

#### ANNOUNCEMENTS

This is HOUSE OF LORDS, a zeen by, for and about publishers and publishing, GMs and GMing. It runs no games, and is available to publishers and GMs only. It is composed primarily of the thoughts of its publisher, and a great many letters on topics relevant to publishing a dipzeen in the modern world. Most importantly, this is a forum for those with experience to share the wealth.

This zeen also exists as a vehicle for Mark Luedi's subzeen, GOING STEADY, on the subject of a new publisher's handbook. Any comments on that topic should be addressed to Mark. Also here on a semiregular basis is KINDER, KUCHE, UND KIRCHE -- an infozeen of the US/OGP Orphan Service. Scott Hanson writes that, and any comments/questions on it should be addressed to either Scott or me.

You can get this zeen any number of ways. 1) Send me money or stamps, and I'll credit your account one issue for every 35¢. This is the least desirable method. 2) Set up a straight trade deal. 3) Write! Anything that gets published here will earn the writer from 1 to 3 free issues of HOL. Most will earn two.

The 1983 Dipdom Census is finished with the input stage. All I need to do now is sort it about half a dozen ways and send it to Fred Davis for some further digestion, final assembly, and then print the rascals. Most of you should have your copy by about mid-November, unless I get called out of town for an extended period of time. Don't bother to send in any more addresses, as the format of the data does not lend itself to extensive updating. Looks like it will be bigger than last year.

Larry Peery is compiling a Con/Tournament handbook containing a great many ideas on running a con/tourney. It's really a one shot, one target deal, but Larry is going to make some extra copies if anybody would like to see whta it is. Contact him for further details. The address is somewhere in here.

November is the month for the Player Poll and Marco Poll. If you need details, contact Mark Larzelere or John Caruso or read most any zeen. Hurry, though, the final deadline is November 22.

A few new faces this time, and the zeen has settled into a subber/participantship of about 30. I'm quite happy with that, as most of you seem to be alive and kicking. Very good -- this zeen may even last through the new year. Don't expect complacency, though. On with the show....

#### OLD BUSINESS

##### HOUSE OF LORDS - THE CONCEPT

\*\*\*\*\* (Randolph Smyth/FOL SI FIE) Received HOUSE OF LORDS #3 today. Sorry my response was so short, as you seem to have taken everything I wrote the wrong way. I will at least answer the questions you posed me in return.

Yes, I think an intelligent ten-year-old can grasp the fundamental requirements of publishing. An energetic one would probably do a better job of it than most of us adults. Zeens are imperfect because most publishers don't have the drive to do as good a job as they could. For instance, my filing system isn't as good as it could be, and I can't find any requests from you for a FOL SI FIE. I don't recall ever receiving an International Reply Coupon from anyone in the Diplomacy hobby, and that's the sort of thing I would remember since I'd have to make a special trip to cash the thing. Nevertheless I'll try to get a copy of the next issue to you.

((Thanks, I appreciate it. The request was early in the life of 81AM, and I believe there were about three of them. You may have been so wrapped up in the game that you missed them. Sure, intelligent ten-year-olds can write symphonies and understand multivariable calculus, too. From my experience, most new zeens that I see have improved drastically over the first year. I attribute that more to earned experience than an increase in intelligence or motivation. Of course, motivation is a very large factor in pubbing, but I don't see it as the "ultimate" solution, if there is such a thing. Anybody else have a different point of view here?))

And yes, I think that the relative sizes of the Canadian and US hobbies have a lot to do with the perception north of the border that Americans are in a constant state of feuding. We've had our problems here, too, but they only come along every five years, perhaps. With ten times the population, you have something nasty to discuss every six months -- and the average feud lasts longer than that! Still, that doesn't alter the reputation that the US hobby has given itself over the years. I don't believe that your proposals to discuss what are in many cases irreconcilable differences are going to help the situation. I hope to be proven wrong.

((I hope so too. I think the difference is that I don't see the differences as irreconcilable. But, even if they are, the differences can be expressed in a peaceful, positive way. A great deal will depend upon how violent I permit the discussions to become. And I don't plan on letting this get out of hand.))

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Hope that this at least clears the air. Again, I'm sorry that I get little benefit from the HOL discussions: #3 was entertaining but not instructive, and it's education that I look for in a dipzeen these days. The fact that you've produced a 10-page zeen based on your ideas proves that you have a following, though, and I wish you all the best.

((Thanks, everything is fine at this end, too. If you are looking for "education" in a zeen, then this issue should suit you well. But really, what do you possibly mean by education? You've been around for quite a few years, seen most everything...what can you learn from a dipzeen, diplomacy-wise? Or are you more an educator than educatee? Or are you not thinking in terms of a Diplomacy "education" at all?))

\*\*\*\*\* (Larry Peery/XENOGOGIC) You ought to publish the names of people who get each issue so we can see who we are communicating with.

I'm not sure how to respond to some of the stuff in the zeen. Either I can make broad philosophical comments, which no one will understand but me (and probably not even I...) or I can make specific comments about peoples comments and confuse things even further. Or, I suppose, I can take the safe route and go through and find every place my name is mentioned, glow at the strokes, and damn the criticisms. Hummmmm.

I like the bright colors also. I used them for a while on XENO covers but I drifted into white and stayed with it. It does get dull, especially on the shelf.

It is interesting, in reading HOL, to read the comments without noticing who wrote what. You can almost predict what some people will say and how they will say it.

As for the Golden Age, if my hair keeps changing color I will start calling these the Silver Years! Groan, but at least I've still got my hair. I have an opinion about it but since I was a participant in it my opinion is obviously going to be different from Tallman's, or yours, or anyone else who wasn't around in those days. So, what should I do, lay around on a rock and play Living Fossil?

Bah!

Since your stated purpose and stated audience are for pubbers I don't see why you can't restrict it to them. On the other hand if anybody is dumb enough to want it I don't see why they shouldn't have it. ZIT! Is that a wishy-washy enough answer?

((Pretty good, but you've done better. Why don't you just take the safe route first, and then go back and make all the comments (any type) your little heart desires? If I run out of space, I run out of space....

((I'd like to publish the list of subbers every issue, but that could be terribly redundant after a few months. Space considerations, or I'd do it for sure. Since most of the names are printed in each issue and the addresses are pretty easy to get, addresses are very low priority.

((I think I'll stay with the "vibrant" green. It wakes me up when I look at it. I'd use orange, but this isn't really an orange kind of zeen. For a few pennies more, the color adds quite a bit.))

\*\*\*\*\* (John Caruso/WHITESTONIA) HOL is not an elitist group or a segregated group as everyone seems to view it. I see it as a forum for a certain group of people. Anyone can GM or put out a one page flyer and call it a zeen and be able to participate. Unlike segregation which denies people -- HOL states how you are entitled. If this was elitist, only the top fifty or so GMs and publishers would be allowed to enter. You have done it in a very fair way -- past and present GMs and publishers, and since anyone can GM or publish, anyone can take part. That's something these people who call this an "elitist group" fail to recognize.

((Good point. Part of the reason this zeen has a restricted subbership is that I'd like my subbers/readers to be active. If you want this bad enough to try pubbing or GMing. I think you're crazy, but I also like it! You'll get more out of dipdom if you do. Enough of this preaching to the converted.))

\*\*\*\*\* (Konrad Baumeister/GIVE ME A WEAPON!) Since I have another twenty minutes before class, I suppose I can also throw in a few words about the latest HOL. (I do like the title, by the bye.)

I don't see that we're going to get very far if we're still arguing, by issue #3 or #4, about who's going to get the zeen. My own opinion is that only pubbers should get it, simply because it makes the zeen elite, and why not feel elite if we can? It happens so rarely anyway.

Trouble is in deciding who's a publisher. Subzeen editors, for example. Now, it's clear that Kathy Byrne, technically a subzeen editor, is also a great part of the publishing effort of WHITESTONIA. On the other hand, Alex Lord wrote an article a month for another zeen, but that's about it, as far as I can tell. Brad Wilson and Vic Dupont write articles for me every month, but ghod knows that they're not publishers in the sense of the word. Other examples abound, but you get the point. For me money, if we limit the zeen

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to publishers, we limit it to those who actually publish, run the zeen, etc. You wanna draw the line?

((No, I don't. I'd like to point out that this zeen is as much for GMs as it is pubbers, so Brad and Vic qualify quite well under that category. Kathy is the "pubber" of EVERYTHING. Julie does as much work on RETAL as I do, yet is a mere "co-publisher." Where can I draw the line? I'm putting it off for as long as I can -- no hurry. The objective here is not to exclude the dregs, but include the most active/experienced.

((I'd like to be discussing the form/content of the zeen 20 issues from now. This is one of those rare places where the depth and detail of a discussion are just as important as seeing how many topics we can cover in an issue. Maybe it'll start to drag sometime, but at the moment I think we're still covering new stuff or old stuff from a new angle. Have patience.))

\*\*\*\*\* (Rod Walker/DIPLOMACY WORLD) The more I see HOL, the more I like it. This is an excellent forum. I have, as usual, a few assorted comments. I would like to start by stating that the best aspect of the zeen is your handling of it. Your technique of responding to comments (often) by asking more questions is very stimulating...particularly as you very frequently pick quite a good question to come back with. However: it is often very difficult in your format to tell where one commentator stops and the next starts in. I almost missed (gasp!) one set of my own comments. Possibly some separation lines or symbols?

((I agree that it's a bit tough to tell beginnings and ends here. All of my stuff begins with the double parentheses and ends with them as well. I won't be using actual characters between lines so I can conserve space, time, and my typewriter ribbon. Do the asterisks help any?)

((Surely you don't just skim HOL looking for your own material? But I must disagree -- the best aspect of the zeen to date has been the extensive and varied response it's received. I could run this thing to perfection, but without the help of the readership it would be pointless and worthless. Thanks anyway.))

"Elitism": We need to be careful of this word. It is not necessarily true that restricting HOL to past/present pubbers is "elitist." You have to have some way to restrict input...otherwise you would have 99-page issues, no doubt. The most vocal and opinionated people in the hobby tend to get into publishing anyway, so this "restriction" isn't all that restrictive. I would say, however, that you would be well advised to consider letting non-pubbers subscribe. Two reasons: one is that there's nothing secret about what's been said here; the other is that some non-pubbers are interested in publishing and it would be good for them to read some of these discussions. But it seems a very good idea to restrict input to those who've "been there."

((We may end up with 99-page issues anyway. I don't know whether that would be good or bad.

((Perhaps when a non-pubber/GM expresses a desire to sub, I shall consider considering it. But I'll cross that bridge when I come to it. Rod, you sound a lot like Caruso -- that the restriction is not much of a restriction.))

\*\*\*\*\* (Dave Carter/SLEEPLESS KNIGHTS) I understand that you are attempting to generate reader response by making outlandish statements in your replies to their letters but do you have to be so negative about it. The concept works insofar as after reading HOL I do feel a need to write to HOL but it's usually to correct one of your slanders.

"Most Canadian pubbers seem to be so impossibly arrogant?" Based on what? The only evidence you presented was that Randolph Smyth did not send you a sample. Were you aware when you made that statement that Randolph had temporarily and orderly closed shop, while he was at a 4 month seminar at a Canadian base outside Toronto? He has only recently started up a mini-FSF for his players only. I would be very interested to know that 4 of the 7 Canadian pubbers are "impossibly arrogant."

((And I thought I was doing so well, too.... The "evidence" I presented for my question (not statement) regarding Canadian arrogance was in Randolph's letter last month. His assertion that ten-year-olds can publish perfect zeens (or close to it) seemed a bit strange, considering how most adults fare. The strong implication that US pubbers always degenerate to personal attacks seemed more than a bit out of line. I think he makes his point more clearly in the letter on page one of this issue. It seems to be a common Canadian misconception (at least, I think it's a misconception) that US pubbers are all more interested in personal attacks than anything else of importance.

((For more concrete evidence of arrogance, may I point out the return of François Cuerrier (who almost defines the word), and Bob Albrecht (charging \$1 per issue of his zeen after a terrible fold the last time). Also, though I don't recall it at the time, Ronald Brown, as CDO coordinator, claimed the right to appoint

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a new BNC (I heard this from Kathy Byrne, though I find it hard to believe that anyone could be so presumptuous, CDO coordinator or not). Add the impression I got from Randolph's last letter and that makes four, though I wasn't keeping score at the time. Also consider that my sample request to FSF (a minor point) was in 1981/early 82, not recently while Randolph was at the seminar. Please don't be so eager to jump to conclusions.

((Could you please explain the last sentence of your first paragraph? I get the impression that you are degenerating to a personal attack here. If that's the way you really feel, well, I wish you wouldn't be so vague. I can neither defend nor correct what you may see as problem areas if I can't figure out what they are.

((I do not attempt to generate reader response with crazy statements, there seems to be plenty of response without them. While I may ask odd or pointed questions at times, they are not intended to infuriate. I'd rather keep this cool and collected. I do edit the letters that come in (slightly, in most cases). If there is anything which I feel may be unnecessarily inflammatory, I may try to slip it back in elsewhere. That's what happened with the "arrogant Canadians" remark, and I'm surprised it touched such a nerve.

((And now, we return you to our regularly scheduled author....))

Besides being "impossibly arrogant" I also like to look at the "silver linings" in life so let me close on a positive note.

HOL is an interesting zeen to receive. I enjoyed reading the letters and the updates on the hobby news. The "lost game listings" is a good idea. I have game information of some of the games which I will pass on to Kathy. Please keep up with HOL but also I would encourage you to not make outlandish statements that slur the majority of Canadian publishers without backing it up.

((Glad you seem to like the zeen after all. By the way, I didn't mean that arrogance was a negative trait. Some of my best friends are "impossibly arrogant," and I've even been called that once or twice (me!?), myself. Don't worry, next time I slander somebody, I'll back it up in advance. OK??))

\*\*\*\*\* (Steve Langley/MAGUS) As to the elitist controversy; it's your zeen, run it the way you want to. I imagine if there exists a "very interested" non-publisher with great insights, etc, that he will be publishing soon in any case.

One note to Jim Meinel's comment about not knowing what one has to go through until one has published. Even after a year it amazes me anew what has to be done and how much work it actually is. I find that I spend over an hour just to adjudicate a game and that's not counting the final typed draft, that's just the making sure the units are correct and that the moves end up where they are supposed to.

In answer to Terry Tallman:

Question Runestone Poll: Who says it's totally bogus? If it were bogus there would be no point in "running" it (how does one "run" a bogus poll?) but it is a real poll. Perhaps it has no great worth to all peoples but some people do respect it. Give those people the right to their poll, OK? As Julie said, if you (actually she didn't -- I'm not quoting) don't want to take part then don't.

Question ethics: That's about all.

Question: Read HOL and let us all know. I came across the idea of using a reader poll to find (attempt to find) out what my readers like/dislike. I think I may feel better about publishing if I feel if I feel I'm making my readers feel better.

