



PAPYRUS™

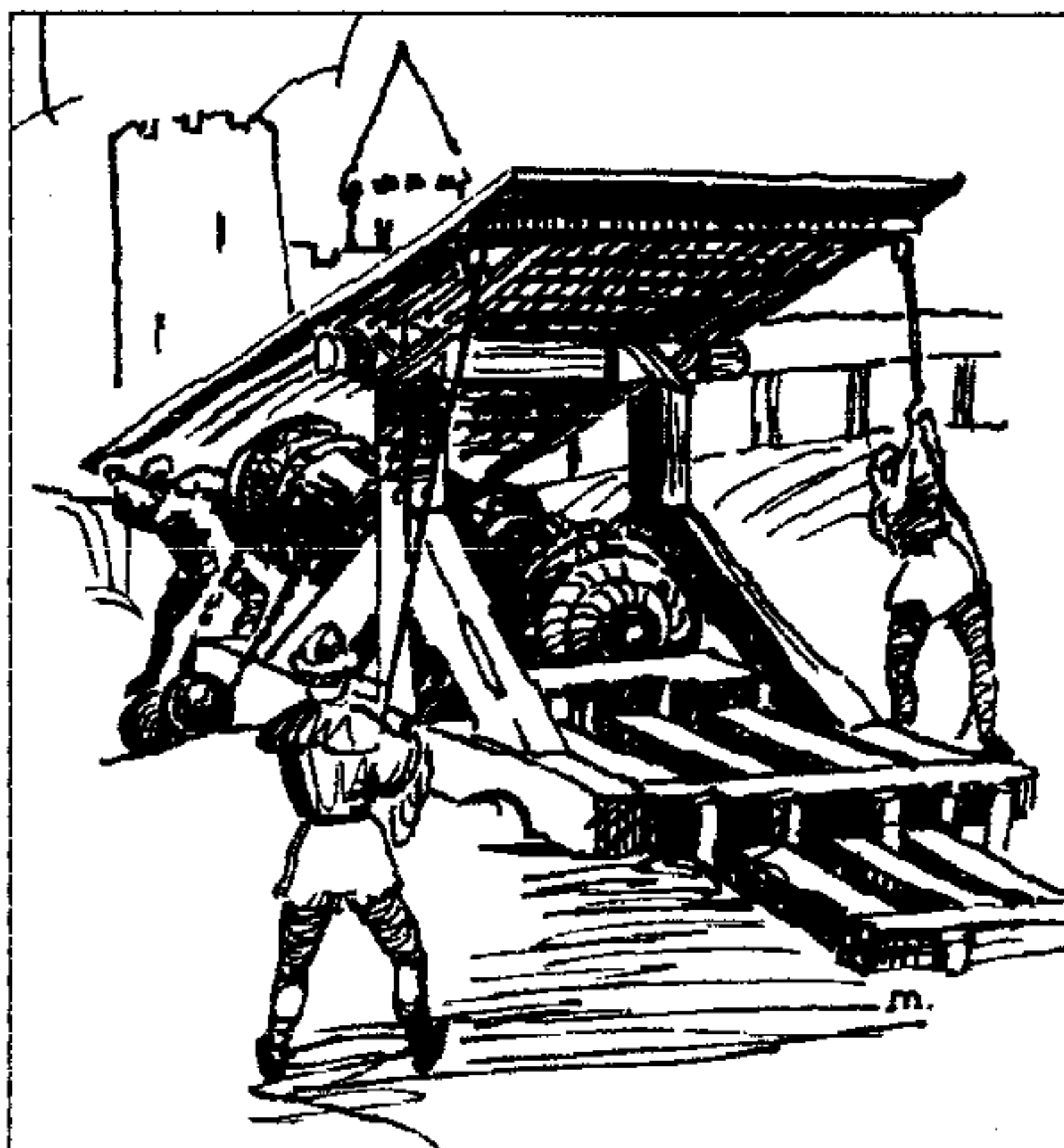
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Rockford, IL 61107-5010

ISSN 1070-2083

Papyrus™ #16

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Knock, knock... We're baaaaack!

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SCRIBBLES FROM THE SCRIBE

First an apology, we have been too long between issues but not for bad reasons. My real job (believe it or not, I don't make a living doing this) has been very time consuming, though enjoyable. My wife gave birth to my second child, Lucas. I awaited, in vain, the repair of an ink jet printer (may it rest in piece). There are probably 500 or more smaller excuses I could use but those details are just that. Most of this issue has been sitting on my hard drive for months, I hope no one has been put off by our delay. Now onto an editorial...

AN OPEN NOTE TO TSR

What the hell are you guys thinking! Metamorphosis Alpha a part of Amazing Engine? Gamma World 4th ed materials being clearance priced at GenCon? XXVc being ignored and Buck getting yet another rules system? Dangerous Journeys and RoleAids buy up and hold?

Let me cut to the chase. You have a good system. It ain't perfect but that's what new editions are for. You ran Gamma World from D&D based thru 3 edition changes back to being D&D based and now it's the best I've seen it. Palladium makes the class system work for multiple genre, so should you. Re-read SPI's Dragonquest and get with it.

Metamorphosis Alpha should be a GW4 and/or XXVc campaign world, much like Dragonlance is to AD&D. For Faerie Queen and Country is nothing but a time displaced Shadowrun (and a good idea) and could really be handled with AD&D, a supplement and some of XXVc's PC/NPC classes. FGU was successful with Villains & Vigilantes, people still play it, and it parallels your mechanics.

Get your creative staff together in a room. Put AD&D, GW4 and XXVc in a pile. Now have them create campaigns in the genres of all your other systems and the systems of your competitors. It's all there gentlemen. Now, to capture those not interested in class systems (preferring skill systems) you only need to look to SPI's Dragonquest. If you slimmed down the core skills of each class and allowed anyone to purchase levels in a wide variety of generic skills, you would

create more character possibilities.

As for your acquisitions to kill, I have opinions as well. The RoleAids line should be examined closely. Supplements like Lizardmen and some of the adventures would be worth continuing under the official AD&D or D&D banner. Dangerous Journeys is a monstrous system, a system conversion chart published in Dragon Magazine, and as an ad in others, would allow you to unload the stock quickly.

But then that's just my opinion.

THE D-WING ASSAULT AIR SPEEDER

(A Vehicle for use with Star Wars Miniatures Battles), by Michael Wigley

CRAFT: D-Wing Assault Air Speeder

Crew: 2 Passengers: None

Drive System: Repulsorlift

Movement Rates:

Cautious: 35 Cruise: 105 Top: 350

Accel: 35 Decel: 35 Min. Flight: 35

Turn Distance: 2 Num. of Turns: 3

Body Strength: 3 Body Points: 60

Cover: full Flight Ceiling: 250m

Arc/Weapons: Dam FCon Short Med. Long

F/2x Mk4e MedBlasCan 10 2 25-125" 375" 750"

F/2x Mk1/S M. Laun. -- 1 5-25" 50" 100"

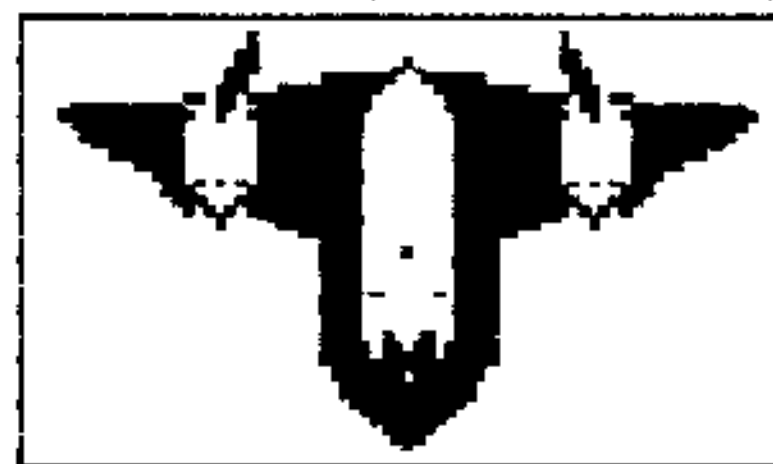
F/12x Mk1 Missile 8 -- -- --

Squad Generation Points: 563 (without crew)

History: After the battle of Hoth, the Rebel Alliance sought to construct a combat air speeder that was heavily armed enough to take on the dreaded Imperial mammoth, the AT-AT.

Alliance technicians designed a craft with a delta-wing configuration combined with a repulsorlift powerplant. The combination of fixed-wing and repulsor controls gave the craft unprecedented maneuverability. A pair of fire-linked medium blaster cannons, one mounted on either wing tip, augmented by a concussion missile launcher fastened atop each wing, gave it remarkable fire power.

The vehicle sports a crew of two, a pilot and a gunner. The craft's weapons systems can



be controlled by either crewman, but are normally controlled by the gunner to free the pilot to perform evasive maneuvers in heavy combat situations.

The D-Wing, as it has been nick-named, has yet to see extensive combat duty. Several have been stationed at various rebel outposts, but these outposts have yet to be threatened.

Model Notes: Because of the lack of any new vehicles being produced for Star Wars Miniatures Battles, I have taken it upon myself to build several of my own. These range from simple walkers made from Micomachine's Z-Bot action figures, to complex speeder tanks constructed from several model kits.

The D-Wing was made from a toy I found at an import store for only \$1.89. It's made by Bluebird Toys (Mattel's subsidiary in the UK). It's called Code Blue Air Force Team. It's a small stealth-bomber-type plane with 6 little 25mm scale rubber figures (some of them are toting some very menacing looking weapons). The scale was perfect for use with the game. All I did to make it look some-what "Star-Warsy" was paint the plane gray, paint the pilot figures in bright orange uniforms, glue some plastic guns to the wing tips (las-guns from Warhammer 40k miniatures do nicely), add some convincing decals (left overs from an X-Wing model kit) and glue it to a elevated base to give it the look of flight. The left over figures in the pack can also be mounted on bases and painted for use as downed pilots or starship crewmen.

There is a whole assortment of products by Bluebird that are the right scale for use in just about any 25mm battle games, and you can usually get them pretty inexpensively. Just check your local discount toy stores or import shops.

With a little luck, and some imagination, you can create your own secret weapons for the 25mm battlefield!

ENDORSEMENTS, don't forget to tell'em Nick from Papyrus sent ya!

Alarums & Excursions, the largest and predominant RPG Amateur Press Association (APA). Published by Lee Gold (ICE Vikings, GURPS Japan, Lands of Adventure, Land of the Rising Sun). Don't just read, participate! For more information send a SASE to, Lee Gold, 3965 Alla Road, Los Angeles, CA 90066.

The Gamer's Connection, a small press publication looking for subscribers and writers. For more information, and writers guidelines, send a SASE to: The Gamer's

Connection, P.O. Box 278331, Sacramento, CA 95827.

Gamer's Forum, a RPG fanzine which runs articles on the entire gaming spectrum. For more information, send a SASE to: Gamer's Forum, c/o David Kufner, 800 Emory St., Apt. B, Imperial Beach, CA 91932.

Camelot '95, a small press fanzine covering a wide spectrum of game genre for systems new and out of print. For more information, send a SASE to: CAMELOT '95, c/o Philip J Reed Jr, 319 W Grand, Perryville, MO 63775.

SHADIS is back, better than ever, and here to stay! This pro-magazine is the current champion of the independent non-system/genre specific gaming magazine crowd. For more info, send a SASE to: SHADIS, 4045 Guasti Road, Suite 212, Ontario, CA 91761.

JUST A LITTLE BIT, Real Giants



The Tehuelchi Indians, of Southern Argentina, were encountered by Megellan during his circumnavigation of the globe. Described as giants (possibly 7'+ tall), he named the area he found them in for the large leather boots they wore, Patagonia. A patagon is a large clumsy foot in Spanish. Although he was able to lure two Patagonians onboard his ship, neither survived their imprisonment long.

Such a race of giant, primitives could make for adventurous encounters in almost any genre of RPG.

HINTS, from David Kufner (Gamer's Forum)

There are lots of places you can get free info and game related material. A local free military newspaper has a weekly Jane's on

Defense column, which is useful for modern spy games. Go to the library and look through military magazines, there's usually a free offer of some kind inside. I got a free copy of Civil War News, an 80 page newspaper. While at a local museum I picked up a brochure that had a map of the building in it, useful for almost any campaign. Conventions are also a great place to find bargains on games and there's usually a free copy table with magazines around. I also suggest you check the library for old and new maps.

I found some Super Human Samurai Syber Squad miniatures for \$1.49 at Toys R Us. These can be used for any Mechanoid game. I mount mine on old juice container lids, after sanding off the name brand and painting it. Car micro machines can be found fairly cheaply and with a little work, and a new paint job, they make great Car Wars cars. I also suggest you use transferable letters or the vinyl ones to identify the car.

HINT\$ 2, from Nick Parenti: I couldn't let David's ideas go without expanding. For gaming miniatures I have purchased clearance copies of Heroesquest and Battlemaster (Milton Bradley) as well as finding "army men sized" ninja, knights and pirates. Other lines of "army men sized" pieces can be used instead of expensive lead miniatures as well: "I've Got A Monster in my Pocket" monsters, "M.U.S.C.L.E." wrestlers (make good superheroes, scifi characters and fantasy folk), and "C.U.T.I.E." figures (females, mostly contemporary but usable as such and some as superheroines). When I was much younger, my brothers and I also happened upon Astronaught and Scifi-Spacemen, including: space knights, droids, blaster weilding/antenea helmeted men and alien creatures. I've also seen Mighty Morphine Power Ranger miniatures lately (superhero/scifi). The best part is that all of these are cheap and can even be found at \$1 outlet stores.

