

QUESTBUSTERS™

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The Adventurers' Journal

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Return of the Interactive Thing from Mars

Bob Jacobs, who founded and headed up CinemaWare in its heyday, has opened shop under a new name. CinemaWare, which had until recently been operating as a software development outfit only, is now another footnote in the history of the computer game companies that boomed, then busted. It will likely be remembered for one of its first games, the trendsetting *Defender of the Crown*, an early Amiga hit.

Jacobs sold and licensed the company's technology and games, then started a new game company called Acme Interactive. DataEast bought the technology, Mirrorsoft got the name CinemaWare, and NEC got the sports games.

The staff consists of 13 people, soon to expand to 17. According to Jacobs, CinemaWare employees who wanted to work with videogames stayed with him when he formed Acme.

Look in the crate...

Jacobs says Acme, whose logo shows a familiar-looking crate with a pair of eyes peeking out from the top, will focus on videogame development for Nintendo's SuperFamicon and Sega Genesis.

Sports games will be the first to leave the chute, but role-playing games will be eventually be developed by Acme for Sega and NES.

(Development is done on PC-based cross-development system.)

Jacobs says "most of the energy and money is going into cartridges" these days, and he expects to see a lot more for the Sega and NES CD-ROM systems. Acme's first products will be shown at the January CES.



Dangerous Dimensions

A few months back we reported rumors that *AD & D* creator Gary Gygax was working on a computer game called "Double Dimensions." The game, it turns out, is actually called *Dangerous Dimensions*, but it's a role-playing game system along the lines of Steve Jackson's *GURPS*, not a computer game. The system might be put to work in a computer game, though, as well as in paper and pencil and videogames.

Changing places

Compute Magazine Associate Publisher Bernie Theobald is leaving the Carolina-based publication for parts unknown. And SSI just hired former Mediagenic exec Brad Brown as Director of Business Development, a new position at the company. He'll concentrate on licensing.

Mediagenic still in transition

Our CES reporter missed the Activision booth, probably because Mediagenic no longer has a public relations department to let anyone know where to find them at trade shows (they've been in "silence mode" since the takeover).

At CES they showed Steve Meretzky's *Leather Goddesses of Phobos II: Gas Pump Girls*, which should be released in September for MSDOS. It's a graphic adventure with an "all-new interface." They have still not decided whether to release it as an Infocom game or an Activision game.

Summertime blues

Due to the paucity of adventures being released this summer (only three actually arrived in June, for example), *QB* is operating on a new summer schedule.

That's why your June issue arrived a bit late, and why this one may also. By August or September at the latest, we will be back on track with a raft of reviews.

13 issues for the price of 12!

Those of you whose subs expire by August are already aware of our new renewal policy: renew at least two months before your sub runs out, and you'll get 13 issues for the price of 12.

So if your label says 91/09, your renewal must be postmarked no later than June 30. Since that date has already passed, September expiration dates have until July 30. We'll send postcards to remind you of upcoming expirations and of this special offer while it lasts.



Options

- 2: *Adventure Road*
- 3: *Timequest*
- 4: *Sex Olympics*
- 5: *Summer CES*
- 8: *Midwinter*
- 9: *Clues and Tips for Might & Magic III*
- 10: *Sherlock on CD, Real RPGs on NES*
- 11: *Walkthru: Escape from Hell*
- 12: *Censorship in Computer Games*
- 13: *Keys to ye Kingdom*
- 15: *Swap Shop*

Shay Addams' Adventure Road™

As much as I hate to admit it, I'm beginning to see videogame machines as an adjunct to computers in certain situations. You don't have to spend a half-hour installing the program, or worry about whether which sound board to buy and how soon you'll have to upgrade to a faster computer with more RAM (*Ultima VII* will require 2K!).

But a more significant reason is that game designers, realizing that most MSDOS gamers now have hard disks, are writing huge games to take advantage of all that disk space. So huge, that anyone who wants to do more than play games will need at least a 100K hard disk. *Ultima VII*, for instance, will not only require a hard disk but will also take up 10K! If the graphics, interface, music and other elements of a quest are just as good on a cartridge-based machine as on a computer, why waste 10K of disk space?

Another factor is that, as cartridges eat up more and more shelf space in the stores, and the shelf life of computer games continues to decrease, developers will soon be releasing some games first on Nintendo or Sega, then following them with the MSDOS version. This has already happened with ICOM's *Sherlock Holmes, Consulting Detective*, and Origin is doing original *Ultima* scenarios for Nintendo and Sega.

Disk-based games will always be around, but some adventurers will find cartridge-based questing a practical alternative in some cases. For this reason, we've asked Russ Ceccola to cover the subject now and then, offering mini-reviews and news on *real* role-playing and adventure games for this market. See page 10 for his comments on *Sherlock*.

CD-ROM

True, CD-ROM discs can store virtual gigabytes of data, permitting vast games without having to sneak out of Toys R Us carrying a videogame machine. Problem is there is still no standard (even Sierra won't recommend a CD drive yet), and few games.

CD-ROM for computers is a trend that I will be covering as it develops. For now, the fastest CD drives cost too much. Prices will drop this Christmas, when you'll also be able to take advantage of software bundles including games like *King's Quest VI* and *Wing Commander*. And there are

far more quests on cartridges than on CD, which will probably be true for another year. So for now, I can't recommend getting a CD drive unless you are one of the three people on the planet who can actually use a CD encyclopedia or get some practical use from discs such as "Birds of America" or "Jane's All the World's Aircraft."

