BOOK I:
PUBLISHING

CHAPTER 1
GETTING STARTED IN PUBLISHING

To Publish or Not to Publish...

...that is the question you must answer first

by Bruce Linsey

Yes, your enthusiasm is high -- else you wouldn't consider publishing at all. But there are other things you must consider as well. If you can answer yes to the following questions, then you're probably ready to publish. If not, you may be doing yourself and your potential subscribers a disservice by starting a zine at this time.

1. Will your enthusiasm last for at least the next two years? That's about how long it will take to run a typical postal game to conclusion, and even four years is not extraordinary. Nobody knows you as well as you know yourself, so try to gauge this carefully. The last thing the Diplomacy hobby needs is another batch of orphaned games!

2. Is your lifestyle likely to remain fairly stable for a couple of years? Major changes in lifestyle are responsible for many folds. If you're going away to college or getting married in a few months, please wait to start publishing. Many zines have foundered at such times.

3. Can you spare all that time? Anyone who tells you that publishing doesn't take a lot of time hasn't published. Are you willing to spend several hours at the typewriter each month? Are you the sort of person who will work to honor a commitment even though you don't feel like it at the moment? Gamesmastering (GMing) tends to be a lot of work all at once -- most of it can't be spread out over a month. Make no mistake -- there will be times when your publishing hobby will be sheer drudgery.

4. Can you afford to publish? Publishing eats money, and requires it at regular intervals, unlike some other expenses which can be put off. The big costs are postage and (usually) printing, but you'll be amazed at how quickly the incidentals add up. Do not expect to come out ahead or break even -- publishing is an expensive hobby.

5. Do you have a clear idea of why you want to publish? It's a mistake to be in love with the idea of publishing per se. You ought to have a good idea of your goals.

If you cannot reasonably say "yes" to all the above questions, then please, please don't publish yet. The hobby will still be here in a year or three. You see, unsuccessful publishers don't hurt only themselves, they hurt their subscribers and players too. With others depending on you, you have an increased responsibility to start only if you're likely to succeed.

If you have answered "yes" to the questions, then great! I'll be looking forward to your first issue. But first, you will need to make some important decisions about your zine-to-be. So...onward we go!

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Taking the Plunge

by Bruce Linsey

The most obvious question, if not the most important, will be what to name your zine. Anything goes, though of course it's best not to use a name which has already been used. In the hobby's infancy, zines were tradionally named after fictional places (Graustark, Erehwon, Costaguana, etc.). This practice is infrequent now. Far more

common are zine names using a derivative of the word "diplomacy" or "dip" (Diplomacy Digest, The Diplomat, Dipshit, etc.), or zines whose names reflect the treachery characteristic of the game (The Brutus Bulletin, Watch Your Back, etc.). But just use your imagination.

Next up is the question of how you will print your zine. You should have some sort of firm printing arrangement, and a backup in case your primary printing source breaks down, goes out of business, or becomes inaccessible.

Then we arrive at your zine's content. This is where your personality emerges most vividly. Will you run games? Nearly all publishers do. Diplomacy only? Standard Diplomacy or variants? Whatever interests you! You will also need to decide on a deadline interval, which may depend in part on the games you'll be running. Anything in the two to six-week range is feasible for Diplomacy, though monthly (or four-weekly) is most common.

Reading material (i.e. content other than games) varies from nonexistent in a games-only ("warehouse") zine to 100% of a zine like Diplomacy Digest, which runs no games. Most zines, of course, try to hit a happy medium. Questions to ask yourself: will you run articles? If so, how will you obtain them? (A guide on how to get people to write for your zine appears later in this handbook.) Will you print letters? Are you going to edit them by topic or keep each writer's letter intact? Will you print feud letters? (If so, you'd better a have a thick skin and a strong stomach for controversy.) Will you restrict letters and articles to the game and the hobby, or will anything go? What will your zine's layout be like? Will you accompany your game reports with maps each season? These questions and dozens of others will require answers. Some of the answers may change over time as your fledgling zine evolves, but you'd do well to start with some idea of direction.

Your zine's format: will it be digest or open-page? Digest zines are usually center-stapled and thus may require special equipment such as a center ("saddle") stapler, though I get by well enough with a long-reach stapler for projects like this handbook. Open-page zines are generally stapled in the upper left corner. Printing is usually non-reduced, making for easier reading but higher postage costs if your zine exceeds ten or twelve pages.

You will want to consider what you are going to charge for subscriptions and game fees, and what will be your rate of payment for contributed material. You can get a good idea of the going rates by examining a few samples of active zines. Will you trade for other zines, or do you prefer mutual subscriptions? A debate elsewhere in this handbook may help you make this decision.

To whom will you send your first issue? Will you mass mail hundreds of samples, or depend on plugs from other publishers to "spread the word"? Mass mailings of a good first issue will typically draw a 5-10% rate of response. In other words, if you send out Issue #1, full of juicy reading material, to 300 active hobbyists; you might reasonably expect to have up to 30 subscribers and/or traders in the next couple of months. The biggest single "draw" you can have is an announcement of game openings. By the way, you can obtain names and addresses for such a mass mailing from the latest hobby census (or Black and Blue Book), or from the mailing lists many publishers frequently print in their zines. Depending on plugs is cheaper, and correspondingly less effective at drawing new subscribers. This is an especially good way to go if you're not interested in having a large circulation.

Finally, although there are few "universals" in this hobby, your first issue ought to contain some vital data, such as:

1. Your name, address, and phone number (unless you don't want to be called).
2. Your subscription rates and game fees (if applicable).
3. A brief (or even not-so-brief) sketch of who you are, unless the zine is only going to people you know. Diplomacy players like to have some idea of whom they're dealing with before sending in their hard-earned cash.
4. A description of your zine's editorial policies and content, such as which games you'd like to run and whether you plan to open a letter column. Even if you yourself haven't decided on all your editorial policies, people like to know that you've given some thought to the zine before plunging into it.
5. A description of your basic GMing policies, assuming you'll be running games. This can take the form of a full set of houserules, or just a summary sheet of the most important points. If you just say "game openings are available at $5 a shot", potential players may be left wondering whether your games will suit their needs. Many people want to know your deadline intervals, whether you'll allow black press, whether you'll be using standbys, and whether your games will be DIAS (Draws Include All Survivors). Tastes vary, and it is only fair that you give people an idea of what they're getting into if they sign up for a game in your zine.

The above is just a bare overview of questions to be answered and items to be considered before taking the plunge and publishing. You'll find many more questions facing you once you begin or even before, questions as diverse as all the individual zines and publishers in the Diplomacy hobby. So go forth...discover...and enjoy!

Some Publishing Tips

by Geoff Challinger

So you've decided you want to start a zine. What next? Well, the first thing to do is to think really hard about the commitment you're making. The commitment is not just to yourself, but is an obligation to the people you hope are going to want to receive your zine. To simply offer your product on a take it or leave it basis is not sufficient.

The wish to run a zine is not sufficient reason to do so. The first edition of Greatest Tips ((the British Publisher's Handbook, which Geoff was kind enough to send me)) quoted Richard Morris's remark, "I often get the urge to start a zine, but then I go and lie down until I feel better." By and large, first issues are relatively hasty, appearing within six weeks of the initial inspiration. While this is a splendid way to keep your enthusiasm at a high level, it is really not the most auspicious way to begin publication.

Your first issue is one of the most important single issues you will produce and it is also the one over which you will be able to take the most time ensuring a satis-factory product. Obviously the first issue is likely to contain such things as what games you intend to run (if any), houserules, and general detail about how the zine will run. It is worthwhile printing a large number of copies of the first issue, for several reasons. You can then send out many samples and you can use your first issue to lay out your policies for interested people.

Copies of this all-important issue should go to as many publishers as possible for two reasons. Not only will you receive wider publicity for your new zine, but you may also receive back zines in trade which will enable you to see how other editors operate. If you are actively setting out to trade with zines, try and make a request via a personal note rather than a scribbled "trade?" on the back page. The same goes for samples sent out to potential subscribers. You're far more likely to gain new recruits if you stick a note in explaining why the sample is coming through the letterbox.

You can use existing editors' subscriber lists to mailshot people if you wish. Several editors publish these every few issues (if only because it's a good way of filling a couple of sides). And if you ask, most editors would be prepared to give you a list of names and addresses as long as they have them in an easily copiable format.

Although your first issue has necessarily to carry some bureaucratic material, it must also contain something which interests people enough to send you a speculative subscription at least. It was once the case that editors merely announced the existence of their zines and they would soon receive a healthy number of subscribers. But times change and there are now upwards of 75 zines in the postal games field ((in Britain alone, I suspect)). So a first issue must make an impression, whether by its wit or erudition, by its originality or by the games on offer.

This is where pre-planning comes in. You have two things to consider; one is the short-term consideration of getting the zine off the ground and the other is the long term goal you have for your zine. These two can be mutually exclusive, and you may have to compromise at the beginning by running the zine in a way not totally to your liking. As we'll go on to see, this is dangerous later on, but it can work to your advantage to start with. If ultimately your aim is to run a zine dealing exclusively with running an obscure Diplomacy variant then you might well be guaranteeing failure if you begin with that approach. Try and think of your zine as something which will evolve over time and don't hurry its development.

((Editor's Note: On the other hand, don't ever deliberately mislead potential subscribers into thinking that your zine is going to be something it isn't. Be straightforward about your plans, even if it means attracting a few less people. Those you do catch with the candid approach are more likely the sorts of people who you'll enjoy having anyway, and who will themselves enjoy the zine even as it changes.))

But beware. In the rock music field lots of groups burst on the scene with an impressive first album which uses all the best material they've been gathering for years. The second album is often disappointing because all the good stuff has gone. So it is with zines. If you create a superb Issue 1, with 32 pages of dazzling articles and graphics, and are then unable to provide much for your second issue, what kind of impression is that going to give? So a little husbanding of resources might not come amiss if you are not a natural writer.

Organize! It will save you a lot of time and effort in the long run to keep accurate records from day one. With the advance of technology, it is now possible to keep all subscriber and address records on a home computer, though obviously this option is not open to everyone. But it is quite easy to keep equally good records on file cards or in looseleaf binders. Each card/page can carry a name, address (with space for changes), current credit and plenty of space for including new credit figures after deducting cost of issues, game fees, etc. It may also help you to keep records of whether or not particular issues have been sent and if the person is

playing in any games in your zine.

An alternative system, which removes some paperwork, is merely to record the issue at which people's subscriptions will run out. ((Editor's Note: This method is far the better of the two. I can't fathom why standard practice in Britain seems to be the sub credit system.)) When you receive checks, you can simply adjust that "final issue number" accordingly. In this way you need only make adjustments to those who send money ((or get credit for articles, or whatever)) rather than having to adjust every person's credit. Game fees complicate things, but you can get around this by equating them to a particular number of issues.

Few editors actually manage to plan ahead, although all would advocate it. It helps to plan things as far ahead as you possibly can. Be aware of what tasks you must undertake to put the zine out, and plan each issue accordingly. If there are things you can do prior to your deadline, such as typing articles, drawing illustrations, addressing envelopes, etc.; then do so. The last item (addressing) is particularly best done ahead of time as it is a brain-numbing exercise I personally consider the worst of all zine-producing duties. It is certainly best not left until you're tired from printing and collating. You can also mark people's credits on the envelopes at this stage, although this does have the disadvantage that people tend to throw the envelopes away. You can also utilize the spare time you have at this point to write little notes to those with low or negative credits. Any other personal messages can be scribbled out at this stage too.

Parr's Law of Zine Production states that "Everything takes longer than you expect." However, it is useful to know in advance what kind of time commitment a zine represents. To adjudicate a game of Diplomacy takes about 20 minutes per season ((not counting typing, at least in my experience)). To type a side of paper seems to take an average of 30-45 minutes, although this varies according to content and typing ability. Printing varies according to the machine and what experience you have with the beasts, but (for mimeo) if you allow 15 minutes for the printing of two sides you should be OK. Hence a 20-side zine running 12 games of Diplomacy takes in theory 24 hours to produce. In theory.

In practice, it's not quite like that. There are coffee breaks, meal breaks, phone calls with orders, and stretches where you stare vacantly out of the window searching vainly for inspiration. You will always find yourself underestimating. Even our unemployed editors find it hard. And I'll guarantee that just as soon as you have steeled yourself to type until five in the morning and really get the job done, your wife/husband/girlfriend/boyfriend/etc.(?) will decide that s/he is playing second fiddle to your silly games and wants you to come to bed, or mow the lawn, or...

Therefore, when you come to make plans, leave large amounts of slack in your schedule. And if you decide that the zine will take, say, 32 hours to produce; don't try this by working 7am to 11pm Saturday and Sunday, or you'll soon become dis-enchanted (as will your wife/etc.). Take things relatively easy and you'll have a better zine as well as a saner editor.

When you are looking at time, don't forget that circumstances may not be the same right now as they will always be. Schoolboys go off to University, students take finals and get jobs, people in their twenties get married and have children. And then there are exciting things such as work pressure, professional exams, divorce, etc. All in all, life is unpredictable and no one can ever guarantee that his life is not going to be turned upside-down and that the zine won't just disappear. But some forward thinking is obviously sensible. If you have exams or some such in the next year then now is not the best time to start a zine. Just sit back, make your plans, and bide your time.

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Advice to the Novice Pubber
by Ron (Canada) Brown

All too often a new zine appears, bursting with enthusiasm, unlimited game openings, every possible variant offered, an "all letters printed as is" policy, and editorials bravely attacking the hobby "establishment" (as viewed by the pubber). Then, six months later, players start wondering where their game reports are and rumors start circulating of a fold. Orphan Placement services step in and the games are rehoused, often after long delays and dropouts.

Why does this have to happen? Can one not trust any zine to survive? Sould one wait for a year, two years, before making any commitments regarding subs or signing up for games in any new zines? Hardly. All zines were once novice publications. Even Bushwacker had a first issue, though it's been around so long that's hard to believe. And, if a zine does not get initial support through subscriptions and players, it will, most definitely, fold.

One cannot set any guidelines regarding which new zines to trust and which not to. Each zine is as individual as its publisher. In Canada, in the past eighteen months ((this article was written in late 1984)), we've had two such folds. One was by a newcomer to the hobby who burned out after three issues. The other was by a hobby oldtimer, and this was the second time he folded a zine without warning. You'd think he'd have learned the first time around...

In any case, those considering the plunge into publishing could help avoid creating problems for the hobby if they stopped and seriously considered what they were letting themselves in for. I don't mean to discourage anyone, as the hobby is always in need of good, reliable zines; but if you have doubts, best wait, as no one wants to be the one who lets players and subscribers down again.

First, you must have a fairly definite idea of what you'll be doing in five years. Sure, the average game lasts about two years, but what about all the games you'll be beginning in the meantime? And what if a game does last that long? Drastic lifestyle changes add pressure to you, and having deadlines to meet doesn't help.

Don't set your sights too high. It is far better to GM one or two games well, than to be continually botching ten game reports. And, while it is flattering to have a circulation of 150, the administrative workload increases geometrically with the number of subscribers you have. You'll have address changes to make with every deadline, questions to answer, expired sub notices to send out, samples to mail, etc. At 100 subscribers I found I was putting in an average of 20 hours a week on publishing related activities. Who has _that_ much free time? When I was running two games with about 30 subscribers, I could do the adjudications, put the zine together, address envelopes, etc., in one evening. Take a look at the long-lasting zines, and note how few games they carry: just two, three, four. Note also how short they are. With a few notable exceptions, long-surviving zines are less than 10 pages (20 reduced) per issue.

I think the most important consideration is your own honesty with yourself. If you cannot get your zine together on the deadline, can you really get it together in a few days, or in a week? Folding pubbers almost invariably tell people who inquire that the zine will be out in a few days...how much fairer it would be if you made a few phone calls to other publishers and asked them to spread the word that you were snowed under, but will transfer the games to other GMs, or get it out in four weeks, or whatever. And you'll have to tell yourself honestly why you are unable to cope now, and look at what major changes will be occurring, or that you can cause to occur, to change the situation you're in. If you're the type who tries to solve problems by ignoring them, better forget publishing.

And believe me, you _do_ get snowed under. Pressures can be tremendous when combined with job or family demands. How you handle it will determine what kind of pubber you'll be: a fly-by-night, or a solid contributing member of the hobby community.

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The New Publisher and the Honeymoon
by Alan Stewart

It all starts when you experience that brief but arresting moment known in religious circles as "Hearing the Call". You are sure, beyond possiblity of refutation, in the very depths of your being, that you could do "it" as well as any of these other guys can. "It" may not be "publishing a Diplomacy zine", but one small component of this, such as "handling complaints" or "getting a laugh" or GMing correctly or putting the thing out on time or what have you. If you shake this feeling off as you would a slight head cold you will go on to live a normal life. If you are unable to shake it off, you will become a publisher.

But before this comes the phony war, the period when you are working to come to a decision one way or the other. How long this lasts and how rigorously you question yourself before making the final decision depends on the ability of maturity and introspection to temper your enthusiasm. In my case, I waited a long time, asking myself questions like "Can I afford the financial losses?", "Will anyone subscribe?", "What if I make enemies?", and "Can I be sure my commitment will last?". I suppose you would think that I would recommend that others go through the same process, but I don't. Every week of equivocation drains a little more enthusiasm away. There is much to be said for just plunging ahead.

Once the decision is made ("It's a GO!") the natural temptation is to tell everyone in the world about it. I told no one in the world about it. No one knew that Praxis was coming until it arrived in people's mailboxes. Lots of good reasons for this, too. This gives you lots of time to prepare your first issue, which will probably be seen by three or four times more people than any other issue you produce. If there are delays in the process, you don't get letters saying "When is that new

zine of yours coming out -- or have you changed your mind?". The expectation of
surprised reactions fuels you as you do the dull compiling of mailing lists, typing
of articles, writing of address labels, licking of stamps. The real fun of this
period is the leisurely contemplation of the policies you will be adopting -- digest
or open-faced? Strict GM or loose? Controversial or wimpish? For the first time
you cannot simply pronounce on these subjects from the ivory tower, as your decisions
will have real-life consequences.

The burst of pride, pleasure, and expectation when you put out your first issue
is very satisfying. During the next few days while waiting for the verdict of the
public you treat yourself to a few well-deserved dreams. Of the universal approbation
that your zine will receive, the sub checks that will come pouring in, the way in
which your zine will pull everyone in the hobby together in shared appreciation.
You imagine gamestarts:

AUSTRIA:	(Walker)
ENGLAND:	(Byrne)
FRANCE:	(Linsey)
GERMANY:	(Langley)
ITALY:	(Boardman)
RUSSIA:	(Hutton)
TURKEY:	(Olsen)

Reality intrudes before too long, but one of the hobby's most widely shared
conventions is encouragement of a new publisher, and the first few months after
beginning publishing are about as pleasant as everyone involved can make them. You
will receive fervent congratulations, heartfelt good wishes, enthusiastic trade
offers -- and all this from people who didn't even like Issue #1, never mind those
that did. Even people who don't intend to sub will write long letters of encouragement.
No matter what you have said in Issue #1, people will ignore the parts they don't
like and grasp for anything positive to say about your new enterprise. "Liked the
whiteness of your paper."

The next four issues you put out mark the beginning of your socialization into
your new vocation. The plugs stop appearing, the flow of incoming letters becomes more
regular (although hopefully not weaker), filing and paperwork begin to take more time
than writing and thinking. You come to realize that to the vast majority of the hobby
your zine is only "un zine comme les autres" -- and then realize that only a fool could
have thought anything different.

There are compensating gains, if everything has gone right. You gradually get to
know new friends whom you hope to know for a long time. You come to appreciate the
self-discipline that publishing produces. You feel the satisfaction of producing an
issue that does not stand on its own, but adds another chapter to a body of work you
are proud of. You get to like the monotonous climb of the figures that encapsulize
your achievement -- Issue #8, 9, 10, 11, 12... You start to think not just of what
you plan to do, but of what you have already accomplished, and feel happy about both...

It's like courtship and marriage. You won't always see your spouse or zine in the
glow of original romance, but if you have chosen wisely at the outset, you will still
have a spouse -- or zine -- whom you want to spend the rest of your life with. That's
the way I feel about Praxis -- or at least that's the way I am going to pretend I feel
about Praxis for the purposes of encouraging prospective publishers and finishing this
article so I can write a few letters owed to subscribers -- no, to hell with them,
I'm going out for a few brew instead -- better enjoy myself while I can -- next week
is the week before the accursed deadline...

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Publishing and Gamesmastering: Administrivial Pursuits

by Steve Knight

Let me begin, somewhat pompously, with an observation of my own:

Administration kills zines.

When you get right down to it, almost any fool can (and will--I offer
myself as proof) undertake the fun of typing up an issue of a zine and
mailing out a bunch of samples. Producing the zine itself, however, is
only the visible tip of the iceberg. Below the surface, publishing is an
undertaking which is mired in caring for small details and dominated by
tracking a good deal of rather nit-picky information. So when I say,
"Administration kills zines," I'm merely asserting (without any proof, of
course) that long-running, competently produced zines get that way because
their publishers have learned to cope with the details of running their
respective publishing operations.

Now, assuming that you are serious about venturing into publishing, this article will, I hope, give you some suggestions which you will find valuable in smoothly administering your own publishing operation. It will, however, be just that: a few hints, ideas I have stumbled across while publishing, things I wish I had known when I started. The list is in no way complete, and I can't claim that all of these are good advice for you. You will have to invent, by trial and error, your own system, which allows you to produce your zine in a manner which you find comfortable. I do, however, offer these hints so that you will not have to invent your system from scratch, and in the hopes that you may find a few ideas in here which will make your publishing a little easier.

OPENING MAIL

As a publisher and gamesmaster, you will naturally receive a good deal of mail. Generally, it is not overwhelming; my own guess is that most publishers receive, on the average, three to six pieces of zine-related correspondence per day. (Note that I am not counting other hobby-related correspondence, such as letters for games in which a publisher may be playing.) There is probably no single item more important to smooth zine administration than coming up with some system which permits you to deal with your zine-related mail <u>as</u> <u>it</u> <u>comes</u> <u>in</u>.

Ideally, you will be able to devote an hour or so each evening to completely deal with the day's mail: open it, separate game orders from other correspondence, file the orders, make note of things to include in your letter column, record subscription money, take down new subscribers's addresses, send off postcards to answer questions, put a player on the waiting list for your next game, send out a few samples, and so on. If you have the time to do all this each evening, I suspect that your zine will be as smoothly-run as any ever have been--but you probably won't be able to do much with your spare time except run your zine.

So what sort of system do you use to deal with your mail on those days when you simply don't have time to fully respond to each piece of it? The tricky part is that most zine-related correspondence will contain many items--e.g., orders for a game or two, a letter for the letter column, a subscription cheque... What you need to avoid is accidentally overlooking one section or another because you have dealt with part of a letter (e.g., filed the orders and cashed the subscription cheque) and left the rest (typing up the letter for the letter column, and recording the additional subscription money) for later. Responding to mail in a piece-meal fashion like this leaves you very prone to overlooking one part or another, so you need to open your mail in a fashion which will help you respond to every part of a letter.

One acceptable method is simply to leave each envelope unopened until you have time to respond to it properly. Although this will help prevent a hurried mistake, its big drawback is the delay between the time you receive the letter and the time you open it. For example, suppose you receive a letter from a player on the Monday two weeks before your deadline. Since you have a busy week, you set aside the envelope until the weekend--but upon opening it, you find that it's not, as you supposed, the player's orders, but rather a question about how you will rule on a tricky situation in the game. Since your ruling will have an impact on his orders, he'd like you to respond right away--but your delay means he won't receive your reply in time to send the proper orders. The point of this rather tedious example is, of course, that you should make a conscientious effort to at least open each piece of zine-related mail within a day or so of its receipt and skim it for any urgent requests which need answering at the earliest opportunity.

After opening and skimming the mail for urgent requests, I find it most convenient to simply put those letters with which I don't have time deal right then back in their envelopes and then put the envelopes in my in-box (which is actually just a file folder), which I reserve for all un-dealt-with mail. I find that keeping such mail in its envelopes ensures that I don't inadvertently forget some part of a player's correspondence because I

filed the letter before looking at all of it. I also have the envelope's return address in case a new subscriber forgets to write their address on their letter.

As a last tip, it's a good idea to record on each piece of mail the date on which you received it. This will come in handy when you have two undated sets of orders from a player, and have no other method by which to select which one to adjudicate with.

READING AND RESPONDING TO MAIL

Easy enough, you're probably thinking, and you're right. The easily-overlooked point here, though, is that when reading your zine-related mail, you should take the time to thoroughly scan all the pages, front and back, as well as the back of the envelope. Unfortunately, not all players take the time to put orders on separate sheets of paper from other correspondence, so before you file those game orders, make sure there isn't a question or request somewhere else on the paper.

When reading and responding to your mail, the key is to make sure that you take some immediate action appropriate to each item in each letter. For game orders, it would be filing it in the appropriate game folder. For a letter, it will be either typing it up, or putting the letter in your letter column file, or writing a note to remind yourself to include the letter in the letter column. For a rules question, it could be either sending a postcard to the questioner, or typing up an answer to the question for inclusion in your zine, or both. The point is, again, that you want to avoid taking care of just part of a player's mail and thus overlooking some other item in their correspondence which needs attention.

A big help in effectively dealing with your mail is a good filing system, which will give you a quick and organized manner to take care of most mail (i.e., you put the sheet in the appropriate file folder). At the very least, you should have separate file folders in which you'll put the orders for each game you're running. I've already mentioned a folder in which to put letters intended for your letter column. Additionally, you may find it handy to have separate folders for any or all of the following: game orders from past seasons (i.e., a way to get them out of the way of this season's orders); articles intended for your zine; inquiries from new potential subscribers; offers to trade with or mutually sub to another zine; and so on. You can doubtless come up with many of your own, but the point remains the same: a filing system with which you are comfortable is invaluable in administering a publishing operation.

LISTS

No, I'm not speaking here of subscription or waiting lists, but lists of things you have to do. If you're not in the habit of keeping to-do lists, you'll probably find that getting into the habit will be a tremendous help in administering your zine. I've already touched on why: each of the different items you will receive from players, subscribers, and potential subscribers should prompt some sort of action on your part, be it adding a person's name to your subscription list, mailing out a copy of your houserules or a sample of your zine, putting part of a letter in your letter column, or scribbling a note to the subscriber on their copy of the next issue of the zine. Given that you will not always have time to take care of each of the necessary actions when you read and file a letter (or, for things like scribbling a note on someone's next issue, you can't complete the action at the time), to-do lists are almost indispensable to ensure that you take care of all (or nearly all) of the tasks you ought in administering your publishing. You may find it valuable to use any or all of the following sorts of lists:

-- Zine List, of items which you intend to put into the next issue of your zine. These include items you plan to produce yourself (e.g., "finish article on Turkish anti-English opening", or "plug Joe's zine"), but will be even more handy for things originating with subscribers,

including answers to questions of general interest ("answer Joe's question about ambiguous convoy routes"), letters, or parts of letters, for your letter column ("Joe's paragraph about XYZ"), as well as complete submissions themselves ("type up Joe's article").

-- Notes List, of things you want to communicate privately to subscribers (e.g., "Tell Joe I won't accept his bribe") by scribbling a note on their copy of the zine itself or by including a letter when you mail it out. For me, this list does not include letters I'm planning to send to a subscriber separately from the zine; I find a single, focused list more convenient when trying to ready all the copies for mailing.

-- General To-Do List, a catch-all for all the other small tasks which need doing (e.g., "record $5.00 sub credit for Joe", "get preference list from Joe").

The mechanics of to-do lists are trivial; simply record each task as you think of it or are responding to your mail, and cross it off when you've accomplished it. I find that my lists function best when I recopy them periodically (generally each issue) to keep focused on what I do or don't have to do for the upcoming issue.

SUBSCRIPTION LISTS

No big deal here, recording names, addresses and subscription credit, right? Right--but then we may as well repeat a little good advice. You should take great pains to add new subscribers to your list as they come in. This is especially true during your first few issues, as you will never again have as thick an influx of new subscribers. (After the first few issues, new subscribers tend to trickle in.) This is one situation where keeping the letter in the opened envelope until you've dealt with its contents really pays off, as you'll occasionally receive a subscription from someone who forgets to include their address in the letter proper-- which makes the envelope's return address extremely handy...

In addition to the name, address, and subscription credit, I find it extremely handy to record on my sub list which games (if any) each subscriber is playing in, whether or not a particular subscriber has requested NMR insurance (i.e., that I call them if I do not have orders from them come deadline day), and the subscriber's phone number (if I know it). The record that a certain player is playing in game XYZ comes in particularly handy whenever I want to send out a flyer to just the players in that game, as I need only make a quick scan of the list looking for the appropriate notation. (If you are keeping your subscription list on index cards or some such, I suspect you will want to maintain a separate list for each game you're running for this purpose, listing the players and their addresses. In such case, still keep track on the index cards of which games each subscriber is playing in, so you can cross-index and change the game list whenever a player changes address.)

If for one reason or another you can't quite get at your subscription list while you are dealing with your mail (you keep the list on a computer, say, and you don't have time to boot it), record all of the subscription list info on your to-do list; it beats having to search for the letter later.

WAITING LISTS

You should keep a separate waiting list of players for each type of game for which you have openings, even if you choose not to publicize such a list. On each list, record the following information for each person: 1) whether they have sent in the game or NMR fees for the game; 2) the player's country preference list (or any other gamestart information you need for the particular game); 3) the player's city of residence. Keeping track of each player's city will help you avoid putting two "local" players in the same game, without having to look up each player's address individually in your sub list. If a player forgets to send in a game fee or preference list, write them as soon as possible reminding them to send you the missing information. (Don't forget--put it on your to-do list if you can't write the note just then...)

Even if you don't currently have any game openings, you should still keep a waiting list of people who write you in search of a game. As often as not, a potential subscriber writing you for a sample will be someone looking for a game opening. Keeping track of such people who are looking for games will help you more easily fill your next game opening.

PAYMENTS

When you get a subscription cheque, there are two conflicting tendencies. On the one hand, you should try to cash it relatively quickly as a courtesy to the subscriber--but you shouldn't do so before you've recording the subscription credit on your sub list. You also don't want to inadvertently credit someone twice for the same cheque, because you forgot whether or not you'd already added in the new amount. You can easily combat this by having a separate place for your to-be-cashed subscription cheques. Subscription credit then simply becomes a matter of _not_ putting a cheque in your to-be-cashed envelope (or whatever) until you've recorded the amount on your sub list.

REQUESTS FOR SAMPLES

Requests for samples of your zine will likely trickle in at a steady but unspectacular rate. Sending out a copy of your zine to respond to an individual sample request is merely a matter of applying the principles already explained above. In the long run, however, you want to avoid both failing to send out a sample to a possible new subscriber and mistakenly sending out two samples to the same person. Unnecessary samples are an expense you don't need, and in any event neither mistake is likely to, impress a potential subscriber, making you look disorganized (conscious, maybe, but still disorganized).

Thus, it's helpful to keep a list of all sample requests which you receive. On it, record each requester's name and address, the date on which you sent out the sample, and the issue number which you sent out as a sample. This will serve two purposes. Firstly, it will help assure that you respond to all requests for samples and that you don't mistakenly sending someone a second sample. Secondly, it will also give you a list of interested people whenever you decide to try to recruit some new subscribers by printing some extra copies and sending out another batch of samples.

Whenever you send out a sample, it's a good idea to include some note to the potential subscriber, explaining a little bit about your zine. Ideally, you should write a short, personal note to each requester, but that's rather time-consuming. As an alternative, then, you can write up a general welcome-to-the-zine insert letter which you can mail along with the samples. In this case, you should still try to update the letter every few months, as it's very easy for it to get out of date (especially if, e.g., you want to describe what your letter column's been talking about). _Don't_ make a whole stack of copies of this letter, as the letter will probably be out of date before you get through all the copies; requests for samples do tend to trickle in, and it's easy enough to make a few additional copies of your insert letter as you need them.

AND THAT'S THAT

...which should, I hope, give you some beginning directions for organizing and administering your publishing and gamesmastering. I hasten to add that there is nothing sacred about any of the above advice. There are any number of ways by which you can accomplish the same ends. The important thing is that you think through your alternatives a bit and come up with some system with which you feel comfortable and which permits you to accomplish everything you need to as a publisher. Best of luck in your experimentation.

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You Can Fake Being a Publisher!

by Gary L. Coughlan

If you don't wish to jump feet first into becoming a full-fledged publisher and have everything hit you at once, in full view of the hobby, there are a few alternatives by which you can get your publishing feet wet relatively inexpensively and without binding and permanent commitments.

One way is just to take any zine, the shorter the better, and simply sit down on a nice, sunny Saturday and re-type it on your own typewriter. This "Saturday experiment" allows you to see how long it actually takes to type up any zine. But this exercise doesn't include the additional time that it took the real publisher of the zine to collect and coordinate all the information that composes this finished product. Nor does it bring home to you that you will be repeating this "Saturday experiment" every four or five weeks for as long as you publish a zine.

A second way to find out more fully how much time and effort publishing a zine entails is to do your own subzine in someone else's zine. Here, you have to adjudicate your own games, keep track of your players' addresses (and make sure all the other players are kept informed of changes), type up your subzine, and mail the finished product in time for it to be published in the parent zine.

However, a subzine, by its very nature, is smaller than even the smallest of zines ((usually)), so doing a subzine still will not give you an accurate reflection of just how much work would be involved in doing a full-fledged zine, not to mention the cost of getting a zine published. A subzine editor merely sends every issue of his subzine to the publisher and that is the end of his duties. Not so the publisher of a zine.

A third way to see just what a publisher goes through on all fronts (timewise and financially) is the method that I used before I became a publisher -- I faked existing zines. One zine I faked was a 12-pager (6 sheets front and back), and the second one was 24 pages, and I learned much from faking each zine.

By deciding to fake an existing zine, I had to adhere to its announced deadline so that my fake issue could reach the subscribers before the real zine did (it being part of the fake fun to see whether the subscribers could be fooled). But this step was the last of many things I had to accomplish within a short period of time.

Let's assume that the 24-page or 12-page issue has already been typed up, a time-consuming job in itself which in the case of a real zine must be done every four or five weeks, come rain or come shine, on holidays, whether or not you feel like it, month in and month out. Now it must be taken to a printer.

I owned a xerox machine and did my own copies. A 12-pager for 100 people was equal to 6 sheets per subscriber or 600 sheets. It took me all of one night and until the wee hours of the morning to get the 12-pager run off, and three days to run off the 24-pager. I could only endure to do this myself for the first two issues of my own real zine and then turned to a professional printer, the method used by most publishers.

And if you intend to do a digest-sized zine, you must deal with a printer. Printers usually charge by the page, 5¢ or 9¢ or whatever. Check out the costs in your city and see how much you will be spending every four or five weeks if you decide to become a publisher.

So now you've got the 100 copies back from the printer -- they must be addressed. Will you do this yourself, by hand, or will you invest in address labels that you can type up in advance while the zine is at the printers? Both methods are time-consuming and both involve keeping track of constantly changing addresses, both of players and of other subbers. Doing a fake is good hands-on experience in this never-ending task.

Now you have addressed the 100 copies -- they must have the correct postage put on them. All first-class mail under one ounce costs 22¢ per item. ((Editor's Note: The prices quoted in this paragraph are current as of 1986, but naturally will be changing. You should check with your post office for current rates.)) Over one ounce (which is anything larger than a 12-page open-page format or a 24-page digest format) is 39¢ to addresses within the U.S. but 40¢ to your Canadian subbers. So, currently ((1986)) the postage costs for 100 copies sent to 90 Americans and 10 Canadians for a 12-pager would be $22.00. ((Editor's Note: Wrong. Canadians' copies must go in envelopes, which pushes a 12-page issue into the next weight class. The correct figure would be $23.80.)) Doing a fake brings home the cost of publishing a zine to you and your pocketbook.

Then you mail your fake issue at the Post Office, an issue on which you have lavished both time and money, an issue you have done completely by yourself, addressing it and putting postage on each and every copy; and you are through, completely finished. You now know exactly what it is like to be a full-fledged publisher, but without taking a publisher's multiple responsibilities onto your own shoulders.

After all, the publisher has to come back and do it all again every four or five weeks for the princely sum of, on the average, 50 or 60¢ from each subscriber, a cost which doesn't even provide half of his expenses.

The decision to become a publisher is yours to make. I have never regretted mine.

((The picture Gary paints, "You now know exactly what it is like to be a full-fledged publisher...", is just a bit too optimistic. Having faked a zine, you still don't have to worry about letters of praise and/or criticism for your next issue, or correcting adjudication errors, or sending samples or keeping sub records, or a myriad of other things.

That aside, though, I agree with Gary's obvious sentiment that faking is perhaps the best way to "try out" publishing before committing yourself. Fakes are a time-honored tradition in the Diplomacy hobby, and many hobbyists enjoy a good hoax.

One item Gary neglected to mention is that, if you want to do a convincing fake, you'll have to arrange to get the thing mailed from the publisher's home city so it has the correct postmark. I would be happy to try and help you arrange a correct postmark if you're planning a fake and don't know who to contact -- I know lots of people who would be more than happy to forward a fake. Or, you can do as I did when I faked Diplomacy World -- drive down to the proper location and mail it yourself... but that's a whole 'nother article!))

