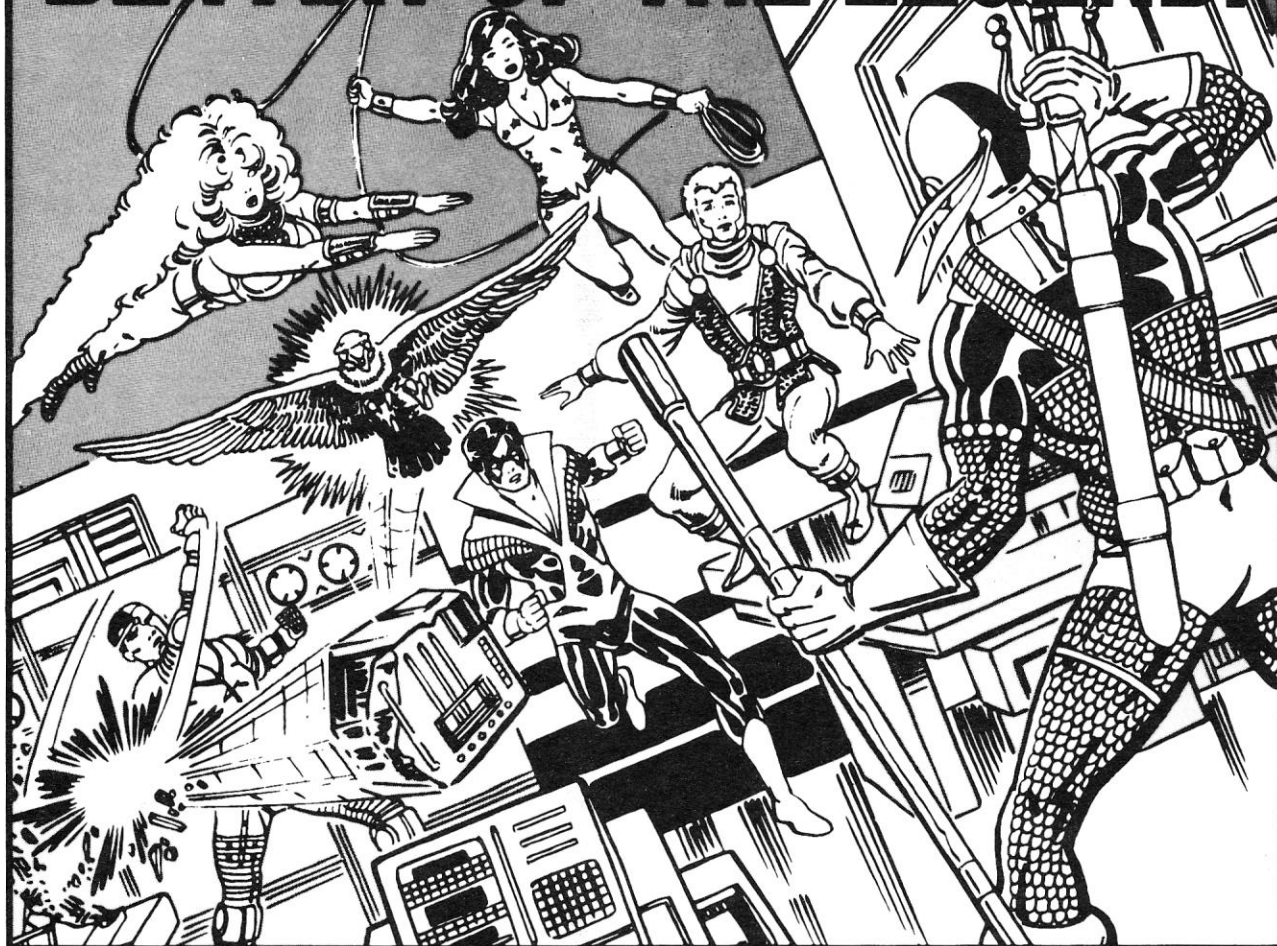




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Abbreviations: The Avalon Hill Games Company (AH), Fantasy Games Unlimited (FGU), Game Designer's Workshop (GDW), Iron Crown Enterprises (ICE), Selchow & Richter (S&R), Steve Jackson Games (SJG), World Wide Wargamers (3W).

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___ Advanced Dungeons & Dragons (TSR)
___ Aftermath (FGU)
___ Arduin Grimoire (Grimoire Games)
___ Boot Hill (TSR)
___ Bushido (FGU)
___ Call Of Cthulhu (Chaosium)
___ Champions (Hero)
___ Chill (Pacesetter)
___ Chivalry & Sorcery (FGU)
___ Conan (TSR)
___ Danger International (Hero)
___ Daredevils (FGU)
___ DC Heroes (Mayfair)
___ Dungeons & Dragons (TSR)
___ Element Masters (Escape Ventures)
___ Elfquest (Chaosium)
___ Espionage! (Hero)
___ Flashing Blades (FGU)
___ FTL: 2448 (Tri Tac)

___ Fringeworthy (Tri Tac)
___ Gamma World (TSR)
___ Gangbusters (TSR)
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___ Golden Heroes (Games Workshop)
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___ Paranoia (West End)
___ Pendragon (Chaosium)
___ Pirates & Plunder (Yaquinto)
___ Powers & Perils (AH)
___ Privateers & Gentlemen

(FGU)
___ Psi World (FGU)
___ Recon (RPG)
___ Ringworld (Chaosium)
___ Rolemaster (ICE)
___ RuneQuest (AH)
___ Space Opera (FGU)
___ Stalking the Night Fantastic (Tri Tac)
___ Star Ace (Pacesetter)
___ Star Explorer (FGU)
___ Star Frontiers (TSR)
___ Star Trek: The Role Playing Game (FASA)
___ Stormbringer (Chaosium)
___ Supervillains (Task Force)
___ Superworld (Chaosium)
___ Tekumel (Gamescience)
___ Thieves' Guild (Gamelords)
___ Time & Time Again (Timeline)
___ TimeMaster (Pacesetter)
___ Timeship (Yaquinto)
___ To Challenge Tomorrow (Ragnarok)
___ Toon (SJG)
___ Top Secret (TSR)
___ Traveller (GDW)
___ Tunnels & Trolls (Blade)
___ Twilight: 2000 (GDW)
___ Valley of the Pharaohs (Palladium)
___ Villains & Vigilantes (FGU)
___ Wild West (FGU)
___ Witch Hunt (Statcom)
___ Ysgarth (Ragnarok)

SELECTED MODULES

___ Angmar (ICE)
___ Autoduel Champions (SJG)
___ Beltstrike (GDW)
___ Cities (Midkemia)
___ City Book (Blade)
___ City of Terrors (Blade)
___ Cloud Lords of Tanara (ICE)
___ Curse On Hareth (Companions)
___ Dark Folk (Mayfair)
___ Dwarves (Mayfair)
___ Elves (Mayfair)
___ Goldfinger (Victory)
___ Grimtooth's Traps (Blade)
___ Handbook of Tricks & Traps (Dragon Tree)
___ Harn (Columbia)
___ Haven (Gamelords)
___ Ivinia (Columbia)
___ The Justice Machine (Palladium)
___ Masks Of Nyarlathotep (Chaosium)
___ Monster Coliseum (AH)
___ Octopussy (Victory)
___ Q Manual (Victory)
___ Stormhaven (Blade)
___ Tarsus (GDW)
___ Thieves' World (Chaosium)
___ World of Greyhawk (TSR)

OTHER GAMES

___ Ace Of Aces (Nova)
___ Acquire (AH)
___ Ambush (Victory)
___ Axis & Allies (Milton Bradley)
___ Backgammon
___ Battlecars (Games Workshop)
___ Battle of the Bulge (AH)
___ Bridge

