

DIPLOMACY DIGEST

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Publishing Survey Results

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There are times when the hobby doesn't seem to be working too well. People fussin' and feudin' to the extent that you need a personal computer to keep track of who's not getting along with whom. But then a real pick-me-up comes along. In my case, it was the unbelievable response to the Survey of Publishing Practices and Attitudes. I had figured that in order to be meaningful, I needed to have at least a 50% response rate. And I'd be pleased with anything above 2/3. As it turns out, the response was almost unanimous! I am so amazed that I'm almost at a loss to figure out why this happened. Almost, you notice I said. Its partly because pubbers love to talk, but a big factor, I'm sure is that its perceived as being positive and helpful, and the hobby can always use that. I realize I'm gushing here, but I'm really tickled with the responsibility shown by thepubbers in helping me out with this.

And speaking of projects with a positive slant, Larry Peery has firmed up his plans for the Don Miller Memorial Award. This is organized in a fairly similar manner to the Les Pimley award in England, also named after a deceased publisher (Miller was one of the founding fathers of the variant hobby and one of the pillars of the early postal hobby). It will be awarded annually at DipCon for contributions to the hobby in the recent past. A nominating committee will select the nominees, and will rely mostly on self-nominees. This list will be then put to a vote of the North American postal hobby in late Spring. If you'd like to serve on this nominating committee (I doubt it will be much work), contact Larry Peery (who won't be on the committee) at P.O.Box 8416 San Diego CA 92102., preferably by Feb 1, which is the cutoff.

Later in the month some information may become available about DipCon XVI. However, from what I understand, the report in Murd'ring Ministers #54 that the DipCon activities have been moved from Detroit (MichiCon) is somewhat premature. So I suggest that you just sit tight and wait till the dust settles, because I suspect that when it does, DipCon will find itself in MichiCon after all.

The 1982 Freshman Poll will be run by Scott Hansen 939 18th Ave SE Mpls MN 55414. Any zine or subzine which began Nov 1, 1981 or later is eligible. Rate the zines from 10 (Absolutely wonderful) to 0 (Absolute worst), and get the votes to Scott by Feb 19, 1983.

Well, so much for a spasm of original writing in DD. Starting with the Feb issue, things will go back to the usual fare of reprints....And another "trip" issue is a long way off, since we are unlikely to take one in 1983 at all, and even 1984 is doubtful.

The 1982 DIPLOMACY DIGEST Survey of Publishing Practices and Attitudes

Publishers eligible for this were North American pubbers: of non-warehouse dipzines who have been publishing since at least Oct 1, 1981. I didn't exclude new pubbers because their opinions are not valued. But many pubbers, myself included, change a lot of their opinions in their first year, as they move from the fantasy of pubbing to the reality of it. And so many of the questions are not applicable to warehouse pubbers that I felt I should exclude them too. They do contribute a great deal to the hobby, they are essential really, but this survey is about pubbing, not GMing.

The questionnaires were distributed in Oct 1982. Those filling it out were Arnawoodian, Barents, Baumeister, Benes, Berch, Brown, Brown, Carter, Caruso, Connor, Daly, Davis, Del Grande, Fleming, Grabar, Hail, Hanse, Heinowski, Henricks, Kane, Boardman Larzelere, Linsey, Lischett, Martin, Mills, Ozog, Palter, Pearson, Peery, Sergeant, Smyth, Walker. Thanx also go to Bumpas and Kendter, who filled it out, then discovered they weren't eligible (silly me, I put the warehouse requirement at the end). And a raspberry goes out to Gary Coughlan for not filling it out.

The questions appear in no particular order. The numbers are the raw counts, not percentages. The underscored answer is the one Berch gave --- no secrets here!

1. After your startup period, have you, on occasion, sent out unsolicited samples for the purpose of increasing circulation? Yes-17; No-15. Henricks: I once sent well over 600 copies of ... Envoy #13 resulted in nearly 50 identifiable subscriptions. Expensive, and a never-again idea, it was worth it...Daly: Only when I had a game filling too slowly and wanted to speed it up.

2. If you received an offer from someone you thought to be reliable to run a subzine in your zine, would you be likely to accept? Yes-15, No-17.

3. Are there people in the hobby you would not permit to sub to your zine? Yes-16, No-15. Another evenly balanced response. Several people named the blacklistee, the most common name being Gibson, who appears to be out of the hobby now. And several Nos added that there are people who are not permitted to play in their zine.

4. Suppose half way between issue 30 and 31 you receive a check from a new subber. Would you start his sub with 30 or 31? #30-9, #31-21. I should have said "assuming you know he doesn't have #30", since a few people said they assumed he had gotten #30 as a sample. I said #30 because I don't want the new subber to have to wait --- the zine in a way is a receipt. Henricks: The new subber would receive #30 with my compliments and sub would start with #31. ((Carter sounded similar)). Daly: If #30 contained the first part of something to appear in #31, I would send #30.

5. Would you consider your present circulation to be more than, less than, or about the same as, your preferred circulation? More than-4, Less than-9, Same-18. A lot of satisfied customers here! Henricks: Present circulation is always satisfactory to me - I consider it an indication of how I am doing...but would not be more than mildly disappointed if a large drop occurred abruptly.

