

GPI Presents

Gateways

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HORSECLANS • STAR TREK • HUMANX

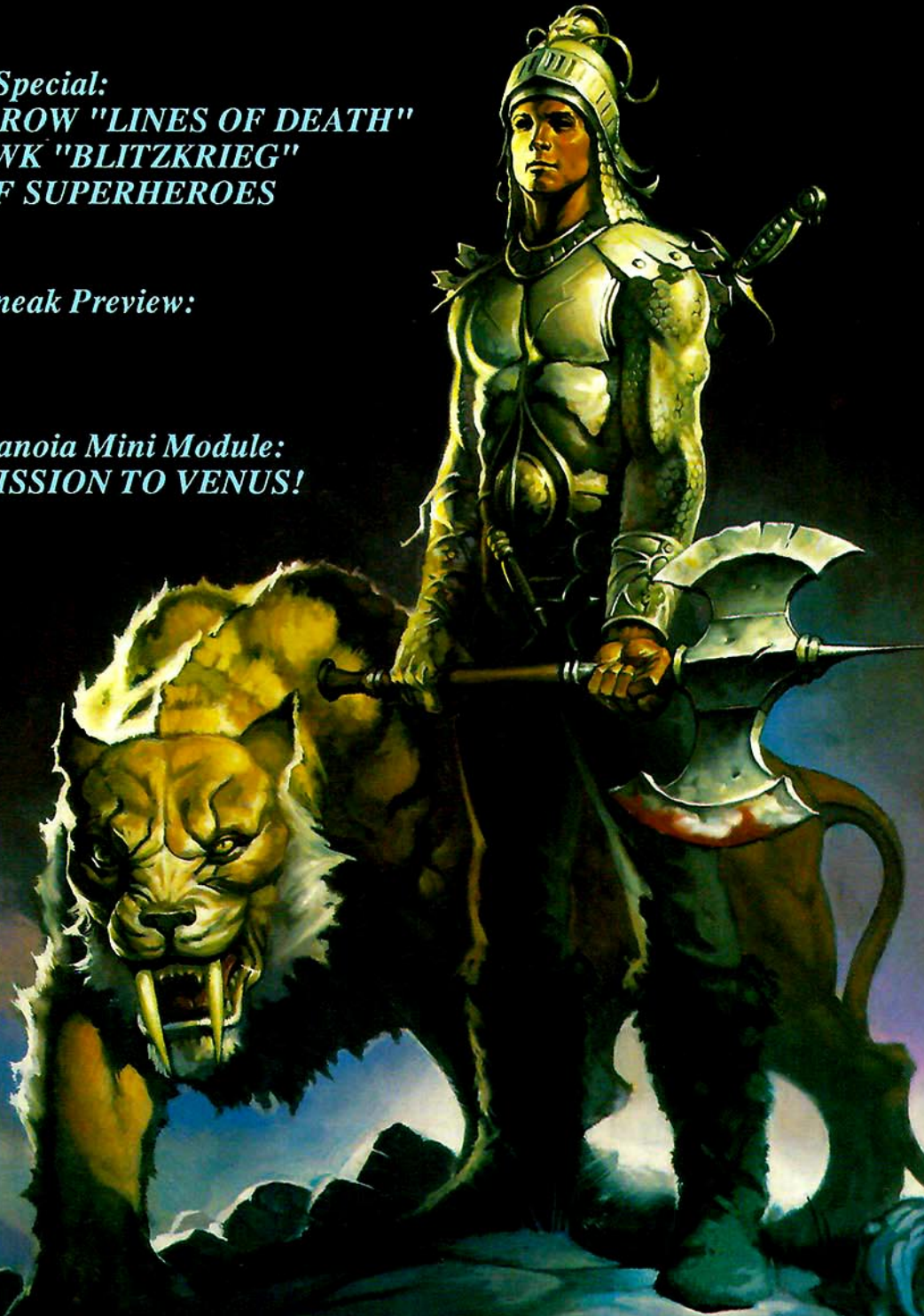


*New Blackhawk
Adventure!*

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GREEN ARROW "LINES OF DEATH"
BLACKHAWK "BLITZKRIEG"
LEGION OF SUPERHEROES*

*Exclusive Sneak Preview:
WILLOW!*

*Official Paranoia Mini Module:
CODE 7—MISSION TO VENUS!*





GPI Presents:

Gateways

Vol. II

No. 8 March, 1988

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Howling At The Moon

GATEWAYS Magazine always welcomes your comments and suggestions. *Howling At The Moon* is your regular forum for opinions, debates, discussions, cries and whispers. If you have something to tell us or to tell your fellow gamers, write to: *Howling At The Moon*, Gateways Publications Inc. JAF Box 965, New York, N.Y. 10116

Dear Laura Antoniou:

Just thought I'd let you know that I found your editorial in issue #6 of *Gateways* very encouraging. I'm a long standing dreamer, who has aspirations of becoming a writer, if I can push myself through my general sloth and lack of discipline. It's good to know that there are other struggling dreamers out there too — goodness knows, the world needs us!

I also found your comments in issue #5 very interesting. Greg Stafford once encouraged GM's to "make your players live in a world of chance and opportunity, where their actions have meaning." Players should realize (and GM's) that this is what makes RPG's exciting, rather than how powerful your character is. Keep up the low level games!

Best wishes for your magazine.

Regards,
Greg Hallam
Melbourne, Australia

Ed. reply: *The knowledge that Gateways is distributed in Australia never really hit me until you wrote, Greg. Thanks for your comments, and your note of promise. I'll be looking for your name in print one day...and it won't just be in a letter column!*

Dear Gateways:

First, I would like to say that I believe your magazine to be the best overall gaming magazine on the market. You combine interesting articles with excellent editorials in which you state your mind but don't come off as preachy. *Gateways* is also the only magazine that realizes that there are people behind the games, and that's an important thing.

Second, I would like you to send me a copy of your writers guidelines. Are there any topics in particular that you want submissions for?

Sincerely,
David Logvin
N. Chelmsford, MA

Ed. reply: *We get so many letters asking for writers' and artists' guidelines that I am going to borrow David's question and answer it for all of those who wrote but did not enclose a SASE. If you would like to write an article, review, gaming aid, chart, adventure, or editorial letter, or if you have already written one and wish Gateways to review it*



c.1988 Steve Jackson Games.

for possible publication, send a letter requesting our guidelines, and enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope. If you wish, you may include a sample of your writing, or your suggestions or ideas about what you would like to submit. If you wish to submit artwork for consideration, do not send originals, but photocopies or other reproductions. Be sure to include your phone number and name on every sheet of paper you send, just in case your envelope gets misplaced. As for topics, Gateways is your magazine. We will always be interested in your ideas.

Dear Gateways

I just wanted to drop you a line telling you how much I've enjoyed reading your magazine.

While its appearance is great, and in fact, improves with every issue, its content is what impresses me most. *Gateways* is always interesting, informative and, above all, what I like to see in a gaming magazine. *Gateways* might not be for everyone (i.e. Monty-Haul-type gamers), but it is for the more serious role-player (i.e. me).

It's nice to see a gaming publication that is committed to the reader for a change. Keep up the good work!

By the way, I'm an avid Traveller player; thanks for all the Traveller stuff. I'm looking forward to reading more.

Sincerely,
Ross Appelmann
Baldwin, NY

Ed. reply: *Your wish is our command, Ross. You'll find more about Mega-Traveller right in this issue.*

Dear Gateways:

I don't know how you'll take this, but back in January 1987 I thought you would be out of business within one month. But my real point is that I'm glad you stuck around.

Sincerely yours,
Larry Altime
Edison, N.J.

Ed. reply: *And we're glad you stayed, too.*

From The Tower

Imagine for a moment that you live in a place where nothing you did or said had any meaning. Your opinions would have no weight, and your views, visions, dreams and questions would never have an outlet. If you found that you didn't agree with something, there would be nothing you could do to change it. If someone did something that hurt you, or made you feel uncomfortable or sad, no one would hear your pain, answer your call for help, or even listen to you as you tried to tell your story.

Terrible fantasy, isn't it? Yet every day, thousands of people live like that. Or think that they do. And in this high-tech world of the Twentieth Century, where miracles happen every day, there is no reason for anyone to feel alone, helpless, or silenced. Yet, as in all things, there are many reasons why people feel that way.

Perhaps you are in a situation where you feel that you are helpless. Perhaps you are "too young", or "too small", or perhaps someone has said something to you that you see as a threat. Maybe you feel so driven by the circumstances that you live under that there seems to be no way out. There are no simple answers, but there is one thing that everyone can do, regardless of age, size, color, rank in a family or class, gender or ability to travel. You can pick up the phone. There are thousands of people who will listen, who will try to help you, to make you feel better, or to stop what is making you uncomfortable. (See page 54 for one such number.) If you have a problem and you don't know where to turn, just calling the operator can put you in touch with hotlines for every situation you could imagine. And many of these hotlines are free calls. Perhaps there are few knights in shining armor these days, but these people do their best to be just that. Because sometimes, regardless of how many monsters you've defeated with dice, the monsters in your mind, at school, at home or anywhere else, can really knock you down. Don't let them. You are worth a lot more than that.

The key to being noticed, being heard, and changing things is the value you place on yourself. We are all, in our own rights, valuable people, and if anyone tries to tell you differently, know in your heart and mind that they are wrong. Every breath you take, every moment of time in which you exist, and every thing that you do has meaning, and is important—to you! And as long as you hold on to that, you will be able to get up and face another day, and the situations that get you down will become "problems", things that must be solved, things that can be stopped, or handled. If your life has worth—to you—your problems will never get so huge that you will be unable to get someone to help, or do something yourself.

I know that you're worth it.

And then, there's the people who can't place a fin-

ger on what exactly is holding them back, or who blame things that should no longer have a real effect on their lives. Maybe you are working in what you feel is a dead-end job, maybe you just can't seem to hack it at school, maybe you can't get along with one or the other or both of your parents. Priorities and responsibilities come into the picture when you do have an amount of control over you own life, or just want to.

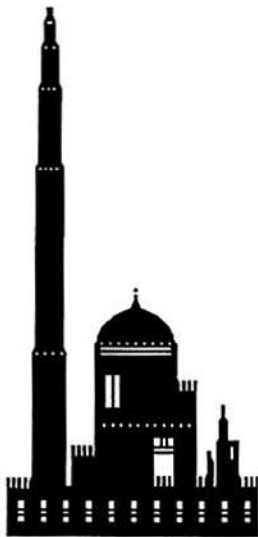
In a game, when there is a great quest that must be completed, even a novice player will know that it would not be wise to be sidetracked and allow the quest to be ignored in favor of partying down at the local tavern or chasing a pickpocket in a city of one million people. That is called establishing your priorities, and it is a necessary part of life. But in order to be able to do so, you must first recognise the ability in yourself to take responsibility for your own actions and decisions. Do you feel that college isn't the answer to what you need? You must have an acceptable alternative, and you must put forward your reasons and motivations for doing what you think will be best for you. You must accept the fact that certain people might not agree with you or support your decision. But once made, you must do what you can to work on your new goals and maintain good relationships with anyone who does not agree with you.

Accepting the responsibility for your own actions is a way of showing that you respect yourself, that you believe in what you are doing. Placing the blame on parents, teachers, bosses, siblings, friends and enemies is saying that these people have total control over your life. After all, if they can make you life so difficult or miserable, then they are controlling you even when you are not with them! But if you were in control of your own feelings, if you knew that your opinion had worth, you could deal with these people as individual people, some of whom you love, and should see that you do.

Outside of the home and school, there are so many ways society makes an individual feel small. Giant corporations hire hundreds of people every week, and you may feel like just one cog in the gears. Government offices are huge and cold, and you can be reduced to a series of numbers in an instant. Laws, regulations, rules, every binding, controlling, monitoring aspect of society can make you feel that there is nothing that you can do to change things.

But there you would be wrong. This year is a year that will determine the next four years of how the United States government will be run. There are so many issues that you are a part of, and regardless of whether or not you will be 18 in November, you will have to live through these next four years. Listen to what's happening, let others know what you think. Take control of your life, show respect for your own opinions, and go out and vote for the man or woman who represents your views and interests. Your vote is important, and don't let someone run your life by telling you that it isn't.

Laura Antoniou
Executive Editor



The Tome



Playing It By Ear using music to liven up your adventures

by Jape Trostle

As your characters victoriously enter the medieval city, the sound of trumpets and song fill the air. That night, at a banquet held in your honor, a group of merry minstrels play many a tune...

As your super-sleuth slips past the guards of the security complex, he can hear the plucky bass riff of the **James Bond** theme run through the back of his mind...

As your space fighter, fully armed with lasers and missiles, begins its dive towards the dreadnought in orbit below, you'd swear you can hear the swelling strains of an orchestra, somewhere in the background...

Although imagination is the main ingredient in role-playing games, why should you settle for an imaginary soundtrack? For Game Masters who enjoy creating campaigns with a particular atmosphere—instead of just conducting an exercise in dice-rolling—the use of pre-recorded music can greatly enhance the "flavor" of a campaign. During a game, music can be used in the background to set a mood—much as a soundtrack sets the tone of a film—or in specific circumstances, such as minstrels playing at a banquet. Additionally, you could choose "themes" for particular places as they are entered, or characters as they are encountered. However you use it, music will greatly expand the dimensions of your campaign.

As any RPG relies heavily on the descriptions put forth by the GM, any narrative can be enhanced by music. Actually playing a recording of triumphant music (such as Holst's "Jupiter Theme") as you describe the characters' vic-

torious return from a successful adventure can give the players a more grand sense of the heroic. Music that suggests swashbuckling and adventure ("music to rescue princesses by") can add much excitement to the game. And, if you want to play up the mystery and danger of a dank dungeon or an unexplored planet, play the appropriate music while you describe the surroundings.

But what music is appropriate; and, what recordings will give you the effects you want to achieve?

By far, the most accessible sources are film soundtracks. Music from adventure, science fiction, fantasy, or "sword-and-sorcery" films are readily adaptable to role-playing games, because many role-playing games have been influenced by these same movies. With very few exceptions, movie soundtracks are always available in record stores, so there will be many selections from which to choose.

Using music from the players' favorite films works well for them, as they associate the excitement of the movie with what is going on in the game. Other tracks that work well are those composed by John Williams (such as *Star Wars* and *Raiders of the Lost Ark*), those used in the films of Alexander Salkind (i.e. *The Three Musketeers*, and the *Superman* films), and music from old epic movies like *Ben-Hur* and *The Ten Commandments*. These, and others like them, could be used in any RPG, but are particularly effective in the fantasy-oriented games, such as *Dungeons & Dragons*. For those who want to add flair to their science fiction campaigns, music from *Bladerunner* and *Star Trek* can be used. And if spy games are your forte, any of the numerous *James Bond* or *Pink Panther* soundtracks are appropriate.

In addition to movie soundtracks, classical music can provide a fascinating alternative. Amongst the classics, something can be found to fit any situation. Players can have their imaginations stirred when their characters head into battle accompanied by Tchaikovsky's *1812 Overture* or Rimsky-Korsakov's *Scheherazade*. And Gustav Holst's *The Planets* or Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring* can weave a flavorful spell as the players explore the dark dungeon, the great city-state, or the far reaches of time and space.

Since there is usually more to a campaign than the intensity of battle and adventure, the music doesn't always have to be dramatic. With a little digging, a GM can come up with a wide variety of recordings that reflect the more mellow moments of games set in fantasy, modern-day, or futuristic settings. For those times when your characters are lounging about in their favorite pub or cantina, there are folk songs, ballads and other medieval melodies which might be applicable. When they are at a monastery, or temple, for example, one could play Gregorian chants, and, when your game is set in the present or the future, a cornucopia of jazz, progressive and the so-called "new age" music is available at local record and specialty stores.

Another way that music can enhance a game session, is by choosing different themes for each place or character. As is often done in operas and motion pictures, a particular track or movement is associated with a particular city, dungeon, NPC, or player-character. It can give a new meaning to "continuity of play", especially when the players realize they are about to run into an old nemesis because you

have just played his "theme"! ("Uh-oh, sounds like ol' Og the Ax is just around the corner!") Of course, everything the players run into cannot have a theme, but if the most important elements in the campaign are given one it can be a lot of fun.

An important consideration for every GM is that of the limited game budget, one that is, no doubt, already strained. With the price of albums, cassette tapes, and especially compact discs so high, gathering the sound you want for your campaign could become prohibitively expensive. So, after you've ransacked your friends' and family's music collections, head on down to your local county or city library. Most large library systems will have a fairly comprehensive assortment of music, and getting a library card is often inexpensive, if not free. You can also find free music on your local radio stations.

As you might have guessed, there are a few drawbacks to having sound for your campaign. In most cases, playing out a battle or adventure will take longer than any specifically selected piece, and, if a campaign is going to extend over a period of time, new and different music will have to be found. Players can get rather testy if they have heard the same piece over and over again, even if it is a "theme" piece ("Oh no...not the "Cantina Theme" again..."). Regarding record albums, 45's and turntables; getting up to change the album record to get a specific piece or turn the side over can be cumbersome as play must be interrupted. Trying to circumvent this problem by stacking singles in order of desired continuity leaves you less control over what is played when. Needless to say, "happy" music that comes on as one of the PC's expires in meleé can really kill the mood.

What works best in most cases is to use a portable cassette player with your music prerecorded and ready to play at a moment's notice. Once you have an idea of what will probably happen during a session of play, you can have a selection of music on tapes that will fit what you expect will take place and be encountered. Thus, little time is wasted with albums and stereo systems.

Of course, all of this is going to mean a little extra

work for the GM, but the reward is a more enjoyable game. As anyone who plays an RPG does so to have fun and exercise the imagination, anything that assists and aids the ambiance of the game is worth the extra effort. The effects can make a good campaign into a truly memorable one.

DISCOGRAPHY

For this listing of suggested records, I have broken them down into four categories; Classical, Period Pieces, Soundtracks, and Progressive and other music. For the works that are better known by their titles (mostly film soundtracks and classical music), I have simply listed those titles, as the music is often released on different labels and by different musicians. For the more esoteric works, I have chosen a few specific titles, and also listed labels and addresses from which catalogues can be ordered if the reader would like to obtain a more comprehensive list. What is listed here, is of course, just a sampling as a complete listing would be impractical as well as voluminous.

I've noted the "flavor" of the music with the following marks:

- (A) Adventurous
- (M) Mysterious
- (S) Sylvan
- (G) Gregorian Chants and other solemn themes
- (B) Ballads, Dances, and other Folk Tunes

Film Soundtracks do not have a marking as they often contain a number of "moods".

An asterisk (*) indicates that the piece or soundtrack in question is Highly Recommended.

Classical

- The Planets*—Holst (A, M, S)*
- 1812 Overture*—Tchaikovsky (A)*
- The Rite of Spring*—Stravinsky (A, M)*
- Scheherezade*—Rimsky-Korsakov (A)*
- New World Symphony*—Dvorak (A, M, S)
- Die Gotterdammerung*—Wagner (A, S)*
- Bolero*—Ravel (A)
- Concerto for Orchestra*—Bartok (A, M)
- 2001 and A Clockwork Orange*, containing the music of Richard Strauss (A, M)



Period Pieces

- Music of the Gothic Era, c.1160-c.1380*—Early Music Consort of London, Archiv Records (B)*
Terpsichore: Dance Music of the Renaissance—Ulsamer Collegium, Archiv Records (B)
Golden Dance Hits of the 1600's—Archiv Records (B)
Treasury of Gregorian Chants III—Monks of the Abbey of St. Thomas, Yorkshire Records (G)
Gregorian Chants: Grand Prix du Disc II—The Trappist Monks of the Cistercian Abbey, Everest Records (G)
Gregorian Chant at Liguge—Archiv Records (G)
Songs and Motets of the 13th Century—Archiv Records (B)
Irish Dance Music—Blarney Castle, Irish Records (B)
Irish Ballads—Monitor Records (B)
Eight Madrigals and Caccia taken from Antonio Squarcialupi's Codex—Pro Musica Antiqua, Archiv Records (B)
Messe Notre-Dame—Pro Musica Antiqua, Archive Records (B)
Music at the Court of Burgundy—Pro Musica Antiqua, Amadeo Records (B)
English Lute Duets—Jakob Lindberg and Paul O'Dette (B, S)
Danses, Danseryes—Pro Musica Antiqua, Archiv Records (B)*
Eight Secular Compositions—Pro Musica Antiqua, Archiv Records (B)
Fresh Aire I-IV—Mannheim Steamroller, American Gramophone Records (A,S)*
Calliope Festival—Various artists, Nonesuch Records (B)*

Soundtracks

- The Star Wars Trilogy*—John Williams*
The Ten Commandments—E. Bernstein
Masada—J. Goldsmith*
Blade Runner—Vangelis*
Raiders of the Lost Ark—John Williams*
*The Three Musketeers**
*Excalibur**
*Ben Hur***
*Cleopatra**
Close Encounters of the Third Kind—John Williams*
Star Trek I-IV—Soundtracks
James Bond's Greatest Hits, containing theme songs from all the Bond films; also, all the soundtracks from each film therein
Superman I-IV—Soundtracks
...and any other movie whose soundtrack you enjoyed.

Progressive and Other Music

- Who's Afraid Of... and In Visible Silence*—The Art of Noise, Electra/Asylum Records (A, M, S)*
Keys to Imagination—Yanni, Private Music (S, M)
Solid Colors; Liz Story—Windham Hill (S, M)*
Harmonic Meetings—David Hykes, Celestial Harmonies (S, M)
Silk Road; Kitaro—Kuck-Kuck Records (S, M)*
Heaven and Hell—Vangelis (A, M, S)
Theme of Secrets—Eddie Jobson, Private Music

Miscellaneous

- Wild West: The Grand Canyon Suite*—Groftz; *How the West Was Won*—A. Neuman; *The Big Country*
Roaring 20's: Harlem Nocturn; The Sting—Scott Joplin

Addresses:

Archiv Records
c/o Deutsche Grammophon Label
810 Seventh Ave.
New York, NY 10019

L'Oiseau Lyre Records
c/o Deutsche Grammophon Label
810 Seventh Ave.
New York, NY 10019

Nonesuch Records
9229 Sunset Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA 90069

also:
c/o Electra
665 Fifth Ave.
New York, NY 10022

Windham Hill Records
P.O. Box 9388
Stanford, CA 94305

Celestial Harmonies & Kuck-Kuck Records
c/o Celestial Harmonies
605 Richfield Road
Wilton, CN 06897

Private Music
220 East 23rd Street
New York, NY 10010

In addition, the following labels have a large number of medieval folk songs, lute and recorder music, and other tunes:

Kicking Mule Records
P.O. Box 158
Alderpoint, CA 95411

SineQuaMon Records
1 Charles Street
Providence, RI 02904

Reference Recordings

American Gramophone
206 South 44th Street
Omaha, NE 68131

Everest Records
10920 Wilshire Boulevard—Suite 410
Los Angeles, CA 90024

Not Just Another Trail Ride

Steve Jackson Runs with Adams' Horseclans

L. Antoniou

Question: What do you call a lean, muscular, battle-scarred and deeply tanned armored warrior accompanied by a 500 pound sabre-toothed prairie cat?

