



# PAPYRUS™

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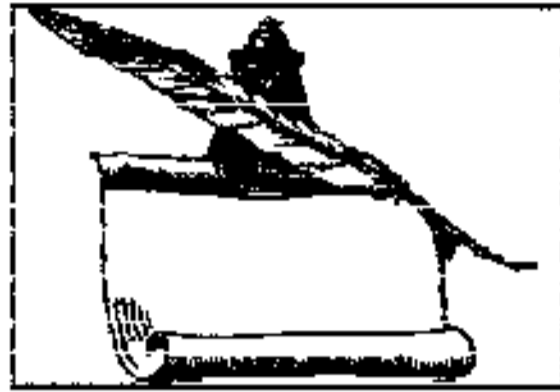
When gamers, gather!



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### SCRIBBLES FROM THE SCRIBE

Welcome to our slightly delayed summer issue. The delay was initially intentional, so that the issue would coincide closer with GenCon, but became unavoidable as work pressures mounted. With any luck, this issue will see some distribution at GenCon. To make up for it, the next issue's release is intended to coincide with RockCon, which normally takes place at the end of October. This should get us back on schedule for our Holiday Issue. Improvements to our quality are becoming less physical and more content. As our readership and contacts expand, the quantity and quality of submissions increase. Speaking of contacts, expect to see Papyrus featured in an upcoming Shadis magazine, Zine Scene installment!



Recently, in the comic book bargain bin, I found DC and Impact comics' Who's Who looseleaf packs, \$1 each. I bought one of each. They are the same in format (DC, Archie comics and Impact are connected) as the DCHeroes RPG DC universe Who's Who without the game stats. These could be interesting. I did notice something that has been eating at me. Captain America (Marvel), The Shield (Archie/Impact) and General Glory (DC) all seem to be based on the same WWII superhero myth. I'm sure Cap is the original, by Jack Kirby, but maybe someone out there knows the details. (Jack Kirby, RIP, 06Feb94)

The Who's Who purchases got me thinking about non-game related game supplements. Travel magazines and brochures, National Geographic, tour books, etc. I may have to dig deeper into these possibilities. Remember Barlowe's Guide to Extra-terrestrials and Dougal Dixon's books? For example, a past Sunday's paper had a 3D cut away floor plan of Rockford's newly renovated city hall, with detailed space usage.

Another example is the Serial Adventures book, of the Serial Adventures of Flash

Gordon, I purchased. It summarizes all of the old movie serials and makes a satisfactory source book. Of course I didn't pay full price (\$16.95) but only \$4.99. There are many other titles by this publisher that include not only old movie serials but TV series as well. An interesting tidbit of info contained therein was that George Lucas' original desire was to make a Flash Gordon movie, licencing difficulties made him decide to write his own story ... Star Wars.

Speaking of Star Wars, Star Log magazine has just published a Tatooine Tech Manual in magazine form (\$6.95). Tech data, maps, diagrams and descriptions of everything on the planet, from Jabba's palace to the Jawas' crawler. I'll pick it up when it hits the back issue bargain bin.

One last example of a non-game RPG aid. Sitting next to a life size cut out of Cathy Lee Gifford (sweee!) was a stack of cruise line brochures. Each contained deck plans, room lay-outs, cruise courses, schedules and prices. This would work well with the 007 Thrilling Places, and/or any near modern setting. Best of all it's free.

**RED STAR REFLEX ELITE**, an armored soldier for the cyberpunk genre, by Philip J. Reed, jr. and Ben Rhodes

Note: The Reflex Elite and all of the corporations listed here are part of a cyberpunk/superhero RPG system which will be released once we get the time and energy to finish it. All of the information presented here is copyright 1992, 1993 Philip J. Reed, jr. and Ben Rhodes. All rights reserved.

Description: Towering at 7'11", Red Star Reflex Troops make up less than 20% of their corporate military force. These gray armored troops are equipped with the latest in nanotech microcomputer controlled hydraulic strength augmentation systems and carry more firepower than a Eurotech RBU system. That armament enables the Reflex Elite to take and hold almost three times the amount of land that a standard Red Star squad can control (8 troops in armor with squad and personal weaponry). Reflex Elite have most recently



been seen operating in NeueTech controlled Germany and Agri-Tech controlled Minneapolis.

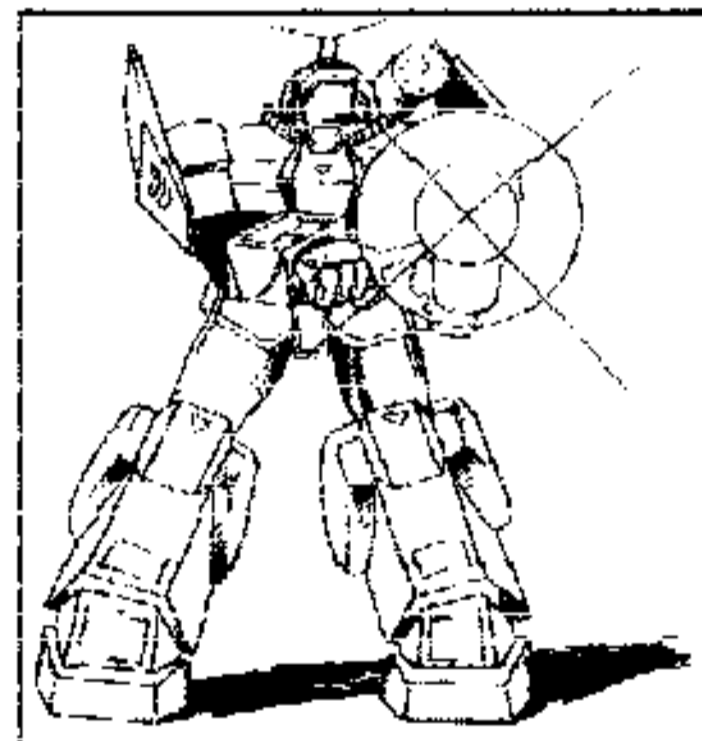
**BioTechnical Information:** The Reflex Elite armor is controlled by a man no more than 2'4" in height and weighing no more than 58lbs. This height and weight are maintained through genetic control, effectively stunting their growth permanently. These men are supplied by the people of the Ukraine, who's children are purchased if they test successfully during mandatory IQ testing in their seventh month of life. The social and economic conditions of Red Star Ukraine, being as poor as they are, few people think twice about selling their children into "slavery" as members of Cataclysm call it. The child's brain capabilities are augmented through the use of virtual reality training and four nanotech microcomputers placed in the lower brain that have the sole purpose of coordinating the armor's limbs and automatic defense systems. The microcomputers are linked with the armor through six separate cables and a NASC implant in the lower neck that needs constant maintenance and repairs due to the strain of combat. The greatest drawback of the Reflex program is the fact that the armor's controller may never leave the battle suit once he is incorporated into it; it is his life support system and being disconnected from it will cause death in less than ten minutes. Waste is filtered through a cleaning system in the lower torso and is pumped into the body as nutrients and vitamins through IVs in the left arm and leg. Monthly maintenance on the BioSystems is required, these are maintenance requirements that cannot be conducted by the onboard nanotech medics and mechanics.

**RoboTechnical Information:** The Reflex Elite armor is a marvel of even the twenty-first century's technical achievements. Less than a man but more than a robot, the Reflex program is the first successful use of man and machine in a new and innovative way, since cyberotechnology was made safe through the use of nanotech medics and mechanics in the late 2060s. Three powerful nanotech augmented hydraulic systems control each limb, providing the Reflex armor with a total lifting capacity of 869lbs. and a maximum running speed of 97.8 mph. The armor is powered by a small fusion plant that is housed in the torso area and the entire unit is covered in 2" thick titanium/ceramic/kevlar armor that has proven capable of stopping up to a full 20 second burst of 12mm HE rounds, as well as a nanotech mechanic system that can repair up

to 49% of the damage suffered in combat within 7 minutes. The entire unit is controlled through a powerful nanotech supercomputer that is based in the upperback region and is then interfaced into the "human" controller. Gyroscopic units are placed in the armor's lower torso as well as in the helmet unit, right above the controller's head. The helmet unit consists of two rangefinder systems, a single IR sighting system, and a speech distortion/hearing magnification unit allowing the Reflex Elite to hear as little as 8 decibels at a range of four thousand feet.

**Primary Armament:** The Reflex Elite carries an 18mm autocannon/rifle in his left or right hand (individual preference) that is capable of a cyclic rate of 580 rounds per minute. The AC/rifle weighs 40lbs without ammo and 89lbs with a full magazine of 1600 rounds. Targeting information is relayed to the controller through an interface cable that connects into the rifle's stock and the armor's forearm (interface ports are built into both the right and left forearm to allow for the weapons changing hands). Maintenance requirements are basically simple; the rifle must be replaced every three million rounds.

**Secondary Armament:** The Reflex Elite carries two 4.48mm four barrel mini-gatlings, one on each arm, and a 1800 round drum of ammo on the armor's back. These mini-gats fire at a cyclic rate of 300 rounds per minute and are capable of punching through 6" of ceramic/kevlar armor or 4" of titanium heat shielding. Targeting systems are both IR and Nightvision cameras located on the mini-gats fourth barrel and provide a 40% accuracy base. Maintenance requirements include barrel replacement every two million rounds, camera replacement every million rounds, as well as ammo drum replacements every four months (this does not include the ammo itself)/.



**Tertiary Armament:** A twelve shot, 20mm multi-fire rocket pod on the armor's right shoulder provides limited ranged support and firepower. This system is a one-shot weapon used only against heavily armored or aerial targets. In case of a fire emergency on the unit, the MFRP may be jettisoned and blown

clear by almost 20 feet.

Support: Each Reflex unit carries four AC/rifle magazines, two 4.48mm mini-gat ammo reloads, and a second load for the 20mm MFRP. Also carried is one spare nanotech medic and mechanic system that may be introduced into the armor and be functional in less than 19 seconds. This system may only be used when the Reflex troop has the five minutes required to open the maintenance port and load the NTMM system. These extra supplies are carried in a metal case that is slung over the left shoulder of the unit.

**ARROW AND BOLT RETRIEVAL**, by Ken R. Auliffe, originally published in GAREMAG #2



"Damn! I'm sure it went over here."

Rogtaff the ranger brushed aside the tall savannah grass with his foot.

"Found one!", came the cry about 50 yards away. Soolie the halfling poked his head above the grass with a triumphant look on his face and one of Rogtaff's arrows in his hand.

