



melton

# ALTERNATE REALITY

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Our thanks to all who bought the first issue and a multitude of thanks to everyone who subscribed. We hope you enjoy this issue, we have tried to make it better in every way than the first.

Our thanks also to the following zines which have offered to trade with us: LIBERTERREAN, c/o Jim Bumpas, 948 Loraine Ave., Los Altos, CA 94022; CLAW AND FANG, Don Horton, 16 Jordan Ct., Sacramento, CA 95826; COSTAGUANA, Grandel Press International, P.O. Box 4, San Diego, CA 92112. Drop a line to these fine zines and I'm sure they'll send you a sample copy. If you have something left after subscribing to ALTERNATE REALITY, you might subscribe to them too.

Thanks also to Gil Neiger for a nice long letter but I'm running out of room. We still welcome any contributions so send them in.

PORTRAIT OF ELLEN

BY Richard Knights

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The photo sat upright on his desk calling his name. When he didn't answer, it decided that he must have stepped out for a moment so it yawned and went back to sleep.

Raymond Kirk sat on the patio-roof of the condominium watching the stars.

"Mr. Kirk?" came a voice from behind him.

He turned. It was a porter, dull glass eyes in a dark plastic face, a voice grill from which the mechanical spoke. "There's someone in your room calling for you, sir. A woman."

"No," he turned back. "It's only a picture of my wife."

"Well then, sir, I'm afraid we'll have to ask you to put her in your wallet. Other tenants are complaining."

"It won't work. I've tried, nothing shuts her up."

"Have you had the windows in your wallet checked, sir?"

Kirk shook his head. "They work on all my other photos. It's just that picture."

If the porter's face had been capable of it, it would have expressed polite doubt. "Pictures can't malfunction," it said flatly.

"I had another photo of her once, it was double exposed, they had to burn it to put it out of its misery."

Having no answer to what it assumed was irrelevant, the porter went back to the main problem. "Still, sir, I'll have to ask you to keep it quiet."

"How? The damn thing won't stop screaming. It has nightmares, ever since my wife died, three years ago, it . . . ."

He turned and stared into the bland face of the mechanical. "You wouldn't understand."

He got up quickly and made his way toward the door to the lower floors. The porter called after him but he didn't stop.

He entered the apartment in a rush and slammed the door behind him.

"Where have you been, Raymond?" the picture asked. "I've waited for hours."

"Shut up," said Kirk at the bar, pouring a drink.

The picture pouted, "You don't love me anymore."

"I never loved you. I loved my wife."

"But I am your wife."

(Continued on Next Page)

Raymond took half of the drink in one gulp. "You are a picture, they should've burned you with the other one."

"You don't mean that! What would you have to remember me by?"

"Nothing. That's the way I want it, no memories." He finished the drink and poured another. "Especially, not a piece of pseudo-emotional plastic."

"What about that pin-up?"

"Why should you care? Ellen posed for that, too."

"A plastic mistress."

"Shut up!"

"Are you going to kill me, too. Like you killed my original?"

"Liar! Ellen's death was an accident!"

"It was suicide, you hated her and you drove her to it.!"

"Iloved her, we had three kids!"

"Yes, I know. You beat Bobby so badly he almost died, just like you used to beat me."

"You're lying! We had arguments, everybody does!"

"Of course, darling. Anything you say but don't hit me again."

"Ar. You're just a stupid piece of plastic!"

"I'm you're wife, don't you remember our honeymoon, dearest?"

"Abunch of graphs and patters embedded in plastic!"

"No, honey, a picture you can turn off, you can't turn me off, I'm your wife."

"I could tear you in half with two fingers!"

"That would be murder, sweetheart."

In a rage, Kirk snatched the picture up and gripped it tightly along the edge with both hands.

"You can't do it." The picture taunted him. "You can't kill me again." He tried. But his hands wouldn't move.

"I can't commit suicide this time, dear, you'll have to do it yourself." He tore the corner.