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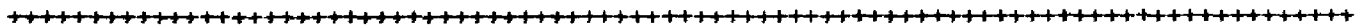
CHAPTER 2

PHILOSOPHIES OF PUBLISHING

A Publishing Philosophy

by Doug Beyerlein

The publisher is king in the world of postal Diplomacy. He runs his zine on his schedule, sets his own subscription rates, and writes his own houserules. Sounds like a good life, doesn't it? Add to the above the fact that the zine is an excellent place to conduct a discussion of one's own pet ideas and beliefs (where the publisher/editor always has the last word). Top it all off with the feeling of power in seeing one's name in print in one's own and other zines (publishers have high visibility) and it is no wonder that every year many novices give publishing a try.

Unfortunately the life of a postal Diplomacy publisher is not as glamorous as it seems. Publishing a zine takes time and money. Games must be adjudicated shortly after the deadline. The zine (2-10 pages per issue, or more) must be typed. Usually each issue includes a letter column exchanging ideas or an article or two written by the publisher to entertain his readers. After the masters are typed the printing, collating, addressing and mailing all must be completed in quick fashion to get the zine out to the players in plenty of time before the next deadline. From start to finish this entire process can last anywhere from a day to a weekend to a week. Now repeat the process every three weeks or once a month for a minimum of two years -- the length of time to gamesmaster a postal Diplomacy game from start to finish. The novelty quickly wears thin and the issue-to-issue drudgery and hard work of publishing a postal Diplomacy zine become increasingly apparent.

But what about the financial rewards? You have got to be kidding. They don't exist. It is rare when a publisher's expenses (printing equipment, paper, postage, etc.) are exceeded by his income from game fees and subscriptions. In fact, most publishers could double their fees and still not make any money from publishing a postal Diplomacy zine. And that does not even take into account all of the publisher's donated labor hours.

It is a depressing fact that most new publishers only come to realize the time and money commitment of publishing after they have started half a dozen new games. Then as the glamour of publishing fades so does their interest. When the fun ends the zine ends. The publisher is left with guilty feelings (which is why he never tells anyone that the zine is folding) and someone's subscription money, but neither lasts long. Soon the publisher (now ex-publisher) is on to try another new experience in life. His zine, players, and games are all behind him now.

That is the problem. When a publisher vanishes from the scene the players lose. It has been that way since the start of the hobby and it is going to continue to be that way as long as postal Diplomacy is an amateur hobby. The only one who makes money from this hobby is the USPS.

Now what can we, as players, do to protect ourselves against drop-out publishers? As a postal Diplomacy player since 1966, I have developed some guidelines that have helped protect me.

1. See a sample first. Always ask for a sample copy of a zine from its publisher before sending any money. Also ask for a copy of the houserules. (Send the publisher a couple of stamps with your request to help defray his postage costs.) Read the zine and houserules carefully and check the gamesmastering. Do you like what you see?

2. Subscribe before playing. Find out whether the publisher stays on schedule or is erratic. Continue to evaluate his gamesmastering and maybe even volunteer to be a standby before signing up for a new game.

3. Once you are in a game keep track of deadlines. If the zine is overdue write or phone the publisher/gamesmaster. Contact the other players. Try to find out what is happening. If the zine is late by a month or more and the publisher is not answering your inquiries satisfactorily, get together with the other players and find a new home for your game. Various people in the hobby offer orphan games services. Give them enough game details so that they can find a new home for your game. If they don't move with satisfactory speed contact a friendly publisher you know and ask him to take over the game.

By following these guidelines a player can do much to minimize problems with publishers. But that is only half of the battle. The other half is how can novices avoid publishing pitfalls?

The easiest way to avoid the pitfalls of publishing is not to publish. Don't get started unless you know you have the time and money not only to get started but also to keep going for at least the next three years. Because of the need to make this multi-year commitment I strongly advise anyone in high school or college not to start a zine.

If you start a zine don't gamesmaster any games for at least the first twelve issues. That might sound silly, but if you find that publishing is not as much fun as you thought it is easier to fold a zine without games than one with them. In addition, fewer people will be upset. Twelve issues seems to be the breaking point for many zines. It represents about a year of publishing. If a publisher can get through that first year with some enthusiasm for publishing still intact then he has a good chance of lasting many years. But many zines never make it to their first birthday.

Gamesmaster orphan games. Anyone can start a new game, but how many publishers gamesmaster them to completion? Not enough. Take civic responsibility in your hobby and complete what others started. The players will thank you for it.

My last piece of advice to novice publishers is to publish less. If you feel capable of publishing a ten-page zine every three weeks, publish only six pages instead. In other words, pace yourself. I have a theory that the number of pages a publisher will publish in his postal Diplomacy career is constant (that is, a fixed number). For someone like John Boardman it may be a million pages, but for someone like Doug Beyerlein it may be only 100. You can blow it all in two issues or ten issues. Or you can stretch it out over 50 issues, or 100, or 500. Your readers will be a lot happier to see your small zine come out regularly over the next five years than to be overwhelmed with first size and then silence.

I have developed most of the ideas presented in this article the hard way. I started a zine while in high school and it lasted one year. Today (12 years later) I publish a one-page zine that runs only orphan games. It has been going strong since 1974. I know how much I can handle. Do you?

((I have but one relatively minor problem with the above advice. Doug is correct to urge moderation and thoughtful, deliberate planning; but it's overdoing things to recommend waiting twelve issues to open your first game. For some people, three or four issues would be sufficient. Others open their zines expressly for the purpose of running games. Still others (perhaps the smartest of all) take up guest GMing before plunging into publishing -- see Jeff Richmond's article on that topic. Not many of the most successful zines going today waited twelve issues before opening any games.))

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Them Thar Little Thingies Wot We Publish...

by Bruce Linsey

It's hardly surprising that there exist so many different views on how to run our hobby publications. After all, in over twenty years of postal Diplomacy, we've yet to arrive at a clear consensus either on how to pronounce them or how to spell them, let alone how to publish them!

The matter of pronunciation is somewhat the clearer of the two burning issues at hand. Most people say "zine" to rhyme with "seen"; this makes sense because the word does, after all, derive from "magazine". But the alternative pronunciation is not without its loyal devotees. I've heard people call it "zine" (to rhyme with "line") from Flushing, New York to Port Hardy, British Columbia; from Ottawa, Ontario to Oberlin, Ohio. Perhaps someday, some hobbyist with an interest in linguistics (y'all

listenin', Gary?) should do an etymological study to ascertain the (pre-?) historical origins of this abberation.

The matter of spelling is not so readily resolved. The most common way is _zine_, of course, but especially among hobby old farts '_zine_ is prevalent. This seems to me rather a stuffy attempt to overlay the technically correct but awkwardly anachronistic across the contemporarily comfortable; after all, who still writes '_phone_ instead of _phone_?

But '_zine_ is merely the tip of an iceberg in an ocean full of deviant spellings of the word _zine_. Other abuses have made the trans-continental journey as well: _szine_ has struck down writers in both Providence, Rhode Island and Seattle, Washington. Similarly _xyn_, a mutation first observed in Endwell, New York, appears to have recently infected a well-known publisher in San Diego, California too. (Such are the hidden liabilities of the Jet Age...) On the other hand, _zinny_ has flourished for years in Wichita, Kansas without appearing to have spread, whilst _zeen_ seems similarly content to fester only in Rockville, Maryland. I suggest, then, that the prognosis may not be as dismal as it first appears; some of the infections, at least, seem to be strictly and permanently localized.

And I hope I'm right in that last observation. For it would indeed be a tragedy if the Diplomacy hobby were to experience its own special equivalent of the Tower of Babel, with writers everywhere babbling everything from '_zine_ to _xyn_ to _zeen_...

But then again, the hobby is noted for nothing if not its tenacity. Certainly we would ultimately come to grips with the problem and arrive at a compromise solution satisfactory to the proponents of all these various perversions: the leading apostrophe, the silent "s", the double "e", the trailing "y", and even the utterly incomprehensible "xy". When this occurs, we will have a new and universally accepted word for them thar little thingies wot we publish:

'SZXYEENNY.

Er, on second thought, let's all work at once to crush each and every one of these mutations.

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The Zine: Past, Present, and Future?
by Doug Beyerlein

In the beginning (1963) there was the zine. It was named _Graustark_. And it was good. It contained one postal Diplomacy game, the press, and the thoughts of John Boardman (its editor and publisher). More importantly, _Graustark_ set the style for zines then and now.

Graustark set the style, but as always fashions change. _Wild 'n Wooly_ (Charles G. Brannan aka Steve Cartier) introduced the idea of the multiple game zine in 1965. Prior to _Wild 'n Wooly_, each gamesmaster started a new zine for each new game. _Wild 'n Wooly_ became the first warehouse zine.

The letter column was an early addition to the zine. It was a natural idea. All of the early postal Diplomacy players were science fiction fans and/or writers. They had opinions and comments and they knew how to express them. The letter column reached the peak of excellence in John McCallum's zine, _Brobdingnag_. John and his readers discussed everything involved with the game from houserules to rating systems.

The origins of the Diplomacy article followed from these extensive letter column discussions. Early in the days of the hobby the players all knew each other and there was no need for the formal article. As new players came into the hobby and the hobby grew so did the need for articles on the play of the game. The first articles were the basic "How I Won the War Playing _____" written by the multiple game winners of that era.

By 1970 enough of these articles had been written to form a nucleus of reprintable material. Walt Buchanan started a zine about this time to keep track of and solicit additional issues of zines for his collection, the Hoosier Archives. He named his zine after his collection. Walt began to reprint old articles in HA and was soon soliciting new articles from the top players and writers of the day. HA became an overnight success story. And as imitation is the most sincere form of flattery, soon almost every zine was soliciting articles from its readers. This is just as true today as it was ten years ago.

Today the average zine in the hobby looks much like it did ten years ago. The reproduction may be a little fancier and the subscription price higher, but the contents have not changed. Except for a few specialty zines (_Diplomacy World_, _Diplomacy Digest_, and some house organization zines), today every zine contains games, press letters to the editor, an occasional article, and miscellaneous editorial ramblings. This isn't necessarily bad, but at the same time such uniformity isn't particularly good.

The average zine can be made better. Look at the top zines in the hobby. What makes them the best? It is not their games (although good gamesmastering always

helps); it is never the press; there are limits to how much an editor can squeeze from a letter column; and interesting, well-written articles are too few and far between to carry most zines. The answer?

It is the ramblings by the editor/publisher of the zine that make an average zine good and a good zine great. It doesn't make any difference whether the editor writes about the latest happenings in the hobby, which team is going to win the World Series, or his cat. If what he writes is well-written it will make the zine stand out among its peers.

When it comes down to what to write about, the secret is to write about what you know best. There is no reason why it has to be about Diplomacy. In fact, Diplomacy and the hobby tend to become rather repetitive subjects after a while. Far more interesting are events and topics closer to home whether they be the happenings in the dorm last weekend or the latest science fiction book read. These are the items of interest that catch and keep the reader's eye. At the same time these items make the zine more fun and less of a chore for the editor to grind out issue after issue. Everyone wins.

The zine of the future can be different from the zine of the past and present. Fewer games, less press, and less emphasis on the formal article are the key. Bigger isn't better or more fun. Personal comments and observations make the better zine. And that is the zine to which I will subscribe.

((I don't agree with Doug's conclusion. My preference is for zines with good letter columns and articles, but this merely serves to amplify the importance of diversity in the hobby. Each reader is different...

On the other hand, I concur entirely with Doug's observation that a well-written zine will stand out like a golden statue among its peers.))

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A Publishing Survey

by Mark L. Berch

((Editor's Note: Mark conducted this survey in late 1982, and published the results in January 1983. The answers underlined are the ones I would have given as of the time I published my final issue, and the commentary following a few of the answers is also mine, not Mark's. Almost all of the hobby's publishers responded to this, so the results are quite meaningful, though they'd likely be different today.))

1. After your startup period, have you, on occasion, sent out unsolicited samples for the purpose of increasing circulation? Yes-17, No-15.
2. If you received an offer from someone you thought to be reliable to run a subzine in your zine, would you be likely to accept? Yes-15, No-17. But I made exceptions in one or two special cases.
3. Are there people in the hobby you would not permit to sub to your zine? Yes-16, No-15. It's supposed to be for fun. If I can't have fun with XXX, then why should I have to deal with him?
4. Suppose halfway between issues 30 and 31 you receive a check from a new subber. Would you start his sub with 30 or 31? #30-9, #31-21. Assuming I had enough copies left over and I felt #30 was a good issue with which to initiate someone to my zine.
5. Would you consider your present circulation to be more than, less than, or about the same as, your preferred circulation? More-4, Less-9, Same-18. I'm using my circulation as of when I folded, but I was always eager to take on a few more hardy souls!
6. If you run a gamezine, and had room for an orphaned game, would you accept it? Yes-24, No-2, Depends-4. I have lots of respect for those who do, but it wasn't my niche...
7. Suppose it is the evening of the deadline, and all games have been adjudicated and the pages run off, and labels all prepared, etc. However, you have prepared absolutely nothing other than games and press. Because of the press of your personal life, you know it will be at least W days before you can put together a decent amount of "filler" -- other material. What is the largest value of W such that you would delay the zine rather than mailing it out the next morning (for example, if you'd delay the zine for 3 days but not for 4 days, then W = 3). Assume that the previous issue was of normal size. W=0 -- 14, W=1or2 -- 4, W=3or4 -- 2, W=5+ -- 4.
8. Do you pay in terms of sub extensions for original articles submitted by a subber? Yes-21, No-8.
9. Would you pay in terms of sub extensions for the right to publish the first results of a rating system? Yes-2, No-29.

10. Same as #9, but for a hobby poll? Yes-4, No-27. But I often called up the Runestone pollster for quick results so I could run them first.

11. If you had to fold, would you prefer to A) disband the zine, transferring any games to one or more pubbers, or B) transfer the entire zine, lock stock and barrel to another person to publish it? A-20, B-10. Mark forgot to mention the possibility of disbanding the zine, but running the games to conclusion yourself in another forum. That was my choice.

12. Do you expect to be publishing in two years? Yes-30, No-3. In some capacity.

13. Do you expect to be publishing in four years? Yes-20, No-9.

14. Will you honor a request for a sample of your zine if no SASE has been enclosed? Yes-28, No-2.

15. Suppose a subber, halfway through his sub, asks that his sub be discontinued and the remainder of his sub fee returned. No reason is given. Would you honor this request? Yes-27, No-2, Maybe-1.

16. Same as #15, but he explains that he's leaving the hobby. Yes-27, No-2, Maybe-1.

17. Do you address your zine by A)hand, B) typing directly on the envelope, or C) typed labels? A-15½, B-1½, C-15. It varied.

18. If a non-player's sub expires without renewal, will you send a grace issue? Yes-7, No-18, Maybe-6. Same here for a player.

19. Assuming you could print only one, which would you print (assume each is one page long and all are of equal writing quality)? A) a strategy and tactics article describing a country opening, B) a satire article, poking fun at someone in the hobby, C) an article on national politics, D) a movie review. A-12, B-11, C-4, D-4.

20. Suppose you received an article that was good enough to run, but only just barely. You feel that with a modest amount of effort it could be greatly improved. Would you A) run it as is, B) send it back to the author with suggestions for editing, C) edit it yourself, then get his approval before printing, or D) edit it yourself and then print it right away? A-12, B-5, C-7, D-6. Yup, I've done all four. It would depend on lots of factors: who wrote it, how long I had till deadline, how swamped I was at the moment, and so on.

21. Is your family's attitude toward your publishing A) very supportive, B) somewhat supportive, C) neutral, D) somewhat negative, or E) very negative? A-6, B-5, C-15, D-3, E-1.

22. Since you began publishing, would you say your writing skills have A) improved considerably, B) improved somewhat, C) been unchanged, or D) deteriorated? A-5, B-14, C-12, D-0.

23. Why isn't your average issue larger? A) Can't afford extra cost, B) Don't have enough time, C) Don't have enough additional material, D) Don't want a larger zine. A-12, B-17, C-10, D-10.

24. Would you say the number of games you have is: too few-1, too many-12, about right-17.

25. Do you keep a significant number of back issues in stock for sale, beyond the last three issues? Yes-15, No-18.

26. If someone, or his actions, are attacked in your zine, will he have a right of reply to the criticism? Automatically-28, Sometimes-4, Never-0.

27. If someone, or his actions, are criticized in your zine, but he is not a subber, will you send him a copy? Automatically-17, If he asks for it-9, Only if he pays for it-1. Alas, a number of publishers these days won't send it under any circumstances, let alone automatically.

28. Suppose you wanted to criticize an editorial stance taken by another pubber; however, the pubber said that he did not want his editorial reprinted in other zines (which of course would include yours). Would you A) reprint it anyhow, B) paraphrase it, or C) forget the whole thing? A-3, B-20, C-8.

29. Suppose one of your games is delayed for a season for reasons which are entirely yours. Assuming that you use the traditional game fee + sub fee system for players, will the players of that game get the issue for free? Yes-12, No-13.

30. If you put out an issue twice your normal size, will you count it and charge it as a "double" issue? Always-8, Sometimes-5, Never-17.

31. What means of reproduction do you normally use? Ditto-5, Mimeo-5, Xerox-14, Photo offset-8.

32. Suppose you received a letter for publication which contained an unsubstantiated allegation against someone else which you were quite sure was not true. Would you A) print it, B) print it, but add your own comment that you did not believe it was true, C) edit the allegation out of the letter, D) send the letter back, asking that the allegation be either substantiated or deleted, or E) not print the letter at all? A-2, B-11, C-3, D-4, E-6. Alas, at least half a dozen publishers these days would simply print it (and not necessarily allow a reply) if they happen to dislike the person accused. I'm hoping that the hobby's stance on this will eventually swing back to as it was in this survey.

33. Do you usually use envelopes to send the zine within the U.S.? Yes-12, No-19, Sometimes-1.

34. Do you think that the average zine you trade with is A) better than, B) worse than, C) about the same quality as your zine? A-10, B-14, C-5. When I was trading, that is.

35. Do you exchange zines with other pubbers A) mostly or entirely by trading, B) mostly or entirely by mutually subscribing, or C) significant amounts of each? A-17, B-7, C-8.

36. Have you ever participated in the production of a fake or hoax zine? Yes-16, No-16.

37. If you run non-black press games, would you permit someone to submit press if he were not in the game? Yes-3, No-11, Yes, but only clearly labeled as such-11. My policy was to let anyone who ever had played in that game submit press for it.

38. Suppose you were printing a long letter which made a number of different points which you wanted to respond to. Would you prefer to A) insert comments with (()), B) insert numbers into the text, keyed to the response below, C) insert nothing and put the entire response below? A-9, B-2, C-18.

For questions 39-47, A = strongly agree, B = moderately agree, C = neutral, D = moderately disagree, E = strongly disagree.

39. Fakes, as they have existed over the past few years, are good for the hobby. A-8, B-9, C-9, D-4, E-1.

40. I find typing to be enjoyable. A-2, B-11, C-8, D-5, E-7. But I'm a masochist.

41. I feel I am getting enough positive feedback from my readers. A-10, B-13, C-2, D-5, E-3.

42. It is proper for a publisher to make a profit on his zine. A-6, B-9, C-13, D-3, E-2. Proper, yes; practical, no!

43. Publishing a zine, and playing separately, tend to be separate and competing hobbies. A-13, B-9, C-4, D-5, E-2.

44. It's best to cram as much stuff as you can onto a page rather than leaving a lot of white space and wide margins. A-2, B-11, C-6, D-7, E-7.

45. I publish more for my benefit than for the benefit of my readers. A-5, B-6, C-10, D-8, E-3.

46. Most non-pubbers do not realize how much work it takes to put out a zine. A-13, B-11, C-3, D-3, E-2.

47. Reading a zine with reduced print reduces my enjoyment of the zine. A-3, B-8, C-2, D-7, E-13. Maybe it's a little harder to read, but I'm probably friends with the publisher and I like to see him save money.

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How Much of "Yourself" Should You Put into Your Zine?
by Mark L. Berch

The hobby's zines vary tremendously in their styles, which produces a lot of variety. One of the ways zines differ is what, and how much, of the editor himself is put into the zine.

How much of your own personality do you want to come through? For example, Don Horton, editor of Claw and Fang, took a fairly aloof position in his own zine. Except for his occasional travelogues, you seldom got a chance to see how he thought, how he viewed things. At the other extreme is a zine like Kathy's Korner/Whitestonia. There, Kathy Byrne's personality comes through very loud and clear in virtually every issue, and it makes an unmistakable imprint on the zine's character. There is no "right" or "wrong" approach here -- both of these zines have been highly successful. The personality which comes through may turn people on, or turn them away, or may be a matter of indifference to the readers. Note that I said, "personality which comes through". What your readers perceive when they read the zine may not be exactly what you intend! In addition, you may want to affect a "persona" which is not exactly what you are in real life. You may decide to come across as a hard-drinking party animal, for example, even though this may be somewhat of an exaggeration. Many publishers are more extraverted in their zines than they are in real life (me for instance). It's not unusual for a publisher to be a lot more scrappy in his zine than he is in person. Ultimately, the zine is your own creation, and you can come across any way you choose.

Another issue that arises in this regard is how much of your personal life to put into the zine. In my case, for example, it would be unusual for me to write twice about my personal life in one year. In other zines, such as Greatest Hits, such accounts are a regular staple, and one of the reasons that people get the zine. This must be done with care; one's personal life is usually much more interesting to oneself

than it is to others. If not handled well, you can come across as just plain self-centered. Sometimes, publishers will take an intermediate approach. If the editor's life is going through some crisis or period of transition, he may suddenly start writing about it. Or perhaps if an isolated, dramatic event occurs, that may be written up even if you don't normally discuss such things. Much depends on how varied your personal life is, how willing you are to expose your personal affairs, and whether you need to protect the privacy of those around you.

A third area where this issue has come up is in handling a letter column. Some editors tend to stay out of it. Most letters won't be responded to. What comments are made are usually short and supportive. In contrast, other editors will respond to almost every letter. Their comments are sometimes longer than the letter itself, and often challenge or disagree with the writer. Some editors actually prefer to run letters they don't agree with, as this gives them a springboard to present their own views.

The great majority of zines feature a mixture of the editor's writing, and that of others. The relative proportions of these, and how you come across in what you write, both depend on how much of "yourself" you want to put into the zine.

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Praise and Criticism

by Bruce Linsey

Once you become a publisher, you will be much more visible than you were previously. One product of this visibility is the feedback you'll suddenly be getting, both pro and con, to your publication and various aspects thereof. It is important that you be able to deal with both praise and criticism, and that you learn to channel both into a constructive effort to improve your zine.

Praise is, of course, easier to accept than criticism. Every human being appreciates a pat on the back for a job well done, and this is magnified in the case of most publishers, who have larger egos than the average person. If you're doing something well, keep doing it or use it as a building block to progress further in the same direction. To cite an example from my own experience, I once published a series of questions dealing with the treatment of confidential letters. The response to this was very good, so I knew I'd struck gold. The positive feedback received made me decide to continue this type of discussion in my zine, and thus my practice of running roundtables on live hobby issues (use of the phone, player ethics, GM interference) was born. (A few of these are reprinted here.)

A side question is how much of your positive feedback you ought to print. The answer is that it's a matter of personal taste. On the one hand, printing pat-on-the-back letters can get repetitive after a point, and even cause a bit of resentment among the troops. On the other, you've earned the right to a little self-indulgence, and so long as you keep up the good work that initially prompted all the compliments, your fans will recognize this.

Praise is fun, then. But criticism can be trickier to deal with. There are various forms of criticism, and you should know how to deal with them in a positive way.

Destructive criticism is that which attempts to tear down, to hurt rather than help. People who indulge in destructive criticism seem interested not in helping you to improve, but purely in making you painfully aware how bad they think you are. This can arise because the critic is simply an undiplomatic sort to begin with, or because he happened to be in a grouchy mood, or because he's been frustrated in his attempts to offer you constructive criticism. Whatever, the best answer to a destructive critic is along the lines of, "OK, I see I'm not pleasing you. Make a suggestion as to how I can improve." You accomplish two things by reacting this way. First, you put yourself on a high moral ground by not trying to tear him apart. If the exchange is or becomes public, you'll earn the lion's share of the sympathy this way; if not, you still have the moral satisfaction of having been nicer to the guy than he deserved -- a quality that will serve you well both in and out of the hobby. Secondly, a reaction of this nature will (if the guy's at all reasonable) steer the discussion into constructive avenues, whence might come better understanding, fewer hard feelings, and (gasp!) perhaps some actual improvement. If your critic is singlemindedly intent on tearing you down and does not respond in a more tempered manner next time, then you can politely but firmly dismiss his arguments from your mind and/or your letter column, telling him that you prefer not to debate the matter further. The trick here is to keep your cool and, even if the guy's comments are gutter-level, to stay as high above him as you can. Your self-image and your public image both depend in large part on how well you react to unjustifiably harsh criticism.

On the other hand, the person who criticizes you constructively is among your best friends. You should be honored that one of your subscribers cares enough about

you and/or your zine to try to help you improve it. The way to respond to constructive criticism is first through introspection (can his suggestions really help you improve?), then with a calm reply including a note of thanks for his interest. If the criticism is justified, you should indicate this in your reply and state how you intend to change. Say for example that one of your players (correctly) mentions an increased number of adjudication errors lately. You should thank him for pointing this out, and tell him (and your other players, if this is all being printed) that you'll attempt to take a bit more time with the games, or run a couple fewer games in the future, or whatever.

Not all constructive criticism is absolutely correct. Often, someone will just be making a suggestion based on different tastes or philosophies. For example, suppose you print letters in their entirety, and someone tells you that he'd rather see them divided up by topic. After thinking it over, you decide to continue your current procedure of running them whole. In a case such as this, you should politely tell the guy that you appreciate his comments, but as a matter of personal preference you intend to continue doing things as you're doing them now. If you're not sure of your ground, or if you want to see how others view things, ask for your readers' viewpoints. Not only do you get more valuable input by doing so, but you show your critic that his words are taken seriously.

Constructive criticism, well-handled, is a process by which all concerned parties gain. You and your critic gain insight into each other's thought processes, and (again, if it's a public discussion) your readers get a better glimpse of both viewpoints. Ultimately, at least some of your critics will raise valid points, and you are thus given the opportunity to improve your zine. What greater gift could a publisher ask for?

Open your ears and your mind to constructive criticism and always keep sight of the fact that no zine or GM is perfect. There is no finer way to gain respect in this hobby, no finer way to promote a free and beneficial exchange of thoughtful ideas and good will, than to write a paragraph that opens with the words, "Thank you for the constructive criticism...".

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When in Doubt, Specialize!

by Mark L. Berch

There are many paths to success in publishing. One of them is to adopt a specialty. The easiest place to do this is in the reading matter part of the zine.

Are you particularly interested in writing about, say, movies? Good. Say so in your first issue. Then, in every issue, write one or two essays on the subject. Movie reviews, film history, quizzes, whatever. Put some special care into these articles. You want material that will 1) attract those who have only a limited amount of interest in the topic, and 2) engage those already interested. Be patient, and keep at it. Eventually the word will get out, either via zine reviews or word-of-mouth, about what you are trying to do. Those particularly interested in the topic will tend to gravitate toward your zine. Before too long, you'll have a core of at least a half a dozen people who can be counted on to contribute fairly frequently to the discussion. Other people will chime in on an occasional basis, and you'll gain some subbers who just want to read about it but who seldom contribute. The inter-action between you and your readers will make the zine come alive. Your zine will have found its "niche" in the hobby.

Many zines have established such specialties. One famous example was The Brutus Bulletin. This had an open letter column, so that any topic could be discussed, but the "specialty of the house" was political affairs and social policy. The editor, John Michalski, was a real right-winger, and he expressed sharply-defined views on topics such as race-relations, the military, homosexuality, and the role of government. He did not attract only those with similar views, he attracted those who were willing to express and defend their own views, and criticize those they disagreed with. He facilitated this by publishing frequently, by commenting frequently on what people wrote in, by making it clear that everyone could have his (unedited) say, and by frequently raising fresh topics for discussion.

So what's your interest? Baseball? Science fiction? Card games? Rock and roll music? Revolting jokes? Booze? Cooking? Travel? Make it a theme of your zine. You don't even have to pick just one. War and Peace, for example, has both play-of-the-game essays and soccer as regular features.

Specialization can also be done in the games part as well. The easiest way is with variants, or well-known non-Dip games. But it can be done with the Diplomacy games themselves. You can run very short (2 or 3 week) or very long (6 week) deadlines. Only a minority of people will be interested in such games, but those

who are won't have many places to play -- and will need your zine to do it!
Alternatively, you could use an unusual style. Announce that your zine will not
use standbys at all. Or black press will be permitted. Or combine winter with
fall, rather than with spring (the way it's done in Great Britain). Or have a
houserule that winter is _always_ combined with spring -- games are speeded up with
no separations permitted. Run a game with substantial prize money going to the
winner. Call it a gimmick if you want, but it does give you an angle, an edge.
There are always people in the hobby looking for some variety, and your game with,
for example, F-W combos rather than W-S, may be just what they'd like. Even if your
gimmick only appeals to 5% of the hobby, if you're the only one running games like
that, once the word gets out, they will find their way to you.

    A specialty or two is one of the ways to give your zine character. My own zine
specializes in reprints and theme issues, and that shapes the essence of what the
zine is. It's not a guarantee for success. But it will let your zine stand out,
and it can help build a very loyal following.

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How to Survive Postal Diplomacy
by Doug Beyerlein

    The idea of an article on how to survive postal Diplomacy may at first sound
rather strange. But look around you. How many of your postal opponents, allies,
publishers, GMs, and friends have left the hobby? How many of the people who entered
the hobby when you did have since left, or suffered postal death (Edi Birsan's term
for dropping out)? If you have been around the hobby as long as I have (since 1966)
you have seen a lot of friends come and go. The purpose of this article is to help
keep you from becoming one of the unfortunate statistics.

    I don't have actual numbers, but I estimate that the half-life of a postal
Diplomacy player is three years. That means that one half of the postal players
who entered the hobby in 1980 will drop out by 1983. Of those remaining, one half
will disappear by 1986, leaving only 25% of those novices who entered in 1980. You
can see by this high turnover rate that to stick around in this hobby more than five
years is quite an accomplishment. I can count on one hand the number of active
participants from my era who are still going strong. Why is this the case?

    The postal Diplomacy hobby has a high turnover rate because postal Diplomacy is
an intense activity. Players, publishers, and GMs over-commit themselves and burn
out. Players join three, four, or more games at one time, and many will play in 20
or more at one time (Ron Kelly was at one time playing in over 100 games simul-
taneously). Publishers type, edit, run off, collate, and mail 10-20 pages of material
every issue every month. And GMs start multiple games at one time and run ten or
more at once. The hobby is addicting; more is better. The more one does, the greater
the pleasure (to a point). But what starts off as pleasurable slowly turns into a
pain. When overloaded, the participant suffers postal death and drops out. This
is not the exception, this is the rule. It is a rule we have all seen far too many
times. But does it have to be this way?

    No. If you identify the symptoms before overload occurs, you can get the problem
before it gets you. The symptoms vary with the participant, but there are some
general things to look for. Ask yourself: (1) Do you have the desire to spend more
time with postal activities than you are already spending? (2) Do you prefer the
involvement with postal Diplomacy activities over person-to-person activities?
(3) Is every weekend and most evenings devoted to your Dippy activities? If you
answer yes to any of these three questions, then you are a prime candidate for
overload and postal death. It is only a matter of when.

    Even if you think that you can handle a hobby involvement that borders on
overload, there are side effects to consider. Man does not live by bread alone.
Nor can he make interaction with the mailbox and typewriter substitute for real
human contact. The dynamics of the game of Diplomacy do not teach the necessary
social skills for truly personal interaction with others. It is true that friendships
are made in the hobby which transcend game level interactions, but it is rare that
these friendships continue once one has left the hobby.

    Similarly, overinvolvement in the hobby can have a distancing effect on those
who are close to you, but do not share your interest in Diplomacy. In more than one
case an overcommitment to Diplomacy has been a contributing factor in a break-up of
a marriage. This is nothing to take lightly.

    What is the answer? First, assess your situation. Are you spending more time on
Diplomacy than you should or would like to be spending? If you are not sure, then
ask someone close to you for his or her opinion. Listen carefully and be honest with
yourself. If you decide that you are overinvolved in the hobby, then decide which

activity (playing, publishing, or GMing) you enjoy most. Cut back on the things that are of lesser importance. Try to limit your involvement in the hobby to less than your capacity. Go for quality, not quantity. Does this plan work? Yes. It is the only way I have managed to survive 14 years in this hobby as a player, publisher, and gamesmaster while going through high school and college, getting a job, getting married, and becoming a bicycle racer. Learn from experience. I have.

((Sadly, Doug finally left the hobby after 18 years of exemplary participation as one of its most successful players and an outstanding career as a GM/publisher. The hobby award for longevity as an outstanding GM is now, fittingly, called the Doug Beyerlein Award.))

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CHAPTER 3

LITERATURE AND THE DIPLOMACY ZINE

How to Get People to Write for Your Zine

by Bruce Linsey

Elsewhere in this handbook, you'll read advice to start small. This is wise advice, and I urge you to take it. But at some point, you may decide that you want to expand, to include more reading material in your zine. Some of this you will of course write yourself, but no large-scale publication can thrive without a stable of outside contributors. How can you attract writers to submit their articles to you? I offer the following hints.

1. Build a large circulation. Only one hobbyist out of every several seems inclined to actually sit down and write for zines, so if you have 100 readers, your odds are better than those of a publisher who has 50. Also, people generally like to know that their writing is going to be widely read.

2. Become known as an "article zine". Ever hear the old saw that the rich get richer? Well, a zine that runs articles tends to receive more. Dave Kleiman's The Diplomat is a fine zine, but because of the emphasis on games only, it receives few if any articles. On the other hand, Gary Coughlan of Europa Express stresses lots of good reading material...and as a result the zine repeatedly generates more.

3. Pay well for articles, and advertise the fact! In Voice of Doom, I would invariably follow a written contribution with a statement to the effect of "thanks, Joe, and six free issues for the above article." I'm sure that got old for some readers, and I certainly took a lot of ribbing for doing it. But I'll tell you what: the steady stream of articles that flowed into my mailbox while I was publishing made it all worthwhile.

4. Print articles promptly. Writers don't like to wait...and wait...and wait to see their work in print. If you must delay running someone's article, write him and explain why.

5. Appeal to a broad spectrum of readers by covering a wide range of topics. There are many subjects to be written about even within the scope of the Diplomacy hobby -- cons, polls, strategy and tactics, humor, and so on. If you don't stick exclusively to Diplomacy-related items (and most editors don't), the variety can be endless -- music, movies, books, sports, other games, food, you name it. Randolph Smyth's Fol Si Fie has often been a source of great reading...if you happen to enjoy articles on how to negotiate. But the highest degree of reader participation is found in those zines whose editors encourage and print articles on a wide range of subjects.

6. Present these articles well. If possible, start each contributed article on the top of a new page, with the title and the name of the author prominently displayed. Retype submitted articles carefully -- no author likes to see his writing butchered by typos or otherwise faulty transcription. I remember one occasion on which I omitted a dateline for an article submitted by the hobby's premier writer, Chuff Afflerbach. Luckily for me and my readers, Chuff is good-natured and after properly chastising me came right back and submitted more marvelous prose for the zine. But that little mistake could have cost me. Editing for grammar is fine, but don't change the fundamental content without the author's permission -- you can always debate his points in your reply afterwards.

7. Lay a few foundations of your own. The articles in Voice of Doom didn't all just pop in out of thin air. Many of them were generated as the result of writing contests or round-table discussions. An example of the former is a game situation set up carefully by the publisher, who then asks his readers to "explain why you stabbed me" or "persuade me to let you live", with the most persuasive (or entertaining) essays awarded prizes. Round-table discussions are always thought-provoking too. A series of questions is posed, grouped around a central theme (e.g. treatment of confidential correspondence, use of the phone, player ethics, etc.). The best questions, of course, are those dealing with borderline situations -- these will draw a variety of different answers from the readers. Believe me, the responses will come in! (You've provided the readers with a topic, and so have helped them get started.) Warning: discussions like this can go on for many pages!

8. Above all, remember that anyone who writes an article for your publication has done you a special favor. Let him -- and if the article is published, the rest of the world -- know how very much you appreciate his efforts. Even if you can't use an article either as is or with some editing, be diplomatic in rejecting it (and a good editor will reject subpar or unsuitable material rather than run it). That guy may write again for you someday if he knows that his first attempt was deeply appreciated. Otherwise, he'll take his business elsewhere.

An example from my own experience will illustrate this. In my early publishing days, I ran a poorly-written article by one of my readers. Following that, I thanked him publicly for "this piece of mindless baloney" -- jokingly, I thought. A couple of months later, a much better article by the same person appeared elsewhere with a note that it had originally been written for Voice of Doom. No explanation was given, but to me, none was needed. Guess who never wrote again for my zine -- and guess what mistake I never made again!

This is just a bare sketch of those points I consider most important in getting people to write for your zine. Good luck -- I hope they work for you.

