

DIPLOMACY DIGEST

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Misc & Etc

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I was surprised that my Linsey/Highfield comments of last issue produced almost no mail here. The recent issue of Magus has some criticisms, which I will answer there. Steve Langely (the pubber of Magus) did raise one issue that I want to take up here because it has much broader implications, and it will give you some insight into how I think, and how I approach situations like this.

Steve took exception to my line, "I'll try to give it to you straight." Let me explain what I mean by that, and why I take the approach that I do. My normal modus operandi is this: If a person says why they did something, their reasons or motivations, I will take that person at his or her word. I do this because I am not a mindreader (telepath) or a psychiatrist. I have no direct input to their internal thought processes, so I have no grounds on which to contradict what they say in this regard. This is the approach I try to use both in the hobby and in the real world; it has served me well.

Its not the only approach, and its certainly not the one that's the most fun. There's the Lets Speculate About His Motives game --- and the motives we assign to other people are always such wicked ones, doncha-know! There's also the Lets Create a Scenario approach --- you'll see that one in Magus. No hard evidence is needed for that. Then, there's the Long Distance Amateur Psychoanalysis School, where we all get to use what we think we learned in Psychology 101. That's almost a sure winner --- the poor fellow just doesn't know his own subconscious, but we do. And don't forget the Let Me Tell You His Real Reason approach. Don't ask me how I found out; I must have wired his brain, or something. I don't like those approaches, and I don't do them. The only time I don't take a person's word, when he tells me what his reasons were, are a) sometimes with small children, this is not appropriate, or b) when I have convincing evidence that the person is not telling the truth (e.g. they give very different reasons to different people) which doesn't occur very often.

I was a victim of this type of approach a few months back, when Dick Martin decided to tell the HoL readers what the real reasons were that Bruce and I had disagreed with what he had done. Mr. Mindreader's reasons were not flattering, and also not true. I don't mean to single out Dick, I mention him since it was me he did it to. A lot of my friends including for example Bruce and Rod have done this during the past year, and I possibly have done it myself; I'm not perfect.

So when Kathy says why she quit the BNC position, or when Steve says why he printed the "Beth Letter" when John Caruso says why he did this, or someone else says why he did that ---- or when Bruce says why he wrote the Navy, I will not do the MindReader Routine, and try to persuade you with some Alternative Scenario.

I will try to give it to you straight.

THE 1984 DIPLOMACY DIGEST HOBBY TRIVIA, HISTORY, AND GENERAL TOMFOOLERY QUIZ

And you don't need to know anything to win, tho it would help. You get one point for each right answer, no penalties for a wrong answer. If you don't know, make a guess! There will be plenty of chances for this --- no one has ever gotten even half the questions right. I'll give the point to the person who is the closest. And if you can't even make a reasonable guess, for heaven's sake MAKE SOMETHING UP! Bluff, its the American way! If no one is even close, I'll give a point to the person who gives the most imaginative or entertaining answer. Some of the questions call for something that its hard to give a funny answer to --- for example, a question which calls for a name --- who said something. In that case, make up the reason or circumstance in which it was said. Someone will get a point for every question even if no one gets the answer right. There may just be a trick question or two --- if you suspect this, say no one or nothing or something, like that. A 12-issue sub extension goes to the winner, 6 issues to the runner up, and 5 issues to the single most amusing or imaginative answer to any question. I will also give a 4-issue sub for the winner in a certain category, but I'm not going to reveal that just yet. So remember: WHEN IN DOUBT, FAKE IT! The deadline is OCT 30, 1984