"Is that the best you can do? You always were a weakling, I never should have married you." The picture was smiling. "If I'm really what you say I am, it shouldn't take any effort to destroy me. But I'm you're wife and a person is harder to kill, love."

The plastic tore and someone screamed, a man screamed.

He lay on the floor, not moving, a red stain spreading from his hands into the carpet.

## ALTERNATE REALITY HOUSE RULES

Much thought and work has gone into these house rules. Many other zine's rules have been used for models. However any resemblance between these house rules and the house rules of any other zine is pure dumb luck. The first section applies to all games played in ALTERNATE REALITY, the second section applies to Diplomacy games, the third section applies to all other games that are run in these pages.

### Section I

1. There will be a small charge for participating in a game in ALTERNATE REALITY. (This may be suspended by special offers.) All participants in games in ALTERNATE REALITY must have a current subscription.

2. We will attempt to run any game or variant that you want, just send us the rules if we don't have them. We will try to set-up a play by mail game and get some players to participate in it with you.

3. We will try to have a pool of stand-by's available at all times. If one deadline is missed by a player we will assign a stand-by to take over the position, he will send in moves to be used in case the original player does not send in any more moves. This way only one season will be missed.

4. A substitute may take the place of one of the original players if the gamesmaster is notified at least one issue ahead of time. The substitute may play for three deadlines before the original player loses his position to the substitute. If the substitute misses a move rule three will come into effect.

5. Rulings made by the gamesmaster are final. Any direct violations of the rules will be corrected within two issues or not at all.

6. Any attempt to fool the gamesmaster will be grounds for expulsion from all games in ALTERNATE REALITY. Also a letter of offenses will be sent to other publishers.

7. We will not be responsible for any mistakes of the USPS or other delivery system. Nor will we guarantee that we will always be available at our phone number.

8. ALTERNATE REALITY will accept any outcome agreed upon by the current players of a game.

9. Deadlines will be announced with the printed moves.

10. The gamesmaster may extend the deadline of a game if he decides that it is in the best interests of the game.

11. If you want to change your moves, the new moves must specify that they are to be used in place of the old ones. Otherwise, the latest received will be used, if they arrive the same day, a choice will be made at random.

(CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE)

## Section II

1. The 1971 Diplomacy rulebook will be used with the following additions.
2. Countries will be assigned by a preference list that each player sends in with his game fee. First choices will be given unless there is duplication in which case choice will be made by lot among all players who made the same first choice. Similar procedures will be followed until every player is assigned a country. Players who do not send in a preference list get whatever is left over.
3. There will be three seasons: SPRING moves and retreats/removals, FALL moves and retreats/removals, and WINTER builds/removals. Prophetic builds will be accepted and will help speed the game along. Prophetic retreats are required with spring/fall moves. Conditional retreats will be accepted. If a unit has no retreat specified, or if the retreat ordered is impossible, the unit will be eliminated.
4. Unordered units, units ordered to make moves impossible under ordinary conditions or moves to provinces not on the board or given illegible or ambiguous moves will be considered to be ordered to HOLD and may be supported in place.
5. A player who misses two consecutive orders will be replaced under Rule 6, Section I, unless he has fewer units than he began the game with in which case his country goes into civil disorder.

6. If Spring 1901 moves are missed, neutral moves will be made from the list below:

ENGLAND	FRANCE	ITALY	AUSTRIA	TURKEY	RUSSIA	GERMANY
FLon-Nth	FBre-Mid	FNap-Ion	FTri-Alb	ACon-Bul	AWar-Gal	(Neutral moves
FEdi-Nwg	APar-Bur	ARom-Nap	ABud-Ser	ASmy-Con	AMos-Ukr	for Germany made
ALiv-Edi	AMar-Spa	AVen-H	AVie-Gal	FAnk-Bla	FSev-Bla	by random choice
					FStP-Bot	from GM's list.)