Top Ten Reasons to play adventure games

- 1: Miss weeks of work, open new job opportunities for others
- 2: Slowly go insane trying to install the game on a hard disk

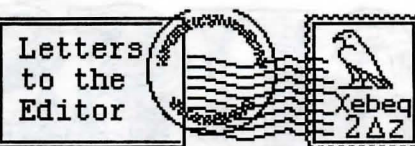


Martian Dreams

- 3: Exercise vocal chords by yelling obscenities at parsers
- 4: Good cover to join rare "screen-staring" cult
- 5: If you didn't, Ken and Roberta Williams would have to get real jobs
- 6: Get to say words like "Broderbund," "Faerghail," and "Uukrul"
- 7: Graph paper is my life!
- 8: Create characters and name them after people you abhor, then laugh when they get slaughtered by a band of Kobolds
- 9: Orcs, Orcs, Orcs!
- 10: Look honey...honey?...honey?? (Dozens of people sent in their Top Ten lists, from which we culled the funniest answers into this master list. Thanks to: Carl Lund, Dan Donahue, Chris Pitcauge, Bruce A. Smith, and John Inzer. For each of their reasons, one extra issue of *QB* will be added to their subs.)

Upcoming and outgoing

Martian Dreams and *Heart of China* will be covered next issue. Both look and play better than previous games in their respective series — and both require a hard disk. *Gold of the Aztecs* turned out to be an arcade game, so we won't be reviewing it after all. MicroProse officially announced *Darklands*, though it won't ship till next spring. It too will require a hard disk.



Dear QuestBusters:
I enjoy your feature-length previews. Though the final versions may not look like anything in the previewed version, there are usually enough similarities to make a preview worthwhile. I don't base my buying decisions on previews, but do like to get an idea of what is coming. I tend to wait a month or two after a game has been released before buying it, anyway, so if a reviewer could take a brief look at a game that he previewed months earlier, we could make even more informed choices.

Edwin Bonilla

After receiving several such letters, we've decided to do occasional preview s (like last month's look at *M & M III*). But we'll wait for final versions of most games before reviewing them. Many magazines will review screen shots to get an edge over the competition, but we're more concerned with delivering accurate reviews than with taking over the world of computer gaming magazines.

QuestBusters™ The Adventurers' Journal

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South American Explorers Club

Timequest

What made me an adventurer ten years ago? *Zork* — not just the game, but a particular experience in which I returned to a vast body of water to find it drained, the landscape transformed, and new possibilities for exploration and discovery awaiting. The ability to do something in one place and change things in a distant location was uniquely enchanting, and I went on to play practically every adventure game ever released.

In *Timequest*, this kind of interaction reaches across time as

Type: Illustrated Text Adventure

System: MSDOS (512K; mouse optional, hard disk recommended by QB; Realsound, Roland, Ad Lib, Sound Blaster

Planned conversions: none

well as space, for your actions in one era can alter events thousands of years later. The results may be drastic or subtle, and the latter are especially engaging.

Your actions in ancient Mexico, for instance, are reflected in a temple mural in which an invading army bears as its symbol the object you gave to a temple priest in the past. It might be a conch shell or a jar; only if you gave him the correct object, though, will you be able to prevent the Aztecs from wiping out Cortez.

Fail to do so, and "the timestream is disrupted," preventing travel past that point in time. This is true for each of the ten missions you must accomplish, all to undo the damage done by a rogue lieutenant of the Temporal Corps.

Kilroy was here

Attempting to destroy civilization, Lt. Vettenmyer used the Interkron to travel to Rome, China and other places to alter history. In Mexico, for instance, he convinced the Aztecs that the Quetzalcoatl myth meant they could not be defeated.

This and the other missions are outlined in the manual, but you're on your own when tracking down Vettenmyer. At least Vettenmyer — a sort of futuristic Kilroy — scribbled clues on walls of tombs and pyramids throughout the timestream.

Time itself is treated originally. Unlike in most time travel games, in which you always reach a different time zone at the same time, the clock in *Timequest* starts ticking the moment you exit the Interkron. The time machine has been set up to travel only to places Vettenmyer visited, arriving exactly one minute after he left. Each time you return to a place, you arrive one minute after your last departure.

A puzzle-rich environment

Passwords, riddles, object manipulation — devised by Bob Bates, who wrote Infocom's *Sherlock Holmes* and *Arthur*, the puzzles encompass a rich variety of types and difficulty. Many are multi-stage problems involving several puzzles, such as the mission to prevent Caesar from being killed by a lion.

First you must repair a broken chariot (by using a nearby object) to enter the chariot race. After losing, you've got to figure out how to win (by using an object from another time and place). Even after victory is yours and you get to meet Caesar, more puzzles must be solved to save his life (by using your wits). This is reminiscent of the Babel fish problem in *Hitchhiker's Guide*, but easier.

Some puzzles are the kind whose answer hits you on the head while you're driving to the 7-11. Others must be unravelled systematically, and you'll probably solve a few of them with the "hit or miss" technique of trying to use every object in every location. Top score is a 1,000 points.

There is an abundance of humor, much of it turning up when you try something that doesn't work. Obviously the playtesters tried to predict as many of the crazy things people might try to do, then dreamed up equally wacky responses.