Why do you think pubbers are doing the same things that were being done 20 years ago? What was being done 20 years ago? Zeens are imitative of other zeens to some extent. Some pubbers purposefully try to break the mold but are still limited to certain similarities. Isn't it possible that the fault lies within the media rather than publisher inertia? Soon will come electronic zeens -- then there will be a revolution away from the old conservative paper zeens to a new media/new concept which will, ten years later, look a lot like it did when it first came forth -- only then, as now, there will be more zeens, all with small quirky differences, but generally similar to each other.

((This publishing stuff can really turn out to be more than you expect, can't it? The best zeens often start snowballing, until it's out of control. I spent many beautiful weekends inside typing when I just wanted to go out and relax. Still, it was worth it for me. I also spent a lot of rotten, otherwise boring weekends typing. As with most things in life, it seems to go both ways.

((Suppose as a pubber I don't want to take part in the Runestone poll -- can I just ask not to be put into the final totals? Which takes precedence, the pubber/GM's right to privacy, or Dipdom's right to poll? A toughie.))

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\*\*\*\*\* (Keith Sherwood/YOU KNOW MY NAME...) Hey, thanks for send me a copy, and for keeping me supplied with notice of "last sample." Afraid you're truly serious this time on the back of #3, and feeling like I better do something to earn my keep and my HOL, I hereby break down and submit.

Dropping back a few months, you ask, "What do I think" of your new project. Well, with the benefit of hindsight now after three months I say I'm surprised you got as much support as you did. I figured you would get general lip service and indifference until you established yourself. This is how I feel most things are in the hobby: viewed with indifference until your worth is proved. Perhaps I'll have to reconsider my view of the hobby.

I never saw the earlier publisher's handbook. I view a new one just as I said I thought everyone would view HOUSE OF LORDS. My view is: Hmm, an intriguing idea. We don't really need one since we're getting along fine now without, but it might turn out to be a nice luxury. I'll reserve judgement until I see one.

Never mind that this is a pretty defeating attitude and that one must necessarily get involved if a project is to be worthwhile. Hey, I'm from CA, I can be mellow, laid back, apathetic.

Actually, my true feeling is that I live 20 miles from Rod Walker and 16 from Larry Peery, so I can go ahead and coast since those two are doing enough hobby organizing for all of San Diego county.

Excuse me, I'm getting a little stream of thoughtish.

((Quite alright, as long as I can follow your stream. You can't fool me, you're still a New Mexican hiding behind that California myth.

((I'm a bit surprised that HOL has gotten the "support" it has, also. I expected maybe ten pages per month. I suppose the support is coming from areas I didn't expect, and I've managed to come up with some decent topics. And the kind of support I need to make this work doesn't require a whole lot of effort. Nobody has to be original, or think up anything clever. All you have to do is tell me what you think about whatever it is we're talking about at the moment, however you want to. I have come to the conclusion that most people do have some opinions on something. This is becoming a good place to express those opinions. If anybody else gets anything out of it, great. If you can crystallize your thoughts by expressing them and then seeing them (and others' reactions to them) in print, great. Then again, maybe there is some inherent value to this little project (not service) that I haven't realized yet. Who knows? But HOL will not be used to "organize" Dipdom, that's a futile project from the start. Rather, I'd just like to open lines of communication that did not exist before. Sure, nobody needs this, nobody needs anything in Dipdom. But maybe it would be nice. Only time will tell.

((What do you get out of this? Is it merely another zeen for the Keither Archives? Or do you actually read this and learn something about something or somebody?))

\*\*\*\*\* (Paul Rauterberg/MIDLIFE CRISIS) Thanks for the three free copies of HOL: actually, this is one of the few zeens that I have bothered to read cover-to-cover and have not been put to sleep in the process! I'm sorry that I have not been inclined to write for it thus far -- that shouldn't connote lack of interest as much as lack of time to compose worthwhile comments on the topics introduced.

As soon as I have a few spare bucks in my checkbook (two weeks?) I'll send some sub money for HOL. I definitely like it, and want to keep receiving it.

((Glad you like it. This is as interesting to me as it is to you, that's for sure. Rather than sending me your last pennies, why don't you set aside fifteen minutes a month to jot down your impressions on the present issue. Don't worry about composing worthwhile comments, even the most uncomposed comments seem to be worthwhile.))

\*\*\*\*\* (Bill Highfield/THE MODERN PATRIOT) I like HOL; it's interesting. I am not sure that I know what you're after, besides informing publishers what other publishers think, but maybe I'll learn more as I find out.

((When you figure out what I'm after, would you please let me know? In the meantime, just go with the flow.))

\*\*\*\*\* (Mark Berch/DIPLOMACY DIGEST) I was richly amused by your saying on page 2 that only GM/pubbers "will know the answers," and then on page 3 saying on page 3 that "most Canadian pubbers seem to be impossibly arrogant."

Seriously, if you think that, for example, that only GM/pubbers are interested in GMing ethics (which deals largely with how GMs treat their players), then from such a wrong premise, wrong conclusions flow. Look at, for example, Kathy's point #2 on page 7. That letter, could have been written, word for word, by someone who is neither publisher nor GM -- note that she even uses "they," not "we."

What I mean by make available is exactly that. I'd tell my readers about it, and say that if they wanted a copy, to send me an SASE. So it would be available on request. The description of the material would go

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in DD, not the material itself. What do you say?

((An interesting proposal. I'll agree on several conditions. 1) You provide whole issues, not excerpted in any way. 2) You charge no more than an SASE. 3) Keep me informed regarding any requests you get, and any responses that you may receive. 4) You provide me with copies of whatever description you put into DD, plus anything else regarding HOL that appears in DD. 5) Either of us may terminate this agreement at any time for any reason.

((You seem to be equating "knowledge" with "interest." From such wrong premises, wrong conclusions flow.))

The hobby was different then. It had a cozier feel, since there were far fewer zeens and few pubbers. In those days, it was much more practical to have a zeen which nearly all pubbers traded for. The zeens were smaller, on the average, then. Perhaps the biggest difference is that zeens then were much more of a one-man-show than they are now. Subzeens were virtually unheard of 10-15 years ago. The high levels of reader participation in the form of letters and articles that one sees on a regular basis in zeens such as VOD, EE, WHITESTONIA, ANDUIN, and HOL was virtually unheard of. Instead, zeens like EREWHON and COSTAGUANA and XENOGOGIC were, except for press, pretty much dominated by one person's writing. That change, I think, really began in earnest with the founding of DIPLOMACY WORLD.

\*\*\*\*\* (Tom Swider/EXPLETIVE DELETED) Thanks for all the HOL samples. Sorry I didn't get back to you on any of them, but I've been quite busy with college, games, work and whatever else I manage to get into these days. I thought I'd definitely get something to you for #4 to make sure I can keep getting HOL. If this isn't good enough, let me know if I should send a donation to help you out.

((If you can keep writing in, I think you should hold on to your donation. What is this, is everybody conditioned to sending \$\$ rather than participating?))

\*\*\*\*\* (John Michalski/MOS EISLEY SPACEPORT) Regarding HOUSE OF LORDS itself, it is nice as an "Insider's Newsletter" as it were, but, it's a lot of extra work for a sidelight to a hobby. Rather than work on HOL, wouldn't we all benefit if each individual pubber put that extra hour into his OWN zeen? Many come to my mailbox these days that quite frankly NEED one or five more hours work: it would apparently double the effort expended on more than one, to judge by the looks of it! (You're welcome to print these comments if you wish. I'm not Russ Rusnak.)

((I don't know if you can translate an hour or so to write in to HOL into an hour taken away from working on one's own zeen. How much time did it detract from the latest MES for you to write that note?

((It may be a lot of work for me, but since I am willing to expend the effort, that should be a minor consideration. And is writing in to HOL any more of a "sidelight" than writing to anybody else? I hadn't looked at it that way. Considering how much time it takes us (two of us) to produce an average sized issue of RETAL, an hour fades into insignificance. Do you think HOL is merely a "sidelight?" If so, why? What would I have to do to make this into a mainstream zeen (if it's not now?))

\*\*\*\*\* (Mark Luedi/THIRTY MILES OF BAD ROAD) Thanks, I appreciate you providing room for GS. Also, I guess you're right about keeping HOL to one topic/month. However, my major complaint to HOL is that your opinion seems to be pervading the whole discussion. Maybe you're unaware that it is. But, a lively discussion of an issue will provide readers with enough food for thought for them to come up with (hopefully) their own answers. I don't know that there will often be "right" answers to what is discussed in HOL. I don't think you want right answers. The readers/publishers will create their won. See what I'm hitting at?

((Yes, and you are right on target. I am looking not for "right" answers, but rather different answers. I am trying my best just to give my initial remarks on a topic and then let it take off from there. Of course, since I usually have something to say about each comment, I'll have more to say than any other single person. Often, what you may take to be "my position" is merely me playing Devil's advocate. Please don't confuse the two. However, I will try at all times not to overwhelm the discussion at hand.

((Here's another note from Mark....))

Oh no!! I just (finally) read HOL #2 cover-to-cover and got to the part where it said "on or about the 7th of each month." I didn't even notice it in my earlier glances through it. Well, maybe you can slip a month somewhere. "Luedi's tardiness provides Martin with vacation!" From now on, I'll keep track of the date on the sheet I keep all my games deadlines on. Can I bother you to jot the date on the outside? Frankly, I'm very impressed with HOL #2. You have a very good editing style, though I'll stick with my comments on opinionality. (Can you read this?)

((Just barely. OK, I'll try to note the date on your issue so you don't get too lost.))

POLLS

\*\*\*\*\* (Randolph Smyth) Regarding the Runestone Poll: I have never attempted to justify it, except on the grounds that it's the best we've got. Not the best system of reporting and ordering the results, perhaps, but the most legitimate in terms of hobby response. I've been conservative -- perhaps too much so -- with the legacy that John Leeder gave me last year: "If it works, don't fix it." A "poor" system of handling results which works with eighty-some responses is going to give a far "truer" idea of what people really think than a terrific system that massages twenty or so responses. Look for more changes in format next year.

That doesn't really answer your question about the point of it all. I plead ignorance. It's a hobby service, probably supported by more people than any other save the Boardman numbers (or even them, since it's mainly the GMs that interact with the BNC). I don't have a philosophical reason for it: some people, at least, seem to appreciate the effort, and that's good enough for me.

((WHY is a system that elicits a greater response inherently better? Does this mean that zeens with greater circulations are inherently superior to low circulation zeens (for much the same reason that a big poll is better than a small poll)? I don't necessarily buy that.

((Aren't you standing on shaky ground when you say the Runestone Poll is a "service?" Following that reasoning, any poll is a "service," isn't it? What makes the Runestone a service where other polls wouldn't be? You seem to be stretching the term "service" a bit. Is this zeen a "service?" Is the "Hobby Reprint Service" truly a service? What's a service and what isn't?

((Back when I started RETAL about 4½ years ago, I wanted to run my games without Boardman Numbers to avoid the ratings hype and a lousy BNC. Several of my players (not players who were also GMs) requested that I get numbers. It's my impression that Dipdom fragments a lot more easily without a BNC than without any poll, or any other service. It is simple, after all, to start a new poll or revive a service. There is quite a bit more to the numbers than meets the eye.

((If you are serious about changing the way you will run the Runestone Poll this year, how would you like to discuss the matter here? We seem to have an active readership, willing to put in at least 2¢ on a topic. You may be able to get a few new ideas, and allow others to gain some understanding of just how to run a poll -- what to look for and what to do. What do you think?))

\*\*\*\*\* (John Caruso) Something productive about my poll -- the Diplomacy Players Poll, and justification for running it. I originally started the poll for a very good reason. Besides curiosity or to do something to feel important. I looked around in 1980 and said -- There's a zeen & GM poll, there are surveys, there are questionnaires, but there was no polling of the players, for whom they thought was the Best, the #1 Player. I also noted back in 1980 that there was no recognition for a Variant Player, and as important if not more so, there was no poll for who the Best Writer of the year was. So I took it upon myself to start the DPP. The first poll was mostly W readers responding, but that didn't deter me. I ran it the following year, and needless to say, I received more votes and a higher percentage of non-W readers. Last year was the ultimate -- more than half the voters were non-W readers, a tribute to the coverage the other zeens have given the DPP.

In the past, as has been the case thus far this year, I receive votes on the pre-printed ballots that are supplied. Some of them are the W ballots, but a lot are from those other zeens that print a ballot and those that don't use a ballot more so than not tell me where they read the plug. Some of the zeens mentioned I had to look up myself.

But the poll is still lacking. I have made changes as suggestions arrived; increased the number to be listed, dropped the variant, but what is missing is the way it's plugged. This poll is THE ONLY POLL to pick the #1 player, by his/her peers. It is also the ONLY POLL to choose the #1 writer in the hobby. To date -- each year, I feel the #1 writer for that year was justifiably chosen. I also feel the #1 player has been correctly chosen, as evidenced by the runaway in the voting in the past polls.

The number of people voting each year has increased gradually, and this year looks to be no exception. And as the DPP stands right now, it is the 2nd oldest poll in North America, and it's only 4 years old. That gives you an idea of the longevity of polls. A poll's biggest enemy is participant disinterest. For a poll to truly mean something, people must vote. When interest wanes, the poll usually vanishes.

((Does it really? How many polls can you name that weren't meant to be one shot deals? I can't think of many polls except the Leeder Poll that go back very far, or many that died out in the past. Something that might be interesting to see would be old Leeder Poll results. Has anybody ever reprinted them?

((Somebody (I can't recall who) once called the DPP an even greater "popularity contest" than the Runestone Poll. Do you think the DPP is prone to "popularity" votes, especially in the player category?

((What percent of votes do you get on pre-printed ballots? Randolph, how about you? Do you think that a greater distribution of these pre-printed forms will yield greater participant response?))

## MORE ON...POLLS

\*\*\*\*\* (Konrad Baumeister) Now, the idea that people or zeens can ask to be left out of the ratings is an interesting idea. I'm in favor of just that. Of course, it makes the ratings even less "valuable" than they already are, but hey, let's have a little fun with them! This way EUROPA EXPRESS can win again and again, if no other zeen is competing! What say the people running the polls?

Jack Master, or Dave Crockett, or somebody, tried to do this in a player rating system, a few years ago. Yeah, it was Crockett. He'd always wanted to have a "perfect record," and when people found out that he'd resigned from a game before SO1 because he didn't like two of the players in the game, it was clear that his record was not "perfect," i.e. he had not won every game he had entered. Crockett then asked Sergeant and McLendon, running a rating system, to remove him from the lists. They said no.

The Gemignani poll was a lot of fun while it lasted, I thought. Well, it was a little negative, but I don't remember anyone taking it very seriously. Participation was not very high, and the whole thing just ended up as another in-joke among the New York Conspiracy and friends. Nothing to get excited about.

((If the Runestone Poll is a "service," then can a pubber elect not to take advantage of it and leave his or her zeen unrated? I don't know any pollster who would go along with this simply because it would make the poll less valuable. Randolph and John, will you voluntarily leave zeens/players out of the ratings upon request?))