Neutral moves for Fall 1901 will also be made.

7. All names of provinces will be abbreviated by using the first three letters of the name except for the following provinces: Gulf of Lyon-Lyo, Gulf of Bothnia-Bot, North Africa-Afr, North Atlantic-Nat, North Sea-Nth, Norwegian Sea-Nwg, Norway-Nwy. Other abbreviation and symbols used will be as follows: A=Army, F=Fleet, C=Convoys, S=Supports, - means moves to, (-location) means retreats to that location, H=Holds or just list the unit. If moves are legible and non-ambiguous they will be used, the above abbreviations are only suggested, not required.

8. Moves must list the name of the game, designation number, date, season, country being played and be signed by the player.

9. A draw will be declared if for any six consecutive seasons no power loses or gains in the number of net supply centers.

## Section III

1. Any special rules or devices needed to play other games or variants and printed in Alternate Reality will be considered part of the House Rules. Anything else published under the heading House Rules in this magazine automatically becomes part of the House Rules.

2. Any numbers needed to play a game or variant will be randomly chosen from a random numbers table.

3. Any situation not covered in these House Rules or the rules of the game or variant being played will be decided by the Gamesmaster whose decision is final. Space, however, will be given to dissenting opinions.

REUNION

by Kevin Rowland

8

"When is she going to get here?" Mike kept asking himself over and over again.

He couldn't help but think of the dangerous risks Barbara was taking going into town at this time of night. He wished again that he didn't have a broken leg, it made him feel so helpless.

Sometimes he thought about how useless it all was. Why couldn't the two races stop fighting? Of course, there had been prejudice between them almost ever since they had first come in contact. But why not cooperate for the betterment of all? No . . . the hatred was too deeply seated, too strong.

The moon was going down, it would soon be daylight. He wished she would hurry. Off in the distance a figure moved.

Mike smiled. His pearly teeth glinting in the last of the moonlight. Barbara was coming.

Softly on little bat wings.

THE END

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Alternate Viewpoints - - - - -A Critical Column by Rich Knights

Last month, on these pages, Ron made a mistake. Actually, he made plenty of mistakes, but only one on which I wish to make comment. That mistake was to let pass a certain remark by Walker Barnes, "The others (comic mag companies) just can't be compared in overall quality to D.C."

I mean, it's only fair to say that quality wise, D.C. is one of the top three companies, or even that, artistically at least, it is the top 20% comix mag producer of the seventies, but to go any further is to risk heavy criticism.

In the sixties, National (alias DC) could not even touch upon the quality of Marvel, their best known competitor. But Morvel's constant slipping in past months has left the number one spot in the 20% line to D.C.

The title of number one in comix goes to Warren's 75% group. Warren are the people (is the people?) that produce Creepy, Eerie, Vampirella, and, coming the 29th of January, the Spirit.

Vampirella, Warren's newest mag until the Spirit, is also the most acclaimed. Don't let the fact that it's a horror mag put you off, it's well worth the price. In fact, it's worth skipping four mags a month to buy. It boasts such talents as Denny O'Neil, Len Wein, Neal Adams, Esteban Moroto, Wally Wood, Frank Frazetta, and Steve Englehart, along with many other writers and artists that you should be acquainted with but probably aren't.

The Spirit, as every old time comix freak knows, is Will Eisner's classic mystery strip from the forties. Now, it's getting its own Warren Mag, a must for every comix buyer.

Both mags boast the best in black-and-white art, and every issue of the Spirit as well as occasional issues of Warren's other mags includes an eight page section of the highest grade color reproduction in the business. The issues with the color sections cost one dollar but are easily worth that if not more.

Until next time then, and be sure to pick up SPIRIT#1.

