

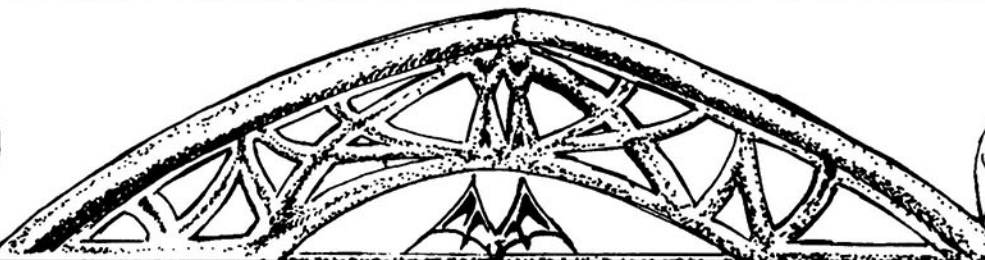
gateways

The Progressive Multi-Media Gaming Aid

- Teenage Mutant
Ninja Turtles
- Tracy Hickman
- Robotech



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FEATURES

- Ninja on the Half Shell.....8**
role-playing with the Turtles
Kevin K. Kresse
- The Many Faces of Zocchi.....11**
a new multi-faceted achievement
- THE Tracy Hickman Interview.....12**
wisdom from the co-creator of
DRAGONLANCE and much more!
Gomez & Antoniou
- Dateline: ROBOTECH.....20**
exclusive media and game news!
- Fringeworthy Reviewed.....22**
gaming on the edge of time
Wayne Koh
- Flipping Through The Dungeoneer's
Survival Guide.....24**
TSR's latest addition
Patricia F. Travis

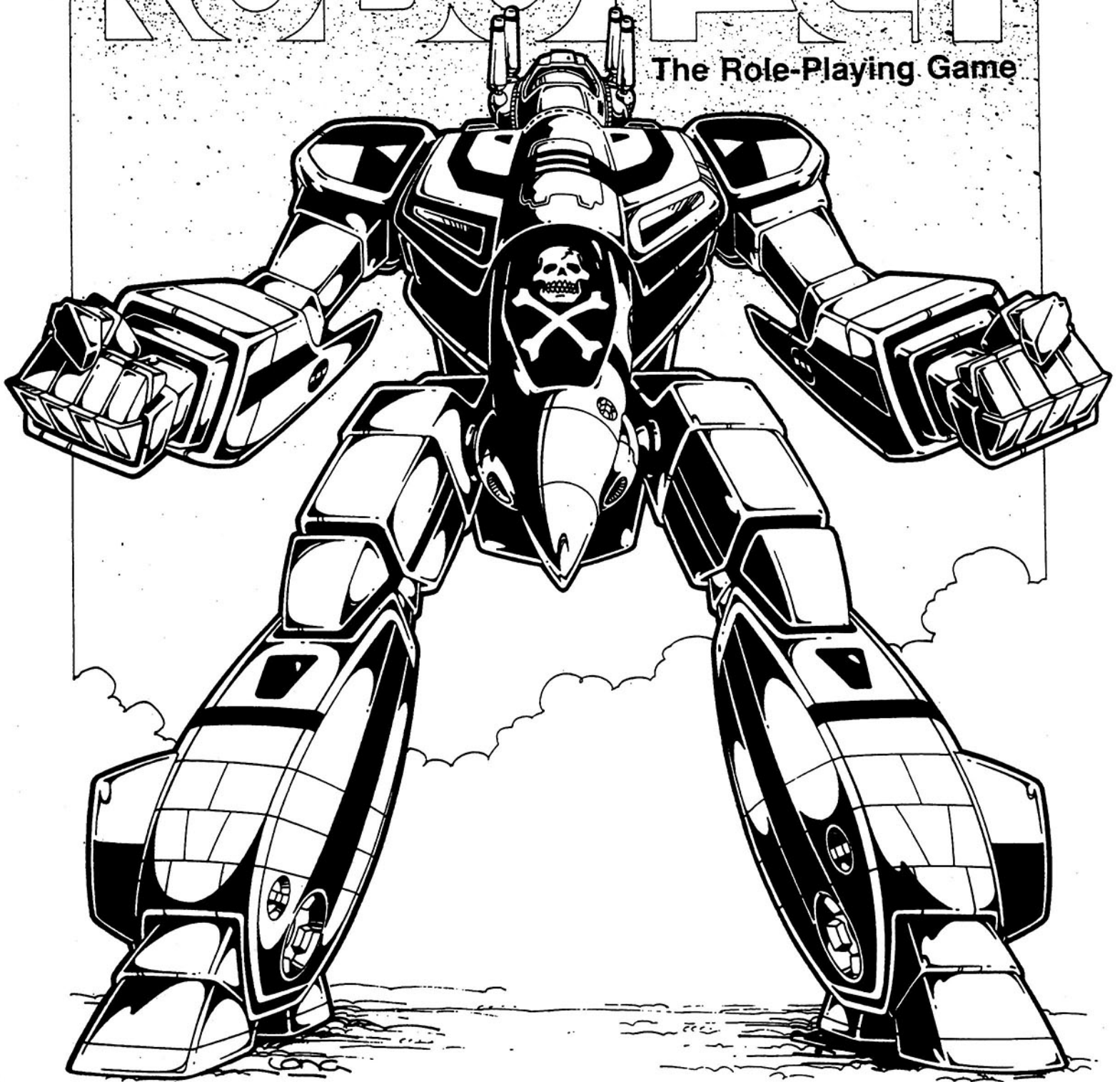
DEPARTMENTS

- From the Tower.....5**
- The Tome.....6**
the how-to's of world making
Jonathan Frater
- Comic Book Forum.....18**
Marvel's New Universe
Bert Hubbard
- Classifieds.....25**
- The Cosmic Streetcorner.....27**

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From The Tower

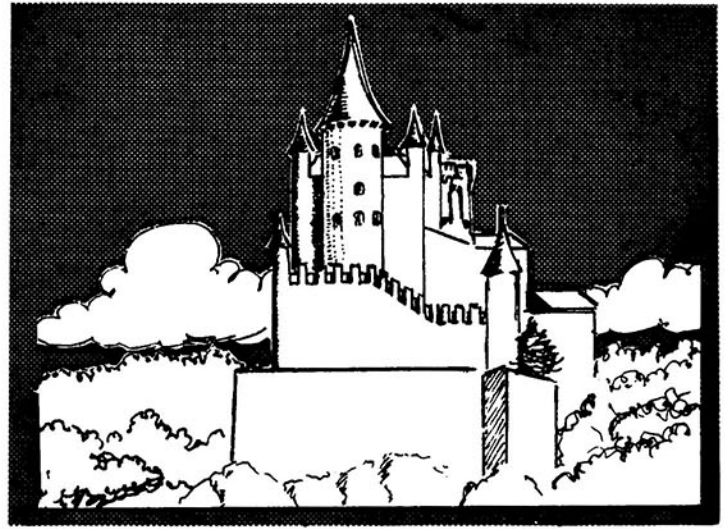
Laura Antoniou
Executive Editor

Inspiration, the very soul of any artist, comes and goes with the contemptuous ease of a 15th level barbarian . . . whenever it damn wants to. With that in mind, an artist must learn to grab it as it's passing through and work on it until it's long gone. Sometimes, however, it can be difficult to understand exactly what form inspiration has chosen to take.

I was on my way to work, when the meeting of bus tire to pothole jolted me out of my usual pre-coffee slumber. I quickly glanced up to determine my position (and a good thing too, because I was almost at my stop), and saw plain white words on a black poster. They read "**You can succeed and change the world.**" Hah, I thought, gathering up my paper. Obviously written by someone who has had their coffee today. But even as I purchased and drank my morning tonic, even as that day's work began, I couldn't get that phrase out of my mind. For some reason, it had special meaning to me. It was when I finally wrote it down that I realized why it sounded so special. Try saying those words to yourself and you might just see why they hold such meaning for people like you and me. "**You can change the world.**"

Isn't that what we do every day in our games? Think about it. Yes, there are failures in RPG's, some so great that they promote conversation years after the fact. But no one starts up or joins a game to "fail and not make any difference." The point, or the soul of roleplaying--fantasy, science fiction, superhero or horror--is to succeed and change the world. And we do it all the time! We are uniquely qualified to take this poster at face value.

You see, it happens to be an unfortunate aspect of life that most people would look at that poster and scoff, thinking that such an idealistic phrase was meaningless in today's world. Those people might look at their own failures and think that a harmless expression like that is mocking them. Change the world?! Who has time to change the world when there are bills to pay, school work to do, work to attend? And how am I supposed to make a difference anyway? And on they would go, giving a million reasons why they **can't** change anything. They don't see that it's just a matter of perspective.



Perhaps they should read this issue's interview with Tracy Hickman, Dragonlance co-author and driven creator extraordinaire. There was once a time when Mr. Hickman was employed in the exciting and rewarding field of movie projection . . . surely not a place to change the world. Yet his last co-authored novel spent 5 weeks on the New York Times bestseller list, an astonishing feat for a book originally inspired by a roleplaying game. He told us some simple, obvious things that no one has ever bothered to say out loud before. There is dignity and wonder in his words. He truly believes in making the "impossible" possible.

For even as a new character in a game struggles through what others might see as minor hazards, each moment of life becomes experience with which the character develops the skills and knowledge to advance through that world. When was the last time you pulled your character back and said, "Gee, I can't do this, it's too dangerous!" Besides, I've got to go home and help out the family business, my dog needs a bath, the little blinking lights on my spaceship aren't working, and no one listens to me anyway, so you'd better get someone else to talk to the King . . ."

Sure, it sounds funny. But it's a pretty dumb way to play. We all have within us the power to succeed and change the world. As roleplayers, we even have the training. I can remember when **Gateways** was only a dream . . . yet here you are, holding it in your hands.

Hey, listen . . . it's lonely working in a tower, even a nice one like mine. I know great things are happening out there, and I'd like to be informed. So if you know someone who did something great (and there's no one you should know better than yourself), I'd like you to write me and tell me about it. I might even open my creaky door and let you have some space around here. Let's spread the word.

The Tome



The Finer Art of World Generation – Part II

Just as a reminder, in my last article I discussed the "basics" of world building, i.e., the various laws of logic, consistency and variety, and a general idea of the various kinds of terrain that can be used.

Since you now have your world, the next logical step would be to add people to the scene. So that's what I'll talk about for part two of this little series, specifically, player characters and non-player characters.

Player Characters

The majority of those familiar with AD&D™ are familiar with the term **player character**, PCs for short. For those who aren't, a PC is a character in the game that is being directly controlled by a player who is not the Game Master (GM).

Now, an important task for the GM, possibly the most important, is to decide just how the players fit into the general scope of things on your world. Obviously, they shouldn't start the game off by becoming world leaders, but don't start them off as peasants, either. The PCs are going to be better than the average inhabitant of your world in terms of skills, possessions, abilities, and so on, but that's essentially what adventures are: the ones who simply aren't happy being just like everybody else. If they were, why would they want to do anything so dangerous as adventuring in the first place? Getting back to the point, I think this decision is best left up to the players themselves.

