

THE DEVIL'S ADVOCATE

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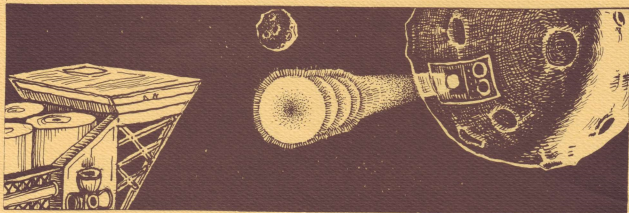
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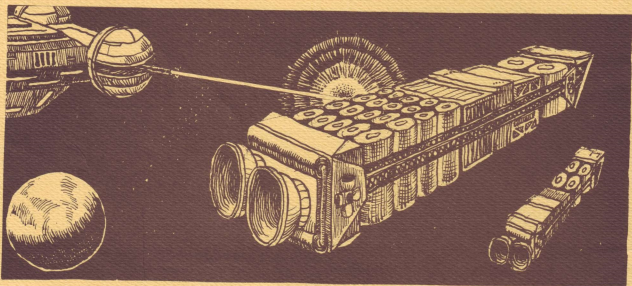


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Our club is oriented towards interested people over fifteen. Under our new membership system, membership lasts twelve months from the month of joining. Application forms are available from the club, and fees are \$3 for Melbourne University students or staff, \$6 for students or unemployed, and \$8 for full time workers. There are currently 270 members.

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This issue of The Devil's Advocate is edited by Martin Dick and Rhys Howitt, and published by MUDDA Adventure Gamers Incorporated.

Editor's Notes

I haven't left myself much space, so you can count yourselves lucky. It's hard to tell before the thing is printed, but this issue seems yet again to have surpassed all previous efforts. We hope our readers will continue to support us through the next stage of our development. Brad will complain that there wasn't enough artwork, but we have chosen the best from our files, or rather what was left after MULTIVERSE magazine took my favourites without permission. In articles, too, we were constrained by space to choosing only the best. We hope you enjoy TDA 19.

STAFF

Martin Dick, Rhys Howitt, Brad Ellis, Penny Love, Karen, Alan Greenway, Kate Chismon, Andrew Smith.

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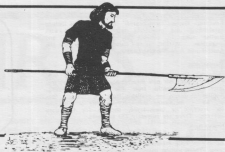
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EDITORIAL



There are now many conventions in Australia, characterised by giving all players several sessions (6-9 hours) of play in the major tournament, and numerous minor tournaments and other activities.

In the U.S., at conventions such as GenCon and Origins, you are likely to have teams of nine or ten, and to be given a single three-hour session then being eliminated before the next round.

And only in Australia do you get the free-form tournaments as pioneered by Peter Quinton's group in Canberra, where you physically play one character in a spaceship, a spy service, or an asteroid-mining company. The technique is unheard of overseas, according to the Editor of WHITE DWARF, Ian Livingstone.

The reason that Australian gamers are doing so well is that a lot of people are putting enormous amounts of time and effort into their conventions. Compared with, say, boardgames and miniatures tournaments, RPG tournaments need a great deal of work on the dungeon, and then there is the major manpower problem of finding 30-50 good DMs to run them. The organisers get nothing, or at best a small honorarium, for enormous numbers of man-hours of constant and crucial effort.

Even so, there are invariably complaints about aspects of the event. We feel that as the convention organisers are creating an enormous and temporary bureaucracy using personnel they have often never worked with before, some aspects are likely to be struggling. Players should enjoy the successful bits, and cope with (or better still, help with) the parts that don't operate so well on the day.

Recently Breakout magazine reported on the Phantastaco convention, but limited their comment to the boardgames competition. The writer was a well-known figure in the boardgames hobby, and complained that boardgames were given too little attention. The staff of Breakout are themselves more boardgamers than role-players, but we think it unfortunate that they didn't pay any attention to the role-playing aspects of this fundamentally RPG con.

TDA took it up with Breakout's news correspondent, who protested that the organisers had never given them a report (the organisers claim they were never asked) and seemed genuinely surprised to hear that Phantastaco was Australia's largest games convention (ARCANAACON II notwithstanding, says Rhys), with 400 D&Ders and 100 Travellers. In response to our question "why didn't you cover it yourselves?" they replied that in view of their lack of expertise in RPGs they would have preferred to have found outside FRP gamers to provide the copy. We believe that this is unsatisfactory - by printing an unfavourable report about a very small part of the convention, Breakout is doing the Phantastaco organisers an injustice.

The inclusion of boardgames in Victorian conventions is usually a gesture of support for boardgaming rather than a rational addition justified by increased takings or provision of services. Considering that the response from boardgamers has been disappointing, it would appear that they might shortly cease to be a part of the big RPG conventions, as figure-gaming has already done.

That also is an unfortunate loss, as the Canberra convention has shown that the two can fit together well, even if there is very little interaction between them, even if the D&D ends up subsidising everything else. Both major Victorian conventions have tried to include figures, with little success, and if the leaders of that hobby want it to survive and prosper they would do well to help reconcile the split, by actually coming out and teaching younger gamers to play and by offering to become involved in the administration of a major convention.

Another problem which is already causing difficulties is the lack of a general convention calendar. It looked this year as if Arcanacon was going to suffer because another convention was scheduled too near it, and over the next couple of years the numerous Queen's Birthday miniconventions are going to get bigger, resulting in certain brawls to the disadvantage of all. We encourage the Australasian Role-Players' League to make an official convention calendar a priority.

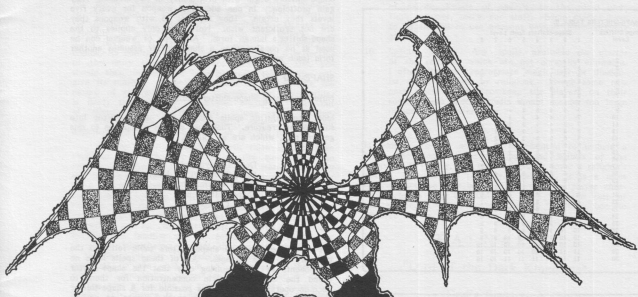


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SHAPE-SHIFTERS

A shape-shifter is a class of magic-user specializing in spells which govern mutability of form. Only humans may become shape-shifters. Minimum scores of 15 in intelligence and 15 in constitution are required. Shape-shifters do not receive any experience bonuses for high characteristic scores. They may be of any alignment. When in human form, shape-shifters attack and save as magic-users, except that they receive a bonus of +2 on all saves against poison. When in shape-shifted form, they attack on the monster's matrix and save either as the form assumed would do, or as the shape-shifter would do, whichever is better. Note that certain forms will alter both attack and saving probabilities.

Shape-shifters are specialist magic-users who deal almost exclusively in spells which enable them to change form. Most shape-shifter spells enable the shape-shifter to take the shape of another creature. All special abilities of the creature which the shape-shifter changes into (with one or two exceptions) are usable by the shape-shifter, except abilities which pertain to the creature's mind. Thus, spell casting abilities and psionic abilities cannot be duplicated, although innate magical abilities, which are used instinctively, can be.

Shape-shifters acquire spells in the same way as magic-users, having a maximum and minimum number of spells they can know per level. They must roll to understand each spell they acquire. Shape-shifters do not have spell books as such. However, at the beginning of each day, a shape-shifter must perform rituals in preparation for later casting of spells. This takes the same time as a magic-user would to learn a spell, i.e. one quarter of an hour per spell level. The shape-shifter can only prepare for a limited number of spells (i.e. the number listed under Table II). Once chosen for a day, these cannot be changed unless the shape-shifter rests and re-performs the rituals. Shape-shifter scrolls do exist, describing the rituals which must be performed in preparation for a shape shift. However, these are extremely rare.

Shape-shifters are continually developing new spells, and it is quite conceivable that shape-shifter spells might differ considerably from one part of the world to another. The DM should not consider the list of spells given as being comprehensive. Far from this, they are merely examples of the types of spells which can be developed. As a general rule, however, remember that shape-shifters should only be able to imitate creatures which are basically natural (to a D&D world, that is). Thus, a spell which changes the shape-shifter into a wight or a vampire is not possible. Creatures which gain most of their power from an extra-planar nature also present certain problems. It is conceivable that a shape-shifter could develop a spell to turn him or herself into a Type I Demon. However only the demon's form would be gained, and not its extra-planar powers. For instance, the demon's high armour class, which is mainly due to its extra-planar nature would have to be reduced.

SHAPE-SHIFTERS TABLE I

| Experience Points | Experience Level | 8-sided Dice for Accumulated Hit Points | Level Title |
|-------------------|------------------|---|-----------------|
| 0-2000 | 1 | 1d8 | Neophyte |
| 2001-4000 | 2 | 2d8 | Initiate |
| 4001-8000 | 3 | 3d8 | Metamorph |
| 8001-16000 | 4 | 4d8 | Chameleon |
| 16001-32000 | 5 | 5d8 | Harlequin |
| 32001-64000 | 6 | 6d8 | Doppelganger |
| 64001-128000 | 7 | 7d8 | Proteus |
| 128001-256000 | 8 | 8d8 | Changing |
| 256001-512000 | 9 | 9d8 | Shape Shifter |
| 512001-1024000 | 10 | 9d8+2 | S. Shifter 10th |
| 1024001-2048000 | 11 | 9d8+4 | S. Shifter 11th |
| 2048001-4096000 | 12 | 9d8+6 | S. Shifter 12th |

220000 experience points are needed per level above 12th. Shape-shifters gain 2 hit points per level above 9th.

SHAPE-SHIFTERS TABLE II:

| Shape-Shifter Level | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 |
|---------------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| 1 | 3 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 2 | 4 | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 3 | 5 | 2 | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 4 | 5 | 3 | 1 | - | - | - | - | - |
| 5 | 6 | 3 | 2 | - | - | - | - | - |
| 6 | 6 | 4 | 2 | - | - | - | - | - |
| 7 | 6 | 4 | 3 | 2 | - | - | - | - |
| 8 | 7 | 5 | 3 | 2 | 1 | - | - | - |
| 9 | 7 | 5 | 4 | 2 | 1 | - | - | - |
| 10 | 7 | 5 | 4 | 4 | 2 | 1 | - | - |
| 11 | 8 | 6 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | - |
| 12 | 8 | 6 | 5 | 5 | 3 | 2 | 1 | - |
| 13 | 8 | 6 | 5 | 5 | 3 | 2 | 1 | - |
| 14 | 8 | 6 | 5 | 5 | 3 | 2 | 1 | - |
| 15 | 8 | 7 | 6 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 16 | 8 | 7 | 6 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 17 | 8 | 8 | 8 | 7 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 2 |
| 18 | 8 | 8 | 8 | 8 | 6 | 5 | 4 | 3 |
| 19 | 8 | 8 | 8 | 8 | 7 | 6 | 4 | 3 |
| 20 | 8 | 8 | 8 | 8 | 7 | 6 | 5 | 4 |
| 21 | 8 | 8 | 8 | 8 | 8 | 7 | 6 | 5 |
| 22 | 8 | 8 | 8 | 8 | 8 | 8 | 7 | 6 |
| 23 | 9 | 9 | 9 | 8 | 8 | 8 | 8 | 7 |
| 24 | 9 | 9 | 9 | 9 | 9 | 9 | 8 | 8 |
| 25 | 9 | 9 | 9 | 9 | 9 | 9 | 9 | 8 |
| 26 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 9 | 9 | 9 | 9 | 9 |
| 27 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 9 | 9 | 9 |
| 28 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 10 |
| 29 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 10 |
| 30 | 11 | 11 | 11 | 11 | 11 | 11 | 10 | 10 |

SHAPE-SHIFTERS TABLE III**:

| Armour | Shield | Weapons* | Oil | Poison |
|--------|--------|---|-----|--------|
| None | None | No sticks, club, jo stick, sling, staff | Yes | Y |

* Includes any magical weapons of the named type.
** These restrictions do not apply when the shape-shifter is in a form other than his or her own.

SHAPE-SHIFTERS SPELL TABLE

| Number | 1st level | 2nd level | 3rd level |
|--------|--------------------------|------------------|--------------|
| 1 | Al-mi'raj | Detect Polymorph | Blind Dog |
| 2 | Baboon | Dolphin | Bugbear |
| 3 | Badger | Dwarf | Bull |
| 4 | Cat | Elf | Bugbear |
| 5 | Dog | Giant Centipede | Giant Frog |
| 6 | Fish | Gaol | Giant Lizard |
| 7 | Fly | Gnome | Giant Lynx |
| 8 | Frog | Halfling | Giant Tick |
| 9 | Giant Bat | Hobgoblin | Gryph |
| 10 | Giant Rat | Killer Frog | Heavy Horse |
| 11 | Goblin | Light Horse | Hippogriff |
| 12 | Hawk | Mule | Large Spider |
| 13 | Kobold | Orc | Leopard |
| 14 | Mouse | Sahuagin | Ogre |
| 15 | Owl | Stirge | Oquip |
| 16 | Read Shape-Shifter Magic | Wolf | Wilderstech |
| 17 | Sheep | | Wolverine |
| 18 | Shrieker | | |
| 19 | Skunk | | |
| 20 | Sparrow | | |

| Number | 4th level | 5th level | 6th level |
|--------|---------------------|-------------------|----------------|
| 1 | Carnivorous Ape | Carion Crawler | Basilisk |
| 2 | Constrictor Snake | Cockatrice | Gaseous Form |
| 3 | Diapel Polymorph | Diaplace Beast | Giant Car |
| 4 | Doombat | Garagole | Giant Scorpion |
| 5 | Electric Eel | Giant Porcupine | Griffon |
| 6 | Galathea Cube | Giant Spider | Hill Giant |
| 7 | Giant Owl | Leucrosia | Hydra |
| 8 | Giant Wasp | Lion | Medusa |
| 9 | Huge Spider | Minotaur | Medusa |
| 10 | Jaguar | Owlbear | Phase Spider |
| 11 | Ochre Jelly | Peryton | Rhinoceros |
| 12 | Pegassa | Poisonous Snake | Serp |
| 13 | Shark | Pseudo-Dragon | Tiger |
| 14 | Subterranean Lizard | Rat Monster | Troll |
| 15 | Tree | Silbering Tracker | Unicorn |
| 16 | Whipweed | Water Naga | Wyvern |

| Number | 7th level | 8th level |
|--------|--------------------|--------------------|
| 1 | Black Pudding | Bulette |
| 2 | Coaxit | Doppelganger |
| 3 | Chimera | Dragon |
| 4 | Elephant | Dragon Turtle |
| 5 | Etix | Form Change |
| 6 | Giant Octopus | Intellect Devourer |
| 7 | Gorgon | Remorhaz |
| 8 | Marid | Roc |
| 9 | Purple Worm | Shambling Mound |
| 10 | Shape Shift Others | Will-O-Wisp |
| 11 | Treant | |
| 12 | Umber Hulk | |

Shape-shifters begin with proficiency in one weapon. They gain proficiency in one additional weapon for every five levels they attain. They fight at -5 with weapons they are not proficient with. Note this only applies to the shape-shifter's human form. Any type of weapon can be used at no penalty when a shape-shifter assumes another form (such as an ogre).

SHAPE-SHIFTER SPELLS

Notes Regarding Shape-shifter Spells:

Most shape-shifter spells change the shape-shifter into some other creature. There are several exceptions to this general rule, which are as follows.

Detect Polymorph
Read Shape-shifter Magic
Dispel Polymorph
Shape Shift Others
Form Change

All other spells on the shape-shifters table fall into the category of form changes. All of these spells have no components at all, requiring only that the shape-shifter spend the casting time in concentration for them to become operative. It is thus possible for a shape-shifter to change from one form to another, since no verbal, somatic, or material components are needed. However, if the shape-shifter changes from one form to another, the spell which caused him or her to assume the original form is negated by the casting of the second form change spell (under most circumstances - see the 8th level spell, form change). Form change spells may be terminated at any time without the need for the shape-shifter to wait out the duration of the spell, or acquire a dispel magic. This training in termination of polymorph-type spells enable shape-shifters to shrug off the effects of polymorph spells after but one round.

Shape-shifter spells enable the shape-shifter to assume the physical and instinctive capabilities of the form into which they change. The only things which remain the same from one form to another are the shape-shifter's hit points and his or her mind. However, each assumption of a new form enables the shape-shifter to recover 10-40% (1d4*10%) of his or her lost hit points. Any permanent bodily damage (such as loss of limbs or scars) that the shape-shifter has suffered is removed when a new form is assumed. Each form change spell either refers the reader to the Monster Manual or the Fiend Folio for further detail on the capabilities of the form. In cases where the form is not listed in either of these works, a brief description of the form in question will be given. We have endeavoured to solve most of the problems which arise from changes into each form with a note under the appropriate spell description.

Editors Note: Owing to the sheer size of this article, we will only be able to list specific spells with which there are some problems. When a spell is not listed, then the details of the form can be obtained from the Monster Manual and the Fiend Folio. Shape-Shifters will have the following details unless otherwise specified: Duration-1 turn/level, Range-0, Area of Effect-Personal, Components-None, Saving Throw-None. 1st and 2nd level spells have a casting time of 1 segment, 3rd and 4th 2 segments, 5th and 6th level 3 segments and 7th and 8th level 4 segments.

1st Level

Baboon:

Refer to page 8 of the Monster Manual. Note that although baboons have a reasonable degree of manual dexterity, they cannot use weapons. Baboons can climb walls as a 1st level thief.

Cat:

The relevant statistics of a cat are as follows: Armour Class 7; Move 15"; Hit Dice 1d4; Damage/Attack 1d2-1; Size S.

Dog:

Refer to page 29 of the Monster Manual. The form assumed is that of a wild dog, not that of a war dog. In this form, the shape-shifter is able to track as a ranger.

Fish:

The relevant statistics of a fish are as follows: Armour Class 7; Move nil/12"; Hit Dice 1d4; Damage/Attack 1d2-1; Size S. Fish can breathe underwater, but cannot breathe or move on land.

Fly:

The relevant statistics of a fly are as follows: Armour Class 5; Move 17/15"; Hit Dice less than 1d8-1; Size S. Flies are manoeuvrability class B in the air.

Frog:

The relevant description of a frog are as follows: Armour Class 7; Move 67/10"; Hit Dice 1d4; Damage/Attack 1d2-1; Size S. Frogs are cold-blooded and tend to be slow in cold conditions. The DM should assign initiative penalties of -1 to -3 in such conditions. Frogs can swim well, and can go without air for up to half an hour.