1. What publisher in the past few years died by his own hand?
2. What hobby hex or fake was considered to have been in the very worst taste?
3. What does the number 8916 have to do with Diplomacy?
4. What pubber has for at least the last 12 years refused to voluntarily pay his income tax, so that the IRS has at least twice attached his wages or bank account?
5. What is the San Diego Shuffle?
6. What did Bob Olsen call "totally insane" and "totally out of control"?
7. Who called his own zine "still one of the worst, least reliable zines in creation"?
8. What are Gasfine, Atu XVIII and Beejam?
9. Who in the hobby would this device be associated with: "thinly laminated layers of colored plastic marked with 14,400 microdots per square inch"?
10. In what game did a player, down to a single army built originally in Ber, manage to wander thru StP-Mos-Rum-Bud-Ser-Tri?
11. Coughlan said about Olsen, "when he uses words such as ... "fornicated".... its obvious he's been hitting the _____ rather heavily" Whats the missing word?
12. What was so distinctive about NMR #50?
13. Who folded his zine twice, the second time in 1984, and created a game sold here and in England?
14. How many people wrote me to take credit for the "Grandson of Lexicon" fake?
15. Scott Hanson said, "John will be tearing out the John" What did he mean?
16. There is an old hobby tradition of naming zines for non-existent locales, such as Granstark. What zine was so named at that time, yet if done in 1984 again (i.e. a new zine with the same name), would not be within that tradition?
17. What former hobbist appeared in plaid shirt and sunglasses in the movie "Taps"?
18. What subzine in 1982 first appeared in print as issue #2?
19. What did Pearson say, "has a reputation of causing folds in most zines"?
20. What two subbers to DD have the same last name, but are not related?
21. What is the most unique (you hear that, Kador?) about the zine Quinipique?
22. In the 1981 North American Zine Poll ("Runestone Poll"), which publisher learned not only which people voted for his own zine, but exactly who voted how for the zine?
23. What zine's title was a commonly occuring quote from Star Trek?
24. What is the largest subzine, aside from Kathy's Korner?
25. Ron Canada Brown had 10 million of what to play with?
26. What global variant, which has been played postally, has 19 players, 111 home centers, and 95 neutrals?
27. What was the first fake of a subzine?
28. Who travelled the furthest to get to MaryCon 1984
29. Woody said, "Winning this game was secondary to the enjoyment I had stabbing _____, _____, AND _____. Who were the names?"

30. In what hobby zine did the first discussion of Electronic Mail Dippy take place?
31. Who won the 1982 "Lydiate Award for Worst Dropout?"
32. In what year did GRI, Inc (the former owners of Diplomacy) apply for a trademark on "Diplomacy"
33. What zine did Ben Schilling call "both free and overpriced"?
34. Whose hair was dyed orange & red & face painted chalk white?
35. What fooled Coughlan but not Mazzer?
36. Walker complained that as a result of meeting Kathy Byrne, he lost two of what?
37. Which zine does not belong on the following list: Ethil the Frog, No Fixed Address, Howay the Lads, Just Among Friends, Sleepless Knights, Lone Star Diplomat, Fol Si Fis, Dogs of War, and Why.
38. Who were the Toronto Triumvirate?
39. What of Hobby significant happened on 11-17-79?
40. Who typed the word rubble as wrubble in a endgame report?
41. Where was I referred to as "Governor Berch"?
42. Where did the "straights outnumbered the lesbians 3 to 2" With whom in the Hobby would the following be associated?
- 43: Snorpid 44: Nowhere 45: Initials 46: Gawkin 47: Oscar Twiddle
- 48: What or Who did Gary Coughlan call "snotty creeps"?
- 49: With what zine would the following be associated: Coral Sea, Sea Lion, Sword?
- 50: What phenominon's initials are A.F.C (pertains to a specific postal game)?
- 51: According to British stats, what is the most misordered piece in S01?
- 52: What did one hobbist do "to substitute for a nearly non-existent public/social/sex life?"
- 53: Who was simultaneously Boardman Number Custodian and Miller Number Custodian?
- 54: What issue(including doubles) of what zine set the record for most independent mentions of my name?
- 55: Who published over 250 numbers on a single page, each of which had a single line?
56. What did Jim Williams accuse me of wearing?
57. Who declined to wake up his roomates, resulting in their, but not his, missing Round 2 at DipCon XVI?
58. In whose story did the phrase "Kafka was an optimist" first appear?
59. About whom was it said, "he might yet reach puberty if he doesn't get mobbed first by pre-teen girls?"
60. What Monthly dipzine normally does not have pagination, and does not have issue #s?
61. What did Al Pearson say "sounds like a shuttle aircraft taking off"?
62. What pubber married someone he went to HighSchool and College with?
63. In what zine was a Turkish player listed as "Rkusty Underware"?
64. Of all the things I've written in the hobby, which 6 have gotten the most response as of 9-15-84? Make no more than 6 guesses; order is immaterial.
65. When a certain publisher split for Mexico, who took over his games? Here are some quotes. Who said them:
- 66: "I'm going "on the wagon" for a month so I can get back to drinking as a hobby rather than a profession."
67. "Negotiation is by and large a waste of time."
68. "Contrary to popular myth, I'm not gratuitously ruthless"
69. "Nobody was out to lynch Coughlan, tho with hindsight it does seem like a good idea to me."
70. "A player who asks his dentist to give my next door neighbor's hairdresser the orders is taking a risk."
71. "I was ... an arrogant snob ... back then"
72. "I trade with crap I would never subscribe to."
73. (after criticizing someone) "I'm not going to name this person, because I'm not a feuder. But use your imagination."
74. "Because I don't deserve to win I am the ideal choice"
75. Organization, for some greater good of course, is the greatest threat of all, and must be organized against at all cost."
76. "My advice to young GMs is that they ignore the Mr. Yuk stickers on the words "GM

interference" The GM cannot help but affect the game..."