Most players start off with relatively low level PCs and, as such, should be content to meet low level monsters and such until they work their way up to middle and high level challenges. Needless

to say, an infinite number of possibilities lie along the path to high level. If you allow them to go at their own pace (with some slight jarring by you, of course) and give them challenges that you think that they can deal with, one thing will lead to another. Of course, don't make things **too** easy for them; after all, what's a game without danger, right?

Non-Player Characters

Unlike PCs, Non-Player Characters (NPCs) are directly controlled by the GM. This includes everybody and everything from the Arch-Mage to the peasants in the fields. The NPCs that I'm specifically referring to are the "major NPCs", or the ones with whom the players have the most contact from one day to the next. Other NPCs, the minor ones, are encountered too infrequently or simply aren't important enough to deserve all that much attention by the GM. If and when they are brought up, a little improvisation should be sufficient to run the encounter.

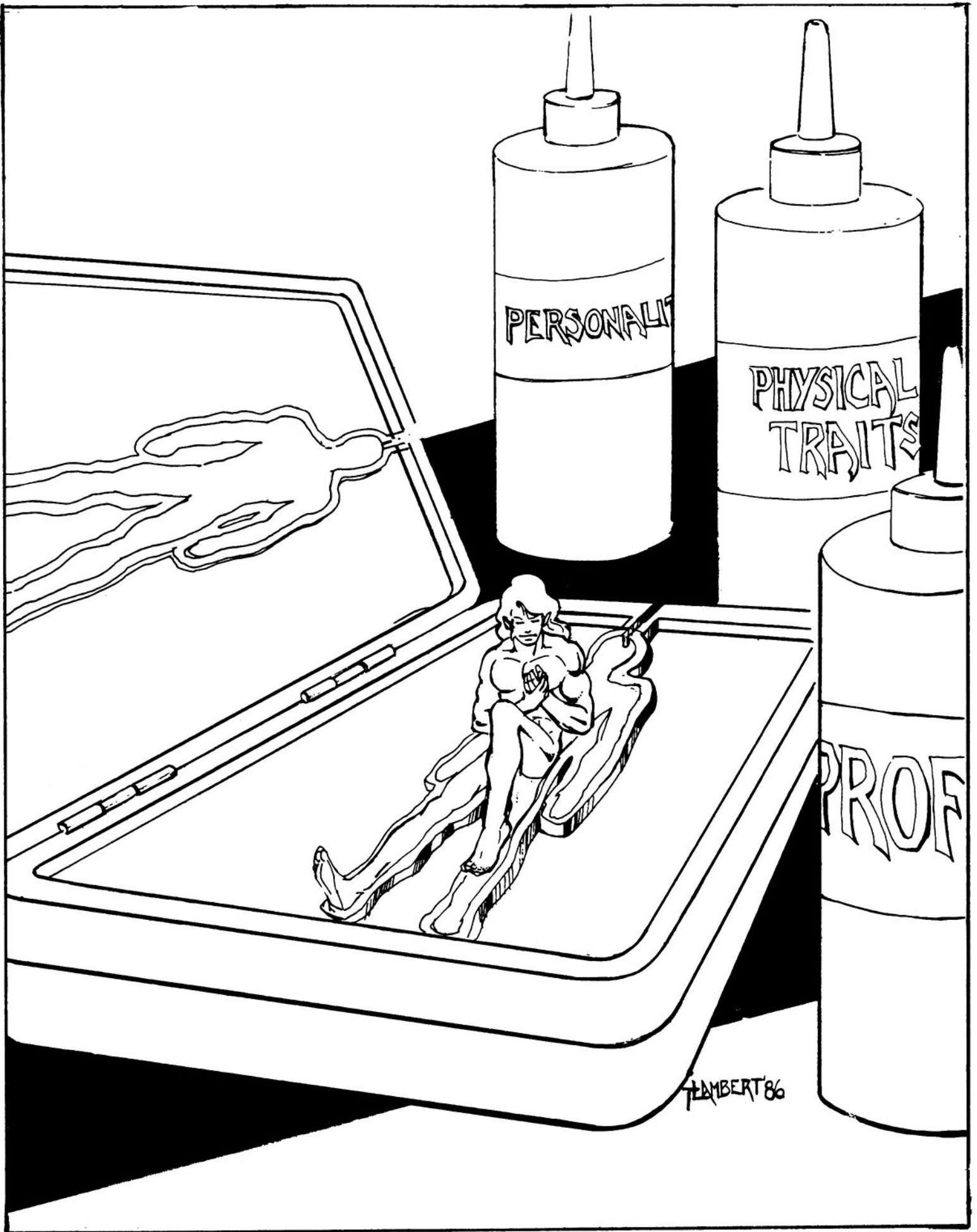
Major NPCs may well be the most important resource that the GM can keep in his or her arsenal. Unfortunately, they are also perhaps the most abused. Too often, I have seen major NPCs who are either incredibly more powerful than the players or incredibly weaker than them. Ordinarily, there's nothing wrong with this arrangement, but if you have **only** NPCs who fall into these categories, it throws the entire order of things off balance.

My reason for saying this (and I can't stress this enough) is because NPCs, **all** NPCs, are people. They are exactly like the PCs in all respects except for one: the GM controls what they do. They have feelings, personalities and desires just like everybody else. And, just like the PCs, they should start off at low level and gradually work their way up through the levels to their ultimate goal, whatever that may be.

Obviously, not all your NPCs are going to be like that, but I think that in the long run, you'll find that the players will relate much better to someone who is "just like them" than someone who happens to be absurdly powerful. But, as I've said before, it's your world and you can do what you want. Just keep two things in mind: **all** NPCs must come from **somewhere**, and even the Arch-Mage had to start out as an apprentice.

And, of course, the three laws.





PERSONALITY

PHYSICAL
TRAITS

PROF

TEMBERT 86

Ninja on the Half Shell

A Review of the RPG

Kevin K. Kresse

Should you have ventured to read the adventures of Kevin Eastman and Peter Laird's **Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles™**, the roleplayer in you would certainly ask "Is there a **game system** available that would permit scenarios such as those depicted? And would players be able to portray characters like the ones in the book?" The answer is yes, and **Palladium Books, Inc.** makes it possible. With the likes of **Kevin Sembieda** and **Erick Wujcik** at the helm, Palladium succeeds in breathing life into everyone's favorite mutant ninja team.

The game, **Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles and Other Strangeness**, is a 110 page booklet which presents a well organized rule system through which you may enter the ninja turtle universe. Actually, it is flexible enough to encompass any number of combinations of mutant animal worlds. Now, it is possible to roleplay any one of the **Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles** with all their extraordinary abilities. You can crush the evil **Foot** organization and have it out with **Shredder**, blow for blow.

Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles and Other Strangeness presents, step-by-step, the information necessary to create a super-powered, mutant animal along with help for providing personality to round out your character.

The first step in creating a character is to choose the basic stock of the animal. The **Animal Section** is a small inventory of animal types, each with enough base stats to begin molding powers and abilities for a character. Each animal type has specific **biological energy points (BIO-E)** which determine the limit of mutation. With these points, a character may be enlarged or shrunken, adding human-like features and super-abilities similar to those found in the superhero/comic book universe.

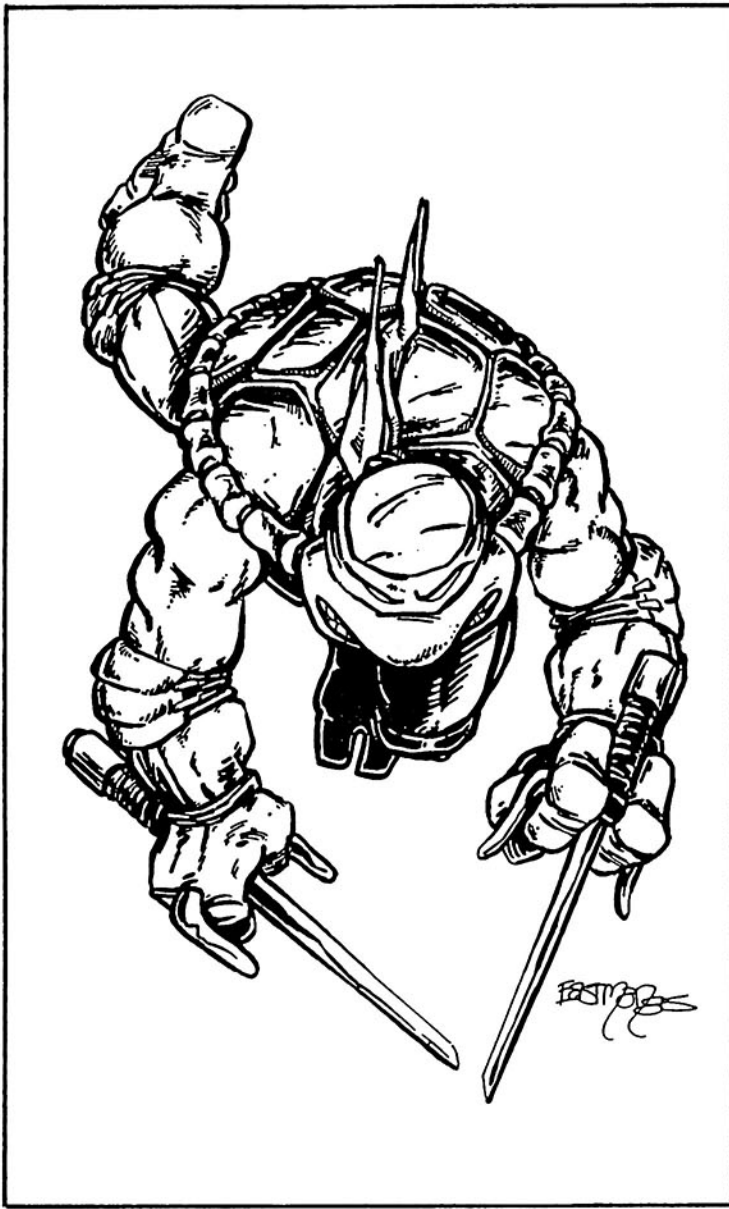
The next step is **Rounding Out One's Character**. Here, the player must decide on such aspects of character generation as education, skills, and alignment.

Included in the explanation of game mechanics are hand-to-hand combat resolution techniques and rules of firearms combat. These are illustrated



by sample gaming sessions. **Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles and Other Strangeness** also includes an entire section of adventure modules, each adventure presented with a flavor reminiscent of the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtle comic book. The difference is that **you** are in it. The adventure section also contains the stats for some of the major characters in the Ninja Turtle epic. Among these are **Splinter**, **April O'Neil**, the evil **Shredder**, the **T.C.R.L.** aliens, and the Ninja Turtles themselves. Also provided are a group of heroes already created, ready for play-testing.