Illustrations range from simple to ornate, but all stand out because the brighter, sharper "hi-res EGA" graphics are displayed with EGA and VGA systems, hi-res black and white EGA for CGA, MCGA and TGA.



Some graphics employ a little spot animation. You can replace the picture with a map that has a "you are here" feature. Sound effects (horses galloping, water flowing) and music are tastefully handled. You don't hear too much of either, and they never get on your nerves.

The interface is the same one used in *Spellcasting 101*. You can type in all your commands, or select (via mouse or keyboard) verbs, prepositions and nouns from onscreen lists that can be toggled off to view a half-screen of prose. I found the compass, which highlights all immediate exits, and the in/out buttons very useful, but typed in most of my commands. Some Infocom-type elements, such as "Script" for printing the text, are available (the traditional "yell" command, however, produces an "Aaaaauuuugh!" rather than "Aaaaaarrgh!")

An excellent save feature lets you name an unlimited number of games and delete old saves. Copy protection asks for answers to three questions

(but only once per session), which are conveniently listed on one sheet of paper instead of scattered throughout a manual.

Conclusions: I have resisted the temptation to comment on the historical accuracy of *Timequest*, especially

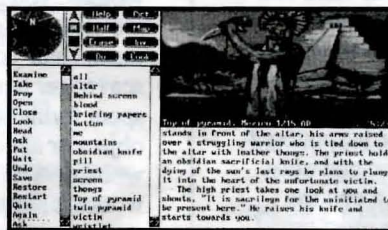
the MesoAmerican scenario — because it's a game, not a history book. And as a game, it's the best one of its type so far this year, a compelling quest whose scope and depth will keep you busy for months.

Difficulty: Advanced

Protection: Keyword

Price: \$59.95

Company: Legend/Microprose



Let's go to Mexico...

By Shay Addams

Sex Olympics: back in the saddle again

It's a typically hot day on the ocean planet of Agua. Sitting on the endless beach beneath a solitary palm tree, it occurs to you, Brad Stallion, that there isn't really much here to do except go swimming. Just then, the frog that you had been talking to (and kissing now and then in vague hopes that something interesting would happen) steals your clothes and heads out to sea.

Quest for clothing

Since you don't have a change of clothing inside your space ship, and since you're really tired of getting arrested for indecent exposure, you plunge into the water to get your clothes back. Waiting for you just below the surface is someone who makes you forget all about your blue shorts and that silly frog. Sirenia is surely the most gorgeous green mermaid you've ever seen. Now, if

Type: Graphic Adventure
System: Amiga, ST (both one meg, hard disk installable)
Planned conversions: none

only there was some way to get her up on the beach...

Brad Stallion, champion stud of the galaxy, is back again in his third soft-porn adventure from Free Spirit Software, this time to save the galaxy from the evil Dr. Dildo and his insidious plot to rule the universe. It seems that the bad doctor has entered the galactic *Sex Olympics*, and only you, Brad Stallion, have a chance against him. To win you must travel to all the other planets and seduce the first (and only) woman you meet there.

The unseen Dr. Dildo is doing likewise, and the first person to score ten times is the winner and will rule the universe. Although Dr. Dildo is supposed to be the bad guy, heroic you gets to pull all the dirty tricks, such as stealing the doctor's batteries or otherwise putting certain women out of his range.

Figuring out which dirty tricks to play is half the fun. On the planet

Whisper, for example, you might want to find some way to close the library. The other half of the fun is in making out with ten of the galaxy's most beautiful women (and a few animals). Don't eat the frog!

As adventures go, *Sex Olympics* is one of the simplest I have ever seen. It is so easy (like the girls) that no save function is included or needed. If you play quickly you should finish the whole thing in less than two hours — maybe even less than one hour. Even though there are three difficulty ratings (Easy, Medium, Hard), I noticed no difference in play at various levels.

The game continues the Free Spirit tradition of lewd and crude. Your space ship is still called The Big Thruster, and it's still extremely phallic in design, but the artists have dressed it up quite a bit with all sorts of external *Star Wars* bric-a-brac. Brad has all the sartorial elegance of a junior-grade Flash Gordon. The no-typing interface that makes it so easy to perform all necessary actions within the game contains pictures of a screw and a bumper jack. In short, there isn't an iota of sophistication in the whole game (well, some of the graphics are sophisticated).

Seek and ye shall find

To make it with the various women, you'll need many items that are scattered around the galaxy. This means half your time is spent on a scavenger hunt. The other half is spent trying to figure out which object or action will turn on which woman. The one action that never works is simple rape, so if there is a message to this game, it's that you must be nice to women in order to get what you want.

I wouldn't go so far as to say that *Sex Olympics* is a good game, but compared to the earlier Stallion adventures, *Sex Olympics* is substantially improved. Though it contains the same raunchy humor, the puzzles are much easier

and make more sense this time. You no longer have to do such things as eat beans and make gas to escape nasty situations.

Earlier adventures in the series tended to kill you and make you restart from your last save when you made mistakes, but *Sex Olympics* is much more forgiving. You really have to try very hard to get killed in this adventure.

Graphic enhancements

Most important, the artwork is significantly improved: it's still a cartoon galaxy, but the girls all look like *Playboy* playmates, and your major reward is seeing them in the nude. The pictures are merely R-rated, since you'll never get to see anything below the waist, but some of these tops are truly excellent.