77. "I have no qualms about feuding with the Soviet Union"

78. "My HRS are simple: 1. The GM is always right. 2. In case of doubt, see Rule 1. This is your assurance of error-free GMing."

79. "A good bucket of mud once in a while is a nice change of pace, too."

What do the following sets have in common. This should be something distinctive to all members, but something few if any other non-members share (e.g. don't say, "all are men")

80. Pearson, Byrne, Mazzar, Fr  h 81. John Caruso and Howard Mahler 82. M-5 and M-12

83. Tom, Eric, Jim, Dick, Steve, Greg, and Cathy.

84. The Diplomat, St George and the Dragon, Diplomacy World. 86. Brown, Osuch

87. DipCon IX, Eric Kane 88. Knight, Rowling 89. Hol, Bel, Spa, Bul, Ser

90. 79KW, 80AC, 80KY, 81HR, 82Q, 83AY, 83V

91. Dipcon Society Column, Diplomacy Introductory Package, Ombudsman Service System

91, thats a nice, round number. Even if you don't enter, I hope you liked reading it. In a way, its my homage to the strangeness of the hobby.



The next item up is by Stephen Bell, and appeared in #3 issue of Carpetbagger, 10-9-72

A MASTER-MIND DIPLOMAT

1971HD had just gotten underway, and I was playing as Germany. Now, many players for Germany establish survival itself as their ultimate goal, but I had recently learned the "Wrong Envelope Ploy", so I was confident that, by skillful use of this strategem, I could win an easy victory.

The first step in my master scheme was the attainment of king-making power for Germany in the Western Theatre; I wanted to be able to choose between a Franco-German alliance against England and an Anglo-German alliance against France. I began my diplomacy by writing a Germany-to-France letter and mailing it to England; the letter said that Germany would not cooperate in French plans to destroy England; I was hopeful that this would encourage a friendly English attitude toward Germany, and sure enough, England promptly proposed an alliance against France. Next, I wrote a Germany-to-England letter and mailed it to France; this letter said that Germany was not interested in destroying France, and within a week I had received a French proposal of a game-long alliance.

Things had gone so well, I decided that Germany had the power to dominate the other European theatres as well. I wrote a Germany-to-France letter in which I encouraged France not to attack Italy; naturally, I mailed this letter to Italy, in hopes that Italy would attack France (I knew that if Italy did stab France in the midst of a German-French assault upon England, then Germany would be the only western power to grow). I also wrote a Germany-to-Austria letter that I mailed to Russia, a Germany-to-Italy letter that I mailed to Turkey, a Germany-to-Turkey letter that I mailed to Austria, and I even wrote a Germany-to-Italy letter that I mailed to Russia.

If the deadline for Spring 1901 moves had been called then and there, I am sure that all of the other countries of Europe would have been in a state of mass confusion, and I could therefore reap immense gains. However, the deadline was yet five weeks away, and although I did not realize it at the time, this fact was to be the downfall of my beautiful plans.

As I was to learn later, England was totally fooled by my Ger-

many-to-France letter, and became so enraged by it that he had my letter photocopied and mailed it to France about this time, demanding an explanation. When France read it, he immediately grasped what I had been doing, and he decided that he would try his luck at the Wrong Envelope Ploy, too. Of course, France's decision would have been completely unbeknownst to me, had I not begun to receive France-to-Italy, France-to-England, France-to-Russia, and France-to-Turkey letters.

When I caught on as to the monkey wrench that France was throwing into my plans, I decided that the situation demanded a new round of mistakenly addressed German letters, so during the next week I mailed several dozen of them. However, just when I began to relax in the confidence that Germany was once again in complete control of the situation, I received a Russia-to-Austria letter, a Turkey-to-Italy letter, an England-to-Austria letter, and an Austria-to-France letter. On the following days I received 19 more mistakenly addressed letters, and by the deadline I had received a total of 106. Completely confused as to the situation, I played it safe by ordering all of my units to hold.

Well, when the Spring 1901 orders were published, I learned that I was apparently not the only one who was confused. Indeed, all seven players ordered their forces to hold! Taking a brief time-out to assess the situation, I theorized that the winner of 1971HD would either be the player who was confused in the right direction, or the player who was confused to the least extent. I realized that the first player would be determined by Fate alone, so I set out to become the least confused by increasing the chaos among my opponents. To achieve this goal, I opened up several of the new weapons in my arsenal.