Published as an expansion to the Adventures section of **Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles and Other Strangeness** is **Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtle Adventures!**. This book of adventures is also written by Eric Wujcik and produced by the same

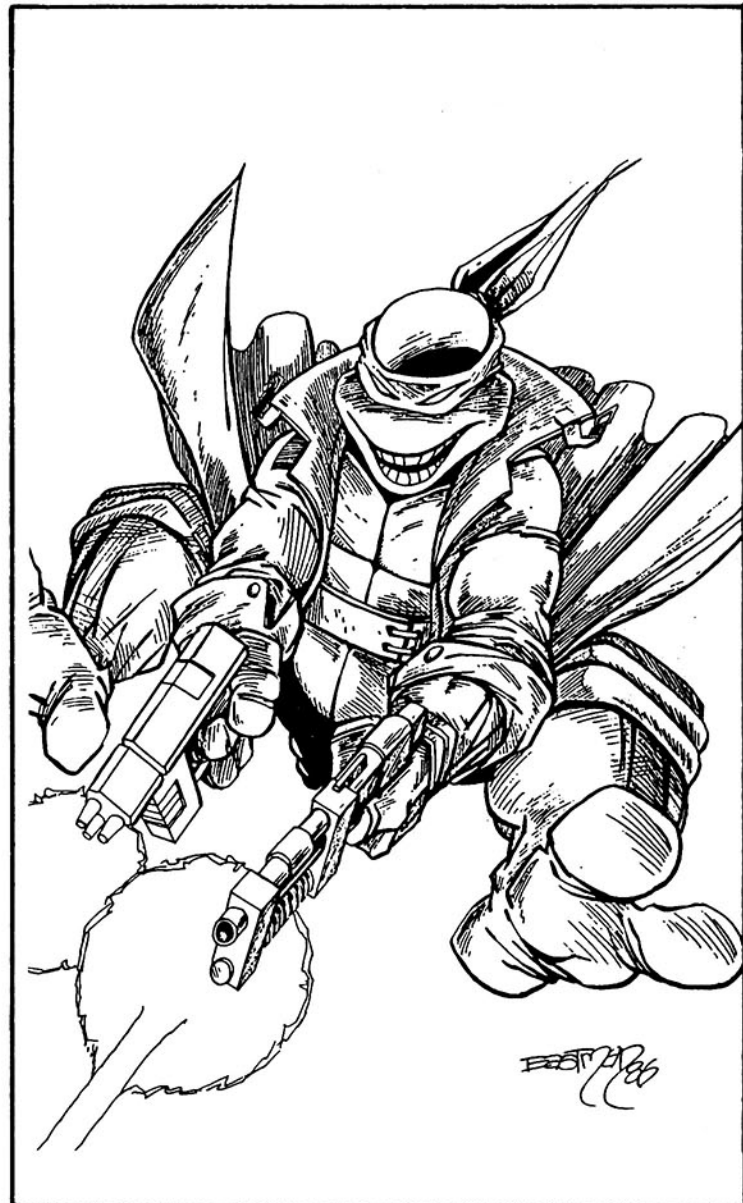


After the Bomb was carefully designed, expanding on it's predecessors. As you would expect, it is compatible with the the previous Ninja Turtle systems as well as **Heroes Unlimited**. What **After the Bomb** gives us an alternate avenue of exploration fo Palladium-compatible characters. A few rule changes and character modifications are necessary, but they are only minor.

The latest addition to this trio of mutant animal mayhem will be **Road Hogs** featuring a new interior artist, Walter Storozuk. This supplement covers all kinds of **road combat** and **vehicle constructions**.

creative team as the previous book. The adventures are intelligently planned and allow the players great lattitude in roleplaying. It is also important to note that Palladium products are **inter-compatible**.

The second supplement to **Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles and Other Strangeness**, **After the Bomb**, creates a new environment to play in. The setting is post World War III, amid the desolation of the nuclear holocaust. Civilization as we know it has ended. Separate clans fight each other for small portions of land and mutant animals predominate. Humans are targeted for extinction.

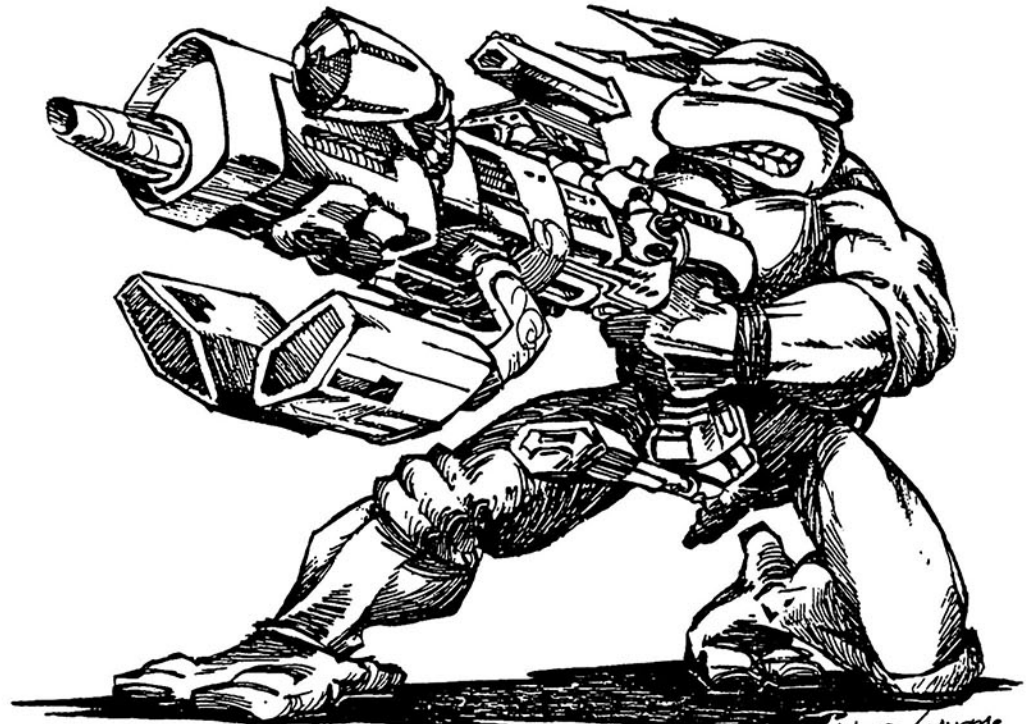


EASTMAN 85



Palladium has done a fine job bringing gamers a consistent multi-verse in which to roleplay. You may also note that **Dark Horse Miniatures** has available several sets of Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtle lead figurines. They include all the most popular characters: Shredder, Splinter, and the four turtles.

Lamborghini?



The Many Faces of Zocchi The ZOCCHIHEDRON 100-Sided Die

The market abounds with a variety of random number generation mediums. Originally, there was the 6-sided die. Then, four-, eight-, twelve-, and twenty-sided die were introduced. These were closely followed by ten-sided, or percentile dice. One step further along the development of random number generators brought us numbered chits and the electronic random number generator. After this came the sling stone sized (and just as useful) 30-sided die.

Now may we introduce the latest die on the scene: the ZocchiHedron, the d100. This die, unlike many of its predecessors, is a useful accessory. It brings an end to the scattered rollings of two dice for percentiles, or the disputes over which of the dice was the tens controller.

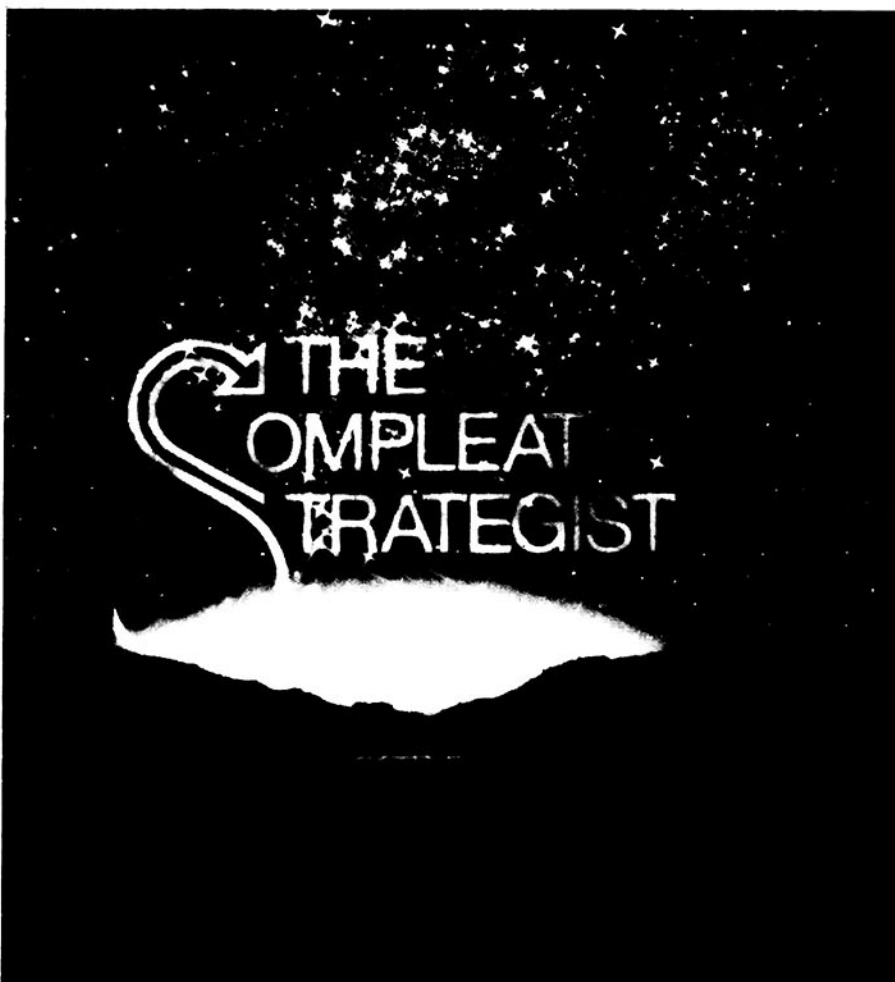
The die, about the size of a golf ball, consists of two hemispheres glued together, with pebble-sized objects inside which slow the rolling. The designer (Mr. Zocchi himself) said to roll the die a thousand times to see that it is truly a consistent percentile.

So we took this die and rolled it, and rolled it, and rolled it . . .

During our test rolling, we discovered that the die will roll too far and too long on a hard surface. The die also had a tendency to roll along the seam that connects the two fifty-faceted sides. However, when rolling the die on a soft surface, being careful not to bounce it, we found that it will yield a roll as efficient as any other die. We had the best results when rolling the die in a bowl on the bottom of which we had placed a paper towel. Or, don't roll the die. Just shake it and put it down, although the other players may object to this.

With a soft surface to roll on, the weights inside the die bring it to a quick stop and allow the die to pass the Chi-Square testing for even distribution. On a regular roll the die will land on the seam 1.138% of the time for each of the 34 numbers on the seam, which range from 34 to 67. On a hard surface, the percentages were heavily weighted in favor of the 34 seam numbers.