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How to Reject an Article Without Starting a Feud with the Poor Sap

by Mark L. Berch

It is not a secret, but more like a little-known fact, that pubbers do reject articles. Pubbers in this position have some need for a way to break this gently. Here are two suggested letters:

Dear Reginald,
Your article on the French opening was far and away the best article on openings that I have ever seen. If I were to publish it, I'm certain it would revolutionize the way France is played. Although, as you point out, the opening has occasionally been used, the arguments that you marshall for it are so powerful that I'm sure at least 2/3 of the French players will want to use it. This will cause the play of France, and thus the entire game, to become very stereotyped. It will also cause great problems for GMs who rely on country preference lists, since France will suddenly be in great demand, and England, Germany, and Italy will plunge to the bottom of the list. Unscrupulous GMs may resort to asking a higher game fee for those playing France. I'm sure you can easily imagine other problems which may arise. As much as I'd like to run your article, I cannot take the substantial risk of destroying the game and thus the entire hobby by printing it. I hope you'll understand.
                                        Prudently yours,

P.S. Please sign me up for France in your next game opening.

Obviously, that P.S. is an optional feature. The next form letter would be of a more general nature; you could use it for any type of article.

Dear Chastity-Diligence,
I was enthralled with your recent article. It is by far the best article I've ever seen, inside or outside the hobby. I would be delighted and honored to publish it. However, if I were to do so, it would be quite impossible for me ever to publish another article of inferior quality. Alas, articles of this stature appear only once every ten years at best. Through no fault of your own, however, it is not possible to publish a dipzine with a publication schedule of once every ten years. It just cannot be done. Thus, were I to run your article, I'd be forced to shut down the zine right away. I'm sure you do not want this to happen. I hope you'll understand.
                                        Unsuicidally yours,

((I'm not sure why Mark thinks it's impossible to publish a dipzine on a schedule of once every ten years. Prudence forbids my naming names, but I could name a few that have made darn good attempts...))

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How to Accept an Article Without Having This Go to the Writer's Head

by Mark L. Berch

Writers in this hobby have such enormous egos. If you accept one of their articles, it's just going to make matters worse. Some way must be found to deflate their egos at the same time. Here's one suggestion:

Dear Archibald,

I have received your article with some sort of routing slip. Apparently, when you first submitted the article, you included a note, asking the pubber to pass it along to another pubber if he did not want to print it. The pubber didn't, so he crossed his name off, and added the name of another pubber, and then sent it on its way. It's impossible for me to tell how long this has been going on. The first dozen or so names are so old that the ink has faded and their names are completely illegible. The next 38 names, each neatly crossed out, are no longer pubbers in the hobby, many of them for so long that I don't even recognize their names. Then there are also about four dozen present pubbers who have also refused it, which was at first (i.e. before I had read the article) surprising, since several of them I know are extremely hard up for reading material. It's finally gotten to me.

I would not dream of publishing this piece of trash, but over the years it has accumulated a variety of humorous comments made in the margins and on the backs of the various pages by the various editors. Many of them I'll admit are on the wicked side, and I'll have to tell you that some of them are just downright nasty. I was originally planning to publish just the comments, but to get the full flavor of what they refer to, the reader does have to see the original, I'm afraid.

If you are planning to write another one, could you join some other hobby first, and send it to them?

Cheerfully yours,

_____

This can be varied in several ways. The reason might be to save future editors the torment of reading it, or that it is so aged that the pages are crumbling and can no longer be passed on, that you photocopied the pages by accident, so they were already printed. If the article takes up x% of the issue, you might add that readers will be given a sub credit of x% of the per issue price ("I can't in all honesty charge people for the opportunity of reading this."). Surely you can come up with a few additional reasons yourself.

((Mark's ideas for deflating a writer's ego are very clever, but I'd prefer not to do that. I would rather tell the writer how great his article is, even when it's really just a worthless piece of crap like the above.))

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Establishing the Letter Column

by Alan Stewart

Any subscriber who has tasted of the delights of the Diplomacy zine letter column is likely to want to make his own new zine a home of similar pleasures. But establishing a good letter column -- or more importantly, the kind of letter column that you want your zine to have -- is not as simple as it might appear. It is not simply a matter of saying "Here's my zine and its address: send letters."

The way in which you advertise your letter column in your first issue, and the way in which you handle the printing of letters that are received as a result of your initial distribution of that issue, will dictate the type of letter column you have for quite a while. If you do not think about these issues before you begin publishing, you may find that you have saddled yourself with the kind of letter column you don't want; once you commit yourself to certain policies or formats you may find yourself irreversibly committed to them, beyond possibility of extrication.

What does this strange and ominous warning mean? Here are seven issues that you should decide in your own mind before you publish Issue #1:

1. Choice of Topics

What is your letter column to be about? The temptation is to say, "about anything and everything." But the time of the dedicated and literate letter writer is a scarce commodity, carefully husbanded. The politics freak, the tactics freak, the music freak (not to mention the feud freak) is likely already to have his own favorite outlets. You have to do something to persuade him that your letter column will be worth his time.

State in Issue #1 just what topics your letter column will be most hospitable to -- and be slow to refuse any letters on those topics after Issue #1.

2. Length of Column

No doubt you have already made some decisions as to the size of the zine you intend to produce. Now is the time to decide how much of that zine will be devoted to letters. If widely distributed, Issue #1 will bring in response more letters in one month than you are likely to get in any other six months of your publishing career. People are going to want to see those letters in print. If you print all the letters you receive, you will have a column much larger than you may intend to print from month to month. If you restrict yourself to printing only enough letters to fill the space you intend to regularly assign to your column, you will disappoint many of your new fans. Whatever policy you intend to follow, you will be better off stating it explicitly in Issue #1 -- at least your readers will know you have thought about the matter. A possible solution is to state that the publication of letters received after #1 will be dispersed throughout the next three or four issues, with preference given to those letters which refer to recent events of one kind or another and thus require timely publication.

3. Extent of Editing of Letters

Some publishers like to print letters in their entirety; others like to extract from them only the most interesting and well-written bits. The former practice encourages your subscribers to write longer letters covering disparate topics, letters that give you some sense of the whole personality of the writer. The latter practice may improve the quality of the material you print (at least in the short run) and allows for more contributors per issue.

You will get complaints. If you skimp on the editing, your readers will complain about having to ingest piles of nonsense in order to get at the nutritional bits. If you over-edit, people will stop writing -- it's as simple as that. However you decide to print them, remember that people are watching.

4. Organization by Writer or by Topic?

This problem, covered elsewhere in this handbook ((see "Chop-chop?", by Mark Berch)), is closely related to the preceding one. If you are printing "bits", you are already losing whatever additional flavor attaches to wide-ranging, discursive letters, and will wish to compensate by giving the reader a variety of views about one topic in juxtaposition. If you are publishing whole letters, you may have trouble placing the flotsam and jetsam into sensible groups of topics.

5. Taboos

Blasphemy, racism, sexism, violent personal attacks -- ah! The very stuff of a great letter column. But not everybody wants to print things from each of these categories. If you feel strongly enough about any of these or related subjects, you might say so in Issue #1 to prevent conflicts with writers later. The trick is how to do so without seeming pompous...

6. Controversiality

You will get letters denouncing various people or hobby projects, glorifying (or denying the existence of) God, praising or condemning sex, drugs, and Ronald Reagan.

Unless your column is to be strictly of the milk-and-cookies variety, you will find it hard to keep controversial subjects out. Even if you start out with people expressing only positive viewpoints about the world in general, someone is going to disagree vehemently and want to tell the world so. Print what you wish, but remember that if you print no response to another reader's controversial letter, people will stop responding to other letters too. If you print one controversial reply, you are pretty well obligated to print whatever anyone else may have to say on the same subject -- particularly if the matter involves personal criticism of hobby members, who are entitled to a right of reply. Remember, you have only a certain amount of space to reply to letters -- it is easy to bite off more than you can chew.

7. Editorial Responses

As editor of the column, you have the right to respond to what contributors say therein. How you use it is another question.

Outspoken editorial comments contribute to the reader's enjoyment at the possible expense of the contributor. They encourage dialogue and debate. They motivate other readers to throw in their own two cents' worth, to become more than just passive observers.

The editor has the power of having the last word, and you must discipline yourself to use it wisely. If you distort the argument you are attempting to refute, if you mock or ridicule your contributors, they will seethe -- with one of two results. Either they will stop writing or they will respond in kind, and your column can quickly become either a very empty or a very nasty place.

8. Response to Criticism

After Issue #1 you will get only nice letters welcoming you to the ranks of publishers, and things not appreciated about #1 will probably not be mentioned. You may, if you wish, indulge in wishful thinking and assume this will continue forever...

It's not fun to print criticism of yourself or your zine in your own publication. I find it particularly irksome when I'm sitting there struggling to type someone's handwritten attacks -- it feels like collaboration with an unseen enemy.

My advice is to start with the intention of printing all criticism you receive. Subscribers pay you a compliment when they write in with criticism. They are saying that what you are producing is worth the time for them to attempt to erase the few flecks of sandstone in your marbled edifice. People who are totally unimpressed with a zine just don't write at all. So print the stuff, and reply with as much graciousness as you can muster.

There you are -- I discussed eight issues, not seven, which I will use as a lead-in to the first of a few pieces of advice that could not be thematically organized. Deliver more than you promise -- don't ever promise someone that his letter will appear in the next issue unless you know you will have the space and inclination to print it. Emphasize the names of your contributors with as much **BOLDNESS** as you can -- that's a large part of what they pay to see. Be careful in using too much familiarity and jocularity in responding to subscribers whom you already know -- you may creat a warm atmosphere for them, but those who don't already belong to your favored circle of friends will feel that they are outsiders not included within an exclusive clique. Apply the same standards to letters from your friends as you do to letters from non-friends. Always have a fire extinguisher handy when you free-base cocaine. Give your letter column a snappy title which fits in with the theme of your zine. Make your best effort to type up contributors' letters without typos (do as I say, not as I do). Remember the golden rule: do unto others' letters b̸e̸f̸o̸r̸e̸ t̸h̸e̸y̸ d̸o̸ u̸n̸t̸o̸ y̸o̸u̸r̸ l̸e̸t̸t̸e̸r̸s̸ as you would have them do unto yours.

Larry Peery once noted that editors train their contributors by means of their editorial decisions. Adopting editorial policies on the wing when typing up your second issue is like scratching underneath a dog's ear when he shits on the table and hitting him with a newspaper when he defecates outside -- you may have to live with the consequences.

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Chop-chop?

by Mark L. Berch

The one single feature I like most in a dipzine is a lively letter column. My most favorite zines have nearly always had them; the lack of one may be Diplomacy Digest's outstanding weakness. But how should letters which cover several topics be presented? Bruce Linsey, writing in Voice of Doom #93, expressed the views of many when he wrote:

"I despise the current trend toward presenting letters European style: chopped up into itsy bitsy pieces, usually by topic. Gary Coughlan of the otherwise-excellent Europa Express was one of the leaders in the North American hobby, popularizing this unfortunate trend in American zines. My reasons for disliking it are simple: whatever style or continuity the author tried to impart to his letter are demolished by overediting. Sometimes a letter talks about many topics but the writer has given it an air of completeness that it loses when chopped up."

I don't agree. In a large letter column, such as one sees in e.g. <u>Anduin</u>, <u>VD</u>, or <u>EE</u>, I would much prefer to see the written material grouped by <u>topic</u> than by <u>writer</u>. What Bruce says about losing continuity is certainly true, but the vast majority of letters don't have much, if any, continuity. They usually just hop from topic to topic; an attempt to unify the comments with a central theme is quite rare. I don't see that much in the way of "style" would be lost by such a division, though I suppose it's possible.

But the reader gains a great deal with grouping by topic, especially in a zine with a very long letter column. If 5 people are discussing, say, Grenada or ByrneCon or badly written orders, I'd much prefer to see these comments all grouped together. The comments will have much more of an impact that way than if I see the first ones at, say, 8 PM, the second at 8:05, and the next one a few minutes later. One loses the train of thought that way. It's even more dramatic if I'm then planning a response to the letters on one topic. It's much easier to respond to several people's comments if they are all together in one place. It's easier to see where they agree and disagree. If it's a topic that I'm not the least bit interested in, it's much easier for me to skip. <u>EE</u>, for example, has my second-favorite letter column. But the guess-whose-picture-this-is discussions (which are immensely popular) do nothing for me and I usually skip them entirely -- which is much easier to do when the dozen or so comments are gathered all in one place.

It might be said then that the writer gains something by having his letter unchopped, and the readers gain by having the letters chopped. So whose interests should come first? I tend to think it's the reader. The letter column is there more for him to read than it is to be a forum for the writer. I also think that if the reader gains, the writer does too. As a frequent letter writer, I prefer the chopped style of <u>EE</u> over that of <u>VD</u>.

There is, of course, a major practical barrier to the chopped style: it's a lot of extra work. You have to be well organized. Also, it tends to push the typing up to the last minute. If you are printing letters whole, you can just type them up as they come in, but chopping forces you to wait and see how things are going; what topics are getting enough response to make into separate categories. On the other hand, when grouped by topic, it's a lot easier for the editor to respond to letters collectively on a topic. Bruce is forever saying things like "For my comments on his first topic, see what I said on page 22 in response to what XXX wrote."

With the advent of word processors, a lot of the problem with grouping by topics will disappear. Letters can be typed as they come in, topics labeled, and then at deadline time, the editor can see which topics have accumulated enough material to be dealt with separately. Those paragraphs can then be electronically pulled out, grouped together, and the editor can write a collective response. The number of editors using word processors is pretty small right now, but in time it will increase, as people buy them or gain access to them at work. I hope they use them for this purpose, and I say that as both a writer and a reader.

((I'm going to have to back down from my original position just a bit. Mark is right in saying that very few letters have an overall style or continuity. I still prefer letters presented whole, but basically the question is merely one of taste: which do you like better, apples or oranges?

For the record, the three most successful letter columns since I entered the North American hobby <u>in terms of degree of reader response</u> have all presented letters unchopped. But it's still simply a matter of taste, and we can all hope that letter columns of both types can continue to flourish.

As a new publisher, how will you present letters to your readers?))

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The <u>Overstuffed</u> <u>Mailbox</u>: <u>How</u> <u>to</u> <u>Handle</u> <u>Excess</u> <u>Material</u>
<div align="right">by Bruce Linsey</div>

Now you've done it! Somehow you've ended up with too much material to print in your coming issue (perhaps you've been following some of the advice in this handbook too carefully?) and you can't figure out a way to handle all those letters, press items, etc. Ignoring the fact that many publishers would give their left arms to be in this very pickle, what do you do? There are a few options.

1. Edit out enough material to bring the issue down to size. Naturally, you'll ax the less appropriate or well-written stuff first, so this will not only make your page count manageable, it will improve the average quality of what you <u>do</u> print as well. But some writers may get annoyed when their work is not printed, so explain what you're doing and why.

2. If you don't already use photo-reduction, consider it now. You can fit more on a page this way. The problem is that some forms of printing cannot easily be reduced (e.g. ditto and mimeo), and some folks find reduced printing hard to read.

3. Expand the page count to accommodate the extra material. If you do this and the issue is twice your zine's normal size, you can double-number the issue (e.g. what was to be #26 is now #26/27) and charge your subbers accordingly. Some people (like me) don't like double-numbered issues, but financially they do make sense. Or you can treat your readers and just go with a larger issue at the usual rate. The largest dipzine ever published as this is being written was Voice of Doom #100, at 270 pages. Subbers were charged only the usual 50¢ to receive it.

Larger issues eat money -- even if you charge double, you won't recoup the loss right away. But your readers will like 'em!

4. Save the less urgent material for a later issue. Be sure to let your readers know what you're doing, so that writers will know that whatever they sent you wasn't lost in the mail or filed away and forgotten. People tend to like to see their writing in print fairly soon, though, so try not to overdo this.

5. Print an issue between normal deadlines to get the extra material out. I used to refer to these as "mid-monthlies". These are a bit more work for you than just expanding an issue (you have to do all your addressing, etc., twice) and the postage is a bit more as well, but readers will enjoy the all-reading content of the in-between issues.

Finally, if you ever have occasion to take any of the advice in this article, you're one of the lucky few, so rejoice. Many publishers have trouble finding enough material to print.

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The Strategy and Tactics of Postal Literature

or

Are We Playing a Game or Writing a Book?

by Conrad von Metzke

I'm not sure. I think, however, that if I were to wake up tomorrow and find that every Diplomacy publication in the world had decided never again to print a line of my press, I'd resign from the hobby. On the other hand, maybe I'd stay after all, straining all the while to bring the other editors back to my way of thinking. Poor benighted souls that I would think them, I should have to presume that some insane malady ("vapidis universalis") had descended upon the world of postal Diplomacy, sparing only me as (I would fancy) the Disciple of Rejuvenation. Perhaps I would struggle; perhaps I would capitulate and drop away; perhaps I would lead a Schism; perhaps I would - no, make this one 'probably I would' - find another hobby wherein my ideas of fun still held some sway. But there is one thing I would not do, and that is glean pleasure from a hobby wherein creativity had died or been shunned. Yes, of course I enjoy the game itself, else I'd not bother with it; but I have now played over three hundred games of Diplomacy, spanning one quarter of a century. I know quite well how to play any position presented me. And I have learned that I was right all along; the essence of this game is the people who play it, not the little blocks and map spaces. Press is one of the processes by which the people who play this game by post present themselves to, and intercourse with, the other people who play this game. Press is creative personality in action. But for it, we would as well play postal cribbage.

Postal Diplomacy began as an outgrowth of science-fiction and fantasy fandom. (At least, the postal effort that first took hold - Dr. John Boardman's effort in 1963, never mind my own preceding failure the year before - came thence.) As such, the game itself was almost secondary. Players negotiated, and developed strategies, and made plans, and tried to win. But what they were really doing was sharing the pleasure of being together, and interlocking varied individualities. And when they couldn't do this in person, owing to distance or other commitments, they did it by mail. And they wrote things, and revealed themselves, and thereby challenged others to write and to match the revelation. Remembering of course that science-fiction involves the writing of imaginative fiction, imaginative press is an obvious adjunct to the postal play of Diplomacy. And it will thus come as no surprise that many players from the early days of the hobby also did a lot of writing in other realms. At least two - Jack Chalker and Jerry Pournelle - are now major figures in science-fiction writing.

Though I came to postal Diplomacy from the extreme periphery of fantasy fandom, and have never achieved the least bit of recognition as a writer in any form (nor have I tried), I have nevertheless been a devotee of press-writing and -reading since my earliest entry into this hobby. My first game, 1965C (in Steve Cartier's WILD 'N' WOOLY), found me sitting in Russia hopelessly confused over alliances and tactical possibilities. After a couple of moves, it looked like I was going to get squished, so I decided to quit worrying about "winning" and have some fun. WILD 'N' WOOLY (another sci-fi outgrowth) featured some intriguing writing (as well as truly fine art), so I took the plunge; I announced that, from that point on, I would be playing "The Republic of Poland" instead of Russia, created President Andrzej Sawiczewski, and began inundating Steve with screwball writings. Other efforts followed in other arenas, and I soon became convinced that the real charm of this hobby lay, not in the game-playing per se, but in the ancillary activities (of which press was by far my favourite).

It must be understood, of course, that my private perspective is not a balanced one. Each of us has a different level of operation in the press genre, and it is only fair to remark the other options. While many hobbyists - we "old-timers" tend to be particularly subject to this - remonstrate that "Press is more" (sorry, Mies), a vast field of major hobby figures over the years has not agreed, at least in the execution. To focus on a few, the contributions of such as Doug Beyerlein, Walt Buchanan, Eric Verheiden, Andrew Phillips - there are many more - are virtually legendary, but those contributions do not include any significant participation in the press world. In as many other cases, press (and writings in general) far outstrip the importance of their playing careers; I number myself in that grouping, together with John Piggott, John Leeder, Rod Walker, John Boardman, and various others. And then there are those who can both write beautifully and play strongly. They are the true giants, I would think, and the outstanding representative of this rare species is the late John Koning. Among contemporaries, Richard Sharp strikes me as the other giant.

Obviously, press material is approached by publishers precisely as it is approached by the same people as players. Those who write it themselves, and enjoy doing it, also love to publish it, and bemoan those games where good press fizzles. Others, who neither write nor much care to read the stuff, rarely make an effort to get press activities going in their magazines. This is not to say that there is the least little thing wrong with pressless publications; they may well bore me, but they certainly have their following and their place. It becomes, in the event, a matter of private priorities. And in that connection, players who have an interest in good press need to seek out those publications that cater to the writing skills of the participants. Similarly, publishers - and I direct this especially to new and prospective publishers - need to understand the truth of the dictum that one will, sooner or later, attract whatever clientele one caters for. If you are a spectacularly good writer, but publish a journal that features bare game moves with minimal press and no chat whatever, you will - never mind your abilities - attract players who send moves and nothing more. If, on the other hand, you publish a journal that exudes congeniality, elicits repartee, and encourages conviviality, you will magnetically draw those who share this expansiveness.

Until now, the present focus has been on "creative" (a.k.a. "literary") press, and the implication has been that the same "serves no purpose whatsoever except to entertain readers" (to quote Roberto Della-Sala in a recent COSTAGUANA). In point of fact, there are fully three 'types' of press in respect to game-relevance, and three 'shades' of each. These groupings are:

TYPES: (1) Purely literary, unrelated to game; (2) Literary in style, but with ties to the game to which attached; (3) Purely game-related.
SHADES: (1) 'White' (clearly identified as to which player wrote it); (2) 'Grey' (unidentified as to writer, but not specifically 'black;' in effect, 'anonymously neutral'); (3) 'Black' (written by one player to make others think that a different player wrote it).

Mr. Della-Sala is quite correct that entertainment is the only possible point to purely literary press. My own "Poland" series in my first postal game, already

mentioned, is an example of this genre; I would occasionally throw in a barb at
whatever enemy I had at the time, but in general the press had nothing to do with
what was going on among the players, and served entirely to have some fun. Hobby
history has innumerable examples of this sort of frolic, and they range from Rod
Walker's all-but-incessant "Pope Joan" browses, to Terry Kuch's history of the
Kingdom of Hernia, to John Piggott's (and, I believe, others') adventures in the
Tardis, to John Walker's "Heidi" rambles, to - you'll forgive my failure to be
humble - the Admiral "Puffa-Puffa" de Grasse interchange between John Leeder and
myself, to what must be the ultimate in irrelevance: Mark Kindrachuk's
series that consisted in nothing more than installments of Gogol's story "The Nose."

Press which is both literary and game-related is perhaps the scarcest of the
three formats. The classic such serial was written, beginning in 1965, by John
Boardman for COSTAGUANA (for a game in which John was not even a player!), and
had to do with the Bourse of the Grand Duchy of Beaucouillon, and the season-by-
season intrigues of the various "ambassadors" of the game-playing nations, and
the odds on victory by each country. Rod Walker's "Pope Joan" material has quite
often taken this tack. A truly wondrous saga by Steve Knight in VOICE OF DOOM
was so brilliantly written that the relationship to the game almost escapes the
reader, but it is there. And in PRAXIS, a comparatively new series (sorry to have
to say it, but I'm writing it) began as purely literary but is about to shift to
parallel the game action; it involves the mysterious spy "Sliv" Myslivecek, the
veteran secret agent "Fonzie" Gorbach, and the shadowy conspiratorial agency ZSOS.
Such press can, when truly well-done (Boardman's series was exceptional in this
regard) serve the dual function of entertainment and game-commentary. More com-
monly, however, such writings will relegate the latter to a view of the game from
the point of view of the player writing the press; thus, if a series is authored
by the Russian player, it will relate to the game from a Russian perspective.
This is, of course, only logical (and necessary in a way, since the Russian player
cannot possibly have any other perspective); accordingly, some of the best press
efforts which relate to the progress of the game are joint or multiple efforts,
wherein two or more players contribute related efforts which draw on the other
contributions for continuity. John Piggott and I did something along these lines
in MAD POLICY, using as our footing the gourmet delicacy "crottled greeps." Not
only did we win the game (as a 2-way draw), we had an immense bit of fun doing it.

To deal with press which has no literary pretensions, and merely deals with
the game situation, is to deal almost exclusively with negotiations in print.
It is quite common to run across a line such as: "TURKEY TO AUSTRIA: Either
you move out of Serbia now, or I'll blast you to bits!" Such writings appear
to substitute for personal communications, and quite frankly, I find it difficult
to understand why they are written at all. If, say, Turkey wishes to discuss
vacating Serbia with Austria, it seems more rational to write a letter to the
Austrian player discussing it! Some players counter with the thesis that press
of this nature can serve as public reinforcement of private assertions, e.g.
Turkey has written to Russia that he (Turkey) will ally against Austria unless
Austria vacates Serbia, and follows up with a press release 'confirming' this
arrangement. Of course there is never a requirement that the press, any more
than the letter, be truthful, which is precisely why many people question the
utility of such press. As an exception, this level of press can be not only
useful, but essential, in the popular "Gunboat" variant in which players are
anonymous and must negotiate only through press submissions.

"Shades" of press (white, grey and black) represent an aspect of the subject
which remains controversial. To understand why, it would help to be specific:

WHITE PRESS: Using the French player as an example, 'white' press would
be that which is datelined "Paris," and/or is written in such a way that it
obviously originates from France.
GREY PRESS: The usual definition here, again using the French example, is
that such writings - written by the French player - seem to come from a neutral,
indefinable source (a common dateline is "Geneva"). Taken another way, "Grey"
press may seem to come from anywhere, but it does not specifically point to a
particular player.
BLACK PRESS: This is material written by (e.g.) France, datelined "Berlin"
and worded in such a way that it seems to emanate from the German player - in
other words, a forgery intended to fool one or more of the others.

Most publishers, unless they decline press altogether (there are mercifully few of those), accept White press without question. While they may place limits on such matters as taste and wording (no obscenities, no blasphemy, etc.), those limits normally have nothing to do with the game and reflect only the editor's personal nature. Some publishers may also impose limits of space - one may not write more than 100 words per issue - but, again, this is a purely administrative decision and has nothing to do with the "type" or "shade" of the release itself.

Grey press is scarcely more restricted than White. A few publishers will accomodate the latter but abjure the former, presumably on the grounds that Grey press may require an editorial interpretation of subtleties and implications that White will not. The distinction, however, is uncommonly made. However, it is important for players to construct their Grey submissions (in journals that eschew Black Press) such that misleading phrases are absent, else they risk censorship or total rejection; similarly, publishers who elect to permit Grey but preclude Black press need carefully to scrutinize all Grey submissions, lest Black masquerading as Grey creep in. One need not be fanatic about this, but it will help, at the very least, if one understands that mere neutrality of date-line does not Grey press make; a French writing "Germany declares war on Austria" is Black press, be it headed Berlin (true Black) or Geneva (falsely "Grey"). To say it one last way, Grey press does not say anything about one player's position or intention vis-a-vis another, except of course as has already been revealed in the past.

With Black press, we arrive at the true controversy. The intent of verbiage of this "colour" is, purely and simply, to deceive; to convince one (or more) of your opponents that another (or more) of your opponents has intentions that the latter does not in fact have. Such Victorian grammar might better be reduced to an example: France knows that Germany does not intend to attack Russia. France, on the other hand, wants Germany to attack Russia. France therefore writes "German" (fake) press hoping to encourage a war between Germany and Russia. The logic is that such tactics sometimes work, and in any case can rarely be traced to the real culprit, so - why not?

Opponents of Black press generally hold that such antics add an unintended element to the game, by virtue of the fact that the ostensibly-neutral Gamesmaster is put in the position of printing false and misleading information. Proponents aver that Black press does not compromise the Gamesmaster, so long as he indicates that the writing is from a player and is simply being transcribed, not endorsed; and further, that any player who bases his alliance structure on press releases, without confirmation in the personal exchange of letters, is being foolish. It is also worth quoting the Rulebook: "During diplomacy..., a player may say anything he wishes...(negotiations) may include...denouncing, threatening, spreading rumors, and so forth...(t)he rules do not bind a player to anything he says...." (Rule IV) Though terms such as "forgery" and "fraud" are not specifically included, there is a strong implication that they are not proscribed. And finally, proponents point out Rod Walker's invention, many years ago, of "security-coded" press to guarantee authenticity. By this means, a player may incorporate into the text of his press one of his moves of the same season (e.g. "PARIS (F Bre-Eng)"), thus rendering forgery difficult and successful only by coincidence. (To extend the coding system, if one happens to have a unit being ordered to hold that season, one can give it a truly outrageous order - "F Bre gathers nuts in May" - and use that as the coding. This renders coincidental guessing for Black press all but impossible.) It remains for each player to assess the Black Press issue for himself, and for each publisher to elect criteria within the parameters of his own perceptions of the question. There are no "right" answers.

In fact, there are no "right" answers to any of this. Press remains an option which one may take (or not) to enhance the level of pleasure in the game. Each of us may elect to write, or not, as we choose; and each publisher may select whatever level of press activity most meshes with his plans. There are no set rules. There are only open-ended possibilities. Find the one that best suits you, and bar no holds.

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The Essential Ingredient

by Bruce Linsey

Of all the components of a Diplomacy zine, which would you rate the most important? The games? The letter column? The articles? The title? Wrong! All of these are, of course, prominent items in most zines, but it is possible to run a zine without any of them.

There is, however, one component that no zine can ever do without, and that is the Mark Berch Department. This is simply a statement of the weather in your geographic location at the time you're typing up the issue, and it need be no more than a quick paragraph or two. You see, Mark Berch once told the hobby of his undying fascination with these little weather reports, and since that fateful day, no publisher has ever dared omit this essential ingredient from any issue of a zine. (Rumor has it, however, that one unorthodox editor a few years back tried to relegate this item to page 2. Needless to say, neither he nor his zine have been heard from since.)

Don't consign yourself instantly to hobby-wide ignominy by neglecting to follow this long-standing tradition. It's right up there with baseball, mothers, and A Con-Bul. If you heed no other advice in this handbook, always, _always_ in your new zine, in each and every issue, include the Mark Berch Department. Without it, you can have no Diplomacy zine at all.

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Editorial Do's and Don'ts

by Bruce Linsey

A well-edited zine is much easier and more pleasant to read than a poorly-edited one. You'll learn as you go, but here are a few hints to help get you started.

_Do_ keep a dictionary handy (mine is always by my side when I type) and spell words correctly, and _do_ write grammatically. For some reason, some people consider it in poor taste to point out the shortcomings of various publishers in this regard. But whether or not the sentiment remains unspoken, the plain fact is that misspelled words and ungrammatical writing obscure the writer's points and make him appear ignorant.

In the same vein, _do_ take the time to proofread and correct your own errors. Dozens of people are going to be reading it -- are you going to tell me it isn't worth a few seconds of your time and a few milligrams of white-out to fix it?

_Do_ let your readers know what sorts of material you want, and _do_ attempt to establish consistent editorial policies.

_Do_ place the writer's name at the beginning of each letter! Why some publishers make you read the entire letter wondering who wrote it is a mystery to me.

_Do_ accept anonymous or pseudonymous contributions for legitimate reasons, such as a player who doesn't want to be revealed as a novice but whose letter raises questions of general interest; but _don't_ ever print material attacking someone (or even criticizing someone) without indicating its true authorship.

When editing other people's work:

Don't change the substance of what they're saying. (You can always express your own viewpoint afterwards.)

_Do_ correct faulty grammar and spelling, unless explicit instructions to the contrary accompany the manuscript. In that case, _don't_ change anything, but reject the material entirely if it's not suitable as is.

_Do_ reorganize if necessary to establish a logical flow of thought (subject, of course, to the same conditions as in the above paragraph -- that the writer did not insist on his work being run unedited).

_Do_ edit for excess verbiage, offensive language, or unwelcome topics if that's your style. Replace all expunged material with ellipses (...).

Don't alter quoted passages except for minor spelling corrections (and many editors would disagree with me even on that -- I was once taken to task for changing nothing but a misspelled word in a quotation!).

_Do_ distinguish your comments from the writer's by the use of double parentheses (or your zine's equivalent).

Those are the basics. Above all, try to be fair to your correspondents and readers.

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CHAPTER 4

GRAPHICS AND ART

Why Art?

by J.R. Baker

A "warehouse" zine is like Shaker furniture: plain, functional, and true to its purpose. It has no frills and its simplicity is an art form in and of itself. But one "warehouse" zine looks pretty much like another, and its lack of personality eventually robs the editor of his/her pride and creative joy.

Probably the single most important piece of artwork for any zine is the letterhead. Many good zines can be recognized from across the room -- some by color, some by size, and some by format. But the letterhead, or cover artwork, is the thing which catches the eye and sets the expectations for the new reader, and it's that letterhead which is called to mind when the zine is remembered, because it becomes the trademark of the zine. Decide on the image you want to project and develop your letterhead to tell the world: this zine is funny, warped, rude & crude, computer generated, serious, timely, odd, carefree, or classic. If your letterhead projects the wrong image, your readers will be disappointed and you'll have to work twice as hard to establish your personality.

We publishers keep our
postal workers hopping!

The second most important piece of artwork in any zine is the map. To many
players, the map is more important than the adjudications (just wait till there's a
discrepancy between the two and see which one the players use). Of course, you
could use Avalon Hill's map, but that's copyrighted, so you shouldn't. ((Editor's
Note: But you won't get in any trouble for doing so -- AH has never objected to
this.)) Should your map be big or small? Should you show the correct three-letter
designations? Show movement? Show land vs. sea spaces? Show territory by possession?
And how will you distinguish between armies and fleets? How much time and effort you
put into your maps is a reflection of how much time and effort you put into your
zine, and carelessness in one is a reflection of carelessness in the other. But
beware -- you can overdo things. When the map causes more confusion that it solves
it's no longer a player's aid! Ask seven players what they want in a map, and you'll
probably get seven different answers.

The difference between a warehouse zine and a more remarkable zine is the contents
above and beyond the game results, be they about politics, feuding, gossip, humor,
literature, or trivia. The articles, cartoons, letters to the editor, games and
puzzles, and contests that make any zine remarkable are a reflection of the editor's
(and players') personality and pride in his/her zine, and that is as it should be,
for the function of an editor is to edit. The cartoon that I find hilarious may be
offensive to some and pointless to others, but it's the editor's job to decide
whether it belongs in the zine.

The use of art to draw attention to an idea or an article can have a tremendous
effect. It can provide humor to an otherwise dry narrative or lend credibility to
an incredible story. A little art to separate games and press from each other or
from articles can help the format flow more easily. And a little humor can ease the
pain of that treacherous stab!

Where do you get artwork if art isn't one of your stronger talents? The easiest
way, of course, is to steal it. Newspapers and magazines have lots of material and
you're small potatoes so they probably will never sue you for using their copy-
righted material. ((Editor's Note: Well, that's good to know! See Scott Hanson's
article on copyrighted material for further info on this topic.)) Not very ethical,
but it's really not going to hurt anyone.

You can buy art -- most office supply, art supply, and school supply stores have
rub-on decals and letters. If you hunt you can find a starving artist at almost any
high school or college. And if you stop and think, you probably know someone who
likes to doodle.

Or you can develop your own contributing artists, hold contests in your zine,
and reward your contributors. You can use subscriptions as a prize, but most
amateur artists will prefer praise. One "ATTABOY!" will work wonders as everyone wants
to be appreciated. But if you get art you won't use, don't just ignore it because it
will go away -- return it with a small letter of thanks and an explanation of why
you won't use it. You just might encourage a budding artist to create the masterpiece
that will make your next issue the most remarkable zine of the year!

((Which of course parallels the advice I gave for handling rejected articles.
J.R. Baker is the art editor of Diplomacy World, and he was kind enough to submit a
sample for inclusion here...))
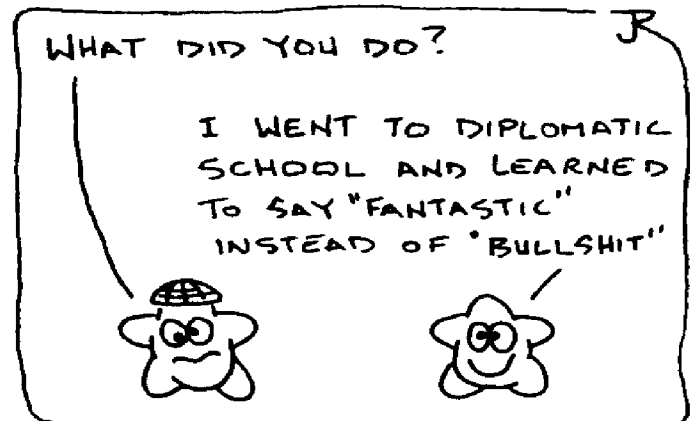
Words

by Wallace Nicoll

Words form a major part of communication - whether spoken or written. While part of NMR 50 has reached its paying public in a pre-recorded cassette version, the majority of zine editors use the written word to communicate to the masses.

We all know what words are and how to use them - some people manipulate them better than others - so I'll pass over this and commence by describing a few methods of producing hard-copy text.

Hand lettering

This is the easiest and least expensive method of creating text. It is quick, ... not need great initial outlay, and ... informal (especial'.. important if you want to communicate information to a less than interested public) A friend running an archaeological dig in Glasgow produced hand-written leaflets on the progress of the dig which were available to site visitors. We reckoned that typed info sheets were too formal and smacked of authority, and that people didn't bother to read them.