___ Canasta
___ Car Wars (SJG)
___ Chess
___ Civilization (AH)
___ Conquest of the Empire (Milton Bradley)
___ Cosmic Encounter (West End)
___ Cribbage
___ Diplomacy (AH)
___ Dragon Pass (AH)
___ Dungeon! (TSR)
___ Elric (AH)
___ Endless Quest Book (TSR)
___ Fellowship of the Ring (ICE)
___ Fighting Fantasy Books (Dell)
___ Go
___ Illuminati (SJG)
___ Jig-saw puzzles
___ Judge Dredd (Games Workshop)
___ Junta (West End)
___ Kingmaker (AH)
___ Lost Worlds (Nova)
___ Monopoly (Parker Bros)
___ Nuclear War (Blade)
___ Ogre (SJG)
___ Outdoor Survival (AH)
___ Poker
___ Rail Baron (AH)
___ Risk (Parker Bros)
___ Sanctuary (Mayfair)
___ Scrabble (S&R)
___ Sherlock Holmes Consulting Detective (Sleuth)
___ Spies! (TSR)
___ Squad Leader (Avalon Hill)
___ Starfleet Battles (Task Force)
___ Star Trek Adventure (West End)
___ Strat-O-Matic Baseball
___ Talisman (Games Workshop)
___ Trivial Pursuit (S&R)
___ 221B Baker Street (Hansen)
___ Web & Starship (West End)

MAGAZINES

___ Abyss (Ragnarok)
___ Adventurers' Club (Hero)
___ Alarums & Excursions (Lee Gold)
___ Autoduel Quarterly (SJG)
___ Different Worlds (Sleuth)
___ The Dragon (TSR)
___ Fire & Movement (SJG)
___ Game News
___ The General (AH)
___ Heroes (AH)
___ The Journal of the Travelers' Aid Society (GDW)
___ Nexus (Task Force)
___ The Space Gamer (SJG)
___ Stardate (FASA)
___ Strategy & Tactics (TSR)
___ The Wargamer (3W)
___ White Dwarf (Games Workshop)

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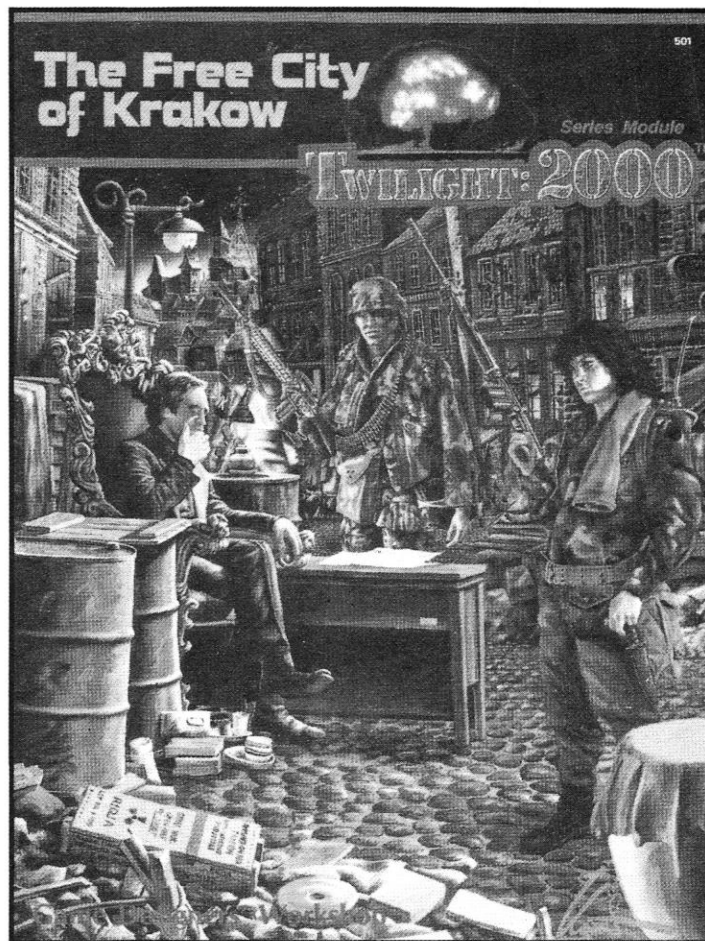
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CONVENTIONS



Conventions are the best place to meet new gamers and others interested in adventure and exploration. Organizers should send details of their convention at least six months prior to the event for announcement in this column.

If you wish to see your convention listed in Different Worlds, send us the name of the event, dates, location, who to contact, number of attendees expected, and number of attendees you had last year. There is no charge for this service.

GAMEX 1985

July 5-7, 1985

At Chapman College, Orange CA. Adventure gaming. Contact: Diverse Talents, Inc., Box 8399, Long Bch CA 90808, (213) 420-3675.

SEAGA '85

July 5-7, 1985

At the Airport Ramada, Atlanta GA. Adventure gaming. Contact: SEAGA, Box 930031, Norcross GA 30093.

Colonial City Gamefest '85

July 13-14, 1985

At Mt Vernon High School, Mt Vernon OH. Adventure gaming. Contact: Colonial City Gamefest, 1003 1/2 E Gambier St, Mt Vernon OH 43050.

Emperor's Birthday Convention XIV

July 19-20, 1985

At Stephen Ctr, Univ of Notre Dame, S Bend IN. Adventure gaming. Send SASE to: Robert L. Hagerty, 905 W Franklin Ave, Elkhart IN 46516.

OZARKON I

August 3-4, 1985

At Ramada Inn, Joplin MO. Adventure gaming. Send SASE to: OZARKON I, Box 2151, Joplin MO 64803.

GEN CON 18

August 22-25, 1985

At MECCA Convention Hall, Milwaukee WI. Adventure gaming. Contact: GEN CON 18 Game Convention Registration Request, c/o TSR, Inc., Box 756, Lk Geneva WI 53147.

FANTASY FAIRE

August 31, September 1-2, 1985

At Griswold's Inn, Fullerton CA. SF&F, Adventure gaming. Contact: Fantasy Publishing Company, 1855 W Main St, Alhambra CA 91801.

GATEWAY 1985

August 31, September 1-2, 1985

At Los Angeles Airport Hyatt Hotel, Los Angeles CA. Adventure gaming. Contact: Diverse Talents, Inc., Box 8399, Long Bch CA 90808, (213) 420-3675.

MileHiCon 17

October 25-27, 1985

At Sheraton Inn-Lakewood, Denver CO. Filksinging. Contact: MileHiCon, Box 27074, Denver CO 80227, (303) 934-7659 or 936-4092.

ORCCON 1986

February 15-17, 1986

At Los Angeles Airport Hyatt Hotel, Los Angeles CA. Adventure gaming. Contact:

Diverse Talents, Inc., Box 8399, Long Bch CA 90808, (213) 420-3675.

BAYFILK III

March 7-9, 1986

At Red Lion Inn, San Jose CA. Filksinging. Contact: Off Centaur Publications, Box 424, El Cerrito CA 94530, (415) 528-3172.

LA ORIGINS '86

July 3-6, 1986

At Los Angeles Airport Hyatt Hotel, Los Angeles CA. Adventure gaming. Contact: Diverse Talents, Inc., Box 8399, Long Bch CA 90808, (213) 420-3675.

For further information contact the convention organizers directly.

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PREDAWN BATTLE

By Linda D. Woeltjen

Predawn battle with a giant cockroach . . .
DM, did you have to roll this wandering monster now?
All I had in mind was a quick visit to the bathroom,
Then back to my warm bed and dragon-prowl.

I am no match for this dark creature,
Scuttling over cold blue tile,
Skulking by the shadowed baseboard,
Leering an imagined smile.