In our opinion, the golf-ball sized Zocchi die isn't a gimmick but a valuable tool for Game Master and player alike.



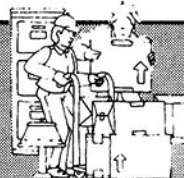
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THE Tracy Hickman Interview

Jeffrey Gomez

Laura M Antoniou

At this summer's GenCon we had the opportunity to sit down with Tracy Hickman, the co-creator of **Dragonlance** and the upcoming **Steel Sorcerer**. In our conversation, Tracy speaks about the role of the game master as story teller and the use of fantasy roleplaying as an educational tool.

GATEWAYS: You opened your seminar by telling everyone that he was great. Why?

T.H.: People really are great, and I believe that. You know, a lot of people come to these conventions to meet Tracy Hickman and Margaret Weiss because they've read our books, and they say, "Hey, Tracy, Margaret . . . you're great!" To which I say, same to you, pal, because we're no different than we were before these books. I still get up in the morning, put on my clothes and go off to work. It's the people who buy the books that are great, finding characters and situations in these books to inspire them to be greater. Most people think that heroes are fellas with shining swords standing on mountain tops fighting evil, yet real people are heroes every day. There is greatness in giving up your place in line, greatness in simple kindness and courtesy to strangers. When you look at it, there is greatness in the very measure of our lives.

GATEWAYS: We have spoken to the people at the convention and found isolationism/escapism and despair among many reasons for playing role-playing games. What can we do to lessen, if not eliminate the low self-esteem found among so many players?

T.H.: Most people have this unfortunate misconception about realization and life in general. My wife used to think that you had what you did for a living and what you enjoyed, and that was it. People have to realize that that's just not true. I worked for TSR, and every Thursday was play-testing day, and we were **forced** to play games all afternoon. Yes, it was a dirty job . . . (laughter). If I had told anyone, my mother for example, whose opinions I respect very much, that I was earning a living by doing what I'm doing now, she would have told me that being a writer is one of the most difficult, demanding and frustrating things that a man can do. But I'm doing it. Making a living as an author is hard, but I really enjoy it. And I think everyone should enjoy what they do.

I believe that anyone can become and do anything they want. Roleplaying can help, as a teaching tool. Roleplaying helps us see that many "impossible" things are not as impossible as they seem, so long as they persevere, they have a little faith, and they get along with other people. But it is absolutely necessary for the referee to understand this! If the referee is not aware of his responsibility to the players, if he (or she) doesn't help the players and guide them, it's our loss . . . not just the individual players' but the roleplaying population in general.

GATEWAYS: Why haven't we heard this before? Is this a new understanding in the industry? Who is responsible for informing players and Game Masters about these concepts?

T.H.: Gaming companies must accept greater responsibility in the matter. Now, I've heard Gary Gygax has said that D&D and roleplaying games in general are just games, neither good nor bad, but just entertainment. I don't really believe that. I do believe that the games are great entertainment, but I also know that they are valuable learning instruments. The referees must see that their games reflect positive views and roles. The old "kill if it moves and kick it to make sure it's dead" gaming style is not only non-instructive, but it's boring, which is even worse. Responsibilities are divided, at least there.

GATEWAYS: How can we instruct if companies can't or won't?

T.H.: The first thing we must do, as writers, artists and creators, is to make the players and referees aware of the instructional aspect of the game. People are always learning, whether we know it or not. When a referee sets up an "evil" campaign, when players choose evil characters, they are reinforcing a behavioral pattern and fostering a belief that evil actions have no consequences. That's when things can get confused and people begin to ask just what's going on in those games. I think that a Law-based world is **required** for an intelligent, enjoyable and educational game. A law based world can have plenty of conflict, but will also show logical consequences.

In reference to fantasy roleplayers playing evil characters per se, I feel that evil player characters are non-essential to an enjoyable game. And



if an evil character is played, it should be as I described in my seminar, that his or her life is short and glorious **without** glorifying their deeds. These are things that all referees should know. They should be aware that they are teaching and being taught. if we can always remember that people never stop learning, then we can look at what we're **saying**, even though it's "just an entertainment."

What can we teach? The very art of refereeing, storytelling techniques, the basics of how to tell a positive story. We can teach the methodology of design structures. You've read the *Dungeon Masters Survival Guide*? Doug Niles used to take notes at my seminars, and I believe that he's done a very good job of translating and forming those ideas. If you have read that section, you should be familiar with the terms "matrix" and "linear" when they refer to structure. I personally believe that the "closed matrix" is the ideal form of storytelling as well as the ideal form of educating. It's not as restricted as the direct linear form, nor is it as loose as the open structure. I find that it allows for all sorts of creativity without limiting players or referees at all.

Magazine can be an excellent instructional medium, but I think forums are the way to go. Another wonderful thing we should take advantage of is video. I'll tell you what I'd love to see . . . a series of video tapes teaching basic and advanced storytelling, to demonstrate not only "how to play" but how to properly design a game that is law-based. I can imagine video taped game sessions with a debriefing afterward, going over what happened in the game, seeing what worked and what didn't. We need to look at the whole picture from time to time, referees and players alike. I'd really like to see more Game Masters learning to listen to and receive feedback from their players. Game Masters can be a well of information if their players know what to look and ask for. Feedback isn't always verbal, you know, and a really good referee can read a player's body language . . . the gestures, the eye movements, even the players' silence.

GATEWAYS: They have to learn how to read people.

T.H.: Exactly! What makes a good referee should make a good **person**. After all, dealing with a group of diverse people is the very essence of what Game Master must do. We have to realize that people are wonderfully complex creatures who are just as diverse and just as fantastic as those characters we create and play . . . and we have to realize that it works both ways. We can **create** heroes because we can **be** heroes.

Like I said, magazines can help, and so can clubs and gaming organizations, but only if we teach more than the rules to the games. We have to teach and learn about dealing with people, listening to people, how to build and maintain that vital feedback loop . . . so many things. We can still look at the referee as an entertainer, but we have to stop looking at him as if he were a judge. Just as an entertainer in a nightclub has to pace his material and adapt it to the audience, so does the Game Master. A truly good referee never stops **giving** to his players . . . a poor referee "Just does his job."

GATEWAYS: Whose responsibility is it when you find a shy player who just can't seem to be drawn into the game?

T.H.: This falls to the referee. The juggling techniques are very useful here, when you're trying to draw someone out. The referee has to figure out a way to gradually bring attention to the shy players by making them speak up more. It's always vital to get that feedback loop started early so the Game Master will be aware that someone feels left out, so he can examine their reactions as well as which techniques work and which ones don't.

It pays to pay attention, not only to the game as a whole, but to the individuals who make up the game. We are wonderfully unique! As referees, we must make that effort to speak to each individual, even through innocuous questions such as "What are you doing now?" You can't answer that with a yes or a no. It makes them think by forcing them to answer **now**. It encourages individuality.

A good referee can come out of nowhere and bring everybody into the game, by using the juggling technique, using the feedback loop, and speaking to everyone. Another good technique that I haven't mentioned as often as I should is voice and tone variation. Let's face it, if the Game Master delivers everything in a steady monotone, even an exciting adventure will seem boring.

Something of interest that everyone would benefit from would be a good class in storytelling. I understand that a lot of colleges offer classes and seminars like that. Something along those lines would be useful to referees and players alike.

GATEWAYS: So what is Tracy Hickman doing now? Is your work supporting those concepts?

T.H.: Absolutely. Margaret and I have been working on a project called **The Steel Sorcerer** for some time now. This is a concept that a lot of

work and love has been spent on. With the support of FASA, who we're working with now, we've created something which I can't really tell you much about, except that we're very excited. We've written a completely new gaming system, an elegant system designed to facilitate the enjoyment of roleplaying while still providing the necessary rules for conflict resolution. This is a totally unique game, with tremendous support literature and room for growth. It's due to be released next fall, and we can't wait.

Margaret and I just finished working on a project called **Interplay**, which was something I had wanted to work on for some time. **Interplay** is an on-line roleplaying game designed to bring groups of independently played characters together through computers. This is a wonderful system, especially for people who are isolated, or who work full time. I know that it tends to be very difficult to arrange for a certain number of people to meet in one place and play when everyone's got a different schedule, and it's tough to get around. We hope that people will be able to get on-line in **Interplay**, meet other people's characters, go on their adventures, and eventually communicate with each other on a player-to-player basis. Interplay will be operating out of Protacol, in Fairfax, VA (800-826-3286).

" ... people are wonderfully complex creatures who are just as diverse and just as fantastic as those characters we create and play ... and we have to realize that it works both ways. We can create heroes because we can be heroes..."

I see so many great ideas out there, exciting things that new names are working on ... heck, I'm working on things that make these developments pall by comparison! We can never be content to rest on our laurels. I think there's tremendous room for expansion, particularly in creative gaming and roleplaying-ondemand. I see a growing number of adults teaching the younger gamers and learning from them. I see a growing synergism between roleplaying games and adult fantasy novels, which is grand. I'm looking forward to seeing some of these changes, and I'm glad to be able to help them come about.



Steel Sorcerer

Margaret Weis & Tracy Hickman

There is a Land
Where Magic is Life
And Steel is only a legend.

The authors of *DragonLance*®, the designers of *BattleTech*™, and Bantam Books combine to bring you a new, exciting, and innovative fantasy. The Adventure Begins ... August, 1987.

FASA

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Argus Hilton is a World War II freak. He knows just about everything there is to know about it. He knows who attacked what when.

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Argus will also talk your head off when you come to visit him at Avalon Hill. He used to sneak visitors into the plant to show

them the tricks of the printing end; how the mapsheets are mounted for durability, and how the playing pieces are printed and laminated to stand considerable fondling.