Rogtaff cast him a disgruntled stare and threw his bow to the ground. This is hopeless, he thought. If only my aim was better, if only that elk wasn't so fast, if only the DM didn't have a lousy table for arrow and bolt retrieval!

These are the chances of finding missiles that missed their targets, by terrain. It takes 1 round per bolt or arrow searched.

Sand/soil (plains):	90%
Grasslands:	60%
Marsh/swamp:	30%
Light forest:	25%
Dense forest:	15%
Hills:	10%
Mountains:	5%

Modifiers: Darkness -30%

Littlelight (torch/twilight/infravision)-15%

Arrow or Bolt Breakage

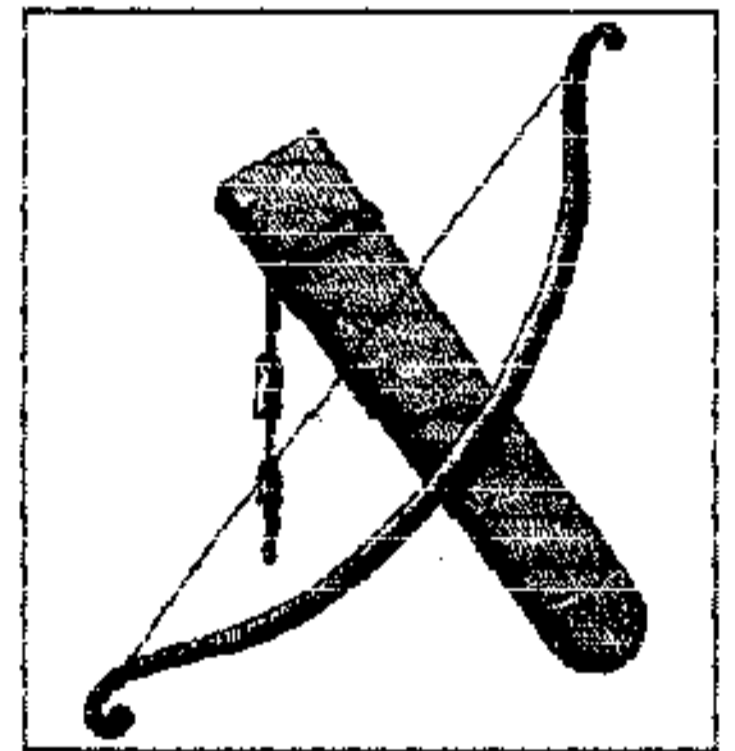
shot into	arrows	bolts	examples
soil	10%	2%	plain, field
wood	25%	10%	forest
metal	80%	30%	armor, iron door
stone	90%	40%	dungeon wall
magic	50%	20%	shield spell

For large amounts of missile fire, DMs will find it easier using total percentages. For example; a group of 10 archers fire a total of 140 arrows at a charging group of worg riders across and open plain. After the battle 100 arrows missed their targets, 90 can be found, although only 81 can be salvaged after they each spend 14 rounds searching.

Missile Breakage on a Hit Target

shot into	arrows	bolts	examples
flesh, soft	10%	2%	unarmored human, animal, zombie, flesh golem
flesh, medium	15%	5%	demi-humans, gnoll, bugbear (natural AC 8 to 6)
flesh, hard	25%	10%	rhino, basilisk, lizard, manticore (natural AC 5 to 2)
flesh, very hard	30%	15%	dragon, bulette (natural AC 1 or better)
soil	10%	5%	mud man
wood or bone	15%	10%	treant, skeleton
metal, woven	35%	20%	ring, scale, chain mail
metal, plated	50%	35%	iron golem, plate mail
stone	80%	50%	earth elemental
magical fire	nil	75%	fire elemental

Using the above example of worg riders, if 40 arrows found their mark (flesh, medium), 34 can be retrieved (15% of 40). Magic projectiles that miss have a 10% less chance of breaking per magical plus; any that hit are automatically destroyed.



**PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT**

"TRADER'S LIST" has now expanded. We now have new separate lists for the following categories: TSR CARDS, TSR BOOKS & GAMES, MODULES, AND RPG MAGS (Dragon, Dungeon, White Dwarf, White Wolf, Polyhedron, etc.). If you have items that you want to buy, sell or trade, Modules that you just want to swap, even looking for out of print hard to find items, just let me know at: John Kittrell, 2183 Buckingham Road, Richardson, TX 75081. Phone 214/530-6251 or Fax 214/644-0856.



**VILLAINS FOR V&V**, by Steven Viola

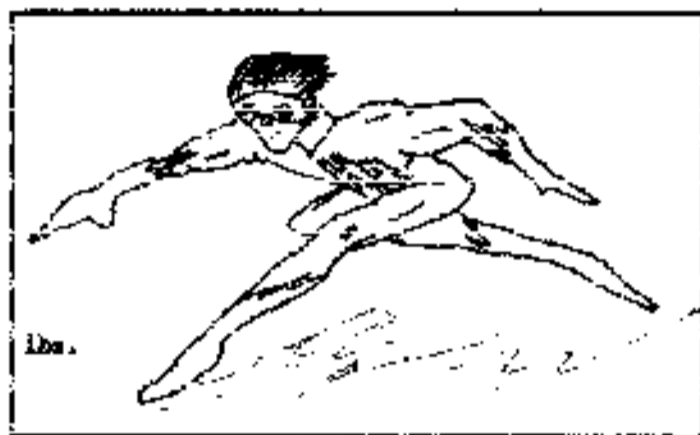
Hot Rod  
aka Roddy Burns  
Level 2  
Age 25

Powers:  
1. Flame Power, range 24", damage 1d12, PR=2  
2. Heightened Speed, +210" to movement, +7 to initiative  
3. Heightened Agility B, +17  
4. Heightened Defense, -4 to be hit

Weight 185lbs  
Str 13 End 11 Agi 28 Cha 10 Int 13 HP 15  
PP 65

+3 to damage  
+3 to accuracy  
Detect Hidden 10%  
Detect Danger 14%  
Carrying Capacity 303lbs

HTH 1d6  
Movement 262"



**Origin and Background:**

A former drag-car racer and mechanic, Hot Rod was trying to develop a new fuel to make his race car even faster, when he was accidentally doused by his concoction.

**Combat tactics:**

Hot Rod enjoys going twice before some super-heroes have the chance to go once! He will run circles around them and fire away with his flame power.

Super-Ebrum  
aka Walter Sayons  
Level 3  
Age 46

Powers:  
1. Heightened Intelligence B, +22  
2. Mind Control, range 2.5", PR=20 if successful  
3. Emotion Control, range 2.5", PR=8 if successful  
4. Telepathy, range 370", PR=1  
5. Mind Surge, range 5", PR=1, 1d10 damage

Weight 210lbs  
Str 12 End 12 Agi 17 Cha 11 Int 37 HP 26  
PP 78

+5 to damage  
+2 to accuracy  
Detect Hidden 26%  
Detect Danger 30%  
Carrying Capacity 304lbs  
HTH 1d6  
Movement 41"

**Origin and Background:**

Walter Sayons was a prominent chemist and



physist who developed an intelligence enhancing computer program. Having no one to test it on, he experimented on himself. His intelligence did increase dramatically, but it also drove him to near psychosis. Soon he realized he had acquired tremendous mental powers by increasing his intelligence and embarked on his mission inf life ... to try and conquer the world!

**Combat tactics:**

Super-ebrum will almost never fight hand to hand. He will try to close within a safe but effective range and overload his opponent's brain with a mind surge. He will occasionally attempt an emotion control and saves his power hungry mind control for only the most dire emergency.

Sphere  
aka unknown  
Level 2  
Age 37 (earth years)

Powers:  
1. Sphere power blast, range 12", damage 1d20, PR=1  
2. Sphere force field, range for attack 24", radius 3", damage HTH, PR=2  
3. Heightened Intelligence A, +14  
4. Weakness detection, +10 to hit

Weight 200lbs  
Str 12 End 12 Agi 13 Cha 10 Int 30 HP 11  
PP 67

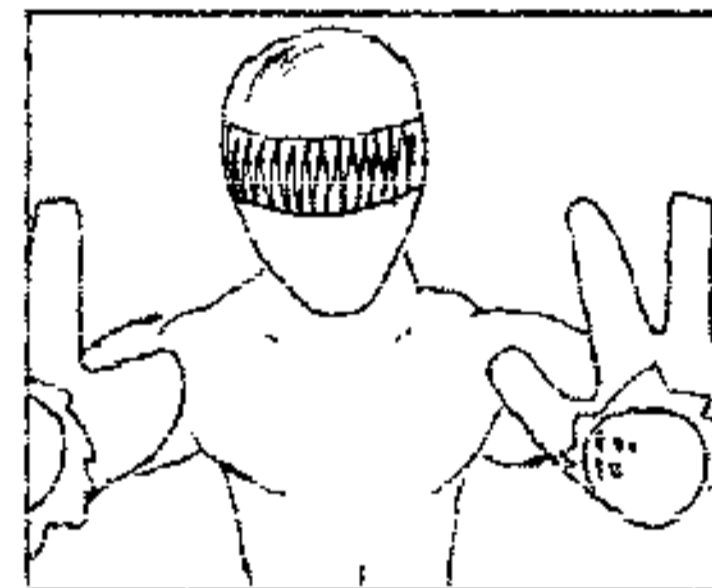
+4 to damage  
+1 to accuracy  
Detect Hidden 22%  
Detect Danger 26%  
Carrying Capacity 300lbs

HTH 1d6  
Movement 37"  
**Origin and Background:**

Sphere crash landed on Earth and was severely injured. He was discovered and nursed back to health by Super-ebrum. Even with his hatred of all mankind, Sphere remained loyal to Super-ebrum and agreed to help in his quest to conquer Earth.

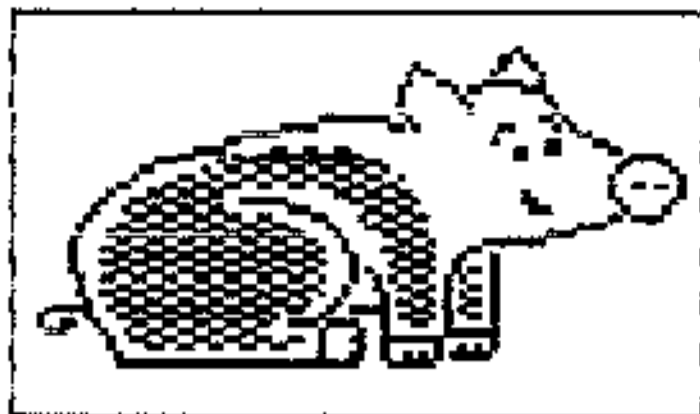
**Combat tactics:**

Sphere will always make a weakness detection on his opponent before attacking. Then with an almost guaranteed hit, he will blaze away with his power blast. When seriously threatened, he will take safety inside his sphere force field and if possible send it rolling at a group of close-together superheroes (like a bowling ball at pins).