Unprepared am I for combat.
I came unarmored and unarmed.
(I left my glasses on the headboard.)
I have no magic, no beetle charm.

Aha! A flash of long-forgotten
Weapon down beneath the sink.
A careful probing of dusty cabinet,
Blurred vision of the runes I seek
With haste, I rip away the wrapper,
The air is filled with ominous fumes,
I place the ivory coffin-box
In a night-black corner of the room.

Once more within my blanket cavern,
I lead the dragon to its fate
Half-wondering if that other monster
Is yet entrapped by sticky bait.



NEW GAMES

Continued from page 43

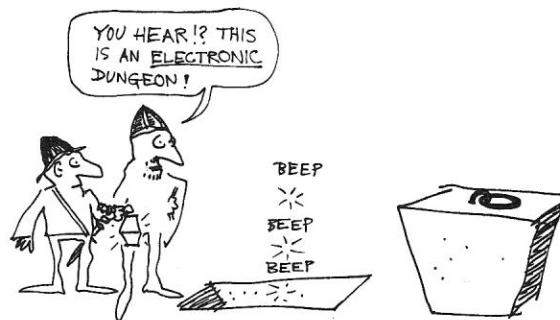
Wabbit Wampage (Pacesetter, boxed, \$15) by Mark D. Acres. For 2-4 players age 12 to adult. Cartoon madness! Adult strategy! "The ultimate game of mindless mayhem! All it takes is a strategy, a lot of luck, and a mean sense of humor—then maybe you'll survive the fun." Available thru *Sleuth* (order PA-6002).

WARGAMES

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Waterloo. The . . . format includes four independent games . . . Additionally, the entire Battle . . . can be played by joining the . . . maps of the four games." Complexity level low, 2-3 hours, 2-4 players. Available thru *Sleuth* (order TS-3016).

Cobra: Game of the Normandy Breakout (TSR, boxed \$20) by B.E. Hessel and David James Ritchie. "From D-Day to the break-out, the *Cobra* game allows you to play out the Allied invasion of Normandy and the break-out from the peninsula in a complete, expanded game." Complexity level medium, 2-8 hours, 2 players. Available thru *Sleuth* (order TS-3010). □



The Maltese Falcon by *Dashiell Hammett*. This American classic is the seminal novel of hard-boiled detective fiction. Set in San Francisco in 1928, it is the story of the search for a priceless statuette by tough, wise-cracking Sam Spade, torn between duty toward his murdered partner and opportunity for personal gain. This edition is illustrated with 47 historic photographs of actual locations mentioned in the novel. Extensive notes accompany the photographs and relate them to the action. (NPP-156-8 hardback 291pp illustrated \$20.00)

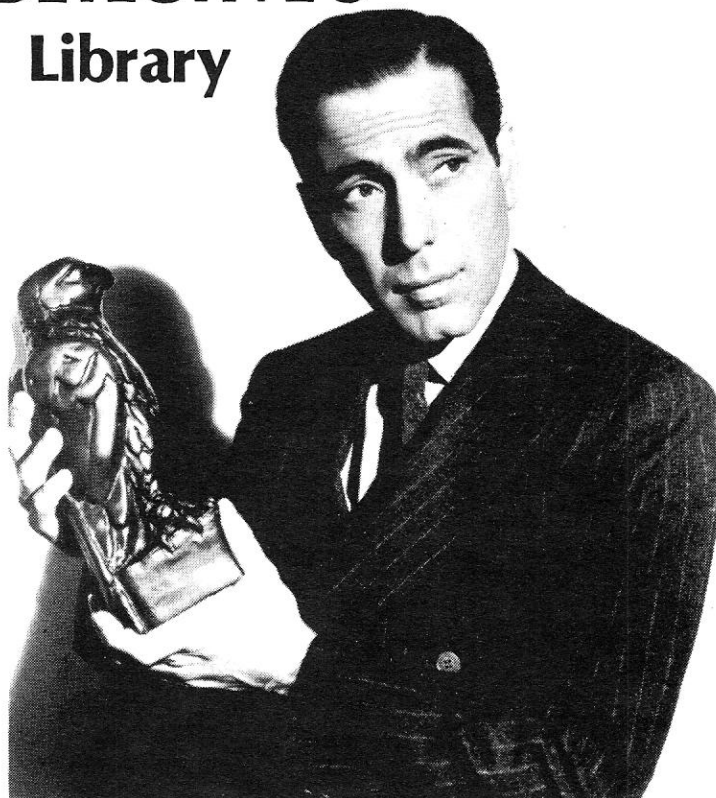
Chandlertown: The Los Angeles of Philip Marlowe by *Edward Thorpe*. Here is Los Angeles through the eyes of Philip Marlowe, the hard-boiled private detective featured in such renowned Raymond Chandler novels as *The Big Sleep* and *Farewell, My Lovely*. Colorful, corrupt, glamorous, and dangerous—that was L.A. during the thirties and forties, and in *Chandlertown* Edward Thorpe recreates its vivid landscape. Photographs throughout the text illustrate the landmarks cited by Chandler in his novels. (SMP-12851-7 hardback 112pp illustrated \$12.95)

The Maltese Falcon Statuette. Exact replica of the original used in the movie and held by Humphrey Bogart as Sam Spade. Weighs seven lbs. but we'll pay the extra postage. Nearly a foot tall, buy a pair and use them as bookends! (SL-1001-1 \$24.95)

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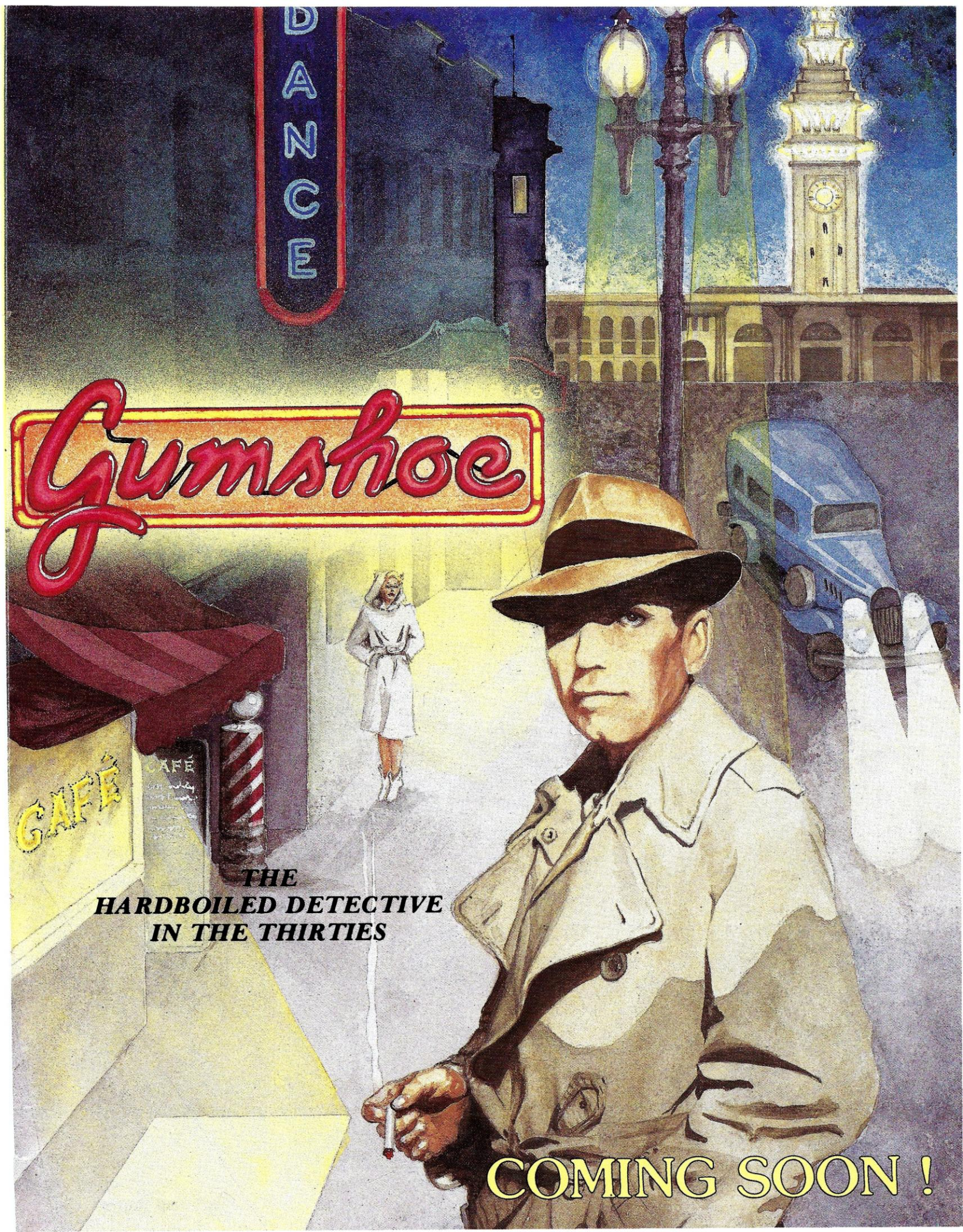
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NEW GAMES IN PRINT

