

Eternal Sunshine #28

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By Douglas Kent, 11111 Woodmeadow Pkwy #2327, Dallas, TX 75228

Email: doug_of_whiningkentpigs.com or diplomacyworld@yahoo.com

On the web at <http://www.whiningkentpigs.com> – or go directly to the Diplomacy section at <http://www.whiningkentpigs.com/DW/>. Also be sure to visit the Diplomacy World website at <http://www.diplomacyworld.net>. Check out <http://www.helpfulkitty.com> for official Toby the Helpful Kitty news, advice column, blog, and links to all his available merchandise! Links to all of the books and DVDs reviewed can be found by clicking on the Amazon Store button in the main menu of the Whining Kent Pigs website. Or <http://www.guysexplained.com> where women can learn all the secrets of how a man's mind works, and why they act the way they do.

All Eternal Sunshine readers are encouraged to join the free Eternal Sunshine Yahoo group at http://games.groups.yahoo.com/group/eternal_sunshine_diplomacy/ to stay up-to-date on any subzine news or errata.

Quote Of The Month – “You said ‘I Do’. I guess that means we’re married.” (Clementine in “Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind”)

Welcome to Eternal Sunshine, the only Diplomacy zine that was effectively forced to go onto eBay and buy a VHS copy of “KISS Versus the Phantom of the Park” just so Heather could find out how it ends. You see, it turns out that as a child while at daycare (or something like that) they used to put in a video of the terrible made-for-television movie for the kids to watch. But before they’d get to the end, it would be time to leave. So for years and years she has wondered how the stupid piece of crap ended. Finally, I couldn’t take it anymore...so I bought a copy on eBay for a very VERY low price, and Heather was able to watch it and see the end...in all its campy, stupid, terrible special-effect, brainless plot glory. Amen. I didn’t mind though, because it is a very small price to pay to give her something she wanted for a long time. Heather is not someone with exorbitant desires or unreachable dreams. So when I have the opportunity to fulfill one of those very moderate requests, how could I possibly say no to the most wonderful woman in the universe (albeit the grumpiest)?

Who is Reading This?

That’s a rather complicated question. Back in the postal days of the hobby, when zines were available by subscription or trade only, publishers knew what their circulation was. For Eternal Sunshine, I have absolutely no clue. Some people see ES through Jim Burgess’ postal mailing of The Abyssinian Prince...officially Eternal Sunshine remains a subzine of TAP, despite the fact that we’re lapping Jim-Bob severely when it comes to issues being released. But besides those individuals, everybody who reads Eternal Sunshine does so via the internet, either in pdf or html format (or occasionally in text format as part of the mailing to the TAP mailing list). To be honest, I have NO IDEA how many people read this.

With that in mind, I’d like to try and get an estimate. So I am asking you to do the following: send me an email, simply stating “I read Eternal Sunshine” and mentioning how often you read it (every issue, once in a while, rarely). You can give your name, or not. If you want to give me more information, such as what sections you read, what you like, what you hate, what you’d prefer to see more of, etc., that would be wonderful – but it is not required. I just want you to email me. ***I will NOT be building a mailing list off this project.*** I just want to try and get a general approximate headcount. It is possible that I might write back to you in response to something you put in the email, but that isn’t very likely. Even if you are sure that I KNOW you read this, send the email. I’m not adding the names of people who I think haven’t emailed...I would like *1 email* from each of you. Send the email to this special email box, which was set up ONLY for this project:

reader@whiningkentpigs.com

I appreciate your cooperation and your participation. I will probably summarize what I learn after a month or two, but it all depends on how thorough a response I get and how useful I think the results are. Just do me a personal favor and send the email.

I wish I had some interesting personal stories to stick in here, but our lives have been very boring lately. I don't mean that in a negative way...I just mean the usual stuff – work, cats, DVDs, Diplomacy, etc. – are all we've been doing lately. Heather and I continue to try and eat better and exercise. My weight isn't dropping as steadily as I would like, but Heather is VERY pleased with her results. She is taking this quite seriously and doing a good job; exercising, eating healthy, and keeping track of exactly what she eats. I'm less concerned with my overall weight and more concerned with how my body FEELS, so I am pretty happy too. I've been getting more exercise, and I've eliminated most of my unhealthy snacking. I do feel healthier, and my energy level is better. It's hard to remember that I am a lot older than I think...in my brain I don't feel much older than 30.

Heather has discovered one new "addiction" in her life, which fortunately is not a harmful one: she buys coupons on eBay. She looks around for food and household staples which we use on a regular basis, and which have long shelf-lives, and then she buys coupons for them online in batches (5 75-cent-off coupons for one thing or another). Usually the cost is maybe 25% of the eventual savings. Then she stocks up on the item when she finds a good price to begin with. So far I think she's spent about \$60 on ALL the coupons she bought, and has saved twice that already on JUST the coupons which she's redeemed (there are still plenty on hand she hasn't used). So overall that's a \$60 TRUE savings, with more to come, on things we use all the time. I think the key is to bid low, and be selective about which items you buy coupons on. Also, pay attention to when they expire (they'll give that information in the item description). We save money, and the person who clipped them makes a couple of bucks on the side too. Everybody's happy!

In zine news, the long-awaited gamestart for Deviant Dip II has arrived. I hope that all of you who are not playing will at least take the time to follow the game closely. Without question, Deviant Diplomacy is the most outrageous, craziest, least-predictable variant ever created. And we've got a terrific group of players (and standby players – they have a tendency to get pulled in as the game progresses), including hobby luminaries who haven't played in ES before such as Pete Gaughan, Mark D Lew, Jason Bergmann, and Russell Blau. I urge you to enjoy the game. And remember, in this game (as in all other games in Eternal Sunshine), press is "black" and can be submitted by ANYONE, whether or not you have any involvement in the game directly. I know that I've been warned numerous times what a headache this can be to GM, but I don't care...I plan on loving every minute of it!

I do believe I may have to rethink these movie contests. Perhaps next time I will describe the plot of some movies and see if anyone can guess them. The deadline hasn't passed yet, but as of this writing I've gotten only four entries, with a high score of two correct answers. In the meantime, the Cinemark gift card will stay in our drawer, to be offered as a grand prize at some future date. Any suggestions on how to create a movie contest which would generate more entries would be welcome.

I'm planning on adding one other simple thing to both the pdf and the html version of this zine/subzine: bookmarks. This will make it easier to navigate from one section to another. The only reason I've hesitated to do so in the past is I prefer people make an attempt to at least browse the publication as a whole, instead of jumping to their games and ignoring the rest. I do put in a good deal of time on the zine, as do the various columnists, so I'd hate to think they will be ignored completely. Still, you're only going to read what you want to. Personally, I prefer to print a full copy of other pdf zines and read them on paper, but I'm not sure what percentage of you do that (or care to).

Besides the games this issue, you'll find the usual crap from me: the next chapter in my Halfway House story, the Hypothetical Question of the Month, the results of the Movie Quote quiz, Music That Doesn't Get Old, letters, and stuff like that. Jack McHugh and Andy York have their columns, but Heather couldn't get motivated and took another issue off. ***If you want her back, you'd better start letting her know how missed she is!*** Which reminds me: ***if you're interested in writing a column for Eternal Sunshine, whether its monthly or just occasional, let me know. It doesn't have to be Diplomacy-related. Politics, movies, music, life updates, anything is welcome. Just get in touch!***

Finally, speaking of getting in touch, I've really enjoyed some aspects of my new participation on Facebook. I've been able to reconnect with some High School friends I never thought I'd hear from again. Sometimes its juts nice to hear how they're doing, while in other cases I have discovered we've grown in the same directions and reached points in our lives where we are now becoming much closer friends than all those years ago. It's fun anyway. Look me up if you're on there; there's plenty to do, even if a lot of it is simply mindless time wasting. There's nothing wrong with that, in moderation. You can't be completely against wasting time if you're reading Eternal Sunshine, can you? With that, I think I've bored you to tears more than necessary...on to the rest of the zine. See you in June!

Halfway Home at the Halfway House – Part Four

A lot of life at the halfway house was much more relaxed than in prison. Counts weren't a timed activity; a staff member simply walked around with a clipboard, marking down everybody he or she saw until they'd gotten everybody on the list of who was supposed to be on-site at the time. Meals were at scheduled times (and breakfast quite early), but dinner was served three times a night. As long as you had a reason for not being able to make the earliest dinner, they allowed you to eat at the second. The third dinner was reserved for those who couldn't make it back from work in time; you had to sign up for that in advance, just as you had to sign up in advance if you were going to take a bag lunch with you to work (which officially you HAD to do if you were working unless you were employed at an eatery, because you weren't allowed to walk off the job site during work hours...I'd learn all about these rules later).

I ate my dinner and tried to settle in. Falling asleep was actually a bit difficult for me, which I attributed to the foreign surroundings. Of course, it might have helped if my roommates were interested in going to bed. They liked to stay up late, watching DVDs or playing some kind of video game. Things of this nature were allowed in the room, to a limit of one TV and one video game system per room, as long as they were owned by a resident of the halfway house. When the guy who owned the TV was leaving for good, somebody else would bring one in. DVDs were also permitted, but as you might expect pornography was not. That didn't stop my roommates from popping in a porno DVD whenever possible. Trust me, it's hard to sleep when six undersexed guys are gathered around a TV groaning and ooh-ing at two women going to town on each other. Because I was new in the room, and one of only two white guys for the time being, I had two benign methods for getting around this late-night entertainment: first, I could put my headphones in and try to fall asleep to talk radio or a baseball game, which sometimes worked; second, I could make them all uncomfortable by walking in the room, finding the porno on, staring at it for a few seconds with my mouth wide open, pointing at the screen, and saying something like "Oh my God...that's my SISTER!" Nobody would believe me for more than a second or two, but I guess it put things into a less festive perspective, and voices would be noticeably lower for the rest of the night.

Of course that wasn't the only thing which made sleep difficult in the halfway house. There was also the constant low-volume ring of cell phones, all night long. We weren't allowed to have cell phones, and the pat-down searches we received sometimes when coming in from work might allow one to be discovered, but the rarity of that happening led me to believe that at least a few of the staff members were receiving cash "gifts" from clients to not look at things too closely. Usually these late night interruptions were from women, which would result in whispered sweet nothings...although sometimes in their sleepy stupor a guy would think the woman calling was his girlfriend instead of his baby's mama, and a stage-whispered argument would ensue. But not all the calls were personal in nature. Within my first week I know that, even half-asleep, I was able to hear what sounded like drug deals being arranged for the following day, or instructions to underlings on how to handle collection matters. This wasn't like prison, where everybody kept their business to themselves; here, it was back to business as usual for the career criminals.