\*\*\*\*\* (Larry Peery) As for the John Michalski Piss Poor Loser award. The responses have been amusing. If JM had suggested it the hobby would have been rolling in the aisles laughing how clever he was. But when I did it it wasn't so funny. Perhaps people don't realize that I do have a sense of humor, with bite. JM has been dumping on lots of people for a long time. Some people find it amusing. But when he gets a taste of his own medicine it is oh so terrible. Bah! It was intended to be funny. Most people took it that way. It was also intended to convey my sense of disgust with his sense of humor. Most people also realized that.....

((I have the impression that a great many people couldn't figure out if you were serious or not.))

\*\*\*\*\* (Rod Walker) Voting is a legitimate way of arriving at any decision whatsoever. People who don't like polls can simply not vote in them. And also refrain from complaining if the results are not to their liking. The idea that polls can (or should) be "eliminated" is silly, to put it kindly. I feel sure that rational people will immediately see that anybody has an absolute right to conduct a poll and/or to vote in it. It is my firm policy, as editor of DW, that every poll I know about (and which seems legitimate and reputable) will be publicized. That policy will not change.

The idea that people or zeens can opt "out" of polls may have some merit -- although it is not visible to me -- but there seems no justification for doing so beyond pure pettiness. Besides, the zeen is not the subject of the poll...the correct subject is people's opinions of the zeen. Those people have a right to express their opinions, and to have them tabulated and reported. Therefore, the "right" to "opt out" of a poll does not exist.

Grudge and sweetheart votes...mathematics were never my strong point. I am lucky if I can get  $2 + 2 = 5$  (or whatever) twice in a row. So whether "advanced statistical techniques" can compensate for unfairly inflated or deflated votes, I can't say. I am, however, dubious, if only on general principles. I spotted a good many such votes in the DW reader response "poll," but have done nothing about them other than count them along with the others. Generally, a given zeen or GM will receive some of both sorts of votes (or none of either), so that they tend to cancel each other out. In a very large sample, they don't amount to much anyway.

I really haven't evaluated the "Piss Poor Loser" award thoroughly. I know Larry intends it purely in fun, and I anticipate that this is how most people will see it. Michalski can "take it," anyway.

The similarity of the Yawner Poll and the Gemignani Poll is not lost on me. The latter engendered little outcry except on Peggy's behalf when she made it clear that her name was being used contrary to her desire. I did in fact write Terry a longish letter in which I viewed with alarm. But I retracted the letter later when he wrote back to explain that the whole thing was intended to be humorous. Judging from the results, however, I would say that this was not clear to all the respondents.

((If Bernie Oaklyn returned tomorrow with a poll which he promised to run honestly, would it appear in DW? What criteria do you use to establish that a poll is "legitimate and reputable?")

(("Opting out" of a poll seems superior to the alternative: an attempt to deliberately undermine a poll. Suppose I don't want to see RETAL in the Runestone Poll next year because I feel it will be hit with a significant number of "grudge" votes. This may seem petty to you, but not to me -- what alternative does this leave me? The first one I see is to plug the poll extensively but REVERSE the ratings (0=good, 10=bad). This

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could seriously hurt the whole poll if enough of my subbers vote that way. If I don't want to go to that extreme, I could plug the poll and request that my subbers vote RETAL low and everything else normally. By being more reasonable, this may have an even greater chance of success. Even if the final standings are sent out normally, RETAL almost has to have a little "\*" next to it if it finishes very low. You see, here are two ways to damage a poll, and I haven't even thought about it very much. Sure, and I'd send out a pre-printed ballot with the vote already written in, too. And the pollsters (and their supporters) would probably scream bloody murder about "subverting their poll." Too bad, if they want to leave my zeen alone, I'll leave their poll alone. We'd probably end up with a feud of some sort.

((The above is not meant to advocate civil war, rather it is a hypothetical example of what could happen in the future. (not necessarily involving me). Actually, I'm surprised that something like it hasn't already happened. Or has it? Does anybody know? It's all well and good to go on about rights for this and rights for that, but is there a "right to be left alone?" If there isn't, why not?

((If opinions are the subject of a poll (obviously, they are), why don't we have the "Runestone Opinion Poll" instead of the Runestone Zeen and GM Poll? I feel that the expression of these opinions is much more closely attached to the zeen itself than you evidently do. Certainly the two can't be far apart?))

\*\*\*\*\* (Dave Carter) Why do some people make life so much more complicated than it really is? Life (and the pbm dip hobby) is really very simple! Too many polls? Then don't fill out the ballots to the ones that you do not want to participate in. Soon, those polls with an indifferent turnout will die or become meaningless. Meanwhile those polls that do get a good response will thrive. Why would anyone bother to to the trouble of filling out a ballot and mailing it in to a poll they did not want to participate in?

What's so hard about giving a zeen a number between 0 and 10? While respecting the voter's right to assign any number he or she wishes, giving a 0 because the zeen is boring is being a little narrow-minded. What about punctuality, legibility, layout, pictures, etc? I mean, not even a 1 or a 2?

((If you want to go by raw numbers, no poll that I know of has ever gotten better than 15% of Dipdom to respond, with more common numbers ranging down around 5%. If this isn't indifference, what is?! Yet the Runestone Poll is in, what, its tenth year now? With such a low turnout, aren't all the polls that are run automatically meaningless -- where do you draw the line? I can think of "duty" as a reason why one would respond to a poll that they didn't really want to. Can you think of any others?

((Perhaps giving zeros for being boring is narrow-minded. But giving tens for being interesting is no better. If you dug up all the categories you could, you would end up with the same number of 10s as 0s. None. Everybody seems to have their own criteria for voting. Just as Julie is only interested in how interesting a zeen is, I am just as sure that there are some folks who care totally about punctuality/layout/pictures/legibility and don't permit themselves to be "influenced" by how interesting a zeen is! Don't these "strange" votes balance out?))

In HOL #2 you asked me what I would do if SK got extremely low results in the Runestone Poll. I would attempt to change it within the framework of what I want to do with SK. If that doesn't work -- fold, if my readers otherwise indicate their unhappiness. Why publish something that people do not want to receive?

((OK, another hypothetical situation for you: what if...SK continues to slide in the polls, but your subber list gets bigger, with consistent resubs? How would you deal with these conflicting indicators? Anybody else out there who has actually experienced the above situation -- how did you handle it?))

\*\*\*\*\* (Steve Langley) Julie's discussion of voting demonstrates a major flaw in the Runestone Poll. She votes a straight 10/5/0 ticket. Thus some zeens get a 10 when "most" people feel they should only get a "7" or some such and others get a "0" when others feel that nothing lower than a "7" should count. The others are wrong, of course. The point of the poll is to see what people think/feel about the zeens in the poll. If people don't think 10s and 0s are appropriate votes then the thing to do is change the poll structure. I like the +/0/- system you suggested. Or perhaps an ordered ranking of zeens by preference with brackets to include all zeens of equal rank.

The polls are a sort of award. They are also a prod and perhaps a source of anguish. I'm not sure any of this makes them have worth but I also know I'll probably support them until I decide that my support is meaningless anyhow.

I did run a reader's survey. I was prompted by the discussion in HOL. A sort of indirect positive feedback for your efforts.

I don't know what to think about Larry Peery. I think he does a lot of work and spends much more time and effort than I'd ever be willing or able to spend on the projects he's involved with. I wish I'd taken

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the time to support his "Power Poll." After reading it I found it quite interesting and not at all what I'd projected from its title. I think his "Piss Poor Loser" award is funny. I'm sure Michalski has thick enough skin that he can handle it. I don't agree/think of Michalski as a loser much less a "piss poor" one and I'm not up on why the award was created.

I've never heard of the Gemignani Poll but that doesn't mean it wasn't traumatic.-- just that it is dated prior to my entry into Dipdom.

((How did your reader's survey turn out? Did you find it as worthwhile as most of us have?

((Do you have any further ideas on how the +/0/- or ranking systems could work? They both seem radically different enough to warrant some more thought.))

\*\*\*\*\* (Paul Rauterberg) For the record, I have ceased participation in polls; I don't feel that they are very helpful aside from being popularity contests. When I want to choose a new zeen to sample or sub to, I ask a friend to recommend one, or I peruse recent issues of PONTEVEDRIA (current game openings) and/or the zeen directory. Those are two very useful, if not indispensable hobby services. My major beef with polls such as the Runestone Poll is that they are reprinted in almost as many zeens as there were people voting in them! Talk about something being blown WAY out of proportion!

Nobody has bothered to bitch about the Yawner Poll because no one that I know of takes it seriously -- I don't think even Terry did, because he didn't necessarily use vote totals as a criterion for choosing the winners of the various categories.

((Ah, but would it be proper to plug a poll and then not print the results? Since so many zeens plug the poll, plenty will probably print the results as well. You're the first one to rate PONT and the ZD as very valuable. How do rate them in relation with other available services?))

\*\*\*\*\* (Bill Highfield) Polls? Who cares? They're cute but worthless. After all, look at my position in the Runestone Poll, then look at my circulation -- nearly 100! I'd say that SOMEBODY must like TMP, or I wouldn't have approximately one tenth of the hobby reading my zeen.

((That would seem to make sense. Is your resub rate as high as your initial subber count would imply, or haven't you reached that point yet?))

\*\*\*\*\* (Robert Sacks/KNOWN GAME OPENINGS) Berch is wrong: opposition is not disinterest, it is a negative interest. I have an abiding ideological opposition to polls and other forms of corruption; surely this is an acute interest.

To vote on an award one usually has to be a member of the constituency giving the award. Then the "award" might mean something. But an open and frequently rigged poll?

PS- The reason why the GAs were so hated was that they were honestly administered and effective.

((I agree with your first statement, but I am not sure that all polls are inherently corrupt. Do you have any proof, or even specific instances? While many polls may not necessarily be very valid due to limited sample size or whatever reason, it would be stretching it to call this "rigged."

((So that's why the GAs were so "hated." Why do you say they were effective -- we seem to have more polls than ever now?))

((Certainly if "the hobby" is giving an award, anybody can vote?))

\*\*\*\*\* (Mark Berch) Julie Martin's 10-5-0 is more than "a bit severe." It's really not following the rules of the poll, and if you aren't going to do something right, don't do it at all.

Yes, every poll is going to "have holes in it," but so what? It doesn't need to be perfect. A larger sample is more meaningful because it represents the views of more people.

((Certainly Julie's votes were well within the rules of the poll, which were to rate zeens between 0 and 10. It lists no criteria for those votes, so I would assume you could vote any way you please. Aren't you contradicting yourself when you say that Julie shouldn't participate, yet a larger sample is inherently more meaningful? Don't you mean to say that a larger sample of people voting the way you think they should is more meaningful?))

\*\*\*\*\* (Dave Kleiman) I do have a few comments about the polls that this hobby is blessed by. At first I thought they were the greatest. But now that I have a developed clique of players, I have decided that polls are unnecessary. Well, if not unnecessary, at least an insignificant portion of this hobby. Many of my subbers, new to the hobby, have asked why these polls? And frankly, if someone new to the hobby doesn't know why, then I surely can't think of a good reason. I suppose that they provide another way to boost our already too big egos, but I still ask why?

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((I think that's what many of us are trying to figure out. Do you think that polls (any of them) helped you to acquire your "developed clique of players?"))

\*\*\*\*\* (Ronald Brown/SNAFU!) The only response I have to your comments in HOL #2, is that the "cabal" who decided to deliberately screw up the Leeder Poll results in 1982 are well-known and bragged about their exploits to me in Baltimore in July of 1982. Also, it takes a "conspiracy" to give non-existent zeens the required 10 votes to make the list.

I am glad Julie described her reasons for her voting and I agree with the poll boycott idea. I am as fed up as anyone with them. There are simply too many -- and maybe if enough people stopped voting, those running them would take the hint. I feel that is a far better way of voicing your disapproval than by trying to put one over on the pollster. In fact, I may even join in the boycott.

((I am not sure that the "cabal" you are referring to is as well known as you may think. For instance, I voted for a non-existent zeen (DIPLODOCUS) that year, but I never bragged about it at Origins. It just seemed to be the thing to do: a joke vote for an overly serious poll. It is a far more active form of protest than a mere boycott. Speaking for myself, it was not an act against the pollster nearly so much as the poll.

((Wait a second! Julie said she was not boycotting the polls from now on, didn't she? Rather, she is joining the other 90+% of Dipdom that is apathetic to polls. Above all, she doesn't want this known as "The Julie Martin Runestone Poll Boycott!" Do you plan to cease participation in all polls, or just most polls (and which ones will you keep up with)?))

ETHICS

\*\*\*\*\* (Konrad Baumeister) Ethics as a GM: Personally, I try to run games as best I know how, I am not perfect. I will make an occasional mistake; if so, I will try to correct it relatively quickly. I have been a couple of days late getting the zeens out, though that's gotten better, lately. I don't keep perfect track of everything that goes on around me. I think that people realize that I'm busy, and that I have other things to do; I'm only a college student, and I daresay that I've done as good or better a job of running a zeen through college than a few pubbers in the past. Basically, "ethics" per se doesn't hit me as a GM. I try to use common sense, and I've never had a serious problem with a player or a game that I've GMed yet...i.e. since I started in 1977.

What's so hard about running a game, anyway?

On calling NMRing players: I used to do this, back in EGGNOG days. Nowadays I don't do it at all, not out of some principle or anything, but simply because I haven't kept up a list of people who'd want to be called in such a case, and because I don't have the time. On the side is the fact that I generally end up putting the zeens together at 3 AM or some such time, and I don't think that a player would like to be called collect at that time. It's somewhat of a bother, unless I'm local to the player or am in constant contact with him anyway. It's postal Diplomacy; why doesn't the player send his orders to me?

((Why is it that some folk insist on using the old "I'm only a poor college student" excuse? School, both college and high school are ideal for Dip. Flexible schedules and short hours (except perhaps around exam times) make running a zeen much easier than a debilitating 40 hour (plus commute) work week. Sure, there's more money around (theoretically) once one is in the working world, but Dip can be such a low cost hobby that that shouldn't matter. But we'll talk about \$\$ later....

((What's so hard about running a game? Nothing, if you know what to do, and do it right all the time. Once errors start to creep in, they can snowball. If this is compounded by a lack of practical knowledge ("Gee, why should I save old orders once I've typed them up?" type stuff), running a dip game can be the worst thing in the world.

(("Ethics" per se doesn't hit me as a GM." Now that is an interesting comment. Could you elaborate on it a bit? Do you feel you're a special case here, or do "ethics" and GMing really have very little to do with each other?))

\*\*\*\*\* (Kathy Byrne) Old business first, and people think that I have no sense of order! To answer your question, no I don't think all GMs are biased enough to affect their games. But you know as well as I do GMs have their favorite players. I think GMs tend to give a break to a player who cooperates, where they might not if the player is always breaking them on you!

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I think the hardest thing for a GM is to keep his mouth shut when a player starts giving his opinion of what's going on in his game. Sometimes it is hard for the GM not to throw in his 2¢. That's probably why I don't GM, I have a big mouth. I have a GM who will virtually tell you who is stabbing who before the deadline -- he also calls his players to discuss the game! No, I won't play there again!

