DIFFERENT WORLDS

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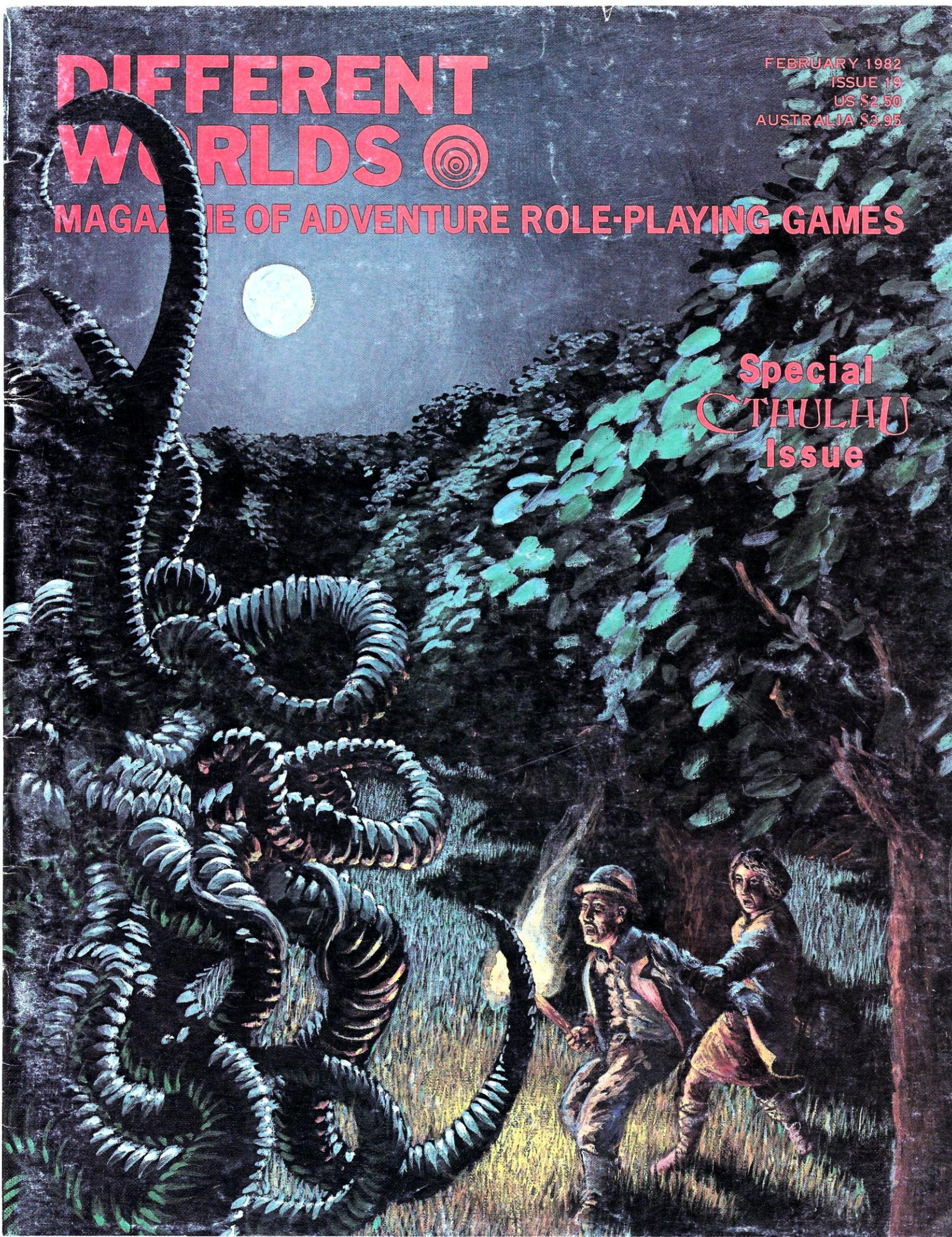

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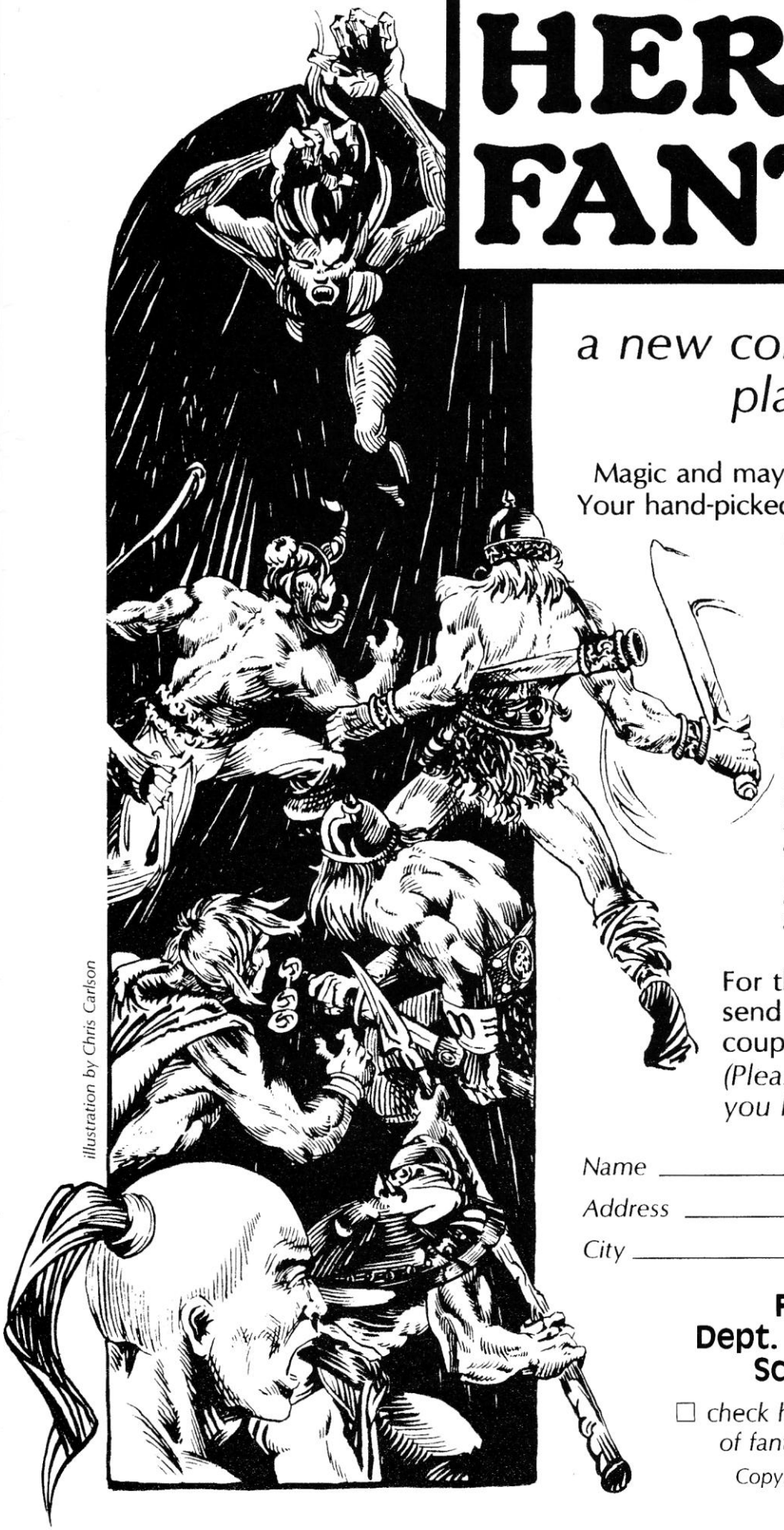

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DIFFERENT WORLDS

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Features

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By Sandy Petersen and Lynn Willis
Get a look behind the scenes at how *Call of Cthulhu* was created. Progressing from a fledgling *RuneQuest* variant to a full blown role-playing game. Pick up tips for running campaigns, creating scenarios and game design.

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This article provides the necessary information for adapting the *Thieves' World* city adventure pack for use with the *Heroes of Olympus* role-playing game. Written by the author of the rules.

Editorial

Poll Results

Here are the results of the poll in issue 14.

1. List all the role-playing games you play regularly. In order from most to least votes are: ***AD&D, Traveller, RQ, TFT, D&D, C&S, Gamma World, Space Opera, T&T, Stormbringer, Top Secret, Bushido, V&V, Superhero 2044, Boot Hill, Arduin, Aftermath!, Gangster!, Champions, Thieves Guild, LRS, High Fantasy, Ysgarth, Helskorm, Entropy.***

2. List all the gaming magazines you read regularly. Because there were 32 different magazines listed, we only have the top nine: ***DW, Dragon, White Dwarf, Space Gamer, Wyrms Footnotes, Sorcerers Apprentice, A&E, S&T, Journal.***

Questions 3-9 asked the readers to rate on a scale of one to ten the following sections: Reviews–av. of 8; Quick Plugs–av. of 7; Gigi–averaged an 8; Metal Marvels averaged 4; Ads averaged a 6; Inside art averaged a 7 while the cover art averaged an 8.

10. List all game cons you attend regularly. Surprisingly, ***none*** beat Gencon East by a two to one margin with no other cons showing any strong support.

Question 11, asking to rate three favorite game companies, produced the following top ten result: Chaosium, TSR, GDW, Avalon Hill, SPI, FGU, Metagaming, Steve Jackson Games, Flying Buffalo, Gamelords.

12. What is your favorite role-playing system. Why? The top ten in order came out to be: ***RQ, AD&D, C&S, own system, TFT, T&T, D&D, Arduin, High Fantasy, Arms Law/Spell Law.*** The most common reason, for most of the systems, was realism and playability.

13. Who do you think is Gigi? Besides saying that the editorial in issue 16 covered the topic adequately, I will say that I liked "Frankly I don't give a D'Arn" best.

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Artists

FRONT COVER : This issue's cover, a possibly unfortunate scene from a *Call of Cthulhu* scenario was painted by Roland Brown.

INTERIORS: Scott Arquette page 44; Peggy Carter pages 18, 19, and 20; Yurek Chodak pages 8 through 13; Miron Murcury page 14; Valerie Olson pages 32 and 35.

14. Favorite books ranged from "The Moon is a Harsh Mistress","Lords of the Rings," to "The Complete Works of William Shakespeare."

15. Regarding miniatures, the opinion was quite mixed leaning towards the negative. A number of people were appreciative of the column because they did their shopping through the mail. Most readers criticized the quality of the photographs and felt that too much space is spent on the description of the figures. We will be getting better pictures and improving the format.

16. Should DW be more aggressive in promoting itself? Most of the readers thought it couldn't hurt. In your hands you are holding one of our answers to this question. We have decided to promote the magazine by printing it on glossy paper to obtain sharper color and B&W pictures. The last three issues have undergone major formating changes to make the magazine more professional. With interior color, theme issues with covers that tie in, professional layout and better articles, we hope that *DW* will support itself and provide you with a better product. If we have more articles submitted to us, *DW* may even go to a larger format.

17. What's your favorite color? Blue was definitely the winner, followed by green, various shades of red, orange, brown, and black. Hm, I wonder what that means?

18. The average responding *DW* reader is 22 years old.

We would like to thank you for contributing to our survey.

Best

Yurek Chodak

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DIFFERENT VIEWS

LETTERS COLUMN

IN DEFENSE OF SOLO ROLE PLAYING GAMES

Dear Editor,

In his article, "Solo Role Playing", (DW #16) Lewis Pulsipher makes several good points about role-playing. He states, "The essential aspect of RPG's is the interaction among people. It is a social game ... the complexities of interaction among players are as interesting as the action in the game itself. In solo role-playing there is no cooperation, only competition between you and the designer." This is all very true. It is precisely for these reasons that FRP is meaningful to me. I belong to a group of enthusiastic players in Idaho, and I have GM'd at game conventions throughout the northwest. I never cease to be thrilled at the ingenuity and variety of approaches to conflict & problems by the players I meet. This type of experience is certainly impossible to obtain in solo play. If I ever quit, there would surely be a gap in my life.

But apparently Mr. Pulsipher is so enamoured of the above aspect of FRP, he cannot find any redeeming qualities in soloing, as he asks "Why Play Solo?" He goes on to criticize solo players, generalizing that they must all be "escapists", "too lazy to create a dungeon", "too selfish to GM, wanting to play all the time," or just "won't get off their duff to find other players." I simply cannot believe that all the thousands of gamers that play solo can be categorized so easily or so harshly.

Perhaps his error is assuming that all solo players do so just to role-play. I would rather think of it as adventuring when no one else is around. Perhaps his term "puzzle-solving" is indeed more apt. I really enjoy playing solo, and I've been told that many players enjoy the solos that I write. I've had fun playing with Flying Buffalo's modules, and I'm currently enrolled in two play-by mail games, FBI's *Starweb* and Jim Walker's *Silverdawn*. I'm also looking forward to playtesting Bud Link's forthcoming *Wars of the Dawn Worlds*.

Now, I'm no isolationist & I don't think I'm lazy. Why do I play solo? Alright, I'm holding down a full-time job and running my ½ of a busy game company. (Quicksilver Fantasies). Most of the players in our group work in a hospital, have different shifts and schedules. Needless to say, it's difficult to get our group all off together on the same night. If I get a chance to play once a month, I'm lucky. Now maybe lack of time is as criminal as Mr. Pulsipher insinuates, but we do have to pay the rent. Game cons are great, but 3-4 a year is all my budget allows. However, somewhere in the mad game titled "Reality", there is an occasional moment of spare time for a little R&R. I find much pleasure turning to solo games with a flair for fantasy rather than the mundane crossword, TV wasteland, etc.

Why do other people I know play solo? Many would-be players live on farms 20-50 miles from other players. It's not just a matter of "getting off your duff & looking for others to play with", it's a matter of transportation, either non-existent or pulling it out of the snow. Fantasy players don't all live in big cities or college dorms.

In addition, there are innumerable players who are handicapped. The disabled enjoy gaming as much as anyone else, but it's much more difficult. Besides being dependent on others for transportation, some gamers are not even physically capable of picking up the dice. Read Judith Sampson's wonderful article in *Dragon* #53 titled "Adventuring With Shaky Hands" and see how important solo play by mail can be to someone with physical problems.

It's certainly true that solos give fewer choices of action than a "live" game. Cost of printing prohibits lengthy options & simple economics dictates that descriptive material must be brief. Also there is no immediate feedback to questions if something is misunderstood. Nevertheless, it strikes me as unfair to label solo players as being pathetically "afraid of other people" or being "halfway committed to the role-playing hobby," just because they find pleasure in a pastime not enjoyed by Mr. Pussipher. On the contrary, it is because of their commitment that they play in this fashion.

Group play is "fun, satisfying, and educational", but why claim that solo play is not? Solitaire gaming may hold a smaller niche in FRP than group play, but it is no less important and should not be dismissed as offhandedly as Mr. Pulsipher did.

Patricia Apodaca
Post Falls, Idaho

ON ISSUE 17

Dear Editor,

I just received DW #17 and was generally pleased with the mix of articles in it, although three pieces on *D&D* strikes me as excessive (but then I don't play it). There was a bit of tarnish on it, though, since the Questworld piece was duplicated in *Wyrms Footnotes*. For people who get both magazines, a net loss.

The other disappointment was the Ware Hall *RQ* scenario. I was delighted to see it, but then I played it and found it had a fatal loop in it. I suspect this was inadvertent, but if the designer put it in there deliberately, he should have made it seem so, rather than have all the earmarks of an oversight. I refer to this sequence: 21C asks for a Spot Hidden roll; success sends you to 13C where a DEXx5 roll is called for; success sends you to 15B, failure to 34B. Failure of the Spot Hidden roll also sends you to 34B, which tells you you have taken 6 pts of damage from a dart and sends you to 15B. So by either route you end at 15B, which tells you you either dodged a dart or were hit by it (but for 1D6 pts, not 6 pts as stated in 34B). You see a fleeing figure ahead, and have 3 options. Ignoring it sends you to 21C again, to repeat the whole cycle. You could fire a missile (21B) but if you don't hit the figure for 6 pts you still go to 21C. You can cast a spell; but unless the spell was Befuddle, Binding, or Mobility (on yourself) (30B) you still go to 21C. I happened to be running a character who at that point had only a throwing axe (with a cumulative 4% chance of hitting for 6 pts) and who didn't know any of the three spells. The character was stuck in the loop, unable to even try to retrieve his axe or attempt to chase the fleeing figure *unsuccessfully* (since casting Mobility on oneself allows catching the figure, then chasing it should have been presented as an option, with a result if it couldn't be caught). As it is, my character was doomed to be slowly pecked to death by a dart-throwing trollkin who by all accounts would willingly surrender if caught and who by the description in 15B was running away after throwing the first dart. Maybe this is what Petersen intended to happen, but if so it is a clumsily constructed death trap. It sure looks like there was supposed to have been some other result than 21C for ignoring the trollkin, failing to hit it with a missile or for casting the wrong spell.

Steve List
Levittown, PA

Sandy Petersen's reply — What can I say? Steve is right. I had quickly hacked out the Ware Hall scenario and it didn't have a chance to be properly playtested or completed, as other projects pressed themselves upon me. Since the article was only a minor filler, it didn't receive the attention that it perhaps should have had. Sorry! Maybe a good way to fix the scenario would be to allow a character to capture the trollkin with any missile weapon that scores a hit, instead of only allowing this if six points of damage are done. You should always be able to withdraw to 7A. □

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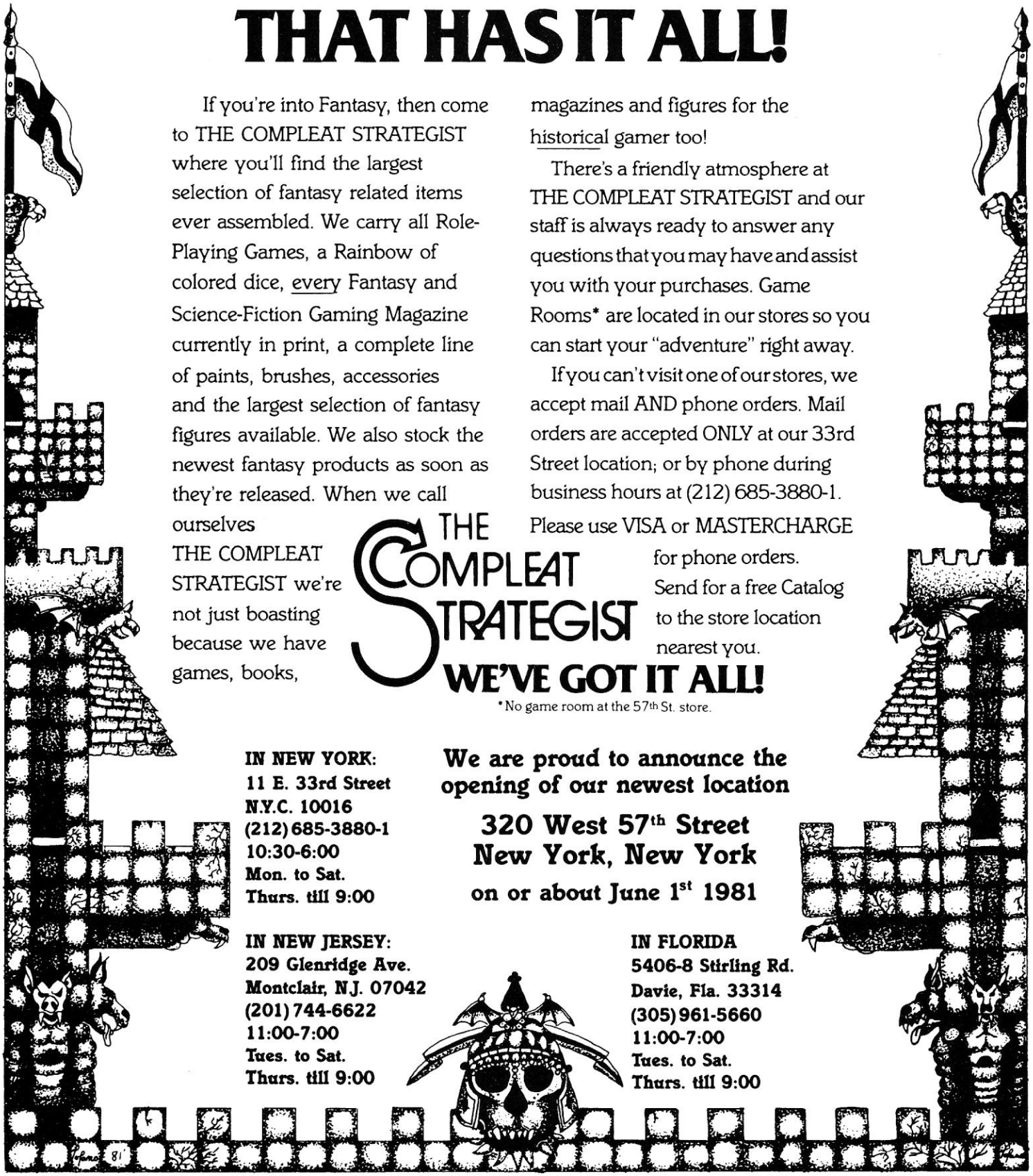
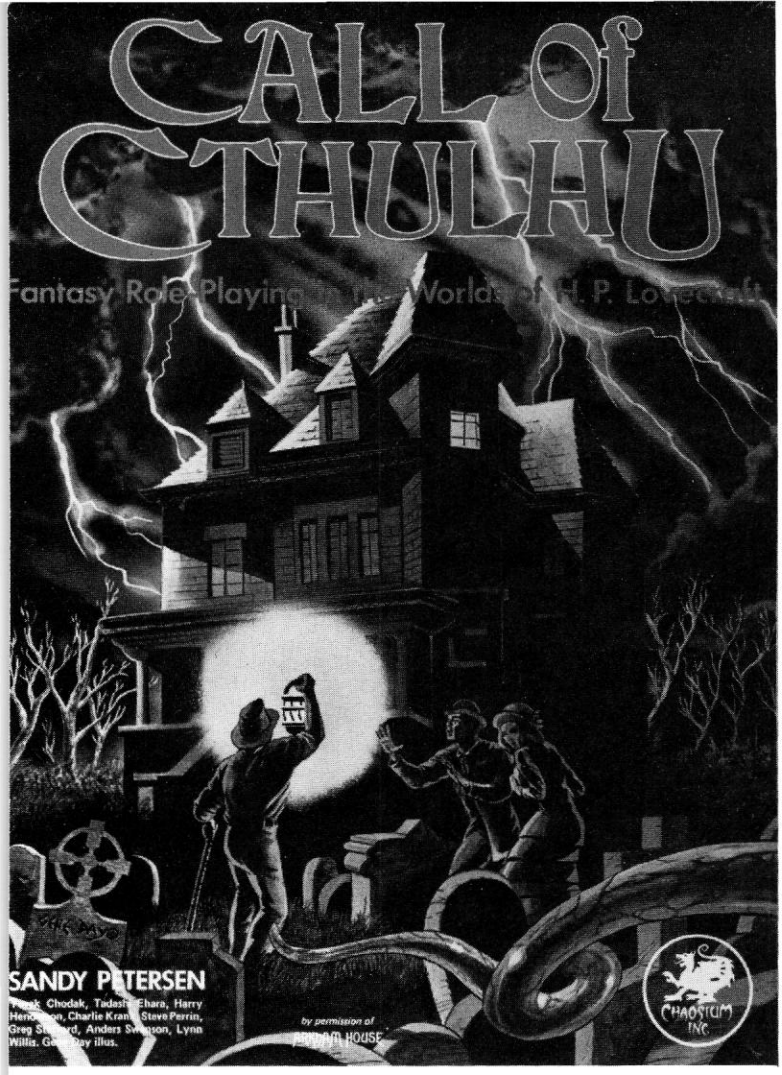




CALL of CTHULHU Designers' Notes

FIRST COPIES OF CALL OF CTHULHU WERE DELIVERED TO OUR OFFICES AMID A THREE-DAY STORM OF RAIN, LIGHTNING AND THUNDER ON FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 13, 1981. FREQUENT POWER OUTAGES AND OTHER STRANGE HAPPENINGS WERE NUMEROUS.