**JUST A LITTLE BIT**

1. In the middle ages, people stored money in a jar made of clay called a pygg. Eventually taking the shape of a pig, they became piggy banks.



2. The origins of chess are in India where a similar game had the pieces march onto the board before play. The pieces correspond to modern ones as follows: Pawn = Foot Soldier, Bishop = Elephant, Knight = Cavalry, Rook = Chariot, Queen = Vizier, King = King. If you analyze the way the pieces move, you'll find the Indian versions make sense. The chariot, traveling in straight lines at the enemy, charging. The elephant, cutting across lines to intimidate the enemy and scatter his troops. The cavalry, riding toward and turning away, launching a "Parthian" (for the people who originated the maneuver) shot.

**THE PULP AVENGERS:** Game Mastering Pulp Adventures in the 1930s and 1940s. Brian Christopher Misiaszek. Copyright 1994.

**The Hero Pulps**

The "single character" or "Hero" pulps appeared early in the days of the flourishing pulp publishing jungle, their adventures zigzagging a course through many different story genres. Before the hero pulps, most magazines were of collections of short stories, or perhaps a novel serialized to span several issues. Later magazines became specialized by genre, such as the detective, horror, and science fiction pulps. In these genre magazines, the stories were usually written by different authors, though it was not uncommon for a single writer to fill the entirety of a given pulp title under multiple pseudonyms, a fact most readers were ignorant about. Certain characters were so popular with readers that they had appearances in many issues, and even different magazines. Examples of these included the detective-mystery pulp Black Mask where Dashiell Hammett's "Sam Spade" and Raymond Chandler's "Philip Marlowe" hard-boiled fiction first appeared. If fantasy and horror was more to your taste, the magazine Weird Tales had both, being home to the very popular Conan sword and sorcery stories of Robert E. Howard, H.P. Lovecraft's terrifying Cthulhu mythos cycle of tales, and Seabury Quinn's ghost-breaking stories about occult detective Jules de Grandin.

Pulp editors soon caught on to the idea

that a recurring character meant increased magazine sales to readers having a "collect the set" mentality. Series characters had always been popular with readers of adventure magazines, with such famous examples as Tarzan, Nick Carter, Fantomas and Sherlock Holmes. It was not, however, until the appearance of a magazine called The Shadow that the exploits of a single character became popular enough again with the public to provide the contents of an entire pulp magazine, each issue being a complete novel in a never ending saga of their adventures.

The entirely unexpected and unprecedented success of The Shadow Magazine spawned a host of other single-character or hero pulp magazines, many extremely popular between the time of the Depression and the Second World War. Some of these were The Avenger, Buck Rogers, The Lone Ranger, Captain Future, The Phantom Detective, Operator No. 5., Dusty Ayres and His Battle Birds, Hopalong Cassidy, The Masked Detective, The Whisperer, G-8 and his Battle Aces, The Wizard, Secret Agent X, The Secret Six, The Green Lama, and many, many more. Even villains had magazines of their own, such as The Mysterious Wu Fang, Captain Satan, The Octopus and Doctor Death, all of which featured the fiendish plots of some of the most diabolical and wicked villains in the pulps being thwarted by a few much less interesting heroes.

Below is a thumbnail sketch of three of the most popular pulp heroes and the magazines they appeared in; the Shadow, Doc Savage, and the Spider.

**The Shadow**

"Who knows what evil lurks in the hearts of men?" asked an awesome and eerie voice over the radio airwaves late in the summer of 1930. A long pause, and the uncanny voice answers himself with, "The Shadow knows!" and starts laughing a nightmarish and terrible laugh. This same rich and sardonic laugh would be the bane of hundreds of criminals, mad-scientists and foreign spies for the next two decades to come. But who was the Shadow?

The terror of criminals and evil-doers, the Shadow was a mystery crime-fighter who did his best to weed cities of crime in a staggering run of 325 magazine issues, beginning from his debut in the April 1931 issue, and lasting all the way to the summer issue of 1949. The first of the pulp hero magazines, The Shadow Magazine was far and away the most successful and popular with the newsstand magazine reading public. He stalked the steel canyons of New York City garbed in his trademark slouched hat, black swirling



cape, face concealing red muffler and two uncannily accurate and well used .45 automatics. As a man of mystery and a master of deduction and disguise, the only consistent feature of the Shadow was a mysterious ring on one finger, described variously as a fire opal, and as a blue girasol. Originally beginning his career waging a one-man war on crime, the Shadow gradually began recruiting agents to create a secret organization built along the lines of his World War I spy ring, devoted to fighting injustice and criminal wrong-doings. In the pulp series, he was aided by a small empire of helpers; Clive Burke, a newspaper reporter; Harry Vincent, his right-hand man, Cliff Marsland, a reformed gangster; Moe Schevritz, a taxi driver who doubled as the Shadow's chauffeur; Burbank, his contact man used by all his roving agents, and many more.

The Shadow worked under a number of false identities, the most famous being that of flamboyant millionaire playboy Lamont Cranston. It is in this role that most people are familiar with, the bored wealthy man-about-town using his athleticism and personal fortune to fight crime as a masked crusader. This was not, however, his true identity according to the pulp novels, recording that there was a real globe-trotting millionaire of this same name conveniently absent travelling around the world. With the permission and cooperation of the "real" Lamont Cranston, the tycoon's appearance, identity, home, and even the friends in the wealthy circles he moved in were borrowed by the Shadow in order to aid his war on crime, as revealed in the issue entitled, "The Shadow Laughs". On occasion the two even aided each other, each adopting the role of the other in order to stop a diabolical villain. Other roles adopted in the double life of the Shadow included that of dim police janitor Fritz, the fussy Phineas Twombly, thick fingered businessman Henry Arnaud, and many others.

After some six years of stories about the Shadow, his secret was finally revealed in the 131st issue of magazine series. In the August 1st, 1937 issue "The Shadow Unmasks", it would be revealed that the true identity of the Shadow was none other than that of missing noted World War I flying ace and super-spy, Kent Allard. The cover of this issue even revealed his own true appearance! Known during the war as the Dark Eagle, Allard had disguised himself as a wraith of the night to work behind enemy lines as a saboteur and spy, learning and honing many of

his crime-fighting skills in the process. This explanation of the "real" origin of the Shadow raises more questions than it answers. It does not account for the Shadow's extensive knowledge of the Far East, its cultures, languages, martial arts and mysticism, features frequently present in the pulp stories, if he had been spending much of the war as a spy in Germany. The most recent film version of the Shadow attempts to account for some of the Oriental background history of the Shadow, hinting of the mystic source of his powers to fading into the shadows, the use of his mocking laugh and his mind-warping abilities. Alas, such explanations owe more to Hollywood and to the liberties of the radio version of the Shadow than anything provided in the pulp novels. Ambiguity of this variety is no stranger to the Shadow, as illustrated with the example of the history of his famous jewelled ring. The latter is described variously in the pulp series as both a gift from the last Czar of Russia as well as the eye of an ancient Xincan idol. In the recent film version of "The Shadow", the famous ring was reduced to being simply a baroque signalling device, flashing out Morse code messages among the Shadow and his agents.

The origin of the Shadow is a curious and complicated story. In the summer of 1930 Street & Smith had begun a radio mystery anthology series as part of a promotional advertising campaign for their line of detective fiction magazines. Every Thursday night during "Detective Story Hour", the shows radio announcer--a mysterious voice known only as the "Shadow" (played by actor Frank Readick, Jr.)--would read a story taken from one of Street and Smith's detective magazine's currently on sale. The response to the radio show was surprising, with news agents reporting to back to the publisher about eager readers asking them for their magazine about "...that Shadow guy". Having no such magazine, but determined to exploit the success of their radio show and the demands of their readers, Street and Smith arranged for novice pulpster Walter B. Gibson to write a couple of Shadow novels for a new magazine of the same name. The result was a smash success, with the first two issues completely selling out. Realizing they had a winner, Gibson was contracted on a more permanent basis to write a Shadow novel every month (and for a period, twice-monthly), so that the loyal readers of The Shadow Magazine would be treated to yet another complete issue devoted to their favourite mystery pulp

hero. Most of the Shadow novels--285 out of 325--were written by Gibson, a former stage-magician, and the stories he spun made heavy use of his expertise in tricks, disguises, puzzles and secret codes.

Thrilled by their success with The Shadow Magazine, Street and Smith managed to convince the sponsor of the radio Shadow, Blue Coal, to change the focus and format of the radio show. In the 1937 season, the announcer became the narrator, and then the star of the mystery radio-play more faithful to the pulp magazine novels penned by Gibson. In a stroke of genius, Orson Welles was cast in the starring role of both the Shadow and Lamont Cranston, and his voice was synonymous with radio's master detective far beyond the 40 odd episodes he acted in. The radio version of The Shadow gave him a romantic interest, the beautiful Margo Lane, who was later incorporated by Gibson into the pulp stories. The writers for the radio Shadow also gave him the powers to cloud the minds of men, a talent not used in the pulp stories. For many years, the radio show's sponsor gave away as a premium a ring with mysterious black stone surrounded and guarded with embossed depictions of the shadow. The stone, alas, was not a rare girasol but simply a chunk of Pennsylvania anthracite! The radio Shadow ironically both preceded and outlasted the pulp version, with the last episode, "Murder At Sea", airing December 26, 1954.

The Shadow has been a perennial favourite with the public, spawning many comic book series, several films and movie serials, Big-Little books, board-games, secret decoder rings, and other ephemera over the last six decades. During the heyday of the magazine and radio series, over 900,000 people were members of the Shadow Fan Club. As additional proof that the Shadow has not laughed his last, the latest movie version of the Shadow starring Alec Baldwin in the title role, was released by Universal Pictures in the summer of 1994. Despite the admonishment made by the radio Shadow, that "Crime does not Pay", it seems that making movies him about fighting it does!