What bothered me about having my letter passed was that a technicality was used against me! I fail to see what difference a label means. Off The Record is stronger than Not For Print? Not in my book. Obviously the intent of the writer was to keep the letter private. That's what offended me the most.

((Perhaps NFP and OTR mean different things, but the passer should make sure the passee knows what they are. Of course, all is fair in love and Dipdom... If you want to get a jump on the other guy you may be fighting with, feel free to redefine words at your leisure. I've had it happen to me, and it appears to be quite effective.

((You answered my other questions before I could ask them. Oh...what percent of GMs would you say are biased enough to affect their games? And of the games affected, would you say the effect was negative or positive?))

\*\*\*\*\* (Rod Walker) Mark Berch is right ... this is an almost unmanageably big subject.

Fakes ... I believe it is really necessary to distinguish between parodies and fakes. This really doesn't have much to do with GM ethics anyway, but let's give it a shot. Most things called "fakes" are in fact parodies. A fake, to be legitimate, must aim at deceiving the recipient into believing that he has got the real thing. I did the first fake in the hobby, of Eric Just's THE DIPLOMAT, back in 1969. It was typed on a typewriter exactly like Eric's and was mailed from his home town of Paoli OK the day after his next game deadline. It even contained a warning about a rumor that somebody was going to fake the zeen. And of course Eric was (as was traditional then) late. He was getting next-season orders from players before he'd even sent out the actual issue! Now that is a fake. Probably most people would not agree with me that a really good fake is worth its price in gold. Kathy Byrne's description of the fake WHITESTONIA suggests that it was a tacky fake (if convincing), rather than a good one. But having not seen it, I can't judge.

The situation Kathy describes with the game seems incredible. No GM should handle a game like that! Frankly, a game handled in this way should not be rated. It's hard to evaluate the situation without hearing the GM's side of it, but ....

"Not for Print." The situation Kathy mentions has long since cleared up and was, in any event, very complex. I mean, very. I would say, in the end, that does not serve as a good example. As I have pointed out elsewhere, I felt (and still feel) that the writing of the letter was as questionable as the passing of it. Then there were questionable things done on both sides and by third parties and .... Oy. There were some deep personal feelings involved here and probably nobody was thinking very clearly. This is of course an important point. It is not always safe to assume that because somebody does something which is unethical that it was intended to be so. How many of us have run a red light (or some such thing) without intending to do so? Life is like that.

Right of reply ... Yes, I believe that an editor is obliged to grant right of reply. However, this obviously has its limitations. I had always assumed that nobody would even want "right of reply" unless he were abused, criticized, or otherwise misrepresented in a zeen. It is this specific attack or negative comment on an individual which confers right of reply. Editors who fail to grant it (\_\_\_\_\_ being a truly awful example of this sort of cowardice) are unethical in the extreme. And, as I've noted, pusillanimous. Buddy Tretick was another of the same sort, and \_\_\_\_\_ is at present, and perhaps there are others in the hobby like that. I am really, really down on this sort of behavior.

But it has its limitations, as I've said. For one thing, "right of reply" is not license to write a book ... the reply ought to be reasonably concise. Furthermore, the sequence reply-GM response-further reply-further response-etc. has to come to an end sometime. A reasonable time, when the exchange has become simply an argument (especially a repetitive one).

By the way, it is also ethical to send a copy of your attack or negative comment to the individual involved. And unethical not to do so. But people who take the coward's way out of refusing the right of reply also take the coward's way out of refusing to send their attacks to their victims. These things ... sending copies and allowing right of reply ... are not only questions of ethics, but of courtesy. And the same unethical s.o.b.'s who don't observe these longstanding hobby traditions are also pretty obnoxious personally.

Frankly, if the hobby ever gets around to setting and enforcing (somehow) ethical standards, the bare minimum ought to be this business of behind-the-back attacks to which replies are not allowed. The hobby should have some way of dealing with individuals who thus show themselves to be cowards, boors, and poltroons.

## MORE ON...ETHICS

(Can you tell I feel strongly on this issue?)

Another limitation, by the way, is exactly the one you mention, Dick. You don't have "right of reply" just because a pubber says something you disagree with. You have to be personally involved in what was said.

I've mentioned \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ as current practitioners of this sort of behavior. Does anyone out there know of others?

((Is "right of reply" all it's cracked up to be? I don't think so. After all, the publisher is going to have a favorable audience (his subbers) in the first place, and he gets the final word if he wants it. Most do. So you end up with your argument picked apart, and often you're in a deeper hole than when you started! Do you know any arguments (recent ones, in particular) that have been ended after a "right of reply" response? I can't think of too many. It is also my experience that right of reply is often an excuse to launch a counterattack, which degenerates the argument into a prolonged feud. Does anybody have any particularly favorable or unfavorable experiences with right of reply that would further illustrate this situation?

((Wouldn't you say that those publishers who do not grant right of reply are not taken as seriously as those who do? Really, I don't know of too many people who take Tretick seriously after minimal contact with mainstream Dipdom. And if right of reply isn't really that great, why should denying it be all that bad? So far, nobody has proved to me that right of reply has any real value beyond escalating a fight. After all, there are plenty of other avenues of reply, letter columns, personal responses, private letters, etc.

((One other flaw with right of reply is that you expect reasonable conciseness and reasonable exchanges from an UNreasonable pair of people. After all, if they were reasonable in the first place, would the whole thing have started?

((As for courtesy copies of attacks, well, I have yet to see the value to them either. Why is it any more cowardly to put in print what you say in private? Certainly, you don't send "courtesy copies" of private letters, do you? It is often the case that the best course of action for a victim of an attack is to simply ignore it. By sending a courtesy copy, you attempt to incite the recipient into an often fatal response. If not sending a courtesy copy is cowardly, isn't sending a courtesy copy a form of bullying? Respond to this or be considered a wimp, sucker! (Not you, Rod.) If you are attacking someone, what is the point in being "courteous?" And it's such a vague area, also. For instance, will you be making sure that any victims of attacks that you send in to another zeen receive a copy? Will you leave it up to the publisher of the zeen? Is it his responsibility to see that your attacks reach their target?

((If there are ethical standards that are to be enforced, wouldn't it be better to treat the disease rather than the symptom and outlaw feuding (or heavily discourage it at least)? Why be a courteous SOB if you're still an SOB?

((Yes, I know of others who practice the behavior you describe. But I don't think I want to publicize them. Then I'd have to give them right of reply (and probably send a courtesy copy of this as well!!!))

\*\*\*\*\* (Steve Langley) I don't know, other than Terry's "Try not to screw someone intentionally" what words could describe an ethical standard. Perhaps something about promptness, accuracy, etc. I only know that I take what I'm doing seriously enough to try to do a good job on it. I don't really think I can do more than that. So, I think I would find that if a generally accepted standard were devised that I was already following it. If I wasn't already following it, then it wouldn't be generally accepted enough to cause me to change (unless it did of course...I could possibly be doing something stupid month after month out of "tunnel vision" as to its implications that I would cease doing if it were pointed out to me).

If I came across some NFP or whatever papers (re Ed Wrobel) that demonstrated that a hobby figure was a total knave I'd probably lose them in a month or so, just like all the other stuff that passes my way. I might return them to their author.

On "right of reply" -- if it were short and to the point I would publish it. The exceptional case was an 8 page letter I got once in a previous incarnation. I excerpted from it. I got another 8 page letter from the same source that commenced with a demand that I print it all. I printed none of it, not even the demand.

I think there are some "player ethics" although they may not be generally followed. I think that an "ethical" player will point out adjudication errors, even if not in his favor. He'll do the best he can to get his moves to the GM before deadline. He won't attempt to influence the game by trying to deceive the GM. I'm sure there are some other ethical givens as well. I'm just as sure there are some players who break some or all of the above who also consider themselves ethical. In their eyes, they probably are (probably?). The point is -- ethics are totally subjective and discussions of ethics are interesting. At

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best, they may even be illuminating and uplifting, but still subjective.

((Illuminating and uplifting? I don't know. Abstract, and subjective, certainly. Hope you're uplifted by this discussion. Are you?))

\*\*\*\*\* (Paul Rauterberg) Deception of the GM is prohibited. There are no other ironclad rules that I can think of, save a moral obligation to get one's moves in by the deadlines.

\*\*\*\*\* (Bill Highfield) Ethics? Does this hobby have any? I doubt it, so why even discuss it?

((I would think that the absence of ethics is almost as interesting as the ethics themselves.))

\*\*\*\*\* (Mark Berch) With respect to your "Don't they take cases of 'unsubstantiated allegations' to court all the time? If it's against the law..." Printing an unsubstantiated allegation is not in itself against the law. You only run into trouble if the allegation turns out to be untrue, and even then the victim may have to show malice or reckless disregard for the truth. If I print that you flunked geography in the 6th grade, but I have no proof, that's an unsubstantiated allegation -- regardless of whether it's actually true or false. Remember, to be libelous, it has to be untrue, not merely unsubstantiated.

((If you say so. Of course, when you trivialize the whole matter, it's a lot easier to brush it off. Essentially you are saying that you can say anything you please about me (for instance) and I have to then prove it is untrue? Well gee, I guess it pays to strike first then, doesn't it?))

\*\*\*\*\* (Dave Kleiman) As a GM and publisher, there are certain things that must be held above anything else. These items are what our code of ethics should be about. We must treat each and every player the same. We must rule with the best interest of the game in mind (and in turn, the best interest of the players). We are to serve the players and the subbers. If it is clearly a writer's intent for a letter not to be published, then don't publish it. What goes on between me and my subbers/players is a personal thing, and I respect their identities. On the other hand, what transpires between myself as a player or subber and someone else is another thing. As publishers, we must be able to draw that line. Again, we are here to serve.

((I agree. But what happens in those instances when one of your decisions goes strongly against one of the players, but only moderately helps the game? For instance, "implied" orders (particularly builds and retreats). What of situations where a decision would hurt one player and help another in about equal proportions? Theoretically, if I was feuding with you, all I would need to do is subscribe to THE DIPLOMAT and you would be unable to use that as a forum for your side of the story? Or are you trying to say that you would not participate in any heated dispute under any circumstances?

((Ah, and what of those cases where the intent is not clear? Some would say that it's better to be wrong and cautious than to print the letter and let the chips fall where they may. What do you think?))

\*\*\*\*\* (Mark Luedi) I'll just go along with what Jim Meinel says: yes, I have, but I'll never tell. Maybe you learn better that way. Ethics is a very fine line, and it's rare not to find yourself toeing it from time to time. Seemingly little things can be unethical. I consider myself lucky for the lessons I've learned so far, and only hope that I don't have occasion to learn many more.

NEW BUSINESSFILING SYSTEMS

\*\*\*\*\* (Ronald Brown) In HOL #3 you asked about filing. Good topic, as a pubber must have a good filing system or be snowed in.

I have gone through various stages as my involvement in the hobby grew. Used to be half a dozen file folders stacked on my desk was sufficient. Then that grew until I needed two filing cabinet drawers. When they were filled, I took out all the back issues of VOICE OF DOOM. That gave me enough space for a few more months. Finally, I took all back issues of zines out and filed them in boxes stacked on the floor. The two drawers are quickly filling with pubbing and custodian-related materials.

One has to be rather ruthless about throwing out out of date material. I keep game orders for one game year and then throw them out. I keep letters I've published for a few months in case there's some kind of challenge. Anything "controversial" I hang onto just about forever.

I think the key thing is to have an organized approach. I have been present to view the remains of a folded zeen, and quite understood why. The pubber had no system at all. Everything was thrust into a drawer and then pulled out when he felt like publishing. The minimum one needs are separate file folders for each game -- and the game orders must go right into the right file as soon as they are received. Same with everything else: file as soon as possible, before it builds up into an impossible pile.

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Just what files you need depends on your publishing methods, what you're interested in, what organizations you're involved with, etc. I must have well over 100 separate files (not counting zeens), all kept in order. If I didn't, I would simply collapse from the strain of trying to remember where everything is.

((I can attest to the fact that a filing system gone out of control is a nearly impossible beast to tame. How much space do you presently have allocated to your Dipdom files/empire?))

\*\*\*\*\* (Konrad Baumeister) Filing systems: Well, I used to have a pretty good one, when I had HQ set up in Milwaukee. For the past three and a half years, at Georgetown, it's been a little more haphazard. I have a file folder for each of the games I GM, and incoming orders are put away pretty much when they come in. That's the most important filing that I have to do, anyway. Naturally, I have the last four or five GMAW copies within easy reach, a card system for subbers (which I regularly lose and then turns up under the bed or in a boot or next to the turntable under a dozen albums just before the deadline). Mail other than orders is generally scanned for my name. If it's in there, I read it over. If not, the thing goes into a "to read" pile, which is, essentially, the floor of my bedroom. Once a week or so, I get around to looking through this mess. Anything with money attached to it gets handled first. Zeens get read over lightly, and then thrown under my bed (the "out" pile). Miscellaneous letters are kept around until I'm tired of rereading them on the floor, and are then thrown out. Game-related correspondence is thrown under the bed, and I try to remember when the deadline was. I generally forget pretty soon thereafter. Stuff requiring personal response is generally put off for as long as possible. If I should write, but don't have to, under the bed it goes. I don't have the time. Material that absolutely must be handled by me is put on top of a speaker and eventually taken care of.

Basically, what has to get done gets done. Everything gets read at one point or another, and all problems are solved. I don't see where anything is hurting.... Every half year all of the material that hasn't been thrown out is taken home to Milwaukee, where it's deposited on the floor of my bedroom there. Last summer I cleaned up the last three years' worth of junk. Most letters are trashed. Most zeens are saved in a couple of filing cabinets. Since these cabinets have been full since 1980, I also have four huge cardboard boxes where everything else is indiscriminately thrown.

It's all utterly useless, and I never go back through the junk, but I don't have the heart to throw the rest of it out, or to sell it. Not just yet.

I have used a sheet very similar to "your" GMs helper since 1977, and find it very helpful. I first picked up the idea from Len Lakofka's Publishers Handbook. Convenient.

((Yes indeed. I would make one change to the GMs helper -- make the space for names longer. As for the "notes" section at the bottom, it's a handy place to note deadlines, standbys called, etc.

((Sounds like you're a charter member of the "hurricane" breed of filers. It's a good thing you don't have the top bunk.))

\*\*\*\*\* (John Caruso) In Flushing? You gotta be kidding! If some of my players ever saw how I "file" their orders, and how I adjudicate a turn, they'd probably die.