Answer: Sir.

Alternate answer: Your favorite role-playing character, by way of Robert Adams and Steve Jackson Games.

Through the multipurpose gaming system of GURPS, the post-apocalyptic world of Adams' 17 (probably 18 or 19 by the time this sees print) *Horseclans* novels can be played out on tables across the world, bringing to life such characters as barbarian, axe-wielding warriors, twisted scientific geniuses, insane environmentalists, Greek statesmen, psionic horses, amazonian women and of course, giant, sabre-toothed prairie cats. How could such a combination of characters exist within the same world? To explain in detail would take the reading of hundreds of pages of material from the actual series of novels, and that is a pleasure any curious readers should discover on their own. But for the reader and gamer who is already a *Horseclans* fan or who wants to get into this fascinating world right now, Steve Jackson Games has managed to pull together GURPS *Horseclans*, a brief but somehow in-depth look at (as the sub-title on the game puts it) "role-playing in Robert Adams' barbarian future."

The world of the *Horseclans* has been around since 1975. Robert Adams recalls that a dream of combat led him to his typewriter, where he began a scene from the first novel, *Coming of the Horseclans*. Two more rapidly followed in the next two years, after which Adams switched publishers (from Pinnacle to Signet, where he is now), and proceeded to issue novels which were snapped up by fans as soon as they hit the shelves. The true breakthrough novel was *Cat of a Silvery Hue*, the fourth *Horseclans* book, proving both that Adams' vision had taken hold, and that

the word "Cat" in a title will sell more books. Many of Adams' female readers admit that their first *Horseclans* book was that novel, a tale of a man driven by circumstance into becoming a hero. The interest generated in Geros Lahvoheetos has lasted throughout the series, and Adams revealed that an upcoming novel would return to the shy hero and have him finally fall in love. When asked how many *Horseclans* novels were scheduled for production, Adams had to pause and begin to count, turning to talented coeditor and (incidentally) wife Pamela Crippen Adams for verification. After their combined figuring yielded three or four titles, Adams admitted that regardless of how many tales actually had names, his visions had a long way to go before they ran dry. "I'll keep writing them as long as folks want to read them," he finally declared. "There are hundreds of years of history I've barely touched."

The Story Thus Far

Hundreds of years? A brief synopsis of the *Horseclans* story will reveal just the edge of a world packed with adventure, mystery, violence and epic quests. For those who have not yet read the books, keep in mind that reading them in the order of publication will not reveal an uninterrupted time line of events. Careful reading of the sourcebook will reveal the proper sequence if you feel that reading them in chronological order will lend to your enjoyment or understanding.

First of all, the *Horseclans* novels take place on Earth. (Makes it easy to map.) The series assumes the year of 2015 is reached without undue strife, which allows for several technological advances necessary to the plots of several tales to be manufactured or invented. However, during or shortly after that year, the "paranoid dictator of Libya" launches a nuclear strike and starts a *Two-Day War*. Systems such as the SDI (so-called "Star Wars Defense Programs"), manage to inter-





cept the majority of the missiles, but the chaos and confusion after the wars lead to a collapse of general governments, followed by several plagues of holocaust proportions. When the devastation slows down, barely 1% of the world's population survives.

Enter one of the central characters of the series, one Milo Moray (or Morai). Milo is a member of a special breed of human, the Undying. (How else can he be a central character in a series of books covering hundreds of years?) Birthdate unknown, he lives through the twentieth century and into the

twenty-first and beyond, through the twenty-ninth. A master of horse, weaponry, linguistics, leadership, strategy and many, many other things, Milo's visions of a new society take a group of sick, starving children to the status of survivors, and then to tribal members, then to roving hunter-gatherers. With the temporary aid of another "Undying" (who may or may not have been a former Nazi), he teaches his "people" how to live off the land, and how to survive the climate and other environmental circumstances. After passing through Canada on their quest to find a homeland, the "Kindred" find themselves a new and fascinating ally, the giant, intelligent, telepathic prairie cats. They roam the remains of North America looking for a home, finding allies and enemies, discovering ways to deal with the greatly changed world, and absorbing smaller groups into their Kindred.

In 2218, the Greeks invade America. Well, not exactly Greeks, but Hellenes, including Turks, Albanians, Italians, Sicilians, French, Spanish...the Europeans, arriving once again to begin lives on North American shores. They establish power bases, mostly along the east coast, and provide characters and situations which cross through over half the series, warring with, trading with, kidnapping, making peace with and otherwise dealing with the members of the Kindred. From that time on, the conflicts and sagas cross between people and cities, homelands and badlands, bringing into play the aspects of politics, religion, freedom and slavery, courage and cowardice, accidents and plots. More Undying people are occasionally found and brought into Milo's reach, to join him and his people. Evil scientists, surviving the ravages of war and age, inhabit young bodies and plot the raising and falling of one group or another. Mysteries abound, as ancient weapons, secrets, feuds and mysteries return to destroy, tempt and enlighten major characters. As hundreds of years pass, the old world submerges and the world of the Horseclans becomes reality, strong and undenia-

ble, a world every bit as authentic as the "real world", and every bit as sadly violent.

Controversy

The wars and conflicts between the many people of the Horseclans world are bloody and not the usual stuff of fantasy. People carried off the battle field still die of their wounds, and not every character gets in a chance to utter brave last words. Murder, torture, rape, and mutilation are all parts of Adams' world, as he insists on telling his tales as reflections of human behavior, not as idealizations. "Good" characters have been known to commit horrible deeds, and Adams will freely admit that he does not always approve of what his major characters have done. Yet, he points out, ignoble characters or "bad-guys" are also known to do great things within the Horseclans, presenting a picture almost unheard of on the science-fiction/fantasy bookshelf. The reader must see all the characters as part of the tale, and judge them individually. All of the characters are desperately human, with every fault, imperfection, stumbling block, case of indecision and yes, every ability to be wrong that real people have. On the other hand, almost every character also has those parts which can be called honorable and "good." The challenge is to read the books and to be able to consider motivation and rationalization, cause and effect. It would be impossible to capture the essence of these characters in brief "alignment" charts, and that is one of the reasons why GURPS is an ideal system to use when trying to play a game set in the Horseclans world.

Adams has come under fire in the past for his outspoken manner and his firm political views. A spokesperson for "realism" in the science-fiction and fantasy community, he occasionally lectures on medieval weapon making, the realities of medieval life, and the practicality of wearing, fighting in and moving in armor. An accomplished blacksmith, his experience and humor make him a popular guest at conventions. He appreciates weaponry, and scorns the "peace-bonding" practices at major conventions. (Peace-bonding is the practice of rendering a model or actual weapon incapable of being drawn from its sheath or holster without the severing or untying of some sort of ribbon or string.) His ribald jokes about what he has "peace-bonded" have always been fan favorites. He carries a small but very sharp knife, and will tell the tale of his drawing it against the threat of a





street assault. As a man who requires realism to play a major part in his work, he has been criticized for his portrayal of scenes of sexual assault of female characters, especially those under the age of 16. He stands strongly behind his depictions, arguing that he, unlike other authors in the field, portrays the act as being criminal and ugly, and not something the victim enjoys. He also points out that the threat of assault is often leveled toward male characters as well, although no surviving male character in any of the books thus far has actually experienced it. The Horseclans books are harsh in their depiction of life in a barbaric world, and readers run into the possibility of being offended. Yet there is heroism to be found, honor, duty, trust and altruism. Adams points out, "Just like in the real world."

Adams' amazons, female warriors called "Moon Maidens", have created both a following *and* a controversy. Originally shown to be a group of women ruled by a matriarchal society, all man-haters and tough warriors, they eventually were forced to "disband", both by circumstance and through the instruction of a divine being. Readers have objected to the descendants of Twentieth Century feminists "dying out" by joining the descendants of Twentieth Century Armenians (and various other Kindred allies), marrying and establishing themselves as part of general society. Adams bemoans the number of former fans who accuse him of "ruining" the Moon Maidens by "curing" them of their man-hating ways. Again, he points out that some Maidens never changed, and that there is a strong possibility that there are others still left in the world. But the letters, calls and occasional confrontation at conventions continue, and there would seem to be no good solution. Adams recommends, "If you're offended, *don't read the books!* I don't write them to tell people what I think, I write them because they are adventure books *that people like to read.* It's really very simple."

So Play The Game

The other simple solution is to play the game. And Steve Jackson, writing alongside Jerry Epperson, has made

it very easy to do so. Although having the actual GURPS game is not required, it is recommended for ease of play. Adapting the information given in the Horseclans sourcebook to other systems would require that you have a system that accomodates psionics, gunpowder, swords, battle rules, large scale battle rules, and too many other variants to list. Also, alignment and magic systems will clash with the Horseclans world, as will any standard clerical system.

From that point, the Horseclans sourcebook provides everything a GM or player would need regarding playing in that world. A complete chronology places the books in order of events, and references major events back to the pages that described them in the various books. Several ages are singled out to use as suggestions for special "Campaign Periods", listing the types of adventures, major personalities involved, the nations involved, and handy references. This is a godsend for those GMs who want to feature a specific personality as an NPC or cross over and/or include a favorite scene or battle. An interesting suggestion for long-term campaign play offers the possibility for one player to be responsible for an entire Clan, making it possible to continue playing even after a player character has died. There is a list of all of the languages mentioned in the books, as well as instructions on how to allow them to be used naturally in play. The "Campaign Types", some with humorous names, are also helpful, especially to new GMs who might not be able to settle on the type of game they want to run. From "Hack 'n Slash" to political intrigue, there is some tale in the Horseclans world that will suit any group of players.

This is followed by a discussion of the lands of Mehrikah (read it out loud and guess), which is both complete and interesting, offering for the first time anywhere, insights into the lands and histories of Mehrikah which could not be covered in the novels without adding bulk and long explanations. The neat maps provide visual insight as to the locations of famous battles and Clan boundaries, and would be of interest to anyone who likes the series. In fact, any true fan of the Horseclans world should find this game aid of interest just for the organizational aspects of it and the simple explanations of events which might have seemed

mysterious in the novels. Since the languages included in the books are so variant and the spelling of proper names reflects this, the maps and land descriptions provide a simple and elegant guide to the complexities of linguistics and semantics revealed within the books.

Players will find the options of which character types to play agonizing! There are so many choices that sound fascinating. The **Ahrmenhee** are mountaineers, loyal, passionate, brave and proud. The **Ehleen** offer a chance to play decadent nobles, while the **Ganiks** are so repulsive that any player of orcs, disgusting and obnoxious aliens and various monster types will have a great time. Everyone will want to play a **Horseclansman** or other member of the Kindred, but what about the possibility of playing an intelligent horse or prairie cat? Brawny warrior types will want to be members of the **Middle Kingdoms**, fighters from childhood, single minded, strong and big. But what about the surviving technologists, the **Witchmen**? Or the physicians, those of the **Zahrtoghahn** race? Or a **Moon Maiden**? Each class and race comes with its own advantages and disadvantages, suggested names and details about the way of life that character would have seen. There is just enough detail to allow someone who has not read the books to play comfortable, yet readers will find facts and examples that go beyond the information in the books as well.

For the GM, there is a listing of important personalities that will hopefully be supplemented in future books. There are too many memorable characters in the Horseclans books to fit in a general sourcebook of this type. Steve Jackson has promised more Horseclans books for the future (the first proposed one being **Horseclans Survivors**, a close up on the post-apocalypse years), and an expanded list of NPC's or specialty PC's would be very nice. Also, maps of major cities and keeps would lend GMs a mighty hand in planning siege or mystery adventures. The discussion of psionics is basic and simple, including the various techniques illustrated in the books as well as the Mind Transfer abilities used by the major bad guys. There are few "monsters" in the Horseclans world, as the true monster is man. Yet mutations have changed a few normal animals into monster types, and they are listed. The glossary is great for anyone whose Greek language skills are not up to translating the various terms and titles used throughout the books. Finally, an index, something noticeably missing from longer books and systems throughout the industry, is logically placed and rather complete, providing a quick method of finding that one fact needed to solve a gaming or reading misunderstanding.

But Don't Forget to Read the Books

Readers should not be daunted by the number of books available about the Horseclans world. Some are worth investing in just for the striking and attractive cover art by fantasy artist Ken Kelly. (By the way, Kelly has allowed Steve Jackson Games to use some of his covers for their gaming aids, such as the **GURPS Bestiary**.) While it might be difficult to believe, each book may be read by itself, providing enough background information to get a new reader through. (Of course, using the sourcebook as a reference book would aid any new reader who just wants to try

one book at random.) And if you find that you like the Adams style, there are other places to find it on your local bookstore shelves. His novels about Twentieth Century people thrown into an alternate past are called **Castaways in Time**, also the title of the first book in the series. There are four books currently published under that heading. Or, if barbarians are your thing, check out **Barbarians I and II**, a pair of short story compilations which feature tales told by Poul Anderson, Fred Saberhagen, Andre Norton, Lin Carter, and other great names in the industry. Finally, if it's the "other world" atmosphere that turns you on, the **Robert Adams Book of Alternate Worlds**, another collection of short stories, might suit your collection. Speaking of collections, the book entitled **Friends of the Horseclans** is a collection of stories done by professional science fiction and fantasy authors, set on the Horseclans world. (Required reading is "*Maureen Birnbaum on the Art of War*", a hilarious look at a remarkable woman who ends up on that world.) There are rumors of a second collection, which should prove equally good. It is rare that a game world has this much detail and source material, and is it equally rare for a published series of novels to have such a well-produced game available for fans. This is a combination that is compelling. Collectors, fans and gamers should enjoy **GURPS Horseclans**, and look forward to similar products from the busy folks at Steve Jackson Games.



Cruising Through the Commonwealth with GURPS Humanx

Alan J. Berkson

With the close of 1987 Steve Jackson Games presented fans with a System Worldbook for their Generic Universal Role-Playing System (GURPS) based on Alan Dean Foster's Humanx Commonwealth novels. Part of an active and ongoing process of gathering some of the finest, classic fantasy and science fiction universes and adapting them into the versatile game system, the Commonwealth has now joined Robert Adams' Horseclans, (and fairly soon Andre Norton's Witchworld and Robert E. Howard's world of Conan).

COMMONWEALTH ORIGINS

Back in 1972, Alan Dean Foster published his first novel about the adventures of a young orphan boy, Flinx. *The Tar-Alym Krang* introduces us to Flinx and his pet flying-snake Pip. Flinx' home is the winged planet Moth, named because of a partially obliterated ring around the planet which makes the planet appear to have "wings." Moth is just one of the many settled planets which comprise the Humanx Commonwealth.

"I never had any intention to write a sequel to *The Tar-Alym Krang*. It just worked out that way," says Foster. Some 13 novels and several short stories later, including three sequels to *The Tar-Alym Krang* and one "prequel," Foster has painted a complex portrait of a futuristic trans-galactic society.

WHAT IS HUMANX?

Humanx is a word applied to the amalgamation of humans and thranx. The thranx are race of arthropods, multi-legged creatures resembling insects, complete with "bug-eyes" and antennae. Despite initial misgivings between both races, they found that the rational and logical thranx were a healthy complement to the reckless and self-confident humans.

GURPS HUMANX

The GURPS Humanx Worldbook is a detailed guide to this intriguing universe. It includes:

- Humanx History - A brief history of some of the pre-Human races and the origins of Humans, Thrax, and the Commonwealth.

- Commonwealth Gazetteer - An encyclopedic description of the worlds and lifeforms of the Commonwealth.

- A *Message for Malaika* - A GURPS Humanx adventure.

Curtis Scott provides a wealth of information for prospective Game Masters to use in fashioning Humanx adventures. The margins contain useful tidbits of background information which highlight portions of the main sections.

LIFE IN THE COMMONWEALTH

Transportation, communications, wealth, money, prices, jobs and income. It's all here, all the necessities for providing a character with background and gainful employment.

Commonwealth Gazetteer

The *Commonwealth Gazetteer* is a catalog of planets in the Humanx Commonwealth. It includes a description of the planet and it's indigenous plant and animal life. Also, any sapient lifeforms that live there and their vital statistics.

CHARACTER GENERATION

The section on character creation shows the unique aspects of a Commonwealth character including a commendable treatment of psionic powers. However, it is not comprehensive. This is intentional, not an oversight. Though it is not explicitly mentioned, the Worldbook is not a self-contained roleplaying game. As it's name implies, GURPS is designed for use with a variety of roleplaying environments using fundamental character generation and combat resolution schemes. The Humanx Worldbook contains only aspects and features peculiar to the Humanx Commonwealth environment. For more detailed information you must consult GURPS itself. The appendix has statistics for popular Humanx characters including Flinx, Ethan Fortune, and Skua September.

SPACECRAFT AND SPACE TRAVEL

The large attraction in this game is the many worlds it provides to gamers for adventures. Included with the game are diagrams and statistics for spacecraft ranging from leisure and commercial, to military, which gamers can command to "roam the stars."

The versatility of the GURPS system, allows people like Curtis Scott to bring us a whole new roleplaying "game" without having to create an entirely new "system."

Recently, Gateways took the opportunity to speak with Alan Dean Foster about the Humanx Commonwealth, GURPS Humanx, and roleplaying:

GW: How did the Steve Jackson Games deal come about?

ADF: Someone at Steve Jackson read the books and suggested it to me.

GW: Why did you say yes?

ADF: Why not? [Small laugh]

GW: What role, if any, did you play in the develop-

ment of the game?

ADF: A Guide to the Commonwealth material was the basis for most of it. I just reviewed the results for any inconsistencies. But with so many books over a long period of time, it's hard *not* to have inconsistencies.

GW: What is your background with role-playing games?

ADF: Never played any games. I know people at Cons who have played.

GW: How do you feel about them?

ADF: If you spend all your time doing one thing, you miss something else. Whether it be roleplaying games, science fiction, or anything else.

GW: How does it feel that these kids are going to be playing characters in a universe you created?

ADF: I don't know. Stange thing to see. I've been to cons. Kind'a fun to see what people do. It's like the ancient Greeks dressing up to re-enact stories of heroes and gods, Trojan war plays. 1000 years ago there were people playing this stuff. Goes way back.

GW: What can we expect from you in the future?

ADF: There is a Flinx book coming out this year. It's called *Flinx in Flux*. It picks up after *The End of the Matter*. It's the first I've written by popular demand. *To the Vanishing Point*, a mystery novel. *Maori*, a historical novel set in New Zealand, with fantasy elements. It's a departure for me. Like James Michener.

GW: What are you working on now?

ADF: Right now I'm working on a novelization of

Outer Heat. It's a science fiction detective film. It stars James Caan and Mandy Patinkin (the Spanish swordsman from *Princess Bride*). Its about a human detective teamed with an alien detective.

Alan Dean Foster has a Bachelor's degree from UCLA in Political Science and a Master's degree from UCLA in Motion Pictures.

Michael Goodwin is a commercial artist and co-author of *A Guide to the Commonwealth*, a comprehensive manual cataloging Alan Dean Foster's Humanx novels. It contains everything from flora and fauna to maps and ship diagrams, some of which were used in the creation of the *GURPS Humanx Worldbook*. He's also done other artwork for Steve Jackson games.

I asked Michael about his involvement with Alan Dean Foster and Steve Jackson Games:

"I've known [Foster] for a while. A friend and I started cataloging his books and eventually came out with the *Guide to the Commonwealth*. It's tough to keep up with him because he keeps coming out with more books."

"[Steve Jackson Games] called and said they wanted to use some stuff from the book. It's convenient because it has ship designs and names of plants and animals and stuff like that."

Alan Dean Foster's Humanx novels (Ballantine Books):

The Adventures of Flinx and Pip
FOR LOVE OF MOTHER-NOT
THE TAR-AIYM KRANG
ORPHAN STAR
THE END OF MATTER
BLOODHYPE
FLINX IN FLUX (coming in 1988)

The Icerigger Saga
ICERIGGER
MISSION TO MOULOKIN
THE DELUGE DRIVERS

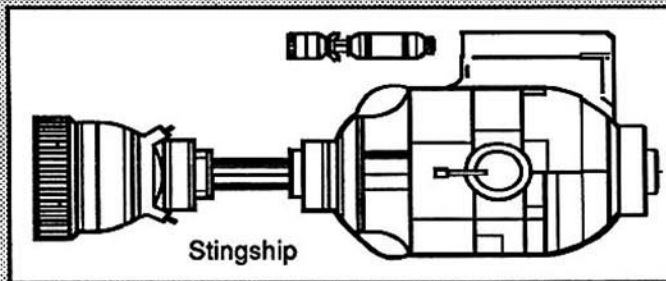
The Humanx Commonwealth
NOR CRYSTAL TEARS
VOYAGE TO THE CITY OF THE DEAD
MIDWORLD
CACHALOT
SENTENCED TO PRISM

Anthologies
WITH FRIENDS LIKE THESE...
...WHO NEEDS ENEMIES?

Other sources:

A GUIDE TO THE COMMONWEALTH by Robert Teague and Michael Goodwin.

A Guide to the Commonwealth



"When exploring vast unknown territories or revisiting favorite old haunts, it's always advisable to travel with a good map."
-Alan Dean Foster

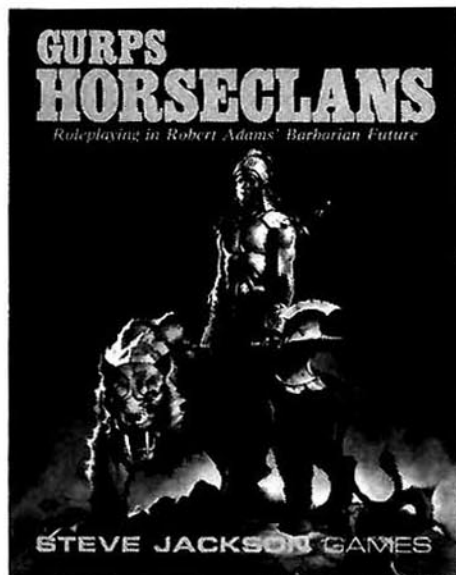
A Guide to the Commonwealth:

70 pages of maps, diagrams, illustrations, a chronology of people and events, definitions and descriptions. A necessary guide for future reading and enjoyment of any of Alan Dean Foster's Humanx Commonwealth Universe novels and short stories.