Giant Bat:

The relevant statistics of a Giant Bat are as follows: Armour Class 5; Move 27/18"; Hit Dice 1d8; Damage/Attack 1d4; Size S. Since bats can "see" by sonar, they can "see" invisible creatures or creatures hidden in shadows. However, they are nearly helpless inside zones of magical silence. In the air, bats are manoeuvrability class B.

Giant Rat:

Refer to page 81 of the Monster Manual. A shape-shifter in giant rat form cannot cause disease, because the ability is based on the fact that rats are dirty and have unsway eating habits. A shape-shifter, not having been a rat all his or her life, will not be as filthy as a rat usually is, and thus cannot cause the infection which results in a disease.

Hawk:

The relevant statistics of a hawk are as follows: Armour Class 7; Move 37/21"; Hit Dice 1d8; Damage/Attack 1d2/1d2/1; Size S. Hawks are manoeuvrability class C in the air.

Mouse:

The relevant statistics of a mouse are as follows: Armour Class 6; Move 15"; Hit Dice 1d2; Damage/Attack nil; Size S. Mice are able to climb walls as a 1st level thief.

Owl:

The relevant statistics of an owl are as follows: Armour Class 7; Move 37/15"; Hit Dice 1d4; Damage/Attack 1d2/1d2; Size S. Owls are manoeuvrability class C in the air. They are able to fly very silently, and can surprise on a 1-3 in 6.

Read Shape-Shifter Magic

Level: 1

Components: V,S,M

Range: 0

Casting Time: 1 round

Duration: 2 rounds/level

Saving Throw: None

Area of Effect: Special

By means of this spell, a shape-shifter is able to read magical inscriptions on objects which are related to the magic of this subclass. The spell is necessary to read shape-shifter scrolls and new spells which the shape-shifter might acquire. All shape-shifters are assumed to begin with this spell since understanding it is absolutely vital if one is to become a shape-shifter at all. Once this spell is cast and the shape-shifter has read the magical inscription, he or she is thereafter able to read that particular writing without recourse to this spell again. The material component for the spell is a clear crystal or mineral prism. The reverse of the spell, unreadable shape-shifter magic, makes such writings completely unreadable to any creature, even with the aid of a read shape-shifter magic spell, until the spell wears off or the magic is dispelled. The material components of the reverse spell are a pinch of dirt and a drop of water.

Sheep:

The relevant statistics of a sheep are as follows: Armour Class 7; Move 15"; Hit Dice 1d8; Damage/Attack 1d4; Size M.

Shrieker:

Refer to page 87 of the Monster Manual. The shape-shifter can generate a piercing shriek in this form, which can be continued for 1d4 rounds before the creature runs out of "breath", and must rest for 1d4 rounds before continuing.

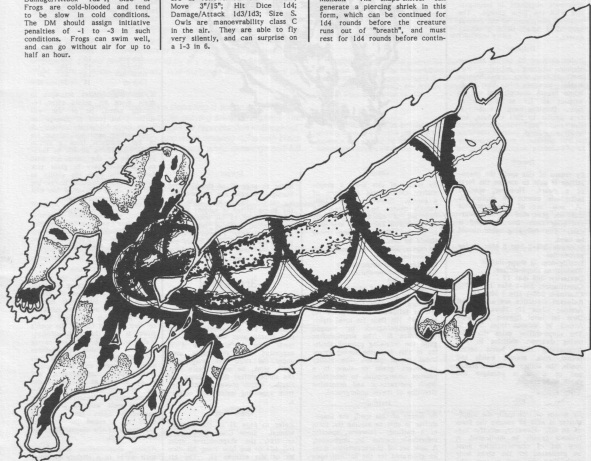
uing. The shape-shifter's senses are very limited in this form, only extending to 30' or so.

Skunk:

The relevant statistics of a skunk are as follows: Armour Class 5; Move 6"; Hit Dice 1d4; Damage/Attack 1d2-1; Size S. Skunks can generate a cloud of musk 10' long, 3' wide and 3' high, extending from their rear. All creatures caught in this cloud must save vs. poison or they will be blinded for 1d4+1 rounds. In any event, creatures in the area of effect lose 1 point of strength, 1 point of dexterity and 50% of their charisma for a period of 1d6 turns. All non-magical cloth material on a person who falls his or her save will rot and become useless. Magical cloth will wash clean without being affected.

Sparrow:

The relevant statistics for a sparrow are as follows: Armour Class 7; Move 67/18"; Hit Dice 1d2; Damage/Attack nil; Size S. Sparrows are manoeuvrability class A in the air.



2nd Level

Detect Polymorph:

Level: 2
Component: V,S,M
Range: 0
Casting Time: 2 segments
Duration: 2 rounds/level
Saving Throw: None
Area of Effect: Special
This spell enables the shape-shifter to detect the presence of any polymorphed creature or object in a 1' wide path which is 6' long. The path extends in the direction the shape-shifter is facing. The shape-shifter has a 50% chance per level of experience of being able to see the true form of any creature or object which is detected by use of this spell. The material component of the spell is a chameleon's eye. The reverse of the spell, undetectable polymorph, must be cast upon a particular creature or object. The creature or object must be touched when the spell is cast. While the undetectable polymorph spell lasts, it will protect the creature or object from detection by use of a detect polymorph spell. Even a detect magic spell will not react positively merely because the creature or object has changed form, although magic will be detected if there are other reasons. This spell is not powerful enough to protect against true seeing, and does not change the aura of a creature. Thus, the form change might be detectable despite the use of the reverse of this spell by means of psionic aura alteration, or a clerical know alignment spell in cases where the creature's alignment is incompatible with the form change. The material component of the reverse spell is a small piece of smoky quartz.

Dolphin:

Refer to page 29 of the Monster Manual. Although dolphins cannot move on land, they cannot breathe water. However, they have prodigious breath control and can go without air for as long as an hour. Dolphins have a sonar system similar to that of bats, and can thus "see" invisible objects when underwater.

Dwarf:

By means of this spell, the shape-shifter is able to assume the form of a dwarf. However, specific individuals cannot be duplicated. A new set of characteristics must be generated for the dwarven body each time the spell is cast. The following table should be used.

Strength: 3d6-2 Min 8 Max 18 (no percentile)
Intelligence: as shape-shifter
Wisdom: as shape-shifter
Dexterity: 3d6 Max 19
Constitution: 3d6-2 Min 8 Max 18
Charisma: 3d6-1 Min 3 Max 16
Relevant statistics are as follows: **Armour Class 10; Move 9'; Hit Dice 1st level fighter; Damage/Attack by weapon type; Size S.** The shape-shifter gains the following gnomish abilities in this form—saving throw bonus versus poison, rods, staves, wands and spells, the ability to detect grades and/or slopes in passages and depth underground.

Elf:

By means of this spell, the shape-shifter is able to assume the form of an elf. However, specific individuals cannot be duplicated. A new set of characteristics must be generated for the elfen body each time the spell is cast. The following table should be used.

Strength: 3d6 Max 18 (no percentile)
Intelligence: as shape-shifter
Wisdom: as shape-shifter
Dexterity: 3d6+1 Min 7 Max 19
Constitution: 3d6 Min 6
Charisma: 3d6-1 Min 6 Max 18

Relevant statistics for the elf are as follows: **Armour Class 10; Move 12'; Hit Dice 1st level fighter; Damage/Attack by weapon type; Size M.** The shape-shifter gains the following elvish abilities in this form—the 80% resistance to sleep and charm spells, the shape-shifter's senses become as acute as those of an elf, so secret door detection as an elf is possible and owing to the capacity of the elfen form for silent movement, the elvish bonus to surprise when not in metal armour is gained.

Strength: 3d6-1 Min 6 Max 17
Intelligence: as shape-shifter
Wisdom: as shape-shifter
Dexterity: 3d6-1 Min 8 Max 18
Constitution: 3d6+1 Min 10 Max 19
Charisma: 3d6

Relevant statistics for the halfling form are as follows: **Armour Class 10; Move 9'; Hit Dice 0 level fighter; Damage/Attack by weapon type; Size S.** The shape-shifter gains the following halfling abilities when this form is assumed—the saving throw bonus versus poison, rods, staves, wands and spells, the ability to detect grade and slope in a passage, determine the direction of travel underground and owing to the capacity of the halfling form for silent movement, the bonus to surprise when not in metal armour is gained.

inflicts. This must be rolled each time the spell is cast. Giant Frog of 1d8 hit dice are 2' long and weigh 10 lbs. Giant frogs of 2d8 hit dice are 4' long and bite for 1d6. Giant frogs of 3d8 hit dice are 6' long and bite for 2d4. Giant frogs also swallow man-sized or smaller opponents. However, if a shape-shifter does not fit in frog form, he or she exposes himself or herself to several risks. Opponents who manage to cut themselves out of the shape-shifter using the rules in the Monster Manual will kill him or her. If the shape-shifter assumes another form after swallowing a creature, the creature's nature swallowed will die instantly. However, the shape-shifter will be incapacitated for a period of 1d6 days, and will be unable to undertake any task during this time.

Giant Lynx:

Refer to page 64 of the Monster Manual. In snow-free conditions, a shape-shifter is able to hide him or herself in this form so as to be 50% undetectable. He or she will then be able to surprise on a 1-4 in 6 if successful. The extremely acute senses of a giant lynx allow a shape-shifter in this form to detect traps and ambushes 40% of the time when outdoors.

Giant Tick:

Refer to Page 94 of the Monster Manual. Since giant ticks vary in size, the shape-shifter must roll 1d3-1 to determine his or her hit dice for attack purposes. Giant ticks are able to draw a varying amount of blood before becoming sated, depending on how large they are. Use the following table to determine how much they can drain.

| Shape-Shifter | Tick Hit Dice |
|---------------|---------------|
| 2d8 | 3d6 4d8 |
| 4th-5th | 10 15 20 |
| 7th-9th | 12 18 24 |
| 10th-12th | 14 21 28 |
| 13th-15th | 16 24 32 |

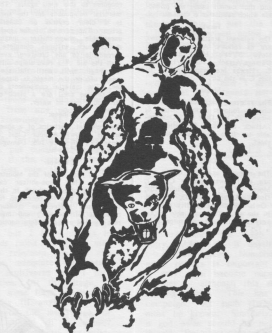
If the shape-shifter attempts to drain more hit points after becoming sated, he or she will suffer 1 hit point of damage for every extra hit point drained. A shape-shifter need not release his or her proboscis from a victim when exposed to alcohol or burned, if he or she does not wish to. Shape-shifters in giant tick form do not have the ability to cause disease, because he or she will not be a carrier of the diseases these creatures carry.

Dispel Polymorph:

Level: 4
Component: V,S,M
Range: 0
Casting Time: 4 segments
Duration: Permanent
Saving Throw: None
Area of Effect: 3' cube

By means of this spell, the shape-shifter is able to cause all creatures within the area of effect to be forced into their natural form. Objects under the influence of a polymorph spell will return to their original form. The spell's power is such that it is automatically successful, and no saving throw is applicable to creatures affected by it. The spell will affect creatures such as vampires, lycanthropes, dopplegangers, and so on, as well as creatures under the influence of magic-user polymorph spells. Creatures affected by the spell will be unable to polymorph again for a period equal to 1 round per level of experience of the shape-shifter who cast the spell.

Against shape-shifter magic, the spell works in a slightly different manner. The spell operates in the same manner as Dispel Magic does



Gnome:

By means of this spell, a shape-shifter can assume the form of a gnome. However, specific individuals cannot be duplicated. A new set of characteristics must be generated each time the spell is cast. The following table should be used.

Strength: 3d6 Min 6 Max 18 (no percentile)
Intelligence: as shape-shifter
Wisdom: as shape-shifter
Dexterity: 3d6
Constitution: 3d6-2 Min 8 Max 18
Charisma: 3d6
Relevant statistics for the gnome are as follows: **Armour Class 10; Move 9'; Hit Dice 1st level fighter; Damage/Attack by weapon type; Size S.** The shape-shifter gains the following gnomish abilities in this form—the saving throw bonus versus poison, the ability to detect grade or slope in a passage underground, to determine depth underground and determine direction of travel underground.

Halfling:

By means of this spell, the shape-shifter is able to assume the form of a halfling. However, specific individuals cannot be duplicated. A new set of characteristics must be generated for the halfling body each time the spell is cast. The following table should be used.

Stirge:

Refer to page 92 of the Monster Manual. Stirges are manoeuvrable class C in the air. None that the shape-shifter is subject to the same limit of 12 hit points maximum blood draining before becoming bloated. Further draining is possible, but it will cause the stirge to take 1 hit point of damage for each extra hit point drained.

3rd Level

Blink Dog:

Refer to Page 10 of the Monster Manual. The shape-shifter has no real control over where he or she lands after a "blink," so it is suggested that the table used under the third level magic-user spell, blink, be used. Note that the shape-shifter does possess the instinct which prevents blink dogs from appearing inside solid objects.

Giant Frog:

Refer to page 41 of the Monster Manual. Since Giant Frogs vary in size, the shape-shifter must roll 1d3 to see how many hit dice he or she attacks as. The hit dice of the frog will also determine the damage that he or she

against normal magic. Even if the spell is successful against shape-shifter magic, it does not prevent further shape shifts being cast on affected creatures. In effect, the spell merely delays the current form. Note that this spell can be used by the shape-shifter to automatically dispel his own magic. The material component of the spell is a small lump of putty.

4th Level

Doombat:

Refer to page 27 of the Fiend Folio. A shape-shifter in doombat form can shriek, causing effects as described. However, like a doombat, a shape-shifter can only shriek for 1d4+1 rounds before running out of breath. A rest of 1d4+1 rounds is necessary before the shrieking can be resumed.

Gelatinous Cube:

Refer to page 43 of the Monster Manual. In this form, the shape-shifter is able to paralyze and does gain the cube's surprise bonus. However, he or she will be affected by fear and sleep based attacks, for unlike a gelatinous cube, a shape-shifter has a mind to be affected.

Huge Spider:

Refer to page 90 of the Monster Manual. Note that a shape-shifter in the form of a huge spider only surprises on a 1-3 in 6 rather than 1-5 in 6. This is because the shape-shifter does not gain the aggressive nature and hunting skills of a huge spider.

Ochre Jelly:

Refer to page 75 of the Monster Manual. If the shape-shifter is struck by a lightning bolt when in ochre jelly form, then two ochre jellies with identical hit points will be formed. One of these will be the shape-shifter, the other will simply be an ochre jelly. When the spell duration expires, the shape-shifter will revert to human form, and any other ochre jellies formed will vaporize.

Shark:

Refer to page 87 of the Monster Manual. When this spell is cast, the shape-shifter must roll 1d6+2 to determine how many hit dice the shark form attacks and saves as. Sharks of 3d8 or 4d8 hit dice do 1d4+1 points on a successful attack. Sharks of 5d8 or 6d8 hit dice do 2d4 points of damage. Sharks of 7d8 or 8d8 hit dice do 3d4 points of damage.

Tree:

By means of this spell the shape-shifter is able to assume the form of a small living tree or shrub, or that of a large dead tree with but a few limbs. The shape-shifter is able to observe that goes on around his or her person if he or she were in human form.

Whipweed:

Refer to page 94 of the Fiend Folio. When the shape-shifter assumes whipweed form, the base will be the whipweed will have 20% of the shape-shifter's hit points, and each of the stalks will have 33% of the shape-shifter's hit points (round all fractions up). The stalks can be destroyed without harming the shape-shifter, who will recover from this damage upon assuming a new form. However, the destruction of the base of the whipweed will result in the death of the shape-shifter. Naturally, the whipweed will go into a frenzy when this occurs.

5th Level

Leucrotta:

Refer to page 60 of the Monster Manual. The shape-shifter is able to imitate human voices when in leucrotta form.

Lion:

Refer to page 61 of the Monster Manual. The form assumed is that of an ordinary lion, not that of a mountain or spotted lion.

Poisonous Snake:

Refer to page 88 of the Monster Manual. Each time this spell is cast, the shape-shifter should roll 1d8 and consult the following table.

Roll Result

1-5 Victim will take no extra damage from poison if a save is made.

6 Victim will take 1d6 points of damage from poison, even if a save is made.

7 Victim will take 2d6 points of damage from poison, even if a save is made.

8 Victim will take 3d6 points of damage from poison, even if a save is made.

Pseudo-Dragon:

Refer to page 78 of the Monster Manual. The shape-shifter does gain the pseudo-dragon's poison sting, hit bonus with its tail, channeling powers, magic resistance, and ability to see invisible objects. However, its telepathy is not usable. Pseudo-dragons are maneuverability class B in the air.

Silbering Tracker:

Refer to page 88 of the Monster Manual. In this form, the shape-shifter can track as a ranger.

Water Naga:

Refer to page 72 of the Monster Manual. The shape-shifter does gain the naga's poisonous bite and water-breathing capabilities, but cannot employ any of its magical abilities.

6th Level

Basilisk:

Refer to page 8 of the Monster Manual. The basilisk's gaze is usable by the shape-shifter, so this form he or she is able to see into the ethereal and astral planes.

Gaseous Form:

By means of this spell, the shape-shifter causes his or her body, as well as what it wears or carries to become gaseous in form and able to flow accordingly at a base speed of 30' a gust of wind spell, or even strong normal air currents, will blow the gaseous form backwards at air speed. The gaseous form is insubstantial, and vapors and shifts. It cannot be harmed except by magical fires or lightning, in which case damage is normal. A whirlwind will do double damage on a shape-shifter in gaseous form. When in such a condition, the shape-shifter is able to enter any space which is not airtight. Note that the gaseous form is quite visible.

Giant Gar:

Refer to page 42 of the Monster Manual. Note that if the shape-shifter swallows a creature in this form, he or she exposes him or her to the risk of being killed if a creature tries to cut its way out. If the shape-shifter assumes another form after swallow-

ing a creature, the unfortunate creature swallowed will die instantly. However, the shape-shifter will be incapacitated by severe stomach cramps for a period of 1d6 days, and will be unable to undertake any task during this time.