OK -- let's break it down. Each dip game is filed in a separate envelope. Orphans get filed in a rubber band (don't ask). Letters for print vary. Some I type right away, some go in an "article/letter" envelope, some just get stacked on the table. Pictures, profiles, articles, the same as letters, except if they are pre-typed, they are put in the finished product pile, unfolded. Personal correspondence and game letters -- they go in my little red bag and go to work with me where I answer them. NFP/OTR/DNQ letters are treated exactly the same, though I have requested no one send me OTR/DNQ stuff any more. Shit goes in the toilet, trash in the garbage, sensitive handled quietly, and love letters under my pillow or on my wall. Zeens are a joke -- Kathy and I throw them back and forth across the table at one another. Occasionally she eats them so I can't read them. The last XENOGOGIC, for instance, will line the cat's litter box for an entire year. My game orders are another story. I file them all together -- xeroxed or carbons of orders inside a rubber band. I throw out all old orders every 3 or 4 months. Personal correspondence -- some I save, some I don't. It depends. Material dealing with a hobby project, I save. Zeens get filed in 4 places -- my collection which has all my WHITESTONIA's and a few odds and ends, "Dick Martin's Box," Kathy's green cabinet, and the garbage. Most go in "The Box," then the green cabinet. Hell, this is New York, not Oklahoma. Space is limited. Game moves and printed matter from W get saved approximately 3-4 months, sometimes as long as 6 months. DipCon Correspondence from 1981-83 I will save for eternity.

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((I don't know which is funnier: that that actually is the way your system is set up, or that it somehow seems to work.))

\*\*\*\*\* (Larry Peery) Note: I think we are repeating this subject. I asked the same question of a number of people as part of a DRT. I don't think I ever published their responses, but they were all funny ....

Many people claim to be the most disorganized in the hobby; which is a welcome change from being over-organized or pro-organization! I am probably the hobby's most disorganized pro-organizer. I am so well disorganized that I have it down to an art! People marvel at my Archives, until they try to find something in them. The hobby is astonished that I can cope with the amount of correspondence that I do and generate the paper flow that comes out of Box 8416, until they see my War Room ....

I am currently in the midst of my umpteenth reorganization project and this one will take a full year to implement, if I'm lucky. If not, it may take longer.

I laugh when I hear people in the hobby talking about their over-flowing desk, or their bulging file cabinets, or their boxes of zeens spilling over onto the floor. I have actually hosted Dippy games inside my file cabinets, they are so big. At least one person once spent an entire night sleeping in the middle of my GRAUSTARK collection. Fortunately, he was a Marine and tough, and emerged none the worse for wear.

The center of my Dippy activities is the War Room, a 12' by 14' room housing most of my Dippy stuff. One wall is devoted to nothing but Dippy zeens and gaming books of current use. A second wall is devoted to back issues of non-Dippy diplomacy zeens, books, etc., etc.; all materials I have saved in the hope that someday they would be of use to somebody working on some project or other in the hobby. The third wall is a closet and it is filled with cases of Dippy Archive materials (some 23 at last count) and cases of files of newspaper and zeen clippings, some 700 file subjects at last count. Last count, by the way, was sometime in the early 1970's. This closet is not big enough to hold all the cases. There are more scattered through other closets in the apartment. The fourth wall is filled with a work table, a special custom-made 8' long, two-level desk designed to hold all current materials, the typewriter, and a second work station. Along one of the other walls is the computer work station with all of its periphernalia, the television, the radio, the tape recorder that doesn't work, a collection of US flags. Stacked all over the middle of the room are boxes (the kind that reams of Xerox copy paper come in) filled with zeens, files of correspondence, current clippings, copies of back issues of publications, etc. On the top of those are the tops of those cartons which I use as portable filing cabinet/trays. There are six of them, at the moment, and each contains materials for a particular area. I move them about as I need them. Each tray contains a batch of file folders devoted to a certain subject: games I'm in, face-to-face Dippy activities I'm involved with, XENO materials, other zeen materials, and various projects. All in all, there are almost 100 individual files on different subjects. They are the heart of the paper generation flow. The heart of the paper flow is a series of some 15-17 file card collections: California Dippy players, PBM pubbers, XENO subbers/traders/players, etc. etc. Each is designed for a particular type of mailing. Some of those collections contain only a dozen names, one has well over 400. Hopefully, by the end of the year, they will all be computerized.

Eventually, as more dead material is generated, I will establish a series of 100 or so individual files for various persons in the hobby. All of their materials, other than zeens, will go into those files. I did the same thing years ago with my materials from the 1960's and 1970's. Eventually files of zeens went into the zeen archives, and personal correspondence files, orders, etc. went into files by individual subject, except for collections like the TDA/IDA feud, which I kept intact. Some years ago, I wrote all these people and told them that I was willing to return their files to them if they wanted them for their records, or I was going to trash them. Fortunately, I kept the files for some of the hobby's better known personalities. So, my early correspondence files with Boardman, McCallum, Koning, Beshara, etc. are still intact.

In addition, I should mention the DR table which I, like so many Dippy players, use as a day-to-day work center. On it are stacked the files for whatever I happen to be working on at the moment and at any given time I'm usually working on at least a half-dozen projects. Stacks of correspondence fill the table until they over-flow onto the coffee table. At that point, I begin to seriously consider answering the mail, or writing a 40-copy letter to everyone.

I try to keep things related to a single subject in a single place; usually it is impossible. The worst kind of a letter to get is one that deals with a game I'm in, a game a player of mine is in, a subject for XENO, a project, and a poll response; all on both sides of the sheet of paper. Grrr... My dislike for that is one reason a person may get 3-4 letters from me in a week, each dealing with a different subject. Sure, it would be easier and cheaper to write one letter dealing with four subjects. But it would be a pain for me to file and respond to. I'm also amazed, looking at my files, how many people fail to date their letters, or

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put a return address on the letter, or even write clearly, especially numbers!

I used to keep records of the amount of mail that came in and went out of here and it was frightening, so I gave it up. Perhaps at the end of the year, I'll weigh it all.

Other than envelopes, I rarely throw anything away, although when I do it is usually masses of material. Last month I filled a dumpster with stuff I disposed of to make room for the new stuff, and the archive materials I will be getting from Scott Marley soon. That will be the challenge, perhaps first. We will be combining materials from three major Dippy collections into one integrated archives, instantaneously creating what may be the second or third largest archives in the hobby. Yuck! What a mess!!

One further note on filing: I only have one suggestion, use labels, colored filing folders, and colored stripes on folders to indicate types of contents. If you put all orders in a red folder, all draft articles in a green one, etc. you'll be able to find things much easier.

Course, most Dippy people probably don't have 200 folders sitting around on their tables.

((How many walls are there in in your War Room?! Yes, those Xerox papaer boxes are very handy. Sounds like quite a bit of stuff there...but where do you live? I just keep expecting to hear, "How disorganized are you, Larrrrrry?"))

\*\*\*\*\* (Kathy Byrne) Believe me when I tell you that you don't want to know about my filing systems! All material for KK goes into an envelope on the kitchen table. However, this is not always easy as sometimes a GM will send me an end of game chart or request for a number on one side of the paper and KK stuff on the other side of the paper (these people should be shot!). Then I have to xerox before I file anything. All incoming zeens get filed differently. First thing I do is take care of any BNC stuff in the zeen, then if I don't play there it goes into your box, if I do play there (like you) it hits the kithchen table until I do my moves -- once my moves are done it hits the green cabinet. As soon as 6 months later it will be in your box for lack of room!

I don't usually keep letters, with the amount of mail I get I'd have to own a library to store the letters. The only letters I keep are ones which are pending action by the BNC and they go into the BNC box, yes, I have a box too! I have one red folder where I keep personal letters which I feel are worth while keeping! Very few.

Your GM helper sheet would be perfect to report end of game stats to me. It would really make mine and Bill Quinn's lives a lot easier, so hopefully you won't mind that I reprint it in EVERYTHING. It'll be a nice follow-up to Bill's article. Thanks.

((No problem, the GMs helper was not original with me, by any means. I'm just the first person to have the kind of zeen where something like that would get printed, is all. Use it as many times as you would like.

("Dick Martin's Box" that Kathy and John Caruso keep referring to is a sort of arrangement I have going with them. Since they end up tossing most of their old zeens anyway, and one of the weak spots in the Orphan Service is a lack of some of the more obscure zeens. So, after a zeen has spent the required sentence in the Green Cabinet, it gets tossed into the box. I clean out the box every time I visit beautiful Flushing. I kinda left a sentence dangling up there, didn't I? ...to continue it... I take those zeens home, file them ASAP (not necessarily soon), and hope the zeen never folds so I don't have to use my enhanced files. Basically, now the orphan service gets every zeen the BNC does (eventually). If anybody else has a bunch of zeens (which I don't usually get) that you'd like to get rid of, contact me and maybe we can work something out.

((It seems that about the most important message you have here is that if you want to write anybody anything of importance, make sure it is on separate sheets of paper by subject! BNC stuff on one sheet, zeen stuff on another, orders on another, articles on another, NFP stuff on another, etc. It may add up to a bunch of paper, but you'll be loved for it!))

\*\*\*\*\* (Dave Carter) I use a 3 ring binder with the games separated by a colored paged divider. When I get orders in I punch 3 holes in the sheets and store them in a pocket at the front of the binder until I sort them. Each game also has the previous season's adjudications, going back to the previous fall turn. I also have an area in the binder for that month's incoming mail.

COAs, new subbers, money received are written on note paper attached to a clipboard. Once a month I update my master address list and the subscribers accounts. I also use the clipboard to jot down notes that I should be sending out with each issue.

I'm lucky, insofar as I have a basement all to myself. So I have lots of filing space for old zeens, old orders, etc.

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\*\*\*\*\* (Keith Sherwood) My filing system. Everything is free in folds -- no three ring binders or anything. I've got a folder for everything. The Apple Archives consists of several boxes of folders, one box of alphabetized defunct zeens, one box of currently published zeens that I don't sub to, and one box of folders of zeens that I currently sub to. Plus folders for misc -- variants, fakes, etc. In the final box I keep close to my bed and desk are files for each game I'm currently in, a file for personal letters (all letters that don't mention a game -- if a personal letter three pages long has one paragraph on a game, it goes with the game. It would be murder for me to try and find all the letters Bob Olsen has written me over the years -- they're scattered over many game files), a file for the apple archives and another for the Modern Calhamer Point count, a file of things to be xeroxed before they can be filed, files zeens to be recorded and filed in the Apple Archives, and a file of letters, zeens, etc that need a letter of response written to the author before the item can be filed. In short, this is the box of working files that are accessed often. How well does my system work? OK, although just because I have your letter or zeen in my "to be answered" file doesn't mean I'll get around to write your letter soon, the system breaks down as it is only as strong as its weakest link, me.

((And you keep the bulk of your archives in New Mexico while you're off at school? Your system sounds a lot like mine used to before I moved half a dozen times.))

\*\*\*\*\* (Paul Rauterberg) I put everything going into the current iss in one big folder, and sort it out when I'm ready to put my zeen together. Somehow, it all works out okay.

((Lucky.))

\*\*\*\*\* (Mark Berch) I don't really have any constructive suggestions to make, but one thing I can't do is what you apparently can: "rely on my memory." Personally, I've found that my memory is just not reliable enough -- too many things will be forgotten.

((Oh, my memory fails every now and again also, just the lapses are temporary. Julie occasionally knows where I've tossed some stuff, as well.

((I understand you have some immense archives? Could you describe it for us?))

\*\*\*\*\* (Jim Bumpas/LIBERTERREAN) I have it easy with a filing system. My ATARI 800 handles everything: turn by turn reports, supply center reports, game history reports. I can print out any combination of them at the touch of a finger.

((Must be nice! Do you save all your old LIBs on floppy diskettes? Did you write your own software, or use somebody else's? I have an ATARI 800 too, and I can never seem to stuff more than a few letters into the memory area, even if I sit on the lid to close it!))

\*\*\*\*\* (Dave Kleiman) About filing systems, well, I cheat. You see, I own a PC and I am a DP person by profession, so the old hardware does that sort of thing for me. I do keep a folder with each game in it, and I staple the seasons together as they are completed. That's about it. It seems to work, and I hope my track record as a GM supports that.

((So what sort of computer do you have? Do you write your own filing programs tailored to dippy, or do you just use standard word processing programs? And do you save back issues on paper or disk (assuming you save back issues)? Of course you're a DP person. I think everybody who reads this zeen is a dippy person. Sorry, it's getting late, and it's hard to keep a straight face (or avoid a good straight line). I should go to bed. Good night for now.))

\*\*\*\*\* (Tom Swider) Organization: Having been rather sloppy for most of my life, I've really cleaned up my act (hahaha!) in the last 18 issues of my subzeen. I've been running my subzeen and games like a zeen should be run. Here's a rundown of some of my routines.

Records: File for each game. Keep a xerox copy of the last two adjudications in the file so I know who owns which centers. Also keep orders for one movement season in case there's a question as to their legitimacy in my reports. I've always used a "GM's helper." I also have a large envelope in each file in which I stuff all the orders when they arrive. I keep the orders on file separate from all the other materials in the file so I can find them easier.

I have four desk trays on the table which I have my ATARI 800 (which will some day do word processing for me). Top tray is games I GM; 2nd is games I play in; 3rd is stuff for my subzeen and my variant projects

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and Swider Number Custodian file (that's for postal DUNE games, I even actually sent out issue #1 of KANLY!) and the 4th is for personal letters ingoing and outgoing (non-negotiation letters).

My dresser is near my bedroom door. I have a xerox file in which I keep all the things I need to have xeroxed. Some I give to Dad for him to copy (he works for Savin) and the rest I take to school to copy on their nickel copier. I take an expandable file to college which contains all my semester's notes. One of the pockets is labeled "Diplomacy," which is where I keep all my mail from my PO Box on campus. Since I am only at home to sleep, I prefer mail being sent to school.

Time: I run my games staggered; all the deadlines aren't all at the same time. I'd go bonkers trying to do everything in a marathon session (a lesson I learned by pubbing TSS). I have a calendar with all exam dates and deadline dates marked, which hangs above my dresser. Also, I have an assignment book calendar planner which has all my assignments, exam dates, and deadline dates. This way, I don't have deadlines immediately before important tests, which is an important thing to keep in mind for college and high school types.

Letters: I don't make copies of letters, and throw away all letters relative to a game once it ends. I have a file with some of the personal letters which I plan on saving; sort of like a scrapbook. Maybe I'll put them in a scrapbook some day. And get some photos to put into them, along with copies of the adjudications of any of my victories (yes, Dick, I can win a game if I put my mind to it).

((And if you get a good enough standby position? Seriously, I stopped taking my mail to school when I almost lost it a few times. Then again, I just carried it inside a spiral notebook, and not actually in a pocket of a folder, as you do. Do you save old zeens and whatnot?))

THE DIPTAX

(John Caruso)<sup>14</sup> "As one of the few people in the hobby's movers and doers group," to quote Larry Peery, I think it is my place to answer his idea of a Diptax.

Yes -- the services do need more money to help them continue, but a Diptax, whether voluntary or mandatory is impractical. Since the mandatory aspects of disapproval are obvious, let us only deal with the voluntary side of it, as Larry suggests.