Hello, again! It's me, wargames editor, subscription manager, correspondence secretary, gamesmaster, fan, and all around good guy. If you think I'm being egotistical, you're right. It was really a fantastic achievement for us to finally get out our own zine. We were so exhausted that we just sat there saying, "I don't believe we did the whole thing... I don't believe it!" But we didn't even get a chance to celebrate, unless you call free cokes celebrating ((Ed. Note They weren't free, who do you think stocks that machine, Santa Claus? RM)) we jumped right into planning this issue and the next several issues.

And we haven't slacked off. Why, just this past week we got Don to do the art that was supposed to be in last issue. He's got the cover done and ready for stenciling and here I am writing your favorite feature, THE Column. You should have already seen Don's cover, if you haven't, you opened this zine from the wrong side, why not go back and start over?

Now to consider a few of the comments we got on the last issue so far. Many people in the wargaming hobby seem confused as to what s-f is doing in a Diplomacy zine. Simple, we like it and it is our zine, and we think there are enough fellow wargamers interested in s-f to give us their support in making this a great zine. But there are other people in the s-f fandom among whom this zine is also distributed, who don't know what a wargame is.

Allow us to elucidate.

If you like history but hate to read it (most history books are made purposefully dull dry recitals of names dates and places, because someone told the history book writers that it was supposed to be that way) or maybe you'd like to create your own history or go back and change history and see what might happen, get a wargame. There are games to cover almost any situation that could, would, might have, did or will arise. Maybe you think Napoleon was an idiot? Could you have done better? Buy NAPOLEON AT WATERLOO (the very best introductory game, available from Simulations Publications, 44 East 23rd St., New York, NY 10010, for only a dollar) and see if you can save the French Empire. If you can't, don't worry, you'll just have been humiliated by your kid brother and won't have to fall on your sword or go into exile on one of those little Mediterranean islands the names of which no one can ever remember.

Physically speaking, a war game is usually a map board marked off in a hexagonal pattern to regulate movement, with appropriate terrain features, roads, hills, trees, cities; indicated in various colors. Military units (or naval or aerial or what have you) are represented by small counters. The counters usually have printed on them various information about the combat, supply or movement abilities of the unit it represents. Of course, there are other types of wargames and not-quite wargames like Diplomacy, if you live in this area, come into Rhodes' Books some Saturday and we'll be happy to show you some of our wargames.

I'll be talking about wargames in this column and in other features and articles, so if you're still doubtful about what it is we're talking about, we hope to clear the fog for you in future issues.

I was supposed to review KAMPFPANZER this issue but wasn't all that enthusiastic about it and Ron talked Ron Roser into doing it for me. In the future, I'll give the editor a list of games I'd like to review and he can pick from it. Offhand I can think of enough games that I want to review to keep me busy for six months. Next issue, I'm thinking of ORIGINS OF WORLD WAR TWO, a game which is available for play by mail in this magazine. See the GAME ANNOUNCEMENT on another page.

I would also like to pick a s-f author and review all of his books making comments on the changes in style as his books came out over the years. How about it, Ron? ((Maybe, but I'd like to tackle something like that myself.))

Since we've defined wargames for those who don't know about them, I've written a story about definitions of s-f, it's on another page. -----WB



## GAME ANNOUNCEMENT

Last issue we announce that the first seven subscribers to ask would receive a free game of Diplomacy. Well, we have filled that game and are now opening our first game for pay. Please send your \$2, ~~if~~ + ~~SOB~~ you are a subscriber, \$4 ~~if you are not~~, and we will enroll as many people as send money in as many games as necessary.

Okay, the seven players in AR 74-1 are:

David S. Lagerson, 19011 Vancouver, Reseda, CA 91335

Ronald M. Kelly, #210, 225 Virginia Ave, SE, Washington DC  
20003

Ronald Venable, P.O. Box 96, Westmorland, CA 92281

Leonard Lakofka, 644 W. Briar Pl., Chicago, Ill, 60657

Steven R. Nozik, S.U.N.Y. at Buffalo, Clement Hall, Box L100,  
Buffalo, NY 14214

Tim Carleton, 617 Dartmouth Pl., Evanston, Ill., 60201

Gil Neiger, 300 W. 108th St., New York, NY 10025.