First of all, I wrote a Germany-to-England letter that, following the pattern of previous mis-addressed letters, should have been mailed to France; however, I compounded the confusion by mailing this letter to Russia. I authored several other letters of a similar variety, mailing them to various opponents.

Secondly, I wrote a Germany-to-England letter, and I mailed it to England! The success of this note encouraged me to write similar letters to other players.

My third, and greatest, secret weapon was a forged Austria-to-Italy letter that I mailed, with an accompanying Germany-to-Russia explanation, to Turkey. As I was to learn later, this package was to be the direct cause of France's resignation, but now I'm getting ahead of myself.

Anyways, I soon learned that I was not the only player at work on new stratagems. I received several different Italy-to-France letters. I received at least one anonymous-to-Russia letter. One day I was surprised to receive a France-to-France letter. Confusion degenerated into chaos, and when the Fall 1901 orders were published, all 22 forces were again ordered to hold.

As I now look back upon 1971HD in retrospect, if I possessed even a partial comprehension of subsequent negotiations I would attempt to explain them to you; however, I do not, and perhaps you will understand why I say that I am trying to forget those unhappy days. In one season (Fall 1902, I believe) Italian units attacked themselves, France submitted to the gamesmaster orders for my German forces, and I topped them all by mailing orders for Turkey's forces to the player for Russia. The situation became so bad that names, addresses, and countries lost their meanings, and I responded accordingly; one day, I wrote the names of the countries, the names of my opponents, and their various addressees

on cards, and I shuffled them around. In this manner, I moved from North Carolina to Omaha, as I switched from the player for Germany to the player for Syria.

Finally, the game began to affect its players in their outside lives. The French player resigned (for reasons of "health"), and as no stand-by seemed to have the courage to replace him, France entered civil disorder. The English player was reported to have total insomnia, as he made the mistake of actually trying to figure out what was going on. The Italian player suffered even more, as he was tortured by horrible nightmares too terrible to repeat in print. Austria and Russia acquired amnesia with respect to postal Diplomacy, and even today they have no recollection of their previous involvement in 1971HD or any other games. Turkey was hit worst of all, experiencing first a nervous breakdown, then complete insanity. As for myself, I lost my ability to construct coherent sentences, and unable thus was letters write to good; I am still suffering slight after-effects of this malady. In the end, the gamesmaster refused to accept letters from any of the players in 1971HD, and as no other publisher had the nuts to take the game over, 1971HD was abandoned and drawn seven-ways.

There was an important lesson to be learned from 1971HD. The Wrong Envelope Ploy is to be used only when it is to your benefit to have the game end in a seven-way draw. In other words, when you risk an embarrassing finish in a postal game, the Wrong Envelope Ploy is an excellent way to guarantee that the game terminates abruptly and to your relative benefit. Otherwise, the Wrong Envelope Ploy is perhaps as dangerous to your mental health as is the authorship of good literature in the Soviet Union. Beware!

THE ZINE COLUMN # 76

Give Me A Weapon! is a zine which has taken two steps forward recently. With #39, the old bugaboo of virtually illegible printing was resolved, thanks to help from Paul Rauterberg. #40 and #41 have lots of interesting reading. Letters, music (much of it by Brad Wilson) and best of all, Konrad's ruminations, "wiretaps". Sometimes that type of column, a blend of hobby and non-hobby comments, sometimes loose and sometimes targeted is beyond the grasp of a writer (I'd never even try it), but in Konrad's hands, it's generally a success, the more so when he's obviously put some time into it. Aside from a blind spot of the subject of Gary Coughlan, it really goes over very well. (Konrad Baumeister 11416 Parkview Lane Hales Corners WI 53130, 10/\$4.50)

And speaking of Gary, the recent Europa Express begins a very interesting series. Gary is doing a capsule history of World War I, covering a few months of the war in each issue. The format is 15 or 20 headlines for each month. I had not realized until I saw it how global the war actually was until I saw this.