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THE KOREAN WAR

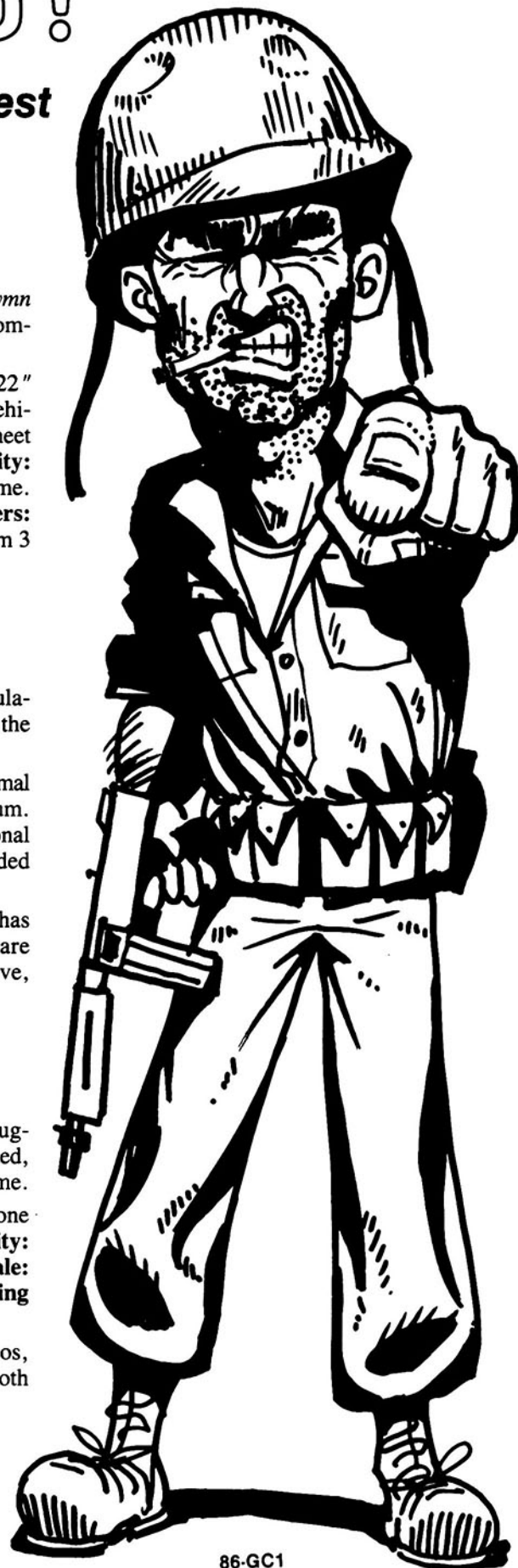
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Was the Korean War the first war ever lost by the United States? Or was the struggle the first US triumph over Communism? History's verdict has not yet been reached, but you can decide for yourself with this comprehensive operational level game.

Components: Rules Booklet, two 22"×32" Mapsheets, 520 Playing Pieces, one 8"×11" Player Aid Card, one 10-Sided Die, Counter Storage Tray. **Complexity:** Medium. **Solitaire Suitability:** High. **Time Scale:** One month per turn. **Map Scale:** 7.5 miles per hex. **Unit Scale:** Division, regiment, brigade. **Players:** Two. **Playing Time:** From 1 to 15 hours, depending on the scenario.

The definitive simulation of the Korean War includes five introductory scenarios, each playable on a single mapsheet, and an Advanced Game scenario entailing both map sheets, spanning all of war-torn Korea.



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86-GC1

Comic Book Forum

New Universe

Bert Hubbard

The coming of summer 1986 saw the birth of a new concept in comic books called New Universe. During August 1986 Marvel comics will release eight interrelated comic titles under the moniker **New Universe** comics: **D.P. 7, Justice, Kicker Inc., Night Mask, Merc., Psi-Force, Starbrand,** and **Spitfire and the Trouble Shooters.**

New Universe comics is the brain child of Marvel editor in chief, Jim Shooter, who in collaboration with comic masters like Archie Goodwin, John Bucema, and John Romita Jr., have set out to bring more realism into comics. Shooter sees **New Universe** comics as the third generation of comics, a likely succession from the Marvel comics universe founded in 1961.

The creators of **New Universe** comics credit Stan Lee's Marvel revolution for making heroes who weren't just one dimensional. Under the Marvel universe, minorities became superheroes. The superheroes had private lives, and sometimes people died. From Jim Shooter's point of view, all comics that came after that copied the Marvel style. He credits Stan Lee, Jack Kirby, and Steve Ditko for creating a universe filled with fantasy but close to our own universe. As the comic book industry got more and more competitive and the old guard began to be replaced, a feeling that something new had to be done began to creep in.

When Jim Shooter was first named editor in chief he earned the nickname Jim "I want to kill them all" Shooter, because of his drive for comic realism. Under his guidance characters like Ironman and Captain America grappled with real life problems and came close to death. The popular character Captain Marvel eventually became a full fledged casualty. Although these attempts were revolutionary, there was only so much that could be done under the Marvel framework, thus the inception of New Universe.

Jim Shooter says that **New Universe** is not really a new one; just a previously unused one. The universe is our own, where there is no Hulk, and no wing footed mermen. There are just a few gifted individuals who experience all the same things that we do, from subway delays to terrorist bomb threats. It's all supposed to be very real. The **New Universe** editors stress the fact that this

world has no ties to the Mainstream Marvel universe; no repulsor rays, no unstable molecules, and no X-men crossovers. It is a universe where, as time goes by, people use toilets and Republicans are still in power.

All the art work with the exceptions of Night Mask and Psi-Force, are functional and the origins are basically straight forward third age fare. The exception to this is Starbrand. This is the only comic written by Jim Shooter. If any comic typifies the **New Universe** spirit, it is this one.

In the second issue it jumps into world politics and the threat of terrorists blowing up the world with nuclear bombs. It brings the headlines very close to home. People get hurt but the good guys still win. Also, in **Starbrand**, the role of the common man is played up. The same is true of **Spitfire** and **Merc.** Although their actions are spectacular, they are still normal people.

It is difficult to draw definite conclusions on Marvel's **New Universe** because it is still young. How will the real world might react to the birth of super powered beings on this earth? **New Universe** assistant editor Archie Goodwin, says that he is more concerned with how the world will react to this new comic venture, although they are proud of the new titles, and hope that they will be a success. The comic world is very crowded and new ideas are very dangerous if they don't work, but **New Universe** has the backing of the most talented and resource-rich comic company in the world. So you can be sure that they will have as much time as possible to develop an audience.

All of the early returns have been extremely favorable with **Starbrand** and **Spitfire and the Trouble Shooters** as the leading comics. They both seem on the way to instant comic top ten status.





JAMBERT

DATELINE:ROBOTECH

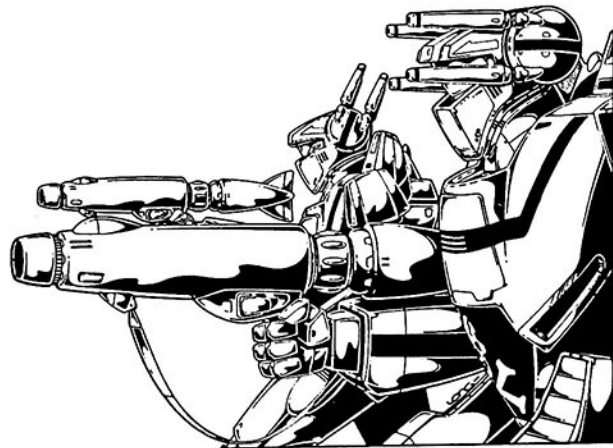
The **Robotech** universe is on the move! The dramatic animated TV series that continues to capture the hearts of kidvid and Japanese cartoon lovers young and old around the world, has successfully invaded other media. **Matchbox** is gearing up for a second Christmas season of **Vari-tech** and **Battlepod** toy sales, while Starblaze Donning Press releases **Robotech Art 2**, which will more deeply examine the spectacular adventures of the Robotech Defense Force in vivid full color.

Each well within their respective storylines, the Comico adaptations: **Robotech: The Macross Saga**, **Robotech Masters**, and **Robotech: The New Generation** continue to evoke the art and spirit of the series. As the comic books have been selling well, Comico has hinted that all three running plots will continue to unfold, detailing the further adventures of Rick Hunter, Dana Sterling, and Scott Bernard's freedom fighters.

Genesis: Robotech, a graphic novel plotted by Carl Macek, the creative producer of the cartoons' American versions, was released by Comico in August. The novel makes a strong attempt at smoothing over several of the TV show's glaring inconsistencies by detailing the origins of the alien Zor, his Super Dimension Fortress Macross, and the reasons for the space cruiser's arrival upon war torn Earth. **Genesis: Robotech** ends almost exactly where **Booby Trap**, Episode One of **Robotech** begins.

Robotech: The Movie details the Earth's first encounter with the stealthy Robotech Masters, who scheme to rob the planet of it's newfound super-fuel, **protoculture**. They are met with noble resistance by Rolf Emerson in days long before he meets with an heroic fate in the **Robotech Masters** portion of the TV trilogy. The movie, which is distributed by the Cannon Film Group, enjoyed regional box office success in the south western United States and is due for national release "quite soon."

Unlike the non-stop, smash'em up violence and heavy metal scoring of the recent **Transformers: The Movie**, the **Robotech: The Movie** will feature a mature, exciting storyline which fits into the continuity of the TV show much in the way the Comico graphic novel does. Original songs highlight the film, many performed by a mysterious and beautiful rock superstar in the tradi-



tion of Lynn Minmei, Bowie Grant and Lancer. Of special interest to **mecha** fans will be the hero's dynamic jet motorcycle which is capable of doing just about anything!

The hottest news on Robotech for readers of **Gateways**, however, comes from Detroit, Michigan in the guise of Palladium Books' **Robotech: The Role-Playing Game**. Due for release in mid-November in the form of a brilliantly colored glossy paperbound volume, **Robotech: The Role-Playing Game** has taken Harmony Gold's science fictional universe from the tube to the tabletop.

The RPG, which contains rules that allow players to portray anyone from Khyron to Claudia, is the first in a projected series of volumes which covers all aspects of the **Macross Saga**. "With this rule system, players can actually run themselves through the entire first series," Palladium President Kevin Siembieda told **Gateways**. "Or, better yet, they can role-play adventures that deal with what happens right after the destruction of the SDF-1."