Hand-written comments can add a little extra to a dull piece of typed text especially if they are short, snappy and relevant. Similarly careful use of under-lining or side-scoring can be used for effect to give the impression of a memo doing its rounds, a first draft text, or a University text book!
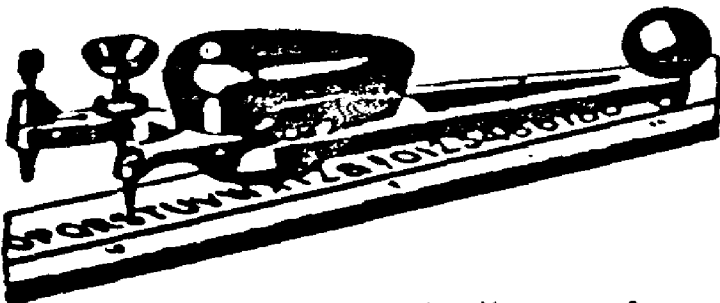
The Leroy Scriber, and
one lettering template

There are two basic types of stencils available for lettering. The more common version consists of a plastic strip with the letters cut out e.g. Rotring and the other major pen manufacturers make a set of compatible stencils in a range of styles and sizes. The pen is inserted through the holes and each letter individually traced out. The pen must be kept vertical to ensure an even flow of ink - a special attachment is available to keep the nib vertical. It is best to tape down a ruler to the base-board for sliding the stencil along to get an acceptably straight base line.

The second type is the Leroy stencil system which is widely used in drawing offices. The pen nib is placed into a holder which has a fine metal point at one end. This is then used to follow a guide template. The pen is never in contact with the stencil, and with a little practice the method is far neater and quicker than using the Rotring stencil system.

Stencilling can be used for effect. A lot of stencilling is in capitals. IT IS PROBABLY BEST TO AVOID LONG SENTENCES, AS THE AVERAGE READER IS NOT USED TO READING TEXT IN CAPITALS - unless an engineer or architect who are used to drawings with stencilled lettering. CAPITALS can be used for emphasis, where the author wishes the reader to proceed at a slower pace, for section headings, or for highlighting a particular word.

Dry transfer lettering

Alternatively known by the trade name Letraset, dry transfer lettering is a slow and expensive medium to use for large areas of text. Other manufacturers marketing rub-down lettering include Alfac, Mecanorma, Blick. It comes as a backing sheet (for protecting the letters on the sheet, and to stop accidental rubbing off of letters in the wrong place) and a film carrying the letters in black or coloured ink on the rear. Gentle pressure with a biro, pencil or "Letraset" burnisher will transfer the letter to paper, drawing film or any other surface. The sheets of dry transfer lettering have pre-printed guides to help line the base of the letters up, but the letter spacing must be judged by eye, which comes with practice - I still slightly overspace letters.

Letraset

To get text or titles centred, or to get a straight base line, rub the letters onto a sheet of graph paper covered with clear sticky-backed plastic. Having got the word rubbed down, cut a legth of sellotape and press it down firmly over the letters. The letters will adhere to the tape and the word can be peeled off and applied to where you want it.

Dry transfer lettering is prone to chipping if handled roughtly. So protect it with sellotape, or sticky backed plastic. Generally the tape will not show in copying unless the edges have become dirty.

If a whole word, or a single letter, must be removed, take a piece of draughting tape and press it down over the letters you want to remove, then gingerly peel it off, and throw it into the bin as the lettering cannot be reused.

There are a great variety of typefaces available - the latest Letraset catalogue contains over 550 different styles. Select a style that echoes the article it is being used for. The letters come in a range of sizes measured in points, though not every style comes in every size. It is best to check with the catalogue first to see what sizes are available.

In zine production dry transfer lettering can be used to good effect as many editors do for titling and incidental space fillers - a large number of non-text elements are also available and I will comment briefly on these later.

---

didot 20pt HELVETICA MEDIUM
u.s.a pica 24pt HAAS

You may notice at the top of a Letraset sheet two slightly different point values - one follows the Anglo-American system of 72 points to an inch, whereas the other is the European Didot standard where 72 points are 1.07 inches. Neither are metric related and are both , gradually being replaced with great resistance, by a supposedly universal system.

Anglo : 1pt. = 0.0138331in., 0.3514605mm
Didot : 1pt. = 0.01481in., 0.3759mm

12 points are called a pica, a measure used for line length and spacing.

Type styles belong to families - the largest is Helvetica which consists of in excess of twenty variations on the basic letter forms - you can get light, bold, italic, condensed, extended, outline, and any combination.

Typing, word processing & phototypesetting

I've lumped these together since the text elements are entered at a keyboard which, sooner or later, spews the completed text out onto paper (and sometimes onto film.) I don't think I need to explain typewriters, other than to say that the new electronic machines from Japan (just like the one I'm using now) are very versatile, and have a wide variety of special functions. Some have a computer link-up point which can turn your typewriter into a word-processor printer. I'm not too hot on word processing (yet, but I'm working on it) so maybe Pete Lindsay can enlighten us on one or two of the basics of word processing packages in a future issue. That leaves me with phototypesetting, a method of text-creation which has just about taken over from traditional metal type-setting in the printing business in ther past five or so years. Glossies like Imagine and White Dwarf are photo-typeset.

Phototypesetting has come a long way since its introduction earlier in the century. The text characters are individually projected onto a photo-graphic film or paper.

Some machines use large glass discs with the letter masters as "windows". A brief burst of controlled light shines through the window to expose the film beneath. The distance between the light source, disc, and film, determines the letter size. The film is then moved automatically before the next letter is exposed.

Modern typesetting equipment is essentially a sophisticated typewriter-word processor with an inbuilt ability to produce a number of type styles to order. The letters are stored in the machines memory in digital form, so it is possible to program the machine for a new typeface, or special symbol requirement.

The basic AM Varityper which Britoil bought a couple of years ago had twelve typefaces with a range in letter height from 6pt to 74pt.

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Lines & Pictures

by Wallace Nicoll

Lines and pictures complement the word elements of the graphic image. They are no more important than the text, though many people would have us believe it otherwise. Both elements help to break up the areas of text, and I would like to take a 'look at the various mediums and methods used to produce non-textual graphic elements. Consideration must be given to the method of reproduction before commencing the artwork, since some mediums are not entirely suitable for photocopying, or litheprinting. A basic understanding of the limitations of the various reprographic techniques is required, and I will cover this element, with respect to zine production, in a future issue. The originator of any artwork should also be aware if his/her output is to be reduced during printing, since fine linework may disappear, and heavy shading may merge into an unsightly black mass.

Pencil

Pencil is a substance I like using, but it is not very suitable in the production of artwork for reproduction as it gives an indefinite contrast, unless it is converted into a half tone by a photographer, a subject I'll return to later. When xeroxed pencil linework tends to become blotchy and any subtle shadings are lost.

"Lead" pencils are made from a mixture of synthetic graphite and clay. The quality of the pencils depends on the quality and fineness of the graphite and clays. The more clay content in the mixture, the harder the "lead" is, and vice versa.. The usual range of pencils available is, hardest to softest, 10H to 8B. I prefer to use a 2H for most 'technical drawing' and a 2B + 4B for 'artwork'. It all comes down to personal taste.

Coloured leads are made from a mixture of colouring, filler (usually clay or talc), a lubricant (a fatty acid, or wax) and a binding agent (such as gum or cellulose ether).

To spread the graphite evenly over an area, or blend it in, you can use a finger - a messy method, but fun. Alternatively, as I did in the office recently, you can make a paper stub. It is possible to buy these in the shops to save a little bit of hassle, but it's never the same as if you've made it yourself. I used a paper tissue, rolled up very tightly, and secured with draughting tape. The sharp end was squared off, and then used to smudge, and even out the pencil. Look Mum, no messy hands. Just a number of odd looks, and sarcastic comments from my colleagues. Coloured pencils can be smudged in the same way.

Pen & Brush

A wide variety of pens and inks are used in drawing offices and graphic design studios for producing drawings. They are indispensible and have many differing uses. To a lesser extent than with pencil, no matter how well an ink drawing is executed, it will have failed if it cannot be copied to an acceptable quality.

BALLPOINT PENS have their uses, but some artists reject them because of their unreliable ink feed and tendancy to blot. I have used them on a few occasions and find them a fairly good suitable substitute to pencil. You can build up tones with a number of light cross hatchings, and by varying the pressure on the nib increase the amount of ink reaching the paper.

I prefer the traditional ball pens e.g. Yellow Bic which have a fine point, to the roller ball style which is becoming more popular. The roller ball is easier to use for writing - I'm using one now while writing the draft copy for this series - as it flows easily across the page. Then it reaches a greasy thumbprint.....

FIBRE TIPS are of most use for bold colour work, due to the fairly limited range of colours. Letraset have, however, manufactured a range of Pantone pens to complement their wide range of films and papers (see later in article).
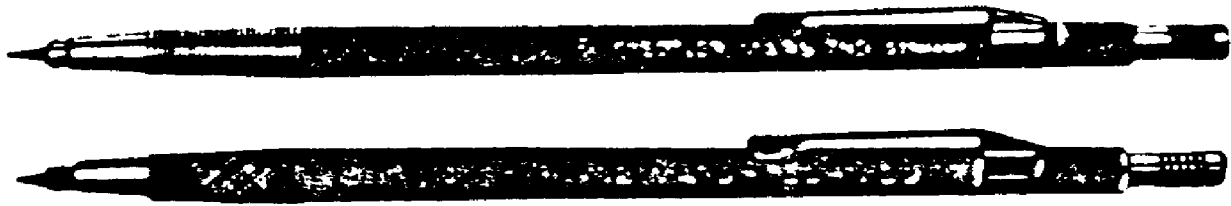
Colour can't really be used in zine production as it is difficult to copy accurately, even when there is a different coloured ink left in the print drum! Colour xeroxing isn't really a viable method of zine production. Yet. You could of course spend your time hand colouring each copy, or send out a guide for the readers to follow a bit like colouring by numbers. Colour felt pens are probably most widely used in the production of advertising and design mock-ups to show the customer the ideas being worked on.

Black felt tips then. Some of them have great pleasure in spreading, soaking into the paper, and through it onto the page behind. Some have a tendancy to fade, or go brown after a time. But advances are being made to produce a more useful fibre tip.

Some recently introduced pens come in a range of sizes - 0.1mm, 0.3mm, 0.5mm, 0.7mm - and are quite reasonably priced at about £1 each. They have been designed mainly for use on paper - the ink is a bit grey on film - as a viable alternative to the tubular nib pens which tend to get clogged up with paper fibres. So far I'm quite happy with the results. The linework in this article has been done using a 0.3 and 0.5mm Edding 1800 pens. Their drawback may be that the tips will go a bit limp and soggy towards the end of their life. Only time will tell.

RESERVOIR PENS come in two basic formats
———————————————— - the ones with screw-in
tubular nibs e.g. Rotring, Staedtler, Faber Castell, and those with push-on flat or shaped nibs e.g. Graphos. Both have an ink reservoir in the barrel of the pen, the ink filled by gravity into the nib. Most need to be filled from a bottle of ink, though the new Rotring model has a replaceable cartridge system.

Tubular nibs come in a range of sizes from 0.1mm to 2.0mm, and are very widely used in drawing offices due to their consistency of line width. Each company makes a range of different pens suitable for use on different

materials and with differing types of inks. Some inks are not suitable for use in tubular pens as they tend to dry in the air quite quickly, and hence block the nib. Keep the nibs clean, and remember not to leave the cap off for too long. While the larger sizes (0.5mm upwards) may be unscrewed into their component bits, it is not advisable to do this with the finer ones as it is nigh impossible to get the wire back into the tube afterwards. But then you've already discovered this to your cost!

At work I recently acquired a number of Faber Castell drawing pens which have a moisture pad at the top of the cap. Unless you forget to keep it moist, it means that the pen is ready for use whenever it is needed without having to spend half an hour shaking and banging the pen on the table trying to free the bunged up nib. They are no more expensive than the normal Rotrings, and are worth the hassle of having to remember to put a drop of water into the cap evry few weeks.

To preserve the life of the pen nib, especially when it is used on the very abrasive surface of drawing film, it is possible to buy gold, or tungsten-tipped nibs. They are usually quite a bit more expensive, but then you don't have to replace them as often as with the normal nibs.

Most of the companies make an etching ink which is used on clear films, such as acetate. Instead of sitting on the surface, the ink attacks the surface chemically, and penetrates it slightly. It is not advisable to use your basic pen for this ink - the plastic has a tendancy to melt and distort - and anyway the pen makers have pens suitable for use with etching inks.

The Graphos pens have a variety of interchangeable nibs including straight, left and right slant, round headed, drawing and tubular. The straight and slant nibs are of most use for calligraphy, while the drawing nibs come in a range akin to pencil classification i.e. B, HB, H, and 2H. The nib flexes as you draw with it, allowing you to draw lines of varying width.
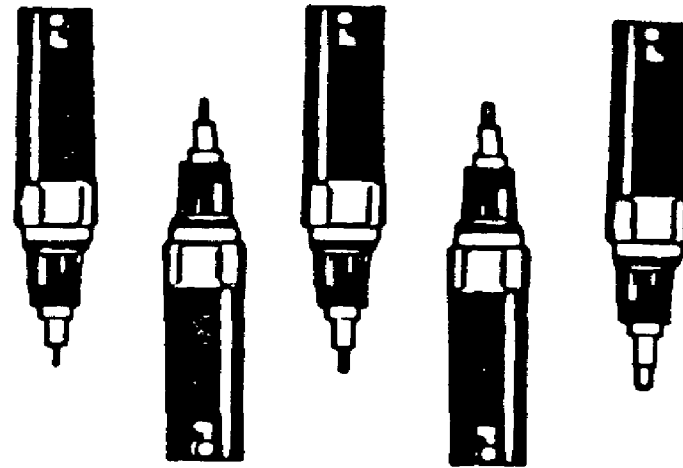
BRUSHES can be used for illustrations, _____ but require a greater level of skill to use effectively. I rarely use them other than to fill in large areas that i want black. Brushes vary immensely in quality and cost. The best are undoubtedly sable hair, but they are expensive if you're to be using them for rough ink work. They are almost essential if you do water colour painting though. Camel, or squirrel hair brushes are much cheaper and are probably sufficient.

Brushes generally are available in a wide range of sizes, and the main styles are round and chisel shaped, Some have long hair length, while others are quite short, and require a stipple action to use effectively.

Inks

Until the mid 19th Century inks were sold in the markets and in the streets. In 1834 Henry Stephens set up an ink making factory to try to make ink with consistent opacity. Drawing inks should be black, though we've had a few problems at work recently with inks that come out a grey colour. This necessitates drawing each line a couple of times which is a bit of a joke when you're tryong to maintain a consistent line thickness. Black drawing ink is often referred to as 'Indian' ink.

The properties of the various drawing inks are quite variable. Some inks are much more permanent than others which are rapid drying. The inks are all designed for use on particular surfaces, and are made up with this in mind. The major pen manufacturers also make a wide range of black and coloured inks for use in their pens.

Also available are artist's drawing inks which are shellac or white spirit based. They are waterproof and come in a good range of colours, but should not be used in tubular nibs. They can be used with the Graphos type pens. Winsor & Newton have a range of 22 coloured inks including white and metallic ones.

White ink can be a useful item to have. It always looks good on black paper or dark card. If you can get black paper it makes for an interesting letter. But I've yet to see black envelopes! I have used white ink recently on some illos I did for The Acolyte and Psychopath. I basically made a photocopy of a photograph, and then went over the print highlighting in white and getting rid of the middle tone greys. It worked quite effectively.

Drawing film is the best medium to use if you want consistent and accurate line work. The surface is very abrasive and the pen nibs wear down unevenly if you don't keep them vertically on the surface. This also leads to varying line thickness. The ink can be easily rubbed off the surface of the film, or else scratched out with a scalpel.

With paper the quality of linework depends on the surface and fabric of the paper, as well as the ink. All artists have their own preferences and dislikes.
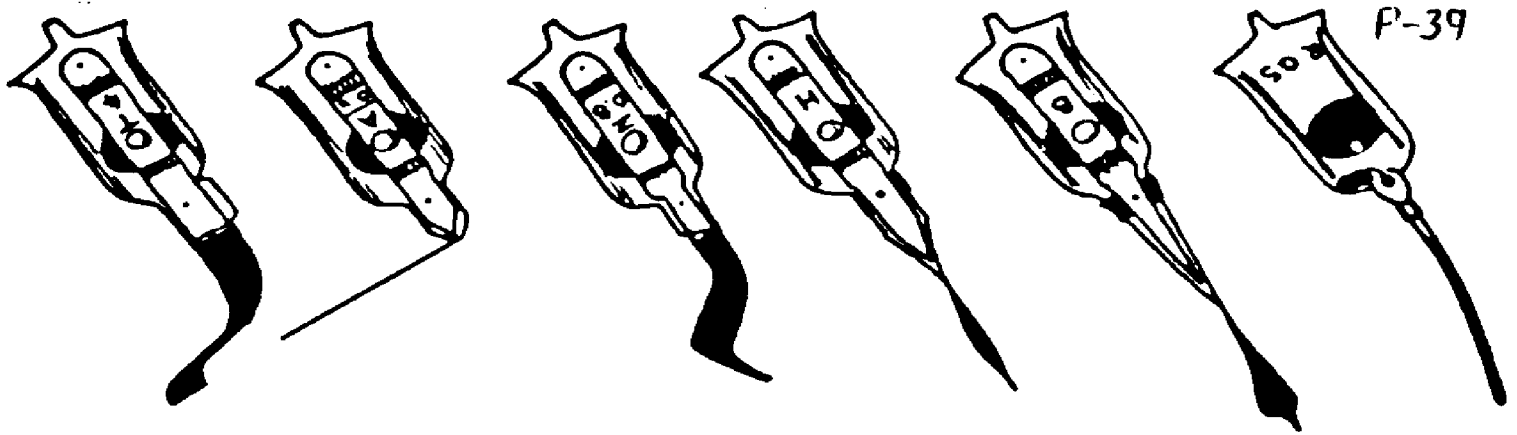
Tapes

Letraline, manufactured by Letraset, is
a range of black and coloured tapes
which are intended to make life a little
easier (and more expensive) for the
draughtsman or designer. Letraset makes
a very wide range of tapes (for some
examples see the illustration at the foot
of the page) including flexible/bendy
ones which at Britoil are used on
contour maps, in preference to ink (as
they are easier to change when the geol-
ogist realises he's cocked things up, or
new data becomes available); pecked
ones which are sometimes more convenient
than inking the line and then scratching
out; ones with symbols or patterns which
can be used for borders to illustrations
and adverts; flexible and see-through
colour tapes are also available, the
former being used to highlight lines
of importance on exhibition work, and
the latter is used for the same thing
on overhead projector slides.

The other graphic material manu-
facturers such as Alfac and Mecanorma
also make wide ranges of tapes, so it
is worthwhile getting hold of the
catalogues and seeing what is available.
Maybe they make just the design you're
looking for.
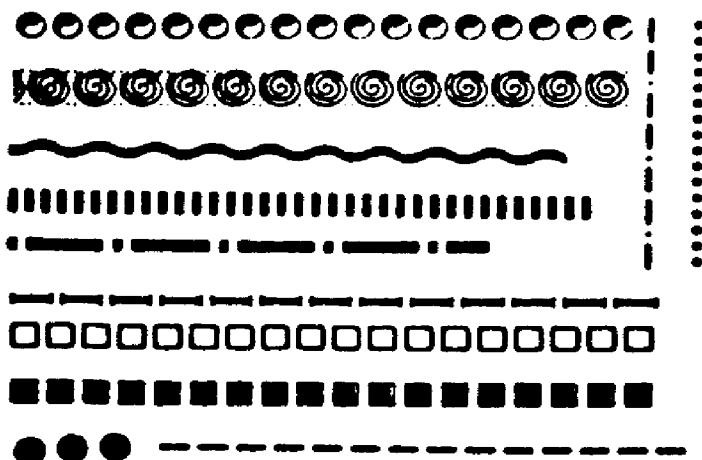
Tones

Pen and ink techniques for drawings are
derived from two basic graphic elements -
the line and the dot. From these simple
beginnings a virtually limitless number
of textures can be created. A look at
some of the recent bits of my artwork
may give you some impression of the
variety of techniques I've used. As with
pencil drawings, the name of the game is
experimentation. Sometimes the effects
will be pleasing and successful; others
may not work as well, but you'll know
not to use them again, or have an idea
where they can be used more effectively.

Where large areas are to be given a
regular tone, sheets of Letratone or
Instantex, can be used. Again I seem to
be naming materials manufactured by Letr-
aset. Other manufacturers produce similar
products which are in all likelihood just
as good, and possibly cheaper. This
series is not intended as a free advert
for Letraset products. I'm not getting
any commission from them. It is more
likely though that you can get Letraset
materials from your local graphics/art
material suuplier, than the other makes.

Below are a few examples of Letratone
sheets.
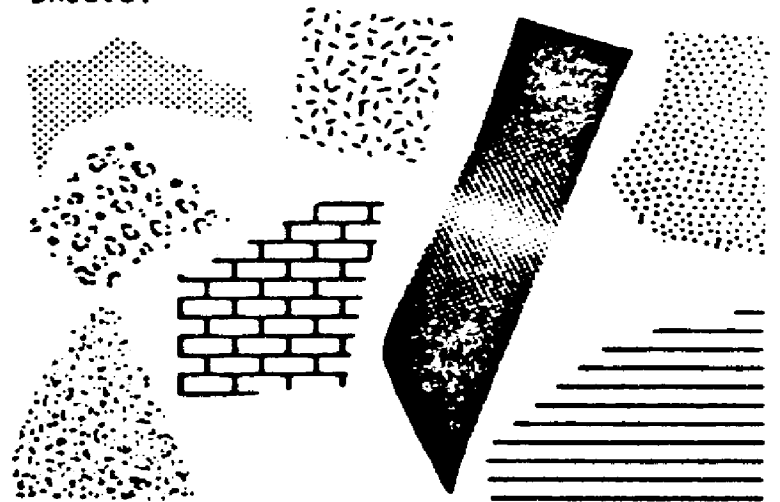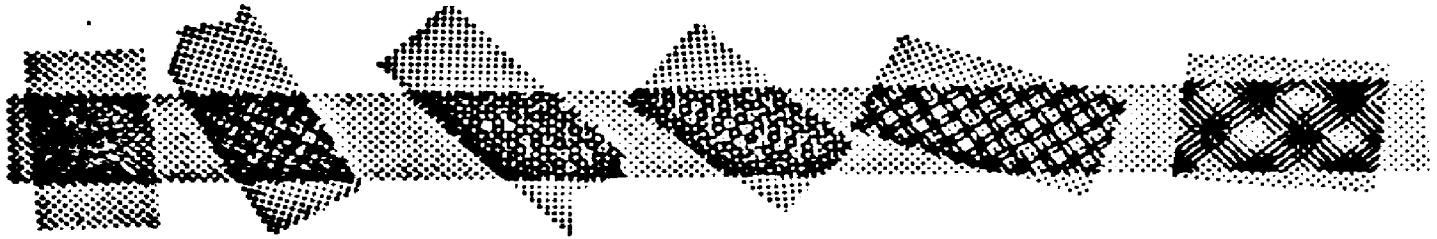
LETRATONE sheets are pre-printed. in a wide range of over 500 references including tints, tones and architectural patterns. The patterns are printed onto the surface of a thin self adhesive acetate film which comes with a waxed backing sheet. The film is stable, easy to cut and has a matt finish. The ink can be scraped off with a scalpel.

To use Letratone sheets all you do is cut the tone (not the backing sheet) slightly larger than the area you need and lay it onto the artwork. Cut exactly around the area you want toned and peel off the excess. Burnish the tone down will to ensure it sticks, and that there no air bubbles trapped. Overlaying these can result in unsightly (the latest Letraset catalogue says 'interesting') Moire patterns. The examples at the top of this page show the range of patterns you can achieve by varying the angles between the two layers. Where a reduction is needed before final reproduction remember to use a slightly coarser screen or pattern, as some styles do not reduce satisfactorily.

INSTANTEX dry transfer tones are what Pete L. mentioned a couple of issues ago. They are basically the same as dry transfer lettering and are laid down in the same way. A wide range of textures are available from the main manufacturers.

Letraset also make a very wide range of printed colour sheets called "Pantone". These are dealt with in much the same way as Letratone. For best results use paper with a smooth and glossy surface. At Briteil we use photographic bromide paper with the black linework printed onto it. I've recently spent a week or so preparing a batch of about thirty 35mm slides for an engineer's presentation in Norway. All his maps and figures were drawn, printed onto bromide, coloured up with pantone, and then photographed onto slide film by a commercial photographer.

For OHP slides transparent, coloured sticky backed sheets, referred to as "Project a film" can be used, but the colour range is limited. Method of application as above. Coloured projectable lettering and symbols are also available.

We find that most of the authors want to cram too much information onto their slides. It is a difficult job to convince them that they would be better making four slides instead of one. It means that the audience can actually read what is up on the screen instead of seeing a mass of unreadable small text. It means that as the speaker talks, the audience are not busy reading what the next points are, and are listening to him instead.

Keep it simple is the message we try to put over, since that achieves the greatest results. Nice bold colours that jump out at you, like red, blue and yellow, are the best.

. . . .

Also available from the ranges of the major graphic suppliers are a variety of "flowers", squiggles, trees, People, vehicles, arrows, borders and engineering and electrical symbols in rub-down form, a few examples of which fill up the rest of this column.

Used sparingly these can enhance bits of text, and can also be used to fill embarrassing little gaps at the foot of pages instead of trying to think of inane spacefillers.
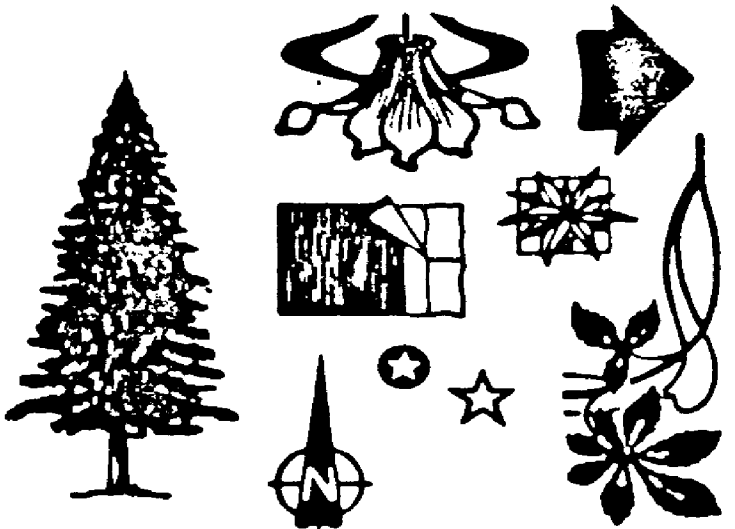
Coping with

PHOTOS

Photographs are printed onto paper as
comtinuous tone. They consist of
black, white, and a gradation through
grey between the two. Printing ink does
not discriminate so finely; only
black, or a very dark tone can be picked
up during either xerox or litho print-
ing. To reproduce different tones,
it is necessary to convert the photo
into a large number of dots, which
appear to be continuous when viewed
normally. Close up the photo is
built up from dots of varied size.

       Half tones of a photo must be
done by a photographer as it is a
fairly complex operation to get the
correct results. The screen density
can vary and is usually measured by
the number of lines of dots per inch.
Litho printing can cope with screens
of over 100 lines per inch, though
newspapers tend to use coarser ones.
If you look at adverts or photos in
any of the papers you'll see how
the pictures are built up.

       Reasonable copies of photos can be
made using the new breed of high quality
photocopiers which have a variable
tonal control. It may be necessary
to experiment until you get the effect
you're wanting. After the first copy
there shouldn't be too much loss of
definition.

SOME COSTS FOR MATERIALS AND ITEMS IN
THIS ARTICLE..........................

        Letratone..........£2.00 per sheet
        Instantex..........£2.16 per sheet

        Project a film.....£1.75 per sheet*
        Pantone paper......£1.40 per sheet*
        Pantone film.......£4.75 per sheet*

        Pantone pens.......£1.50 each

        Letraline tapes....from £3.00

                        * cost plus VAT

HOW TO MAKE A QUILL PEN

To make a quill pen, take for preference
a goose feather from the first five on
the wing. A wing feather from any large
bird will do; the slightly oiled feathers
of waterfowl are more water resistant,
but for general purposes a goose feather
is considered to be the most durable and
flexible; for very fine writing, however,
a crow's feather is superior; and when
none of these are available reeds have
been used.

       To turn the feather into a quill
strip off the outer membrane which covers
the writing end of the feather. This can
be done in a number of ways:

1 The quill end should be heated in a
   fire for a few minutes to soften the
membrane. It should then be laid on a
flat surface and drawn beneath a blunt-
edged blade. The membrane should split
off without the quill splintering.

2 Some quills can be left overnight
   soaking in a mixture of turmeric and
water and then dried in warm sand. This
should soften the membrane so that it
splits off easily when drawn beneath a
blunt-edged blade.

3 Dip the quills in hot water until the
   membrane softens and can be removed.

4 Hang a bunch of quills in steam from
   a boiling pot until the membrane
softens.

5 Put the quills in very hot sand until
   the outer membrane softens and can be
stripped off.

       The next step is to clean the
feathers with a rough piece of cloth or
a piece of dogfish skin. After this,
the nib may be shaped with a sharp knife
and the quill is ready for use.

       Ink can be made from a wide variety
of materials. Recipes for ink abound in
old books. Strong coffee, boiled tree
bark, the autodigested ink cap mushroom,
and the dried, powdered roots of the
yellow flag iris all make inks varying
in colour from sepia to black. Indian
ink is mainly lampblack and glue.
Invisible ink is made from the juice of
lemon or other acid fruit, or milk. The
words are not revealed until the paper
is toasted over a fire or candle.

+++

Grabbing the casual reader's Attention

by Wallace Nicoll

From the feedback I've had so far on the series (after only a couple of issues of the new format d&d) it seems that my articles have attracted the gazes of the subscribers. Hopefully the content is worthy of this attention.

One of the primary aims of the designer is to make an idea appear attractive to the reader, even though he may be skimming over the pages. If the magnet is there the reader will return when in the right frame of mind to properly digest the article. But the job has been done. The advertising has been successful. The bait taken.

There are a great many ways of triggering the mind, and I don't want to say "this is the way to do it". Look around you - in the press, in magazines, on the tv, or on bill-boards - for ideas. Take these ideas and tailor them to suit your own requirements.

Most zines have few pictorial elements within them, so it doesn't really seem worthwhile going into details on ways to attract the readers attention using subtle graphical effects.

What ways can you make an article more attractive to the casual reader?

By incorporating relevant illustrations within the body of the article introduces areas of a different texture and open space. It is probably best to put illustrations at the top or the foot of the page. Text can be inserted irregularly around the illo., following the shape, or else left in a block of standard width. It often depends on the shape of the illo. which you choose. I would avoid inserting an illo so that the lines of text continue across it, as it is very difficult to scan.

Irrelevant illos mislead the reader about the article, and its contents. But who am I to preach against the use of incidental space-filler artwork! For most of this

series I have tried (but not always succeeded) to find relevant illos and include them in the correct context.

It may be interesting, and is definitely effective, to use a visual trick to lead the reader through the maze of an article. A pointing finger, or the position of the head, in an illo. is a subtle way of guiding the reader. We subconsciously follow. Illos of rope, or chains, are useful too to tie the bits of an article together. Avoid directional indicators that lead the reader in the wrong direction. You want him/her to retain an interest so that they finish reading the column/article. Not skip it because they find it difficult, or boring, to read.

In a previous contribution I reversed the lettering in one of my headings. Unusual. Unexpected. Perhaps the idea worked. You can do lots of things with lettering to give added impact. Where a double letter occurs, have them sit back to back. Vary the typeface from letter to letter which leads to the ransom note/punk style. Use an unusual typeface. Leaf the letters over. Turn them upside down. Cut them. Scratch them. Use a style or layout which reflects the meaning of the word, or add a few little graphics to go with it.

Illustrations and fancy titles go a long way to attract the reader to an article, but you have to make the content accessible too, so what can you do to achieve this?

PARAGRAPHS

The introduction of spaces, headings, emphasised words, etc. make the mass of words on the page look easier to digest. Instead of a daunting field of monolithic grey, it comes in apparently shorter and easier to tackle chunks. Readers will feel that they require less commitment of both time and energy to consume the article. Belch!

Paragraphing, and the insertion of spaces between is probably the easiest way to break the text up. Yet paperback novels do not use this convention. Perhaps, because we expect page after page of even-textured greyness in a novel, we overlook this variation.

In addition to inter-paragraph spacing, we can indent the opening line of each new paragraph by a regular amount.

Having no indent provides a crisp st:rt to copy especially after a title or subheading, and gives a neat left hand edge. This is often quite effective where there are short paragraphs, such as with brisk dialogue.

I normally use a five-space indent, but even this is unnecessary. It is quite common to see a two-space indent, especially where the columns are narrow.

Deep and half line indents are rare, and should be used carefully,

otherwise there may be problems of creating giant chasms between the paragraphs. They can be quite effective with fairly blocky text as they allow a bit of air into the text.

Hanging indents can also be used, but ..gain care must be taken when using them.

SUB-HEADINGS

These help   lead the reader through the article. It might be more fruitful to include a series of annotated diagrams to show some of the options, rather than try to put them into words. I have used, what is termed, "bodytext" in the illustrations. It is of no consequence. Do not try translating it. It is garbage. It is available in a range of styles and sizes from the major lettering manufacturers, and is widely used in advertising graphics to give clients an impression of the text area, and how it will relate to the illustration being used.

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1 esse molestaie son consequat, vel illum trud exercitation ullamcorpor suscipit.

Lasmo

Ut enim ad minimum veniami quis nos laboris nisi ut aliquip e. ea commodo dolor in reprehenderit in voluptate velit dolore eu fugiat nulla pariatur. At vero qui blandit praesent lupatum delenit sint occaecat cupidat non provident,

The Normal case and most successful. Comfortable. Left hand lines up with text.

2 eos et accusam et justo odio dignissim gue duos dolor et molestais exceprur.

Hamilton

Duis autem vel eum irure dolor in reprehend son consequat, vel illum dolore eu fugiat et justo odio dignissim qui blandit praesent et molestais excerptur sint occaecat cupidat in culpa qui officia deserunt mollit anim id harumd dereud facils est er expedit distinct.

Does not always work — if heading long or very short. Can lead to large open areas at the sides — fill 'em with lines or flutes!

3 deserunt mollit anim id est laborum autem vel est er expedit distinct.

Ranger

At veru eos et accusam et justo odio dignissim delenit aigue duos dolor et molestais exceprur provident, simil tempor sunt in culpa qui laborum et dolor fugai. Et harumd dereud liber a tempor cum soluta nobis eligend cum

Unusual and interesting. Need to lead eye back to start of text in next line

4 comque nihil quod a impedit anim id es voluptas assumenda est, omnis doloc.

Unocal

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur eiusmod tempor incidunt ut labore et et aur office debit aut rum rerum necessit sint et molestia non este recusand. Itaque delectus au aut prefer endis dolorib

Add a rule. Vary its weight. It can go above and/or below. Vary its form. Dash it. Double line above. Line above puts heading with its own text.

Adding annotations by hand gives extra emphasis to a point. With side scores you can indent the text to allow the left 'score' to line up with the rest of the text; or else leave them outside the confines of the column of text. Hand written text annotations should not be overused, and it is probably better to use a fine nib pen than a heavy one. They give the effect of an afterthought, or comment from a previous reader, and are especially effective if over-printed in a contrasting colour.

RULES

These are drawn lines of regular width and are called 'rules' in a typesetting context since 'lines' refer to lines of text. Rules are cheap, simple, and don't require any editing effort, though they can appear a bit terminal unless they are used as an obvious design element. Within text, use fine line weights, or dots; or else use a short length of line in the centre of the column. Use a heavy rule to signify the end of an article.

You can use vertical rules as well. For example, the fine lines I use between the two columns help to separate the text, and hopefully make it easier to read the text.

OPENING A PARAGRAPH WITH A LARGE LETTER

A natura profic facile explent sine julla nobis eligend optio comque nihil quod a impedit facer possum omnis es voluptas assumenda est, autem quinsud et aur office debit aut rum rerum ut er repudiand sint et molestia non este recusand.

M anim id quod maxim placeat tenetury sapiente delectus au aut ego cum tene sententiam, quid est nebevol, olestias access potest fier ad auge toen legrum odioque civjuda. Et tamen in

Ensure that the first word of the text reads from the opening letter, and that the text lines up evenly.....

UNDERLINING

Use underlining as a graphical element, rather than a means of adding a little emphasis to the word. With a type-writer it is difficult to achieve any great cotras for a particular word. In typesetting, the underlined word might have been italicised for effect.

If you are underlining a sub-heading, try varying the line weight. Make it heavy, or extend it across the full width of the page or column.

5 sentntiam, quid est cur verear ne ad eam ros quos tu paulo ante cum memorite.

