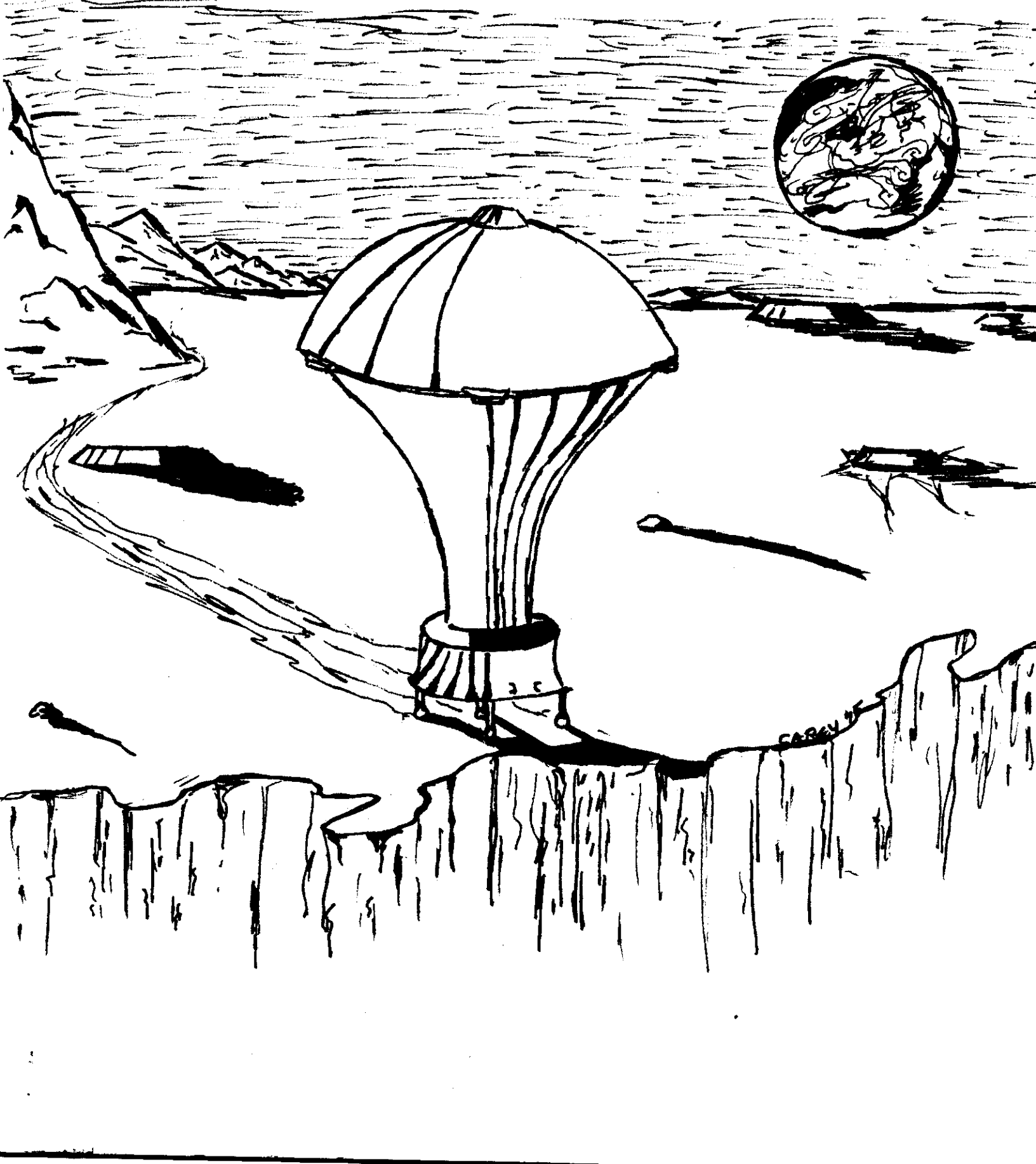


GIGO⁵





This is GIGO #5. (Garbage In Garbage Out). It is available to all and sundry for 1/50¢ or 6/\$2.50. It is available from Greg Costikyan 1675 York Av. New York, NY 10028. GIGO is (supposedly) quarterly and is printed on a manual Gestetner.

Also available from the same person is URF DURFAL a Diplomacy variant play-testing zine, available for cost (which runs about 20¢ per issue.) It is monthly (supposedly triweekly).

And FIRE THE ARQUEBUSIERS!, more about which is detailed below.

Available from me also are the following things all available for an SASE.

- Diplomacy variants: Diplomafia Utter Chaos Indonesian Diplomacy. Rules
- FRIGG IT! an insane version of SPI's Frigate. The house rules to URF DUR
- Rules to a game entitled DESTRUCTION OF SPI CENTER.

THE FIRST 14 PAGES OF THIS IS ZINE WAS PUBLISHED IN #17 -- MY MIND BROKE DOWN SO I HAD TO BORROW BEN GRAYMAN'S.

This is issue #5, printed February 19 1976.

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THE EDITOR FILLS SPACE

No, contrary to what you might think I have no been goofing off between the last issue and this---a large 5 months apart. I have as well as everything else, produced a GIGO-sized zine in the interrim. Siad zine is known to its afficianados and its detractors alike as FIRE THE ARQUEBUSIERS!

FTA! is, to put it succinctly, a D&D zine. To those unfortunate souls who don't know what D&D is, I refer you to my third issue, in which I spent several pages describing that wonder of the western world. The first issue of FTA! included rules for two new character types (Holy Men and Animal Trainers) rules for large army combat, magical spices, sex in D&D, a spell point system, empathis, and letters, a census, and so on.

It is available for 50¢ or 6/\$2.50. Issue number 2 including rules for Assassins, Martial Artists and several other things is going to be printed as soon as I finish with this GIGO. Subs to FTA! are interchangeable with subs to GIGO.

I'm sorry this issue is so late. I started typing up the stencils in the beginning of January, but soon afterwards I was mugged. My hand was messed up a bit, and its difficult to type while one hand is bandaged. Which may explain some of the lousy typing in a couple of the articles.

Issue---I'd meant to have some book reviews for this issue but nobody contributed any, and somehow I couldn't bring myself to write any. I've found that I don't write book reviews particularly well in any case but I though I might write a few.

Neither are there any zine reviews this issue. When I sat down at the typewriter I found that about all I could say was "a pretty good personal-zine or "a piece of shit." or "dramatically improved from its first issue." The same phrases repeated over and over again become somewhat boring. If you want a decent zine, write any one listed on my mailing list as "trading;" I only trade with zines I think are pretty decent.

Conventions: The next con I'll be going to will probably be Lunacon. After that, probably nothing until the summer unless I go to [Delaware] Uncon. Fortunately, Boskone was scheduled at the same time as the Star Trek Con. I would have much preferred to go to the former, but the ST Con was in New York, relatively near my house. Which removes travel and accomodation expense. Maybe \$150. So I went to the Star Trek Con.

During the summer I will definitely be going to MidAmerican and Origins II ; and, if I can afford it to GenCon.

Al Nofi and the Metropolitan Wargaming Club is currently investigating the possibility of running a wargaming con in New York over the summer. I had though that I might try to organize a D&D con in New York but it does seem that a D&D con would have a rather limited audience. And what would one do at such a convention, in any case.

Therefore, I may or may not be running a D&D somethingorother at said hypothetical convention.

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T--Trade

S--subscription (or he pays for it, anyway)

L--regular contributor

?--I dunno quite why I'm sending him copies, but I am. So what the hell.

C--Complimentary.

Several people complained last issue because of the large amount of space that was wasted with useless spacefiller and because of the general lack of organization of the issue. I hope I have rectified that problem at least partially, in this issue. All the columns are together, all the letters are together, all the wargaming material is together.

And there are very few spots in the issue that I had to use spacefiller to fill. In fact, I can think of only one.

This.

Which is a bit silly. You see, I type up the entire issue, leaving a few pages blank towards the front. This issue I left 5. Two are taken up by the cover, one by the masthead and table of contents. Which leaves me two. Apparently, two too many. Some of that I managed to fill up with blathering and some is filled by the Mailing List (which is not complete since I'm sending out a lot of freebies this since I think its a pretty good issue) but I've still got about a half a page here to fill.

Which doesn't look too good, because its too close to the front of the zine and it gives a bit of a bad impression to people who've just opened the thing.

But there you are. Its a space to fill, and there's no two ways about it. It must be filled, and filled it must be. I must manage to provide enough material to close the gap between the mailing list and the bottom of the page. If I don't, it'll leave a half a page of blank space. Of course some might say that an half a page of blank space is better than a half a page of blathering. Perhaps they're right. But I've filled it anyway.

ON BELIEF IN GOD

A discussion on belief in God and related topics with examples from science fiction and other literatures.

by Robert E. Sacks

Introduction

In science fiction and in other literature, one of the major questions dealt with is that of God. In answer to a charge that it (religion) is not an appropriate subject for science fiction, James Elish (writing as William Atheling) responded "It is not...self-evident that we will not find gods, or the belief in them, on other planets. We find them everywhere on Earth, which cannot be said of royalty or...other folk customs.... and even where we do not find specific deities, we find religion's immediate precursor, magic."

A Case could well be made...for the proposition that any humanly conceivable thinking creature will arrive at magic, and hence eventually at religion in some form, before he can arrive at the scientific method, since the basic proposition of one is, in essence, a less precise form of the other. The root assumption of sympathetic magic...is "Similar actions produce similar results." The root assumption of scientific method might be stated in the same form: "Identical actions produce identical results." The difference between the two assumptions, aside from the fact the first does not work and the second does, is a matter of refinement of observation--and it is difficult to accept that any thinking creature, no matter how bug-eyed or many-tentacled could so evolve as to arrive at the more precise formulation first. He may...have since outgrown the earlier faith, as we have not, but nevertheless traces of it could almost surely remain buried in the culture."

In this paper, I will attempt to develop the questions of belief in God, disbelief in God, and man as God. In Part I, "Why do Men Believe In God," I will present three answers; that man has met God, that man finds belief convenient, and that man needs to believe. In Part II, "Why do Men Disbelieve in God?" I will present three more answers; that belief is destructive to man, that belief hinders progress, and that religious disputes disgust men. In Part III, "Man as God," I will examine the roles of rationality and of mysticism in transforming man into God.

Part I - Why do Men Believe in God

There are at least three reasons for believing in God. The first is an historical reason, that sometime in the past man met or observed a being or beings which were Gods or were sufficiently powerful or awesome to be taken for Gods. Stories on this theme are quite common in science fiction. Among those were some of the Gods are real and true are Biggle's "Whom the Gods Love," which deals with a God who is overcome by man in the end, Del Ray's "Evensong" which deals with Gods of a non-anthropomorphic form, Heinlein's "Lost Legacy," in which the Gods (perhaps ancestors to man) leave messages to man to help him along to Godhood, Laumer's "The Devil you Don't", where God and the Devil are beings from a higher energy level, and (from non-science fiction), Michener's "Tahiti", where there are many Gods, one in the shape of the shark, one walks as a woman, a couple who are without physical form, and one supreme gentle God

we cannot be conceived of save as a small child-sized rock. A Variation on this type is the story where the Gods are real, having been created by the worship or adoration of their believers. Among this type there is the Andersons' story "A Feast for the Gods". In all the above stories, the Gods are moderately helpful to man. Each of them has as a basic hypothesis an explanation of the nature of God; like all histories they may be rejected by any casual reader who chooses.

Among the stories in which the Gods are real but false are Cliftons' When They Come From Space where the Gods were an early space-traveling species who enjoyed playing at God and did all sorts of damage to other species; Mercock's Behold the Man, where Christ is a time-traveler trapped in the past; and West's Lords of Atlantis, where the Gods were a technologically advanced part of the human race. This type differs from the previous type in that if one were to accept the basic premise as to the nature of God, one would be rejecting rather than accepting the existence of God. There is a variant on this type which is neutral on the existence of God. It deals with a people, such as in Henderson's "People" stories, or Kurtz' "Deryni" chronicles, who are mistaken for angels or demons for their supernatural powers.

The second reason is the explanatory reason; that God is a simple abbreviated explanation for some complicated phenomenon whose real explanation is too long, complicated, or impolitic or cannot be given. God is in some of these stories a cover for some political activity. Gods of this nature include the Galactic Spirit of Asimov's Foundation, Begi of Brunner's Stand on Zanzibar, and Mota of Heinlein's The Day after Tomorrow. Unlike the other two, who are simply covers for a relatively advanced science Begi, who may even have been (in the context of the story) a real person is a non- even anti- political Christ figure. Unlike the other two, whose nature is apparent from the beginning, Begi's nature is only revealed at the end; he is an explanation for a previously undiscovered genetic mutation. Explanatory reasons of this type must be handled carefully; in Foundation, Day After Tomorrow, Leiber's Gather, Darkness, and in "Nightfall" (also by Asimov), the belief that there is a real God rather than in God as an explanation becomes destructive.