Example titles: The Living Shadow, The Voodoo Master, Mox, Grey Fist, Shiwan Khan Returns, The Romanoff Jewels, The Creeping Death, The Room of Doom, The Shadow Unmasks, The Shadow Laughs, etc.

Doc Savage

Doc Savage Magazine featured the incredible adventures of Clark "Doc" Savage Jr., known by many as the "Man of Bronze".

Armed with a superhuman intellect, scientific prowess and an awesome strength in his giant frame, Doc Savage had dedicated his life at an early age to thwart the foes of truth and justice. The 186 issues of Doc Savage Magazine recounted the world-shaking exploits of Doc and his daring five helpers ranged from straightforward adventure, to far-out science-fantasy, to war-time spy stories.

Trained and raised by some of the worlds foremost scientists, Doc Savage was a true renaissance figure, proficient or excelling in nearly every field of athleticism, science and invention. His own nickname of "Doc" was bestowed as a result of being one of the world's most distinguished and skilled neurosurgeons, in addition to all his other noted scientific accomplishments. The "Man of Bronze" epithet was made in reference to the bronze hue of his giant, deeply tanned and muscular figure, as well as his uncannily hypnotic gold-bronze coloured eyes. His five helpers--who were best known by their nicknames Ham, Monk, Renny, Long Tom and Johnny--were no slouches either, each being an expert in such diverse fields as industrial-chemistry, engineering, law, geology, archeology, and electricity, but with all bowing to Doc's vast expertise in each of these areas. Occasionally tagging along with this "famous five" was Doc's tomboyish and beautiful cousin Patricia "Pat" Savage, who was worth more than her own weight in wildcats to this team when trouble came her way.

A gadgeteering hero, Doc Savage and his pals were loaded with exotic devices, vehicles and equipment. This included special rapid-fire machine pistols that fired narcotic "mercy bullets" (for Doc never knowingly took a human life), giant zeppelins, ultra-violet tracking powders, true gyrocoptors, miniature radios, tiny knock-out grenades, underwater breathing tablets, and much, much more. He made his headquarters the entire top floor of the worlds tallest skyscraper, where folks in distress and villains wanting to take out their only threat could often find him. This was connected by a secret elevator to an elaborate waterfront shipyard and aircraft hanger which Doc Savage also owned. Doc also had a more secluded scientific base to which he occasionally retreated, his "Fortress of Solitude", hidden high up in the Canadian arctic.

With an immense wealth obtained in his very first adventure, "The Man of Bronze", Doc Savage was an aggressive philanthropist,



not only building hospitals, schools, and performing surgical operations for the needy, but also going to great lengths in trying to rid the world of powerful evil doers. He also operated a secret "Crime College" in upstate New York state, where the criminals he caught underwent a delicate brain operation to have them forget the memory of their crooked ways, and then trained in some useful vocation before being released as a productive member of society. Nearly all the Doc Savage stories were written by Lester Dent, an incredibly inventive pulpster who was somewhat of a Doc Savage himself, being simultaneously an inventor, ocean sailor, treasure-hunter, ham-radio operator, and aviator.

Example titles: The Man of Bronze, The Land of Terror, Brand of the Werewolf, The Sargasso Ogre, The Phantom Oasis, The Giggling Ghosts, Murder Melody, Meteor Menace, The Dust of Death.

#### The Spider

Bored millionaire Richard Wentworth donned the hideous visage of the Spider--hunched back, fanged teeth, hooked nose, a lanky mop wig, and a slouch hat--when he stalked the streets of New York as an eerie vigilante to deliver bullet justice to those most deserving it. The most violent, imaginative and passionate of the pulp heroes, Norvell Page's The Spider series was simply volcanic with elements of horror and weird-menace. The Spider was not content to rehabilitate crooks as Doc Savage did; instead, he'd much more often throw such thugs off a tall building or riddle them with a Niagara of molten lead from his thundering automatic pistols. As a warning to other criminals, he would afterwards brand the cooling foreheads of his dead enemies with his trademark spider seal, using a device concealed in the base of his cigarette lighter. The costume and the branding trick worked too, with even the spine of the most hardened villain turning to jelly at the sight or mere mention of the Spider. The police took a very dim view of this hobby of course, and avidly sought the capture or death of this weird crook killer. Loathed by crooks and lawmen alike, the Spider waged war hampered by a personal code that prevented him from fighting the police at the same time as they interfered with his own efforts to combat such foes as bloodthirsty cavemen, robot-suited gangsters, resurrected Pharaohs, and even Death himself!

No lone wolf, Wentworth was aided by a cadre of loyal helpers when he took to the streets to fight crime. These included his

faithful Sikh warrior and personal bodyguard, Ram Singh; his former sergeant and now private chauffeur, Jackson, who always referred to Wentworth as "Major" because of their days spent together in the Great War. As the Shadow has his Margo, so did the Spider have his own soul-mate, the incredibly beautiful and feisty Nita Van Sloan. Nita was no shrinking violet, having had several times donning the dark mantle of the Spider herself when she had to fight for the life of her true love, Richard Wentworth. Another ally of both Wentworth and the Spider was Professor Brownlee, a scientist friend of Wentworth's, sometimes became involved whenever there was a gadget to be built or a villainous weird-science device to be thwarted. There was also Wentworth's friend Stanley Kirkpatrick, New York City's Chief of Police and later State Governor. Ironically Kirkpatrick's sworn enemy was the Spider, which made for tense moments when he suspected Wentworth--as he often did--of being the Spider.

Representative titles: The Pain Emperor, Hordes of the Red Butcher, Death Reign of the Vampire King, Satan's Death Blast, Corpse Cargo, Green Globes of Death, and The Grey Horde Creeps.

**NO ONE IS PERFECT**, an adventure write-up by Kathy Bayles

Mind you I am not the perfect adventurer, but this one particular day was more comical than most, I had to write down what took place. Hi, my name is Darsa Uylas, a halfling, fighter-thief. I was traveling with my company of friends: Zark a human wizard, Zeldar an elf mage, Dungeoness a multi-classed half-elf, Fundeem a human warrior and Samuel a dwarven warrior.

We had found this door leading into the hillside, and the promise of treasure was more than any of us could bear, so we entered. I went first, followed by Samuel, Fundeem, Zeldar, Dungeoness and then Zark. As we rounded the second corner of the hallway, I came face to face with a goblin. We stood staring at one another for a minute, and then with a yell he took off. Zark said he would take care of it with a fireball, and everyone else moved out of the way. I sent my hawk up ahead, figuring he could spot more. Well, Zark got off his fireball, and after hitting the wall, ceiling, and my hawk (now fried) it finally hit the goblin. We were hungry anyway, fried hawk sounding better than goblin, we ate.

The next encounter was with three orcs,

and after a crude game of poker with Dungeoness, we took their gold, clothes and weapons.

Our entire adventure lasted three hours. From there, while wondering around, I found the door out. Since I was first, I decided to have a look around. High up on a craggy cliff ledge, I found three griffin eggs. What a prize! 5000ggs for each one. I looked below and everyone was getting ready to set up camp. I carefully climbed down and walked back to the group. I told them I had found griffin eggs and each one congratulated me with a slap on the back. Of course, that's where the eggs were, in my backpack. Oh well, they made a great lunch. Maybe we'll have better luck tomorrow!



**BEHIND THE SCREENS**, Why you should keep some dice rolls hidden, by Mark Arsenault (originally published in The Gamer's Connection #4)

"I'm going to look in the room for secret doors." The GM consults his map key, carefully concealed from the players' view via his trusty screen.

"Roll your Spot Traps skill minus two." the GM declares.

Rolling well below the needed score, the player gleefully announces, "I made it! Where is it?"

What's wrong with this picture? All too often game masters will go to great lengths to keep certain details hidden from the players, only to let the players know the results of what "should" be hidden rolls. In the example above, the player knew whether or not there actually were any secret doors in the room. His character, in reality, would know only that he did, or did not, find any secret doors. There's a big difference.

In this game master's opinion, there are some things that the players simply weren't meant to know. A good GM will let the players search to their hearts content, but will make the necessary rolls himself, out of view of the players. In this way, the players will only know what their characters would know, whether or not their search turned up any secret doors. Frankly, that's all they need to know.

Players should rely on the relative

proficiency of their characters in a given skill, as opposed to dwelling on simple point values and mathematical odds. If the character in the opening scene had a relatively high Spot Hidden score, then he would know that a failed search for secret doors meant that there were likely no secret doors to be found, period! In reality, there may still be a secret door in the room, but at this point that is only for the GM to know. There are occasions when I will let the players make their own rolls instead of making rolls concealed (for them), but this is only with players whose integrity is not in question, and then only for events which will not compromise the scenario. As a rule of thumb, I would suggest making all rolls for characters whenever the roll involves the characters perceiving or discovering something, such as a hidden clue/trap/etc. If you're worried about your players becoming suspicious every time you roll the dice after you tell them that you're rolling for them, then break them in slowly. Start rolling the dice every so often for no reason at all (except maybe to keep your players guessing), but continue to allow them to make their own rolls. Eventually, they will think nothing of the spontaneous dice rolling, and you can start making the rolls for them without them even knowing it!

**OTHER POINTS OF VIEW**, don't forget to tell'em you heard about it in Papyrus!

**BIOACTIVITY**, the not so academic journal of the SF3SIG (of Rockford College). This tri-annual digest size fanzine debut in March. The first issue contained campaign background, fiction and some original poetry. Looking for submissions, artists and subscribers. For more info send a SASE to: Pete Sipes, 5050 East State Street, Box 712, Rockford, IL 61108

**GREEN MOUNTAIN GAMER**, contains: short stories, character personalities, game/book/movie reviews, poetry and more. Genre Shock (a hilariously funny, satyr of role-playing) and great discount prices on your game and hobby needs. They are also looking for art and written submissions. For a free subscription, or more info, send your name and address to: Knight Games, P.O. Box 59, Proctorsville, VT 05153

**BEAUMAINS**, the Authurian Magazine for Gamers. Published by Gareth Jones (Black Mole magazine and AAARG! RPG), this zine caters to Pendragon or any King Authur/Knights of the Round Table setting. Adventures, rules, reviews, variants,

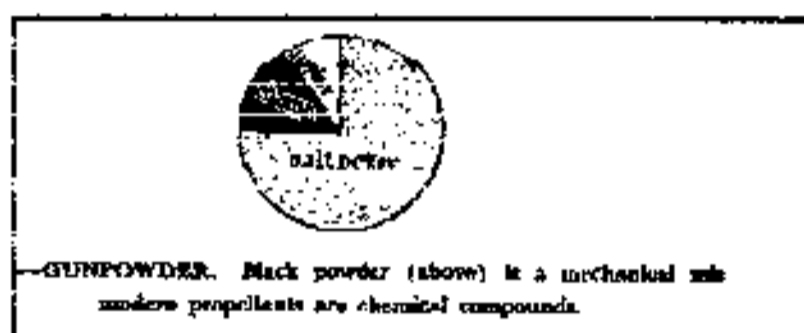


previews and background. Although Pendragon predominates, the subject is Authurian RPGing so any system can apply. Write for more info: Beaumains, c/o Gareth Jones, 69 Atherley Road, Shirely, Southampton SO1 5DT.