The following morning I was introduced to the "shared chore" system of the halfway house. Each room had a chart on the door, and every week the residents would rotate between one custodial job in the room to another. One week you'd have clean the sinks and toilets in the commode room; another week it was sweep and mop the floor; etc. My job this first week was (not surprisingly) the one most hated: clean the shower stalls (of which there were two in a room of our size). I'd already noticed the day before just how filthy these were; clearly nobody had been doing much of a job. So I went to the front desk, was directed to the cleaning supplies (gloves, scouring powder, paper towels, and some sort of liquid cleanser), and went to work at the mess. I scrubbed for about 20 minutes, put everything away, and initialed the sheet to show I'd completed my task. But when I returned from breakfast, the staff member on duty had marked it as "not completed to satisfaction." I looked around and found "Manny," the staff member. I'm not sure what his game was; it could be that because I was one of the few white residents he expected me to carry some sort of racist attitude, or that he wanted some cash, or simply that this ball-busting was something he did to all the new residents to figure out how they acted. But even though I was irritated (and keep in mind, this is not a small issue; if you don't complete your tasks in an "approved" fashion, it can affect your visits, future passes, and just about any other privilege you could earn) I remembered the rule of thumb I'd used to get by in prison: this wasn't my house, it was THEIR house. So I had to follow their rules.

I think I really saw a look of shock (as surprise would be too light of a word) when I caught Manny off-guard with my approach. I apologized that the showers weren't up to his standards, but as it was my first day I wasn't exactly sure the best way to get things clean enough. I proceeded to ask him to show me the spots I most blatantly missed, and to offer some advice or tricks on how to do the job better. After five minutes of this, Manny got tired of it and just asked me to do better next time, changing his remark on the sheet to "completed." I knew that without question, whoever had been assigned the task for the prior week or two had done zero

cleaning. But why they were able to get away with that was not my concern. I just had to get along with the system, such as it was.

Later that day it was time for orientation to begin. This was where I had the "pleasure" of being introduced to Miss Fosse, the "Employment Counselor." She clearly hated her job, mistrusted everybody, and had no interest in helping anyone do anything. She had us fill out forms describing our work experience and skills, which were promptly filed and ignored forever. She had no job leads to offer, no ideas or hints, nothing. And there was no time for any of that anyway – we had a total of ten days to find a minimum of 30-hour-per-week employment or we would potentially be written up. Because I'd taken the Residential Drug and Alcohol Program in prison, I was living in this halfway house on a supposed "zero tolerance" policy; if I was written up once, that was all they needed to send me back to prison if that's what they felt like doing. And there was no workable appeals process. I was going to have to find a job, FAST.

So, as you might expect, I immediately had the roadblocks laid out for me, one by one. First, I was not allowed to go out and seek employment yet, because I hadn't been seen by the doctor and medically cleared. The doctor only came in on Tuesdays. This was Thursday. I would be stuck, sitting around the halfway house, until then. Oh, and the even better news was those days COUNTED against this "ten day" time limit to find employment. Even better: those were CALENDAR days, not business days. So by the time I cleared medical and was allowed to go out and look for work, I would be at day 7 out of 10. Oh, except that since I had to be cleared before I could submit my search schedule, I wouldn't be allowed to go out and look for work until day 8. Wonderful!

In the meantime, it was suggested that I make use of the halfway house's materials to look for work over the phone. Those "materials" included a huge stack of yellow pages, which were more than a year old. There were also a few "free" employment newspapers in stands, which never had anything in them but ads for employment education programs – "Learn to be a Dental Assistant." At least there was the daily paper to look through, except there was only one copy for 60+ inmates, and inevitably the employment section would disappear before 8am. It would turn up again, after 7pm, or perhaps the following morning...or never. There was no computer or internet access, so job hunting was fully old-school.

This left my "job hunt" activities to be very limited. While Heather helped, faxing my resume to any ad she could find in the paper or online, I was left to flip through the yellow pages, day after day, trying to figure out who might be hiring. I'd make a list of a few places, wait my turn for the free "business only" phone, and call. There were only two questions to ask. "Are you hiring?" and "Do you accept applicants with a conviction on their record?" The answer to number two was almost always yes, because unless it is a business with some sort of security issue, they ALL accept applications from felons; they just won't HIRE you. And for the first question, you heard "yes" about one time out of six, "we're always accepting applications" half the time, and discovered the place had closed (or the phone number had changed) the rest of the time. Then you'd hand the phone off to the next person, and wait for your next turn.

It isn't as if any of this was useful, because let's pretend they told you "yes, we're hiring, come in for an interview right away." Nope, sorry, no go. You needed to submit your job search travel schedule the day before. So you'd have to wait until the next day...unless, like me, you weren't cleared yet, in which case what were you supposed to do, say "can I come in next week to apply for this minimum wage job which you'll have filled by noon tomorrow?" It was a frustrating, depressing waste of time. But I had nothing else to do, so I made a ton of calls a few hours a day, and spent the rest of my time reading.

Not surprisingly, the resume faxes did very little to generate any job leads. Oh, I did get ONE phone call from one of the maybe 100 resumes Heather sent. Because we didn't have phones, the calls would come to the front desk, and the staff would take a message and let them know you'd call them back. It was a less-than-optimal system. First, they're calling what they think is someone's house, and get "Volunteers of America, can I help you?" instead. Assuming they choose to leave the message (often after being rudely asked "is this a personal call? We can only take messages regarding employment!") you had to hope it found its way to you. A company nearby was looking for a dispatcher, and I suppose my experience at Amerifleet sounded good to them. So they called, and left a message. An hour later when I walked by the front desk, I was told "Oh, Doug, we have a message for you." I stood there for about 20 minutes while they searched. Nope, can't find it. Wonderful. Finding a job was going to be soooooo easy.

I don't mean to imply they never found the message. Two days later I was told they'd finally found it. When I went to the front desk, they'd lost it again. Then they found it, at last, an hour later. It was scribbled on a square sticky note, with an illegible company name. The phone number was wrong; it went nowhere. I wasn't surprised in the least. I simply felt more hopeless, and depressed that Heather was taking such effort to help which appeared to be wasted energy and time.

Before I was able to go out and look for work, Heather came down and brought me some clothes and other items I'd need. This was my first face-to-face glimpse of her since I'd left more than 30 months earlier. I can't even begin to describe the overwhelming emotions...I was so happy to see her, but it also felt very uncomfortable (especially as I was not really supposed to have true contact with her, as it wasn't a visiting session). I could also feel some tension rising from Heather's side, which I learned later was because she had some fear of how easily we would be able to slip back into the magical connection we'd felt when we first met and fell in love. 30 months is a long time, and we'd both changed some in that span, but I didn't think it was going to be a major problem. And, of course, she worried about whether I'd still find her as beautiful and desirable as I had before...which from my standpoint was just as silly as how nervous she was on our first date. How could I not see how incredibly gorgeous and sexy she was, is, and always will be? Heather is one of those women who will still be beautiful when she's in her 70's...older, yes, but unquestionable beautiful. (I still don't see how I got so lucky after years of bad choices and bad luck).

I was given the opportunity to spend an afternoon away from the halfway house even before my medical clearance: a group of us were driven to a special meeting where Dallas was announcing some broad new programs to help those with criminal records. Miss Fosse was very insistent that we all go, as she'd heard such wonderful things about all the new training and hiring programs. This wouldn't just make it easier for us to find jobs...it would make her life simpler too. The meeting was about three hours long, and it only took me about thirty minutes to realize it was a complete waste of time. Ignoring all the talk by the speakers regarding how this program was designed especially to help minority felons (of which I am not one), I also came to understand that in order to use the job-placement assets this program could provide, you needed to complete three to four weeks of specialized training AND have two interviews with the administrators. After a while, Miss Fosse even became disillusioned, and raised her hand to ask what this program could do for those clients she was in charge of, as none of us had the kind of time horizon they were talking about; we needed jobs FAST. Unfortunately, they admitted there wasn't really anything which would help us. It was (like every program I have encountered before or since) designed for state or county felons, not Federal.

Finally, after a week or delays, I was ready to head out and look for work. With the phone books and faxes doing nothing, I had to nail down a plan. Miss Fosse was only willing to provide me with a four hour pass, which really didn't leave much time for job hunting, especially since it took 20 minutes to get from the door of the halfway house to the nearest transit station, and another 30 to get to any reasonable location where you might find work. I'd found a job in the paper which two other clients had been able to get work through during my wasted week, but they weren't interested in hiring anybody else from the halfway house after that. Their reasons were common ones I would discover during my job hunt. First, if you hired one of us you had to be willing to deal with Miss Fosse; she would show up for on-site visits once a week, having forms to be signed and reviews to be made. Then there were the random calls from the halfway house, often at least once a day, to confirm that you were actually at work like you were supposed to be. A lot of clients got fake jobs from friends, and then spent their time hanging out with buddies, or reintroducing themselves to the criminal lifestyle. There was also the issue of the lack of initiative most of the halfway house clients possessed; it was not at all rare for somebody to go to work for a day or two and then just stop showing up, because they didn't like the job. Overall, hiring a felon who lived in the halfway house was a lot of extra work for the business, with very little reward. True, there was a tax credit they could apply for, but the felon had to keep the job for 60 days (I think it was) before the application was valid. So many people quit, or did such a piss-poor job that they'd be fired, that the tax credit was not a realistic incentive.

Because I'd lived in Dallas, I figured my best plan was to hit one major retail area and apply for jobs at every store there. That way I'd take the van to the train to a bus, arrive at my destination, walk from store to store, and then head back. Two hours was the maximum amount of time I'd have to fill out applications and talk to managers. The first obstacle: you have to list every single place you are going to go on your job search form, with address and phone number, in advance. I couldn't be sure what stores were still at this shopping center and which had closed, or what new retail outlets had opened. The phone books were only useful if you knew the name of the business. Still, I managed to get five stores down on the list, with the information. This led to the second obstacle: Miss Fosse herself. She did not believe anybody when they put a lot of locations on their list; to her it was simply an attempt to appear busy while you're out having sex, drinking, or who knows what else. I actually had to argue with her and show her that all these stores were in the same plaza, within walking distance of each other. Finally she signed off on the form, but then reminded me that I was forbidden to apply at any store NOT on my list. In other words, if there was a business there I had forgotten about, or which hadn't existed when I went to prison, the only way I could try to apply for a job would be to call them later and then use up ANOTHER day to travel there and get an application. Fat chance.

About this time is when I realized my third obstacle: I needed my driver's license and Social Security card to secure employment...the identification which the prison had somehow lost. So I'd need to use my second day of job hunting (as I'd already gotten approval for the first day, I wasn't about to change things around) to go

downtown and try to resolve that nightmare. Fortunately I'd had Heather bring me my birth certificate from home when she brought the clothes. A few phone calls had led me to believe that I'd be able to use that to get a new copy of both my license (which was not expired; I had renewed it a few months before leaving Texas) and my Social Security card. With luck, I could do both in the same day. In the meantime, I figured that if someone wanted to hire me I could promise to bring appropriate ID on my first day of work.