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NEW ADVENTURE GAMES

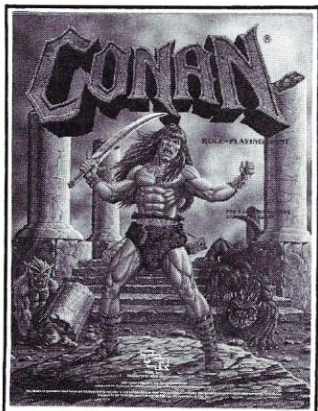
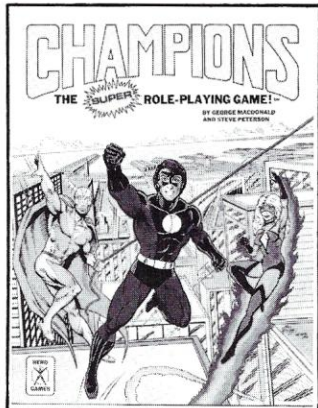
Champions: The Super Role-Playing Game (Hero Games, boxed, \$14.95) by George MacDonald and Steve Peterson. Third edition. *Available thru Sleuth (order HE-01B).*

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Twilight: 2000 (GDW, boxed, \$18) by Frank Chadwick. "... a complete role-playing system for survival in a devastated post-holocaust world. Rules cover character generation, living off the land, encounters, combat, skills and skill improvement, medicine, vehicles, ammunition, trade and much more." *Available thru Sleuth (order GD-500).*

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tastic armies with miniature figures or die-cut counters and fight incredible battles against the forces of evil!... You can create your own battles or play the exciting scenarios—including an epic Dragonlance adventure battle!" *Available thru Sleuth (order TS-1019).*

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C5: The Bane of Llywelyn (TSR, 32pp + maps, \$6) by Bob Blake. Official Competition Adventure for 6-10 characters, levels 4-7. "The Bane of Llywelyn concludes the epic adventure of the Prophecy of Brie—can you insure that the quest will be a success?" *Available thru Sleuth (order TS-9109).*

DL6: Dragons of Ice. (TSR, 32pp + maps, \$6) by Douglas Niles. Beginning the second book of the Dragonlance Saga. "The refugees from Pax Tharkas are safe in the dwarven kingdom of Thorbardin. You are in the ancient port of Tarsis searching for ships to bear them out of the dragonarmy's reach." An adventure for character levels 6-9. *Available thru Sleuth (order TS-9140).*

REF1: Dungeon Master's Screen. (TSR, \$6) by Bob Blake. "... Consisting of two durable card-stock screens, it places all those much used tables at your fingertips. One screen for the DM with all the important combat, weapon and saving throw charts; the second for the Player." *Available thru Sleuth (order TS-9146).*

FOR CHAMPIONS

Enemies III (Hero Games, 32pp, \$5.95) by Andrew Robinson, et al. "Here are another 27 villains which may be used as villain group fillers, throwaway encounters, or as the basis for world-threatening campaigns." Includes a complete villain index for the *Champions* series. *Available thru Sleuth (order HE-16).*

FOR CHILL

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32pp, \$6) "A series of ghastly murders has occurred worldwide... there is one clue... The murders have occurred in cities visited by a touring museum exhibit... Can a horror from ancient Egypt be walking today's streets?" *Available thru Sleuth (order PS-2009).*

FOR DUNGEONS & DRAGONS

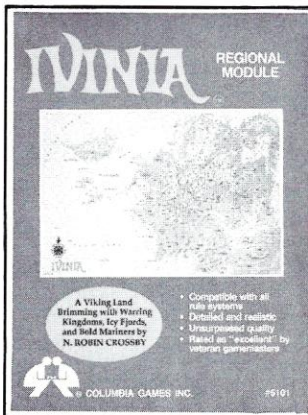
AC4: The Book of Marvelous Magic (TSR, 76pp, \$10) by Frank Mentzer and Gary Gygax. Also compatible with *Advanced Dungeons & Dragons*. "(This book) is the ultimate sourcebook on magical items and their twists and quirks. Over 500 new magical items are described in detail." *Available thru Sleuth (order TS-9116).*

B8: The Journey to the Rock (TSR, 32pp, \$6) by Jim Bambra. Lone Hero Expert Adventure. "... an adventure for one player and one dungeon master, featuring a lone elf against the forces of evil." *Available thru Sleuth (order TS-9108).*

FOR HARN

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Ivinia Regional Module (Columbia Games, boxed, \$20) by N. Robin Crossby. "... compatible with any rule system... You can now create and plan your own campaigns, quests, and viking adventures within a complex and realistic background, confident that this world will unfold as it should."



Available thru Sleuth (order CO-5101).

FOR INDIANA JONES

IJAC1: Judge's Survival Pack (TSR, 16pp + cutouts, \$6.50) by Harold Johnson, et al. "... features... vehicles... from *Raiders of the Lost Ark*... expansions to the chase rules including stunts and shortcuts... new flowcharts and hazard tables... a second referee screen... a combat computer... ruin maps and a random ruin generation system..." *Available thru Sleuth (order TS-6754).*

FOR LOREMASTER

Creatures & Treasures (ICE, 96pp, \$10) by S. Coleman Charlton and Lee O. Short. "... game stats for a variety of animals, descriptions and game stats for fantastic beasts and monsters, tables for generating random treasures and encounters, guidelines for converting creatures from other major systems to *Rolemaster* and *MERP*." *Available thru Sleuth (order IC-1400).*

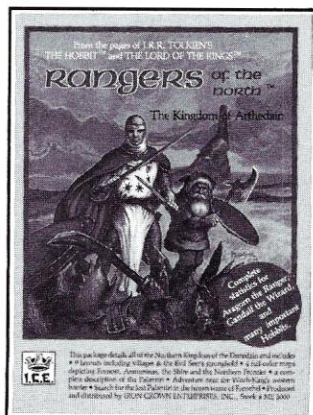
FOR

MARVEL SUPER HEROES

MHAC5: Project: Wideawake (TSR, 32pp \$6) by Jeff Grubb. Official Character Roster. "They are the children of the atom... They are mutants, hated and feared by mere humans. Some... are protectors of humanity. Others... want to be the masters of humanity." Describes X-Men, the New Mutants, and other important mutants of the Marvel Universe. *Available thru Sleuth (order TS-6861).*

FOR MIDDLE EARTH

Rangers of the North: The Kingdom of Arthedain (ICE, 56pp + maps, \$10) by John David Ruemmler. "... details



all of the Northern Kingdom of the Dunedain and includes 9 layouts including villages & the Evil Seer's stronghold, 4 full-color maps . . . , a complete description of the Palantiri, (an) adventure near the Witch-King's western border. . . ." Available thru *Sleuth* (order IC-3000).