By Sandy Petersen

Introduction

Ever since I found a tattered, World war II vintage copy of the works of H. P. Lovecraft in my father's library in 12th grade, I have been enthralled by Lovecraft's creations. The exotic monsters, black terrific atmosphere, and overall mood of horror all combined in my mind to form many shudder-some moments. I greedily devoured all of Lovecraft's stories I could get my hands on, and now, fourteen years later, Lovecraft is firmly ensconced in my heart as my all-time author.

I have been engaged in fantasy role-playing for nearly eight years now – almost as long as the 'genre' has been in existence. Two years ago, a friend of mine, Steve Marsh, suggested that I start a campaign based on what he called "American Gothic"; by this he meant a fantasy campaign taking place in the modern era, with only a little magic, and most monsters stemming from '50s horror movies and modern horror literature. I actually started this campaign and went to the trouble of detailing all the possible types of scenarios that could exist, and made up some special rules for combat, experience and so forth. This campaign was short and abortive, but the things I learned from it planted some of the seeds for later work.

A year and a half ago, I wrote to Chaosium, offering my services in writing up a *RuneQuest* variant based on a fantasy world derivative of H. P. Lovecraft's dreamlands cycle, as best exemplified by the short novel *The Dream-Quest of Unknown Kadath*. Greg Stafford replied that they were working on a variant game entitled *Dark Worlds* which was to cover H. P.

By Lynn Willis

Call of Cthulhu is a boxed role-playing game set in 1920's United States, the place and time in which horror-writer H. P. Lovecraft originated what became known as the Cthulhu mythos. The game works best with four or fewer players, each of whom might run 1-3 characters. The characters will investigate mysterious Cthulhoid events and situations. *Call of Cthulhu* is the first published fleshing-out of the *Basic Role-Playing* rules, a system designed for quick and simple RPGing. Like *RuneQuest, CC* is percentile-oriented, and it uses the same initial characteristics and some of the skills.

The Cthulhu Mythos

By temperament an antiquarian and student of the bizarre, Lovecraft developed a cycle of tales hypothesizing that beings of great power dwell on Earth, biding their time until they can reclaim the surface of our world and extinguish upstart mankind. The being Cthulhu happens to have the largest cult among the degenerate offshoots of humanity who would wor-

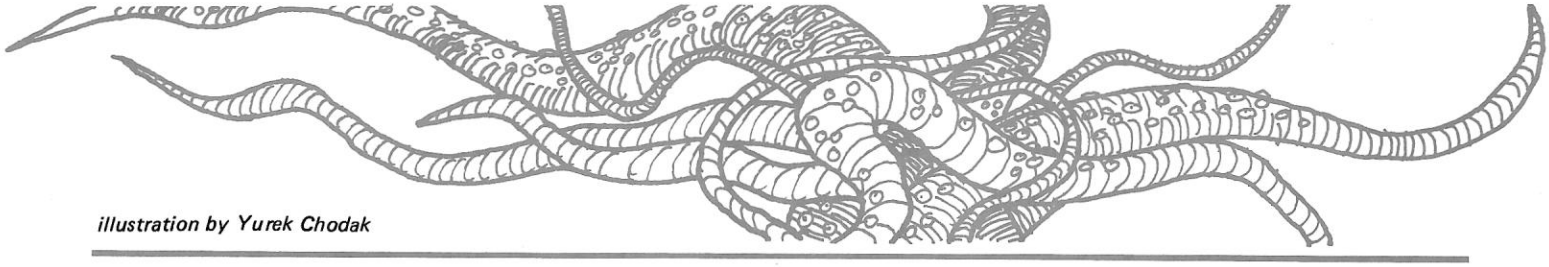


illustration by Yurek Chodak

Lovecraft's novels in a modern sense. My fancy was immediately struck by this, and I begged Greg for a chance to get in on the project. My craven begging bore fruit a few months later, when, beyond my expectations, Chaosium dumped the entire project in my lap. I was going to be allowed to do the whole thing myself. Chaosium sent me very little source material at first and I was very much on my own, not even knowing what the previous workers had done. The assignment seemed relatively easy to me, and after some slight toying with the project, I hit some mild snags and decided to let the project sit a few months. When I was finally prodded back into action again, I looked more closely at the situation and was appalled.

The Problems

When I first approached the project, I thought that it would be ridiculously easy; all I would have to do is put the *RuneQuest* rules in a different time period, add some new monsters, and have different cults than those in *Cults of Prax*. But it proved not to be that easy. Working on the project I discovered that I would have to formulate an entirely different magical system consistent with the books, yet playable; I needed to make a fairly complete listing of modern skills, such as Automobile Driving, Mechanical Repair, Psychoanalysis, Library Use (for which skill I am indebted to Steve Marsh once again), and so forth; I also had to make a list of, and rules for modern weapons including guns – no small project in itself. It seemed to me that overnight the project had multiplied in size and complexity by about a thousand times.

All the foregoing difficulties were actually minor compared to the one paramount design problem which I faced: how can I make the mood of a fantasy role-playing game match the mood of a modern horror story? I needed spooky happenings to get the players chilled, I needed black horrors that would chill the minds and blast the souls of the intrepid investigators, and I needed to make sure that the game did not degenerate into a slugfest or simple matching of power against power.

The Solutions

The monsters were relatively easy to develop. I already had experience in making up monsters for gaming (having had a book of 99 new monsters for *RuneQuest* published by Chaosium a few months previously), making my task simple. I pored through all the stories written by Lovecraft and a great number written by his imitators and picked out all the hideous abnormalities that seemed to be at all consistent from story to story. The total was surprisingly low, and I had to dredge up monsters from quite obscure stories and collaborations in order to have a respectable number of creatures to smite the players. In most cases specifics were lacking on the monster, so I had to do a little bit of educated fudging, giving the monster in question abilities that at best were only implied in the story. I was not completely arbitrary in this and feel that the results make for a harmonious whole.

The 'cults' were much more difficult. They could obviously not be correlated with the normal *RuneQuest* cult rules, both battle magic and Rune spells being conspicuously absent in the normal world. At first, I tried to simply write up all the different deities as if they were normal monsters, listing SIZ, POW, and so forth for each different god, along with some brief notes about the cult, if any, of that particular

---

ship such an entity; he may also be the most powerful being on the planet. The protagonists of the stories are like Lovecraft in their uniform love of old and strange things, and Faustian in their will to know the meaning of the Cthulhoid clues across which they stumble.

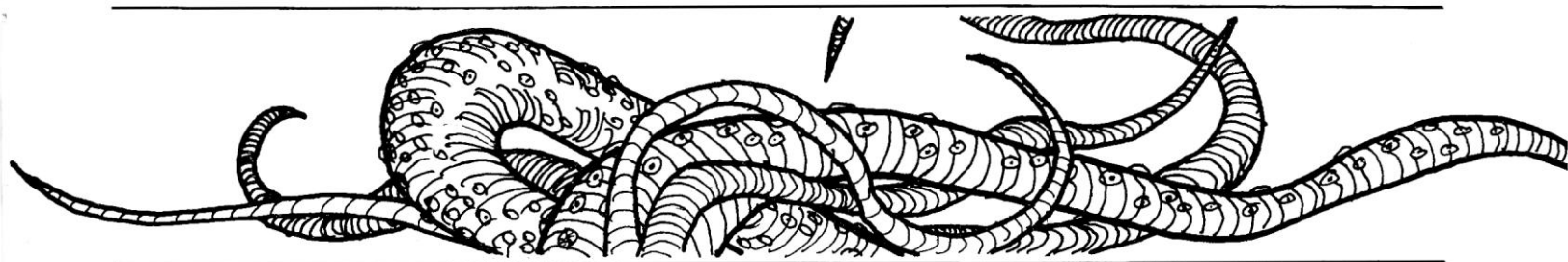
Each story in the mythos depicts a narrator's dawning comprehension and shock at discovering this disconcerting threat to life as we know it. By accepting the narrators, the readers for a moment accept as well those horrifying conclusions of impending doom. Feelings of underlying menace and of ill-glimpsed, uncontrollable forces are congenial to our era, and account for some of the popularity of Lovecraft's work.

The game consists of the *Call of Cthulhu* rules, a *Sourcebook for the 1920's, Basic Role-Playing* (the *CC* rules start from *BRP),* cut-out characters for use in play, character sheets, a special world map, six dice, and other inserts. It is boxed, with an excellent Gene Day full-color painting on the front, and sells for $19.95. There are no Elder Signs, dark gems, or mysterious manuscripts written on debatable surfaces included, yet powerful forces were at work to prevent this game ever from being published; surely *mi-go* scuttled around corners, and vast putrescences rose above the wooded hills!

The Origins of the Game

Originally, *Call of Cthulhu* was not about Cthulhu at all. (We say it 'kuh-THOOL-hoo'; Lovecraft said it 'tluhluh' or 'khlul-hloo,' but he wasn't trying to get gamers to ask for it by name in stores.) Nor was Sandy Petersen the designer. The springboard for *Cthulhu* was a proposal from a free-lance designer about a gothic fantasy role-playing game, and he wanted some incidental use of Lovecraft descriptions. His proposal was interesting. I negotiated rights for the Cthulhu mythos from Arkham House, but after many months delay the manuscript of the game was unsatisfactory, and had to be (with bad feelings and confusion) turned down. It was originally to be a 1980 release; now we were hoping for 1981.

During that time manuscript sections had been lost, letters delayed, and motives misunderstood: all obvious signs of the



being. I quickly discovered that this approach was unsuitable, since the scores I gave the various monster gods was too completely arbitrary, and the possibility of harming one in the course of play too remote for their statistics to really matter. For a month or two, I let the matter of the gods slide and worked on other projects, hoping that a brainstorm would enlighten me to the point where I would be able to finish the project.

The aforesaid brainstorm did finally come, and I listed each god according to its effects when summoned, its characteristics, its worshipers, and the gifts or requirements that it demanded of those worshipers. This approach was eminently workable, and I was quite self-satisfied at its conclusion. Later on in the development of the book, Steve Perrin wanted to re-include the statistics for the deities, and thus the STR, INT, etc of Cthulhu and the rest are now included in the game again. Anyone disagreeing with the particular score we gave any deity is certainly free to modify them to fit their own preconceptions or prejudices instead of ours.

The magical system used in the game was also a special difficulty. Lovecraft made no effort to make any spells in his work seem consistent – his primary objective naturally being to produce horror rather than to give a coherent system for FRPing. In fact, in most stories, spells are never cast in the story's course, although the grisly effects of spells are often seen or implied. Another difficulty is that only the 'bad guys' usually have any spells. I needed to make the spells such that the players would usually be afraid to use such black arts. In order to create spells, I simply theorized as to what spells would be needed in order to produce the effects seen in the books, and applied my theories. It was easy enough after that, since most of the spells were being used to contact or control the various monsters and/or deities in the Cthulhu Mythos, and a very few spells with diffierent effects thrown in. The players are discouraged from using too many spells, since the process of using spells directly gains contact with many grisly beings, most of which there is no protection against.

The skill listing was not one of the major problems in the game. I took a few days to formulate lists of all the skills which I felt would be usable in the game, and then took a few more days to write up the effects of these skills in game terms. Greg Stafford was of help here, in that he sent me a list of what he felt would be useful skills. The skill list is prominent for the large number of esoteric knowledge skills on it, including such skills as Accounting, Archaeology, Law, Linguistics, Geology, Zoology, and so forth. Many other skills presented themselves to my fevered mind, but limitations of space and sanity precluded my putting them all in. Any good game referee should be able to determine the effects of skills not included in the game already. One such skill, that I feel should have been included, is Photography. Maybe the second edition will have it.

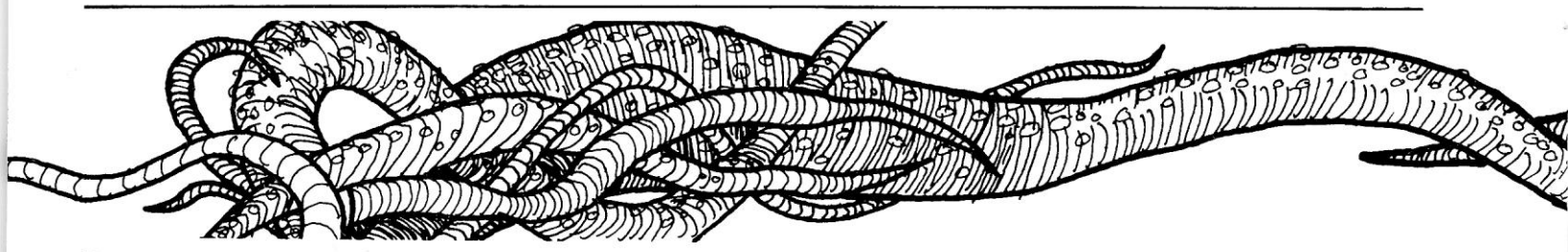
One shortcoming which may be made manifest to some readers is the preponderance of academic subjects in the skills list. Being a student myself, I have a natural tendency to see the world in an academic light, and to list the skills I know best as the most specialized and subdivided, so that there are separate skills for Psychology and Psychoanalyze but only a single skill for Operate Heavy Machinery. I can partially justify this bias by the fact that most players in the game will be more intellectually than physically oriented, and by the fact that the vast majority of Lovecraft's heroes were also well-educated in the so-called 'higher sciences.'

surreptitious influence of something in our affairs. But events turned for the better. While I had been reluctant to pull a concept from its originator, Greg had been hopping about for months waiting to see the project roll: he nominated Sandy Petersen, a long-time Lovecraft fan who met every deadline. Sandy jumped at the chance. It was agreed that the rules would become exclusively about the Cthulhu mythos, since we had those rights. (This change of authorship clearly escaped the notice of those beings in charge of foiling the game, since there were no complications.) The rules were to follow the general *RuneQuest* development order, but what more happened between Greg and Sandy should be left for them to write.

The draft which Sandy sent was substantially the first part of the rulesbook as published, minus ten or so pages of copy, a few maps, and Gene Day's interior illustrations. Al Dewey was kind enough to start a weekly Cthulhu campaign, and was careful to follow the rules as written, so that we could accurately perceive how the game would play as written. Most of the subsequent modifications concerned the new characteristics, Education (EDU) and Sanity (SAN), and the combat section.

As written, Sandy had accurately transposed the Lovecraft universe into gaming terms. That meant that every character who investigated the mythos eventually would go insane, since Lovecraft never showed such knowledge as anything but ultimately frustrating or destructive. Dark endings may be effective ways to end short stories, but they do not work for FRP – nobody enjoys seeing their characters always crushed, impaled, drained, sliced, throttled, and otherwise made corpses of without relief, and neither is it much fun to have Investigators staggering from Catatonia to Amnesia to Stupefaction without much chance to do more than shrug.

We changed Sanity into a two-way ticket, leaving the initial premise: the more a character knows about Cthulhoid things, the crazier he gets. Characters ceased the plunge to NPC-dom (the referee – the Keeper in this game – gets all the permanently insane characters as well as the dead ones). A character can go temporarily insane and recover his Sanity up to his current maximum SAN, and he even can extend his Sanity up to



Since I am no gun nut, I was incompletely prepared to deal with the problem of firearms in the rules. Everyone I knew gave me a different story on how much damage guns would do, how many shots they would fire, etc. The first gun listings done were far too low on damage given, and the second group were much too high. Finally I sat down with Steve Perrin and Sean Summers after Origins '81 and thrashed it out until we all felt that the guns were properly represented. I personally feel that the gun section is one of the more accurate parts of the game, if rather less important in a player's context, since the game is set up to penalize those characters relying on firepower rather than brainpower.

In trying to make the game itself have the feel of a horror story, I first set up the monsters such that almost any single monster was more than a match for a single character, and some monsters were even beyond the capabilities of even a well-organized party. My motive was not to make the game unplayable or a 'killer,' but to cause the scenarios and actions of a single game session to revolve around plans and plots to dispose of a single horrific event or being.

While I was working out this part of the game, I read an article in *Sorcerer's Apprentice* magazine, which explained how to adapt the Cthulhu muthos to the game of *Tunnels and Trolls* written by Glenn and Phillip Rahman. The article was well-written, but all of it was useless to me (having already progressed past most of the areas covered in the article) except for one part. The article suggested that a new characteristic be added in such a campaign which basically would represent Willpower, and that this score gradually decrease as the player progresses in a game until it reaches zero. The authors also said that the failure of a saving throw based on this characteristic should result in insanity or fainting. This idea struck me as the perfect way to incorporate a large portion of the Lovecraft feel into the rules.

Originally, I had the Sanity characteristic range from 1-100 at the start of a character's creation, and only go down, and that permanently, upon encountering a monster. When it reached zero, the character would go permanently insane. This oversimplistic solution proved poor in play. It was changed so that losing varying amounts of Sanity caused different amounts of problems, and each monster, spell, and magical book read caused a different amount of Sanity loss. This made for a very fatalistic or depressing game, as the players watched for their precious Sanity go down, and down, and down . . . In many ways this matched the stories' mood perfectly, but it often made for a feeling of hopelessness in a game. The entire crew at Chaosium evidently bent their efforts to improve on the original system, and the system now allows for increase of Sanity through various means (though the tendency is still definitely towards Sanity loss rather than gain). A reasonably complete chart for appropriate forms of insanity is included as well.

The current sanity rules are quite good, I feel, and still give a feeling of hopelessness to the players at times, though in actual play it is usually possible to overcome the handicaps of having a poor Sanity. The whole concept of Sanity permeates the game and makes it what it is. It allows for such things as the case in my own campaign, where six players stood inside a pentacle trying to summon One Who Walks Between the Planes. When darkness lowered, and scraping noises were heard, several of the characters hid their eyes so that they would not have to see the hideous being. It is hard to imagine such an event happening in *RuneQuest* or *D&D*.

99 (no one is ever completely sane), so long as he has no Cthulhu Mythos skill. And yet in this game it is as dangerous to know too little as too much.

Greg wrote up regaining and increasing Sanity. Steve Perrin did the insanity categories, adding definition to Sandy's initial 'gibbering formlessness.' Yurek Chodak contributed all but one of the phobia descriptions (Dorothy Heydt did Claustrophobia). I added the availability of psychoanalysis and institutions for curing temporary insanity, and whined about the desperate plight of too-curious or too-confident characters, some of which found form in admonitions about proper style of play.

Steve combed the entire manuscript, tightening and checking it, adding to the weapons rules and writing the examples for combat, magic, and monsters.

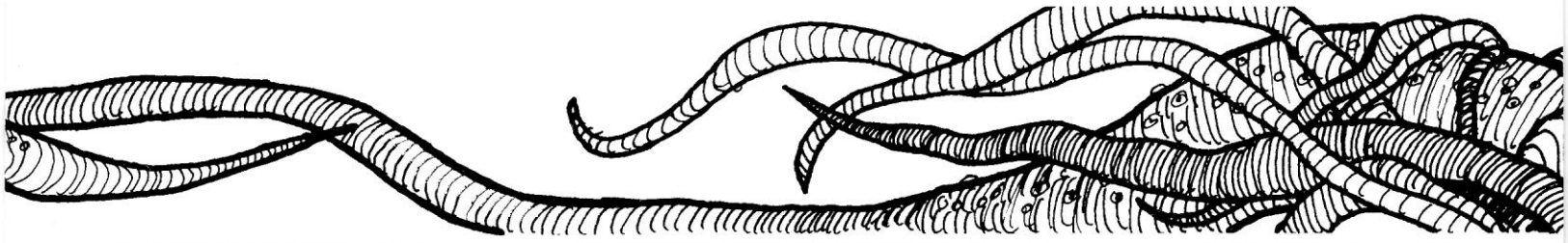
The Game Delayed

Cthulhu originally was to be an Origins 81 release (derailed by a promise to have *Stormbringer* out then) and then was to be out in time for GenCon in August (derailed again, this time for *Thieves' World*). Neither of these other games were at all Cthulhoid [but the timing is suspicious!].

Preparing for the GenCon trip, I thought I saw a good way to save some time on *Cthulhu* – now really on track because the extended agreement with Arkham ran out if we failed to publish soon. I did an edit and format for the main rules and gave them to a free-lance typesetter; returning from Wisconsin, I started thinking out and assembling the *1920's Sourcebook*. Alas, I had more time to do that than I thought.

Other Items in the Box

The *Sourcebook* accompanies *Call of Cthulhu* in the box as an independent item, usable with any role-playing game. It is literally a collection of biographies, time-lines, weapons, prices, transport times, maps, and so on – chosen to enhance adventurous play in the period. The movie *Raiders of the Lost Ark* influenced it in one respect (the archaeological site maps) and I believe there is a reference or two in the weapons examples to one "Ohio Jones," probably a cousin to the better-known hero of similar name.



Conclusions

An especially charming aspect of the game is that it is set up to be run in the roaring twenties. This time era is close enough to our own to allow us to fully understand the culture, motivations, and activities, yet far enough away so that everything that happened then is covered by a patina of glamor. It is hard for a player to lock horns with Al Capone or meet a young Albert Einstein. The game can easily be run in a more modern time period by a clever referee, and most of the information for a modern campaign is more readily available to the players and the referee. In a campaign set in the 1980s the players will readily know how much a new car costs, or what inventions are available.

A Sourcebook for the 1920s is included in the game to provide supplementary information about the period including all sorts of interesting information (do you know what company advertised its product as coming from contented cows?) and useful facts, such as steamship costs for passage and the internal layout of Pullman cars.

In the game's present form, it plays much like an adventure mystery, such as the movie *Raiders of the Lost Ark*. The players rush around frantically trying to find out what exactly the problem is with which they are faced, trying to cope with it, and trying to get something out of it as well. The game is based on *Basic Role-Playing* – a framework on which the rest of the rules are hung. The simple, yet elegant rules of *BRP* make it easier to get right into playing the game without having to learn about various picky specifics. In fact, it has been my experience that a campaign run in which the players know absolutely nothing about the rules except for what is in *Basic Role-Playing* and how the skills work is one of the finest campaigns that can be run in *Call of Cthulhu*.

In writing up this game, I wanted to have a game which both had the overall mood and specific details of the Cthulhu Mythos. Additionally, I wanted to make an enjoyable and easily playable game. I think that I have succeeded (though not without help) in both of these requirements. Being a player (though not a referee) in a *Call of Cthulhu* game requires perhaps less rules knowledge than any other role-playing game that I know, yet still gives the player an excellent return in fun, adventure, and chills. The very subject of the game, along with the setting, encourages role-playing rather than simple rules-following. If the goal of the campaign is to stop the evil Cthulhu and his minions from destroying the world, a suitably heroic (though horrific) death for a player can be truly edifying for all. I think you'll like the game as much as I do. If (barbarous thought) a person should decide to use the game not as a game in itself, but as a Lovecraftian source for monsters, magic, books, etc., for a different game, it works well for that too. I would have to say it is probably better as a source for *RuneQuest* than any other role-playing game except *Worlds of Wonder*.

Thoughts on Running a Campaign

If you want to run a campaign of *Call of Cthulhu*, a lot of background work will need to be done (as in most RPGs). In particular, a network connecting one scenario to another will need to be forged by the referee. In the rulesbook itself, I compare such a network to a series of layers – as one discovers more, he is led to ever more deep dark secrets. For example, in my campaign, the characters, while investigating a haunted house, were led to an old ruined church that the former inhabitant of the house (a Cthulhu worshiper) had

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The game box had to be made, a nerve-wracking task because the first time I or Charlie Krank see a box design the way it will be printed is when the color-key comes in: all the film work has been done then, a commitment amounting to several thousand dollars. Once the color-key is at hand, it is easy to see errors of color conception or of design balance, but it may be too late to do much about it without expensive corrections that drive up the price of the item. Gene Day contributed a delightful cover painting of a party of adventurers.