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They ride the plains of a post-holocaust America, telepathic prairiecats by their sides. They're deadly warriors — for honor, for loot, or just for the joy of a good fight. They would follow their leader, the undying Milo Morai, straight to Hell. And they'd come back with trophies.



They're the

Horseclans

Now, Robert Adams' best-selling *Horseclans* series comes alive in the newest supplement to the *Generic Universal RolePlaying System*. This 96-page book is a complete concordance of all published *Horseclans* material, with maps, historical and geographical information, lists of names, and everything else you need for a complete *Horseclans* roleplaying campaign.

Also included are rules for Undying characters, "mind speak" and other psi abilities, and a quick system for resolving large battles and determining their effects on player characters.

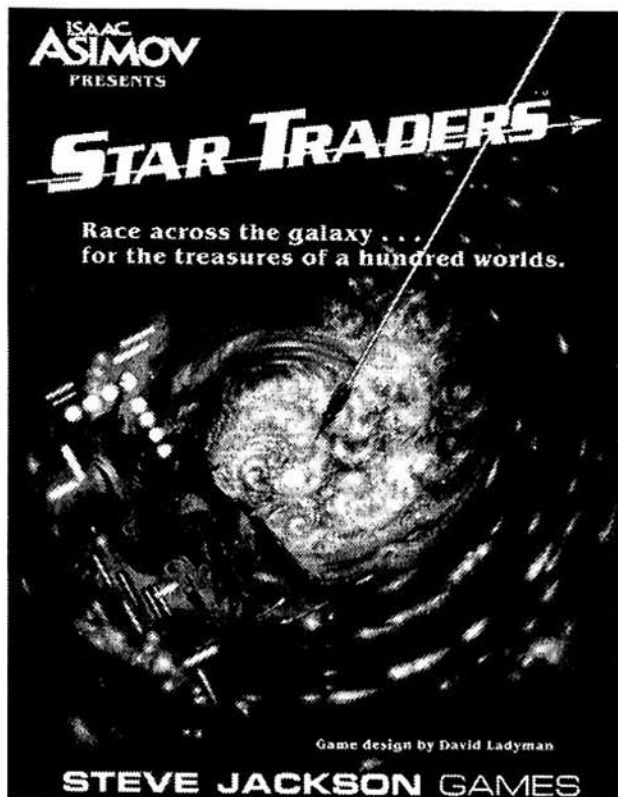
Ask your retailer for this and other great *GURPS* products. *GURPS Horseclans* is \$9.95. It is a supplement to the *GURPS Basic Set* — you need both in order to play. The *GURPS Basic Set* is \$24.95.

If your local store doesn't have our products, send \$10.50 for *GURPS Horseclans* and \$27.50 for the *GURPS Basic Set* to order by mail (postpaid). Texas residents please add sales tax (74¢ for *GURPS Horseclans*, \$1.95 for *GURPS Basic Set*). Send a SASE for our free catalog.

STEVE JACKSON GAMES
Box 18957-G Austin, TX 78760

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Drawing a Bead on the Emerald Archer

Serge F. Clermont

Jeffrey Gomez

Not too many people remember the line-up of the original **Justice League Of America™**. Sure, they remember *Superman™*, *Batman™*, and *Wonder Woman™*. They had their own animated cartoons, comic strips, and TV action series with real actors. But most comics were terribly respected in those days, and though they sold by the millions they tended to be broad and colorful morality romps that appealed to preteens and adolescent carry-overs. In fact it is only recently that comics have made a big splash in the adult media. A lot is being done to revamp old and familiar characters from the funny books, making them not so funny after all. They are, if not becoming more than two-dimensional, at least being drawn along a more serious vein by both fans and creators.

DC Comics has been in the forefront of this new renaissance, burning rubber and leaving its competitors in the dust. *Wonder Woman* now hearkens more to her classical Grecian origins than to her recent stint as a 1970s icon of women's liberation; the *Batman* is no longer the campy sort of superhero he tends to become during dry spells at DC, with all those gadgets popping out of some extra dimension within his utility belt, but is a dark harbinger of justice and retribution; and *Superman* can no longer push planets around or blow out stars with his super-breath, but is the archetypal hero of the Sun, embodying nobility, courage and truth as well as the flaws that go with being raised as an earth man.

Now, with Mike Grell's *The Longbow Hunters™* and an all-new regular monthly title (as well as a dynamic new adventure module called *Lines of Death™* for Mayfair Games' *DC Heroes Role-playing Game*), a fourth hero has joined the ranks of the reborn—the Emerald Archer himself, *Green Arrow™*.

Secret Origins

Green Arrow is one of the oldest characters of DC's Silver Age of Comics. He appeared in the title which eventually became known as **Adventure Comics™**, sharing the spotlight with other such notable as *Doctor Fate™*, *Aquaman™*, and *Superboy™*. His first origin was something out of an Indiana Jones movie crossed with Daniel Boone, the Lone Ranger and Robin Hood. A historian of American Indian culture, Oliver Queen traveled to a place called the Lost Mesa to investigate rumors of ancient Indian artifacts. Overheard referring to the find as a "lost gold mine" by a couple of thugs, he is followed by them to Lost Mesa, which is also the home of his soon-to-be adopted ward, Roy Harper, who was raised by an Indian named Quoag. Fighting off the bad guys, Quoag is killed. While exacting revenge in battling the thugs Oliver and Roy discover that they both share a talent for archery, and they also discover that there actually is a gold mine at Lost Mesa. Oliver adopts Roy, they are millionaires, and they resolve to putting their bow talents to use as crimefighters. They were dubbed Green Arrow and Speedy™ by the surviving thugs, and so legends were born.

It should be noted that this Green Arrow first appeared in 1935, and this origin was told ten years after, the stories in the interim written by various people like Mort Weisinger (famous for *Superman*) and Otto Binder, living in a much simpler time compared to now. Colorful adventures like Green Arrow's first origin were in vogue at this time. The hero's second origin materialized the 1960s, though no one knows who wrote the story. Oliver Queen was now a playboy had the misfortune of becoming a desert island castaway. Archery became a method of survival, his first

"gimmick" arrows forged out of necessity: a net arrows and drill arrows (don't ask) were both used to ambush and capture local pirates who had invaded his island some time later. This origin might have been reflective of a neo-romanticism found growing in the 60's; hearkening back to the "noble savage" (a la Tarzan of the Apes), a primer for the next period in the Green Arrow saga.

Crises

After joining the **Justice League of America** in their book in 1961, the Green Arrow later underwent a cosmetic makeover as artist extraordinaire Neal Adams gave him a look reminiscent of a swashbuckling Errol Flynn. About two years later, the emerald archer moved from **Adventure Comics** to **The Brave and the Bold**, and in the early 1970's Denny O'Neil took over **The Green Lantern** title just as G.A. moved in. Green Arrow lost all of his wealth as Oliver Queen, and reformed from a playboy into the socially-aware superhero that starred with the Lantern in a series of issues that should have been titled "Search for America". This series was used as the yardstick against which all other comics that aimed for "relevance" were laid against. Drugs, civil rights and racism were only some of the topics covered during this time, and Green Arrow was placed in the role of teacher to Hal Jordan's (*Green Lantern*) ignorance about what was happening at home on Planet Earth. It was around this time that the **Black Canary™** showed up from Earth-2 as a love interest for Green Arrow. Steve Englehart used her in the Justice League's book to contrast Green Arrow's chauvinism, but there was no doubt that these two birds were in love.

(The appearance of Earth-2, by the way, enabled the two incarnations



of Green Arrow to co-exist at the same time in the DC continuity—for what it's worth. The Golden Age Green Arrow's further adventures were depicted as taking place during the Second World War, during which he founded the superhero team known as the **Seven Soldiers of Victory™**, that later on sometimes became referred to as the **Law's Legionnaires™**. Then, DC's **Crisis on Infinite Earths** occurred in 1986, and Earth-2 was blown to bits along with that Green Arrow. So much for that.)

What the Crisis did enable DC to do was prepare the house for explosive new developments for many old characters. Mike Grell (**Jon Sable™**, **Warlord™**) picked Oliver Queen for

his particular contribution to this movement. Re-defining Green Arrow's origin in **The Longbow Hunters** three issue limited series as involving no gimmicks and placing drug smuggling in place of piracy made him once again a hero of the times. Opting not to even attempt a stand-off with Frank Miller's **The Dark Knight Returns**, Grell's new Green Arrow would set his booted feet squarely in our gritty, contemporary world to experience adult and remarkably personal problems.

Shooting to Kill

Oliver Queen was always angrier, more streetwise than his fellow superheroes. He was the loud-mouthed,

womanizing member of the Justice League whom readers either wanted squashed by Despair the Oliphant from Andromeda, or celebrated as the guy who didn't need super powers to prove he was right. True to his Robin Hood origins, Green Arrow held onto his blonde goatee through three decades of peer group pressure to wear it proudly now as co-owner of Seattle's own Sherwood Florist.

When Mike Grell picked up the archer for revision in **Longbow Hunters**, he asked the DC seniors to allow Queen to age post-Crisis, making for one of the few costumed heroes in comic book history to make it into his 40s without resorting to longevity drugs or immortality potions. Indeed,

with a time honored relationship in perennial siren Dinah Lance, Queen would be made to face an all too realistic crisis in coming to terms with aging and the uncertainty of an older superhero's future.

With its mysterious Oriental assassins, drug trafficking scum and corrupt government agents, **The Longbow Hunters** achieves a chilling brilliance despite its standard comic book antagonists. Grell infuses elements that made his work on First Comics' **Jon Sable, Freelance** to lend more of a sense of Oliver Queen's character than has ever been achieved before. In fact, nowhere in the miniseries or in its subsequent monthly is Queen referred to as *Green Arrow* (neither is Lance as *Black Canary*). That both Queen and Lance are superheroes is an accepted given, a major facet in this couple's ongoing relationship. Queen's desire to marry and have kids, a standard one for a man his age, becomes fascinating because of the way it would

affect both heroes' careers. Hence the threads of maturity are created and woven through the story, making it both more powerful and more terrifying.

The evils of drugs such as crack maintain their presence even in the relative calm of the Pacific Northwest. There are serial killers, youth gangs who treat their victims mercilessly, and arms deals made that secretly spell death just beyond our perception. Mike Grell has chosen to place Green Arrow in a position to combat such foes, and therefore has had Queen choose to abandon the "gimmick" arrows (nonetheless still detailed in the **Mayfair Games DC Heroes Hardware Handbook**), for which he became reknowned. Now when Green Arrow aims, he is often shooting to maim, or even to kill. He has hardened a bit, becoming an urban vigilante with the finest of wilderness survival skills. No four-color supervillains these, Queen often chooses (perhaps questionably) to defend against deadly force by cutting his opponents down in action. Stunningly, the police have not been portrayed to mind very much! Indeed, for the first time in many years, blood can be seen running freely and often in an ongoing DC comic book. A comic that is labeled **FOR MATURE READERS**.

Lines of Death

With the bravura and timeliness set by its mid-series release of **Who Watches the Watchmen™** (**Gateways #4**), Mayfair Games has proudly unveiled a new format adventure module featuring Green Arrow and Black Canary called **Lines of Death™**.

Written by Mark Acres, **Lines of Death** is a loose reworking of **The Longbow Hunters** uniquely created to be run with only two players (Mayfair deems it the first "Match-Play" adventure). The storyline fea-

tures Green Arrow on a hunt for a random serial killer, even as the Black Canary seeks to derail a drug trafficking organization. Both plots involve a corrupt government agency, and both involve a mysterious and ambiguous third party.

Boasting a dead-on cover portrait of Green Arrow by Grell, type faces cleverly printed in black or green, the module must actually be divided and distributed between the pair of player-heroes. Essentially two intertwining solo stories, Match Play alternates encounter by encounter, the Green Arrow player game mastering the Black Canary's plot, as the Black Canary player will, in turn, run G.A.'s through to the end of both adventures.

A possible frustration for fans of both **The Longbow Hunters** and the **Green Arrow** series, is that nowhere is it firmly indicated that Oliver and Dinah must cross paths. While players may take pleasure in seeing where clues cross over between scenarios, the module chooses to gloss over much of the fireworks and charm of the duo's relationship, as well as perhaps the unique maturity-potential in the role-playability of such a pair. A hardy recommendation would be for one of the players to actually take up the responsibility of game mastering the scenario so that both characters can interact; reverting the Match-Play at that point to a sensitive and rewarding one-on-one.

Without revealing much of the plot, it can be stated that though, as usual for the DC Heroes game system, there are always alternatives to killing, sometimes heroes can and do kill. As players mature and indeed keep playing, we are left wondering: can a Green Arrow who has learned and been shown to kill also be portrayed as a character who can also love? Mike Grell and DC Comics have taken first steps toward answering "yes", and yet **Lines of Death** keeps emotions squarely divided. How about it Mayfair?



Green Arrow is™ and c. 1988 DC Comics Inc. and is licensed for use with the DC Heroes Roleplaying Game by Mayfair Games c. 1988.

It is 1943 and the Blackhawk Squadron fights on desperately against the Axis, even as the world sneers and looks away. Still branded as Communists and hated by the very people they have sworn to defend, Janos "Blackhawk" Prohaska leads a band of international freedom fighters against his arch-enemy's most insipid scheme yet, as Mayfair Games presents the spectacular adventure of:

BLITZKRIEG

Jeffrey Gomez

With a breakneck pace, a wing and a prayer, Mayfair Games has managed to beat yet another comic book mini-series to its close in the release of *Blitzkrieg*[™], an action adventure starring the Blackhawk Squadron[™]. Late last year, Mayfair President Darwin Bromley foresaw a renewed interest in the perennial World War II heroes and put forth a bid for DC Comics to allow for a module. To be written by Jeff O'Hare along the lines of the current Howard Chaykin's smash *Blackhawk* graphic novel trilogy.

By virtue of its Kyle Baker cover art alone, the module is a worthy piece of Blackhawk memorabilia. Both Baker and Chaykin seem to want Janos Prohaska returned to the mythic soil of his original, Nazi-smashing origins. Framed with Chaykin interiors, and written in terse, straight-on prose, *Blitzkrieg* valiantly attempts to capture just this spirit.

In a scenario that reads like a 1940s silver screened serial adventure, British Prime Minister Winston Churchill desperately turns to Blackhawk, as Hitler's scientists near completion of the dread *destructus bacillus*—a germ warfare bomb! It would seem that American soldiers are being forced to work in a secluded Nazi factory, unwittingly building the cannisters that will house this evil weapon. True to form, the Blackhawks accept the mission, only to quickly realize that the diabol-

ical driving force behind this Nazi scheme is none other than Prohaska's arch-enemy, *Colonel Von Tepp!*

The slayer of Prohaska's family during a life or death struggle on the battlefields of Poland, Von Tepp stands as one of the great villains in comic book history, having clashed with Blackhawk dozens of times ever since. Interestingly, as O'Hare and Mayfair Senior Editor Thomas Cook point out, Blackhawk faced his greatest foe on the ground at least as many times as in the air. Believers in the power of knuckles as much as in bullets, the Blackhawk Squadron tended to abandon their cockpits for down-home brawling at any opportunity. It stands to reason that *Blitzkrieg* plays most of its action on the ground level, but the module is thoughtful enough to make recommendations for players who wish to dogfight (not a DC *Heroes* rule specialty) by naming such systems as Nova Games' *Ace of Aces* to better simulate fighter combat scenarios.

Fans of DC's old line of war comics will find a special treat within *Blitzkrieg* (as well as fuel for some strong discussion!), as the Blackhawk investigation into the factory's POW contingency turns out to be those *Combat Happy Joes, Easy Company*. Only there's little to laugh about, as the recently cancelled *Sgt. Rock*[™] (*Our Army at War* has just gone into reprints, ending for now the longest continually fought war in comic book history!) must rely upon the Blackhawks to get out of this one. Purists may balk at the fact that Rock would never have allowed his men to get into such a situation in the first place, and furthermore, would die before aiding Nazis even under the greatest duress.

"Tough!" responds editor Cook, "Rock's presence is both an excuse to get in some stats for *Easy Co.*, and makes for a solid cross-over and good storytelling."

Blitzkrieg is Thomas Cook's first adventure module as both Senior

Coordinator. A Perdue University graduate with degrees in Film and English, 25 year-old Cook has been reading comics since he was eight! Having amassed a collection of thousands of comics, he is undoubtedly proud of being able to contribute to the legends he grew up with:

"It's a credit to (DC Comics liaison to Mayfair Games) Bob Greenberger for being so cooperative with us. He links up both our writers and our editors with everyone from Paul Levitz (Legion of Super Heroes) to John Byrne (Superman) to Alan Moore (Watchmen). We can actually do things that have impact both in our supplements and in the comics they're based upon. It goes freely back and forth that way, and that's how we're able to do things in the supplements like the map of Blackhawk Island, and watch as they find their way into the books."

Cook also pointed out that modules can supply answers to many of those What-If? questions posed when series end or a favored character meets an untimely demise, "I understand Blackhawk's first recruit, Stanislaus Drozdowski, is acknowledged to have been killed in a plane crash in Chaykin's mini-series. Well, his stats are still in *Blitzkrieg*, and while the players are told that he died, the option of playing him is always there. He could even be placed as a Player Character or Non-Player Character set

to be killed off at a certain point, just to prove that Tepp isn't kidding around!"

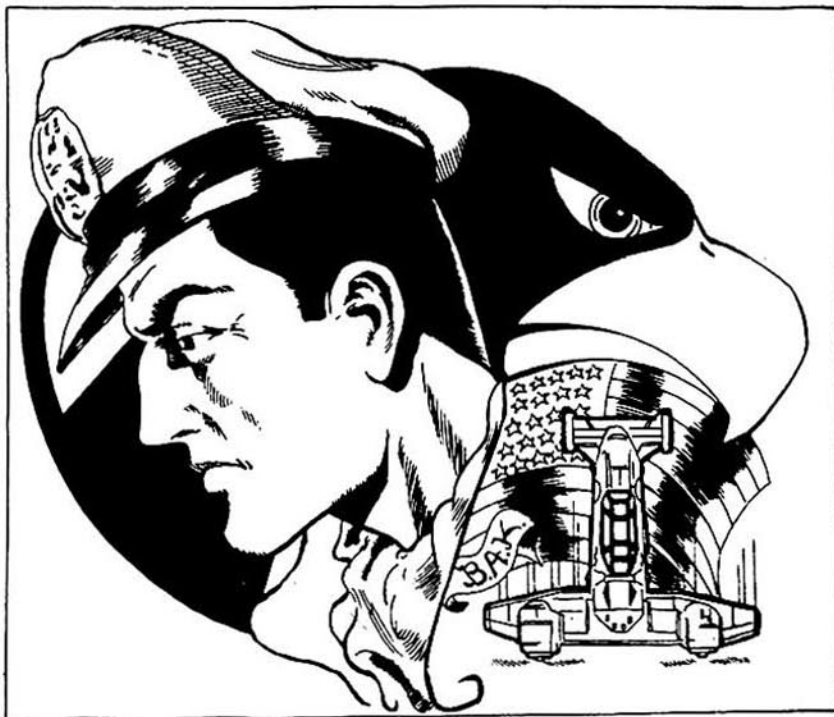
Blitzkrieg climaxes with a race against time as the Blackhawks must team with Easy Co. to destroy the factory before the destructus bacillus can be turned on a Summit Meeting of World Powers, where Roosevelt and Churchill will meet with Stalin and DeGaulle to discuss an end to the war. As with another current Mayfair release (see the previous article on *Green Arrow*), however, this is where game rules and even comic book reality get sticky. Outlining a scenario wherein Colonel Von Tepp is captured alive and brought into the hands of the Blackhawks and Easy Co., the module offers the Non-Player Character of Sgt. Rock as suggesting that the Nazi villain be taken underground for transport to an Allied prison facility to await trial for war crimes. Staring his entire family's murderer in the face, can Blackhawk himself truly let his nemesis simply walk away?

The answer is most probably not, but the rulings in the DC Heroes Roleplaying Game are



clear in their effort to present heroes as people who will avoid killing at all cost. Though the rule is admirable, the question of its validity in the face of such a quickly changing comic book market is a subject that will certainly be tackled by readers and gamers alike this year.

Cracking secret codes, grappling with guard dogs and double agents, dodging crude laser beams and crazed Nazis, there is no doubt that the Blackhawk Squadron has its hands full in *Blitzkrieg*. The donning of those black leather bomber jackets, the glory in fighting on though those you defend had once sneered at your name, the mystique of the high flying Blackhawks will continue, as a new Blackhawk series, to be written by Mike Grell and drawn by Rich Burchett, has been slated to appear in the pages of *Action Comics Weekly* (starting with #603), picking up where Chaykin's miniseries (and, perhaps, *Blitzkrieg*) left off.



Gaming in the Thirtieth Century

Mayfair Takes On DC's

LEGION OF SUPER-HEROES

Ian Harac

In *Adventure Comics* #247, *Superboy* (who no longer exists in the DC Universe, and allegedly never did) met three young teenagers from the Thirtieth century who told him they wanted him to try out for their "Super-hero Club". He tried, flunked, and then, in a typically Weisinger ending, was admitted because the real test had been to see how he would handle failure. It was intended as nothing more than a throw-away story, something that, by all rights, should have gone the way of "*The Super Juvenile Delinquent of Smallville*" or "*The Robot Kents*".

It didn't.

The three teens, calling themselves **The Legion of Superheroes**, returned once again, with a few more members. And again, with some more. They met *Superman*, took *Superboy* into the future, began appearing more and more frequently, and finally kicked *Superboy* out of *Adventure* altogether. Throughout the sixties, they produced a series of adventures somewhat different from the average DC title of the time, though hardly up to today's 'realistic' comics. While *Superman* was being turned into a giant ant by Red Kryptonite, *Lightning Lad* was having his arm destroyed and given a cyborg replacement. While 'Imaginary Stories' were in vogue, *Lightning Lad* died...for real. (He was later revived, but only by the sacrifice of *Protv I*, a sentient blob of protoplasm. Don't Ask). *Ferro Lad*

also died, this time without any revival. He's still very dead. The Legion had people dying long before Marvel started its "Death of the Month Club". And, unlike most of the members of the club, all but one of the Legionnaires who died have stayed dead.