David also mentioned micro machines. They also make a line of space ships that include: original, Star Wars and Star Trek designs, all of a scale useful to gamers. Additionally, mech-heads might find use for micro machine's Star Wars AT-AT and AT-AS models, as well as "Z-bots" and any other Transformer-clones.

So, keep your eyes open and you creative juices flowing.

MURPHY'S LAWS OF COMBAT, by Adam Geibel (with permission of Ken R. Auliffe, GAREMAG)

1. If the enemy is in range, so are you.
2. Your weapon was made by the lowest bidder.
3. Never share a foxhole with someone braver than you.
4. If your attack is going really well, it's an ambush.
5. If it's stupid and works, it isn't stupid.
6. Make it tough for the enemy to get in and you can't get out.
7. If you're short of everything except the enemy, you're in combat.
8. Anything you do can get you shot, including doing nothing.
9. Incoming fire has the right of way.
10. The only thing more accurate than incoming fire is incoming friendly fire.
11. If your plan works, the enemy was probably low on ammo.
12. The enemy diversion you're ignoring is the main attack.
13. The most dangerous weapon in the enemy's arsenal is one of your own second lieutenants carrying a map and compass.
14. All five second grenade fuses burn down in three seconds.
15. No plan survives the first contact intact.
16. If you're forward of your position, artillery fire will fall short.
17. The important things are always simple.
18. The easy way is always mined.
19. Radios fail as soon as you need fire support.
20. When you have secured an area, don't forget to tell the enemy.
21. No combat ready unit has ever passed inspection.
22. Beer math is simple: 37 men times 2 beers each, equals 49 cases.
23. Body count math is simple: 2 hostile bodies, plus 1 probable, plus 2 pigs, equals 37 enemy KIA.
24. Things that must be together to work usually can't be shipped together.
25. Tracers work both ways.
26. Recoilless rifles aren't.
27. If you take more than your fair share of objectives, you'll have more than your fair share of objectives to take.
28. When both sides are convinced they're about to lose, they're both right.
29. Professional soldiers are predictable.
30. The world is full of amateurs.

REFERENCES AND RESOURCES, for Game Mastering Pulp Adventures in the 1930s and 1940s, by Brian Christopher Misiaszek, copyright 1994.

Primary Pulp Sources and Reprints:

Maxwell Grant (pseudonym for Walter B. Gibson who wrote the majority of the stories, as well as Theodore Tinsley and Bruce Elliott). The Shadow series.

Robert Hogan. G-8 & his Battle Aces series.

Brant House (pseudonym for Paul Chadwick, G.T. Fleming-Roberts, Arthur Leo Zagat and R.T.M. Scott). Secret Agent X series.

Kenneth Robeson (pseudonym for Lester Dent). Doc Savage series. Note that the unnumbered stories currently in print are new novels ghost written by Destroyer author Will Murray.

Kenneth Robeson (The first 20 novels by Paul Ernst under this pseudonym; subsequent novels ghosted by Ron Goulart in the 1970's). The Avenger series.

Grant Stockbridge (pseudonym for Norvell Page, though R. T. M. Scott wrote the first two novels). The Spider series. Reprinted in double book format by Carol and Graf, with the latest (and likely final) volume being #8 at this point of writing.

Books on or about the Pulp, Movie and Radio Serials

Alan G. Barbour. "Days of Thrills and Adventure". An illustrated survey of movie serials, divided by genre, stars, stunt-men, etc.

Alistair Durie. "Weird Tales". A survey of the authors, stories and artists of the premier pulp magazine of the strange and the bizarre.

Frank Eisgruber Jr. "Gangland's Doom". A slim and hard to find book that discusses the Shadow and his various identities; brief synopses of his various exploits, his helpers, B&W cover reproductions, etc.

Philip Jose Farmer. "Doc Savage: His Apocalyptic Life". A loving look at Clark Savage Jr., his various lairs, his famous helpers, his tom-boyish cousin, notable villains, gadgets, and even a speculative family tree relating Doc Savage to most every other fictional and real-life hero. Also check out his carefully researched and creative biography of Edgar Rice Burroughs most famous Lord of the trees, "Tarzan Alive!"

Tony Goodstone. "The Pulp". A bright and cheerful illustrated survey of the pulps, with a short story or two from each of the main genres covered.

Ron Goulart. "Cheap Thrills". One of the

few survey books about the pulps, covering such genres as SF, Western, Detective, etc., this book includes interviews with some of the original pulpsters.

Ron Goulart. "The Dime Detectives". An examination of the mystery-detective pulp stories, with chapters on the Shadow, the Spider, Doc Savage, Race Williams, Sam Spade, Philip Marlowe, and other fictional gumshoe notables.

Walter B. Gibson. "The Shadow Scrapbook". Actually written by the man who penned the vast majority of the Shadow stories, this is a beautiful look at this dark avenger through essays, a short story, a complete comic strip, a radio-script, listing of all the stories and radio-episodes, colour plates on the original pulp covers, information about the various Shadow movie-serials, and more! Well worth tracking down.

Jim Harmon. "The Great Radio Heroes". A nostalgic, though at times gushing, book about many radio serials of the 1930s to 1950s. It covers such radio shows as "Little Orphan Annie", "Superman", "The Lone Ranger", "I Love A Mystery", "The Shadow", and many others. Highly recommended.

Robert Kenneth Jones. "The Shudder Pulp". A look at one of the more bizarre genres of the pulps, the horror-terror-weird-menace tale of newlyweds and couples beset by lusty cripples, sadistic witches and bloodthirsty fiends; lots of quotes and synopses from representative stories.

Jay Maeder. "Dick Tracy; the Official Biography". A look at the comic-strip version of this famous police detective, and the many oddball crooks he fought.

Bill Prozini. "Gun In Cheek". A humorous trek through some of the worst detective-mystery stories of all time. Not surprisingly, lots of pulp material to be found here, and tons of great quotes from less than great stories.

Robert Sampson. "Spider". A deep and thoughtful look at the novels involving the most messianic and violently right-wing of the pulp heroes, the Spider. The book includes a listing off titles, and a brief synopsis of many of the stories, and is the definitive work on this character.

Robert Sampson. "Yesterday's Faces". A five-volume series that looks at the broad literary themes and characters of the early pulp stories, such as Tarzan, the Red Raven, Nick Carter, etc.; it has less coverage of later hero pulp characters and magazines.

Lee Server. "Danger is My Business". A

beautiful survey book of the pulp magazines. Wonderfully illustrated with colour reproductions of many pulp covers. One of the few books on the pulps actually still in print. Strangely enough, I found my copy in the art section of my local bookstore; don't miss picking this up!

James Steranko. "The Steranko History of Comics" (two vol.). Besides having an entire chapter devoted to "The Bloody Pulps", there are tons of material and ideas from golden-age comic-books that are entirely suitable for pulp situations.

Robert Weinberg (with John McKinstry). "The Hero Pulp Index". Thumbnail sketches of every hero of the hero pulp magazines, and a listing of every magazine appearance they had. The list of pulp novel titles is extremely useful for triggering ideas for pulp adventures of one's own. Hard to find, but well worth looking for.

Robert Weinberg (ed.). "The Man Who Was Doc Savage". Chock full of essays about the gadgets, adventures and villains encountered by Doc, and articles about the author of the Doc Savage stories, Lester Dent. This book also includes Dent's pulp formula that he used to write all his Doc Savage stories.

Ken Weiss & Ed Goodgold. "To Be Continued..." is a gold mine for RPG ideas; this book lists nearly every adventure movie serial ever made, and provides photos, a brief plot synopsis, a few of the more daring cliffhangers encountered, and a cast of characters for each.

Comic Book Series and Graphic Novels:

Airboy / Agent 13 / Doc Savage / Flash Gordon / Batman / The Green Hornet / Justice Inc. / The Night Prowler / The Phantom / The Phantom Stranger / The Shadow Strikes / Radioactive Man / The Rocketeer / Sandman Mystery Theatre / The Shadow / The Spider / The Spirit / Terry and the Pirates / Tintin / The Twilight Avenger / Valkyrie

Movie Serials Available on Home Video:

The Adventures of Captain Marvel / Batman / Batman & Robin / Captain America / Cliffhangers: Adventures from the Thrill Factory / The Crimson Ghost / Daredevils of the Red Circle / Dick Tracy (various) / Fighting Devil Dogs / Flash Gordon / Hurricane Express / King of the Rocket Men / Manhunt on Mystery Island / The Purple Monster Strikes / Spy Smasher / The Tiger Woman / Undersea Kingdom /

Movies, Television & Cartoon Shows:

Movies

The Big Sleep / Big Trouble in Little China / The "Bulldog Drummond" series / Buckaroo

Banzai / Cast a Deadly Spell / Cat People / The "Charlie Chan" series / Chinatown / The Two Jakes / Dark Man / Dick Tracy / Doc Savage: The Man of Bronze / Dr. X / Double Indemnity / Dracula / The "Falcon" series / Gilda / High Road to China / His Girl Friday / Invasion of the Body Snatchers / Island at the Top of the World / Jake Speed / King Kong / King Solomon's Mines / The Lady Vanishes / Laura / Lost Horizons / The Maltese Falcon / The Mark of Zorro / The Mask of Fu Manchu / The "Mr. Moto" series / The Mummy / Murder, My Sweet / On the Town / The Old Dark House / The Prisoner of Zenda / Raiders of the Lost Ark / Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom / Indiana Jones and the Holy Grail / The Rocketeer / Scarface / The Shadow / The "Sherlock Holmes" series / The Sting / The "Thin Man" series / The Thirty-Nine Steps / The Untouchables / The Wizard of Oz /

Television Series

The Adventures of Brisco County, Jr. / Batman / Bring 'Em Back Alive / The Flash / The Green Hornet / MacGyver / The Prisoner / Tales of the Gold Monkey / The Untouchables / Young Indiana Jones /

Cartoon Series

Batman: The Animated Series / Darkwing Duck / Duck Tales / Jonny Quest / Scooby Doo (early seasons) / Tail Spin / Tintin

Role Playing Systems and Supplements:

Buck Rogers: High Adventure Cliffhangers RPG (TSR Games).

Call of Cthulhu RPG, 5th Ed. (Chaosium); "Blood Brothers", "Shadows of Yog-Sothoth", "Curse of the Cthonians", "Horror on the Orient Express" are some of the more pulp-useful of the horror-adventure supplements available.

Daredevils RPG (Fantasy Games Unlimited); supplements include "Black Claws", "Menace Beneath the Sea", "Supernatural Adventures" and "Lost Worlds".

Dream Park RPG (R. Talsorian); useful supplements include "Fiendish Agents of Falconberg" and "Race for El Dorado".

Gangbusters, 3rd Ed. (TSR Games)

Gumshoe (Sleuth Publications Ltd.).

Gurps: Cliffhangers (Steve Jackson Games).

Gurps: Lensman (Steve Jackson Games).

Indiana Jones RPG (TSR Games); "Raider's of the Lost Ark", "Temple of Doom", and "Fourth Nail", "Crystal Death", "Golden Goddess" and "Nepal Nightmare" adventure supplements.

James Bond RPG (Victory Games, Inc.); while aimed at a modern setting background, pulp useful supplements for pulp adventures include its "Thrilling Locations", "Villains"

and "Q Manual Supplement" sourcebooks.

Justice Inc. RPG (Hero Games); titles include the adventure "Trail of the Gold Spike", and the excellent "Lands of Mystery" Lost Worlds supplement.

Mercenaries, Spies and Private Eyes (Sleuth Publications Ltd.); supplements include "Stormhaven", "Mugshots 1: Case of the China Clipper".

Top Secret S.I. (TSR Games); "Agent 13 Sourcebook".

Torg (West End Games); excellent pulp supplements include "The Nile Empire", "The Land Below", and "Terra".

Blood Shadows/Indiana Jones (West End Games). Two different RPGs using the same game engine, the first based on the pulp-magic movie "Cast a Deadly Spell" and the second on the eponymous film series. Scheduled for Summer or Christmas release, 1994.

Additional Inspirational Reading:

Edgar Rice Burroughs. Nearly everything, but especially his Tarzan, Barsoom and Pellucidar series.

Lin Carter. "The Nemesis of Evil" and later books in the Prince Zarkon series.

Raymond Chandler. "The Big Sleep", "Farewell My Lovely" and the rest of his hard-boiled detective fiction.

Leslie Charteris. "The Saint" series.

Flint Dille and David Marconi. "The Invisible Empire" and later books in the Agent 13: The Midnight Avenger series.

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. Sherlock Holmes and Professor Challenger stories.

Philip Jose Farmer. "Escape From Loki" is an authorized novel recounting Doc Savage's first meeting with his famous five pals during an escape made together from a P.O.W. camp in World War I. His "Lord of the Trees", "The Mad Goblin" and "A Feast Unknown" grouping of novels is an affectionate and "realistic" homage to the Doc Savage and Tarzan stories. Try also the novella's "Greatheart Silver", "The Adventure of the Peerless Peer", and the short story "After King Kong Fell".

F. W. Dixon. The original Hardy Boys series outlined by Edward Stratemeyer, but ghost-written by Leslie MacFarlane beginning in the late 1920's under the Dixon pseudonym.

Ron Goulart (ed.) "The Hardboiled Dicks." An anthology of great detective yarns of the pulps, written by Lester Dent, Erle Stanley Gardner, and others.

Carolyn Keene. The original Nancy Drew series, outlined and written by Edward Stratemeyer under the Keene pseudonym.

Dashiell Hammet. "The Maltese Falcon", "Red Harvest" and "The Thin Man", and the rest of his books and short stories.

Robert E. Howard. Conan sword and sorcery stories, "The Skull-face Omnibus", "The Incredible Adventures of Dennis Dorgan", and "Solomon Kane" series.