Spot animation livens up a few of the graphics, and a digitized, "Oooh, Brad!" will reward you for solving some of the more difficult problems.

Copy protection is of the key word variety, but it is a joke, since you are often asked for words from page six of a four-page manual. I can't say much more about the challenges themselves without doing a walkthrough.

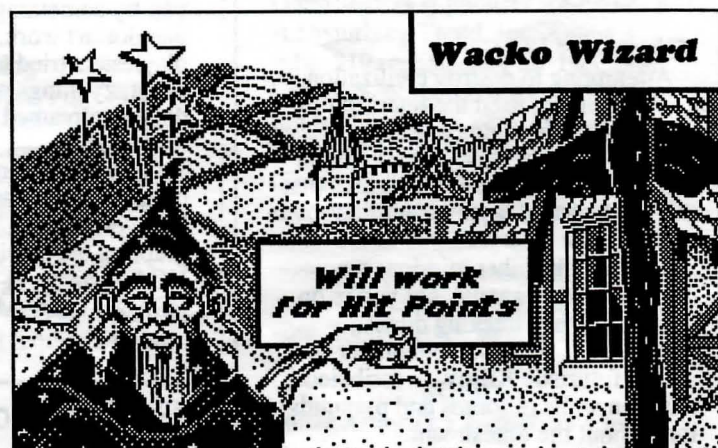
Conclusions: The game is very corny (no, not horny), and full of sexual cliches (how well do you know them?), but in a guilty way, I rather enjoyed it. I recommend *Sex Olympics* for tolerant gamers who haven't totally outgrown their adolescent sex fantasies.

Price: \$39.95

Protection: Keyword

Difficulty: Easy

Company: Free Spirit



By Ken St. Andre

CES Chicago: M & M III & Origin steal the show

I pulled up to the McCormick Center in the forbidden zone somewhere in Chicago, feeling somewhat overdressed in a gray suit — until I got inside. Hah! I've never seen so many dark suits, outside of a law firm or investment bank.

CES was huge: it took three days to cover it all, but it was worth it. Between Japanese businessmen, conventioners lobbing water balloons, and a pack of wild ferrets that someone turned loose in aisle, I managed to see a coupla games. I also heard game designers complaining about DOS' memory management.

Techno-hype?

Nintendo's SuperFamicon 16-bit system was supposed to be the big thing, but it wasn't anything we haven't already seen. CD-ROMS are supposed to be the next big development for the PC, but no definite plans to support them were explained to me in any meaningful detail. Except the super-VGA CD-ROM *Battlechess I* saw at the Interplay booth — wow!

I heard that Sony was supposed to make the internal and external CD drives for Nintendo, and was going to market the external drives separately. This apparently pissed off Nintendo, who then promptly signed up Phillips to do the external drive in an incompatible-with-Sony standard. Sound unbelievable? Not when you're dealing with corporate bureaucracies.

The smaller companies had some games that made me salivate. Oh yeah, there were the "soon" release dates, along with plenty of "don't quote mes." Still, we've got some great games coming up, and I'll begin with the most memorable.

New World Computing

New World's *Might and Magic III* looks even more robust than

described in last month's issue. It should be showing up the end of July.

And running right next to it was *Planet's Edge*, a sci-fi role-playing game with space combat. The planet Earth has disappeared as a result of alien experiment. You, an officer on a space station, must discover what happened and try to retrieve our little mistreated (but by whom?) planet. You can customize your space ship, and party movement is the top-down view (looked a bit like *BattleTech I*, but nicer).



Might & Magic & Monsters

Champagne and movies

Origin showed a few titles, all memorable. *Martian Dreams*, the second game in the *Worlds of Ultima* series, was up and running. (It shipped right before CES.) The premise is similar to Paragon's *Space 1889*, and *Martian Dreams* looks pretty good.

Origin hosted a champagne reception to announce *Wing Commander 2* (I haven't waited for a sequel like this since *Star Wars*), *Strike Commander* and *Ultima VII*, with demos running on a movie screen at a special preview. Origin's booth on the floor also won "loudest speaker" award: the PA system rattled my fillings, not to mention the exhibitors in the next booth.

Ultima VI: The Black Gate

The *Ultima VII* demo was a "commercial" full of stunning graphics and digitized speech — but no gameplay screens. Lord British promised plenty of new elements for the game, which will be packaged in an all-black box with a "voluntary

MP-13 rating," saying that Origin designed had got their "IBM" legs on *Ultima VI*, the first *Ultima* that was not developed on an Apple.

The first *Ultima* to combine murder mystery and horror thriller elements with the traditional medieval themes, *The Black Gate* takes place 200 years after your last visit to Britannia. Teenaged drug use (in the form of reagents), an incurable disease killing all the Mages, and ecological disasters are the latest "plagues" to strike Britannia. You must also solve the wave of gruesome murders that is sweeping the land.

Chris Roberts showed off *Wing Commander 2* and *Strike Commander*. *Wing Commander 2* takes off with even better graphics, improved AI, digitized speech and a more complex storyline. It looked great, and they said it will be out by July. (We will have to wait a while of *Ultima VII* and *Strike Commander*, though.)