Finally I learned the fourth obstacle: it was my responsibility to maintain contact with the halfway house. "Full accountability" was the name they used for the policy. What this meant was I had to call the halfway house just after arriving at, and just before leaving, each of my destinations. Unfortunately, this meant I'd have to call them in between EACH business I went into. First I'd call when I got off the bus, then go to the first store on the list, apply, get a signature on my sheet to show I had been there (whether or not they were hiring), and then waste precious time (and 50 cents) to call on a pay phone back to the halfway house, so they could mark off my completion of my first location and my intention to proceed to the next one. To me this was the stupidest of all the rules. After all, the stores were RIGHT NEXT TO each other! But my attempt to argue from a position of logic and reason did nothing to help...if anything, it only made Miss Fosse and the staff more suspicious of my intentions. Nobody else seemed to be complaining, so why was I? Of course, as I'd learn throughout my time there, that was because most of the other clients were using fake jobs, cell phones with no caller ID on them, or any other number of ways to outwit the system that I was so desperately trying to follow (including bribing staff members, in my opinion). I hadn't been in the halfway house long enough to believe that the rules made success next to impossible...so I was going to do things their way as long as I could. With the "zero tolerance" policy hanging over my head, a screw up wouldn't just mean giving up the six months I was due to spend split between the halfway house and home confinement; it would also mean giving up the five months I had taken off my sentence for completion of the Residential Drug and Alcohol Program. In effect, if I broke the rules blatantly enough, the Federal Marshalls would just pick me up and send me back to Pennsylvania to spend almost another year locked up (something which I saw happen to four or five clients during my time at the halfway house). Plus, this wouldn't be a bus ride on Greyhound. Instead, I'd spend two to three months in the Federal transfer system, moving from rat hole to rat hole until I'd made my way back. Maybe I'd enjoy a few weeks in solitary confinement in Fort Worth? Or six weeks sleeping on a folding cot in Oklahoma, in a huge way station where pigeons that roosted in the rafters crapped all over the inmates (of their blankets if you were smart enough to stay covered all night long)? No thank you. I just wanted to get through this nightmare and get home to Heather, and to Tigger who somehow had survived in decent health despite being 20 years old by now. I couldn't believe that nobody had ever been able to find a job this way...some clients had to succeed, and I was determined to be one of them, even if it nearly killed me in the process.

Hypothetical of the Month

Last month, we gave you this hypothetical: You work in as a cashier in a grocery store. Occasionally they also have you work at the customer service desk. The woman who runs the desk is very aggressive and short when she deals with other employees, and makes no secret of the fact that her boyfriend has done time in prison for gang-related violence after someone "betrayed" him. One day you happen to see out of the corner of your eye as she throws five or six cartons of cigarettes into the trash, tying the bag up and putting it in the rolling trash bin in the room behind you. You can only assume this is a method she uses to move these cigarettes outside, at which time she can retrieve them and sell them, give them to friends, or use them personally. You're not sure, but you think she may have noticed your awareness of her actions. But her demeanor does not change for the remainder of the day. Do you report her to the manager, or someone else? Or take some other action?

Melinda Holley - I'd report it to the manager. Cigarettes are taxed pretty heavily so any loss in inventory (assuming the inventory is correctly kept) will result in an imbalance of inventory in, taxes due, and taxes paid. The manager is ultimately responsible so any tax heat is going to come down on him/her. Whatever action the manager does or doesn't take is up to that individual.

Tom Swider - I'd use the employee suggestion box to make the comment "review the security tapes aimed at the cigarettes." I'd drop the note in within the next day or so, while the coworker isn't at work.

Phil Murphy - What I would do is wait until she is gone home then, wearing gloves, retrieve the full cigarette cartons from the rubbish, put them back in the store room, and replace them with ones filled with tissue paper and/or packing foam. That would soon put a stop to it. She won't know for sure who did it, so I'd feel safe enough doing it.

Andy York - I don't know what I'd do, having never been in a similar position with the constraints you list and too many intangibles. Who her boyfriend is would have no bearing on the situation; but the "see out of the corner of (my) eye", does. I don't know how sure I would be that a nefarious act actually occurred (nor do I know the rules for tracking tax certificates on packages of cigarettes). Could they be spoilt, expired (if cigarettes even expire), recalled or even empty cartons after the individual packages were removed for a display? Also, is there a history of unexplained shrinkage in the cigarette inventory? That being said, if this actually was an ongoing criminal enterprise, informing management is the right thing to do.

Heather – I'd be scared shitless, but I guess I'd report her to the manager. Better make sure my life insurance is paid up first though.

My Answer - I know the right thing to do would be to report her. But I wouldn't, at least not until I hadn't worked the customer service desk for a few days. Hopefully that would reduce suspicion. Then I'd put an anonymous note on the managers desk, which I'd ask a female friend to write for me in pink marker, in another attempt to obscure the source of the information.

For Next Month: Your significant other rarely uses text messaging on their cell phone. One Sunday evening at about 8pm you are asked to see if you can figure out how to work some application on the phone. As you do so, a text message comes in, saying "Hey, what's up?" You reply "Who is this?" and get a message back, "It's (insert name here)." "You play honest and say "This isn't my phone, it's my spouse's, I'm just fixing it." To that you get a simple "Oh sorry, I thought this was my cousin Terry's phone." Since your spouse has had the same number for over four years, you are a bit suspicious. But you don't mention it. The next day after work, you ask about it and are told it was his/her supervisor at work who had texted, and they'd left a voicemail on their work phone saying "I texted you last night, hope I didn't get you in trouble." How suspicious should you be, and what do you do if anything?

2nd Eternal Sunshine Movie Quote Contest

The rules to the contest were simple. I gave you quotes from a number of movies. Your mission was to identify as many of the movies as you can. I was still underwhelmed by the number of responses, but at least a few of you gave it a shot. Now on to the quotes!

1. Don't worry Smitty, that's why you've got two. Correct - The Big Red One
2. Masturbation; refuge of the lonely housewife. Correct – Presumed Innocent (LM).
3. Do you realize you've had three names in the last two days? Correct - Charade
4. Am I mad enough Professor? Am I? Correct – Shine.
5. Where have you seen this divine spark in operation Colonel? Correct – Gettysburg.
6. I'll have a half double decaffeinated half caf with a twist of lemon. Correct – L.A. Story (RD).
7. Yes Captain, computer indicates we are about to be swallowed by a giant sheep dog. Correct – Zapped. Incorrect – Spaceballs (AY).
8. Can I use the bathroom? I may have shit my pants. Correct – Man on the Moon.
9. Ever fired your gun in the air and yelled "Arrrrrrrr!!!!"? Correct – Hot Fuzz (RD).
10. With your bad knee, Ed, you shouldn't throw anybody. Correct – Ferris Bueller's Day Off (RD).
11. On the 3rd date, Harry, I'm going to screw your eyes blue. Correct – Miracle Mile. Incorrect – When Harry Met Sally (BW), The 40-Year Old Virgin (LM).
12. Never being happy isn't the same as being unhappy. Is it? Correct – Fame.
13. Mister, we **are** the weirdoes. Correct – The Craft.
14. My meteor, my price. Correct – Creepshow.
15. I speak for all mediocrities in the world. I am their champion. Correct – Amadeus.
16. He's like all men: a big kid in a man's body. Correct – Bronco Billy. Incorrect – Wonder Boys (BG), What Women Want (BW).
17. Sometimes when I think of how good my book is going to be, I can't breathe. Correct – Capote. Incorrect – Finding Forrester (BW).
18. I liked being in bed. I pretty much didn't like anything else. Correct – Reversal of Fortune.
19. There's nothing funnier than the ridiculous faces you people make mid-coitus. Correct – Dogma. Incorrect – Mars Attacks (BW).
20. Tentacles. N-T. Big difference. Correct – Better Off Dead (RD). Incorrect – Men in Black (BW).
21. How many rooms am I checked into in this shit hole? Correct – Memento. Incorrect – 4 Rooms (BW).

22. I wouldn't be afraid of death if I was you. I'd be more afraid of driving in rush hour traffic. Correct – Fried Green Tomatoes (LM).
23. You can't fire me; you don't even know my name! Correct – Clockwatchers. Incorrect – The Simpsons Movie (BW).
24. The Empire State Building is the closest thing to heaven in the city. Correct – An Affair to Remember (BG).
25. Get this, honky. You go tell Raphael that I ain't taking no jive from no Western Union messenger. Correct – Being There. Incorrect – TMNT the Movie (BW).

Rick Desper (RD) – 4 correct; Lisa Murillo (LM) – 2 Correct; Beth Goffe (BG) – 1 Correct; Brendan Whyte (BW) – 0 correct; Andy York (AY) – 0 correct.

Rick Desper wins the free DVD! I'll be in touch with him directly to give him some choices. As with last time, nobody won the grand prize.

Music That Never Gets Old

This was just a little poll, which grew out of one of those "tell everybody about yourself" things you see on Facebook or on mass emails. But I thought about this one question, and I was interested in hearing everybody else's response. The task was simple: give me three songs which never get old (in your opinion). Please include the artist if you know it, or if it's a song with many versions...just choose the one version in particular which doesn't get old for you. Here's what I received so far. Anybody else want to offer their opinion?

Melinda Holley: Freebyrd by Lynyrd Skynyrd; Twelfth of Never by Johnny Mathis; Paradise by the Dashboard Light by Meatloaf

Tom Swider: 1) "She Blinded Me With Science" - Thomas Dolby. Again, just to shout out at FlapJack "SCIENCE!!!" at unexpected intervals.; 2) "Music for 18 Musicians" - Steve Reich. Can listen to it over and over again, and has a sound that defies genre. 3) "Block Rockin' Beats" - The Chemical Brothers. Tough picks amongst Chem Bros, Fat Boy Slim, and The Prodigy, but I think Block Rockin' Beats sums it up. Add Red Bull and stir.

Andy York: Objects in the Rear View Mirror May Appear Closer Than They Are (Meatloaf), Brother Love's Traveling Salvation Show (Neil Diamond), Werewolves of London (Warren Zevon), amongst others!

Robert Lesco: I have been listening to Brian Eno's "Another Green World" (from 1975) of late and I was pleasantly surprised that nothing there sounds dated. Hard to believe that Phil Collins was once cool but he appears on percussion on a few tracks and does himself proud. "Forward-looking" records tend to suffer over time but, at least for me, this one doesn't.

"I, Swinger" by Combustible Edison has been described as pre-aged, meaning it sounded dated (in a good way) the day it was released and that is what they were going for but I don't know if that qualifies or not.

I'm sure if I think for a while beyond what I've been listening to lately I can do better but that's about it for the moment.

[[How about the rest of you? Let's hear some more input!]]

The Dining Dead -

The Eternal Sunshine Movie Reviews

No movie reviews...we haven't seen one in the theater since last issue!