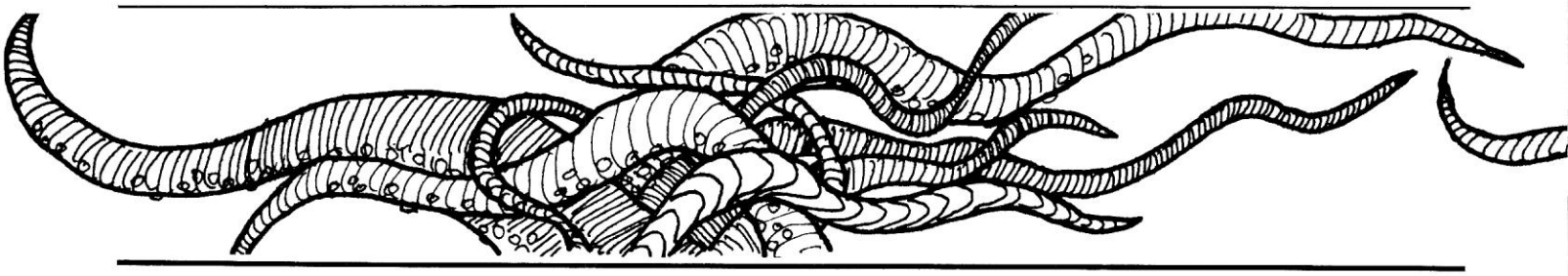
Steve drew up a sketch for the character sheet. Since every game differs, every game should have its own character sheets. The one Sandy had been using was converted from *RuneQuest*. Because *Cthulhu* relies upon number relations much less than does *RQ*, the resulting sheet is more open and readable, and less intimidating to newcomers.

Since the minions of Cthulhu threaten the whole world, we needed to add a world map to the package. The experience of our campaign (in which we sailed to Egypt, had endless blood-curdling adventures, were finally ejected from the country, took the Orient Express, encountered some interesting Transylvanians, and had an unusual time in a Bavarian monastery) showed just how much fun (and how many accents) we could have with the rules, and I wanted the map to reflect that. Yurek drew the outlines and the tentacles, I added the teeny names and symbols, and Charlie cut the screens. The Cthulhoid sites shown are approximate when followed by a question-mark. The archaeological sites include all or nearly all of the the detailed sketches in the *Sourcebook*.

Final Problems

The typesetting for the main book had been designed to lay out the body of the book as well as simply to put the text into print, and to that end I spent several week-ends sitting by a terminal, figuring out proper page breaks and re-writing to fit tables and illustrations where they might reasonably go.

Imagine my joy when most of the copy came back in unusable and incomplete form. Efforts to further correct the copy began to take 7-10 days queuetime before hard copy returned. It was in this time that I began to recall all of those dark cables



gone to. At the church, they found out that the current owner of the church was trying to perform various unholy acts, and indeed was a powerful sorcerer. In trying to deal with him, they were led into a nest of sinister foreigners plotting to infiltrate the government and cause construction of a morbid device that would cause enormous destruction if completed. The players never did get back to exorcising the haunted house, and it stands there still, waiting for unwary persons.

A series of scenarios will need to be devised by a beginning referee, designed like the scenarios given in *Call of Cthulhu*. The players can begin with these scenarios as a sort of episodic play, and as the campaign gets going, the players will make friends and enemies, have places to go, and things going on. Interesting hints, letters from afar, and highly unusual newspaper accounts about the record-breaking monsters that the moonshine whiskey has conjured up in the obscure backwoods town of Dunwich can all go towards keeping things happening.

Good horror movies are one great source of scenario ideas. Suitable changes should be made both to match them up with the Cthulhu Mythos and to change the scenario so that the players won't recognize it. For example, the classic *Frankenstein* redone for the twenties could give players some rough times. Change the names to protect the innocent: the well-known Doctor Von Franken has had recent scientific success in the field of organic revivification. He has recently written a nearly incoherent letter to a professional friend, who is either a player, or who requests the players to go and see what is wrong. Evidently something connected with one of his experiments has gone wrong. Not only that, his fiancee is missing. . .

Popular novels are another good source for scenario ideas. Many of these are also in movie form, but the books usually give better detail. An advantage here is that some players will not have read the book where they may have seen the movie. In the small village of Bethel, New Hampshire (note, Bethel = *Salem's Lot*) there has been some trouble. Many villagers have moved out, and others have simply disappeared. Maybe the mysterious foreigner, 'Stracker,' (who looks suspiciously like James Mason) knows what is going on. Maybe he's even trying to stop it? Who bought the old mansion and why hadn't they fixed it up better?

Probably the finest source of scenarios is Lovecraft himself, and his imitators. Unless your players are real Lovecraft fanatics like me, you should be able to find an obscure story that they won't be familiar with and let them have it. For example, in the story *Horror in the Wax Museum*, the neurotic sculptor Rogers and his Karloffian servant Orabona have a little museum in which the Adult's Alcove is a little bit too realistic. In fact, Rogers even claims that not all his sculptures are, strictly speaking, sculptures. Does an intrepid player take his bet that he will not be able to remain a night in the Museum? If he does stay, why do the more morbid monstrosities in the Adult's Alcove seem to move while he is not looking? And what is that noise in the basement?

I hope this overview of the problems I had with the game, and suggestions on scenarios helps you to enjoy it. If you like the game, have questions or comments, suggestions or additions, please feel free to write me care of the Chaosium or this magazine. If you enclose a self addressed stamped envelope, I'll be sure to reply. If you don't, I may anyway if your letter is especially flattering/interesting/useful/annoying.

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on the floor below the terminal: where they all cables, or were some of them something else? Did I always stumble over them because I was clumsy, or did some of them *move?*

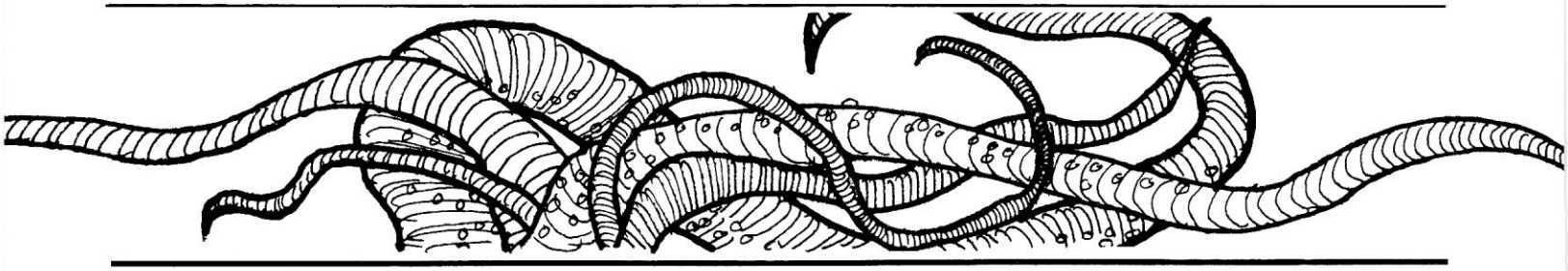
Thus it was that by the beginning of October I missed my first SAN roll, and had to take a week off.

Conclusion

Eventually the project did get done, of course, breaking budgets and schedules along the way. Cthulhu and his minions were foiled, at least temporarily, and more hard data about them and their machinations has been published in this game than in perhaps any other artifact of the entire mythos, all of it quantified, organized, and immediately available to hard-pressed Investigators.

Cthulhu is my favorite role-playing game now, since so much of the play is concerned with building proper atmosphere and since it strongly encourages real cooperation between the characters. Set in the 1920's, a time just strange enough to be exotic, the setting is yet familiar enough that most of the minutiae that can plague fantasy-world runs here is handled by common knowledge. Referees presenting a scenario will be amazed at how little of their time needs to be spent building traps, mazes, and monsters, and at how much of the run can concern role-playing and story-telling. The level of violence is generally low; when violence does occur, however, it does so with truly shocking speed and power. This game of contrasts and searches can be as charming and urbane as an old Alfred Hitchcock thriller, or as stunning as the latest drive-in no-story cut-'em-up.

I hope this article explains how *Cthulhu* came to be as you have it; many decisions must be made and even more things happen in order to turn an idea into a manuscript and then into the marketable game you might want. Such stories usually are not told, because they involve many people and are long and complex. In fact, it is often not clear even at the time just who is responsible for a rule or a concept – it may in fact be three or four people. One of the nice things about role-playing games is that there are many heroes; the same is true for role-playing game companies. □



Guns Against Cthulhu

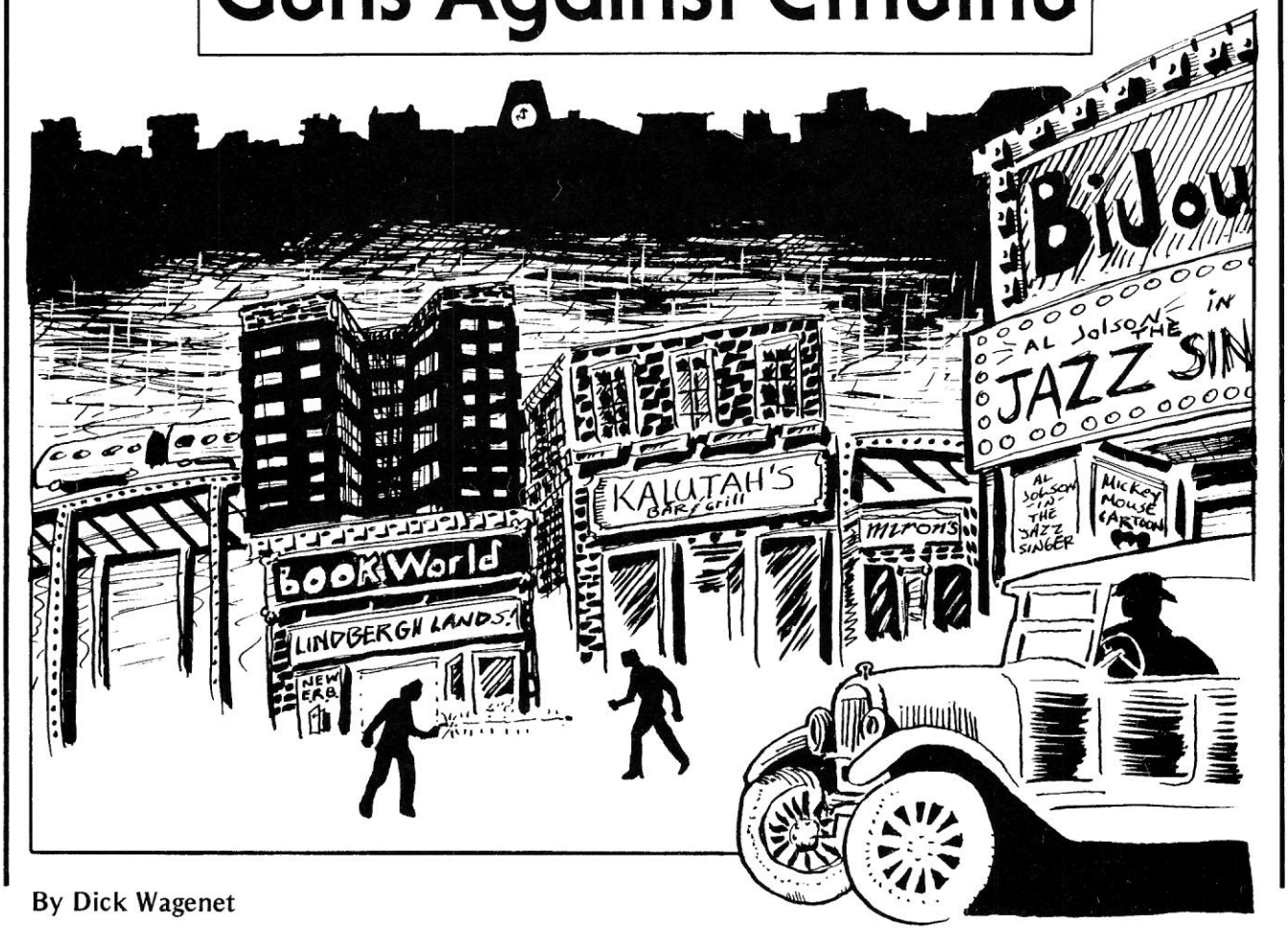


illustration by Miron Murcury

By Dick Wagenet

Glowering grimly, the hardened man in the battered brown fedora strode purposely into Sears Roebucks' bustling smoke-filled sporting goods department, hot fire in his eyes. The wire he'd received had been all too familiar . . . his damn brother Ohio needed bailing out again. "Between him and Idaho . . ." He let the thought trail away like steam on a crisp autumn morn. Pausing, he tugged his tired chapeau even further down in front of his glinting eyes, shrugged his massive shoulders, then stepped to the head of the line. His chiseled jaws chomped firmly down on the bitter butt of his last stogie as he spat to the pert young thing behind the counter, "Gimme a heater, Honey."

"A heater Sir?" replied the lady, "those are in appliances . . ."

"Not a heater!", he barked impatiently, "a gat!"

"I'm sorry Sir," she lilted, "but Sears doesn't carry pets."

Rock hard hands snatched the cheroot from his lips. "Not a Cat!", he roared, "GAT! A ROD! A PIECE!"

"A-A-A What?", she faltered, lily hands leaping to her suddenly heaving bosom, a rosy blush beginning to tint her alabaster cheeks.

He shook his head feebly. "Lady," he whimpered, "please give me a gun."

Heaters, rods, gats, guns, zeppelins and luxury liners, earthly modern mysteries and monsters from beyond time. Add to this a very playable system and you have the Chaosium's *Call of Cthulhu*, one of the more attractive new releases on the FRP market. To one who is thoroughly (as perhaps many of you are) tired of having to learn a wholly new system every time he wants to adventure in a different time period, the last is probably the most welcome aspect of the game. Though *Basic Role-Playing* is still a new and relatively threadbare format (when compared to virtually any of its predecessors, especially its parent, *RuneQuest*), there is something about its very lack of formality that makes it appealing, especially to the gamer who enjoys improvisation. Not to mention that the successful application of it to another milieu than that originally designed for it says quite a bit about soundness of its design.

Unfortunately, every system needs some level of complexity to keep it interesting to the players. In *Call of Cthulhu*, we see what happens when "Basic" tries to become complex without really seeming so. The compromises that the Chaosium has tried to make are for the most part valid ones that add to the system without too much trouble.

In one area – that of new weaponry – the resolution of the problem, that is the decisions as to what constitutes "basic," and what doesn't, seems to have been made too much in favor of the former, and hurt the system as a whole in the process. The following is an attempt to address and redress these problems. The solutions here are suggested as no more than optional rules, to be agreed on by all involved before being used. Hopefully they will allow the users a bit more flexibility in the Lovecraftian world.

"Here we are sir," the girl said, "our firearms section. Which would you like to see first?"

"Shotguns," he growled tersely," I may need some Firepower."

She stepped to a glas covered case on the wall, unlocked it and took down a gun. "Here's a fine weapon," she smiled, tucking away her wad of Wrigley's into her cheek.

Snapping the barrel briskly shut, he laid the shotgun back on the counter." This'll do me fine," he said, the faintest trace of a smile hovering about his lips. Only one thing besides a good gun made him smile – a good . . .

"I need a pistol." The words were more a command than a request.

She stood still for a moment, fingers softly tracing the outlines of the gunbarrel, her head bowed in reverie. "Don't we all," she murmured.

For a moment their eyes locked, his steely blue melting the resistance in her doelike browns. Tension hung around them like wet noodles on a wall.

Forcing herself to look away, she reached into the drawer between them and drew out a small automatic.

"Here you are Sir," she spoke boldly, raising her eyes back to his, "How will this do – a nice .32?"

He hefted it in his hand, feeling its smooth coolness settling into his callused palm. "A .32 huh? Tell you the truth, I was thinking more of a .45." He raised one eyebrow in slow question.

"A ,45, Sir?", she leaned slightly forward,"but a .32 costs just the same to get."

"I know that," he countered, squeezing the trigger gently,"but I like something bigger, something with a little more . . . body."

"Believe me," she pleaded," a .32 will do anything a .45 will."

"Yeah?", he pursed his lips amusedly. Opening the action further he peered down the dark tight bore,"will it hit as hard?"

"N-no," she admitted, dropping her eyes.

"Will it shoot further? Faster?"

"No," she trembled,"no."

"Can it . . . penetrate as far?"

"Oh nooo," she whispered, moaning.

"Gimme a .45," he ordered in deep, satisfied tones.

"But . . . why?" she begged, soft eyes brimming into his.

Call it . . . a whim."

The first real problems one runs into in the firearms rules to *Call of Cthulhu* lie in the weapons ratings given. If taken as written, only three weapons will ever be used – the .45, the .30-06, and (for those who can afford it) the scatter gun. With every other comparable weapon costing the same, carrying the same number of rounds, shooting the same distance and not hitting as well, why would any character use anything less?

For variety's sake, if nothing else, I would like to offer the following, heavily altered weapons table:

NEW WEAPONS FOR BRP (revised)

Weapon	*Rounds*	*ROF*	*Damage*	*Range (Base%)*	*Reload-Jam*
pistol					
.22 revolver	6	2	1D4	20yds (20%)	2 – 99
.22 revolver	8	2	1D4	20yds (20%)	1 – 96
.32 revolver	6	2	1D6	15yds (20%)	2 – 99
.32 auto.	7	2	1D6	15yds (20%)	1 – 96
7.65 revolver		Use same statistics as for .32			
7.65 automatic		Use same statistics as for .32			
.38 revolver	6	3	1D8	20yds (20%)	2 – 99
.38 auto.	8	3	1D8	20yds (20%)	1 – 96
9mm auto.	8	4	1D8+1	15yds (20%)	1 – 96
.45 revolver	6	4	1D10	15yds (20%)	2 – 99
.45 auto.	7	4	1D10+1	15yds (20%)	1 – 96
rifles					
.22 (clip)	5	4	1D6	80yds (10%)	1 – 98
.30-06 (clip)	5	4	2D8	100yds (10%)	1 – 98
.30-06(lever)	12	6	2D6	100yds (10%)	1 – 98
.303 (clip)	10	5	2D6	100yds (10%)	1 – 98
7.92 (clip)	5	5	2D6+1	100yds (10%)	1 – 98
8mm (clip)	5	5	2D8+1	100yds (10%)	1 – 97
.375	5	5	2D10+2	100yds (10%)	2 – 98
shotguns (any gauge)					
2-barrel	2	3	see book	see book	1 – 00
pump	7	4	see book	see book	2 – 96

Note: Automatic rifles will not be discussed in this article. Those listed above are all bolt or lever action military surplus or sporting arms.

In conjunction with this table are the following rules and clarifications:

Rate of Fire (ROF) is read somewhat like strike rank in *RuneQuest*; that is, a character may fire his gun on every multiple of its ROF beginning with his DEX (a character of DEX 14 firing on 14, 10, 6, 2). This is somewhat of an esoteric problem – I mean, how many times can a person fire while another swings a club? Given the effort needed to put anything behind the swing, these values may not be all that bad. In any case, they are well below the capabilities of the weapons if used by trained parties (which it has been assumed most characters aren't). Anyway, if a character is dim or harassed enough to empty his gun in one round, it would be his choice and ensuing problem. Finally, it clears up one glaring problem left open to misinterpretation – if second round is at half DEX, is also third? If so, that means low DEX characters will wind up firing at faster rates than high DEX characters.

No costs are given for the cost of guns intentionally. Those given (as stated) are perfectly good starting points, subject to the Keeper's decisions.

Reload times are given in full combat rounds, not in DEX ranks – and jams in percent or higher rolled when that weapon is fired, every time it is fired. Note here that automatic weapons (machine guns) should have a breakdown number of 100 minus the number of three round bursts fired that round – so a Thompson fired 15 times would jam on 95 or higher.

Last, where it says "see book" means I didn't feel the values originally given needed tampering with.

Straining furiously against his bonds, Ohio Jones raged silently at himself. Caught like a schoolkid at the girls

locker room window. How could he have been so stupid? Now he was all trussed up like a Christmas turkey for the oven.

And where the hell was his brother?

The door rasped open and in stepped his nemesis, the evil Baron Gotterdammerung. The cretin leered contemptuously through a frosty monocle at his helpless prey.

"Your time hass come, Ohio Jones," he sneered in his nasal Prussian falsetto. He raised his mauser to his shoulder and fired.

"Himmel," he shouted, "A blassted tventy-vun!" He squinted through the scope and fired again.

"Scheiss!" he screamed, stamping his hobnailed jackboots, "a seventeen!" he fired again. And again, and again.

"Forr Chrisssake ya' verdammt schweinhundt!" he screamed, "quit vigglink your ears, cantcha?"

Since accuracy is halved at double range, it should be doubled at half range, tripled at one-third range, quadrupled at one quarter range and so on. This will bring firearms accuracy more in line with reality without adding any real amount of complexity. It will also result in some unreally high chances to hit without some moderation, so consider using the next two rule alterations as well.

Point blank range will not be the character's DEX in feet, but that range at which the firer reaches 100% chance to hit (characters receive no further increases after 100%).

The final percentage should be halved when firing at a moving target except when at point blank range – only subtract 25%, or the target is dense enough to move straight into the shot, for which there should be no accuracy loss at all.

Suddenly, just as Ohio reached the middle of the temple the stillness was shattered by the roar of gunfire. A hundred barrels pumped a thousand rounds into the confined space, shredding the very stone of the walls. Ohio frowned as he felt the Thud! Thud! of slugs tearing into his frame.

"Lucky for me," he breathed relievedly, "they're all only flesh wounds."

Aside from the obvious physical damage – torn flesh, punctured vitals, spurting arteries, etc., etc., – there is also quite a bit of damage inflicted on one by the shock of the bullet alone, shock which is for the most part ignored in determining damage. Stopping power is one of the most sought after attributes of any missile weapon – yet in virtually every system characters take repeated hits from high power weapons of all types and sizes with no immediate adverse effect. *RuneQuest*, to some degree, in both its *Basic Role-Playing* and advanced forms takes this into account with their "impale" rule. But there is still the spectre of the CON 15 character taking 13 points of damage in one blow and staying in to fight and win. This may in reality happen, but for players who would like an easy way to simulate the effect of a blow on the recipient, the following is offered:

Each time a character takes a hit from a gun or an explosive device, the owning player will have to make a roll. The number he must roll, equal to or less than, will be the number of hit points remaining to his character, times five, plus ten. For example, Ohio Jones has a CON (and therefore hit points) of fifteen. He takes a .45 round hit for ten points, leaving five. He then has a 35% chance (5x5, +10) of continuing as normal.

Characters making the roll suffer no further adverse effects that round. Characters failing the roll are considered shocked unconscious for a period equal to another die roll of the same type that caused the wound.

STOPPING POWER TABLE

Hit Points Remaining																
die	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
roll	95	90	85	80	75	70	65	60	55	50	45	40	35	30	25	20	15

"Die, Amerikaner peeg," yelled Gotterdammerung as he tossed the potato masher grenade at Ohio.

Ohio stepped nimbly aside as the infernal device exploded, a thick cloud of smoke and dust volcanoing up from its site, deafening concussion ringing in his ears. He blinked and smiled.

"Yep," he thought, " exactly three feet one inch away from me." He walked away whistling, sunlight reflecting blindingly from his immaculate white suit.

Other than by acts of God, explosives rarely cut off as sharply as those given in *Call of Cthulhu*, but rather, by simple physics do decreasing damage at increasing range.

To reflect this without getting carried away in how much reduces how much, explosives are rated by the number of damage dice thrown at minimum range, damage dice being D6s, minimum range being 0-6 feet. For each multiple of six feet out from minimum range, subtract one damage die. Actual damage is rolled separately for each potential target. In addition, roll a D100 whenever explosives are used, 98-100 being dud bombs.