The third reason is that man needs to believe in God. This is the area of the historical debates over the logical and moral reasons for the existence of God. This is the area where people feel a need for God to give meaning to their lives, to overcome nihilism, the feeling of nothingness. (An example in science fiction would be Zelazny's "Rose for Ecclesiastes.") This is the area of the debate, exhibited in Blish's A Case of Conscience, Delany's Einstein Intersection, Heinlein's "Waldo," and Lewis', Rand's and Russell's works, whether rationality is sufficient to explain and handle reality. This is the area of alienation, so predominant in non-science fiction, as to draw the following statement from Heinlein, as the "answer of science fiction": "I am not a stranger and I am not afraid in a world I am helping to make... (sic) and I am 'damned from here to eternity' only if I abandon my human intelligence and, sheep-like, give up the struggle!"

Part II - Why Do Men Disbelieve In God?

The claim is made that man needs to believe in God. The first reason for disbelief is the counterclaim, not only that he need not, but to believe in God, is destructive to man and human dignity. Bertrand Russell, a leading socialist exponent of rational thought, had this to say:

"For which see Russell's Why I Am Not a Christian (title article) - - - - -
 Robert A. Heinlein "Science Fiction: Its Nature, Faults and Virtues." p. 5

"Nature is only a part of what we can imagine; everything real or imagined can be appraised by us and there is no outside standard to show that our valuation is wrong. We are ourselves the ultimate and irrefutable arbiters of value, and in the world of value, nature is only a part. Thus in this world we are greater than nature. In the world of values, nature in itself is neutral, neither good nor bad, deserving of neither admiration nor censure. It is we who create value and our desires which confer value. In this realm we are kings, and we debase kingship if we bow down to nature. It is for use to determine the good life, not for nature---not even for nature personified as God."³

Ayn Rand, another leading (but capitalistic) exponent of rational thought says further: "Because...God--whatever anyone chooses to call God--is one's highest conception of the highest possible. And whoever places his highest conception above his own possibility thinks very little of himself and his life. It's a rare gift...to feel reverence for your own life and to want the best, the greatest, the highest possible, here, now, for your very own. To imagine a heaven and then not to dream of it, but to demand it."²

A second reason for disbelief is that belief has been destructive of human progress. One could consult Russell⁶, or read Asimov's "Nightfall" or Foundation or review the history of Galilee to find a religious hierarchy which to protect dogma~~xxx~~ persecutes those who would propose working alternative explanations. One could read Zelazny's Lord of Light where the prevention of progress is a point of policy for the pretending Gods, or Kurtz' "Deryni" chronicles where a religious hierarchy jealously persecutes a people with supernatural powers.

A third reason for disbelief is the destruction when religion fights not science, but another religion. We can review the history of the Crusades, Reformation, or of the Conquistadores, or we can read Hynes' Lost Continent Herbert's Dune and Dune Messiah, Michener's Hawaii, or Zelazny's Lord of Light. In summation, the reason for disbelief is, since there is no reason to believe, and so much harm comes from belief, there is no justification for belief.

Part III - Man as God

In the beginning of Part II, we have two leading rationalists denying any God higher than man. It is natural to ask, what about man as God? It is an old theme, since "God created man in his own image, and man, being a gentleman, decided to return to compliment." The anthropomorphic God can walk among men, interbreed with men, be born of men, or even lead men into battle or out of danger. Some religions have saints who intercede between man and God. Some religions do not even worship a God, but rather some great man or prophet. How does one classify Buddha, or Begi of Stand on Zanzibar, or Paul Atreides of Dune?

Although God is traditionally the ultimate in rationality, there is practical nothing in the literature on becoming God-like by being rational. Indeed it seems as if rationality is morally neutral, merely multiplying the effect of whatever morality of immorality was there without it. It would then seem that arguments about rationality should collapse to arguments about premises but even then that is a rational deduction.

¹Bertrand Russell "What I Believe" Why I am Not A Christian pp. 55-56

²Ayn Rand We the Living p. 107

⁶Bertrand Russell "Has Religion Made Useful Contributions to Civilization?" Why I Am Not A Christian

(Attributed to Mark Twain (Samuel Clemens))

In any event, rationality alone is not enough to transform man into God. It looks at a variant of rationality, mysticism, or mental control of function, not ordinarily associated with mental control. The distinction seems arbitrary. It has been the focal point for a good many science fiction and fantasy stories. There are few stories wherein men actually become Gods. Dune and Lord of Light come close. Two works by Heinlein, [Lost Legacy] and [Stranger in a Strange Land] do deal with the question, and are worth examining.

In [Lost Legacy], it is the destiny of all sentient beings to become Gods eventually. To use supernatural or psychic or parapsychological powers it only requires a bit of training. Even evil beings can sometimes use these powers, although the manner in which they do tends to doom them to failure, a familiar theme from historical religious doctrine on black magic.

In [Stranger in a Strange Land], there are a few differences. There is nothing eventual about the process; any decent, rational, sentient being is God, given a little training. The use of such powers is limited to those who are not evil, which tends to eliminate moral problems. The role of God is not to go roaming around the universe, patiently training new species to become God, but to sit at home in heaven, and administer the various planets in the various stages of development, only occasionally interfering to send down a Christ, or a Michael Valentine Smith.

Heinlein's answer, at least, is clear: ~~God is a sentient being~~, any sentient being. Man need go no further than himself. His life is among the highest forms in existence; his life is the value he needs to live--he need not disappear for other value. If there are powers possible beyond those we presently openly use, they are attainable through practice and reason. Damnation is defeat or error, but surrender.

[Tacked on to the paper is an index card: "Since 1972 when this was written I have done more reading, and my thinking has changed to the point that I would end the paper with an additional chapter if I were to write the paper today. Adam's Watership Down has had a profound effect; combined with works by Zelazny (Including Creatures... even though I dislike it), Tolkien and Lewis, my ancestral religion, and my personal commitment to military service, it yields a belief in a kind of "church militant" best described by saying that this world is merely a training ground for the battles of the next."]

[Robert Sacks is currently the Custodian of the Miller Numbers and assigns Miller Number designations to all Diplomacy variants started in North America. He has applied for service in the Air Force (I believe,) but has not yet been called up. He is a Beshpuppet, tends towards incoherence in person. My immediate reaction to the paper is "So what," but then my dislike for philosophy has been remarked upon before.]

 Recently, I acquired a copy of a game called 1480: THE AGE OF EXPLORATION, designed by Whitney Streiber. It, like several other massive, lengthy multi-player games, has not been printed commercially, but circulates in xeroxed form among the aficionados of that type of game. In 1480, each player takes to part of one of 22 European or Near Eastern or North African states, and does whatever he wants to do--try to make his country an economic power, conquer Europe, survive, discover America, set up trade routes to Cathay, or whatever. The rules are a massive 70 pages long but the majority of that is charts and tables listing the production and characteristics of the various countries--mechanically, the game is quite simple. The first game is about to start, and I'm playing the Palatinate. I wanted a country with a seacoast, but by the time I heard of the game they were all gone. So I'm going to see if I can get a piece of Flanders---

COMICS COLUMN

Captain Canuck
The Emerald Warrior Returns
Atlas Shrugs
(and various other masterworks)
by Charles Jacques

Thanks to subtle hints supplied to me by Ye Editor and the gallant efforts of Douglas S. Carey, I am able to supply you with a promised column on COMELY COMICS, who put out the comic with the unlikely title CAPTAIN CANUCK. I am much indebted to D.S. Carey, but on to the column.

CAPTAIN CANUCK was closely examined by yours truly upon receipt in the mail. (I was lucky enough to get issue #1.) It seems basically like American comics but apparently, as intended, it has its own uniqueness. Like what? Well, the pages are almost unnoticeably larger than American comics. The difference is negligible, but still there. What else? General merchandising. American comics have between 18 and 25 pages of story and between 0 and 3 pages of text. CAPTAIN CANUCK #1 had 27 pages of story and 5 pages of text. Still another difference; American comics, 25¢; Comely Comics, 35¢. Advertising: American, about 20 pages; Comely, 13 pages. But enough about the trivial, business-like differences; let's get to the major differences.

First; as a writer, I know very little about art terminology, so bear with me. I believe the proper cliché for here would be... "But I know what I like..." The cover art wasn't bad. Really. It had C.C. standing on a mountain at sunrise with the Maple Leaf flag flapping at his back. Inspiring. Sort of like the original CAPTAIN AMERICA #1 cover (done by Kirby) with Cap American and Bucky defending an American flag from a bunch of thugs. The only thing on the cover I really wasn't too fond of was the big COLLECTORS EDITION stretched across the lower right-hand corner. It seems that every first issue coming out now bears the same logo.

Now about interior art... Comely seemed to overuse the technique of super-imposing comic art over actual pictures. Generally this is a fantastic effect. However, when you use the same effect 3 times... on the same page... it loses something. One panel every 15 issues is a good spacing. Aside from that, how was the art? I hate to put Richard Comely down, because he is adding new horizons to fandom, but it was lousy. It was better than some American art, true, but it wasn't the kind of art you have for the premiere issue of a new comics company. All the art looked like a high school graphic notebook. It was very amateurish. The only decently drawn thing was Captain Canuck in his Maple Leaf flag outfit (Hum. The resemblance to Captain American seems to grow.) Blue Fox wasn't that bad. They also had another feature called JOHN, about a stranded Astronaut-turned-superhero on this other planet. It had the same art problems, except somewhat better inked than the main feature.

Story/concept/plotting: The basic concept of Captain Canuck was okay. It is set in 1993 (or thereabouts) and the basic assumption is that backed by its resources, food-growing potential etc, Canada eventually became the most important country in the world, somewhere in the '80's. Totally believable. (Oh yeah? Australia, the East African veldt, Argentina, and the American Great Plains each is capable of out-producing the Canadian Great Plains.) (It is possible. We may even see the start of such a move in the sudden Canadian nationalist movement. Anyway, faced by such suddenly thrust world power,

Canada sets up a special organization to combat possible invasion by other powers. (A little pretentious that, but within the borders of plausibility.) To help them with their tougher cases, the CISO (Canadian International Security Organization) have apparently created Captain Canuck and Bluefox. (The old Cap American syndrome.) Good concept that, even the plotting is good!

Issue #1 starts with a story ("Artistic Standoff") about the Invasion Canada fears. A Communist invasion from Russia (that implied, not made fact). Unless Canada knuckles under, Instant Overkill. At this point, Cap Canuck is dispatched, with his sidekick Bluefox, who logically wears a blue uniform. It turns out Bluefox is a commie spy, and has led CC into a trap. No sweat, since he's the hero. He breaks loose, ends the plot, and saves the world with seconds to spare.

Basically good plotting, except for the part about Bluefox being a commie spy. Any man trusted enough to know the identity of Canada's foremost weapon, various secrets, etc, would be checked all the way back to day One. No possibility for a spy to be a Hero's sidekick.

The actual story, regardless of the plotting, stunk. We pick up on the Main Character, knowing nothing about his origin, powers, duties, views, or identity. He could be the Streetsweeper for Ottawa for all we know. (Hum, I could see the "Canuck Phone," inside a hollowed-out Dustpan.) Anyway, Bluefox gets kicked off (good, I'm not too crazy about side-kicks, anyway.) But is looked like 'ol CC picked up a new sidekick, an eskimo named Utak. Comely, a good Editor makes a lousy artist and writer.

I'm not all down on Captain Canuck or Comely Comics. I'm glad to see both arrive. I hope they stick around for a while, as a matter of fact, I am taking out a subscription on CAPTAIN CANUCK. Comely shows potential. If old Richard Comely could attract some decent Talent, Comely has a good chance of making it. They have some good ideas, good characters. Captain Canuck is good, John (CC's Back Feature) shows potential, and CAT-MAN, an up-coming character, looks good, at least in the initial sketches. Like I Said, Comely looks good. It has potential.