Hydra:

Refer to page 53 of the Monster Manual. When this spell is cast, the shape-shifter must roll 1d8+4 to determine how many heads the hydra form has. Each head will possess an even portion of the shape-shifter's hit points. For instance, if the hydra has 10 heads, each head would possess 10% of the shape-shifter's hit points, all fractions are rounded up. The number of heads determines how much damage the hydra inflicts, and what hit dice it attacks as, as described in the Monster Manual. The shape-shifter will die if all of the hydra's heads are destroyed. However, as long as one is still alive, it is possible for the shape-shifter to assume for another form, total the permanent damage inflicted on any other heads. When changing to another form, total the hit points of the hydra's heads which are still alive. This is the shape-shifter's current hit points, although of course the usual 10-40% recovery rule must still be taken into account. Neither Lernaean hydras or prochydras are possible using this spell.

Rhinoceros:

Refer to page 82 of the Monster Manual. The form assumed is that of a normal rhinoceros, not that of a woolly rhinoceros. When this spell is cast, the shape-shifter must roll 1d2-7 to determine his or her hit dice for attack and saving purposes.

Satyr:

Refer to page 85 of the Monster Manual. In this form, the shape-shifter does gain the satyr's magic resistance and keen senses. However, he or she does not gain the ability to blend in with foliage or use satyr pipes.

Troll:

Refer to page 97 of the Monster Manual. In this form, the shape-shifter can regenerate, no matter how badly damaged he or she is. If the shape-shifter is already wounded when he or she changes into troll form, it will be three rounds before the regeneration process begins, even if the wounds were inflicted on the shape-shifter more than three rounds ago. Once the spell duration expires, of course, regeneration will cease (meaning that the shape-shifter could die if a determined opponent has smashed him or her to jelly).

Unicorn:

Refer to page 98 of the Monster Manual. The shape-shifter gains all of the abilities of a unicorn when in this form. This includes double damage on a charge, a hit bonus with the unicorn's horn, immunity to poison, charm spells, hold spells, and death spells, detection of creatures at a 24' range, surprise on a 1-5, and a dimension dooring ability.

Black Pudding:

Refer to page 10 of the Monster Manual. The shape-shifter is split into two pieces when in black pudding form, then two black puddings with identical hitpoints will be formed. One of these will be the shape-shifter, and the other will simply be a black pudding. When the spell duration expires, the shape-shifter will return to his human form and any other black puddings formed will vaporize.

Coat:

Refer to page 15 of the Monster Manual. In this form, the shape-shifter does not gain use of the coat's magical or psionic abilities. However, he or she does gain use of the coat's poison, constriction, and ability to become ethereal at will.

Elephant:

Refer to page 38 of the Monster Manual. The form assumed is that of an Asiatic elephant, not that of an African elephant.

Ettin:

Refer to page 40 of the Monster Manual. This spell effectively divides the shape-shifter's mind into two parts. However, like an ettin, it is normally impossible for the two to disagree. Using this form, it is possible for the shape-shifter to rest so as to recover spells while still staying awake!

Giant Octopus:

Refer to page 75 of the Monster Manual. The body of the octopus has a number of hit points equal to the shape-shifter's. In addition to the octopus form will have 8 arms, each of which will have 8 hit points. If the tentacles are severed, the shape-shifter can recover from this permanent damage by assuming another form.

Morkoth:

Refer to page 71 of the Monster Manual. In this form, the shape-shifter can breathe water, but cannot breathe air. A shape-shifter in this form does not gain the morkoth's hypnotic powers, because these originate mainly in the shape of the morkoth's lair. However, the morkoth's spell reflection ability is gained.

Purple Worm:

Refer to page 80 of the Monster Manual. Note that if the shape-shifter swallows a creature in this form, he or she does not gain himself to the risk of being killed if a creature tries to cut its way out. If the shape-shifter assumes another form, the creature becomes a creature, the unfortunate creature swallowed will die instantly. However, the shape-shifter will be incapacitated by severe stomach cramps for a period of 1d6 days, and will be unable to undertake any task during this time.

Shape Shift Others:

Level: 7

Components: V/S

Range: Touch

Casting Time: Special

Duration: Special

Saving Throw: None

Area of Effect: One creature

This powerful spell enables the shape-shifter to change his or her form change spells on other creatures. In order to do this, the shape-shifter simply casts the form change spell on the creature, and then touches the creature to be transformed. Unwilling opponents must be struck in melee combat. The form change can be any that the shape-shifter currently has memorized. The spell will last its normal duration. Note that if the creature cannot terminate the spell, although the shape-shifter can do so. Use of a shape shift others spell up before the form change and the shape shift others spell.

Treat:

Refer to page 96 of the Monster Manual. Note that the shape-shifter does not gain the ability to animate other trees, since this is very much a reflection of a treatment. When this spell is cast, the shape-shifter must roll 1d6+6 to determine the treatment. The die for attack and saving purposes.

Bullet:
Refer to page 12 of the Monster Manual. If the shape-shifter decides to have his or her friends despoil off his or her shell as a bullet for manufacture of shields, he or she could be discouraged by not allowing regeneration of permanent damage which is deliberately inflicted.

Doppelganger:

Level: 8
Components: V,S
Range: 0
Casting Time: 8 segments
Duration: 1 turn/level
Saving Throw: None
Area of Effect: Personal
This spell enables the shape-shifter to assume the form of specific individuals. The species to which the individual belongs must be one for which the shape-shifter has a generic form change spell. The spell must be in the shape-shifter's spell books, and must be chosen at the start of the day, when the doppelganger spell is prepared. Thereafter, by casting the doppelganger spell, the shape-shifter can either duplicate an existing individual or assume a new persona as someone else. For instance, a shape-shifter has the spell Elf in his books, he could prepare a doppelganger spell for a transforged elf at the start of the day. Later, when the need arises, he could cast the doppelganger spell and become any specific elf of his choice.

Note that humans can be duplicated using this spell without the need for the shape-shifter having a spell for this in his or her books. However, the doppelganger must still be specified as one for duplicating humans at the start of the day.

This spell has another very powerful use. If the shape-shifter has seen or assumed a form which he or she desires to be able to duplicate (such as a hydra with 12 heads or a treat with 12d8),

he or she can prepare a doppelganger for the appropriate species and duplicate that individual by use of the spell. This means that the shape-shifter can automatically get 12 heads as a hydra by using a doppelganger spell rather than a hydra spell, where he or she would have to roll for the number of heads. Or, in the case of a treat, he or she would automatically have 12 hit dice, rather than having to roll for this.

Dragon:

Refer to page 29 of the Monster Manual. This spell enables the shape-shifter to assume the form of a dragon of any colour. However, the type of dragon which can be assumed is constrained by the level of the shape-shifter.

| Shape-Shifter Level | Dragon Type |
|---------------------|---|
| 14th | White |
| 15th | Black, Brass, White |
| 16th | Black, Brass, Green, Copper, White |
| 17th | Black, Blue, Brass, Bronze, Copper, Green, White |
| 18th | Black, Blue, Brass, Bronze, Copper, Green, Red, Silver, White |
| 20th | Black, Blue, Brass, Bronze, Copper, Gold, Green, Red, Silver, White |

Upon assuming the form of a dragon, the shape-shifter must roll 1d8 to see how big it is. The result indicates the number of hit dice in the normal way, i.e. 1-2 means small, 3-7 means normal, 8 means huge. The level of the shape-shifter will also determine the age level of the dragon. The table below should be used to determine the maximum age level of the dragon form into which the shape-shifter changes.

| Shape-Shifter Level | Age Level |
|---------------------|-----------|
| 14th-15th | Adult |
| 16th-17th | Old |
| 18th-19th | Very Old |
| 20th-up | Ancient |

All abilities of a dragon are usable by a shape-shifter in dragon form, including breath weapon, saving throws, aura, and so on. Magic use will never be gained. Note that a shape-shifter can choose to be younger if he or she desires, but that he or she has no control over the hit dice of the new dragon form.

Dragon Turtle:

Refer to page 35 of the Monster Manual. The hit dice of the dragon turtle form assumed must be rolled using the usual method with 1d8. i.e. 1-2 means 1d8, 3-7 means 1d8, and 8 means 1d8. Dragon Turtles use the same table as Dragons (see above) to determine the maximum age level of the dragon turtle form into which the shape-shifter changes. The shape-shifter gains all the abilities of a dragon turtle, including breath weapon, water breathing, and the ability to captize ships. Note that a shape-shifter can choose to be younger if he or she desires, but that he or she has no control over the hit dice of the dragon turtle form.

Form Change:

Level: 8
Components: -
Range: 300 yards
Casting Time: 2 rounds
Duration: Permanent
Saving Throw: None
Area of Effect: One creature

This spell enables the shape-shifter to make any of his or her spells permanent. When the form change spell is cast, all shape-shifter magic upon the designated creature will become permanent. Note that this does not mean that the creature affected by the spell cannot have any further shape-shift spells cast upon it. However, when the spell duration of any further shape-shift spells cast upon such a creature expires, the creature will revert to the form made permanent by use of this spell. In effect, this spell changes

the native form of a creature.

This spell can be used in conjunction with doppelganger, shape shift others, detect polymorph and read shape-shifter magic spells to make them permanent as well. Thus, friends can be permanently transformed into a desired form, or even doppelgangers of specific individuals. Enemies can be permanently transformed into a relatively harmless shape. Naturally, the shape-shifter can also do these spells upon himself. Also note that a transformation can be made permanently undetectable by use of a form change spell and an undetectable polymorph spell.

Form changes can be dispelled by using a dispel polymorph spell, but the shape-shifter attempting to dispel the magic must be of greater level than the shape-shifter who cast the form change spell. Naturally, the dispel polymorph spell is subject to the usual failure rate. As the DM's discretion, certain applications of a form change spell could reduce the shape-shifter's constitution by 1 point.

Intellect Devourer:

Refer to page 54 of the Monster Manual. In this form, the shape-shifter does not gain the intellect devourer's psionic abilities. However, he or she does gain the intellect devourer's immunities and awareness of the astral and ethereal planes.

Remorhaz:

Refer to page 82 of the Monster Manual. We suggest that the damage from touching the remorhaz's back be reduced to 1d10, or else this spell will result in the shape-shifter rolling on all his or her enemies (leaving 1d10 is ridiculous anyway). The shape-shifter does gain the remorhaz's magic resistance when in this form, as well as all of the creature's other abilities.

Shape-shifters as an article was inspired by the version of the class in The SpaceGamer by Ronald and Kevin Pehr. The class as presented here has been changed a great deal. The original class was not particularly compatible with standard AD&D and thus we have modified the form of the class to standard AD&D, as well as changing the emphasis of the class from a druidical viewpoint, to one of pure magic. The class has been playtested over the last year in Andrew South's campaign and has proved to be great fun to use.

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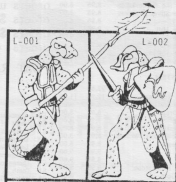
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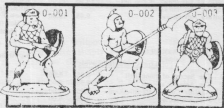


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cluster II

THE INTERSPIRAL CHAIN STRIKES BACK

Location: somewhere in IC space, Naval Headquarters of the InterSpiral Chain.

Time: 1642 hours 348/1384

Seated around the table, a group of men are heatedly discussing some topic. The men are of many races and species. Suddenly into the room bursts a tall insect-like creature bearing the rank of Lieutenant in the Plerby navy.

"Sirs, incoming information from the surveillance station on Falcon indicates that the Priscuuz navy has just jumped into orbit around Falcon-3 and are refuelling; preliminary computer analysis reveals an 86% probability of a combined Fueteller/Priscuuz attack upon the homeworld of the Sendrian alliance. With a roar Admiral Conte Ce of My-Thray leapt to his feet, saying "I have told you we cannot trust the Priscuuz scum, time and time again we have let them be, this time they have gone too far. I demand an immediate vote on a declaration of war." The tall desert warrior from My-Thray sits down scowling at Admiral Gwynhan, the current Cooperator of the Naval Bond, with a sigh he signals the discussions to begin on the action to be taken. Several hours later, the orders go out for the 1st Task Force of the My-Thray Navy, the 2nd Unit of the Naval Harmony of Ekranla and the 1st and 3rd Fleets of the Imperial Plerby Navy to leave for Sendrian to intercept any possible attack by Priscuuz and Fueteller.

The above is only a small section of the game Cluster II. A PBM game run by the Game Systems of Canberra it has been running since April 1983 and with over 300 players involved Cluster II is the largest single PBM game in Australia.

Cluster II is a PBM game of great diversity with several unique features to it. The most individual and challenging aspect of the game is that it is playable on two levels. The main level is where you are the controlling force for an entire planet; you control the economic, naval and scientific capabilities of the planet and you divert it as you will. The second level is that of the role-player, instead of playing a planet you are assigned a character from one of the planets in the Cluster. Such a character could be an Admiral of a Fleet, the head of an interstellar megacorporation, a secret agent or spy for a security service, the leader of an opposition party on a planet. In fact you can play any person who would occupy a position of power in the society. Thus unlike normal PBM's the planet players proceed with their plans of stellar conquest and glory. However the best laid plans of mice and men often go astray and with several role-players involved both on your side and against, all with differing goals, planning and playing take on aspects of uncertainty that begin to approach a real life situation. I play a planet in Cluster II so the rest of the article will concentrate on the same from the view of a planetary player.

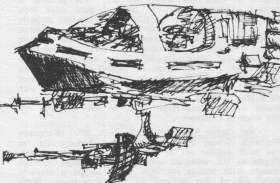
1) Naval Forces.

The ClusterII game system is directly based on the Traveller role-playing system, and has approval from GDW to do this. Navies are designed by use of Book 5 High Guard and Adventure 6 Trillion Credit Squadron. These two books give a complete and detailed system for designing ships and fighting fleet combats. All players commence equally with 1.5 TrCr, 20,000 crew and a tech level of 12; the power of your fleet depends upon how well you design the ships and the structure of your fleet. Whilst war as would be assumed is a major part of the game, it is by no means dominant and many players have managed to go through the whole game without firing a single shot.

2) Scouting

About 1400 years ago, before the start of the game, a wave appeared in jump space preventing the use of jump engines. Interstellar society was destroyed and only now with the end of the Wave, can your planet search out the surrounding space. However to do this a scouting program is necessary. Scouting is done with the equivalent of the Imperium's 100 ton Jump-2 scout in most cases and proceeds in three stages.

The first stage is a general survey of a hex of space (equal to one cubic parsec) to determine whether any planetary system is present around the stars in the hex. Secondly, when a system is located, scouts are sent to scan the system and discover its structure, i.e. 7 planets, 3 are gas giants etc. The third stage is where scouts are sent to individual planets to carry out a variety of tasks, there are 9 different types of planet scan, all providing different types of information. The information gained ranges from the population and government type of the planet, to the mining potential, to the wealth of the planet for aspiring pirates.



3) Economics

Each player has to take over control of his/her economy and manage it to provide maximum efficiency. Each year, a player gets a naval budget, a military budget and an administration budget. The administrative budget is the monies which players are free to spend as they like. A player can use it to establish research bases, colonies, mining bases, encourage merchant trade in his or her system, and anything else the player can think of. These monies will increase as players invest money in their economies and develop sources of supply for their industry. Each inhabited planet will either have a deficit or surplus in the three areas of produce - Agricultural, Mining and Industrial products and a player must remove the deficits as soon as possible.

4) Playing Cluster II

At present Cluster II costs \$5.00 for the initial set-up and \$2.50 per turn after that. Turns are every three weeks, and you will probably wish to subscribe to Backspacer, the newsletter/magazine of the game which details current events and game hints. The costs only apply to planetary players, role players need not pay any game fees at all, however they do not receive the printout that planetary players do. Games Systems is contactable at the following address: Games System, P.O. Box 1733 G.P.O. Canberra ACT 2601.

WARG AIMING



Adapting Miniatures Wargames Rules for Fantasy.

"It isn't fantasy without violence!" — Rulg.

If you think that war should be kept right out of fantasy campaigns, please read the rest of this paragraph before physically abusing me. Warfare is a bigger part of fantasy than most people realise, and certainly fantasy warfare is more popular than most of the "real roleplayers" would care to admit (just think of all the countries campaigns). So where does war come in? One of the main ideas of building up mega-characters (this of course applies to D&D more than Runequest) seems to be that once at high levels, a character can get into inter-dimensional politics. He then tries to set the multiverse right (or wrong, or even left if the campaign is politically subtle) either by conquest for the sake of conquest, or by killing gods. Having said far too much on the second alternative, I would now like to talk on the war option.

Most articles that I have read on fantasy warfare are terrible. Role-players don't usually have the background to write intelligently on war. The problem is further compounded by the lack of good rules sets, most rules don't cover the role-playing systems properly and those that do are usually re-hashes of the individual combat system. In an attempt to bring some measure of (in-?) sanity to the situation I offer the following comparison of Wargaming rules books available and the possibilities for conversion to fantasy (Note: In case you didn't know, there is no totally accepted system of rules for any period, various systems compete with each other). I am restricting this to D&D and Runequest (could include Stormbringer here) as other systems are too much of a minority.

War Games Rules 3000BC to 1485, WRG (Wargames Research Group) 6th edition by Phil Barker. By far the most popular set of rules and the easiest to get. Passes as the universal system for the period although fraught with serious problems. Easy to get a playable knowledge of, but difficult to fully understand. WRG also suffer from bad writing and constant re-writing (7th edition due out soon). Gives a good game, but lacks a lot of realism having some ridiculous variables while being far too inflexible in other parts.

For D&D: Reasonable, although big monsters and subtle differences in troop quality difficult to express.

For RQ: Again reasonable, problem of differentiating troop quality difficult and more crucial here than D&D.

The **Shock of Impact** — Rules for "Ancient" period Wargaming, Tabletop Games by Ian S. Beck and Michael Bussey. Written as an anti-reaction to WRG, less popular and less easy to obtain. Written clearly and with some humour, although much of it sidely directed at Phil Barker (also known to wargamers as "Uncle Phil" of "God"). Takes a little longer to learn and play than WRG but more realistic and giving fewer silly results. Interestingly has no scales (figures to troops, time or terrain), so for campaigns this would need to be worked out.

For D&D: Not recommended as it does not cover heavier armours of mediaeval ideals (ie -- the superiority of Knights).

For RQ: Excellent, only real problem is lack of coverage for the heaviest armoured footmen.

Lance 3rd edition, Medieval Wargames rules by Alan Cook, Tabletop Games. Put out by the same publisher as Shock of Impact, but not all that similar. Fairly well written, although occasionally sections are impossible to find. Quite playable, although sometimes a bit simplistic. Not easy to get a hold of though.

For D&D: Very good, medieval assumptions (superiority of Knights) borne out. Sensitive enough combat system for drawing some distinctions between troop quality.