Loaded as heavily as a prospector's burro, the hardened man in the battered brown fedora stumbled painfully to the exit from Sears Roebuck's bustling, smoke-filled sporting goods department, pausing to rub the fatigue from his eyes. Now to get on that zeppelin and save . . .

"Ohio!" he exclaimed, jaw dropping open in surprise, "how the heck . . ."

"You didn't come," grinned his brother, "so I wiped 'em out myself."

He stopped stock still for a moment, struck by thought. "What the hell happened to you? There I was, tied to a chair, shot at by Gotterdammerung, surrounded by Cthulhu cultists, bombed, chased by natives . . . where the hell have you been?"

His brother stared back, blank alien horror in his eyes. "You think you had problems," he sighed, bent over under the weight of the eqipment, "I tried to charge this stuff." □

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CC Scenario

Underground Menace

By Sandy Petersen

For all of you Lovecraft and *Call of Cthulhu* fans, present and future, here is a scenario that will really challenge your players' abilities and role-playing skills.

illustrations by Peggy Carter

The intrepid investigators (the player-characters) have read of an interesting newspaper report from northern Michigan. There have been earthquake mumblings in and near the town of Winnemuck. Since there are no fault lines in the area, this is viewed as quite unusual, to say the least. The report says that the natives are "panic stricken" by this event and graphically describes their terror.

Keeper's Information

There are three ways by which the players may get involved in this: a university that they are connected with could send them to see what is going on; a relative from Michigan could ask them to come and help them out – he has heard of the player's expertise in paranormal happenings, "and if this ain't paranormal, what is?"; or something about the description of the townsfolk's fear strikes the players as abnormal.

Basically the scenario is about an evil priest of the Great Old Ones who is starting up a nest for a horrific monster in a cave near Lake Superior. The burrowing activities and underground rituals of the monsters have caused the troubles. He plans to eventually use the monsters in an attempt to seal and destroy the entire small peninsula on which Winnemuck stands, then importing Cthulhu cultists from all over the world to dwell there, and begin rituals of great power and magnitude in a not entirely hopeless effort to bring Cthulhu & his kin back to life ahead of the set time.

Winnemuck

In the town of Winnemuck, none of the townsfolk will talk at all about the quakes unless a player makes a successful Fast Talk or Law roll. A successful Law roll implies that the townsman could be in trouble if he holds out on his information. Even if the player makes his roll, all he can get out of the person is, "I thought it could come to this, though I hoped that when we drove Bill out of town the problems would end. I sure hope that them quakes are natural and normal, like the scientists are trying to prove, but I'm mighty afraid they ain't." After saying this much, the townsman will try to clam up and not say anything else (in reality, he doesn't know much more). If the player makes a successful Oratory or Fast Talk roll immediately after the townsman stops talking, and the player asks something to the effect of "Bill who?," the townsman may be startled into saying, "Bill Whittaker, naturally." Then he will get angry and refuse to speak to the investigators.

On a city map in the city building (copies are available for 25 cents each) is an old road leading out of town towards Lake Superior called the Whittaker road. No Whittakers currently live in town, as the city clerk will repeatedly assure the players, even if they don't ask. A country map available at the county seat (costs 50 cents) shows that the road leads straight up to the lake, passing through a forest in which a farmhouse is located. No one at the county seat knows anything about the road or the Whittakers and they will try to play down the quakes, fearing that tourists

and immigrants would be scared off if the quakes became too generally known.

The police station (roll Law or Debate to get information) has one document dating from 1916 stating that three persons; Dollie Hackens, Buddy Perklette, and Maxwell Eisenstein were arrested for "harassment" on the accusation of one J. W. Whittaker, but Whittaker refused to press charges thereafter. If the players search for these people, they find that Dollie Hackens drowned in the lake two months later, Buddy Perklette died of a heart attack in 1917 (he was 24 years old), and Maxwell Eisenstein was committed to the state madhouse in 1917, where he died raving in 1919. This information can only be gotten at the homes of the respective people or at the coroner's office for Perklette and Hackens.

The offices of the Winnemuck *Bee*, a local newspaper (roll Orate to get in) have back issues dating to 1910, when the paper was started. Before that there was no newspaper available in town. A successful Library Search roll allows the player to find a paper dated August 15th, 1916, in which there is a letter to the editor signed by a Bill W. It is rather long and rambling, accusing the good township of Winnemuck of trying to suppress his rights and condoning the "ruffians" trying to damage his property, trespass, and otherwise "harass" him. He ends the letter by saying, "If these harassments end not, the entire township will be the worse off. The minor things that have been happening up to now could grow worse, and I can promise you that my cries for justice are not answered in vain. Things have learned to walk that ought to crawl. I may leave, but never forever. Curtly yours, Bill W."

Facts

If the players go up the road to the old farmhouse on the Whittaker road, things will happen. If they travel in a car, after a mile or two of rough road, it will definitely get too muddy for the auto to travel any further, and the party will have to walk through the woods. If they ride horses, the horses will refuse to enter the woods at all, so the players will still have to walk. It is a four hour walk to the farmhouse, through heavy woods, though not much underbrush. If the players are in the woods at nightfall, whether they are traveling to or from the house, they can hear whistling howling noises coming from the west (see below under *Standing Stones*).

Farmhouse

The farmhouse looks as if it has been abandoned since 1918, which it has. There is thick growth clear up to the door, and the old stable has half fallen down. All the shingles on the roof have fallen off, and lay in the 'yard,' and all the windows are broken. The miserable three acres of farmland are now overgrown with saplings. An animal trail leads from the back yard of the house into the deep woods. The road continues on to the Lake, which is only a mile or so from the house.

Inside the house, which is single story, and has only three rooms, one with a fireplace, is destruction. A dead rabbit, twisted and convulsed for some grim reason, lies in one room. There is much old, broken furniture everywhere within, and there is a hole in one wall, exposing an opening (it takes a successful Spot Hidden to see this).

If the opening is explored, an old book can be seen under some cobwebs. An investigator reaching in for the book will automatically be bitten by a Black Widow spider. If he ignores the sting and grabs the book anyway, he is bitten again. If he immediately withdraws his hand, he is only bitten once. There are several spiders in the hole, and any violent attempt to kill them will also ruin the book. When the character withdraws his hand, the spider will be highly visible, clinging to his hand and scurrying about. A successful DEX x 5 roll will dislodge it, and it may then be easily stepped on. If the character fails his DEX roll, he is bitten again unless he can roll POW x 5 or less and this continues until the spider is smashed. Each spider bite infuses a poison of potency 1D10 into the victim (for treatment see Treat Poison skill). The poison will begin to take effect 1D3 hours after the character is bitten, and he will start suffering abdominal cramps, breathing difficulty, nausea and so forth. Within one hour after the pain begins, he will no longer be capable of walking (remember, the farmhouse is four hours walking distance, about eight miles, from succor). If the poisons POT is high enough to kill the character, death ensues about 3D10 hours after the bite. If the character will live, he will completely recover at that time instead. In any case, if the total poison POT adds up to less than ½ his CON, he will not be incapacitated and will be able to walk again in 1D3+3 hours after the bite. Note that the loss of hit points from the poison is longer lasting, and the damage will only go away at the rate of

one point per day. If he gets to a hospital within six hours, six points of poison POT will be automatically purged from his body. This is in addition to any Treat Poison rolls the players try.

The book hidden in the wall is a copy of *The Revelations of Glaaki*, standard English edition (see *Y'Golonac*). Upon perusing the book at all, the characters must immediately be aware of the title of the book, and the fact that it will cost a loss of 2D6 points of SAN if read.

The animal trail from behind the farmhouse leads several winding miles into the woods, finally ending up at a clearing, within which stand some megalithic stones and a stained cube-like rock (the altar) in the center. If the characters arrive here after nightfall, a ceremony will be going on. If the characters follow the whistling howling noise mentioned earlier, they will also end up here.

The Standing Stones

In daylight, there is nothing grim here, except for the altar. A successful Zoology roll tells that the stains are blood in vast quantities, and the weirdly charred, perforated, and scraped tissue around the altar's base comes from cattle. At nightfall, the party will be impressed to see torches set all around the base of the cuboid altar stone in the center, and a tethered cow, rolling her eyes in fright, also near the stone. If the characters arrive before night, and wait for dusk, the priest will spot them from his hiding place and will not come out to set up torches or bring a cow, but the ceremony will start just the same.

The ceremony consists of the afore-mentioned whistling, howling sounds, but they are now interspersed with the following words, "Ia, Ia, Shub-Niggurath, the Black Goat of the Woods with a Thousand Young! Iar' Mnarh'lu w'gah'nagl thnarlo yorra analakh Sirrharie'! Sirrharie'! Y'm rokh'nahl noyklom! Noyklom rajh annigh! Ia! Ia! Shub-Niggurath! Thnarlo yorra analakh! The goat! The goat of the woods! Accept now my sacrifices!

A successful Listening roll will tell the players that the chanting noise appears to be coming from behind the altar, where some stones and a dip in the ground make it impossible to see what is there without stepping into the clearing. If someone is foolish enough to step into the circle, the chanting will stop, though strange flute-like music accompanied by drumbeats will continue. If the player goes to where he can see behind the altar, a robed figure will leap at his throat. If more than one player has entered the circle, the figure leaps at whatever figure is armed most heavily (long arms outranking pistols, and shotguns outranking rifles). The priest has a DEX of 17, and unless the player's DEX is equal to or greater than that, he cannot get a shot off before being mauled.

The priest is now a ghoul, but formerly was Bill Whittaker, as can be determined from his old clothing of rags, and a watch he wears with his name on it. Discovering this adds +1% to Mythos knowledge, but also costs 1D3 points of SAN.

Bill Whittaker (current incarnation)
STR 18 CON 13 SIZ 12 INT 10 POW 15 DEX 17
Move 7

Weapon	*Attack*	*Damage*	
Claws	50%	2D6	Bill gets two claw attacks and a bite each round as per normal ghouls.
Bite	50%	2D6+worries foe	

Spells: Contact Cthonian, Summon Dark Young of Shub-Niggurath, Voorish Sign, possibly others as appropriate.

Note: Bill only takes half damage from guns of any sort, and his strength is high enough to keep from being knocked down or back by any gun wound. He is a ghoul, after all.

If Bill is slain, the music, which has been playing all this time will stop, and the cow will begin to scream in terror. Also, Bill's robe will fall back and the players will get a good look at him (as per seeing a ghoul – lose 1D6 points of SAN). If Bill is not slain, but kills his victim, he will attack a second foe, and so on until he is killed, or all the party is killed. If someone tries to shoot Bill while he is engaged in fighting someone, a miss indicates that Bill's target has been hit instead, unless the character can roll his DEXx3 or less (in his attack, Bill and the victim will be rolling around, entangled, all over the clearing).

1D6 minutes after Bill is killed or the ceremony is allowed to continue without interference, a horrible squishing noise, like a giant wearing wet tennis shoes, is heard coming from the south. Trees begin to break and finally, a looming Thing enters the clearing. Players should be given enough warning to be allowed to avert their eyes if they wish. The Thing is a Dark Young of Shub-Niggurath, and will proceed to walk up to the altar and stand before it. The priest (assuming he is still living) will then come out of hiding and slaughter the cow. Before the blood ceases running from the animal's neck, the Dark Young will grab the cow and destroy it, leaving only a charred, perforated, scraped membraneous hide. If the players try to interfere, or if the priest has already been slain, the Dark Young will attack the players.

The Thing from the Woods: (a specimen of the Dark Young Of Shub-Niggurath)

STR 44 CON 23 SIZ 41 INT 16 POW 20 DEX16
Move 8

Weapon	*Attack*	*Damage*
Tentacle	80%	4D6+drains one point of STR, permanently per round thereafter

The Thing can attack with four tentacles per round and tentacle reach is ten yards (it is ten to twenty yards tall). If a victim is being held and his STR drained, the Thing cannot attack with that tentacle that round, but the victim cannot fight back anyway.

Armor: none–all firearms do only minimum possible damage.

Spells: Call Shub-Niggurath, Shriving, Summon Hunting Horror, Bind Hunting Horror, Summon Servitor of the Other Gods.

SAN: Viewers lose 1D20 points of SAN. If they make their roll, they lose one point of SAN anyway.

If the Thing is killed, it will begin to melt away almost immediately, and within half an hour it will be entirely gone, except for a damp spot on the ground, within which all the plants have been killed – no new plants will grow on that soil for decades to come.

If the Thing is slain the players will gain 1D20 points of SAN each. The characters who failed to see the Thing slain or who ran away, do not gain any SAN. If the characters end up running away when the Thing comes out of the woods, it will not follow. However, the next week, the players will be attacked by a Hunting Horror, which has been summoned by the Thing and sent after them. It will attack at midnight, and if the players are in a building, it will tear the roof off (or tear its way in through a wall) and come after them. If the players are separated, it will go after the largest group of them, and if two groups are equal, it will attack the better armed. (The Thing knows of the players' movements.)

Hunting Horror, (sent by the Thing from the woods)

STR 28 CON 19 SIZ 29 INT 11 POW 16 DEX 14
Move 7/11 flying

Weapon	*Attack*	*Damage*
Bite	70%	4D6
Tail	90%	grapple and carry off (roll STR vs STR to escape)

Armor: 9 points (cannot be impaled by firearms)

Spells: Call Azathoth

SAN: Costs 1D10 points if seen. No loss if SAN roll is made.

Later Actions

About the time the player-characters have met the Thing, and possibly slain the priest or driven off the Hunting Horror (which melts if slain, just like the Thing, except that it won't kill the plant life) the players should be considering leaving the area. If they do, a few months later, they will read in a newspaper report that the quakes got worse until most of the townsfolk were forced to move. Those that stayed were killed when an enormous crevice opened up and swallowed up what remained of the town. Only bare ground covers the site now.

If the players kill the priest, but not the Thing, and drive off the Horror, they may wish to return to the altar site and fight the Thing again, only better prepared. If they do return there, the Thing (which can see through the Standing Stones, using them as a sort of long distance camera) will sneak up to a point where it can see them and they can't see it (easy enough in the dark, despite its size, the Thing does sort of look like a tree), though they can smell it well enough, but not well enough to pinpoint its location, the Thing will then throw a 15 point Shriving spell at the best-armed player, and follow it up with a physical attack by the two Servitors of the Gods which it has summoned up in the last few days. The Servitors simply look like rolling lumps of tentacled matter, and cost SAN to view. Servitors are also immune to all non-enchanted weapons. (For Servitor statistics see *Call of Cthulhu* rulesbook.)

If the players kill the Thing, but not the priest, he will continue by calling another "Thing from the Woods". *If they kill the Thing and the priest,* then they have saved the town. Congratulations are in order. If they don't kill the thing, but return in daylight (or whenever) and knock down the standing stones, the Thing will instantly stalk out of the woods and attack physically, possibly casting a 15 point Shriving spell as well. This will effectively give the players another chance to kill it. If the priest is still alive, the stones will prove impossible to knock over. If he dies, his death will seem to weaken their foundations and they can then be knocked down by matching combined STR vs. their STR of 20 each. If all the stones are knocked over, the site will become unusable and any Cthulhoid priests using it would have to go through a long and complex purification ritual. If the players knock over all the stones after killing the Thing and the priest (and possibly a Hunting Horror), they can find under the altar (when it is overturned) a series of stone steps leading down into the earth.

The Stone Steps

The steps lead down 30 meters and end in a small, hot chamber filled with bones and rotting meat and stinking furiously. A dark polished wooden stick is visible on top of a bone heap. The wood is good quality, though if a Botanist makes his roll he can be sure that the wood of this staff was never grown on Eath. The staff is actually about three feet long and uncarved. A successful Cthulhu Mythos roll identifies it as some sort of sacred staff used by the Old Ones against the sorcerous creations of the Older Gods. The staff acts as a nightstick if used as a weapon, and counts as a magical weapon vs. various monsters, such as the Servitors of the Outer Gods. It is also immune to any attacks made by anything of this earth, and cannot be burned, broken, or otherwise destroyed, except by magical spells or actual contact by a Great Old One who is willing to destroy it.

If the staff is touched, Black Widows spiders will be found clinging to the underside and will bite the grasper. See details under *Farmhouse* in this scenario. □

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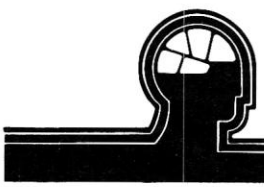

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CALL of CTHULHU

Errata and Second Thoughts

Page 6: Under **Characteristic Rolls**, the first sentence should read –

Basic Role-Playing **introduces the characteristic rolls of an** *idea roll* **based on five times the character's INT, a** *luck roll* **based on five times the character's POW, and a** *persuasion roll* **based on five times the character's CHA.**

Page 7: Insert in front of **Skill Categories**:

Humans have a base movement of 8. This represents moving 80 feet per melee round, in a combat situation. A Keeper may wish to set up a playing area divided into squares or hexagons to determine movement.

Page 8: Immediately after the table correlating STR and SIZ with a possible damage bonus, insert the following –

Hit Points – Optional Rule: Larger sized beings should usually have more hit points than smaller ones. Use the following chart to determine how many hit points are added (or subtracted) from the CON of an individual of the given SIZ.

For those who prefer a formula instead of a chart, just divide the being's or character's SIZ by 4, rounding all fractions up. Then subtract 3 from the total. The result is the hit point bonus due to SIZ. This rule is only optional but is recommended.

SIZ	*Hit Point+*	*SIZ*	*Hit Point+*
1-4	-2	33-36	+6
5-8	-1	37-40	+7
9-12	+0	41-44	+8
13-16	+1	45-48	+9
17-20	+2	49-52	+10
21-24	+3	53-56	+11
25-28	+4	57-60	+12

Pages 10 & 13: There are several discrepancies between the character sheet on page 10 and the skills list given on page 13. The character sheet has the correct score in all cases, except for the skill of *Hide*, which has a 05% base chance. The precise categories, along with the corrections, which must be changed on page 13, follow –

First Aid 45% **Move Quietly 25%**
Listening 45% **Climb 55%**
Spot Hidden 25%

Also, the skill of 'Throw' should be added to the list of Agility Skills. It has a base chance of 45%.

Page 14: Table 3.B needs some corrections. The damage listed after *Fighting Knife* should be 1D4+2. In addition, the following weapons should have an asterisk (*) after their name on the list –

Fencing Foil **Smaller Knife**
Fighting Knife **Pocketknife**
Butcher Knife **Rapier or Heavy Epee**

At the bottom of the chart, this note must be added:

***An asterisk means that this weapon is able to impale.**

Page 18: Under **Law**, it actually takes 30 - INT in weeks to learn a foreign nation's laws, not 30 - INT in months.

Page 23: Under **General**, the last two sentences of this section should be changed to read –

Characters automatically recover from temporary insanity; 'permanent' insanity may be cured. Reduction of SAN to or below zero results in incurable insanity.

Also in the **Shock and Temporary Loss** section the third line should read –

...He must make a D6 roll...

Page 25: Under **Regaining and Increasing SAN**, the section headed **Skills**, delete the last part of the first sentence. The deleted portion reads **"...and to increase his maximum SAN by an equal amount, up to 99."** Under the section **Defeating Monsters**, delete the entire second sentence in the first paragraph. This sentence starts out **"He may also increase his..."**

Page 29: In the section **DEITIES, RACES AND MONSTERS** add one more sentence to the **Introduction.**

When a deity (Outer God, Elder God, or Old One) has its CON reduced to 0, it is not slain, but merely driven off for an indeterminant period of time (up to the Keeper).

Page 32: Just before the section headed **BEINGS AND MYTHOS**, insert –

If the campaign uses the optional rule of hit point bonuses (see page 8), then many of the monsters listed here should have such bonuses figured. In any case, the deities, including the Outer Gods and Great Old Ones will not gain any CON additions due to their SIZ. This is because their hit points depend upon other things than mere physical volume. Also, Flame Vampires, the Spawn of Cthulhu, and Dholes receive no CON bonuses or subtractions due to SIZ. All other monsters do receive them if this rule is used.

Pages 33-54: Right after **Armor** in the monster descriptions should be an additonal category entitled **Hit Point Bonus (average).** What is listed under that category depends upon the monster –

Monster	*Bonus*
Byakhee	+2
Cthonians	+9 - +12
Dark Young	+8
Deep Ones	+1
Dholes	no bonus
Dimensional Shamblers	+2
Fire Vampires	no bonus
Flying Polyps	+10
Formless Spawn	+1 - +6
Ghouls	+0
Great Race	+4
Hounds of Tindalos	+2
Hunting Horrors	+5
Mi-Go	+0
Nightgaunts	+0
Old Ones	+1
Sand Dwellers	+1
Serpent People	+0
Servitors of Gods	+1
Shantaks	+7
Shoggoths	+6
Spawn of Cthulhu	no bonus
Star Vampires	+4

Page 37: Cthulhu should have a CON of 150, not 105.

Page 44: Hastur should have a CON of 120, not 200.

Page 45: Ithaqua has a CON of 140, not 125. Ithaqua's attack is too weak. **If a character is within 50 feet of Ithaqua, he must roll his STR or less to keep from being whisked into the air. If he is 51-100 feet away he should roll STRx2 or less, if he is 101-150 feet away the roll is STRx3 or less and so on.** Under **Damage** instead of **Lift and drop 1D10 feet.** It should say **Lift and drop 1D10x10 feet.** Ithaqua also has a claw attack on those near enough (150% to hit, 6D6 damage, ignores all armor). He will use the claw attack only vs. extremely powerful foes.

Page 49: Nyogtha should have a CON of 80 instead of 120, as well as a POW of 28.

Page 53: Shub-Niggurath has a CON of 200, not 165. On this same page, Shudde M'ell has a CON of 100 instead of 120.

Page 54: The CON of the Spawn of Cthulhu is 3D6x5, not 3D6+5. The listed average is correct, however.

Page 55: Tsathogghua has a CON of 100 instead of 120. Also on the same page, Y'Golonac has a CON of 100 instead of 120.

Page 56: Yig has a CON of 100 instead of 120.

Page 57: Yog-Sothoth has an INT of 40 instead of 10.

Page 60: SAN loss for reading the *Cultes des Goules* is 2D6 instead of 1D10.

Page 66: Under *Contact Y'Golonac*. Change the last sentence to read –

Y'Golonac will try to possess the contacter himself. If the deity feels that he would make a suitable priest, Y'Golonac will possess the body of an associate and try to convert the contacter.

Page 68: Under *Shriving* add –

In order to be successful, the caster of this spell must match his own POW vs. the POW of the target. If the target successfully resists the caster's POW, then he will only take ½ damage (round fractions down). Casting this spell costs the user SAN equal to the points of POW used in casting it.

Under **Enchant Item** the third sentence should read –

The criterion is the same for each, involving a blood sacrifice (which need only be a chicken or dog), the permanent loss of 1 or more points of POW, 1D4 points of SAN per item enchanted, and one day of time. □

THE GANG LEADERS

By Glenn Rahman

Dillinger, "Pretty Boy" Floyd, Ma Barker, Bonnie and Clyde – these are names that have been immortalized in book, song and motion picture. The very sound of them conjures images of machine-gun blasts, fast chases over country roads, and dauntless killers going down in a barrage of FBI bullets.

It was with such images in mind that this writer purchased his copy of *Gangster!*, published by Fantasy Games Unlimited. In *Gangster!*, players do not portray wizards, barbarians or spacemen, but lawmen and lawbreakers of American criminal history. For one who has read extensively in the literature of Depression and Prohibition Age lawlessness, this game was made to order.

It wasn't long before the possibility of introducing famous gangsters into our scenarios was suggested. It turned out to be a good idea and soon the Prohibition wars blazed.