FOR PALADIUM RPG

Book II: Old Ones (Palladium, 210pp, \$14.95) by Kevin Siembieda. "The most comprehensive book of cities ever! Includes 21 forts, 34 towns and cities, over half a dozen adventures, monks, illusionists, and the dreaded Old Ones." Available thru *Sleuth* (order PA-453).

FOR RUNEQUEST

Monster Coliseum (Avalon Hill, boxed, \$16) by Steve Perrin and Dan Nolte. Arena combat & chariot racing. "Derived from Roman examples, *Monster Coliseum* adapts gladiatorial types and coliseum combat procedures to the RuneQuest rules, explains coliseum construction methods, describes pregame ceremony, and instances types of combats." Available thru *Sleuth* (order AH-8573).

FOR STAR ACE

First Strike on Paradise (Pacesetter, 32pp, \$6) by Jon Brunelle. ". . . has Star Team members trying to escape the planet Wilderness. The planet becomes a deathmaze for the unwary!" Available thru *Sleuth* (order PA-4005).

The Gemini Conspiracy (Pacesetter, 32pp, \$6) by Mark Acres. "One imperial dreadnought means trouble . . . But three dreadnoughts spell disaster . . . Sure you can outrun the ships. But can you escape the burn of their . . . plasma guns, all twelve aimed straight at your tail?" Available thru *Sleuth* (order PS-4006).

FOR STAR FRONTIERS

SFKH3: Face of the Enemy (TSR, 32pp \$6) by Ken Rolston. *Knight Hawks* Adventure. The

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Whom the Gods Destroy: The Adventures of Odysseus (Pacesetter, 32pp, \$6) by Michael Williams. ". . . sends Time Corps Agents to help Odysseus home. Do angry Greek gods or aliens bar his path?" Available thru *Sleuth* (order PA-3009).

FOR TOP SECRET

TS008: Operation: Seventh Seal (TSR, 32pp \$6) by Evan Robinson. "The terrorist group Four Horsemen . . . has issued the following threat: In three days, the Horsemen will detonate at least one 10-megaton thermonuclear device . . . The terrorists' demand: \$1 billion in uncut diamonds within three days, or the bomb will be detonated." Available thru *Sleuth* (order TS-7610).

FOR TRAVELLER

Adventure 13: Signal GK (GDW, 48pp booklet, \$6) by Marc W. Miller. "Signal GK—the Vilani interstellar distress signal. When starships are in trouble, they use it like SOS or Mayday. Now Travellers can embark on an adventure through the Solomani Rim, and never be sure when they will hear the signal, or need to send it." Available thru *Sleuth* (order GD-341).

Alien Module 4: Zhodani (GDW, 49pp, \$7) by Marc W. Miller, et al. Encounters with

the Psionic Masters. "In a culture where psionics is an accepted talent, available to all with high enough potential, the very fabric of society is changed. Those with the talent are naturally the elite; those without are the proletariat." Available thru *Sleuth* (order GD-258).

FOR TWILIGHT:2000

The Free City of Krakow (GDW, 44pp, \$7) by William H. Keith, Jr. "This module is more than just a single adventure . . . it is a richly detailed setting for dozens of adventures. It contains a detailed description of the city of Krakow and its environs in the year 2000." Available thru *Sleuth* (order GD-501).

ENDLESS QUEST BOOKS

From the Crimson Crystal Adventure series (TSR, 144pp pocketbooks, \$2.95 each). Comes with a special red screen that reveals important visual clues to lead you along the right path. "Pick a Path to Adventure."

Adventure 1: Riddle of the Griffin by Susan Lawson. ". . . you now have the opportunity to rid your homeland of its oppressive ruler . . . But to do so, you must leave the security of your father's farm to face the gauntlet of the griffin and solve its riddle. Do you have the courage to pass this ultimate test of your new powers?" Available thru *Sleuth* (order TS-8926).

Adventure 2: Search for the Pegasus by Roger E. Moore. "You must rescue your dear friend . . . from the Blue Hag's hideous torture . . . (Y)ou call on the aid of your most trusted friends . . . Though the three of you have an average height of only three and a half feet, you make a determined band as you set out to defeat the Blue Hag." Available thru *Sleuth* (order TS-8927).

SUPER

ENDLESS QUEST BOOKS

Adventure Gamebook 1: Prisoners of Pax Tharkas (TSR, 192pp, \$2.50) by Morris Simon. Uses simple role-playing game system; character stat card included. ". . . you are transported to the danger-filled world of the Dragonlance legend, where you find yourself the prisoner of evil Lord Verminaard and his strange draconian followers." Available thru *Sleuth* (order TS-8951).

CARTOON SHOW BOOKS

Based on the *Dungeons & Dragons* cartoon show (TSR, 80pp booklets, \$2.25 each).

Book 1: Tower of Midnight Dreams by Margaret Weis. "Tiamat, the five-headed dragon, is hovering above, ready to attack you. There is no escape from the

Tower of Midnight Dreams. What will you do?"

Book 2: Backward Magic by Jean Blashfield. "Shadow demons are trying to pull Eric into a deep, dark cave. He could disappear forever! Eric might be a pest, but he's your friend, too, and you've got to save him—fast!"

Book 3: The Witch's Spell Book by Linda Jacobs. "Pig-faced orcs hold your friends prisoner. Venger insists that he'll keep them in his dungeon forever unless you agree to help him combat Tiamat, the five-headed dragon, who is destroying the Golden Woods."

Book 4: The Maze and the Magic Dragon by Linda Lowery. "Stuck inside Venger's maze you and Eric have just landed inside the mouth of a monster. You have to get out fast, before you're swallowed whole!"

SOURCEBOOKS

The following Palladium Books are all by Matthew Balent (Palladium, 50pp, \$5.95 each).

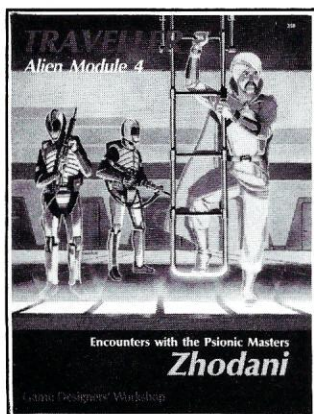
Weapons & Armour. ". . . contains 35 types of armour, each clearly illustrated with annotations. Armour types span the world and includes European, Asian, Indian, and Japanese. The weapons section depicts over 600 different weapons, from knives and swords to polearms and axes." Available thru *Sleuth* (order PA-404).

Weapons & Castles. ". . . outlines the development of European castles, each illustrated and complete with floor plans. Contains two weapon sections; the first details a variety of bows and crossbows, including the Chinese repeating crossbow . . . The second section is devoted to siege equipment and their use." Available thru *Sleuth* (order PA-405).

Exotic Weapons. ". . . spot lights (sic) many of the strange and unusual weapons listed in *Weapons & Armour* as well as a host of new lethal oddities. Fascinating swords, knives, maces, war clubs, axes, whips, polearms and others to delight and intrigue you." Available thru *Sleuth* (order PA-409).