Seen on DVD – Goodfellas (A-, it is hard to get tired of this film...ever). The Long Riders (B+, a violent but terrific western, which holds up after almost 30 years). A Few Good Men (A-, I don't generally like Tom Cruise but he has enough youthful enthusiasm to keep from destroying a terrific script.) Burn After Reading (D-,

What the fuck was THAT? You've got a great cast sleepwalking through self-indulgent boredom, a terrible plot, and no surprises. The Coen Brothers must have thought this one up after eating spicy Mexican food and suffering in the bathroom that night). **Catch-22 (C+,** I remember loving this movie but this time the humor seems so terribly dated. The world has changed too much I guess and what was ironic and original then is simply part of life now. It takes a lot more negativity to be cynical now). Most of our DVD time this month has been taken up watching episodes of "Freaks and Geeks" and "Bones," which I believe Heather will discuss in her column (if she writes one next month). Since she is skipping this issue again, I leave it to all of you to send emails complaining, and begging her to grace us with her presence again.

Meet Me In Montauk

The Eternal Sunshine Letter Column

Tom Swider: Hope you're enjoying the warmer weather. Evidently, it hasn't come to central PA yet.

[[I wish it would never come. I prefer cool weather. That was the only good thing about prison; I was able to enjoy four seasons again.]]

So, did you think the Psycho remake sucked? I thought van Sant's remake was a good redux; faithful and respectful. On the other hand, I wouldn't dare watch the new version of The Manchurian Candidate because I'm sure it sucked.

[[Remakes almost always suck. I just can't figure it out. And now they basically remakr Fast and the Furious, a terrible movie which was a rip-off of another terrible movie – Point Break – and it has the biggest April opening in movie history. Why? This society is finished.]]

Been watching more Film Noir recently, with Double Indemnity and The Final Seduction not too far in the rearview mirror. DI is a tough act to follow and TFS attempts to do so though it's more of a "fem power in your face" rather than the more subtle "femme fatale". I think evil (subjective thing) is more dangerous when it's subtle or not obvious. Just returned The Third Man ... enjoyable for the camera shots and the ending. Orson Wells was a pretty good choice for the villain.

[[Wells was generally underrated as an actor...or just not appreciated. Did you see "Brick"? It was supposed to me a modern-day Film Noir, but I just thought it was a boring pointless mess.]]

In Lynch-land, I've been doing some repeat viewing of Mulholland Drive vs. Ingmar Bergman's Persona. It's hard to decide which is better, but I enjoy both. The theme of lost, merging or changing personalities, and of dream, fantasy, or flashback help put yourself into the experience and allow you a different perspective each viewing. For MD, I've been considering the story more from Camilla's perspective rather than the more popular view of it being told from Betty's perspective. In a Camilla interpretation, the ending with an aged blue-haired woman sitting in the balcony, saying "Silencio" in reflection of her bygone acting days, makes sense where it really doesn't make sense in any other interpretation). MD serves as Lynch's Sunset Boulevard. Likewise, I can see a similar interpretation with Elisabet slipping further into her own world of silence, with the film becoming more and more dreamlike as a defense mechanism against the guilt felt for not being a good mother or for her "part" in the world's problems.

[[These kind of discussions are the only reason I would ever want to take a film class...but I always fear such a class would have a professor who wants to impose the "correct" view that they hold on everybody else. I need to re-watch MD soon...the whole idea of which perspective to view the film from shows the genius of the work. And those discussions can be simple too. Take Memento; did Guy Pierce's wife kill herself with insulin shots to see if he was faking his illness? Or was there actually an insurance case he'd worked such as that? The former seems the more obvious, but not necessarily...]]

Andy York: Sorry, no clue on any of the movie quotes. A couple seem familiar, but no movie really comes to mind. The closest is the "Sheepdog" and a faint memory about "Spaceballs", but that's about as close as I get.

[[Shame on you...]]

Kevin Wilson: Paraic's By Popular Demand answers last time may not have scored much but they were certainly entertaining.

[[If you can't win, at least have fun! And even with the Joker it is next to impossible to climb up to first place if you miss more than the first turn of the game.]]

Beth Goffe: By the way, I think Heather did the right thing in not giving her mother a Valentine's Day gift. From what she described in her List, she owes that woman absolutely nothing, including her time. It seems anytime she's in contact, her mother says something truly horrible and destructive. Screw her, I say!

[[I agree, but knowing Heather she'll choose to send her gifts for other holidays anyway...just not to give them to give them to her in person.]]

Robert Lesco: By the way, God bless Jack McHugh for picking the Toronto Blue Jays to win the pennant. Speaking of remiss, I finally took my daughter to her first baseball game at the age of eight. My sons were, in order, five months and two months at their first Jays' games. We learned why you don't just declare an intentional walk and send the batter to first. With runners on second and third Cito Gaston called for the intentional pass and the first pitch sailed over the catcher's head. Just the same, the pitcher and the catcher each made a remarkable recovery and there would have been a play at the plate had the runner not turned back. The two-way run-down that should have happened didn't - the pitcher threw the ball over the second baseman's head and into the outfield: a wild pitch and an error on the same play. Toronto defeated Detroit 5-4 anyway on a sacrifice fly in the bottom of the 9th. A highlight: one dollar hot dogs.

[[The amazing thing about the Jays is how well they are doing with, what, three-fifth of their rotation on the DL? This could be the year!]]

Andy York: No Heather this month, I feel cheated. Even though I may not comment on her writings, they certainly add a bit of class to the zine.

[[She needs more attention, so try to send her a comment every month. Nothing makes her happier than people telling her how wonderful she is. Of course, you learned that first hand, as well as how tolerant...I'm already wondering if she'll get around to her column this month or not.]]

Dane Maslen: And let's finish with some comments on the latest issue, just to reassure you that I do read it all, even when it does take me over three weeks to get round to downloading it (that's what comes of first being away on holiday, then going to a games convention, then having a cold and then trying to get "Dane's Games" out on time)...

[[At least you read it. I still wonder how many people actually do? See the first page of the zine for what I hope will give a reasonable estimate.]]

Damn! My original thought for the knife last issue was steak knife.

[[Always go with your first instinct. I think they tell you that when it comes to test-taking too, don't they?]]

I believe that your plan is the best way to lose weight (quite apart from anything else, it gets you accustomed to a lower food intake). Crash diets have a nasty habit of being followed by a rebound. The overall effect of crash diet followed by rebound is often to increase the percentage of body weight that is fat.

[[I never quite understand the philosophy behind, say, the Hollywood Diet where you spend a day in the bathroom sitting on the toilet. That isn't "losing eight" but rather "weighing less."]]

So the fact that I've never heard of The Wrestler is a bit of a give-away that I don't follow movies (I must remember to switch back to speaking British English after this email). I might, however, be about to make my first visit to the cinema for nearly a year to see the new Star Trek film (oops, I've switched back too soon), though I suspect I will find it overstuffed with special effects and underprovided with a plot. Sadly that appears to be what most people like, presumably so that they merely have to say 'Wow!' at intervals rather than needing to engage their brain.

[[I'm very lucky to be married to someone with similar taste in movies. Of course there are many that I love and she doesn't, and vice versa, but in general we agree on them. That is probably more the result of being similar in other ways, which help form those likes and dislikes.]]



***Brain Farts: The Only Subsubzine With It's Own Fragrance
By Jack "Flapjack" McHugh – jwmchughjr "of" gmail.com
(or just email Doug and he'll send it to me)
Issue #5***

I'm back. Not that you deserve me. My birthday came and went, and the whole lot of you ignored the occasion. Do you think some of you could have sent gifts, cards, something? Nahhh, not you selfish jerks. Screw the lot of you, and the horses you rode in on.

That isn't entirely true. My buddy Bwad Wilson and I went to the track for my birthday, and had a good time. I even won some races. Well, sort of...see, Bwad had enjoyed a few beers, and once when he went to empty out his bladder, I switched a few of our betting tickets, after the races had been run. I figured he would be too tipsy to remember which horses he'd bet on, and I was right. Sorry Bwad, I think I needed the \$140 more than you anyway.

Still looking for a full time job. Anybody got any leads or connections? I can do IT stuff, help desk support work, on site or off site...and I am learning some programming. Phildelphia area, or across the river in New Jersey in that area. Seriously, I could use a few leads. Its hard as hell to find work, and most of the IT departments are trying to hire guys with 10 years experience for minimum wage. Sometimes I feel like one of those guys in the old black-and-white Great Depression footage, waiting in line for food at the soup kitchen. I read that in Ohio or something, they had a job opening for a janitor and over 1,000 people applied. This SUCKS.

Meanwhile, I still have my part time job. I like it, but there isn't enough work to make it a full time position. Not even when some of the more reliable employees miss work unexpectedly, for some very odd reasons.

Like two weeks ago, my boss wondered why one of his most valued employees had not phoned in sick, and hadn't shown up. Having an urgent problem with one of the main Unix systems (I'm still getting up to speed on Unix), he dialed the employee's home phone number and was greeted with a child's whisper. "Hello? "

"Is your daddy home?" he asked.

"Yes," whispered the small voice.

"May I talk with him?"

The child whispered, "No."

Surprised and wanting to talk with an adult, my boss asked, "Is your Mommy there?" "Yes."

"May I talk with her?" Again the small voice whispered, "No."

Hoping there was somebody with whom he could leave a message, my boss asked, "Is anybody else there?"

"Yes," whispered the child, " a policeman".

Wondering what a cop would be doing at the house, my boss asked, "May I speak with the policeman?"

"No, he's busy", whispered the child.

"Busy doing what?"

"Talking to Daddy and Mommy and the Fireman," came the whispered answer.

Growing more worried as he heard a loud noise in the background through the earpiece on the phone, my boss asked, "What is that noise?"

"A helicopter" answered the whispering voice.

"What is going on there?" my boss demanded, now truly apprehensive.

Again, whispering, the child answered, "The search team just landed a helicopter."

Alarmed, concerned and more than a little frustrated my boss asked, "What are they searching for?"

Still whispering, the young voice replied with a muffled giggle... "Me!"

I think they should have locked that kid in the closet for a week to teach her a lesson, but all they did was hug her when they found her. You call that parenting?

Before I forget, I hope you all realize that I am the Variant Editor for Dougiepoo's Diplomacy World. You'd really be helping me out if you wanted to write an article on some Diplomacy variant. You could talk about why you really like a particular variant, or hate it. You could also give strategy ideas. And I am arranging some upcoming Demonstration Games in variants for DW, so if you're interested in playing in any of those please email me.

How about those Phillies, eh? Okay, they're only playing .500 ball right now, but I haven't given up hope. The baseball season is a marathon, not a sprint. There are things to be very pleased with. Ibanez and Utley are bashing the ball around. Pitching is the real problem. Hamels and Blanton are both 0-2, and the team ERA is over 6. This is the National League! I'm surprised nobody on the pitching staff has an ERA over 10.00 yes, but give them time. Really, how is it even possible that Chan Ho "Out of the" Park is still pitching in the major leagues? Did the Phillies lose a bet or something?