R. Rider Haggard. "King Solomon's Mines", "She", and other African adventure novels.

H.P. Lovecraft. The Cthulhu cycle of stories (i.e. "The Call of Cthulhu", "At the Mountains of Madness", etc.) and other stories of the strange and bizarre.

Rob MacGregor. The new Indiana Jones series of novels, that includes "Indiana Jones & the Peril of Delphi", and "Indiana Jones & the Interior World".

A. Merritt. "The Moon Pool", "Dwellers in the Mirage", "Seven Footsteps to Satan", and other fantasy novels.

C.L. Moore. "Northwest Smith" collection of SF short stories, and various fantasy.

Bryon Preiss, ed. "Weird Heroes" anthology series.

Sax Rohmer. Fu Manchu novels; great for ideas on deathtraps and "Yellow Peril" adventure.

Seabury Quinn. Jules de Grandin scientific occult detective series.

'Sapper'. "Bulldog Drummond" series of a British gentleman adventurer.

E.E. "Doc" Smith. Lensmen and Skylark series; galaxy-spanning gosh-wow space opera.

Weinberg, Dziemianowicz & Greenberg (eds.) "Rivals of Weird Tales". An anthology of weird-fantasy fiction reprinted from pulps other than the granddaddy of them all, "Weird Tales".

Gahan Wilson. "Eddy Deco's Last Caper". A fun spoof that mixes the pulp SF and detective genres, with a big dollop of Art Deco for flavour.

H.G. Wells. "The Time Machine", and other scientific romances.

THE DICTIONARY SAYS...armory edition.



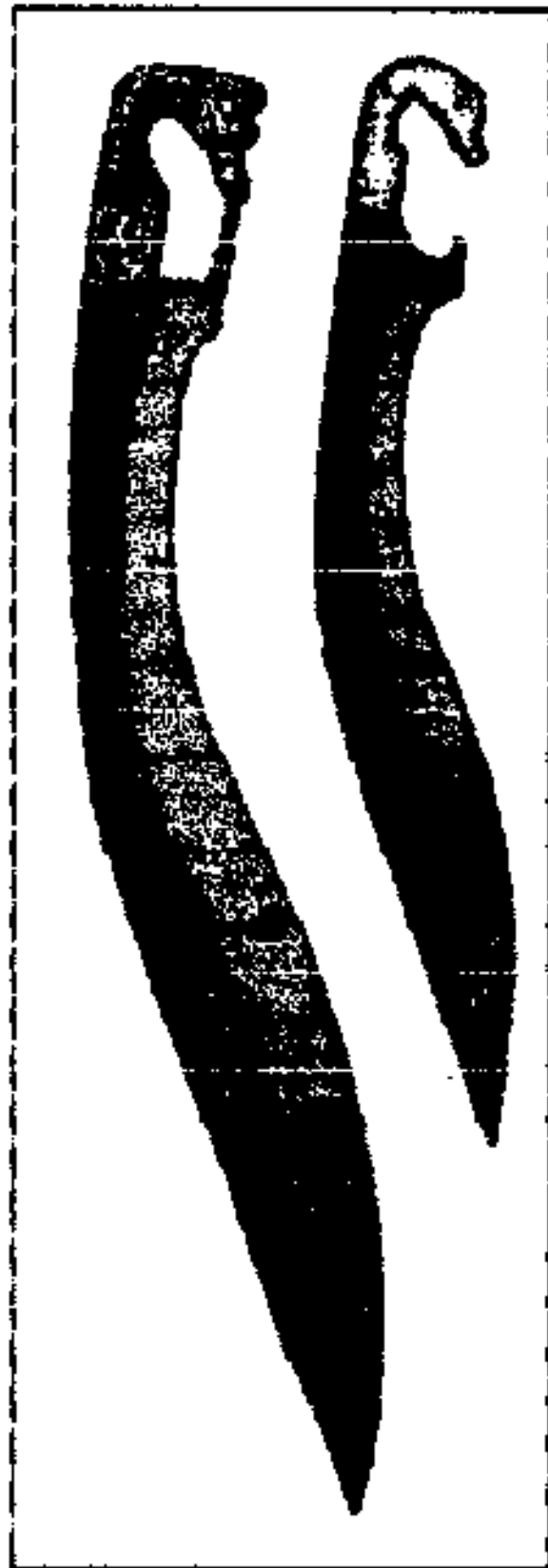
PRODD: a medieval, European, stone / bullet / clay pellet casting crossbow. Used for hunting small game.

ARQUEBUS

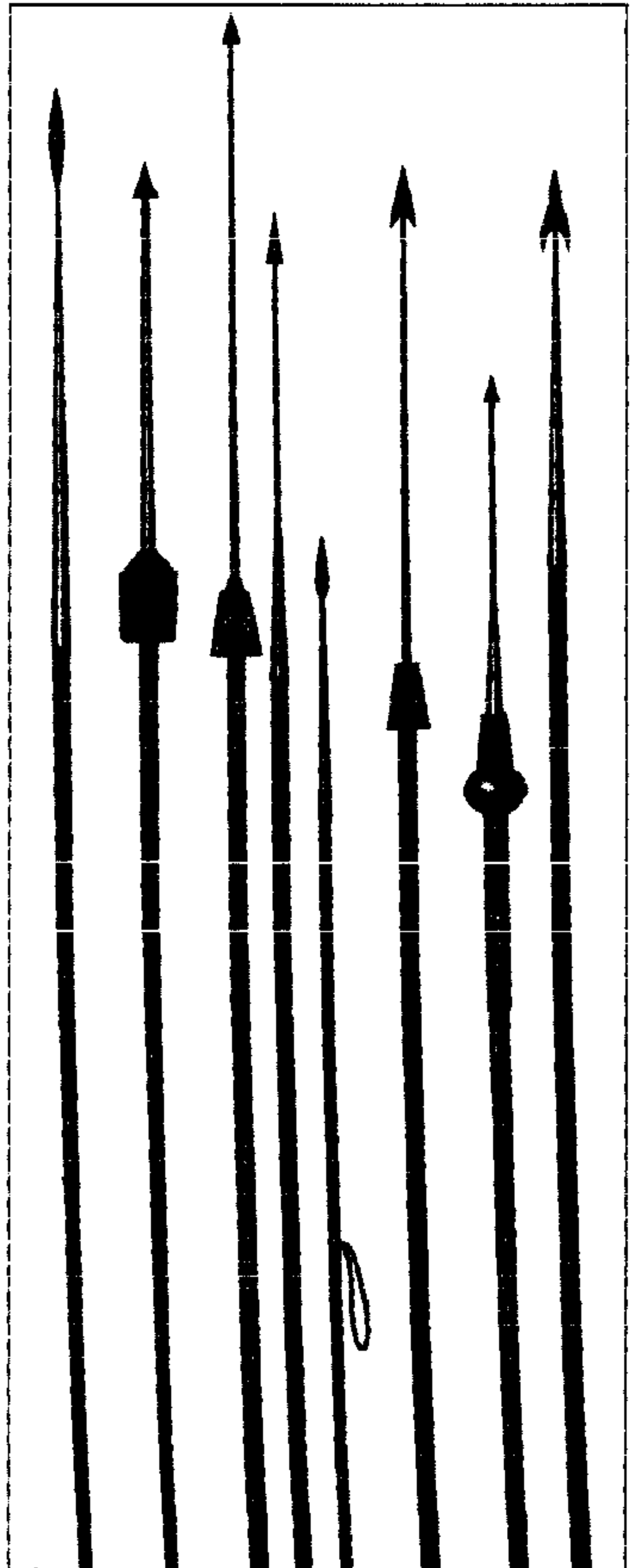
This ancient firearm is mentioned in both, AD&D2 PHB and the Gamma World 4th ed. rule book, but little is done to describe it. Below are pictures from the late 1500s of harquebus, presumably the same weapon, which co-existed with muskets at that time. One depicts a harquebus firing a flaming arrow at a ship. Flame, running down a spiral match cord, accelerated in flight and helped stabilize the missile. I would estimate that this would increase the effective range by 50% but not change the damage of impact.



FALCATA (Latin), KOPIS (Etruscan/Greek), MACHAIRA (Thracian/Dii): slashing sword. Originated in Etruria (North & Central Italy).



PILUM: a Roman javelin with a soft metal shaft. The shaft was intended to bend after piercing a shield, making that shield and the pilum unuseable for the opposition.



GASTRAPHETES (c 400BC): belly-bow. For ranges and damage, treat as a short crossbow. For weight and rate of fire, treat as a large crossbow.



OUTRAGEOUS FANTASY CHARACTERS

THE CORRINIAN SISTERS,

by Kathy Bales

Acroia: level 46, 1/2 elf Alignment: CG
Fighter/Illusionist/Magic User

Spells: Players Handbook 1 & 2, all illusionist and magic user spells levels 1-26 (x5).

Has been designated Queen of the Elements. Often appears as a water or wind elemental.

Odyssey: level 42, 1/2 elf Alignment: CN
Druid/Cleric

Spells: Players Handbook 1 & 2, all druid and cleric spells levels 1-25 (x6).

Has the ability to transform herself into a four headed snow hydra; 6 legs, 3 tails, 2 pairs of wings. The eyes of each head are; blue, red, green, and white. Each has the ability to use cleric/druid spells as well as the following breath weapons; fire, lightening, chlorine gas, and frost. The white eyed head rules and also has the ability to breath a laser beam, 3 times per day, 60' long by 20' wide.

Tashanna: level 40, 1/2 elf Alignment: N
Fighter/Thief

Has all of the master techniques of a high level thief/assassin.

All three sisters can/will appear as a cloud of pink mist if summoned. Their hit points correspond with the classes and levels given. Resurrection %: 100% for each.

The sisters are elven in appearance. All have red hair and violet eyes, 5'4.5" tall, and weigh 130lbs. They have families and children in the universe of Tomadriv, but have little or no contact with them. The sisters themselves can and do visit many other universes.

NON-OUTRAGEOUS V&V CHARACTERS

by Charles Parenti

THE ANOLE

Identity: Bernard Jeriba

Side: Vigilante Born: 12-23-60

Sex: Male Level: 1

Powers:

1. willpower - agility +13
 2. heightened strength +9
 3. heightened attack +1 damage/level
 4. heightened defense (2x) -8 to be hit
- Weakness:

vulnerability - ice powers do double damage after first hit

Weight: 180lbs Basic Hits: 4

Agility Mod: -

Strength: 19 Endurance: 11

Agility: 25 Intelligence: 10

Charisma: 9 Reactions from: G -, E -

Hit Mod: (1.6)(1)(2.5)(1)=4

Hit Points: 16

Damage Mod: +3 Healing Rate: 1

Accuracy: +4 Power: 65

Carrying Capacity: 726lbs

Basic HTH Damage: 1d8

Movement Rate: 55"

Detect Hidden: 8% Detect Danger: 12%

Inventing Pts: 1

History and Other Information:

The Anole is an incredible athlete with tremendous agility and strength. He uses his abilities to not only stop criminals but punish them. He is a die-hard vigilante and so the public's reaction toward him is mixed.

He has never liked cold weather and will not stay in an area where it is below 0F unless it is absolutely necessary. Cold seems to slow his body functions down and so ice powers do double damage after their initial hit has cooled him down.

The Anole has two costumes. One is green for day time use, the other is brown for night time use.

MR. SUNSHINE

Identity: Cary Adonis

Side: Good Born: 4-4-59

Sex: Male Level: 1

Powers:

1. heightened charisma +21
2. heightened attack +1 to damage/level
3. teleportation: range: power points in inches: power rating: 1
4. non-corporeality: power rating: 4/hour

Weight: 170lbs Basic Hits: 4

Agility Mod: -

Strength: 11 Endurance: 13

Agility: 15 Intelligence: 10

Charisma: 30 Reactions from: G+5, E-5

Hit Mod: (1)(1.4)(1)(1.6)

Hit Points: 9

Damage Mod: +1 Healing Rate: 1.2

Accuracy: +2 Power: 49

Carrying Capacity: 224lbs

Basic HTH Damage: 1d4

Movement Rate: 39"

Detect Hidden: 8% Detect Danger: 12%

Inventing Pts: 1

History and Other Information:

Mr. Sunshine is basically The Anole's public relations man. Without his charm and charisma, The Anole would not be able to

carry on his vigilante acts in our society.

Through his time with The Anole, Mr. Sunshine has been able to train in the art of fighting and as a result has increased his agility and endurance.

He has the ability to change his molecular structure into particles of light (photons) enabling him to become untouchable and to travel at nearly the speed of light (giving the impression of teleportation). Mr. Sunshine acquired these powers in an accident during an attempt to harness solar power.