In the hobby today, we already have people voluntarily donating money to the services, as shown by the recent DW and EVERYTHING financial reports. To say that GMs must donate \$1 per player per game to the BNC or MNC for new game starts is ludicrous. Who will see that the GMs donate the money? Who will keep track of the money donated to the custodian? Who will verify the amount available for distribution? Who will pay the \$1 per player -- the player or the GM? Let's face it, I do not believe there is one zeen that is operating on a balanced budget, let alone a surplus. Everyone accepts their cost as part of their enjoyment of their hobby. Some GMs use game fees to help offset publishing deficits. I know I did.

So if a Diptax isn't the answer, then what is? There are numerous other avenues. One way is an idea Robert Sacks originated a few years back. And if he gets recognized for nothing else, Robert will always be known as the forerunner for the idea that the surplus money left over from FTF conventions be divided and donated among the hobby services. The problem is getting all those who run diplomacy conventions to donate the surplus money, over costs for prizes, etc, to the services, instead of lining their pockets with the money, as has been done in the past. If every tournament director of every major diplomacy convention just donated  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the surplus money, after costs, to the services, the services might be able to run in the black instead of the red. The only way anything like this can ever happen is on the local level, with you, each reader, requesting that your tournament director partake in this worthwhile endeavor. We already have Robert Sacks doing this on the East Coast, and I understand a similar setup is in the making out in CA, with none other than Rod Walker behind it.

The Herb Barents, Fred Davis, Mark Berch Dipcon Committee set a precedent last year by being the first Dipcon to give all surplus proceeds to the services, and this year, myself, Al Pearson, and Ben Schilling did likewise, though we haven't received the money from MDG yet. But more importantly, this year, Al, Ben, and I set a precedent for Dipcon, by asking the host convention bidding for the next Dipcon who will receive the Diplomacy game fee money to agree to give all the Diplomacy game fees collected to the committee. I hope future committees and societies take note of this and receive the commitment before the Dipcon site is selected, as we did this year for next year's Dipcon XVII.

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There is another means of generating money for the hobby services, and I'm proud to say that Mike Mills is the person with foresight. He took our Dipcon auction idea and expanded it to a hobbywide auction. The purpose is again to donate money to the services. All money received after any defraying of costs, will be divided to the services. I wish Mike luck this year and continued success in the future with this. There is the possibility of generating hundreds of dollars on the auction.

Other means of supplying money to the services can be found. Take the game openings for example. When requesting a copy of either list, players could either send a SASE or two stamps, which would be a beginning to lowering the costs. A lot of GMs are already donating \$1 when they request a BN, and some GMs a MN. Why can't the GMs also donate \$1 to the openings list for them listing the game opening?

No -- I don't believe we need a Diptax. If we can't generate enough money from conventions, the auction, donations and request reimbursements, and have to revert to a TAX, then we are no longer a hobby, and as hobbyists, have let our own hobby down. Hey -- it's our hobby -- yours and mine. We've helped each other out in the past. We can do it again. Let's help the services thrive so this fun hobby of ours continues to live, and grow.

((Ah, but every opportunity for revenue is also an opportunity for problems. For instance, you seem to feel that conventions are a great untapped source of revenue. Perhaps. But in talking to Al Pearson the other day, it looks like we won't see any of the \$\$ that MDG had from Dipcon at Origins this year. So that \$300 or so goes to MDG to cover their losses on the con, rather than the services! As you pointed out, there are quite a few ways to generate income for the services. With them working as they are, do we need an additional tax?))

\*\*\*\*\* (Kathy Byrne) As BNC, I want it publicly stated that I will not support this tax in any way, those who can afford to donate will, those who can't won't. If a GM asks for a BN, I give it to him, the \$1 donation has no effect on how fast I respond. Sure I donate lots of time and money to the hobby, but that is my choice. No one should be forced to pay a tax in a hobby. I think that this is the most outrageous thing I've ever heard! Sure custodians absorb a huge cost, but they do that by choice. If I couldn't afford it, I wouldn't do it. I could just see me charging a dollar a person to play a game of dip at a Byrnecon -- what a joke! I say we've done fine so far with donations -- so let's continue the same way. If anyone really gets in trouble, I'm sure the hobby will volunteer on its own to help out!

((But what will you do when you get a check for \$50 as proceeds from the next Peericon? If you charged \$1 per player per game at the next Byrnecon, you'd see a lot more folks playing BLARF, I bet! From what I understand, the minicons out west are much more formal affairs than your average Byrnecon, so a Diptax would not seem that unusual. Do custodians really absorb that huge a cost? In running the census and helping with the orphan service this year it would seem that my big expenditure is time, not dollars. How about you? Any other custodians with comments?))

\*\*\*\*\* (Paul Rauterberg) As for Peery's "tax" on the players: who, in all his supreme wisdom, would decide which "hobby services" are entitled to funding from such a stockpile? Right now, there is considerable duplication of services, and there are innumerable examples of "unnecessary" hobby services (the Runestone and all other polls, the "ethics dictats"). Some may feel their services are necessary and helpful; others feel they clutter the mailbox. When I see a worthwhile project (such as the assignation of Boardman numbers) I send money to the specific custodian of that service. When I see a worthwhile non-dip charity (such as a poor kid who needs \$\$\$ to get into college) I provide it directly to the target of my generosity, rather than giving to some bureaucratic monstrosity such as the United Fund.

((So how much money have you donated directly to PONTEVEDRIA and the Zeen Directory (two services which you call "very useful, if not indispensable"), above and beyond a stamp or two, or the \$2 cost of the ZD? Anything? Do you think everybody else (or at least enough people) are as responsible and generous as you are, and will donate without prodding?))

\*\*\*\*\* (Bill Highfield) By the way, to answer your question, if Peery DOES implement a Diptax, then I'm going to set up a new hobby fund -- it's going to be called the "DUMP LARRY PEERY IN SAN DIEGO BAY FUND." My family pays enough taxes on our ailing grocery store (no, we don't have any loopholes) and we already pay about \$6,000 a year in property taxes alone! If I see a new tax I'm going to SCREAM! I REFUSE to participate in Larry's attempt to turn this hobby into a dictatorship run by him or anyone else! The hobby organizations already have ways of receiving money, let them worry about it. Perhaps some sort of fund raiser -- BUT NO TAXES!!!!!!!!!!

((Of all those ways to receive money, the only one that the orphan service has been able to take advantage of has been a donation from the New York Game board. The census has only gotten \$\$ by charging for

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copies -- about \$1 more per copy than I would like. If you believe that the services need more money, then something should be done to "share the wealth." Either that, or each service should try to raise money as it sees fit. It sounds to me like you are more opposed to it being called a "tax" than anything else?))

\*\*\*\*\* (Robert Sacks) I am opposed. I will not collect the tax. I oppose the inclusion of the editor of DW on the administering committee. I think my credentials are clear on this: the lasttime this obscene proposal to tax the hobby was raised (by the NADF) I started the East Coast/NYGB Diplomacy Tournament in support of hobby services, the total proceeds distributed by right to certain hobby services: the BNC, the MNC (under the covenant), the OGP, and the KGO. It is telling that DW, which supports or sponsors rivals to 3 of the 4 supported projects, again proposes to tax the hobby, and would no doubt share the proceeds of the tax.

((It was my understanding that DW and its publisher had nothing to do with the Diptax proposal -- it was a Peery project all the way. I do not recall the NADF (North American Diplomacy Federation, for the uninitiated) proposing a Dipdom-wide tax, when was that?

((This letter illustrates (as did Paul Rauterberg's earlier) that it will be very difficult, if not impossible, to decide who should decide where the \$\$ goes. I get the impression that it will be nearly impossible to pick a committee without resorting to "hobby politics" (and I use the term loosely). Is the income worth the grief of deciding who should get it?))

\*\*\*\*\* (Mark Berch) How did Peery come up with the \$1? So far as I can tell, the number was just pulled out of the air. With, say, 150 PBM regular and variant games in North America alone, that would be \$1,000. I don't think Larry has demonstrated a pressing need for nearly that much money. And considering all the controversy that such a plan would entail, there ought to be demonstrated a need for it. This isn't like a Dipcon, where the TD can set the fee well in excess of expenses and people really have no choice. I don't object to the idea of a tax per se, since, let's face it, that's exactly what was done at Dipcon 82 and 83 -- in both cases, we charged a fee sufficiently large that we had the reasonable expectation of turning over significant funds to hobby services. The \$1 donation that most GMs make to the BNC amounts to 14¢/player; what Larry is proposing is that this be raised to either \$1 or \$1.14 (it's not clear whether this new plan would get rid of that old \$1 biz, or add to it). If some GMs collect it, and some don't, there will be a lot of cries of "unfair, unfair." If the substantial majority of GMs will collect it, then yes, I'd be in favor of some figure (not necessarily \$1, though), but if GMs are deeply divided, then it may not be worth the controversy.

((I got the impression that the Diptax proposal was merely a preliminary one, to be modified as opinion and reality dictated. So that \$1 was indeed picked out of midair as a reasonable, round number to start with. If everybody participates, yes, that provides for quite a bit of money. If only half participate (still a high percentage, knowing Dipdom), it's a much more reasonable amount. Please remember that the \$1 to the BNC is typically not shared out to the other services. Why would there be cries of "unfair?" There's already a great disparity in game fees, ranging from free to \$15 and up. I think the dollar would go largely unnoticed. Certainly no one could complain about unfairness if they were warned in advance that \$1 of their game fee would go to the Diptax. Nobody is ever forced to sign up for games, and thereby pay the \$1. What sort of figure would you be comfortable to charge as a tax?))

\*\*\*\*\* (Dave Kleiman) Larry Peery's idea about funding the hobby is totally out of touch with reality. Come, now, you can't be that naive about people and money. Let the hobby support itself the way it is. It seems to be working pretty well. Heck, I'm willing to lose some dollars to do this (and I do), and it seems that we have a large number of hobby-oriented people doing the things that need to be done (including keeping brownie points!).

((I think his point was that the people who run services shouldn't have to take on the additional burden of paying for that, in addition to regular Dipdom stuff. While the various services could use the extra money, and it would probably help us do a better job, it may not be necessary. What I find interesting is that most of the custodians don't seem to be too hot on the idea.))

\*\*\*\*\* (Rod Walker) I like the intent, the essence of this idea. The thing that bothers me is that the potential here is very high for some ugly feuds and disputes down the road. Questions of money are always going to arouse strong emotions. By the same token, I am willing to wager that most negative reactions to this idea are emotional rather than rational. We can discount those. The problem, however, is that there might be very real reasons why this is not a good idea, but they might not be apparent right away. Once an idea

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Like this gets going, it will set in motion machinery which will be very hard to dismantle once it is in place. I think Larry's idea deserves a fair and dispassionate hearing, and I fear that is exactly what it is not going to get.

The problem of funding hobby services is growing more acute as they become more productive and more expensive. The BNC, USOS, and PONTEVEDRIA projects are the most obvious examples. Some projects are more or less self-funded...NA Variant Bank and the SUPERNOVA (novice) project are good examples. Others shouldn't have high expenses but still need support (e.g. the MNC, I should think...but I don't know). The Census and the Zeen Register are not incurring ongoing all-year expenses, but seem to need at least a modest sum annually. Funding through tournaments is one source; auctions such as the one organized by Mike Mills would be another. Private donations are yet another. But Larry's proposal has the advantage of tending to spread these expenses out more evenly over the whole hobby. If I read initial signals rightly, however, this issue of fairness is going to get not only glossed over but run over with cleats and chains.

In any event, we have to make sure that money that is raised for hobby services is given according to need and without strings. There has already been one attempt at blackmail (or bribe, depending on how you look at it) this year. Most unfortunate.

The problem does exist, however, when it comes down to determining "need" and, even more difficult, who the rightful recipient is. If you say that money is going to be given to the BNC, that's fine until you get two people claiming to be BNC. God forbid this should ever happen, but it might. There needs to be some way to resolve any future dispute of that sort fairly and with a minimum of personality involvement.

((Ah, but I don't think that can happen, can it? It's nice in theory not to relate personalities with positions, but how can you really separate the two? Is a Kathy Byrne BNC the same as a Dennis Agosta BNC? I don't think so. I think that the proposal has gotten a very good level of response so far, and not the emotional steamroller that you feared. Most of the responses to this zeen appear to be rational and with some thought involved. After reading them, do you still feel the Diptax won't get a fair hearing? Is an even distribution of cost among starting players more "fair" than, say, among all subscribers?)

((One problem I see cropping up is that costs will increase to fill the allotted budget. If, say, \$500 is allotted to PONT next year, will you try to keep costs down, or just spend spend spend until you come near your ceiling? I know that if I had a lot more money for the orphan service, I'd be willing to spend it on some questionable ventures (like more phone calls, for instance).))

\*\*\*\*\* (Terry Tallman) Since I first saw Larry's proposal in the most recent issue of XENOGOGIC, it has been fairly difficult for me to keep from frothing at the mouth whenever I think about it. My reaction is neither anti-Peery nor anti-Organization, although I admit to a dislike of the latter.

Rather, I respond to the potential end result. And unlike most of you I don't draw on the disasters that have preceded this effort. My own experience comes from the chess hobby.

Larry cites the "real problem, the lack of a dependable source for the hobby's various projects and services." This ignores the fact that the people performing these services do so because they want to. No one is drafted and forced to serve. And how many necessary projects are there that need funding? SUPERNOVA has turned excesses back over to the hobby. The hobby orphan service is run by two individuals who seem to be able to do the job without incurring too great an expense. Whose projects does Larry want to see funded?

He states that as the hobby expands, it seeks to improve services. Again, the only areas that seem to be neglected are the ones that this same hobby doesn't seem interested in.

Without an Organization, it is impossible to itemize what exists to service the hobby and whether or not it is starving for funds. But let's look at the chess hobby.

The United States Chess Federation (USCF) was charging \$20.00 per year for a membership when I dropped about four years ago. As part of that membership, you got a subscription to CHESS LIFE AND REVIEW, the hobby flagship zeen.

CL&R is a lithographed zeen put out in the national headquarters in New York. The officers of the USCF have control of the editorial policies, and it tends to ignore the feuds that spring up everytime there is an election of officers and the same groups go at it tooth and nail to grab power.

The USCF has THE rating system for the United States and, for all practical purposes, North America. If you ran a chess tournament, as I did occasionally for my college chess team in 1977 through 1980, for face-to-face players, you had to pay the USCF a dollar for every game played in order for it to be rated. Thus you had to have tournament fees for any match that was rated.

And, of course, if you wanted to run a tournament, you had to go to the regional tournament director certifier to become an approved tournament director. Your tournaments had to be advertised in CL&R. And unrated face-to-face play is virtually dead in the US. At least in the sense that a group of people might gather to hold a Pudgecon or a Marycon or a Byrnecon.

Postal chess has gone the same route. Virtually all the postal games in the company are run by the USCF.

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The cheapest game run when I dropped cost \$5.00. And for that five bucks, you got paired and, when you are done, rated. It's all computerized and usually six months out of date by the time it's printed.

Both postal and face-to-face have tournament structures with cash prizes. The interesting part is that, because everyone is rated, it's possible for a tournament to be broken down into about 7 or 8 classes or ranges of skill. Naturally, the bulk of the players fall into the mid-ranges, so at any tournament, the bulk of the players fall into this class. But prize money is virtually always an inverted pyramid, so that the lowest rated player class receives a token prize, but the upper divisions often receive prizes that range up to thousands of dollars.