BOARDGAMES

Black Morn Manor (Pacesetter, boxed, \$15) by Troy Denning. For 2-6 players age 12 to adult. Build the board as you play! "A creature of unspeakable evil dwells within the walls of Black Morn Manor . . . and you must destroy it! You must move with speed and strike with precision, or fall prey to . . . who knows what?" Available thru *Sleuth* (order PA-6001).



DUNE

THE CAST (In Alphabetical Order)

Lady Jessica... Francesca Annis
The Baron's
Doctor... Leonardo Cimino
Piter De Vries... Brad Dourif
Padishah Emperor
Shaddam IV... Jose Ferrer
Shadout Mapes... Linda Hunt
Thufir Hawat... Freddie Jones
Duncan Idaho... Richard Jordan
Paul Atreides... Kyle MacLachlan
Princess
Irluan... Virginia Madsen
Reverend Mother
Ramallo... Silvano Mangano
Stilgar... Everett McGill
Baron Vladimir Harkonnen
... Kenneth McMillan
Nefud... Jack Nance
Reverend Mother Gaius
Helen Mohiam... Sian Phillips
Duke Leto
Atreides... Jurgen Prochnow
The Beast Rabban... Paul Smith
Gurney
Halleck... Patrick Stewart
Feyd Rautha... Sting
Doctor Wellington
Yueh... Dean Stockwell
Doctor Kynes... Max Von Sydow
Alia... Alicia Roanne Witt
Chani... Sean Young

THE CREDITS

Produced by... Rafaella DeLaurentiis
Directed by... David Lynch
Screenplay by... David Lynch
Based on the novel by... Frank Herbert
Photographed by... Freddie Francis
Production Designer... Anthony Masters
Edited by... Anthony Gibbs
Casting by... Jane Jenkins, C.S.A.
Music Composed & Performed by... TOTO
Associate Producer... Jose Lopez Rodero
Mechanical Special Effects by... Kit West
Creatures Created by... Carlo Rambaldi
Special Photographic Effects by... Barry Nolan
Additional Special Visual Effects by... Albert J. Whitlock

FRANK HERBERT His Book/Their Movie

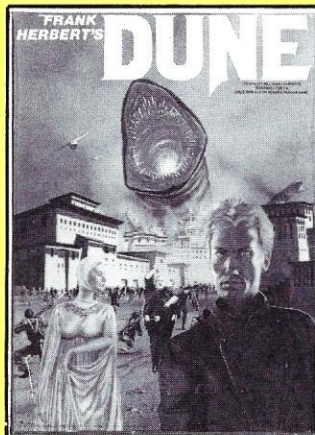
Interview By John Nubbin

After twenty-two rejections from most of the major publishing houses, Frank Herbert finally found someone with faith in the first chapter of his magnum opus at the Chilton Book Company. That was twenty-five years and 13 million sales ago.

After winning every major award the science-fiction field has to offer, it only took ten years for someone to option the rights to make a film. Fifteen years after that first option, a motion picture version of the novel voted the "Best Science-Fiction Novel Ever Written" has been released. It may not be the best science-fiction film ever made, but it is near the top of the heap.

Dune, the film, is a major accomplishment for the modern cinema. It is nearly unbelievable that such a staggeringly beautiful and powerful film could have been produced at this time, given the state of the science-fiction film these days, but it was, and most everyone connected with the production is as pleased as can be.

Rather than go on at length over the film's merits, however, this issue we decided to leave that up to someone else. We were able to meet author Frank Herbert for an hour during which he discussed both his novel, and the breathtaking bit of wonder which has been produced from it.



Q: I know you feel David Lynch really pulled the film together beautifully. Is there anything special about his background that you feel made him exceptionally perfect for *Dune*?

A: You know David was an oil painter; he comes into movies from a very strange direction. People ask me if the sets match my original vision of it all, and to be truthful I have to say that some do, and some don't, and some are better.

Q: None worse?

A: No. Not at all

Q: Then he's matched or topped your own interpretations throughout?

A: Yes; as far as the visuals are concerned. But what would you expect with Tony Masters as the art director, for God's sake? He didn't win those Oscars sitting home twiddling his thumbs.

Q: What was his best achievement—what did he bring to the screen so perfectly you just couldn't believe it?

A: The Great Hall. It was absolutely beautiful. I just stood there and said, "boy." And the castle at Caladan was magnificent. It was a real metaphor for the feudal society I had postulated.

Q: And the creatures and the costumes, how does it all come across?

A: Oh, God, the costumes are eye-sockers! They did a great job with all the artifacts; they really did. They went all out for everything. At the wrap party, a lot of the actors and actresses and technical people kept coming up to me to tell me how sorry they were it was over.

Q: Well, you do seem happy about the way things went.

A: I'm absolutely delighted. I'd heard so many horror stories about books being butchered by being made into a film, and bad science-fiction films coming from DeLaurentiis, but this is not one. All the characters of *Dune* are in it; there is character development in it—it's not a comic book for the screen at all.

Q: The performers are responsible for character development to a large part. Was there anyone who did such a remarkable job they brought tears to your eyes?

A: I thought Freddie Jones in the Thufir Hawat part really did a super job. And (Kenneth) McMillan as the Baron is absolutely hideous. You hate him.

Q: You're supposed to.

A: Yes, yes. And the same with Sting. I was surprised by Sting. He wasn't a pretty face with naught behind it—he was everything Feyd is supposed to be. Francesca Annis was also a surprise to me. I met her the first night I was in Mexico City (where most of the principal photography for the movie was shot), and I looked at this beautiful woman and I thought, "My God, she's Jessica; there was no doubt about it. Now I thought Kyle MacLachlan did a bang-up job as Paul; he wasn't the way I had visualized Paul, but the spirit and the intensity are there—he plays the part. He dominates the screen when he is on it.

Q: Which is helpful, considering that this is Paul's story. Which makes it a good time to ask you what that story is. Where did *Dune* come from? How did you decide to write such a book? Where did all the background come from? Start anywhere you like.

A: I was going to do a story on the messianic impulse in human society. Why do we follow charismatic leaders? I had a small insight once, that charismatic leaders are dangerous, and that we should question them because they are just people and they can make mistakes. But the mistakes of the human being as leader are amplified by those who follow him without question. So I decided I would explore this propensity human beings have to do things like go to Jonestown and drink Kool-Aid. You get a mad leader, and that mad-

ADVENTURER'S LIBRARY

Available thru Sleuth

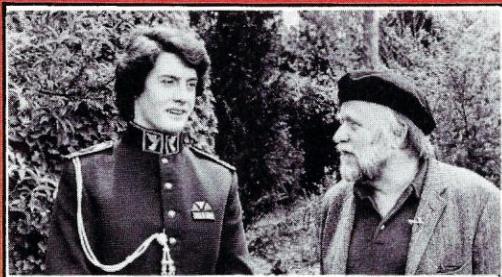
THE GAME

DUNE: Space Civilization Power Struggle Game. (AH-824 \$16.00)

MODULES

Spice Harvest. Recreates the conflicts for control of the life-preserving mineral. (AH-8241 \$10.00)

The Duel. Recreates the situation that builds to a crescendo in the movie. (AH-8242 \$14.00)



Star Kyle MacLachlan as the lead character Paul Atreides with author Frank Herbert. Copyright © 1984 Universal City Studios, Inc. and Dino De Laurentiis Corporation.