1994 ORIGINS AWARDS WINNERS, from GAMA NEWS

1. Best Historical Figure Series: Medievals 15mm, Swords & Soldiers
2. Best Fantasy or Science Fiction Figure Series: AD&D Series, Ral Partha Enterprises
3. Best Vehicular Series: Battletech Series, Ral Partha Enterprises
4. Best Accessory Series: Destiny Deck, Stellar Games
5. Best Miniatures Rules: Warhammer 40K 2nd ed., Games Workshop
6. Best Roleplaying Rules: Traveller: The New Era, Game Designers Workshop
7. Best Roleplaying Adventure: Dragon Mountain, AD&D, TSR Inc.
8. Best Roleplaying Supplement: GURPS Vampire: The Masquerade, Steve Jackson Games
9. Best Graphic Presentation of a Roleplaying Game, Adventure or Supplement: Underground, Mayfair Games
10. Best Pre-20th Century Boardgame: History of the World, The Avalon Hill Game Company
11. Best Modern Boardgame: Hacker II, Steve Jackson Games
12. Best Fantasy or Science Fiction Boardgame: Magic: The Gathering, Wizards of the Coast
13. Best Presentation of a Boardgame, Magic: The Gathering, Wizards of the Coast
14. Best Play-By-Mail Game: Illuminati, Flying Buffalo Inc.
15. Best New Play-By-Mail Game: Quest: The World of Kharne, Adventures By Mail
16. Best Fantasy or Science Fiction Computer Game: X Wing, Lucas Arts
17. Best Military or Strategy Computer Game: Seven Cities of Gold Commemorative Edition, Electronic Arts
18. Best Professional Gaming Magazine: Dragon Magazine, TSR Inc.
19. Best Amateur Adventure Gaming Magazine:



Berg's Review of Games, editor Richard Berg
20. Hall of Fame Inductees

Products: Ace of Aces/Nova Games, Diplomacy/The Avalon Hill Game Company

People: Don Featherstone and Michael A. Stackpole

OTHER POINTS OF VIEW

THE CLUBBER, a small newsletter of gaming. For more information, send a SASE to: The Clubber - Club Publications, P.O. Box 125, Mullica Hill, NJ 08062

SILVER GRIFFIN is apparently back and improved. Silver Griffin, P.O. Box 1751, St Paul, MN 55101

DUNGEONIER DIGEST, dedicated to AD&D. An excellent, high quality zine that leans mostly toward AD&D though any game is welcome. Some real excellent, imaginative supplements appeared in the first 2 issues, #3 is due out by November. James L. Shipman, Dungeonier Digest, Star Quest Games, RR#1, Box 81, Flat Rock, IL 62427-9735

INK BLOT, publication of The Fellowship of the Black Spot. A fun club newszine with useful articles as well as club news. Both issues I've seen contained humorous TV news style reports of adventure encounters in a fantasy city, detailed magic items, fiction and advice. Ink Blot, The Fellowship of the Black Spot, P.O. Box 27261, West Allis, WI 53227-0261

FACTUS BELLI, the newsletter of the Tomorrow is Yesterday Wargaming League. Appears to concentrate mostly on Warhammer, including rules and reviews. Free at the Tomorrow is Yesterday store, for more info send a SASE to: Factus Belli, c/o Dan Mathews, P.O. Box 624, Pecatonica, IL 61063

IN-COMING FIRE, Companion Games monthly newsletter supporting Star Fleet Battles (TFG). Ships, rules, advice, etc. GALACTIC INTERCOM, Companion Games bi-monthly newsletter for the Galactic Empires card game. Play-test cards, rules, Q&A, advice, etc.

For info on either, send a SASE to: Companion Games, P.O. Box 392, Stamford, NY 12167

SERENDIPITY'S CIRCLE, exploring the catacombs of weird fantasy and horror gaming. Mainstream horror and not so mainstream games get some good exposure. Adventures are system generic with tips on use within several systems across genres. For more info send a SASE to: Serendipity's Circle, 12345 Lake City Way N.E., Suite 147, Seattle, WA 98125

THE ORACLE, for AD&D enthusiasts. A

fantastic resource for AD&D players. Rules variats and additions, tips, reviews, encounters, campaign notes and Q&A. Professional look, bimonthly, 8.5"x11" newsletter format. Send a SASE to: The Oracle, PO Box 21, Newburgh, NY 12550.

**PRIME-TIME ROLEPLAYING:
PRODUCING A TELEVISION
SERIES CAMPAIGN**, by
Stephen Beeman, Updated
4-20-89 (This article
originally appeared in
ROLEPLAYER #8.)

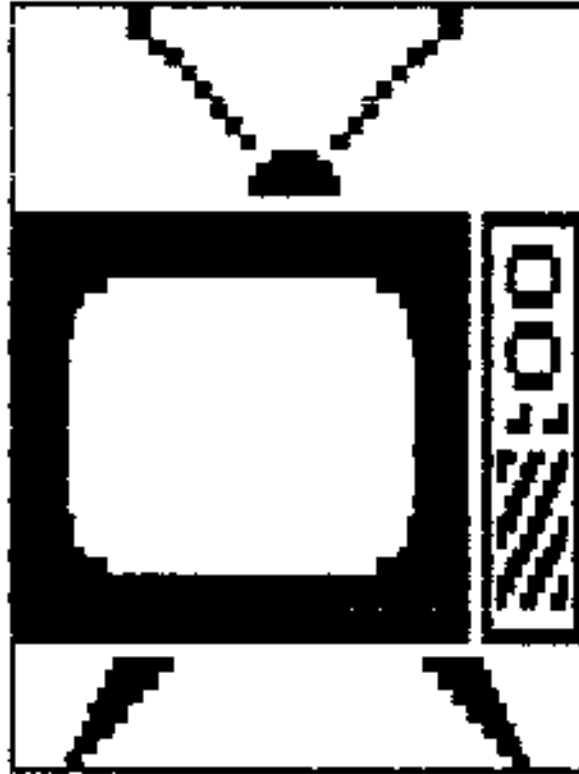
A bored young woman leans against a lamp post in a shady part of town. Her dress shows a marked lack of taste and modesty. A tall, mysterious figure in a trench coat approaches her. After a brief negotiation, the woman leads the man into a run-down hotel. They climb the graffiti-scarred stairs to a small room: a bed, a chair, and a view of the alley. The woman tosses her short leather jacket on the chair and turns to unzip her spandex blouse. Suddenly, the man grabs her by the shoulder and spins her around. For the first time, she sees the man's shadowed face. His eyes are glowing with a demonic light! The woman's screams fade as the camera pans out the window.

"We will return to E*S*P*I," a disembodied voice announces, "after these important messages . . ."

Roleplaying is when the GM and the players cooperate to create an interesting and exciting narrative. Often, the GM will shape this narrative into the form of novel or movie. Such formats help the GM structure his plot, and let the players visualize the action more easily.

When I set up E*S*P*I, a psionic-detective campaign, I wanted to create this sort of narrative with my players. But our sessions had to end by a certain hour and were occasionally postponed, making it difficult to sustain a long, complex novel- or film-style plot. I needed a format that lent itself to short, self-contained, fast-paced adventures involving a standard collection of characters and settings. The obvious answer - a television series!

Conceived as an hour-long detective program airing on Tuesday nights at 9 p.m., E*S*P*I resembled a cross between Miami Vice and Poltergeist. A big-budget series, it was



filmed on location in New York City, and featured paranormal plots, superb special effects, and top-notch actors. The title was also the name of the detective agency, Eric Seneca Private Investigations, which specialized in psychic investigations. All the PCs were employees of E*S*P*I. This background gave me a convenient framework for adventures - I had a preset length and basic outline for each episode (the TV show format), a collection of regular NPCs (supporting actors with recurring roles), an endless supply of foes (the New York underworld), and a ready source of plot ideas (real detective shows). The result was an easy-to-run campaign that both I and my players enjoyed.

Here's how it worked, and some tips on developing a TV series of your own.

Structure

Each episode of an hour-long TV series breaks neatly into five parts. It begins with a "teaser," designed to catch the viewers attention and to hint at the villain or conflict for the episode. In a multi-part adventure, the teaser shows scenes from the previous episode.

Act I introduces the villain's crime fully, and gets the PCs involved. It climaxes in a minor confrontation with the villain or his henchmen when one of the PCs unwittingly gets too close. This confrontation, which will often take an impersonal form - a bomb in an apartment, a car chase, a sniper - should put the PCs on the right trail.

Act II centers on the PCs' investigations, as they put together the pieces of the puzzle that lead to the villain. By the climax of the second act, the investigators should be fairly confident of whodunnit; the tension in this act comes from the need to catch the villain before he gets away or strikes again.

Act III brings the PCs into direct confrontation with the villain, climaxing in - we hope - the miscreant's downfall. Following Act III is the epilogue, which wraps up loose subplots and clears the stage for next week's episode.

Length

Each adventure is a single episode of the series, and should be playable in a single session. An occasional adventure can run two or even three episodes, in a "To be continued . . ." format, but even then, each episode should stand alone well enough that it can be enjoyed by those who missed one part or another.

The sessions I ran lasted five to six hours. If you have less time per session, it

is possible to run a single episode over two or three sessions by ending each session at a commercial break between acts. This method demands that the next session be held soon, though, since TV episodes are structured to leave the audience - and the story - hanging during commercials.

As a general rule, the teaser and the epilogue each take about fifteen minutes to play out. Acts I and II, which are full of action and information, should run about two hours apiece. Act III usually lasts about an hour, most of which is taken up with the climactic combat.

Character Development

The characters in a TV series change very little, compared to the characters in books or movies. This is done deliberately, so that the episodes can be written, filmed, and aired in any order, without disturbing continuity. At the end of every adventure, the major characters should have changed as little as possible, while the background and NPCs should not have changed at all. You can radically alter the background if you want to, but in doing so, you destroy one of the major advantages of this sort of campaign - the stable of recurring NPCs and locations.

The Bible

Every TV series has a "bible," a book containing information about the characters and setting of that series. Descriptions of all the sets are found here, as are details on the likes, dislikes, and personal history of each recurring character. Writers refer to the bible as they write each episode. The GM of a TV campaign should compile his own bible, with maps and descriptions of the most common settings, character sheets for PCs and NPCs, and notes about previous episodes.

The Teleplay

With a fleshed-out bible and a solid plot-concept, a GM can put together an episode fairly quickly. Start at the conclusion and work backwards. Who is the ultimate villain, and how do the PCs finally catch him? These answers should give you Act III in a matter of minutes. Next, determine why the PCs will be hunting this particular fellow. What heinous crime did he commit? Answering this question gives you the teaser. Then fill in a logical chain of clues for the investigators to follow through Act I, trying always to leave the investigators more than one option (there should be two or more ways to obtain all the necessary clues). The nature of the action in this act will be determined by the path that the investigators follow.

Act II will likewise depend on the adventurers' actions, but no matter how they get there, the climax of Act II should be about the same, since it has to lead into Act III. Add some brief notes on subplots that will need resolution in the epilogue; you shouldn't need more than that at this point, because most of the epilogue will depend directly on the character's actions throughout the adventure. Finally, go back over the teleplay you've created, fleshing out the individual scenes. Build the villain and his henchmen, write their dialogue, and tailor the details of some of the scenes to particular PCs.

This entire process seldom took me more than one or two hours, once I had a good premise for the episode. I drew ideas from a variety of TV shows, giving each episode its own flavor and disguising the cookie-cutter method used to create it.

Producing the Series

Once the series' format has been established, the show can enter production - that is, you can start to run adventures. The GM, as the series' producer, should make copies of the bible available to the players so that they can jump right into the series. Of course, any detailed information on recurring villains should be deleted from the players' edition of the bible!

After he has run a few episodes, establishing the style and flavor of the series, the "producer-GM" can hand off his duties to other GMs. These GMs, taking the role of episode writer-directors, follow the series format to create new episodes. Because of the stand-alone nature of each episode and the continuity enforced by the bible, a series campaign can run for quite a while with several GMs rotating director's duties. Of course, the series' producer remains the ultimate authority on the campaign, but each director can add his own touch to the show.

MORE DUNGEON FOR YOUR \$, by Nick Parenti

TECHNO, for Mayfair's Underground RPG, by P Murphy

Other than reviews, ads, articles and fan discussion, I have no knowledge of the Underground system and little of the campaign world. However, that did not take away from my enjoyment of this hardware / software / equipment supplement for Underground.

The contents apply to any dark future campaign, and most of it could be used in scifi and super hero campaigns. I was particularly impressed with the logical imagination that resulted in robots needing

a cerebral cortex to function and was morbidly impressed with the Bio-drive (preserved human brain) storage for personal computers. The book covers: computers, software, robots, medical, chemicals, drugs, communications, surveillance, security, criminal equipment, survival gear, climbing gear, building materials and entertainment equipment. I find it hard to believe that any one campaign would find use for all of the items presented but it would be a great resource for players looking for solutions and GMs looking for challenges.

The book is well written, with occasional "in character" bits to create a mood. Although visually striking, it suffers from huge borders ala TSR. The last third of the pages are meant for removal and placement in a binder. It is a collection of all the items described previously in the book, with game stats only. This is nice but adds to the cost and at \$18 I can't see recommending this to anyone other than the diehard Underground player/GM. Others will find it useful but not at that price.

BUCK ROGERS XXVc RPG, by TSR

I often wonder what goes on in the heads of the decision makers at TSR. Buck Rogers is a popular scifi/pulp icon. Each time the story was rewritten it was popular, the television series being the latest successful retread. TSR purchases the licence for this popular scifi hero and creates a campaign for him meant to exploit the popularity of cyberpunk, and fails to make it fly. The sad part is that the setting is interesting, unfortunately Buck isn't the interesting part. XXVc stands on its own, Buck and associates doesn't add to it at all. The game has possibilities and was well supported, it's unfortunate that it never found (nor built) a following.

The system is admittedly AD&D based. Anyone who has ever played AD&D, D&D or Gamma World (editions 1 and 4 at least) will be on very familiar ground. I am told that the rules for rocket ships are similar to those guiding Spelljammer movement and combat. It appears to work better than Star Frontiers and Metamorphosis Alpha did.

The campaign is dark future, intra solar system only. Cybernetics is out but biogenetics and some nanotech and virtual reality fill the gap. In fact the digital personalities, computer generated or converted people, are one very unique twist on the usual. The genetically engineered races parallel mutants in GW and Justifiers from the game of the same name. There is a

domineering corporate power, several smaller ones, secret societies, underground rebellion, politics, mixed morality and near holocaust conditions.

The non-pulp-ness of the campaign is a surprise since Buck has always been ... pulpish. The character classes used lend themselves to a pulp environment: rocketjock, engineer, warrior, scientist, rogue, scout, medic (could be used to describe the main cast of both Enterprises and DS9). My first thought was to build a pulp campaign, ala Flash Gordon, using these classes.