For RQ: Not recommended, medieval orientation is the glaring problem in addition to which much of the rules are irrelevant for RQ purposes.

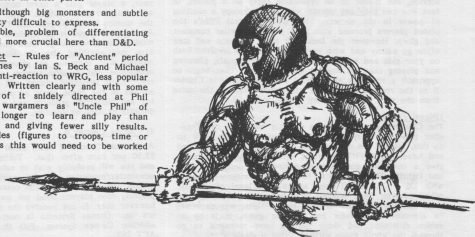
Hoplite Warfare & Hellenistic Warfare I haven't played either of these, so I can't review them properly. The system seems quite flexible, but the limited period covered writes it off for D&D and might be a problem for RQ.

MAGIC

I haven't yet considered magic in the light of the systems discussed, but it should be relatively easy to convert. Some other systems not mentioned here don't really have the flexibility to account for it. One major problem that I can see here is Shock of Impact's lack of a time scale.

This discussion has necessarily been vague as the unbelievers won't want me wasting any more space. The chief thing to remember when converting systems for fantasy is to think of the implications of the adjustments and to use your brains. For those without brains, mine are available and if Rhys receives enough insulting mail/obscene phone-calls and/or physical or verbal abuse on the subject I could run a few more articles on impossible conversions (if the fairies don't get me).

Niall of the nine hostages.



DECISION

GAMES

54 KILBY RD
EAST KEW



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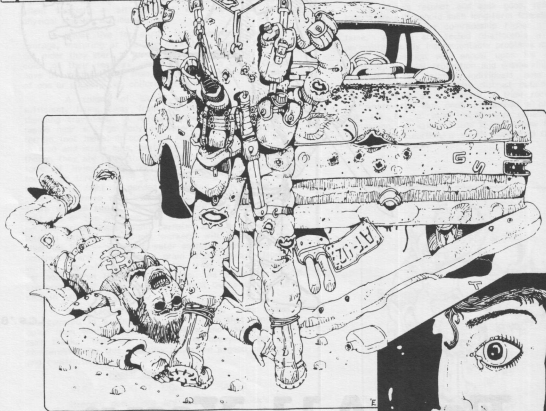
For All Your Gaming Needs

It's cold... it's so cold.
My breath forms a fragile web of
ice within my gaunt leather face
mask.

The sun hasn't come out yet...
the black, solemn clouds drift over
the horizon congealing into a dirty,
foreboding mass.

The buildings are grim and
barren, the streets before them are
strewn with litter that seemingly
broods in the shadowy recesses.

The sun hasn't come out yet...
a fine coat of frost glistens off
the rusted husks of cars and trams.
Street lights stand like crippled
insect-legs in the chilling gloom.



All I need to do is to shred
these worn, dirty garments and step
into the night's fury with just my
blue-tinged flesh; to feel the wind
impale my skin with millions of shards
of ice. My soul would soar through
the sky's ugly hood and behold the
stars beyond and feel the caress
of the sun -- the warmth of its life.

To be by your side once again and
to forget the horror that ruinous
greed had bred.

The Northern Hemisphere is a
moonscape of barren craters and life-
less charcoal remains. The giant
mushroom clouds extended fiery heads
toward the sun, vomiting thousands
of tons of dust, soot and debris
into the boiling sky.

Your ever-lasting memory tests my very will to live. Your lost love makes every living day seem a life-time of burning self-hatred.

The sun hasn't come out yet... the city is an empty shell, a skeleton filled with weather-tormented constructions; frayed, ragged and dismal. The sombre, dreary sky is a fitting mantle for this dormant ruin.

Every day I pass shattered windows whose faded and torn displays advertise the past to the stiff carcasses and their dark eye-sockets. The scratched and rusty neon lights are nothing but inanimate memories beckoning me to tortuous reminiscence and suicide.



The sun hasn't come out yet... pools of water lie like slick, glassy portals to the frozen waste below. The chill wind cuts through all but the thickest clothes, its frigid embrace making silent morgues and cold, chilling tombs from once thriving cities.

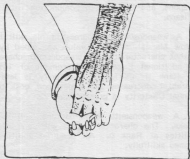
Food -- to survive I must be as cold as my environment. Millions of people died in the Southern Hemisphere, frozen to death or reduced to living skeletons by starvation.



The sun hasn't come out yet... every season is a midnight winter, every night is an arctic storm that consumes all forms of life in its malevolent, elemental being. Each morning is a frosty, bleak dawn of the most pale ice-light.

I slowly walk down corroded streets like a destitute explorer in some grotesque nightmare of frozen delirium and icy horror. Where the only sounds are those of ruin and disrepair (frequently accompanied by the hushed and frenzied drive of sleet and wind) my memory recalls phantom renditions of 'Ommadawn' and 'Oxygene' -- both a dirge for the decay and solitude that burdens me.

I weep at night, my tears forming smooth trails of ice down my numb face. During the day my sights I see choke the bitterness and resentment in my throat -- I would only cry for myself.



The sun hasn't come out yet...it will not be seen, for another three years.

'NUCLEAR WINTER'
Story & Art
Brad Ellis '84

NEW SKILLS IN DRAGONQUEST



THE WEAPONSMITH

In a DragonQuest campaign, the weaponsmith is usually kept quite busy by almost every section of society. His or her skills are solely concerned with the manufacture and maintenance of weapons. As such, it is entirely possible for a weaponsmith to design new weapons, and to work in conjunction with magicians and artisans.

(1) A weaponsmith's progress in his skill is inhibited by a low Manual Dexterity value and aided by a high value in that characteristic. A weaponsmith character must pay an additional Experience increment of 10% to increase his Rank if his Manual Dexterity is less than 15. A character decreases his Experience cost by 10% if his Manual Dexterity is greater than 22.

(2) A weaponsmith acquires one ability per every 2 Ranks. The character begins with one of the following abilities at Rank 0. All acquired abilities can be performed skillfully.

- 1) Make and maintain Swords (including Daggers)
- 2) Make and maintain Hafted Weapons
- 3) Make and Maintain Thrown Weapons
- 4) Make and maintain Pole Weapons
- 5) Make and maintain Missile Weapons
- 6) Make and maintain Entangling Weapons
- 7) Construct and maintain Experimental Weapons
- 8) Construct and maintain Siege Engines

A weaponsmith may gain additional abilities after achieving Rank 10 by the expenditure of 1000 Experience points per ability.

(3) A weaponsmith can build increasingly more effective weapons as his Ranks increases. For every Rank divisible by four that a weaponsmith achieves, he may create weapons which cause an extra point of damage and have an increased base chance of +5%. Thus a Rank 4 weaponsmith would be able to construct a short sword with a Base Chance=50% and a DM of +4.

(4) A weaponsmith can construct a magical weapon in which an Adept can store a spell. The weaponsmith first must construct a weapon. He/she then silvers and enchants it in conjunction with a mage, at a cost of (100*Spell Rank) additional silver pennies. The Adept must employ Ritual Magic for ((Spell Rank + 1) - (Weaponsmith's Rank)) hours. The spell is stored in the weapon, unless backfire occurs.

(5) The time required for a weaponsmith to construct a weapon is dependent on his Rank. A weaponsmith must spend ((4*Damage Modifier) - (Weaponsmith's) hours and 80% of the base cost in silver pennies as shown on the Weapons Table (20.2) to construct a weapon. For each additional point of damage that a Weaponsmith adds to a weapon, he may charge an additional 50 silver pennies.

(6) A weaponsmith can assay a weapon to determine its exact worth. A weaponsmith can assay a weapon after 15-Rank minutes. The success percentage for assaying a weapon is equal to the weaponsmith's ((Perception) + (10*Rank)).

(7) A weaponsmith, with the exception of some missile weapons, can only perform his skill in a properly maintained workshop. It costs 2,000 silver pennies to construct a workshop and 500 silver pennies per year to maintain it with tools and materials. A basic tool kit will cost 100 + (100*Rank) silver pennies. A workshop may be rented at a cost of 10 silver pennies a day.

(8) Experience Point Costs

| Rank | Cost |
|------|--------|
| 0 | 600 |
| 1 | 300 |
| 2 | 600 |
| 3 | 1600 |
| 4 | 2600 |
| 5 | 4000 |
| 6 | 5500 |
| 7 | 7300 |
| 8 | 10,000 |
| 9 | 10,500 |
| 10 | 14,000 |



Notes from the Red File

We're to the fourth appearance of this department now, and I still haven't been lynched for going against the great god Gygax. "Notes from the Red File" attempts to portray one campaign, in the hope that it may be of interest to people beginning their own; I unashamedly encourage people to make the rules (and I'm talking specifically about monster stats, the concept of alignment, and the divine pantheon) to fit their own fantasy worlds rather than making their worlds fit TSR's conception of things. I promised this campaign summary last edition, for the assistance of those persons who actually read my articles and who may have been mystified by parts of them.

I am sometimes accused of being the wrong person for writing this sort of article, because my campaign is run very intermittently. This used to be because I wasn't happy with my campaign's development to that time, and unfortunately now that I am I have lots of other things to do (including running MACInc, organizing Arcanacon and editing The Devil's Advocate) which limits my opportunities. Perhaps it will operate again in 3rd term, and I still have aspirations for setting it up as a club campaign next year. But not being a regular campaign at present does not invalidate it, so long as those players who do play in it will find it interesting and enjoyable, which I understand is the case.

Wyzardree has been designed in the process of successive approximation over several years (since 1979). I started with the map, a beautiful work of colouring and calligraphy I've been unable to do as well since. The themes and names of towns were partly original, and partly pirated from my old campaigns: it is simply not possible for most of us to churn out huge numbers of names, and if you bring them from another campaign you can also carry some of their themes with them.

Wyzardree was originally a Celtic world, and Aarg was the focal city. I designed that city in detail, along the lines of the Citystate of the Invincible Overlord (Judges' Guild), which I still think is an excellent, though melodramatic, playing aid. The campaign was centred in Aarg for a couple of years, and then I got completely fed up with it.

Rather than scrap the campaign, I moved to another theatre, the island of Yuenen at the extreme East of my original map. I had by then developed my own pantheon, and I rewrote my history (now about 10 typed pages). The village of Hommlet (a TSR product, but like most of their modules very well written) was situated in the wooded Western end. This worked quite well but the island was too limiting and the main town of Yu was not big enough to generate city adventures.

By then I had the city of Bannath written up (including a history of its own, of seven typed pages). Bannath was on the mainland coast, not far from Yuenen.

Bannath was a sin city, the leading city of a cruel nation. The Bannathi people were comparatively recent, having beaten down the previous inhabitants, the occult race of the Yidenones. They were based on an "arabian nights" stereotype with some extra arrogance for good measure.

Bannath gave me the opportunity to introduce giantkinds into a city: the Citystate of the Invincible Overlord did so but I didn't like their nationalisation. The difficulty was that with such a strong "Evil" presence it made it very hard for "Good" players, even though I sprinkled the city with pro-Good secret societies. The city had another theme, a conflict between two factions of the Bannathi: air and fire. Hence the Hell-hounds and Firegiants wandering the streets at times. (This sounds ridiculous, but they were actually guards for high priests and nobles respectively).

After a time my disillusionment with AD&D got to me and I felt that it was necessary to develop my own system. Early in 1983 I wrote a system compatible with AD&D and introduced it gradually into Bannath. This was a bad move, as the players reacted poorly to my continuously mutating campaign.

That system had some problems, and for 1984 I wrote a new system which I hoped would overcome these. Because the new approach was incompatible with AD&D I moved the focus North to Vadron, a country which had once been a mighty empire. I started my players off in the Barony of the Nether Glades, near the area used for the "Silverwraiths Quest" convention dungeon. I expected the players to learn about this system in this backwater before heading to the more neutral city of Vadron.

During the move to Vadron I remodelled my world, mainly to correct horrible anomalies in the climate. The new one is an icosahedral approximation to a sphere, with a climatic gradation similar to Earth's. The rearrangement is actually small for any area I've used already, although the more obscure coastlines have changed enormously.

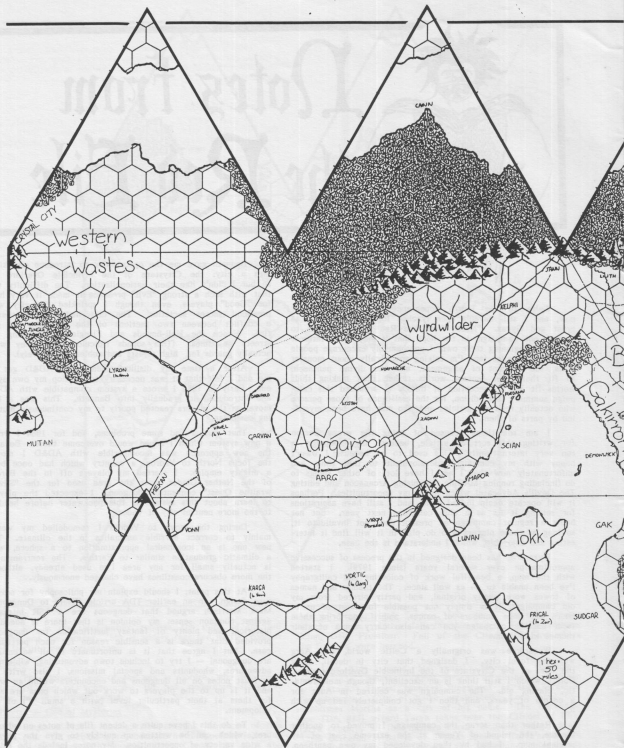
At this point, I should explain my philosophy for adventure design. In an earlier TDA article ("Nuts to Dungeons") Mark Morrison argued that dungeons are a TSR intrusion against common sense: my opinion is that there is adequate historical and plenty of fantasy justification for dungeons, provided that there is a sensible reason for each particular case. But I agree that it is unfortunate if all adventures are dungeonal - I try to include town adventuring, wilderness adventures, whodunits and special missions. I also write up at least notes on all dungeons and encounters within an area, and it is up to the players to work out which ones are safe for them at their particular level (with a small 'l') of development.

To do this I have quite a decent file of notes on adventures, which can be written up quickly to give the players a wide variety of opportunities. My notes include the raison d'être for the adventure, and an elaboration of the world history (itself about 30 typed pages, not including city histories) for the location. I try to include a couple of new monsters (or modifications of old ones) each time.

AREAS

The Northlands

This area was settled early in history, and has frequently been the subject of dispute since then. It includes Vadron, Bandak and the Island of Yuenen.



The Ringstates

This area includes Zorron, Yedon, Tarron, Kolnn, Prominar, Thressi, Gakirron, the desolated island of Tokk and the Catacombs of Grond. It is the most ancient area of human habitation, and has been the centre of several major empires: the Maezon group of citystates and the Thressian Confederation (the "Old Kingdom") being the most notable.

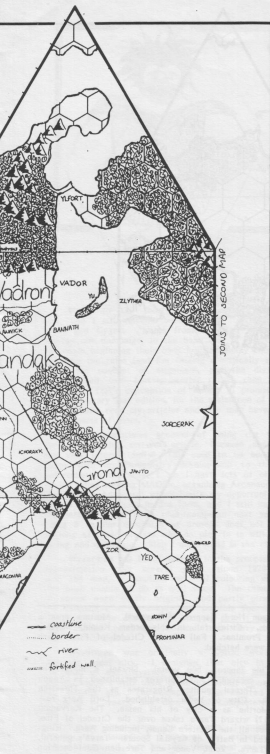
The Western States

This is almost a misnomer, as there are only three countries left. One is Hlorian, a race of near super-humans, who have a great citadel in the mountains. Another is Kelebarak, whose port of Lunan is an important one. The other

is the Empire of Aargarron, which has progressively taken over all the other countries (in the present age Darn's Weald and ScianKordann have fallen). Aargarron is currently threatening Gakirron, a large Ringstate with a small population and army.

The Lands of Mystery

Vonn, the chief mercantile nation, is the only commercially important city in this area. Mutan (see TDA 17) is also here, as is the curious Crystal City and the island of Atlan.



The Wyrdwilder

This area North of Kordann once contained prosperous nations, particularly the barbarian cities of Jann and Kelphi. This was desolated by Lonni the Lychwitch in the Controlled Obfuscation.

The Northern Forests

To the North of the Wyrdwilder are the forests of the Elves, and other less savoury things too. There are distinct nations here, although most humans don't understand the distinctions.

MAJOR DEITIES

The Spider Gods

The gods of creation (see TDA #5) were Koinn and Crostovan. Koinn died in the genesis of the other gods, but Crostovan still rules as the goddess of the less friendly side of nature: she is the crone goddess of the new moon.

Chronil the Dominator

The Age of Controlled Obfuscation was due to the effects of this deity; he created the Chaos Hordes of the Orklings, from which all the Giantkinds have come. Lonni the Lychwitch commanded the Northern Orkling army.

Fensar the Evenhanded ("the Fence-sitter")

Fensar is the god of entropy, and of compromise. He created the first four men to appease the Dwarves after Kordd's curse (which is quite an involved story in itself). Fensar is the Chief deity in the more conservative areas of the Ringstates (which is saying something).

Kordd the Instigator

Kordd was once the chief god of both Elves and Dwarves, but few of either kin worship him now. His other important creation is mankind, after Fensar's model.

Mistel -- Goddess of the Air

Mistel was quite heavily involved in "The Necropolis of Pard", but since then she seems to have surfaced little in my writings on Wyzardree. She is the goddess of the Silquirrin and all creatures of the air, and her priesthood rides pegasi.

Menulla -- God of Thieves and Tricksters

My campaign is full of anecdotes about Menulla, but he has never done anything very earth-shattering; he's just not that kind of god.

Mustark

The players in my campaign are usually prepared to give temples of this god a wide berth. Mustark was written up in an early edition of TDA and, if anything, has got nastier since then. He is the demon prince, the god of Dragons, and lord of many sorts of undead.

Sart -- God of Chaos

Sart is the twin of Menulla, or at least was at first. Some sages suggest that there are a whole pantheon of chaos spirits forever struggling for ascension and that the "god" at one time might be quite different to that at another. Certainly Sart has a great number of demi-gods, causing trouble and mischief for a few years before disappearing for a long time. "Sart" is responsible for the chaos field in Mu (see TDA #17).

Tenthis -- God of Truth

The most influential god of the Ringstates is Tenthis, god of Truth. His image is on all the coinage (see TDA #16), and his chief temple is in Tare. Outside the Ringstates his influence is limited.