The resemblance of the old Legion to modern Marvel is hardly coincidental. Most of the best stories were written by a talented fourteen year old named Jim Shooter. Some critics have noted that it was his last decent work.

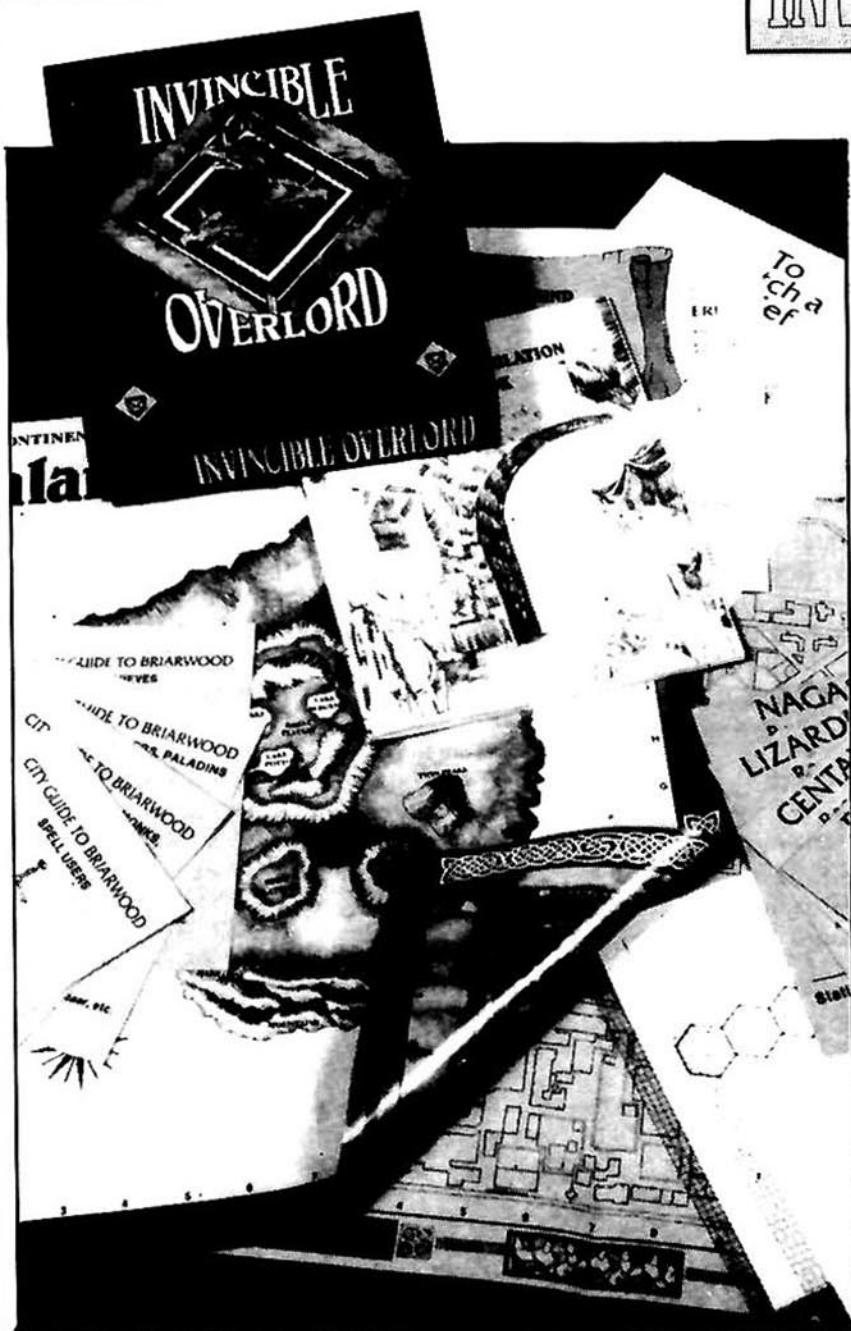
The Legion today is quite different from the Legion of the sixties. People still die (*Karate Kid* was the most recent) but the campiness and silliness which was pervasive throughout all DC comics of the era is gone, though the Legion is by no means as dark as the majority of today's series. The theme of the comic is far more hopeful than that of most. The Legionnaires are not hunted, hated, outcasts...they are admired heroes. They are not rebels fighting a tyrannical State, but a supportive branch of an apparently benevolent, democratic government.



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(But see below...there are some unpleasant aspects to this.) There is only one Legionnaire really unhappy with his power, and even he has become more accepting of it. The rest enjoy their powers, and enjoy being heroes, even though some (such as *Sensor Lass*) have motivations beyond mere fun.

Of course, in today's world, you can't have a popular comic book series without a role-playing game or two to go along with it.

For thirty years, the Legion of Superheroes has been a comics mainstay, building up a body of lore nearly equal to Superman's. It has gone from a throwaway idea in an issue of *Superboy* to one of DC's top titles, creatively and financially. And now, thanks to Mayfair Games, thirty years of the series have been distilled into two references, and a substantial section of a third, the **Hardware Handbook**, is also devoted to the Legion. Does it work? The answer is yes.

Despite a couple of minor quirks, the two Legion manuals successfully provide a wealth of information on the Legion. Since they were co-written by Paul Levitz, the Legion's scripter, there can be little question of the accuracy of the stats for the various heroes. (Though I personally disagree with a few, and I suspect that nearly



every GM will want to change a couple here and there, to suit their own tastes and campaigns.)

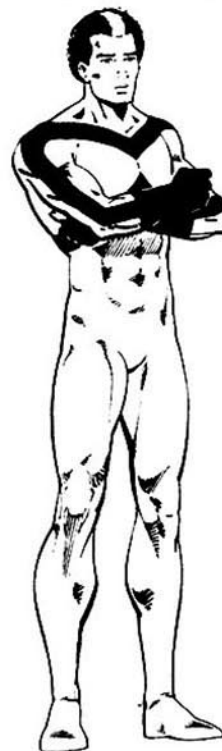
The product consists of two volumes. The first is the **Character Book**, which contains stats on the various heroes, villains, and supporting characters that populate the Legion Universe. The second, the **World Book**, gives information about the planets and cultures of the Thirtieth Century. Both are reasonably thick volumes, well bound, with color covers, each retailing for \$9.95.

The **Character Book**, could probably stand alone if you are running a Twentieth Century campaign and want the Legionnaires to make occasional guest appearances. It is a complete listing of Legion heroes, guest stars, and villains as nearly anyone could want, ranging from the 'biggies', such as *Superboy* and *Mordru*, to those almost nobody (save for hardcore Legion fans) has heard of, such as *Jungle King* and *Size Kid*. Also included are other thirtieth-century hero groups, such as the *Wanderers* (recently the targets of an investigation regarding their deaths) and the *Heroes of Lallor*.

All of the Legion members living and dead, are given a full page, including statistics and illustration, and an extensive background history, though not as extensive as would be needed were a Game Master to use this supplement without being a Legion reader. Some backgrounds, of course, are very difficult to give, such as *Quislet's*. Something which might also prove irritating to non-Legion readers

is that the heroes are listed not alphabetically, but rather in the order that they joined. (They are, however, listed alphabetically in the back in a GM's reference.)

One word of note to non-Legion readers. The Legion has a long and proud tradition of, well, silly names. *Bouncing Boy* and *Matter-Eater Lad* are not jokes or one shots--both have actually saved the universe. Yes, *Lightning 'Lad'* is at least twenty-seven, in comic book years. But if you can accept that people will spend a good portion of their lives running around in tights punching other people in tights, you can accept the names. One more thing about 'silly names':



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Ever want to be a character in the books you've read? Or help rewrite some of the chapters? Here's your chance! You are a Time Traveler thrust into a world that you know little about, using all of your skills and contacts to make alliances with the inhabitants, watching out for spies, assassins, false rumors, and those Time Travelers who have chosen to join one of the 'other' sides. Of course, you will have your ever-loyal band of followers to help guide you through this new world. With the right information and some good timing, you can change history to your benefit.

OTD is a role-playing game played through the mail. To begin writing your part of the story, send \$15 for a rulebook, start-up, and first five turns (or \$2 for just the rules) to:

TWIN ENGINE GAMING, 3254 Maple Leaf Ct., Dept. 121, San Jose, CA 95121

Do not think of them as an impediment to the game, but rather as a challenge to the GM. If anyone thinks that a villain named "Computo" can't possibly be frightening, I suggest they read *Legion Annual #1*, for an example of just what can be done with that name.

While the *Character Book* concentrates on the heroes of the Legion, the *World Book* is what is needed if you want to run a full Thirtieth-Century campaign. The major worlds and races of the *United Planets (UP)* are listed, along with what may be a first for a superhero game: a planetary generation system that may even prove useful for science fiction games as well. There are a number of documentary essays on life in the UP, detailing some aspects only hinted at in the series. There are some unpleasant facets of life in the thirtieth century: Earth is an idealized welfare state, and many individual rights and freedoms seem to have been forgotten in the quest for the 'common good'. Everyone is fed, clothed, housed, etc, and there appears to be no

wholesale oppression. There are even outlets for capitalism, and people can indeed become filthy rich if they want to. Still, the concept of a worldwide handout program tends to grate more than a bit on my nerves, and a society which still uses hard-labor camps at the south pole, practices brainwashing and mind control, and telepathically probes the minds of suspects seems to be more than a bit Big-Brotherish to me. The Thirtieth Century had always seemed a bit too clean, shiny, and happy to be really believed, and now we get to see the dark underside of it all. Still, it should be remembered that the Legionnaires are firmly behind the system, and, to them, this is a good and just world.

Also included is an extensive list of planets, both in and out of the UP. *Apokolips*, *Lythyl*, and *Naltor* are among the many worlds listed, which include the home worlds of all the alien Legionnaires. The only annoyance about the world listings is the fact that the worlds of the UP are separated out from the rest of the worlds of the galaxy. Thus, locating a

world if you don't know its political affiliation can be cumbersome.

The book also includes a detailed guide to *Legion HQ*, with a description of the living quarters of all the Legionnaires, excepting those who died before the headquarters was built. There is a reasonable selection of spacecraft, though there are no accompanying illustrations. (The spaceship rules have been considerably updated in the *Hardware Handbook*) A fair, though slightly limited, assortment of Thirtieth Century equipment and weapons is also included. Finally, there is a very useful section on the theory and practice of time travel in the DC universe, as well as a selection of time-hopping devices.

Also, one major annoyance. Nowhere, in either book, is the *Interworld* alphabet used throughout the Legion comic-book series. Even though many illustrations include *Interworld* characters, there is no translation key. The key has only appeared twice in the Legion series itself and it is thus easy to miss,

especially at today's ludicrous back-issue prices. This is a major oversight, and one which should be corrected in future editions.

The conclusion? Well, if you're running a *Batman* campaign, these books will probably be of little use to you. (A *Batman/Bouncing Boy* team up seems slightly ridiculous.) But if you are a Legion fan, whether or not you play the game, pick up the books: they are invaluable reference materials.

Finally, if you want to run games set in the Thirtieth Century, these books will let you do it easily. Even if you play another system, conversion should be no problem.

Mayfair has also produced a four part series of modules for the Legion, which use a wide range of villains, heroes, and situations...perhaps too many. Mayfair has chosen as their main villain the *Time Trapper*, probably the best choice they could have made (With *Darkseid* a close second), but have surrounded him with a host of second-stringers and one-shot characters. *Mantis Morlo*? *Dr. Mayavale*? As a long time Legion reader, I recognize these characters, but many players might not. Also encountered are the *Infinite Man*, the *Fatal Five*, all the dead Legionnaires (of which there are many) The *Heroes of Lallor*, *Tyr*, *Computo* (in an older incarnation) and *Pulsar Stargrave* (a very good villain, by the way), as well as many others. This is perhaps a bit much. Two or three of these, spread out over the four modules, with a lot of depth and motivation, would have proven to be much better than the rapid fire switches of character, plot, and setting.

The artwork and typesetting in the modules, alas, fall to Mayfair's usual standard. Text is organized in blocky, hard to follow formats, and the art is usually clipped from old Legion comics...a good source, but Mayfair has enough talented artists

capable of creating original artwork. And please, in the future, no more washes of color over the lettering or weird layout styles. The modules and supplements produced by Mayfair tend to show high levels of creativity in their concepts and content...we don't need creativity in layout.

In conclusion, Mayfair has done a very good job of capturing thirty years of rather chaotic Legion history and translating it into game terms. Most of my criticisms are of their overzealous comprehensiveness, which is not such a bad thing. I would have preferred more depth on fewer characters, but most players would rather have full stats on every character whoever appeared in the series, and this Mayfair gives them. All in all, an extremely worthy effort on the part of Mayfair Games. (The latest is that the game company's coverage of the superteam has, for the time being, been completed. So much for a special *Legion of Super Pets* supplement, I guess...)



c. 1988 DC Comics Inc.

THE LEGION OF SUPER-HEROES

A GATEWAYS EXCLUSIVE SNEAK PREVIEW OF

THE

WILLOW

GAME

Jonathan Frater

Jeffrey Gomez

The advertisements have been telling us to forget everything we ever thought we knew about fantasy. The posters, the teasers in movie theaters and on television, with their swirling colors and twilight air, all whispering of something special coming soon. A movie that promises to be more than just a movie. This will be a *motion picture*, an experience that won't go away, and will be spoken about by people all over the world for

years to come. If you haven't guessed it by now, then **Gateways** is going to grant you this tiniest of glimpses: what is certain to be one of the popcorn experiences of the decade, a colossal undertaking three years and as many continents in the making, will be none other than the Lucasfilm production of George Lucas and Ron Howard's **Willow**.

Though Lucasfilm and Industrial Light and Magic have been involved in a number of box office flops and half-hearted attempts at movie magic such as *Howard the Duck*, *Explorers*, and *Labyrinth*, a strong promise has been delivered from Skywalker Ranch: "Five films in history have been created by George Lucas. They are five of the eight top-grossing films of all time. In 1988, there will be another: there will be **Willow**", declares Lucasfilm's publicity. And, judging from the preview reactions from such high caliber licensors as Tonka Toys and Saint Martin's Press, it may well be right!

The world of **Willow** is big enough to be considered its own universe. In fact, it is self-contained, with all the lavish cultural, geographical and spiritual detail that a true George Lucas picture should contain. Across its vistas, its forests and planes, its icy mountains, a battle will take place unlike any seen before in cinematic history.

Thousands of extras will sweep across the screen on horseback, garbed in full armor, swing-



TM & c. 1988 Lucasfilm Ltd.

ing rune-shot blades against awesome villains. **Willow** (directed by Ron Howard, long time fantasy fan and the guiding force behind the wonderful **Cocoon**) will be Lucas' answer to his own space opera in **Star Wars**, and his own action-adventure serial in **Raiders of the Lost Ark**. It will be an epic fantasy in a grand tradition, the likes of which have never been attempted before in live-action movie making.

And, as if that weren't enough, Eric Goldberg Associates and Tor Books have plans to release the **Willow Board Game** even before the movie's magical May 25, 1988 premiere date! Following the film's spectacular premise, that of the quest of the tiny Nelwyn farmer Willow Ufgood to join forces with an unlikely band of heroes and carry a child marked by destiny across a land about to erupt into final war, the game is said to be true to both the spirit of the storyline and the high expectations of adventure gamers everywhere. Joining Goldberg in creating a simple and elegant rule system for the game will be none other than Greg Costikyan, who with Goldberg is enjoying tremendous success with the **Star Wars**



TM & c. 1988 Lucasfilm Ltd.

Roleplaying Game (Gateways #6), done before the pair departed from West End Games late last year, and continued success with the **Paranoia** adventure game system.

Pictured on these pages are pre-production drawings of some of the revealing illustrations created exclusively for the board game. Of special note are **The Right Finger** (to be portrayed by Billy Barty), a warm-hearted but powerful village mage, a nasty bear who is set to menace players of the game, and **Elora Danan**, the infant found by Willow on the banks of the Nelwyn River. "Transformation", a drawing which only hints at the remarkable and innovative polymorph effects which are so integral to the plot of the film.

In the **Willow Game**, each of two to six players takes the role of one of the major movie characters (Willow Ufgood, the renegade warrior Madmartigan, the mighty Airk Thaughaer, the brownies Franjean & Rool, the sorceress Princess Sorsha, or the terrible and deadly General Kael), four of whom strive to carry the baby to safety, and two of whom plot to capture the baby and return her to the evil sorceress. The game also features all of the "Places of Power" to be featured in the movie, as well as relics, creatures and devices only alluded to during the film. Thaughaer's glorious Army of Galladoorn and Kael's dark Army of Nockmaar both come into play, as well as the show-stopping two-headed monster, Ebersisk (film critics Roger and Gene could not be reached for comment!).

The mounted game-board is a gorgeous, full-color illustration of the land of **Willow**, specially commissioned by the people at Tor Books. The playing pieces will be faced with full-color portraits of the characters they represent, and the card play, the heart and strategy that makes the game unique, will be enhanced with 144 full color





In addition to the game, Tor will be putting out the **Willow Sourcebook**. Co-written by Eric Goldberg and Alan Varney, the sourcebook will contain a wealth of information about Willow's world, the creatures who live in it, all of the film's featured characters, as well as the geography of the land. Copious illustrations and full-color shots from Lucasfilm's already vast **Willow** archive.

The **Willow Sourcebook** will be designed for use with some of the most popular role-playing games. The information will allow for the players to set their own fantasy adventures in the new *milieu*.

Next Issue: A major salute to **Willow!** Don't miss our cover story of what is certain to be the cinematic and adventure gaming triumph of the year, as **Gateways Magazine** reviews **The Willow Game**, previews **The Willow Sourcebook**, and takes a unique look into the creation of a new and incredible George Lucas universe!

original paintings taken from the production and recreated by renowned fantasy artists Ron Miller and Romas Kukalis. The game will have a list price of \$29.95 and see release this April.

- Who Won Last Year's H.G. Wells Awards for Best RPG's? (Special, pre-publication issue A)
- Which Small Gaming Company was Purchased by a Larger Company? (Issue A)
- Where is The K-Society? (Issue A)
- What Happened to The Generic Dungeon Contest? (Issue #1)
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a Paranoia Adventure for 2 or more Troubleshooters



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This is a special Paranoia Mini-adventure. If you are a Troubleshooter, do not read any further. Reading further would be a treasonous act. Traitors are everywhere, trust no one and keep your blaster ready! If you are reading this, you have committed an act of treason against the Computer, who is your friend. Please report yourself to the proper authorities for termination. Failure to do so will result in further discipline. Your service to the Computer will be rewarded!

Troubleshooters (nestled safely in hibernation stasis for the duration of the trip) survive in their crash-cushioned control module. Upon awakening, they find themselves in a strange, twisted jungle—all burned and spooky-looking—which they believe to be the surface of Venus!

more...



Paranoia and Code 7: Mission to Venus is™ and c. 1988 by West End Games.

Code 7, Mission to Venus

The Mission

The Troubleshooters are assigned to ride a huge missile to Venus to find out if reports of Commie Mutant Scum on other planets are true. They will be assigned special equipment and environmental suits in order to faithfully serve the Computer.

The Problem

Unfortunately, shortly after take-off, the rocket malfunctions and lands in a mutated jungle in the Outdoors. The rocket fuel explodes on impact and ignites the surrounding forest. The

Another Problem

Most of the mission equipment was destroyed by the impact, or is (as usual) malfunctioning. The long-range radio receiver is destroyed, but the transmitter is still working so the Troubleshooters can report their findings to the Computer if they so desire. Unfortunately, they cannot receive orders from the Computer to abort the mission and return to Alpha Complex. The Computer dispatches a Landbot to retrieve the group, which will take three days to reach the PCs.

What Should We do Now?

Meanwhile, the Troubleshooters can spend their time exploring the strange, burned-out landscape in bulky spacesuits, carefully noting what they are doing for the Computer's historic record of the event ("I am moving my left foot...now I am moving my right foot," etc.). They will also realize that they're stranded on an 'alien world', with no means of getting home (sanity checks, anyone?).

The Great, Mutated Outdoors

The flora and fauna of post-holocaust Earth is frightening enough, but the scarred forest makes the setting truly alien. Mutated animals and insects abound throughout the mutated landscape, and their fearsome calls can be heard reverberating throughout the smoky, tortured wasteland. GMs should be encouraged to make references to the twisted forest in *Dante's Inferno*.

Slimey, mutant, Commie, Whats?

While the PCs are exploring their hazy surroundings, the sound of snarling, vicious beasts gets closer and closer. Small, glowing eyes appear in the mist, just outside of laser range. The howling then changes into a high-pitched, wretched keening. Suddenly, a mad pack of slime-coated werehamsters leap into combat with the Troubleshooters.

The werehamsters are vicious beasts, nibbling insanely at the PCs' kneecaps, snarling and yipping with much ferocity. Each can be treated like a knife attack and is considered to have protection equivalent to leather. About sixty of

the nasty creatures make the assault, which should be able to drive the surviving Troubleshooters back into the relative safety of their crashed command module.

What Now?!

After the beastly assault, strange-garbed **Mutant Survivalists** will approach the downed spacecraft, dressed in anti-radiation gear, flack jackets and carrying heavy firearms. Although they might bear a striking resemblance to *Commie Aliens From Venus*, they are actually all Earthlings—and members of the NRA. The **Mutant Survivalists** saw the crash and have turned out to defend their territory from strangers.

