

NUMBER 20

JANUARY 28TH, 1977 / FEBRUARY 25TH, 1977

KOVAL PUBLICATION NUMBER 57

MEMBER OF TDA, IDA, DNYMPA, AND MITSGS

A tetracuspid is the graph of an equation of the form $x^{2/3} + y^{2/3} = a$. The Tetracuspid is a Diplomacy* oriented zine published on the last Friday of every month (other factors permitting) by Richard Kovalcik, Jr., Room 205, Bexley Hall, 50 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge, MA 02139 who may occasionally be reached by calling (617) 494 8759 any day of the week between noon and midnight Eastern Standard Time. The best time to call is probably around 11 PM EST.

Subscriptions to the Tetracuspid are available at the rate of 1¢ per page plus postage. When subscribing please specify how you want me to mail your issues to you (e.g. First Class, Airmail, Printed Matter, or Third Class) and send a lump sum of at least \$2.00. Please make all checks payable to me. Send cash at your own risk.

All trades are quite welcome.

I have four gameopenings is one game of regular Diplomacy which will in all probability be guest-gamesmastered. The houserules used will be the Koval Publications' Houserules dated July 1st, 1976 with the exception that no phone calls will be accepted by the GM. To play you must maintain a subscription or trade, pay a \$2.00 gamefee and maintain a \$3.00 deposit which will, as stated in the houserules, be deposited in the ISE (International Subscription Exchange). This deposit will only be refunded if you stay in the game until you are eliminated or the game ends. Players from New York and New Jersey are not eligible to play in this game as I already have players in this game from New Jersey and upper and lower New York State. Please send me your preference list and a lump sum of money if you want to play.

Standbys are needed. To be eligible to standby the only requirement is that you regularly receive the Tetracuspid. If you're interested in standbys please let me know. At the moment my standby list consists of Ron Kelly, Roland Straten, Alan Rowland, and David Lagerson.

(continued on the next page)

*Diplomacy is the registered trademark for the game invented by Allan B. Calhamer and manufactured by the Avalon Hill Company.

Anyone writing an article which is published herein will receive two cents of sub credit per line used toward anyone's account. This money can even be used to provide a sub for someone else. However, it may not be refunded. Your articles are greatly appreciated.

I am a member of DNYMPA (Duh New York Mafia Protective Association). This means that should I be forced to fold the games contained herein will be rescued by the other members of DNYMPA. DNYMPA is a group of publishers from the New York and New England area whose sole purpose is to insure each others' games. To the best of my knowledge the other members of DNYMPA are:

John Boardman
Fred Brenner
Greg Costikyan
Ben Grossman
Adam Gruen
Brad Hessel

Ray Heuer
Robert Bryan Lipton
Drew McGee
Michael Muchnik
Doug Reif

%%%%%%%%%

R A N D O M R A M B L I N G S

(1) John Boyer has just announced the ceasation of the publication of Impassable per se. Impassable will continue as a game-zine until the end of the games which John is currently running. John's retirement from postal Diplomacy publishing will leave a gap in the hobby. Impassable was undoubtably one of the very best zines around. We should all be indebted to John for his helping make the hobby what it is today.

(2) On the Everything front we have two items of interest. First, in Everything, # 30 Doug Beyerlein says "... Avalon Hill will donate the entrance fees from future Origins Diplomacy tournaments to the Boardman Number Custodian for the running of the numbers and Everything... The Origins tournaments appear that they will bring in sufficient money for me to drop the mandatory one dollar fee, and instead make it voluntary. So all of you people who can't spare a buck will still get your number for any new games started." So for the time being at least it seems the Boardman Numbers will continue to be run as a true hobby wide service. However, even in announcing this Doug Beyerlein couldn't resist the temptation to make an idiotic comment about his opponents. Now for what may turn out to be the bad news. John Weswig, the publisher of Everything, announces that the printing cost of Everything has jumped to about eight times what it used to be. John is looking for someone who has a better means of reproduction to help.