6. If you run a gamezine, and had room for an orphaned game, would you accept it? Yes-24, No-2, Depends-4. John Daly take note---this is a generous crew, tho the second limitation is an important one. Lischette: Depends on whether the players want me. Del Grande: After the way I mangle games (with my GMing) I'd only accept an orphan if I had a GM to run it. Henricks: Envoy always has room ... we've picked up and run 21 Dip orphans 2 Kingmaker orphans, and working on others. ((With a record like that, yes, I most certainly will let Roy toot his horn --- that's quite a record of service!))

7. Suppose it is the evening of the deadline, and all games have been adjudicated and the pages run off, and labels all prepared, etc. However, you have prepared absolutely nothing else other than gams and press. Because of the press of your personal life, you know it will be at least W days before you can put together a decent amount of "filler" ---other material. What is the largest Value of W such that you would delay the zine rather than mailing it out the next morning (For example, if you;d delay the zine for 3

days, but not for 4 days, then W=3). Assume that the previous issue was of normal size. O-14, 1 or 2-4, 3 or 4-2, 5+-4. I got more flack on this question than any other. It was called confusing, incomprehensible, badly constructed, irrelevant etc, and many did not answer it. Heinowski, Smyth and Linsey pointed out that they don't normally mail the next day anyhow --- I should have said the evening before you normally mail. Woody said he mails the games out before the zine --- I should have limited this to those who don't use flyers. Oh, well. I was trying to get some notion of how pubbers balance the competing needs of putting out a full size issue and getting the games out on time. Hail: Zero...there is no excuse for delaying 2-week deadline games! Henricks: This question is quite apropos to me, as it caused my severe lateness last year in Jan/Feb/March. I now expect to get the zine out timely, but will hold it for a maximum of 7 days to get a complete issue.

8. I'll skip this one, it was repeated later -- I'm such an awful proofreader.

9. Do you pay, in terms of sub extensions for original articles submitted by a subber? Yes-21, No-8. This practice is much more common than I had thought.

10. Would you pay, in terms of sub extensions, for the right to publish the first results of a rating system? Yes-2, No-29.

11. Same as #10, but for a hobby poll? Yes-4, No-27. I didn't ask these two questions well. I answered no because I don't publish complete poll or ratings results. What I should have asked was whether you find it objectionable for others to do this. Palter and Lischett point out that 9-11 and others aren't relevant to them since they don't apparently charge for subs. Henricks: If I want to publish a Poll result first, I'd run my own poll...but I can't give it the effort it really needs to be meaningful. I don't object to anyone else paying for poll results, etc...if its mine to sell, then no one has the right to dictate what I do with it. Peery: about the Leeder Poll flap. I have never seen so much energy wasted on such ...trivia. Its Leeder's Poll, he can do with it what he wants, publish it where and when he chooses. What is worse... is the way the hobby handled its dicussion of the matter. My God, what a bunch of babies! What would we do if something important came up for debate!

12. If you had to fold, would you prefer to A) Disband the zine, transfering any games to one or more pubbers, or B) Transfer the entire zine, lock stock and barrel to another person to publish it? A)-20, B)-10. I do not beleive that gamezine has been transfered in North America for at least 8 years, and probably much longer. Indeed, I suspect most people who fold their zine don't even consider the possibility. I think, however, that it has been done twice in Britian in the past 5years, tho I could be wrong. Peery: I would transfer anything except the title Xenogogic which is mine. In every project I'm working on ... there exists some kind of safety valve in case somethign happens to me. Hendricks: Disband --- Envoy is me, DD is you...I would hope that Envoy is uniquely enough me that no one else can do it as well as I (or as poorly...)....I am careful crossing busy streets. ((Yes, and Diplomacy World was Walt Buchanan, and Everything was Conrad von Metzke, but they got transfered --- several times in fact. If or rather when my time comes, I'll try to find someone to take over the whole DD operation; including of course the archives))

13. Do you expect to be publishing in 2 years? Yes-30, No-3.

14. Do you expcet to be publishing in 4 years? Yes-20, No-9. In a way, these two are somewhat fatuous questions. Most folds come from unforeseen events, whch of course, one cannot expect. It will be interesting to see who of those who said No to Question #14 rally is around in Oct, 1986.

15. Will you honor a request for a sample of your zine if no SASE has been enclosed? Yes-28, No-2. This is more lopsided than I'd have predicted. Smyth: Usually, Americans enclose US staps which are useless to me. Mills: If the letter without SASE says. "Send me sample", I say "where's the garbage pail." If the letter without SASE is an explanation of why he wants sample, who he is and is otherwise fairly communicative Then I'll usually send one with a note that he should send a pubber the postage...Most