Some oldtimers have game openings at present:

Steve Heinowski 12034 Pyle, Oberlin OH 44074 (Ter-ran)

Jim Behes 417 S. Stough St Hinsdale Ill 60521 (Dippy)

Fred Davis, Jr 1427 Clairidge Rd., Baltimore MD 21207 (Bushwacker) (Variants)

Kathy Byrne has resigned as BNC, citing harassment from Bruce Linsey, and saying that it is the best thing to do for the hobby. While I personally think the hobby would benefit if she kept the BNCs, she has made a very fine choice as replacement: Bill Quinn 301 Conroe Drive Conroe TX 77301. All publishers are asked to give Bill their complete cooperation. Bill has been the publisher of Everything, the official journal of the BNC, since Nov 82, so he's very familiar with the operation. One interesting aspect of this, to me anyway, is that Kathy became the first BNC with no significant experience GMing postal Diplomacy games. The others were all well-known GMs. Bill, so far as I know, is also a non-GM. I'm always glad to see non-GMs in these kind of hobby roles. Among other things, it spreads the work around.

((Lets kick off the letters column with this item from Steve Langley, responding to comments I made in #82, page 7))

I thought your observation that Tadek Jarski should not play diplomacy ((well, thats not precisely how I put it)) if he is so easily knocked out of a game well taken, but your contention, that anyone can be obligated to play out a game that he has signed up to play, I cannot agree with.

I have heard arguments as to whether the GM or the players own the game. I have never before seen it stated that the game owns the players. What a silly idea. This is a game we are talking about, play_{ed} for the enjoyment of the participants, not a legal partnership.

There have been cases where players, for whatever reason, have found themselves in the position of being in a game with a GM or player with whom they do not want to have any social contact. Such was Tadek Jarski's case. The class thing to do in such a case is to send in a resignation and a final set of moves. The alternative is to continue to send in moves in a situation that one finds distasteful. Wallowing in a game that one does not enjoy out of some "obligation" to the game can only lead to a game ruined for the whole group playing. After all, one of the assumptions in the game is that all 7 of the players are interested in playing. When one is not, when in fact he is antipathic to playing in that particular game, there is no way that his attitude will not affect the play and the general enjoyment. Not only do games not own people, but they should not.

((I then wrote Steve back, asking if the same ^{reasoning} applied to the GM, e.g. a GM who does not wish social contact with one of the players. Could he, by that reasoning, expell the player, or quit his role as GM? I got the following in response:))

In answer to your question about whether a GM has the same or different rights and obligations as a player: I feel that the GM's position is different. He takes on a commitment to make a game available for play. I feel that such is a bigger commitment than that of being a player. So, no, I don't feel that a GM has the "right" to orphan a game because he's taken a dislike to one of the players in the game. If I were the GM ((Steve is in fact a postal GM)), I would continue to GM the game but would dissociate myself from being part of the game otherwise (say, in the press).

If the offending player was actively ruining the game for the other players, and one or more of them brought that to my attention, I might make the situation a public situation and ask the players for ideas. I would not unilaterally orphan, kick the player out of the game, nor any of the other options you mentioned...

If it were just a matter of my own antipathy, I would ignore the problem as best I might. As I see it, the duties of a GM are to adjudicate accurately and present the results promptly. Neither of these require the GM to "like" all the players.

((Well put, and I suspect that quite a few of my readers, possibly even a majority, would accept your conclusion. But I don't. I view the GM-player situation as basically symmetrical; the reasoning that applies to one applies to the other. Each (GM and player) have certain basic responsibilities. So long as each holds up his end of the bargain, the other should too. The GM's responsibility is as Steve describes it (I'd just add the adverb "fairly", which I'm sure Steve meant). Thats all that he promises, and that's all he should be held to. He doesn't --- he can't --- promise to be desirable for social contact with the players, any more than he can promise a thrilling game. He does not undertake that duty, and so his failure to provide this should not be grounds for quitting any more than his failure to provide a thrilling game. The arguments that Steve makes about a game being "distasteful", a game being one that one does not "enjoy", should apply just as well to the GM. The players are there to enjoy the game, true, but so is the GM --- its the rare GM who is in it for the money. He takes on a commitment to make the game available, sure, but so do the players. The GM is no more essential to the game than the players, and indeed, I would argue that he is less essential. A game can switch GMs, and the odds are that there will be no meaningful difference. But if a game

switches players, there is a very good chance that this will make a difference. A game, after all, is made up of the fabric of player-player interactions; the GM-player interactions are usually much less important, and may be non-existent. I think then that the player's obligation should if anything be greater, since his personality is the essential element.