Tinuwyll

She is the goddess of the crescent moon, the huntress, the maiden. Tinuwyll is neither compassionate nor particularly cruel.

Ukkwahl -- God of Fire

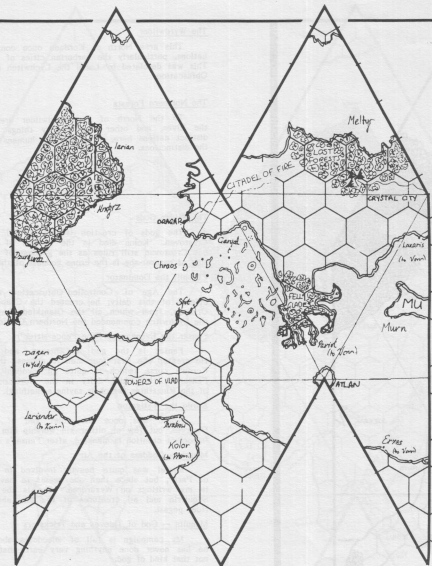
He is the god of the Cocodrillae (see TDA #17) and the chief god of Bannath. Outside those areas Ukkwahl is just a god for fire creatures.

The Archipelago of Chraos

The infamous Citadel of Fire is in the land of Equivolk to the North of the Archipelago, and the dangerous ports of Dragan and Garyl are on the Northern coast too. To the South are the Dragonlands where the Thrakoni (draconic humanoids) live.

The Lizard Lands

Dzurgrdz is the de facto capital of this area. The social structure of the lizardlings is incomprehensible, and only the wisest sages would venture an opinion as to the existence of separate states there.



Vorwen

She is the third nature goddess, the spirit of the full moon and the mother. She is widely regarded as the goddess of fertility and nurturance.

Cordra

The Octopus god of the sea is Cordra, who was once an evil god of vengeance. He has moderated somewhat now, and is a fisherman's god.

Thonga -- God of Mysteries

Enigmas, riddles and puzzles are the provinces of this wise god. Or perhaps were, because he disappeared following the confrontation with Mustark where Cordra won back the realm of the sea.

TIMELINE

Age of First Flowers (Sages estimate 2000 years). Wyzardree created. Initially populated only by elementals. Kordd creates Elves and Dwarves. Much feuding. Kordd curses both races.

1st Age of Men (approx. 500 years). Fensar creates first humans: Horlion, Grond, Vlad and Merion. Kordd creates 12 tribes of mankind. Maezon civilization develops: main cities Zenthis and Zor. Ringstate cities established.

2nd Age of Men (approx. 500 years). Paradox, Mortha, Lunan established. Mortha rebellion defeats Horlion. Tokk established. Mortha established empire, defeats Vonn in 80 years' war.

Age of Dragon Herds (approx. 500 years). Mustark creates Dragon Herds. Cities fall in this order: Kelphi, Mortha, Sclan, Gak, Prominar. Fall of the Citadel of Fire where the Dragons were hatched.

The Dark Tide (approx. 500 years). Sirzani, a malevolent marine race, created. Anyu pirates established in Yueen by Mustark. Thressi reunites Ringstates as the Thressian Confederation. City of Vador established. Lord Aarg re-establishes Mortha as a city of his name. The Kervadani (see TDA #17) wizard Tarva takes over the Citadel of Fire. Tarva captures all the Western Lands, including Aarg. Ringstates defeated in Battle of Crystal Spears. Tarva's general, Ekan, slays Tarva. Vonn, Vador and Thressian Confederation defeat Anyu pirates with aid of gods Cordra and Thonga with the Pearl of Glisten.

The Controlled Obfuscation (approx. 500 years). Creation of Orklings by Chronill the Dominator. City of Aarg re-established, Desolation of the Janniands by Lonni the Lychwitch. Southern Orkling army invades by the Battle of Pard. A mountain falls on Ringstate capital (Thressi); hence collapse of Ringstates. Jihad of St. Lalth (see TDA #16) wins back Ringstates. Aarg takes Garvan (the city where the Silverwraith Lady was built).

The Renewal (present age). Aargaron empire takes Darnhold, then Sclan Kordann. Bannathi takes over Yidenar, renamed "Bannath". Present day: 475th year of age.

SCRATCHINGS FROM THE VAULT



I return to the crypt yet again. This is the third of my articles on the magnificent "Call of Cthulu," game, and the latest in the department I hope to see a permanent feature. However, unless the Mi-Go have been intercepting the mail, I notice a distinct lack of feedback, response, etc. Please scrawl down your views of the game and your variants for future inclusion in these pages. Remember, if you do not reveal your darker fears, they may yet become reality...

And now, my decaying masses, I unveil...

PSYCHIC FRILLS AND ECTOPLASMIC THRILLS.

The Extra-sensory paranormal in CALL OF CTHULHU

ESP, the sixth sense, call it what you will, but the ability, fictional or otherwise, of the human mind to fathom things beyond the confines of normal experience has long remained a fascination, and one that has been represented on scores of occasions in the horror genre. By and large, Chaosium have left this aspect out of their game, for it does not have a place in Lovecraft's works, which attributed all bizarre dreams to the machinations of the Cthulu Mythos. The only example Chaosium have given us in the form of a concrete NPC is Paul Le Mond, from the Fungi from Yggoth. Le Mond is a gentle young man of rare and accurate talent, and because of this accuracy he can hardly be used as a guide for psychic PC's, or even for further NPC's, who would just be seen as an extension of the same.

In lieu of other material, I present the following variants for introducing psychic investigators into your games. The first part gives two professions which any PC, legitimate psychic or not, may choose to follow. The second part describes a simple process to determine whether or not a PC is a "shiner" (after Stephen King's fashion), and how to integrate this into your campaign.

New Professions.

MYSTICS, MEDIUMS, FAKERS, CHARLATANS, MAGICIANS - All are familiar figures from the occult revival, but unrepresented as such in the game. Obviously there are two types - those with legitimate talent and con men. I suggest the following professions be offered to players who wish to play characters of this genre:

MYSTIC

Astronomy
Credit Rating
Fast Talk
Occult
Oratory
Pick Pocket
Psychoanalysis
Psychology
Sing

MAGICIAN

Chemistry
Credit Rating
Debate
Fast Talk
Foil Restraints
Pharmacy
Pick Pocket
Sleight of Hand
Throw

Both professions have an income of $1d4 + 1 \times 1000$ annually.

New Skills.

Base chance in both these cases is 00%.
Foil Restraints: (Note that this skill is lifted directly from Runequest). This is a manipulation skill. It is the ability to position oneself so that chains, ropes, etc. are applied ineffectively. The chance should be reduced by degree of difficulty. I.e. there is no chance of breaking out if you are in a box welded shut and dropped into Lake Michigan!

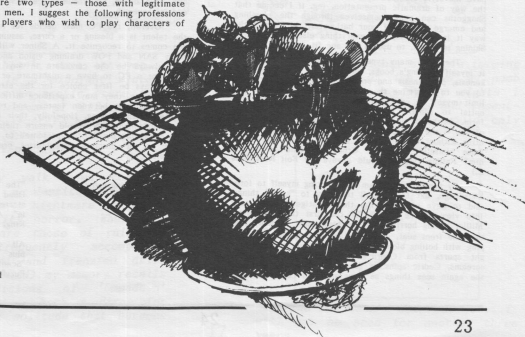
Sleight of Hand: This is also a manipulation skill. It is the means by which a person produces a rabbit from a hat, or a fifth ace from a sleeve. It is an integral part of a magician's performance.

Characters adhering to either of these professions would be a colourful addition to any campaign.

Real Psychic Ability - "Shining."

Here I must confess to be delving into the realms about which I know very little. What I hope to provide is a playable means by which to introduce the elusive sixth sense.

My main source material here are the psychic thrillers of Stephen King - namely Firestarter, The Dead Zone, Carrie, and most of all, The Shining. Each of these books presents us with an otherwise normal person, in a completely normal setting, except that they are possessed of mental powers far beyond those



of a normal person. In Dead Zone these are explained as being caused by concussion, Firestarter makes them due to the effects of a drug. However The Shining provides the best explanation i.e. none at all. It simply states that some people have a "shine", which is stronger in some than in others. As described in the book by one of the characters:

"A lot of folks, they got a little bit of shine to them. They don't even know it. But they always seem to show up with flowers when their wives are feeling blue with the monthlies, they do good in school tests they don't even study for, they got a good idea of how people are feeling as soon as they walk into the room. I come across fifty or sixty like that. But maybe only a dozen, including my gran that knew they was shining."

Obviously the first passage could be connected with anyone with a high POW, however as people interested in the unreal and the paranormal, the second part becomes the most intriguing.

To decide whether or not a PC is a "shiner", the following formula is abstracted for game terms:

$$POW - 14 \times 1\%$$

eg. A character with a POW of 17 has a three percent chance. This is checked for on all high POW characters when they are rolled up. This check is made by the Keeper once the character is completed and finalized, and he should not reveal the result to the player, and preferably not even inform him that the variant is being used!

If the PC is, in fact, a Shiner, the following charts should be consulted:

| ABILITY | | FREQUENCY | |
|---------|------------|-----------|------------|
| 01 | Shiner | 01 | Frequent |
| 02-10 | Sparkling | 02-10 | Spasmoid |
| 11-25 | Bright | 11-25 | Occasional |
| 26-75 | Average | 26-75 | Rare |
| 76-90 | Glimmering | 76-90 | Very Rare |
| 91-00 | Dim | | |

One roll should be made on each chart to determine the PC's psychic awareness.

This is all I intend to present in terms of game mechanics. To categorize the talent any further would be to reduce it to the mindless (pun intended) bookkeeping, garden variety Psionics to be found in AD&D and Traveller. I believe that no Keeper can be allowed to have his style cramped by rules — they tend to get in the way of dramatic presentation, (eg. if I decide that Shoggoths can pour themselves through the plumbing and emerge instead of your bathwater, then that's the way it is, kids). So, like everything else in the game, Shining is a tool, to use as you see fit.

There are many types of psychic ability — to limit myself to King's books, these include telepathy, telekenesis, pyrokinesis and precognition. Although it is up to you to determine the direction this will take, I will limit myself to precognition, as this has the most potential to remain intriguing yet playable in gaming form. (Although spasmodic telekenesis could be a lot of fun — the character may be able to light his cigarettes without touching them, but will be able to release himself before the Cthonians come to collect him? Failing this, he could always try Foil Restraints ...)

By precognition, I am not limiting myself to foreknowledge, but the overall tendency to "know" things, and to have visions. [Eg. the investigator's car pulls into view of the stables for the first time. However, Millie, sitting horrified in the back seat, suddenly sees that the front seat, dashboard and windshield are dripping with boiling blood, which is still fountaining in bright spurts from Cedric's headless body. When she screams, Cedric spins to see what is amiss, but now she again sees things as they are, and cannot answer

to his concern, for she is now not too sure of what just happened herself. What she has in fact just experienced is a brush with the psychic residue left by the murder of a coachman in the previous century, by the young master who had seduced the coachman's wife. It is this ghastly coach which has returned and is stalking the remnants of the family).

Although the above plot comes somewhere between "Friday 13th" and "Christine", the illustration serves to provide an example in which a psychic flash was experienced by a PC, but in such a fashion as to leave her so confused as to be unable to understand the significance until her research led her to unlock the family's dark secrets.

The most obvious thing about the above example would be that the Keeper has it planned into the scenario. Decide upon the information you want to release and then wait until a certain time to release it — i.e. hold the vision of the bloating, hanging corpse until he's been in the bell tower, or of the dream of the towering corpulent mass until she's seen the tapes in the vestry, etc. Of course, as a final resort to edge on stuck parties, if they have ignored your clues via Know and Idea rolls, is to throw in a particularly potent vision.

The Flashes can come at certain times, like when in the area or touching some intimate possession of the deceased, or simply at random, when driving to the drugstore to fetch milk, etc. The rule is never to let the PC suspect or expect a vision. One of the best ways to work is via the PCs dreams, as you can be as allegorical and misleading (or downright vague) as you desire. You may also describe a non-psychic PC's dreams in an effort to excite them, and otherwise lead them up blind alleys.

These blind alleys are most important — try to give at least one red herring for each goldmine. Accurate but irrelevant flashes are a lot of fun — seconds before the crazed screwdriver murderer struck, Horace remembered where he had left his Diner's Club card.

Possibly the most important thing is to not overdo it — i.e. a vision every adventure is liable to be tedious, as the Investigators' while away the hours distilling moonshine while waiting for Edward to have his brainwave, so that they can get on with the case. Introduce a vision pertinent to a particular scenario three scenarios beforehand — make it a recurring nightmare if your player's aren't that cluey. It will drive them insane trying to work it out until, three months later, the facts unfold at last. And even then it might be inaccurate.

Keepers should not apply the preceding formulae to NPC's, but should decide for himself whether an NPC is a shiner, and should place such NPC's sparingly and infrequently.

Overall, the PC must decide for himself whether the talent is a blessing or a curse, assuming that he or she comes to recognise it. A Shiner will be subject to many SAN and POW draining vision and dreams; they will always be the candidate in any scenario which calls for a PC to have a nightmare or a vision, they will always be first choice for the attacks of ghosts and spectres, they may experience difficulty sometimes in distinguishing between fantasy and reality, between nightmare and waking. Hopefully, their (obviously) high POW and high SAN should ensure their survival. The role — playing possibilities presented to the PC are as great as the dramatic possibilities presented to the Keeper.

Suggested bibliography:

"The Shining", "The Dead Zone", "Firestarter", and "Carrie". All by Stephen King.

Filmography:

All of the above, plus "Scanners" and "The Fury".

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QUACKINGS FROM THE POND



Ducks are a race of cursed humanoid, they represent the true physical example of Godly revenge; for the lack of providing a force to combat a growing evil army they were set upon by the God's malevolent, terrible rage. It is not known whether they are ducks cursed with intelligence and arms (rather than wings) or as humans cursed with bills, feathers and webbed feet (the ancient fight against the evil juggernaut required the rapid formation of adversaries from all forms of animals, birds and beings).

These creatures are stout, plucky individuals whose personalities are shaped around their natural wish for racial purity and a distinct distrust of all external religions. Most Ducks are not socially active, preferring to keep relationships restricted to selected individuals and otherwise acting in a reserved (shy?) manner. However, some of these creatures have been known to except his or her lot in the birth-stakes, and to regard life as a hearty feast of carousing and merrymaking. Ducks (although severely conscious of their lack of racial heritage, loyalty and tradition) are sly and dogmatic fighters. Fueled by the humiliation of their predicament they are easily provoked into showing their personal valour and fighting mettle. Ducks are therefore sufficient warriors -- although not well known for their physical fighting attributes.

Ducks live for eighty to one-hundred years on average, maturing at the age of sixteen years. As they get older they start to moult feathers infrequently -- the color of their feathers will also begin to pale. Ducks have live births rather than eggs, but a birth will consist of one or possibly two children at most.

A colony of Ducks will usually be self-sufficient, living away from the habitats of men and shunning travellers. A normal 'tribe' establishment will reside near a large body of water, within any type of terrain (not including cold, icy regions). They will live in mud and straw huts, preferring a simple lifestyle even though they are more than capable of sustaining a higher form of living. The population will number between forty to three-hundred Ducks, one-third of which will be able to fight if needed (protected with leather or chain and armed with bows, spears, swords and shields). There will be two to six Druids (there is a 25% chance that one or two of them will be Magic-Users) who will be the tribal leaders and perform as the council for internal affairs. The Duck 'workers' will both fish the river (or lake -- whatever water source is sustaining the populace) and grow various grain crops nearby. Money will be internally produced by the tribe via the panning for gold within the river beds, etc. As a society they are neutral and reserved, although most Ducks are lawful both in nature and outlook.

As a race they are short statured. Their bodies are covered in a fine layer of feathers that range in color from white through light-yellow and pale-brown to pure black. They are not strong or heavy-set but are compensated for this disability by having a good dexterity and constitution.

Racial Characteristics

STR: -2 DEX: +1 CON: +1 CHA: -2

Strength deductions are due to the Duck's size and build. A dexterity addition is given because of their natural swimming skill (dexterity being the prime floatation propulsion requirement). Constitution is given a bonus for two reasons: 1 -- swimming continuously in cold water should be of some benefit; 2 -- the layer of feathers on the skin will make a Duck's body warm, slick ("water off a Duck's back") and rather thick (this doesn't help deflect insults). The charisma deduction is due to the Duck's rather strange appearance, this deduction does not count when NPC or other PC Ducks are involving themselves in a visual appraisal of the character.

Height

Average height:

Female 50 (+1-4 or -1-4)

Male 54 (+1-4 or -1-4)

Height Determination:

01-29:(under) 30-70:(average) 71-00:(Over)

Weight

Average Weight:

Female 100 (+1-4 or -1-8)

Male 110 (+1-4 or -1-6)

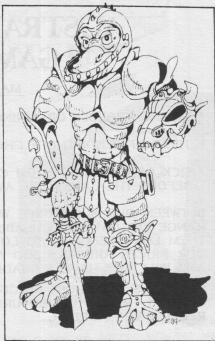
Weight Determination

01-35:(under) 36-64:(average) 65-00:(over)

Swimming is not only a pastime for Ducks, it is also a vocation. Duck fishermen and sailors are very common as the entire race is made up of exceptional swimmers; they may even fire crossbows whilst floating on water, and can wear armour as heavy as plate. Because of this affiliation with water Ducks have a high resistance against all adverse weather conditions (not including heat extremes).

Ducks may not use the following weapons (because of size and strength): any polearms, poleaxes, lances, two-handed weapons, heavy crossbows and long-bows. They cannot employ large shields. Armour also has its own problems -- it is easy enough for a Duck to get body armour of any type but extremely time-consuming and costly to get a full-faced helm and webbed shaped shoes.

Ducks respect and seek good, reliable companions. They will uphold such long-term friendships from any race as they value comradeship higher than money or fame. A true and tested relationship will help Ducks persevere usually insurmountable problems and in turn the Duck in question will endow upon his or her friend guidance, personal protection and unswerving loyalty. This coupling of two or more individuals does however take time. Ducks may initially distrust outsiders, mistaking open friendship as a mockery of their racial background (or whatever). But once established a character could not ask for a more solid and reliable adventuring companion. A valued friend is like a new family member and as stated earlier, is worth more than riches or public renown to a Duck.