- of the time I'll get a return letter from these types with a stamp enclosed for the sample I sent them. (That I've never gotten. Tho I honor any request, I've noticed that the chances of getting a sub are much higher if the person has enclosed a stamp)) ((OOps add "Depends-3" to #15, which three people added to the choices given))
16. Suppose a subber, half-way thru his sub, asks that his sub be discontinued and the remained of his sub returned. No reason is given. Would you honor this request? Yes-27 No-2, Maybe-1.
17. Same as #16, but explains that he's leaving the hobby. Yes-27, No-2, Maybe-1. These turned out to be pretty useless questions.
18. Do you address your zine by A) Hand, B) Typing directly on envelope, C) Typed Labels A)-15 $\frac{1}{2}$, B)-12 $\frac{1}{2}$, C)-15. Those voting for 2 choices were split. There was a strong correlation with circulation --- there was only one pubber with circulation over 75 using A or B, and even he (Henricks) says he's moving to labels. Choice C) includes copied typed lables, tho I should have made this clearer.
19. If a non-player's sub expires without renewal, will you send a grace issue? Yes-7, No-18, Maybe-6. Actually, on rare occasions I will send the issue, and I often send postcard reminders. Lischett: If a player drops out or a standby fails to standby, I'll send a final issue saying that its a final issue.
20. Assuming you could print only one, which of the following would you print. Assume Each one is of the same length(1 page) and of the same quality of writing: A) A Strategy and Tactics article describing a country opening, B) A satire article, poking fun at someone in the hobby, C) An article on national politics, or D) A movie review. A-12, B-11, C-4, D-4. This is not quite as wide a spread as I would have predicted. For those interested in finding the right market, C) was given by Davis, Palter, Mills, and Barents; D) was given by Martin, Hail, Baumeister and Daly.
21. Suppose you received an article which was good enough to run, but only just barely. You feel with only a modest amount of effort it could be greatly improved. Would you 1) Run it as it is 2) Send it back to him with suggestions for editing, 3) Edit it yourself, then get his approval before printing 4) Edit it yourself, and then print it right away. 1)-12, 2)-5, 3)-7, 4)-6. This is a close choice for me between 2) and 3), and it would depend on the writer --- for some I'd make suggestions. But for most, my theory is, they've already done their best job, so now its my job to be editor. 4) strikes me as an unnecessary risk, and 1), well, that depends on how important it is that your zine does a good job. Mills: I've always done 4)...if it has some merit, I'm not going to hold it back, and if it only needs a few holes filled (syntax, grammar, etc) I'll edit it. If there are content holes, which I am familiar with I'll add my stuff between the lines, not with (()) but by inserting restrictive clauses, etc, so that it flows as if written by one person. I've only gotten in trouble one: rewriting portions of a Gregory Russell play in EM. I spruced up the dialogue.
22. Is your family's attitude toward your publishing A) Very supportive, B) Somewhat supportive, C) Neutral, D) Somewhat negative, E) Very negative. A)-6, B)-5, C)-15, D)-3, E)-1. Smyth and Arnawoodian said they weren't sure their families knew about it.
23. Since you began publishing, would you say your writing skills have A) Improved considerably, B) Improved Somewhat, C) Been unchanged, D) Deteriorated. A)-5, B)-14, C)-12, D)-0. My spelling hasn't improved, tho! Lischett: My writing may have improved a little, but my spelling has suffered from reading non-proofread Diplomacy stuff ((so thats why Andy dropped his DD sub; what a novel excuse.))
24. Why isn't your average issue larger? A) Can't afford extra cost, B) Don't have enuf time, C) Don't have enough additional material, D) Don't want a larger zine E) Other. A)-12, B)-17, C)-10, D)-10. In questions 18, 20, and 21, when I got multiple answers, I split the point, as they were alternatives in any given situation. Here, all answers were counted, which is why these add to more than 33, but I should have said explicitly to list all reasons. This is a rather even spread, so that all 4 factors are fairly common. Daly: I go the one ounce limit ((12 pages)), what room is left after games goes to filler from most any source. ((this is a common approach))

24. Would you say the number of games you have is: Too few-1, Too many-12, About Right-17. I'm amazed -- only one out of 33 wants to expand the number of games (the typically, its the new pubbers who seek to expand games). Daly: I think 8 would be comfortable, but demand has pushed me to 12.

25. Do you keep a significant amount of back issues in stock for sale, beyond the last three issues? Yes-15, No-18. Back issues are an absolutely essential part of the DD operation. They allow me to do print runs (175-200 copies) of the size needed to get cheap rates. Because of the postage savings from mailing them printed matter rates, they generate a profit which partially offsets the loss from regular operations. Well over half of my subbers have bought back issues, complete runs in some cases! Hail: Yes, but not for sale; for free issues for inquiring players. Each SASE receives one copy of all the back issues I have on hand.

26. If someone, or his actions, are attacked in your zine, will he have a right of reply to the criticism? Automatically-28, Sometimes-4, Never-0. Its interesting that 3 of the 4 "Sometimes" are pubbers from way, way back: Peery, Barents, and Boardman. Peery: This depends on the nature and the vehicle of the criticism. A bad review of a zine of such would not require a response. A signed editorial attacking an individual would give him the right of reply usually, depending on the nature of the criticism.