I should admit one element of bias here. I keep a rigid wall between "hobby relationships" and dippy games. As a result, I just can't imagine quitting a game because a hobby relationship with another player or GM has gone bad, no matter how bad. I'm not saying that everybody should do as I do in such matters, but if people did set up a rigid wall, there would be fewer resignations, that's for sure. I am, for example, not on very good terms with Dick Martin, but there's no way that would influence my leaving a game with him, regardless of whether he were player or GM. Maybe that ranks me as someone who either takes the game too seriously or the hobby too lightly, but those are my values. I've recently had a correspondence with a subber, a very sensible fellow, who quit a game over disapproval of statements made by the GM in his zine about others in the hobby. To me those values are wrong. Such resignations are to me a betrayal of one's obligations to the other players and the GM, and that is ultimately what Tadek was guilty of))

((I seldom print articles about ratings. One of the reasons for this is that when I do, strange stuff oozes out of the woodwork. For example, the following arrived from Don Del Grande:))

I've got a possible solution to the ratings problem - make all of the systems as complicated as my FUDGE FACTOR system, and nobody will understand the ratings; everyone will be glad when the ratings are then dumped.

(What is a Fudge Factor rating? Simply take the max. SCA a player gets in a game, divide by 18, add the Calhauer Points earned, and multiply by

$$1 + \frac{1}{3} \times \left(\frac{1}{7} - CPC \right) \times \frac{1}{SE}$$

where CPC is the average CP count for the player's country over the last 8 issues of EVERYTHING, and SE is the "standard error" of the CPC values for the 7 countries (this is:

$$\frac{1}{7} \times \left(\frac{6}{\text{Games}} \right)^{\frac{1}{2}}$$

where "Games" is the number of games in the last 8 EVERYTHINGS).

Give up yet? (By the way - since a person's rating is the average rating over the past 4 issues of EVERYTHING, I don't have a rating for you....)

Speaking of Fudge Factor and other rating systems, here's a major question: should ratings be based on average, sum of scores, or what? Basing it on the sum gives those players with a lot of games played a big advantage; for example, in FF, based on average, Bob Olsen is #2 and Steve Arnawoodian #18 - based on totals, Woody is #1 and Fudge is #51. (This alone shows how accurate this system is....)

One (hopefully) LAST ratings comment: The FF system attempts to compensate for what, in my opinion, is the MAJOR flaw in Diplomacy rating systems. As far as I know (you would know this better than I would, since you've been in the hobby longer), only the FF system gives (or takes away) points for playing "harder" (or "easier") countries - i.e. a win as Russia does NOT rate the same as a win as Austria! Most (all?) other systems make the assumption that Diplomacy is balanced - there are two ways of stating this:

- 1) The game is balanced - each country has an equal chance of winning. (Sure - in WAR AT SEA, under the original rules, both sides could win, but the Axis did it twice as often!)
- 2) The player interaction is more responsible for determining the winner than the actual strategies used by the players. (If this is the argument, then why are we rating? In this case, clearly the best player is the one that gets the most votes in a Best Player poll!)

((Alas, Don, your system isn't as simple as it might seem (that's probably not quite the line you were expecting?!). The problem with most schemes for adjusting for country strengths is that they probably introduce as many problems as they solve. Every time a new issue of Everything thing comes out, the relative CPC "strengths" of each country will change, as an old issue is dropped, and a new one is added. This will cause a complete recalculation of everyone's rating, even those people whose names don't appear in the new Everything or the dropped one. A player's rating could go up or down even tho the exact same games were being rated. If one "locked in" the old rating (and didn't adjust it for the new strengths), then a Russian win in one game could be of different value than a Russian win in a game ending around the same time, but which appeared in a different issue of Everything. And now, folks, you see the second problem with printing ratings articles in DIPLOMACY DIGEST.....))

((Next up is Doug Beyerlein. For those of you who are new, Doug was the BNC for three years, was one of the most highly regarded players, and won the North American GM Poll in both 1982 and 1983, and was for a while very active in the ratings biz:))

Three types of postal Diplomacy games were classified as variants and assigned Miller numbers. These three general categories of variants can be labeled as (1) board variants (2) rule variants (changes in the rules); or (3) procedural variants (changes in the general Diplomacy game procedures). Types of variants that fall in this third category are: team games (very popular in the late '60s), anonymous games, and gunboat-type games. All the games in the third category use the standard game board and rules, but are based on procedures that differ from the standard game. These games are not the same as irregular BN games, which usually achieve their irregular status by unusual actions by the GM during the course of a regular game or by a player location problem....the procedural category is a less specific category in that games in this category are more subject to gaining their status via a decision by the BNC. This isn't necessarily bad, as someone has to make the decision if one wishes to continue the current regular and variant game numbering systems ...

In any case, the BNC made her decision based on her own views on the situation as it pertained to the Wordworks games, advice from previous BNCs (Ditter, Kendter, and myself), and precedent. It was still a judgement call, but you can't fault her for her thoroughness in evaluating the situation.