Sian Phillips as Gaius Helen Mohiam and Jose Ferrer as Shaddam IV. Copyright © 1984 Universal City Studios, Inc. and Dino De Laurentiis Corporation.

ness is actually contagious. People follow such people and I could see there was a story in there, so I started doing my research. Comparative religions, anthropology, you name it. Now at the same time, I went down to a Department of Agriculture experimental station on the coast of Oregon to do a newspaper magazine story on their work. They had been extremely successful in developing ways to control the movement of sand dunes. In fact, successful to the point that there were delegations from all over the world to learn from us. I looked at this; I flew over it, took photographs from the air, and it got me interested in how we inflict ourselves on this planet. And then, about a year later, I woke up to the fact that I had a perfect setting for the story I wanted to tell. A planet which was entirely dunes, entirely desert. So then I finally started to concentrate on the kinds of research I was doing. Desert ecology, geology, the flora and fauna of same, and then, I went down to the Sonora Desert and lived for a while so I could experience it all first hand.

Q: How long 'a while'?

A: About three months.

Q: Are we talking about driving out from the hotel every day and kicking around?

A: No. We're talking about renting a place out in the desert, off of a dirt road. Living with the roadrunners and rattlesnakes and all the rest all around you. There's a lot of life in the desert.

Q: So, after all that, were you ready to start writing?

A: No, not really. I hadn't finished loading the system, as I call it, getting together all the information I would need to give me that sense of verisimilitude of what it would really be like to live in a place where water was so precious that people did not cry, that the body was salvaged for its water after death, and so on. So I went back to the drawing board, and took some more books out of library, and I also developed a system of going to the experts. Being a fairly good interviewer, I would go knocking on professors' doors and say, "Hey, you know something I'd like to know. I can do something for both of us; I'll get an article out of you, which will be published," which is what all professors need, "and I'll get the information I need." We would knock out articles in a week most of them would swear they couldn't have written in three months. And they got published, and I got what I needed.

Q: So then...

A: Then, I sat down, and started to write. And a year and a half later, I had a book.

Q: How long before the public had the same book?

A: A long time. It was turned down twenty-two times.

Q: Twenty-two times, eh?

A: That's right.

Q: We'll leave the implications of that one alone for now and try to concentrate on the story itself, and not the story behind it. When did you decide you hadn't told everything there was to tell and start on *Dune Messiah*?

A: Well, the three books were always one story in my head. I had written parts of *Dune Messiah* and *Children Of Dune* before *Dune* was finished. I wrote the last chapter of *Dune* long before I finished it. Mostly because I knew where it was going, so I just went there.

Q: Did you plan the others that followed then?

A: No; I planned three books—to do a *rondelet*, to invert, because I was talking about messianic impulse; that was the thrust of the original idea. So I wanted to create a very charismatic leader, who became a messiah, and you would follow the leader for the proper reasons, he was a great guy, you see. But then, the power structure occurs; the theory about absolute power corrupting absolutely, I don't think that really nails it. I don't think that power always corrupts, but I do think that power attracts the corruptible. And so, when you get a power structure, you tend to get a lot of converted people into it.

So I had the idea of taking this messiah, building the power structure around him, having the central book invert the whole picture of the charismatic leader. Then, the third book gets to show the aftermath of it all.

Q: And that takes us far ahead of ourselves. After all, the film is only from the first book.

A: Correct. And not every scene of it is in the movie. You wouldn't sit for a fourteen-hour, butt-killing epic, would you?

Q: The way this one looks, maybe four hours, but no, not

fourteen. Of course, the director has said people should go and read the book before they see the film. Would you agree?

A: I would. Now, I'm pretty close to the book, but I had the wierd experience of seeing the film, and having the sense that some of the scenes that were left out merely happen off stage.

Q: So you don't feel anything was missed?

A: Well, there was only one scene I would have liked that they did not include. The Banquet scene. I understand the necessities of it—it did not fit the continuity of the script they had written, and it would have cost a lot of money, but David, in the final proof, has done a magnificent job. The film begins as *Dune* begins, and it ends as *Dune* ends, and I hear my dialogue all the way through it.

Q: With so much missing, though, do you feel that maybe the film's major concentration is on the book's violence, and the sandworms, rather than on the core of the story as you described it earlier?

A: Oh, those things are there, and they really look marvelous, they really do—but the feel is for the politics and the people. David has a way—as he had in *The Elephant Man*—of giving you the feel of the situation, the attitudes of a people and an environment, without going into a lot of detail.

Q: So, the short of it is that we both agree, *Dune* the film is great, and you are very personally pleased with the way everything has turned out?

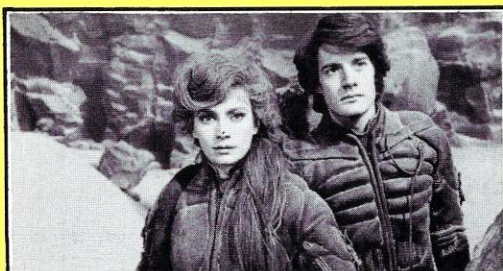
A: Simple answer; yes.

Q: Then I'll wrap with a whimsical question; if you could have stepped in front of the camera without feeling you'd be recognized, hiding out in the background somewhere, what scene would you have wanted to be in?

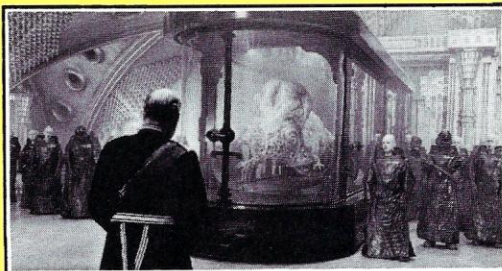
A: In the finale, in the confrontation scene between Feyd-Rautha and Paul. Just as one of, oh, the Fremen in the background.

Q: Well, it's a shame you didn't. I think you could have gotten away with it. People have been a little too caught up in things to be watching for faces.

A: I hope so. Everything has gone just perfectly, as if someone was up there watching over me. Before the whole project, I'd heard so many horror stories, but I went into it all with the feeling that there had to be an exception to all the tales of woe sooner or later. I'm just delighted that *Dune* got to be the exception. □



Francesca Annis as Lady Jessica, mother of Paul Atreides (Kyle MacLachlan). Copyright © 1984 Universal City Studios, Inc. and Dino De Laurentiis Corporation.



The Padishah Emperor has an audience with the Space Guild Navigator. Copyright © 1984 Universal City Studios, Inc. and Dino De Laurentiis Corporation.



A Letter from Gigi

By Miss Gigi D'Arn

Dear Tadashi,

ORIGINS is approaching and I've made my reservation with United. I hope I finally make it to this annual game convention which, though not as large as TSR's GEN CON, is certainly more clubby and attracts a much more mature crowd, some trekking all the way from England, Sweden, Italy and Australia. Maybe I'll get lucky and find Mr. Right. Wish me luck.

DC Heroes is finally out! The cover of Mayfair's adventure game was illustrated by well-known comic-book artist GEORGE PEREZ... Mayfair also announces three more releases for their Role Aids line, now the second largest series of modules for fantasy gaming... Even though Mayfair publishes the DC superhero game, and TSR the Marvel, Mayfair is the publisher of the 1986 *Marvel Super Heroes* calendar. Along with the covers from twelve notable issues of Marvel Comics, it features Marvel Universe trivia.

Rumor tells me the Avalon Hill Game Company is in poor shape. The design staff hasn't produced much lately and the management is experiencing burn out... But their latest releases include *Advanced Squad Leader*, *Devil's Den*, and a CRAIG TAYLOR original, *Russian Front*... And in their *RuneQuest 3* line, expect to see soon two sets of character sheets, *Human Adventurers* and *Non-Human Adventurers*, and the long-awaited *Vikings* module... Avalon Hill has a new director of software R&D: leaving Coleco for the job is ARNOLD HENDRIK.

Also leaving Coleco is LAWRENCE SHICK to pursue private consulting. The future of Coleco's electronics division is unknown at this time.