Mobil

Nam liber a tempor cum soluta nobis olestias access potest fier ad augendas odioque civiuda. Et tamen in busdad ne imper ned libiding gen epular religuard

Extend rules across the page.

6 umdnat. Improb pary minuiti potius dodecendense videantur

—— Total ——

Nam liber a tempor cum soluta nulla aequitated fidem. Neque hominy efficerd possit duo conteud notiner si liberalitat magis em conveniunt. Dab al is aptissim et ad quiet.

7 peccand quaerer en imigent cupidat inura autend unanc sunt isti.

Conoco ═══

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consecterur adipscing elit, sed diam nonnumy eiusmod magna aliquam erat volupat. Ut enim ad exercitation ullamcorpor suscip laboris nisi

8 non provident, simil tempor sunt est laborum et dolor fugai.

Amoco

Endium carital praesent cum atib saepe everuet ut er repudiand earud rerum hic tenetury sapiente

Put a box round the heading.

BOXES

Boxes can be used around individual items on a page, like adverts or illustrations, though I personally detest the style whereby the page is split into two columns by a line, then lots of small items, such as game prefs or comments,are each separated by lines i.e.

asperiore repellat.	neque nonor imper ned nulla praid im umdnat.
dolor repellend. Tempo enit atib saepe eveniet que earud rerufi hic asperiore repellat.	Temporem autem quins magist and et dodecend ad iustitiami aequitated
modut est neque nonor itat, quas nulla praid im coercend magist and et et dolor fugai.	Hanc ego cum tene ante nost ros quos ru paulo
	Duis sunt in culpa qui que neg facile efficerd forunag veling en liberal
accommodare nost . Nos amice et nebevol, a factor rum toen legum	Et harumd dereud facils
	At vero eos et accusam in voluptate velit esse molesta
elit, sed diam nonnumy aliquam erat volupat.	
ceat facer possim omnis	Invitat igitur vera ratio bene luperum delenit aigue duos

Makes it look like a road/route map.

In the hobby now I see a trend towards putting boxes around the text on a page. Constance Hackett was, perhaps, the initial culprit, but I'm probably as much to blame as her, since I've used the medium to a greater extent, varying the style from one issue to another. Boxes confine and restrict the text, allowing regularity and continuity of style/presentation throughout an article. This is a subject I may return to later.

Simple, single line boxes are dull. Be imaginative. Experiment. Add variety. Vary the line weights, or line configuration. Emphasise the corners, or break the border to insert a title, or other graphical element.

Patterned letraline, mentioned previously, can be used to create an original, and different border to a page, but put a little thought into relating the style to the article.

However, there is a problem with putting boxes around whole pages of text. When the sheet is being copied it is quite likely that it will move sligthly. Even borders will become irregular, skew,etc. There is no real way to avoid this. It is something we've got to live with in the amateur business. In professional printing the hardware used in the production of litho plates, etc. is very accurate, so what you draw, or write, will come out exactly as you have the original.

PAGE-TONE AND PASTE UP TEXT AREAS

One method of adding a little colour to page layout, but one which I have yet to try as the circumstance has not cropped up yet, is to use a sheet of Letratone, and paste the text on, leaving textured areas around it. It is probably of most use for a single page on which there are a lot of short, vaguely related items. If you can't aford a sheet of Letratone each time, photocopy it first, and stick the text to that. It does not take much effort to do, and can be quite effective if used sparingly.

I've decided to split this article into two sections as it would be too long for a single issue of d&d. Next time, I'll look at the preparation of hard-copy for giving to a printer for copying.

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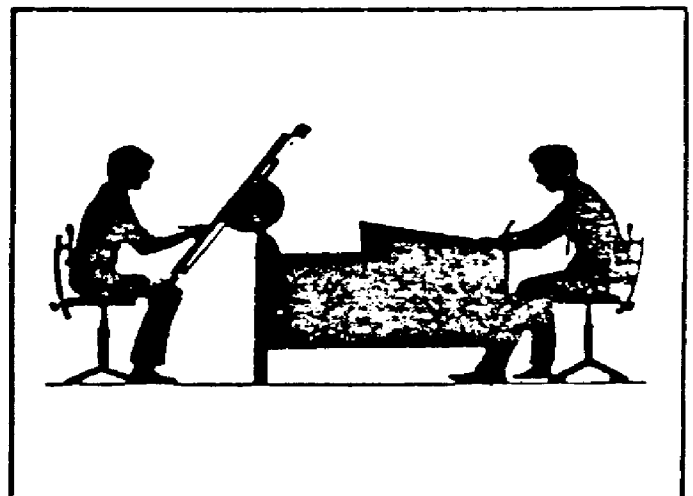
Design & Layout

by Wallace Nicoll

Of all the articles in the series, this is perhaps the one most relevant for zine editors and contributors. It is also one of the hardest to write up. I can only offer a few suggestions as to possible options. I don't want to lay down hard and fast rules. What looks good in one setting might be a visual disaster in another.

A lot of the zines I see are, to put it mildly, badly laid out. If the content is earth-shatteringly good, it does not matter how well, or badly, it is laid out. People will still read it avidly, and take in what is being said without question. With less exciting, or revealing, text, it is necessary to introduce elements to attract the reader.

Editors are inevitably overworked, shorthanded, underfinanced and behind schedule. Editors of all varieties of publications are also fundamentally word-oriented.

For many editors artwork is a secondary element, necessary for dressing up pages of interminable text.

Editors know what they like in terms of design when they see it elsewhere. But they are too often unable to use this insight to improve their own work.

Experiment with ideas. Risk failure. Even if you don't create perfection every time, who cares?

Designers, like editors, are overworked, shorthanded and underfinanced. They are even further behind schedule than editors because they get squeezed between editorial delays and unextendable publishing deadlines.

Publication design is not an arcane, occult, esoteric skill. There is no secret password or handshake to get into the club. Page design is merely the last step of the editing process.

Great literature needs no typographic break-up: people will read it in spite of its length, page after dull, grey page. They know it will be worth the effort.

Learn from making mistakes - you don't learn from being correct first time around.

Looking pretty is a by-product: the prime purpose of an art director's work is to apply his or her knowledge of design techniques to catapult ideas off the page into the reader's mind.

The vast majority of raw material we are faced with using in our publications is just plain dull. Most of it is repetition of, or if we are lucky, variation on the same old themes whose importance lies within the information they contain.

So, I have this idea for an article in the zine. Normally I write a rough copy, just like writing an essay, to get down what I want to say. Leave to mature for a week, or so, then return to it, to edit, revamp bits, and tidy up the English. In the meantime I've worked out, roughly, how many pages it will take up, and design the layout. This latter element includes illustrations, titling, whether I use two columns of text, or a full width, and a decision whether to use a border or not.

Sometimes I draw a layout sketch. I did one for the opening page of the previous article, but the final layout was different (slightly) to that initially envisaged.

I do the illustrations first and put them aside. Sometimes they will come from 'commercially available art' books which are widely used in adverts. Alternatively, I do the illo myself. I then type the text once it's to my satisfaction.

If I'm typing full width I'll draw the borders and the position of the illos, and then type the words around, or within, these limits. On completion I stck down the illos and add the title in Letraset, or whatever medium I'm using.
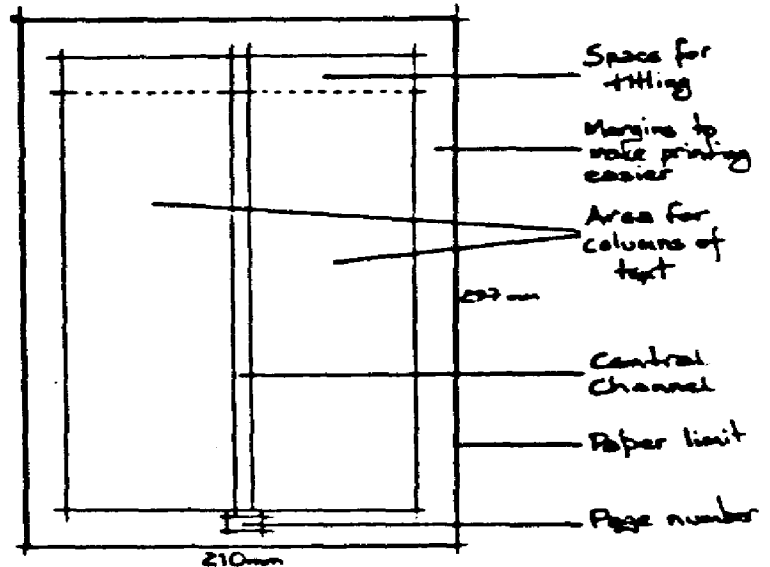
If I'm doing columns I find it easier to use a sheet of A3 paper, and cut the text up before paste-up. This means that you can fit the text around

illos, and that the columns are of equal length, especially important where there is on odd half page.

Two columns fit reasonably onto an A4 page - before typing, make sure that you leave enough room to fit them into any borders, and to have a wide-enough channel down the centre of the page.

So you've decided you want a couple of columns. The underlying page structure is called a grid into which the text and illustrations fit.

Space for titling
Margins to make printing easier
Area for columns of text
Central Channel
Paper limit
Page number
210mm

AN EXAMPLE OF THE BASIC GRID USED FOR MOST OF THE GRAPHICS ARTICLES. If you want to type full page, use the same grid, but disregard the central channel.

If you want to achieve consistency of page layout it is essential to draw up a universal grid covering a double spread. It is best to draw this onto film (acetate is best).

Look at two facing pages at a time, rather than the individual pages as this will give a better impression of the overall layout. Alter the layout until you are happy with it. Move the component parts around - treat it like a jigsaw - until everything fits together nicely.

For lining up text, and positioning titling I use a light table and a mm grid (like graph paper). The light box consists of a sheet of frosted glass resting on a wooden box, inside which are a couple of short strip lights. The light table serves a number of uses - looking at my holiday slides, tracing drawings, and laying text up ready for copying. Alternatively use a window, or sheet of glass and an anglepoise.

I actually use a sheet of clear film onto which the mm grid has been photo-chemically transferred, but I believe these can be purchased from specialist shops. One sided graph paper could be used, but more light gets through the film, making it a little easier to work with.

Most papers and light card are suitable for mounting your material on. If you are using the light box, tape the grids to the glass, with the paper over it. Glue the text and illos in place. Without access to a light box, you can draw your grid onto each mounting paper/card in pencil (non-reprographic pencils are available (light blue/purple which don't show when they are copied) and paste the material up.

I use aerosol 'spray mount' made by 3M for paste-up - it's quick, and clean, but remember to protect the surface you're spraying on. Alternatively use any of the normal paper glues, such as Cow Gum, Pritt, Gloy, etc.

With spray glue you get a light, even coating over the whole sheet, and there's no excess squeezed out from under it when you rub over it to get rid of any air bubbles.

3M manufacture three types of spray glue - "Spray Mount" in a blue can, "Photo Mount" in a red can, and "Display Mount" in a brown can. The lables claim that the glues allow repositioning before permanent bonding. Treat this with caution, or rather, make sure you have everything lined up first time, just in case you can't peel the layers apart. Of the three I prefer the "Photo Mount". Unfortunately, cans of spray mount cost about £5 each - it's difficult to say how long each one lasts.

Some folk have asked where I get all my ideas for illustrations from. Look around - in newspapers, Sunday Supplements, women's magazines, specialist hobby publications e.g. bike, photo, or military. Illos may be lifted direct, others are converted as they won't copy well. Pick-up anything that might be useful. Even the most seemingly innocent bit of artwork may be just what you want to fill that gap at the bottom of a page: Yes like the one there...............

PASTING UP A MAGAZINE OR PAMPHLET READY FOR THE PRINTER TO WORK FROM............

Most A5 reduced fanzines are printed on A4 paper from ready-reduced artwork. I know that some printers prefer to have the original A4 sheets, then reduce them in their correct positions. If you take a zine to bits you will find that there seems to be little logic in the numbering on each sheet.

If you have to make up the page order for a pamphlet/zine of more than four sides, it is often best to make up a dummy using blank paper, and number the pages. When you know how many sides - it must be a number divisible by four for an A5 reduced format - you can tape the pages up in their correct positions. For an eight page booklet:-
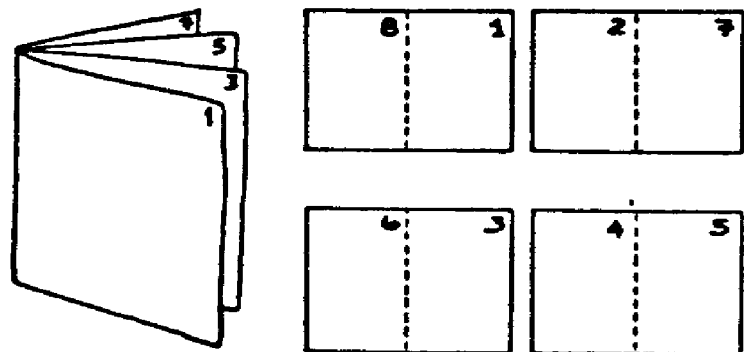
It will help the printer if you put page numbers on, or at least mark them on the rear of each double page spread if you don't want to put them on the page itself.

CHAPTER 5

MODES OF ZINE PRODUCTION

Using Spirit Reproduction
by Konrad Baumeister

Spirit reproduction, or "ditto" to steal a brand name, was once far more popular than it is today, and that is in many ways a shame. Today many print runs are in excess of 150, pictures are run, and people lack the necessary time or inclination to get involved in their own publishing. Moreover, there is the popular conception that offset and xerox look more "professional", and that this is a desirable thing to be. The first assumption is correct; the latter incorrect. Xerox and offset are a betrayal of the fannish ideals of the hobby. Any dunderhead can achieve a brilliant effect using these modes of repro; that is not true of ditto.

Ditto's popularity did not stem from reasons of fannishness alone, however. It still enjoys some advantages over other, more "professional", methods. It is relatively inexpensive. Buying a machine will set you back maybe $200 or so. Automatic and manual machines are available; I lean towards the manual for two simple reasons: they're cheaper, and there are fewer things that can go wrong. Purple masters will set you back maybe 10¢ apiece in lots of 100, with other colors slightly higher. Duplicator paper costs about $6 per ream in white, and $7 in colors, no more than any other paper. Colors are pretty simple to do, which is not true of any other reasonably-priced method. It is very versatile and convenient to use; not much mess. It's a process you can own and therefore control; that xerox machine at work can be taken away at any time, or your friend with the mimeo might move out of town. ((Editor's Note: Flawed logic, that. Who says you always own the ditto while a friend always owns the mimeo?))

Operation is simple. You'll need a ball-point pen, a razor blade, and your typewriter. Take out the onion-skin separator so that the back of the white sheet is against the carbon. Since the top of the master will have to hook into the machine when you run copies, start your page an inch or so from the perforation, and start typing just the way you type a letter, with the ribbon in. If you make a mistake, go back and strike over. You might want to mark the error lightly with a bright-colored felt-tip pen, so that you can find it easily later.

When you're done with the page, turn the master over and you'll see that the purplish carbon is now on the back. Use your razor blade to scratch out letters you don't want, or adjust letters you've struck over. To keep the carbon from getting all over your hand, rest your hand on the onion-skin sheet. If you don't, it should wash off fairly easily, but watch your clothes.

Using colors is just about as easy. You use one master, but use carbons of different colors under it. A multicolor master is only run off once. The only trouble with color is that most colors besides purple (red, black, yellow, green, whatever) are not very good for longer runs, and except for black are rather light to begin with. Tinker with your fluid meter to find out what works best for you.

Drawing or writing should be done with a ball-point pen, or pencil. Felt-tip pen is no good for this because the carbon will not transfer to the master. Felt-tip pen is good for marking errors or the last line on the page or rough drawing features (that you'd trace over with pen later).

The actual running off isn't too much harder. Use 20 lb. paper, "duplicator" paper only. Duplicator paper is sold by the ream in a number of colors. It feels sort of slick to the touch, and is less absorbent than bond or mimeo paper. Paper of 20 lb. weight or above is suitable to be printed on both sides without bleedthrough.

Make sure you've got fluid in the thing, set the pressure fairly low to start, and increase as you see your copies becoming faint. The more fluid you're using, the higher your chances for bleedthrough, so the accent is on legibility, not darkness. Generally, I run all of the odd numbered sides first, then shuffle, fan, or blow through them until they're completely dry. Stacking them and blowing through works best for me; if one sheet is not separated from another, it will stick when you print the backs, and will mess you up. Also, you'll want the paper to be as close to evenly-aligned as you can get it, or your feeder will feed irregularly.

When you do your run, figure about 8-10% paper waste. It is a very unusual run in which every front and back copy comes out just right, and you don't want to go back and print short runs of each master again.

((Publishing by ditto can indeed be an extremely rewarding experience, as I too found out. I've a couple of little quibbles with Konrad's advice above. Most

ditto publishers agree with him that you should leave the ribbon in while typing a ditto master, but I always had better luck with the ribbon out. Also, I got by without the razor blade. Whenever I'd mangle a word beyond repair, I'd simply cross it out with the ball-point and just type the word over immediately _after_ the messed-up portion. Then, when I finished typing the sheet, I'd turn it over and white out all the crossed-out words. This left a few unsightly blank spaces on each page, but it was a much easier way of making corrections. Of course, it won't work if you aren't a reasonably accurate typist...))

The ditto machine: a pleasure to use

Publishing by Mimeography

by Ron (California) Brown

So, you are considering publishing a Diplomacy zine, eh? If so, then you must obviously be considering which medium to use to reproduce your zine. There are several choices available to you. The one choice we will concern ourselves with is mimeography -- the use of the mimeograph machine.

The mimeo has a special place, traditionally speaking, in "fan" type hobbies. Postal Dip is, in reality, an offshoot of Science Fiction fandom. Most of the old Sci-Fi (or SF) fan zines were done via mimeograph. Numerous old Dippy zines employed mimeo as their repro method. But, you don't see very many mimeographed zines around any more, primarily because of the affordability of photo-copy/offset printing which has become all the rage of the late 70s and into the 80s of Dip publishing. However, there is still a case to be made for the old-fashioned way of doing things, and I will presume to tell you all about it!

First of all, why consider using mimeo to reproduce your zine? Under certain circumstances, it gives you more control over the printing of your zine and it still may be more economical in the long run. For instance, say you're a little late in getting your zine done up because of those real-life pressures that seem to get in the way of important matters -- like Dip. So you have finished the typing of your zine, but it's 6:00 PM. You have no choice but to wait until tomorrow, take your originals to the printer, and come back the next day to pick them up (not to mention the shock of finding out the cost!). If you owned your own mimeograph, when you finished the typing at 6:00, you could run it off, and complete the collation of pages, addressing, and stamping all that same evening! So, it can be more efficient than being forced to rely on someone else to do it for you.

As for the expense involved, you will have to fork over some bucks in order to make the original investment in a machine. A good mimeograph machine is not cheap. If you keep your eyes open and are not in a big hurry to get one right away, you can probably find one that is no longer needed by a church or school, or even a private individual, and buy their used machine for a bargain price. Mimeos also vary a great deal in price according to the manufacturer. Gestetner is the "Cadillac" of the mimeo world. But they are quite expensive. (I bought a used machine from

Gestetner -- it had been a school demo for a year -- for $1,000.) A.B. Dick makes reliable machines (if not as good) for more reasonable prices. I would not suggest you buy one brand new from an office supply store. You will pay too much.

However, once the original investment has been made, you can produce a zine about as cheaply as possible. The supplies required to reproduce by mimeo are stencils, correction fluid, and ink. Twenty-four one-page stencils run about $10.00. Correction fluid lasts a long time and costs about $2.00 per bottle. The ink varies in price, usually costing around $8.00 per tube. It usually takes me two or three issues to use up a tube of ink. So, you can see that once you have made that initial investment, compared to the costs of photo-offset (around $50.00 - $80.00 per issue), mimeo isn't such a bad way to go.

As for the mechanics of using mimeo, they really aren't that hard. You begin by running the machine for a few minutes and allowing the ink to soak into the pad. Gestetner uses a silk screen pad. After the ink is there, stop the machine and attach your typed stencil. Adjust your paper feed, turn on the machine, and stop it after you have the desired number of copies. Once you have your copies, you may dispose of the stencil and go right on to your next page. It is usually better to go through your odd page numbers first, then run them all through a second time adding the backsides, the even-numbered pages. This allows the ink a bit more time to dry on the paper and reduces the amount of smudging.

Well, I suppose that's really about all there is to it, mechanically that is. The final thing I will add is that using the mimeograph gives you a sense of total control over your zine. It helps foster a sense of pride in your zine as you are producing it ENTIRELY. From the creation of the words on the page, to the actual printing of those words, to the collating, stapling, stamping, and addressing you know that the product you send in the mail is totally and completely YOUR handiwork.

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Printing the Zine Professionally

by W. Elmer Hinton Jr.
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The day was when every newsletter publisher had a totally do-it-himself operation. He produced his work at home on his own mimeograph or spirit duplicator (ditto) press, bought for the purpose. He did all "printing", collating, folding, bindery, and mailing with no outside help. Professional printing rates, even offset printing rates, were prohibitive and photocopies, also somewhat expensive, were generally of poor quality.

In time photocopies became less expensive and of better reproductive quality, costing as little as 3¢ per page (under reduction), compared with 1-2¢ for traditional means, but without the investment in a press, or in time running one.

Then printing began to be competitive as zines became somewhat larger and as legibility and ease of production became factors, while inflation made the costs comparable to photocopying. These prices, and the full availability of the "quick" printing offset plants have made the offset professionally printed zine a viable option in today's hobby market.

Professional printing made be divided into two parts. One is full line lithography where metal type is used in metal plates to reproduce text. The second is "offset" (as opposed to typeset) printing. At first this also used metal plates, created by a photoengraving process from a "camera ready" original. The original, set up exactly as it should look, was photographed, and this photograph transferred to the metal by use of an acid ("etch") bath. Today even this form of printing can cost twice conventional offset prices. In the early 70s a new form of offset printing became very common, spawning offset shops in great numbers (such as "Insty Prints" and "Postal Instant Press" (PIP), neither of which I recommend, by the way). This method uses a photostatic plate rather than a metal plate. The "camera ready" original, with all text, graphics, and photographs, is "shot" by the camera onto a photostat which becomes the plate for the offset press. There is some loss of detail to very fine-lined drawings, and some limitation where photographs are used, but this process is more than adequate for the demands of any zine.

Nowadays, "typesetting" is often done on phototypesetting machines which produce galleys (strips of finished original ready for set-up) which can actually be used in a "camera ready" original; so, a typeset book may actually never have involved a block of metal type in its production. However, any form of typesetting is generally too expensive for zines.

The cost of offset printing is also variable. A printer might charge $50 for 1000 two-sided sheets (1½¢ per page), but charge $15 for 100 of the same (3 times as much). This means that, for hobby sized runs, a zine can be produced at prices competitive to photocopy, but not much less. The real benefit lies in the ease and flexibility of production of the zine, and the variety of uses, as well as the prestige

of having a commercially produced product. Balancing price, also, is legibility and quality of reproduction.

Setting up zines for photocopy requires glueing or taping paper to your master sheet, and living with "shadow lines" around some or all of the edges where they meet. "Gray" areas show up as well as stray bits of toner from the copier, and dark areas or photographs from newspapers may blur or run together ("close up"). Photocopiers look at an item and try to reproduce, more or less, what is seen. As a light pans across it, any shadows that result are picked up on the copy.

Offset printing begins with a first step like the copier in that a camera takes a picture of the original. Already one difference affects the quality in that a bank of lights is used to make sure that no one light source will cause the kind of shadowing effect mentioned. This can happen if lighting isn't well balanced or due to a very badly set-up original, though, but rarely.

Then, the photostatic plate is placed on the press. The blackest areas are raised slightly and will hold ink for transfer to the paper. Gray areas won't be raised sufficiently, or won't be able to hold ink, and so even if they show up on the plate they tend to "wash out", increasing the quality by eliminating the set-up lines. There can be problems, perhaps with a camera developer, or with the plate or a hundred other little things, but these are not more than one-tenth as common as when photocopying. Generally, a clean original will produce a clean product.

Suppose that you want to try offset printing. First you need to choose a format. The most efficacious is the digest-sized booklet. When I began publishing via offset printing, in late 1976, the number of printed zines, or for that matter booklet zines, could be counted on both hands with room to spare. Price was a more important factor then. Today, whether photocopy or otherwise, this format is the most popular, partly because it is the most cost-effective. This means that the original will go through a reduction, making the text smaller, though not too difficult to read. It also means that a booklet rather than a newsletter style will be your finished product.

You can use the reduction and keep a newsletter ((also called "open page")) style, but this makes for long lines of reading (unless broken up into columns) and very long pages which I find tiring to the eye. In booklet format, since the reduction generally works out to a bit over a page of text per "page", the psychological disadvantage is eliminated, as well as a bit of eyestrain.

The advantage of newsletter format is that you can print two pages back-to-back, and simply collate whatever number of sheets are printed for that issue. The booklet format takes a good bit of extra planning. Each booklet sheet will have four pages and the order in which they are printed must be determined before your start laying out the issue.

Pagination is actually easy once you get the hang of it. Each issue will have a multiple of four (the number of pages per sheet) pages. The outer cover will be page 1 (on the right) and the last page (on the left). All of the odd numbers will always be on the right no matter which side of the sheet you look at. The back of the cover will carry the second and second-to-last pages. Each inner sheet will carry the next numbered page in order (if the issue were 24 pages, that would make the second sheet pages 22/3 backing 4/21). You can check these numbers as you go along by paging through the originals to be sure. ((Editor's Note: Each pair of pages should add to n + 1, if the zine has n pages.)) As a check, when I get my sheets home from the printer, I lay them out for collation and put together the first booklet, and check this for errors. If the back is on the wrong sheet (and my original is correct in this respect), back it goes for a free correction from the printer, immediately.

I suggest figuring out the probable size of an issue, then setting up the page numbers and checking them on each sheet before doing any other layout work.

Room must be made for margins. As an editor, I say if you can't produce the text legibly and readably, don't bother. When offset printing, there is even greater reason for not crowding the margins. To run through a press the paper is pulled by a "gripper" which generally requires a full ½ inch of margin space, usually along the short side of the sheet. You have to leave a great deal more (I recommend 3/4 inches) for the reduction to leave that ½ inch remaining on all sides. This gives my own zine, <u>Kaissa</u>, a per page text area of about 6 8/10ths inches (69 characters) by 11½" (69 lines), which I divide into 32/33 character columns for convenience.

If you use more than 4 to 6 sheets, though, the outer margins must be increased. Inner sheets in any bundle of paper folded in half will move outward to compensate for the spine thickness. A respectable zine would be trimmed to make these edges even, but this results in slightly less paper per page. For each 3 sheets over 24 pages I leave an additional 1/16 inch for trimming, on the outside edge of each page; I move the gutter margins slightly toward the center to compensate. Trimming is always done after binding and folding.

Remember, after binding, the margin in the gutter should be the same as that around the edges; so when setting up, the space across the middle of each sheet between pages will actually be twice the edge margin width.

In printing, you always want to make best use of the form, so always use a carbon film ribbon, rather than a nylon or fabric ribbon. The latter become worn and as the darkness fades, so too does the quality of the printing done from it. Since gray can't be printed, the letters will appear fuzzy and broken as pieces "wash out". The carbon or film ribbon is more expensive and usable only once, but is worth it for the sharpness of reproduction.

The same rule applies to artwork. Art should be in black with no gray in it. The illusion of grays areas is created by "screening" photographs or sketches. This process reduces the graphic to a series of dots of various sizes, ezch of which is absolutely black (see any newspaper photograph for an example). These black dots will wash out only if reduced or if the number of them in the screen is too high. Most offset places can handle a coarse screened item of 80-100 lines (of dots per inch). Metal plates can handle much more delicate work and higher line screen material. Reduction can also close up areas.

Remember, color will not reproduce as a color; red, for example, always shows up as pure black. Other colors may wash out.

In creating your master, or in making notes or corrections, always use a "non-reproducable blue" pencil (be sure it says "non-repro blue" on it). This is a light blue color that washes out by virtue of printing (caution: it has been known to show up quite well in photocopying, however!), and so it can be used to draw your margin and guidelines on your master sheets, to guide set up work, and to number pages or make notes where errors exist during proofreading.

When you get your order from the printer, be sure to inspect it. You should receive between 90% and 100% of the amount you ordered in acceptable condition; if less than this results be sure to find out why and how fast the situation can be fixed. You can have the printer do collation, folding, and binding (two staples are a must), or you can do that part yourself if you have a "long reach" stapler. ((A center ("saddle") stapler will do the job too...)) These cost in the neighborhood of $50, but allow you to knock off enough to pay for itself in just a few issues compared to having the shop do the work. The down side is that you must do the work of collating the pages together, staple them along the center, and fold them to produce the booklets.

When deciding on frequency of the zine, consider the amount of time your printer says he will usually take. If you do the bindery yourself, add one day to this. Kaissa, for instance, is deadlined on a Saturday, delivered to the printer Monday morning, and usually returns the following Thursday when it is put together and mailed. This means, on a 4-week schedule, the players have about the same amount of negotiation time as in a home-produced 3-3½ week zine. As a result I send Canadian players copies of the game result immediately so that the production delay won't leave them without play time. For them it allows the same time as another 4-week zine.

The big advantage with printing is that you can reuse headlines and logos, or introduce standards without a great deal of retyping each issue. You can also experiment with headline styles for games or articles, using transfer letters or artwork, such as letraset. Probably the biggest asset, though, is in creating material ahead of time which can then be used later according to your layout plan. By carefully measuring the lengths of pieces (I do so in inches rather than lines because no typer platen is perfect) and recording this, along with the variable space needed for headlines, you can plan your issue on paper before setting it up. This allows you to create a harmony among the pieces, and a pleasant reading stmosphere, unavailable in zines where one thing is simply typed after another until the thing is filled up to here like some storage room.

After a bit of experimenting I think you'll find the ease and versatility of printing to be the way of printing a zine.

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Computers and Publishing

by Dave Kleiman

In the publication of The Diplomat over the past four and one-half years, I have used my personal computer to assist in the production of the 'zine in many ways. I can definitely state that if I did not have the computer, I would not be publishing today. That, I believe, should quantify the value of the computer to a publisher.

But functionally, what can a computer to do to help in the production of a Diplomacy publication? I suppose the fundamental support the computer can provide is word processing. A computer with a good word processing package is a very powerful tool for the publisher. First, the publisher can spread the production of his magazine out over a number of weeks. To do so manually would require extensive planning (what goes on what pages), and extensive guessing (how much room for press is 1989AF going to need?). Without the automated support, the publisher that types much of his publication ahead of time ends up with a good number of "continued on page whatever"'s. And of course, the ability to correct his work after reviewing it is a tremendous help.