27. If someone, or his actions, are criticized in your zine, but he is not a subber, will you send him a copy? Automatically-17, If he asks for it-9, Only if he pays for it-1. Mills: If I'm agreeing or disagreeing with someone on his opinion of a person or issue, I'll not send the person under issue a copy. He'll still be informed from the original detractor. If I take it upon myself to yell at someone, I'll send a copy. But you see, I stay away from that silly shit ((your assumption about what the original detractor will do seems risky)). Boardman: D) Sometimes not at all ((ah, but we have our ways of seeing it))

28. Suppose you wanted to criticize an editorial stance taken by another pubber. However, the pubber said that he did not want his editorial reprinted in other zines (which of course would include yours). Would you A) Reprint it anyhow, B) Paraphrase it, or C) Forget the whole thing. A)-3, B)-20, CO-8. I should explain. The editorialist is speaking with a forked tongue. He wants to put his arguments in the public domain to persuade people --- and then pretend that he hasn't. He is simply throwing up a roadblock in the way of anyone who wants to criticize his editorial. Of course it is tempting to just paraphrase it, but there's a considerable risk that your paraphrasing is going to change something, despite your best efforts. He can then retort, "Thats not what I said." You defend that it was, and presto, you are on a tangent, discussing whether or not your paraphrase is accurate. Hendricks: I would criticize by private letter, which is how I handle all my gaming feuds. Brown(Canada): I'd write it for his zine((fat chance of getting it published)). Peery: I wouldn't reprint it, I would refer people to the source. I'd probably lambast him for not allowing it to be reprinted.

29. Suppose one of your games is delayed for a season for reasons which are entirely yours. Assuming that you use the traditional Game Fee + Sub system for players, will the players of that game get the issue for free? Yes-12, No-13. Del Grande: Yes-- if that's the only game they're playing in Life of Monty((his zine)). I refund a percentage of the price equal to the percentage of their games which got screwed up((That should make it clear why I don't gm!)).

30. If you put out an issue twice your "normal" size, will you count it, and charge it as a "double" issue? Always-8, Sometimes-5, Never-17. I should have left out the counting part of the question. Several commented that they never put out oversize issues. I have given my reasons in VoD recently, but in summary, it is foolish and wasteful for me to do otherwise. Some topics (e.g. #25/26) need the 23 pages, and the Lexicon needed a triple size. My alternative is to mail out #25, and then mail out #26. But that will cost me quite a bit of extra time in addressing, stapling, etc. Plus, its going to cost me 135 x 20¢ = \$27, in extra postage. Why should I lay this out??? The alternative is to put out the double issue, but change for just one. But thats fantasy-

land, folks. I cannot possibly afford to put out a 23 page zine for 35¢. If I could, I'd have no business charging 35¢ for the regular 11-12 page issue. DD costs you about 3¢/page, regardless of how it is packaged (as a single, double or triple) -- so what is the big deal? I realize this sounds awfully defensive, but I don't see why people object to paying twice as much for twice as much.

31. What means of reproduction do you normally use? Ditto-5, Mimeo-5, Xerox-14, photooffset-8. One of the two or three most dramatic changes in publishing which has occurred since I started in 1977 has been the switch away from the "fannish" methods (ditto and mimeo) towards the high technology methods, to where they are now less than a third. And this trend is continuing -- Smyth's zine is switching away from ditto, and of those zines under 4 years old --- the newer ones, only Baumeister's and Larzelere's are using fannish methods. The main holdouts seem to be the oldest zines, e.g. those of Boardman, Barents, Benes. There is even a trend toward photooffset. Daly: Mimeo is the fastest, best looking option I could come up with to get Dogs of War in the mail on the day after the deadline.

32. Suppose you received a letter for publication which contained an unsubstantiated allegation against someone else which you were quite sure was not true. Would you A) Print it, B) Print it, but add your own comment that you did not believe it was true, C) Edit the allegation out of the letter, D) Send the letter back, asking that the allegation be either substantiated or deleted. A)-2, B)-11, C)-3, D)-4. Alas, I forgot an alternative, i.e. not print the letter at all, but 6 people wrote that one in on their own initiative.

33. Do you usually use envelopes to send the zine within the US? Yes-12, No-19, Sometimes-1. Actually, this is a rather pointless question.

34. Do you think that the average zine you trade with is a little A) Better than, B) Worse than, or C) Same Quality as your zine. By trade, I mean only all-for-all, not "mutual subs". A)-10, B)-14, C)-5. In retrospect, I should have included ms's. Daly: My zine caters to those who play in it. If the pubbers I trade with aren't playing in Dogs, I wonder why they trade with me((answers should be sent to John)).

35. Do you exchange zines with other pubbers A) Mostly or entirely by trading, B) Mostly or entirely by Mutual Subs, or C) Significant amounts of each. A)-17, B)-7, C)-8. Mutual subs have made enormous inroads in the past 5 years, to the point where only half use trades mostly or exclusively. When I started pubbing in 1977, ms was very controversial and unpopular. This has arisen, in part, from a greater variation in sub prices than existed, say, in the early 70s. .