For more information on Comely/Captain Canuck, or to place a subscription to CAPTAIN CANUCK (twelve issues for \$3--save at least \$1.20 over newsstand) write to:

Captain Canuck
c/o Comely Comics
1854 Portage Av,
Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, R3J 0G9

Next column, I'll elaborate on the symbblism and possible American potential of Captain Canuck. I'll also talk on JOHN and the early Canadian Comics, known today as "whities." But onward to this column;

GREEN LANTERN RETURNS - Due to the popularity of his exploits in THE JUSTICE LEAGUE OF AMERICA, THE FLASH, and two recent D.C. specials, there is talk of once again giving THE GREEN LANTERN his own magazine. All I can say is it is about time. Actually Green Lantern should never have been cancelled in the first place. D.C. pleads that the GREEN LANTERN magazine had poor sales towards the end. Bullshit. When Green Arrow joined the Lantern, and Denny O'Neil wrote the "relevance" stories about pollution, war, drugs, and injustice, it was nearly impossible to find a copy of the GREEN LANTERN anywhere. At a recent Boston science fiction convention, I had several fans from all over the country share my observations (and booze.) So poor sales wasn't it.

and it was was mothers, fathers and grand-parents writing D.C.--flooded D.C.--with thousands of letters, complaining about the "harmful garbage" being "spoon-fed to their children by someone they idolized." In other words, they wanted their kids to have a sugar-coated view of injustice, war, drugs, and the wrecking of the environment fed to them. They didn't want their kids to know about the realities of life until they had to ---until they got busted for speeding while some rich pusher walked away untouched except for the loss of a beji, until they got their asses blown off in Vietnam, until they found out too late you can't kick horse, until they watched an old man drop dead in the street from the wounds of a mugger no one would help him fight off...yes, hold off teaching the kids until its too late for them to learn and help. That's how GREEN LANTERN died. That's why GREEN LANTERN died.

So GL is coming back. Good. But let him pick-up where he left off. Don't have him fighting costumed creeps like B.O.-man. Make him what he really is ---a hero who is fighting real evils, not symbolic baddies. Make him a hero to be identified with. Above all else, have him what he really is. A man, Bill Jordan, learning the meaning of life and discharging his great responsibility.

Various and Sundry; the Douglas S. Carey news agency informs me that the first issue of HOWARD THE DUCK, Marvel's new satire-comic about the most unlikely superhero of all, a duck from another dimension, has sold out so fast as to be ridiculous. Not surprising. What with the chick they had on the front cover with the Duck (bad pun.) According to Carey, it may even break Conan's record for 1st issue. Comics News: Phantom Stranger, D.C.'s Superhero/Gothic Mystery hero recently made the circular. In short, he got canned. Apparently, sales of the PS were too low to justify any further publication. Tough break. I was just starting to like him...by the way, I am currently expanding my comics collection. I am currently accepting lists of comics for sale. If you have some comics in fairly decent condition, I will take a look at your sales list. Am especially interested in Timely, Red Circle, Atlas (from the '50's), Tower, and early Vampirella. Send you lists, or comments on this column to ;

Charles Jacques
PO Box 254
Scarborough ME, 04074

Atlas Shrugged; Atlas comics, looked on by many as a fresh breath of life into a somewhat stale comics industry recently folded. After only 8 months of operation. Apparently, ATLAS sales weren't matching bills. According to what I could find out about ATLAS from the MANHATTAN BBB, they are in debt to the tune of, say .5 million bucks. They need 3 million to get going again. Jesus. The whole town can't get that much. Fat chance the Goodman's will. Ah well, it looks like Atlas goes the way of RED CIRCLE (Who?) for the second time. (There was an ATLAS COMICS in the 5-'s.) It's really too bad. I was starting to pick up 10-12 of their mags regularly.

Rebuttal: Last issue Ye Editor disputed my claim that the world would be totally destroyed come Nuke War. He gave you all this shit about Second and Third strikes. No such animal. The minute the First Nuke lifts silo, every nation in the world will launch its entire arsenal at every other nation. There will be nothing left to launch for a second strike. And nobody to launch it to, since the combined heat of the first nuke strike will completely turn all 85% of the silicon in the earth's crust to solid glass.

Time to go---remember, next issue; CC's future American potential, the first Canadian comics JOHN, CC's symbolism, Canada's role in American comics---plus---the return of Kirby to Marvel, and an attack on THE WARLORD, D.C.'s latest title.

an added note about analogs; I don't really know as much about them as I do about digitals, which may account for part of my disenchantment.

IBM TS SYSTEMS

IBM is the largest manufacturer of computers anywhere, so I may as well concern myself with them for this issue.

IBM has so many timesharing systems on the market for its' 360 and 370 that I haven't used the m all yet. A few are:

Callos--probably the most common, and the least interesting of all the TS systems put out by IBM. Garbage! I have a friend who works for CUNY and

NY, and he has a few of the monitors for Callos in source. In FORTRAN.

APL--a great deal of fun, although limited to the aforesaid language, (for all typical uses.) APL is fun.

Wylbur and the new system Orville. Both of which are supereditors cum read-readers. You essentially prepare batch-type jobs through Wylbur or Orville, and submit them to the machine. I haven't used Orville yet, but IBM is very pleased with itself for making the new version of Wylbur come out of Orville. Not so great a time-sharing system, but a hell of a nice editor.

VM 370 and CP67 -- the first is for, you guessed it, 370's, the second for 360's. CP67 is the predecessor of VM, and there are many major differences. Security conscious people might make use of the fact that CP in either CP/VM or VM is always in supervise state. Also, for VM, if you want to control the batch system, you can, through a handy little device called the internal reader. I can't, for obvious reasons, go into that now; if you have access to a VM system, write to me, and I'll tell you how. My address is a public implement, judging by some of the mail I've recieved. 300 Central Park West, NY, NY, 10024.

Interesting Notes: NYU is trying to sell its Univac 1108. It stands to lose a million bucks because of its stupidity in buying the damn thing in the first place, and then not trying to get rid of it earlier. The 1108, as I believe I've mentioned earlier, is a disgusting machine.

BUT Stony Brook, part of the State University of New York is getting a Univac 1110, one level above the 1108. Christ.

If you are interested in buying overprinted or non-overprinted pictures from me, write me.

If anyone knows who woke me up at four-o'clock two nights in a row, ask me about JCL, tell me, or preferable, kill said person.

Did you know that someone has come out with a PDP11 on a chip? Not Digital, some other contractor. PDP11 on a chip sounds somewhat like Beef Jerky on a stick, whatever that has to do with what I was saying.

It sounds very much like IBM is going to call its new system the 380, and not make as many radical changes as have been rumored.

Who's Left in the business game:

RCA- out five years ago

Xerox- out this year

GE- see RCA

Hitachi- still cooking

IBM- no comment

Parroughs- fading

CDC- specializing

HP- still around

Univac- Ugh.

ABSTINENCE AND CANNIBALS

Gerard Houarner

Once again, with a blaze of howitzer fire and a swirl of nerve gas, with a flick of an electronic switch and a hearty hello sailor, comes the Ether-Traversing Breton (with apologies to the Armenian wart-hog who edits this rag).

FANTASIES

Having just received a suprisingly witty letter-of-demand-for-a-contribution from a certain intellectual low-brain who, even as you look and I write, may be interjecting singularly inane comments in my otherwise faultless conglomeration of thoughts and ideas I must now take time off from lounging around on my bed and reading Milton to bring you another column on fantasy. Did you follow all that? Good. Now that I know you're stoned, we can proceed at a leisurely and civilized pace.

As I write this, I am watching "The Return of Dr. Phibes," one of my all-time favorites. Another of my all-time favorites is, of course, "The Abominable Dr. Phibes". I suppose what attracts me to these movies is the semi-camp, semi-absurdist situations in the plot. Can you see Vincent Price, make-up abounding, talking through the pipes of an organ and eating through the back of his neck? Then there are the novel ways he chooses to kill off his victims: a plague of locusts; a brass bust of a unicorn shot by a catapult; the blood drained from Terry Thoman, who was in the midst of watching a bestiality porno flick when Phibes caught up to him; and of course there's the classic strangulation and disposal of the body by throwing it into the sea, in a seven-foot bottle. It's pretty gruesome stuff, really, reminding me of Bradbury's classic "Usher II", where the central character's enemies are knocked off by using ideas from Edgar Allen Poe. And of course, it's dreadfully funny.

Then there are other little things, like the mechanical clockwork musicians who accompany Phibes' organ playing and monologues on vengeance and eventual reuniteement with his late wife, Victoria. And Phibes' two headquarters (London-based in the first movie, and Egypt-based in the one I'm watching now) are truly remarkable sets, reminding me a little of Ken Adam's sets for the Bond pictures. One can mention the hilariously appropriate over-acting on the part of Vincent Price, and the dead-par foil provided by the Scotland Yard folks, but I guess you get my point. When next these two movies come around, I strongly suggest you catch them, as they are probably the best thing American International, a company that made "mediocrity" a household word, ever put out.

But onward. The reason I started talking about the Phibes films (other than to fill up space that would otherwise be dedicated to the paranoid blathering of an editor who is dedicated to conquering the world, as it is defined by the board or playing surface of whatever war game he's playing [Nyahahaha. I've won the battle of Alamein! I'm better than Rommel!]) (see what you get for disturbing us demons, Greg?) is his helper, Vulnavia, who is played by Valli Kemp. I remember her name because the Daily News once featured a chess cake picture of her, for which the rag is famous, as a promotional set-up. (The News, when not otherwise occupied by showing promotional bikini stills of starlets destined to go nowhere, sends photographers down to Australia, to take bikini pictures of beach groupies. What worries me is that the News proclaims itself to be a newspaper for the masses, and it does have the largest circulation.) Now it's not Kemp that grabbed my attention, he said nodding his head sagely, but the character she played.

Some of you may remember something I wrote about Jack Nicholson and Maria Schneider in a movie whose name has slipped my mind (you go look it up in one of my past columns). It was their relationship that intrigued me; they understood one another without the need for words, the same way Emma Peel and John Steed (another fantasy couple, and another personal idea) could act as a "team" and still retain their individuality. With Kemp as Vulnavia, this personal fantasy of mine has reached new heights. Nicholson and Steed portrayed fairly conventional heroes, and their female partners or companions are pretty "normal," understanding ladies. But Phibes is in another world; he needs a really understanding woman to help him through life (or death; I believe that in both pictures he's already dead and has been somehow reanimated). Phibes is on a quest; he is seeking eternal life with his deceased wife. Such a quester needs a companion, not only because his methods are bizarre and his appearance unusual, but because the object of his quest (life while dead, making an eternal afterlife and heaven through individual effort---Phibes is making his own heaven) is so much more important than the mere conflict between good and evil, as symbolized by Peel and Emma, or the escape from reality and the pressures of everyday existence, as shown by Nicholson and Schneider. Now I'm not saying that my quest object(s) is/are as important as Phibes' or even that my methods are all that unusual (even though many would think this is a pretty weird column, if anybody out there was reading it), but I do think I am "not of the masses," and that I need a companion on this here trip I'm taking. Nah. That's what every horny college dude says.

Anyway, I hope I've made you see how inner fantasies (in this case my sex/life drive which has somehow combined, and it's attached "partner of the opposite sex" drive---wait a minute, am I saying that life is sex and sex is life? My God, is there nothing to life but sex? Ah! sensuality. A balance between pleasing the senses and intellectual pursuits, or between sex and life. Thank you, Spenser. What I am seeking, ladies and gentlemen, is the middle of the road. Sex and sensuality can be there, as demonstrated by the Steed-and-Peel image, but it doesn't have to be blatant, nor does it have to rule one's life. There is room for other things. Indeed, there has to be other things, otherwise the human mind sinks into a rut and is unable to expand.) can be projected on somebody else's fantasies (in this case the screen writer's fantasies.) That's one way I like to think of fantasy: something so fantastic and unusual that, if you can identify with it, will make you aware of your own secret fantasies, just like the dreams made you aware of all the little things you lose in the unconscious. And with that thought in mind, let us move on to sane, and more mundane, matters

STUFF

It has occurred to me that some of you would like to read up-and-coming fantasy writers. It's only logical. After reading great stuff like Tolkien, you need some lousy writing just so you can gain perspective. Actually, the writing isn't all that awful since the zines I'm talking about pay semi-pro rates, so they have some kind of standards. Don't think every zine is run like this one.

FANTASY AND TERROR: Jessica Salmonsens, Box 89517, Zenith, WA, 98188. \$6 for 6-----This one of the two biggies. The latest issue was 100 pages long (it combined several issues) and had a print run of 500 (of which I got 495, and I'm a subscriber) and had a little bit of everything. If you're going to get involved in fantasy, this is one of those mags you've got to get.

WHISPERS: Stuart David Sciff, 5508 Dodge Dr., Fayetteville, NC, 28303
 \$5.50 for 4, but hurry, subs are going up-----If there's anything better than
 F&T, it's WHISPERS. Professional in every sense of the word, it has recently
 featured color interior paintings and fiction by pros as well as "semi-pro"
 writers. It also features articles, mainly on the horror branch of fantasy
 (its fiction is slanted towards this, too) and it carries the latest news on
 limited-edition books from such publishers as Grant (Robert E Howard books)
 and Arkham House.