**GUNPOWDER COMES TO EUROPE**, from Artillery Through the Ages, by Albert Manucy, for the National Park Service Interpretive Series (1949)

Chinese "thunder of the earth" (an effect produced by filling a large bombshell with a gunpowder mixture) sounded faint reverberations amongst the philosophers of the western world as early as A.D. 300. Though the Chinese were first instructed in the scientific casting of cannon by missionaries during the 1600s, crude cannon seem to have existed in China during the twelfth century and even earlier.

In Europe, a ninth century Latin manuscript contains a formula for gunpowder. But the first show



of firearms in western Europe may have been the Moors, at Saragossa, in A.D. 1118. In later years the Spaniards turned the new weapon against their Moorish enemies at the siege of Cordova (1280) and the capture of Gibraltar (1306).

It therefore follows that the Arabian "madfaa", which in turn had doubtless descended from an eastern predecessor, was the original cannon brought to western civilization. This strange weapon seems to have been a small, mortar-like instrument of wood. Like an egg in an egg cup, the ball rested on the muzzle end until firing of the charge tossed it in the general direction of the enemy.

Another primitive cannon, with narrow neck and flared mouth, fired an iron dart. The shaft of the dart was wrapped with leather to fit tightly into the neck of the piece. A red-hot bar, thrust through a vent, ignited the charge. The range was about 700 yards. The bottle shape of the weapon perhaps suggested the name "pot de fer" (iron jug) given early cannon, and in the course of evolution the narrow neck probably enlarged until the bottle became a straight tube.

During the Hundred Years' War (1339-1453) cannon came into general use. Those early pieces were very small, made of iron or cast bronze, and fired lead or iron balls. They were laid directly on the ground, with

muzzles elevated by mounding up the earth. Being cumbersome and inefficient, they played little part in battle, but were quite useful in a siege.

**MORE DUNGEON FOR YOUR \$**, by Nick Parenti

**DEMONS RULE**, a Champions adventure by Charles Brown

A true to genre, comic hero treatment of occult/super natural evil. The plot is simple but satisfying, horror yet not terrifying. The text includes notes on using the adventure with other than superhero rpgs, any could use it. The idea of other than earthly powers using disillusioned youth to further evil crosses all genre. Suggestions are provided for handling different degrees of success or failure by the PCs, surprisingly open to any outcome reached by the players. I think, for \$5 or less, any GM would get his money's worth.

**THRILLING LOCATIONS**, for James Bond 007, by Victory Games

This book describes the basic ingredients of some typical espionage adventure locations: a train, a plane, a yacht, a restaurant, a hotel and a casino. The patrons, the staff, the operation and the physical characteristics common to such locations are discussed in detail. Random encounter generators are provided to ensure a spy vs spy atmosphere.

In each category, at least one famous location is explored in detail. Maps, menus, schedules, traditions and histories of these real world locations are provided to add realism.

With the exception of the NPCs stats, the info is fairly system generic. Any near modern campaign would be able to use the information within. Most historical and future campaigns will also find the majority of it useful. Fantasy and Post Holocaust/Dark games will have less use for this book. At \$10, it's a little expensive to just have as a reference. I got mine for \$5 and I think that none espionage gamers should avoid it for any more. It is well written, informative and creative... but the location info can be had for free at a travel agent and the espionage elements added to the GM's taste.

**NECROPOLIS**, for Dangerous Journeys by Gary Gygax (GDW).

This large book describes the world of Mythos' equivalent of Egypt, AEgypt. It does a better job of bringing Egyptian elements into gaming than Mythic Egypt did. The epic series of adventures within the book is well

developed and inspiring ... but ... Mr. Gygax's writing is almost painful to read for an extended period. Its like listening to someone who won't let you get a word in edgewise, while they ramble on and on, tangent to the original subject. Quantrigue is a much better example of how this type of supplement should be written.

To be honest, I will keep it for its source material and adventure inspiration. I haven't had the patience to finish reading it though and I don't think that I ever will. Unless you can find it very cheap (<\$5) I would stay away.

THE BELLE REVE SOURCEBOOK, for DCHeroes, by S Crow & D Franks

This small sourcebook describes the DC universes equivalent of the Dirty Dozen and the facility they call home. Task Force X, recruits super villains to perform covert operations for the government both in and out of the US. This is the first acceptable premiss for running a super villain as a PC. The history, profiles and background provided, really give the reader and excellent feel for the organization and its adventure potential. I got mine at an Everything's \$1 store, the \$7 cover price is steep for the size of the material, but the content is worth it to any SHRPGer. Since the characters' stats are the only system oriented info in the book, any system can add a Task Force X to their universe.

FTL: 2448, Space Adventure in the 25th Century, by Richard Tucholka, for Tri Tac Systems.

I had read some good things about FTL:2448's earliest edition. The author had a big hand in The Morrow Project (which receives a cameo in the FTL: 2448 background) and used the same system to create Fringeworthy (inter-dimensional) and Bureau 13 (horror). FTL: 2448 is his contribution to interstellar scifi role-play. The 4th edition comes in 2, perfect bound, 192 page books. Book 1 concentrates on character generation, while book 2 fills in the background. I must say I was very impressed with the thoroughness and flexibility of the system and the background.

The author is humble enough to offer his work as a background or sourcebook for other scifi rpg systems and this is an easily accomplished and enjoyable option. The originality and completeness of the background lends itself to a multitude of role-playing situations. All of the elements of the scifi genre are present, from pulp, to dark future, to fantastical, to hardcore, to

cinema epic. The history of the campaign universe takes us to a time when faster than light travel is common, mankind has successfully interacted with dozens of aliens and integrated with them to varying degrees of success but mostly with peaceful coexistence. An evil empire borders the edge of known space, exploration and discovery continues on all fronts, urban sprawls crawl with decay, corporations exploit/colonize new worlds and space pirates dodge the forces of law and the interstellar navy. Accommodations are made for role-playing any of these facets, the possibilities are nearly endless.

The complete system is a complicated but comprehensive collection of charts and tables. It seems that every option is explored and available for randomization and/or interpolation via dice and formula. The fact that nearly all of it is optional, non-essential to the system or background, makes the whole work worth while. The GM can decide the level of detail, randomness, and complexity of his game as he sees fit. It's all there for reference but not crucial to play.

I would recommend FTL: 2448 to anyone looking for a change, either a change of genre or a change of scifi setting. The system can be used for any degree of detail desired and the background is gigantic in scope as well as complete. Part or all of the campaign background can be woven into any existing scifi campaign or at least provide source material for a change of pace.

DC TECHNICAL MANUAL, by J.A. Novick for Mayfair Games, DC Heroes

This is the last product Mayfair will publish for their DC Heroes game, as their license to do so will not be renewed. The book is basically a souped up and more comprehensive Hardware Handbook (see issue #?). It calls pretends to be an annual report from S.T.A.R. labs on the state of the art of super-technology. Within it describes the equipment, armor, weapons and vehicles of many DC heroes and villains. Lastly, as with the Hardware Handbook, there are some notes and rules on gadgetry.

There is a lot of empty space here. The book is very visual and at times does nothing to remove the mystery of how some of the items within work. All of the game stats for each item are included so it is an excellent resource for DC Heroes gamers. The written descriptions of each item are barely enough to allow gamers using other systems to find this book useful, especially at \$20. Should



a superhero or scifi gamer come upon a cheaper copy, it is certainly a resource of ideas maybe worth \$5 to \$10 to any non-DC Heroes gamer.

I hate to say this, because it will probably jeopardize future review material from Mayfair, I found the product visually striking but lacking substance. The written descriptions do not match the detail nor quality of the art and layout. Wait for this one to go on sale.

LIGHTSPEED RAID, a Star Ace adventure by M. Acres for Facesetter

Star Ace has never been rated among the best scifi rpgs ever published, but neither is it the worst. Adventures for this system are easy to find at bargain prices so a look at them for use with other game systems is warranted.

The story is simple, bad guys disguised as good guys look to disrupt the good guy alliance by staging raids. As the elite of the good guy forces, the players are tasked to track down these evil doers and reinforce the alliance. It is a plot familiar to numerous genre and therefore suitable for any system. Star Ace doesn't take its science seriously but that just leaves those details open to the standards set by other games. FTL: 2448 players (see last issue), with the games various campaign possibilities, will find Star Ace adventures (and nearly any other scifi rpg aids) easily useful. This Star Ace adventure combines basic scifi reworks of old western reworks of traditional japanese folklore with basic role-play encounters.

I'm going back to get more of these. I expect to use them in scifi, pulp and superhero campaigns. For \$3 and less (the price of a gaming magazine) a player of any of those genre will get their moneysworth.

ROADKILL, by L. Johnson for Champions

An excellent Champions adventure pitting the players against a maniacal heavy metal band of supers. With its classic comic hero encounters, this adventure would work well in any super hero campaign and most (dark) future games. I wouldn't pay the \$7 cover price (it's not that many pages) but I would pay up to \$5.

THE HAMMER SHALL STRIKE, by Del Carr & Cheron for Psi World

This booklet actually contains 2 adventures. One concerns the psi-awakening of some adolescents, the other is about a fanatical movement within a cult. Both stories are full of twist and urgency as the players are not the only parties involved.

Either would fit well into: supernatural/light horror, super hero, near/dark future, and espionage campaigns. Character descriptions are plain enough and game mechanics inessential to the story. Again, for \$5 or less, you'll not be disappointed.

MORE DUNGEON FOR YOUR \$ TIP: RPGers should look for old V&V adventures. Quite a few of them included conversion material for use with Champions and/or Super World, which makes them useful with any Hero, most of Chaosims BRP, system games (including RQ and CoC). Once you find one with the conversion info, you can convert any V&V material. Coupled with the Hero/GURPS conversions published in Roleplayer (or GURPS/Hero published in Fantasy Hero) GURPS, especially Supers, players can use them. The 3-18 nature of the characteristics, damage ranges, level advancement and characteristic titles make them useful for TSR AD&D/D&D based games (GW4, XXVc, AD&D and D&D) without conversion material. I've never read one I didn't like and I've seen them as cheap as \$1.