Countries have not been assigned yet, since we want to try the country preference list method and only three of the seven sent in preferences.

Nobody has tried to win the contest in which we are giving away a game of Origins of WWII but we are opening up a game of Origins to anybody who wants to join. Fee is \$1 ~~for subscribers, \$3 for non-subscribers.~~ + SOB

By the way, in any game played in Alternate Reality, all of the players who stick it out to the bitter end, win lose or draw, will get a free five issue subscription. This applies to substitutes also.

Would you like to be on our substitute list? Just ~~send one dollar~~ <sup>FREE</sup> to be put on the list. If you do not specify which game you want to play in, your name will go on the list for all games, Diplomacy, OWWII, and any variants we may be playing.

Speaking of variants, we are opening up one game of Transatlantic Diplomacy at the ~~regular~~ <sup>FREE</sup> fee. If you want to join this game, be sure to specify Transatlantic when you send in your game fee. The rules were given in our first issue, if you don't have a copy of them, send a dime and a stamped self-addressed envelope and we will send them to you.

The House Rules for all games in ALTERNATE REALITY can be found on another page in this issue.

This was supposed to be done by Walker Barnes but he said he didn't like Kampfpanzer that well, so here I am.

Kampfpanzer is SPI's new game of tactical armored combat in France, Poland, Finland and Manchuria between 1937 and 1940 with hypothetical engagements in Spain and Czechoslovakia. The game scale is 100 meters per hex and three minutes 40 seconds per turn.

I have played every scenario at least twice, so I will discuss them first. For you anti-Germans, pick almost any scenario with the Germans in it and you will find that, with fairly equal players, the Germans get creamed, especially in the Arras and Abbeville scenarios.

Other than being rather poorly balanced in victory conditions, the scenarios are quite accurate. Despite being lopsided, they are excellent playing and rated eight on the scale.

The rules are complete and I found them easy to understand, but I've been playing wargames for 5 years. The more complicated rules are well illustrated. My only gripe is that there is no provision for anti-tank fire from the infantry. After extensive research (15 minutes) I decided to do justice where justice was due.

The German infantry, already far superior to anybody else's, can fire at enemy tanks once per game. The catch is that it can only be done if the infantry unit firing is being overrun. I suggest that a "4" be the anti-tank factor, to be used along with the -2 that is provided for in the rules. As I mentioned before the unit firing must be in the process of being overrun to use this, therefore the range is zero and also no two units can combine their anti-tank factors.

((Ed. Note Ron doesn't make it quite clear here but I assume that he means for each German infantry unit to have this capability to use anti-tank weapons once per game. A realistic optional rule, but perhaps an anachronism as I don't believe that effective anti-tank weapons and tactics developed until after the battles this game simulates. In any case, I suggest an addition to Ron's rule, if the unit is suffering any degree of disruption, it may not use its anti-tank capability against an overrun. RM))

My next suggestion is to allow the tanks to be used as infantry transport, embarking and debarking should be carried out as with trucks and half tracks, the tanks, when carrying troops may move at half speed maximum. They may fire while so loaded but may not overrun. If they do fire or if they are fired at, the embarked infantry instantly and with or without orders, debarks. If they (the tanks) are moving when fired at, attacker rolls the die and consults the +4 column to determine effect on the infantry. If stationary, consult the zero column instead. If the firing weapon is A or M, the tank must suffer the attack, and no additional hurts befall the foot soldiers. If R or H type weapons, the effect of the attack is borne by the infantry in addition to whatever may have happened to them from falling off the tanks. A concentrated H type attack affects both tank and passengers.