((I can't and haven't, but just the same, I don't agree with the result. I don't see the need for, and thus legitimacy of, your category (3). The only other examples you give are gunboat and team, but both of these fall into (2). To begin with, team games never had 7 players. Gunboat games also violate the rules, this time because players cannot negotiate "in secret" as specified by the Rulebook, and in no-press gunboat games, cannot negotiate even in the open. If "procedure" is such a valid criteria, why are games where the GM is also a player not variants --- that seems like a much more drastic variation in procedure than not knowing a person's name? The bottom line, I should think, leaves aside such rarified considerations as "gaining status" and all that and asks this: Are they playing Diplomacy, or are they playing a different game? Isn't that what it's all about? To me they are playing Diplomacy, and to you and Kathy and some others, they are not. Anyhow, thank for writing, even if I did have to drag it out of you!))

((Last issue I mentioned the Atlanticon Tournament. The following is from Ken Peel:))

Sacks and Boardman were so annoying in the way they ran the Atlanticon Tournament (requiring "proof" of a win or draw -- really! Even the two of them couldn't agree on what constituted such proof), that I boycotted round two.

((That's the third Atlanticon, at least, that I've heard such complaints about Sacks. I don't see the validity of "proving" a draw, since you cannot prove that an alliance will stick together long enough to eliminate other powers, or even that the alliance existed at all prior to the end of the game. If players agree to vote themselves out of a draw, fine, but otherwise, it's best to use Draws Include All Survivors, DIAS))

KATHY

Kathy Byrne certainly has been and is a major asset to the hobby. She has been a very hard worker. She was a co-director of the US Orphan service for over a year, a very taxing job because you see people there at their worst. She was also BNC for well over a year, a time consuming job which she did very well, despite having to deal with the complicated matter of the PBEM games, some touchy situations in a few games, and some completely unnecessary criticisms from Bruce Linsey and Rod Walker. She has put out a very entertaining "Kathy's Corner" month after month. She's been involved in any number of funny fakes of people's zine. She has contributed letters to many zines, and been a source of advice and counsel to many people. Her social skills are probably unmatched in the hobby, and she's one of the few people in the hobby's entire history to have a genuine "personal following". She's been an extraordinarily successful postal player, and has done very well at tournament dippy as well. Kathy is an extremely interesting person just to talk with, as I saw again at MaryCon '84 this summer.

But Kathy has a dark side. There's a lot that I've put up with, just let slide, that you'll never hear about from me. Recently, however, I have become completely fed up; hence this editorial.

Kathy has a practice of saying things about other people that simply aren't true. I know this for a FACT because she's said them about ME, and I KNOW what I've done. One of the first contacts I had with Kathy was when I heard thru the hobby grapevine that Kathy had put out the word that I was accusing her of rigging the 1980 Zine Poll. A short time later, I heard this directly from Kathy. I had in fact done nothing of the sort. In the summer of 1982, Kathy resigned as co-director of the US Orphan Service, citing abuse and complaints. In a letter published that summer in AG, she said she was "totally disgusted with the opposition that I face placing Overby ((a defunct pubber)) games" Guess who was fingered -- me. I had absolutely nothing to do with that situation. On another occasion, this time in Whitestonia, Kathy wrote a big editorial complaining about how some people were trying to stop Lee Kendter, Sr from becoming the new BNC. Guess who got fingered -- me. This accusation, like the others was 100% false. I did none of those things. There have been other incidents, two of them in the last year which are off therecord, and my sources want them kept that way. They cannot mean anything to you of course, but they are people that I trust and believe.

I am not the only person. One of the more embarrassing incidents occurred when Woody castigated Bruce Linsey for running a Not for Print letter of his. Kathy Byrne chimed in with her criticism, and back him up, saying "I know for a fact he clearly marked it "Not For Print"" (this was printed in VoD #70) Whereupon Bruce dug up the letter; it was completely unlabeled.

Kathy has also made accusations on the basis of letters which then don't get produced. A while back, Bruce hit upon the response of offering Kathy \$50 if she could produce the letter she was bitterly complaining about. Bruce still has his \$50.* I have had two run-ins with Kathy, both involving her making accusations grounded on letters which, somehow, she was unable to produce. To this day, I do not know whether those letters ever existed; I do know that she based accusations on them.