For this article we turn to the other type of lawbreaking that dominated the headlines during the Great Depression – namely that which some criminologists have labeled "Organized Gang Criminality." During the twenties and early thirties freelance outlaws involved themselves with bank robbery, kidnaping and automobile theft, with some smatterings of hijacking, warehouse robbery, jewel theft and some expedient murder. Tough, hardened criminals comprised these gangs. Equipped with machineguns, tear gas, bullet-proof vests and high powered cars for quick getaways, they were well-disciplined, efficient and dangerous. Living violently and expecting violence, armed with a real, though fatalistic, courage, it took the combined efforts of the federal government and a dozen states to bring their careers to a halt. They often extended their activities across the country, moving quickly by automobile from crime to crime – sometimes dispersing and reuniting in prearranged hideouts. These were the professional criminals whose daring crimes the newspaper readership followed avidly.

EQUIPPED WITH MACHINEGUNS, TEAR GAS, BULLET-PROOF VESTS AND HIGH-POWERED CARS FOR QUICK GETAWAYS, THEY WERE WELL-DISCIPLINED, EFFICIENT AND DANGEROUS.

This article features biographical information required to turn four of America's greatest gangsters into characters for role-playing fantasy. Gamemasters may allow their players to act out the lives of these criminal celebrities, or let them interact with the gang leaders as non-player characters. Finally if the scenario is law-oriented, the players may be detectives. No lawman of the Old West ever had tougher, craftier or more dangerous opponents than these legendary outlaws of the twentieth century.

JOHN DILLINGER
1903 - ?

Intelligence: 18
Dexterity: 18
Strength: 14
Personality: 18
Loyalty: 18
Agility: 18
Luck/Intuition: 6

Escape Artist: Level 3
Streetwise: Level 2
Wheelman: Level 3

Beginning as a headstrong Indianapolis youth, eight years in state penitentiaries turned John Dillinger into a cool, self-disciplined criminal. When he was paroled in 1933, he left prison determined to aid in the escape of his friends who were still there. With a small gang of desperados, Dillinger robbed several banks in and around Indiana. Finally he smuggled guns into the Michigan City Prison and left funds for the escapees with a contact.

Dillinger's loyalty paid off. Just before the prison break, he was arrested and jailed in Lima, Ohio. The convicts he had helped to spring – Harry Pierpoint, John Hamilton, Charles Makley, Russel Clark, and Edward Shouse – murdered the Lima sheriff and effected his release.

With the robbery of a police arsenal in Peru, Indiana (10/20/1933), the Dillinger gang touched off a spectacular career of crime. Basing in Chicago, the gangsters carefully avoided hard liquor and kept dispersed in groups of twos and threes, enjoying the city's shows and cafes. They rented apartments around the city, but these were changed frequently to throw police investigators off the track.

After selecting a possible bank to rob, the Dillinger gang would case it several times in preparation, usually posing as newsmen or inspectors. Once they circumvented rapid public and police response to a robbery by having a gang member make himself known in town as a movie producer planning to shoot a gangster film.

When the bank's layout, guards and alarm system were known, the gangsters drew up and studied the detailed diagram. Sometimes a rough mockup of the bank would be laid out in a barn or warehouse to allow the robbers a chance to practice and time the holdup. Timing was their formula for success; if the allotted time passed in the

WANTED

JOHN HERBERT DILLINGER

On June 23, 1934, HOMER S. CUMMINGS, Attorney General of the United States, under the authority vested in him by an Act of Congress approved June 6, 1934, offered a reward of

$10,000.00

for the capture of John Herbert Dillinger or a reward of

$5,000.00

for information leading to the arrest of John Herbert Dillinger.

DESCRIPTION

Age, 32 years; Height, 5 feet 7-1/8 inches; Weight, 153 pounds; Build, medium; Hair, medium chestnut; Eyes, grey; Complexion, medium; Occupation, machinist; Marks and scars, 1/2 inch scar back left hand, scar middle upper lip, brown mole between eyebrows.

All claims to any of the aforesaid rewards and all questions and disputes that may arise as among claimants to the foregoing rewards shall be passed upon by the Attorney General and his decisions shall be final and conclusive. The right is reserved to divide and allocate portions of any of said rewards as between several claimants. No part of the aforesaid rewards shall be paid to any official or employee of the Department of Justice.

If you are in possession of any information concerning the whereabouts of John Herbert Dillinger, communicate immediately by telephone or telegraph collect to the nearest office of the Division of Investigation, United States Department of Justice, the local addresses of which are set forth on the reverse side of this notice.

JOHN EDGAR HOOVER, DIRECTOR,
DIVISION OF INVESTIGATION,
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE,
WASHINGTON, D. C.

June 25, 1934

Photographs courtesy of the Federal Bureau of Investigation

midst of a robbery the gang would leave the remaining money behind and flee. Flight was always along a pre-planned escape route. Back roads were explored in advance and any stop lights were carefully timed.

Dillinger's leadership was unofficial. Others in the gang were older and more experienced than him, but he was the organizer and the peacemaker, smoothing the conflicts and keeping the team together. He managed quite well until the gang took a holiday in Tucson. Mishaps got them all arrested (1/25/1934), but Dillinger (sent to the Crown Point Jail) carved a wooden gun and effected an escape (3/3/1934). He soon organized a new gang, whose members were Homer Van Meter, "Baby Face" Nelson, Eddie Green, Tommy Carrol and, again, John Hamilton.

Dillinger was an athletic man. He played baseball in prison and when he went robbing, he liked to show off by leaping rails and barriers with ease. He was an excellent driver, once eluding several police cars in an eighty-mile an hour car chase through the streets of Chicago. And he was lucky – as his escapes from police in St. Paul, the Little Bohemia Lodge and Crown Point Jail demonstrate.

Dillinger didn't want bloodshed during his robberies. Although accused of machinegunning a policeman in East Chicago (1/15/1934), substantial evidence exists to place him in Florida at that time. On the contrary, one of his victims, a teller, described him as the most courteous of bankrobbers. One incident in Dillinger's career – allowing a farmer to keep his own money during a robbery – was attributed by Hollywood to the scurrilous Texas thief Clyde Barrow. At another time – when fleeing the jail at Crown Point – Dillinger gave his released hostages four dollars for food and car fare.

Dillinger's whole criminal career lasted little more than a single year. This would be no success story were it not for the evidence (collected by Jay Robert Nash in his book *Dillinger: Dead or Alive?*) that the FBI shot the wrong man at the Biograph Theater (7/22/1934, Chicago).

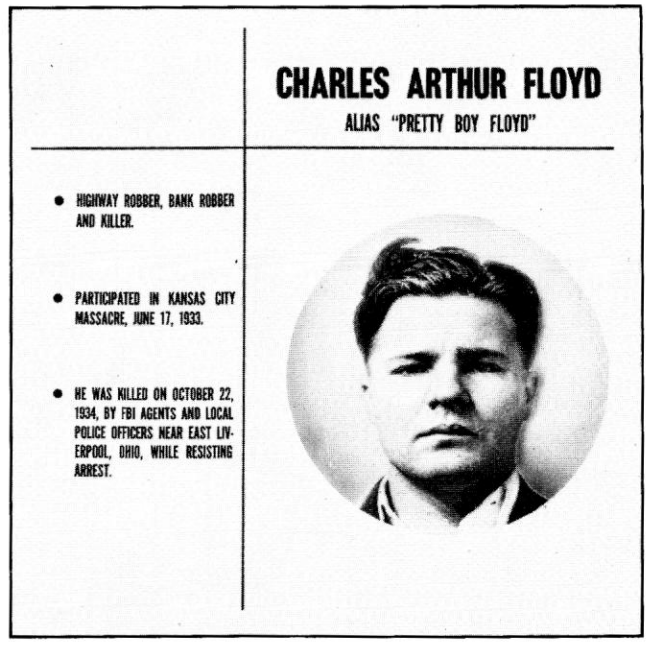
In a *Gangster!* scenario, Dillinger should be carrying a small arm 85% of the time. While engaged in robbery, the gang members will have machineguns (90% chance) and bulletproof vests (80% chance). When at leisure, Dillinger may be accompanied by a fellow gangster (20% chance) or a girl friend (50% chance–usually pretty Billie Frenchette). Dillinger's friends are very loyal and there is only a 10% chance that a Dillinger friend can be forced to inform on him.

CHARLES ARTHUR "PRETTY BOY" FLOYD

1901 - 1934

Intelligence: 17
Dexterity: 17
Strength: 17
Personality: 16
Loyalty: 18
Agility: 18
Luck/Intuition: 6

Escape Artist: Level 3
Sharpshooter
Street Fighter: Level 3
Wheelman: Level 2



"Pretty Boy" Floyd was the most famous of several hillbilly outlaws who came barreling out of the Cookson Hills of Oklahoma during the Great Depression. Floyd probably would not have turned to lawbreaking at all if the times were better. But the "Okies" were hit hard by the Dust-bowl and the young farmer really does seem to have started robbing to support his new wife.

His efforts won him three years in the hellish Missouri State Penitentiary. Floyd was parolled just in time to find out that his father was murdered in a hill feud. Floyd took blood vengeance against the slayer, then fled arrest. In Kansas City he took up with a gang of bankrobbers and pulled a few jobs before he was arrested again.

While being conducted to prison via train, Floyd waited for his guards to fall asleep, then kicked out a window and leaped out. By the time the train stopped, Floyd was a half mile away (5/25/1930). Thereafter he embarked on a career of robbery longer than almost any other outlaw of his time.

Floyd seldom worked with more than one partner – the most important being ex-preacher George Birdwell (until late 1932) and later, until the end, with Adam Richetti, a small-time stickup man. Floyd's robbery style depended more on luck and daring than on detailed planning.

FLOYD'S ROBBERIES CAUSED INSURANCE RATES IN OKLAHOMA TO DOUBLE. HE EVEN DID WHAT NO OUTLAW HAD DONE BEFORE –ROB TWO BANKS IN ONE DAY.

Typically, Floyd and his partner would lay off liquor for a week before the job. Then they would steal a car to use for a getaway. When they entered the bank, Floyd would hold the machinegun while the other man would scoop up the money. Two bank employees would be taken hostage and forced to ride on the running boards of the car as it drove out of town. After a few miles, the prisoners would be released.

"Pretty Boy" Floyd was a strong man with catlike reflexes and nerves of stainless steel. He knew how to use his guns. One lawman said Floyd was one of the quickest men on the draw and the surest pistol shot he had ever known. Another called him the luckiest bandit that ever lived.

One reason for his success were his guerilla-like tactics, living among his own people in the Cookson Hills. He killed ten men in his life, but never hurt the hill people nor was ever betrayed by them. Only when the law made total war on the Cookson Hills to root out the outlaws hiding there did Floyd leave Oklahoma for any extended period – to spare his friends any worse trouble, they say. On his own, forced to buy expensive protection from city mobsters, he lasted only eight months.

Floyd was identified as a member of the Dillinger gang that hit a bank in South Bend, Indiana (6/30/1934), but it was probably a mistaken identity. Tall, muscular and fleshy, Floyd looked like a lot of men. In fact, his resemblance to Kansas City torpedo Solly Weisman led to disaser. Weisman was one of several mobsters who machinegunned four lawmen in a train station (6/17/1933). Blamed for the crime – the Kansas City Massacre – Floyd became one of America's most hated and hunted outlaws.

The Massacre wasn't like anything Floyd would get mixed up in. He didn't kill for money; only for vengeance and in the heat of battle. He was devoted to his parents, his brothers, sisters, son and – despite his easy familiarity with every bawdyhouse in the Midwest – his wife Wilma. He was an honorable man in his own way and his word was reliable. Even at the height of his criminal career he took chances and went to church.

Floyd's robberies caused bank insurance rates in Oklahoma to double. He even did what no outlaw had done before – rob two banks in one day. Finally, on October 22, 1934, the FBI caught up with Floyd in an Ohio cornfield.

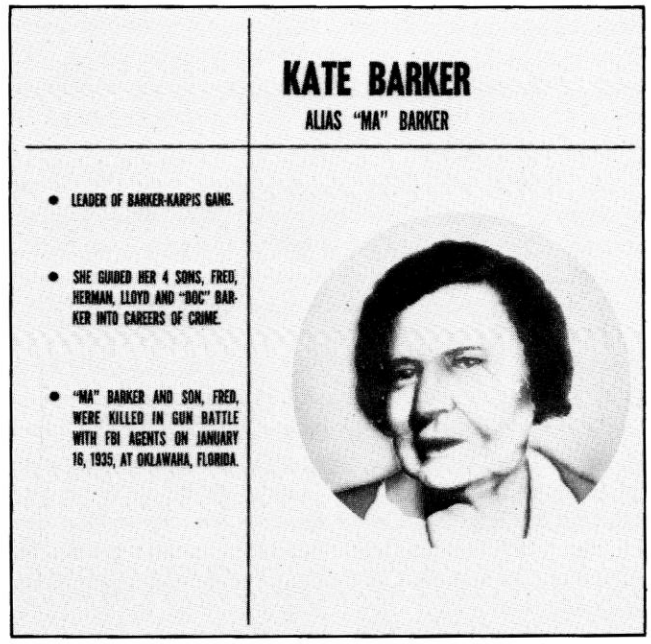
A crowd of 40,000 people attended his funeral in Akins, Oklahoma, perhaps sensing that "Pretty Boy" Floyd was about the closest thing to a Robin Hood that American crime has ever produced. His epithet might justly be what he asserted about himself: "I have robbed no one but moneyed men."

In *Gangster!* Floyd's tool of the trade is the machinegun (85% chance). When not robbing, a pair of loaded .45's are likely near at hand (80% chance). Like many gangsters, Floyd generated intense loyalty; there is only a 10% chance that an associate will be willing to help the police – and then only under duress.

ARIZONA CLARK "MA" BARKER
1872-1935

Intelligence: 18
Dexterity: 10
Strength: 8
Personality: 18
Loyalty: 18
Agility: 6
Luck/Intuition: 6

Streetwise: Level 2



Ma Barker was one of the most important women in the history of modern crime. Hers was the most successful freelance gang of its era; it was a family business and her own sons were its lieutenants. Interestingly, the Barker boys – Herman, Dock, Lloyd and Freddie – led the parent into crime. Growing up in Tulsa, Oklahoma, the Barkers were incorrigible juvenile delinquents. Ma – although a woman of will and presence – did nothing to discourage their lawbreaking. Instead she defended their every action, often browbeating police and judges into going lightly with their misdeeds. The boys were too reckless, though, and three of them found themselves in prison with long sentences. The fourth, Herman, was heading for the same fate, but trapped by lawmen after a robbery, committed suicide.

After Herman's death in 1927, Ma left her husband, George Barker, a law-abiding farm laborer. For the next few years Ma tried to free her sons through every avenue – financing her legal services with tens of thousands of dollars earned by providing hideouts to hosts of escaped convicts and wanted robbers. Her business established a vast network of criminal contacts and while the Barkers were never a part of the rising national syndicate, they had the friendship and help of many of its members.

Ma's efforts won the release of Freddie (1931) and Dock (1932). Also in 1932, one of Freddie's prison friends, a smart young thief named Alvin Karpis, joined the gang. An intelligent and imaginative robber, Karpis would be the last of the famous gangsters to be brought down by the FBI (5/1/1936).

The Barker Karpis gang operated throughout the North and Midwest. To Ma's gang there floated scores of ex-cons, escaped murderers, professional bankrobbers, politicians, businessmen, women and hangers-on.

The Barker gang was as skillful as Dillinger's – and its takes were even larger, sometimes as much as a quarter million at a stroke. But where Dillinger's and other gangs loved the limelight, the Barkers preferred secrecy, allowed others to dominate the headlines – and take the blame for their crimes. They robbed without pattern, coldly and

efficiently, over a vast area. Their unpredictability made them hard to identify and link with particular crimes. For a cut of the Barker's enormous profits, politicians, officials and police gave them sanctuary and information about the movements of the law.

Ma herself stayed in the background, planning and organizing. In her life of sixty-two years, Ma was never arrested. She was a genius at crime, the gang should have listened to her and stayed out of the messy business of kidnaping Edward G. Bremer, a Minneapolis banker (1934). Dock left a fingerprint behind and the manhunt was on. Freelance outlaws could not bear up under the pressure of the FBI and in less than a year the gang was finished.

Dock was arrested in St. Paul (1/8/1935); he wouldn't break under questioning, but evidence in his apartment traced Ma and Freddie to Florida. Both of them died fighting in their surrounded cabin – Ma with a rifle and Freddie with a machinegun. All that can be said for Ma Barker is that she died in the way she would have wanted to – rich.

If encountered in the heyday of her career, Ma Barker will be armed (pistol) only 20% of the time. There is an 80% chance that 1-6 criminals are within earshot if she needs help. Ma's associates are icy professionals and there is only a 5% chance that one of them will talk even under duress. It is even harder to make Karpis or one of the family members cooperate (1% chance).

CLYDE BARROW

1909 - 1934

Intelligence: 14
Dexterity: 15
Strength: 9
Personality: 13
Loyalty: 9
Agility: 16
Luck/Intuition: 5

Escape: Level 2
Marksman
Street Medicine
Wheelman: Level 3

Clyde Barrow was an outcast, even among thieves. John Dillinger said of the Barrow gang: "They're giving bank robbing a bad name." When the Barrows hid out in the Cookson Hills of Oklahoma, "Pretty Boy" Floyd advised the hill folks to call the law down on them if they didn't get out of the hills fast enough.

Clyde Barrow came from a poor family of Telice, Texas. Before he reached teenage, he was a truant, a thief and a runaway. Soon he was robbing grocery stores and gas stations with his older brother Buck. Clyde met Bonnie Parker in 1930, shortly before he was arrested and sent to Eastham Prison.

Paroled in 1932, Clyde went back to petty robbery. After Bonnie joined him, the pair knocked over a string of gas stations, luncheonettes and a few small town banks, from Texas to the north woods of Michigan. Their largest take was only $1500 (Okabena, Minnesota 5/16/1933). In the first days their companion was ex-con Ray Hamilton, a childhood friend of Clyde's. Although small time, the Barrows were well-armed, robbing at least two National Guard armories during their two-year crime spree.

Perhaps no other Depression-age outlaw except "Baby Face" Nelson shared the Barrows' love of mindless violence. They frequently killed in the act of robbing. But worse, both Clyde and Bonnie murdered in cold blood for the thrill of it, as when Clyde murdered a sheriff and a deputy at a barn dance, and Bonnie shot a traffic policeman in Oklahoma City (July, 1933) for sport. They preyed on the poor and gunned them down ruthlessly. In return they were hated and feared.

The Barrow gang lived out of its cars. Clyde, a talented mechanic, kept the motors tuned to perfection. The tanks were kept full; their belongings were carried in the trunk and their arsenal in the back seat – machineguns, automatic rifles and shotguns. For emergencies, they kept a four-day supply of food, a five gallon jug of water, a first aid kit and Clyde's saxophone. Too broke to buy protection from city gangsters, they camped in the open, or rented cabins and lodges in remote areas.

When Ray Hamilton split off (soon to be arrested in Texas), Clyde recruited W. D. Jones, a seventeen year old car thief. When Buck Barrow was paroled (3/20/1933), he and his wife Blanche joined the three gang members.

Bonnie was the gang's mascot; Clyde was its undisputed leader. Small, quick and wiry, his fast draw, his marksmanship and expert driving got him out of many tight scrapes. Clyde's style of loyalty showed in his thoughtless abandonment of his companions during emergencies, including Buck and Bonnie at different times.

On July 24, 1933, the gang was attacked by a posse near Dexter, Louisiana. Buck and Blanche were captured (Buck dying of his wounds), but the others escaped. In the fall W. D. Jones deserted the gang and was arrested soon after. Clyde replaced him with a young escaped convict, Henry Methvin. After a few more robberies, Methvin's father made a deal to trade Bonnie and Clyde to the law for leniency for his son. An ambush set by Texas Ranger Frank Hamer riddled the outlaws with bullets (5/23/1934). The ending of their sordid lives was the birth of a legend.

If encountered in *Gangster!*, the whole gang will be camped out (50% chance), on the road (20%), in a rented cabin (20%) or elsewhere (10%). The gang members always carry small arms and are never far from heavier weapons (80% chance within ready reach). The Barrows inspire no loyalty, so they keep their plans to themselves. If Buck, Bonnie or Clyde are captured, there is a 20% chance that they will give useful information against the gang. Other members and associates will usually curry the favor of the law by accusing Clyde (75% chance).

SUGGESTED READING

The Bad Ones, by Lew Louderback, Fawcett World Library, Greenwich, Conn., 1968.
The Dillinger Days, by John Toyland, Random House, New York, 1963.
Gangs & Gangsters, by Hank Messick and Burt Goldblatt, Ballantine Books, New York, 1974.
The True Story of Bonnie and Clyde, by Emma Parker and Nell Cowan, Signet, New York, 1968. □

Clyde Barrow

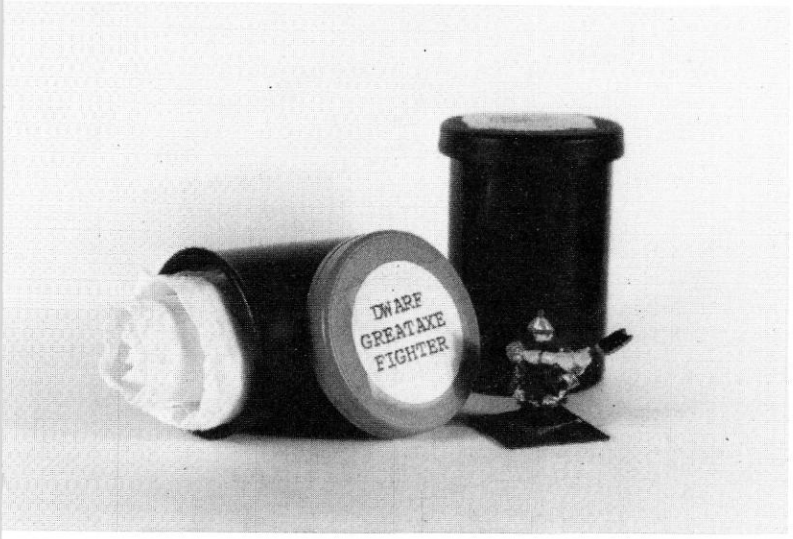
SAFE STORAGE FOR FIGURES

THE MANY WAYS FOR STORING A LEAD FIGURE SAFELY

By John T. Sapienza, Jr.

Lead figures are not the only system used in roleplaying games to determine who is where during an encounter, but they are clearly the most popular. This is easy to understand, for the lead figure has the advantages of being three-dimensional, and having enough weight to keep it in place even outdoors in spring and summer breezes. Furthermore, once painted, lead figures are both colorful and individualized to your favorite character's own colors.

Still, leads have problems too. You need a way of carrying them around that preserves them from having their paint chipped or rubbed off, and their soft metal dented and bent out of shape. Simply putting them in a box won't do, since that allows them to bump into each other, causing all three types of damage. (Remember that even in manufacturers' blister packs, where figures come padded with foam, they generally arrive with at least one in four bent out of shape.) What you need is something that keeps figures separated and safe.



The first thing you can do is elementary. When you finish painting and the figure is dry, spray it with a protective coating. I recommend "Dullcote" by Testors (No. 1260, $1.25), which is a clear spray lacquer that both gives your painting a more realistic cut in the shine that is natural to all paints, and protects your paint from casual loss from finger handling and rubbing against other figures. Nothing is perfect, but this does help a lot.

The next thing to think about is packing the figure to keep it from bumping around while you are carrying it. For a number of years, I stored my figures individually in 35mm film cans. These are available absolutely free at camera stores. They are happy to give them away because they throw them out anyway when film is returned for processing. These plastic cans are ideal for 25mm figures, as they are just the right size in height and width for most such figures (a small number of 25mm figures are too wide to fit these cans, which prevented me from using those figures until I devised a small foam-lined box for them).