("Confarned fer'ners tryin' tuh take ma farm? *Eat my buckshot!*)



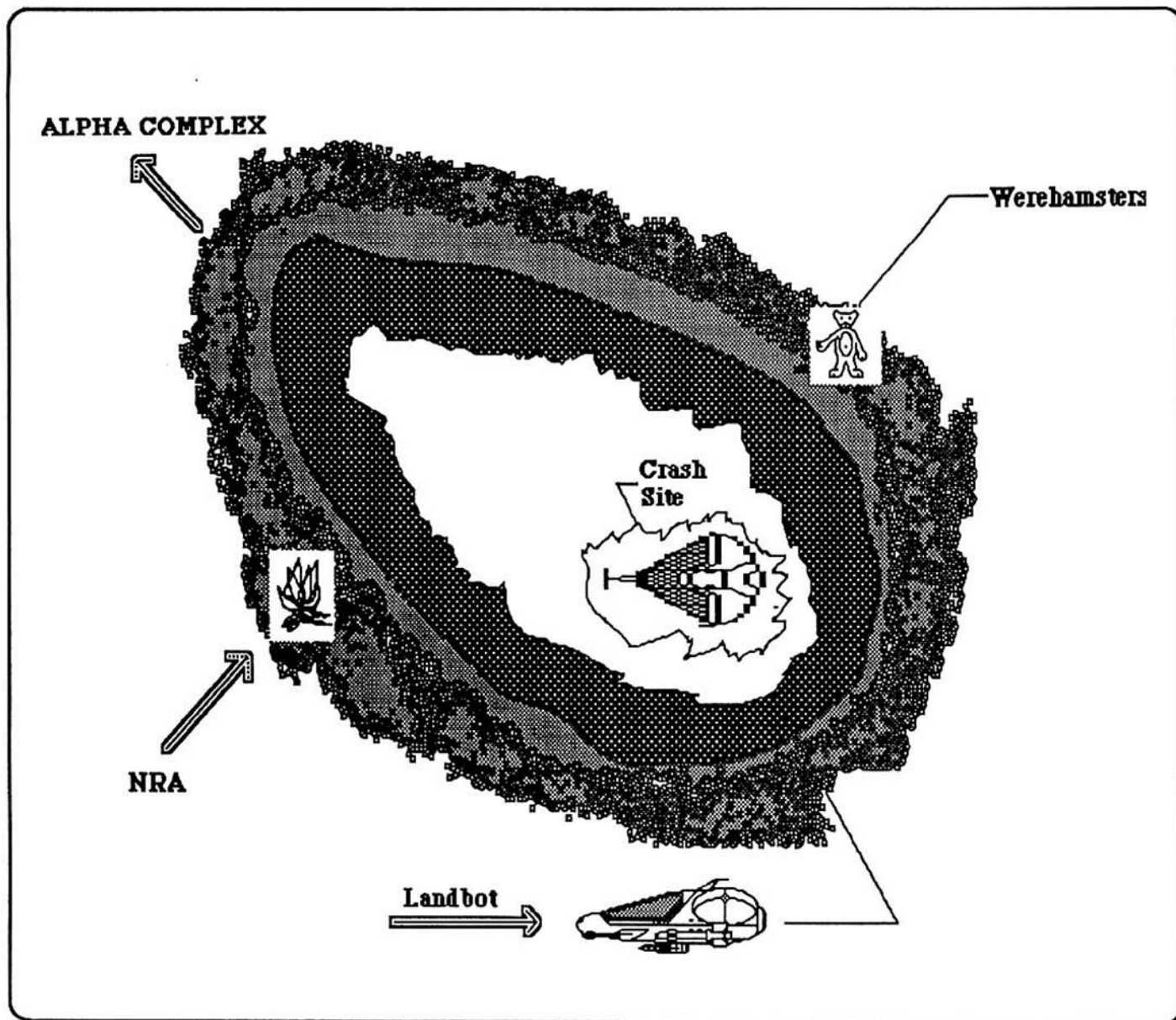
Guns Don't Kill People, Semi-Auto Slug Throwers Kill People.

PCs might somehow try to convince the **Mutant Survivalists** that they are not *Commies* and make friends. Fortunately, the **Survivalists**

are too paranoid to believe any stories about "Alpha Complex" or a "Mission To Venus", and cheerfully blow the head off any Troubleshooter stupid enough to try to parley with them.

Duh, Which Way Did He Go, George?

To add to the confusion, the Computer will be monitoring the PCs' activity carefully, and dutifully send replacement clones via the *1000mm Outdoor Clone Insertion System (Paranoia, 2nd Ed: pg.111)*. This bombardment will probably panic or confuse Troubleshooters still mourning over the loss of their teammate(s). The appearance of a groggy or wounded Troubleshooter replacement from a smoking crater might be taken in a number of ways: a) "He's a bloody shapeshifting alien mutant *Commie!* Blast him!"; b) "Say, how did you get to Venus?"; or, c) "What do you mean we're on *Earth?*"



Here It Comes, To Save The Day!

After the long siege by the Survivalists (who never seem to run out of enthusiasm or ammunition), the PCs hear the chugging sound of the arriving Landbot. The Mutant Survivalists, upon seeing the Landbot, will start shouting "Foreign or Domestic!?" and will fire on the Landbot when it doesn't reply. The armored, tread-tracked, and rugged Landbot will continue rolling, impervious to small arms fire, and park 20 meters in front of the wrecked spaceship.

At Last, A Rescue!

Most likely the PCs know they are being rescued.

If so, they can try to make a mad dash for the Landbot under the small arms fire of dozens of screaming Survivalists. Alternately, the PCs who still believe that they're on Venus, (due to insanity, etc.) might start to fire on the approaching vehicle. Regardless, the Mutant Survivalists, being a trigger-happy lot, keep a steady stream of fire on the Landbot.

Or Sort Of...

If the players instantly know the Landbot is from Alpha Complex, run the gauntlet easily, and feel comfortable about being rescued, put a little twist into the adventure. When the PCs board the Landbot, strange robots strap them into seats "FOR--(click)--THE--LONG--RIDE--(click)--AHEAD." The Landbot drives off and



Survivalists: One dozen (12) gun-toting paranoid members of the NRA; they hunt Werehamsters for food.

Secret Society: National Rifle Association (remnants of Old Reckoning culture)

Mutations: None

Weapons: each carries one or more of the following:

- Semi-automatic slugthrower (7P)....14
- Tangler (special).....10
- HE cone rifle (10P).....8

Armor: Environment suits over Kevlar vests and farraday suits (A111P4E5)

Tactics: Survivalists sit back among the bushes and shoot to kill; get rid of those "carnfarned fer'ners"; protect Mom, apple pie, and the American Way to the death.

eventually rendezvous with an alien mothership which hauls the Troubleshooters to the far reaches of the Milky Way.

MISSION TO VENUS ENCOUNTERS

Mutant Werehamsters: Slime-coated denizens of post-holocaust North America; there are roughly 60 of the little critters.

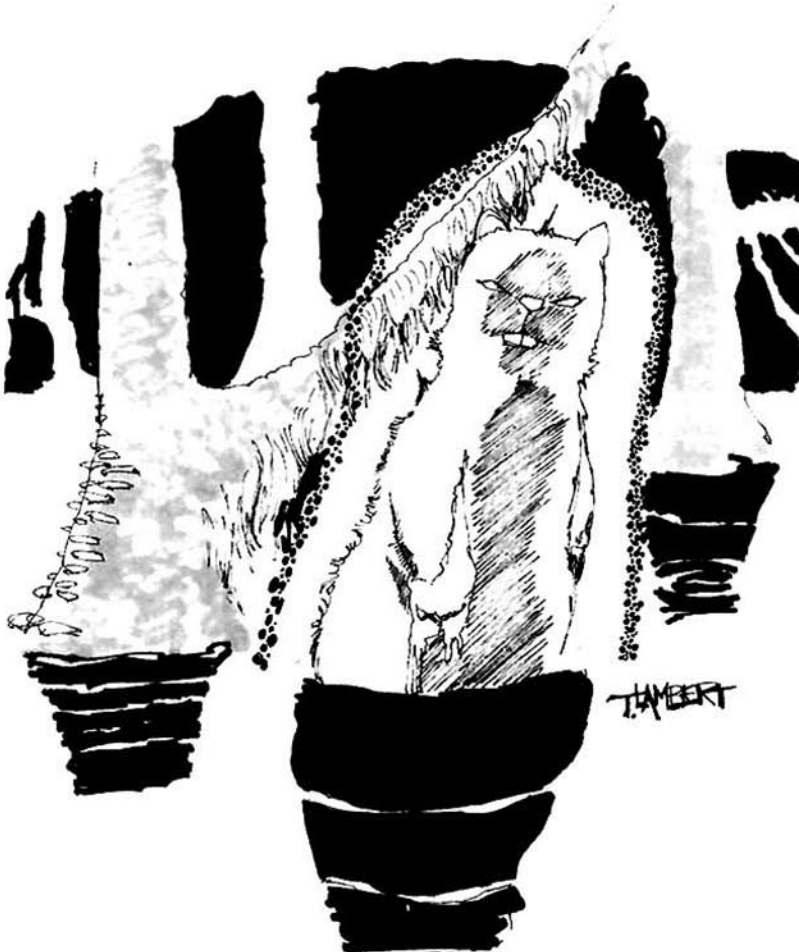
Mutation: Matter Eater

Weapons:

Big, nasty teeth (7I)—10

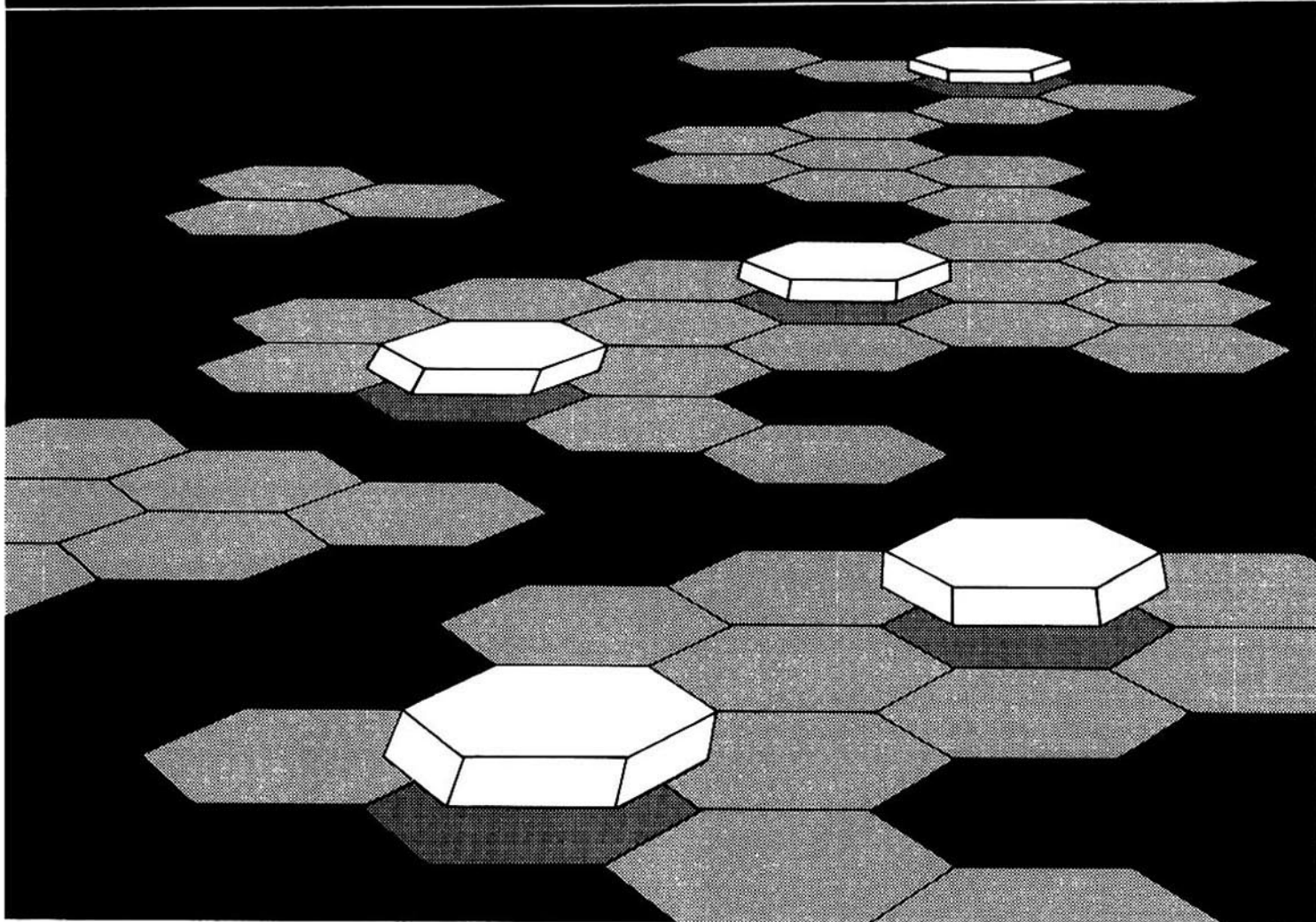
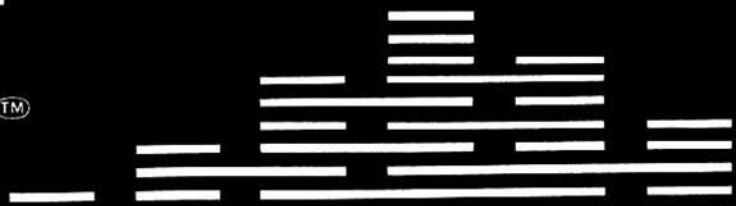
Armor: Mangy fur (A112)

Tactics: Swarm the Troubleshooters like maggots on rotten meat. If the Troubleshooters retreat into the spaceship, start dismembering the ship to get at them. Fight until dead.



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A Cadet's Guide to Star Fleet Battles

By: Dave Kinney

Star Fleet Battles is a game that depicts ship-to-ship combat in deep space using some familiar and some not so familiar races from the original Star Trek television show.

The game system is made up of several parts; the Ship System Display, the Energy Allocation Sheet, the Movement Chart and the rules. The Ship System Display (SSD) is the graphic display of the ship; from it most of the information needed to play a ship is attained. The SSD is also used to mark off damage accrued by the ship and to keep track of used ammunition.

The Energy Allocation Sheet (EA) is where most of the game's actual record keeping is done. Recorded on the EA, for example, is the ship's power output as well as how the power is being used. Other information is also kept on this sheet, such as a shuttle craft being prepared for a special role as a seeking explosive bomb (known as suicide attack shuttles in SFB), for example.

The game is broken down into turns; which consist of 32 segments, called impulses, where each ship is given the opportunity to fire weapons, and move. The movement charts are arranged such that ships and missile weapons (i.e. drones) which move at different speeds will move on different impulses.

The mechanics of combat are really quite simple. A player tries to move his ship into the best position from which he can bring as many of his weapons as possible to bear upon his opponent. While Player #1 is doing that, Player #2 is trying to avoid being shot to pieces while maneuvering for *his* best attack position. This is not to say that both players are just moving around on the playing board. They are constantly exchanging fire and launching seeking weapons in order to cause as much damage to their opponent as possible, while attempting to avoid the other's weapons.

Every ship is equipped with shields that absorb incoming damage, but they will only do so up to a certain point. Another item that all ships are equipped with are Phasers. A ship's phasers are the most effective weapon at relatively short ranges in SFB. Phasers can also be used defensively as well as offensively. They are the only weapon, for instance, that can shoot at an incoming plasma torpedo and do damage to it; they are also one of the few weapons that can fire unhindered at a drone.

The various races (there are ten in the advanced game) have their own types of heavy weapons (none of which even remotely resemble phasers) which can do large amounts of damage, but are very expensive in terms of power and time spent in charging them up; some take several turns to recharge. There are also heavy weapons that use no power and may be launched every turn, but the ship will have only a

limited supply. One example of the latter type is a drone, essentially a nuclear missile that is contained in storage racks on some ships. They are fired at an enemy ship and will home in on it until they hit or run out of fuel.

The United Federation of Planets is presented as the race against which all other races are compared. The game also takes into account the fact that the Federation is so peaceful, that it has optional combat rules that allow the Federation ships to damage weapons and power systems, rather than have to kill the enemy ship's crew.

Klingons are infamous baddies with ships that are built to conquer the galaxy. They are armed with disruptors, phasers, and drones. Some of their ships are also armed with the cumbersome, but lethal stasis field generator system, a weapon that literally freezes enemy ships between seconds of time; sort of the ultimate weapon for the ultimate bad guys.

The Romulan Star Empire is also present, but you might not recognize it because of their ships' cloaking devices, which presents the players of this race with a devastating tactic. They are armed with their familiar plasma torpedos, phasers, and particularly ugly weapon known as maulers.

The Gorn Confederation flies some of the most formidable ships in known space. They also use plasma torpedos; while not quite as nasty as the Romulans', they are still quite dangerous.

The Tholian Holdfast is a mystifying race that simply wants to keep to itself; the Tholians want no intruders in their territory. The Klingons are always ready to see if they really mean what they say about that, but even the Klingons are hard pressed to completely penetrate a Tholian star system because of the famous Tholian Webs. Nobody can keep track of Tholian weapons, anyway, so they always have something new with which to stop would-be invaders.

The Kzinti Hegemony is included as a primarily drone-using race that boasts of its courage and ferocity in combat. They are deadly enemies of the Klingons and are frequently having border skirmishes with that empire. This race uses one- or two-man fighters which also serve as drone launching platforms. Full squadrons of these fighters can launch enough drones at once for even a dreadnaught captain to be concerned about.

Then there are the Orion Pirates, seeking fame and fortune in space. They are out there to make a profit, sometimes at the expense of someone else's freighters. They are equipped with ships that are able to double the energy output of the engines, which makes it easier to accomplish their dastardly deeds.

All of these races are included in *Volume One* of SFB. They are diversified enough to keep any starship captain happy for years of starship dogfighting.

Star Fleet Battles is a complicated game that pits one captain against another, or it can be used to play out major or minor fleet engagements. If the latter is desired, then there should be at least one extra player around because the sheer amount of paperwork involved with such a game can be staggering. To play a two person game from start to finish can take from 30 minutes to 4 or more hours; even longer if each player controls more than one ship.

The system is well thought out in that combat and movement is conducted simultaneously during each impulse. The damage that each ship takes is rolled on a chart that allocates damage to certain systems, usually destroying them for the remainder of the game. Although this chart works well with all of the ships used in *Volume One*, it presents a few problems with some of the more recently published material. The system also contains rules that allow ships to use transporters and tractor beams, which can be very useful for catching stray drones when a ship runs out of phasers!

Volume One is only the beginning of the game, however. It retails for about \$22.00.

Volume Two

Just when you thought you finally mastered SFB, along comes *Volume Two* with even more material for the game. In *Volume Two*, four new races are introduced, along with over one hundred new ships; one of which is the interesting *Fast Patrol Ship* (a.k.a. *Pseudo-Fighters*, or *PFs*). These things are essentially all weapons and engine, and are specifically designed to fly in groups of six, known as flotillas. The *PFs* in a flotilla are supposed to destroy anything up to, and including, a battlecruiser and can even destroy a dreadnaught if they are lucky.

The new races have new weapons of their own which can render some of the tactics from *Volume One* completely useless. One of these is the *Andromedan Displacement Device*, which can literally pick up an enemy and drop him off in a different location.

The *Wyn Star Cluster* is a new race that is made up of the races that surround it, i.e., the *Kzinti*, the *Lyrans*, a few mutinying *Klingon* ships and a few *Orions* thrown in. The only real defense the Cluster has is that it is surrounded by a cloud of hard radiation that badly damages the weapons systems and shielding of any ship that tries to go through it.

The *Lyran Star Empire* is a race that looks something like the *Kzintis*, but under no circumstances should you ever say that to a member of either race; not if you value your life, that is. The two races have been fighting ever since they found out about each other.

The *Hydran Kingdom* is made up of methane-breathing beings that do not like *Klingon* excursions into their home space. They are equipped with phasers, including a new type called the *Gatling Phaser*, that has four times that rate of fire of other types, and the *Hellbore Torpedo*. The *hellbore* torpedo is probably one of the most dangerous weapons in SFB, no matter which *Volume* you're playing; it works primarily by doing the most damage to the target's

weakest shield.

The *Andromedans* are a race from the galaxy of that name, and they are determined to take over *our* galaxy and everyone in it. These guys are equipped with the deadliest ships in known space. They don't have shields like everyone else, but they do have something better (or worse, depending on your point of view): *Power Absorption Panels*. As the name suggests, they absorb up to a certain amount of power, with each panel having its own limit; and most ships have a *lot* of panels. Then, to add insult to injury, they are able to recharge their batteries with this absorbed energy, and guess how many batteries they have!

Also included in this volume are several new rules that can add more fun to combat, such as new types of drones, new plasma torpedos, and scout functions. *Volume Two* sells for around \$25, not bad considering that volume two is almost as large as volume one and adds so much to the game.

Volume Three

Volume Three covers all of the details of the *Andromedan Invasion* of our galaxy, and adds yet another race to SFB, the *Interstellar Concordium*, which is armed with the *Plasmatic Pulsar Device (PPD)*. The *PPD* does immense amounts of damage at longer ranges, but cannot be fired at ships that are within a few hexes. The *PPD* also has the ability to automatically hit ships up to four times in a row, during consecutive impulses. The *Interstellar Concordium (ISC)* is also armed with various phasers, and with plasma torpedos. They fly their ships in an echelon formation that allows the larger *PPD*-armed ships to avoid damage.

Additional ship types are also included, such as exploration ships, police ships, and the defense monitor, which is a slow-moving ship with the armament of a dreadnaught that is designed to protect planets in the same way that a starbase would.

Also included in *Volume Three* is the tactical intelligence rules, which allow ships to detect certain formation at extremely long distances. The intelligence gained ranges from what type of variant a particular ship is, to whether or not your opponent has overloaded his weapon tubes. However, if one gets close enough to find out if the enemy has overloaded weapons, he might just prove it by shooting them at you.

Volume Three is available at a dealer near you for the well-deserved price of \$25.



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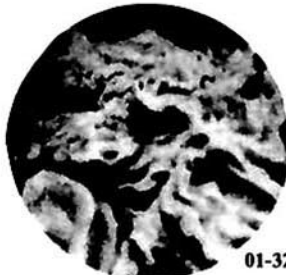
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Starfleet Crew—Not the Only Answer

Options in the Star Trek Roleplaying Game

Jonathan Frater

Roleplaying games that try to deal exclusively with science fiction in general may tend to seem a bit restrictive in what the Player Characters are allowed to play and in what way. And I hate to say this, but as much as I like the game (and I *do* like this game), **Star Trek: The Roleplaying Game** by FASA, can fall into this category. Don't misunderstand me; I think that it's an excellent game system. The rules are easy, the characters are interesting, and there are infinite opportunities for character development, but the fact that the basic system provides only for the creation of **Star Fleet** personnel makes the game inferior enough to me that if a GM that I knew came up to me one bright, sunny day and said, "Hey, Jon! I'm going to run a **Star Trek** game and I need someone to be an engineer on a Constitution-class starship. Wanna play?" I might not be too eager to say yes (at least, not right away). I mean, **Star Fleet** treats their people like dirt; you always have to do what you're told, you have to stay cooped up in one starship for months on end, and you have to follow every one of those countless, pesky, little rules that they spring on you when you least expect it. There has to be another choice when one creates an ST:RPG character and FASA thankfully accomodates those of us who feel this way with not just one or two, but four extra choices: traders, spies, and a pair of famous (or infamous) alien races.