It's not uncommon for tournament fees to range from \$25.00 to \$50.00 for a two-day tournament. The classes one would see at a typical tournament would be unrated, E,D,C,B,A, Expert, Master. The prizes might be for first place in each category - \$25,\$25,\$25,\$50,\$50,\$75,\$100,\$250. And there may have been as few as 10 experts and three or four masters if this was a fairly typical tournament. The point is that the bulk of the players are paying their money for the 'pros' participation. Often there will be a large prize for winner of the overall tournament, but it is very rare when one of the masters doesn't take that.

At this level we have both cash flow and Organization, the bane of your average dip anti-Organizationalist. But the feuds, ah yes, the feuds.

The same group of power brokers take turns wielding power at the national level with little or no interference from us troops in the trenches. But at the state level, you could actually get close enough to watch the monster squirm.

I pause to give you a truism to throw around. Tallman says, 'Organizers are like art critics and music critics, they who cannot create, criticize. Those who cannot get along with the hobby as it exists, organize.'

The Washington Chess Federation holds a meeting every summer in conjunction with the Annual Seafair Chess Tournament to elect officers. During the five years I attended, 7 people took turns shifting around between 5 positions. And the elections always generated a heck of a lot of press, and out of about 450 members, 31 was the most I ever saw vote.

And these guys had charge of the funds. And they got to certify tournament directors. And if someone was running a tournament that conflicted with a date of a tournament they liked better, pressure was brought to bear for the unpopular tournament to pick another date or receive no advertising in the state flagship zeen controlled by the gang of five.

In case you missed the highlights, the chess hobby is tightly controlled by a very small, self-perpetuating clique that feuds its ass off, but resists new blood like the plague, unless it's brought in in the form of toadies to one faction or the other. I am not saying that money generated the chess professionals, both in the form of masters and organizers, but without the money, they would get into something a little more serious. I really haven't done justice the feuds I witnessed, but it will suffice to say that the best efforts of the dip-feudsters would barely raise a ripple.

And the fact that the average player has literally no say in how his organization is run or how its money is spent may also seem irrelevant.

People with the ear of the Organization can always get money for their projects. Big name organizers are in power for years. And virtually none ever made any kind of a name for himself as a player, only as an organizer and politician.

And I gave it up because it wasn't very stimulating.

Before anyone says they are an entirely different type of gamer, let me state that I went through some very heavy déjà vu when I played Dip at Dragonflight in Seattle this summer. Gamers are gamers are gamers. Zit-faced teens and old weird guys who live alone and only play games for social interaction. Most of the zit-faced teens grow up. The old guys never do.

Anyway, I figure Larry's proposal would net over \$2000 a year from the postal hobby, if he is able to con the BNC into tying Boardman numbers to the Diptax. I happen to trust and respect the current BNC, but it has been demonstrated in the past that it is easy to get some bozo who refuses to be accountable. And I can easily think of a number of people I would trust to disperse the monies. But does everyone trust the people I trust? Bernie Tretick is still on my sub list. Would you put me in charge of these monies?

It would be easy to say that such a proposal is begging for trouble. Rather I will argue that it is simply unnecessary. Any worthwhile project will always have someone willing to do it, and most of the people doing these projects are clever enough to find a way to finance them. Or, if they feel strongly enough, they'll finance them themselves.

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One of the other proposals Larry made in XENOGOGIC is that all zeens should pay for themselves. I consider this very comparable to hobby services and projects. The last two issues of NSWG cost me about a buck to produce and mail. That is only xerox and mailing, it ignores time, gas, supplies, and so on. But I want to do it, and I don't want to charge a buck an issue. I want to communicate with a lot of friends who can't afford that buck.

By the same token, the people performing various services to the hobby believe in them and will perform them as long as they feel that way and are able. And when they can't or won't, they will pass the position on. And so it goes.

In a response to my hour-long tape decrying the Diptax and other Peery projects, Larry said the response was stimulating and interesting and virtually 100% against. Why do I have the feeling Larry won't take the hint?

In an effort to be less than subtle, but calmer than I was in the tape, I wish to clearly state that I am unalterably opposed to the Diptax. I will boycott any zeen that requires such for play in its games (although what it is a game fee?) and will recommend to all my subbers that they do likewise, and will repeat the same arguments made here. I will also recommend boycotting any tournament or con that proposes such. No game run in my zeen, NORTH SEALTH, WEST GEORGE, will levy such a fee.

I will end this by saying that up until now, I had considered Larry Peery to be one of those hobby hold-outs from the stone age who has refused to fossilize and become a mute testimony to some strange and forgotten time. Who was also a Sachsist (sachism -- an uncontrollable urge to organize anything and everything, intensified when the object of organizational intent resists).

Maybe chess is the cure. How could anything that organized notice or worry about yet another organizer....

((Not knowing anything about the chess hobby firsthand, I'll have to pass comment on it. Does anybody else out there have any other views on the chess situation?))

\*\*\*\*\* (Dick Martin/RETALIATION) I give the Diptax an "old college try" pat on the back, as I close the book on it. Sure, it would be nice if all the services were financed by someone other than the custodian. Sure, it would be nice for everybody's zeen to pay for itself. But the way Dipdom is: a very low-cost (stingy, is more like it) hobby, it just wouldn't work.

One of the main negative effects of a Diptax would be on the custodians the tax is trying to support. Right now, all custodians are dedicated people, working because they think a job needs to be done. A diptax might draw in more mercenary types in the future who, if funding somehow ceases, would fold up shop. Right now, all the work is being done on a shoe string budget. That would imply to me that only the most necessary services are being performed. And will be performed regardless of "hobby support."

The other main problem I see is that you can't just divorce the position from the personality as Larry does. Sure, right now we have responsible people in the DW editorship, BNC post, and MNC. But I can think of a time not long ago when NONE of those positions was run responsibly. I don't want to take the chance on giving \$1000 to some clown who will promptly disappear.

And dividing up the funds would be nearly impossible. How many different splits were proposed at Dipcon this year? Just think what it would be like deciding between ten projects instead of six. And where do you draw the line: where you think a particular service should be funded, or at the actual level of expenditure? All I can see are headaches.

Finally, who exactly decides where the money goes? The DW editor? BNC? MNC? US/OGP, KGO, CIA, FBI? Sorry, but I don't think you could get everybody to agree on that either. And who should even be in the position of choosing: custodians, non-custodians, past custodians? Without a great deal of support (say, 200 people), the whole idea is doomed from the start.

So I'll have to say thanks, but no thanks. I don't need the aggravation.

((Ah, but think of all the money you could make!!))

STUFF I MISSED EARLIER

ETHICS (Larry Peery) I just can't get all that excited about the question of ethics. You either have them or you don't. It's become obvious to me that there is little chance of the hobby adopting any meaningful universal code of ethics. We are all too different. At best we can hope each pubber would publish individual statements of his/her ideas. But all this was covered in the DRT on the same subject, at least from the pubber's angle. I have had people write and ask about player ethics, another subject entirely. I, for instance, witnessed at STRATEGICON cases where player(s) in a game would watch another player write his orders across the table and then write their own, making no secret of their spying on the other player's orders. Yet when I pointed out to them that I considered this unethical, they said it was no such thing, that it was perfectly

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Legal. Perhaps so, but was it ethical. Not in my book.

((It's a good thing you don't go to Byrnecons, you'd have a heart attack. As far as we're concerned, spying is like lying: this is Diplomacy! If you get caught, too bad, but if you can get away with it, fine. After all, they do have a section in the rulebook specifically dealing with this, don't they?

((Have you found that discussions in here match pretty well with your DRTs?))

ETHICS (Mark Berch) Ed Wrobel wonders about the scope of ethics, concluding, "I don't think ethics has anything to do with it. It's a matter of practicality. You don't want to ruffle too many large feathers and find your own projects torpedoed." This is one of those hypothetical problems that people worry about but never actually occurred. I cannot think of a single example of a project being torpedoed because the person trying to do it had ruffled too many feathers, and I think it's pointless to worry about such things. Thus, in contrast to your position, Dick, I do not think his fear is at all "well grounded." With regard to Wrobel's original ethics question, I'd say that if the material were in fact, off the record at the time, they remain that way permanently, unless of course the letter writer authorized their release.

((Ah, but I think I have seen a project or two "torpedoed" because of who was running it and possible disputes between that person and the submarine. Then again, I suppose "attempted torpedoing" is more like it. Perhaps it hasn't happened to you, but that doesn't mean it's never happened. Anybody out there ever had a project "torpedoed" because you ruffled the wrong feathers? Rod? Robert?))

((Since Ed, as a third party, has already received copies of supposed off the record material, why is he to assume that an already broken confidence is still in effect?))

MORE ANNOUNCEMENTS

(Robert Sacks) I should mention that the NYGB's corporate aegis (the Metropolitan Fantasy, Wargaming, and Science Fiction Association, Inc, of NJ) has received an IRS tax exemption letter. A corporate resolution authorizes the collection of contributions (which would be tax exempt) for hobby services, in particular the BNC, the MNC (under the covenant), the MNC (not under the covenant -- Kendter), the OGP, the KGO. Other similar projects are eligible -- write me for eligibility determination. Checks may be made payable to "New York Game Board" -- indicate which project(s) are to receive support on the purpose line or (even better) in an attached letter.

((That's interesting. So anybody can make a tax deductible contribution through the NYGB to the service of their choice? If this is the case, why would we need a diptax? More on this to follow, I hope.))

(Rod Walker) EREWHON #100 will be produced later this year, only 7 years late. Once it appears, ERE will resume publication as a regular hobby gamezeen. I will have a couple of games and may take one orphan. I still have to set a specific schedule for myself. ERE will be monthly and subscriptions will be 10/\$6. Game fee will be \$3, NMR fee \$2, plus subscription required. At the most, I will have a regular game, a variant game, and an orphan. ERE will trade, especially with those GMs who have been trading for the nominal ARDA or those who have kindly been sending their zeens without a trade.

I am still taking articles and contributions for ERE 100. Prepublication price is \$2. After publication it's \$2.50.

((Seven years late? Hope it's not seven years, one month, or you could be in big trouble for misrepresenting the problems you've had in running the zeen. Do you have any particular date for this big event?))

(Me) Well, the census is input, run off, and just about ready to roll. About 40 zeens sent in lists, and the total population is in the mid-800s. Fred Davis has got the info now, and as soon as he gets back to me with his figures, I'll go ahead and finish it up. Should not be long. It'll run about 16-20 pages or so, in either reduced digest format, or full page.(or probably both). Pubbers who sent in lists will get the reduced version for free, and can "upgrade" that to the full paged version for \$1 plus their reduced copy. Costs for non-contributors will be \$1 for the reduced version, and \$2 for the full sized. The print is very clear pica, so reading either version should be no problem. I'll try to leave some blank space so you can write in any additions/changes at your leisure. There will be a section on electronic mailing addresses. Anything else? Oh yes, thanks to Julie, Fred Davis, and Mark Larzelere. Without their help (and the help of all the pubbers who sent/printed lists), this project would be later, lesser, an far more wear and tear on poor me. Thanks again.

If you wish to plug the above to your subbers, feel free. There will be no further changes in price, or format.

A CONSUMER'S GUIDE FOR DIPLOMACY PUBLISHERS - by Fred Davis

Regardless of whether you print by ditto, mimeograph, or offset, there are certain stationery items which can be very useful in helping you to run things efficiently. Here are a few, based on personal experience.

Folders. Keep a separate six- or eight-pocket folder for each game. The orders for the current season go in the front pocket. Last season's orders can be saved in a rear pocket. For variants, I keep the masters of the rules/maps in one pocket, and have separate pockets for the copies of the rules and maps. If there were prior versions of the variant, I keep at least the masters of those versions in the rear, for ready reference. I use another pocket for special commentary on the design, including critiques, reviews, and suggestions from others. If the game has a preface or "historical background," that goes in another one.

I make a baseball scorecard-type record on the front pocket, showing the names of the countries and players on the left, and the seasons at the top. As the orders come in, I place check marks in the correct boxes. I write "P" if the orders were phoned in, and "S" if they're from a stand-by. Each game folder is a different color, and the name of each game is attached to the outside spine with stick-on labels. These folders are all filed on a high shelf where no one but me will touch them.

(You must also remember to file the orders as soon as they're received, on a daily basis, so they don't get lost. You'd be surprised how envelopes can run and hide if left alone for two or three days.)

Mailing Labels. You can buy 4-sheet carbon-interleaved address labels, Dennison item #37-724. That's ten sets, 33 labels to each page. This takes care of your labels for four issues at a time. Since Diplomacy people move about so often, or leave your mailing list due to drop-outs or finishing a game or a sub, it's not practical to set up a label supply for a longer period. I always wind up with a lot of address changes and new names at the bottom of my list by the end of the third month.

Map Tacks. Assuming you go the "tacky" route in keeping game records, Moore's map tacks are available in all of the 7 traditional colors. They used to come in small pillboxes about one inch square with 20 tacks to the box, but I see that they now seem to sell only the larger, more expensive boxes (@\$2.75 each in my area). Tacks are available in both plain versions (for armies) and dotted or scored (for fleets). However, you can buy just the plain ones, and use paint or Liquid Paper to place dots on your fleet tacks. You can also buy tacks in brown and pink for variants. I've taken to using pink for English units to avoid confusion with other nationalities. (Pink is the official English colour in U.K. sets.)

Master List of Readers/Subscribers. Assuming you're not using a computer, it's better to keep these names on a Flexoline type mode wherein each name & address is on a separate piece of heavy cardboard, mounted on holders, which in turn are held in a ring notebook. Moveable names enable you to keep your list in alphabetical order for ease of finding, and avoid the need to retype your list. It's always up to date.

Actually, I keep two lists, one for Players and Stand-bys; and one for my Subscribers, Traders, and Complimentary copies. I also have another list in the back of the book for former readers and other prominent hobby people who for one reason or another don't get BUSHWACKER. On each strip, I enter their names and the month they began receiving BUSH on the first line. Their addresses go on the second line, and their status (e.g. "(P) 1885" indicating a Player in the game "1885") on the third. Some very long addresses will require more than one line.

The system I use is made by the Datastrip Corp. To begin with, you have a choice of three different-sized books, each with a choice of about two different-sized cardboard strips. The smallest-sized book is able to hold up to about 110 names. These ringed books should last a lifetime. If your local stationery stores don't carry the Datastrip brand, they may carry the original Flexoline brand. If you can't find either of them in the stores, write directly to the company and ask for a free catalog. Their address: Datastrip Corp., 1575 Avon St. Extended, Charlottesville, VA, 22901.

You'll find your mail orders are usually filled within 10 days. After your first order, they will bill you for the difference between what you've sent them and the shipping charges, plus any price increases not reflected in their catalog, rather than holding up your order for full payment.