Anyone with a Gamma World 4th ed campaign should consider a purchase of the XXVc rules and any of its supplements. The fit is smooth. Anyone with AD&D/D&D experience who wants to try a (pulp-)scifi campaign could easily build one with the XXVc rules. Some of the XXVc and GW4 supplements would expand their possibilities. The rule boxed set, and all of the support material I've seen, is well written and enjoyable. As this game dies, watch the prices drop, buy.

TREASURES OF THE ANCIENTS, Gamma World 4th ed, by D Henson

This is the "hardware handbook" for the new edition of Gamma World. As regular reader may have already guessed, I'm going to recommend its use with GW4, V&V, XXVc and for those AD&D/D&Ders who like to add hi-tech artifacts to their campaigns. The book covers armor, weapons, robots, medical equipment and drugs, vehicles and misc. stuff. All of it was built before the holocaust so it would fit well into other future/scifi campaigns (Psi World perhaps?).

There are a few disappointing typos, the vehicle table is split into 3 categories: ground/sea/air but each is labeled "ground". The previously reviewed "No Humans Allowed" repeated a lot of info from the XXVc core rules and published adventures, that might be a pain to XXVc players but a treat for GW4/V&V/etc players. This book is the opposite, it doesn't repeat material found elsewhere (like Gamma Knights) but does reference them. This is great for big time GW players but could prove frustrating to those XXVc/V&V/etc players.

Of all the hardware supplements reviewed generically thus far, this is the one with the most meat (material likely to be used generally) and in the best format (not a lot of wasted space). I am recommending it to any scifi/future/post holocaust gamer but remember, it is going to tease you once in awhile with references to items it does not detail.

PROBE NCG8436, a survey & contact mission for FGU's Space Opera, by S Kingsley

I have heard tell of the complex and hard science rules that made up the Space Opera scifi rpg. This 21 page adventure, with art by Jeff Dee, was originally marked \$5 (discount priced at \$2.50). The contents do not really constitute an adventure module in the traditional sense, it is more a source book for the adventure. Inside is a situation, some background and some encounters. A nice candidate for use with other game systems.

The survey ship Outreach is detailed enough to use with other systems and large enough to be the center of a campaign. The planets of interest receive some minor detailing and would also be enough for their use in another system. The culture and tech level of the Grinithi (the 2nd planet's sentient) is proper for a Spelljammer campaign. Just a basic setting in a scifi universe, worth \$2.50, maybe \$3.

AGENT 13 SOURCEBOOK, for Top Secret/SI, by R Winninger

This book is intended to allow for the TS/SI system to be used in pulp adventures, specifically the Agent 13 universe. What it actually functions as, is a text book on gaming in the pulp genre. It covers all the pulp genre: racketeers, scifi, lost worlds, super agents, daredevils ... and more. It describes the basics of each sub-genre and where such adventures might go. If you have TS/SI, you need this. If you are new to pulp rpgs, this book will help player and GM alike. If you like to study about roleplaying, this book will be informative.

The cover price is \$8.95, at half that or less it is a better bargain than the latest issue of your favorite rpg magazine.

DAREDEVIL ADVENTURES SUPERNATURAL THRILLERS ISSUE, for FGU

This is a collection of 3 adventures for the Daredevils RPG, each with a supernatural twist. Due to the game system they are written for, all have a pulp/20s/30s feel. The first adventure has an alternate logical ending if the supernatural is not your style. The second has several supernatural explanations possible and the third is just about a psychopath.

CoC players will find all of the scenarios enjoyable. Only the second adventure depends on something out of the ordinary, so any pulp, gangster or investigative campaign can use them. The nature of all 3 adventures lend themselves to OTE with a little updating. With some work, each of the

scenarios will lend themselves to any genre.

For anything less than \$5, this is at least an enjoyable read for any gamer.

2001, A SPACE ODYSSEY, for Star Frontiers, from TSR, by F Mentzer

This scifi adventure follows the movie script too closely for me. Players are supposed to create special pre-humans to play out the opening sequence before getting to the scifi stuff. There is more roll than role-play in this one. For the discount price of \$2 I got what I wanted, a detailed description of the ship and HAL. I'll orchestrate my own space odyssey, thank you.

SAN FRANCISCO KNIGHTS, for Cyborg Commando, by P Petticord

I took a chance that this post-holocaust adventure would provide me with some San Francisco post disaster background. Like the game system it's meant for, I found the scenario to closely tied to the intended background to be of much use. I suppose a Gamma World GM could build a campaign around it, but it would have to include the Cyborg Commando background, so could any other post-holocaust or scifi game.

Unless your really curious, ignore it at any price.

F.R.E.E. LANCERS, for Top Secret/S.I., by J. Grubb

It's the late 1990s and people with metabilities (read super powers) are recruited by the forces of good and evil. This book contains rules and a campaign for TS/SI that are low powered superhero / cyberpunk. The FreeLancers are a group of boosted (naturally or technologically) agents. Formerly a part of a government service agency the FreeLancers, are now a for profit business, provide services with regard to high legal and moral restraints. As with the Agent 13 sourcebook, new rules are given for the differences between super agent and traditional TS/SI campaigns. The rules appear complete and consistent with the parent game.

More importantly, the history, present membership and campaign world of the hero-for-hire FREE Lancers organization is detailed. The organization and characters can be dropped into an superhero or dark future campaign. The short adventures contained in it would apply to most shrrpg, espionage or scifi game. I find myself thinking of an Underground (MGI) campaign built around the FREE Lancers, a better use of boosted veterans in any case.

I found this one at the auction at GenCon for \$1, and I saw it in TSRs clearance booth

for \$3. In either case it's a bargain for any gamer. If you have a need for a slightly better than normal group of heroes/agents, you would do well even if you paid up to \$5 (original cover price \$8.95).

THE WEB, for TSR's Top Secret/SI

Web is the global conspirator your loony uncle always blames the world's problems on. It seems the since WWI this group of rich scoundrels have been manipulating world and local events for their profit, with the eventual goal of world domination. This sourcebook details the history, tactics, organization, equipment, capabilities and interests of Web. It is nicely done, if not a little bit hard to swallow as fact, it makes good fiction. Like the previously reviewed TS/SI sourcebooks it has several mini-adventures but these are in a Shadis-like "Hook line and sinker" format that has groups of mini-adventures connected into larger missions.

Web would make a great villain for rpgs of most eras: pulp, present, espionage, superhero, mild scifi and mystery/mild-horror. As is suggested, Web can be part of a campaign for years before the organization itself becomes the focus. In fact, it could be immediately grafted into most campaigns as the evil behind all the characters' previous adventures.

If you need or want a global organization of badies, this is it. Mine cost \$2 at auction, TSR was clearing it at \$3 and I would say you'll get your money's worth at \$5. I would recommend The Web to any gamer who might even be considering an organization for an old or new campaign. It passes my gamer's value test... it is at least as entertaining as a prozine, for about the same price.

PLAYER'S HANDBOOK for Underground, by MGI

Now I understand! I've been bewildered by the campaign associated with the Underground RPG since I first heard of it. Now I can see all of the scifi, dark future and superhero facets everyone else has referred to. If it can make the games atmosphere that clear to an outsider, it must be a good player's handbook.

Like Techno, it mixes "in character" bits of background info along with straight game stats to help flesh out the campaign's conventions. Although it is not my cup of tea, way to indiscriminately violent and graphic, it is cohesive and consistent. The additional rules are clear enough for even someone who doesn't know the system, like me, to understand and appreciate. The new

enhancements and character archetypes are detailed enough to allow their conversion to other systems.

What I found most inspiring was the campaign's possibilities as a supers environment. Boosted vets on the side of good and evil would be an excellent premise for a superhero saga. This type of superhuman justification supports TS/SI's FREELancers (see review above) almost perfectly.

What am I suggesting? If you have a tired or are creating a new supers campaign with another system, consider Underground's premise partially or totally. If you are looking for a new system to liven up your supers gaming, consider Underground and consider dropping some of the graphic violence and dark future aspects of it, to create a more comic hero feel. A good read, a good inspiration and an excellent system aid. No Underground player should be without it, others should try to at least get a look and open their campaigning to the additional possibilities.

BAYERN, by W.W. Connors for 2300AD (GDW)

As I have been on a scifi binge lately, I decided to check-out some pre-Traveller: the new era stuff, figuring it'd be discounted. I picked this 2300AD adventure because it contained a description of an outer system capable starship, the Bayern. The adventure(s) revolve around the Bayern's trip to and exploration of the Pleiades (a nebula, with young stars and possible forming planets). Due to its mission, and the organization that funded it, the Bayern is an unarmed vessel of exploration and research. Although no interior detail is given, there is enough info here for using the Bayern as the center of a campaign in the 2300AD or any other scifi system.

The module reviews the history of the mission and details the major persons aboard. Two science oriented scenarios are included, one of which could result in minor personal combat. Since it is all well written and not stat heavy, any system could be used to run the Bayern to the Pleiades, back and beyond. Pick it up if you can find it for around \$4 if non-combat oriented scifi adventuring is your interest.

OPERATION PEREGRINE, by S. Jones for Space Opera (FGU)

Not as much so as the previously reviewed Space Opera scenario, this one proved non-system specific enough to use with other scifi/future games. The plot concerns breaking a criminal (drug) syndicate that

operates in a corner of known space. Many of the area's planets and some races are described in general detail. The PC's starship, on loan from their controlling agency, receives some description and deck detail. A uniquely designed airship gets some definite detailing as a part of the plot. I really purchased this one for the plans to these airships, a favorite subject of mine and a special part of my plans for a space-fantasy campaign.

This adventure stresses covert and investigative solutions. Violence has some negative side affects. I can see this story working well in a Star Wars or Star Trek campaign. Even an espionage game, given the future-tech, would be able to run this adventure. At \$3 or less (1/2 the cover) it's a good source of ideas and an excellent side adventure for interstellar gamers.

DEATH STAR TECHNICAL COMPANION, for Star Wars, by WEG

This is by far the best "generic" scifi supplement I have purchased. Yes, it details the Death Star from the Star Wars movies, and provides WEG's RPG system stats for all of it's capabilities and important personnel. It does this without a lot of game system specific info, in a manner that's fun to read (written as an alliance report on the DS). Any scifi game could include a Death Star with the information contained within; either in its intended form, as a fixed station (ala DS9 or B5) or in a capacity related to its intended form (a Borg-like encounter), shrunk or at its specified size.

The detail is divided into functional areas of the Battle Station, and this is where I get really excited! The text describes the empire's construction as modular so that the areas it provides diagrams and info on could be found on any imperial starship or starbase. Why restrict this to the empire? Within the detailed maps and floor plans are: starship bridges, space port prisons, crews quarters, land based weapon stations, starports, shuttle bays, hi-tech medical facilities, futuristic cityscape and more. All of the designs ready for use with any scifi RPG system, or even for superhero group command centers and starships.

If you need good, readily available, detail in your scifi gaming, buy this one. Even at the cover price of \$15, you will find it more valuable than most of your present scifi systems supplements. If you can get it for under \$10, just do it.



CYBERNETIC ENHANCEMENT in XXVc, by Phillip J. Reed, jr. (editor, Camelot'94)

Throughout the XXVc basic game and (if memory serves)

within the first few novels, the subject of cybernetics is avoided (save for Black Barney, who I'm still unsure of). Gennies, the genetic creatures created by man, fill the gap left wide open by the lack of cybernetics in the setting, though gennies can only go so far. After all, what happens when a Terran or Martian loses a limb in combat? Does he grow a new one or just suffer for the rest of his life?

The following is a short collection of possible cybernetic enhancements useful in the XXVc setting as well as a few brief notes regarding their use. This information is written for use with XXVc though with its AD&D2-style mechanics, as Nick Parenti has pointed out so well in the past, it is also useful with any RPG system derived from those basic concepts.

Attributes and Realism

It's important to note that this cybernetics system is far from realistic. Any cybernetic which grants an attribute bonus is applicable to the entire attribute range and not merely for the limb or enhancement in question.

For example, a character takes a cyberarm with a +2 to Strength. Various game systems utilizing cybernetics would, at this point, rule that the bonus is added only when using that arm. This system just drops the bonus on top of the attribute, generalizing its affects greatly.

Motor Power

Another frequently asked question when cybernetics are used, is the old "what's powering them?". This system assumes that all cybernetic components have an internal battery which gives them a one-year life. This battery can be easily charged from any starship's drive or other engine/energy device.

Cybernetic Availability

Yeah, right. These things are almost impossible to find (thus the high cost) and, even if you do happen to find them, they'll probably be attached to someone. If you really want to locate some cybernetics, try contacting the Black Brotherhood. Of course, I'll warn you now that it's gonna cost more than you've got.

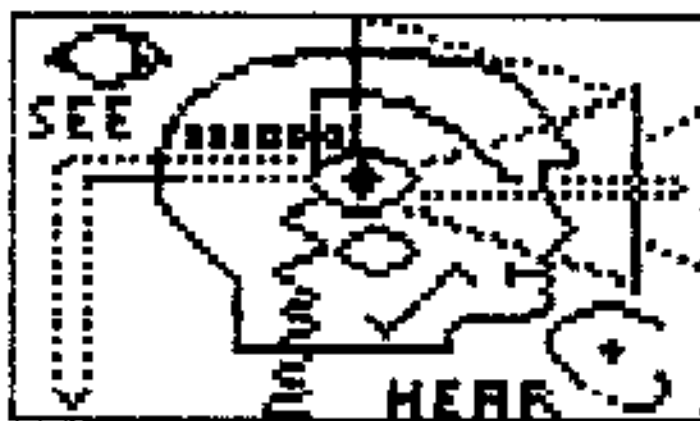
Cybernetic Components

Now, after all the flashing neon and bright lights of hype, I present a few cybernetic components/enhancements for use in your XXVc (or system-related) campaign.