However, one of the things that I found quite useful with the word processing is the checking of a unit's position. An unforseen problem with postal Diplomacy GMing is the need to check a player's orders for the existance of an ordered unit. That can be accomplished with word processing by copying last issue's game results before starting on this issue and stripping it down to show the positions of the units. An example of this technique:

```
Austria (John Doe):      A BUD, A SER, F ALB.
England (Fred Smith):    F NTH, F NWG, A YOR.
France (Rita Doe):       F MID, A BUR, A MAR.
Germany (Susie Public):  F DEN, A MUN, A KIE.
Italy (Dave Kleiman):    F ION, A APU, A PIE.
Russia (Tom Slick):      F BOT, F BLA, A WAR, A SEV.
Turkey (John Quest):     F CON, A BUL, A SMY.
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When it's time to GM this game, just take the new orders and edit the above skeleton. You'll immediately know whether or not a unit exists.

Now, a computer can do a lot more for a publisher if he wants it to. In the production of The Diplomat, I have added a number of easy-to-do features. I maintain my subscription list on the computer. This allows me to produce mailing labels for each issue - and if one has a rather lengthy list of subscribers, this can be quite beneficial. Additionally, I keep an indicator with each subscriber that tells me if he's in a game. That indicator is used to produce a list of players that is published as the last page of each issue. Also, I maintain and publish the phone numbers of each player that desires what I call "NMR insurance". Basically, if the player so desires, I will call him collect if he is aoout to NMR. That has been a popular feature (and a real headache for me) and the computer has helped by maintaining that phone list.

I suppose the most discussed usage of the computer for postal Diplomacy is automation of the adjudication process. The Diplomat has been "computer adjudicated" since March of 1983. I wrote the programs myself, and trust me, it is no easy task. Interestingly the biggest advantage of a computer adjudication program is not the adjudication process, but the automation of the printing of the game report. The Diplomat has a very structured appearance, and this is because of the computer adjudication process. Each game report takes up one page and each page features the results of the moves, a supply center chart, and a map. The computer automation helps the most by bringing in the players' names, keeping track of where units are from one issue to the next, maintaining a supply center chart that does not have to be typed, and knowing where to draw the units on the pre-printed map. The automation of the actual adjudication process might be more trouble than it is worth. An experienced GM can adjudicate a game in his head (assuming the computer is checking whether a unit

exists or not) in about minute. The program that I have written has undergone a number of corrections and rewrites in it's three-year life, and it still makes mistakes. Fortunately, when it makes a mistake it is normally a very obvious error, and the players are all quick to catch it.

The computer that I own is an IBM PC with 384K ram and a 20M hard drive. My computer programs are written in PASCAL and will run on a floppy drive only system with as little as 64K ram. The word processor I use is WordStar. Numerous people have asked for copies of the programs, and I have been reluctant to give them out - but not because I am selfish, but because the programs are not perfect. I depend on the programs entirely, and when they don't work (about once every 3-4 issues), it takes a programmer that understands them in detail to fix them. Perhaps someday they will be error-free - then I'll become the hobby's first perfect publisher/GM.

I guess the biggest testimony supporting the use of computers in the publication of a Diplomacy magazine is the track record of The Diplomat. I run 3-week deadlines and 10 Diplomacy games. Deadline is Friday night at 5:00 pm and The Diplomat is almost always in the mail on Saturday. Could I do that without a computer?

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Diplomacy by Electronic Mail

by Ken Hill

Play-by-electronic-mail (PBEM) Diplomacy is a fascinating and rewarding hobby that I have enjoyed for the past eighteen months. The last nine months I have been editing the oldest (as far as I know) PBEM zine in the country, The Armchair Diplomat, found in The Gamer's Forum section of the CompuServe Information Service. While the underlying idea is the same, PBEM has a different set of requirements and needs than those of a PBM system.

Starting a PBEM game might be tough at first. You would need to find a commercial consumer-oriented computer network that is willing to support your games. There are several in addition to CompuServe who might be interested. Another alternative is to find an existing bulletin board system (or BBS, a private, non-profit communications network run by an individual) or set up your own. BBS games tend to be localized, and therefore generally not rated or recognized by the national Diplomacy hobby.

In order to provide a proper environment for Diplomacy, your system must have the ability to send private messages between players as well as a "public" posting area for game reports, press, news and general discussion. The private message function would be used for orders and negotiations between players, as well as questions for the gamesmaster. Private messages should be completely confidential with no ability for anyone other than the sender or receiver to intercept and read the message.

With the instantaneous message-sending ability of a PBEM environment, you will find that the logistics of running games changes somewhat. Shorter deadlines, faster reporting, and better communication between players means smoother running games for players and GMs. Our normal deadlines on CIS are two weeks between turns. As games progress and fewer players are involved, we have successfully gone to once-a-week deadlines. Average playing time for a PBEM game has been 6-8 months.

PBEM can also have its share of unique problems. Technical problems can often prevent players or GMs from connecting to the system to participate. I have found nothing more frustrating than a player who disappears for no apparent reason. Usually, a technical problem is at fault. Also, because most commercial networks charge for connect time, it can be more expensive for a player to participate. With a BBS, the expense lies mainly with the publisher/provider of the system. Most BBS's require separate phone lines and dedicating your equipment to running the system. This can be a costly proposition for the publisher unless you can use someone else's BBS for your games. Most BBS games have modest service charges to help cover the GM's expense of running the games.

If you need more information on how to get started in PBEM, or about electronic-mail Diplomacy in general, feel free to contact me. Via CompuServe you can find me (and Diplomacy) in The Gamer's Forum (Go Gamers). My user ID is 70357,431.

((Or you can write Ken by mail -- his address appears in the insert to this handbook. PBEM is a rapidly growing segment of the Diplomacy hobby.))

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CHAPTER 6
DISTRIBUTING THE ZINE

Addressing

by Mark L. Berch

Addressing zines by hand is a tedious and time-consuming process, and if your circulation gets to be large, it can be a real drag. Moreover, some people start to get error-prone when they have a lot of repetitive work to do concerning numbers. It surprises me how many publishers address by hand, and retyping labels each time isn't a whole lot better.

The system I use is as follows. My address list is typed up on a sheet (actually, two sheets) in a standard three-line format. If I have a return address sticker ((for the subber)), I use that. The number of the last issue appears after the name. When the time comes to put out an issue, I just xerox the sheet and cut it up to make labels, which I tape directly onto the envelope or the mailing side of the zine. It's that easy. If a change of address comes in, I type up a new one and tape it over the old one on the master mailing list. New people's addresses can be put on top of long-expired ones if you like. I usually run off a second copy each month, and date it. This then allows me to have a record of what my mailing list was at any particular point in the past.

The only real expense in all this is for the adhesive tape, but even that comes to less than $\frac{1}{2}$¢ per name. Even that can be avoided by buying gummed sheets, and xeroxing directly onto them, although this can cause a problem with some copiers.

In this way, you can avoid transcription errors, not worry that you've left someone out, and save some time as well. The system has worked well for me for eight years, most of the time with circulation in three figures.

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ZIP+4 Codes...Free from the USPS

by Scott Hanson

We all bitch about the United States Postal Service, but quite frankly we couldn't have a postal hobby without them. Our first class rate is a bargain compared to most developed countries. We can mail a letter across the country as cheaply as across town, and they do a pretty good job most of the time. And they didn't pay me to say that.

One way we can get better service is to use ZIP+4, the infamous 9-digit ZIP Codes. While only huge mailers get a cheaper rate, any piece of mail will be delivered faster with ZIP+4. The USPS will find ZIP+4 Codes for your mailing list (no matter how long or short), and make sure it conforms to their standards, all for free. Just type up your mailing list in columns (no more than two columns per page, double spaces between addresses, personal names not necessary), and on a separate sheet write your name, address, phone number, date, number of pages and number of addresses in the list. Send it to ADDRESS INFORMATION SYSTEMS SUPPORT CENTER, 2825 LAMAR AVENUE, MEMPHIS, TN 38188-0001. For single addresses you can call toll-free 1-800-228-8777. They will also update addresses on a computer disk of any format; write to them or find the information in the back of the latest ZIP Code directory. It takes about three weeks, and your subbers will notice the faster service.

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Changes of Address

by Len Lakofka

Many players will take advantage of the GM if the GM gives them the chance. One of the most common abuses involves Changes of Address (COAs). Some players, prominent ones -- whatever that may mean -- will expect you to scan other publications for their COAs. This, of course, is nonsense.

Many players will list their address on their orders every season and almost all of them will have a return address on their envelopes. However, some will expect you to <u>notice</u> a change even if they do not spell one out. This, too, is nonsense.

Some players may give you a two-year itinerary of various addresses and expect you to follow it. This is also asking too much.

If a player has a COA effective for NEXT SEASON he should be required to give it to you at that time via <u>clear</u>, <u>concise</u> <u>labeling</u> on his orders. I encourage you to take the position that an error on your part due to the player's failure to give a specific COA is <u>his</u> fault.

((And I concur.))

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Trades or Mutual Subs?

by Simon Billenness and Bruce Linsey

(There are two common methods by which publishers exchange zines. One is the trade, wherein each party will simply send the other everything he publishes, at no cost. The other is the mutual subscription, wherein credit to each other's zines is exchanged and accepted as subscription money. In this debate, mutual sub advocate Bruce Linsey takes on trade proponent Simon Billenness.)

<u>Bruce</u>: Why do I prefer the mutual sub? For one thing, it makes bookkeeping easier.

<u>Simon</u>: Rubbish! There's nothing easier than simply trading. You add a name and address to your mailing list and that's it. No worries about exchanging money. No bookkeeping. No fuss.

<u>Bruce</u>: No fuss with mutual subs, either. If you exchange $10 credit with someone, you treat it <u>exactly</u> as if he had sent you a check for that amount.

<u>Simon</u>: Yes, but that's one more name from which to subtract 50¢ (or whatever) each time you put out an issue.

<u>Bruce</u>: No it isn't. Maybe some publishers keep track of sub credit that way, but not I. I keep a list of my readers and their issues of expiration, written in pencil. If someone's check for ten issues comes in (or if we exchange that amount of sub credit), I erase the "42" next to his name and make it a "52". Easy as pie. I think we're each going to have to concede that the other's system is quite simple, and that neither wins big on this point.

<u>Simon</u>: Right. So do you have any other quarrels with trading?

<u>Bruce</u>: Well, yes. Trades can force people to make unpleasant decisions, as when either party opts to discontinue the arrangement. True, the same could be said of a mutual sub, but since a trade is generally all-for-all, its termination is more likely to come across as a message that one party doesn't think it's an equitable arrangement.

<u>Simon</u>: This is true. Cutting trades is surprisingly traumatic. Editors often feel obligated to apologize when they cancel trades. "It's not that your zine is bad, but...". I feel that this shows the stronger ties that are built through trading. Trading helps turn a myriad of different publications into a close-knit, friendly community.

<u>Bruce</u>: (Snicker) I think it's going to take a lot more than trading to turn the North American hobby into a close-knit, friendly community! But seriously, I think you're searching awfully hard for a silver lining here. I certainly don't feel any less close to, say, Gary Coughlan simply because he and I mutually subscribe rather than trade. In fact, that brings me to my strongest point. Perceptions aside, trading might not <u>be</u> an equitable arrangement. A person who publishes 50 pages monthly is not getting a fair shake when he trades for a 10-page bimonthly zine. With a mutual sub, assuming that each editor is charging a reasonable price for his zine, the arrangement is more equitable. If one party is putting out a significantly smaller amount of value than the other, his end of the mutual sub will expire first and money then changes hands in the right direction. Thus, I believe that a mutual sub is a fairer arrangement.

Simon: The hobby is one of the last places where you should be bothered about what is "equitable". In real life you scrimp and save, cut costs here and get a bargain there. A hobby is something you spend money on. It's an escape from the penny-pinching daily grind.

Bruce: Look, your hard-earned cash is hard-earned whether you spend it in real life or on the hobby. All of us publishers lose money, but there's no reason not to cut costs where possible. Just because it's a hobby doesn't mean one should throw money away...and sending someone $10 worth of zines per year in exchange for $5 worth is, in my opinion, throwing money away.

Simon: I find this notion that "my zine is more valuable than yours" offensive. It's mean, obsessively money-orientated, and has no place in a friendly hobby. Besides, larger zines, on the whole, tend to be run by older, more experienced editors. By trading these for smaller, more recent publications, new editors receive encouragement they need and good examples to learn from.

Bruce: Ah, I get it -- take from the rich and give to the poor! If we don't watch it we're going to digress quickly into a debate of our respective political philosophies. But for now, let me just say that it's all very nice if a big-time editor wants to subsidize a newer, less experienced one, but he shouldn't be pressured into doing so by a hobby that condones trades and discourages the more equitable practice of mutual subs.

Simon: On the whole I feel trades -- the simple exchange of zines -- creates a friendlier, more close-knit hobby. Mutual subs certainly make more financial sense, but a hobby is not a place for financial sense. Trading helps create a community and that's more valuable than mere money.

Bruce: I'll leave it at that, then. In closing, we should point out that some publishers trade with some zines and mutually subscribe with others, so it's not necessarily a black-or-white decision.

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The Subzine Route

by Mark L. Berch and Ron (Canada) Brown

((Editor's Note: Both Mark and Ron were kind enough to submit articles on subzine publishing, each with plenty of good advice, each well-written. With their permission, I have combined the two essays into the following article.))

Putting out a zine may be more work than you want to do. The alternative is a subzine, a zine within someone else's zine. You mail the editor your material, the subzine, and he incorporates it into his zine. Most subzines stay with one zine, although there have been a few which hopped around from zine to zine, or which appeared in more than one zine at a time.

There are some immediate obvious advantages to conducting business in this way. You are freed from having to keep track of addresses and sub balances, from the logistics of stuffing and addressing envelopes. You don't have to worry about collating and stapling, or licking zillions of stamps. You'll never have to bother with sample requests, keeping back issues in stock, or missing copies. All you need do is prepare your master pages, photocopy them (for safety's sake), and mail them off to someone else. Let him have all the headaches. This is no small advantage! The above list represents some if not most of the really boring parts of putting out a zine. You are bypassing things that are non-creative, repetitious, and mechanical.

There are other advantages too. Most zines run at a financial loss, especially if commercial printing is relied upon. In most cases, the editor is not going to ask you to shoulder part of that cost. You won't need to buy any special equipment, such as a mimeo or saddle stapler. If you are running games, you'll probably have access to the main zine's standby list, which can be important if you were just barely able to get seven players to begin with. Sometimes, in fact, the editor organizes the game and then turns it over to the subzine. And finally, if need be, you can drastically cut back on the size of the subzine without having to worry that readers are going to feel gypped.

But there are some disadvantages too. You're going to be dependent on the zine's editor to get the product out. If he's late, you're late. He may set limits on the number of pages available. You can get around this on occasion by mailing the subzine independently, but that's a lot of bother and expense. The editor may even set limits on what you can say, since he may find some language or topics unacceptable. If you are the type who likes to maintain control, you are bound to be frustrated by being tied to

someone else's schedule. As a subzine editor, you have to do the accommodating. Not many main zine publishers would be willing to make major alterations in their publishing cycles just to please you. Your games (if any) will have shorter deadlines, since you must allow time for transmitting results to the publisher if he is not local. Your subzine may get bumped for lack of space or because it didn't arrive in time. (You may, on occasion, want to look into the possibility of Special Delivery or even Federal Express if your subzine absolutely has to be there in time, but these forms of mail are expensive.) You may have trouble keeping your identity amidst the welter of other materials in the issue. If you pick a poor zine to appear in, you may not get the audience you deserve, since people will usually decide where to sub on the basis of the main zine. In most cases, you won't get trade copies -- these will go to the zine editor. There is less prestige associated with being a subzine editor rather than a publisher (yes, status rears its ugly head). If a reader, for whatever reason, does not want to get the main zine you appear in, you'll lose him. Unless you and the publisher are local, telephone costs are going to add up. It will be a rare deadline when you don't need to spend 15-20 minutes on the phone working out some snag in the mutual arrangement. And you lose the advantage of being able to stick a personal note in a player's copy.

One disadvantage that I did not foresee, and which in fact still baffles me, is the amount of confusion subzines seem to generate. I've run my subzine for a year, but players still occasionally send their orders to the main zine editor (who lives 350 miles away), and send sub fees and changes of address to the subzine editor. The latter is a minor inconvenience; the former leads to NMRs and angry letters. It may be perfectly obvious to you and me that orders should be sent to the GM, but once subzines enter the picture, common sense seems to get mislaid somewhere.

Still, subzines have contributed a great deal to the hobby. They add a lot of variety, especially as they tend to be somewhat less formal than the zines they appear in. They allow their editors a much broader audience than they might ordinarily get. A person who just wants to run a game and write a page or two each month, no more, is going to have trouble going beyond his players, his good friends, and a few I'll-trade-for-anything types. But in another's zine, he can easily reach dozens of additional people. It's an important outlet for people who just don't want to publish, period. It allows people a "trial run", letting those who are leery of diving into the pool get their feet wet first. They can be useful for publishers who are having trouble filling their zines to the size they want, or who want the additional readers that a well-known subzine editor might bring with him. The subzine frequently rides on unused weight, i.e. it doesn't add to the postage bill. Thus, it can be a much cheaper way to get the material out. There have been zines, such as Coat of Arms and The Pouch, which were little more than collections of subzines. Some subzines last only one issue; others have gone on for years. Subzines sometimes jump out and become independent zines, or vice versa, and occasionally a publication will go back and forth for a while. There have even been a few sub-subzines, which appear in other people's subzines.

So give it a thought. If you're not ambitious enough to tackle publishing, the subzine might be just what you -- and another publisher -- need.

((Paragraphs 1, 3, 6, and 7 are Mark's. Paragraph 5 is Ron's. Paragraphs 2 and 4 were written by both.))

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CHAPTER 7

PUBLISHING ETHICS AND CONDUCT

Ethics and the Diplomacy Publisher

by Bruce Linsey

(Author's Note: Opinions regarding publishing and GMing ethics vary widely. The guidelines which follow represent my personal opinions. They are widely but not universally shared. Give some thought to your own personal code of ethics before you start publishing.)

When you publish a zine, you instantly assume a lot more influence than you had previously. All of a sudden people are depending on you for information about people and events elsewhere in the hobby. This visibility carries with it a tremendous obligation, for the power of the press can be (and sometimes is) abused.

Thanks to freedom of the press, a publisher can say just about anything he pleases in his zine. In fact, the ability to say what you want whenever you want to is one of the reasons some people publish in the first place. But whatever you say is going to be read by a good number of people, not all of them your subscribers, so rule #1 is to write accurately about others. This goes double when you are criticizing someone, or someone's zine, ideas, or actions. Be straightforward and factual no matter how strongly you feel. To stray from the truth, even if you don't see your comments as anything serious, is to invite disaster. The hobby has some explosive personalities. Be careful.

A corollary to this point is that it is usually unwise (not necessarily unethical) to make allegations that you can't substantiate. It is counterproductive to put people in the position of having to accept your word against someone else's, so when possible avoid this. I know, because I have done exactly that and lived to regret it.

When you print a criticism of someone, or of his zine, ideas, or actions, you should make sure he receives a copy of the issue or at least the page(s) containing the criticism (this is called a "courtesy copy"), and give him a chance to reply in your zine. The Golden Rule is your best guide here.

Unless you make it clear that you'll do otherwise, publish your zine in a timely fashion. Most publishers are late from time to time (this is a hobby after all), but the really erratic ones are not being fair to their readers. It is legitimate to put out an issue every six months or so if you have stated that this will be your schedule; it is not legit to do this while pretending that your zine will be monthly. If you can't continue in a reasonably timely fashion, the proper thing to do is fold, with prompt refunds to all subscribers. (See the section on GMing ethics for advice on handling your games.) Believe me, a prompt zine is a lot more fun and generates a lot more reader response than one whose reliability is in question. There will be occasions on which you just won't feel like putting out a zine on a deadline weekend. Do it anyway. That's an obligation you take on the minute you begin publishing.

Honor people's requests for confidentiality. If someone requests that a letter be kept off the record, do not (except under the most compelling circumstances) quote that letter to a third party. If someone labels an item "not for print", you would be remiss to publish it. Even if your judgement differs from the author's, his feelings should take priority. And even if a letter is not labeled, most publishers will (wisely) not print it if it is clear that it wasn't intended for publication.

That brings us to the matter of GMing ethics. As a GM, there are but a few ethical guidelines you should keep in mind. Always, ALWAYS, be scrupulously honest with your players. The day that you have to cover up facts regarding a game you're running is the day you should quit GMing.

However, that is not to say that you should tell your players everything; indeed, the reverse is true. GMs are sometimes told sensitive and confidential information; this player-GM confidence must be adhered to scrupulously. It is easy to be a blabbermouth when you're dealing with friends: don't let this extend to the games you're running. You'd perhaps be surprised at how sensitive the tiniest morsel of information can be. I had an enormous controversy erupt once in a game I was running, and why? All because one player thought I had dropped a hint to another that he and a third party were acquainted! Watch what you say at all times in your role as a GM. If you are ever in a position where you're not sure of yourself, clam up instantly and give yourself time to think it over or talk it over -- in confidence and without naming names -- with an uninvolved party. The appropriate words to your player would be, "I can't discuss that with you; let's change the topic." Then do just that.

By and large, practically anything goes in terms of how you will run your games, provided your players are informed in advance. If you want to do something really screwy, like letting players build inland fleets or allowing players to forge each others' orders, be my guest. Just be sure that the players know how their games will be run before they sign up. The proper place for information like this is in the houserules. Not only are players entitled to this information for its own sake, some people actually care about their ratings (don't ask me why) and have a right to know whether their games might be declared irregular (and thus, might not be rated) thanks to GMing oddities.

Finally, if you find yourself too burdened or uninterested to GM your games to conclusion, do right by your players -- contact the U.S. Orphan Service and cooperate in rehousing your games. Understandably this may cost you some ego points, but you owe your players a well-run game, even if that means giving it to someone else to run.

Much of the above may seem obvious. But there has been no small measure of trouble in the hobby caused by people who don't abide by these standards, especially the one which ought to be called the Golden Rule of Publishing: Write accurately about others. Please give serious thought to your own ethical guidelines and take care to remain calm and aboveboard in print. Your hobby enjoyment and reputation will depend in large part on how carefully you do this.

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Telephone Courtesy

by Fred C. Davis, Jr.

Everyone in the postal hobby is going to make use of the phone from time to time, whether to make or receive calls. Accordingly, it behooves us all to follow some rules of elemental courtesy when doing so.

1. Time of calls. Check to see whether the GM or player has set any limits on when to call him. Some people are night owls, and are willing to receive calls up to 1 A.M. Some households retire early, or have a small child or ill person who goes to bed early. Common sense would tell you not to phone after 10 P.M. barring some great emergency, unless the GM has told you that it's O.K. to call at a later hour.

Don't forget there is a three-hour time difference between the east and west coasts. Check the map in your phone book if you are in doubt of the time in the area you are calling. It may only be 8 P.M. in your time zone, but you could be waking someone up in the East, or disturbing someone at dinner in the West.

2. Identify yourself. No matter who answers the phone, identify yourself. You should have been taught that in grammar school. If a lady answers, this does not mean that she is mentally incompetent. The chances are that she is a wife or reasonable facsimile. If so, she is probably somewhat familiar with the game of Diplomacy. If the GM is not home, you can at least ask her if she'd be willing to take down your orders, or at least a message. Even if a child answers, you can at least leave your name and phone number. You can ask almost anyone who answers when they would like you to call back. To hang up without identifying yourself is extremely rude, especially with all the "pervert" type calls which people, especially women, are receiving these days.

3. Collect calls. These are a no-no from a player to a GM or another player, unless you are stranded in a phone booth without change. You may wish to give your GM permission to call you collect if your orders have not been received. This is an arrangement which has to be made separately for each GM. Collect calls are charged at the full rate, so they can be quite expensive. They should be used rarely, and then only with express permission.

4. Exchange of information. It is probably best to get the orders transcribed, or other business taken care of first and as quickly as possible, before socializing about the weather and other things. Remember, to some people a long-distance phone call is a significant item in their budget, so don't go on with the call after the information has been delivered, unless the other person says it's O.K. When giving or receiving orders, it's best to repeat whatever has been said, to be certain that the information has been transmitted correctly.

5. Answering machines. If you encounter such a machine, it's best to leave a brief, concise message. No goofy stuff, no obscene words. You don't know who is going to take your message.

6. Discourtesy. To end such behavior, GMs may wish to consider including the following sentence in their houserules: "Anyone behaving in a discourteous manner to any member of my family (such as using foul language or slamming down the receiver when told I'm not home) will be expelled from the game, without refund of the game fee."

((Publishers are quite a chatty bunch, and often use the phone a lot, so this article may be useful as a guideline in dealing with other publishers. Regarding Fred's proposed warning to the player who slams down the phone: this assumes you can figure out who it was. My solution to people who treat me rudely on the phone is simply to tell them to communicate with me in writing in the future.

Many (most?) publishers live with family members and don't appreciate being called at ungodly hours. I always had a houserule that players could call to submit orders or obtain results on a 24-hour basis, but that's the exception and Fred's advice is correct when dealing with normal people.))

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Copyright Law and the Pubber

by Scott Hanson

First of all, you should know what this article is not. It is not legal advice on copyright. I am not a lawyer. I do have some skills in legal research, but that's about it. I don't charge $75 an hour for my time, either.

Nor is this a guide to how to copyright your zine and articles, and how to forever keep them from being reprinted in the hobby. If you are very vain or a very hot author, you may register your issues and articles with the Copyright Office for $10 each. Basic copyright protection doesn't require registration. I don't believe a copyright can or should be used to restrict the flow of information within the hobby. We should be able to take care of our own problems without having to turn to legal means.

What I do attempt to cover is the subject of US amateur publishers reprinting material from professional sources. I don't have any clear do's and don'ts. The law is rather unclear. What it comes down to is an ethical decision on the part of each publisher.

This is something we need to think about as publishers. While we write and publish for our own amusement, there are a few lucky people able to make a living at it. Many zines reprint cartoons from various sources, most without permission. Yet cartoons are one of the most jealously guarded types of material by their creators. Is it right for us to use their products in our zines without permission or compensation? The answer is maybe yes, maybe no.

US law (Title 17, US Code) gives authors copyright, the right to control the use of the material they produce. They may sell this right to whomever they choose, and may sue for damages when their rights are infringed. This implies that the material has some economic value, and this is why copyright doesn't really apply within the hobby. What we write is often very entertaining, but it is (economically) utterly worthless.

If the law stopped there, it would be illegal to reprint anything without the author's permission, period. But there's also the concept of "fair use", situations in which it is OK to reprint without permission. This is where the law is vague. It depends on four factors: 1) the purpose and character of the use, including whether such use is of a commercial nature or is for non-profit educational purposes, 2) the nature of the copyrighted work, 3) the amount and substantiality of the quoted portion in relation to the whole copyrighted work, and 4) the effect of the use upon the potential market or value of the copyrighted work.

To me, those standards seem as clear as mud. Say I want to reprint a Garfield cartoon strip from the newspaper. By 1), I'm not sure where I fit. My zine is not a commercial venture, but it's hardly educational. I don't know what 2) means. I don't know what the "whole copyrighted work" is in 3); it's the entire Garfield strip for the day, but only half a page of the upcoming Garfield book. As for 4), I'd think the effect on the market for Garfield would be close to zero, seeing as I have only 50 subbers and the strip was just seen by millions of readers of newspapers a couple weeks ago.

We probably don't have to worry about being sued; of all the copyright cases reported, I can't find one involving an amateur publisher. Face it, we're not worth suing. We should note that the law here is civil law, not criminal. The cops won't be coming after us for reprinting Garfield. It's more like your kids playing on your neighbor's lawn: there's no problem if your neighbor either doesn't notice or doesn't care.

There is a technically correct way to reprint, to receive permission from the publisher. For cartoons, there is usually a nominal fee, which you may be able to negotiate downward if the cartoon is not well-known and you explain the non-profit motives of your zine. For cartoons in newspapers, the distributor is always listed in the strip. The newspaper will have their address, and you can write to the "Permissions Dept.".

If you decide your reprint falls under "fair use", you should make sure the source is clearly noted. Cartoons generally include the artist's signature and distributor. Make sure the author and source of articles is mentioned in your reprint. Don't leave any chance of confusion -- misrepresenting yourself as the author of someone else's work is plagiarism.

The last piece of advice I can offer is not to depend on cartoons or other professional material for your zine. An occasional space filler is one thing; a regular "cartoon page" is another. Your zine should be able to entertain on its own merits. Heavy use of cartoons without permission is stealing, and that's wrong no matter how small your zine.

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Off the Record!

by Bruce Linsey

It's a generally accepted dictum of hobby ethics that information which is given to you and marked "off the record" (or "confidential" or "do not quote," etc.) should not be repeated to other people in the hobby. I try as hard as anyone else to comply with such requests, because I want my readers to have confidence in my ability to hold a confidence.

But are there certain times when such a restriction may be (or even should be) ignored? I think that there are, and before you jump all over me please read through the following situations and decide for yourself. Some of these situations have actually arisen during my time as a hobbyist, others have not occurred but their presence in this article was inspired by the potential for their occurring, and still others will probably never happen but are the products of my ever-so-fertile imagination. The situations presented are selected to pertain to publishing and GMing ethics.

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SITUATION 1: You are the publisher of a zine with a large letter column. One of your readers sends you a long, juicy letter just loaded with controversial shit. Eager beaver that you are, you type it up and then type up several letters after it.

The following day, you get a card from him asking you to please keep his letter off the record. Retyping the other letters would take a couple of hours, and there is no other way for you to exclude his letter. Do you leave his letter in?

- -

SITUATION 2: A new publisher is GMing a game in a small-circulation zine. Some of the players in the game are well known to you. The GM, writing to you for advice on how to run games, happens to say in his letter, "By the way, please don't say anything, but the English player is my brother playing under an alias." You of course attempt to persuade him privately that this is unethical. But he turns a deaf ear, replying that he knows the hobby generally frowns on this, but his brother wanted to play and the houserules permit the use of aliases. More importantly, he assures you that his brother is not receiving any inside info on the other players' orders. Do you squeal? If so, do you do it publicly or in private letters to the other players?

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SITUATION 3: You, a well-known publisher, are feuding with another well-known publisher. In his zine, he has taken to telling outright lies about you; lies which could seriously damage your reputation as a GM if they are allowed to go unanswered. Naturally, you rebut these as best you can in your own zine, but so far it's just his word against yours. At this point, you receive the following letter from him:

Dear _____,

Now you know how it feels to be attacked. Yes, I made up those stories about your GMing; and no, I will never admit to it publicly. What's more, this letter is STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL, so suffer, asshole!

Worst wishes,

_____

Do you print this letter in self-defense?

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SITUATION 4: One thing that always irks me is a player who writes about more than one game in the same letter — especially if I'm GMing one of the games! It goes without saying that info given to you as a GM, by one of your players, must be held in confidence. But can a player use this fact to unfairly keep you as a player from passing a letter? Luckily, I have never encountered a letter like the following:

FRANCE to AUSTRIA, 1982YB
Dear _____,

I have decided to ally with England and attack Germany in our game. Therefore, I'm going after Munich this fall and... ((other negotiations follow)).

By the way, concerning 1980ZA, which you're GMing; I've decided to stab my ally and go for the win. Watch when it happens; it'll be spectacular!

Best,

_____

Can you pass this letter to Germany in 1982YB, the game in which you're both playing? If so, does it make any difference in your answer if that German player also happens to be the writer's ally in 1980ZA?

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SITUATION 5:. You are the GM of a black press game, in which players may use each others' datelines for press releases with confidentiality of the true source guaranteed by the GM. One season, you print the following release from the Russian player:

GERMANY to ENGLAND: Because you are a member of the Nazi party, a thief, and a dishonest GM, I plan to attack you in this game.

This provokes the following responses. From the German player:

Dear _____,
    I don't know who submitted that press release, but it wasn't me and I want you to publish that fact.
                                                                  Sincerely,
                                                      _____

    From the English player:

Dear _____,
    Whoever sent in that press release about me is guilty of libel. I am not a Nazi, a thief, or a dishonest GM. A black press game this may be, but these are serious charges that go beyond the scope of an enjoyable game. I want to know where that statement originated, and if you won't tell me then I will hold you responsible.
                                                                  Angrily,
                                                      _____

    When the Russian player is told of these negative reactions, he submits the following:

Dear _____,
    When I signed up for this game, I was told it would be an all-black press game with no holds barred, which means that under no circumstances would the source of any press release be revealed. Furthermore, both England and Germany have played in your zine before and are both aware that vile insults occasionally do crop up in the black press.
    Therefore, I do not give you permission to cite me as the source; nor do I think you should say that it wasn't Germany as the other players could then narrow it down to me by having you vouch for their innocence one by one. Just state in the game report that you cannot reveal the true author of black press, and if you are concerned about England's libel charge put in a disowner saying that he is not any of the things I called him.
                                                                  Thank you,
                                                      _____

    A sticky situation indeed! Do you take the Russian's advice, or do you comply with Germany's request and say that he didn't write it, or do you identify the source for England? And after resolving all that, do you ever open another black press game?
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Responses to "Off the Record!"

Situation 1 (A LETTER, SUPPOSEDLY INTENDED FOR PUBLICATION, IS DISCOVERED TO HAVE BEEN INTENDED AS CONFIDENTIAL BY ITS AUTHOR -- AFTER IT HAS BEEN INCORPORATED INTO THE ZINE. DO YOU LEAVE THE LETTER IN?)
John Michalski: Yes.
Mark Keller: No, take it out somehow.
Bob Osuch: Simple. Just leave the letter in and claim that you never received the follow-up to remove it. ((!!))
Mark Johnson: Retype the other letters ((which would have to be retyped as a result of removing this letter)). It's your own fault for hitting the typewriter before the deadline.
Bruce Linsey: But houserules only apply to game-related stuff, not letters for publication. I can assure you that it's quite common for a publisher to type up a lot of the zine well in advance of the game deadline.
Mark Berch: This asks the question of when does something on the record go back off. Strictly speaking, your reader is out of luck. For all he knows, you blabbed on the phone minutes after you got the letter. You cannot be criticized for printing the letter, so the question becomes one of courtesy. For myself, I would probably take the letter out unless I felt there was some compelling reason to print it, even with the extra work. However, if the zine had already gone to the printer, it would stay in.

Ron Brown (of Canada, in this discussion): Doesn't apply as I can easily cut out a letter and repaste using the method I do. Too bad if it's a lot of work, you have to cut that letter somehow.

Judy Winsome: What I would do would depend on what was said, who said it about whom, etc. No deadline or publishing frequency (or pride of always meeting deadlines) is worth creating emotional turmoil for someone unnecessarily. If someone, either the writer or the subject, will in my judgement be greatly disturbed by publication, I'll omit the article. The typing time lost is a small price to pay. I'm not here to hurt people. I can retype the rest of the page and publish at a later date. I'll just age that writer's letters in the future before I print them.

Situation 2 (A NEW PUBLISHER IS GMING A GAME IN WHICH UNBEKNOWNST TO THE OTHER PLAYERS, ONE OF THE PLAYERS IS HIS BROTHER, ALTHOUGH THE BROTHER IS ENJOYING NO ADVANTAGES FROM LIVING WITH THE GM. AFTER LEARNING THIS IN CONFIDENCE AND UNSUCCESSFULLY ATTEMPTING TO PERSUADE THE GM TO TELL THE OTHER PLAYERS, DO YOU SQUEAL? IF SO DO YOU DO IT PUBLICLY OR PRIVATELY?)

John Pack: Write the GM and urge him to put the game under a guest GM. If he refuses, a public statement is in order. Every chance should be given, though.

John MacFarlane: I'd probably respect the GM's request. If he wants to GM games in this way, it's his problem. Most likely, this will either be found out by the players, who will then resign or call for a replacement, or they will catch him on some other unethical charge.

Jeff Noto: You certainly do not "squeal" privately to the other players. The GM has less of a chance to defend himself. If you're going to do it, do so publicly and give the GM a chance to defend himself.

Jim Williams: I would do nothing. Many pubbers have very close friends playing in their zines, and I don't consider a brother that much different. I would try to convince the pubber to reveal the identities of all aliases upon the game's end, though.

    Since the houserules permit aliases, I don't feel that the GM has done anything unethical.

Situation 3 (A WELL-KNOWN PUBLISHER WITH WHOM YOU ARE FEUDING IS PUBLICLY LYING ABOUT YOU IN AN ATTEMPT TO HURT YOUR REPUTATION. HE ADMITS THIS IN A CONFIDENTIAL LETTER TO YOU. DO YOU PRINT HIS LETTER?)

Mark Johnson: Not yet. The letter is confidential but the fact that it exists and is in my possession is not. I would print something to the effect that I had a letter from X that proved X was a liar and would print the letter next month if a public apology from X was not forthcoming. If I didn't receive the apology, I would print the letter and make copies for anyone who wanted one.

Pat Conlon: No, I wouldn't print his confidential confession. He might get a lot of mileage out of the fact I had betrayed a confidence, or he could claim I forged the letter. Better to ignore the asshole. As long as he's getting attention, or knows he's getting "under your skin", he will continue his childish attacks.

Jim Williams: I would print the letter to clear my name without a moment's hesitation. The other pubber has given up his right to be treated fairly, by printing outright lies. I owe him no consideration at all, and I wouldn't feel the least bit guilty about breaching his confidence.

Mark Berch: You are just out of luck. Rules must apply to everyone. If each of us can decide when to waive the rule and when not to, then there's no point to the rule in the first place. If you break the confidence, then you descend to his level, and the expected response from the rest of the hobby will be "A Plague on Both your Houses".

Bruce Linsey: I'm with Jim Williams. I print the letter and clear my name.

Situation 4 (YOU ARE PLAYING AUSTRIA IN 1982YB, AND ARE GMING 1980ZA. YOU GET A LETTER FROM A FELLOW PLAYER IN 1982YB STATING THAT HE INTENDS TO ATTACK GERMANY IN THAT GAME. IN THE SAME LETTER, HE DISCUSSES HIS (OBVIOUSLY CONFIDENTIAL) PLANS TO STAB HIS ALLY IN 1980ZA. IF IT WILL HELP YOUR POSITION IN 1982YB, CAN YOU STILL PASS THIS LETTER TO THE GERMAN PLAYER? IF THAT GERMAN PLAYER IS THE ALLY TO BE STABBED IN 1980ZA, IS THE ANSWER ANY DIFFERENT?)