Each can I identified by means of an adhesive label. The one shown in the photo is a Dennison PRE-a-ply No. R1616 1" circular label, but I started with typing paper cut to fit and glued on with white glue; you can always improvise. Each figure was wrapped in folded tissue and stuffed in its can for storage. This works nicely to prevent side-to-side movement, but is less effective with vertical movement. For this reason, it is important to store the figures vertically at all times to minimize damage to weapons from figure movement during transit. This is why the cans are labelled on the top, since they are stored in a cardboard box, and when you take off the top of the box what you see are the tops of the cans.

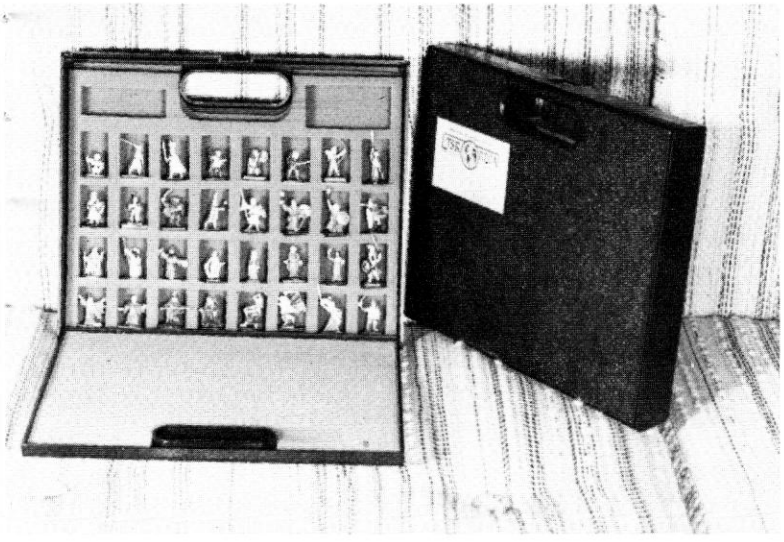
The use of film cans worked fine for the first couple of dozen figures, but when I began carrying over 40 figures around (I was providing painted character figures for most of the gamers in our group), it became awkward to find enough boxes for all those cans. I tried using a 12"x12"x2" cardboard box for a while, but this required carrying the figures on their sides, and resulted in accumulating damage over a period of time. It was time to look for a different system.

One system that recommended itself was to use Grenadier figure boxes, since I already had four of their 20-figure boxes. These are 8"x8¼"x1" cardboard boxes which come with a foam layer on the bottom, and a grid of 1"x1½" spaces in the ¾" foam sheet on top of that. These provide reasonable security through separating the figures,

and if you are going to buy the figures in the box anyway, you'll get the box for no additional cost, in effect. The only problem with this is that the boxes were not big enough to satisfy me. Now what?

The Role Playing Game Association, sponsored by TSR, sells accessories for gaming. (For information, write to RPGA, P'O'Box 509, Lake Geneva, WI 53147.) One of them is their figure box, which takes the same system Grenadier uses, increases capacity by 60%, and does so in a handsome plastic case the size of a small briefcase (10"x12" x1½"). Available only to members, it costs $9. That may seem outageously expensive, but with leads going for $1 apiece, perhaps on balance it isn't out of line. I bought two.

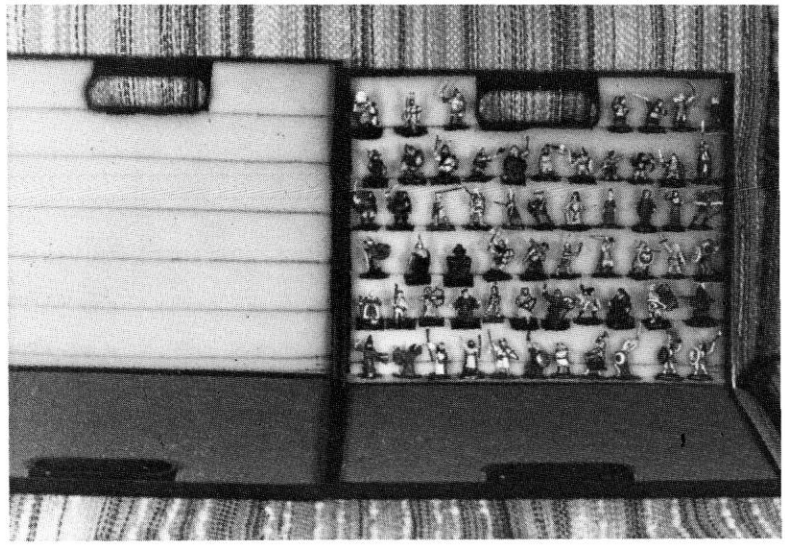
I quickly discovered a flaw in the design – when filled with leads, each compartment deforms from the weight,



and the sheet as a whole is forced downward. Look carefully at the photo, and notice the amount by which the foam sheet has moved downward from the top and around the handle. This brings the bottom row uncomfortably close to the bottom of the case, where it joins with the cover. The RPGA recommends gluing the foam in place, but I found even that isn't too reliable. In addition, I eventually decided I was unhappy at the amount of movement possible for figures within their compartments, particularly for small figures. At the same time, I was unhappy at the confinement the size of the compartments caused for oversized figures, whose weapons or limbs protruded out of their compartments, sometimes into other compartments.

The solution to this was provided by a friend, Wayne Dionne. I always put a base on a figure when I paint it, to make it more stable (most manufacturers put very small bases on their figures relative to height of the figure, and as a result they fall over easily). By using masonite-like report covers that are thin but stiff when cut into small squares, I get a good flat base that can be painted to match the figure, and is so thin that it doesn't add appreciably to the figure's height. Wayne showed me that by using a foam base with slits cut into it, the thin bases hold the figure in place very nicely without needing cutout compartments in the foam.

So I went to a foam shop and bought ¾" sheets in 10" x12" blocks for my cases. After cutting out a place for the handle, I measured lines down the sheets from the top,



1½" apart. Taking a standard packer's cutting tool (which has a razor blade that you can adjust for depth), I cut ¼" deep slits, using a ruler to keep them straight. This proved a bit tricky to do right, as you really have to press the blade to the ruler with determination to keep it from going off where it wants to go. When I got the lines cut, I went back over them with a broadtipped felt marker to make them more visible, so I could find them when replacing figures in the case.

When I filled up the finished case #1 with figures, everything looked fine. Unfortunately, after a couple of weeks of use, the foam was sagging from the weight of 60 figures. I solved this by taking some of the leftover foam and stuffing a strip into the bottom of the case. The lesson here is to cut your foam insert a bit oversized and stuff it in even though you think it's a bit too big. As it turned out, the bottom foam strip allowed me a bit of extra headroom for the bottom line. You can see from the photo that the figures on the bottom are not on the bottom marked line, but even though it looks a bit messy, it works nicely.

The advantage of this base-in-slit system is that you can fit figures of any size and shape into the case. The combination of the leverage of the base being held by the slit and the firm hold of the foam layer in the cover keeps the figures solidly in place until you want them. For extra-wide figures, you simply put fewer figures on that line. For extra-tall figures, you stagger the figures on that line with respect to those on the line above, so there is room for the protruding part above.

This is the most elegant figure storage system I've seen yet. You are not, of course, confined to using the TSR case. You can design foam sizes to fit any case or box you have, and do the slits with a sharp knife. Bases for figures can be had cheaply, since a report cover will yield about 100 bases for $1.50. Use your imagination in adapting this method to your own resources, and you will find your figures will be better protected and longer-lasting than ever.

illustrations by Valerie Olson

SHALPA / HERMES

THIEVES OF SPARTA

By B. Dennis Sustare

Adapting THIEVES' WORLD to HEROES OF OLYMPUS

Heroes of Olympus is a new role-playing game about ancient Greek heroes. This article is an adaptation of the *Thieves' World* city adventure pack for use with the *Heroes of Olympus* rules.

Sparta has long been noted for both heroes and thieves, and it seems quite natural to identify it with Sanctuary, the City of Thieves now famous through the volumes of stories edited by Robert Asprin and the role-play adventure pack produced by Chaosium. Greek heroes often engage in trickery, thievery, and piracy, and would no doubt feel at home visiting Sanctuary, while the god Hermes smiles down upon the scene, he being the god of thieves, merchants, and wizards. Even the geography of *Thieves' World* can be readily placed on the campaign map of *Heroes of Olympus*.

Geographic Equivalents

The region of play includes the Peloponnesus and nearby areas, with minor terrain modifications. On the Campaign Map of *Heroes*, consider every Peloponnesian hexside that is completely inland (that is, colored all yellow on the map) to be mountainous, so that travelers must roll a die to cross just as though they were entering an all-mountain hex. There are six such hexsides in the Peloponnesus. In addition, the hex that contains Pylos (hex 1016) does not have a land connection to the Peloponnesus, but rather is a small group of islands. The following table shows city and island equivalencies.

Hex	*Heroes of Olympus*	*Thieves' World*
1017	Sparta	Sanctuary
1016	Pylos	Visala Islands
0918	Cythera	Scavenger's Islands
1018	Helos	Dar
1117	Olympia	Ilsig
1118	Argos	Bakt
1119	Tiryns	Ranke
1218	Corinth	Velos
1219	Eleusis	Sihan
1316	Calydon	Caronne
1318	Delphi	Adrale
1320	Thebes	Lirt

*Most of the gods of **Thieves' World** may be identified at least roughly with the Greek gods, though some distortions are evident.*

CYCLE ONE: THE ILSIG GODS

Ils the Mighty = Zeus. He has the powers of the wind and shape-changing, and is all-knowing. He battled and cast down the Titan known as Gundr, and fathered many of the other gods. The Sikkintairs are a variant of the eagles sacred to Zeus.

Shipri All-Mother = Hera. She is the consort of Ils (Zeus) and the mother of many gods. In contrast to Zeus and Hera, here in Sanctuary Ils is the more jealous of the pair.

Anen, God of the Harvest = Dionysos. He is associated with wine and beer, and is the patron of taverns and those who drink alcoholic beverages.

Eshi = Aphrodite. She is goddess of love, and has bedded with most of the gods. Unlike Aphrodite, the cow and cat are sacred animals to Eshi.

Thufir = Hermes, in his aspect as patron of merchants and travelers, and god of both profits and roadways. Thufir is noted for his swiftness and acute vision. Perhaps his strong association with Sanctuary is partly explained by the nature of those who comprised the first pilgrims to this land.

Thilli = Hestia. She is goddess of the hearth and beneficial fire.

Shalpa = Hermes, in his aspect as god of thieves. Like Thufir, Shalpa is noted for speed, but also shows the characteristics of agility, trickery, luck (both good and bad), and stealth, especially at twilight and night. Clearly Hermes was such an important god to those of Ilsig that he has been represented as two gods (Thufir and Shalpa) to personify his varied attributes and abilities.

Theba – god of outcasts, weaklings, and those who seek refuge. He has no counterpart among those gods described in *Heroes of Olympus*.

CYCLE TWO: THE RANKAN GODS

Savankala = Apollo (distorted). He is god of the sun, but also of fire. Unlike the purity and restraint of Apollo, Savankala produces passion and excess in his priests and followers, who seek to placate him with grand temples and the live burial of women.

Sabellia = Athene, though she is a distant goddess for those of Sanctuary. She is a goddess of wisdom, and is depicted with a cloak covered with stars. Her Rankan worshipers insist that she has been mother of many gods, a belief at odds with the followers of Athene in more distant civilized lands, and perhaps one reason Sabellia has been rejected by those of Ilsig origin.

Vashanka = Ares. The god of war, he is vicious, violent and destructive. He will sometimes provide followers with magical weapons, but usually with a severe payment or behavioral restriction by the owner.

Azyuna = Artemis (distorted). Although thought of as a love goddess by some, she despises men, and uses the love act as a means of draining power from men (whom she sees as rapists) and adding to her own strength by a process akin to vampirism. She will betray and destroy any man she can.

CYCLE THREE: THE OTHER GODS

Dyareela = Hecate. Her darker nature is intensified, so that Dyareela has become the embodiment of evil, showing a strong association with death and demons. Appropriate sacrifices to her include vile acts and terrible crimes.

Heqt – the toad goddess, has no counterpart in *Heroes of Olympus*. She is the goddess that brings back the life hidden in the wastelands, and continually opposes the evil of Dyareela.

Weda Krizhtawn = Poseidon (distorted). An unusual form of the god of the sea, worshiped as a goddess, but little known in Sanctuary. She passes on magic to selected followers by allowing them to draw magical power from the flow of water itself; thus it is regional magic that is being tapped.

Additional Sources of Magic

In addition to the magic of the gods, operating directly through priests and priestesses or through artifacts from the gods, there are several other types of magic operable in Sanctuary.

Regional Magic: The odd form of regional magic that pervades Sanctuary and its surroundings has the effect of producing a tingling sensation in people when spell-casting is taking place in close vicinity.

The S'Danzo: This race of mysterious origin is perhaps derived from offspring of Ils (Zeus) and mountain nymphs (Oreads). Some females of the S'Danzo can utilize limited forms of magic of nymphs, but the most notorious ability, that of divination, probably comes from the divinatory power of the father of gods (Ils, or Zeus).

Order of the Blue Star: It is said that long time ago a line of witches existed that could engage in magic through possession of an ancient gem called the Blue Star. One of these witches, defending herself against an attacker, struck out with the gem in an attempt to burn down her assailant. To her surprise, the outline of the Blue Star burned itself into the man's forehead, and he immediately gained the magical powers of the witch. Since then, those who bear the mark of the Blue Star may use the gem to introduce others into this Order of Magic. For protection of the Order and protection of a secret, the revealing of which will cause a giving over of the magician's power. Now the Master of the Star controls the gem, keeping it in a secret place. All those magicians that are united in the order may draw on magical powers of each member of the group. Since the Order has continued to grow, this means that Adepts of the Blue Star can call forth nearly any form of magic, with access to great

power. This magic does not come from the gods; it is possibly a type of regional magic that comes from the stars, similar to the moon magic that has been taken by Dyareela (Hecate) and the sun magic that has been taken by Savankala (Apollo).

PRINCE, RETINUE and OFFICIALS

Prince Kadakithis (Kittycat): Sword 60; Great Beauty 20; Riding 20; Poetry/Story: A. Family Bonus: out of favor with the Emperor of Ranke.

Hell-Hounds: Arman – Sword 70; Great Strength 30.
Bourne – Sword 70; Great Strength 30.
Quag – Sword 70; Great Strength 20.
Razkuli – Sword 70; Bow 45; Great Strength 25.
Zalbar – Sword 80; Great Strength 50.
All have Riding A.

Tempus – son of Vashanka (Ares); Bonus from Vashanka: +25 Sword, ability to regenerate two points per combat round; Sword 55+25=80; Great Strength 50; Riding A.

Aye-Gophlan: Bonus from Shalpa (Hermes): +20 speed; poverty due to bad luck. Sword 40; Great Speed 20; Javelin 20.

Danlis: Great Beauty 40; Singing/Harping 50; Dagger A.

Molin Torchholder: high priest of Savankala (Apollo); Construction 50; Poetry/Story 20; Bonus from Savankala: Limited Divination.

Walegrin: Cursed by Shalpa (Hermes) with bad luck; Sword 50; Great Strength 30; Great Speed 20.

RESIDENTS

Alten Stulwig: Apothecary/Alchemist 50 (herbs, drugs, poisons, and healing; treat as herbal spells of Hecate, but must acquire components); Staff 20.

Amoli: favored by Thufir (Hermes as merchant); Skills of Courtesan 60; Skills of Merchant 40.

Dubro: Wrestling 50; Great Strength 50; Construction 40 (bonus:Hephaestos).

Enas Yorl: Both blessed and cursed by Anen (Dionysos), Enas readily shape-changes, but is not able to control the change; he also comprehends all languages, and has limited control of animals, including basilisks. Perhaps Enas is the offspring of Anen and a local Nymph, since he is a powerful wizard who draws his magic from the regional magic of Sparta. (This may be why he stays here.) This has given him a wide range of spells to choose from, and his power is continually renewed by the region.

Hakiem: Poetry/Storytelling 60; Great Hearing 50.

Illyra: Great Beauty 40; Poetry/Story 20; Bonus: Divination (probably derived from Ils).

Jubal: Sword 50; Great Speed 30; Great Strength 20. He is favored by Thufir (patron of merchants) and Shalpa (patron of thieves)[the two aspects of Hermes], though he uses no magic.

Masha zel-Ineel: She has a bonus from Hephaestos of knowledge of metals and the metal-working skill (especially jewelry); Great Speed 20; Great Vision 20; Dagger 20; Sword 25.

Mizraith: He has an interesting variant of the ability to draw on regional magic; lesser users of magic contain an inner force that powers their magic ("spell points"), and Mizraith can tap this force directly, rather than gaining spell-points by sacrifice. He maintains a complex system of long-term spells and curses to guarantee his continual supply of magical power and to protect himself. He maintains a special charm from Hephaestos, that causes intense heating of any metal carried by intruders in his home. Image-Making 30; Great Vision 20; Great Hearing 20; Poetry/Story 20.

Myrtis: Great Beauty 50; Great Speed 20; Courtesan skills 90; Merchant skills 70. She keeps young by the consumption of ambrosia, that is provided by Lythande.

One-Thumb: Rapier 50 (This weapon is not generally available in the world of *Heroes of Olympus*. It can be used for the Major Impale trick, but not the Bleeding trick.) As a bonus from Shalpa (or perhaps Thufir), One-Thumb has access to the spells Cunning, Stealth, and limited Illusion of Self, and has three spell-points per week for the use of these spells (no more points may be acquired by sacrifice) He also has skill with Dagger at 40, and can use rapier and dagger at the same time.

TRANSIENTS

Cappen Varra: He is the son of Apollo (in pure form, not distorted as Savankala) and a woman of Caronne, and has received a bonus of music and a gift of a magical amulet from his father. The amulet is a silver serpent (sacred to Apollo), that protects Cappen from magic if he can speak three truths about the spell-caster. Singing/Harping 80; Great Speed 20; Rapier 25 (see One thumb).

Cime: She is a witch of Dyareela (Hecate). To accomplish the sacrifices needed to acquire spell-points, she assassinates wizards of Hermes (both as Thufir and Shalpa), removing threats and competitors in the process. She has been cursed by Azyuna, preventing a love relationship with any man, and not allowing her to owe debts, especially to men. She has a gift of diamond rods from Dyareela, allowing her access to the spells of Hecate and providing protection from most magic spells. Dagger 60 (she usually makes poison for her dagger); Great Beauty 20.

Hanse Shadowspawn: He is a son of Shalpa (Hermes), and has a bonus of the ability to move in total silence. He also can use the following spells of Hermes (maximum of one each per week, but subject to the normal success roll requirement for spells of Hermes): Pathfinding,

Detect Ambush, Detection of Traps, Agility, Speed. Great Beauty 40; Great Speed 40; Daggers (held or thrown) 60; Sword 20 (may be used with dagger).

Jamie the Red: He is from the northern mountains (hex 2315), the son of the Mountain King (though some have suggested a parentage of Ares). He has a bonus from Ares (perhaps in his form of Vashanka) of +20 with axe, and +20 Strength. Axe 40+20=60; Sword 50; Great Strength 20+20=40.

Kemren: A renegade priest of Weda Krizhtawn (Poseidon), who draws all his magical power from the flow of water, and he can control creatures of water (such as giant crabs) and spiders. Construction 70; Swimming 20; Poetry/Story 40. He is a master at the construction of traps of all sorts. His homeland, Sherranpip, is an island in the delta region of Aegyptus, in hex 0326 (site of the great temples of Weda Krizhtawn).

Lythande: A member of the Order of the Blue Star (see earlier comments), (s)he has access to an incredible range of magic, probably drawn directly from the stars. Sword 50; Great Strength 20; Great Speed 30.

Samlor hil Samt: He is a follower of Thufir (Hermes), and has access to the following spells of Hermes: Cunning, Pathfinding, Detect Ambush, Evaluate Treasure, Send Message, Illusionary Object. Long Dagger 70; Riding 45; Seamanship/Steering 20; Excellent Vision 20.

Smhee: He is a minor priest of Weda Krizhtawn, and can not use magic. Garotte 70 (can not be used against an aware opponent); Dagger 60; Great Speed 20; Swimming 20. Like Kemren, from Sherranpip (0326).

Westerly: (Wess) She is of a northern race who are descendants of Boreas (and some of whom have the bonus of flight). She has a heightened perceptual sense (Excellent Vision 20; Excellent Hearing 20) that permits her to see through magical illusions. In addition, she has two natural skills that indicate a heritage derived from Nymphs; an accurate pathfinding ability and a bodily awareness so potent that she can effect minor healing on herself. Great Beauty 20; Great Speed 25; Knife (dagger) 40.

MONSTERS

Bengil Crab of Serranpip: Endurance 20; Armored (1 point); Move (crawl or swim) 1 (no charge); Weapon – two claws, 20 points each (damage of 1D6 each).

Purple Spider of Serranpip: Endurance 1; Unarmored; Move 1 (no charge); Must roll for combat level (1D10 and for poison level (1D100, with only damage done by poison.

Sikkintair (Flying Knife): Endurance 30; Unarmored; Fly 3; Great Strength 30; Weapons – Bite 50 (damage 3D6) or Talons 30 each (damage 1D6 each).

REFERENCES

Heroes of Olympus (game): Task Force Games 1981.
Shadows of Sanctuary (book): Ace Books 1981.
Tales from the Vulgar Unicorn (book): Ace Books 1980.
Thieves' World (book): Ace Books 1979.
Thieves' World (game): Chaosium Inc 1981.

Different Worlds is planning to present more role-playing system's adaptations to the *Thieves' World* adventure pack in future issues.

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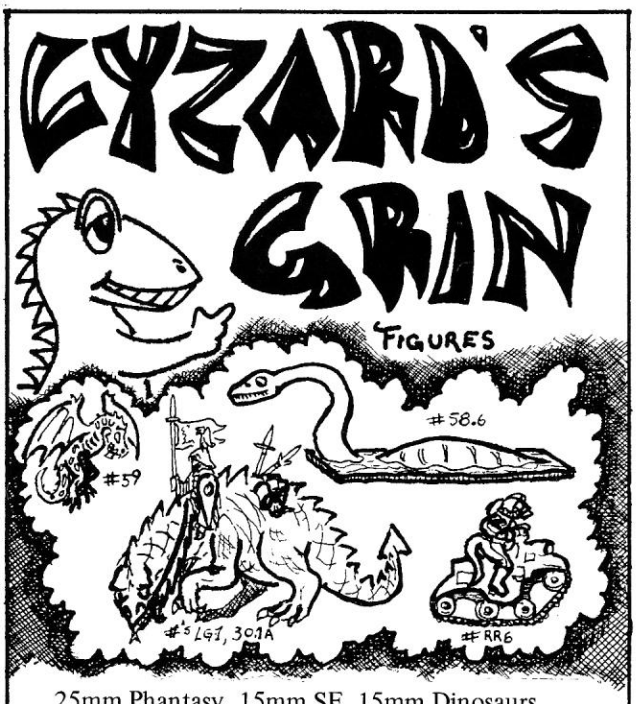

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REVIEWS

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BY FIRE ■ THE HOUSE ON HANGMAN'S HILL

CALL OF CTHULHU

By Sandy Petersen
Chaosium Inc
$20.00
Reviewed by Steve Peterson

Horror has come to role-playing with the release of Chaosium's *Call of Cthulhu* (pronounced Ka-thoo-loo), a role-playing game based on the stories of H. P. Lovecraft.

The Chaosium has developed a reputation for good games with beautiful graphics in a field too often lacking both. *Call of Cthulhu* lives up to this reputation with fine cover art by Gene Day and very readable booklets. The game components in this boxed set include the *Basic Role Playing* rules, the 96-page *Call of Cthulhu* rulesbook, a 32-page *Sourcebook for the 1920's*, character sheets, character silhouettes, multisided dice necessary to play the game, and a world map featuring important locations for the game. The graphics are exceptional, and I only wish more games could look this good. The only complaint I can muster is that there is not enough interior artwork. The artwork is especially important to help set the mood for this game, which is very different from the standard role-playing game.