Halfings are much like Ducks in certain respects; Ducks enjoy self-indulgence very much and prefer the company of fellow Ducks (this protects them from embarrassment and gives rise to mutual self-pity nights). They are quite apt drinkers, consuming alcoholic liquors is a skill easily gotten and often leading to frequent malpractice. Eating is also a much favoured form of relaxation -- the pleasure of tantalizing the taste-buds is a seduction not easily avoided by a Duck.

Duck characters can be either Fighters, Magic-Users, Druids or thieves. The limitations for classes: Fighters -- 10th level; Magic-Users -- 12th; Druids -- 14th; Thieves -- unlimited. NPC Ducks may be Clerics (only if living in large water-bearing areas, ie -- river deltas). An NPC Duck Fighter or Magic-User may advance to a level no higher than the 15th.

Ducks may communicate with pure bred water-birds, they can also speak common and their own racial language (rather like a staccato guttural quacking). They also have the natural ability of determining the depth of a body of water (by 'sounding-off' atop the surface) the rough temperature, currents and type (salt, pure, hybrid, spring, volcanic, ect).

Please note: this article was inspired by 'Runequest' Ducks but is not a direct transformation of information and stats.

DUCK DEITIES

The gods of the Ducks are the only pantheon known to have not played a part in the Duck curse. These gods reside in a void that represents a water-locked castle wrought of marble. This massive construction is merely a back-drop for the huge 'pond' of crystal-clear water and magnificent clumps of lilly-pads and other water-plants. Atop this tranquil, translucent body of liquid reside the Duck gods. Here they contemplate their subjects, think about various personal beliefs and argue about the frail disposition of mortal life. Most of their godly time is spent swimming, either alone or whilst conducting a lengthy conversation (concerning some obscure happening in time long lost) with a divine companion. These gods will appear on the Prime Material Plane every so often to intervene upon some hapless mortal's life, offering divine consultation or a reprieve from impending death (this improves public-relations and is good propaganda).

The water in their heavenly 'pond' is extremely pure; untainted by corroding mortality or venomous evil -- it will always retain the virginal essence that grants it its magical powers. A sip from the 'pond' will cure the drinker of all wounds and pains, it will wash away any feelings of weariness or moral disorder (guilt, ect) and leave the consumer physically and spiritually cleansed. These powers are nullified if the liquid is collected in some receptacle or otherwise transported away from the 'pondage'. Any person or creature can drink from the 'pond' regardless of alignment or race -- however, if the Duck gods do not desire the individual to gain the benefits, all the curatives will disappear.

The large castle is the infrequent resting place for the gods. Within it is a confusing, maze-like connection of corridors, walls and doors; all lavishly furnished and impeccably clean. This impressive array of luxury adorned rooms is where the gods perform their administration and book-keeping functions (its not all fun and games up there you know). Any unwitting guest into these hallowed halls will automatically feel lost, misplaced and very uncomfortable. This unease will continue until dispelled by one of the gods. If any combat should suddenly materialize indoors (if characters are assaulting deities, the DM should be shot!) the attackers will not be able to draw weapons or swing them, spells will be forgotten and psionics mentally 'blocked'.

The Duck gods know that if their worshippers suddenly lose the taint of their curse they will become humans or true ducks. Once this happens they will either lose their flock or become the deities of real, unintelligent ducks (this is not a bad future for a duck god). It is only because of the anger of some other gods that these duck deities have intelligent followers -- because of the nature and power of entire pantheons every god eventually receives worshippers in the mortal worlds (it is mere speculation that mortals are made for select deities or vice-versa) regardless of the time-span of these mortal relationships. It is the eventual fate of the Duck gods to fade into historical obscurity.



TRISARQUE

God of Flying & Wind
Greater God

ARMOR CLASS: -4
MOVE: 12" (fly 48")
HIT POINTS: 316
NO. OF ATTACKS: 1
DAMAGE-ATTACK: 2-12 (+3)
SPECIAL ATTACKS: see text
SPECIAL DEFENSES: +3 or better
weapon to hit
MAGIC RESISTANCE: 80%
SIZE: M (5'8")
ALIGNMENT: Chaotic Good
WORSHIPER'S ALIGN: any
SYMBOL: silver feathered
wing
CLERIC-DRUID: 16th level Druid
FIGHTER: 15th level Ranger
MAGIC USER-ILLUSIONIST: 16th
level Magic User
THIEF-ASSASSIN: none
MONK-BARD: none
PSIONIC ABILITY: III

STR:18 INT:25 WIS:18 DEX:23 CON:19 CHA:18

Trisarque is a god that Ducks see as the representation of their life-long desire to fly. He is quite tall for a Duck and has wings rather than arms - these still allow him to grip and hold objects as they are very supple and easily contorted. His feathers are a pure, glossy white.

This god is the physical embodiment of the wind -- thus he can show both it's harsh violence or it's caring caress. The nature of the wind also expresses itself in the moods of this god -- he is unpredictable, showing mindless anger one minute and mercy the next. It is still Trisarque's will to ensure that his followers gain the benefits of his element and that others do not try to seriously influence nature's aerial current. Sometimes he will appear to beings on the Prime Material Plane as a shadowy, wispy outline that continuously shifts and billows.

The staff he carries is a powerful artifact -- it can bestow upon anyone the power of wingless flight for several days (at most). It can also render flying objects inanimate by just pointing the staff-head towards the desired target (magical flight must save vs wands at -4). The final ability of this wondrous object is that it may call any winged creature to the summoner's aid instantaneously. The bearer of this staff may therefore never be attacked by an aerial creature.

Trisarque himself can control the winds in a one kilometer radius. His slightest mental command can call forth whirlwinds, hurricanes or tornadoes. But he may also stop the weakest breath of air from blowing. His ownership of the winds is complete when his powers are coupled with those of the staff.

Ducks will worship this deity in the hope that he will, in the future, grant them their wings and cast away their arms. Flight, to his followers, is a sorely missed mode of transportation and pleasure. But the worship of this god is not purely mercenary in nature -- every being shows respect for this entity as his element is a part of day to day life that could lead to global disaster if permanently tampered with.



Phaf is the most popular of the Duck gods. He is the physical embodiment of water. His interests lie in the well being of his aquatic and amphibious followers and the continued protection of rivers, seas, lakes, springs and the like. He will also, on occasion, help swimmers of any race (or religion) if they are in dire need of assistance whilst traveling across his element. Phaf is, to all Ducks, a hero of incredible swimming feats and the only known master of their ponds and rivers. Because of this he will mostly aid Ducks if they seem to be in need of his mighty powers -- it is said that he loves Ducks as much as he loves water.

The god's feathers are a light gold color, he is very handsome and incredibly well-built. He can swim without rest and in any body of water, regardless of how rough or stormy it is. He can also hold his breath for very long long periods of time (some say several days!) and can dive to the bottom of any depth of water. His powers are such that he can control the currents, temperature and fury of water within a one kilometer radius. Every round he can call forth water-spouts or whirl-pools to harass or attack his opponents -- if in desperate need he can also command all aquatic life-forms (from prawns to whales and sharks).

A magic collar around Phaf's neck will allow the god to change his shape at will into either a human, true duck or fish. This also protects him from all adverse temperature changes -- thus it is a powerful magic item both in water and on land.

Phaf never wears anything but a simple loincloth and his collar. He sometimes appears as an outline of vapour, swirling and damp. He is the most active of the three gods listed here, always willing to aid his worshipers in some way.



PHAF

God of Swimming and Water
Greater God

ARMOR CLASS: -4
MOVE: 12" (swim 48")
HIT POINTS: 342
NO. OF ATTACKS: 1 bite
DAMAGE-ATTACK: 2-20
SPECIAL ATTACKS: see text
SPECIAL DEFENCES: +3 or better
weapon to hit
MAGIC RESISTANCE: 80%
SIZE: M (6'4")
ALIGNMENT: Lawful good
WORSHIPER'S ALIGN: all
good alignments
SYMBOL: gold waves
CLERIC-DRUID: 14th level Druid
FIGHTER: 16th level Ranger
MAGIC USER-ILLUSIONIST: 16th
level Magic-User
THIEF-ASSASSIN: none
MONK-BARD: 8th level Bard
PSIONIC ABILITY: IV
STR:21 INT:20 WIS:18 DEX:25 CON:25 CHA:21

SLEU FENG (GLUM HEART)

God of Apathy and Self-Pity
Lesser God

ARMOR CLASS: 6
MOVE: 8"
HIT POINTS: 163
NO. OF ATTACKS: none
DAMAGE-ATTACK: none
SPECIAL ATTACKS: none
SPECIAL DEFENCES: see text
MAGIC RESISTANCE: 75% (see text)
SIZE: M (4'2")
ALIGNMENT: Neutral (True)
WORSHIPER'S ALIN: Any
SYMBOL: black cloud
CLERIC-DRUID: 16th level Cleric
FIGHTER: none
MAGIC USER-ILLUSIONIST: 18th
level Illusionist
THIEF-ASSASSIN: 20th level Thief
MONK-BARD: none
STR:16 INT:21 WIS:18 DEX:21 CON:18 CHA:17



Sieu Feng is a strange god who always wears a pure black robe that never shows folds, wrinkles or lines. His feathers are light brown in color and he constantly has on his face an expression of sullen dejection, boredom, disdain and laziness.

His worshipers are a dull, drab lot who feel little towards any job, object or living thing. They see no or very little love and pleasure in the world and have constant paranoia about being the scapegoat of anything and everything (not to mention the bodily battle-ground of every disease known). Ducks worship him because he closely relates to their racial predicament -- the reaction of humourless gods and a cold, unfeeling mortal world. These characters who are both lazy and resigned to their fates will find that this deity embodies their pathetic lifestyle.

This god will not help any of his worshipers regardless of what problem they face. It is his desire to turn a blind-eye to those around him and to continue to mentally sow the seeds of self-pity. Everything is too big a problem to get involved in -- if something arises he will leave it to be resolved by another god or being.

Anyone who even thinks of attacking or harming Sieu Feng whilst being within 500 meters of him will immediately become demoralized and feel ill, worried, pathetic, lazy and scared. If an attack is still impending and within 100 meters of Sieu Feng the aggressor will have to save vs spells (at a -6 chance) or be distantly forced to 'not give a dam' about anything -- this lasts for 1d10+3 turns. If the attacker actually gets in close enough to strike, the following things will happen; all spells and poisons will be 'devoured' by the robe (this will also negate long-range spell attacks) and all physical assaults will merely brush through the robe and its contents as if the attacker has struck at air.

QUE

Duck Hero

ARMOR CLASS: -6
 HIT POINTS: 147
 CLASS: 20th level Ranger
 ALIGNMENT: Chaotic Good
 MOVE: 10"
 SIZE: M (5'3")
 STR: 18(00) INT: 17
 WIS: 14 DEX: 18
 CON: 19 CHA: 16

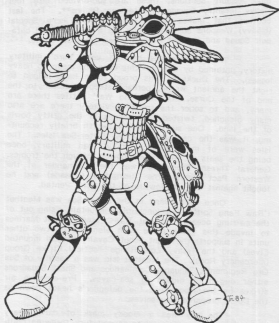
Que is the greatest Duck fighter to ever grace the mortal world. Her deeds and legends are common Duck folk-stories, often told to inspire young Ducklings. Her bravery and tenacity in combat is unsurpassed in Duck lore and even promotes respect in other races. She is a worshiper of both Trisarcus and Phaf and is usually employed by these two gods to do their tasks on the Prime Material Plane. The intense love she feels towards her race is the second-most important motivation force that calls forth epic adventures and passionate daring-do.

Que wears +2 plate (made from very light alloys) and carries a +2 shield. In combat she wields a +3 Vorpal long-sword and may rely upon her divine special ability to summon an Air or Water Elemental for aid (random size -- use thrice per day). On the index finger of her left hand she has a ring of warmth, on the right hand she wears a ring of infravision. The helm she wears is a Helm of Flying (unlimited -- fly at 24") and her gauntlets are those of swimming and climbing. Lastly there is a Cube of Frost Resistance (double powers) hidden within the rim of the shield.

The tomb from which Que draws her Magic-User's spells contains the following enchantments:

First Level: Comprehend Languages; Friends; Hold Portal; Protection from Evil; Read Magic; Sleep; Unseen Servant; Write.
Second Level: Detect Invisibility; ESP; Invisibility; Rope Trick; Web.

In any given situation Que will not ask for compensation or a reward for any deeds done, but the offer of food or shelter for a short period of time is always welcome. She is very open and friendly to strangers and known individuals alike, courteous and pious. If, however, someone acts selfishly or blatantly abuses her gods or race she will retort vehemently and then lose all further openness (possibly becoming aggressive and arrogant). If the situation worsens she will then become obtrusively vulgar and resentfully clamorous. An argument could very easily lead to violence.



The RDF

A Duck Institution

The 'Old War' was a bloody and very costly conflict that created powerful nations, enduring pacts and maimed enemies. The dismal, gore-stained and magic-scarred battlefields saw many beings rattle out their last mortal breath, and hundreds of creatures stiffen in black pools of their own thick blood. The new land was built over the rubble of the old, burying the skeletons of the dead, of every race that had fought for glory and died in pain. The proud heads swung high, the bright banners snapping in the wind, the brave cry from silver horns -- each passing season saw the brave formation and usual integration (read annihilation) of quite a few traditional and sometimes innovative racial forces (for example -- the Dwarven Interdiction Terrorist Squad, led by 'Bad' Barg Kause, that went deep into enemy territory, raiding supply caravans to inject Rot Grubs and frozen Cerebral Parasites into food and water consignments). Through the tortuous memory of corpse-ridden waste-lands one can recall both the infamous and the glamorous units that served tours. Faces standing before the foul secretion of war, the tangled maggot-fodder, these faces bring to the surface names and places from the time-glazed mental recesses. One such corps that remains both famous and operational is the Regional Duck Force (RDF), more important is one of its service arms -- the 1st Marines (home for many veterans of illustrious campaigns). The Ducks of the 1st Marines were possessed with a strong desire to refute their ancestor's pacifist path to the Curse.

Organization:

The 1st Marines is a force made up of over 600 personnel, of which under 8% serve administration functions. The formation of this group is as follows:

There are six companies, each containing five sections and being run by a senior Officer. There are thirty sections, each made up of two Squads, each Section is run by a junior Officer. Each Squad has ten Ducks, there are sixty Squads in the 1st Marines. Squads are run by two NCOs, thus having eight Duck-at-Arms. The final unit is the control body, involving eight senior Officers and six senior NCOs; this is the Command Group.

Deployment:

Each company, as stated above, has five Sections -- these are divided into the following classifications. There are two Light Infantry Sections, these are sub-divided into a total of three 'grunt'* Squads and one Archer Support Squad. There are also two Amphibious Assault Sections, these are sub-divided into four Heavy Infantry Squads mounted on Rhinos**. The last Section that makes up a full Company is a Special (Heavy) Weapons Support, which has a ship-mounted catapult Squad and a Giant Frog-mounted crossbow Squad.

The 1st Marines have a very 'pure' military history, untainted by defeats (this does not mean no heavy losses). The Ducks of this proud force have helped to right the ancient wrong, perhaps stepping closer to the end of the Curse. Of the 'Old War' battles there are also many, and to sober the spirit of victory there are also many bleached, twisted Duck bones in the gritty bowls of the land. One such victory is worth briefly recounting, it was the campaign for the Bitter-Sea Isles. The Isles were of more political value than military, once being the seats of High Elven power through the tropics. General Thresh 'Stone-Eye' was the commander of the Western Pact Force (The Rising-Sun Crusade) and he fought against the vile lowlife of the Grim Pentad.

Once such Island in the Bitter-Sea was Mentheth ('Raw Fang Spit') -- a jungle-clad mountain rising out of the swirling ocean. General Thresh used the 1st Marines to invade this gaunt place with elements of two other units in support: the Light Scout Cavalry (Pegasi mounted Elves) and the Heavy Long-Range Tactical Strike Group (mercenary Rocs). The Mentheth Isle was a bastille of Sea Orc Regiments, Sahugin Commandos and Shark Squadrons either dug-in or hidden in sea-caves. Pre-emptive air strikes by the Rocs kept the defender's heads down as the Ducks prepared themselves.

The sky was a moody mask of dark, heavy clouds, the sea a grey, white-capped fury throwing chilling spray into the half-dusk light. In this restless sea the Ducks launched a two-pronged invasion aimed at demoralizing the enemy and crushing his position. The Light Infantry stormed ashore, battling the humid, electrical-charged heat and the stinging winds. Local suppressive support was used by the raft and Frog mounted crossbows to halt any Sea Orc flanking maneuver. Then the huge clouds above broke, vomiting forked slivers of lightning groundward and booming out peals of earth-shaking thunder. The rain fell heavily and without respite. The Amphibious Assault Sections had traversed the Isle, bobbing erratically through the boiling sea, cresting heaving waves. The sea-tossed troops soon rode their Rhinos into the fine sand beach, charging through the rubbery green jungle towards rain-soaked rear supply dumps. Once the 1st Marines had secured deep footholds in the defence lines Aquatic Elves were transported through the deluge to land on safe beaches to aid the fight. Several hours later the enemy survivors were herded, wounded and sullen, through the glistening tangle of vegetation to be taken aboard troop-ships. The restless ocean washed up bloodless, pale bodies of Ducks, Frogs and Rhinos onto the sands. So it was that the Island was returned to the Elves, the 1st Marines prepared to invade the next Isle.

* -- 'Grunts' is the nickname for the Infantry. Duck Light Infantry wear chain and carry shields, swords, maces and axes. Heavy Infantry wear Plate and carry shields, swords, axes and maces.

** -- Rhinos can swim and are thus used as heavy transport. They are only required to swim short distances, from a troop-ship to the shore, usually a distance of under 500 meters.



TRIPPING OUT

(One of an irregular series of articles concerning 'The Fantasy Trip'.)

WHERE THERE'S A WILL.....

For a beginning wizard of reasonable intelligence, illusions are amongst the more efficient and versatile spells at his disposal: so long as his opponents aren't too bright. As he gains L.Q., he becomes capable of casting larger and more powerful phantasms. Yet, as he grows more formidable in intellect, surely the forms he can create become possessed of a greater subtlety and sense of life? Surely they become more believable?

Not so, for as the character's creations become ever more vivid, his victims can still believe on a 3-dice roll vs. IQ: a feat that even the dimmer members of the population can achieve about 33% of the time. The same is true of the various 'control' spells. The feat of resisting the fatal web woven by an IQ-20 enchantress is no more difficult than for an IQ-13 amateur. This doesn't ring true to me.