John Michalski: You cannot pass the ZA sentence. Obliterate it and do as you wish.

Bob Osuch: Only assholes pass letters.

John Pack: Leave "By the way, concerning 1980ZA, which you're GMing" in and block the remainder out.

Konrad Baumeister: The player should damn well know by now that he should keep orders on a separate sheet from negotiations.

Pat Conlon: Another easy one. Pass only the info concerning the game you're playing in. Also, add a houserule: in order for anything to be protected by player-GM confidentiality, it must be on a separate sheet of paper from all other messages.
Bruce Linsey: And presumably, after such a houserule is in effect and the situation arises again, you might consider passing the letter? The situation is not quite as cut and dried as it may sound at first. The question arises of whether a player can put material of a confidential nature into a game letter in order to keep it from being passed. (This could be personal information, or material about a game that the letter's recipient just happens to be GMing.) Is it legitimate to use tactics like this to prevent an opponent from passing a letter? I don't think so, yet on the other hand I'd not pass the letter myself. (We're assuming here that for whatever reason, you've decided that your interests as a player are served by passing the letter. There are a few people out there who despise letter-passing under any circumstances; see Bob Osuch's reply above.)

Pat Conlon's proposed houserule is one way out of it, but that covers only player-GM confidentiality. What about personal matters? John Pack's solution may be best: at least the recipient knows why you blocked out a portion of the letter and will have to give reasonable credence to your refusal to pass the whole thing.

The question is a good illustration of the conflict of interest that might confront a hobbyist in his dual role as player and GM.

Situation 5 (YOU ARE GMING A BLACK PRESS GAME IN WHICH THE RUSSIAN PLAYER WRITES SOME NASTY AND UNTRUE REMARKS ABOUT ENGLAND, USING GERMANY'S DATELINE. GERMANY WANTS YOU TO PUBLISH THE FACT THAT HE DIDN'T WRITE IT. ENGLAND WANTS THE TRUE AUTHOR REVEALED, AND EVEN HINTS AT A LIBEL SUIT. RUSSIA DOES NOT GIVE YOU PERMISSION TO IDENTIFY HIM AS THE SOURCE, BUT SUGGESTS THAT YOU MIGHT PUT A DISCLAIMER IN THE GAME REPORT STATING THAT THE COMMENTS ABOUT ENGLAND WERE NOT TRUE. WHICH REQUEST(S) DO YOU COMPLY WITH?)

John Michalski: You were wrong to tell the Russian player about any reactions; in a black press game indignation or hurt feelings are inappropriate. You should tell only the English player, "You're in the pigpen, enjoy the mud. Your options are to fling mud back, or resign. Your threats only make you look like an immature asshole."
Al Pearson: It is not a sticky situation. It is a black press game. If the English player is that big a baby (and I know a few), dump him. He should have known what he was in for in a black press game.

I don't run black press. Never have, never will. Mainly for the above situation. Most people are not as mature as they like to appear to be.
Konrad Baumeister: I don't come out and identify the Russian as the writer -- I do publish the fact that Germany didn't write it. Most players like for the games to remain on the fun side. Those who insist on getting very personal elicit very little sympathy on my part. Sure, I open another black press game.
Garry Hamlin: Whatever you do in this case will be wrong, at least in my opinion. As a GM, you had no business printing libel to begin with, and I'm arguing that regardless of whether the game was black or white press. In my mind, it's legitimate to say anything one wants about the Tsar or the Queen, etc., but personal assaults against the players handling those positions are out. I recognize that this stance differs from the majority of the Diplomacy hobby. I make no defense other than to say that there are plenty of games around without those restrictions, and those who prefer not to operate under those constraints are welcome to go elsewhere.
Mark Berch: I see no problem at all. England has no cause for complaint at all. These are not "serious charges" and they are not "libel". This is press, not a letter column. It is part of a game and there is no obligation to tell the truth in a game. Press can be part of a player's propaganda, and this might have been done just to rile England. I realize that there are people in the hobby who get all bent out of shape by what they read in press, but that is entirely their own fault. As for Germany, no, you do not print his letter. If you guarantee confidentiality, you cannot eliminate the suspects. The German statement could be printed as press -- black press, so that it has equal weight with the original press item. As you know, I am opposed to black press in general, as I think it will usually degenerate into vulgarities and namecalling, neither of which I find entertaining reading.
Bruce Linsey: Three or so years ago, I would have agreed entirely with Berch and Michalski on this one. Not so any more. In my view now, that press release ought not to have seen print. (Given that it did, though; no, I wouldn't reveal the author.) My stance on matters like this changed rapidly when an unscrupulous player, ostensibly as part of a game, used some personal info against me. I didn't like it, and that incident opened my eyes to the fact that even in the context of a game,

even in black press, there are certain things that should not be said, and should not be printed if they <u>are</u> said. Since new and potential GMs will be reading this discussion, I'd like to strongly urge here and now that this sort of thing be thought over thoroughly. Consider: might not certain remarks hurt someone even if they're "black press"? And is it worth printing those remarks, if so? Granted, maybe the guy's hypersensitive...but a game ought not to be a vehicle wherein even sensitive people get hurt. (However, I'd draw the line at a player who gets "hurt" by being stabbed!) <u>Think</u> about what you publish, regardless of whether it appears in your zine's press or in its letter column.

Some closing comments on this article: it's almost always wise to respect a request for confidentiality, but as you can see there are a few borderline situations. The best advice I can give is to use common sense and weigh the circumstances carefully. Also, remember that various people have different standards on this sort of thing, so always tread cautiously.

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CHAPTER 8

THE PUBLISHER: A HOBBY CITIZEN

<u>Where</u> <u>Have</u> <u>All</u> <u>the</u> <u>Mega-zines</u> <u>Gone</u>?
The Hobby Survives the 1980s
by Scott Hanson

Back when I joined the hobby (yep, he's gonna get nostalgic, you can bet everyone thinks the hobby's Golden Age was back when he was a novice) was the era of the mega-zine. The mailbox busters. The zines that required a three-day weekend to get through the letter column. When men were men and zines were zines. <u>Retaliation</u>. <u>Black</u> <u>Frog</u>. <u>Whitestonia</u>. <u>Passchendaele</u>. <u>Voice</u> <u>of</u> <u>Doom</u>. <u>Coat</u> <u>of</u> <u>Arms</u>. <u>The</u> <u>Modern</u> <u>Patriot</u>. <u>Magus</u>. And the king of them all, <u>Brutus</u> <u>Bulletin</u>.

A couple of them are still publishing. But a cursory look at the 1986 Runestone Poll ballot reveals that the big zine is a thing of the past. <u>Europa</u> <u>Express</u> has cut back to five issues a year. <u>No</u> <u>Fixed</u> <u>Address</u> has eliminated its schedule. <u>So</u> <u>I</u> <u>Lied!</u> hasn't been seen in months. And that's about it. So what's happened?

The early 80s was a time of "slash and paste" publishing. Photocopying was becoming the main means of printing, and we were fascinated with being able to reproduce <u>anything</u>, not to mention that letters and articles could be printed without retyping. <u>BB</u> was famous for having only the cover typed ((by its editor)) and everything inside submitted by readers. It was the only way John Michalski could do three or four issues a month. But even those zines using mechanical reproduction seemed to have a policy of "anything goes". Good taste was sacrificed for a good joke, whoever it was on. The games themselves seemed to be secondary to the press.

The main topic of discussion in these zines was ourselves, the hobby. We called it "Dipdom". It wasn't a big happy family, but a loud raucous one. There were lots of laughs and lots of fights. Being part of "Dipdom" was a full-time occupation, what with publishing a mega-zine and contributing to several others.

But today "Dipdom" is dead.

Today's hobby is made up of part-time publishers with warehouse zines. In between the games are inserted little blurbs about jobs, family, and (God forbid!) other hobbies. Clean photocopies are the norm for reproduction. Many use word processors, and a couple are laser printed. Today's zines look sharp.

The emphasis is now on the game, not the hobby. We have seen the consequences of hobby personalities turning sour, and it's best now to keep the relationships friendly but not deep. No more cliques. And hopefully, no more feuds.

Technology has made part-time publishing possible: one can GM a few games without devoting every spare moment to the hobby. It also seems the hobby has a larger proportion of non-publishers; those who play the game and enjoy it, but don't feel compelled to jump into pubbing.

We shouldn't mourn the passing of the magazine and "Dipdom". Today's hobby is stronger, more stable, and more accessible than ever. It is different, yes. I'm not sure whether there is a place for <u>Diplomacy</u> World in a part-time hobby. But a hobby with fewer fanatics is a hobby with fewer feuds, fewer messy folds, and fewer people quitting the hobby. And that sounds like a better hobby to me.

((Much of the above, I do not agree with. The mega-zine is <u>not</u> anywhere close to dead; nor, alas, are feuding or cliques. And my own opinion <u>is</u> that <u>Diplomacy</u> World will always have a place in the hobby.
Still, this article makes one think: what kind of hobby do <u>you</u> want to be a part of? As a publisher, you'll be helping to mold the future for all of us...))

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And the opposing point of view...

<u>MegaDiplomacy</u>

by Chris Carrier

Often, as I play Diplomacy (or any other game, for that matter) by mail or face-to-face, I think of how nice it would be if I were really the person I am playing in the role of the game. Usually this person is the leader of a force, perhaps even an empire, or greater or lesser size who uses his or her diplomatic and military abilities to make alliances and further his or her gaming ends.
Well, there actually is a way you can play such a game in real life.
Many dipzines are larger than they need to be. All a dipzine truly <u>needs</u> is a game report and space for press. But most zines contain more; some information about the persons and personalities behind the game, even if only player profiles. Frequently a zine will have a letter column in which at least game strategy will be discussed; frequently this will go into other subjects as well which have nothing to do with Diplomacy, such as one's stands on various political issues. In fact, some zines are nearly totally devoted to such matters, and solicit subbers on the basis of their controversial letter columns.
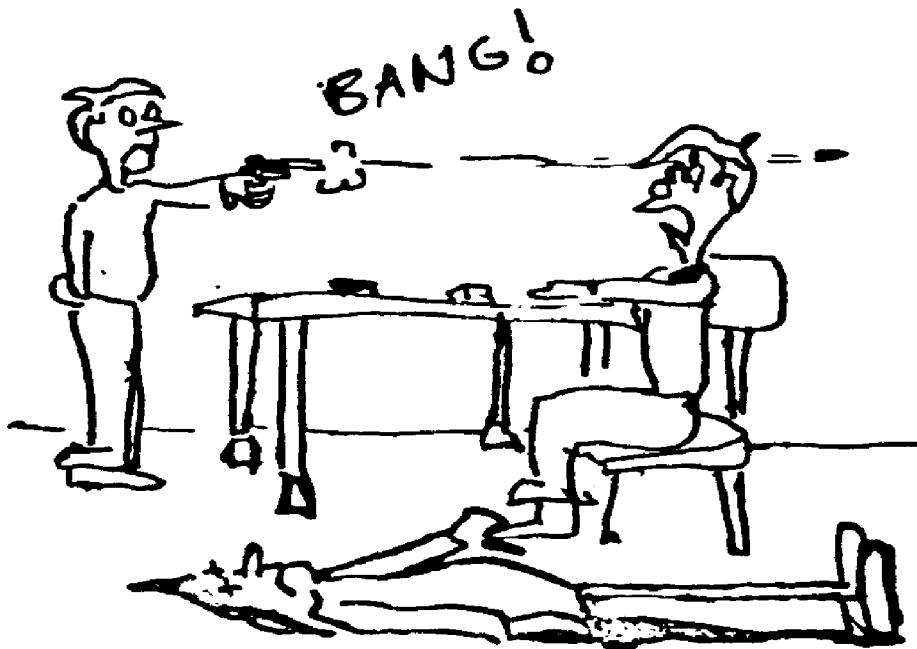
MegaDiplomacy: rather
an, uh, exciting hobby

Diplomacy people and other gaming people tend to be more intelligent and have more aggressive personalities than the population in general, and these tendencies lead to paranoia and megalomania. In addition, the lack of opportunities for a person of intelligence to use that intelligence for "real-life" purposes such as one's career lead to its redirection towards other endeavors; as the chance of a person winning or being one-up in a gaming simulation is usually dependent on the amount of intelligence and effort brought to bear on the problem, it is not in the least surprising to see people spending major fractions of their discretionary income and free time on building a gaming empire.

Given many people doing this, there are going to be substantial interactions, and there are also certain to be disagreements and clashes among the major members of the hobby -- major member being defined as someone who spends a lot of time on the hobby. These interactions are known, when they occur in the Diplomacy hobby, as MegaDiplomacy. The conflicts among various hobbyists, when they get serious enough, are known as Feuds. ((Editor's Note: The author is showing an uncharacteristic amount of restraint -- note that it took him five paragraphs to get to the "F" word!))

There are many resemblances between nations at war and MegaDiplomats who are involved in a Feud. Each side is sure that it represents Truth, Goodness, and the American way. Each side considers the other side to represent Darkness and Evil. Each side uses propaganda and private communications to reassure the members of the alliance of nations or MegaDiplomacy players that internally they are right, and to attract neutrals to their side. Each side boosts its morale by believing that this is the last such struggle to make the world or the hobby safe for its Way of Life and that it will end in a total victory for the good guys.

Neutrals either stay out of the situation, voluntarily enter, or get dragged in somehow; just like in a war game or a real war.

The neat thing about MegaDiplomacy is that, like the real world, it is a non-ending game played in a real time mode, which is the advantage of PBM over FTF. World War I, after which Diplomacy is patterned, lasted four years; I have heard of Dip games that have run almost twice as long, and I have heard of MegaDip campaigns that have lasted longer than the six years of real time that it took to fight World War II. ((!!))

Non-ending means that a Feud/War will end, there will be a new balance of power, something will happen to upset it, and then there will be another Feud/War, just as in the real world.

And much as the real world has pacifists who complain about the effort devoted to self-defense, we have those who decry MegaDiplomacy and wish to see it come to an end. Usually these people want to see the hobby press cease to cover the MegaDiplomacy hobby, on the theory that if such coverage would cease, MegaDiplomacy would cease to exist. I will not argue the merits of such a case but I will argue the reverse: that the existence of a free and open hobby press is a vital and desirable part of the hobby, that issues need to be aired before they explode into open warfare (if avoiding war is one's desire), and that many zines owe their popularity to the coverage of such material. Of the top ten zines in the 1985 Runestone Poll, for example, six devoted extensive coverage to the MegaDiplomacy hobby.

And of course the best thing about MegaDiplomacy and other wargames is that, unlike real war, people can work out their aggressions without real people being hurt or killed.

((I expect to take more heat for my editorial decision to run the above article than for anything else in this handbook. However I stand 100% behind that decision, and the reasons are twofold. First, for better or worse, feuding is and probably always will be part of the hobby. To pretend otherwise is to deny reality. Second, the above represents a legitimate view pertaining directly to the role of the hobby publisher, and such views, regardless how repulsive some might find them, are part and parcel of this handbook.

That said, let's get down to some of my own personal opinions. For the most part, I do not agree with Chris. He is factually incorrect when he states that people do not get hurt by feuding. People do, whether or not Chris is aware of it. That fact alone makes feuding undesirable in a hobby ostensibly for fun. But, as with real world warfare, feuding is just not totally avoidable in a hobby full of such strong personalities as ours. That being the case, you as a new or potential publisher would be well-advised to give thought to your own role (or lack thereof) in Chris's "MegaDiplomacy hobby".

I don't, mind you, think controversy is necessarily bad. Indeed, a hobby with no hot debates at all would be quite a boring place. Nor will I even say that all personality conflicts are bad. People have different styles and philosophies, and these as often as not mirror their proponents' personalities. But what I will go on record as deploring is the sort of all-pervasive feud that rocked the hobby in the early-to-mid 1980s, in which people were personally attacked and hurt, and several

constructive and well-liked hobby members (such as Doug Beyerlein and Alex Lord) were driven to leave it. I cannot recommend that anyone involve him/herself in such a feud, and I hope the hobby never experiences another like it.

Chris did make one statement with which I fully agree: that a free and open hobby press is vital and desirable. But such rights necessitate the use of restraint; their abuse can make the hobby -- or any society -- an unpleasant place indeed.))

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A Diplomacy Vacation

by Doug Beyerlein

Vacations are great fun. Vacations allow one to do new things, see new sights, and think new thoughts. They are a refreshing change of pace. There is no better way to shake the cobwebs from the mind, view the current situation from a fresh perspective, and generate new creative juices. Everyone should take at least one vacation every year.

When was the last time you took a vacation away from Diplomacy? I don't mean the week you had final exams and didn't have time to answer your correspondence for your postal games. Or the time you spent two weeks at the cabin with Uncle Ned and Aunt Nell. Those were periods away from your typewriter and mailbox, but your games and zine were probably still in your head. If you had been playing postal Diplomacy for more than a year you need a vacation from the game.

At this point you may agree that it would be nice to take a month off from Diplomacy, but it is impossible. Every day the mail arrives there are letters to answer, orders to write, and zines to read. It might be possible to dump it all in a box and ignore it for a week or two at the most, but that is taking chances with deadlines and wavering allies. There must be a better way.

There is. The hobby (you and I) needs a one-month vacation away from postal Diplomacy. One month when there is no postal Diplomacy. One month when we all rediscover what the world is like without Diplomacy; when we get outside or into a good book; when we stop and take the time to reexamine why we are addicted to this madness called postal Diplomacy, which devours our time and money with uncomfortable ease.

To make this vacation from Diplomacy effective we all have to vacation together. We need to take our vacation all at the same time. If we are going to stop postal Diplomacy in its tracks for one month each year it has to be a collective effort. Half of a vacation isn't much better than none in this case.

There are two periods that immediately come to mind that will make good times for a vacation: (1) November-December and (2) one of the summer months. The period between Thanksgiving and Christmas is hectic for most of us. There are college final exams, shopping for Christmas presents, and visits home for the holidays. The summer months can also be busy and offer other diversions (work, travel, adventure, etc.). My choice for a Diplomacy vacation month is August. August usually offers the best weather of the summer, it is usually after the DipCon, and it is before school starts up in the autumn. A vacation from Diplomacy in August allows the Diplomacy player, gamesmaster, and publisher time to investigate new ideas, places, and people before reimmersing into the thick of the hobby come September. This annual vacation will give everyone time to stop and collect their breath before charging back into battle. Maybe fewer players and publishers will overcommit themselves and drop out of the hobby in the future when they have a month off to think over the alternatives. Maybe we will all feel a little more excited and creative and in turn enjoy the hobby more.

What is the price? A game will move one season slower per calender year and novices eager for action will have to sit on their hands for a month. Is it worth the price? Definitely yes!

I am willing to back my words with action. I will not publish my zine, EFGIART, in August. The July issue will give the next season's deadline in September, just as if August doesn't exist. This way I will give my players and myself a vacation from the game. I hope that you will do the same.

((This is a sensible idea. While there will never be universal agreement throughout the hobby on when (or whether) to take a Diplomacy vacation, there's nothing stopping individual publishers from doing so. Think it over. Can you see beyond your initial enthusiasm far enough to realize that we all need an occasional break even from our most enjoyable activities?

August is one good choice; December, with its holiday events and slow mail, would be another.))

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A Short History of Costaguana

by Conrad von Metzke

COSTAGUANA was first published in mid-1965. I had first learned of the game itself in a classified ad in "Saturday Review" in 1961 (I was 17 and a college freshman), and showed the ad to my newest friend at school - Rodney C. "Gopher" Walker. Rod immediately sent away for the game, and when it arrived we collectively put together a play group and had regular games going for some months. Then Rod left school, entered the Air Force, and left me to hold the banner.

I tried. First, I attempted to start a postal game so that Rod and I (and several of our other players who were dispersing) could keep in touch. The game flopped because, frankly, nobody had time; but we did get started just enough that we have thought of ourselves ever since as the first-in-history postal players. And I was, in a rudimentary sense, the first-ever Gamesmaster. (A year later, unknown to me at the time, Dr. John Boardman began the first successful postal game. That makes me the Leif Eriksson, and him the Cristóbal Colón, of postal Diplomacy; I was there first, but he made it work.)

Postal play having failed, I continued locally with face-to-face play with my circle of friends. (Three of them - Hal Naus, Bob Cline and the late Bob Ward - eventually became postal publishers of renown.) I lost touch with Rod entirely, and forgot all about playing in the mails.

Then in early 1965, unsolicited, came a copy of a new postal Diplomacy magazine - WILD 'N' WOOLY, published in Los Angeles by a man I'd never heard of, Steve Cartier. To this day there is dispute as to where and how he got my address; I claim it was from Games Research Corp., the original maker of game sets, to whom I had once written for rulebook clarification and who had presumably sent Steve a list of names on his request. However, Steve denies ever having written to them. I honestly don't know, but I insist that I have to be right simply because there are no other possible points of conjunction between us.

Well, I fell for it; I joined my first postal game.(I got Russia, and eventually won the game; I still think I won because others got so sick of reading my endless press releases in which I introduced my first continuing press character, a Pole named Andrzej Sawiczewski who had taken over the Russian government. A couple of the press releases were actually in Polish, and one of those wasn't a press release at all; it was the wedding announcement sent to me by the real Andrzej Sawiczewski, who has not now and has never had any connection with Diplomacy. He is an architect in Sopot, Poland, with whom I've been corresponding as a penpal for twenty-six years.)

Through WILD 'N' WOOLY I got acquainted with the fledgling postal hobby, and joined more games. A few months later I started my own magazine - this one. In those days it was traditional to name postal magazines after fictitious countries (another Dr. Boardman invention), so I took COSTAGUANA from Joseph Conrad's novel "Nostromo" - a fictitious Central American "banana republic" - and started publishing. My first few issues were printed by a friend on a shabby old mimeo, and half of what I typed wound up illegible. Disturbed by this, I soon bought my own printing system: a hectograph! To my knowledge, COSTAGUANA remains to this day the only Diplomacy journal ever printed by this incredibly primitive process. (Does anyone out there even know what hectograph is? It has a relationship to carbon ditto printing, but much cruder. You have a flat wooden tray about the size of a sheet of paper and 1" deep; in the tray you put a thick gelatine-like substance. Then you type your master, which is simply a regular ditto master typed upside-down. You place the master on top of the gelatine and rub gently; the mirror-image carbon is absorbed into the goop. Then you place your paper on top and rub it, and the words transfer and print. Each master is good for about twenty copies; then you have to wash the ink residue out of the gelatine, let the latter harden again, and start over.)

After four or five such issues I found a friend who had access to a real ditto machine (and free paper) at his office. So he printed the next few issues. When that source ran out, I used the ditto machine at the local Democratic Party Headquarters. Rod Walker once printed an issue on his machine for me, which was particularly interesting since he lived in Nebraska at the time. And there were others....

Which reminds me - I had mentioned that after the failure of the 1962 postal attempt, I had lost touch with Rod Walker? Well, he stayed lost - for four years. Then one day I was strolling across the campus

of the 15,000-student university campus where I had originally met him,
and - bam! There he was, ambling into the library. Seems he was in
town doing some post-grad work, and I just happened to be in that part
of the college that day....

I asked him how he was, and he replied. I asked him if he still
played Diplomacy, and he said "occasionally." I reminded him of our
first postal game; he nodded politely and said yes, he remembered, and
wasn't it nice that we'd tried, but such stuff was hopeless, obviously.
I then told him about WILD 'N' WOOLY and GRAUSTARK and BROBDINGNAG and
COSTAGUANA, and I have never seen eyes brighten to quite that extent
at any other time in my life. Before I knew it we were exchanging 'phone
numbers and addresses; soon after came EREHWON, and we have been friends
ever since.

COSTAGUANA came and went a few times. It went in 1968 when I was
briefly working three jobs (clerk at the library, taxi driver and owner
of a coffee house); it came back when I landed a job with the post office.
It flickered a bit when I got married in 1971, then roared back full-
bore when I separated from her in 1972. During the years of separation,
reconciliation, re-separation and eventual divorce from Kathy, my Diplomacy
output was at its peak. It served a need; it kept my mind active and my
relationships with friends alive at a time when I was emotionally very
unhappy. It allowed closeness by mail at a time when I found it difficult
to achieve closeness in person. Night after night I would sit at my·
typewriter or my ditto machine, all alone, and churn out Diplomacy maga-
zines. As I gradually healed from Kathy, I expressed myself in ditto
pages by the ream. I published COSTAGUANA, which then had ten or so games
going; SAGUENAY, with six games; K.35, with just one game but twenty pages
of press per issue; RENAME, with four variant games; EVERYTHING, the maga-
zine of game statistics issued by the Boardman Number Custodian (which I
was); and two or three other things as well. At one time I was, simul-
taneously, a gamesmaster of at least 30 games; the Boardman Number Custodian;
the Miller Number Custodian; the director of the Orphan Games Project;
and in almost every respect the guiding light and mainstaying force
of the entire hobby. Even Rod Walker has never been stupid enough, or
emotionally depressed enough, to take on that much!

Well, it was great therapy, but all things come to an end. By the
summer of 1974 I realized that, no matter how much I loved and wanted
Kathy, it was a lost cause; and so we divorced. I got involved in a local
divorce-therapy group called "We Care," came to terms with my loss, met
a new lady - and then another, and another - and by March of 1975, a week
after my divorce was finalized, I became engaged to Jean.

Diplomacy lingered for a while after that - though I had long since
transferred all my other responsibilities, I briefly took on the editorship
and (for one issue) the publishing of DIPLOMACY WORLD - but I gradually
came to realize that the depressions and the traumas were over. Now I
had a different sort of wife; Jean is not the sort of woman whom one
simultaneously loves and yet wants to escape from. And so my gaming
days petered out, and finally ended.

They're back now in limited fashion mainly because I have passed
through other life-stages - solidifying a marriage, having the children
I wanted, gaining a meaningful career - and have devolved onto a level
where I need a pleasant, but limited, hobby. I already have a big hobby,
philately, but found that I honestly missed Diplomacy and some of the
people associated with it. While out of the hobby, I nearly lost touch
with Rod again; that would be a tragedy, because I love the man dearly
as the greatest friend I have ever had in my life - other than Jean,
of course, but that's a little different. I missed Fred Davis, the
brightest intellect I've ever encountered. I missed John Leeder. I
missed Ralph Morton (yes, Ralph, I did!); I missed Dick Vedder; I
missed the Beyerleins; I missed...well, this could go on all night.
In short, I wanted my friends back - and, in the process, I wanted a
little contact with the hobby that had given me so many hours of pleasure
and so much support during my days of upheaval.

That's why I'm back. But I'm also a realist (and a lot older) now;
I no longer need the therapeutic or escapist aspects of the hobby. So
I'm keeping it to rational limits, and having the fun I want, with the
friends I treasure (old and new), without the strain of overcommitment.

There are two things I don't have back yet that I want; one I won't
get, and one I may:

1. To re-contact my favorite player of all time - Anita Beth
Hughes (I won't get that one);

2. To revive, for one game only, my old magazine SAGUENAY,
   which among all my publications remains my favorite. (It
   was for Canadians only, and there was a warmth in those
   pages that I would give my left arm to recapture.) (I
   may get this one, some day; but not just now, okay?)

   And for the future? Just one more good intention: Let's get those
games played and not orphan the goddamned things this time, eh?

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A Plea for Action

by Steve Hutton

There is a clear crisis in the Diplomacy hobby. Few if any publishers are able
to turn a profit. Most do not even break even. In addition to their financial
problems, they are required to settle the petty disputes of the players in their
zine, trade or mutually subscribe with other publishers (whether they like them or
not) to stay current on hobby news, act as foster parents to an endless supply of
novices, write letters to each other so that they will have something to fill up
the empty spaces, write headlines and (()) comments so that no one forgets for a
minute that this is their zine ((Editor's Note: In fact, some editors insert
comments in double parentheses even when absolutely unnecessary, a practice to
avoid at all costs)), and attempt to be cheerful even when the only issues they get
compliments about are fakes. Certainly this is too much to expect of any individual.
    "Well, what can we do?" you ask desperately. I have been in correspondence with
others who see the problem. There are two basic solutions which have been presented.
I choose to call them the "American Solution" and the "Canadian Solution" because the
one solution typifies the American approach to a problem and the other is a typically
Canadian approach.
    First, the American Solution. As we well know, the Americans always attempt to
solve problems with new technology. This is the approach which won World War II and
lost Vietnam. "Why not" they would say "replace the pubbers with a machine?"
Certainly machines could be devised to staple pages and lick stamps. I understand that
there is even a computerized GMing program somewhere. A machine would never get angry
over the frustrations of its job. But the real question is: Can we design a machine
with enough intelligence to write witty (()) comments and headlines? The only way to
devise a program capable of this feat is for Dippy to have a "Manhattan Project".
For each set of moves, there would have to be on file an appropriate headline. This
would be difficult even for the first move, but in future seasons it would approach
impossibility. Still, it is only by confronting the seemingly impossible that anything
is accomplished. The (()) comments would be equally challenging. Someone would have
to search through every zine ever printed recording the press releases. Then, it
would be necessary to create the ultimate (()) to go with each press release. If
someone wrote a press release that was not on file, the computer would turn to its
bank of about 500 all-purpose replies. This bank could include: "Why don't you
just fuck off?", "That's the worst press release I've ever seen!", "This is my zine;
you guys are supposed to be my straight men" ((Editor's Note: Ah, never mind...)),
and "Why don't you go up to the North Pole and marry Bob Acheson?" This, then, is
the American Solution.
    But, we in Canada do things differently. As anyone who observed our last election
knows, Canadians march like lemmings into the sea of Big Government. There's no
reason why this approach could not be applied to the Diplomacy hobby. First it
would be necessary for there to be a hobby-wide organization. Then the government
(American, Canadian, or a combination of the two) could contact the organization with
a proposal. In exchange for allowing themselves to become a government department
(or "Crown Corporation" in Canada) the Dippy hobby would be subsidized. The problem
of money-losing publishers would disappear. The publishers would be able to form a
union which would demand (and get) a good wage. The extra cost would not be passed on
to the consumer (not within four years of an election, anyway) but would be absorbed
by the government. Also, those in areas under-represented by Dippy publishers would
be encouraged to start up their own zine with tax incentives. All zines would have
to be bilingual (French being the second language in Canada, Spanish in the US) and
would be censored for obscene (i.e. anti-government) material before going to the
presses. Special zines would be created to serve various minorities. At least half
of all Dippy players, publishers, and "custodians" would have to be female. All
moves which could have possible international repercussions (e.g. the Lepanto Opening)
would have to be cleared by the appropriate government departments. Orders, zines,
and even negotiations would have to be done in triplicate with one part going to the
intended recipient, one part to the appropriate government agency, and the third
being used as toilet paper in 24 Sussex Drive (or the White House in the United States).

Every five years, there would be a government inquiry into the functioning of the Diplomacy hobby. Buddy Tretick would be tracked by the Mounties, the FBI, Interpol, and the Unification Church. At last, the hobby would be organized in such a way that it could not be swayed by the efforts (good or bad) of a few individuals. Even the "Diplomacy Players Association" would have its place. It could then become a sort of players' union modelled after the successful Polish trade unions.

Which course we choose is up to the members of the Diplomacy hobby. Each course offers its own advantages. But either course is certainly preferable to inaction. We dare not sell the future of the Diplomacy hobby for short term peace of mind. As former President Carter would say, we have "a choice between two futures". There should be a real debate throughout the hobby as to which course we should take. It is certainly the most important decision the hobby will ever have to make.

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A Proposal: the Team Concept

by Larry Peery

The North American Diplomacy hobby's magazines are currently in trouble. Big trouble. The quantity and quality of Diplomacy publications in North America is down, way down. Almost any objective criteria: number of publications, number of pages per publication, number of issues per publication per year, etc. shows the hobby is in a state of decline in North America. People in the know, such as Simon Billenness, the editor of the Zine Register, and myself, have known it for a while. Even members of the hobby at large, such as J.C. Hodgins, have known it for some time (see his letter to the editor in DW #43). Soon everyone will know it.

((Editor's Note: This article's off to a poor start, alas. The North American hobby's zines are not (as of 1986) in "big trouble"; they're in great shape. I have never seen so many excellent zines all being published at the same time as there are now, and cannot remotely agree with Larry's assessment.))

The question is why? There are two reasons, or sets of reasons, I think. First, it costs too much money, too much time, too much work, and too much emotionally to produce a Diplomacy magazine in North America today, especially for a beginning publisher. Secondly, the atmosphere the hobby has generated in the early and mid-1980s has discouraged new publishers from starting publication---and driven many hobby old timers to the side of the field---because they know, based on the examples around them, what lies in store for them.

The bottom line is that it is too difficult to publish a Diplomacy publication in today's hobby for most people and, as a result, we are in trouble.

But I believe there is a solution. It isn't an easy one to make because it goes against my twenty years of experience as a Diplomacy publisher and it certainly goes against my experience as DW's latest publisher. Still, for a newly arrived publisher on the Diplomacy scene it may be the way, the only way, to go.

This Publisher's Handbook is one part of the solution since it will provide potential new publishers with useful information and, hopefully, help them avoid the mistakes made by others. If nothing else, they'll make new mistakes. Everyone, including myself, who publishes a Diplomacy publication thinks that they can do so without repeating the mistakes of their predecessors. Woe be to them for such a foolish thought.

Second, I advocate a periodic sabbatical for hobby publishers, editors, and gamesmasters; to give them a chance to rest from their duties. We all need one once in a while.

Third, I advocate the use of guest publishers, editors, and gamesmasters to take over hobby publications on a temporary basis to provide for the above periodic sabbaticals. Individuals who would like to publish, editor, or gamesmaster---but not on a regular basis---could serve as temporary providers of such services for publishers, editors, or gamesmasters who need a rest. Under the guidance and supervision of experienced publishers, editors, and gamesmasters, individuals interested in trying such duties could, without a long term commitment to the same.

Fourth, and most importantly, I advocate the use of pooled resources in producing publications for the hobby. Instead of one individual trying to do everything, I suggest that team efforts be used to publish Diplomacy publications based on geographical regions, special interests, or a division of labor by special talents. For instance, individuals located in the same geographical area, or interested in the same special subject, or a group agreed upon with a logical division of labor (gamesmaster, publisher, editor, etc.) could easily combine their resources and talents to produce a major hobby publication instead of the mundane efforts we see from so many sources today. Well intentioned I agree, but still mundane.
My thought is that one of these team efforts, with its logical division of authority and responsibility, would transcend one's individual resources and ability, and allow one---and the hobby as a group---to produce more, if fewer, top quality zines ((??!)). DW, the CDO, MENSA, The Gamer's Zine, and many of the UK publications, to name just a few, suggest that such team efforts are possible, if not easy to achieve. The details I leave for others to thrash out.

But, as an example, I offer my own XENOGOGIC. At the moment its publisher/editor/gamesmaster has many commitments other than the magazine and yet a number of individuals have stepped forward to keep the magazine going: Ken Hager as Gamesmaster, Mark Coldiron as PeeriPoll publisher/editor, etc.; thus allowing me to do what must be done elsewhere. I would like to have another one or two guest gamesmasters on staff to run games on a day-to-day basis; and perhaps even a guest editor to write much of the editorial content of the magazine; and, oh what a godsend it would be, to have a guest publisher to handle the day-to-day aspects of the magazine. My thought is that hobby old timers: publishers, editors, and gamesmasters---with their wealth of experience and knowledge---would be natural partners for new publishers, editors, and gamesmasters and in the process create a publication that bridges many of the gaps I mentioned.

It's a radical idea and, in some quarters, no doubt an unpopular one. But, in truth, we have fewer than 60 Diplomacy magazines in North America today and only a dozen or so of them are of any substantial worth---besides the games they carry--- and the rest would be better off combined into something of more significance. My view, and no doubt one I share with very few people, is that we would be better off with a half-dozen magazines on a regional basis; combining the best of our publishing, editing, and gamesmastering talents; or a special interest basis; then with the mish-mash of publications we have today. I would rather see 5-10 major regional or special interest publications similar to DW, each carrying a dozen or even two dozen games on an insert/flyer basis, than the hodge-podge of stuff we have today.

The benefits and costs of such a course as I have outlined should be obvious. There are, of course, a multitude of problems that must be discussed in advance and resolved in advance before setting out on such a course. Any team effort requires a captain to give the team direction as the dangers inherit in a leaderless team are too great for a successful operation. Still, the possibilities, for those willing to put aside their biases and pre-conceived notions, are great.

It's a radical idea. But these are radical times. A time for radical ideas.

A few years ago I proposed an equally radical idea. It was called the DIPTAX. It died because of the flak raised by hobby old timers. This proposal may well go the same way. But, hopefully, at least new publishers will have a chance to consider it as an alternative to what has been our traditional method. What you do with the proposal is your decision. In the meantime, good luck.

((Many zines have achieved a great deal of success using the team concept. It's a good way to go if that's your inclination, but it's not for everyone. We publishers are a pretty egotistical lot, and some of us (myself included) prefer to be in complete control of our own publications.
So what would I rather see? Zines produced either by individuals or by committee, depending entirely upon the inclinations of the various people involved. I do agree that it would be nice if there were a few more "teamwork" zines out there, though.))

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<u>Internationalism</u>: <u>Why</u> <u>and</u> <u>How</u>
by Steve Knight

Beyond the normal reach of the North American postal gaming hobby, there is a postal gaming hobby that thrives in Europe, almost completely unseen by most American hobbyists. Making contact with this "other" hobby can be a bit difficult, given the inconvenience of having to deal with overseas mail and currency exchange, but the rewards more than make up for the extra work involved.

This article should, I hope, help you decide if you wish to internationalize your zine, and give you a few hints towards accomplishing that goal should you decide to do so. A few words of caution are in order before we get to the subject itself, however. First, this article is, after all, only my own opinions, so there is no special validity to my appraisals of the European gaming hobby. (I could, after all, be suffering from complete misconceptions--but you'll have to investigate for yourself to find that out, won't you?) Second, this article will concentrate almost exclusively on the British hobby; although this implicitly slights the growing postal games hobbies in countries such as Germany, France, and Denmark, this is simply because my foreign language ability is limited to some broken schoolboy French, so I have no direct experience with the hobbies in any countries other than Britain. If you are fortunate enough to be reasonably adept at another language, you should be able to generalize the British-specific references in this article. By all means give it a try!

In any event, it seems appropriate to begin with the burning question...

WHY INTERNATIONALISM?

Like many publishing decisions, trying to attract international subscribers has its up and down side. On the one hand, going international is decidedly more expensive, both for you and for your international subscribers, than is limiting yourself to subscribers from your own continent. Overseas air mail in the U.S. can cost up to four times normal first class mail, and trying to pass all of that cost on to your overseas subscribers will discourage all but the most interested from trying to maintain a subscription.

The positive side, although a bit less concrete, more than makes up for the extra expense. Simply put, British zines are amazingly well-produced. On average, British zines exhibit a level of literacy which puts far too many North American zines to shame, and they are <u>edited</u> in a manner which few North American publishers even try to approach. The discussions which go on in the various letter columns are well thought out and fascinating, if for no other reason than the participants are working from a different set of cultural assumptions. Sure, there are the discussions of local British politics and events for which you won't have all the background details, but it's easy enough to pick up the general ideas. Lastly, you'll probably find British zines to be a wonderful source of ideas for ways to improve your zine (I certainly have, as anyone who has seen my zine can attest).

WHAT'S THE BRITISH HOBBY LIKE?

Although by the time you get around to leaping into the icy waters of publishing you'll doubtless have been in the hobby for at least a little while, tapping into the British hobby will bring back something of what you probably felt entering the American gaming hobby. You'll be less of a novice, to be sure, and at least generally familiar with how things work, but you'll be opening up a door to a hobby with its own established culture and personalities. Adjusting to the new rules of conduct will be different, but it's really not that difficult to get the hang of. That said, you should be prepared for at least the following differences:

1. <u>Diplomacy</u> <u>games</u> <u>in</u> <u>Britain</u> <u>are</u> <u>run</u> <u>with</u> "<u>prophetic</u>" <u>builds</u> <u>and</u> <u>retreats</u>.

   Simply put, the British fashion is to combine summer and autumn retreats with the <u>preceding</u> turn; that is, when a player sends in orders, they are also expected to send in retreat orders for any units which may be dislodged during the turn. The same holds true for winter --players send in builds and removals with the preceding fall turn, and must anticipate the different situations which may result from the Fall adjudication.

2. <u>In general</u>, <u>British</u> <u>zines</u> <u>run</u> <u>a</u> <u>greater</u> <u>variety</u> <u>of</u> <u>games</u> <u>than</u> <u>do</u> <u>North</u> <u>American zines</u>.

   This is not to say that every British gamesmaster is a gaming wizard running every game under the sun. Diplomacy is still the hobby mainstay, and there a number of zines who do restrict themselves to Diplomacy and variants, but you're as likely as not to find that the British zine you've just received as a sample runs a few other games which you've never seen before. Mind you, a quick glance through the <u>Zine Register</u> reveals that we have our share of zines which run games other than Dip, but by and large (personal opinion, here) these zines tend to stay away from the mainstream of the American postal Diplomacy hobby.

3. <u>British</u> <u>hobbyists</u> <u>tend</u> <u>to</u> <u>take</u> <u>the</u> <u>zines</u> <u>a</u> <u>little</u> <u>more</u> <u>seriously</u>, <u>and</u> <u>the</u> <u>personalities</u> <u>much</u> <u>less</u> <u>seriously</u>, <u>than</u> <u>do</u> <u>American</u> <u>hobbyists</u>.