Call of Cthulhu is designed to scare the players. H. P. Lovecraft's stories of cosmic horror, written in the 1920's, evoked a universe of powerful alien gods whose very gaze could blast the sanity from a man. *Call of Cthulhu* uses the *Basic Role Playing (BRP)* system, which is essentially simplified *RuneQuest*, in a very successful simulation of the Lovecraft stories.

This game adds two new characteristics to the *BRP* system, Sanity and Education. Education reflects the amount of schooling a character has had, and gives him a chance to know facts that the player would not necessarily know. A character's Sanity rating reflects his mental stability, and may never exceed 100 minus his Cthulhu Mythos percentage. The more you know, the less stable you are. Whenever you encounter a particularly unnatural creature, you must make a Sanity roll. If you make your roll, you may lose only one point of Sanity. If you blow the roll, you can lose a lot more, depending on the creature. There are also rules for going temporarily or even permanently insane. Of course, psychiatric care can help you in some cases. But you can never remove the knowledge of the unnatural creatures you have seen.

Character generation can be handled in two ways: the usual "roll up the stats and let's go" style, or a well thought out system for developing a character's background. The latter system requires more time, but results in a much more developed character. The skills which the character may choose from are interesting and well worked out, although in some cases their utility is questionable (Singing?). The character sheets provided with the game are well designed and quite usable.

The basis for the combat system is *BRP*, undoubtedly one of the best systems on the market. *BRP* has a prime virtue that most combat systems lack: simplicity. The addition of guns to *BRP* is reasonably well handled, but a longer list of guns would have been nice. Perhaps a special version of an impale specifically for guns, or some sort of knockdown rules, would have made the firearms seem more gunlike. In any case, the weapons list covers most everything you would need to attack something in the 1920's.

The most important innovation of *Call of Cthulhu* is the *Sourcebook for the 1920's*. This is a sampler of the important facts and biographies, a timeline, outlines of vehicles, maps of archeological sites — a beautiful compendium of basic knowledge about the '20s. This sourcebook gives you a fine grasp of the time period along with much valuable information. Game designers, take note. If you are doing a modern day or historical role-playing game, emulate this book. Even if you don't like Lovecraft, or horror, if you would like to role-play in the '20s you need this book. By itself the sourcebook is worth nearly the price of the game for anyone interested in the period.

The writeups of the monsters show a deep familiarity with the Cthulhu mythos, a large and often confusing body of writings. Many authors since Lovecraft have attempted to write stories based on the background Lovecraft created. The monsters chosen and their presentation demonstrates a strong knowledge of the mythos, and more importantly, a good feel for the Lovecraftian universe.

Playing the game is made easier by the inclusion of several scenarios. These will help the beginning Keeper (Gamemaster) capture the right mood and start playing immediately.

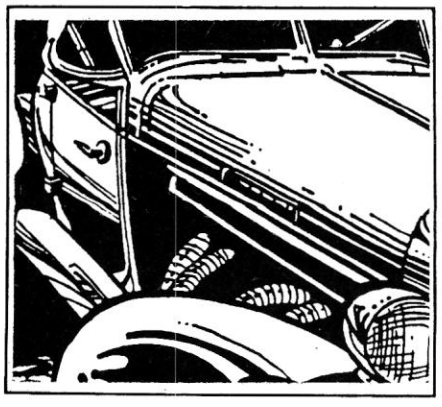
Call of Cthulhu is a well organized, well presented game. Everything is provided for you to start playing. The combat system is fine, Aside from a few very minor quibbles here and there, I only have one complaint with the game. I don't like the *philosophy* of the game.

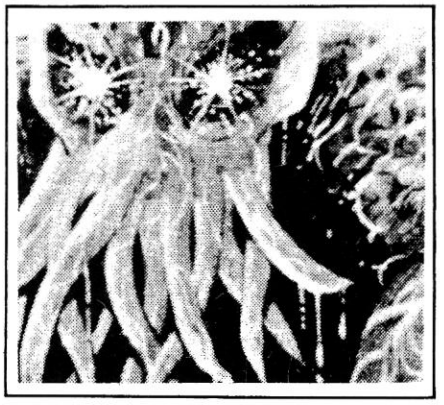
There are a couple of places in the rules where you are told not to get too attached to your character because he is likely to die at a very young age. This is an odd warning, but it is quite valid, as I have discovered. The monsters in *Call of Cthulhu* are designed not to be trifled with. In Lovecraft's writings, people who got involved with Cthulhu and related creatures were either killed or driven insane. The game simulates that very well. 'Your character had better not mess with the deities, or he'll get stomped.' Guns are worse than useless. Eventually, your character becomes one of three things: dead, insane, or a coward.

This is as it should be, because that is what happened in the books. The sanity system serves to show the player that his character can't always just sneer and say "Nah, it don't bother me none." This is necessary if you want the players to experience some horror. The problem lies in the fact that it is hard to regain your lost sanity, and you can't fight back against these creatures. You are fighting a losing battle with no way out.

I guess I like having a chance to win, no matter how small. I also like to develop a personality for a character over a long period of time. Both of those things are difficult in this game. *Call of Cthulhu* is a game that I will enjoy playing more of, but a steady diet of it would be too much. Of course, there is nothing to stop you from modifying the rules a little bit, allowing your maximum Sanity to be greater than 100 minus your Cthulhu Mythos score.

Call of Cthulhu is an excellent game, well worth your money if you are at all interested in horror or the 1920's. This game can add much to any role-playing campaign. □





THE SPAWN OF FASHAN

By Kirby Lee Davis
Games of Fashan
$8.95
Reviewed by Charles Dale Martin

The Spawn of Fashan is book one of the Fashan role-playing series. The game is based on a projected series of fantasy books, *The Annals of Fashan*, by Kirby Lee Davis. *Fashan* uses a character class system with experience points and levels. The first volume covers character generation and has extensive referee's notes.

A nuclear war has reduced the world of Fashan to a medieval economy. There are many radiation zones of varying intensity and it is presumably this radiation which has produced psionic abilities in the humans and animals of Fashan. The designer suggests that there are high tech artifacts around, including sentient computer complexes guarded by robots. Since any campaign is set in a referee's variant of Fashan, that campaign world is said to be a "spawn" of Fashan.

Players are very restricted in choosing a character class. A player gets to choose the character class he liked best as a 'child.' The referee then rolls for the character class of the player-character's parents. (If the parents were *misfits*, the player's character can only join that class.) The player then rolls up his character's statistics and picks either the parental or childhood choice of character class.

If the many *normals* are taken as one class, *Fashan* has fourteen character classes. The only power of the game's *priest* lies in his ability to communicate with his god so that the god's followers will go on quests. There are no magic-users but *occultists* use their mental powers to control and delude people. The enemies of the occultists are the *swayers* whose specialty is persuasion. A *creeper* is a ninja who excretes an inky (psychic?) cloud from his body. All details of the misfit class are left to the referee's imagination.

There are eight characteristics: strength, dexterity, constitution, intelligence, charisma, reflexes, courage and senses which is a type of empathy which detects living creatures and which is usually not available at first level. Each characteristic is generated by taking the four best results on five D6.

Characters improve by increasing the values of characteristics as they go up in level. Every characteristic has an Advancement Chart listing based on character class, e.g. an occultist who reaches second level rolls D100 and, if he rolls 20 or less, his dexterity increases by D6. If he misses, he can increase his dexterity upon reaching third level by rolling 35 or less. A second failure allows him a chance to increase his dexterity at fourth level with a roll of 50 or less. When he is successful, his chance at the next level reverts to the base value of 20. When a character goes up a level, the player rolls for every characteristic with different chances for success.

Davis calls *Fashan* "the best role-playing game on the market." This claim is largely based on the game's combat system which takes up about nineteen of 96 pages. The combat system is based on armor class and uses a D20 for combat resolution. There are extensive modifiers based on the difference between the combatants' reflexes, weapon type and aiming point: head, body, arms, or legs. Damage varies with the amount of fatigue expended with each blow. Dodging and parrying are allowed. There are critical hits and fumbles.

The combat system is both complex and unwieldy. It imposes too great a strain on the players and the referee — using these rules is rather like playing *Gladiator, Traveller* and *Arduin Grimoire* simultaneously. *RuneQuest, Bushido* and *Chivalry & Sorcery* provide more realism for less effort.

The combat system is really a combat resolution system because it does not deal with space. The rules don't mention miniatures or battleboards. Weapon length is not important. Combat rounds are 36 seconds long but there are no guidelines for movement. If you are using a 'sweeping' weapon and your target dodges the blow, you may attempt to hit an adjacent foe. Another anomaly is that the range of a light bow is only one hundred feet.

Female characters are another problem. The introduction has a disclaimer that using the pronoun 'he' in referring to characters is not sexist. However, the initial constitution and strength of females is half that of males and these characteristics improve at one-quarter the rate for males. In compensation, females increase their charisma and gain Intuition (which is described in the Mental Illness Table). Such an approach to women is neither fair nor realistic.

If *Spawn of Fashan* ever goes into a second edition, a table of contents or an index would be a useful addition. The spelling could also be improved.

The Fashan co-op seems to be out of touch with the adventure gaming community. The game was released at a science fiction convention. The only other role-playing systems mentioned are *D&D, AD&D, The Fantasy Trip* and *Magic Realm*. I am familiar with fifteen fantasy role-playing systems and I must conclude that, despite honest effort, *Spawn of Fashan* is several years behind the state of the art.

However, it may still be worth buying. The referee's notes are excellent guidelines for any fantasy campaign. Game masters of an eclectic bent may wish to use some of the new character classes and the many tables in their own game systems. And some adventurous souls might actually play the game and enjoy it. □

DEITIES AND DEMIGODS

By James M. Ward and Robert J. Kuntz
TSR Hobbies
$12.00
Reviewed by Patrick Amory

Deities and Demigods is the *AD&D* version of the old *Gods, Demigods, and Heroes* booklet for *D&D*. Written by the same authors as the earlier supplement, *Deities and Demigods* contains seventeen pantheons (*not* religions) ranging from the Greek gods to the universe of Lovecraft's *Necronomicon* to the Arthurian heroes. Also included are brief notes on mortality and immortality, omens, gamemastering deities, and divine ascension.

Deities and Demigods lives up to TSR's usual high-quality component standards: it is a sturdy hardcover book, well-illustrated and clearly laid out. Unfortunately, the illustrations vary immensely in quality, ranging from the lowest in crudeness with the Celtic and Sumerian pantheons to the sensitivity of the American Indian illustrations. Most of the artwork tends toward the mediocre.

The work is complete in overall approach: it manages to cover most of the well-known myths from Earth and some of the more popular of the fictional legends. Pantheons include the overused Egyptian, Norse and Greek deities, the less familiar Finnish, Japanese and Sumerian gods, and the literary Melnibonean, Lovecraftian and Nehwon mythoi.

Under a closer look, however, *Deities and Demigods* fails quite seriously to deliver anything much more than a scaled-up *Monster Manual*. The introduction seems quite promising in the way it draws away from the *D&D* ideal of fighting monsters. In fact, the editor tries to make us believe that this work is *not* another book of monsters, but a "reference work" of use to the Dungeon Master for "creating, intensifying or expanding his or her campaign." With this cheerful note the reader continues on — only to be horrified with the same old sets of statistics stacked

beside pictures of the creatures — it even looks like the *Monster Manual*.

What we have here is an error of vision. The authors may have started out with the right idea, but they lost it very quickly. Their initial problem may have been adapting real-world creations to the artificial *AD&D* alignment system. As the authors say in the preface, "Beings like Set, Loki and Arioch are easy to classify, but when working with the middle-of-the-road deities who were often chaotic but known for consistent kindness, it becomes necessary to consider them as a whole to make a judgment."

Here Ward and Kuntz made their first error. Perhaps fantasy characters in a *D&D* campaign can be adapted to the Law-Chaos Good-Evil matrix, but gods and pantheons resulting from the beliefs of real-world people cannot be so classified without destroying their personalities, quirks and, in fact, their godliness.

The alignment system mistake is certainly not the worst error made in the compilation of *Deities and Demigods*, but it shows the lack of sensitivity with which the authors approached their mammoth job.

Their next false step lay in the assumption that these gods could (and would) *meet* their worshipers for the purpose of chiding them or thanking them. Surely these tasks are above almost every deity detailed in this work, as can be seen in just a short reading of some of the more well-known myths. The authors do provide for these meetings to be rare, but the fact that this section exists (including percentages for appearances) together with the structure of the book (as discussed below) will cause many a novice Dungeon Master to throw Odin and Zeus together at the first adventurers who come their way, as happened with the more powerful *Monster Manual* pantheons. Each god, demigod or divine servant is treated exactly as a super-powerful monster out of the *Manual*. A few extra points are added (such as "worshipers' alignment") but otherwise the format is exactly the same as in the previous book, right down to typeface and illustration to the right. This practice encourages treating untouchable divine beings as simply yet more stock for the local dungeon, an unforgivable act of malice to ancient traditions brought down to us from times long past.

What *Deities and Demigods* should have included is a detailed discussion of what characters in a reasonable fantasy world would have normal contact with: the trappings of religion, ceremonies, beliefs, the interactions of these beliefs with culture and society, and not the butchering of gods like Odin and Loki into mere 300-400 hit-point monsters.

Instead, description of these points is almost non-existent. Say the authors in their preface, "The names of the deities and heroes . . . and many of their personality traits are plain for everyone to discover for themselves. . ." What this translates to in English is this: the most obscure of deities are given complete statistics for a *D&D* melee, without the slightest touch of personality, description, beliefs, and even place within the legends.

Deities and Demigods contains monsters, not religions. What is included here is not of the slightest use to anyone in the FRP market and should be avoided like leprosy. The careless butchering of ancient legends, the lack of any details useful for creation of religion in a normal campaign, and the encouragement of the insertion of yet more higher-level monsters for the worst kind of fantasy gaming makes *Deities and Demigods* fit only for the trashcan. □

ADVENTURE CLASS SHIPS, VOL. 1

By Jordan Weisman, Craig Johnson, Scott Walschlager and Ross Babcock
Fasa
$9.00
Reviewed by Tony Watson

This folio of ten starship deck plans for *Traveller* is one of the most ambitious and nicely presented offerings ot its type. For the price, it is also one of the best values.

The package consists of five 22x17 inch back-printed sheets with one starship per side. A sixteen-page booklet is included and contains pertinent data as well as four additional diagrams of new types of small craft. The whole set fits into a very classy looking 11x17 inch slipcase, with which is enclosed a cardboard stiffener.

The subject of the set is a selection of starship types and classes of at least three different nationalities. They include the Chatl-class Zhodani Scout-Leader, a 150-ton, high-jump capable, and very stylish military courier; the Maru-class 500-ton bulk cruiser; the Valor, an Imperial missile corvette of 400 tons and armed with four triple missile turrets; the Ninz-class Zhodani scout, a very pretty ship resembling a great manta ray; a heavily armed 500-ton system defense boat of Freedonian origin known as the Condor-class; the Chameleon-class commerce raider, an 800-ton starship armed with a fifty-ton missile bay and a bristling array of particle accelerators and lasers, also featuring superb staging facilities for boarders; a Zhdits-class Zhodani destroyer escort of 400 tons; the Desiree Keach, a 400-ton yacht, with twenty-one fine staterooms and jump-4 capability; the Zhodani Stedlas system defense boat, displacing 400 tons and mounting a fifty ton fighter in addition to its two particle accelerators and a pair of triple missile turrets; and finally, the Imperial destroyer escort class, Lucifer, a very agile and heavily armed and armored warship.

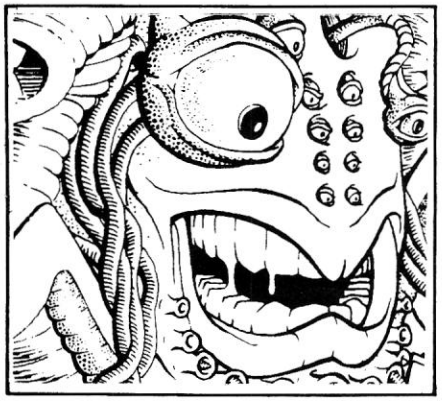
Information about the ships is given in detail in the booklet. All pertinent statistics are provided, as well as a few paragraphs of explanatory text. *High Guard* information is included as well. The presentation is not unlike that used in supplement 9, *Fighting Ships*.

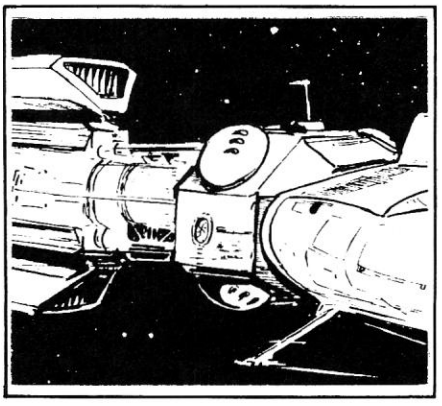
As for the deckplans themselves, they are excellent, as one might expect from FASA, a company that entered the market with a line of deckplans. These are probably some of the most meticulous plans around, offering not the usual half-inch, 1.5 meter scale grid, but a great amount of interior detail such as consoles, tables, beds, and regular and command chairs as well. This attention to detail allows easy use of the plans with tactical combat rules such as *Snapshot* or *Azhanti High Lightning*. In addition to the deck interiors, top and side drawings of the ships are provided, indicating important hull features such as turrets, fuel scoops, and drive and bridge locations. Each plan is supplemented by an illustration of the ship, drawn excellently by William H. Keith. □

PALACE OF THE SILVER PRINCESS

By Tom Moldvay and Jean Wells
TSR
$5.50
Reviewed by Anders Swenson

This is dungeon module B3, intended to be played using the *Basic D&D* rules which are the most recent offered by TSR. The module consists of the usual 32-page booklet and cover folder, with a painting by Erol Otus on the front, and plans of the dungeon levels on the inside. The text includes ready-to-play characters, notes on play of the game, player's and GM's information on the plot of the





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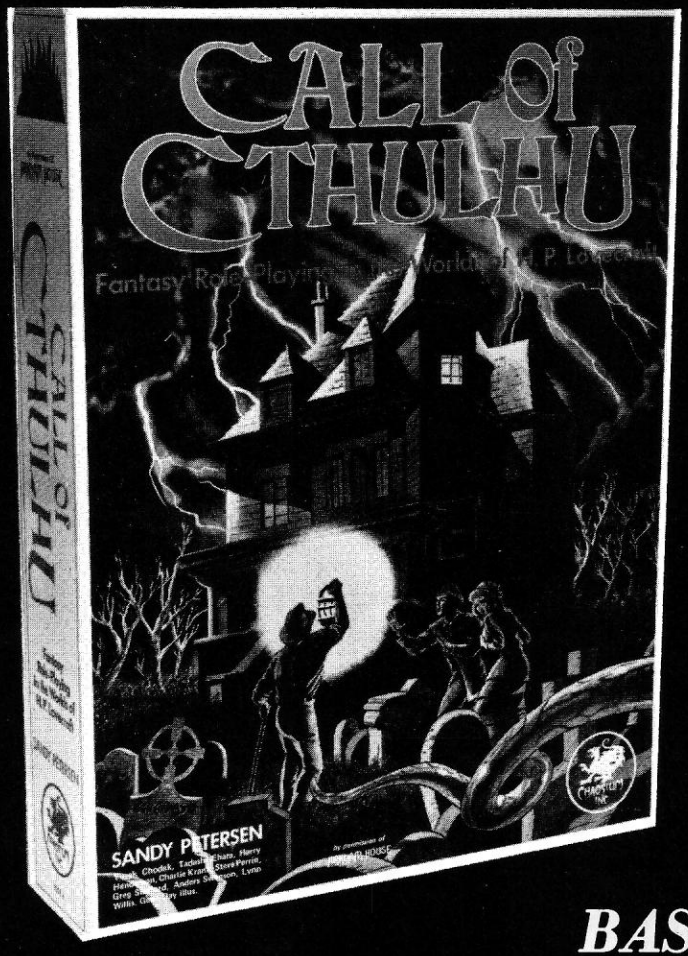

Call of Cthulhu is a fantasy role-playing game set in the fabulous 1920's, but underlying the events of the time lurk the minions of the Cthulhu Mythos. The players in **Call of Cthulhu** portray Investigators trying to unravel the secrets behind mysterious and supernatural events, protecting the life and sanity of the world against unknown monsters. Discover what horrors haunt the ancient house or what creeps through the shadows of man's imagination, driving him insane.

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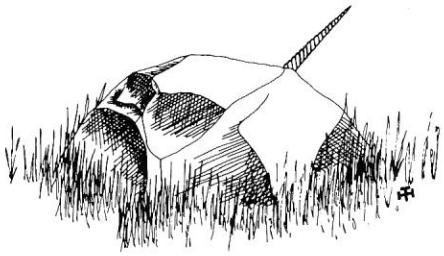

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adventure, new monsters, a cast of characters, a glossary, and a blank page of graphpaper.

The Palace of the Silver Princess is an adventure for a group of beginning players. The adventurers have been asked to enter the palace, find and destroy a magical ruby which is the source of a vicious curse which has destroyed a once-prosperous kingdom.

The entrance to the palace is written as a programmed adventure to be administered by the GM to show the new players the sorts of things done by adventurers during the course of a dungeon crawl. In order to enter the dungeon, the adventurers must solve a simple puzzle.

The main part of the dungeon is described in the usual manner — the GM reads the description to himself and tells the players what they see. Many of the dungeon segments feature a boxed room description which may be read aloud to the players verbatim.

The dungeon is set up as if it were a series of rooms forming part of a great palace. There are rooms which form a bathing complex, a kitchen and dining hall, a study and library, a guardhouse, etc. While the rooms are described as if they were part of an aboveground palace, the maps seem to show a series of chambers carved into the solid ground. There are no windows, and the corridors twist around with no regard for the support of a second story. As the adventurers explore the palace, they must be alert for clues to the means of destruction of the evil ruby.

After following a most circuitous path, the adventurers will find the way up to the upper level of the dungeon. This section is much more like a building — the rooms are joined by their mutual walls, as are the rooms of a house. The upper level contains encounters which call for more initiative and imagination from the players than the straightforward monster slaughtering and clue gathering of the ground level. The encounters include a pair of thieves, a doppleganger, some apparitions, and a genuine Evil Cleric and his bodyguard. Finally, the adventurers will find the ruby itself and destroy it, ending the adventure.

This is a reasonably well done effort, although I have a few nits to pick on it. First, while the adventure is billed as a palace, with the implication of an integrated institution with well-established communications and well-instructed functionaries, the actual adventure lacks almost all of the above. It is instead a very linear and sequential dungeon with almost no interaction between the different encounters. This leads neophyte players and GMs into the standard trap of the totally random adventure where each particular encounter is handled independently without reference to the reactions of monsters and NPCs within earshot of a loud fight. While the encounters are separated to eliminate this problem, the lack of an example of casual cooperation among the monsters is unfortunate.

The floorplan also suffers from the dungeon syndrome where things which would in real life be easily accessible, are in fact shut up behind convoluted corridors and absurd traps in order to confound the players better. In particular, the entire second floor, where improtant persons reside, as well as where the court functions, can be reached only through a very inconvenient-looking trap door.

Finally, there is a re-emergence of the perennial FRP identity crisis where the text refers to the characters as players, as in "Players may recover hit points . . ." where it is presumably the characters and not the players who have suffered injury.

These objections aside, this is a reasonable adventure package for novice GMs and/or players. Everything has been explained in detail, with a proficient use of the language, leaving very little to the industry of the GM. *The Palace of the Silver Princess* is a good buy for new GMs or new players who want an easy start in the hobby. □

THE HOUSE ON HANGMAN'S HILL

By Jon Mattson
Judges Guild
$3.95

TRIAL BY FIRE

By Mike Wilson
Judges Guild
$3.95
Reviewed By Anders Swenson

These two booklets are recent releases from Judges Guild. They both describe FRP adventures for the *AD&D* rules system. They are intended for beginning GMs and players who are unfamiliar with role playing and/or *AD&D*.