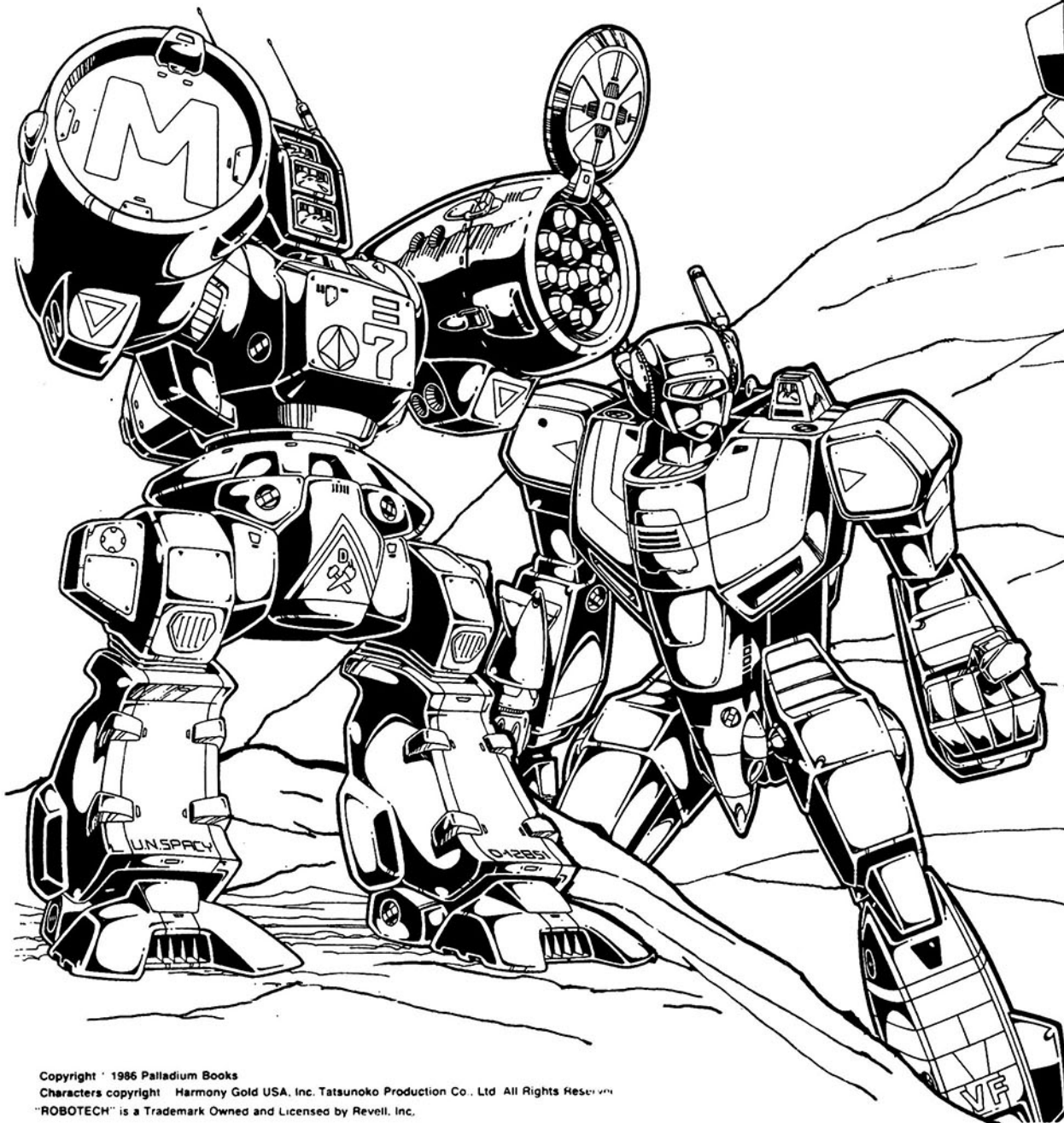
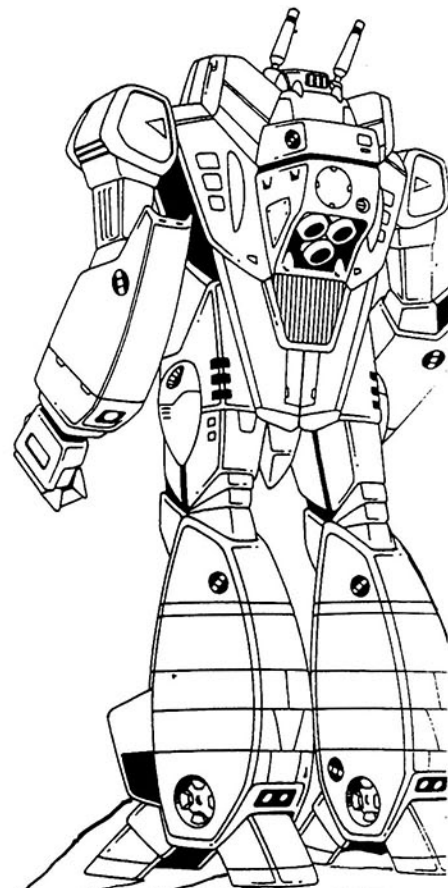
Siembieda stressed that gamers should be encouraged to come up with their own characters and plotlines using the lavishly crafted Robotech myths detailed in the RPG as a back-drop. Based upon the **Palladium Role-Playing System** and **Heroes Unlimited** supplement, that are both, in turn, featured in the wildly popular **Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtle & Other Strangeness** RPG, the **Robotech** rules seem promising indeed. Creator Siembieda boasts that players will immediately be able to operate **mecha** almost exactly as it is depicted in the TV show without sacrificing the flow and speed of the role-playing action.

"Say, was that Raphael or Donatello I saw in that **Battloid**?" That **Robotech: The Role-Playing Game** is easily compatible with Palladium's basic rule systems is quite a coup for Siembieda. Gamers can actually mix and match multiverses to create bizarre patchwork adventures and can even

pick and choose from books to create original worlds.

The additional rules and improvements in the Robotech volume may in fact be used in earlier volumes. The "fast kill" or multiple missile volley in **Robotech**, for example, gets results much faster than the plodding machine gunnery in **Ninja Turtles**. Finally, **Gateways** has learned that Carl Macek himself has scribed the introduction to the RPG, including a detailed revision of the history of the Robotech universe.

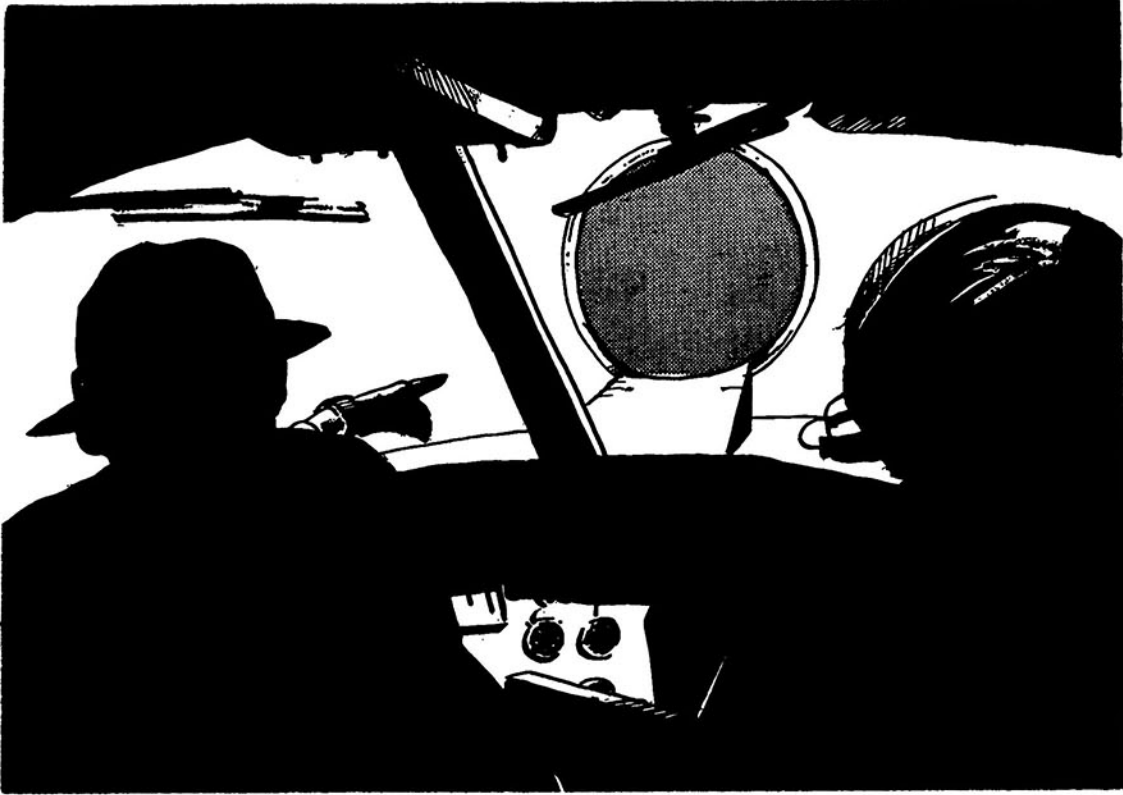
Future issues of **Gateways** magazine will feature interviews with Carl Macek, Kevin Siembieda, and Harmony Gold on the Robotech RPG, Movie, and next years' **Robotech II: The Sentinels**. Watch for them!



Fringeworthy : A review

Wayne Koh

Greg Sherwood



Gary Peter Moon kept on running, his lean body soaked with sweat. He started reminiscing as he always did when he was worried. He wondered why he couldn't have studied harder in college, why he joined the Fringeworthy Organization, why he left his nice, safe, comfortable job as a New York City taxi driver. Why his girlfriend Annie had left him for a boring but rich IBM executive, and why he was being chased by a bunch of frothing at the mouth loonies on some Alternate Earth.

"Infinity at your feet--hah!," he mullied. "Service to humanity and all that crap! When I get back I'm gonna kill that recruiter!"

Just then, he rounded a streetcorner and found himself face-to-face with twelve of what appeared to be medieval-type warriors led by a fully armored knight. They stared at each other for a good 30 seconds, the warriors not knowing what to make of Moon's strange garb, and Moon having a very good idea of what would happen if he came within ten feet of the tin can with the two-handed sword.

"Damn that sucker is big," he muttered as he pictured himself strewn about the cobblestone road in little red pieces. He pumped the 12-gauge Mossberg Pump Shotgun, chambering a 00 Magnum buckshot round. The knight screamed to his loyal (soon to be swiss-cheesed) henchmen. "Kill the Mongol Invader!"

Moon screamed back, "who you callin' Mongoloid, ya jerk?!?" Then it hit him that he was sort of on the Oriental side--Chinese Korean to be exact.

The lackies started to close, cautiously raising their clubs and spears, when Moon finally decided it would be a good time to a) shout a warning, b) shoot and shout a warning, or c) run like the cowardly dog he was.

"No," he decided. "I am Fringeworthy. I am one in 100,000, Chosen of the Chosen, Explorer, Scientist, Warrior, brave, fearless, and besides, I got a shotgun...Come on tough guys. Let's party!"

Fringeworthy was written to be as realistic as possible while maintaining an easy to play rule system that length itself to quick, smooth, imaginative, and most important, fun playing.

The most time consuming part of the game, other than the gaming sessions, is the initial set-up of a player character. This is also the most difficult portion of the rules that the **players** will encounter.

Character development of primary and secondary stats is pretty straight-forward. You roll 4d6 and subtract 4 which yields stats between 0 and 20. The primary stats are: Strength (STG), Constitution (CON), Dexterity (DEX), Agility (AGL), Intelligence (INT), Wisdom (WIS), LUCK, Charisma (CHR), Psionic ability (PSI), and Crystal use (CRY); the secondary stats are Thr(ow), Dod(ge), and Hit Points.

With these stats in mind, you can then create a background or history and develop the first set of background skills, ranging from Abnormal Psychology to Light Military Weapons. There is also coverage of extra-legal skills as well as skills that you gain when you enter Interdimensional Exploration Teams (IDET) organization.

You then outfit your character with whatever materials you think you may need and you set to walk the fringe paths to adventures.

History Generation

The generation of history is a basic record keeping of the homebase (Earth Prime), plus a who and what is travelling where and when. On the different fringe worlds, time and space are not necessarily continuous with what you have experienced before (as illustrated by the film **Time Bandits** and that map of theirs).