It turns out that the willpower of the casting wizard can be simulated quite simply and effectively by using his IQ to determine the number of dice rolled in the saving throw. Simply divide the IQ by 4, rounding down, and add the remainder as a modifier to the roll. Since the average roll of a D6 is 3.5, this results in a very smooth improvement in the wizard's skills as IQ increases.

To give an example: an IQ-9 fighter is trying to disbelieve something he thinks is an illusion. If it was cast by an IQ-13 mage, then he must roll 13/4 = 3 dice and add one to the result, i.e. he must roll 8 or under on three dice. If the wizard was IQ-20, then the roll would be made on five dice: the fellow would probably be better off fighting it!

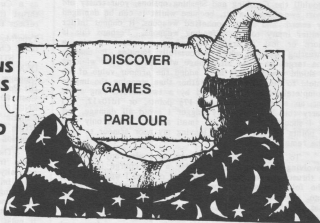
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The Stormbringer Scribe

RUNEQUEST COMBAT NOTES:

Runequest certainly has one of the most playable, and dare I say, realistic combat systems available in fantasy RPGs, but even so it has its own fair share of 'holes'. In this article, which no doubt will soon be rendered redundant by the new edition of Runequest, I have some suggestions to remedy some of the more immediate problems.

PARRYING IMPALING WEAPONS:

Over the past two years since I first took up Runequest, one thing I have noticed is the relative futility of impaling weapons when used against melee weapons capable of damaging them whilst parrying. Now an impaling weapon is rather nasty, but when you play (as I feel you should) the Crushing and Slashing options, your trusty old short sword loses a bit, because whilst it can be damaged by swords and short, nonhafted weapons, it cannot inflict similar injury to the offending weapons. Perhaps this is more or less accurate, but when a weapon parries a thrusting weapon which successfully impales, it enables the target to avoid all damage whereas a person wielding a shield would simply have added the armour value of his shield to his total armour rather than stopping the impale completely (eg. I'm impaled by a two-handed long spear for an average damage of $17\frac{1}{2}$ points, or $1d10+12$, if I parry this blow with my dagger I avoid all damage, but if I should parry with my small shield I would only stop 8 points of this damage, leaving my poor armour to face the remaining $9\frac{1}{2}$!).

To remedy this conundrum, and also any situation involving a mounted lance after a full charge (or where a thrusting weapon is set verses a charge) I would suggest the following amendments: rather than blocking all damage, any weapon which parries a thrusting weapon which has impaled, a charging lance or a thrusting weapon set verses a charge, reduces the damage inflicted by the thrusting weapon/lance as if it had an armour value equal to its maximum normal weapon damage ($1d4$ or 4 plus 2), whereas a bastard sword would stop all 11 points. Naturally these weapons aren't damaged by the thrusting weapon, but they can only deflect so much damage. This is perhaps fairer to all concerned and upgrades the usefulness of shields and thrusting weapons in general.

Optionally you might like to allow a character who parries an impaling thrusting weapon, a charging lance or thrusting weapon set verses charge, to add his randomly rolled strength bonus to the armour value of his weapon in reducing the damage. Note: in any situation other than those mentioned above, a thrusting weapon parried by a non-shield will normally do no damage unless it crits!

Note: Thrusting Weapons Include Cut & Thrust weapons such as rapiers.

Note: Thrusting Weapons include Cut & Thrust weapons such as rapiers.

SETTING THRUSTING WEAPONS VERSES CHARGES:

One of the most feared opponents is the mounted lancer, whose deadly charges have ended the lives of many erstwhile adventurers - and this is only fair, the lance was the ascendant melee weapon for 1,000 years! However the lance was far from being an unanswerable challenge, even a quivering peasant who could hold a pitch-fork steady for a few seconds could skewer a charging knight. To reflect this any thrusting weapon (but not Cut & Thrust weapons such as daggers, short swords and rapiers), may be 'set verses charge'. This gives the person wielding a set weapon an effective Dex SR of 0 in the round that the set weapon is used (for the purposes of calculating the overall SR of the weapon only) and should he successfully hit, he will do his normal damage, but will forgo his own damage bonus and use that of the mount charging him. Such weapons, as well as cut & thrust weapons may be set against charging you on foot. This gives you the normal SR bonus and instead of using your own damage bonus, you use a $1d8$ damage bonus if the target of the set weapon has moved more than 10 metres. Note this 10 meters must be in the same round

or immediately preceding round in which the charger comes into contact with the person with the set weapon - ie. a person may move 8 metres in one round, stop, then walk 2 meters without enabling the defender to set his weapon.

HALBERDS - VARIABLE CUT OR THRUST:

The halberd is one weapon not fully utilised in Runequest which I feel deserves a more careful treatment, and certainly I don't believe that you can pass it off as the rather simple 'Poie Axe'. The halberd is a weapon which reached its hey-day towards the end of the Middle Ages in the use of the Swiss at White Mountain and the Landsknechts - in fact so popular did it become that virtually every monarch in Europe came to arm his or her bodyguard with the halberd. I classify the halberd as a Cut or Thrust weapon, altering in its routine from thrust to cut, or cut to thrust every other round. To reflect this I give it the following statistics;

Type/Mode: Cut or Thrust

Basic Chance: 15%

STR Needed: 13

DEX needed: 12

Damage: $1d10-1$ (thrust) or $2d6+2$ (cut)

Hit Points: 15

Cost: 80

ENC: 3

Length: 2.4

Strike Rank: 0

Training Cost: 200/400/800

The Halberd is a special weapon in that it alternates from its cutting attack (in which it may slash, normally doing $2d6+2$ damage) to thrusting (in which it may impale, normally doing $1d10+1$ damage) and then back again. The person wielding the halberd at the commencement of each melee selects which routine he uses initially (though if the halberd is set verses a charge it must commence with a thrust routine), and he will use this same routine every other round until he is disengaged. The halberd was a great 'equalizer' bringing peasants and ill-equipped townsmen up to the point where they stood some chance against armoured knights, and as such it is a rather nasty weapon, but again, I think an infantryman wielding sword/axe and shield should be able to slay the halberd if he survives the initial few rounds.

MISSILE WEAPON 'TO HIT' LOCATIONS:

The Runequest 'to hit' locations presume that you are in melee with a sensible opponent who shields and parries the area around his chest and neck. This is probably quite correct, but when you are being shot at by a man using missile weapons the position changes - he gets to choose where he is aiming, and you largely have little to say in the matter. I believe that this problem is being remedied in the new Runequest, but I thought I might correct the matter here and now. I have also added a 'to hit' location table where the missileman is above the target by at least two meters.

'To Hit' table I
(Ground Level)
18-20 Head
16-17 Left Arm
14-15 Right Arm
11-13 Chest
07-10 Abdomen
04-06 Left Leg
01-03 Right Leg

'To Hit' table II
(Height Advantage)
17-20 Head
14-16 Left Arm
11-13 Right Arm
06-10 Chest
03-05 Abdomen
02 Left Leg
01 Right Leg

However to counter the increased effectiveness of missile weapons under these tables, I would suggest the passive use of shields to add to your armour against missiles. Any person wielding a small shield would add its armour value to that of his left arm, a person with a medium shield may additionally cover one of the following locations: head, chest or abdomen (he must declare which), a person with a large shield would add the armour value of his shield to his left arm and either his chest and head or to his chest and abdomen.

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1. An adventure designed for any published role-playing system. The environment may consist of a number of interconnected encounter areas on as many levels or containing as many subsections as desired. Do not feel constrained by any specific style of environment, there is none. Specifically, non-dungeon adventures will be acceptable.

Artwork Design Competition

2. An illustration or illustrations depicting a scene, or sequence of scenes which may occur, in a role-playing adventure game. The illustration must be in a media suitable for reproduction in Breakout. Preference will be given to black and white drawing done with black ink on white art paper, coloured black and white drawings and full colour paintings.

OFFICIAL ENTRY FORM 1984 CSA/JEDKO ROLE-PLAYING MODULE & ARTWORK COMPETITION

This form, or a copy, must be completely filled out and signed and must accompany any contest entry.

In return for the sponsorship of Conflict Simulations of Australia and The Jedko Games Company, and the sponsoring parties' agreement to consider a submission, the entrant agrees that all submissions will constitute a work made for hire and all submissions, including the copyright and all other rights therein become the property of CSA and Jedko without further obligation to the entrant. The entrant warrants to the sponsoring parties that all submissions are original and do not infringe on the rights of third parties. If CSA or Jedko publishes a submission in any publication and/or product the entrant will receive one free copy of the publication.

I hereby enter the work described below in the indicated category of the 1984 CSA/Jedko Role-Playing Module & Artwork Competition. I agree to the terms and conditions of this contest set forth in the rules and on this official entry form or copy thereof.

General Rules — The 'Small Print'

Entries must fit one of the above categories. Each entry must be made on an official entry form or a copy of that form, below. You must fill in your name and address, the title of the work, and the category you are entering on the form. The information must be repeated on the first page of the manuscript. All entries become jointly the property of Conflict Simulations of Australia and The Jedko Games Company, and cannot be returned.

Every module consists of at least two elements: the text (manuscript) and any maps or schematic diagrams that are needed to play the adventure. A contest entry should include any diagrams or illustrations that are essential to the understanding of the text.

Manuscripts must be type written or printed on good quality A4 white paper. Computer printouts are acceptable if the characters are clean and dark. Type must be double spaced and include generous margins.

A manuscript must contain at least 5,000 words and no more than 10,000 words. A manuscript may be accompanied by as many maps, diagrams and illustrations as you feel are necessary. Inaccurate or incomplete maps will disqualify an entry. Maps need not be of reproducible quality but should be original works. Black drawing ink, black felt tip markers and black or blue ball-point ink are acceptable media.

JUDGING: Manuscripts will be judged by a panel appointed by CSA. Their decision will be final and no correspondence will be entered into regarding their decision. Entries will be judged on creativity, playability, presentation and technical quality.

CLOSING DATE: Entries postmarked after 11.59pm on October 30, 1984, will not be considered. Entries will be acknowledged only if a self-addressed post card with return postage is included. Contest entries or questions about the rules should be addressed to the Role-Playing Module Design and Artwork Competition Editor, c/o Breakout Magazine, PO Box 162, Mooroolbark, Victoria 3136.

PRIZES: Prizes will be awarded in each category provided the winning module and the winning piece of artwork is judged to be of a publishable standard. All prize winners will receive a free copy of the edition of Breakout in which their work is published. First and second prize winners will receive a 12 month subscription to Breakout and a Breakout T-shirt.

Title of contest entry

Category

Entrant

Signature

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Signature of Parent or Guardian if entrant under 18

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RELIGIONS WITHIN A CAMPAIGN

by Andrew South

There can be little doubt that religion is one of the most important aspects of the D&D system. From the moment a character is generated to the moment of his death (and even beyond), the gods will have an enormous impact on his or her life. Religion will colour the way that a faithful worshipper views life as a whole and difficult situations in particular. In times of desperate need, a faithful worshipper frequently turns to his or her god for aid - whether this be in the form of a last-ditch cry for divine aid, or (when this fails, as it usually does) a spell to raise him or her from the dead.

The importance of the divine pantheon is built into the game, and is supposedly covered by the inclusion of the Deities and Demigods Cyclopaedia in the AD&D set of books. Unfortunately, some interpretations of the deities listed there are doubtful at best. Another annoying aspect to using this text is the fact that some of the best pantheons were not included in the final edition. I have great difficulty in understanding why the excellent Hyborean mythos was included in Eldritch Wizardry, yet was left out of Deities and Demigods. These disadvantages, however, are minor compared to the difficulty of player knowledge of the gods listed therein. As every DM knows, there are players who can quote information verbatim from any one of the AD&D books. Such extensive knowledge of the gods totally destroys the atmosphere of the game. My contention is that Deities and Demigods is totally inadequate. I feel that any D&D DM must put considerable work into his or her religious system if the campaign is to be run well. To do anything less robs the campaign of much of its individual flavour.

The first step in designing a religious system is a careful consideration of the divine hierarchy. Are the gods ruled by a single super-powerful entity, or an alliance of one or more divine beings? My campaign falls into the former category, but I have played in one where a trinity of gods ruled all. You may decide that there is to be no rulership amongst the gods. In such a case, however, adequate explanation must be given as to why the multiverse wasn't torn apart long ago by battling deities. At this stage, it will usually be worth considering some form of creation myth. How did the ruling deity (if any) come into power? Did he, she or it create the multiverse, or simply step into someone else's shoes? If so, whose? The creation myth is an important aspect of any religious system. Indeed, some have speculated that it may be the one major mystery that creates the need for religion.

The next point for consideration is the number of deities to be used. Some favour a collection of several extremely powerful religious blocs. Although this entails less work for the DM, another viable alternative is the type of pantheon where an abundance of splinter cults is spread over the campaign. This involves considerable effort on the DM's part, but provides the players with the challenge of running into obscure religions about which they know next to nothing. My own campaign is of the latter type.

Once this has been done, the DM can actually sit down and begin to design the religions of his or her world. I recommend that this process begin with an idea of what the deity is all about. Assign basic spheres of influence to a deity. For instance, a god might represent magic, knowledge and alchemy. Having assigned such broad areas of influence to a deity, everything else tends to fall into place naturally. Never hesitate to draw from traditional mythology, but always change things around so that recognition is made difficult (if not impossible). Make sure that every alignment is represented equally, unless your world is one where one alignment aspect dominates another.

The DM might also like to consider how non-human races are to be represented in the divine pantheon. I myself do not favour the creation of exclusively non-human deities. The abundance of intelligent species in AD&D usually makes this approach difficult if the number of gods is to be kept manageable. After all,

if orcs and goblins can have several of their own deities, why not every other species with low or greater intelligence and a sizeable population? Personally, I see no reason why non-humans cannot worship the same deity that humans do, provided of course that the alignment and general nature of the god is suitable. Orcs might worship the same god of battle and armies, for instance. He would appear to his orcs as shamans as an enormous orc, but would be essentially the same deity in most respects. By the same token, elves could worship the same goddess of the arts and music as do other species. However, she would be seen as a female elf, and might take the form of such before elvish worshippers. In my opinion, this simplifies things considerably. Nonetheless, DMs willing to put work into non-human deities might be aided by the series of articles in DRAGON magazine on the subject (these are some of the more worthwhile items to appear in that magazine lately).

Quite a few DMs will stop here. The gods have been detailed and their broad scope of control has been defined. What more is there to do? The answer is: plenty. This is just the beginning. To illustrate this, I have summarised below the type of information I use to outline a religion more fully. Almost all DMs have clarified this information in their own minds, yet few get it down on paper. Following this summary, I have given an example religion from my own campaign, in order to show how I generally go about it (I know I can trust my players not to read this section). [Ed: as a once and future player in this excellent campaign, I can only say that typing it without reading it is going to prove tricky even with our new whizz-bang typewriter!]

God's Statistics

Almost everyone covers this area well. This basically entails detailing the physical, magical, and psionic capabilities of each god, along with the powers of any artifacts the god might possess. Some DMs, however, give their gods unlimited power - this is definitely not a good idea. It is my opinion that players should never be able to reach the stage where they can challenge a deity. After all, if anything is sacred, it would have to be the gods! Nonetheless, the definition of each god's powers is important for purposes of comparison. It may even become necessary for one god to battle another - although this should be an absolutely land-shaking event. This has occurred once in my own campaign. At such times, the abilities of each god must be known. Similarly, the powers of all artifacts a god owns should be defined. Why stop with Orcus' Wand? Detailing things like Vidar's Crown and Jurala's Armour adds immensely to the campaign flavour.

Divine Agents

Almost all gods will use some form of go-between to communicate with their multitudinous worshippers. Such beings will be those most commonly encountered by players. Their capabilities must thus also be detailed. Consider carefully the nature of the servants(s). They may be a race of beings that serves the deity - e.g. ki-rins serving a powerful Lawful Good god. On the other hand, the deity may have a handful of demigod children that serve him or her. Whatever you do, never make the mistake of creating divine servants more powerful than their masters. The omnipotent Gary Gyax himself appears to have done this - compare the solars described in the Monster Manual II with any of his gods as listed in DRAGON magazine. To do this makes nonsense of a religious hierarchy.

Special Familiars

According to the information in the Player's Handbook, familiars are sent to a magician by the gods. It makes sense to assume that special familiars should not be listed by alignment, but rather by god. The religion of a magic-user can then determine what type of creature is sent if he or she is lucky enough to get a special familiar. It may even influence the type of normal familiars received - for instance, a god of battle is more likely to send a hawk than a sparrow to act as a familiar. In any case, the detailing of

a deity's special familiar is a must if you agree with the above reasoning. You can adapt some monsters to this person — for example, a good special familiar for Bahamut would be the pseudo-dragon. Others will typically be minor spirits sent from the deity's home plane (such as the imp or the quasit). Whatever the choice, its abilities and appearance should be a reflection of the deity that the creature serves. As DM, you should then decide what benefits a special familiar will give its master. These also should be in line with the nature of the god. Finally, consider how the familiar is likely to react if its master begins to react out of alignment. This inevitably causes great friction, but familiars will react differently, depending on their alignment and the general nature of the god they serve.

Another point I would like to raise in this area concerns the description given to the quasit and the imp in the *Monster Manual*. The text states that they are "created to spread evil in the form of a familiar to a ... magic-user or cleric." However, AD&D does not provide for the granting of familiars to clerics. Perhaps Gary Gygax changed his mind between production of the *Monster Manual* and the *Player's Handbook* (it would not be the first time). Admittedly, folklore favours the familiar as the servant of a magic-user or witch. Nonetheless, I feel that clerics should have a chance to qualify for gaining a familiar, since they are sent by the gods. In my campaign, I therefore assign a cumulative percentage chance that a cleric will be sent a familiar on attaining each new experience level. This chance is typically small, so that familiars generally are still mainly the province of the magic-user.

Naturally, a cleric must have been exemplary in conforming to his or her religion before a familiar is granted to him or her. Generally, he or she will also have at least several experience levels and have proven his or her devotion and worth to the deity.

General Information

This is the last major section of information, and probably the most important. It is basically a summary of the religion for the benefit of the player character clerics and paladins. It should also describe how the religion fits into the campaign in general. This type of information should not be generally available to the players, or a large degree of mystery is lost. I always strive to give each religion some special powers and abilities, in order to further enhance their differences. Such bonuses should not be all-powerful. If they are significant, the DM can impose an experience penalty on the clerics of the religion to compensate for their added abilities. Points to cover include the following.