Cyberlimb: A pretty common enhancement, these are most often used by those poor souls who have seen their original limb either disintegrated or ripped off. The basic cyberlimb costs 2500cr. For an additional 1000cr, you can purchase a hydraulic-powered limb which grants a +2 to Strength. A Dex+2 cyberlimb is also available for an additional 1500cr beyond the base cost. A Str/Dex+2 limb is also available, but you'll end up paying 500cr beyond the combined totals.

Cyberscreen: Why wear smart clothes with an ECM package when you can just have the defensive abilities implanted within yourself? Sure, it costs 3500cr, but the protection is worth it. This little gadget operates in the same manner as the ECM package detailed on p.27 of the XXVc Technology Book.

Enhanced Senses: This includes such things as cybereyes, implanted hearing magnification, and any kind of vocal modification. The



t y p e s o f enhancements are limited merely by the imagination of the gamemaster and players. Each sensory enhancement costs 1000cr, though the gamemaster may set a higher cost for special enhancements (such as laser eyes).

Internal Armor (light and heavy): Not nearly as protective as the real armor available to XXVc patrons, internal armor is undetectable to the naked eye and can be combined with regular armor types. The light version costs 3000cr and has an AC8, while the heavy version costs 5500cr and has an AC4. When combined with regular armor types, the internal armor's AC should be subtracted from the regular armor's AC (in effect, treating it as an AC modifier, similar to a Dex AC modifier).

Organ Replacement: This enhancement is most often taken by people suffering from a terminal disease though a few have chosen this cybernetic modification for the simple desire to swim in space. A character so modified is assumed to have not a single original vital organ, instead there is a mass of plastic tubing and copper wiring filling the body. They can survive in space, their internal organs identical to those of a Space

(see Characters & Combat p.30). Of course, since their skin hasn't been enhanced, it's necessary that they wear a space suit in order to be protected from the freezing cold of space. This operation costs 15000cr.

Weaponry Attachment: Intended for a cyberarm, the weaponry attachment is an external connector for any one-handed weapon. The weapon is fired by thought alone, an action which increases the character's chance to hit with the weapon by +1. The weaponry attachment costs 5000cr, plus the cost of the weapon and ammunition. For an extra 6000cr, any small weapon may be concealed within a cyberarm. A concealed weapon takes one full combat round to conceal or reveal. The weapon may not be fired when concealed.

Possible Use in an AD&D2 Campaign: It's easy to lay the blanket term of magic over the cybernetic enhancements described above, possibly even making a few of them magical items to be found during an adventure. Magical surgery could implant any of these items, creating characters as strange as anything they could ever encounter on an alien world.

The DM could even go so far as to take a few of the more standard magic items found in a typical campaign and rework them just slightly. The Gauntlet of Strength which slowly replaces flesh with steel, ensuring the gauntlet could never be removed, would be an odd magic item (especially for the finder). What about the Cloak of the Manta Ray which permanently attaches itself to the wearer, falling off only when the wearer has been killed? Magic rings, once slipped over the finger, could disappear forever, becoming a permanent spell-like ability of the wearer instead of a power inherent in a ring.

When adapting material, it's best to keep a well open mind.

WHEN WILL IT END? by Mark Arsenault (originally published in The Gamer's Connection #15)

Role-playing games tend to be episodic, following the exploits of the characters from one adventure to the next, as they grow in skill and sometimes wealth. Ongoing, episodic campaigns are by far the most common type of campaign. They satisfy our need for growth and gain, and there is a certain satisfaction in continuing to adventure with personalities that we have created and molded during play. But when does it end?

Does your campaign seem to wander on and on, with countless game sessions dumping your characters into obscure and cliché' tavern

scenes? Do you tire of mindless combat where the only point in continuing the fight is the prospect of living to fight again next session?

After ten years of just such an ongoing Champions campaign, I decided to end it. Why? Because it had become nothing more than a weekly exercise in PC vs NPC conflicts. My hero's private life was no longer involved, and the GM paid little attention to his "campaign disadvantages", such as "hunted", "dependent NPC", et al. There was no sense of story in the campaign. In short, the role-playing aspect of this role-playing game had all but disappeared. Even though we had four alternating GMs and plenty of variety, I was losing interest, and fast!

Was the demise of our campaign entirely the GM's fault? No, not by a long-shot. Every player in the group should have demanded more from themselves and the others in the group. I am convinced that one of the biggest factors leading to the decline of the campaign was that every player had an average of four PCs a piece; one for each GM's campaign city! We had the hero team S.T.A.R. on the east coast, Sound Protection in Seattle, the California Guardians in Sacramento, our Dark Champions vigilantes in St. Louis, and even a villain team (that's a story in itself)! And all of the PCs (and NPCs) were part of one giant maxi-campaign universe, with cross-overs galore! It was, to say the least, a mess!

So what's the answer, you ask? I gave a lot of thought to that Champions campaign, and why I stopped enjoying it. The answer became clear when I tried to remember what the campaign's overall goal was. There wasn't one! That was the problem! We had lost sight of our heroes, and their reason for being heroes in the first place. Without some common goal to galvanize the characters into a meaningful, and motivated hero team, each game session degenerated into a superhero "hack-n-slash" game.

What came of all this was my new found dedication to keeping the PCs directly involved in the story. With a concrete goal to work toward, players would be more inclined to cooperate with each other. Regardless of the motivation, each character had a reason to be there in the adventure.

So the point, again, to keeping your campaign focused is to provide a goal for the players. The goal can be simplistic, like rescuing a princess, or very complex, like bringing about the economic and militaristic collapse of a dictatorial government. Some

goals will be reachable for the characters, while other goals will be impossible for the characters to achieve. The impossible goals are useful only for providing motivation for the characters. The do nothing to keep the campaign in focus because no matter how hard the PCs try, they can never achieve the goal, and will wind up straying from the path, as it were, to pursue smaller achievable goals.

If the gamemaster is feeling particularly creative, he can add personal goals (or character goals) to the game. These serve to give each character a special sense of purpose, above and beyond the group's common goal. Personal goals are the stuff that legends are made of. Look at any classic tale and you will find, at the heart of it, a strong central character with a personal goal!

Coming up with a personal goal isn't nearly as difficult as it might seem. The easiest way to deal with the problem is to have the player come up with a goal for their character! Believe me, if they want to play, they'll come up with a personal goal! Players often inadvertently outline personal goals in their characters background.

Introducing personal goals into a campaign can improve the game, or simply complicate it. Like anything, much depends on how the GM handles the challenge.

The basic distinction between campaigns that do and don't have a campaign goal is the perception of time. When the players aimlessly move from one adventure to another, with absolutely no end in sight, they can become disinterested. But a campaign with a goal allows the players to concentrate their resources in an attempt to progress toward the campaign's completion. The players all know that once the goal is achieved, the campaign must take one of two turns; it must end, or the players must find a new goal.

Keeping a goal will help everyone stay focused. In fact, in my current campaign, the players themselves have occasionally brought the game back in line after they had begun to stray from the obvious path.

For some reason, knowing what the main objective is, takes some of the pressure off of the players. They are free to concentrate on the business at hand, namely achieving the goal before them!

Once a campaign goal has been reached, the group can continue the campaign with a new goal, or simply end the campaign. That's the beauty of the campaign goal, it gives the GM both a tool to motivate the characters, and an excuse to end the campaign!

Whatever you decide to do, you no longer need to worry about indefinitely suffering throughout a series of adventures without purpose! If you do choose to continue the campaign, simply take those same characters and give them a new problem to deal with. What could be simpler?

A NEW WORLD (part 2), by Charles Parenti

The explosion rings out with no warning save for the preceding flash of light that filled every room in the house, including those without windows. Each individual scream goes unheard as the thunderous blast rings for what seems like a lifetime. The same feeling of sure death fills the three adults simultaneously. Nicholas feels nothing as he is overcome with a sudden blackness after knocking his head on a flying chest of drawers.



On the floor below, Michael is anything but "on the floor below". The sudden explosive force shatters all of the windows and sends the toddler hurling through the air like a discarded rag doll. Shards of glass and splinters of wood fly throughout the entire ground floor, ripping through everything with the greatest of ease.

Outside on the driveway, Tom is stunned and is completely motionless. He had seen the flash of intense light but was not prepared for the blast that shattered the Chevy's windows. The rain streaming on his face pulls him out of his daze and he quickly darts out of the car and into the house.

Another flicker of light and a clamor of thunder pass without acknowledgement. Tom's first sight is miraculous. In a room of total destruction and ruin a small child sits on a pile of rubble consisting mainly of material that was once an old colonial style couch. Although he is covered in ash and cindered shrapnel he appears relatively unscratched and is still clinging to the handle of his shredded baseball bat.

"The light, you see?" he asks pointing out the enormous hole that was blasted through the rear end of the tiny house.

"Oh my god, Michael, you're alright," Tom says as he lifts the boy up into his arms and makes his way toward what's left of the staircase. "Dolores, Mike, Bar..."

"Tommy, where's Michael?" yells Mike in a highly concerned voice.

"I've got him, but what about..."

"Tom, I think we're alright, but Barbara needs a doctor, now," comes the reply from his wife.

The damage to the upstairs section of the house does not seem as bad. The back two bedrooms, and the bathroom situated between them, are demolished but fortunately none of the vacationers had been in them. The front bedroom is in much better condition and luckily experienced nothing more than broken trinkets and scrambled furniture.

Tom enters the room with Michael still clinging in his embrace. Mike is cradling the conscious, but crying, Nicholas and reassuring him that everything is alright.

"Michael, my god he's okay," Barbara lets out in a whimper and tries to reach out and grab her son before being intercepted by Dolores.

"He's fine Barb, he's fine, now you have to hang in there 'cause we still have a baby on the way,"

"Where's Nicky," she asks in a shaky voice.

"I got him honey," answers Mike, also shivering from trauma, "he'll be alright, but you have to try and stay calm."

She does not respond to him but rather mumbles something incoherent, her face wrinkling in obvious pain. The others are aware of her suffering and quickly turn their full attention to the still present problem of a woman in labor. None of them is concerned over the event that has just occurred or the damage done to the house with the exception of the naive little Michael. His tiny mind is still preoccupied.

"But the light, Daddy, rain light," he says with the annoying whine of an ignored child.

No one answers the boy as the scramble to help Barbara resumes. Mike grabs the phone from the floor and repeatedly tries to revive a dial tone.

"The phone lines are definitely dead," he says in disgust as he lets the phone drop to the floor, "damn, we need a doctor."

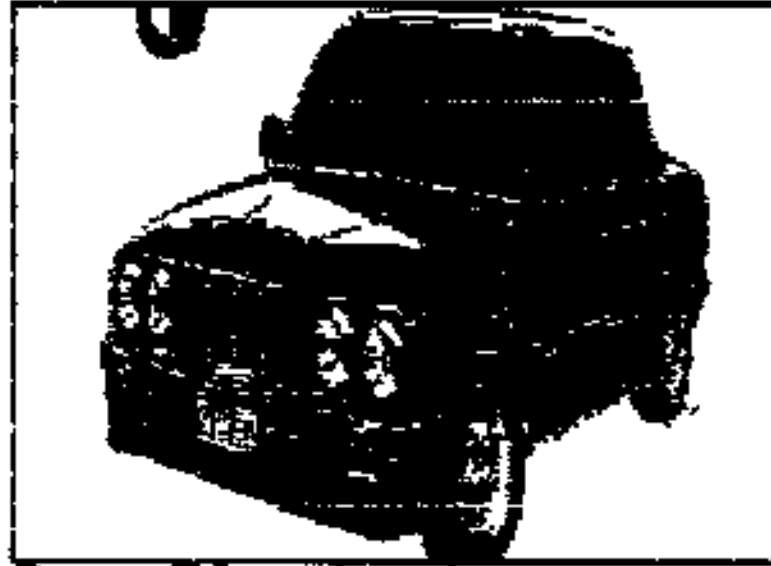
"Don't worry Mike," Tom replies in an attempt to sound upbeat and reassuring, "I'll go outside, somebody had to see that blast and I'm sure that they'll be able to help us."

The thunderstorm seems to have reached its peak. None of the vacationers seem to notice the indoor climate change. With the entire northeast side of the house exposed, the basement furnace has no hope of keeping the internal temperature at moderate levels. Rain water flows into the ground floor at an

ever increasing rate and together with the swirling wind actually aids in extinguishing any fires that still are ablaze.

A small, brown Volvo races down a rocky trail, wrestling with the untamed forest in the middle of what most people would consider nowhere. The little vehicle is tossed back and forth like a pinball by old tree stumps and large moss covered stones. Heavy winds and buckets of rainfall do not help in making the tiny car's venture any easier.

Even with the obvious hazards of his little escapade, Dr. Julius Fleming still manages to maintain his boyish smile. After leaving the observatory, he



Dr. Fleming's car.

had noticed a small red light emerging from the darkness of the stormy afternoon sky. Still excited by his computational discoveries of the early morning, Dr. Julius lets his imagination control him.

"What was this strange light and where did it come from?" he would ask himself. "And where was it headed?"

After jumping in his car and speeding down the mountain that serves as a home to the observatory, Dr. Fleming now finds himself desperately scanning the cloudy heavens for another glimpse of what he guesses to be some sort of meteorite. His head bobs up and down as if he were floating in the violent waters of the North Atlantic constantly shifting from the road in front of him to the sky above him. A narrow escape with a large oak tree reminds him that his number one priority should be handling the automobile in treacherous conditions rather than following some mysterious light on a ridiculous wild goose chase.