The supporting rules are fairly easy to grasp and one can usually achieve a working knowledge after just a few hours of play. This involves knowledge relevant to firing a gun, hitting the target and applying the damage to repairing engine damage on a "Moscovi B" land explorer.

One fault in the game is the inclusion of Psionics with no solid system backing it up (this is corrected in **Stalking the Night Fantastic** and **FTL 2448**).

Fringeworthy is almost 100% compatible with **Stalking the Night Fantastic** and **FTL 2448** (both **Tri-Tac** games). With a minimum effort, characters outside this system may be brought in, and likewise, those in can be taken out.

Stalking the Night Fantastic and **FTL 2448** cover magic, psionics, and future sciences more thoroughly than **Fringeworthy** does. They also update the rules with regard to medicine.

The rules get a bit jumbled after the beginning, but, that's to be expected when you consider how much there is going on around, let alone the countless alternative planes. After one gets through the first reading, it's all readily understandable, or the conclusions are reachable through the various charts.



The artwork leaves something to be desired, save for the illustrations of the vehicles and the setting of scenes. These are done very well.

The bottom line...

There are paragraphs at the end of each block of rules to point out how something is done or why it comes into play. This is a tremendous plus to the system and should be incorporated into the systems to make life easy on the gamers. **Fringeworthy** is an excellent gaming system which will generate hundreds of hours of fun play time.

Dungeoneer's Survival Guide:

A Study in Schizophrenia

Patricia F. Travis



The latest hardbound book in the TSR **Advanced Dungeons and Dragons** library is in fact two very short books accidentally bound together. The first "book" is exactly what the title implies—a guide for surviving in caves and dungeons. It is the second book which saves this volume from a second-class position among the nine (yes, **nine**) reference books used to play **Advanced Dungeons and Dragons**. This short, second part of the book would be better than a *Dungeon Master's Guide II* would be, is more useful than the **Unearthed Arcana**, and should be the **Advanced Dungeons and Dragons** manifesto. But first things first.

The **Dungeoneer's Survival Guide** (DSG) opens with a discussion about caves, complete with mildly interesting graphics and rules for such unforeseen activities as diving and rappelling. Some new rules are nice, but most are incomplete or far too subjective for practical use. The brief section on rope bridges should have included at least one method for building them—Mr Niles has a habit of mentioning drawbacks and limitations without hinting at solutions.

Another problem with this section is that it portrays dungeons as the ultimate roleplaying experience. This attitude is echoed in a section that expands the character proficiency system intro-

duced in **Oriental Adventures**. That's good. The proficiencies listed are only the most basic handyman/adventuring skills and cover only the middle to lower class educational levels. That's bad. These charts would not, for example, allow for the fourth daughter of a nobleman, a merchant's son, or anyone raised in a type of military class. An individual Game Master may wish to expand these charts to include professions and talents appropriate to his/her world. But don't rush off to utilize them, because the DSG states that actually using these skills is not worth experience points. This is explained by the notion that the use of non-weapon proficiencies serves only to augment the actual adventuring. The standard TSR "characters exist ultimately as combat specialists" takes over for a while in sections on underground combat and special 'Battle System' rules.

"New" ideas put forth in the book are sure to raise heated arguments. Does a vorpal sword act as such only when a character is aiming it at the neck? Can characters construct solid dams and bridges without engineering skills? Are dogs really good pack animals? New equipment, like air-bladder flotation devices and water-proof lanterns, make underwater adventures easier, but are they compatible with the technological level of the average game?

So, part one is basically an overpriced hint sheet for players, with nice pictures and an attractive layout. It does serve a purpose in a simple how-to function, but it is not necessary to play the game.

And then there's the other "book." This second book is meant for Game Masters, and a warning to other readers is thoughtfully placed at the beginning. It seems a little absurd that they would expect you to pay the \$15.00 cover price and then not read half of it because the book tells you not to. This section begins with another argument in defense of dungeoneering adventures and a **very** brief glimpse of some favorite underground societies. "Lands of Deepearth," a beautifully mapped and well written introduction to underground layout and setup, is very pretty to look at but should not be "played" as a dungeon. It serves well as a model.

Continued on page 28

GATEWAYS CLASSIFIEDS:

Gateways Magazine introduces a regular feature for fantasy role-players, Game Masters, and all other fans of the genre, **Gateways Classifieds**. Every six weeks on this page, you may insert or peruse messages that will reach gamers across the country, and, quite soon, around the world. It's simple--find the category your message belongs under, write your words down, mail them to us, and we'll print 'em. Player/GM Wanted ads are free!

The categories are: **Player/GM Wanted**--please specify: 1) the type of game 2) the location at which it will be played, and 3) general age/experience level desired. **Merchandise for Sale**--include your telephone num-

Wanted:

Gateways wants material for new columns which examine media with the rolegamer in mind. These include **Howling at the Moon**, **Comic Book Forum**, **Screen View**, **The Tome**, and **International Scene**. Also, ink drawings on clean white paper and features with innovative approaches to gaming will be carefully considered.

FREE GAME - Get a free Play-by-mail game. The game is called **It's a Crime!**. It is the largest play-by-mail game in the world. Just tell us you saw this ad in **Gateways** and you get 2 turns free. Afterwards, it is only \$1.25 per turn. Write to: **Adventures by Mail**, P.O. Box 436, Cahoes, NY 12407.

PERSONALS

Shelly and Mukluk: The Flowerlight Odyssey began in Middletown, NJ and distance is nothing between friends.

Bruce Springsteen-5 Alive-Alright

Zep, Outrider, Stunts, Speed Spawn and Chaz-let us have another gathering-Wizard

Battlemage's Rise on Valentin's Day.

To Gry, Tuttle, Sean, Areg, Devon, Volmer, Jarvik, Ozru, Shimem and Co.-Just you try it. . .Takthesis.

Amado; I love a man in uniform, Tami.

ber. No dealers, please. **Merchandise Wanted**--Please be specific. Don't say "old DRAGONS wanted", say "DRAGONS 35 to 58 wanted". **Events**--You can advertise conventions, tournaments, concerts, special screenings, etc. **Personals**--Have fun! Anything goes under personals: secret messages, congratulations, gloating, announcements, fave raves, even challenges! **Services Offered/Needed**--Model painting, mapping, drawing, arts & crafts, any service of use to gamers and genre lovers. **Gateways** classifieds are cheap! At one dollar (\$1.00) per twenty words, this will be an offer limited to our earliest issues. Take advantage of it while it lasts!

To Kevin, Peter, Raph, Don, Mike, and Leo, and exuberant thank you! GPI

The Golden Rule of D&D-if you can get a date you may be excused from tonight's game. Get going!-Jeff.

Jeff goes **Dark**

To the witch: The curse of "Stanky on your hang-down" was not funny!-Knight scorned.

Rumple what?skin?

Mamalockabooboo. . .(poof!)

Shout it from the rooftops-
EE COH AH YAY-EE YAH, HEY YAH, DOO DOO WOP.
YEAH.

Let this be the response to the challenge of Duffin Relial, Knight of the Realm, Royal Defender, from Geldor Mun: **"Die you gravy-sucking pig!"**

You might rabbit, you might. . .

You bloody twit! You made me soil me armor!!

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The Cosmic Streetcorner

Welcome back to the sidewalk with the greatest view in the star system! Tonight, from the Cosmic Streetcorner, I want to tell you a little more about all those worlds that are shining out there where street lights and grid lock are supposed to be.

The way I see it, every one of those lights belongs to someone, and each light is a special dimension in what many people are calling the "multiverse." If you're reading this and you know kind of what I'm talking about, then you better believe that one of those places is yours. See that one? The blue one flickering just beyond Orion. That one's mine.

When I was a kid, it was a simple galaxy, one where the Planet of the Apes could be traversed by Speed Racers Mach 5, where Godzilla could team up with GI Joe to fight evil in my Lower East Side apartment building. Since then, my galaxy's grown into a universe; Cornelius and Rodan have moved on, and fantasy roleplaying games have helped me to flesh out new stars, moons, heroes, villains, and even space warped sewer drains.

I bought my first roleplaying game at 16. It was the basic Dungeons and Dragons set in the blue box, with the bad artwork, and the big chunky dice inside. Guess I was starting to feel funny about running around in the park, with my sister and friends, pretending to be the diabolical monster that schemed to take over the Earth. D&D, I'd hoped, would give me an excuse to tell my stories, growl, jump around, and maybe ... maybe ... slip in a lesson or two (a few of my good buddies never took very well to school work). So, confusing hit dice for hit points, it was off to Middle Earth. We went, pulling great heroes with swords named Andruil to go on pre-packaged quests through Castle Quasqueton.

Pretty soon, though, something started bugging me. I was beginning to realize that I was playing other people's stars - and why should I when I had so many of my own bright ideas. If people as different as J.R.R. Tolkien, Inoshiro Honda and E. Gary Gyax could create their own universe, then the least I could do was try the same. With a little help from my friends, it worked. A star was lit, and baby did it burn! Over the next four



years, a story was told, from week to week, that had us laughing, crying, losing, winning and most of all - hah! - learning with each other time and again.

To this day, the game's journal stands as proof to how much fun we had cutting loose with our imaginations and our emotions. So how come I don't see a whole mess of on-going fantasy roleplaying serials come so alive on so many stars?

Some of you probably remember a T.V. show about a clean cut school teacher who gets lost in a desert, encounters aliens, and winds up flying around in red long johns and a cape, just trying to do the best that he could. He louses up a lot, because when he got his super suit from the little green guys, he lost the instruction booklet! Before the series was canceled, we learned that the booklet could have tapped the full potential of this amazing suit, making it something that could have changed the world, hopefully, for the better. But even if that nice teacher had gotten hold of the instructions, he would have had to be careful.

As Peter Parker learned all those years ago, when his Uncle Ben was murdered, because Spiderman ignored an escaping thief: with great power comes great responsibility. Roleplaying games are truly super-suits! Playing them you can do, be, create anything. They can be used to teach math, english, history, sociology, psychology, mythology, natural sciences - anything.

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Survival Guide

cont'd from page 24

The final 17 pages should be required reading for all Game Masters, experienced and novice. It is not so much a *Dungeon Master's Guide II* as much as what **should** have been in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*—a well organized and well written description of the careful planning and creative efforts required to construct and run an above-average game. Included are detailed analyses of player character types easily recognized by any experienced Game Master.

The rest of the section contains some superb advice on how to actually begin a game, deliver motivation without manipulation, and keep tension, excitement and fulfillment at peak levels. Good questions are raised to stimulate creativity on the part of the Game Master. Discussions about types of outlines and storylines cover from the most simple hack'n'slash adventures to the most complex soap opera-esque games. This is all delivered in a sophisticated package designed for intelligent readers—terms like denouement gave me a pause.

This book is really not necessary to play or run **Advanced Dungeons and Dragons**. Seventeen pages of it **is**. This is the kind of book that should be purchased by a group and shared, allowing the players to look up rock formations, game designers to draw beautiful maps, and Game Masters to learn good technique.