\* \* \* \*

((Ron's review above is something of a minority report, both Walker and I would have rated Kampfpanzer a bit lower in each department but then we really haven't played it as much as Ron. Apologies to Ron from me, I changed some of your numerical ratings as they did not seem to match what you said in your text. Next issue, Walker plans to do a review of Origins of WWII here but for the fourth issue I'd be glad to hear someone else spout off about a game they particularly love or loathe. We pay five free issues for any articles used, so send them in.)) RM

RATING CHART FOR KAMPFPANZER  
1=lousy, 9=excellent

Map	- - - - -	-9
Rules	- - - - -	-8+
Complexity	- - - - -	8
Counters	- - - - -	9
Balance	- - - - -	-7
Scenarios	- - - - -	-8+
Realism	- - - - -	-9
Length	- - - - - (about two hours)	
Overall	- - - - -	-8+

## WHY GOOD COMIX FAIL

by Ron Melton

Good comics fail because not enough people buy them.

Now that is an amazingly simple and perfectly obvious answer but really only a restatement of the question. In other words, why don't enough people buy the better comics that are published to make them financial as well as critical successes?

The answer to this question is rather more complex. Good comics appeal to the more intelligent and more mature readers, and, sadly, there are fewer of these than of the other kind.

According to Carmine Infantino, publisher of DC, a comic has to sell around 150,000 copies to be considered worth publishing. A company simply can't afford a marginal profit and if the sales of any mag fall below a certain point it is dropped. Efforts are sometimes made to revive a faltering magazine but they are seldom successful. (Witness the ultimate failure of Green Lantern/Green Arrow, a revamped comic which won awards and even a commendation from the Mayor of New York. It changed the face of Comix publishing by liberalizing the Comics Code, but it failed on the newstand.)

Sales are the crux of the matter. There are more little people (or people with little minds) out there who prefer the simplistic plot, the cliché dialog and the stilted art of the poorer mags than there are comix-aware people with adult tastes who think that the graphic medium has every bit as much right to good writing as any other medium.

I'm not knocking the people who buy the comix that I don't like, each to his own. I'm not knocking the men who put out the comics and invariably cancel my favorites, their actions are dictated by economic necessity.

I'm talking to the minority of comix readers who have enjoyed Deadman, Silver Surfer, GL/GA, Savage Tales, the ERB adaptations and Agent of SHIELD. Anyone who wants quality goods knows that he is going to have to pay more for the good stuff than he would if he settled for less. Practically all comics cost 20¢, they're exceptions, the black-and-whites, the DC 100's, and DC \$1 special editions. You'll notice, however, that the higher priced mags tend to be of generally better quality. Among the 20¢ mags, it is rare for a good, well-written and well-drawn mag to last more than a year or two. This is true because it is difficult to achieve and sustain that balance which gives it appeal to the more discerning reader and yet allows it a broad enough base of average comix readers to survive. (Conan and Batman seem to have done so, although there is evidence that both are beginning to falter on the newstand. Spiderman once did but no longer, it has sacrificed quality for popularity. Batman may yet survive by moving into the 60¢ format. I have never understood how Conan has survived so long, but it has and long may it violate my theories.)

If all comics have to compete at 20¢, the good will not long survive. Popularity, it has often been said but bears repeating, is based on the lowest common denominator. This is why television is generally bad; it's free and the criterion for survival is not quality but popularity. Gresham's law states that the bad will drive out the good and it applies to tv and comix as well as economics.

Action must be taken at the consumer level, if you want the best, you've got to be willing to pay for it. If you expect to get steak at hamburger prices, you must be prepared for steak to be taken off the menu without notice. It was fine while it lasted but when the steak is gone, you might as well throw away your teeth, you won't be needing them.

What I've taken about 700 words to say is that if you have a favorite magazine, you should be ready and willing to boost its circulation in any way you can. You'll have to buy two copies, or more. That is the only way you can make your personal preferences known to the publisher effectively.