WYRD: Grey Stafford, PO Box 6302, Albany, CA, 94706
 I have no idea what's going on with these folks. They are good (the editor
 is into mythology, especially Celtic and Norse), but inconsistent. I think
 one of the editors has left, and Greg is stuck all alone. Whatever is happ-
 ening, it apparently takes time away from his correspondence because I haven't
 heard from him in months. Drop him a postcard and I'm sure he'll be happy to
 send you a flyer on WYRD and its associated publications (of which my own
 KABALLAH once had the privilege of being) (er, that's not good English--
 you'll forgive me, it's 2:30 AM and the world is beginning to melt). They
 publish fiction and all sorts of good stuff.

MYRDDIN: Lawson W Hill, 3952 W Dundee Rd, Northbrook, IL, 60062
 \$1, 4/\$3.50-----An "Up and coming" mag with some really nice things going for
 it, like fiction by Joseph Brennan and (cough, sputter, choke) Jessica
 Salmonson, poetry and articles. There's not much art, but what there is
 is outstanding. (Two is's back to back? Surely that can't be right.) It
 really is a good zine for a fantasy-type person to have and so I recommend
 it to you.

It is Saturday morning (I should say afternoon, but time is relative to me
 since I've got a tremendous ego, you know) and I've just been awakened by the
 merry mailman (at 13¢ a throw for letters, he's got damn good reason to whist
 and be happy on a rainy day) who has delivered unto me Vaugh Bode's "Deadbone"
 along with a couple of beautiful French (that's the nationality---I got to
 watch out for you dirty minded folks) comics. The Deadbone book is expensive
 (\$14.95 if you order from the publisher, and an even \$15 if you order from
 my usual dealer, Bud Plant) and kind of thin, but you have to expect that
 sort of thing from "art books." It reprints various Bode strips, and if you
 haven't been introduced to the magic of this, ah, "person", I suggest you
 order some of his undergrounds (Junkwaffel 1-4, 60¢ each; Schizophrenia, 75¢)
 and get a sampling of his work. If you like what he does in the undergrounds
 you'll love this book and you won't even care about the price. The comics
 are available from Bud Plant, PO Box 1886, Grass Valley, CA, 95945 (add 25¢
 for postage and 6% tax if you live in California) and the book is available
 either from Northern Comfort Communications (Dept. DPB, Main St, Smithers,
 BC, Canada, VOJ 2N0) or Bud Plant (you don't have to add the postage fee if
 you're ordering the book since it's over his minimum order.) If you're
 ordering the comics, you have to state that you're over 18 (that doesn't
 mean you have to be over 18, just state that you are) (I could get in trouble
 for saying things like that--postal regulations and all--so don't tell anybody
 what I told you in the previous parenthetical statement) (ahem.)

Well, I've done it again! Another lousy fantasy column that somehow strayed
 on to the subject I was supposed to talk about: Fantasy. I wish my papers could
 be this organized, but what do I care, I get A's anyway. I sure as hell don't
 get anything for doing this thing. Oh, the aggravation and the suffering I
 go through for Greg. Oh, sometimes I think I must go mad. Where will it
 all end? What is it getting me? HAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAH
 HAHAHAHAHAH [May I join in?] (Certainly) HahaHahaHahaHahaHahaHahaHahaHahaH

PURE BLOBS

W. G. Bliss
 422 Wilmet
 Chillicothe, Ill, 61523

5 Nov.

Hey! I just got a gasser of a paperback - THE SCREWING OF THE AVERAGE MAN. It's not X-rated, but all about ye establishment rip offs. Odd that sf hasn't delved much into that theme. I showed it to a lot of average men (and one queer) today, and none was interested. Like, they should be. I already knew about most all that---

Haff been busy with some favorite obsessions (like trying to think of even more sf whorey stories) and somehow #3 didn't get loc'd. I do stale locs. 1 1/2 isbes behind on TITLE, but that's a serial loc - a sort of one-copy zine called CONTINUED, includes lots of trivia that happens around here. Like progress in the rock pix field and an essay from real life called DEATH OF A TIN LIZZY. I am probably the last one to actually throw away a A Model Ford. Week & 1/4 ago Shaver's frau sent word that he is ailing and in bad condition in a hospital at: (the legendary Richard S. Shaver)

Boone Country Hospital
 Room 205, 3rd floor
 Harrison, Arkansas, 72601

Gads, someday fangdom is going to roll a stink bomb in my door, but Tolkien is another thing I thought was inferior. I waded valiantly through parts of The Rings & Hobbit, and gave up and tossed it all into a big box of rejects out in the garage. Highly dug BORED OF THE RINGS. It had things like a dragon on roller skates.

Oh, I'm far away gone from school, attended unwillingly until ye draft intervened in '44. Ye academe sure can be a big waste of time.

You crave art??? How about some crumpled foil art? Sample enclosed.

Postal Diplomacy never stirred up any interest in my brain box. Neither did Chinese Checkers or baseball. I bugged the postman a bit about those mystery labels, and he said, "Don't worry about them." AHA. There is something ominous going on. Could be that it's only that some label company has a strong lobby, though.

More from the invisible management of this world last month. Cuy popped into the shop with a chunk of paper clutched in his pinkies craving to inspect the joint for a fire insurance policy. Let him know that this is one place I am a hard-core non-buyer. Never bought any and don't intend to (see the insurance chapter of THE SCREWING OF THE AVERAGE MAN.) He finally reluctantly left and a couple of weeks later I got a policy in the mail that insured me for several other things, windstorms, etc besides fire. Three year term and the first payment was due in 9 days. I can just see some chicken/rabbit type getting the hard sell like that, no doubt, they would gooch about the budget getting raped again. Not thees kid. I gave it a whole afternoon's though and hit upon a big gap in the insurance racket. Returned the policy with a happy act*, and informed Ye Insurance Agent (who also hires wetback labor for her pea canning factory) of the hairy fact that wot if the old place did burn down---that would be a good excuse to build a new one that had some class, and then, ERGO!, put it on a depreciation schedule on federal income tax, and thus the Feds are providing insurance for me for free, and a lot less paperwork and B's even.

Among the sundry things I didn't get done today was getting this in the mail. this being the next day.

Two ordinary flies have taken up residence here in the back room for the winter - they are swatter shy, but after three days, I nailed one. So that should solve the fly problem for next year.

Green Eggs and ham. Purple pickles. Red Milk. Black mashed potatoes. Why does color make a big psychological difference with some foods and not with others? As a mere tad, the most hideous looking glop to me was stewed tomatoes with bread, which a grandmother liked. It was good, especially if the bread was toasted, but it sure looked yekky. ((I've always preferred stewed tomatoes over toast spread with peanut butter, but there's no accounting. The difference between Illinois and New York, I suppose; one with peanut butter, and the other without.))

Thank for the TEG plug in reviews. Since I have a cash-register type mind, it will likely some day be a best-selling pb. It's actually designed for ye common reader, and all of it gets tested on lots of 'em before it gets onto stencil. A lotta good stuff that would swing with ye sf crowd bites the dust from that.

Usta read WSFA and finally drifted away from Washington fandom. Along about the third fit of semi-gaffia back.

Hmm. I would inkle by Liberman's kolumn that things are being done the hard way in computers. In general, there are two classes of machine. One is simple and performs complicated tasks. The other is complex and performs simple tasks. And of course the vice versas of that simple machines for simple tasks, and complex machines for complex tasks. Some mechanisms are misleading in appearance. Like the common screwdriver. But to be used it also includes the comple mechanics of one human bod. This typer has me doing about 1/2 its work. (Some antiques were better that way - have a Crandall in the collection that has me doing only 1/4 of the mechanical work.) Off-hand, I would say it looks like computer technology is one of those things that just grew. Like where is the ideal model of design parameters???? Beyond simple things like calculating irrational numbers until it is worn out a computer should handle informati er bloc. Using individually fabricated and assembled parts for that has some quickly found limitations. So, each part must have multiplex function. It must have N number of indices - not less than a trillion. Preferably out in the vicinity of a googol. Input i direct or translated into planar scroll secondary image generating matrices. Right. It is optical. Why busta gut for decades speeding up fuction when optics operates right or the propagation speed of electromagnetic waves? All of the computing is done -ZAP!- in that one single operation and readout is direct from that. For error-free calculation (which also applies to analog functions) an indexing base of unified self-generating matrix image is used. For information storage scroll planes in three dimensions are limited only by the grain size of the medium, which can be its molecules. Polarities are established by the scroll and etc. Scroll window establishes ratios. Obvious. I have been looking into something made with some rather advanced technology. I think refracting anamorphics will be useful in translating "common" information into scroll. In simple form that was a popart machine I showed at Peoria (Pecon) Con a few years ago. I gather that the on-the-scene computer effort is mostly on getting a computer to handle input on the same or simpler terms that the input material - the input languages - or at most only slightly more complex than the material. A computer should handle data at the highest practical internal level of complexity---that does wonders for dependability.

Actually, I am usually so far ahead of the current technological scene with my own stuff, that I usually ignore current technology. Besides, it's handy for fomenting sf. If this foregoig survives fifty years from now, or maybe a few hundred or thousand, it would be interesting to see how far off base I was on wot is a good computer.

9 November

More garbage in---

Gigo is growing - the time will come when you will need micro-elite for the lettercol.

Woota night - the wind is blowing in strong gusts and the lightning is poppink and snappink and it is raining cats and dogs. It's supposed to be blizzarding this time of year.

Nice cover on #4 - how did the tailfin on the flying saucer get bent?

The only drinkable soda pop left is Schweppes, and it isn't as good as it usta be

Oops, they're talking about tornados on the radio. They do that every time a squall line comes through. If one did hit this neck of woods, I would have to dig a fox hole in a hell of a hurry, since I don't have a basement or cave to hide out in. The paper sack for the coke wan't a waste if you can think of something to do with it. They can be used to jot note down on, and cut out flat can be used for wrapping paper.

I have just found the questionnaire - it was misplaced. [That's completely possible. I have a number of friends who take but their real or imagined quarrels with me by mis-collating GIGO. A number of #1's were totally fucked up--four page 9's, and missing the last six pages. That kind of thing. I got a letter from one guy who wanted to know why I bothered to send him 24 copies of pages 1 and two.]

[Note- the following refers to the questionnaire that was in issue 3]

Subscribed - have an eccentric habit of actually sending \$\$\$ to fanzines

Wot do I like about GIGO?, oh, its freewheeling informal aire.

Dislikes - Star Treke jazz. Maybe if I looked into gaming (Diplomacy etc) it would turn out interesting, but since that's one of the scads of things I never did, with me it is zilch. Which is kinda unfair to the good folk who groove gaming.

GIGO is the abbreviation for Gigolo

Computer column not necessary, but interesting.

Fantasy col - gosh yes, - fantasy is interesting no end

There is real literature in Frankenstein along with the drivel. Like when the monster is in an ice cave and tells off his creator.

The Female Man - "You've come a long way baby." Somewhere in every flat-topper there is a short circuit.

Scott Rosenberg: Mimeos also wear out. Friend dropped by yesterday who has a big printing plant that prints TV Guide. Asked him which model of Multilith the counterfeiters liked, and he was of the opinion that Multiliths are junk, even after I showed a beautiful old multilithed SHAGGY.

Me high? I smoke only Amphoria and drink high class soda pop - am known to take a nip of cheap brandy on occasion. When it comes to head feelers, I usually lecture to them. Thought of a shrink joke this year:

Shrink opens his office one typical morning and a young man enters. A bit of advertising brainwashing - all those booze ads in Psychology - has afflicted the shrink, and he is a trifle OD'd on hangover cure. (Shrinks are one of my favorite targets.)

"Gotta problem, doc."

"Most people do." The first scheduled patient was a circus fat lady, at 11:00, who had lost her eating compulsion and was in danger of losing her job. It had been necessary to place two large jacks under the couch to hold her up.

"It's a weirdo obsession, Doc." Two minutes later the patient was comfortably laid out on the couch. The shrink had his notepad in hand, and was inscribing in ornate calligraphy TWO LESS MARTINI TODAY, AND NO DAMN NIGHTCAP.

"How long have you had it?"

"It all started when I was 13 and my aunt Hattie gave me a two cell Eveready flashlight. Ever since then I have had the impossible dream of having a prong that big. I even wake up in the middle of the night yet dreaming it has come true."

"Hmm, yes, you do have a problem. I'll have to do a bit of research. Drop back in the same time in two weeks."

Two weeks later the patient shows up optimistically. "Figure out what to do about it Doc?"

"There does seem to be only one thing to do about your obsession."

"Gosh, what's that?"

"Buy a smaller flashlight."

12 November

The mysterious Mrs. French was by yesterday. She had Alaska plates on her Volkswagon this time. Never has time to stay over a few minutes. Shows up about twice a year. Last time around, she was seeking the meaning of it all (the universe). This time she was perturbed about the instability (wobble) of the planet since 1933, and was fascinated that there is a pyramid in Australia that is directly opposite the pyramid of Cheops. And was worried that Nickola Tesla had set loose an electromagnetic wave that is still going and maybe get out of hand and zap the planet. He used to talk about resonating the planet electromagnetically-----There is one helluva strong signal - a raucus buzz on the low end of the low frequency band - that's about 500KC down through audio.