At least I can root for the Flyers and the Sixers. The 76ers are a nice surprise, up 2-1 in the first round as I wrote this. Some supposedly expert sports commentators had written them off before the series even began. Never give up on Philadelphia! Unless it's the Eagles...or unless you live there, work there, travel there, or get within 50 miles of the city limits. In that case, give up. You're doomed.

Sometimes when I walk our dog I wonder if his pee smells different based on what he eats, the way mine does when I eat asparagus or broccoli. I know his farts smell different!

See you next month, you utterly worthless and useless jack-offs.

Out of the WAY #7

by W. Andrew York
(wandrew88 of gmail.com)

=====

I'm currently in Lubbock visiting a friend for a few days. It's my first time this far out in West Texas (previously, only as far as San Angelo) and into the Panhandle. Pretty darned flat out here, with quite a few small communities surrounding the city – from what my friend said, quite a few folks come “to the big city” to shop at the mall, use the regional airport and such. And, of course, there is Texas Tech University which is a big part of the community.

So far, the visit has been pretty low key. Enjoying his company, getting a tour of the city – where he grew up, went to high school, etc. Taking the lead in the local papers is the upcoming election – will Lubbock become “wet” instead of folks having to head out of town to get liquor by the bottle (a place called The Strip). I'll head back to Austin on Tuesday.

The point of this, I hadn't done much on the column before I left. So, I don't have my Babylon 5 quote book, the usual references I draw the “This Month in History” items and the dictionary I use as a reference for the next “everyone plays” game. The recipe is one I had on my computer from another friend of mine that I quite like, so that part of the column is up to par (and a very tasty, but easy, recipe!). Apologies about the rest, but things will get back to normal next month.

Commentary

I had the pleasure of attending an Apollo 8 reunion's public forum at the LBJ Presidential Library a few days ago. The group coming together included the three astronauts (Frank Borman, James Lovell and William Anders), as well as a number of the ground crew including scientists, capcoms and physicians with their families – I'd guess about 150 folks were there. Prior to the reunion, there was a public panel with the three astronauts discussing their trip, differences between the NASA of their day and today, along with the possible future of the space program.

After 20 minutes, or so, consisting of a standing ovation as they entered and the introductions, the panel began. The moderator kept things on target, starting with the prelaunch and launch activities and their personal attitudes. The discussion continued for about 45 minutes through their return to near Earth. At this point, there was a short period for audience Q&A before winding up about 80 minutes after it started. The panelists left to another standing ovation.

Some of the stories they told were well known and some I'd never heard before. However, all of them were very forthcoming and not bashful with their opinions. Borman was frank about his nausea at the beginning of the mission, noting that it was a reason to abort the rest of the mission if Mission Control found out. However, all three agreed that would never have happened as they would have had unexplained radio failure before acknowledging the command. Borman made the comment about the order – “no comprende”.

Lovell mentioned when he announced that he'd inadvertently shut off the sextant, losing the programming, with an “oops” – to the consternation of the other two. He was able to get it restarted and calibrated without endangering the mission. His follow-up comment made the point that this experience was extremely beneficial during the Apollo 13 mission when it had to be shut down to conserve power – and one less thing to worry about during that tense mission.

Of the three, Anders is the only one who would return to space if given the chance. The others felt space travel was for those able to contribute to exploration and scientific pursuits, not for casual observers or hangers on. The opinion was that John Glenn's shuttle flight and the inclusion of a school teacher were politically motivated. No mention was made of space tourism, possibly because Austin local Richard Garriott was in the audience. Interestingly, for his space tourist trip, he conducted experiments to compliment his father's efforts on Skylab and to meet certain goals, not just as a joy ride.

Regarding the current space program, they felt the current staff, in general, were not near the caliber of the scientists and support crews of their missions, giving a nod to the other Apollo 8 reunion attendees. Discussing the risks, Anders commented that they had roughly 1/3rd chance of having a successful mission, 1/3rd chance of an “Apollo 13” result and 1/3rd chance of not returning. In today's NASA, their mission would not have had a chance of launch.

The most striking difference between the NASA of the '60s and now is in the reason behind it. Without the Cold War, the success of Mercury, Genesis and Apollo programs would never have occurred. And, once Armstrong stepped on the moon and the Soviets basically conceded space to the US, NASA became an afterthought.

For the future of the space program, no one had an optimistic opinion. Without the nationalistic concerns on the line, the drive to return to the moon and, eventually, to Mars will have very little support or resources. One comment was that, if nothing changes, it might be our great grandchildren who step on non-Terran soil.

However, the tone of the evening was positive, celebrating the achievements of the astronauts and the rest of their supporting team. The hope they gave to the world when they read from Genesis on that Christmas Eve and the picture of “Earth Rise” brought humanity a little bit closer. LBJ's daughter, Lynda Johnson Robb, mentioned during the introduction that copies of that picture were mailed to every world leader by LBJ, including Ho Chi Minh (via intermediaries). His written thank you to LBJ is part of the library archives – showing that even enemies can have common ground.

Letter Column

(always welcome, send them in!)

Doug Kent: Sorry to hear of your hail problems Heather and I have been lucky in that regard (knock on wood); we each have a few dents on our cars, and I have a tiny chip in the windshield, but that's as far as it has gotten. And since both of the cars are old (2002 or prior), high mileage, and had enough body damage to begin with, we don't notice (or care). [WAY] This is the first time I've had any noticeable hail damage, and the car ended up being totaled by the insurance company – in fact, of my seven neighbors, at least three of us had cars totaled. In my case, besides the rear window, the damage was dings and dents, along with cracked plastic molding and a hole in a rear quarter panel. I took the payoff, kept the car (no mechanical problems) and hope to keep it a couple more years.

[Doug] I didn't find much problem with the Facts in Five game...the categories were challenging. But yes, the real issue is the time aspect. I was able to look at the categories, and come back later on in the day after I'd had time to think about them for some time.

If you want a fund reader participation game, there's always stuff like Snowball Fighting, Sea of Despair, or Where in the World...[WAY] I'm going to go with my Hangman by Definition which starts below. I hope everyone will join in and enjoy it!

Paul Milewski: (in response to an entry in last month's "This Month in History") Article IX of the Confederation (which is a surprisingly wordy document), includes the following: The United States in Congress assembled shall have authority to appoint a committee, to sit in the recess of Congress, to be denominated 'A Committee of the States', and to consist of one delegate from each State; and to appoint such other committees and civil officers as may be necessary for managing the general affairs of the United States under their direction – to appoint one of their members to preside, provided that no person be allowed to serve in the office of president more than one year in any term of three years...

It is not widely known that there was a president under the Articles. Of course, it was entirely different from the office by the same name under the Constitution – it was not an "executive" office and the president only presided over the Congress, although passing laws required a majority vote and the signature of the president.

To the best of my knowledge, John Hanson (1715-1783), a delegate from Maryland, was elected the first president under the Articles. I seem to recall that a few years ago that there was a first class postage stamp with his picture on it, with the hype being that there was a president of the United States before George Washington...

[WAY] Actually, if memory serves as my reference materials are on the other side of the state, there was more than one "president". A quick Google search comes up with a count of seven and other with ten. However, as you point out, they weren't presidents in the sense we think of today. Additionally, there was another person officially president, when an incoming presidential candidate (I don't recall which one) refused to be sworn in on a Sunday. As the outgoing president and vice-president's terms ended on Saturday, for one day, the "next in line" was the president.

[Paul] The Vice-President of the United States shall be President of the Senate, but shall have no Vote, unless they be equally divided. – also – The Senate shall chuse their other Officers, and also a President pro tempore, in the absence of the Vice President, or when he shall exercise the Office of President of the United States.

Poll Question

Each month a question will be posed to the readership. Your thoughts and commentary are solicited for the next issue. Also, any response to what folks have submitted for the previous question are very welcome.

This issue: What is your favorite country to play in Diplomacy? What makes it your favorite? Does your choice change if you are playing face-to-face instead of PB(E)M?

Doug Kent: I can't say that I have a favorite country to play. I seem to get Italy and Austria a lot lately, and I have never been very good with Russia. So I'm going to say France, just because. So there. Pphpt! And as I haven't played face-to-face in YEARS (something I hope to resolve soon...perhaps even travelling to a big con sometime) I can't compare one to the other.

Don Williams: My favorite country to play is probably not a surprise to anyone who knows me – I love the Green Machine! Italy's arguably the toughest country to play and that's one of the reasons I like it – in classic American fashion, I like pulling for the underdog and, in Diplomacy, that's the Italian. I also like it because it requires a style of play that's a little bit different from the rest (big talk, small acts) and because she can become as strong a naval power as England (though not as quickly), or opt to play an important role as a land power. Ultimately, though, I mostly enjoy playing Italy because of something I call the "psychology of country"...of the Great Powers, only Italy is perceived – especially by Americans – as an "anti-belligerent, not warlike nation." At least not since Roman times. I enjoy working with that perception and using it to advance Italian hegemony in Mare Nostrum and beyond. Ave Italia!!!

WAY: Personally, I have no preference. I'll play whatever falls my way. That being said, I'm not that good of a player nor have I done much to analyze best openings, strategy options or the ilk. I'm just a "weekend" player in the end. As for the PBM versus face-to-face, I can't really say. I've only played a handful of FTF games and find it very hard to deceive, let alone outright lie about my intentions – which really hinders your ability to win!

For next issue: Are you tied to an electronic tether (Blackberry, cellphone, etc) or can you easily leave those devices behind or turn them off?

Recipe of the Month

Recipe Philosophy: Except for baking, recipes are only suggestions. I rarely precisely measure, eyeballing most everything. The listed measurements, for the most part, are estimates from the last time I made the recipe. Feel free to adjust to meet your personal tastes – and remember, it is easier to add “more” of something than to compensate when “too much” has been added.

For ingredients, if you don't like raw onions, omit them or replace with celery to retain the crunchiness. If you like food with more spice, add an extra jalapeno or use habeneros instead. On the other hand, if you don't like spicy food, replace the jalapeno with half a bell pepper. Optional items are used when I'm looking for a variation or making it for individuals with specific preferences.