Give the extra copies to friends, if you can turn them on to something you like, it will mean that much more security for your favorites.

by Walker Barnes

"Good morning, students. I would like to welcome you to English 102-A or 'Science Fiction: It's definition and impact on American Society Today,'" Professor Amizovoloskiev roared. He had a funny voice that sounded like his head was in a paper bag and he was trying to imitate a Russian accent. He was a short little man, fat and bald and the voice just didn't match.

"If you want to pass you've been paying attention, (a hush fell on the classroom) and you will have noticed that the first thing we must do in this course is define science fiction. Before we attempt this, though, there is something I need to know." He scowled at the class, "Whose science fiction have you enjoyed reading most, mine," pause, "or somebody elses?"

A chorus of mostly meaningless answers escalated into a regular hub-bub which the professor finally halted by jumping onto his desk and kicking books off the side onto the floor.

"Now that I have your attention again," he roared, looking ridiculous atop the desk, shouting and waving his arms. "There are certain other requirements to be met and prices to pay if you expect to pass this course. First you must be able to spell my name out completely," he pointed at where it was printed on the board, not noticing that he had misspelled it himself, a lot of furious writing ensued. "But you may call me Prof. Amizov for short. The price you have to pay for an 'A' is ten dollars. Heh-heh, just kidding." A mild titter arose from the class, which didn't please Professor Amizov as that was his best joke. Scowling, he jumped down from his ludicrous perch.

"To pass this course you must read seven or more of my hardcover science fiction books that have just been published. Don't bother looking for used copies, they just came out this semester. If you're lucky, maybe I'll have two or three more out before the semester is over."

A groan came from the back of the room and someone asked, "What if we can't afford your books?"

"Then you'll flunk, dummy!" Amizov roared louder than before. "Most of you are on grants or G.I. Bill, anyway." He looked everyone of them in the eye simultaneously, no mean trick, and dared them with a look to dispute what he knew to be a fact.

"Okay, we must first define what science fiction is. I've looked it up in dictionaries and they don't say a heck of a lot; so, I invented a way to get useable definitions: each of you has to come up with a good definition or you don't pass."

(CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE)

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He rummaged around in a pile of papers. "Here's a definition from Mortimer B. Flunt from last year, 'You can tell a book is SF if it has the word Science Fiction spelled out on the cover.' Mortimer flunked. Another - uh-- original definition was given by Juneau Lovlit. 'The way I tell if a book is SF is I go to the library and see if their copy of it has a little rocket stamped on the spine.' She flunked, too.

"A slightly better definition was made by Alviran Johana, 'SF is what SF writers write, mostly.' She got a 'D' so you'll have to do better than that. Anybody got a definition they want to give now?"

A hand shot up, Amizov nodded, a freshman stood up and said, "I don't have a definition but I have to go to the bathroom."

The kid left, Amizov turned bright red and the class fell laughing into the aisles. When Amizov had control of himself and the class again he asked for some more definitions. He pointed at one kid, "You, with the greasy hair shirt, you go first."

One boy stood up looking puzzled, "I ain't wearing no shirt." A laugh started but Amizov stared it down. The kid went on, "I think that SF stories are stories that have a large part concerned with science."

"No!" someone shouted, "SF is a story about something plausible but not possible."

"You're both wrong! SF is about the future of science or scientists!"

"That's too narrow," said the first, but was interrupted by the second and in moments a three-way free-for-all was taking place in the middle of the classroom. One of the debaters jumped up and ran out with the other two in hot pursuit.

Amizov, now talking quietly, said, "Now that I've gotten rid of the fanatics, I would like to hear what the rest of you have to say."

No one spoke or raised their hand until someone in the back stood up, Amizov nodded pleasantly, the kid looked at his watch and said, "I just wanted to remind you, the class period is over."

"Oh, so it is, well," said Amizov looking a little disappointed, "I won't keep you long but I would like to say that I think this class is going to be one of my best yet. Class ... CLASS! Pay attention! I'm not through."