But what really blew my mind (and all the press and software execs attending) was *Strike Commander*. It is a flight simulator in the near future, with fractal generated terrains. The mountains and coastlines look like they really should, not like squares of green and jutting pyramids. Mountains are capped with snow, coastlines are jagged, and haze and clouds are mists covering your VGA terminal. If it has enough RPG elements), we'll review it here.

Gee, the Origin people were nice, and they wore tuxedos and cowboy hats for the preview! I was torn between watching Origin's PR head, Jackie Chapman in a hot, black strapless dress, and the unbelievable *Strike Commander* demo. Tough job.

In the works at Origin is a whole new point-of-view fantasy game that will allow you to tilt and turn your head the way a camera pans, and entails detailed lighting and shadows, and another sci-fi game (working title "Bounty Hunter") that will combine role-playing and *Wing Commander*-type space flight.

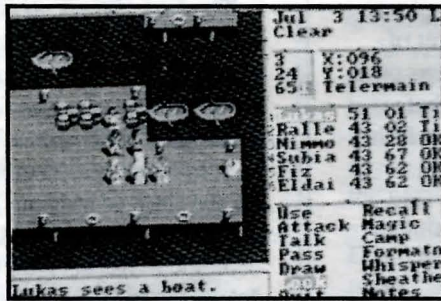
By Bernie Yee

Bane II

The biggest complaint about Sir-Tech's *Bane of the Cosmic Forge* was the tepid EGA graphics. Well, in a suite upstairs, Sir-Tech showed the

combat (the Klingon looked very convincing) in VGA, as well as role-playing (the landing party beamed down in a sequence more out of the movies than the TV series, for all you nitpickers).

Magic Candle II will be well worth the wait



first demo game screens for *Crusaders of the Dark Savant*, the upcoming (October?) sequel. It has 256-color VGA graphics and a mouse interface that make it even more impressive than *Eye of the Beholder*, object management (drop an item on the floor and it stays there) and an impressive plot.

There are four possible beginnings, depending on which of the three endings you saw in *Bane*. If you didn't play it, there's a "cold start" position at the outset.

Other parties wandering around the "dungeon" too. It will probably require one meg, as opposed to *Bane's* 640K. There was also talk about converting the earlier *Wizardry* series, and maybe even *Bane*, to VGA.

Towers of Power

Interplay showed off *Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers*. They've cleaned up the interface, added automapping (finally), and allow you to play it with or without characters from Volume I.

They also released *Bard's Tale Construction Set*, which allows you to design monsters, dungeons and treasures, and *Castles*, in which you build castles, wage war and watch little VGA guys run around and saw, build and mortar.

But what really looked cool was *Star Trek*, a game complete with the music and intro screens of the Enterprise whooshing by, just like in the old TV series. There will be 3-D

I grilled Interplay about the *Mean Time*, which the world's record for longest delayed computer game, and was assured that it was being worked on. They've rewritten the game engine from the ground up a few times, to keep abreast of the latest game technology. They

also said *Dragon Wars II* is on the way, but no sequel is forthcoming to the likeable and fun *Neuromancer*.

Magic Candle II

Mindcraft was running *Rules of Engagement*, the space combat module designed for *Breach 2* and Omnitrend's interlocking game system IGS. With IGS, you play the space combat situation in *Rules*, and if you board an enemy ship, *Breach 2* takes over. Both products can be played independently of each other.

Ali Atabek promises "very soon now" for *Magic Candle II*. It looks good and will have a notepad to record all messages and conversations (depending on your computer's memory), and allow you to save them to disk and print them out. Finally — someone realizes how much I hate to take notes and map.

SSI is still relying on the A D & D name, not the quality of the software

Underwater Indy

Lucasfilm showed *Indiana Jones and the Fate of Atlantis*, the first Indy game with an original plot and storyline. I liked this — it's like getting a whole new Indiana Jones movie! It also looks real good.

Better still is *Secret of Monkey Island II*, where you have to

redispatch that pesky ghost of Pirate LeChuck. The demo ran only in black and white, but I kinda liked it that way. Both games have improved mouse interfaces.

SSI of the Beholder

SSI showed yet another Gold Box game, *Gateway to the Savage Frontier*, the first in a whole new series. They also announced the last of the *Pool* series, *Pools of Darkness*. (You've seen it once, you've seen it four times.) More promising is a horror title running under the *Eye of the Beholder* engine. You get to hunt vampires and werewolves, just like Aunt Radika and Uncle Boris did. *Citadel of the Black Sun* promises a whole new game engine that uses a scaled "isometric" system with an oblique-angle, top-down view.

Darksun is another new *A D & D* game "in the works." It has an interesting magic system: when you use magic, it drains the life of things around you. Kind of like a nine to five job.

A *Buck Rogers* sequel is also in the works. It has the game engine — so where are all these alleged improvements? I liked *Pool of Radiance* and sat through *Azure Bonds* (barely), but that's it. My guess is the game designers aren't really allowed to fiddle around with the engine, and these games end up being mass-produced.

Seems that SSI is relying on the strength of the *A D & D* name and not the quality of software itself, at least for the Gold Box line. *Eye of the Beholder* was definitely a step in the right direction.

More sequels

The life of a real computer game quester is what have you done for me lately — and like movies, a good sequel is as rare as a *Godfather II* or *The Empire Strikes Back*. Accolade had *Elvira II* (two of what should be obvious), which puts you on a movie set to investigate Elvira's kidnapping. You search through a Victorian mansion set, a catacomb set and a mad scientist's laboratory set. It'll be gory, they promise.