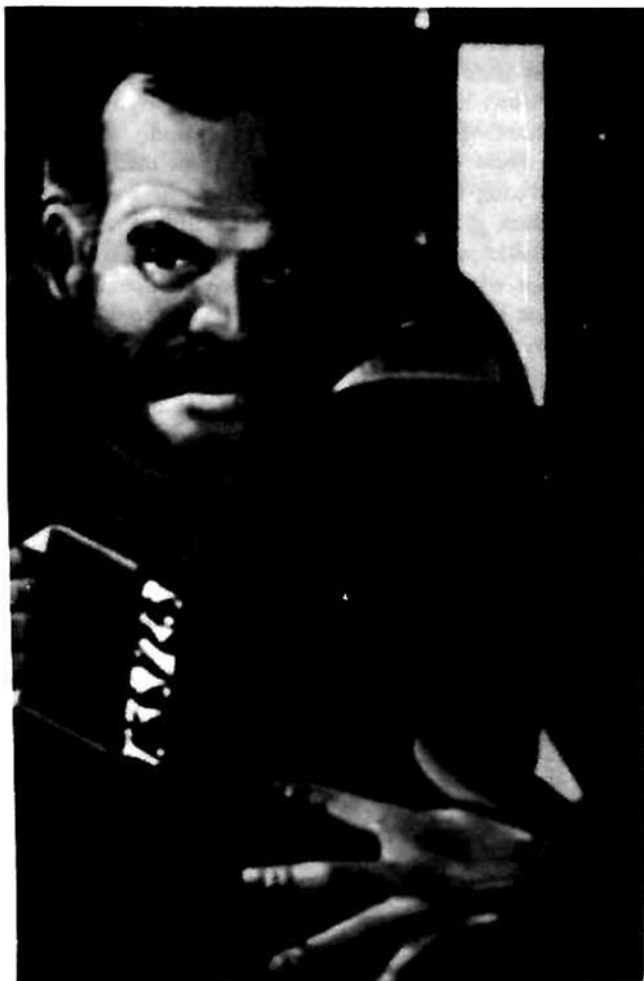
Money and Merchants: Have you ever wondered what it would be like if you had the run of the entire galaxy, your own starship, and as much cash as you could fit inside your wall safe? Well, all that can be yours if you or your GM has a copy of **Trader Captains and Merchant Princes**, something that ST:RPG has been dying for. The ideas behind the typical merchant a la **Star Trek** is well presented in this informative, concise, and all around useful 127-page supplement; the rules are clear, fairly easy to understand, and mesh rather well with those found in the basic game (not to mention some wild artwork).

First, let me say that this thing is extensive and if you can think of a particular situation that any galactic trader should, might, or wouldn't want to encounter, this supplement either has rules for it or can give the GM some half-way decent advice on the subject. It provides some very good character generation techniques which range from fast and easy to long and complicated, but none of which should be dismissed until you've seen what they can do. The whole supplement is done like that and as a result, there is something for everybody.

All right, you may ask, now that I'm a merchant, what do I do? That much depends on you. I believe I spoke of owning your own ship before? Well, in this game, that's no real problem because it's not much more difficult to buy a

ship than it is to buy a house in the real world. Cash always talks, of course, but you can also get a **Federation** supported loan if your credit is good enough (in the **UFP Merchant's Guild**, a credit background tells all about an individual). And once you've got your ship (and if you just can't decide which one you want, there's a whole section of them in the back), what's a person to do except buy and sell commodities (sorry, but those the GM has to invent, although there is a section that describes the best ways to find, buy, and sell cargo) of course. And if your character happens to be the type who can't seem to hold on to his money for any length of time whenever he see a new gadget, there is an entire section of the supplement labeled **Equipment** with enough stuff to keep even the pickiest technojunkie happy for many a moon.

In truth, there is far more contained in this work than I have the space, though not the enthusiasm, to write about. I will go as far to say that in my opinion with a copy of the basic game, these rules, a little common sense and a great deal of *chutzpah*, the inventive player can pro-



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duce any merchant character ever seen in fiction or real life from **Harry Mudd** to **Han Solo** (or his *Star Trek* equivalent) or can produce one that is just as interesting. Those who enjoy the dangerous aspects of fast living will no doubt find the sections marked **Smuggling**, **Piracy** and **Hijacking** extremely interesting, while the future *Star Trek* businessmen will prefer **Finance and Investments**, and **Building a Business**. This book is vital to any and every campaign out there, I recommend it highly.

Adventures & Agencies: Actually, there is only one real agency, but it's the one that counts the most in the Federation. What am I talking about? None other than the dreaded (if you're on the wrong side of the law, that is), super secret, and highly efficient **Star Fleet Intelligence Command**, the CIA, FBI, NSA, and everything else rolled up into one big package. The **Star Fleet Intelligence Manual** is another supplement for *Star Trek: The Roleplaying Game*. This one contains everything a player or Game Master would need to know about this incredible organization, and it does for spies and military intelligence organizations exactly what the previous supplement did for interstellar merchants.

The supplement comes in two books, the **Agent's Orientation Sourcebook**, and the **Game Operations Book**, meant for the players and GM respectively. The former contains everything that could reasonably be packed into one book on the subject, including character creation and training, a complete history of the SFIC and the agency's organization (a bit complicated, but interesting, just the same), plus everything that the beginning agent needs to know in order to do his job. Not to mention humongous selections of equipment for techno-junkies and other forms of life, of **Federation**, **Romulan**, and **Klingon** origin, as well as sections on medical equipment and weapons (you hope you won't need them, but just in case, right?).

The GM's book contains everything else that the beginning agent doesn't need to know, but that might come in handy during the game such as full dossiers on the SFIC head honchos, a discussion that deals with the various positions available within the agency and what responsibilities typically go with each of them, advice on operating procedures (what might and probably will go wrong on a mission), and a list of non-Terran intelligence organizations that work within the Federation. You know, GM stuff.

Now, this might sound like a lot of stuff to some people and it is, but don't let that deter you from examining this work if what you want is a realistic and exciting spy campaign. As far as extras go this is one of the better ones around. But I want to warn some of you: being a spy, although interesting, is not one of the more glamorous occupations in the galaxy. This supplement, after all is said and done, is still meant primarily for those hi-tech Elliot Ness fanatics out there who want to follow in their hero's footsteps within the *Star Trek* universe. For those of you who meet this description, I whole-heartedly recommend the **Star Fleet Intelligence Manual**.

Antics of Aliens: Ever wonder what it was like to be something other than a human in the UFP? You did? Well, even if you didn't, there is now a pair of alien races in the *ST:RPG* universe that have been getting bad reps for the

past 25 game years, namely the **Klingons** and the **Orions** of *Rigel 7*, whom I believe *everyone* is familiar with on some level, PC or not.

The **Klingons**, as everyone in the UFP knows, are the meanest humanoid critters in the galaxy, knowing three things well: battle, battle, and revenge. On the other hand, has no one in the Federation ever really tried to find out why they happen to be that way? The answer is YES! The **Klingons** supplement from FASA deals exclusively with that race, including every possible aspect of Klingon life and attitudes towards life, including a comprehensive history of their homeworld and race, an overview of their attitudes towards their interstellar neighbors, and more general knowledge about how they view their lot in life than I have room to mention. The supplement is divided, as usual, into two separate books meant for GMs and players, respectively, and includes all UFP intelligence data (which is accurate up to and including the latest movie) on the Klingon Empire as well.

The second alien race with an extraordinarily bad reputation, which unlike the Klingons, they do not always deserve are of course, the **Orions**, you know, the guys from *Rigel 4*. The **Orions** supplement from FASA deals with all of the little known facts of this race, known for their pirates, mercantile *chutzpah*, and green slave women, and unfortunately for their neighboring giants, namely the Federation, Klingon Empire, and the Romulan Empire, that's almost all that the galaxy at large does know for certain. Until now, of course, for the supplements explain in fascinating detail all of the Orion sub-races, technology, society, and includes a full history of the planet of *Rigel 4*. After I got a look at this information, I wanted to play an Orion without hesitation.

I'm not going to say that Orions and Klingons make good PCs, that is a decision best left up to individual GMs. But in case the situation does occur when such races would become seriously considered for PC candidacy, these supplements have all of the necessary information dealing with how that might be accomplished, right down to specialized character generation tables and rules. And even if your GM doesn't want Klingon or Orion PCs in his or her game, wouldn't be fun to at least have these things on hand to look through if and when humans become a little monotonous?



...AND NOW, THE OPPOSITION

Introducing a new Traveller universe

Jonathan Frater

First of all, I would like to clear up a statement that I made in my *Traveller 2300* review in *Gateways* #6. GDW wants it made clear the 2300 is not only like another universe, it *is* another universe in every way, specifically, one that is shared with *Twilight 2000*. 2300 is *not* *Traveller* in any way beyond the title, and the company is now referring to the newer game as 2300 in all of their newly released material to prove it. I also mentioned in that review that the game came with the *Beanstalk* module, also for use with 2300; I have since been corrected by GDW that *Beanstalk* is a separate item, and must be purchased without the game. Apologies to anyone who thought that they were getting a module with their basic game. My information is not usually that off.

Anyway, GDW's big release for 1987-88 was, as we now know, *MegaTraveller, The Role-Playing Game* in the *Shattered Imperium*. And they're not kidding, people. A small sample of this universe follows, as we look at the year in review, 1120 Third Imperium:

Archduke Dulinor of the Deneb sector killed Emperor Strephon in the Imperial Palace on Capital and proclaimed himself to be the new Emperor by Right of Assassination. The immediate heirs to the Iridium Throne were also killed, leaving Prince Lucan, Strephon's nephew, in charge. The Imperial Moot has been dissolved for one year, and they have not yet formally declared the Imperium to have a new Emperor as of yet. They are still considering Strephon's grand-niece Margaret for the position. Both she and Lucan have their own defense fleets and are attempting to hold their own territories. Strephon's double, who has claimed to be the real Strephon has come forth, but has not had his authenticity confirmed by the Moot at this time, either...

...The Vland sector has completely withdrawn from the Imperium and has renamed itself the Vilani Imperium in remembrance of the first Vilani empire. The Antares sector has also seceded from the Imperium, and is now part of the Julian Protectorate.

...The Solomani Government has seized upon this opportunity to take control of complete sectors, and is boldly attacking numerous planetary systems in Imperial space. The Vegans have remained loyal to the Imperium, so far...

Well, barring a few minor considerations, that's the way things are nowadays in the *Shattered Imperium*.

The game is new, but is essentially a revised, re-hashed, and re-edited version of Books 1 through 5 of the original *Traveller*. It also includes a great amount of new material as well, and most of it is the stuff that people have been screaming for for years, such as more complete rules,

more library data, and finally a legal way to use the Universal Task System, which by the way, is what the game revolves around now. The UTS is sort of the ultimate equalizer; you want to do something? Anything? Well, grab a pair of dice and make a task roll. It's that easy, and the task roll can quite literally be used to do anything that players or referees of all backgrounds can possibly think of. Combat (personal and starship), simple jobs like cleaning the air ducts in a house, or large and complex jobs such as rewiring the gunnery control fixtures in your scout cruiser, can all be handled with task rolls. It makes the game a lot easier to understand and play.

There are three parts to *MegaTraveller*: the *Players Manual*, which is the equivalent of *Traveller Books* 1, 2, and 3; the *Referee's Manual*, which contains new (and better) rules for starship and vehicle design, and closely resembles *Books* 4 (*Mercenary*) and 5 (*High Guard*); and, the *Imperial Encyclopedia*, which has revised equipment lists, maps, library data, and includes the starships of *Book* 2 (*Starships*), using the new design formats.

The easiest way to describe *MegaTraveller* is to actually call it a new game in its own right. It is a very different universe in which the players find themselves. There is still a huge universe out there, but now it's more interesting, exciting, and profitable than before, if only because there are so many different political and military factions to ally oneself with (or make enemies of—depending on your lifestyle, I suppose). That alone makes for scores of new and wild adventures for a group of players that know where to look for their fun.

Gary Thomas, Joe Fugate, and their colleagues at *Digest Group Publications* honestly surprised me with their work on this game. I was considering quite a few possibilities of what the consumers would see when I spoke to Marc W. Miller last year at *GenCon '87* about the project, and I am more than pleased with the results of a project that seemed to have a lot of genuine skill and effort poured into it by the crew at *DGP*. Thanks for the game, guys, and keep up the good work.



Supremacy— The Game of Superpowers

Greg Sherwood

Supremacy is a boardgame which deals with world conquest by a modern superpower. Each player controls one of six superpowers struggling for economic and military control of the world. The object of the game is destroying your opposition by capturing your opponent's nations, or causing them to go bankrupt.

The gameboard is a map representing the six superpowers and twenty-four neutral countries. The superpowers consist of the Confederacy of South America, the Federation of African States, League of European Nations, People's Republic of China, the United States of America, and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. Each superpower is represented by its own color; with the neutral countries shaded gray.

One player is appointed *Marshal* and calls the "Order of Play" and makes sure that the players adhere to the order. Another player is appointed *Banker* and is responsible for all payments made to the bank and makes sure that all the Market and Supply Center markers are moved properly.

Each of the Superpowers receives six representative companies from the deck of resource cards; the Superpower also receives three units of grain, oil and minerals, as well as an army on each of his starting territories. Each neutral territory has its own company, as well as the natural resource that it represents. After the cards have been distributed, five are left over; these consist of two Laser Star Research and Development Completed cards and three Nuclear Research and Development Completed cards.

Further resources may be purchased from the bank, while surplus goods may be sold at the market. The Market is a scale which is found at the top of the gameboard. Along the bottom of the Market is the Price Index which shows the current buying/selling price for each of the resources. The Market operates on a Bull/Bear principal; when there is a glut on the market, it is in its Bull period. When the Market is Bullish, the resource may sell for as low as one million dollars; if the Market is Bearish, the price may go as high as one billion dollars.

The order of play is as follows:

- Stage 1) Pay salaries and loans to the bank.
- Stage 2) Transfer production units to Supply Center. (The player may do three of the five remaining stages)
- Stage 3) Sell all, some or none of the supply units
- Stage 4) Attack
- Stage 5) Move armies and/or Navies
- Stage 6) Build forces and weapons
- Stage 7) Buy or prospect for resources.

Rollout— The Game of Risk-Takers

Greg Sherwood

You are a high-class corporate official seated behind your desk. The plaque on the door says Chief Executive Officer of 'Simcor Multinational Corporation'. Your product lines are sold world wide, and it's your job to make sure that you make more money than the competition. Sounds simple, you think to yourself, I can do that easily. Oh yeah? Corporate business isn't a game; it's its own challenge. You have to pit your knowledge, skill, and raw guts against some of the world's best businessmen and entrapenures. You have to know when to take the big risks and when not to risk too much. You have to buy low and sell high; you have to come out on top any which way you can.

Rollout is a game where, instead of planning military strategies, you plan corporate strategies. As the C.E.O you must decide on a balance of buying or selling shares, committing corporate resources to the research and development of better products, speculating on the Stock Market, or opening a new chain of stores. See if you can succeed and gain a monopoly in the battlefield of business. Watch your opponents crash and burn if they make the wrong decisions; and if you can acquire over 50% of an opponent's company, the Hostile Takeover is successful—you gain his company and assets, and he is in the street and out of the game.

Each player is head of one of six companies based in a major city. They are Simcor based in New York city, Camcon based in Cape Town, Pedrasca based in Sao Paulo, Bermax based in Brussels, Razno based in Leningrad, and Ibuki based in Tokyo.

The gameboard is set up much in the same way as the **Supremacy** board, with all the important rules and order of play printed right on the board. This eliminates any need to go back to the rules every turn. Along the top of the board is the Sales-Track which is where product competition occurs. This keeps track of the Sales Index, which is how many units of that product (either radios, computers, or televisions) have been sold.

The Stock Market appears at the bottom of the board. This presents the Price Index and Dividends Due Index; the Price Index shows the current buy/sell price of a company's stock. The Dividends Due Index tells you how much Dividend must be paid out by the company at the beginning of each turn.

Again, as in **Supremacy**, one player is chosen to be the banker who handles all monetary transactions, and one player to be the Chairman, the one who keeps the game moving along the order of play.

The Stages of play are also close to those of **Supremacy**. They are as follows:

- Stage 1) Pay salaries, loans and dividends

Supremacy Cont'd.

This series of play, a combination of economic manipulation as well as a flexing of military muscles is what makes **Supremacy** a strong game. It combines the plottings of a **Diplomacy** game, the Manifest Destiny of a **Risk** game, and the cutthroat dealing of a game of **Monopoly**, takes the strong points from all three styles of games and brings them together. The game really comes to life after the first few plays. After you have familiarized yourself with the rules, you have the option of advancing to the optional rules. Using the optional rules, the game can no longer be controlled by two people setting out to help each other by influencing the Market.

The optional rules section introduces several interesting variants, the most important of which is Simultaneous Random Play (SRP).

SRP proceeds as follows: all players go through stages one and two together then choose which three of the other five they wish to play. The *Marshall* then calls out the stages and those wishing to participate in that stage roll to see who goes first; the highest roll winning. The low roller doesn't have to participate in that stage, but it does count as one of his three, and each player must place one of his markers on that stage area on the board so that the other players may know of his intentions.

Upon reaching this level of play, you begin to realize the true fun of **Supremacy** and the different strategies available which will make a World Leader out of any gamer.

Roll-out Cont'd.

Stage 2) Rollout

(Players may do any of the remaining four Stages, or pass.)

Stage 3) Sell shares

Stage 4) Buy shares

Stage 5) Build or buy shares

Stage 6) Research and Develop new products

The entire mechanics of the game come out in the "Rollout" stage. Here one checks to see what products are in demand, sets the budget for his/her Advertising Campaign and the price set for the product.

Each player gets one die's worth of movement up the Sales Track and then applies bonus modifiers. Each category has its own bonus modifier; one extra die for the highest Quality Rated Product, one extra die for the biggest advertising blitz, one extra die for the lowest retail price, and, finally, two extra dice for the player with the most stores.

The game is quick and fun to play. It's a game that can be played easily with as few as two, or, as many as six players. And, what may be most important, it's a fairly new game, and, doesn't require three volumes of rules to play.

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The Red Dagger Inn



Charles and Sydney Barouch

Recently, there's been some construction at the Red Dagger Inn. It seems that some of the rowdier Haffings have been demanding a gameroom for some time now, and we've finally given in. What this means is that in addition to our reviews of the best in electronic role-play, you'll also see some reviews of the more generic kinds of gaming software.

Now, we know that the gnomes in the construction crew are making a lot of noise, but let's ignore them for now, pull up a tankard and settle in for some interesting conversation about electronic role-play.

Ultima

Last issue, we discussed the kind of software that invents or defines a new software category. At the very end of the article we happened to comment on the *Ultima* series. It's a spectacular piece of software in that it has grown in both its concept and in its overall sophistication.

Ultima I was originally an offering for the Apple II series of computers and has set the precedent for all that followed. By today's standards, it's a primitive and poorly defined game destined to frustrate all but the most die-hard gamer. *Ultima II*, on the other hand, boasted of a wide concept—travel is not limited to one time period or planet, for that matter—but the execution of the game seemed too loyal to the AD&D™ idea that inexperienced characters are made to be trashed.

Then came *Ultima III* and maturity. This game featured cleaner graphics, a clearer sense of purpose and excellent play value. In it you could gain information from people and creatures who would often be travelling about on business of their own. The game includes several *layers* of play. It's fun even if you ignore the planned Quest and simply wander around the world. *Ultima III* proved that you could indeed be challenged by a game that wasn't all text.

Then, *Ultima IV* was announced. The question running through everyone's mind at the time, was how they were going to be able to top *Ultima III*. The answer was a whole new concept in electronic role-playing games. A whole new layer, if you will. *Ultima IV* not only challenges your mind, it challenges your morals, as well. The program tracks what you steal, when you run away from battle, and how well you defend your party. In short, it rates your purity of purpose. *Ultima IV* is not an easy game, but it does provide many fascinating, and sometimes frustrating, hours of gaming. It's a program that actually requires that the player treat the game like serious role-play.

Ultima V, originally announced for a December release, is as yet unseen. We have arranged to review *Ultima V* when it does appear, and will certainly do so as soon as

the program is available—hopefully in time for the next issue. If the progression this series has displayed so far is any indication, *Ultima V* will be a clear-cut, well-planned game that will take us further into the unexplored reaches of computer gaming. It looks to be well worth the wait.

Amnesia

If slick packaging and a few interesting ideas were all it took to sell a game, *Amnesia* would do very well. The cover is clever and particularly funny if you've ever been to Times Square in New York City. The package includes a Manhattan street map, hotel guide and a street finder; all of which are needed to play because as the game begins you awaken naked, without your memory and in a dingy room in an aging New York hotel.

The game is not consistently the gem its packaging promises. While it is a good game and well worth the price, it can be very frustrating. Firstly, it is labeled an 'Interactive Novel'. Essentially, what this means is that the program may take over your character at any time. Secondly, the software has an extremely difficult initial sequence and an unwieldy method for backing up your game disk—a whopping twenty swaps on an IBM.

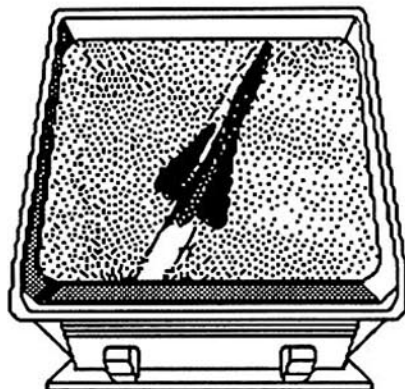
On the plus side, however, if you can find your clothes, and aren't too proud to take a peek at the hints section, the game picks up nicely. The text parser (the thing that translates your words into commands that the program can understand) is one of the best available and allows you a number of different actions. And, like most text adventures, this is not a game for the impatient.