36. How many gamezines do you receive from England? Zero-21, 1-7, 2-3, 3+-2. Sad.

37. How many zines do you get from the rest of Europe? Zero-26, 1-5, 2-2.

38. Have you ever participated in the production of a fake or hoax zine? Yes-16, No-16 Boardman: Persons identifiable as having done so are dropped from my mailing list ((OK, those who say they have, are Carter, Grabar, Fleming, Mills, Berch, Pearson, Ozog, Caruso, Walker, Larzelere, Hail, Smyth, Linsey, Hansen, Arnawoodian, and Baumeister. There are others outside the scope of this survey, too, but that should be enough to get you started)).

39. If you run non-black press games, would you permit someone to submit press if he were not in the game? Yes-3, No-11, Yes, but only if it is clearly labeled as such-11.

40. Suppose you were printing a long letter which made a number of different points which you wanted to respond to. Would you prefer to A) Insert comments with (()), B) Insert numbers into the text, keyed to the response below, C) Insert nothing, put the entire response below. A-9, B-2, C-18. My choice doesn't seem too popular, eh? Inserting numbers seem to me to be a good compromise. Its barely intrusive, and permits the letter to be read without significant interruption, yet the reader can tell what is being responded to by the editor, and can, if he wants, read the response before continuing. Baumeister: I would prefer to insert comments, but out of respect

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for letter-writers, I answer at bottom in practice.

For the next nine statements, the publishers were asked to indicate their attitude according to the following score: Strongly agree-1; Moderately agree-2; Neutral-3; Moderately disagree-4, Strongly disagree-5. In presenting the results I have also circled the median answer.

41. Fakes, as they have existed over the past few years, are good for the hobby. 1-8, (2-9), 3-9, 4-4, 5-1. With one side (the negative) having only 5 votes, this was one of the two most unbalanced questions, and was the only question to report just a single vote for one of the choices.
42. I find typing to be enjoyable. 1-2, 2-11, (3-8), 4-5, 5-7. Fairly well balanced here. It would be interesting to see if hates typing correlates with poor typing.
43. I feel I am getting enough positive feedback from my readers. 1-10, (2-13), 3-2, 4-5, 5-3. With 23 positive responses, pubbers seem satisfied. Henricks: Never get enuf positive feedback, but the response to Envoy #36 was truly a shot of the old morale boost. I live for the short notes like "Keep up the good work"...I interpret resubs to the hobby's most expensive zine as the highest possible praise.
44. It is proper for a publisher to make a profit on his zine. 1-6, 2-9, (3-13), 4-3, 5-2. This had the highest "neutral" vote of any question. Considering all the ruckus this point has generated in revent years, I was surprised to find so few negative votes.
45. Publishing a zine, and playing separatly tend to be separate and competing hobbies. 1-13, (2-9), 3-4, 4-5, 5-2. The 13 here was the highest extreme vote any question got. Daly: Except that if you stab someone, he can take revenge at the polls. Henricks: Absolutely! Some of the best players couldn't publish or GM on a bet because they would find themselves calling it work. I publish as a hobby - it is fun, and rewards my ego without causing too great a drain on my pocketbook. ((Its interesting to note that most of the pubbers who have been at it for a very long time do not play postally at all e.g. Boardman, Barents, Benes, Leeder; Beyerlein plays only standby positions Davis just a variant or two, and Peery just one game. For myself, tho I enjoy postal play almost as much as I did when I started, its a question of time, and the discovery of diminishing returns. Where once 4 games postally was not enough, now I find that one or two, is))
46. Its best to cram as much stuff as you can onto a page rather than leaving a lot of white space and wide margins. 1-2, 2-11, (3-6), 4-7, 5-7.
47. I publish for my benefit more than for the benefit of my readers. 1-5, 2-6, (3-10), 4-8, 5-3. Piggott's first law of fanzines doesn't exactly have overwhelming support. Views are very evenly balanced and there were only 8 votes at the extremes.
48. Most non-pubbers do not realize how much work it takes to put out the zine. 1-13, (2-11), 3-3, 4-3, 5-2. Not surprisingly, this was the most unbalanced response of all, with a difference of 19 votes between negative and positive. I have always encouraged those who are thinking about pubbing to try the subzine route, which has some but not all aspects of pubbing a zine (if they are absolutely sure of themselves, they aren't going to be asking for my advice anyhow).
49. Reading a zine with reduced print reduces my enjoyment of the zine. 1-3, 2-8, 3-2, (4-7), 5-13. Reduction has enormous cost advantages, but what is the price? Connor: It depends on the degree of reduction ((and there is variation here; DW has relatively little, DD has quite a bit. This is related too, to whether a 10-to-the-inch or a 12-to-the-inch typewriter is used)). Henricks: Since I pioneered reduced print, I am hardly objective on this, but I really don't think reduced print is a problem - if the printing is crisp. For example, I rarely find Whitestonia easy to read, but the reduced print is not the problem, the problem is the method of printing -- looks like Xerox reduction ((if is))...If I did Envoy on a non-reduction basis, the last issue would have set subbers back \$5.18 at my present rate, of which \$2 would be postage.((You aren't quite the "pioneer" in reduced print, as both DW and DD were reduced before Envoy began, along with some now defunct zine like El Conquistador, Dolchstoss, Ethil, etc))

This concludes the questions on practices and attitudes. I was curious to see who was most and least typical. The simplest approach was to look at the numerically scored attitude questions, #41-49. I looked at how much people diverged from the median (thus, if a median was a 4, and you answered 2, that would give a divergence of 2) The person with the smallest divergence was Randolph Smyth with 5, and a few others closely following at 6. The most divergence was Herb Barents at 16; no one else was even close. The problem is, this approach just looks, really, at the extent to which you picked extremes(1,5), since the median was always in the 2-4 range. Smyth had no extremes, Herb had 6 of them.