A FORCE TO BE DEALT WITH, by TJ Hild  
Nigros "Mindmasher" Archuk says,

"Dear, dear friends, ages ago when I was but a small child, my kindly parents served the great wizard Vangerdahast of Cormyr as two of his best War Wizards. The fought without fear against the Zhentarim and the Cult of the Dragon, and were honored with more than one badge of bravery. Their undoing, however, came when I was but 10 years of age. An ambitious Zhentarim, one Myluk Sumsplit, slew both as a cowardly assassin would in their sleep. Later Myluk himself was captured and his powers were discovered to be that of a psionist. Knowing little of psionists, it took only a week before Myluk overtook the Cormyrian guard and escaped. Now I, Nigros Archuk, have decided to avenge my parents' death after so many years. I have definitely earned my title as the Mindmasher as in my time I have slain 15 psionists in the hope of finding my parents murderer. As of yet, they are unavenged.

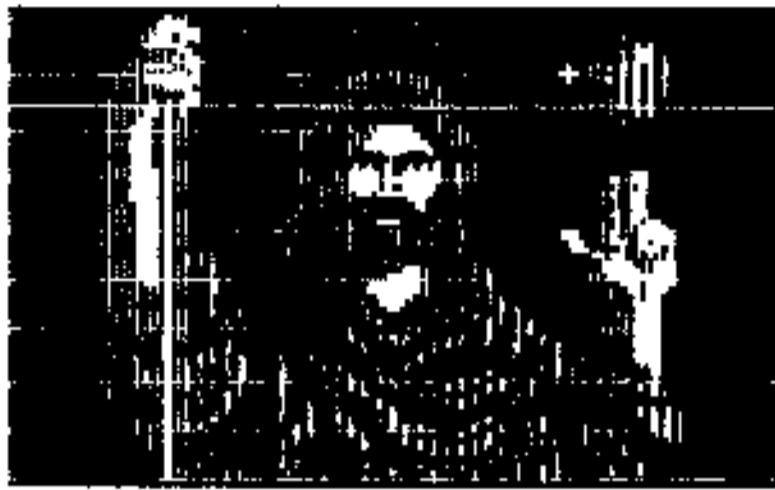
I charge a mere 150gps/day, as each member of my company (Thought Slayers Unlimited or TSU) has their own personal vendetta against psionists. We show no mercy in our dealings and we assure you the mission will be accomplished (or as advertised, double your gold pieces back). We would do the job for free if not for our need to eat."

The Characters

Nigros Mindmasher Archuk  
 Fighter 11 / Wizard 12, Human, Male  
 Str: 16 hp: 55  
 Int: 17 Al: N (chaotic tendencies)  
 Wis: 10 AC: 0  
 Dex: 16  
 Con: 17  
 Cha: 7

Equipment: Long sword +2 (specialization), Bracers of Defense AC3, Ring of Protection +1, Ring of Mind Shielding, Mirror of Mental Prowess.

Spells: Make selection based on Player's Handbook and Forgotten Realms Adventures.



Weaponmaster Redcoat Talbot  
 Fighter 9, Halfling (Stout), Male  
 Str: 17 hp: 49  
 Int: 10 Al: CG  
 Wis: 7 AC: 4  
 Dex: 10  
 Con: 17  
 Cha: 16

Equipment: short sword +1, longbow +1, chainmail +1, 2 throwing daggers +2 (specialization), shield, Ring of Mind Shielding.

History: Redcoat shares much in common with Nigros, his father was also killed by a human psionicist and Redcoat seeks vengeance on all psionicists. However, his nature tempers him with a little more mercy than Nigros.

Shondool the Black  
 Wizard 7, Half-elf (Drow), Female  
 Str: 9 hp: 20  
 Int: 18 Al: NG  
 Wis: 9 AC: -1  
 Dex: 17  
 Con: 12  
 Cha: 18

Equipment: dagger +3, Bracers of Defense AC4, Ring of Protection +2, Ring of Mind Shielding, Medallion of ESP.

Spells: Make selection based on Player's Handbook



and Forgotten Realms Adventures.

History: Shondool, called the Black for appearance more than personality, is a mystery to even Nigros. She is reclusive, thoroughly unambitious and has not one stereotypical trait of a Drow. Her mother was a Drow priestess of Eilistraee, the Drow god of good, and that is probably where she obtained her temperament. She never speaks of her human father. Some believe her father was a raider from the Pirate Isles, and a psionicist to boot!

Other members of TSU include:

Raith Messipur, human, neutral, fighter 7  
 Amblim Burtooth, gnome, neutral good, fighter 3/illusionist 5  
 Seth Vermillion, human, chaotic neutral, berserker 4  
 Melisha, halfling, chaotic good, witch 4, owl familiar  
 Felith of Calimshan, human, lawful neutral, thief 6

All have a Ring of Mind Shielding and at least a +1 weapon.

A NEW WORLD, by Charles Parenti (copyright 1994 Charles Parenti)

TIME

Time, one of the simplest words in the english language but possibly one of the most difficult to understand. What in fact is time? Could it be an inevitable fact of nature, or just a position taken up by two hands on the face of a clock. Many say that time is just a measurement created by homo-sapiens to help them tabulate their achievements. Others see it as the one force in the universe that we, or anyone else for that matter, will never be able to tame. Still others like to fantasize and imagine the conquest of time to be man's ultimate frontier.

What if, however, we are just viewing time from the wrong perspective. What if time was not any of these, but rather an instantaneous happening in someone else's universe. Perhaps it is not our phenomena to even try and understand. Is it possible that the setting of our existence takes place on the game board of some higher being? Could it be that we are just pawns in this game, subject to rules, time being one of them?

Let us ponder the possibility that someone, or something, else is playing some kind of game with us. Suppose that every moment in our past, present, and future are just locations coexisting simultaneously on a stage in this other universe. Imagine that time, as we know it, is just the restriction



that forces us to follow a pattern, to connect the dots, or to stay within the lines. If this were the case, and we had no control over the rules, then our destiny is not in our own hands but rather in those of a higher echelon. We have no choice but to trust in them to keep the rules simple enough for us to follow.

Now let us imagine that these beings are not models of conformity. Maybe it interests them to sometimes break the rules. To them, winning might be more important than how they play the game. It's possible that the jigsaw puzzle known to us as time has various solutions and we are left with no choice but to live with the one that excites them the most.

#### DIMENSION

Unlike time, dimension is tangible. We can see it and we can touch it and therefore it has become very cut and dry to us. We believe our universe to contain three dimensions, length, width, and height ( or depth depending on perspective ). Our laws of physics work quite well in this scheme and thus why should we believe otherwise? Then again, why shouldn't we?

In his famous literary work Cosmos, Carl Sagan borrows from Edwin Abbott's Flatland and describes a world that exists only on a two dimensional plane. In this world, all of the life forms are two dimensional, such as squares and triangles, and therefore have no reason to ever think that there may be a third dimension. Eventually their plane is interrupted by a three dimensional creature. It is impossible for the two dimensional life forms to understand the three dimensional creature because they cannot experience his extra dimensional existence. He appears to change shape as he passes through their plane creating an image of unexplainable magical force in their world. Similarly, if we were to have an encounter with an object of other dimensions, would we ever be able to understand the magic of its ways?

Would it not be egocentric of us to believe that since we live in a three dimensional world, that must be all there is? Is it not arrogant to only believe in what we can see and feel? Who are we to envision ourselves as the main subject in the grand experiment of existence?

Let us now imagine that we are not as significant as we would like to believe. Suppose that our three dimensions make up only a small part of a multidimensional universe that is well beyond our comprehension. If we once again look at

Flatland, the two dimensional world mentioned above, we can try to envision a second two dimensional world lying in a plane perfectly parallel to the first. These two universes would never intermingle since they are separated by the third dimension, a seemingly impenetrable barrier for two dimensional life forms.

Now if we think of our own three dimensional universe, we must ask ourselves if there are other three dimensional universes coexisting with ours, but lying beyond the fourth dimension. We will never really know... unless, of course, the fourth dimension were to be transversed.

#### CHAPTER ONE

A sole traveler is preparing for his historic journey into the unknown. The masses of what appear to be his supporters surround him in an unending sea. As the traveler hangs his head in meditation, a shaman of some kind leads the crowd in a spiritual chant. The noise rings repetitively throughout the travelers mind as he makes his final preparations and he vows that he will never forget this echoing sound no matter where his trek may take him.

One last glance at the assembly reminds him that the time has come. A final cheer in celebration is the last thing he hears before the incredible sound of crackling flames envelop him. The sight of the crowd slowly fades as the journey begins and our subject ventures into the unknown. He has become a pioneer and once again reminds himself that this moment can never be forgotten.

Pain and ecstasy seem to battle for control of all his senses. Thoughts of understanding rush into his mind and exit as quickly as they entered. The knowledge he gains and the questions he is able to answer would boggle even the greatest of thinkers, if only he could retain them. An overcrowding of concepts in his brain is quickly followed by total emptiness as wisdom and ignorance dance through his head for what seems an eternity, but may only be an instant.

Every nerve ending in his body seems to fire to the beat of an unknown song. The odors he feels and the colors he hears scare him, but at the same time enlighten him. Words, in any language would fail to describe the plethora of sensations that overtake him.

No one else could have ever lived through this for if they had, they would have certainly been praised and remembered. He was sure he would survive and anticipated his due worship. Mortality was left back in his

homeland and he was now a God. Suddenly, it ended and there was darkness.

Now we must jump to a land much more familiar and a time that is comprehensible. A weakly, rapidly aging man is staring as he views the early morning sky from an observational telescope high in the Catskill



mountains of New York State. Upon a closer look, it becomes obvious that this man is not quite as old as he first appeared. Taking in consideration his numerous achievements, he is actually viewed as young by his peers in the scientific community. He has already conquered the fields of physics, chemistry, and biology and now tries to apply them to his one true love, astronomy. At fifty-four years old Dr. Julius Fleming is already tired of the Nobel prizes and longs for new excitement. Unfortunately he is still waiting and studies the sky to pass the time while his secret hope of alien contact slowly dwindles.