The story itself is quite good and the author has spared nothing in creating a true sense of realism. You can get caught up in the character's emotions as you suffer flashbacks, threats from the gun-toting Luke Dudley and the occasional person claiming to be his wife or sweetheart. *Amnesia* can be a riveting role-playing adventure once you finally get into it.

Finally...

As the workgnomes have finished their work in the gameroom, we can go in, now, to see how it's shaping up. Perhaps, with some careful control of the sorts of games that go in there, it might turn out to be a good addition to the Inn. Oh, and leave your mug—no food or drink allowed in here.

The three games in here all seem to be simulators. They certainly aren't role-playing games, but they do look interesting. Let's take a look.



Arctic Fox

Arctic Fox is your basic "Super Tank vs. Everyone Else" game. It's very reminiscent of the arcade game **Battle Zone**, but the improvement here consists mainly in a highly sophisticated control panel and the addition of color. As a shoot-'em-up, it plays well but is challenging in that it requires a lot of practice to get much done.

Sky Fox

Sky Fox is not, by any means, related to Arctic Fox. It is, in fact, a much more difficult and sophisticated game. It borrows heavily from wargames for the strategical aspect of the game. The goal is to defend your bases and slow the ongoing invasion. The graphics are not state of the art, but they are nicely drawn and do give the illusion of motion. Strategy and planning seem to be the watchword here; the shoot-'em-up is only a part of the action.

Chuck Yeager's Advanced Flight Trainer

The last game in our new space is the only one that simulates the real thing. Here, you're put in the cockpit of any of a number of actual planes and, in fact, Chuck Yeager, himself, appears to make fun of you if you screw up the flight. That's right, the famous flyboy's smiling face appears after crashes and other disasters to take a cheap shot at you while you're climbing out of the wreckage.

Strike Fleet

On the strength of PHM Pegasus, Lucasfilm has released **Strike Fleet**. The game allows you to pilot several types of Naval ships as well as fly a helicopter or two into battle in a number of different scenarios. The scenarios are drawn from today's headlines, which have, unfortunately, become a good source of military stories as of late. As the name implies, you have control over several ships at a time and must guide your fleet to the successful completion of your mission.

By The Way...

These notices appeared on the bulletin board at the bar. Let's take a look.

Strategic Simulations, Inc. has signed a deal with TSR, Inc. to develop a line of TSR approved software. Our sources indicate that the software is likely to include both gaming aids and actual "electronic modules".

Next Time: Unfortunately, we were unable to include the promised **Beyond Zork** review as we had prom-

ised. We *think* one of the gnomes filched it. If we can persuade him to return it, we'll try and have that review by the next time we meet.

PRICING:

Chuck Yeager	
C-64/128	\$34.95
IBM/APPLE	\$39.95

SKY FOX

C-64/128/APPLE	\$14.99
AMIGA/ST/MAC	\$19.95

ARCTIC FOX

C-64/128	\$29.95
IBM/APPLE/AMIGA/ST	\$39.95

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Figuring Out the Fairy Folk: A New Look at *Elves*

Serge F. Clermont

As a GM, I have often found that for the entertainment purposes of my role-playing game campaign, a new twist on an old theme serves best to capture my players' attention. This philosophy can be expanded to include different approaches towards the depiction of races and cultures on the game world. I have taken two of the oldest and most used (if not over-used) racial types most commonly found in fantasy role-playing game milieus and revamped them based on various pieces of literature that I have read, feeling that this information could add new dimensions to their appearance in my campaign.



The concept of the Faerie Folk and Elves has always been an attractive one for me. But the problem of remaining true to the tales and literature of these elegant and graceful creatures within the cut-and-dried text of a gaming system was a challenge that it seemed most game designers nowadays weren't interested in tackling. They made very little attempt to establish that there was some type of relationship between the Elves of famous fantasy epics and the Faerie of Celtic-European folklore that was the original source of such creations. Therefore, I created a history and subsequent culture based on this premise, one that allowed the two types to co-exist and be acknowledged as being related to each other in some way. Drawing upon several sources of epic and modern fantasy, I used the elements that appealed to the romantic air of my campaign and came up with—the Saga of the Elvarin.

In the Beginning, the Powers that Be which had created the World looked down upon the Paradise they had made and sent down their celestial servants to become its caretakers and guardians from Evil. In order to interact with the physicality of their new charge, these servants assumed physical forms. In doing so, they lost much of their puissance, but still were the most magically powerful beings existent on the

Humanoids' Quarterly:

A new look at **Orcs**

Serge F. Clermont

To my mind, Orcs have been much-maligned entities in the realm of role-playing. They are often classified as monsters in any bestiary found in any fantasyland-based system, but I believe that to be unfair. Elves are not considered monsters in the sense that would-be characters can be Elves, because ideally, they have a culture and history behind them that can be exploited for interesting role-play. It seems that just by virtue of being nice to look at, Elves have copped everything needed to be considered a genuine social race, not just another type of monster. If being an intelligent humanoid is what it takes to become a fantasy race, why not give the same consideration to Orcs? From a sociological perspective, here is a new way to look at a much maligned character and NPC race.

Family

The family structure of the Orcs is based upon their extremely short lifespans. Orcs live half as long as Men/Humans, and have double the capacity for bearing children. The gestation period of the female Orc is anywhere from four to six months, thus averaging about two to three children any given year. Females are a commodity if they are not witches or warrior-women—in the latter case, only certain Houses may allow their women to become fighters. (Orcish witches never mate and never marry, because their magicks involve such quantities of hatred, rage and murder that they are rendered sterile and insane. They are respected and feared for their power while, at the same time, being loathed and despised wherever they should appear.) One male Orc may possess several women, but may only marry within the tribe one female of the highest-ranking Houses. Marrying a female of lower rank is an insult to that House if a female from such a House has been taken but not married, a cause enough for blood feud to erupt.

As is expected, children are only valued for the glory they bring their family (and House) in the art of war. Weak and crippled children are often exposed at birth, as are the decrepit of age.



The Elves

World at this time. It was they that moved amongst the Created Race and helped Man to grow in his culture and knowledge of the universe and the Gods that had created him.

However, this idyllic period was not to last. Being that they were now of physical body, the caretakers had lost, in addition to their former celestial power, their direct link with the Gods. Thus, the caretakers made an attempt on their own to contact and commune with the natural forces of the earth, sea and sky that the Creators had sown within the World to bind it together; in order to try to reestablish

this time to later on become hostile towards their former teachers, for Man still worshipped the Creators, whereas the Tuatha now held Danu as the object of their adoration.

During the relatively short peace that followed thereafter, the Tuatha De Danaan had regained some of their former might, and moved amongst Men as figures of great power. They turned their attention to the question of Death and Mortality, when it began to appear amongst the Men they taught, for the Tuatha did not age or die. The Tuatha asked Danu what this meant, for either the knowledge of Death and

turn to live where they had departed without facing the consequences eventually.

There were many violent, though not necessarily negative, reactions to this enlightenment on the part of the Tuatha, especially when Man finally arose in war against them. The mightiest of the Tuatha bowed to Danu's wisdom and would go, with her guidance, to the place she had designated as their new home. This would be the island kingdom of Tir N'a Nog.

Those who refused to accept Death, or departure from the Land they had served, chose to take lesser forms in order to conserve the magic in their area. For some who fought against the Man invasion, this was inevitable, for the drain upon magic became noticeable during battle as the Tuatha fell against Man. (This might suggest to some that Man was intended to be the dominant race on the World, because they had been created by the Gods to inhabit this place, while the Tuatha/caretakers were intruders and squatters, in a sense.) These Tuatha also resolved to only use their magical powers as little as possible, relying on them only to survive where need be. These were changed by their experience and desire into the Faerie (Folk), who indeed would remain immortal, but paid the price of being nothing more than what they became---a people whose memory is short and personality is uncaring for others, dealing only in magic to mislead, to confuse...a people who never evolved further than what they were because of immortality and the lack of change. They do not ever seem to be serious because if they pay attention to what they are doing, their thoughts will inevitably return to their sad existence, and that they cannot bear. Memory is a burden, so they have discarded it. It is an oddity amongst the lesser Faerie for one to remember what he has done before the previous day.

The Faerie love to create chaos and mischief because it is their attempt to make their lives more interesting. The more malicious of them, found in



their holy Oneness and to better understand their new world. The caretakers used their magical powers to give a form to these natural forces, inadvertently creating sentience in it and creating a Earth Entity who called itself "Danu", who surpassed them in might and wisdom, being more than just the sum of the collective. Danu was more familiar at this point than the Creators, who the caretakers had not spoken with ever since their earthly incarnation, because each caretaker was known intimately to "her" as well as a mother might know her child. Upon this discovery, the caretakers began to call themselves the Tuatha De Danaan, "the Children of Danu". This seeming switch in religious loyalty was cause enough for the humans of

Passing had been lost in their transition from the heavens, or they had never known of it before. Danu gave unto all of the Tuatha a vision that allowed them to draw their own conclusions. In the place they rested now, she warned, there was not enough magic to sustain the forms the Tuatha had worn for so long, for their very presence drew magic to them like magnets. Like the soil that has borne crops for too long, the magic would cease to support the Tuathas' existence, and, like the crops themselves, the Tuatha would begin to decay, like Man. However, she could take them to a place where the magic would never fade, because it was on the borders of reality, and so touched every part of the universe, but they could never re-

Education

Orcs do not place that much emphasis on formal, required education. You learn from experience is the Orcs' motto and philosophy, and usually, life is cruel to these people. They are not a stupid people, though, merely somewhat ignorant of the finer things in life. Their cunning and reasoning ability is what makes them the most popular race for armies on the 'Shadowed' Side. Half-Orcs are even more dangerous, because some of them can pass in human society without too much trouble, perhaps gaining the knowledge of urban societies that the ethnocentric Orcs do not have access to.

Education is handled within the family. The males and females alike are taught how to fight from the moment they can walk. Orcish childhood is a living hell in which one must always be on his or her guard, or one may get attacked and badly hurt. There is, obviously, very little evidence of affection and love. But attempt to take an Orc baby from his mother and you will find yourself on the business end of a murder machine. Children are, as is stated above, a commodity. In addition, they are an indicator of the value of a Orc's Woman to bear many children. Mothers in an Orc tribe hoard their children like precious metals for their prestige value. The grief of a mother for a lost progeny may be grief of loss indeed, but not at the loss of life; rather, it reduces the standing of the mother amongst the women of the community.

An Orc belongs to a Clan when he is born. This is his blood family. When he is of age, he becomes part of a House, which is oriented around a profession. A House may be comprised of several Clans, but the social etiquette in instances of conflicting loyalty is explicitly clear. In the spheres of influence of the House, the Clan is secondary. Yet there are situations where the Clan takes priority. Examples are marriages, family honor, establishing heirs; anything that preserves the bloodline of the Clan. An

Orc may remain in the lodge of his own Clan if he has also become part of the House that predominates under the roof of the Clan Lodge.

As mentioned, Orcs are separated into various Houses within one tribe, but in no way does this mean that Orcs in one House are, by necessity, related to each other. Upon reaching adolescence, a child is given up to the Choosing, a urban event that gathers all Orcs of the ages between eight and ten, to be divided amongst the Houses as booty. The House with the highest prestige at this time gets to pick first, and a Choosing may get out of hand if another House challenges the Choice of Houses that will go or have gone before them. Children are picked on the criteria of their physical condition, the current prestige of the family they were born into, and the possible future prestige they will bring the House and their profession. Families get prestige from their progeny and relatives, while the Houses get prestige from their members and their members' families.

Marriage between Houses is a carefully timed thing, because prestige gained from a marriage does not change on the basis of two separate people becoming one single unit. The One never changes, though the two partners' personal prestige may change in accordance with their actions and their families', and so on. The ideal marriage in Orcish society is where both partners have high personal, familial, and House prestige; but arranging such a marriage is like watching the stock market--knowing when to buy and sell, as it were.

Religion/Afterlife

Orcs have a martial pantheon to match their martial culture. Ancestral spirits are worshipped as mediators between the gods and their worshippers, but there are no saints. Martyrdom is not an Orc's way of thinking. To them, martyrdom is stupid. (Why die when you can lie? Honor is one thing; deceit is quite another, and is not regarded as shameful when used to pre-

serve one's own life.)

The gods of Orcs are such that they are often mistaken for demons, being that one may bargain with them in order to obtain material and spiritual power. However, these gods are particular to the Orcs; any non-Orcs who attempts to summon one as if they were just another extraplanar servant is going to have a lot of trouble on his hands...

The Orcish Gods are peculiar in that they love to manifest themselves to their worshippers whenever they can, when the conditions are right. Great clerics of the Orcs are possessed by the Gods while in battle; unfortunately, the body is usually burned out and the spirit taken to the Orcish afterlife.

Death for Orcs is fairly constant, given a short lifespan, a volatile interactive process, and martial living. However, contrary to popular belief, Orcs, though meat eaters, do not eat other non-Orcs or even each other. They do eat the hearts of defeated enemies if they were notorious in battle and renowned enemy fighters. This is done to prevent the spirit of the fallen from fighting for its own pagan god on the great battlefield of Orcish Heaven, as well as extracting the Orcish qualities of combat from the dead fighter.

Orcs do not believe in reincarnation. They do believe that Orcs have lives to live out in other worlds, and at the end of this cycle of fighting, dying and going on to fight again in another place, those who are not annihilated by their own unworthiness go on to fight the Battle at the End of Gods. Burial of an Orc consists of his armor, and weapons--that's all he needs, the Orcs say, for the next battle. The rest of his possessions goes either to the one who killed him (if he's an Orc), or to the highest ranked male in his Clan. It all depends on the prestige once more; in this case, if both individuals' prestige is very low, then another Clan or House could get in on the act if their

The Elves

the Unseelie Court, take a more sadistic pleasure in torturing Man because of some racial memory instinct that Man was somehow responsible for their predicament, if not a direct cause.

The Seelie Court also retain some racial memory, but it is that of the original benevolence of the race from which they sprang---when they indeed remember. Usually, one can tell the difference between members of the Two Courts of Faerie.

The Tuatha who accepted the inevitability of Death and remained in the Land they loved so much became mortal (though extremely long-lived) and lost all their Heaven-born magical ability, though they still remained inherently magical. These became the Elvarin---the Elves.

The Elvarin split off into the different branches of Elves that one wishes to have in one's campaign. In the following text, we will discuss the ways of life found within the mainstream Elvarin culture, with brief references to specific branches of the Elvarin.

The Elvarin Culture

As Elvarin culture began, each race was known for a particular profession in which its members excelled. For instance, Wood Elvarin were known to make the best rangers and woodsmen, while the Sea Elvarin were excellent mariners and sea-farers. The High Elvarin, in addition to being artistically and intellectually inclined, became extremely proficient in magic-use once it was discovered, and the Grey Elvarin rivalled the Dwarves in smithing and jewel-craft.

The Rift between Races occurred when hostilities with Man flared up again. The High and Grey Elves, realizing the danger, joined their forces in order to forge weapons and artifacts of great power, using magic and mining to bring forth the metals and raw materials they needed. Yet there were some amongst the High and the Grey who were not satisfied with what they had achieved so far. Using secret and forbidden lore, these descendants sum-

moned forth the metal adamantine from the bowels of Danu. Outraged, the goddess cursed them to remain in Darkness forever while they mined the metal they adored so much. When they returned to the World Above, their skin turned black and their hair turned white, and the Sun pained their eyes. But the Dark Elvarin were not finished as a race.

Indeed, the joint skills these Dark Elvarin had formerly possessed as either High or Grey Elves made them a deadly force to be reckoned with, combined with the metal they had raped from Mother Danu herself. With this in mind, the Dark Elvarin (Drow, Druas, Dark Elves, etc.) fostered mistrust amongst all the other Elvarin races through cunning politics and military strategy, making it seem that each one was out to get the other. (It must be pointed out that the Dark Elvarin, though coldly logical and merciless in their anti-social activities, generally do not act from malicious intent, though perhaps there is some bitterness involved. They are relatively few when compared to the sum of their brethren, and would be in danger of extinction if they did not take steps to prevent the Elvarin races from uniting.)

As a result of the Dark Elvarin's efforts, the High, the Grey, the Sea, and the Wood Elvarin have become rather estranged from each other, though an attempt by the High Elvarin has been made to rectify this situation. The Grey, the Sea, and the Wood Elvarin are somewhat localized geographically, but, in each society, there has been set up a ruling house of High Elvarin, much like the way ancient European Kings gave whole countries to the other members of their family in order to consolidate their power through the ties of kin. In short, the High Elvarin have become an aristocracy, but there is one catch. The High and Grey Elvarin had once inhabited several valley and mountain cities, but after the War Between Man and Elvarin, their numbers were reduced to a handful.

The handful of High Elvarin went forth, leaving their cities to either take up residence with other Elvarin as nobles, or to adventure, hoping to find more High Elvarin that were not involved in the war because communication had been lost with them. Because of their noble affectations, the High Elvarin excel in the adventuring classes of bard and cavalier as well as magic-user (though magic-users have become rare amongst them ever since the Dark Elvarin incident; only the aged High possess any amount of significant power in this regard), though they are somewhat worldly and thus make poor clerics.

(A note about the High Elvarin aristocracy; it seems that those who take up residence with the intent to govern other non-High Elvarin "go native" in order to mix in and relate to the people they rule. Therefore, the High Elvarin nobility that rules the Wood Elvarin have adapted the ways of the Wood Elvarin to such a degree that they are indistinguishable from the real thing, except to other Elvarin. That is, until the High starts to use magic, because only the High Elvarin know magic and no other race has this ability.)

The Grey Elvarin, on the other hand, remained in their mountains, frequenting the company of Dwarves because of similiar tastes, but not overmuch. They are most often in combat with the Dark Elvarin, surviving only through sheer tenacity. It is also rumored that the Grey Elvarin have made forays into the area of technology in order to counter the magical forces of their Dark brethren; forays that the Dwarves do not approve of, grumbling that the Grey Elvarin are in danger of unleashing another disaster, but unwilling to break alliance with them.

The Grey Elvarin are best known for being multi-classed adventurers when they are adventurers, for they are able to reconcile differing philosophies attributed to these classes in favor of a goal. They are best at fighting, most of all fighting to win. They do not give up easily---so one

relationship is close enough--say, if the one killed had a wife, the wife's House could make a claim on the slain Orc's possessions.

Economy

Orcs use the currency of whatever land they have traveled into. Their philosophy in this area is, "Whomever has the most when he dies, wins", although prestige again counts for a lot more than just material wealth. The way one obtained it is important. The best circumstances under which wealth could be gotten is if 1) the superiority of the Orcish race beyond all others was proved, and 2) if another race's honor and "face" suffered in the interim, the worse the better.

Once Orcs have decided to settle down for a spell, land is divided by the ruling Clan in the area, and further divided by the Clanmaster to his warriors. (This is why a Clanmaster always attempts to keep the House of a profession intact under him—to prevent further strife.) If a higher prestiged Clan wanders into the quasi-permanent settlement that has been established, they must immediately demand that the land held by the previously-most prestiged Clan be given to them. This is how some civil wars usually break out, because losing land is a great loss of face, one which no Clan or House wishes to suffer.

Politics/Government

Orcs do have a royal family existent at any one time, and the Lord of All Houses is the absolute ruler of his people. Half-Orcs born of his blood are never harmed and are in fact, treated with an exalted status. Each Clan Lord owes his allegiance to him; if betrayed, the Lord Of Houses may wipe out the entire line of the person responsible, if he is so inclined. Any Clan that successfully resists execution (which means that the Lord of All Houses and his Clan are eliminated), then that Clan becomes the ruling Clan if its prestige is high enough to maintain.

There is no prestige gained by destroying the heads of government in

such a fashion, because it renders the Orcs as a race vulnerable, and no Orc betrays his race.

Language, Customs, and Communication

Orcs only have one language, although dialects can widely range, according to the area. Orcish senses are sharp enough to read body language subconsciously, so attitude is very important when dealing with Orcs. They may react without warning for imagined insults and the trespassing of customs, and since customs and taboos vary from tribe to tribe, and clan to clan, it is very difficult for an outsider to keep track of all of them.

Warfare/Technology

Orcish warfare is pretty straightforward. They utilize all the elements of classic military confrontation; cavalry, infantry, and war-machines. Since Orcs are unable to use magic on a very large scale at all, they are at a disadvantage against it. (They do rec-

ognize its significance, and are always on the look-out for magic weapons, armor, and miscellaneous items that their various professions can use.)

Orcs are best known and used for siege war; they have an incredible patience for it, and have been known to actually set up temporary communities around the besieged for two or three generations. By this time, it has become a matter of honor to bring the objective down.

Orcs are always interested in some new method of warfare and combat. On my world, Orcs have contacted the fighters of Eastern countries to learn Oriental-style martial-arts fighting and weaponry. Running into an Orc during an episode of my game who knows the shotokan technique of karate has proven to be an interesting experience to those characters who thought a weaponless Orc was easy pickin's...

The plated armor and weaponry



The Elves

may find the best fighters, assassins, thieves and any combination or related profession in this group. (Their martial reputation is such that they are often sought out as mercenaries by other good-aligned type races in favor of any other---in addition, they really hate orcs.)

The Wood Elvarin are most often seen by Man near rural communities, making agreements to help protect the community's crops, farms and game in exchange for peace with their neighbors. Out of all the Elvarin, the Wood Brethren still worship Danu in the Earth, and thus maintain good relations with local druids. Wood Elvarin adventure, but are uncomfortable in an urban or underground setting, and are not much for politics and intrigue. The High Elvarin who rule them prefer that they remain near their forest home, to prevent possible misunderstandings and discontent due to social gaffes.

Wood Elvarin work best as or with rangers and foresters. The nomadic Wood Elvarin that live on the borders of the Plains in my world are more barbarians and shamans than anything else, although they are less "barbaric" than human barbarians can be, they much resemble the American Indians.

The Sea Elvarin do not frequent Mannish ports-of-call, as one might expect. They, surprisingly enough, are very ethnocentric in their pursuit of sea voyaging. This is attributed to the fact that all Sea Elvarin seek *Tir N'a Nog*, considered to be the One Home of all the Elvarin, and they expect to find it on any voyage they set out on. In other words, it is a great honor for a non-Sea Elvarin, and a greater one for any non-Elvarin period to be allowed to travel on a Ship of the Sea Elvarin, for this means that they think one presentable to the Tuatha, fathers of the Elvarin race. It is unfortunate that the Sea Elvarin consider that they own any Sea they're traveling in, and therefore are responsible for anything that is or happens in it.