All this is by way of introduction to what is perhaps Kathy's most sensational charge of all: That Bruce wrote a "sick letter" to Kathy's 12 year old daughter, Francine. Kathy first spread this story personally. I heard about it from a number of people in letters and fone call before Kathy put it out in her recent flyer, "The

* In Whitestonia #90, John Caruso is now saying that this letter really did exist, and was written 3/19/83. He quotes several times from this 3/19/83 letter, and concludes that Kathy "paraphrased him to an accurate degree". In my opinion, what Kathy wrote could not possibly be considered as an accurate paraphrase.

Ethical Bruce Linsey". If Bruce did indeed do this, he should be condemned; there is no excuse, none at all, for this sort of behavior. But did he?

In her flyer, she says, "I am asking all publishers to please print this. I can prove what I am saying. And that proof is available to anyone...and yes, I can prove it." I will tell you that if I hadn't had those previous experiences with Kathy, especially her disappearing-letter trick, then such confident language might have even dissuaded me from being so suspicious as to actually ask for proof. But ask I did. I have written Kathy three times, asking to see her proof, which is supposedly "available to anyone". I have heard nothing from her.

I have investigated the matter as best I can. I have written to everyone whose name has been mentioned in any way with this, asking: Have you seen the letter? What did it actually say? When was it written? None of those people have said that they actually saw the letter itself (have said it to me, I mean. They might have said it to someone else). The description of the letter, such as I have gotten, shows some curious possible contradictions. All that Kathy added was that "Francine was upset to say the least". On the other hand, Bob Olsen says, "it turns out that being 12, she didn't know what they meant." Its a little hard to see how someone could be upset and not understanding at the same time, tho I suppose its possible. What did the letter say? According to Terry Tallman, Bruce questioned the relationship of Kathy and John in an improper manner. According to Olsen, they were "hate letters;" and "smutty". Robert Sacks says that he (and Rod Walker) "sexually harassed Kathy and Francine". Tom Hurst used much worse language. Its not clear how many letters there were. Kathy uses the singular, as did Terry, but Olsen repeatedly used the plural. The only person to give me a time frame was Terry, who said (phone conversation 8/31) that it was written in the last month or month and a half (i.e. latter half of July, or Aug). Its hard to know what to make of this morass of fragmentary information, but I have a lot of trouble reconciling it all. Its possible that people are describing a lot of different letters, or that its a case of the blind men describing an elephant from touch. But I don't think so. I think something smells here.

Bruce has repeatedly denied, and publically denied, writing such a letter, and has challenged her to produce it. He's removed any Off The Record Label that he may have put on any letter to Francine, so Kathy couldn't have the option of hiding behind that (so far, only Olsen has said that the letter was labeled Off The Record, tho. Its not in Kathy's flyer that way). And he has again put up \$50 - Challenge to Kathy to produce such a letter.

To me, this has an all-too-familiar ring. I don't think that such a letter exists, and I'm going to put my money where my mouth is. I'll give you \$50, Kathy, if you can produce a "sick letter" written by Bruce to Francine.

I've also asked Kathy for proofs on two other of her charges made in the flyer. I've gotten nothing from her on those either. I have written Kathy a letter, pointing out some what I consider to be misleading statements in her flyer. If you saw the flyer, and you want to see this letter I wrote, let me know and I will send you a copy.

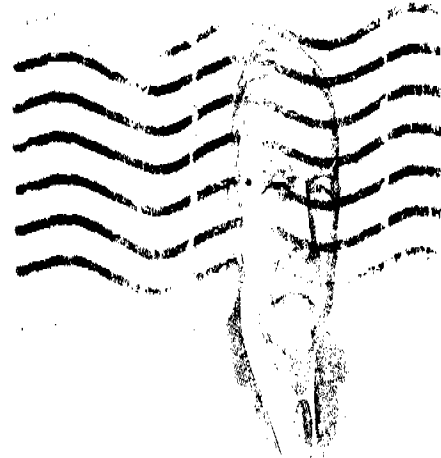
Before you get the wrong idea, I am not trying to drive Kathy out of the hobby. So far as I'm concerned, the longer she stays, the better. I recently sent in a re-sub cheque to Whitestonia, and I'm sorry she gave up the BNC job. But its time for her to clean up her act.

Postscript: I'm under the impression that there are a few people in the hobby who feel that the appropriate response to a pubber criticizing Kathy is to cancel one's sub. To save any of you the bother of asking, the policy at DD is and always has been that any funds sent to me will be refunded if you no longer wish to receive the zine (minus the deduction for the issues already received, of course!) You need not give a reason if you do not want to.

Mark L Berch
492 Naylor Place
Alexandria VA 22304

If "(84)" appears by your
name, this is your final issue.

OK, Doug,
here's your chance at the
quiz again!



Horace Moses
Founder, Junior Achievement
USA 20c