His hand moves swiftly across the page of a log book. He is writing what appears to be random numbers in an entry labelled 09/28/70/6:22. Words such as corona, chromosphere, sunspot, and prominence, stream from his pencil at an incredible rate. To an ignorant bystander it would seem that all this jargon may be of ground-breaking significance, but to Dr. Fleming it has become just another routine survey of the Sun's surface.

He cannot be anymore wrong however and his tabulations soon begin to highlight it. Checking and then rechecking the figures over and over again still leaves Dr. Fleming astonished. This is more than simply peculiar for as far as he can recall, sunspot activity has never been so high. Like an avid tennis fan his head sways back and forth, moving from his log book to the coronagraph affixed to his telescope. Suddenly he sees it and he becomes glued to the telescopic eyepiece, his body completely motionless in some self induced hypnotic state. The snap of his pencil point echoes through the all too quiet observatory.

Thirteen full minutes pass before Dr. Fleming even so much as blinks. Are his eyes

deceiving him or is the Sun truly discharging a solar flare of abominable size? No, suddenly it is gone and he blames his tired eyes, a cruel trick played by his overworked brain. Somehow he had let his imagination run wild and convinced himself that he just witnessed a highly improbable astronomical phenomena. A planetesimal sized ball of plasma does not hurl out from the Sun and then just disappear as suddenly as it was formed. Dr. Fleming decides that he is in desperate need of a more exciting hobby.

The log entry now reads 09/28/10:14. This will be Dr. Fleming's final observational entry of the morning. An unannounced electrical storm has made telescopic viewing virtually impossible, leaving the doctor nothing more interesting to do than to look over his previous entries. A loud clamor of thunder goes unnoticed as he calmly scans the hours following 5:00 am. A small blotch of lead under the 6:22 entry reminds him of his visual illusion and the broken pencil that resulted from it.

His forehead wrinkles and he admits to himself that he is still not satisfied with letting it rest as an optical mishap by an exhausted old fool. The numbers do not lie. The unbelievably high levels of activity recorded on the solar surface were not imagined. He did see something and now he is sure of it. A smile indicates the excitement of a bottled up twelve-year-old waiting to emerge.

A small boy sits on a window sill of a small summer home in what is considered by most New York urbanites as upstate. He is not quite three years old and is much too young to understand the changes that are about to overtake his family. All that concerns him at this moment is the brilliant flash of light and thunderous boom that attracted him to the window. The down pour of rain suddenly begins and the wind howls with incredible strength causing nearby tree branches to slap violently against the house. Little Michael Paridiso is not frightened however and his gaze goes unaltered.

"Bam Bam, get down from there," cries his father, referring to the child by his affectionate nickname, "and come over here by your good ol'wonderful dad."

"Look, rain, light," replies the kid as he points toward the sky with his Fisher Price plastic baseball bat.

"It's only lightning son," his father says calmly, "nothing to be afraid of." All the while not realizing that his son is more mesmerized than frightened.



Mike Paridiso Sr. is an employee of the U.S. Federal Government who spends four weeks of his vacation every year in his summer home with his family. Normally, he would spend two weeks in early July and then two more in late November, the latter two weeks coinciding with the deer hunting season. This was not a normal year however, for his wife, Barbara, was expecting their third child in early October and Mike knew that he would have no time for hunting with a newborn to look after. Therefore, it was decided that the vacation was to be taken in September, when things were not expected to be so hectic. Unfortunately, nothing ever seems to go as smoothly as planned.

The other vacationers include their oldest boy, Nicholas, as well as Barbara's sister Dolores and her husband Tom Bevins. All three are currently standing around the expectant mother's bedside, she has suddenly gone into an early labor. The baby is not expected for at least another two weeks but these predictions are never exact.

"Daddy, Daddy, come quick!" screams Nicholas.

"Mike, it's happening, now!" adds Dolores as her husband Tom darts for the telephone.

"Oh my God," Mike mumbles, "why now?". He motions for the three year old but is too nervous to handle the situation sensibly and scrambles up the old creaky stairwell screaming, "I'm coming, I'm coming. Hold on baby."

Little Michael's attention is not drawn away from the excitement of the storm. His father's final plead for him to retreat from the window was to no avail as the boy appears hypnotized. The bright light that is rapidly growing larger seems far more exciting to the tot than the commotion of his family.

"Shit, the storm must be affecting the phone lines," says Tom as he rapidly taps the button on the phone, "I can't seem to get a dial tone."

"B r e a t h e ,  
Barbara, breathe,"  
coaches Dolores.

Mike grabs her left hand with both of his and whispers nervously in her ear.



Nicholas just stares, frozen in a hypnotic state, the world seeming much to quick and busy for him at this moment.

"We have to get her to a hospital," explains Tom, "I'll go start the car."

"Thanks Tom," says Mike a little calmer

than before. "Everything is going to be alright," he adds to his wife, "you're doing great."

Barbara does not appear to answer but just stares at him with a slight loving smile, breathing in short, rhythmic increments. Although she is sweating profusely, Barbara has been through this twice before and maintains a confident attitude. She thinks of the incredible pain that she must endure but knows that it will be well worth it. Nothing in the world can compare to the joy of childbirth.

On the main floor, one flight of stairs below, Michael still gazes out the window, oblivious to the excitement taking place above him. His attention is only momentarily drawn away as Tom comes sprinting down the steps skipping every other step on the way.

"The light, look," the boy says, but his uncle can not be bothered and so he once again stares into the night alone.

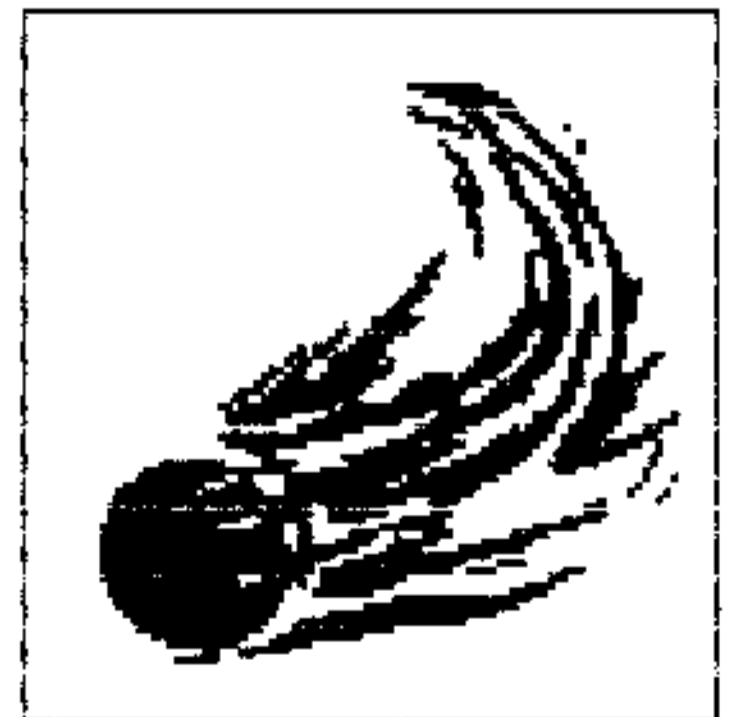
Tom rushes out the front door into the down pour and onto the driveway. In one motion he slides in the old Chevy and starts the engine. Reaching into the back seats, he unlocks the other doors and awaits the arrival of the others.

Inside the rest of the family does not work as efficiently. A pregnant women in the midst of labor is far from being the most agile of sights. Even with the help of her husband and sister, Barbara has trouble getting up from bed. Suddenly she screams.

"OH GOD!"

"Baby, what's wrong, what's wrong?" Mike yells as he catches her from falling over forward. He cannot support her slumping body weight and is forced to return her to the bed. As he does, tears of concern well up in his eyes.

Nicholas still stands in a corner, motionless. Dolores covers her mouth, feeling the pain of her suffering sister. Mike kneels down beside her too nervous to speak. None of them notice the sound of the pouring rain or the last cries of little



Michael as he once again speaks of the rapidly approaching ball of light. And then it happens.

... TO BE CONTINUED

**ENDORSEMENTS**, don't forget to tell'em Nick from Papyrus sent ya!

**Alarums & Excursions**, the largest and predominant RPG Amateur Press Association (APA). Published by Lee Gold (ICE Vikings, GURPS Japan, Lands of Adventure, Land of the Rising Sun). Don't just read, participate! For more information send a SASE to, Lee Gold, 3965 Alla Road, Los Angeles, CA 90066.

**The Gamer's Connection**, a small press publication looking for subscribers and writers. For more information, and writers guidelines, send a SASE to: The Gamer's Connection, P.O. Box 278331, Sacramento, CA 95827.

**Knight Notes**, a bi-monthly gaming fanzine running articles on older and newer games alike. For more info and guidelines, send a SASE to: Daniel Gallant, 167 Columbia Drive, Huron Park, Ontario, NCM 1Y0.

**Gamer's Forum**, a RPG fanzine which runs articles on the entire gaming spectrum. For more information, send a SASE to: Gamer's Forum, c/o David Kufner, 800 Emory St., Apt. B, Imperial Beach, CA 91932.

**Camelot '94**, a small press fanzine covering a wide spectrum of game genre for systems new and out of print. For more information, send a SASE to: CAMELOT '94, c/o Philip J Reed Jr, 319 W Grand, Perryville, MO 63775.

**SHADIS** is back, better than ever, and here to stay! This pro-magazine is the current champion of the independent non-system/genre specific gaming magazine crowd. For more info, send a SASE to: SHADIS, Alderac Entertainment Group, 17880 Graystone Avenue #203, Chino Hills, CA 91709.

**NO HUMANS ALLOWED**, a XXVc game accessory by D Henson for TSR, alternate use reviewed by Nick Parenti

No Humans Allowed describes the history and present status of genetically engineered life (gennies) in the XXVc universe. It covers the discoveries, personalities, corporations, human gennies and animal gennies. There are suggestions for gennie construction, rules for gennie PC/NPCs, adventure seeds and background material on the XXVc campaign. Some of the material is reprinted from other adventures and accessories, but the majority is new and the reprinted material revised.

What follows is not a traditional review of this product. Although the production standards are high, and the writing good, the only point of this article is how one might use this accessory outside of a XXVc

campaign. Specifically, its use in AD&D/D&D, Gamma World 4th ed. (GW4) and Villains & Vigilantes (V&V) campaigns. These systems are most closely related to the XXVc RPG system and will require little, if any, conversion time. In fact, XXVc does little to hide its AD&D roots. The key is in the commonalities between these systems: 3-18 characteristics of similar definition, class/combat levels, saving throws and hit point advancement, as well as similar damage levels for attacks.