Rick Loomis - I KNOW I'm being watched. About a decade & 1/2 ago I bought a couple ten of old phono records for a teh-spot. A lot of them were dogs - too worn - cracked - or stuff I didn't like. Sorted them out and gave 1/2 of them the pitch one weekend. A couple days later a character dropped in the shop and intoned seriously "You shouldn't destroy your records " Never saw him before or since. Naturally, most of the discards got broken when I tossed them out - who ever heard of tender luv'n care of trash? I've had a few people I don't know tell me at auctions that I shouldn't be there - but back at the shop working. What most of them got told was too vile for a nice homey family-type fanzine like GIGO. One one of those instant inspirations, I tried to stir up some business from them, but drew a blank. Does the TV fixit trade also have a Men In Black phenomenon/ problem? Actually, going to auctions is good for business. If somebody buys an old junkheap (circa 1920's - 1950's) radio, I let them know that I have a good stock of obsolete hard-to-find tubes and have been working on radios since 1935. Too many people know me that I don't know - and I have an eidetic memory - well, now that I am aging a bit around the edges - 99% eidetic. They always call me by my first name, but the locals never use that handle. A few of those are field research psychologists. They always use a lot of "we"'s in their speech.

Bottom of pg. 14: Sericon stuff. Egad. I know the answers, but that is too morbid. One way to put it is a few hairy questions.

1. Why is the majority of the population anti-intellectual?
2. " " " " " " " " " " -t. nology?
3. Why is technology incorrectly used? (Stuff like atom bombs.)
4. Why does humanity in general have an exploiter philosophy?
5. " " " " " " " " " " cherish delusions?

6. Why does humanity insist on impractical systems of management?
7. Why does not humanity have a much improved - or at least viable - state scene after being on the scene for so long. Like we shouldn't need jails.
8. Why is not 7 considered an emergency?
9. Why does not humanity have longevity - into thousands of years - the brain was designed for a very long service life.
10. Why do most people (over 99%) have no inherent thinks in their brain? Best handy example is rock images - anyone who has seen at least a brief resume of the subject and a few good rock pix should realize that it is a source of any and all information - and quite a large interesting mystery. Ran an ad once in FATE and they changed the wording because they claimed they failed to see any images in the samples I sent. Yet showing them to local folk almost everyone saw the same images. In the current ish is a very good article on ghost photos - one is very plainly common universal imagery - the film could have acquired it anywhere along the line to the fixing bath. That ad bombed. Two orders with no follow up and one query. Another thing is a simple but vital magnetic phenomenon - it gets 100% no-think. Even from hot-shot electronic engineers. No use describing it here - nobody would remember it anyway. Natrually, it doesn't appear anyplace in magnetic literature.
11. Why the general strong (sometimes unto panic) fear of UFO's? That's a reaction seldom caused by previous knowledge. Reading through ufo stuff, many flying saucers are evidently hazardous.
12. Why does the management of human affairs usually pass into the hands of the insane?
13. Why is the establishment monkey cage being rattle of late? By whom? (that latter, I have several suspicions, but its like if the postal inspector happens to pick this envelope to steam open---

Hey there's an idea -- everybody send their fanzine to the Inspector. That will keep them busy and out of mischief for a long time before they give up on trying to figure out fandom. Might even turn up a few new fans--CIA fanzine.

14 November

Actually, I have a soft spot in my heart for trekkies ever since a trek zine (a beautifully put-together zine) TRISKELION ran one of my short stories. What I faunch most about is what ST could have been. The nearest it came to greatness was I, MUDD. If I were producing it, that klunker space ship which looked like it had been designed as a Matell toy would have been junked and something practical like with a trihederal hull would have been used. Of all things, ST needed it was a strong lead character like Edward G. Robinson. The engineering dept would be bossed by the ship's computer, and the engineering officer, who always has to follow the computers instructions for upkeep and repair says oncina while "Someday you are going to be mistaken."
"When that happens, I will obviously be in need of repair."

---and the ship's internal would be like a real space ship. The control rooms would not look like weird offices. The supporting cast would show up there only when needed.

Oh, I thought of a few ST scripts - but after reading how Harlan Ellison left that scene -- anyhoo, there is such a terrific lot can be done with an exploration trek in space. Like passing an old colony ship withonly its very old captain aboard. He was born in space and has so retired in space - flashbacks of some of his reminiscences.

WHITHER GOEST STAR TREK FANDOM? THITHER GOEST SF FANDOM.

Last weekend, I attended what the Committee declared would be the last ST CommitteeCon, (known to the general public as The Star Trek Convention.) CommitteeCon was the first ST Convention. It was, like all sf conventions to date, put on by the fans for the fans. It was an amateur convention, yes, a fan convention. It was not a kind of entertainment at which all the bug-eyed gum-chewing adolescent morons came to scream at the stars. It was not something one went to to watch the movies. It was not where one went to buy Spock's Ears.

CommitteeCon was a convention--a meeting--of people who cared about Star Trek, who had though it was excellent television and at least half-way decent science fiction. One did not go to CommitteeCon to see the stars; one went to see other fans.

CommitteeCon is finished. The Committee has declared itself exhausted, and has stated that it will not be running another convention. The "tradition" of ST cons is being carried on by such people as Al Shyster and other rip-off artists. ST conventions are cons in the fans sense of the word no longer, although for the most part they are cons in the better known sense of the word. They have no residual feeling of that which has become most important is sf conventions. In ST cons now, one pays one's money, and one is entertained. If one is not entertained, he has his money refunded. (Or not; actually, but that's another matter.)

ST conventions have, in a word, become commercialized.

This is to be expected. ST conventions have become a lucrative business--even the Committee, who haven't really planned to make money, have made some money in the past con. Therefore, ST conventions will be exploited. Are being exploited. As far as I am concerned, ST is dead.

SONOFABITCH

Some months ago, I recieved in the mail a flyer for "SCIENCE FICTION EXPOSITION 1976." A convention put on by people with no real love for sf or sf fandom, to make money. From further flyers and from inquiries, I have determined that the thing is not a ripoff; it would seem that SF Expo intends to deliver everything it promises in the way of authors, movies, and so on. Attendees will receive their money's worth.

That is exactly what attendees will get; their MONEY'S WORTH. They will be fans no longer; they will be johns. They will be people attending an entertainment in order to be entertained.

This sf convention is a commercial con; if it is successful (and it seems that it must be), there will be further commercial conventions

Will SF fandom as it is be able to survive the commercialization of fandom? What will we do when we have thousands of morons running around cons in beanies? Will sf fandom become as commercialized as comics fandom has already become? Will sf fans prize slickness for itself, shy away from "amateur" fanzines? Will the Dealer's Room become the most important part of a con?

(Do you think SPACE 1999 CON will never occur? Stu Grossman is planning one now.)

I don't know. But I don't like what's happening.

And I don't think there is anything that can be done. There are commercial possibilities in sf fandom; therefore, these possibilities will be exploited. That's about all there is to say.

But it may be that we will be able to keep a sense of fandom separate from the larger "fandom" of commercialization.

Last year, an ST fan in Washington ran something called "The August Party," which had no stars, few films, a very small dealer's room. It was run for ST fans, those who cared about ST; not for Trekkies, those who care about Spock's Ears-shaped personal vibrators. It is yet to be seen whether or not decent god-fearing conventions can live alongside monster commercialized cons. But the August Party at least provides some hope.

What the hell. We shall see.

The following is a con report of The August party. It's a bit uncritical, and it concentrates, I think, a bit on the wrong aspects of the con. But what the hell;

THE AUGUST PARTY

A Conventinn report
by T. J. Burnside

On August 2nd, 1975 during the worst pollution alert our state has ever had, myself, my larger brother and two friends piled into the family station wagon and drove off into the haze to The August Party, Maryland's very first Star Trek con. Let me first say that although I am a hard-core trekkie from way back, I may not be qualified to report on the con for the simple reason that it's the only one I've ever attended. It's going to be very hard for me to be critical---I loved every minute of it!

Upon arrival at the University of Maryland Student Union, the first thing of importance we noticed was the WRC-TV mini-cam filming a large vehicle parked outside---a van emblazoned with USS ENTERPRISE and equipped with phasers and shuttlecraft. Being the modest folks we are, we slipped by it without getting ourselves filmed, and immediately rushed to the registration desk upstairs (all the while passing people wearing Star Fleet uniforms pointed ears and buttons saying "I've got a One Trek Mind.") The cost was \$4 for three days, not bad. We each recieved a schedule which no one followed, a trivia quiz (How Far above the Earth did the rocket detonate in "Assignment Earth?"); and a convention program. As soon as we had our cute little name tags, we set off to the hucksters room to see what we could find.

I have always considered myself a knowledgeable trekkie [contradiction in terms] but never have I seen such merchandise. For instance: how many of you have seen a Mr. Spock LOLLIPOP? There were other outlandish things, (many of which I bought) and it turned out we spend most of our time in the hucksters room. I am now the proud ownder of an Enterprise belt buckle, an assortment of buttons, an ST tee-shirt, and other sundries. While in

the huckster's room we bumped into Joan Winston. (co-author of "Star Trek Lives" and let ourselves get conned into buying another copy of her book just so she could autograph it for us. She was an absolutely delightful person, and everyone enjoyed meeting and talking to her.

From the huckster's room, we pushed past Channel 4's Freddie Davis and the mini-cam to the main lobby, where we ran headlong into --- tah dah! --- The Transporter! Tim and Denny Pace, a husband and wife team from Falls Church, Va., had built it themselves, and, judging from the looks of the thing, they obviously know what they were doing. (We later found out that they are professional lighting designers, and the thing wasn't even completed!) Also in the lobby was a four-foot tall birthday card to Gene Roddenberry which everyone was invited to sign. I hear they got over 700 signatures!

There was so much to see that it was absolutely staggering. The whole atmosphere a sort of controlled pandemonium was...well, fascinating. While wandering around gaping in awe at what was about us, we stumbled upon the auditorium where "Planet Earth" was just ending. Settling into some good seats, we proceeded to listen to the guest speaker, Dick Disell of Channel 20. (Disell is best-known for his portrayal of Captain 20, a Washington-area children's hero obviously copied from Mr. Spock. Plagiarist!) He had brought with him several episodes of Superman and other oldish sci-fi [PARIAN!] shows in addition to the ST episodes "The Menagerie," "The Changeling," "The Enterprise Incident," "Amok Time," "The Ultimate Computer," "Catspaw," and "The Tholian Web." During the next few hours in the auditorium, committee chairman Rich Kolker entertained questions about the upcoming ST movie, showed a few episodes ("The Ultimate Computer," "Amok Time," "Catspaw.") and promoted his fanzine, "Phoenix."

We were extremely lucky to have with the con someone who had brought a reel of trailers (previews) from the upcoming series "Space 1999." These were extremely impressive, and I personally feel this is a very promising show. The special effects are especially good, and the premise is just about conceivable. [you are kidding? Aren't you kidding? Please say you're kidding.] After viewing the opening segments of the first 10 episodes, they showed a few Star Trek trailers that happened to be there. Two short movies, "THX-1138" and "K-9000" followed.

"K-9000, A Space Oddity," as it was called, was one of the most enjoyable animated movies I have seen. A satire of "2001" this movie followed the adventure of a small puppy being experimented with by extra-terrestrial beings. If I had laughed any harder they would have had to scrape me up off the floor.

I am sorry to say that I did not have a chance to get a good look at "THX-1138, The Electronic Labyrinth." The pollution had rendered me with a case of bronchitis, and a lost voice, and I was beginning to feel so ill that I took the time during this movie to lie down and recover before the blooper reel arrived. Unhappily, the blooper reel was more than a little late, and through the crowd, chanting "We want bloopers!" Joanie Winston managed to stand up and ad-lib for an entire hour, answering questions and being as witty as any comedian I've ever seen. ("Why should we see a blooper reel if we're here to see science fiction?" "It's to pacify the crowd, kid.") She was positively marvelous. Finally, at 11:30, when the relay runner charged through the door with the blooper reel held high over his head, he was greeted by 600 people in a standing ovation. However long we waited, it was worth it. You poor creatures who have never seen a Star Trek blooper reel have got to be the most deprived people on earth. I thought nothing could make me laugh harder than "K-9000," but this time they did have to scrape me up off the floor! They were re-threading the projector to show it again when we left.

We called our parents at 12:00 midnight, and were extremely reprimanded for staying so long. After stopping at McDonalds for dinner, we dragged ourselves back home at 1:30 AM and crawled back into bed.