So I went back, and looked at how many times people hit the "mode" answer --- the answer which was the most common, and did this over all the questions. For questions with ties (41, 38, , 39, and 18) I counted both answers. The person with the largest numbers of hits, who obviously apes every twist and turn of hobby fashion, Mr. "Middleman" himself was Guy Hail, with 32 $\frac{1}{2}$ hits. Only a whisker behind at 32 was Hansen. It is clear that you guys are toadying up to the entire hobby. Calculating the least hits was a problem. Three people had nine or more questions unanswered, which of course reduces their number of hits. I've somewhat arbitrarily disqualified them. That left as Mr Hobby Outcast, Jack Fleming, who is, I understand, wandering around Mexico at the moment (obviously another attempt to be different).

I also asked for some basic biographical data:

Age. The median was 32. All but two people answered this, one older, one younger, so the figure is good. This breaks down as follows: 0-24 years old-5; 25-29 -- 7; 30-34 -- 10; 35-39 -- 5, 40+ -- 4. The range was 16(Kane) to 52(Davis). The average age came to 31.4

Length of Publishing. The median was 3 $\frac{3}{4}$ years (remember, those older 1 year were excluded). The longest is of course Boardman, 19 years. We presently have 6 people who started publishing 10 or more years ago, and all 6 of them answered Yes to Question #14.

Employment Status. Full Time-25, Part Time-2, Unemployed-2, College-2, High School-1. This represents a dramatic change from the mid 70s, when high school and college publishers were much more common.

Circulation. The median was 70. I defined this as the average over the last few issues, of copies actually mailed to people who receive the zine on a regular basis (so that if one copy went to a household with several readers, it still counts as one) Distribution was as follows: 40 or less-7, 41-60 --- 5, 61-80 -- 11, 81-100 -- 5, 101+ -- 4. Its interesting that of the top 4 (Walker, Henricks, Berch, and Linsey in that order), all rely entirely or almost entirely on mutual subs: Roy, Rod, and I think Bruce have no trades at all, and I have very few. We all use fotooffset. I believe that if this question had been asked 8 years ago, the median would have been under 60.

Answer status. On the record-30, Off the record-1, On the record, but don't use my name-2. The latter 3 caused no problem, as it turned out.

Finally, I asked what question I should have asked, but didn't, and suggested they give their answer.

Benes: Why is publishing worthwhile? Because of the many good and bad, interesting and boring types of people you meet ((I could give a question like this, with some categories, but if I allowed people to give multiple answers, many would choose most if not all the categories, and if I limited them to one, people would have a lot of trouble choosing one above the other. Still, its worth some thought))

Martin: Are anonymous bitches ethical? No ((This could become a good question if it were a lot more specific. Would you print an anonymous personal attack? Would you print an anonymous critical zine review? Or it could take the form of, Is it proper to...., as that avoids the I-don't-print-Zine-reviews-other-than-those-I-write situation which prevents the person from fully answering)) How much attention do you pay to poll results? On a scale of 1-5, 5=none ((another good idea, but "attention"

is too much of a catch-all. A person might pay attention because he thinks they are very amusing, but of no consequence. Perhaps it could take the form of: If your zine did much poorer than you expected in the NAZP, what would your most likely reaction to this be? A).... Or it could take the form of "I take the results of the NAZP seriously, and then use the 1-5 format.)"

Daly: What is your approximate cost per single issue? 30-39¢ (Hell raising question for sure) ((Hm, dare I ask for both cost and price? I suspect that many would not even want to calculate the cost. I'd have to specify what costs were to be included (e.g. amortizing the cost of the duplicator). But a price question should have been included with this survey, damn!))

Henricks: Does a publisher have an obligation to his subscribers in the same sense that a business has to its customer? Absolutely ((Yes, yes, but everybody has a different notion of just what the business obligation is, so your yes and my yes could mean two different things. And how do you weigh various factors? Surely the punctuality requirements for Time Magazine and Envoy are different in the eyes of the readers of each.))

Connor: How many games do you run now? 7 ((Good)) In how many games do you play now? 2 ((Good)) What are the maximum # of games you have ever run at one time? 8 I think ((I'm not sure anyone would care)) Ditto for games played? 9 ((Ditto)) Rate or rank the following factors: appearance, hobby news, fiction, letters...((he goes on. Another good question, but some of these are not competing, tho that might not be a real problem)) What is your peak sub level? ((Again, of little interest)) How many zines do you read? ((I'd need to define "read", but another good one. Why didn't I think of some of these?))