Suddenly it happens, just beyond a small, desolate cottage the earth erupts in a brilliant flash of light. Dr. Fleming slams his right foot hard on the break peddle but he never hears the screech of his squeaky breaks or the crackling of pinched gravel. Instead his ears ring with a thunderous blast ten times louder than anything else he has ever heard. His initial shock only lasts momentarily however, and is quickly replaced by ultimate excitement.

"My lord," he whispers to himself, "this is... is... is... my lord."

Without a second thought he presses hard on the gas and quickly spins the wheel. The Volvo seems to fight and swing but the determined Dr. Fleming easily lets the car know who's in charge. He is a determined man. No road, no car, and no weather is going to prevent him from getting to ground zero, the point of impact. He had just witnessed a collision between the Earth and some foreign, astronomical object and he was absolutely sure of it. That was certainly not a plane crash nor was it an explosive device. It was the meteorite, his meteorite.

In a matter of minutes he is on the outer reaches of the crater. The storm has reached its peak and the thunder soon subsides but the doctor doesn't notice as he steps out of his car and into the steady downpour. There is much more on his mind than the simple question of how long the storm will last.

Many thoughts, some fantasy and some realistic, run rampant through his mind. The most prevalent being whether

or not the impact and his odd solar observations were in some way related. Could there be some cause and affect correlation or were they two totally independent events that coincidentally occurred on the same day.

As he walks through the steaming mud on his way towards the middle of the fresh crater, Dr. Fleming becomes increasingly more aware of the unexplainable energy being emitted from the unknown object at its center. He walks closer and closer to the final prize, sweating from the heat the entire way. The cold wet rain and his incredible determination are all that keep it from being unbearable. He reassures himself that it will be well worth his efforts.

Upon climbing the final ridge that cloaks the center from plain view, Dr. Fleming encounters a brilliant crimson hue that forces him to suddenly shield his eyes. After slight adjustment he desperately tries to focus on the source of the bright red light as it seems to pulsate a mere forty yards in front of him. Another man of his intelligence might worry of radiation or contamination poisoning when dealing with extra-terrestrial objects but not Dr. Julius Fleming. This is much too exciting to take it slow and be precautious. Dr. Fleming was never one for the anticipation, he wanted answers.

Ignoring the intense heat and blinding light, Dr. Fleming breaks into a sudden sprint. After slipping once and landing on his face, he decides to proceed on the hot, slick mud at a slightly more controlled pace.

His heartbeat increases with each step and his sweat now seems to pour heavier than the rain. Twenty yards to go and the object is still unrecognizable but the pulsating now appears more like a slow rhythmic swelling motion. Ten yards to go. Five, three.

"Holy... shit," is all that he can mutter as his eyes finally settle on the heavenly object. He stands, motionless for several minutes before he even attempts the simplest of functions. When he does he chooses breathing.

"It's happening now!" Barbara screams without separating her teeth.

"Oh my god, oh my god, oh my god," is the reply from her husband.

Dolores has just finished tending to the childrens' minor wounds and is running into the still scrambled room.

"Barbara, just stay calm, now when you say now, what exactly do you mean by now?" she asks nervously.

"Now is unnnhhhh! now." is the answer accompanied by tears and cries of pain.

"Okay, do you mean now as in a little while or do you mean now as in right at this moment."

"Now!!!!!!!!!!"

Outside Tom is frantically attempting to flag down a small brown Volvo as it sprints down the road that passes the house. The driver seems like a heartless, determined man who has no intention of stopping, not even just to satisfy his curiosity. This will not deter Tom from doing everything in his power to make contact with him, even if it means stepping into the vehicles projected path.

For a split second, Dr. Julius Fleming did indeed have every intention of ignoring the raving pedestrian, but the thought is fleeting and he now knows differently. Through the corner of his eye he can see the house that this man has apparently come from and it has been severely damaged. He curses himself for not noticing this earlier. Just moments before he had been standing a mere hundred or so yards from the back of the abode and somehow not even noticed. He realizes that he had been seriously preoccupied but then scolds himself for making such a careless blunder. The car screeches to a halt.

"What is it my friend," Dr. Fleming inquires. "How can I be of assistance," he adds, sounding very concerned as he steps out of the automobile.

"Quick, find us help, we need a doctor," Tom yells without acknowledging the older man's greeting, "We have a woman giving birth

in that ruin so either get back in your car and help us get her to a hospital or get the hell out of the way and give me your damn keys."

"A woman giving what?" replies the doctor in shock.

"Birth, you fool, we have no time for your surprise act so toss me the keys and just get your ass out the way."

"Christ," is all that comes out of Dr. Flemings mouth before he races up the driveway, slipping once on the wet pavement but maintaining his balance, and into the house.

"Wait a min...," Tom doesn't bother finishing his statement and quickly follows up the driveway never pausing to question the vibrant red hue emanating from the back seat of the car.

"Unnnhhhh, ahhhhhh," come the cries from the upstairs front bedroom. Dr. Fleming hurdles the mangled stairs two at a time and darts into the bedroom, knocking over the gazing Michael in the process.

"Out of the way," he screams. Mike turns but before he can even question it, Dr. Fleming is pushing his way up to the expecting mother and saying, "I'm a doctor, just hang in there and everything will be alright." He gives Barbara a reassuring wink and suddenly she feels a little more at ease, or at atleast Dr. Fleming hopes she does.

Tom reaches the top of the stairs and just stops, staring at the doctor as if he were a savior or somekind of superhero. A sense of relief overtakes him as he suddenly feels everything is in good hands, not knowing the insecure thoughts emulating in the mind of Dr. Fleming, a doctor of science, not medicine.

Even if he could read the doctor's thoughts he probably would be unable to decipher them. Beside the hidden insecurities lies the total astonishment of a truly unimaginable day. A few short hours ago, Dr. Fleming had been begging for just a little excitement for a change. This is far more than he could have ever even conceived. Delivering a baby in the partly demolished remains of someone's home is the perfect ending to his insane granted wish. First the wild meteor chase in the pounding rain. Then the discovery of the, of the, of, what in the hell did he discover.

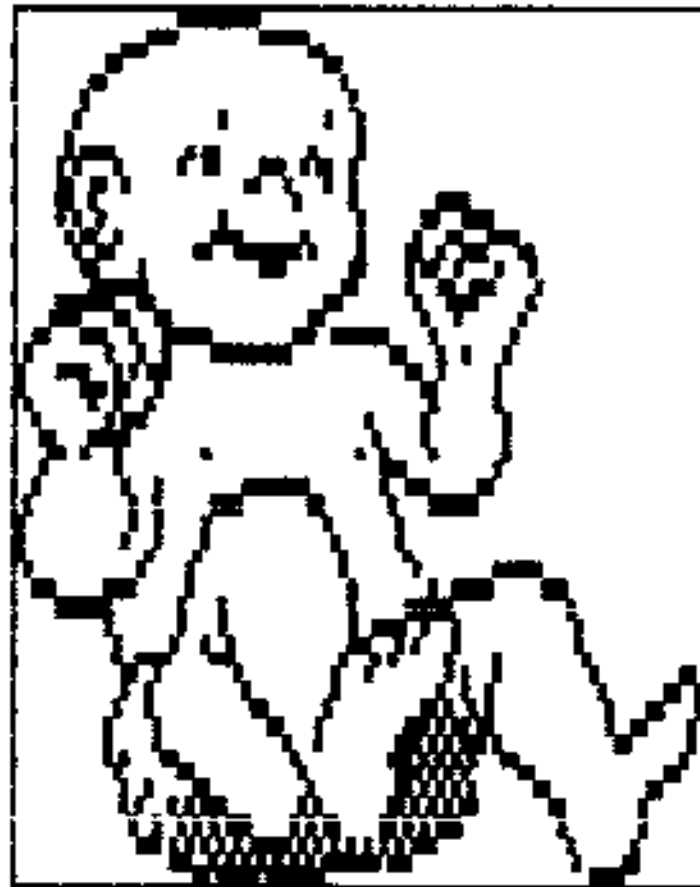
"Breathe, Barbara, breathe."

"Come on baby, you're doing fine."

"That's it, that's it, Barb."

"You're doing great Barbara, now let's have a push," instructs the doctor as he

tries to concentrate on the crisis at hand and forget the millions of questions suddenly forming inside his head. This is a childbirth, these people need his full attention and his care, there is no time to ponder over the origins of his find. The greatest discovery of his life and possibly of anyone else's for that matter, would have to wait. A mother is giving birth. A family is sharing in a miracle. A baby is born. A new world begins.



Campaign Suggestions for ICE AGE

by Kirk Tate, 8-89 (This article originally appeared in Roleplayer #15, downloaded from SJG's Illuminati BBS.)

The most frequent comment I've heard about GURPS ICE AGE has been something along the lines of "Hmmm, but what would you do with it?" As the book's author, I spent a substantial amount of time pondering that very question - just what kind of adventures and campaigns would a GM build around a group of hairy, stone-age tribesmen? Most of my answers found their way into the Campaigning chapter, but a few of the crazier ones did not survive editing. Others didn't occur to me until after the final draft had gone to the printers. Here are three of my favorites: Thundering Hooves

There are several tantalizing pieces of evidence that Cro-Magnon Man had domesticated animals thousands of years earlier than is generally believed. At two sites in France, engravings of horses - estimated to be 15,000 years old - have been found with what appear to be rope harnesses carved into them. At another cave, a harnessed reindeer is depicted. Even more interesting are the fossilized teeth of two horses that lived in northern France about 30,000 years ago. These teeth show a distinctive pattern of wear, called "crib-biting," normally seen only in domesticated horses.

Although this scant evidence is not enough to convince anthropologists that Cro-Magnon Man had domesticated the horse, it conjures up some curious images. Imagine our fur-clad heroes wandering the tundra, with food, clothing, shelter, even children packed

neatly on horse-drawn sledges, rather than toiling along with their meager belongings on their backs. Better yet, picture them descending upon their enemies at full gallop, each hunter mounted on his trusty steed - or their enemy descending upon them.

The domesticated horse could be to the Cro-Magnon man what fire was to Homo erectus. An entire campaign could revolve around the capture, taming and training of horses. In a Warring Tribes campaign, the horse might be just the edge the Good Guys need to defeat the Bad Guys. Remember, Ice Age horsemen won't have saddles, stirrups or bridles with bits; at best, the mount would be controlled by a rope looped around the animal's nose and held in one hand (-3 to Riding skill). Also, these horses aren't trained, specially bred destriers; they're more like timid brown zebras. Our heroes will fall off - a lot.

Texas, 1540

In the year 1540, Francisco Vasquez Coronado set out from what would one day be called Mexico City to search for the fabled Seven Cities of Cibola. Stories brought back by the explorer Cabeza de Vaca told of streets paved with gold and beautiful women adorned in magnificent jewelry. Coronado never found the legendary cities, but he was the first European to encounter the primitive Indian tribes of the southern Great Plains.

These tribes, probably the Apache, Comanche, Wichita and Kansa, were at Tech Level 0 - the stone age. They had no knowledge of metals, firearms or the wheel. They had never even seen a horse - horses were not at that time native to the Americas. In fact, when they first saw the mounted Spaniards, they thought that rider and horse were a single creature, the upper part being armored like the armadillo. They were completely shocked when the creature split itself in two, and the upper half walked up to them on two legs and started talking.

A campaign in which Indian PCs encounter the Spaniards could be challenging. The players would have to roleplay their amazement at the European technology, as well as their inability to understand it. Having seen how easily the mounted foreigners move about, it will occur to them that they could use some horses themselves, but the Spaniards will be most unwilling to part with their mounts. A raid to steal horses might be staged, but then the tribesmen will have to learn to ride. . .

Religion will play an important role. The Indians practiced an advanced form of totemism, and the Spanish priests will be

anxious to convert them to Christianity. Not only do individual tribes, clans and families have totems, but the tribesmen worship several major nature spirits. The Buffalo, Coyote, Eagle and Raven are important, and the Great Spirit is above them all. The Indians will find it almost impossible to understand the abstract concepts of Christianity, removed as it is from the world of nature.

Sources for adventure ideas include the Western novels of Don Coldsmith, beginning with The Trail of the Spanish Bit. These novels - there are ten of them - are all told from the Indian point of view, and set in the Great Plains during the 16th century. For source material on the Spanish in America during this period, check out GURPS Swashbucklers.

Monsters of the Mist

This was inspired by the book Eaters of the Dead, the travel account of Ibn Fadlan, an Arab ambassador who visited Scandinavia in the year 922 A.D., translated and edited by Michael Crichton. It describes a series of battles between Vikings and the wendol - short, stocky, hairy brutes with sloping brows and incredible strength. These "monsters" attack on dark, mist-shrouded nights, and carry off humans to eat them. When the Vikings attack their lair, they find, among other things, piles of stone flakes used for skinning and figurines of pregnant females. Fadlan's description of the creatures and the figurines lead Crichton to speculate that the wendol may have been a tribe of Neanderthals that survived in the mountains of Scandinavia as recently as a thousand years ago.

This could provide a way to bring a conventional fantasy campaign and an Ice Age campaign together. The Neanderthals might prey on the strange men with the metal swords and wooden caves, or they might be prey themselves. The tribe could be engaged in a grim fight for survival, being driven ever farther into the cold mountains by the frightening metal-skinned giants. As it becomes more and more difficult to get food, they conduct more shamanistic ceremonies, but the magic no longer works (perhaps the shamanism of the more numerous Vikings overpowers their magic). Eventually, they are forced to prey upon the flocks of the Northmen, and perhaps the men themselves.