We were back at the Student Union bright and early the next noon, when the doors opened. Today, since we knew our way around, we spent more time in each place without the urge to explore. We saw quite a few elaborate uniforms and drawings in the art room, plus caricatures of the ST cast and a rug wall hanging of the IDIC. The Smithsonian Institute had lent for display the original Klingon warship and the mini-Enterprise dangled over the flame in "Catspaw," (now cast in a clear plastic block.) A local talent, "Pierre the Piano Man," was banging away at the keys with the 400 page book of sci fi [there it is again, mammit] ballads [you mean folksongs] that he had helped to write [I have no doubt you mean Filthy Pierre. Where does piano man come in?] (For instance, "The Naked Sun" set to music...."As a friend I can't repay you/by the Asimov that made you/ You're a better man than I am, Hunk o' tin.)

After my friend blew \$3 on a Kirlian photograph (it measure your unique emotional output in different colors) we settled back into the auditorium for a lecture on Evolution and life on other planets. I discovered through a conversation that the person next to me had flown in from Europe the night before--talk about Star Trek loyalty! and was missing her beloved "Six Million Dollar Man" to attend. To liven up the activities, I broke out my set of film clips, and we played a little game of naming characters and episode scenes.

Later on, during a question and answer period about the movie, Kolker played a tape of the telephone conversation with Gene Roddenberry two days before. In it, he described how far along in production they are (just doing revisions in the script...which Gene is writing) and told a small bit of the plot. Around 4:00 Kolker set up a slideshow with his filmstrips. Using a carousel projector, each slide was shown on a big screen. Our little game was nothing compared to this! Have you ever heard 600 people all scream "AMOK TIME!" at once, or "FOR THE WORLD IS HOLLOW AND I HAVE TOUCHED THE SKY!" (which comes out sounding like gibberish)? I was privately proud of my own astuteness in this field. I got several which took the other quite a while. (For instance how many of you would mistake the computer console in "Assignment:Earth" for the one in "The Ultimate Computer"?) And if Rich Kolker made the slightest error, the audience corrected him with no voice spared. We had a few experts on filmstrips who identified the one button depressed on the Constellation console as "The Doomsday Machine," and got other episodes from the extras, or lighting. I regret to say that I'm not quite that good! (We also had one joker who identified one shot of Bill Shatner as "Barbary Coast!") We finished the game with our faces glowing, our ears ringing, our voices gone, and both our minds and bodies fatigued. I might add that by this time it was 6:00, when the con was supposed to have ended at 4:00. Time for a good episode. "The Enterprise Incident" was well received, and we had enough time to run down to the Macke vending room and try to get some dinner. They were sold out of everything except chocolate milk. We each had three chocolate milks. We passed the movie room on the way back, which was showing a Flash Gordon flick.

Upon arriving, we found out the auditorium was reserved for someone else at 7:30, and so could not be used for further episodes *sob*. The already dissipating crowds grew smaller, and the official word was announced: Convention over. We charged back to the movie room only to find it empty and locked. The halls grew suddenly quiet..all the love that had radiated through the building "Bouncing off the ceiling" as Joanie put it, was gone. We hung around for a little while, watching the blackboards being erased, and the signs taken down, before we sadly walked out to our car to go home. Two of the best days of my life were over. Happily, though, we still have next year---and, as the giant birthday card to Gene Roddenberry put it:

"THIS YEAR WE HAD TO SETTLE FOR COLLEGE PARK..BUT NEXT YEAR...MARS!"

STAR RAIDED

Last issue, I printed the following review of an atrocious game called Star Raiders:

STAR RAIDERS (Attack Wargaming Association, 314 Edgley Av, Blenside, PA, 190 \$4 to \$6.50, depending on packaging)

STAR RAIDER is a rotten game. To put it succinctly, it shits.

The board is advertised as being reproduced in three brilliant colors---and so it is. From an apparently hand-drawn original. The counters, too, are reproduced from a hand-drawn original. The rules were apparently written by the chimpanzee-and-typewriter system. The number of typos, grammatical errors etc ad nauseum is exactly that. From the explanations in the rules, one is unable to distinguish between black holes and pulsars. The rules are badly written and badly organized. They explain nothing; they are incomplete. They are, for the most part, unintelligible.

Combat is rediculously simple. Roll a die, and lose half of ones' force. A large force of slightly inferior ships has no chance against one very large ship---more likely, that one ship will destroy the entire fleet, ship by ship. The scale is ridiculous---about 60 stars in an entire "galaxy." The terrain is rediculous.

I'd burn the game, except that the plastic envelop it came in would stink up the house. And I am loath to destroy a \$6 investment, no matter how much of a turkey the game is. So, the game will stay hidden under a pile of shit for all eternity. I'll never play the thing again, thank God.

In response, I recieved the following letter from "D.H. Casciano", dated October, 1975.

After all the letters of praise and encouragement from customers, we had almost given up hope of receiving a "crank letter." We certainly did not expect him to be so foolish as to place FALSE and malicious slander into print.

In the first place, you can not count! There are 112 stars shown on the STAR RAIDER map, not a mere 60 as you so blithly stated. Further the game states that the map shows an "unexplored region of space" (a portion of a spiral arm to be exact). Even if you could not read the very fact that the major portion of the empires extend off the map would show that the map never intended to depict an entire galaxy!

The rules were ready by students at Antioch College who had never seen a war-game before and by local wargamers as young as 12 years old. None of these groups had any trouble understanding the rules. No one expressed any difficulty distinguishing between black holes and pulsars.

You described the terrain as rediculous, which shows us two things. One that you overuse the word rediculous and two that you have little knowledge of astronomy. With the exception of such bodies as messer 42 where the gas is excited and luminous, gas clouds are located by obscuration of stars and most astronomers are of the opinion that there are many more concentrations than they can locate especially in the spiral arms. They same rational holds true for black holes and many theories of stellar evolution suggest that they should be quite common.

You lose half your forces when you have combat because you don't know what you are doing. Each ship is designed for a specific mission; if you use them incorrectly or for a task which they were not designed for you obtain the above result, but from your statement about how you fared in the tournaments at Origins we concluded that missusing your forces is nothing new to you. We shudder to think what lese you might be missusing. You have already missused the names and reputations of some of the worlds S.F. writers on your content page.

You are upset because our game does not allow you to use cruisers to kill battle ships. It does not work in space and it never worked on this planet. NO MODERN BATTLE SHIP WAS EVER SUNK BY CRUISERS which were not supported by heavier ships. I could go on but by now it is obvious that either you do not know what you are talking about or that you are attempting to obtain revenge because I did not approve of your antics in disrupting the tournaments at Origins.

IF YOU DO NOT PRINT A RETRACTION IN YOUR NEXT ISSUE and include the above rebuttal verbatim, we shall instruct our attorney in N.Y. to bring suits to recover damages and to obtain an injunction to block publication of "Gigo" until such retraction is printed. Further if I do not receive confirmation of the above within 20 days I shall bring the obscene content of your publication to the attention of the Post Master General. I will not bring your name to the attention of Mr. Asmov (he would be less understanding than I am), but I do suggest that you reconsider your policy.

I will grant you that the artwork and typesetting of Star Raider were not as good as they could have been, although your feeble attempts at humor left us cold. We do take constructive criticism to heart and our latest game Formalhout-II has these defects corrected; however, do not expect a courtesy copy.

Please note that the above is printed as received; no grammatical errors are corrected; nor are the numerous errors in spelling. Below is my response, mailed to Mr. Casciano, dated 7510.25

1. I was incorrect when I stated that there were "about 60 stars" on the board. There were, as you have pointed out, nearly twice that many. However, the fact that I used the word "about" shows that I was not making a count, and was merely estimating. I agree that I was incorrect; I do not agree that I cannot count. The fact that I was incorrect will be printed, along with your letter, in the up-coming issue of GIGO. (By the way, "GIGO," as any trufan can tell you [or any computer freak] stands for Garbage In, Garbage Out. Thus, all four letters are capitalized.)

2. "The fact that major portions of the empires extend off the map" is not clearly indicated. I can mention a good many games in which artificialities of various sorts were included for reasons of play of one sort or another. A prime example is "Star Centurians VII," in which it is possible to colonize a planet and have it start producing industrially in one week. The fact that the empires were in various corners of the board did not suggest to me that large portions of them were off the map.

3. Perhaps I was a bit hasty when I said that the rules were incomprehensible. With a good deal of study and cogitation, they can be understood. There are, as I have stated, numerous typographical errors. The grammatical errors are not only numerous, but horrendous. I do not put myself forward as a grammarian---merely as a competent user of the English language. But I do recognize lousy grammar.

The rules are badly organized, at least in my opinion, and badly written. What the hell is one to make of a rule such as "All ship counters may move up to their movement allowance"? I know what you mean, you know what you mean, but, shit, not everyone who buys the game is a wargamer. And a large percentage of wargamers like rules that at least MEAN something.

I am sure that wargamers "to the age of 12 years old" had no trouble understanding the rules ["Quick, run out and get me a 12 year-old---I can't make head or tail of this"---Groucho Marks] First of all, anyone can understand the rules of any game if the designer stands over his shoulder during playtesting and answers questions. That is, in my experience, the problem with a good many "old tradition" designers---the designer knows what he means when he writes a rule, all the playtesters do because the designer explains the rule---but when the game is released, no one else does.

4. I concede that I may use the word ridiculous too often. I do not concede that your terrain is not ridiculous. For it is. I am sure that large numbers and amounts of gas clouds exist in and among the spiral arms. I merely find it difficult to believe that a gas cloud will obstruct the movement of a spaceship. I find it difficult to believe that a black hole will destroy any ship moving, say, within 1/2 light year of it, or that as many black holes as are portrayed on the board exist in as limited an area as the board, or that pulsars will do the same 2/3's of the time.

5. This is one of the major problems with a lot of space games; space is not just the Pacific spread out a little and moved over a bit. A group of cruisers never sank a battleship---so what? Why does this mean that medium space-going warships will never destroy large space-going warships?

But I should not quarrel with this; this is a design limitation, and, I am sure, represents the thoughts of the designer. If any.

I do think the combat system is unnecessarily simplified, and unnecessarily over-stacked in favor of those participants in a battle with larger ships.

6. What??? Please, I'm sorry. I wrote a rather nasty review of your game, perhaps overly nasty. I'm sorry; I didn't want to hurt anybody's feelings. I was confident that if the designer truly like his game, he wouldn't particularly care what I thought. And that if he was insecure enough to care about some dipshit fan pubber's opinions, he would be somewhat less vociferous.

Really, I don't mind getting letters telling me what a moron I am. That's okay, and I expect that, after writing such an obvious panning review, I might get an angry letter from the designer.

But what is this? "-----it is obvious that either-----or your are attempting to obtain revenge because I did not approve of your antics in disrupting the tournaments at Origins."

First of all, I would like to state that I have no idea who you are, and I had no idea who the designer of the game was. I reviewed the game as I saw it. If I had the pleasure of displeasure or whatever of meeting you at Origins I cannot remember it. I was not attempting to exact revenge for any wrong, real or imagined.

And I made no "antics" that "disrupted" any tournament at Origins. The only tournaments I participated in were the D&D tournament and the Diplomacy tournament, although I was signed up for the SPI Napoleonic and the Blue and Gray tournaments. I did do a few flippant things at the D&D tournament, but I disrupted nothing. I do not think the expedition was run by its leader in the most efficient manner possible, but I didn't disrupt anything (Were you in the D&D tournament? If so, can you honestly remember me disrupting anything?)

And I played quite honestly in the Diplomacy tournament. It is true that I over-slept and didn't show up early enough to get in on the second round at the start, but that is hardly disruption. And it is true that I got a bit mad (I shouldn't have done so, I admit) at a fellow-player, but that anger did not translate itself into action (i.e., physical contact.) I did not disrupt the Diplomacy tournament.

If you can produce specific examples in which you think I disrupted any tournament whatsoever at Origins, I will be glad to provide a full and complete explanation of my behavior.

7. I shall print no retraction in my next issue. I will announce that I was incorrect in certain specifics in my review of your game. I shall state that there are indeed 112 stars, rather than 60; that I was incorrect in stating that the board covered an entire galaxy, or in implying that the advertisements in any way implied that they did; that the rules are incomprehensible. I will restate that I think the game is bad, that the rules are badly and ungrammatically written, that it is my opinion that the terrain and combat system leave a good deal to be desired.

I shall print your letter along with my response.

8. Consider this as "confirmation."

9. You are invited to bring the "Obscene" content of my publication to the attention of the Postmaster General....my publication does not print pornography or lewd matter; it prints no matter designed to titillate the reader without the benefit of redeeming social value. My use of certain words is in no way obscene. I suggest you examine the most recent issue of any magazine but, perhaps, the newsweeklies. The most recent issue of Analog has a story in which the words "fuck" and "shit" are used several times. Ms. Magazine, the New Yorker, F&SF, Rolling Stone, New York Magazine and the Times of London all have used such words upon occasion. Will the Postmaster General ban such publications along with mine?