Sea Elvarin demand tribute from any sailing ship they come across, and the Sea Elvarin are very difficult to defeat in combat on the ocean. Their ships are small, and light, but they always travel in threes, and they are masters of ship-to-ship combat strategy. What some might consider to be fortunate is that, despite their sea mastery, they are subject to its dangers as much as any Man-owned ship.

The Dark Elvarin live in an underground complex of cities called the Labyrinth, named for the tunnels and roadways which link each kingdom. They are heartless, and pretty much soulless in their pursuit of dark knowledge. Any being that is taken into the Labyrinth is usually as good as dead, even though it isn't that easy. (Dying, that is.) The Dark Elvarin on my world are responsible for many of the mutated/hybrid monsters you might find in gaming guides---anything that isn't natural, like the *owlbear* in the *AD&D Monster Manual*TM. They perform hideous experiments on anything that falls into their hands, trying to get maximum results from their efforts. They are the Masters of Minotaurs, their servants; a success on their part. Failures include vegetative monsters, undead, rampaging golems...you get the idea.

Needless to say, the Dark Elvarin specialize most in magic-use. They are especially good illusion-casters, and like their Grey relatives, they are adept in using the abilities of one class to augment the abilities of another--in this case, with magic. They also make fine clerics of the Darker Aspect of Danu, even though they had been cursed by her in the beginning. They raised her up through that unique bond, and she is the Mother of Fate as well as Darkness.

The relationship between Elvarin and Faerie is such that the Faerie scorn the Elvarin as nobles do backward peasantry. They resent any type of imposed order, which makes it difficult for anyone to deal with them, but the Elvarin can appeal to the Faerie

through the bond of their common ancestry. The Dark Elvarin and the Unseelie Court show more of a tendency to try to work toward the same evil goals, even if they don't necessarily follow the same procedure or work with the same attitude all the time.

Bibliography: Lord of the Rings, J.R.R. Tolkien; The Flonavar Tapestry Series, Guy Gavriel Kay; The War of The Oaks, Emma Bull; A Field Guide to the Little People, Nancy Arrowsmith/George Morse

of Orcs is decorated with the signs and sigils of the bearer's House, Clan, and a brief history of famous deeds, much like the heraldic coat-of-arms describes lineage. An Orc will often wear bands of brightly colored cloth or silk across their armor as a symbol of their current prestige. The philosophy behind this is that current prestige colors past deeds and history.

White is the color of slavery or obligation, because white can be stained. Red is the fighter's color for victory and war, black is used to denote direct service to the Lord of All Houses' House, purple is the color of the assassin (Orcs' blood is very dark in color, like purple), and midnight blue is the clerical color.

Arts/Sciences

Orcs are not deep thinkers, though when they do think about war it is sometimes in a poetic frame of mind (for them). Enslaved men and

women of other races usually earn survival through entertainment, though such entertainment might consist of self-mockery of race and status.

Race Relations

Since Orcs believe that all races besides their own are inferior because they lead relatively "soft" lives, they have some trouble with diplomacy and tact. The Orcs dismiss all other races as inconsequential except for one---the Elves. Their mutual hatred has been theorized to be racially instinctive, stemming from a possibly magically altered evolutionary branch from the same tree.

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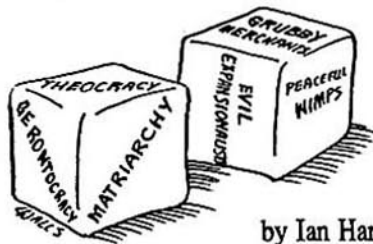
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INSTANT GOVERNMENTS, or *Who Tells Who to do What?*



by Ian Harac

For as long as humans have been organized into societies, groups of people have gathered for the express purpose of telling other people what to do. This is known as government. The number of forms of government practiced by humans is nearly equal to the number of societies, and the number of nonfunctional forms (the ones that look good on paper, but never work in reality, such as socialism, capitalism, and democracy) is at least twice that. Yet, many role-playing games use a pathetically small assortment of governments: your standard feudal types for fantasy games, an all-purpose empire for science fiction, and a basic petty dictatorship for post-holocaust games. This may be due to the fact that the careful creation of a viable government is a difficult and time consuming task. (America's been at it for 200 years, and we still don't have it quite right) So, to aid temporarily stalled GMs, I have compiled a series of charts designed to create governments the way they sometimes seem to be created in real life--by random.

I have basically divided governmental structure into three parts: Who makes the rules, who has a say in who makes the rules, and what keeps people (as a group, not as individuals) from rebelling completely. Using a d6, roll once for each category (Leader/Citizen/Stability). Then, using the explanations below, construct the logical government for your system and setting.

Now, for the requisite explanations and examples.

LEADERS

One Individual: Rule is by the will of one person. This can take many forms. A tyrannical usurper, a benevo-

lent king, and a dictator disguised as an elected leader (Are you listening, Mikhail?) all fall into this category.

Caste: Rule is by a certain caste, which may or may not be genetically determined. Rule by Royal Family, or by Mages, or by those with pink eyes and fur, all fall into this category.

Chosen: The citizens (whoever they may be) choose their leaders, by election, lot, volunteer, or whatever seems reasonable/entertaining. Note that in some cultures, being chosen for leadership may be less than a great honor. (See DeCamp's *Unbeheaded King*)

None: No ostensible leader. The system may be a hippie-style anarchy, or a socialist style diffuse beurocracy, or a country ruled more by custom, tradition, and/or guns than by organized government.

By Social Group: This indicates that different social groups have different leaders. Pre-Revolution France tried this. The French Revolution was a testimony to its success.

Competent: This has never occurred in the history of man, and is best reserved for unrealistic fantasy games. This system indicates that the leaders are those who are best suited to lead, regardless of other factors. These societies tend to be stable, prosperous, and relatively egalitarian. Like I said, it has never happened.

CITIZENS

None: Either the government is a tyranny where none have a say in who can lead them (This is quite possible for all leader types, even chosen) or there is simply no need for the process of choosing a leader. (If the leader type is none,

Roll	Leader	Citizens	Stability
1	One individual	None	Fear
2	Caste	Over a set age	Propaganda
3	Chosen	Those who have performed a service	Belief in system
4	None	All	Apathy
5	By Social Group	Caste	Religious/Philosophical
6	Competent	Profession	Controlled



for instance.)

Over a set age: All those over (or under) a certain age have a say in the way things are. Giving this power to an individual merely because he/she/it has been wasting resources for a given number of years may result in a decadent, chaotic, and unstable culture. Hmmm.

Those who have performed a service: This is a broad category. The service might include joining the military, getting a job, moving out of one's parents' house, feeding the homeless, housing the starving, killing the homeless and starving (drains on society, y'know), or going to the land of the gods and bringing back an artifact. Use your imagination.

All: Everyone, from babies to criminals, has a say in things, but there are likely to be some controls, somewhere. Perhaps a system of votes by proxy, for example.

Caste: As per ruler, except that this is usually somewhat broader. Pre-Civil War, (and, unfortunately, later years) America limited the caste to White Males over 21 years of age. The Soviet Union uses a caste of Party Members. In some cases, the ruler caste and the citizen caste may be identical, though the latter is usually larger. For instance, the Ruler Caste in a feudal society could be a handful of nobles, while the Citizen Caste would be all of noble blood.

Profession: This indicates that citizens are members of a specific profession that anyone may join regardless of birth. For instance, mages, clerics, or those with gobs and gobs of money. (That spells power in every society.)

STABILITY

Fear: Perhaps the most common means of governmental control. The people obey because they effectively have no choice. The fear-inducing agents may be obvious, such as heavily armed guards and the decaying corpses of rebels hanging on poles, or they may be inobvious, such as secret police and the like.

Propaganda: The people are continually bombarded by information telling them that they are living in a paradise. The people are indoctrinated from birth into the ways

of the system, and are conditioned to give their lives for the government. I'm certain we can think of a few real-world examples of this, eh Comrade? Some Religious/Philosophical governments (see below) might fall under this category.

Belief in System: The people, without undue propaganda/fear, actually feel the system they are living in is the best for them. They will often be very patriotic and supportive of the government, though this can be sometimes taken to unfortunate extremes. (See 1950's America for example)

Religious/Philosophical: The system works on the presumption that no matter how lousy life is, it's that way because A:The Gods made it that way, or B:That's life, bub. Usually the rulers of this society, whatever their actual classification on the chart, will be in the guise of religious leaders or teachers.

Apathy: The people support the government because there is nothing better around, or the people simply don't care. (This is an unfortunately common occurrence in our world.) Revolutions don't happen simply because they cannot gather enough support, and the general mood would be that of non-interference.

Controlled: This is one form which has never been successfully used in our world, though it might be one day. The populace is actually robbed of free will via drugs, magic, or psionics, depending on the campaign milieu being used. Such societies tend to be bland, hyper-conformist, and dull.

USING THE CHARTS

The simplest method of using the charts is to roll 1d6 for each column. For instance, rolling a 3,6,2 would result in **Chosen, Profession, Propaganda**. The GM then interprets this as follows (Assuming a basic fantasy style milieu):

The government consists of a council of four members, selected from among the ranks of the citizenry. The citizens are all merchants, each of whom has a number of votes





based on his/her wealth. The merchants spend a good chunk of their money convincing the remainder of the population how valuable their services are, with the occasional boycott and 'shortage' to drive the point home. This government would work well for a city-state, especially one heavily involved in trade.

It is also quite possible to roll two or three times on as many columns as you want, playing mix-and-match with the results. As it stands now, the chart produces about 180 governmental combinations, and, with a little imagination, will produce many more. The same numbers may indicate very different governments. The more work you put into fleshing out the numbers, the more adventures will suggest themselves.

Occasionally, a number of apparently incompatible results will appear. The easy way is to re-roll. The harder, but more enjoyable way, is to attempt to rationalize the apparent contradiction. Suppose you were creating a halfling community, for instance, and came upon a religious dictatorship. This looks like a prime candidate for a quick reroll, as fundamentalist/fanatic-type halflings just don't cut it. But wait. Suppose the little guys were in fact led by a sect of good and noble druidic halflings, who were 'dictators' only in the sense that their opinions were valued highly enough to be listened to without question, and in fact they did not abuse their power. Religious rule does not have to be oppressive, tyrannical, and stultifying--these are, after all, fantasy games.

Race also has an effect on government. The same rolls that produced the peaceful druids above could easily produce

a horde of fanatical dwarves on a jihad against anything with pointy ears. No matter what the ostensible government of Orcs, it will likely be tyrannical in one form or another.

Once you have some basic idea of how the government works, you must start fleshing it out. Why was this government chosen? How long has it been in power? How stable is it? Is it liked? What factions are involved within the government? How powerful are they? Will they hire the PCs to do their dirty work for them? How much does it pay? ("That much? When do we start?")

As the last few lines somewhat facetiously show, government is more than just something for background: It can be a prime source of adventure ideas, things to keep the players out of YADDD (Yet Another Deep Dank Dungeon). A good interaction war in a government can be the source of a whole campaign, if it is handled well.

A quick guide for **Faction Determination**: Roll percentile dice. This number is the degree to which faction "A" controls the

government. Subtract this from one hundred. Then roll again. This number is the amount of power that faction "B" holds. Subtract this from what was left after you subtracted group "A"'s power a couple of lines back. Keep doing this until you achieve a negative number. You have just established how many factions there are, and their relative strengths.)

The next, and most time-consuming, step is to actually flesh out the people who compose the government. Give them personalities, drives, and ambitions that are not necessarily those of the government. (A high-ranking official in a slave state might be morally opposed to slavery, a democratically elected ruler might yearn for more tyrannical power, a hereditary noble might wish to step down, etc.) The less stereotyped your NPCs are, the more fun they are, and the more surprising they will be to your players.

As with all things in gaming, (or in Life, for that matter) the degree of success with the use of governments is generally equal to the amount of work put into it. Charts, tables, and the like are helpful, but the ultimate arbiter of the game, and the determining factor in its success, is you.



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The Cosmic Streetcorner

More than any other kind of storyteller, a Game Master bases what he says and does upon the reactions of his audience. The finest role-playing game referees will be intuitive and run games based on the reactions of his players, adjusting them as he goes along so that the fun and excitement continues week after week. The very best Game Masters can be like magic, possessing skills that guide players through adventures with such smoothness and enthusiasm that it truly feels as if you're on another world, acting out the stuff of daydreams. Sometimes it can seem that these GMs are uncanny, they seem to be able to read into you, know what you feel and bring it out for an extra special experience.

Think of your favorite musician, the actor or writer who captures your imagination, then fires it across the galaxy. These people, Game Masters included, are talented. They all have feelings in themselves that are deeply personal and yet they make that certain connection. They have something to say and they tell it to us in ways that make us want to keep listening because there's a quality there that appeals to our hearts. Now I just want you to remember that this skill, this extra sensitivity, as wonderful as it is, can be honed and sharpened within each and every one of you. I will tell you how you can do just that.

Storytellers have called it Recognition, Using the Force, Cosmic Awareness. Here on the Streetcorner I simply call it paying attention. Look at people, all of them at every age, color and shape. We all want things, even tiny things every minute, every day of our lives, whether it's to make scads of cash or to eat that lonely potato chip laying on the new kid's lunch tray. And most of us are pretty lousy at hiding all those desires for all that time. Think about it. We tell people what we want without even having to say anything. Your job in paying attention is to notice when and how this happens.

When you're upset with a friend you look away, avoiding eye contact with her. When your brother won't talk to you but really wants to, his throat moves because he's forming the words he'd say if only you'd be a little nicer, encouraging him to be brave and speak up. The body can express what the mouth will not, and if you learn how to read gestures, glances, habits, posture, you will have the key to an incredible power. You will know these people better than you thought possible, even perfect strangers. You will be able to make it easier for friends to tell you things, know whether what you're saying is being understood, notice when someone is uncomfortable with a certain situation.

The most important part about paying attention is what you do with the incredible amount of information you can take in, how it can be used to do upbeat and positive things. Bruce Springsteen started out singing songs in bars about his friends and neighborhood near Asbury Park, New Jersey and now he tells his stories, spinning that certain kind of magic in great concert halls from Melbourne to



Hamburg. Bruce was quiet and awkward when he was younger, but he was always watching people, always paying attention that way. On a darker note, Stephen King fills his books with the deceptively simple observations he makes about ordinary people who do things as small and gross as peek into their handkerchiefs after they've blown their noses. King knows about the little things that make us uneasy because he watches us so closely. Entertaining us with the big scares is no problem after that. And while watching and then turning observations into ideas, songs and books that make a lot of money can be very difficult work, it is also an activity that can almost always benefit both you and the one to whom you're paying attention.

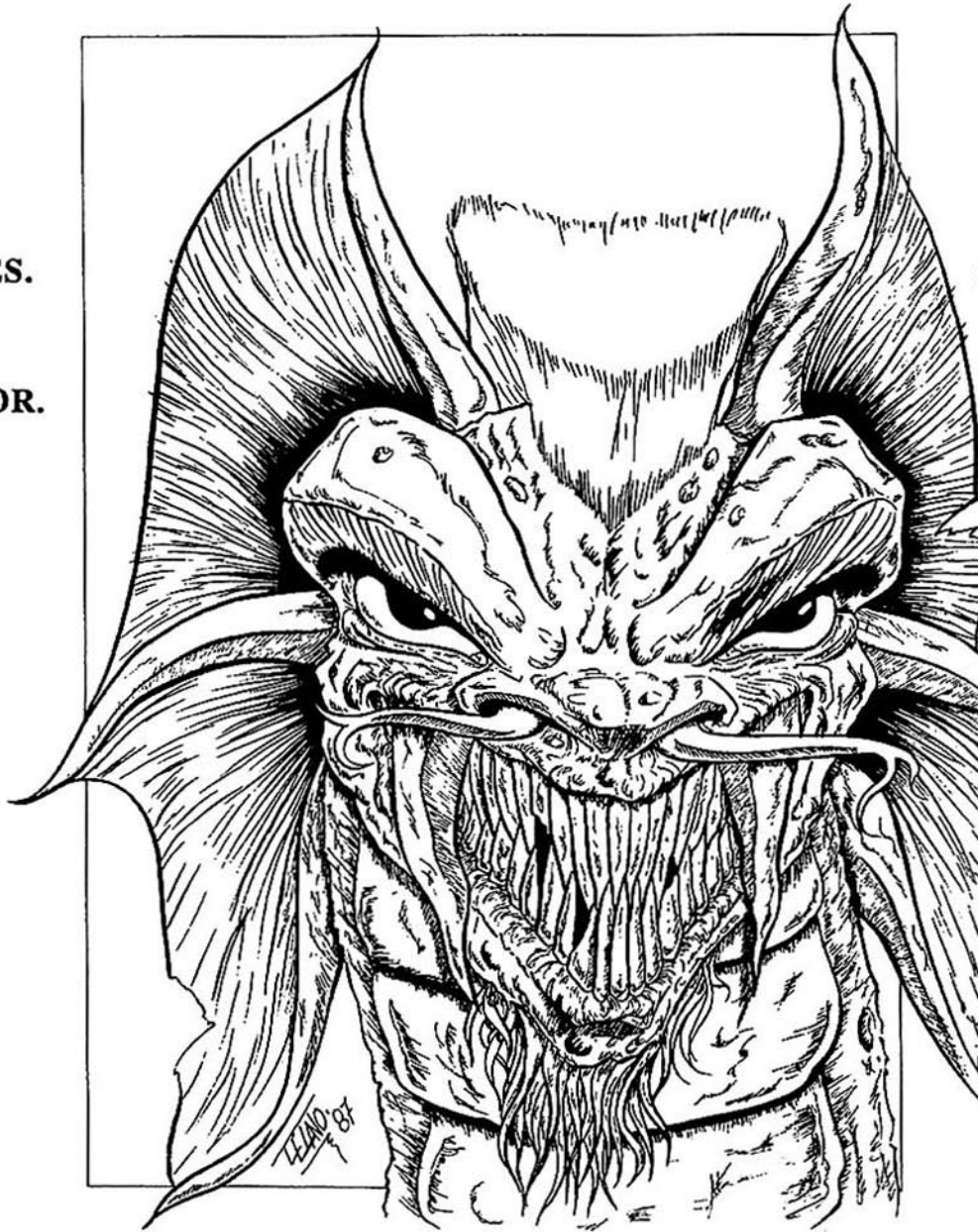
Next time you game master, watch your players in action as individuals both in and out of character. These people are sitting down to have fun and are hoping you will do what you can to set the stage for excitement, and as referee you have a certain obligation to give it to them. What *are* each of your players looking for? What do they *want*? Based upon what you see when you watch carefully (and after applying a bit of educated intuition), you'll be able to provide just enough to keep all of you happy session after session. Next time you go to school (or work, or out to dance for that matter), stay alert to the possibilities. Giving people some of the good things that they want will make you friends, win you arguments, make you a leader. Once in a while people will even give you something back. Be careful, though. Never give until it makes you feel bad. And *never* abuse the power in this knowledge, because if and when you're found out your game'll be over and your name'll be about as good as a skid mark off Hollywood Boulevard.

Perhaps most of all, you should pay attention to yourself. You and I want as many things as the next person and sometimes we deny ourselves by not taking the privilege of going out and getting what we need. Being aware, paying attention and then working with what you've found, giving it back to yourself and others—that's the stuff that keeps them gathering around tables, staying up scared at night, or filling up the world's greatest concert halls.

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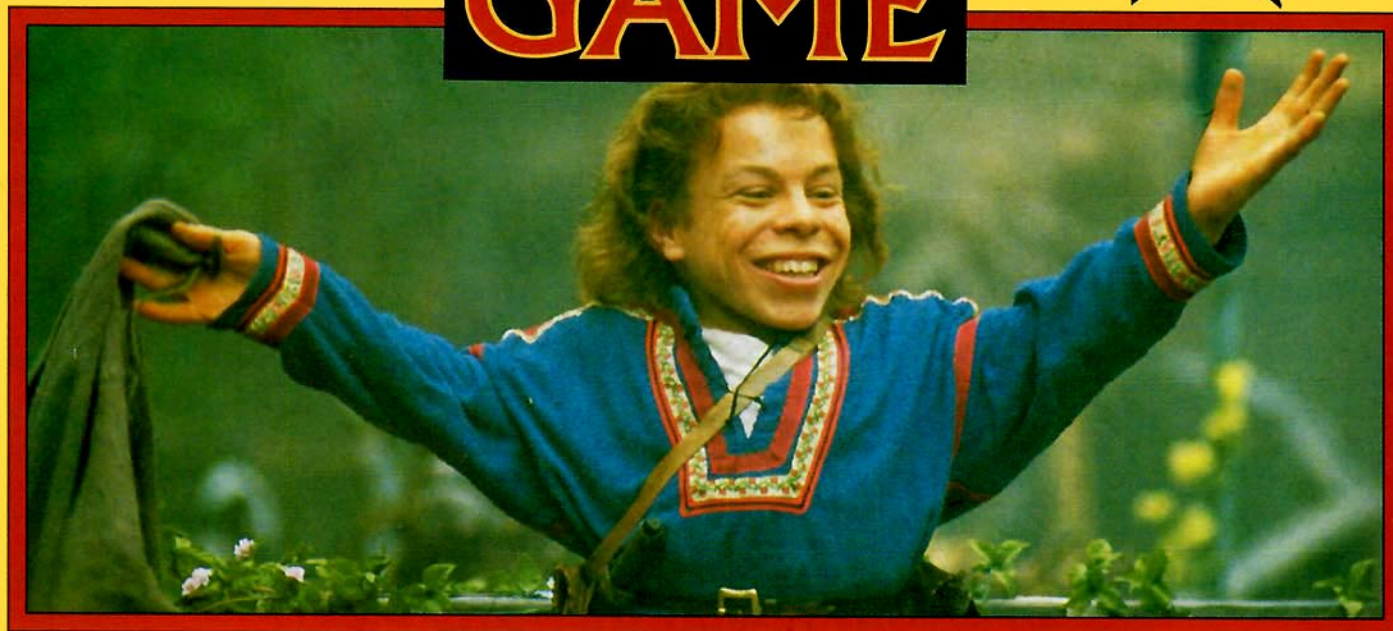
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