(3) On page four you will find the mailing list as of this issue. If there's something wrong in your listing please let me know.

(4) I have a limited number of sets of the Colonia II or III rules and map for sale for 50¢ each (sent as Printed Matter). Please send stamps or tell me to deduct the money from your account and specify which edition you want if you'd like me to send you a set.

1974PQ

WINTER 1907

SEE COMMENTS BELOW

The deadline for Spring 1908 orders is Thursday March 17th, 1977 by phone and Friday March 18th, 1977 by mail.

I really must apologize for the way this game has been run lately. I'm not going to bother making up excuses. I'll only say that I'll try to be more punctual in the future.

ORDERSEngland (Civil Disorder)

Is even.

Has FCly. (1 unit)

France (Ken Johnson)

Retreats FNth to Eng and is even.

Has ARuh, FHol, FMid, FSpa(sc), FEdi, ABur, APar, FEng, and AMar. (9 units)

Germany (Civil Disorder)

GM removes FHel.

Has AMun. (1 unit)

Italy (David Lagerson)

Builds AVen.

Has AVen, ABoh, FBul(ec), FIon, FAeg, FTyn, FLyo, FBla, ARum, AGal, ASev, ATyr, APic, and AVie. (14 units)

Russia (Roland Straten)

Builds AMos and AStP.

Has AMos, AStP, FNwy, ABer, FNth, FKie, AWar, and ASil. (8 units)

Turkey (Ron Kelly)

Is even.

Has AArm. (1 unit)

NMR PROTECTION

I have spring orders on file from Russia and Turkey.

I have no general orders on file.

I have permission from David Lagerson to call collect if I don't receive his orders.