Datastrips come about 15 to a sheet, so it's easy to type up your initial list. When it comes time to make changes, it's usually easier to make the entries in longhand (print!), unless you have at least 3 or 4 to make at once. I find the use of a Pilot Fineliner pen is the best tool. Rodney Dangerfield is right - Pilot pens are best.

## A CONSUMER'S GUIDE (cont'd)

Mounting Maps. Since I use map tacks, I mount each game's map on heavy cardboard. Any time you receive a shipment in a cardboard box, consider dismantling the box for future use as a map holder. Most of my cardboard comes from wine delivered in case lots, which gives a certain aura to the maps. Some people don't like to mutilate variant maps with tacks. If it's your only copy, I agree. However, photocopies are available almost everywhere these days for 15¢, so it's surely worth 15¢ to make an extra copy. Providing the maps are placed out of the way of dogs, cats, or infants, they will last indefinitely and instantly furnish an up-to-date map of the situation in the game. I prefer the map tack method over the acetate sheet and grease pencil method, since it is less complicated. If you use a soft pencil and good eraser (like the Faber Eraser Stik #7055), you can draw lines on your maps to show attacks, convoys, retreats, etc., just as you can do on a grease pencil map.

Postage Stamps. At the very least, you'll want to buy your stamps in coils of 100, and a plastic dispenser to hold them. You can probably get a dispenser from the Post Office for about 10¢. A better idea is to buy a Posta-Fix machine, which holds a coil, and automatically wets and fastens one to the envelope when you press down. These used to be sold in the P.O., but I don't see them on sale there anymore. Check your stationer. The manufacturer is the Data-link Corp. of San Diego, CA, but my machine doesn't show a street address. (Any San Diego people able to furnish their address?).

However, remember that Canadian and Overseas readers may appreciate receiving commemorative stamps on their copies, so buy a few specials for them. Also, remember that zeens sent to Canada should be in envelopes to insure faster service. I enclose my zeens in envelopes for my Canadian players, but send the subscription and trade copies in the usual self-mailing format. Theoretically, all mail to Canada is supposed to be sent in envelopes, but most big city Postmasters ignore this rule. (Each P.O. is run as an independent fiefdom. Some small town Postmasters can be very strict.)

Your Overseas sea mail rate is 30¢ an oz. You can use the regular 20¢ commemoratives by pairing them with the regular 10¢ stamp. Air Mail is 40¢ per half-ounce, so Air Mail is not the way to go except for very special people or players. We've had the same dull 40¢ Air Mail stamp for five years, but now there are some 1984 Olympic stamps to use in its place.

Scotch Tape. It goes without saying that you should always use the "invisible" Scotch Magic tape. It doesn't show up in photocopy or offset work. It's more expensive than the other brands, but well worth it.

Revising Whole Sentences. It's messy and a lot of work to use Liquid Paper for an entire line. A much quicker and neater method is to use the narrow self-adhesive strips produced by Avery Labels. These are single lines 1/6" high, the height of a single line of type. You can put these right over the old words, and then type in the new line. Their #5106 gives you four-inch long strips. #5108 gives you 7" strips, and product CR-16 gives you a single 600" roll of one-line strips. You can also use these Avery strips to change addresses on your Master mailing list, or any other Datastrip or Flexoline files you maintain, thus saving the cost of having to use new strips.

White Out. The Liquid Paper brand is best. Avoid any water-based whiteners. They take too long to dry. Even if you have a typewriter with a built-in whitener, you may still need Liquid Paper for drawing (like variant maps) or final editing. Your masters may look awful with Scotch tape, Liquid Paper, and Avery labels all over it, but the camera doesn't see any of those things, and it sure beats retyping the whole page or paragraph.

Note: It seems that many stationery stores tend to carry either Dennison or Avery products, rather than both. So, you may have to shop around for your supplies.

Mimeographing. Finally, if you can afford it, I recommend the Roneo as the best home mimeograph machine. Check your yellow pages for a dealer. Most cities will have only one. If you buy a Roneo, which is made in the U.K., you should use only Roneo stencils, and you must use Roneo ink. The stencil holes for attachment to the drum are different on a Roneo from most other brands. However, you can fit an A.B. Dick stencil on a Roneo if you make the proper holes, and it will print. The dealer you purchase your machine from may be the only source in town for such supplies. This means you must place your re-orders well in advance to be sure of not running out.

((Thanks, Fred, for a very thorough and well put together article. I hope you get most of your supplies as demonstration items! You should know about this sort of stuff by now, you've been using it long enough. Has BUSHWACKER always been this organized, or did it take you a long time to figure out everything you needed, what worked, etc? Thanks for writing, I learned quite a bit.))

GOING STEADY no. 3

from: Mark A. Luedi, P.O. box 2424, Bloomington, IN 47402, (812) 333-8258

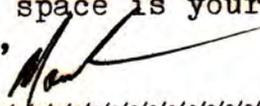
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First off, I'd like to thank all of you who have responded positively to the idea of a publisher's handbook and who have volunteered to submit articles. Next, I'd like to somehow motivate the rest of you (how does a kick in the butt sound?) to seriously consider helping out by writing an article or volunteering in some other way. One thing is certain; I am not going to write this thing. The success of the publisher's handbook is going to be the result of your efforts. Sure, I'll do an article or two, but the rest of you are going to have to contribute the bulk of this.

Already, I think the December goal is gone by the wayside. It's October already and two months is too short a time to arrange, edit and compend the materials necessary. Or is it? Start getting materials in and prove me wrong. Perhaps reimmersion in the think-tank will be necessary to produce a publisher's handbook.

%%%

I hope to see my mailbox bulging with responses from you people!!  
Guess that's all for now, folks. The rest of the space is yours,  
Dick, if you want it. Peace,



%%%

FUTURE BUSINESS

It seems that a few people would like to talk about....

COST: I know a lot of pubbers like to put across the impression that they spend zillions of \$\$ on their zeens. I'm sure that some actually do. Then again, is it necessary? I know that I spend a bit less than most pubbers who have their zeens professionally printed (if Ed Wrobel is typical). Here's how the costs break down for RETAL:

- For a typical 23 page double issue....
  - \$0.25 x 12 reductions = \$3.00
  - \$0.07 x 45 astrobrite pages = \$3.15
  - \$0.05 x 495 plain white pages = \$24.75
  - \$0.20 x 40 postage = \$8.00
  - TOTAL COST = \$38.80
  - ANNUAL COST (total x 12) = \$465.60
  
- For the 82 page 4th anniversary issue....
  - \$0.07 x 100 astrobrite pages = \$7.00
  - \$0.05 x 100 plain white pages = \$5.00
  - \$1.39 x 44 postage = \$61.16
  - TOTAL COST = \$73.16 (fortunately most copying was free)
  
- For this issue of HOL....
  - \$0.07 x 70 astrobrite pages = \$4.90
  - \$0.05 x 980 plain white pages = \$49.00
  - \$0.54 x 32 postage = \$17.28
  - TOTAL COST = \$71.18 (I'm gonna have to reduce this!)

I almost hated to do that, to find out what this dipdom costs. So RETAL runs at about \$500 a year, and

MORE FUTURE BUSINESS ON...COSTS

HOL about \$400 (projected, if we keep up like this). Of course, most of you aren't dumb enough to publish two zeens, so your costs won't be this high. Then again, I run two very low circulation zeens.

Hmmm, what do I make of these figures? Well, I see that it costs about \$1.00 per issue for each RETAL I send out. With my rate structure, I get about \$6.00 back in sub fees (15 paying subbers x 20¢/issue x 2 issues) each time. I end up subsidizing about \$400 a year. In return, I get about 17 zeens as trades, so my subsidy is actually less than \$400, closer to \$250. To me, that's not too much money for a year round hobby. Some guys at work spend \$500 on a rifle and \$1 per bullet, so I'm glad I've chosen a cheap hobby!

Now, I figure my expenses for RETAL are about average for Dipdom these days. Am I right? Let me know, and we'll compare figures. I'm willing to spend a few \$\$ more to have a nice, legible zeen with a little bit of color to liven it up. It's worth it to me -- if you can't read it, a zeen isn't worth any of the expense of putting it out. My sub rates are so low because I figure that I can't get all the \$\$ back, there is no use trying, and I would rather keep it cheap. My contribution to Dipdom, for all the enjoyment I get out of it, as it were. I cover all the costs of printing the several subzeens that appear in RETAL, except GMS send out their own game reports. We can afford the expense of subsidizing a zeen, so we do. I'd run a free zeen, except I'd be afraid of the deadwood I may find. Even a nominal sub fee seems to keep folks active, or maybe it's just habit now. Either way, I'm happy with the costs I incur vs the returns (most all intangibles) that I receive.

By the way, many times I have underpaid on postage. While I won't encourage y'all to start shorting the USP"S", I'm amazed that you guys pay the extra 17¢ per issue for a 7 sheet zeen. For one thing, most of the scales I've used tell me that 7 sheets is barely at the one ounce level. For another thing, I'm not too sure that the posties check every item too carefully. As long as it's not outrageous, like 20¢ for a 20 sheet zeen, I am not sure that they notice. Maybe it's just because we have a busy metro area post office, I don't know. Anyway, it's worth the risk for me -- if I end up with a postage due issue, I just give out sub credit to balance the expense.

So how do you folks do it, anyway? Do your sub rates cover a significant percentage of your costs? How much does it cost you to put out each issue? For a year of pubbing? Any specials (color pictures, photos, color paper, etc.)? How much are you willing to pay for the hobby (sub-hobby?) of publishing a dipzeen? Feel free to take it from here. There's a lot that I didn't touch on with this topic. Some was intentional -- saving it for a future topic -- some was unintentional. But don't worry about preserving my future topics for me, wherever you want to go, we'll take it. OK? Let me hear from you!

Oh, yes. I'd be interested to find out how much it costs for a zeen page in each medium (xerox, ditto, mimeo, photo-offset, etc.). Consider such expenses as buying a machine, paper, fluid, masters into your calculations, please. What is the "best" repro method for a dipzeen?

(Jim Meinel) Are pubbers costs fairly constant from issue to issue? I don't mean total costs, I mean rates. Here is how THE PRINCE has looked for a few recent issues: 4 pages back to back, white @ 8¢ = 32¢, 1 page back to back, beige @ 10¢ = 10¢, 1 page astrobrite, various @ 12¢ = 12¢...54¢ x 53 subbers = \$28.62. 2 ozs of postage 37¢ x 53 subbers = \$19.61. Total = \$48.23.

What are copy rates like across the country? Who pays only 3½¢ a side (7¢ back to back)? The cheapest I ever saw was 7 3/4¢ which made THE PRINCE #15 come in at 27.82 + 8.1% sales tax = \$30.08 plus \$19.61 for postage. Fifty dollars for a 7 page (14 sides) zeen...I'd hate to see what some of you are dropping!

Also, how do you account for zeen monies? Being an accountant, I couldn't help but set up some ledgers. From sub fees and gamefees for 8 game fees I was able to finance totally my first 14 issues. But from #15 on out it's all out of my pocket. And it stays that way until I get resub checks or start new games.

I think a useful exercise for pubbers to do is to add up how many issues you are obligated to put out and multiply it by your cost per copy. You know, Sherwood has 6 issues coming to him, Larzelere's paid up through 10, Michalski's down to 1; add all these up and then multiply that by the cost per copy. I did that a few months ago and came up with something like 351 x .91 = \$319 left owing. And I only had \$20 of zeen fees left unspent. It's enough to ruin your whole day by letting you know what kind of debt you're operating under.

I have a question for you pubbers out there with subzeens. Who pays for the cost? I would suspect that most if not all pubbers pick up the tab themselves. I know I pay for the one page (2 sides) Kevin Tighe sends in for HUMBOLDT, and in Seattle it cost me \$5.30 an issue. And sometimes that extra page sent me over the 1 oz mark so I paid extra 53 x .17 postage, but anything after a page he pays for. What about Gary and Dick when they run MASS MURDERS? Who pays for that shitload of printing? The reason I ask is way back when DAMN THE TORPEDOES was a zubzeen of THE SCHEMER (remember?) Greg Fritz cited as a reason for going out on his own the fact he was paying for a subzeen but not getting any revenue from sub fees. So how is it handled generally? I also still charge Kevin for a sub fee. Am I being a Simon Legree?

MORE FUTURE BUSINESS ON...COSTS

((Well, Simon, let me put it like this.... I treat suzeens like articles...I even give sub credit for them! After all, I think they contribute to the zeen, by providing variety on a regular basis. They lighten my load because I'm not expected to run 5 games at once any more. So I end up paying for MASS MURDERS, ELEPHANT HEART, DAYLESFORD and THRILL OF AGONY. Of course, I can see why a pubber would want to farm out some of the cost of the zeen subzeen pubbers (particularly something as excessive as FIAT BELLUM in MAGUS -- but I understand that Steve does not pass any of the costs back to Don). But charging a sub fee? Well, as long as all of the details are clearly worked out in advance, any arrangement you want to make is fine. Make sure you make all arrangements before committing yourself to the subzeen, though, or the situation could become unpleasant (like a maximum size allowance, for instance).

((I like to look at the brighter side and only estimate what it would cost for me to refund all the sub fees I have. 155 issues x .20 is a lot more heartening than 155 x \$1! A little self deception goes a long way. I've never been able to keep close track of costs for long. Every now and then I estimate what it costs and then forget it. Well, I should wrap this up for now. See y'all again next time!))

STILL MORE ANNOUNCEMENTS

(from Lee Kendter) I have a similar problem as MNC that Kathy has as BNC. Due to some highly inefficient work by a couple of my predecessors the Miller Numbers are incomplete. I have NO record of any 1977 games at all! So, if any of your readers know of any information on games with 1977 Miller Numbers I'd really appreciate them sending me the information.

((Well, kids, Lee's address is 4347 Benner St, Philadelphia, PA 19135. If you can help him out any, drop him a line. If you would like a "Boardman Number" for any variant game you may be running, Lee is the man to write to. Lee also publishes ALPHA AND OMEGA -- a sort of EVERYTHING for variants.))

(from me) As you may have noticed, this zeen is later than usual. A few reasons for that. First and most important, it's been triple the work of any of the first three issues.(at least). Still it would have been out on time if I hadn't been spending the last few weeks on the road working. Third, I wanted to take the time to do it right, and I think this issue turned out very well. Fourth, I do not plan to have a December issue. Rather than worry about slow mail delivery and time pressure at this busy time of year, the next issue will be out in JANUARY. So the deadline for submissions for HOL#5 is going to be January 5. The sooner the better, though, remember.

If HOL continues to be this big, I am considering switching it to a bi-monthly schedule. This will permit me to put the zeen together right most of the time, rather than just slapping it together just so I can get it out in time. It will also permit you all to read this whole thing and then respond without feeling too much pressure. It will keep us all from burying ourselves under a mountain of paper (hopeless in my case, anyway). I'd like any comments you may have on this topic. I'd rather regulate the frequency than the size of HOL.

YOUR LAST ISSUE OF HOL IS SCHEDULED TO BE \_\_\_\_\_

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FIRST CLASS