Mexican Corn Bread Ocnaschek Family Recipe

provided by : Tim Ocnaschek
with some substitutions/clarifications/revisions by: W Andrew York
(last reviewed April 26, 2009)

Ingredients:

1 1/2 cups	Cornmeal
1 tsp	Salt
1 tsp	Baking Soda
1 1/2 tsp	Baking Powder
1 1/2 cup	Sweet Milk
2 ea	Eggs
1/2 cup	Salad Oil
1 lb	Hamburger
1 small	Onion, Chopped
1 15oz can	Cream-style Corn
1 cup	Grated Longhorn Cheese*
3	Hot Peppers (Jalapeno)**

*Tim often used other grated cheeses such as Mexican blend

**Tim often substituted one 4.5 oz can of green chilies

Steps:

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees
2. Brown hamburger until meat is cooked through, place to the side to cool
3. Sauté onions in a little butter until softened
3. Mix first four ingredients together (dry cornbread ingredients)
4. Mix next three ingredients together in a different bowl (wet cornbread ingredients)
5. Combine dry and wet cornbread ingredients until thoroughly mixed and smooth.
6. Then stir in Cream Corn and Onions
7. In greased 13x9 pan, pour in 1/2 cornbread batter, cover with meat, sprinkle with jalapenos, top with cheese then pour remaining cornbread batter over top
12. Bake for 33 minutes
13. (optional) top with additional cheese

The Month in History

May 10, 1869 – The Union Pacific and Central Pacific railways were connected, creating the first transcontinental rail line.

May 12, 1949 – The Soviet ground blockade of Berlin was lifted after the Berlin Airlift successfully supplied the city for over a year.

May 31, 1889 – The Jonestown flood, killing over 2000 people, occurred after an upstream dam collapsed in Pennsylvania.

Sources include: <http://www.historyplace.com/specials/calendar/may.htm>

Game Openings

Diplomacy (Black Press): Signed up: Philip Murphy, Ian Pringle, William Wood, need four more to fill. Get in on the fun now!

Gunboat Diplomacy (Black Press): Signed up: Two players, need five more to fill.

Diplomacy Bourse (Black Press): Buy and sell the currencies of the Diplomacy nations. This Bourse is using the new game "Dulcinea" as its basis. *Players may join at any time (one just joined this issue)*, and are then given 1000 units of every currency still in circulation. The rules to Bourse can be found in ES #24.

Intimate Diplomacy Round Robin (Black Press): Signed up: Tom Swider, Peter McNamara, needs two more. Four players, each playing in 3 games at once (one game against each of the other three players). The rules to Intimate Diplomacy can be found in ES #26. I'll give this another month to see if anybody wants to fill the spots before I drop it.

By Popular Demand: Game currently underway, join any time.

Standby List: HELP! I need standby players!

I may offer another Gunboat 7x7 soon, so keep your eyes open (the current one is down to one game, which is at 1914. The final results will be printed here whenever it wraps up). I'm also considering variants like Cline 9-Man, Fog of War, Youngstown, or Woolworth. Does anybody have an interest in Kremlin? Or Stephen Agar's Cannibalism? And now that Deviant Dip II is starting, if the rest of you realize what a fun variant it is, I may offer another game of THAT (despite how many times I have been warned not to)! If somebody wants to guest-GM a game of anything, just say the word. If you have specific game requests please let me know.

Eternal Sunshine Game Section

Diplomacy "Wouldn't It Be Nice?" 2008A, Autumn/Winter 05

Austria (Kevin Wilson - ckevinw "of" yahoo.com): Build A Vienna. Has F Aegean Sea, A Bulgaria, A Trieste, F Tunis, A Vienna, A Warsaw.

England (J r mie LeFran ois - jeremie.lefrancois "of" gmail.com): Build F Liverpool. Has F Baltic Sea, F Barents Sea, F English Channel, F Liverpool, F Mid-Atlantic Ocean, A Moscow, F Norwegian Sea, A St Petersburg.

France (William Wood - woodw "of" offutt.af.mil): Retreats A Marseilles - Gascony, F Tunis - Western Mediterranean. Remove F Western Mediterranean, A Gascony. Has A Burgundy, A Paris.

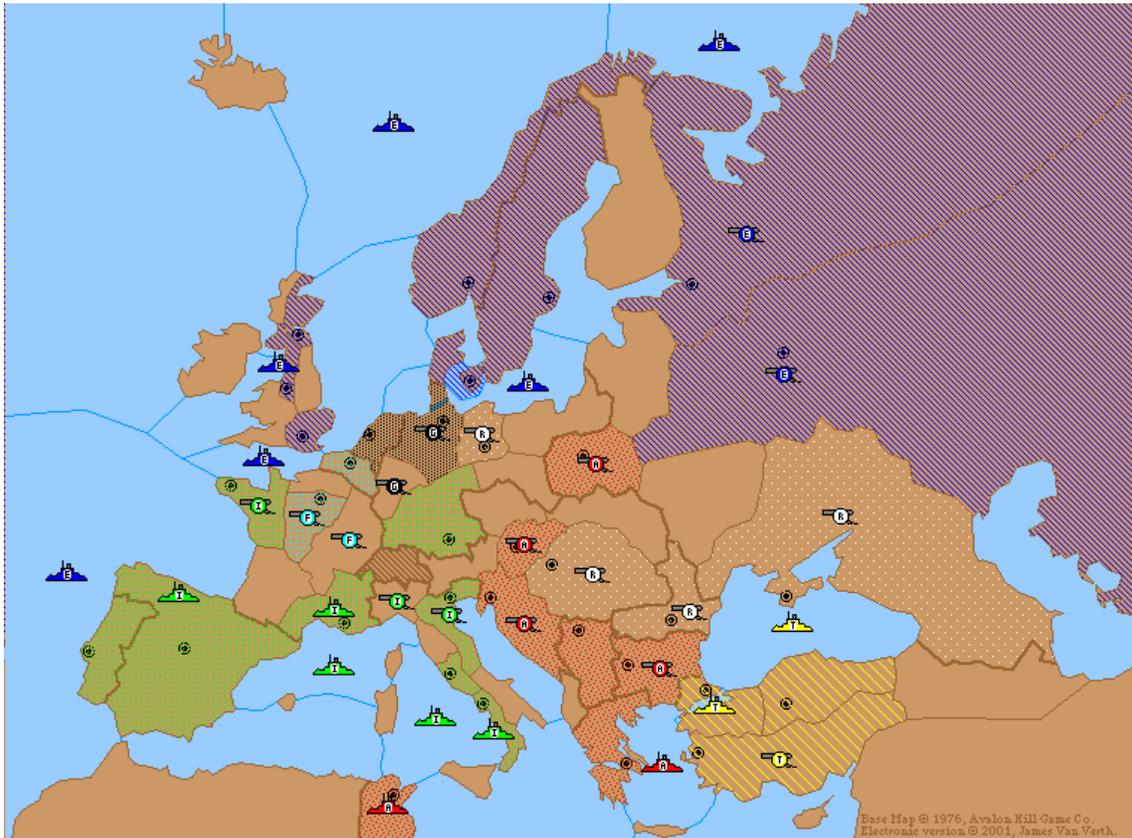
Germany (Graham Wilson - grahamw "of" rogers.com): Has A Kiel, A Ruhr.

Italy (Don Williams - dwilliam "of" fontana.org): Retreats F Mid-Atlantic Ocean - Spain(nc). Build A Venice, F Naples. Has A Brest, F Gulf of Lyon, F Marseilles, F Naples, A Piedmont, F Spain(nc), F Tyrrhenian Sea, A Venice.

Russia (Melinda Holley - genea5613 "of" aol.com): Remove F Gulf of Bothnia. Has A Berlin, A Budapest, A Rumania, A Sevastopol.

Turkey (Brad Wilson - bwdolphin146 "of" yahoo.com): Retreats F Bulgaria(ec) - Black Sea. Remove A Syria. Has F Black Sea, F Constantinople, A Smyrna.

*William Wood is now the official French player.
Seasons were separated by player request.*

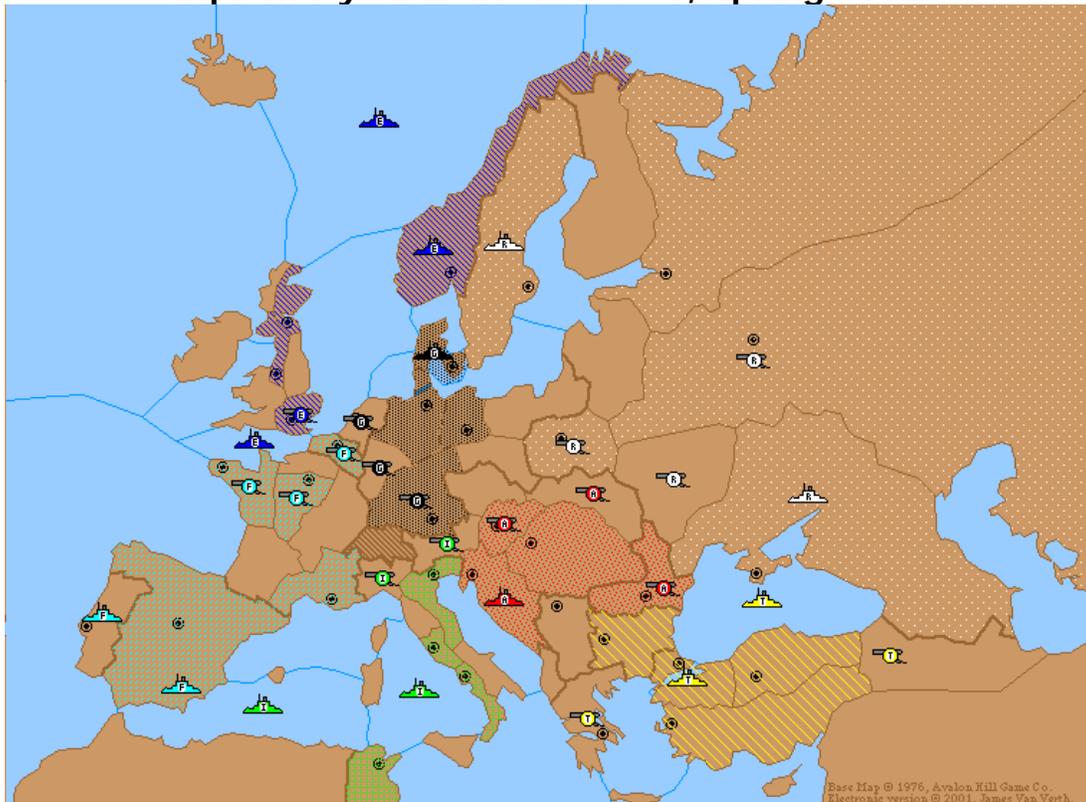


Spring 1906 Deadline is May 26th 2009 at 7:00am my time

PRESS

GM – All: No press? You all suck.

Diplomacy “Dulcinea” 2008C, Spring 1902



Austria (Stephen Agar – stephen “of” stephenagar.com): A Galicia Supports A Rumania, A Rumania Hold, F Trieste Hold, A Vienna Supports F Trieste.

England (Philip Murphy trekkypj “of” gmail.com): F Edinburgh - Norwegian Sea, F English Channel Convoys A Picardy – London, F Norway - Sweden (*Fails*), A Picardy - London.