THE TETRACUSPID MAILING LIST

1. t. Dennis Agosta, 16 South Wilber Street, Belleville, NJ 07109
2. c. Trevor Baille, Apt. 16, 4598 Decarie, Montreal, PQ, CANADA H3X 2H5
3. t. Herb Barents, 1142 South 96th Street, Zeeland, MI 49464
4. t. Jim Benes, 417 South Stough Street, Hinsdale, IL 60521
5. t. Doug Beyerlein, Apt. F, 240 Hawthorne, Palo Alto, CA 94301
6. t. Pete Birks, Darwin College, University of Kent, Canterbury, Kent, UNITED KINGDOM
7. t. John Boardman, 234 East 19th Street, Brooklyn, NY 11226
8. t. John Bayer, 117 Garland Drive, Carlisle, PA 17013
9. c. Fred Brenner, 2821 West 12th Street, Brooklyn, NY 11224
10. t2. Walter W. Buchanan, Box 324, RR # 3, Lebanon, IN 46052
11. t. Jim Bumpas, 948 Loraine Avenue, Los Altos, CA 94022
12. t. Greg Castikyan, 1675 York Avenue, New York, NY 10028
13. t. Blair Cusack, 1620 42nd Street, SW, Calgary, Alberta, CANADA T3C 1Z5
14. t. Ernie Demanelis, 106 Wilson Avenue, Morgantown, WV 26505
15. t. Larry A. Dunning, 46 Holmesdale Road, West Midland, 6056, WEST AUSTRALIA
16. t. Laurence Gillespie, 23 Robert Allen Drive, Halifax, Nova Scotia, CANADA B3M 3G9
17. t. Adam Gruen, 470 North Street, Harrison, NY 10528
18. t. Walter Luc Haas, Postfach 7, CH-4024, Basel 24, Switzerland, EUROPE
19. t. Bob Hartwig, 2434 Burge Hall, University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa 52242
20. t. David Head, Box 1231, Huntsville, Ontario, CANADA POA 1K0
21. t. Brad Hessel, Apt. 5R, 232 West 24th Street, New York, NY 10011
22. s. Norm Hinsey, 308 Carey Hall, RPI, Troy, NY 12181
23. t. W. Elmer Hinton, Jr., 20 Almont Street, Nashua, NH 03060
24. t. Don Horton, 16 Jordan Court, Sacramento, CA 95826
25. s. Ken Johnson, 17605 Peak Avenue, Morgan Hill, CA 95037
26. t. Dave Kadlecak, Box 802, University Of Santa Clara, Santa Clara, CA 95053
27. s. Ron Kelly, # 120, 225 Virginia Avenue, SE, Washington, DC 20061
28. t. Anthony Kniaz, 3975 Haverhill, Detroit, MI 48224
29. c. Richard Kovalcik, Sr., 947 56th Street, Brooklyn, NY 11219
30. s. David Lagerson, 19017 Vanowen Avenue, Reseda, CA 91335
31. t. John Leeder, 1903 42nd Avenue, SW, Calgary, Alberta, CANADA T2T 2M6
32. t. Brian J. McCarthy, PO Box 74, Van Brunt Station, Brooklyn, NY 11215
33. t. Drew McGee, 65 Winter Avenue, Staten Island, NY 10301
34. t. Steve McLendon, Box 57066, Webster, TX 77598
35. t. Cliff A. Mann, Apt. 101, 823 Marcy Avenue, Oxon Hill, MD 20021
36. s. Ralph Morton, 173 Irving Avenue, Ottawa, Ontario, CANADA K1Y 1Z6
37. t. Hal Haus, 1011 Barnett Avenue, Chula Vista, CA 92011
38. t. Roger Oliver, PO Box 452, Denville, NJ 07834
39. t. Doug Reif, 67 Grosvenor Road, Kenmore, NY 14223
40. c. Ira Rosen, 122 South Baker Hall, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY 14853
41. t. Alan Rowland, PO Box 2173, College Station, Easton, PA 18042
42. t. Chris Schleicher, PO Box 907F, Wheeling, IL 60690
43. t. David Schwartz, 569 South Springfield Avenue, Springfield, NJ 07081
44. t. Robert Sergeant, 3242 Lupine Drive, Indianapolis, IN 46224
45. s. Roland Straten, 36 Erwin Park Road, Montclair, NJ 07042
46. t. Dick Trotek, Apt. 1, 2728 SE Main, Portland, OR 97214
47. t. David Truman, 30 Prince Rupert Avenue, Toronto, Ontario, CANADA M6P 2A7
48. t. Conrad von Metzke, PO Box 626, San Diego, CA 92112
49. t. Rod Walker, 1273 Crest Drive, Encinitas, CA 92024
50. t. Richard Ware, 253 Commonwealth Avenue, Boston, MA 02116

Key:

- c - complimentary
- s - subscription
- t - trade

ANOTHER LETTER ON THE BOARDMAN NUMBERS

From Rick Loomis, Flying Buffalo, Inc., PO Box 1467, Scottsdale, AZ 85252 to me dated February 14th, 1977:

Received your recent sample copies of the Tetracuspid (#18 & #19). I was particularly interested in reading your comments on the Boardman Number Fee. I have not yet decided whether I am amused or angry and ((sic, at)) your fatuous demand that someone ELSE be required to spend money on your hobby. One of your arguments against the fee is that Diplomacy is Doug's hobby, other publishers lose money on their hobby, therefore Doug should lose money on his hobby. This argument fails to hold water. If your magazine folds, the rest of us lose very little or nothing at all. There are dozens of Diplomacy magazines available, and dozens of publishers willing to pick up orphans. I doubt that any pbm Diplomacy game needs to be abandoned if any of the players really want to continue it. But the Boardman numbers are something else. If they get abandoned, we all lose something. There just aren't that many people around willing to do all that work and lose money too. Diplomacy publishers are publishing because they are having fun. When they quit having fun, they drop their zines. Look at the drop-out rate of zines. What percentage of the Diplomacy zines actually stay in the hobby year after year?