Brown-Canada: What do you think of hobby Polls? There are too^{damn} many of them ((This is a nice question but it isn't really about publishing per se, but a question about the hobby. Or was it just a speech?)) Do you report hobby feuds not involving yourself? Rarely, there are too damn many silly ones ((Another speech! But this could be turned into a good question on what criteria is used in deciding on what feuds to comment on, whether you'll permit your letter column to be used for that, etc))

Boardman: What should be done about forgers, thieves, and cheats in the hobby? ((Another speech. On the "forgers", you'll have to first persuade people that something needs to be done at all. There were, after all, only 5 negative votes, including your "5" to question 41. I doubt you'll get very far with either Smyth (who has already done this sort of thing) or Davis. That leaves you with Benes and Barents.))

Palter: Knowing what a thankless task this is, why does anyone bother?

Smyth: Do you enjoy publishing? Yes, I suppose everyone should answer the same way, but from the occasional comments in some zines, it makes you wonder. On second thought, a deep evaluation of the question by publishers might spur a lot of folds --- better skip it. ((Two questions here with a similar theme, and closely related to the Benes' question quoted earlier. With three writers on the topic, its clear that some question of this sort should appear. This sort of question is better for a write-your-own-answer, but that gets a collection of mini-essays which are hard to compile. OOps, here's one more I missed in the same vein:))

Grabar: Why do you publish so long? I have a lot of friends who depend on me. ((And yet, Grabar answered "1" to question 47, so things are more complicated than they would seem to be.))

I am extremely pleased at how this survey went, and consider it to be a complete success. The almost unanimous response is a kind of vindication of its worth. I plan to do this again in 1985, with some questions dropped, rewritten, and added. I'll close with a pair of quotes from notes attached to the survey.

Boardman:...since my answers to many of the questions take strong issue with your most heartfelt positions, such as defense of forgery, I am not certain that you want them.

Carter: I hope this is not a fake.

Letters: (There, now that I've said that, what can I do with the rest of the line?)

Scott Marley: ((who was Austria in 80AY)) Eric and Jerry did not have to twist my arm to enter 80AY. The fault is my own: I should not have entered a game I didn't have time for. However, I am not a "beginner" --- I've been playing Diplomacy about as long as you, but almost exclusively FTF. I think my record in the many tournaments I've been in is quite respectable and demonstrates a certain minimum competency, at least ((OK, what I meant was "postal" Diplomacy))

FO1: A Vie-Bud was a misorder --- I intended A Vie-Gal, which shows how much I was paying attention to the game....around that time I was getting a lot of shit dumped on me because of Utopia Ltd ((his unsuccessful attempt at a news oriented genzine)) and the IDA mess, so I was very bitter about the hobby, and hardly in the mood to devote the time to the game that I should have....You might be amused to hear that I originally agreed to join the game only on the condition that I not be assigned Austria...

Peter Ashley:I really enjoy your travel notes. The game diary was also very interesting but I thought could have used some editing. I suspect I am not alone in not setting up the board when reading it, which is fine in the early years and difficult later, so it might have been helped to have game maps there, but then the space addition would have been significant. ((Very significant indeed. I was tempted to do some editing, particularly since the issue was running over the 36 page level. But if edited, it would no longer be a true diary, and people would justifiably wonder what I removed, and why, and what the real story was, etc))

Jim Grosch:Would like to have seen each season from all 7 players' viewpoint but realize how impractical that would have been....I would rather see more like the 80AY account than the trip to Spain, but its your zine....Hope to still be with you when you publish the 1990AY game ((I don't plan to ever do such a diary again. But something similar to what you mention was once done --- each player wrote commentary on the game, and these were printed along with the moves. I may reprint that some day, but that would be a good three years off (just as I did something similar in #25/26, over three years ago). I suspect your preference for 80AY over Spain is a minority view, but I have no way of being sure.))

Doug Beyerlein:....after reading how you won the DW demo game I almost wanted to sign up for the next one. Fortunately, that idea didn't last long. ((Rats! I failed, Rod))

Mark Luedi: I enjoyed reading your account of Spain. Surely you must have kept an on-going diary of sorts to keep all those details straight.((I always mean to take more notes than I actually do; this time I took practically none at all. But I did have those travel guides with me when I wrote it up, and I have a good memory. Luedi goes on to also say that he wanted to see all 7 players do this, adding:))one does not get a very good impression of whats going on in the west((Next issue of DW will have the endgame statements, and that should shed some light on that))....I've tried maintaining diaries of sorts for a couple of my games and find that things generally get disorganized....((Yes, but you are just getting started in postal play; I've been at this for a while, and have written sizable endgame statements before(nothing nearly this big, tho). It also takes some discipline --- writing when you don't really want to, and trying to figure out how to explain something concisely)).

Dan Stafford: A couple of issues back, you said you didn't think a subzine had been faked before((the faking of Dipimaster)). Wrong. Tro ((Sherwood)) and I faked Down 'n' Dirty a year or so back when it was still a Brutus Bulletin subzine...it did appear in BB #98-99. No one in DnD-1 was fooled....but according to Marshall, everyone in DnD-2 was taken in, as was Michalski himself ((OK, I stand corrected))

John Boardman: May the coming year find you, Linsey, Walker, Coughlan and Ozog continue to be confused with each other ((People confuse me with Coughlan?!?! Folkes, this guy Boardman is just not keeping up!))