Les Manley II: Lost in LA was sporting digitized images of fabulous babes and Les Manley wandering around Lala land trying to find his buddy Helmut Bean. Yessir, *Playboy* models were used, but the game is still PG-13 at best. They've cleaned up the interface, and the game looks eminently playable.

A legend in its own Timequest

Being an old Infocom beta-tester, I enjoyed seeing Legend's *Timequest*. It looked like lots of cerebral fun in the old Infocom tradition, with a easy-to-use (and helpful) interface. *Spellcasting 201: the Sorcerer's Appliance* is in the works, but no demos were available. Bob Bates, head of Legend Entertainment, is convinced that there are players who want a story and complexity in questing really not available in the pretty VGA point-and-click games a la Sierra. I agree: sometimes the written word is more powerful than a thousand VGA images.

EA and MicroProse

EA showed a few things. *Black Crypt* was quietly announced for the Amiga. It seems to be a *Dungeon Master*-type game with great-looking graphics and the ubiquitous point-and-click interface. But most of EA's stuff was under the Affiliate labels, like Mindcraft, SSI and New World.

Microprose and Paragon were busy with *Hyperspeed*. It's new superset of *Lightspeed*, which I reviewed and didn't like. I saw no reason to change my mind.

More promising was *Darklands*, of which there was only a brief video demo. This RPG is set in medieval Germany and is supposedly "realistic" in its depiction of how medieval Germans viewed magic and monsters. (How do you say "hit points" in deutsch?)

They also shipped *Elite Plus*, a sequel to the old space exploration game. This one I didn't see. I did catch a demo of *Twilight 2000*, a computer version of GDW's game, and *MegaTraveller 2*, GDW's classic.

What I saw was inconclusive. They could be great, could be not-so-great. Paragon is also working on

converting a space fighter game called *Mantis* from the Amiga to the PC: the *Wing Commander* bandwagon is rolling, kids.

Sierra's latest Conquests

Sierra came up with the Sierra Network, a modem network where gamers can meet and play chess or talk or go do computer "things." The potential for online questing is interesting, but no multiplayer quests were running yet. And it costs \$12 a month!

Christy Marx showed *Conquests of the Longbow*, a Robin Hood adventure with beautiful painted images, a storyboarded layout by *Conan* veteran Ernie Chan — and finally, a strong female character. Best of all, Robin Hood does not look like Kevin Costner.

Sierra also managed to get *Leisure Suit Larry V* up and panting, and this time you can play Larry or Passionate Patti. *Police Quest III: the Kindred* showed a stabbing in VGA glory and has a Jan Hammer (Miami Vice) soundtrack.

The original *Leisure Suit* and *Space Quest I* have been converted to VGA for those who haven't yet played these classics.

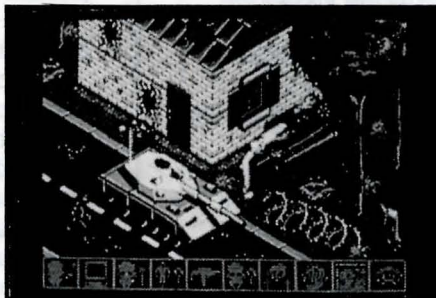
Best of all, Sierra's Robin Hood doesn't look like Kevin Costner

Most fun was the *Adventures of Willie Beamish*, a younger-type adventure game with character movement animation done by cartoon animators. He leaps, he falls — maybe he'll get hit by a pan, which will make his head into a pan-shaped object with facial features.

Calling all Carmens

Broderbund showed *Where in America's Past is Carmen Sandiego*, which will ship with a book

chronology of America's sometimes glorious and other times smarmy past. Maxis showed *SimAnt*, an incredibly simple and elegant simulation of the ant colony in your backyard (not



Twilight 2000, from Paragon

mine, I live in NYC) all the way to your fridge.

Odds and Ends

There are lots of little things to mention too, like the Ad Lib Gold and SoundBlaster Pro coming your way — but the music coming out of the Roland was far superior to the original Ad Lib or SoundBlaster. No sign of Disney's little sound-thing, either. There also was a number of flight simulators — *Falcon 3.0*, *Yeager*, and other wargames that might interest some of you. Spectrum Holobyte's *WordTris* was deceptively addicting too.

What struck me about the games at this CES (especially with Origin's plans) is that games are pushing the technological envelope as fast or faster than most business applications.

Well, I'm dizzy now — thanks to all the friendly, eager and attractive PR reps who gave me press kits (and sometimes, food and drink).

My faves of the show? In no particular order, *Might and Magic III*, *Wing Commander 2*, *Strike Commander*, *Crusaders of the Dark Savant*, *Star Trek*, and *Indiana Jones and the Fate of Atlantis*. *Planet's Edge* looked promising, and *SimAnt* looked irresistibly addicting. My only complaint — where were all the parties?

Midwinter

The year is 2099. Debris from a huge meteorite has blotted out the sun, and a resulting drop in the temperature has destroyed crops around the world.

Governments and their armies have broken down. Small groups of citizens have formed survival teams, while warlords have amassed small armies and begun claiming territory all over the world. Anarchy reigns.