You say no one should be allowed to make a profit on the Boardman Numbers. Why not? Just what is so terrible about a profit? I think it would be GREAT if Doug made a profit on the numbers. That way we could be fairly certain that he would continue, year after year, to provide us with the service that we think we want. There would be some continuity. Look at it in the extreme example. If the Boardman Numbers aren't very important, we can demand that the custodian do all that work for nothing. It's nice for us, and it makes the whole thing more of a hobby operation. Sooner or later, the custodian will tire of doing all that work. Suddenly it isn't fun anymore. So he continues only out of an obligation; a duty to the rest of us. But now it takes a little longer to get a number. The magazine doesn't come out quite on time. We complain. The custodian says "Buzz off! I don't have to put up with this garbage. Get someone else to do it." So now we hunt around the hobby for someone else with the time, inclination, ability, and maturity to handle the BN's for awhile. Eventually we find someone. Meanwhile all the new games that are starting have to wait for their numbers. People who haven't gotten the word send their requests to the old custodian. Then suppose two people volunteer at the same time to take the numbers. "Oh, no", you say, "We wouldn't ever have two people arguing over who gets to be the number custodian. One of them would graciously drop out of contention when he discovered that there were two people who wanted the numbers." Right. Just like we have no problem with the Miller Numbers. And suppose we go to Avalon Hill and ask, "Why don't you put a flyer in every game of Diplomacy, telling about Everything and the Boardman Numbers, and giving the address of the Boardman Number Custodian, so that all new players will know about the BN's." AH, says, sure, the next time we print up Diplomacy, we will do that. We'll probably reprint it sometime

in the next two years. What is the Custodian's name & address?" And we way "Well, in two years it will probably be someone else anyway. Why don't you let us know when you are ready to reprint, and we will let you know who it is then." What do you suppose good old AH would answer to that? We want them to go to the trouble of listing the BN Custodian in the next 5000 copies of Diplomacy, when the name and address will probably be out of date in a year or two. Some of those games will sit on shelves or in warehouses for two or three (or more) years. So in 1982, Joe Newplayer buys his Diplomacy game, and wants to write to the BN Custodian. He ends up writing to someone who has quit the hobby 6 years ago. How does that help us?

On the other hand, if a man is making a little profit at the hobby, when the day comes that it is no longer a hobby, and not much fun, he now has an incentive to continue helping us out. He has gotten used to that extra hundred bucks or so a year. He makes a few dollars, and we have a SERVICE with CONTINUITY. I can, if I desire, print up a flyer describing the Boardman Numbers without having to worry about whether the address of the current Custodian is going to be the same when the flyer finally gets in the hands of the novice. I can DEPEND on someone. Some one who has a FINANCIAL INTEREST in being dependable. I know that next year, when I start two more Diplomacy games, that the same man, with the same address and the same procedures, will still be running things. The less often we change Custodians, the fewer problems we will have.

The arguement that really disgusts and irritates me is the one that someone "shouldn't be allowed to make a profit". Just what the heck is so terrible about a profit anyway? Be it for a BN Custodian, or an oil company, I am all for profits. They are what makes things run. You can run any enterprise or service for awhile "for the good of the hobby" or "for the good of Man-kind" or whatever. But sooner or later, the thrill wears off. There is drudge work in any enterprise. Typing up lists, tabulating figures, changing address cards, whatever. It's thursday evening, you've had a long week already, and there is this pile of stuff you are supposed to do "for the good of the hobby". And next week there will be another pile of stuff. Does anyone really appreciate what you do? Does anyone understand how much work it is? Does anyone really care? Obviously not. It's not even worth a lousy buck to all those Diplomacy publishers out there. Look what they did to poor Beyerlein, just because he wanted to charge a buck a number. If it's not worth a dollar to THEM, why should it be worth anything to ME? And another BNC quits the hobby.