Streetcorner


cont'd from page 27

The game is the only table-top activity where people must fully cooperate with each other, in order to win. Think about it! A referee or Game Master's job is not simply to set up a series of conflicts for the players, but to guide the players across this new universe and to get them involved in a story that must be important and stimulating to everyone at the table, at least to some extent. Why else would you invest all those hours, all that effort. No one should ever feel as if those hours are wasted. Heck, above all else, the game's gotta be fun!

Stick around a minute more, I'm about to promise you something. Open up the box to most any role-playing game currently on the market. Sure you'll find some rule books, but where are the **instruction booklets**? The booklets that teach you how to really run these games, the ones that'll tell you how to burn your star bright enough for me to notice from way out here on the Cosmic Streetcorner. The booklets that are supposed to help you turn your dreams into stories and characters, and your aspirations into reality. I'll tell you why those **booklets** are not included. Although they might get people excited, they won't make the gaming companies much money. Well, that's okay I guess, because here's where Gateways magazine comes in. I promise you I'll do my very best to get you a guide to the multiverse that you can use to create and learn about your own.

Who knows, maybe you're holding a piece of that instruction booklet right now... No retreat, no surrender.

Jeffrey Gomez
Publisher



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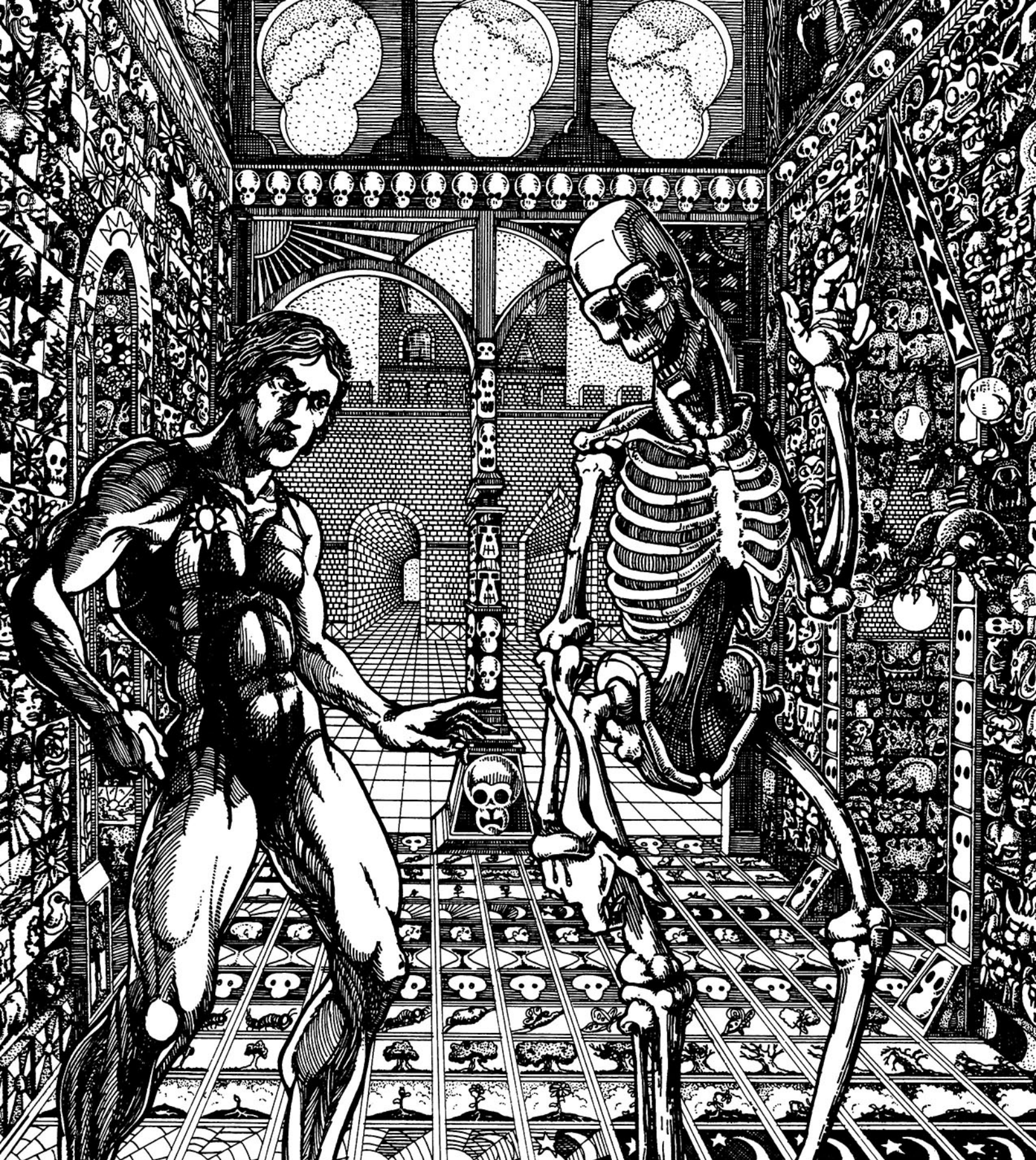
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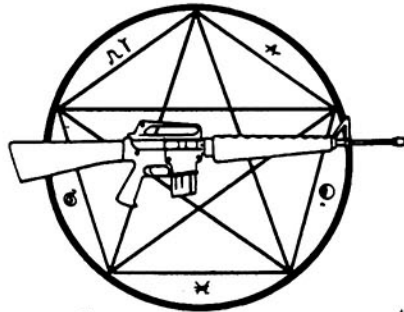




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to be continued...



Fringeworthy



Reader Survey

GATEWAYS invites all of its readers to answer the questions below on the form provided (or a photocopy of it), and mail it to Gateways Publications Inc. JAF Box 965, New York, N.Y. 10116. Your answers and opinions will be carefully considered, and five lucky responses drawn at random will receive original Gateways artwork inked by our talented staff! Each question can be answered by marking a number in the appropriate blank.

Rate each article in this issue of Gateways from 1 (bad) to 9 (great!)

1. From the Tower
2. The Tome
3. Ninja on the Half Shell
4. The Many Faces of Zocchi
5. THE Tracy Hickman Interview
6. Comic Book Forum
7. Dateline: Robotech
8. Fringeworthy: A Review
9. Dungeoneer's Survival Guide
10. The Cosmic Streetcorner

Answer (1) for YES or (2) for NO.

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12. Do you like the overall content?
13. Would you like more system reviews?

14. Do you belong to a gaming club, such as a high school or university role-player's guild?

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20. One.
21. Two to Three.
22. Four to Six.
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What is your age? (Place the first digit in box 24. and the second one in box 25. Any Centurions?)

What types of games do you play? (Check the appropriate box.)

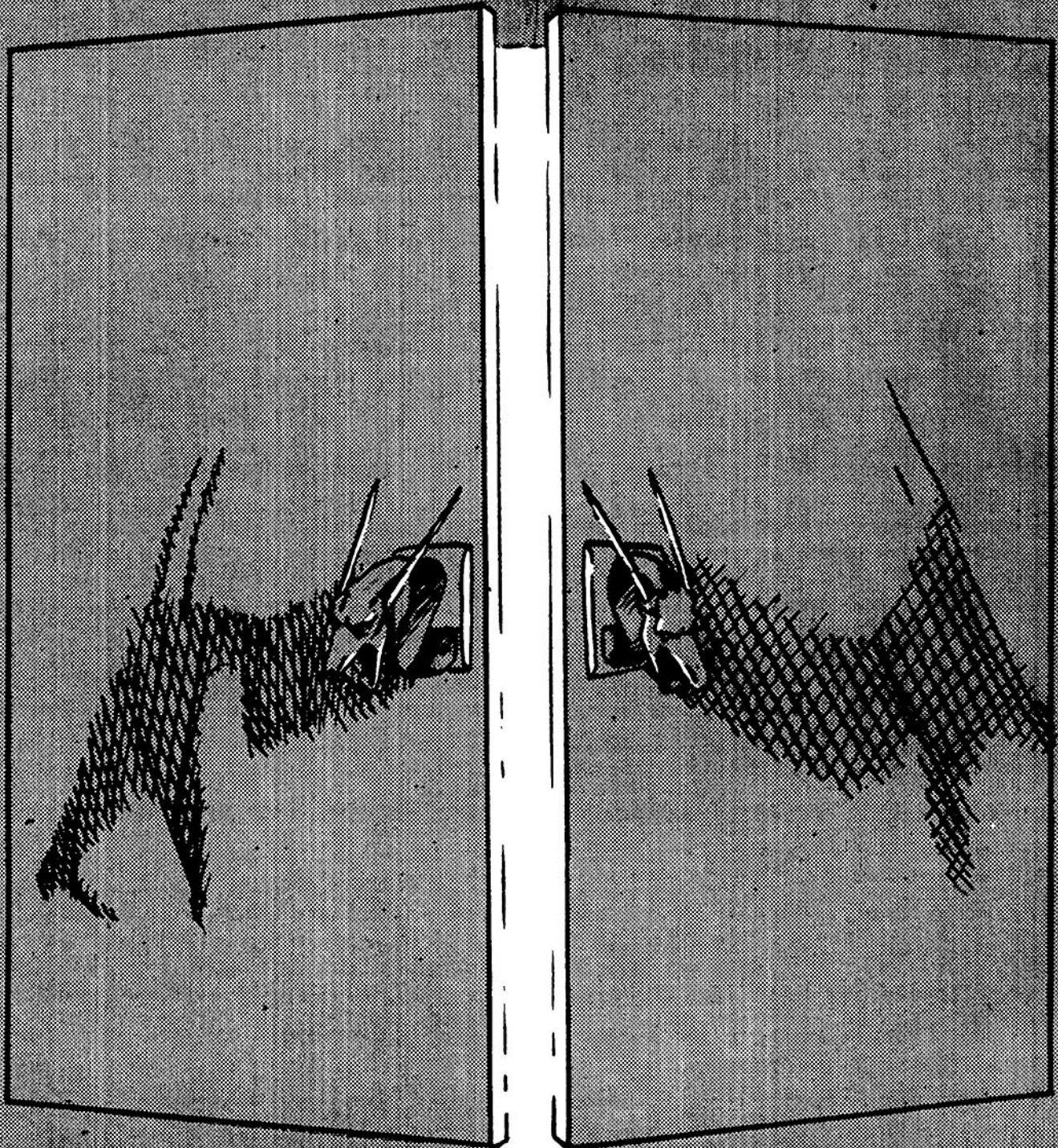
26. Fantasy Role-playing
27. Spy, Intrigue & Adventure
28. Recondo--Viet Nam Genre
29. Science Fiction Role-play
30. Alternate Earth Role-play
31. Super Hero Role-playing
32. Strategy & Tactic Games
33. Comedy Games
34. Board Games
35. Dating Games

Where do you live?

36. The bustling big city.
37. Out in the suburbs.
38. Way out in the country.
39. Outside of the U.S.A.
40. Outside of this dimension.

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NO RETURN.**



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