France (Brad Wilson – bwdolphin146 “of” yahoo.com): A Belgium Supports A Kiel – Holland, A Brest Hold, F Marseilles - Spain(sc), A Paris Supports A Brest, F Spain(sc) - Portugal.

Germany (William Wood – woodw “of” Offutt.af.mil): F Denmark Hold, A Kiel – Holland, A Munich Hold, A Ruhr Supports A Kiel - Holland.

Italy (Melinda Holley – genea5613 “of” aol.com): F Naples - Tyrrhenian Sea, F Tunis - Western Mediterranean, A Tyrolia Supports A Venice – Piedmont, A Venice - Piedmont.

Russia (Jack McHugh – jwmchughjr “of” gmail.com): A Moscow Supports F Sevastopol, F Sevastopol Supports A Bulgaria - Rumania (*Void*), F Sweden Supports F Denmark (*Cut*), A Ukraine Supports A Bulgaria - Rumania (*Void*), A Warsaw Supports A Ukraine.

Turkey (Jim Burgess – jfburgess “of” gmail.com): F Ankara - Black Sea, A Armenia - Sevastopol (*Fails*), A Bulgaria – Greece, F Constantinople Supports F Ankara - Black Sea.

Fall 1902 Deadline is May 26th 2009 at 7:00am my time

PRESS

PRIME MINISTER TO THE NATIONS OF EUROPE: My fellow heads of state,

The time for change is at hand. With my predecessor now removed from power, Great Britain wishes to extend the hand of friendship to her neighbours.

In particular, I offer the hand of friendship to my French counterpart and invite him to visit London to begin negotiations for a new détente - a peace between our two great nations. Our recent dispute is not worth a single human life and I urge him to open a dialogue at the earliest opportunity, in the interests of our common prosperity.

Any nation with peaceful intent will find that we are a friend to all peace-loving nations. No nation with peaceful intentions has aught to fear from His Majesty's government.

I invite you all to send your envoys at your earliest convenience.

Yours etc.

Harry Jones, Prime Minister
on behalf of
HRH King Edward VII of Great Britain

Russia to Board: You mean this is a gunboat game??? Doug lied to me again...

Prime Minister to the World - So, anybody got any funny jokes? *tumbleweed*

GERMANY TO ALL: This is the most polite game I've ever seen.

(Swain Murphy to the Duke of York): I hear and I obey, but let me smite Flap Jack first, please, pretty please???

“Dulcinea” Diplomacy Bourse

Billy Ray Valentine: Is looking good, and feeling good. So he does nothing.

Duke of York: Buys 38 Lire.

Smaug the Dragon: Sells 500 Pounds, 500 Francs, 500 Marks, 500 Lire. Buys 3000 Roubles.

Rothschild: Sells 500 Piastres. Buys 234 Francs and 527 Rubles.

Baron Wuffet: Baron Wuffet says he's doing badly enough as it is, and holds onto what he has.

Wooden Nickel Enterprises: Twiddles his thumbs.

VAIONT Enterprises: Decides to hold his portfolio until the market trends become clearer.

Insider Trading LLC: Forms a new investment company. Sells 500 Francs, 500 Marks, 500 Rubles, and 500 Piastres. Buys 500 Crowns.

	<u>Austrian</u> Crowns	<u>English</u> Pounds	<u>French</u> Francs	<u>German</u> Marks	<u>Italian</u> Lire	<u>Russian</u> Rubles	<u>Turkish</u> Piastres	Cash	Total Value
Opening Value	\$0.9186	\$1.1598	\$1.2961	\$1.0643	\$0.9850	\$0.5748	\$1.2122		
Closing Value	\$0.9686	\$1.1098	\$1.2194	\$0.9643	\$0.9388	\$0.8775	\$1.1122		
Player Holdings									
Billy Ray Valentine	500	1677	700	1000	700	700	1500	\$ 0.59	\$7,103.61
Duke of York	2200	0	1050	1300	1088	0	1300	\$ 0.07	\$7,132.22
Smaug the Dragon	500	773	500	1571	1500	3500	0	\$ 1,029.50	\$8,975.74
Rothschild	0	0	5068	0	0	527	3000	\$ 0.33	\$9,979.29
Baron Wuffet	1486	1722	200	1322	400	300	1122	\$ 3.08	\$6,758.84
Wooden Nickel Enterprises	1000	1726	2176	900	1000	1248	100	\$ 0.39	\$8,550.93
VAIONT Enterprises	500	2200	0	1050	1700	0	1600	\$ 2.49	\$7,316.35
Insider Trading LLC	1500	1000	500	500	1000	500	500	\$ 1,614.40	\$7,202.60
<u>Any New Players</u>	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	\$ -	\$7,190.60

PRESS

Insider Trading LLC: Our motto is we don't just talk to the government; we ARE the government

PRESS - SMAUG the Dragon to ALL: Roubles - almost sounds like Rubies.... almost. Better value too. Should make good scale material... *snorts flame*

Duke of York to the Bourse Regulators: I love to stand on Pat, but I think I'm going to invest in Melinda instead. She is so much more useful!

Duke of York to Rothschild: I think selling my country short is not as advantageous as I thought. But as long as you stick with me, I'll stay out of Pounds.

Fall 1902 Bourse Deadline is May 25th 2009 at 7:00pm my time

Gamestart – Deviant Dip II – “Black Licorice” – Winter 1900

Austria (John Walker - jwalker150 “of” hotmail.com): Has F Tri, A Vie, A Bud.

England (Russell Blau – russblau “of” imapmail.org): Has F Lon, A Lvp, F Edi.

France (Don Williams – dwilliam “of” fontana.org): Has F Bre, A Mar, A Par.

Germany (Pete Gaughan – raptormage “of” astound.net): Has F Kie, A Ber, A Mun.

Italy (John David Galt – jdj “of” diogenes.sacramento.ca.us): Has F Nap, A Rom, A Ven.

Russia (Mark D Lew – markdlew “of” earthlink.net): Has F Sev, F StP(sc), A Mos, A War.

Turkey (Jason Bergmann – jasonbergmann “of” gmail.com): Has F Ank, A Smy, A Con.

Standby Players, as needed: Jim Burgess (jfburgess “of” gmail.com), Jack McHugh (jwmchughjr “of” gmail.com), Hugh Polley (hapolley “of” yahoo.ca).

Remember that for the next turn you need to send in your Spring 1901 orders, your votes on the proposals (you get one vote per supply center, and they may be split among the proposals as you see fit), and your NEW rule proposals. Whichever proposal passes takes effect after the season it is voted on, so the proposal which you guys pass in Spring will be in effect for the Fall turn.

Spring 1901 Deadline is May 25th at 7:00pm my time

Winter 1900 Rule Proposals:

Rule #1 - More Deviant Rule (Proposed by Jason Bergmann). Paragraphs (5), (7), and (8) of the Deviant Diplomacy II variant rules are repealed and replaced with the following:

(1) Every Winter and Spring season, each starting player who controlled at least one supply center at the end of the previous Fall season may propose up to two rule changes. Such players may choose to submit fewer than two rule proposals without consequence.

(2) Every Winter and Spring season, each starting player who controlled no supply centers at the end of the previous Fall season may propose up to one rule change. Such players may choose to submit no rule proposals without consequence.

(3) Every Spring and Fall season, each starting player has a number of votes equal to one plus the number of supply centers the starting player controlled at the end of the previous Fall season.

(4) Players may vote yes or no. Players may cast all of their votes for or against any one rule proposal, or players can split yes and no votes among multiple rule proposals. Players' votes are published.

(5) A no vote on any rule proposal cancels a yes vote. The rule proposal receiving the most net yes votes goes into effect beginning the next season. If more than one rule proposal tie for the most net yes votes, then all tied rules go into effect beginning the next season. The rule proposal (or proposals) will go into effect even if the net yes votes are zero or negative.

(6) In addition to any rule proposals that go into effect under paragraph (5), additional rule proposals may also go into effect beginning the next season, if such proposals receive one or more net yes vote and if such proposals do not receive no votes from at least two different players.

(7) If two or more rule proposals would go into effect on the same turn but conflict explicitly or implicitly with each other, then both rules are null and void.

(8) The phrase "starting player" refers to the seven players who started this game, plus any standby player who succeeds the position of a starting player in this game. The word "player" includes all starting players and all other persons who enter the game as a result of the passage of additional rules.

(9) This rule may be amended or repealed only by any rule proposal going into effect under paragraph (5). Any rule proposal going into effect under paragraph (6) that amends or repeals this rule, or which conflicts explicitly or implicitly with the terms of this rule, will have no effect.

Rule #2 - The Clever Title Rule (Proposed by Mark D Lew). Every proposed rule must have a title. If a rule proposal's title is insufficiently short, descriptive and/or clever, it is not actually disqualified in any way, but the GM and all players must publicly express their disapproval of it. Any proposal with no title will be given one by the GM. Acronymic titles are allowed only if they are less contrived and obnoxious than acronymic titles proposed by the U.S. Congress.

Rule #3 – The 1898 Rule (Proposed by John Walker). The game will be rolled back to 1898 as the starting point. The 1898 placement of one center unit only be used. The The owning player can elect what unit and what center they want to start with.

Rule #4 - Booming Economy Rule (Proposed by John David Galt). All passable land spaces on the board are supply centers.

Rule #5 – Haiku Rule (Proposed by Russell Blau).

"Each season all send
One press item as haiku
Or be disordered."

That is, any player who fails to submit (at least) one press message in the form of haiku each season, will have their power be in civil disorder for that turn.

Rule #6 – The Gibraltar Rule (Proposed by Don Williams). The little line between MID and WES becomes one of those little fortress symbols and is named Gibraltar (GIB). All fleets may now move from an adjacent province/water body to GIB, and then may move on through on the next turn. An army or fleet may occupy GIB, which keeps any other unit from moving through (one unit per area rule). GIB cannot be destroyed, except by passage of another rule.

For fleet movement, SPA(sc) is now divided into SPA(sec) and SPA (swc) and fleet movement between the two along the coast is not possible; that is, a fleet must now go SPA(sec)-GIB, then GIB – SPA(swc) or vice versa. An army in SPA is not affected.

For fleet movement, NAF is now divided into NAF(wc) and NAF(nc) and fleet movement between the two along the coast is not possible; that is, a fleet must now go NAF(wc)-GIB, then on to GIB – NAF(nc) or vice versa. An army in NAF is not affected.

An army may be convoyed into GIB. An army may not move directly from NAF – GIB or vice versa. A fleet in GIB may convoy an army from SPA – NAF or vice versa.