Avalon Hill is supposed to be a profit-making enterprise. Why don't you demand that they give Diplomacy away free? Diplomacy is a hobby, no one should be allowed to make a profit on a hobby. I lose money on Diplomacy, therefore Avalon Hill should lose money on Diplomacy. If they are not willing to do so, then someone else should be found who will be willing to print and package and distribute and advertise Diplomacy for free, so that everyone who wants one can have one. Imagine those people thinking that Diplomacy should help pay their overhead, like their office typewriters, and paper and supplies. Hal Typewriters and paper and

correction fluid and computer time are free. Everyone knows ~~that~~. They just appear magically in offices around the world, where any hobbyist can just walk in and use them. No one ever has to PAY for them. Imagine Doug Beyerlein being honest enough to reimburse his office for the typewriter or supplies he uses in his hobby! What an idiot he must be! Let's all laugh at the poor, dumb, honest sucker.

Your second main argument, that the numbers will no longer be universal, was a good one. I agreed with it, but it has been solved. The latest issue of Everything makes the \$1.00 fee voluntary ((see page 2)). In addition, the next issue of Everything should contain an offer I made to Doug, which should also help out. I am looking forward to seeing the hobby reaction to that offer.

If you print this letter (and I hope you do), please send me a copy of that issue.

/signed/ Rick Loomis

My comments on the above letter:

In the first paragraph Mr Loomis tries to show that Doug must be allowed to make money on the hobby so that the BN's will continue or we will all lose something: the continuity of the BN's. He fails to realize that if Doug charges a dollar per number we will lose something equally important: the completeness of the numbers. I think that it would be better to wait and find a new custodian so that the numbers could be complete rather than to continue to have a custodian but not to have complete numbers. We have been able to find people willing to be custodian in the past and we will continue to be able to find people willing to be custodian in the future.

There is nothing wrong with making a profit. However, a hobby is "something a person especially likes to work at or study apart from his main business". I feel that it is wrong for someone to make a profit from a hobby. That's just my belief. If the hobby really needs something that takes a lot of time badly enough then perhaps the IDA or someone should hire someone to do the job. That is the way other hobbies and hobby organizations work. However, I don't think that's necessary at this point in time. It may be when the hobby grows to 10,000 people.

Mr. Loomis' argument regarding fliers concerning the BN's really doesn't make any sense. There is no need for novices entering the hobby to know who the Boardman Number Custodian is. Putting the BNC's name in Diplomacy sets is almost like beaming radiotransmissions consisting of the President of the United States' name into outer space. The only people who need to know the BNC's name at any given moment are the publishers and ratings-masters. Others can find out from such places as Diplomacy World and other zines.

Finally, there is nothing anyone can say which is going to convince me that it is wrong to use a typewriter or computer in your office

when it's not being used for anything else without paying for it. By using a typewriter or a computer you're not hurting anything. Using things like paper and correction fluid is not justifiable in the same way. My justification for using paper and correction fluid is that it seems to be acceptable; that is I think that most employers expect and condone this kind of thing. Perhaps things are different out west but that's the way they are here.

~~~~~

This issue will count as seven pages for all subscribers.

~~~~~

Next issue I hope to have zine reviews and the rules for a variant.

~~~~~

\_\_\_\_ This is a sample issue. Would you like to subscribe or trade?

\_\_\_\_ This is your last issue unless I hear from you by the time the next issue is published.

☒ You get this regularly because

\_\_\_\_ you know me.

☒ you subscribe. You have a sub balance of \$1.22.

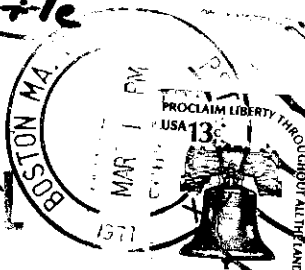
\_\_\_\_ you trade.

\_\_\_\_ Please see page \_\_\_\_.

☒ Since I haven't received your zine in such a long time I must assume that you've stopped publishing. You have some sub credit from that article so you'll continue to get this for a while

from  
Richard Kovalcik, Jr.  
Room 205, Bexley Hall  
50 Massachusetts Ave.  
Cambridge, MA 02139  
U.S.A.

FIRST CLASS MAIL



FIRST CLASS MAIL

ADDRESS CORRECTION  
REQUESTED

FIRST CLASS MAIL

TO:

t x  
Rod Walker  
1273 Crest Drive  
Encinas, CA 92024