With the exception of melding scifi into a fantasy campaign, the first half of this book is fairly useless to AD&D/D&D gamers. Its greatest asset to these games is the gennies. All are potentially new encounters, not found in any of the: Tomes, Manuals, Catalogs nor Compendiums. They are all presented in a familiar, Compendium-like format. Out of the 58 described in the book, 50 are easily melded into a fantasy world. 24 of these include information for use as PCs, opening new and unique character options. Furthermore, many of them can be used to bring standard fantasy campaign races to PC status rather than stand alone as unique races, a list follows:

<u>XXVc Gennie</u>	= <u>AD&amp;D/D&amp;D PC race</u>
Asterminer	= Lizardmen
Delph	= Merrow (sea ogre) or Selkie
Desert Runner	= Tabaxi/Rakasta
Devastator	= Ogre or Half-ogre
Depthine	= Koalinth (sea hobgoblin)
Ganyman	= Sahuagin or Kuo Toa
Lowlander	= Troglodyte
Talan	= Dire Corby/any birdman race
Terrine	= Hobgoblin
Chimbot	= Banderlog or Dakon
Desert Ape	= Dakon (giant)

Spelljammer players will find whole new worlds of races just by gathering the gennies together by the planet they come from. The gennies of Jupiter provide an ecology and society ripe for adding color to a Spelljammer campaign.

If magic is switched for technology, the gennies can retain their unnatural status. Much like The Fifth Cycle's, Military Races, gennies could be magically created races. As each has a specific purpose, this would be easy to justify.

A great deal of the XXVc setting would fit right into a Gamma World campaign. In fact, both systems would benefit from the other. GW4's mutant race creation rules are far better than the guidelines provided for making gennies in No Humans Allowed. Even the GW4 setting can be used, almost whole, to



help detail the devastated but struggling Earth in the XXVc.

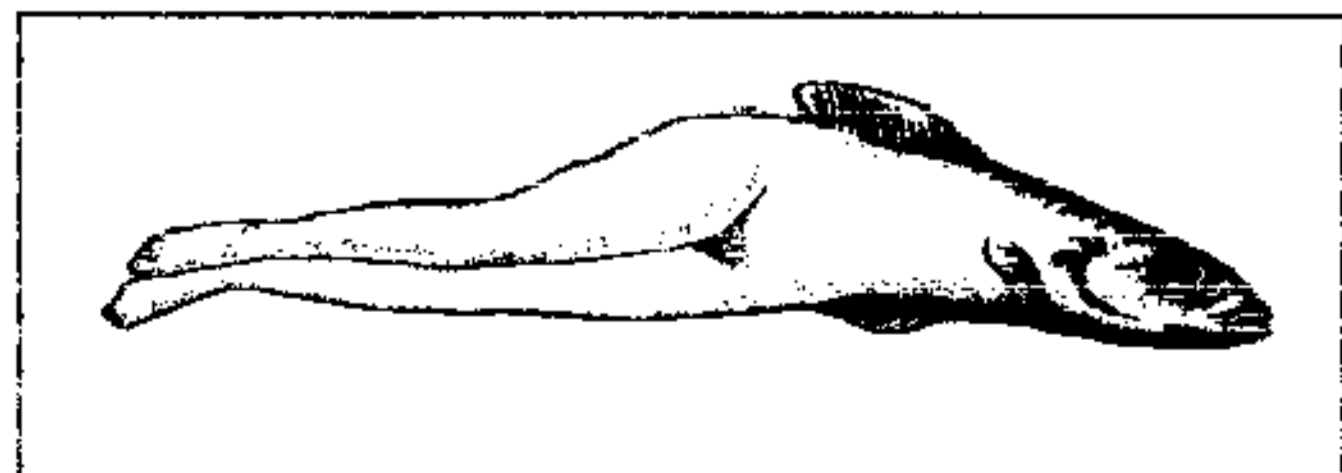
All of No Humans Allowed can easily be adapted for use in a GW4 campaign. Of course the gennies make excellent mutants, but the source material can take this further. The genetics labs and personalities described can easily make up a part of a GW4 campaign's history or present. All of the history on gennies contained in No Humans Allowed is applicable to GW4's post holocaust time line. The same holds true for XXVc's RAM and colonies on the solar system's planets. Any GW4 campaign would do well to expand its scope with a XXVc supplement on any of the planets.

A GW4/XXVc combo could easily handle any scifi genre including the following presented in other games: Star Trek, Star Wars, Metamorphosis Alpha, Justifiers, the possibilities are endless. As mentioned above for Spelljammer campaigns, gennies can be grouped into ecosystems to create new and interesting worlds. The Terrine MKII is a dead ringer for the Terminator, providing yet another alternate possibility.

V&V, although more unique than the others, campaigns could also find expansion and originality by borrowing from No Humans Allowed. As with GW4, the background and history can be used as part of the past, present or future of a V&V game world. The reasons for the gennies creation remain valid even without using any of the XXVc background material.

As in any of the above examples, the gennies make excellent aliens (Terrine MK1A could become the Krull from Marvel's FF comics) or mutants (like Marvel's Inhumans). They could be inter-dimensional visitors or lost races or created by evil villain scientists. The Terrine MKII's impersonation of Arnold the Terminator is also applicable in a V&V campaign.

As the XXVc RPG dies of apathy, look for No Humans Allowed and other supplements to go on sale. I can not speak for the adventures, but this supplement and the ones describing the planets are well written and worth any gamer's time.



**FEATURED CREATURE, for AD&D/D&D**

RACE: Monkey  
 CLIMATE/TERRAIN: Arboreal  
 FREQUENCY: Rare  
 ORGANIZATION: Troop  
 ACTIVITY CYCLE: Varies  
 DIET: Vegetarian (insects too)  
 INTELLIGENCE: Low (5-7)  
 TREASURE: nil  
 ALIGNMENT: Neutral  
 NO. APPEARING: 6-25 (1d20+5)  
 ARMOR CLASS: 9  
 MOVEMENT: 9" @15"  
 HIT DICE: 1-1  
 THACO: 20  
 NO. OF ATTACKS: 1  
 DAMAGE/ATTACK: 1-2 bite  
 SPECIAL ATTACKS: throw fruit/rocks (1-2)  
 SPECIAL DEFENSES: none  
 MAGIC RESISTANCE: nil  
 SIZE: S <3'  
 MORALE: 10 low  
 XP VALUE: 7

DESCRIPTION: Any small primate, specifically: howler, wolly and spider monkeys. All will have prehensile tails and hand-like feet to assist in their arboreal lifestyle.

COMBAT: When ever possible these tiny primates will run from a fight, with two exceptions. If they are cornered, or their young are, they will bite fearcly. Another exception is when they are encountered in large numbers. In these instances they have been known to conduct mass attacks by hurling: fruit, rocks, nuts, and the like with uncanny accuracy.

HABITAT/SOCIETY: These arboreal nomads travel in groups of 6-25 extended family members called a troop. Each troop contains one dominant male, chosen by ritual display/mock combat, and one dominant female, usually the dominant male's eldest mate. Some species practice monogomy, regardless, the community as a whole tends to the needs and protection of the young. In all cases there remains a strong and special relationship with the natural mother.

ECOLOGY: Their diet consists of fruits, nuts, vegetables, insects and leaves. Adults weight between 10 to 15 kg and live about 20 years on average.

SKILLS: Monkeys are expert tree climbers and have been known to travel for days without touching the ground.

THEOLOGY: None.

COMMENTS/ENCOUNTERS: Most encounters will be random. Non-random encounters can be expected with pets and familiars.

## Papyrus

**MAGICAL DISCIPLINES FOR GURPS**, by Brett Slocum, downloaded from SJG's Illuminati BBS

This is a different method to subdivide magic, comparable to specialized guilds, affinities, or the Clerical Magic system. Different types of mages exist with various specializations. These specializations are mutually exclusive, and members of one type cannot crossover and learn spells of the other types.

### Wizardry

This involves "white" magic that does not harm or coerce the subject and does not involve souls. This discipline is usually opposed to Sorcery, though individuals can coexist.

#### Colleges:

- Knowledge (except Divination)
- Communication/Empathy (except Control Person, Exchange Bodies, Possession and Permanent Possession)
- Light/Darkness (except Darkness and Dark Vision)
- Healing (except Instant Restoration, Instant Regeneration and Resurrection)

### Sorcery

This involves magic that can harm or coerce the subject and often involves souls and gr (text missing). It is opposed to Wizardry, though individuals can coexist.

Colleges: Mind Control; Communication/Empathy; Necromancy (except Zombie, Control Zombie, Turn Zombie, Resurrection, Age and Steal Youth)

### Necromancy

This involves essentially "black" magic of death and darkness. Necromancers are universally feared. This discipline is often allied with Sorcery.

Colleges: Necromancy; Light/Darkness (except Light, Continual Light, Colors and Flash); Body Control; Mind Control (Fear and Terror only)

### Conjury

This discipline involves the creation of illusions. Feats of sleight of hand are also within this field. This discipline is often mistaken for "stage" magic and parlour tricks.

Colleges: Illusion/Creation, Sound

Skill: Sleight of Hand

### Alchemy

This discipline involves the creation of magic elixirs.

Skill: Alchemy

### Divination

This discipline involves the prediction of events through Astrology, Tarot cards, and other methods.

College: Knowledge (except See Secrets, Wizard Eye, Invisible Wizard Eye, Mage Sight, Mage Sense, Identify Spell and Analyze Magic)

Skill: Astronomy/TL3

### Healing

This discipline involves the healing of the body.

Colleges: Healing, Body Control (Resist Pain only)

Skill: Physician

### Magesmithy

This involves the forging of magical weapons and armor.

Colleges: Enchantment (Enchant, Weapon Enchantments, Armor Enchantments, and Limiting Enchantments); Making/Breaking

Skill: Armoury

### Runesmithy

This discipline involves the casting of magic through runes. All spells must be cast through runes.

Colleges: all colleges

Skill: Rune Lore

### Nature Magic

This discipline involves the magic of animals and plants. Primitive mages, such as Druids and Shaman, fall into this category, as well as foresters.

Colleges: Knowledge, Plant, Animal

**Unrestricted Colleges:** The following colleges are open to any of the above disciplines.

Protection/Warning; Meta Magic; Elemental; Movement; Food.