10. You are invited to bring my "exploitation" of Mr. Asimov's name to his attention----as well as my similar "exploitation" of Paul Linebarger's, Harlan Ellison's, Kurt Vonnegut's, and Philip Jose Farmer's. Any fool who cannot see that the lower half of my Table of Contents is a joke deserves the laughter his accusations of exploitation will receive. I have never "exploited" anyone, and I do not intend to do so. I don't use people.

11. Were the Postmaster General to decide to take action against my publication, or were you to file suit against "Gig", you would quickly find that said publication has no legal standing. In the eyes of the Post Office, it is a mass-produced private letter. I am filed as a publication with no department; I have never applied for a second-class permit. I publish mimeo, not by any professional means. I print a FANZINE, damnit.

For similar reasons, my publication cannot be stopped.

And I think you will find that "damages" from a fanzine with an approximate circulation of 80 are little.

My feeble attempts at humor have, I am sure, left you cold. The person at whom humor is aimed is rarely appreciative of such.

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EPISTLES FROM HITHER AND YON

RUTH BERMAN 5620 Edgewater Blvd Minneapolis MN 55417

I feel guilty at the idea of your sending me GIGO without a NO in return... but thank you very much. I'll try to respond with locs now and again but for some reason I find it hard to write locs. Anyhow...

A comment on your dislike of artificial problems. Actually you've got two kinds of 'artificial' problems named. How many angels can dance on the head of a pin is basically trivial although there is a serious underlying principle. Whether Christ is in some sense the same being as God or merely a good man. ~~Whether~~ God is important because a merely good man's religious rulings can be disputed --we still have people who have to gro through considerable mental acrobatics to figure out a way in which women can be treated by men as equals without denying the words of God who said that man has authority over the wife (not to mention the close-minded types who still figure women are inferior because the Bible says so.) One may think it's foolish to treat the Bible as divinely inspired in every detail but the problem is real for Fundamentalists --and for the people who have to live in the same world as Fundamentalists.

And "free will" matters because if criminals commit crimes out of free will there is no possibility of "curing" them but only the (obviously weak) possibility of converting them or the somewhat stronger possibility of frightening them off with the threat of punishment. If our wills are not free then crime can be treated as an illness, searching for causes and trying to end them. (In the society at large by economic and social changes in the individual through --psychology drug therapy etc). At the moment it's an artificial problem because assuming the possibility of treating crime as an illness we don't so far have any really helpful treatments (except quarantine---which is awfully primitive medicine.)

And so on and so on. Some questions are more important more urgent or more soluble than others. but when you come right down to it everything interlocks and nothing is really trivial.

[I'm afraid I must disagree with you. If our wills are free then criminals can be swayed from their path; they can choose not to commit crimes and we can help them come to the point where they might choose not to commit crimes. Thus, if there is such a thing as free will rehabilitation of criminals is possible.

[If, on the other hand our actions are predetermined then a criminal commits crimes because he must because it is determined that he should. Therefore there can be no hope of rehabilitation for him because it is determined that he should commit crimes.

[The question can be argued either way. The question of free will vs. determinism is an artificial one because it has no real applicability; the question at hand is whether or not it is possible to rehabilitate criminals. And after a hundred years of experimentation we can only say that at least with our current methods we cannot rehabilitate criminals at least most of the time.

[The question of free will vs. determinism is artificial because it is a rationalization of real problems. The creation of the concept solves no problems and were we to come to a definitive conclusion as regards the concept that conclusion would solve no real problems.

[And if solving the question of free will as opposed to determinism solves no real problems why should we debate the thing at all? There are so many more pressing questions that need to be resolved.]

Don D'Amassa 19 Angell Drive East Providence RI 02914

Thanks for the nice review of MYTHOLOGIES in the current GIGO much of which I managed to find interesting despite (I'm sorry to say) a very confusing format (or lack thereof.)

Gerard Houarner is much too severe in his comments on DRACULA. Firstly the central characters of the novel are a bunch of strange characters rather than strong dominant heroes. They are supposed to be real people reacting to supernatural threats not John Carter of Mars taking another monster in stride. Imagine how well your next door neighbors would behave if confronted by a vampire.

Actually DRACULA isn't even the best of Stoker's novels. He had a fine occult adventure story THE JEWEL OF THE SEVEN STARS somewhat similar to Sax Rohmer another horror-adventure novel titled PAIR OF THE WHITE WORM which appeared as a US paperback as GARDEN OF EVIL and LADY OF THE SHROUD a novel which starts out as a vampire novel then does an about-face and becomes pure technological SF.

It also appears that he doesn't realize that much of THE FEMALE MAN is a put-on, much of it is an ironic turning of the tables. There are hundreds of sf stories in which the female characters are just as ridiculously drawn as the male characters in Russ' book. Some male reviewers seem to have gotten a great deal more upset about the characterization of their own sex than they did about the other. To take Gerard's own example look at how silly the female characters are in DRACULA.

Howard Thompson Box 15346 Austin TX 78761

With your fourth issue of GIGO the second I've seen I feel compelled to make some sort of comment. It's also a lousy day and I don't feel much like doing real work for awhile either.

First I would have liked to respond to the Metagaming Concepts is a dud company comment, but will refrain since it's impossible to be sure who it belongs to due to the confused continuity of the pages Scott Rosenberg-- personally I feel Metagaming has come out with the two finest professionally printed sf games ever printed.]

But with four issues [comments on your quality are more in line.

Really now. Poking fun at the incredibly sloppy nature of your product is no excuse for not doing something about it. Even Star Raider is put together better than GIGO. It's clear you have enough material and enough things interesting to say to put out a zine that has impact and appeal. SO. WHY DO YOU INSIST ON A TRASH FORMAT!

You're certainly free enough with criticism of others to realize the lack of quality of your own effort/ So come on and level with us. What is your excuse for putting out crud? Even most of your readers must be old enough not to think you're soooo cute and campy.

You've got computers, games, fantasy and a lot of variety. WHY NOT PRINT 10 WELL ORGANIZED PAGES THAT SAY THINGS CONCISELY AND WELL INSTEAD OF 40 PAGES OF TURGID CRUD.

Enough of bad mouthing. If you don't think enough of your readers to do a decent effort, GIGO will die soon anyway.

Computers. John Liberman is too obviously new at computers. The Altair 8800 is a lot of power for the money. Someone who is upset is someone who hasn't kept up with the market. No there's no one who can sell you a \$500 computer with \$5 000 worth of software to make it easy for you. If you know what you're doing you can do it with an Altair a lot cheaper than many other ways. The emphasis is on knowing what you're doing. If you don't then be prepared to cough up a minimum of \$10 000 for a computer that already has a minimal operating system. Altair 8800 mostly lacks a hard-wired basic language like Wang 2200 or others. You have to use core to store the compiler rather than having it on ROMs or such. Maybe it really doesn't matter since very few people have the expertise to build their own computer system from components. And most of the rest can't afford \$10 000.

But Liberman is right that Micros are the wave of the future. There will be complete little systems with CRT's, Tape cassettes, hardwired languages with a variety of optional devices for under \$3 000 in a few short years so everyone stick around. Big computers may even be on the way out since getting to work on them is such a hassle in most installations I know of. Time-sharing systems help but why time share on a \$3 million system when everyone can have his own for peanuts?

As a parting shot let me urge you to seriously consider a small well-done effort rather than another choker. Or can't you really do a job of clear thinking? My bet is that you can but are afraid to try for fear that an effort to be really good would fail. Then where would you go having really tried and failed? How about it Greg.

[Hopefully this issue shows some improvement.]

Flying Frenchman Frenchman's Fortress

As Emperor of the French Empire I must protest your inclusion of letters by nits in the same zine in which I appear. Really are you so keen on winning the Upper Class Twit Race next year that you have to release such thoroughbred twits as Scott Rosenberg on an unsuspecting public? I know you've probably spent long hours with Scott carefully training him to mis-read the English language to trip on commas and balance a thesaurus on his head for proper word use and I appreciate all the work you've put in (but really I think you let him stay in the bathroom too long; I think a bit too much of his cranial mass might have worked its way down the old digestive tract. Ah well just hope he'll shoot himself through the heart instead of the head or else the judges will disqualify your entry because of excessive lack of brains.) The way things look now there's not another twit (except for a few in the N3F) who can hold a candle to your man. But try to keep him under wraps for a little while longer; if your rival twit-trainers find out about this true low-point in the human race they might withdraw from the competition.

Let me try to evaluate Scott for you, so you'll be able to smooth out any rough spots before the next competition. The use of the word "dud" is a nice little touch and it's sure to score very high with the judges. Try to get him to say a few other stupid things like "smock," "Nixon" (maybe this one's too hard for

him--some of them can't handle two syllables) and "woof." Pretty soon he'll have a totally nonsensical vocabulary which will go right along with his nonsensical way of saying things. Then there's his comments on my ignorance as to what's going on in NYC fandom which you unfortunately destroyed thus robbing me of the pleasure of showing him where he went wrong. As a matter of fact I don't even remember commenting on NY fandom.

What else is there. Oh yeah my use of the word "gore" in reference to Monty Python and the Holy Grail. I see that Scott is unaware that a great deal of humor is based on cruelty (slapstick insult satire etc.) and that it is the brutality -- as long as it is a safe distance away -- that we laugh at. Monty Python's movie was savagely brutal (would you want your arm chopped off?) - but it was also hilarious in the same way that Chaplin kicking cops around and sticking a bully's head in a gas lamp is funny. But let's not confuse Scott with facts. What really amazes me about your prize twit is how he managed to make my review which was favorable (indeed I was trying desperately to tone down my enthusiasm for the movie) sound like it was not favorable. Beautiful.

Finally Scott takes exception to my disappointment with MPATHG's ending by saying exactly what I said about it. He summarizes the ending in greater detail and says it goes beyond myth-busting that it is the realization of all the inappropriateness (motherfucker what a word!) and absurdity of all the Monty Python school of humor. Well sure! Only why didn't anyone laugh? Isn't that the point? Was it funny did it work? I say it didn't the audience said it didn't and everyone I have met who has seen the movie said it didn't work. A better ending would have been the sinking of the Swan ship by a British police patrol boat or a battle with the bobbies. All I was asking for was a smoother ending. Just because it's absurd doesn't mean it's funny.

Ah, but don't take these remarks negatively. In a twit things like insensitivity ignorance lack of understanding and an inability to read are highly prized. Keep up the good work!

You should have used bigger staples on GIGO 4. The damn thing fell apart as soon as I opened it. The cover was lousy but a good cover would have stood out too much from the rest of the issue. I was impressed by the general disorganization of the issue the near record amount of "bypg" and the complete lack of anything worth reading. Pretty soon you'll be ready for the New York Times Greg.

 WARGAME REVIEWS

SORCERER Printed by Simulations Publications 44 E 23 NY NY 10010. \$9
 Designer: Redmond Simonsen

SORCERER is SPI's first foray into fantasy wargaming and is designed by Red Simonsen who also designed SPI's eminently popular STARFORCE game. Readers who received the first issue of GIGO know what I think of STARFORCE and I won't go into that here.

The board and counters to SORCERER are very impressive. The board proper covers about 2/3's of the area of the map with the rest being taken up by charts and so on. A 21 millimeter hex grid is superimposed; that is to say each hex is 21 millimeters from one side to another. The typical SPI war-game uses 16 mm. hexes. Each hex is one of eight colors; White grey or one of the magical colors---blue green yellow orange red and purple.

The basic underlying idea of the game is that SORCERER takes place in a universe in which several "universes" with varying physical properties interact. Thus there are six colors of magic and each region of the board is predominantly one color or another. A sorcerer adopt in blue sorcery will have little power over any other color. Blue sorcery is more powerful than green which is more powerful than yellow which is more powerful than orange which is more powerful than red which is more powerful than purple which is more powerful than blue. Full circle.

The only other terrain depicted on the board are cities, rivers and mountains.

The counters depict various sorcerers, their strongholds, magical vortices (which the rules persist in calling vortexes throughout [Simonsen says he looked in the dictionary and it said that "vortexes" was an acceptable alternate spelling---all I can say is that the "dictionary" sure as hell wasn't the O.E.D.]) human infantry, and magically conjured units. Each sorcerer may in addition to certain other things conjure up magical fighting units to do his bidding. In each scenario a certain number of sorcerers fight it out, pitting themselves and their conjurations against each other. The rules are immensely complex and totally different from any game SPI has ever done.

The game is also a piece of shit, as a fantasy game. As a nice abstract game its very good. Its less boring than chess, and has more nuances than Diplomacy. As a fantasy game, however, it is a miserable failure.

One of the basic things about a wargame is that it must have a recognition factor. You can't have a Napoleon unit in a game about the North African front in World War II. You can't have tanks in a game on the battle of Borodino.