Armchair detectives, listen closely: Cal State-Long Beach has a new Center for Sherlock Holmes Studies where Sherlockians meet monthly to exchange their views about the detective. The center is open to off-campus visitors.

Yet another superhero game appears. Ragnarok Enterprises of Washington DC announces *Challengers*, featuring over three hundred skills and powers. To appear this June.

Sleuth Publications is extend-

ing their \$10,000 *Queen's Park Affair* contest to September 30. The San Francisco CA game company deduced that, since the concurrent British contest ends on that date, it would only be fair to give the American sleuths the same deadline.

TOME/Clash of Arms announces the publication of KEVIN ZUCKER's *The Emperor Returns*, covering 30 days of the Waterloo campaign using Avalon Hill's *Napoleon at Bey* system.

FASA's *Dr. Who* adventure game is a success but there was a problem and the company apparently is forced to change the box cover. The first print run sold out quickly but the second will have to wait for the new cover rendition. A collector's item?

Victory Games' latest releases for their *James Bond 007* adventure game are *A View to a Kill*, based on the latest spy thriller movie, and *Villains*, a book of eight villains and their organizations.

Yet another *Traveller* magazine is launched. The approved *Travellers' Digest* comes from Boise ID and the first issue is set for a June 1 release.

Is England's Game Workshop going to buy TSR?... Did California venture capitalists buy 80% of the Lake Geneva WI game company?... Is Lorimar involved?... In any event, what is official is that the board of directors has elected E. GARY GYGAX as president and CEO of TSR, Inc... Mr. Gygax's current projects include: *Unearthed Arcana*, an AD&D hardbound supplement scheduled for a June release; *Temple of Elemental Evil* which will be AD&D modules T1-T4; the *Isle of the Ape* campaign for the *World of Greyhawk* setting, due for an August release; *Oriental Adventures*, an AD&D hardbound supplement scheduled for fall; and *Sage of Old City*, a fantasy novel, first in the Greyhawk Adventure series, also scheduled for fall... Also scheduled for a June release is TSR's first original game for the SPI wargame line. Although the same title was used for a previous SPI game, *World War II* by DOUGLAS NILES is a brand-new, never-before-seen treatment of the most important conflict in the 20th century. Strategic level with monthly

turns, the game combines air, sea, and land combat... And another TSR June release is *Party Zone Game 1: Spy Ring*, a "party in a box" where the host sends out special invitations for guests to play secret agents trying to fulfill a secret mission.

FGU is set to release a new edition of DENNIS SUSTARE's *Swordbearer*.

Congratulations to KERIE L. CAMPBELL, a *Different Worlds* contributor, on her recent marriage. I wish both the bride and the groom many years of love and happiness.

I guess you don't have STEVE PURCELL doing our covers anymore. The talented Oakland CA artist has stone-stepped *Different Worlds* to doing storyboards for Marvel's latest monthly comic *Hero*. I hope it's a winner.

Pacesetter has announced that a screenplay based on their *Chill* adventure game is under development. They don't give any other details except to say that tentative release date is Spring 1986... Pacesetter is offering \$10,000 to the first person who can figure out the character's identity in their new Instant Adventure game, the Sandman Series. Look for the series first release, *The Map of Halaal*, in late June.

Grenadier Models of Springfield PA has been licensed to do the official *Middle Earth* miniatures. The first two boxes will feature the Fellowship and the Servants of Sauron.

Please quash the rumor that the "legs" on TSR's *Top Secret* game are from a photograph of me taken some time ago. I wouldn't wear shoes that clash with the dress.

Diverse Talents, Inc., of Long Beach CA is making big plans! They have merged with the Strategicon and will be hosting L.A. ORIGINS in 1986. And they have bought *Fire & Movement* magazine. They have also

formed the Strategicon Adventure Gamer's Association (SAGA) and will publish the journal *The Continuing SAGA*. And finally, they will publish *The V.I.P. of Gaming* magazine, V.I.P. standing for Variants, Interviews, and Profiles. Are they behind schedule yet?

Among the seminars the Game Designers' Guild will be sponsoring at ORIGINS this year are: "Bad Ideas & How to Make Them Work," "The Next Generation in Role-Playing: Sophistication vs. Simplicity," "The Role-Playing Adventures: Crutch or Artform?," and "Why are Play-By-Mail Games Boring?" I hope to attend all them myself but let me know if I don't.

Is it true that the new Play By Mail Association has excluded Schubel & Sons, one of the largest PBM moderating companies, from their board of directors and other committees?

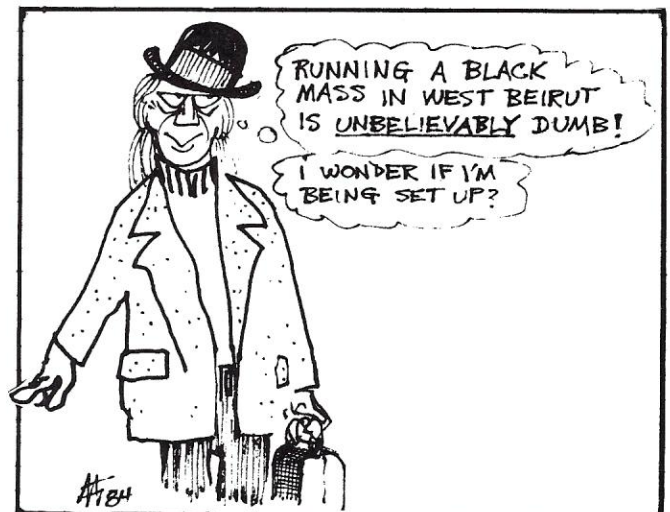
Palladium Books secures two comic book licenses: *The Justice Machine*, which is already out and based on a relatively unknown series, and *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles*. Both will be compatible with Palladium's *Heroes Unlimited*.

Who is this WILLIAM A. BARTON and why is he saying all those bad things about GDW and their *Traveller* products? Could it be because his *Traveller* adventure was rejected by the Illinois publisher?

A Vermont man who changed his name to Coke-Is-It has reached a settlement with Coca-Cola allowing him to keep his name. His attorney calls himself Party of the First Part.

Love,

Gigi



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Pacesetter

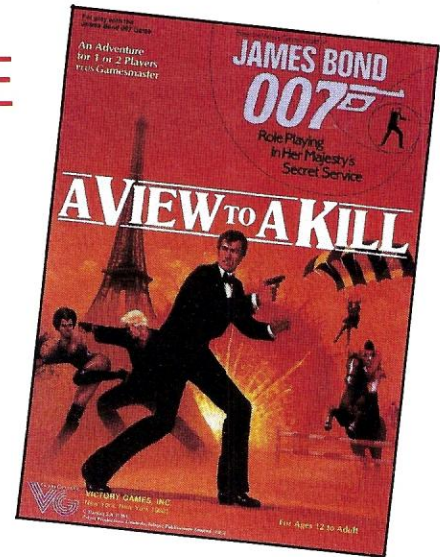
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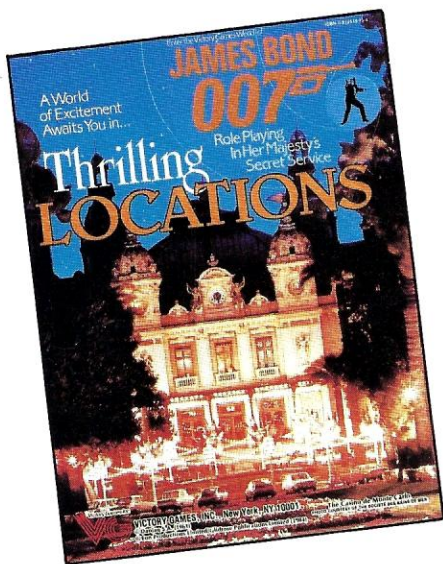
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