1. Status. Whether god or demigod, prime deity or servitor.
2. Sphere of Influence. What aspect(s) of life the god is associated with.
3. Holy/Unholy Symbol. The physical shape of the holy/unholy symbol of the god.
4. Religious Cant. I use this to replace alignment language, which is patently absurd as there is no logical basis for its use. Each god should have a tongue spoken mainly by his or her clerics, paladins and worshippers (along the lines of Druid's Cant).
5. Alignment. The alignment of the god.
6. Temple Locations. The locations of the deity's major temples within the campaign. It may be a good idea to work out the level of the highest level cleric in each of these temples, so that you know where the players can obtain high-level spells from.
7. Worshippers' Alignments. The alignments considered acceptable by the god in his or her worshippers. Some are more fussy than others — for instance, a god of travel might accept worship from nearly anyone, but a god of undead might only want evil types.
8. Highest Spell Level. This highest spell level grantable by a deity to his or her clerics. This should relate to his or her status.

9. Weapons Allowable. It is ridiculous to limit clerics of Arloch, Knight of Swords, to the usual club, flail, hammer, mace and staff. Some clerics have to be allowed to use weapons beyond those normally given.

10. Special Spells. Any spells available to clerics of the religion, which are not normally allowable. I often "borrow" appropriate magic-user or illusionist spells for use by religions. Invent some new ones where needed to keep the players on their toes. These special spells should not be too large in number, however.

In addition to the above, it is essential to include a brief discussion of the theology and beliefs of the religion. Obviously, you cannot hope to cover a religion's history, customs and theology. However, it is a must to construct the bare bones upon which the player character clerics and the DM can flesh out the rest of the religion. The DM should encourage players to become involved in this.

KALNAROS

"Lord of the Dark Kingdoms"

God's Statistics

Armour Class: -7
Move: 9"/18"
Hit Points: 300
No. of Attacks: 3
Damage/Attack: 2d8/2d8/3d10
Special Attacks: See below
Special Defenses: See below
Magic Resistance: 120%
Size: L
Alignment: Chaotic Evil
Psionic Ability: 350
Attack/Defense Modes: All/all
S: 24 (+6,+12) E: 23 W: 19 D: 22 C: 25 Ch: -4

Kalnaros is demonic in appearance, and horrible indeed to behold. He is humanoid in general build, but has bat-like wings. His head also is bat-like, but has a snouted nose. His fangs and talons are extremely long, and his body is heavily muscled and extremely powerful. His skin is a revolting mixture of red and purple, and his eyes glow a deep red.

Kalnaros attacks with two talon rakes, each of which inflicts 2d8 points of damage, and a bite from his powerful jaws, which inflicts 3d10 points of damage. His bite will also drain the creature struck of one life level. Kalnaros can only be hit by +4 or better weapons, and regenerates at the rate of 5 hit points per round.

Kalnaros continually radiates protection from good in a 100' radius. All non-divine creatures of lawful or good alignments that come within 100' of the god must save vs. magic, or they will be held transfixed until they either leave the area, or until Kalnaros gives them permission to move. This save must be made on each round that such beings are within the affected area.

Kalnaros can use magic as a 40th level cleric and a 25th level magic-user.

Divine Agents

Kalnaros is served by Alvara, a demi-god spawned many centuries ago upon this plane. When the N'gari were in power, a virgin maid was sacrificed to Kalnaros as a matter of routine. To the delight and amazement of the N'gari, in the year BE 185, Kalnaros chose instead to implant his seed within the maiden. Thus was Alvara created. She was raised in her youth by the N'gari, but was taken to the Abyss by Kalnaros when she came of age. Alvara now acts as divine agent for Kalnaros on many planes. Her abilities are as follows.

Alvara ("Witch of the Knife")

Armour Class: -2
 Move: 18"
 Hit Points: 95
 No. of Attacks: 1
 Damage/Attack/1d4
 Special Attacks: See below
 Special Defenses: See below
 Magic Resistance: 50%
 Size: M
 Alignment: Chaotic Evil
 Psychic Ability: 180
 Attack/Defense Modes: All/All

S: 18/47 I:1-20 I: 18 W: 18 D: 20 C: 20 Ch: 19

Alvara appears as a very beautiful dark skinned woman, somewhat Arabid in appearance. Her dressed hair is styled in her vampire-like fangs and small horns. Otherwise, however, she is remarkably human. She has dark shoulder-length hair and strong black eyes that seem to spin if gazed upon for any length of time. Alvara wears very little in the way of clothing - usually a bikini-type outfit of deep red coloration. She will also frequently wear one each of matching red around her waist, and another as a headband. Alvara is an exceedingly cruel and violent demi-god. She was brought up amongst unrepentant evil, and upon reaching maturity was brought to the Abyss, where she has spent the bulk of her existence. She laughs at pain, and its refinement of cruelty is beyond her. She particularly delights in corruption of all that is good or lawful, for she detects such traits with a vengeance hatred. Although Alvara feels little love for Kalaros, she serves him faithfully for delight in the pain she can inflict, as well as the knowledge that he is infinitely more powerful than she.

Alvara possesses two magical weapons that she is frequently used in melee, one in each hand. The first is a -1 dagger of sharpness (NSAL). The second is a +3 dagger (DVT 14, FOO & ALIGN CTS, speaks Atlantean, Common, Hiyakatan, and Kalaran; detects good in a 1" radius; detects magic in a 17' radius). Alvara is an absolute master of the dagger, and for this reason is sometimes known as Alvara of the Knife. When using daggers, she is able to strike twice per round. This effectively gives her a total of four attacks per round, two with each dagger. She strikes as a 12th level fighter, but does not gain multiple attacks except as outlined above. Alvara has all the abilities of a 10th level assassin and will make use of her ability to backstab by using teleportation in combat. She can only be struck by +1 weapons or better.

Alvara's gaze causes the creature looked upon to save vs. magic or be held for 1d4 turns. Eye contact is not necessary, but Alvara cannot do anything else in the same round. She has the standard basic magical abilities for a demi-god, and can thus plane shift and teleport at will. Her gazing ability will cause the appearance of a wraith demon (15%), necro-demon (20%), galebrea demon (20%), halfbreed demon (20%), or Kalaros himself (5%). The gate has a 50% chance of opening.

Finally, Alvara uses magic as a 10th level cleric.

Special Familiar

Kalaros' clerics have a 1% cumulative chance per level of being given a familiar. Thus, a first level cleric has a 1% chance, a second level cleric a 2% chance, a third level cleric a 3% chance, and so on. The special familiar given by Kalaros to those he favours is the quasit, as described in the Monster Manual. The master of a quasit is raised one experience level, but permanently loses four if the creature dies. He or she stays in telepathic contact with the creature as long as it is within one mile. If the quasit is within 1" of its master, he or she gains a 25% magic resistance and regeneration at the rate of 1 hit point per round. Once the familiar has been granted, it will generally become morose and moody should he or she begin to act out of alignment. After a time, it will refuse to obey instructions. If such behaviour continues for any length of time, the immortality of its master will be revoked, and his or her soul will be claimed by the quasit when the subsequent years of old age slay him or her.

General Information

Status: Lesser God
 Sphere of Influence: None of Importance
 Holy/Unholy Symbol: Circle split by a crack
 Religious Cant: Kalaran
 Alignment: Chaotic Evil
 Temple Locations: ?
 Worshipers' Alignments: Chaotic Evil only
 Highest Spell Level: 6
 Weapons Allowable: Club, flail, hammer, mace, staff
 Special Spells: None
 Other Changes: None

Other Information: Kalaros' religion is an exceedingly ancient one. It dates from the earliest days of the Kalaran Empire. This entire civilisation was founded and maintained by the ruling class, the N'gari. This elite class consisted not only of priests, but also of fighters and magicians. They were powerful indeed. In the days (my campaign) with an Iron grip, ruled the N'gari that served him. Rebels against the rule of Kalaros were infrequent and often badly organised.

However, this idyllic period came to an end, as must all ideals. Kalaros himself destroyed the civilization of the

N'gari when they began to feel that it was they, rather than Kalaros, who ruled Fearth. He did this despite the fact that his power upon Fearth was shattered, and Kalaros himself was driven from this plane forever. Many centuries passed before Kalaros was able to reassert his power here. Recently, the ancient and forgotten lore of the N'gari has been rediscovered, and Kalaros has returned from his banishment beyond time and space. Aghast at the enormous multiplicity of pagan religions that have sprung up in his absence, he instructed his servants to begin forming a new N'gari class.

The religion of Kalaros embodies several concepts. The first is represented by the unholy symbol of the god. The circle split by the crack represents both destruction of the world and disruption of the universal harmony. Kalaros detests any form of beauty or balance. These are illusions of the mind by which the weak-killed are seduced from a purpose. In some ways, this is the primary purpose of the religion, which basically evolved as a mindlessly violent protests against the strictures of the law and good. Destruction of all forms of organization and harmony are the eventual goals of the new N'gari. Even the religious order of the N'gari must eventually be destroyed, although this task is the responsibility of Kalaros rather than his servants.

The strength of the N'gari arises from four points, often known as the four aspects of Kalaros. The first aspect of Kalaros. The first aspect of Kalaros is KNOWLEDGE, which is embodied in the N'gari mages. They serve the will of Kalaros aiding with such knowledge and skills as they are able to provide. The second aspect of Kalaros is STRENGTH. This is embodied in the N'gari fighters that serve the temple, and provide a powerful fighting force should strength be required. The third aspect is WISDOM, which is embodied in the N'gari priests that serve his will. The fourth and final aspect of the god is DEATH. Kalaros is the dealer of death to both N'gari and non-N'gari, as can be plainly seen by the fall of the Kalaran civilization. Mastery of death is not given to those who serve Kalaros. Yet because mastery of death is his, Kalaros stays his hand against those who serve him.

This mastery of death effectively bestows immortality upon a N'gari, whether cleric or not. All those that join Kalaros' religion are promised immortality - their death will not come through time alone, but only from another's hand. This will not come to any class of character willing to worship Kalaros. However, the promise of immortality has been found to be less appealing to the non-human races, because of their longer life spans. Because of their longer life spans. Because of this, only humans are allowed to join the religion. Those who do join the religion. Those who do join are periodically fed a sacred liquid given to the N'gari by Kalaros. This substance acts as a potion of longevity, reducing the age of the person drinking it by 1d12 years. However, under normal circumstances there is no chance of age reversal using the liquid. In addition, after 10 doses of the sacred liquid, the person becomes immortal, and will never age again. As yet, few have actually achieved immortality because of the religion's comparatively recent revival.

The sacred liquid is made available to any worshiper of Kalaros. Supplies are limited, however, by comparison with the days of old. The religion is therefore forced to charge those who wish to drink the liquid 1000 gp per dose. Removal of the sacred liquid from the temple in which it is purchased is not permitted. Pilfering of the sacred liquid is a sin punishable by a slow death. Kalaros himself is said to pursue those who steal his gift to the N'gari. Also note that it is not permissible for the non-N'gari to drink the sacred liquid, under any circumstances. However, if he or she is given special permission, a N'gari high priest is permitted to feed the liquid to non-intelligent monsters or animals, in order for them to become eternal guards for something of value.

It is because of the sacred liquid that the N'gari rose to supremacy in the days of the Kalarans. Many of them achieved immortality, and were consequently able to rise to extremely high levels of experience. When this occurred, none could stand before them. At present, the N'gari are weak by comparison with their past glories. Given time, however, they will also achieve great power.

The N'gari plan is to remain relatively inactive until this time. However, when they have achieved sufficiently high levels of experience, all obstacles will be swept away, and the N'gari will once again assume their rightful position of ultimate power.

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VAMPIRES

Pearly moonlight streamed from the sky to light the forest clearing with its glow. Near one edge of the clearing was a little white rabbit who was having a little quiet midnight snack of the dew-covered grass. He glanced up as a shadow flitted across the moon. The rabbit became a motionless statue as loud panting suddenly filled the air.

Gasping for breath a beautiful young maiden staggered into the clearing. With a panic-stricken look she scanned the clearing for danger before darting across to the other side.

She saw her waiting pursuer too late and her despairing scream tore apart the stillness of the night. Moonlight glinted off his fangs as he savoured the moment. With his mouth open in eager anticipation he lunged at her.

His feet slipped on the wet grass and with wildly flaying arms he fell full length onto the ground. His jaw slammed shut with fangs speared deep into flesh. Instantly the maiden turned and fled into the night. Shocked and stunned the vampire rose to his feet. While spitting out blood and fur he raced across the clearing, searching for his prey.

Meanwhile, deep in his underground home, a little white rabbit quaked in fright as a small amount of blood oozed from two puncture-marks on his neck. The body chemistry of the little white rabbit changed subtly as a thirst for BLOOD was born. Thus a new race of creatures was created.

VAMPIRE RABBITS

No. Appearing: 1-20

Armour Class: 6

Move: 12" (or 18" leap)

Hit Dice: 3

% In Lair: 60%

Treasure Type: Small to Medium

No. Of Attacks: 1 bite/front claws/back claws

Damage/Attack: 1-8/1-4/1-6

Special Attacks: see below

Special Defences: none

Magic Resistance: see below

Intelligence: Animal

Alignment: Chaotic Neutral

Size: Small

Psionics: none

As rabbits are a different species from humans they did not gain all the abilities or disabilities of a human vampire. Vampire rabbits must feed upon the blood of the living in order to survive. They may be found wherever normal rabbits can be found and also where suitable victims may be.

Vampire rabbits will drain all the blood from a victim who is about rabbit size. If the victim is larger then the rabbit will either only drink enough for itself or it will call the whole warren to the feast. A vampire rabbit can only turn other rabbits into vampires (they make a saving throw versus Polymorph to avoid changing) and do not have any form of energy drain attack.

A vampire rabbit may attempt to charm any who gaze into its eyes. The victim must save versus Spells to avoid the Charm. Charmed beings will not be able to move whilst the rabbit drinks their blood. Another form of attack is their leap. They will leap for their victim's throat in order to tear out the jugular vein. If a natural '20' is rolled the head is decapitated.

Sleep, Charm and Hold spells have no effect on these rabbits and they may not be turned by Clerics. Mirrors and crosses also have no effect on them. Lost Hit Points are regenerated at 2 per round but once they have been reduced to 0 HPs the rabbit is dead.

They may be destroyed by:

A - being reduced to zero Hit Points.

B - having a wooden stake driven through their heart.

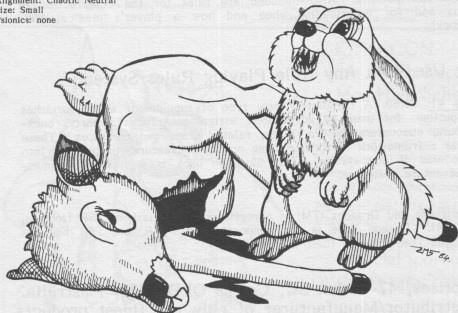
C - immersion in running water for 1 turn.

Sunlight has no effect on vampire rabbits but they do tend to avoid it when they are not thirsty for blood. All normal weapons do their normal amount of damage when they hit.

Shiny objects attract their attention and so their warren will contain gold, electrum and platinum pieces as well as any gems and jewelry that they may have collected.

I swear that I have never played 'Bunnies and Burrows'. And finally may a peaceful green field containing several cute little bunny rabbits, nibbling grass, terrorize your characters.

John T. Stewart



The Restaurant At The End Of The Magazine

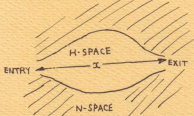


HYPERSPATIAL TRAVEL

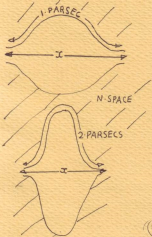
This brief article is intended for all those Traveller players and referees that have wondered and perhaps searched through volumes of physics text-books in search of that ever intriguing: how does a Jump Drive work? While it is obviously unofficial, the following explanation may give a gasping ref. a chance to actually stumble his way through a seemingly plausible argument as to why a group of characters in a ship equipped with Jump 6 cannot jump 1 parsec in a sixth of the time required by a ship with only Jump 1.

The everyday, standard model J-Drive is not so much a drive as a Field-Generator. Its function, quite simply is to warp Normal-Space (N-space) in such a way that the ship contained within the field is pushed into Hyper-space. Once there, the ship is then propelled through Hyperspace to the point of the warp now closest to the ship. The distance between the ship's point of entry and the point of greatest warp is equal to 'X' (see figure 1).

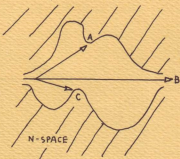
Fig. 1: profile of a warp



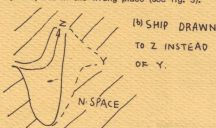
Once in Hyper-space, the rate at which the ship will move becomes independent of the ship as it is propelled through an action not unlike that of peristalsis. The rate of this 'natural' movement is such that it will carry the ship across the distance X (fig. 1) in approximately one week of N-space (and shipboard) time. As a consequence of this, therefore, all ships will travel through Hyper-space at a rate independent of both the size of the ship and the size of the J-Drive. When drives capable of jumps from sizes one to six are operative, they differ only in the magnitude of their effect upon N-space, not upon Hyper-space (see fig. 2). Theoretically, the maximum jump possible is J-6, due to a combination of both N-space and Hyper-space forces, which prevents generation of larger warps.



(a) SHIP
DRAWN TO
EITHER
A, B OR C.



One of the most common mishaps, or 'malfs', that can happen to a ship's J-Drive is that of mis-jumping. Applying this to our theory therefore, it can be interpreted as a failure on the part of the drives to generate the desired warp. Instead the drives generate a warp with either more than one region of greatest curvature, or with only one, but in the wrong place (see fig. 3).



One final point is that of switching off a J-Drive while in Hyper-space. Usually it will result in the ship, being immediately expelled from Hyper-space somewhere into N-space (usually a light-year or two from any star-system). Alternatively, however, and by far more interesting is to leave the characters in Hyper-space for a rather unique adventure in another universe. Who knows, it might be an ideal way to cross into a Runequest or D&D campaign (although there may be some trouble in explaining why the Imperium does not continually go there). Perhaps in this universe they will find, at its centre, a huge amorphous body writing unceasingly to the monotonous piping of a flute...

by Arthur Spanos



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