And speaking of Coughlan, I got response on that editorial from Arnawoodian, Byrne, Caruso, Linsey, Fassio, Olsen, Ozog, Stafford and Jim Williams. For various reasons unrelated to the content of the letters, none of these will be printed. But I greatly appreciate your writing, and hope you'll do so again.

The Zine Column #59

Is a headline really necessary?

Some news from the variant hobby. Lee Kendter, Sr, 4347 Benner St Philadelphia, PA 19135 has now taken over as Miller Number Custodian, as of Jan 1..... Fred Davis,*the hobby's most experienced variant GM, has opening in East Indies II and other variants at \$8, which includes a sub to his Bushwacker, for as long as your game lasts (and some variants can take a long time indeed)...fans of colossal variants may want to note that John Marsden recently completed GMing a game of Mercator VII, a global variant with 19 players, 111 home centers and 95 neutrals! The game was won by England, with 10 other survivors and only one dropout....Ron Brown 1528 El Sereno Pl Bakersfield CA 93304 has openings in Machiavelli.

The Dogs of War has been faked, probably by Michalski. Its a slight effort, with page 1 being some smart-alec remarks ("Disaster has struck the hobby lately, as Mark Berch DID return from Spain!") and the rest being a scandalous version of the Peanuts comic strip, fotocopied from somewhere, something which would be a trifle out of place in the normally staid Dogs of War....Bruce Linsey has set a hobby record for his VOD #70, which has a letter column 34 pages long with 38 letters from 34 writers, which exceeds anything I've ever seen in Greatest Hits or Europa Express or Ethil the Frog....Roy Henricks 128 Deerfield Rd Pittsburg PA 15235 will be taking the Zine Directory from its founder, Mike Mills. Roy is mulling some changes, so if you have suggestions, write him. He plans publication for late June, 1983....

Its sad to have to report the folding of Just Among Friends. Al Pearson put out close to a purists zine --- just humor, along with the postal games. His cartoons, his articles and his "news" items poked good-natured fun at nearly everyone active in the hobby, his family and people he met in the travels his job required. Other zines have humor too (Whitestonia, Apalling Greed, Voice of Doom) as a regular feature, but for my taste, no one was as consistantly witty as Al. He will still be around, and is still working on DipCon. And if we're lucky, we'll see some of his stuff around, perhaps in the form of a subzine or a fake or two. Al had to drop the zine because of a job change, and the games are being rehoused.

The deadline for the third annual "Nixon Award" nominations (given for conspicuous dishonesty in a postal diplomacy game) is Feb 14th. Get them in to Ron Brown, 1528 El Sereno Place Bakersfield CA 93304, and include a paragraph explaining your reasons....and speaking of Ron, his Murd'ring Ministers #54 has an interesting account of a type of face to face diplomacy played with one day deadlines on a Polaris submarine back in 1967. One player went so far as to circulate doctored maps (with no Boh) in an attempt to foil an attack on Berlin ... and another account of a odd doings, this time in a school-game, is written up in DIJAGH #4. Huh? you say? Read on.

NEW ZINES

DIJAGH Glen Taylor 3007 Hewitt Avenue #428 Silver Spring MD 20906 (55¢ per issue)
The Diplomat Dave Kleiman 8315 Spyglass Dr #1B Indianapolis IN 46260 (4/\$1)
Jours de France Pierre Lavaurs 45 rue d'Ulm 75230 Paris Cedex 05 France (In French)

Its a pleasure to see another dipzine in the DC area. Glen has been running games by carbon copy since the mid 70s, and is now going big time. The stress seems to be on variants (there are openings in gunboat, anarchy(a 34 player variant) and others) and on Science Fiction...Kleiman's zine is the 4th, at least, with that title.

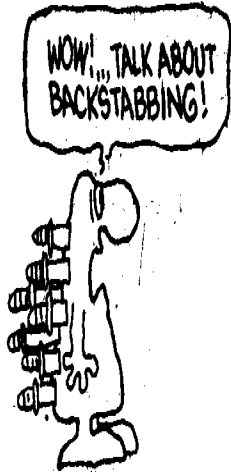
John Caruso writes that Kathy Byrne just had emergency surgery. Its scary to hear things like that, and I hope she'll be completely recovered. Anyhow, Kathy's Korner will likely not appear till Feb, and Whitestonia may be late....Quote of the month comes from Fol Si Fie #150, where GM Randolph Smyth says, ".... five months should allow everyone time to submit orders...."A final note of trivia comes from Runestone #370, where GM John Leeder notes that game 78I had players residing, at various times, in USA, Canada, Finland, Belgium, South Africa, Iceland, West Germany, Japan, Venezuela, Ecuador.

(Davis is 1427 Clairidge Rd Balt. MD 21207) //

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Mark L Berch
492 Naylor Place
Alexandria VA 22304

If "67" appears by your name, your
sub has just, and its time to renew



(from The Washington Post)



Larry -
Thank for
Contributing to the survey
Mark

P.S. I just add 10 issues to
your DD sub, so you are adding
\$350 to my X account, such as
it is!

Larry Feery (96)
Box 8416
San Diego CA 92102