An enterprising GM might even run two separate parties, one of Neanderthals, the other of Viking warriors. (They don't have to be Vikings, of course - the setting could be

any isolated, cool environment.) The players of the two groups, meeting on different days, could be kept in the dark about the fact that they are really fighting each other. Then, at the climactic battle, a player might find his enemy being played by his best friend on the other side of the table! The results, while bloody, could be interesting. Who knows ... the final result might be a party made up of both races.

TRADE LIST

Check out the below list, write back with any offers, please include a Self Addressed & Stamped Envelope (SASE).

The prices below are provided for those who have nothing to trade or prefer not to. Since I only have one of each item please write first with a list of what you wish to buy and a SASE, include substitutions if you like. Using the SASE you provide, I will: confirm that what you want is available, total it and add postage, then mail a SASE of my own to you so you can send your money order (or check) to me without anymore postage. I'll mail your stuff out ASAP (after the check clears).

**** I am actively seeking: DragonQuest and V&V material, the "Swords and Sorcerers" supplement to Chivalry and Sorcery, and TSR's "Warlord of Mars". I am also interested in any starship floor plan supplements from any system.****

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\$5.00 TOP SECRET/S.I. CATACOMBS Book, "THE FINAL BUG, A SOLO OPERATIONS CASEBOOK", by Jean Blashfield (for solo gaming)

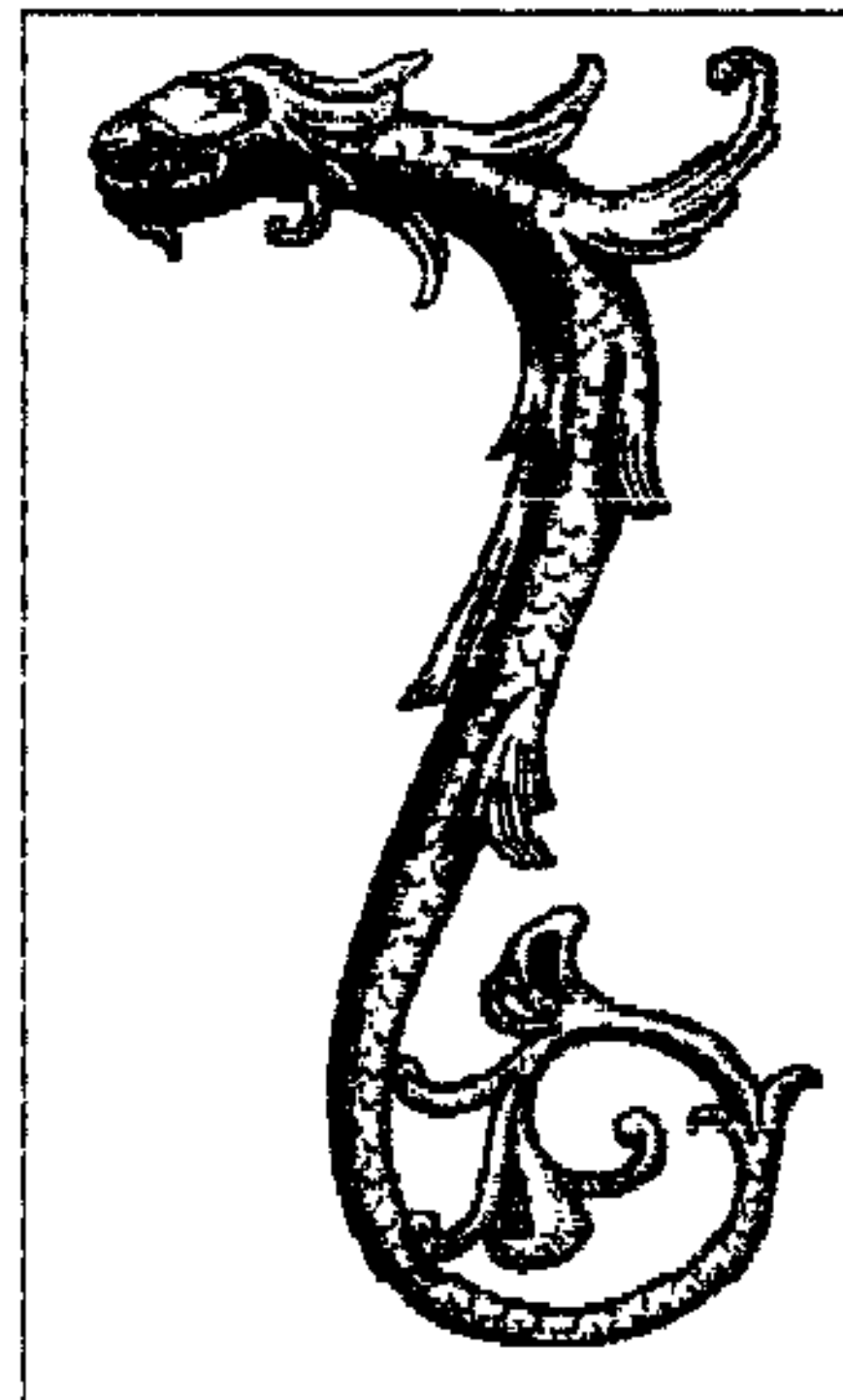
\$15 - LEGENDARY LIVES, 2nd edition, FRPG, unused.

\$20 - IRON DRAGON, fantasy railroad game, new and unopened.

Send all correspondence to:
Nick Parenti, 4823 Flintridge Ct #2,
Rockford, IL 61107-5010

CLIMATE/TERRAIN:	Tropical/subtropical islands
FREQUENCY:	Rare
ORGANIZATION:	Solitary, mated pair
ACTIVITY CYCLE:	Any, Night preferred
DIET:	Carnivore
INTELLIGENCE:	Low (5-7)
TREASURE:	nil
ALIGNMENT:	Chaotic Neutral

NO. APPEARING:	1-2
ARMOR CLASS:	2
MOVEMENT:	16
HIT DICE:	45
THACO:	5
NO. OF ATTACKS:	2
DAMAGE/ATTACK:	5-50/10-40
SPECIAL ATTACKS:	Constriction
SPECIAL DEFENSES:	Regeneration
MAGIC RESISTANCE:	nil
SIZE:	G (100' - 600')
MORALE:	Elite (19)
XP VALUE:	38,000



Description: The Serpentua is another breed of Gargantua appearing much like a normal constrictor snake, although many times larger. Thankfully the serpentua has no poison in its bite or else it might have been the most powerful of all gargantua.

Combat: Much like the other gargantua, the serpentuas' actions are mostly destructive. The serpentuas' greatest attack is the bite, which causes 5-50hp of damage (without poison). This isn't its most preferred attack however, as it enjoys constricting for 10-40hp. If its attack is successful it can continue to constrict until it or its victim are dead. Only gargantua sized creatures with a strength over 22 can even hope to break this grasp. This fact makes the serpentua a predator of even the reptilian gargantua, although never without a fight.

Habitat/Society: Serpentua live only on land, secluded from most civilization. They usually enjoy the thin air of high mountains.

These snake gargantua are strictly predatory carnivores however the smaller of them would usually prefer the eggs of other gargantua (especially insectoids). Serpentua are very territorial, so it is very rare that any other large predators are found within a mile of their lair.

Ecology: Every decade or so, males seek out a female and mate. When more than one male appears, they normally fight but rarely to the death. Three months after fertilization, the young are born live, 30HD and 60'-70' long. From that moment on, they fend for themselves. They normally grow 2HD and 10' per week until full grown.

One meal can last these snakes for years (4-12).

As noted before, they are very territorial, any human sized or larger creature may be considered a competitor.

The only useful body parts of a serpentua are its fangs which serve as a useful alternate component of a staff of serpent and can be fashioned into wicked and enchantable scimitar.

CLIMATE/TERRAIN: Any Land
 FREQUENCY: Very Rare
 ORGANIZATION: Solitary
 ACTIVITY CYCLE: Night
 DIET: See below
 INTELLIGENCE: Very (11-12)
 TREASURE: nil
 ALIGNMENT: Chaotic Evil

NO. APPEARING: 1
 ARMOR CLASS: -2
 MOVEMENT: 12
 HIT DICE: 8
 THACO: 13
 NO. OF ATTACKS: 2
 DAMAGE/ATTACK: 1-8/1-8
 SPECIAL ATTACKS: See below
 SPECIAL DEFENSES: +2 or better to hit, invisibility
 MAGIC RESISTANCE: nil
 SIZE: M
 MORALE: Fearless (19-20)
 XP VALUE:



Description: A Maleficium is the spirit of a good person who committed a heinously evil deed in life and whose spirit refuses to enter the lower planes. They are invisible, but if detected they appear to be a ghostly transparent image of a human with an evil grin.

Combat: A Maleficium's normal attack is that of its fists, which it can materialize (therefore becoming visible) and strike any opponent, even those only affected by magic. This attack does 1-8hp of damage but also causes a horrible thing to happen to the victim. Anyone so struck, has his alignment shifted one step towards Chaotic Evil, starting with chaos and law. For this reason, they are nicknamed "Paladins' Bane". Only a wish can reverse this.

A Maleficium is completely invisible, meaning all attacks on it are -4 to hit. Even if visible, a Maleficium can only be hit by weapons of +2 or better since it exists partially in the plane of negative energy.

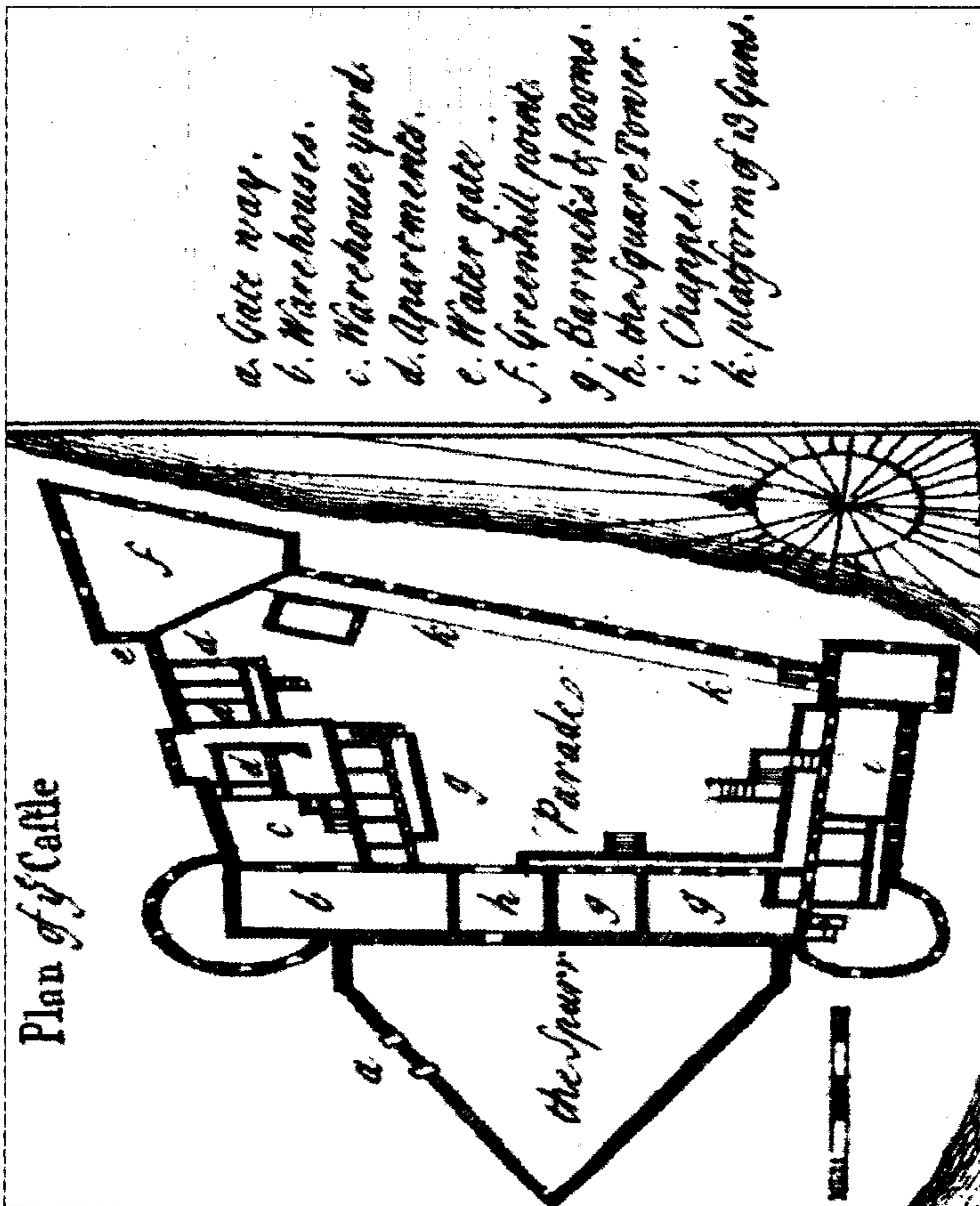
Maleficium are undead and have all undead immunities. They turn on

the Priests' Table as a Special.

Habitat/Society: Maleficium can be found anywhere on land. They are most commonly found in towns and cities where they can corrupt the good citizens. They actually feed off this unholy alignment shift, and they appear happy knowing others must suffer their same fate.

Unfortunately their hunger for this is never satiated. Once they are destroyed, they re-materialize 101 days later, far away from their point of destruction with no memory of their destruction and a much greater "hunger". A person changed to a Chaotic Evil alignment by a Maleficium has a 50% chance of becoming one upon their death. Nothing short of divine intervention can stop or reverse the transformation.

Ecology: Maleficium take but give nothing to the ecology. Some have been known to change entire town's alignments. Maleficium are considered to be the worst of corruption, an enemy that can cause a thing worse than death to occur.



Cape Coast Castle (Gold Coast, Africa)