A fleet in NAF may support actions in/into GIB. An army in NAF may not support actions in/into GIB. GIB starts the game as a neutral space. The last country to occupy GIB on a fall turn controls GIB. Control of GIB allows fleets of the controlling country to move normally as if GIB did not exist. (For example, F MID – WES once again becomes possible, or F LYO – SPA(sc) followed by F SPA(sc) – POR.) The country controlling GIB may not permit this movement to the fleets of any other country. In the event GIB is occupied by any unit while the country last controlling GIB has a fleet occupying SPA(sc) and/or NAF, that country (i.e., the country controlling GIB) must declare which coast the fleet(s) occupy(ies) on the next turn of play.

Rule #7 – Avian Flu (Proposed by Pete Gaughan). Immediately following every Spring season (including any necessary retreats), avian flu strikes. The flu infects 1/10 of all armies and fleets, rounded up to the next whole unit; which units are infected is determined randomly by the GM. Infected units immediately become squadrons.

A squadron may move to any adjacent space, land or sea, that an army or fleet may move to, and squadrons may coexist with other units; movement of a squadron does not affect the movement of any other unit. Instead of moving, a squadron may support another unit's move. A squadron's location does not affect the ownership of any supply center.

Squadrons have a life span of three seasons (counting only Spring and Fall). At the end of a squadron's third season, it disbands.

PRESS:

Deviant Observer: Exchanging powers? GM can the game have a rule which applies to only one player? Say a rule that German units can only have hold orders? Players could gang up on a leader, stopping his SC growth!

Here is a rule: A standby can be declared press agent for a particular country, that country's press must be edited by the standby agent then published!

(Paris) The Emperor Napoleon IV greets all of his current and future subjects. "The sun shines brightly on our glorious Empire, and it will do so even more brightly after we annex some of those Mediterranean beaches that I've had my eye on," he proclaims.

St. Petersburg: The Russian government released a report showing that skin cancer rates in Russia are far below world averages. "Excessive sunshine clearly is detrimental to the public health," stated the minister. As a result, it is expected that Russia will avoid any conflicts with its sunny Southern neighbors. Those in gloomier climates, however, had better watch out.

(London) Reports circulate here of a pending change in the Government. The Prime Minister reportedly has lost the confidence of Parliament and pressure is growing for a cabinet reshuffle. According to an informed source, the Minister of Silly Walks is considered the favorite to head the new Government. "We expect many silly things to start happening very soon, and who else could be better prepared to guide Britain through this era of silliness?" the source said. Asked to comment on these reports, the Minister responded, "F'tang F'tang Ole Biscuit-Barrel."

Constantinople to Vienna: You infidels make sausage out of unclean swine! This is a deliberate insult! You must die!!

Constantinople to St. Petersburg: Is it true you are allergic to chocolate?

Germany to France: What, you couldn't afford the bribe to get Italy? I can't remember the last time I saw you in some other country. Of course, I can't remember the last time I saw you in any Dip game -- or even the last time I saw you, period. So you hate me, right? That's why you never visit. Damn you, Duck! Damn you to hell!!!

This is the all powerful EFGIATR: You must prove yourselves worthy to lead a country. I am watching and I will be testing. Will you pass and are you worthy to rule? I know who is worthy. Do you know? The All Powerful EFGIATR

RUSSIA to AUSTRIA: Just so you know, I'll be ordering A War-Gal, so if you don't want me in Galicia you'd better order one of your armies there to bounce it.

Germany to Standbys: Get warmed up, guys, this game always taxes the bullpen.

Rome: Reporters arriving for the Prime Minister's scheduled press conference were left in confusion when neither the Prime Minister nor any press spokesperson appeared at the scheduled time. After waiting a bit, reporters roamed through the hallways and offices of the government buildings in Rome, but were unable to locate any officials whatsoever. The entire government apparently has simply gone missing. When this news was released, spontaneous celebrations broke out in many Italian cities.

Vienna to Europe: You are all invited to stop by the palace, have some nice schnitzel or sausage, and maybe some chocolate cake for dessert. That nice Dr. Freud will have you lie down on his couch, take a nice rest, maybe chat a little. We want to get to know all about you...

Berlin to Vienna: Why, thank you, old chap. We'd be delighted. Mind if we bring a few thousand of our best friends with us when we visit?

(Tokyo) You Europeans can plot among yourselves as much as you like. We are waiting for our opportunity. Emperor Jim-Bob-ito will inspire us to victory!!

Germany to GM: I used to think I was a masochist for publishing a dipzine for so many years. But I can't top a guy who, having *seen* someone GM Deviant, goes out and deliberately starts a game himself. As Short Round would say, you ain't nuts; you crazy!

GM – Germany: I'm hoping that this game generates enough interest to start ANOTHER one before it ends. And yes, I am crazy. I know it, you know it, Heather knows it, my friends know it, my therapist and psychiatrist know it, and the Federal Government is fully aware of it.

By Popular Demand

Credit goes to Ryk Downes, I believe, for inventing this. The goal is to pick something that fits the category and will be the "most popular" answer. You score points based on the number of entries that match yours. For example, if the category is "Cats" and the responses were 7 for Persian, 3 for Calico and 1 for Siamese, everyone who said Persian would get 7 points, Calico 3 and the lone Siamese would score 1 point. The cumulative total over 10 rounds will determine the overall winner. Anyone may enter at any point, starting with an equivalent point total of the lowest cumulative score from the previous round. If a person misses a round, they'll receive the minimum score from the round added to their cumulative total. ***In each round you may specify one of your answers as your Joker answer. Your*** score for this answer will be doubled. In other words, if you apply your Joker to category 3 on a given turn, and 4 other people give the same answer as you, you get 10 points instead of 5. Players who fail to submit a Joker for any specific turn will have their Joker automatically applied to the first category. And, if you want to submit some commentary with your answers, feel free to. The game will consist of 10 rounds. A prize will be awarded to the winner.

Round 5 Categories

1. Something you make with corn.
2. A newspaper comic.
3. A type of bird.
4. A movie with Nicolas Cage in it.
5. Something you pierce.

Selected Comments By Category:

Corn – Andy York "Masa, of course, for tortillas. However, that is a very regional/ethnic answer. What else? Corn relish, creamed corn, caramel corn (oops, no actual corn in that one), corncob art, chocolate covered corn (niche market), hmmm....not sure what you're going for." John Colledge "Having typed 'foods made from corn' as a Google search the first site comes up 'Education - A Zillions Uses for Corn'. This is 'Education'? 'A' zillions in the

plural?" Dane Maslen "I've no idea if you guys also have a breakfast cereal called 'Cornflakes', but offhand no other answer occurs to me (I'm probably overlooking something obvious)."

Comic – Phil Murphy "Did Charlie Brown ever get that home run?" Andy York "I would have said Opus, but Berkely Breathed ended that one way too soon (in its second incarnation). I actually only read a handful on a daily basis, and a couple more in the Sunday comics." Dane Maslen "I'm hoping that 'newspaper comic' means what I think it means in American English."

Bird – Phil Murphy "I should say Robin but my better half would probably be cross with me.... best not then." Kevin Wilson "It's baseball season and I'm from St Louis"

Nicolas Cage – Kevin Wilson "Tough category. He's had a lot from a few early career cameos to some fun movies to watch but not too many box office hits. I think this was a \$\$ hit so I'll go with it. Besides, it's the only one to generate a sequel (and another coming) so maybe folks will remember it." Jim Burgess "I'll bet the Rock, Con Air, or Adaptation score higher and 8MM is his coolest role."

Pierce - Brendan Whyte "Brosnan....not! I'm steering clear of nipples and penises...." Phil Murphy "You can pierce anything but I'm playing it safe with this one. Yep..." John Colledge "I was tempted to say the new neighbors kids' ball given that it never seems to be out of our garden!" Dane Maslen "At one time this would have been a no-brainer. Given all the self-mutilation that now goes on in the name of fashion (Do you remember watching TV programs as a child and being amazed by the ridiculous behavior of African tribes? Presumably they are now watching TV programs and being amazed by the ridiculous behavior of Westerners) there are now several other plausible answers, but I'll play my joker here anyway." Jim Burgess "If this were a religious crowd, the answer would be Jesus, but since I don't think it is, let's go with Ears."

<u>Player</u>	<u>Corn</u>	<u>Comic</u>	<u>Bird</u>	<u>Cage</u>	<u>Pierce</u>	<u>Turn</u>	<u>Total</u>
W. Andrew York	Side Dish	Doonesbury	Robin	National Treasure	Ears	60	214
Bill Brown	Fritters	Fred Basset	Eagle	Face-Off	Ears	53	213
Philip Murphy	Popcorn	Peanuts	Eagle	Con Air	Ears	46	209
Heather Taylor	Popcorn	Peanuts	Crow	National Treasure	Ears	64	203
John Colledge	Flakes	Marvel	Eagle	Knowing	Ears	42	199
Jack McHugh	Popcorn	Dilbert	Pigeon	Face-Off	Ears	58	195
Don Williams	Popcorn	Doonesbury	Eagle	National Treasure	Ears	54	194
Dane Maslen	Flakes	Peanuts	Eagle	Cpt. Corelli's Mandolin	Ears	59	193
Jamie McQuinn	Popcorn	Dilbert	Robin	Ghost Rider	Ears	44	186
Brad Wilson	Tortillas	Blondie	Robin	Leaving Las Vegas	Ears	35	174
Melinda Holley	Alcohol	Mary Worth	Robin	National Treasure	Ears	57	171
Allison Kent	Corn Chowder	Peanuts	Robin	Leaving Las Vegas	Ears	39	170
Jim Burgess	Cornbread	Doonesbury	Crow	National Treasure	Ears	44	161
Tom Swider	Popcorn	Doonesbury	Pigeon	Wild at Heart	Ears	43	155
William Wood	Alcohol	Far Side	Robin	Raising Arizona	Ears	32	154
David Burgess	NMR	NMR	NMR	NMR	NMR	23	153
Paul Bolduc	Cornbread	Peanuts	Eagle	Moonstruck	Lips	23	146
Kevin Wilson	Corn Oil	Non Sequitur	Cardinal	National Treasure	Ears	52	142
Jeremie Lefrancois	Popcorn	Mickey Mouse	Sea Bird	Knowing	Ears	40	140
Brendan Whyte	Flakes	Dilbert	Jail	Matchstick Men	Ears	31	133
Brad Martin	Flour	Doonesbury	Eagle	Cpt. Corelli's Mandolin	Ears	37	125
Martin Burgdorf	Cornbread	Garfield	Nightingale	National Treasure	Ears	37	106
Paraic Reddington	Cornbread	Garfield	Crow	Knowing	Ears	56	102
MOST POPULAR	Popcorn	Peanuts/Doonesbury	Eagle	National Treasure	Ears	47	

Round 6 Categories – Deadline is May 26th, 2009 at 7:00am my time

1. Something you find in a diner.
2. A magazine with content about movies.
3. A type of whale.
4. A character in The Wizard of Oz other than Dorothy.
5. A Christmas carol.

**General Deadline For The Next Issue of Eternal Sunshine:
May 26th 2009 at 7:00am my time – See You Then!**