You are Captain John Stark, a second generation colonist on "Midwinter Island," which emerged from a submarine mountain in the Azores. You have just gone out on ski patrol — unaware that the evil warlord General Masters has invaded the island with thousands of men and vehicles.

Your mission is to quickly ski to each of 32 colonists, set up a defensive line across the island's southeastern tip, and mount a counter offensive to eliminate the invaders

Midwinter seems to have initially

Type: Strategy-intensive RPG
Systems: Amiga, ST (512K), MSDOS (640K & color monitor required; CGA, EGA, VGA, TGA; Roland, Ad Lib)
Planned conversions: none

been developed as a winter sports game by its designer, Mike Singleton from England. It incorporates marksmanship with small arms, skiing, snow mobiling and cable cars. For more role-playing punch, it was redesigned to include 14 statistics, dynamite, and an invading army.

The action is portrayed with a 3-D display. Through the silhouette of ski goggles or the windscreen of a snow buggy, you see the landscape and a mini-display of icons representing your character, a watch, a muscle power gauge, a mini-map, speed, and compass.

The skiing and snow buggy displays feature an angle of slope display; the hang glider, an angle of ascent or descent display. The snow buggy and the hang glider have missile displays.

When skiing, you can snipe with your rifle and lob hand grenades. By far the easiest means of getting around is the cable car. Skiing depletes muscle power that can get you stranded. Hang gliders require certain statistics as well as mouse or joystick skills.

Skills and attributes

Fourteen attributes are broken up into nine qualities and five skills. Only Morale, Energy and Alertness change during the game (when you eat or rest). Other attributes cannot be improved or changed, and no levels can be attained. In fact, you don't even get experience points.

Most RPGs have a plot that is revealed by exploration with puzzles to solve. *Midwinter* has no puzzles and little plot, and character interaction is limited to recruiting the 32 people. Inventory is restricted to weapons, dynamite, flares, and gasoline. The only artifacts you can acquire and experiment with are snow buggies and hang gliders. It has role-playing game aspects, but *Midwinter* resembles a simulation more than a pure role-playing game.

Bombs away

Combat is conducted in real-time. Since wilderness travel also occurs in real-time and requires you to actually ski, snow buggy or hang glide to your destination, combat requires no change in the display. When you get close to an enemy, an alarm goes off and a directional finder directs you to him; enemy units appear as black crosses on the tactical map.

You can fire missiles and torpedoes from the ground or air to knock out targets in the sky or on land. When skiing, you can select the sniping icon and look through a circular view through your rifle scope. A rifle can be effective against any type of enemy vehicle. If you hit the enemy's lead vehicle, the whole column of men and vehicles deserts General Masters. This is very unrealistic combat, but really the only way to win battles, since the invading army is so big.

Characters can be injured in combat or by falling off a vehicle. An injured character's skills may be impaired until he rests or is healed. Party members will move under the

direction of a leader, but coordinated action during combat is awkward and troublesome at best. Movement and combat takes place in rounds. Each character completes his two-hour move essentially alone, then the next character goes. It takes forever to move a lot of characters.

The mapping system lets you see an overhead view of the whole island with cryptic details, or zoom down to 16 x 16 magnification. It reveals the location of enemy columns, the 32 NPCs, garages, heat mines, synthesis plants, and other structures.

In towns, you can hurt the enemy by blowing up captured installations, which unrealistically cannot be defended or recaptured. You can slow the foe's advance by blowing up warehouses and synthesis plants. Blow up all three enemy-held radio stations, and you can immediately recruit all 32 characters via radio messages.

You can use keyboard, joystick or mouse to operate the completely icon-driven interface, but only the mouse is precise and quick enough for movement. The keyboard "hot keys" can be used with your left hand while your right controls the mouse. The only drawback is that painful and annoying repeated mouse-button presses required for skiing.

Midwinter is fun to play, giving you the feeling of a very complete self-contained landscape where you can participate in a variety of winter sports that are entertaining by themselves. The intricate fractal landscape is beautiful to behold, and blowing up buildings has its pleasurable moments.

Victory is difficult, requiring you to think very far in advance and plan moves in detail. The slightest mistake or miscalculation can cause you to lose the game, making wise use of the ten save games essential. Expect 50-60 hours to win, much of which will be spent of slowly moving your team.

Conclusions: *Midwinter* is more of an adventure/strategy game than a true role-playing quest. Recommended for people who like real-time combat, intricate well-planned strategy and unusual interfaces.

Difficulty: Advanced
Protection: In manual
Price: \$49.95
Company: Microprose

By Al & Amanda Giovetti

Might & Magic III Clues

Jon van Caneghem, Mark Caldwell and Ron Spitzer at New World Computing provided this assortment of clues for *Isles of Terra*. These will make a big difference in the early stages of your quest. (Because the events were still being fine-tuned at the time, one or two of them may not work. Watch for next month's update and more clues.)

Keep wishing at the fountain in Baywatch.

Seek the statue of Fire Mane, especially if you have a Paladin.

Save those Quatloos.

Find the skull for the builder of the shrine, and you'll go much further in the cavern below him.

Magical mirrors link the land. Tell them where you want to go, and they'll carry you away.

After saving Fountainhead, the fountains will prove much more helpful.

Archnoid Cavern can be very essential in developing your characters.

If you seek gold and gems, go to Dragon Canyon.

Your spellcasters will be very pleased if you visit Magic Cavern.