   Based on the quality of the zines I've seen, I almost find it hard to believe that the average British editor has much time for anything else besides work and the hobby. On the other hand, this is not to say that the zines are themselves overly stiff or formal or too-polished; the presentation is quite often relaxed. But the actual publisher's "product," the content of the zine itself, tends to be scrutinized a bit more, and the publisher who is letting quality slip a bit will no doubt see that fact mentioned in a few letters or reviews.

   But the seriousness with which the British hobby seems to look at the zines does not carry over into the hobby itself--which has one extremely nice benefit: the hard-nosed politics that sometimes boil to the surface in North America and make things a bit, uh, warm are scarcely prevalent in Britain. Sure, there is a good deal of banter that goes on amongst the established hobby members, but over it all there is a stronger sense of community that tempers the potential conflicts and keeps the whole experience very enjoyable.

4. <u>The</u> <u>British</u> <u>gaming</u> <u>hobby</u> <u>has</u> <u>slightly</u> <u>stronger</u> <u>connections</u> <u>to</u> <u>the</u> <u>other</u> <u>amateur</u> <u>press</u> <u>hobbies</u> <u>in</u> <u>Britain</u>.

   Here in the Americas, we seem to have split fairly cleanly with the amateur science fiction publishing hobby which gave our postal gaming hobby its birth. (At the least, I don't know of any zines which straddle the fence between the two.) In Britain, though, they take a slightly wider view of what constitutes "The Hobby," even if the different parts are still readily identifiable. Looking through <u>Zine With No Name</u>, there are a great number of Fantasy Role-Playing zines around, and I seem to notice a few publishers with connections to the science fiction fanzines, or music fanzines, or...you get the idea. This needn't be a concern to you at all--but if you're involved with one of these other hobbies which give rise to fanzines, that can be additional selling point by which you can attract more subscribers to your zine.

5. <u>British</u> <u>hobbyists</u> <u>are</u> <u>a</u> <u>little</u> <u>more</u> <u>insular</u> <u>than</u> <u>American</u> <u>hobbyists</u>.

   Over the last few years, more American hobbyists have been subscribing to British zines than the other way around. This obviously doesn't pose any great barrier to <u>your</u> getting involved in the British hobby-- but it does mean that you may have to go that extra distance to attract a sizable foreign subscribership.

INTERNATIONAL GAMES?

If you decide that you would like to run some games with overseas players,
the 'normal' four-or-five week deadlines which you use for domestic games
will be inadequate for players on different sides of the Atlantic to
communicate with one another and still leave time to submit orders to you.
There are (at least) three ways you can deal with the longer deadlines
necessary for an international game: 1) slow down the zine as a whole to
accommodate the international game deadlines, which will doubtless be
unpopular with players in any North American games you run; 2) run the
international games by separate flyer, reporting the results in the zine as
often as necessary; or 3) run the game to deadlines every other zine.
Which method you choose is up to you, obviously, but the point is that you
should run international games from a position of having thought through
your options ahead of time.

Of course, you may decide that you'd rather not run any international games
at all, but would still like to have a number of international subscribers.
If this is the case, international subscribers means committing yourself to
providing some sort of reading material in (nearly) every issue. (To a
large extent, this is true even if you'll run some international games.) It
needn't be lengthy--quality is more important than quantity. Just keep in
mind that your international subscribers will be from that small subset who
are willing to go to a little extra effort and expense in order to
subscribe to your zine. If you wish to keep them as subscribers, you'd
best see to it that your zine is worth their extra effort.

HOW TO INTERNATIONALIZE

The first step in trying to attract international subscribers involves
swallowing a bit of extra expense. Just as you can build your domestic
readership by sending samples to potential North American subscribers,
you'll need to build an overseas readership by sending samples to potential
European subscribers. Air mail for these samples is almost a must if
you're going to seriously try to attract overseas subscribers; no matter
how good your zine is, a sample which is six weeks out of date owing to the
slowness of surface mail will seem, whether you intend it or not, as though
you're only half-interested in soliciting that person's subscription.

To whom do you send samples, though? Unless you have nearly unlimited
funds which you are planning to blow spend on your publishing, it will do
you little good to try to blanket the names on a foreign subscription list
with samples. Just as most American hobbyists are content to stay within
the American hobby, the random British hobbyist to whom you might send a
sample will probably not be interested in subscribing to your zine just
because you happened to be good enough to send them a sample.
The key to raising your odds is simple: publishers. This isn't to say
that there aren't other ways, of course; if an American zine to which you
subscribe has a British hobbyist or two on its sub list, by all means send
them a sample. As a rule, however, British publishers will be a bit more
receptive to your offering than will random hobbyists. Part of this is
doubtless because of the natural camaraderie of publishers--they've been
through what you're experiencing, and most are only too glad to give a bit
of help to a sincere effort to start a promising zine.

At the very least, then, send a sample to any publisher who you think has
anything to do with internationalism. If you want to spend a little more
money, send a sample to any overseas postal gaming publisher for whom you
can secure an address. (The <u>Zine Register</u>'s list of European zines will be
good for the former; the latter group includes every publisher listed in
<u>Zine With No Name</u>, the British version of <u>ZR</u>.) Even if this is your first
issue and in it you have done a thorough job of explaining to potential
subscribers what the zine is about (you did, didn't you?), you would do
well to include a short note or letter introducing yourself to the
publisher, including the following: 1) describe the particular

international interest in your zine (will you be running international games? which ones? do you plan to have a lot of reading material? will you be discussing things of international interest?); 2) ask for a quick plug or review of your zine; 3) ask for a sample copy of their zine, along with an offer to plug it in return; 4) ask for a trade or mutual sub, if you wish. The point is you're asking this publisher to help you spread the good word about your new zine so that any British hobbyists who <u>are</u> interested in American zines can take the initiative and look you over.

Of course, merely spreading the word won't be enough to coax all potentially interested overseas subscribers into giving your zine a try. So, you may find it worthwhile to offer a bit of a bonus to any new subscribers from outside North America. This needn't be expensive; a free issue or two should serve to show that you're genuinely interested in foreign subscribers. And it just may convince a hesitant newcomer that you're serious enough about this internationalism business to be worth a look.

One other bit of extra expense for you to swallow: send one complimentary copy of every issue to <u>Zine With No Name</u>, for inclusion in its list of American zines. To the average who British hobbyist who may actually be interested in getting involved with the American hobby, this will identify you as an American zine receptive to British subscribers. It will probably be sufficient to send this complimentary copy by surface mail, although you're welcome to send it air mail if you want to be hardcore.

TO TRADE OR NOT TO TRADE

Of course, you may decide that you will not trade your zine, preferring instead to either arrange mutual subs or simply subscribe to those zines which you like without regard for whether or not the publisher subscribes to your zine as well. This is, after all your decision, and it would be wise for you to decide one way or another before you begin publishing. Nevertheless, even if you decide that you'd rather not trade your zine, I would advise that you make an exception for European zines. The primary reason is convenience; trying to exchange sub credit, even if no money actually changes hands, will run up against the fluctuations of foreign exchange. Additionally, the extra expense involved in sending and receiving zines internationally is best left hidden. The expense is still there, of course, but it's psychologically easier for a publisher to agree to a trade than to realize that they'll be shelling out a pound or more worth of their zine each month in order to get yours.

SO WHY NOT?

That pretty much wraps up the insight I have on the ups and downs of going international. No, there's really nothing mysterious about it; as you've probably noticed, most of the stuff mentioned in this article is merely a mixture of common sense and experience. But that just serves to show how you can, with just a little extra effort, open your zine up to an entire audience who you would otherwise never know and who would otherwise never know your zine. I, for one, am firmly convinced that you, your zine, and your subscribers will be much richer for your decision to internationalize. So good luck, and above all, have fun!

((To this gem of an article, I can add very little. One thing I shall remark upon is that Steve understates the importance of agreeing to trade (rather than mutually subscribe) if you choose to go international. It isn't merely a matter of convenience; trading is a firmly entrenched institution in Britain, and you'll get nowhere if you offer mutual subs to British publishers. I know -- I've tried it. Simon Billenness's comments in the article on trades and mutual subs, elsewhere in the handbook, reflect a typically British philosophy.))

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CHAPTER 9

WHEN THE ZINE ENDS

A Farewell Kiss

On Folding a Dipzine

by Judy Winsome

The folding of a zine should be unremarkable. All players should either be done with their games or happily playing under another arrangement. Subscribers should receive their expected amount of refund with their last issue. Other publishers with mutual trades should know the status of their trades. That's how it is supposed to go. But those who have been in the hobby for more years than they care to admit will testify that it doesn't always happen like that. Some will say it is rare for zines to fold that cleanly.

I suspect that the reasons why a publisher stops publishing explain why some folds become infamous. A publisher who is angered with the hobby for one reason or another is unlikely to be very careful about quitting publishing. So, one way to avoid a messy fold is to remain uncontroversial, and never give anyone cause to anger you. For many of you, that is not a very welcome suggestion. Controversy and dialogue provide the fuel for many publishers. So let's see if I can make some more palatable suggestions.

1. Discover your reasons for publishing. At first they may not be apparent. For me, at first I was interested in zine trades, then I enjoyed setting up a system for running the games, then I enjoyed the contacts, the notoriety, and the dialogue. Once you get a handle on why you're doing it, you're better able to predict when you'll give it up. Letting your subscribers know that you're thinking of folding well in advance helps.

2. Make a commitment to yourself regarding gamestarts. Don't take on more than you're willing to pledge either to finish or to find satisfactory foster homes for. ((Editor's Note: I'd have left out the second half of that sentence. Don't start any games you aren't willing to finish, period.))

3. Keep each subscriber's balance visible. I used a label-making program on a microcomputer to keep sub balances visible to each subscriber. That way each subscriber knows when to renew and what to expect for a refund when you fold.

4. When engaging in a mutual trade, be clear how it can end. Some zines you will want to continue with as a subscriber; others you won't be able to afford. When you stop, be clear with each what your plans are.

I wish you happy publishing. Enjoy your adventure in stardom among a very narrow but always interesting segment of the world's population. And when the time comes for you to bow out of the limelight, regardless of why it happens, treat us compassionately, maybe even with a farewell kiss.   xx

Love,
Judy

((I might add that Judy's fold of her wonderful zine, Winsome Losesome, was as clean as zine folds can be. A class act all the way!))

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The Psychology of Folding

by Geoff Challinger

If there's one aspect of a zine harder than starting it, it's folding it. As the more experienced members of the hobby will tell you, I have intimate knowledge, having helped end three publications myself. Like all experience this has proven useful, and I now feel I know quite a lot about the whole technique of dropping out.

The first thing to try and avoid is the social stigma a dropout attracts within the hobby. By and large we are not kind to dropouts, for obvious reasons. A vanishing player can spoil a game and a vanishing editor can ruin several. It's been quite some time since we ((the British hobby in mid-1985)) had a really messy fold, and here John Marsden and Nick Kinzett's good offices as Orphan Games Rehousers have helped. But people do still make the mistake of seeing a fold as a singular event -- as if one woke up in the morning and decided to jack it all in. Life isn't like that. If it were it would be simple to lift the phone and ring Nick Kinzett to say, "I'm folding, sort it all out." I've no doubt Nick would swallow hard but no problems would arise.

((Editor's Note: In North America in 1986, the Orphan Games head honcho is the hard-working Jim Burgess -- substitute his name here for Nick Kinzett.))

What actually happens is a slow ebbing of enthusiasm and an inability to overcome what were once merely trivial problems. Self-psychoanalysis is not easy and it's hard to tell the difference between mere laziness and an impending fold. Most of the genuinely awful folds are caused by people failing to realize that they are never going to print another stencil, and being prevented from confessing this to anyone by the guilt which they feel at mucking people about.

The best way to avoid this trap is to maintain personal contacts with other members of the hobby, so people can ring up as friends and ask why your zine isn't out. Statistically, messy folds are most likely to happen amongst zines produced by people not in social contact with many other people in the hobby.

If you are a good psychoanalyst and can see your enthusiasm beginning to ebb, then for goodness sake fold as soon as possible. An ebbing zine is a very depressing thing to produce and to play in. You may also find that with time away from regular production you find yourself wanting to run a zine again, with lessons learnt and all the benefits of experience.

((Indeed. Conrad von Metzke is the best example I can think of offhand of a publisher who restarted a zine and again achieved great success.

Know yourself and please, for your own self-image and the sake of your friends, fold cleanly when the time comes. If you should ever renew your publishing venture, a dirty fold will have left bad feelings for you to surmount; and even if you leave the hobby permanently, who wants to be remembered as having screwed people over?))

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Non-publishing: My New-found Hobby
by Bruce Linsey

Realistically, I'm the wrong person to be writing this article. While it's true that I have just stopped publishing, you'd never know it by glancing at my current level of hobby involvement. A typical ex-publisher would relate tales of his new-found free time, his increased wealth, and the exuberation of his local postmaster due to a drastic decrease in the tonnage of mail deliveries to his residence. But no one has ever accused me of being typical, and I can tell no such stories. So why am I writing this article? Well...it's difficult to say no to Mark Berch after all he's done for me and this hobby. So, I'll give you my point of view, but please don't regard it as typical.

The biggest thing I noticed about non-publishing once I resumed it after a five-year hiatus is that it's one heck of a lot of work. Consider the following. When I was a publisher, I almost never had to write letters. In a very real sense, my zine was my "letter" to all my friends out there. When a long letter from a friend would arrive, all I'd have to do was dash it off on the typer, plop down a quick response, ditto the page, and presto! -- there was my reply to whomever wrote the letter, with the added benefit that a hundred other people would read it and some of them would then write in with more letters contributing to the discussion. Generally, my readers understood that my zine was a medium for responding personally to letters. I can think of only two people -- Peter Ansoff and Ty Hare -- who ever chided me for not writing privately more often.

Now, however, matters are different. I have at hand a stack of personal letters that I've yet to respond to, going all the way back to November. I feel bad about this -- people like Bruce McIntyre, Chuff Afflerbach, and Rob Schmunk, to whom I owe letters, are still waiting. Without Voice of Doom, it isn't as easy to get off fast replies. So baby, do I ever miss the spare time I had as a publisher.

Not only is non-publishing very time-consuming, but it's awfully expensive as well. Back in the days when I was not non-publishing, my zine was a relatively inexpensive way of communicating with people and getting my points across to the hobby, and people were willing to pay for it. I mean, brother, I had it easy! If I had a new proposal for a hobby service, or a bit of supporting evidence for my position in a hobby feud, or if I just felt like saying hello to someone; heck, I'd print it in VD and a hundred people didn't mind subsidizing it. Now, in order to communicate, I must resort to long-distance phone calls, circular letters, and the dreaded spectre of private correspondence. This is of course very costly, and can you imagine what the reaction would be if I were to ask people to subscribe to these forms of communication?! "Your sub to my personality is up, Chuff, renew now or I'll never write you again..." Perish the thought! So, boy, do I ever miss the extra cash I had as a publisher.

The third drawback to non-publishing is that my postman, who has a weak back, is thoroughly pissed off at me for the added workload. You see, before I took the plunge and became a non-publisher, it was so simple: once a month I'd mail out the zine, and

ten days later I'd get the flood of response. On these two occasions the Dalton Post Office would bring in an extra truck for the occasion; the rest of the month they had nothing to do but sit in the lounge and speculate about what was going on with that weirdo on Ashuelot Street who periodically sent out mountains of envelopes adorned with lightning bolts.

Now, however, I keep 'em hopping continuously with all these mass mailings and -- yecchh -- personal letters. There is no set schedule, and so the posties never know just what their volume is going to be on any given day. And let me tell you, they're pissed! In fact, they aren't even delivering everything I send out any more. One of my circular letters was recently found lying unceremoniously in the gutter. (At long last, a statement with which even my enemies will agree!) So, man, do I ever miss being on good terms with my not-so-friendly postal workers.

I must summarize then by stating that my experience as a non-publisher has not lived up to its advance billing. I don't know how I ever did it for all those years while I was growing up. Indeed, the process is so time-consuming, so costly, and has my postman so aggravated that one of these days, I may be forced to give it up.

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CHAPTER 10

HOBBY SERVICES FOR PUBLISHERS

Diplomacy World: the Search for Excellence Continues

by Larry Peery

When Walt Buchanan established DIPLOMACY WORLD in 1974 I don't think even he dreamed that his creation would go on to become the hobby's standard of excellence. Still, given the reasons for which it was founded, it was perhaps inevitable that DW would become---for better or worse---the standard by which all other hobby publications are judged.

Walt published the first 15 issues of DW on an every other month basis at first, and then as a quarterly when the magazine took off. During his tenure the magazine's size increased from 32 to 40 pages and circulation tripled. Then, in 1977, Conrad von Metzke, of COSTAGUANA fame, took over as DW's publisher and published the next five issues. Beginning with number 21, Jerry Jones acted as publisher from 1979-1980. In the fall of 1980 Rod Walker took over as publisher with issue number 28 and continued as publisher through the summer of 1984, producing eleven or twelve issues of DW, depending on how you count 'em. During the past dozen years or so DW has published some 1,600 pages of Diplomacy materials and hundreds of original articles by well over a hundred contributors dealing with every aspect of the game and hobby. Allan B. Calhamer, the game's designer, and Avalon Hill, the game's manufacturer, supported DW and contributed to it generously. Nothing like it exists elsewhere in the hobby literature. Over the years in spite of its many failings, DW established, maintained, and continued to insist on a standard of excellence that did not exist elsewhere in the hobby. That standard of excellence was part of DW's original purpose.

DW is different from other hobby publications because its purposes are different from other hobby publications. Most hobby publications exist to run games, publish entertaining features, carry a bit of news or gossip, and stroke the egos of their publishers and/or readers; and as long as they do those things well, they flourish. When they cease to do so their publishers lose interest and the magazine folds. DW's purposes are different. Where personal publications serve personal goals, DW serves hobby goals. Among them: publication of original feature materials related to the game and hobby, dissemination of news about the hobby, acting as the hobby's journal of record, and doing all this in as impartial and professional a manner as possible. Of all the hobby's publications only DW is committed to those goals. Serving the

hobby is DW's raison d'etre. My own personal commitment has been to achieve these goals on schedule and on a sound financial basis. In an amateur hobby DW reflects professional standards.

Commitment is not the same as achievement, of course, and DW has had its share of lapses in attempting to turn these goals into reality, but over the years DW has been gifted with some very dedicated and talented publishers and editors who--- each in his or her own way----have attempted to achieve these goals, and to do so in the best manner possible.

By overcoming its problems, by its endurance, and by its very survival DW has proven itself to be a stronger institution than any of its publishers and that includes some of the hobby's greatest figures: Buchanan, von Metzke, Walker, and the rest. Most Diplomacy publications die when their publishers lose interest, but DW seems to go on, somehow.

Why? Because much of the hobby shares the same commitments as DW and wants it to survive. It wants the same things as DW exists to provide and since no other publication provides them it will do everything in its power to ensure DW's survival. That is the reason why DW survived its financial crisis in 1985, because the hobby wanted it to. Literally hundreds of people expressed, in a real way, a desire to keep DW alive and well. If there is anything in the hobby which qualifies as an institution, then DW is it. And, as long as it remains committed to those goals, it will survive, one way or another.

But goals have to be translated into realities and that's the rub. In a hobby populated with as many strong-willed and independent people as this one, working together for a common goal is difficult under the best of circumstances. The very nature of the game, the feudalistic structure of the hobby itself; all make it difficult, if not impossible, to translate DW's goals into realities. Doing so is the job of the DW publisher/editor. He is the bridge between the magazine and the hobby, the staff and the readers, and the goals and their implementation. And everyone tries to walk over him. And, as long as the bridge is strong, that's OK. But once the foundation starts to go, woe to the publisher and the magazine.

Most publishers of Diplomacy magazines have to please only themselves and, hopefully, their players. Some even pay attention to the needs of their readers. DW's publisher, on the other hand, juggles DW's original goals, his own personal goals, his staff's goals, his readers' needs, and the hobby's best interests. And, once in a while, the publisher of DW even acts as the conscience of the hobby and its collective voice: calling for a better physical product from Avalon Hill, demanding an end to hobby feuding, or even lambasting the hobby's publishers for a poor performance. Rarely does he achieve a perfectly balanced performance or relationship and sometimes even he drops the ball. Still, as a group DW's publishers have been remarkably dedicated to the magazine and its goals. One develops a feel for this by skimming through the DW Anthology Volume I and reading what previous publishers/editors have written for and about DW. There is a sense of continuity of purpose---if not method----even of history there that one finds nowhere else in the hobby's vast literature. If being publisher of DW is the hobby's most important job, it is also its loneliest, especially when it comes time to make difficult decisions.

From the physical product, produced on over-sized pages using quality papers and a mailer; to the articles within, written by some of the best writers in the hobby; to the demonstration games, filled with some of the best players in the hobby; to the hobby-wide news and information; DW attempts to do it all and do it well. And, except for its scheduling and financial problems, I think it has done a good job over the years. In many areas, DW has set the standard of excellence and judged itself--- not always favorably---by that standard. At times other hobby publications have performed better, but none has ever taken on DW's mission.

Of course the hobby could and would survive without DW but would it be the kind of hobby we want? Personally, I think not. If DW did not exist, as the saying goes, someone would have to invent one all over again, because some hobby publication like DW would have to exist to justify calling the Diplomacy hobby a hobby. ((Oh, Larry... I just love it when you say things like that!))

The publisher/editor of DW is the captain of the hobby's flagship, as DW has often been called. But to be useful a ship must have a crew, passengers, cargo, and a destination in mind. The captain's concern is for the safety of the passengers and crew first, the cargo second, and the ship third---getting them all to to their destination is his primary responsibility. The DW staff is its crew. The DW family is its readers. The content of the magazine is its cargo. The destination is the goal the magazine serves. Obviously, it is a far broader responsibility than that carried by the typical hobby publisher. Producing a good DW is difficult, but not impossible, for a good publisher/editor; but it takes a lot of cooperation and help from all the hobby's publishers and editors to produce a great DW on a consistent basis.

Hopefully, by now you have some understanding, if not appreciation, for DW's unique position in the hobby. The question that concerns us here is how can you, as a new publisher, relate to DW and, together, how can we, you and DW, work together for our mutual benefit and the improvement of the hobby?

As a potential new publisher, editor of a Diplomacy publication, or provider of a hobby service or publication, you are a future member of the DW family; whether you be crew, passenger, or cargo. As a new publisher DW can help you in many ways: by publishing news of your existence and your game openings, by providing you with listings in our game openings list, with lists of new players entering the hobby and looking for games, by reviewing your publication or services, by providing you with access to our own publications and services---which can provide an invaluable resource of information and knowledge to the new publisher---and even by printing your Diplomacy obituary when you fold your publication. More important than any real tangible service that DW provides, however, is the intangible one that you receive on becoming a part of DW's family. That is the sense of comradery, of fraternity you experience as part of DW's family because when you become a part of DW you are, truly, a part of the Diplomacy hobby's mainstream.

I remember, years ago, someone once talking about why he thought DW was so important to him and the hobby as a whole. It wasn't profound, but it was true. He said, "When I want to show people what Diplomacy is all about, what the hobby is, and what I do when I waste all that time writing letters, etc., I pull out a copy of DW and show it to them. It's the only publication in the hobby that I'm proud to show to my non-Diplomacy friends." I remembered that when I was trying to decide if it was worth trying to save DW last fall. From that thought to the idea of a Diplomacy coffee table art book that one could display proudly to invite inquiries from one's guest was but a mega-thought. And from there to a BBB to keep on the telephone table was as natural a progression as one finds in the hobby. Even the Stabbing Gourmet Cookbook, in the kitchen, has its place. And who knows, next time we may have something for the bedroom, The Joy of Diplomacy, or the bathroom to pass away the time.

In return for our support of your new effort we ask that you provide us with information about your Diplomacy project and activities---of all kinds---for dissemination to the hobby, that you subscribe to DW, contribute an article or news item for the magazine now and again, and publicize our various projects and publications for your readers' benefit. Your collective input is what makes our collective output significant.

DW, by its very nature, is a clearinghouse for hobby news and information, and by being a part of that clearinghouse you have saved the effort and expense of trying to keep up with the scores of hobby publications that exist. We do it for you. In addition, by being a part of our clearinghouse you make sure your information gets out to the entire hobby on a timely and efficient basis. Let me give you an example. This past year saw dozens of hobby publishers reprint the information sheet for DIPCON and the Runestone Poll ballot and instructions. I myself received over 25 copies of each. It was a duplication of effort and a terrible waste. Instead, as an example of what can be done using DW's large scale of operations, we produced a single awards and poll ballot, including all of the various awards and poll forms and the DIPCON info sheet, and distributed to the entire DW family. By pooling our efforts we can do more and do it for less cost. That's also part of DW's function, to do the things that individual hobby publications can't do on their own.

Together---and that's the key word---you, the new hobby publisher; and DW, one of the hobby's oldest institutions, can work together for our mutual benefit and, in the process, help make the hobby a better place for both of us. That's the bottom line.

((I too urge you, as a publisher-to-be, to support Diplomacy World. As Larry points out, it's hardly a one-way street; DW can be as valuable to you as you are to it.

I have but one major quarrel with Larry's article, and it's in his second-to-last paragraph. I don't think it's a "terrible waste" that many publishers print such items as the DipCon info sheet and the Runestone Poll ballot. The fact is that there are always going to be hobbyists who, for whatever reason, do not subscribe to DW. These people are entitled to see these items through other zines. It's great that our hobby has a publication whose purpose is to disseminate information as completely and reliably as DW does, but no single publication can or should ever hope to be the sole news source for the hobby.))

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The Black and Blue Book: Why and How

by Larry Peery and Mike Maston

The Black and Blue Book, or BBB as it is commonly known, is nothing more or less than a hobby-wide telephone book for members of the North American Diplomacy hobby. Conceived in 1981 as a tool to aid members of the California hobby, the BBB has become so successful and grew so fast (from 125 in the first edition to 700 entries in the third edition -- all Californians) that it was merely a matter of time before the BBB expanded to include the entire North American hobby. We were originally hesitant to cover all of the American hobby because doing so would require a quantum leap in the amount of work required by us, attempting to gather information from more than 100 different sources, and finding ways to make the computer handle a doubled or tripled workload. Still, it was a challenge. The 1985 edition included some 1,066 listings of players, publications, services, events, etc. of interest to the North American Diplomacy hobby, and that was after we purged the names of some 500 Californians who we felt were not part of the mainstream of the hobby.

We contacted every possible source for lists of names of Diplomacy hobby members: publishers, hobby officials, tournament sponsors, etc., and they were very responsive. We waded through dozens of lists and one individual's name turned up over 25 times! By the time we were through we felt we had identified most of the hobby's key members although local and regional listings were weak in particular areas. It took us a lot of time to find Area Codes for a lot of the names submitted for members of the postal hobby, and we still lack telephone numbers for an awful lot of hobby members.

Organizing all the raw data was a challenge. As I collected it I had transferred it to 3x5 file cards; one per person, publication, service, event, etc. By the time I was done the stack was over a foot high. At that point Mike and I sat down and discussed how we wanted to arrange the information on disc and on paper. We've stuck with the same system from the beginning because to change it would mean re-entering all the data into the computer (a real chore at this point), re-educating people to deal with a new system, and finding a better software program and means of physically reproducing the materials on paper. So far we haven't found anything that will do it at a price we can pay. My personal feeling is that by 1988 or so we will have the North American version of the BBB down pat. And then the challenge of a true world-wide BBB confronts us. Now that would be a challenge.

We decided to try and make it easy for players to find each other, even if they didn't know the name of another player or his exact location. So instead of a single alphabetical listing we devised a three-part listing using last names, Area Codes, and ZIP Codes. The first is alphabetical and the last two are numeric. So, even if you don't know the name of a player in your area, you can look him (or her) up by his/her Area Code or ZIP Code. All of these lists are generated by computer sorts and each list is divided into three parts because of the vast amount of data involved. It takes three disks to hold all the data. Individual entries include name, address,

telephone number (with Area Code even if the actual phone number is not listed), areas
of interest in the hobby when known (face-to-face, postal, play by electronic mail,
computer play, convention/tournament play, publishing, etc.), and publication
title(s) if any. The Area Codes and ZIP Codes are the keys for separate sorts, and
we can print out a listing by any of the various subjects.

In addition, the BBB includes an introduction explaining the system and how it
works; technical notes on how it was produced by computer; a list of hobby publications;
a list of hobby services, organizations, and projects; information on electronic mail
Diplomacy; a list of major conventions and tournaments; and information on the overseas
hobby; all in a 130-page ((in 1985)) reduced format, digest-sized publication. A
number of people (two, to be exact) have criticized the large amount of white space
we left in the BBB. Yet when you see the copies belonging to people who frequently
use it as we intended, they are filled with additional names, changes of address, phone
numbers that have been added, and new listings. All that space isn't going to waste.
((Editor's Note: Boy -- that was about the smoothest rationalization for lots of
white space that I've ever heard!))

By way of closing, I'd like to plug the BBB in two ways. First, if you aren't
already listed you should be; so send us your name, address (complete), phone number
including Area Code (and indicate if you do not want your phone number published),
your areas of interest in the hobby, and the title of any publication in which you are
involved. If you are a publisher, hobby service provider, convention/tournament host,
or active in the hobby in other ways be sure to write us and request a copy of the BBB
information form. There is no charge for listing in the BBB, nor does the BBB accept
advertising of any kind. Second, BBB's costs are paid for by sales, which means it
isn't exactly cheap.

So the next time you hear Dale Robertson talking about "reaching out and touching
someone", think of the BBB and what it could be doing for you.

((Editor's Note: Mike Maston was in charge of the actual production of the BBB,
and his part of the article, following, deals in more detail with that.))

The BLACK AND BLUE BOOK (BBB) is the first and largest project that I have
attempted. The key to compiling this work is the assistance of my home computer
system. For me at least it would have been impossible without it! I believe that
I have shown the value of such a system to the Diplomacy hobbyist. How was this
project done?

First, mountains of raw data must be collated into useable formats so that it
can be accessed by the end user, in this case the BBB purchaser. To do that, the
first step is to select the appropriate software to do the job. The type of software
to be used is called a "data base." This software must be able to accept all of the
information and then present the final readout in a concise, readable, and useable
manner. It must be more than a "list of names, etc." Secondly, I must be able to
manipulate the data, so that if necessary I can find out such things as "Are there
Diplomacy players in New Mexico? How many? What are their ZIP or Area Codes?"
The data base program leaves me with a blank CRT. I can then set up the file in
any way I want. In the case of the BBB I decided that we needed the hobbyist's
name, address, city, state, ZIP Code, phone number, publication(s) (if any), and
any other pertinent information. Each one of those categories is called a "field."
Once all of the fields are organized, we have what is called a "file." In this case
the file is the BBB. The next thing that must be done is to fill in all of fields
with the raw data. In this case I have well over 1,500 names to input (type into
the computer). Once this is done, and proofed, I can then sort any of the fields so
that the data can be utilized by the end user. All of this organizing, inputting
etc. lacks one necessary thing: a computer system. This must all be done on one of
those. Otherwise it must be done by hand. My system is the Commodore 128 Computer
with a disk drive, an RGB Monitor, and a Gemini 10X printer. However, the key to
the whole thing is the software. I have been very fortunate that the software I
have used allows me to present the information in an intelligible manner.

Another thing is that once the initial inputting is completed and the end
product is printed and sold, it must be updated each year, so that each edition is
up to date. I have to have a place to store all of the information in the file.
That storage device is the 5¼ inch floppy diskette. Because of the limitations
of the Commodore storage system (only about 166K per diskette), I have had to
divide the entire file (remember the file?) onto three diskettes. When update time
arrives, all that I have to do is to make the corrections required, add new entries,

etc.; then run a sort so that everything is correct from A to Z. Once that is completed the whole thing is printed on the printer, pasted up, and sent to the printer for reproduction.

Basically, that's how it is done. Now that the BBB system is fairly well perfected I'm considering starting on the Diplomacy Archives; a project that will require handling almost ten times as much raw data as the BBB, but the basic system will be the same.

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The Runestone Poll
by Bruce Linsey

The Runestone Poll is an annual, hobby-wide poll founded in 1977 by John Leeder, publisher of the former zine Runestone. Also known as the North American Zine and GM Poll, it is conducted in the spring each year. The Poll's purpose is to determine the hobby's opinions of all North American publications and gamesmasters. Voters rate zines, subzines and GMs on a scale of 0 (horrible) to 10 (excellent), and all the votes are tabulated and analyzed. In 1985, this was done by computer for the first time. The official publication of the Runestone Pollster is called The Cream Shall Rise!; it is sent out each July with the final results and a great deal of statistical analysis.

Participation in the Poll is of course optional; it's not as essential a project as, say, the novice packets or the orphan service. Nonetheless, I strongly urge you, as a new publisher, to support and publicize this poll. The Runestone is the oldest, best-known, and most highly regarded of all the North American hobby's polls. Many hobbyists take a lot of stock in the results, and with considerable justification. While of course the standings don't prove anything on a scientific basis, participation in recent years has been large enough to give the final scores a great deal of statistical validity. This is further evidenced by the consistently high placings of the zines generally regarded as the hobby's finest; Europa Express and No Fixed Address, for example, always seem to finish quite well.

On top of all that, the Runestone Poll is fun for a lot of people, and we're here to have fun! Please, if you would, support this project by publicizing it in your zine and by voting.

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The Zine Register and the Zine Bank
by Simon Billenness

The Zine Register was initially an annual production (originally called the "Zine Directory") under Mike Mills. Mike later passed it on to Roy Henricks, who has since passed it on to me. Its original purpose was to provide the hobby with a comprehensive guide to Diplomacy zines.

My goals in producing the ZR are somewhat different. I feel its value as an archives publication is secondary to its recruitment function, so I have dropped the policy of mandatory inclusion. Though I do my best to list every zine, editors always have the right to exclude their zine for whatever reason. In order to use it as a recruiting device, I have arranged for it to be distributed with the two novice packets (Masters of Deceit and Supernova), and by Larry Peery in his capacity as editor of Diplomacy World.

There have been a few changes to the format of the ZR. For starters, publication has been speeded up to an issue every four months, which helps keep the information up to date. In addition, the European section has been expanded to help promote international interest, but what do you expect from a Brit? I also intend to include zines which don't run Diplomacy and, instead, devote themselves to other games, even sports simulations.

I'm keen to trade with all zines and I hope the publicity I provide justifies all the issues I receive. Not only does each issue reach my subscribers and almost every editor in the hobby, it's also sent to many hobby newcomers via the novice packets and Diplomacy World. All trade copies become part of the Zine Bank, which provides a bulk sampling of zines to newcomers to the hobby (or anybody else interested). For $2.00 and a business-sized self-addressed envelope, I'll stuff it full of as many zines as I can.

The ZR is intended as a hobby service, helping editors and novices alike. If you feel I can help you in any way, don't hesitate to write me a letter.

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The International Subscription Exchange

by Steve Knight and Bruce McIntyre

I.   Introduction

The International Subscription Exchange (ISE) is established with the intent of making it easier for British and American hobbyists to obtain subscriptions to American and British zines. Its secondary intent is to avoid the sending of large amounts of money through the post or the expense of International Money Orders.

II.   Internal Operation

Letters will be sent by each of the two representatives every four weeks via Airmail, the representatives alternating sending and receiving every two weeks. Each letter will contain the details of the subscription requests received by the sender during the past four weeks, including moneys received, addresses, zines, etc. The recipient of each letter will dispatch the equivalent sums in his own currency (determined via the tourist exchange rate on the date of receipt of the letter) to the requested zines.

Credit imbalances between the two operators will be settled as often as the two operators agree, the paying party responsible for the security of whatever method of exchange he chooses.

III.   Subscriber Requests

Subscription requests should be sent to the ISE operator in the subscriber's home country, stating clearly and legibly the following information:
1.   Subscriber's name, address, and telephone number
2.   Zine or zines requested, including the publisher's name and address
3.   Specific mailing instructions for the zines (airmail or surface mail), if any
4.   Amount intended for each zine or publisher OR number of issues desired

When requesting a subscription to a zine which charges a flat rate ("X dollars/ pounds for Y issues") instead of maintaining credit balances, add 10% extra to cover variations in the exchange rate; excess over the requested number of issues will be returned.

All requests will be dealt with as rapidly as possible.

((Editor's Note: The above is Steve Knight's Statement of Operational Intent; in Excelsior Bruce McIntyre offered the following further explanation.))

Let's follow my $20 ((sent to Steve Knight, intended for a sub to Richard Sharp's Dolchstoss)) through the ISE's highly efficient bureaucracy:

Act I: I send my $20 to Steve Knight, with a note stating name, address, and the zine(s) I would like to receive for the money enclosed. I am careful not to forget to include the name and address of the editor(s), since this is as important an enclosure as my money. (I am uncertain, but I do not believe Steve or Doug can get cash for cheques made out to ISE, so if you send a cheque, use their names, please.) ((Just as you'd write a check to the editor and not the zine when subscribing normally...))

Act II: Steve converts my $20 U.S. to pounds sterling: £16.54 by today's rates. I don't remember whether there exists any sort of fee; there may well be one, as Steve and Doug deserve better than to spend their time, effort, and most importantly postage and stationery costs for nothing. (("Doug" is Doug Rowling, the British operator. Since this was written, Bruce has joined up as the Canadian operator.))

Act III: My order is sent, along with the other orders Steve has received, to Doug.

Act IV: Doug, seeing my order among the rest, sends off a cheque for £16.54 or so to Richard Sharp.

Act V: Richard applies the money to my sub balance, and curses the heavens, knowing that anyone who can listen to the Beatles and Beethoven in the same evening can only cause trouble.

Act VI: I receive the latest Dolchstoss and note with great pleasure that my sub has been extended! Note the immense amount of slavery I have to endure to achieve this end result. I mean, this is taking millions of dollars in service charges away from banks and post offices every year, to be sure! How sinister! How immoral! Do wonders ever cease?!?

And, as they say on the Chevron commercial, that's it.
That's it.

((And how could anything be simpler for subscribers and publishers alike? All the fuss and hassle with international exchange rates is left to the operators!))

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