And in a fantasy game you must base the game on a world that is recognizably fantasy. Oh, sure, the world in which SORCERER takes place is fantasy---but who the hell ever heard of anything like it? A game on fantasy should have monsters and continents and seas and adventurers; if it is to be a strategic-level game it must have huge armies, inhuman races, barbarians, heroic leaders, mighty warriors and mighty magicians. You know fantasy not this bullshit interior decorator's color-scheme game.

Sure, its a nice game. If the thing were called COLOR WAR, and the sorcerers were called color units, and the trolls and so on, fighting pieces, the game would be exactly the same and would lose nothing. And maybe I'd play it a bit more often, and I wouldn't get disgusted at the moronic "historical" preface to each of the scenarios.

I have no doubt that the game will be an unequivocal success and the funny little pimply-faced-teenager-stereotypical SPI wargamer will send in his amusingly stupid letters, telling all and sundry what a fantastic game SORCERER is and I am sure that it will stay at the top of the SPI Bestseller list for millenia to come.

But I am confident that any person reasonably well-read in fantasy who plays the game will instantly recognize it for the bullshit that it is.

So much for job relations at SPI. [I wonder if my next game will manage to get through the art department in recognizable form?]

WHITE BEAR AND RED MOON printed by The Chaosium PO Box 6302 Albany CA 94706. \$8 (I believe). Designed by Greg Stafford

WB&RM is quite obviously a work of love. The board and counters are nearly up to professional standards and the rules although obviously not done professionally are quite impressive. Mr. Stafford has obviously done a great deal of work on his world---I wish however he had done a bit more on the game.

The game is based upon a fantasy world of the designer's devising. Apparently the two major powers in the game the Lunar Empire and the Principality of Sartar are a decadent Imperial power and a barbarian power. The Lunar Empire is an empire based upon the powers of its magicians. Said magicians' powers wax and wane with the waxing and waning of the Red Moon. The Sartar Principality is a newer culture and whose magic depends more on exotic and unusual forms of magic. The two powers lie at opposite ends of the board and large portions of each extend off the board.

The three major scenarios deal with 1) the raising of the standard of revolt by Prince Argrath of Sartar against the Lunar Empire 2) a typical invasion of Lunar by Sartar and 3) a typical invasion of Sartar by Lunar. Apparently the two nearly-evenly matched powers made several dozen back-and-forth invasions.

Although they do not usually play a large part in the game there are a large number of neutral powers---Delecti the Necromancer the Dragons and Dragon-ewts Sir Ethilrist and the Black Horse Troops and so on. Various rules deal with attempts by one side or another to gain an alliance with the various independents and one scenario depicts an alliance of the independents attempting to break the pattern of Sartar-Lunar hostilities which continually devastate their lands.

As can be seen from the above---which is only a summary---a great deal has been done by the designer in developing the fantasy world and in peopling it. Somewhat less work has been done on the mechanics on the game.

The combat rules for instance seem a bit simplistic. The CRT is obviously based upon the old Avalon-Hill standard CRT and is incredibly bloody. Given the general background for the game it would seem that both sides wipe out the majority of their adult male population in every scenario (and perhaps a majority of the adult female population as well; a number of the Superheros are female so there seems no reason that there need not be female warriors as well.) Given the fact that Prince Argrath of Sartar is supposed to have led somewhere between twelve and thirty-three invasions of the Lunar Empire it is hard to believe that most of his army was wiped out in every invasion.

And it also seems a bit silly that the same table is used for magical combat that is used for physical combat.

And as well, the movement rules are a horrific example of badly written amateurism. Forest "halves" movement; roads "double it." A secondary road "adds one movement point to units traveling along" it. Zones of control are never adequately explained; is one forced to stop upon entering one? Must one attack an enemy unit in one's zone? May one move from zone to zone.

Therefore: The game and the fantasy conception are excellent. The mechanics need a good deal of work. All in all the game is (with the exception of D&D) the most impressive fantasy game I have ever seen. And the designer says he plans to print two supplements to the game as well as a newsletter about the game. So there is no reason that the mechanical faults cannot be corrected.

STIMULATIONS PUBLICATIONS

by the Editor

It has come to my attention that a large number of people at SPI read GIGO as if I never seem to say things there. I thought I might set down a few thoughts here.

In the last year, SPI's overall quality seems to have diminished. Admittedly their hiring of me probably had something to do with it but I cannot think that is the only reason.

In my opinion, SPI came out with two really good games during the year--- PUNIC WARS and FREDERICK THE GREAT---a couple of decent ones---BLUE & GRAY WORLD WAR I DREADNOUGHT NAPOLEON AT WAR ---a morass of unimaginative games and a few real stinkers---GLOBAL WAR WORLD WAR III SIXTH FLEET OIL WAR ISLAND WAR.

But I think that is to be expected. SPI was making a lot of changes--- it was really only beginning to get used to the retail market there was a relatively large turnover in staff and perhaps most importantly SPI was stepping up its schedule and putting out a larger number of games than it had ever done before. Over the past year SPI has put out about 4 games every two months, and in the last few months six games every two month period---one SPI folio, one large game, and four Quad-game folios.

And I think that the games now currently in production show that SPI has not completely lost its touch and is still capable of putting out the best games on the market. TERRIBLE SWIFT SWORD is probably one of the best games I have seen in years; WAR IN THE WEST is astonishing if only for its scale; SMOLENSK looks to have a large number of innovative concepts; the THIRTY YEARS WAR QUAD is an excellent example of a number of very different very good games done in a system that is both unique and workable under the Quad format; the Italian Betrayal rules in SUPERCHARGE are an obvious breakthrough in game design.

But even if the games that SPI is putting out are still excellent SPI does seem to be stagnating in an very important area---the magazines.

STRATEGY AND TACTICS has never at least since I began reading it been a particularly good zine as professional standards go. The historical articles are, with a few exceptions, neither particularly well-written nor particularly accurate nor particularly interesting. The meat and potatoes of the zine has always been the "extras"---Outgoing Mail Briefing For Your Eyes Only Sackson on Games Rod Walker's Diplomacy column. Recently and over the past few years, those extras have been declining. One after another they have been eliminated or moved to MOVES. Thankfully under Redmond Simonsen's editorship, a number of them have been revived. And thankfully one of the historical articles has been eliminated.

But it has been eliminated to pave the way for---an "After Action Report " a replay of a given game. Something so deadly boring that it could belong only in the General. What an After Action Report does or attempts to do is show in game turns exactly what happened in a given historical situation---say replay the Battle of Borodino, using SPI's Borodino game showing exactly what happened on the board corresponding to what happened in the battle.

At least reading the historical articles one had the idea that one might possibly pick up something or two that one didn't already know that was valid. Reading an After Action Report is like sitting down and reading the Quotations section of the Wall Street Journal.

It also seems to me that the whole concept of an After Action report is contrary to the basic idea of S&T; when MOVES was created S&T was seen as an historical magazine and MOVES as a gaming magazine; one would carry general news, book reviews, and historical articles; the other would carry material interesting to wargamers.

Although S&T is definitely declining in quality it doesn't have very far to descend, and thus the change in quality is not really terribly noticeable. But MOVES has degenerated from an excellent magazine to something on a par with S&T.

I will compare a recent issue of MOVES number 24 with a somewhat older one, number 18; 18 was, I think, somewhere near MOVES' highpoint. For those not familiar with the numbers, 24 is the DREADNOUGHT Profile issue and 18 is the SNIPER profile issue.

The lead article in 18 is the Sniper Game Profile. It is a discussion on all subjects of Sniper. It talks about how SNIPER! was developed tells anecdotes about SNIPER!'s playtesting talks about some impromptu scenarios invented by the writer and a few friends discusses the rules and talks about solutions for rules disputes that readers might agree upon gives a few hints on tactics and in the end makes a critique of the game as a whole.

The lead article in 24 is the Modern Quad Game Profile. It consists of four short articles; each one on one of the Modern Quad games Mukden Chinese Farm, Golan, and Wurzburg. The articles do not discuss the games; rather they describe them. The articles are nothing more nor less than descriptions of the games, with a few hints on tactics thrown in.

Of the other three important articles in 18 one discusses EL ALAMEIN perhaps a self-defeating battle but interesting; another discusses tactics in AMERICAN REVOLUTION; a third provides new scenarios and new units for COMBINED ARMS.

In 24, four articles remain. Two are "Comparative Evaluations." One compares Dreadnought to Jutland; the two games are miles apart. Their similarity between the two can be stated as follows: they're both on dreadnought warfare. Well, shit. THIRD REICH and KAMPFPANZER are both about tank warfare.

The second compares PANZER LEADER and PANZER 44 an essentially masturbatory exercise. Both games are on the same subject and on the same scale; the only differences between the two games are differences in the ways the two designers saw things. It's like comparing THIRD REICH and WORLD WAR II; some people like one game more than the other some feel the other way around. No amount of arguing is going to change anyone's opinion. The two games are DIFFERENT, that's all.

The last two articles: One deals with DREADNOUGHT gives new scenarios and rules for the game. A good, all round old-style moves article. Very nice. The second is the first of the "Tactical" articles; it deals with tactics in the Napoleonic quad. And the tactics discussed are not even tactics in the true sense of the word; they are nuances and peculiarities in the game system that one side or another can use to advantage. The hex grain keeping a force behind lines to provide a second set of ZOC's that kind of thing.

In issue 18 and at the times when MOVES was at its height one wrote an article on wargames or a wargames and shipped it off to SPI. If it was good maybe they'd buy it. If not not.

In the back of issue 24 we find a list of article types. Articles are filed in 7 categories; if you want to write an article for MOVES its got to be either a Game Profile, an Operational Analysis, Scenarios and Variants, Design Critique, a Field Report, an After-Action Report, or a Footnote. Each type of article is followed by a list of qualifications for that type of article, and a list of things which must be included or may not be included in that article. Presumably an article combining several of the 7 categories or one which does not fit into any of the 7 categories will be rejected.

As well, "All articles should be typewritten double space on 8 1/2 by 11" white bond. Each typewritten line should be no more than 65 character long and no less than 55 character (including word spaces.) Type no more than 25 lines per manuscript page (including a blank double line between each paragraph.) Manuscript pages should be numbered and should include the author's name, address and phone number; the category of the article (one of the seven described) and the suggested title for the article. Proper terminology should be used in all game articles. Abbreviations should be avoided."

I kid you not. Look on page 29 of issue 24. There it is in black and white/

What would happen, I wonder, if I submitted an article which didn't fit into any of the categories, which was handwritten in white ink on black paper in a readable but tiny scrawl and which had nothing but my name and address tacked on at the end. Would it be rejected no matter the quality of the article? I tend to think so.

It is when organizations become bureaucratically inflexible that they start to die. All these qualifications are totally ridiculous. A good article should be accepted; a lousy article should be rejected. These are the only qualifications that a decent editor needs. Where would science fiction be today if all of Asimov's works were rejected merely because he has the habit of typing single-spaced on both sides of the page with wide margins? If MOVES is to survive as a viable magazine it must not restrict itself with petty and irrelevant qualifications; it must be responsive to its audience and it must be flexible.

In summary; SPI is still the best game publisher on the market although its games in 1975 have, on the average, been somewhat less good than might have been hoped. However, the games for 76 are looking up.

However, the quality of the magazines MOVES in particular has declined alarmingly over the past year. Qualifications and standards have been set up for articles for MOVES---and for SPI---that are little short of "fill out in triplicate, return the red form to me, the yellow form to the front desk, and the blue form across the street." They are arbitrary, restricting, and essentially meaningless. If MOVES is to survive or even improve in quality it must get rid of its ridiculous qualifications, become more flexible. More attention at SPI should be paid to the magazines or they should be done away with as a waste of time and money. If SPI is to do a magazine at all, it ought to do one well.

Well that's the end of GIGO 5. It's a bit late---even on my quarterly publication schedule I'm two months late. But what the hell----

I may be dropping Urf, or merging it with the POCKET ARMENIAN so I may have a bit more time left over for GIGO.

Part of the problem is that I now go to school and work at SPI. Which leaves me about four hours after I get home to do things before I zonk out. Assume an hour for answering correspondence. And assume that I'm playing in a number of games, one of which takes about 15 hours of work per move. And assume that I read quite a bit. And assume that a print three zines and run a D&D campaign. I'm surprised I get so much done.

The next GIGO will most probably come out early in June which will make it about a month late according to the quarterly publication schedule. Except if I get enthused and put it out during the March vacation. Not very likely----

In any case, those who cannot survive the days and weeks between one GIGO and the next, those who cannot survive without the comfort of my printed word can subscribe to Urf or to FTA!

*****IF I WERE NOT OF THE C.I.D.*****
*****SOMETHING ELSE I'D LIKE TO BE*****
*****IF I WERE NOT OF THE C.I.D.*****
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