Everyone rushed for the exits before Amizov could continue. "Wait!" he called, "I haven't even got to use my other two jokes yet."

Nobody stayed, nobody listened, it being a part of the student code to leave as soon as possible. And they weren't particularly anxious to come back to this class next time, either. About the only thing that could be said for English 102-A is that it would seldom be boring.

THE END

## EDITORIAL

It is positively amazing.

When we produced this magazine we decided we were going to do so for our own enjoyment. If anyone else liked it well enough to buy it, good, we would be pleased to share our interests with people of like minds.

What is amazing is that there are so many of you like minds.

We produced 190 copies of our 1st issue, mailed 140 of them freely to people and magazines we believed would be interested in them. We distributed ten among the members of the staff, put ten away for file copies and decided to sell the other 30 to whoever might want them locally.

In our first day of efforts, we sold 16 of the 30 with several more people wanting copies but lacking the quarter we were charging.

Amazing.

\*\*\*  
We have some new contributors this issue: Kevin Rowland and Ron Roser.

Kevin's very short REUNION can be found elsewhere in these pages. We hope to have some more fiction from him soon.

Ron took over the task of writing the game review this issue since he had played KAMPFPANZER more than the rest of us and was willing. Our Wargames Editor, Walker Barnes, was not willing, he didn't like the game particularly well and didn't play it enough to form a more concrete opinion.

Rich Knights is back with a comix review and PORTRAIT OF ELLEN and possibly another story if we have room.

Walker Barnes composed our House Rules, WELCOME TO ENGLISH 102-A, and THE COLUMN.

My brother, Don, finally, has done the cover for us as well as the special lettering thruout.

And I'm back, here and with an article on comix.

Would you like to contribute, think of it, your words in print (well, mimeo, anyway) right wher lots of people can see them. Gives you goose bumps thinking of it, doesn't it?

Well, we pay one five-issue sub to all contributors. So send those stories, articles, essays, letters,

or what have you to:

ALTERNATE REALITY  
% Rhodes Books  
694 Broadway  
El Centro, CA 92243

Please enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope with anything that you'd like returned. Otherwise, we'll keep it.

\*\*\*

I don't think I'm going to try this two column layout again unless I have to, the stencil gets wrinkled when you start the second column.

\*\*\*

Actually, ALTERNATE REALITY is my third effort at producing a fanzine. My first try, five years ago was entitled FANTASY HOUSE PRESENTS ADVENTURES INTO THE IMPOSSIBLE FEATURING CRUSADER ALSO THE STEELMEN, title and contents all-in-one.

FHP was a text comic zine with illustrations distributed rather like in a big little book.

The draft aborted that project after everything but the mimeoing had been done. My co-conspirators were Jim Glendenning and my own brother, Don.

When I got out of the service a year and a half ago, David Glendenning, Jim's younger brother, Don, and I launched GRAPHIC, which starred the Harlequin. Unlike FHP, GRAPHIC was a totally illustrated zine, an amateur comic. It was also more ambitious and was to be done Photo Offset.

Alas, printing is expensive and GRAPHIC, near complete, was and is shelved for lack of funds.

However, during the preparation of GRAPHIC, my brother informed me that he had met a kid in high school who was a game nut like me. Not only that, but Walker was a subscriber to S&T.

From Walker to Diplomacy to GRAUSTARK and THE POUCH (two fine Dippy zines) one thing led to another and I realized that a mimeo zine of modest goals could be produced for a fifth of the cost of GRAPHIC and three times as often.

In December of '73, I announced that I was publishing a zine called ALTERNATE REALITY, combination of s-f wargames and comix. In two weeks we had the first issue out, a five year old dream was REALITY, ALTERNATE or not.

# ALTERNATE REALITY

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Rhodes' Books  
694 Broadway  
El Centro, CA 92243



JEFF KEY  
618 78<sup>th</sup> TERRACE, MO  
KANSAS CITY, MO 64112