Each book is 32 pages long, including the cover (printed in the ghastly-looking color process favored by the publisher). Both books have maps and drawings in addition to the proper text of the adventure. *Trial by Fire* also includes a listing of pre-rolled characters for the players' use if they so choose.

The House on Hangman's Hill presents the exploration of a haunted house near a village plagued with strange happenings. The wrongfull death of the former owner of the house has changed him into a spectre; the resultant aura of evil which emanates from this undead being has filled the house and made it attractive to all sorts of foul creatures. The interior plan of the house is rather random for a dwelling of such a large size — it is surprising that there is neither a second floor or a basement. The monster population of the place is quite random, and many groups of creatures seem too large to be contained in the spaces assigned them.

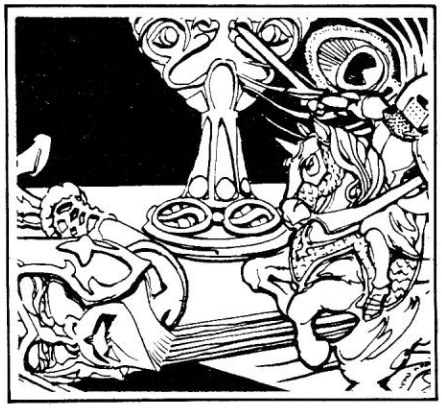
Trial by Fire is another adventure in a deserted place. In this case, the place is a long-abandoned fortress, consisting of underground rooms and corridors. Again, the rooms have been taken over by monsters; there are also a number of traps left over from the time when the place was a fortress with the need for internal security.

For all the effort that the authors have put into these two adventures, I am afraid that I find them to be as dull as dishwater. Both involve the use of standard *AD&D* elements applied randomly to a randomly drawn map. The adventures are simple, and one would suppose that they were designed as beginner's runs for this reason. Certainly, players flushed with enthusiasm for the game will be more likely to overlook the bland lack of direction which typifies these booklets.

The factor which I see as a real problem in these adventures is that they perpetuate the old idea of a random, graph-paper dungeon as the only type of adventure gaming. Instead of inspiring new GMs to seek ways of making adventure scenarios conform to common sense and the ways of actual constructions, products like these reenforce the acceptance of the random tables found in the back of, lets say, the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, as adequate sources of adventure, rather than the stop-gap flights from creativity that they actually represent.

The texts of both booklets also suffer from trivial mistakes in spelling and syntax which give these books an aura of amateurishness, reflecting poorly on the hobby. Shoddy, ugly products like these give our hobby, which already suffers from a lot of criticism from various quarters, an even poorer name.

The House on Hangman's Hill and *Trial by Fire* are products which fulfill their basic purpose of being usable adventures for low-level games. However, they suffer from poor development, and the new GM would do well to shun these products in favor of similar, albeit more expensive, adventures from other adventure-gaming houses. ■



QUICK PLUGS

TRAVELLER

STRIKER — Rules for 15mm *Traveller* miniatures, it is designed by Frank Chadwick. Comes boxed with three 48-page rulebooks, 16 pages of tables, playaids, and a pair of dice. The game involves initiative, morale, command, communication, visibility, direct fire, grenades, tac missiles, lasers, smoke, meson accelerators, drones, encumbrance, ammunition, animals, weather, surprise, bombing, chemical warfare, etc. Available for $11.98 from GDW, PO Box 1646, Bloominton, IL 61701.

MARANANTHA-ALKAHEST SECTOR — Approved for use with *Traveller*, this is a sector description by Dave Sering. Comes with a 22"x34" map and a 32-page rulebook. Along with the 16 subsectors, it comes with extensive rumors and events. Price is $5.98.

WASPWINTER — Approved for use with *Traveller*, it comes with a 22"x34" map of the planet and a 32-page book. Designed by Walter and Dorothy Bledsaw, it has character descriptions, pirates, history, a city description, a bazaar, creatures, encounter tables, and many maps. Sells for $5.98. Both are available from Judges Guild, RR 8 Box 9, 1221 N Sunnyside Rd, Decatur, IL 62522.

BUSHIDO

BUSHIDO — This is a new edition of a samurai RPG set in feudal Japan. Designed by Paul Hume and Bob Charrette, the boxed set comes with an 80-page book on the Heroes of Nippon, a 48-page book on the Land of Nippon, an 11"x22" map of Japan with encounter tables, an 11"x25½" GM's shield, and playaids. Available for $16 from Fantasy Games Unlimited, Inc., PO Box 182, Roslyn, NY 11576.

TUNNELS & TROLLS

MISTY WOOD — This is a solitaire adventure for *T&T* designed by Roy Cram. This is a 28-page book that involves strange goings on in a nightmarish forest. Available from Flying Buffalo Inc., PO Box 1467, Scottsdale AZ 85252-1467.

WORLDS OF WONDER

WORLDS OF WONDER — This is a boxed set of three introductory RPGs. Along with *Basic Role-Playing*, there is *Magic World, Superworld*, and *Future*World*. Comes with four 16-page rulebooks, an 11"x17" map of the city of Wonder with description, playaids, character sheets, cut-out characters, and a set of polyhedral dice. Designed by Steve Perrin, it sells for $16. Available from Chaosium Inc., PO Box 6302, Albany CA 94706-0302, add $2 for postage & handling, California residents add appropriate 6% or 6½% sales tax.

COMPUTER GAMES

ESCAPE FROM TRAMM — This is a computer adventure game in the style of Scott Adams. Designed by Jyym Pearson, the game involves a stranded space ship in a bizarre world. The object is to survive and escape. Tape for TRS-80 16K sells for $19.95.

STONE OF SISYPHUS — Described as a role-playing compu-novel, the object of the game is to fight monsters, collect treasure, and get out alive. Designed by Chameleon Software, requires Apple or TRS-80 with 48K and at least one disc drive. It comes with two disks and sells for $29.95.

MORTON'S FORK — This is a compu-novel set in a wizard's fortress. You equip your warrior and pick a skill level to determine complexity of the maze and the tricks and traps. By Chameleon Software, it requires Apple or TRS-80 with 48K and at least one disk drive. Comes with two disks, it is priced at $29.95. All are available from Adventure International, PO Box 3435, Longwood, FL 32750.

ACCESSORIES

HEXAGONAL GRID MAPPING SYSTEM — Comes in a folder, there are 53 8½"x11" three-hole punched sheets with 23x15 ½" hex grid. Hexes are numbered and a mapping system is described. Available from the Companions, Inc., 245 Water St, Bath, ME 04530 for $3.75 postpaid.

DUNGEON FLOORS — Comes with 25½ 4"x7" floor sections containing pictures of stone corridors, rooms, wood floors, curving hallways, stairs, furniture, pits, pools, gratings, trap doors, etc. Printed on cardstock, it sells for $4.99. Published by Heritage USA, it is available through retail outlets and mail order dealers.

PLASTIC BASES FOR CARDBOARD HEROES — For $3 you get four 7" strips for one full set of figures. Available from Steve Jackson Games, PO Box 18957, Austin, TX 78760.

ANY SYSTEM

GLORY HOLE DWARVEN MINE — Designed for use with any FRP game, this 48-page book describes an adventure into a dwarven mine. Designed by Edward R. G. Mortimer, it has catacombs, artifacts, caveins, a gorge, disgruntled miners, rumors, ores, encounters, a mine with 14 areas to explore, and a larger one with 115. It also comes with 23 new creature descriptions. Price is $3.98. It is available from Judges Guild, RR 8 Box 9, 1221 N Sunnyside Rd, Decatur, IL 62522.

OTHER

DUEL MAGICAL — Designed by Dave Nalle, it comes with 24 mage records and four pages of rules. The game involves magical combat through the use of mana and spells. There is a basic scenario along with advanced, multi-player, solitaire, and campaign. Available for $1.95 from Ragnarok Enterprises, 1402 21st St NW, Washington DC 20036. □

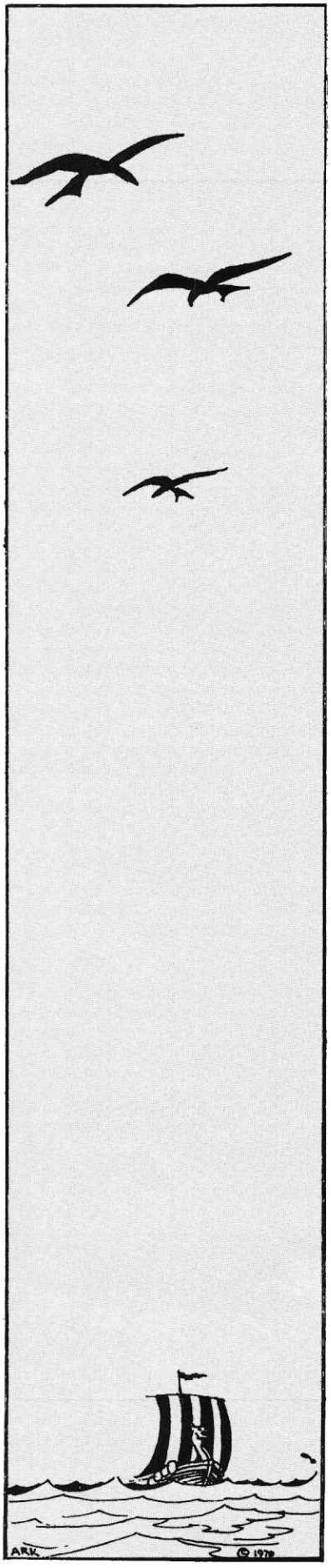


illustration by Scott Arquette

notice board

Interested in more gamers, or campaigns to play in? Do you have a gaming club or group that you want others to know about? *Different Worlds* will print your notice for free for up to six issues if it is no more than 30 words in length.

WARNING!!!

Zarzeena the Sorceress has escaped Cielmond II through the Sacred Portal of Space. The reward on her head has been raised to 4,000,000 Bralls in case she returns.

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by GIGI D'ARN

Dear Tadashi,

Still waiting for your next issue of *Gryphon*? Baron Publishing, the publishers, have sold their other magazine, *Fire & Movement*, to Steve Jackson Games for $24,000. That should be enough to get out two issues at least. It's been so long since the last issue, I hope it doesn't contain too much outdated material I know.

A recent *Space Gamer* mentions that *Panzer Pranks'* sequel is going to be *Squat Leader*. Must be a typo, its planned name is *Squawk Leader*.

DAVE ARNESON gets my vote for this year's Origins Awards for Hall of Fame. It is only fair, since GARY GYGAX won last year.

Is Avalon Hill going to change their name? One of their press releases arrived in an envelope marked Monarch Avalon Inc. Is that their parent company's name?

In the deep woods of Maine, there is a Tudor-style castle that is the setting for two weeks of adventure role-playing. The Gamesmasters Workshop '82 is sponsored by the Companions Inc, 245 Water St, Bath, ME 04530, and provides programs in designing scenarios, playing live adventures, tournaments, movies, demonstrations, and discussions on gamemastering. A gamer's paradise.

The Game Designer's Guild has secured the services of LOU ZOCCHI and WOODY KNOTTS for their annual banquet at Origins. Also in their program is the Right Reverend HOWARD THOMPSON giving a sermon on "The Sins of Profiting from Game Designing." With all those famous game designers attending, eating, and drinking, it should be quite an event.

There is a report from Grenadier Models that their female miniatures pack is their slowest seller. Where are all those female gamers? Where are all those role-players? The figures are probably unpopular because most of them are dressed.

JOHN MANSFIELD, after 14 years of publication, has ceased publication of his fanzine *Signal*.

SPI got the rights to do the *Star Trek II* movie game. This Trekkie sure wishes to know more.

Another magazine is coming. Task Force Games announces *Nexus*, still another magazine to cover F&SF boardgames, RPGs, and miniatures. MIKE JOSLYN will be the editor and the first issue is supposedly due early this year.

More goings on at Flying Buffalo: (now, here is a good gimmick) Rick Loomis has released *Skull*, it is a pair of those skull dice with a *free* game. Their "Trolls" indoor soccer team finally won a game after a lengthy losing streak. Having won a game, coach MIKE STACKPOLE predicts a good season. Sorry, no picture of the Trolls. Anyone who chooses a dead rubber chicken over me as a mascot doesn't deserve any favors.

I've picked up a rumor from a Japanese friend that Post Hobby is planning to translate and market *Traveller* and *Champions* in Japan. Have they seen your *Worlds of Wonder?*

It looks like LAWRENCE SCHICK, formerly of TSR, has joined PAUL JAQUAYS at Coleco to work as the in-chief electronic game designer. Looking forward to seeing good things from Hartford.

GDW continues cranking out their *Traveller* line with Adventure 7 *Broadsword*, and Double adventure 5 *The Chamax Plague /Horde*. I wish companies would put the designer's names on their press releases.

It was frustrating looking through *Space Gamer 46*. Most of the pages were out of order. Anyway, they will make up for the error by extending subscriptions by one issue. If you've seen *Adventure Gaming 7*, you know they had a similar problem with a page spread. Will TIM KASK give the same deal as *TSG*?

I bet you are happy for the 49ers. Rumour has it that the Chaosium and Hero Games (the *Champions* gang from Palo Alto) cleaned up with their bets with friends in Dallas and Cincinnati. I hear TIM KASK owes you a six-pack of beer.

Smart move department: Gencon East is cancelled for this year. With a ton of publicity going to Origins this year, the Eastern Gaming Association decided having two conventions weeks apart in the same neighborhood wasn't a good idea after all.

Tom Loback Artworks is going to incorporate and will have a new company with greater distribution and new packaging. Time to go professional.

For those who like to read about *D&D* sex scandals, see LEW WOLKOFF's contribution to *A&E 78* about goings-on in Harrisburg, PA, where he reports that a Dungeon Master made his players do some strange things.

RICHARD SNIDER, designer of *Mutant* and co-designer of *Adventures in Fantasy*, is now working for Avalon Hill in their RPG department. Good luck Richard.

There will be a *D&D* game cartridge put out by Mattel for their Intellivision system. I wonder if they'll ever create anything for us over-educated kids.

Flying Buffalo is upset at Schubel & Sons for using the buffalo logo on S&S's *Buffalo Hunting* ad. Is it a coincidence that they both do PBM games? If S&S was trying to be funny, someone in Arizona isn't laughing.

DAVE ARNESON has a new pet dog. Her name is Nugget and she's smart, cute, and Adventure Games' mascot. Smart, but not quite housebroken yet. Dave will accept paper towel donations. Adventure Games has moved to new quarters: 1278 Selby Ave, St Paul MN 55104 – across the river into triple the space with a three-car garage as well.

Is it true that DAVE ARNESON, KEN ST ANDRE, and STEVE PERRIN are organizing an International Fantasy Gamers Society as outlined in LARRY NIVEN's *Dream Park*?

My notoriety is spreading, thanks to J. ERIC HOLMES's mention of my column in his *Fantasy Role Playing Games* book published by Hippocrene.

Chaosium's *Questworld* project is really picking up steam. Since the publication of the world in *DW 17*, Judges Guild, Games Workshop, Boardcraft Simulations, FASA, and Gamelords will be doing supplementary material for *RuneQuest, Worlds of Wonder,* and *Basic Role-Playing*. STEVE PERRIN will coordinate the enterprise.

GDW has served a cease-and-desist order to Edu-Ware for publishing *Space* and *Space I*, which GDW claims to be based on their *Traveller* game. I have noticed that computer people frequently pilfer RPG ideas, but I don't know *Space* and *Space I*.

Gamelords will be busy this year. In April, they will have RICH MEYER's *TFT* adventure *Land Beyond the Mountains*. For Origins they hope to have KEVIN HARDWICK's *Mine Eyes Have Seen the Glory*, a Civil War RPG. And for GENCON, they project the release of KERRY LLOYD's *Fantasy System*, compatible with their *Thieves Guild* material.

SPI has signed a contract with Bantam Books for the latter to publish trade paperback versions of *DragonQuest* and *Universe*. Projected release is for late this year with a 50,000 print run each.

Chaosium's next three projected releases are *Borderlands*, a *RuneQuest* campaign in seven scenarios by various designers; *Trollpack*, GREG STAFFORD's version of trolls; and *Dorastor* by Ken Kaufer, billed as the *RuneQuest* version of sorts of *The Toughest Dungeon in the World*. Three *RQ* items in a row. The ball should really be rolling by summer.

Love,

Gigi

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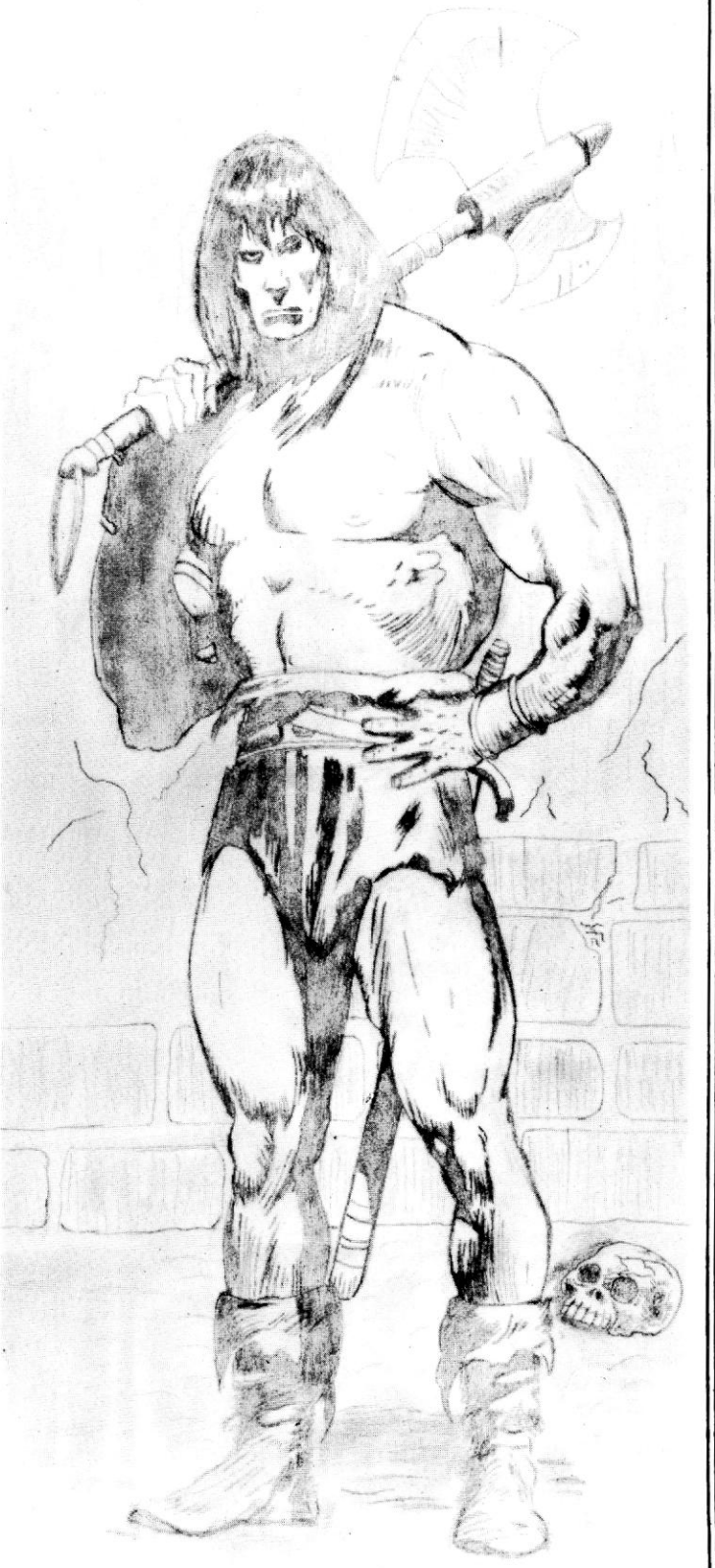

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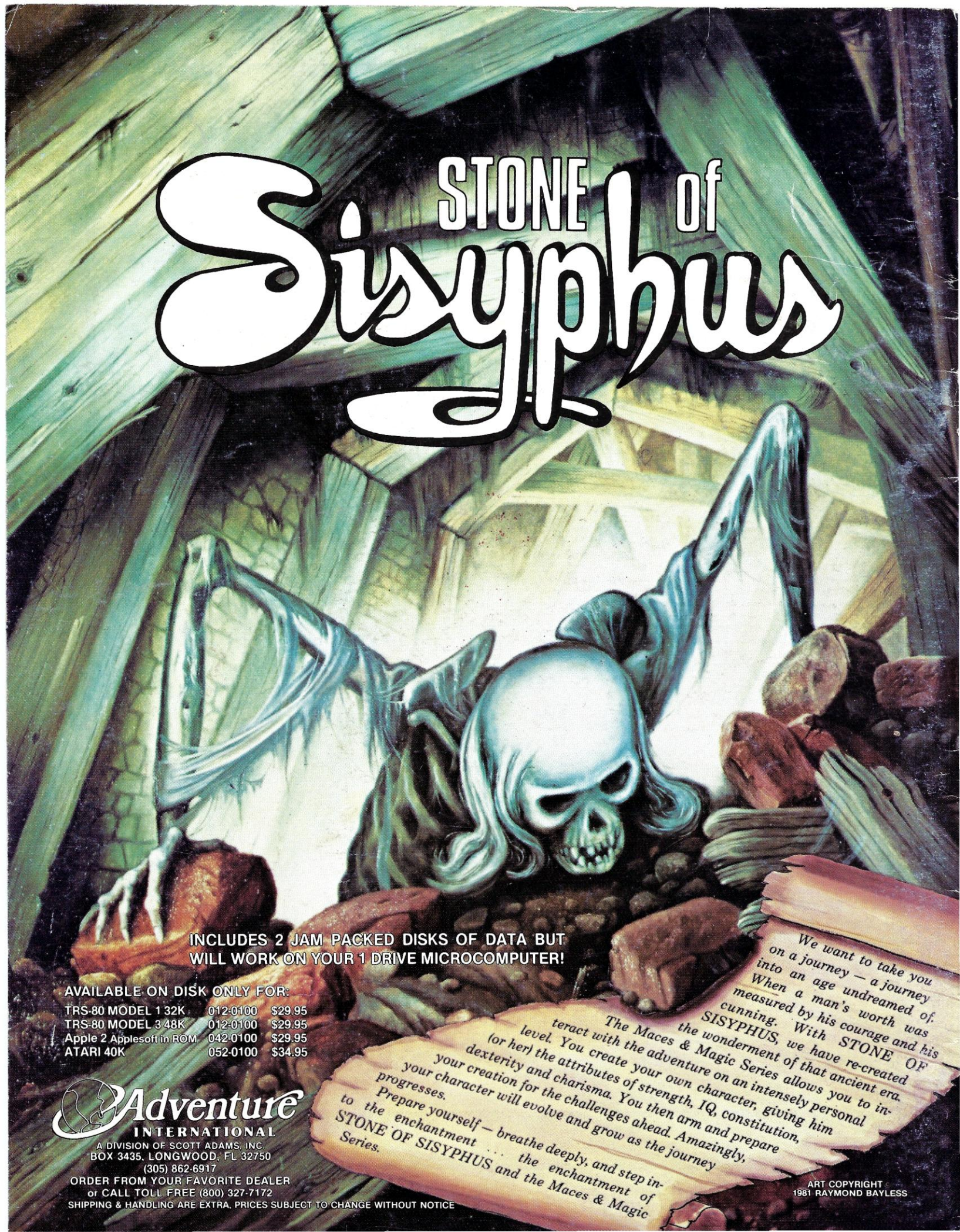

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