To fortify against the elements, visit Blistering Heights.

Get artifacts in the Cursed Cold Cavern and take them to the three castles with kings.

When you visit the Greek brothers, remember which one you don't find.

Don't pull levers in Wildibar Cavern, unless you're ready for a battle.

When you have a party of Mountaineers, visit Mount Keystone.

Solve the puzzle in Arachnoid Cavern, and the crystals will work again.

Locations:

Arachnoid Cavern: B4

Magic Cavern: E4

Dragon Cavern: F1

Cursed Cold Cavern: D1

Mount Keystone: A4

Galleons of Glory

Part quest, part simulation, *Galleons* casts you as Magellan, leading your ships on the history-making voyage around the world. There are three difficulty levels.

The plot involves sailing down the coast of South America, investigating, trading and keeping up the morale of your crew while you look for the strait leading to the Pacific Ocean. Your score depends upon how fast you find the strait and how much trade goods, treasure and spices you accumulate in your search for the strait.

Your crew is composed of ten men, from captain and priest to navigator and cook. You can give orders to them, ask for advice, and so on. You control sailing the ship, the crew's rations, the battles, the condition of the ship and many other variables.

If officer or crew morale falls below a critical level you will be confronted by a group of angry men and asked to identify the ringleader. If you do identify the ringleader correctly, your voyage will continue. If you do not identify the ringleader, your crew maroons you.

The ship is divided up into four locations and the log which gives the status of the ship in a descriptive narrative. The four locations of galley, deck, quarter deck and cabin

give you access to eight of your crew (two for each location).

Your cabin gives you access to the hourglass (to advance time), the diary (which keeps track of food, treasure, trade goods, etc.) and the map.

The map shows you the shape of the immediate area including shape of coastline, villages and vegetation. Villages contain natives, and vegetation contains more foodstuff.

You cannot scroll the map see places you've already visited, so the map gives you very limited perspective of the lay of the land. You must keep inspecting it for inlets and harbors, checking ever inlet to determine if it is the strait. A telescope allows you to view the shoreline or horizon to spot other ships, villages, or inlets.

| |
|---|
| <p>Type: Adventure Simulation System: MSDOS (640K required, hard disk and mouse or joystick recommended; CGA, EGA, VGA\MCGA; SoundBlaster, Ad Lib, Tandy 3-voice Planned Conversions: None</p> |
|---|

When you sight land you can trade with the natives for spices, trade and treasure. If they turn nasty, combat with the natives and other vessels is resolved using random chance as a factor. Use the unlimited save game capacity frequently to minimize the effects of errors and chance.

You must monitor the levels of meat, perishables, biscuits, water, rum, cannon balls and muskets, seeking a safe harbor to resupply the ship if stores get low.

Conclusions: Somewhat limited as an adventure, *Galleons* is rich with historical detail. It's recommended for anyone with an interest in the subject.

Difficulty: Average

Price: \$44.95

Protection: Manual

Company: Broderbund

by Al C. Giovetti

Sherlock Holmes and the Case of the CD ROM

Sherlock Holmes, Consulting Detective will be out this month on the NEC CD system. It is also being converted to D format for MSDOS computers and the Amiga CDTV.

Developed by ICOM, who did *Uninvited, Deja Vu I & II* and *Shadowgate*, it has a point-and-click interface and completely digitized graphics that pull the player into three completely different mysteries.

The unique graphics make *Sherlock* a new experience over previous computer games based on the novels. Instead of digitized stills, *Sherlock* uses over 100 minutes of film footage.

To do so, 35 actors were cast for the 50 speaking parts, 70 costumes were created and 25 sets were built. Many hours of film were shot and edited down to the final product. New design processes developed by ICOM were employed to for crunch the graphics and sounds down onto the CD.

If looks could kill

Players will certainly be happy with the results. I adapted quite easily to the game. Instead of reading text for clues, I actually had to pay attention to the actors and watch their movements.

This is the first game in which a gesture or look can be just as important as words. Before long, you will be pulled into the story, and your brain will start turning over the clues again and again, as any real mystery game should cause you to act.

The 'video' is a bit choppy and halts ever-so-briefly every few frames. But this minor glitch can't be helped for now, and doesn't detract from the experience at all. Speech moves along in synch with the graphics, and the characters do a much better job of lip-synching than Milli Vanilli (which is which, anyway?).

Is it worth it?

Though the CD system for the NEC machine is expensive at \$399, the price tag will be worth it if future products are as good as this one. NEC ought to put together some kind of deal for people who plan on buying *Sherlock* and the CD system to entice people into the new gaming environment.

In any case, the "movie" *Sherlock* teleports the adventure game market into a new and exciting era. Now if I can only find some way to play the CD backwards to find those hidden

messages. Oh, that's only music CDs. Never mind...

Real role-playing on Nintendo, Sega, etc.



FCI, long a strong contender in the Nintendo market, recently committed themselves to a number of real role-playing games for the Nintendo Entertainment System (NES), the Game Boy handheld system. And several software companies are not only converting game for NES other cartridge-based machines, but also writing original RPGs for them.

Some of them are already out, and more are on the way. If these are any indication of the future, there may good reason for computer owners to pick up one of the 16-bit cartridge-based machines.

The FCI games already out are *Ultima: Exodus*, *Ultima: Quest of the Avatar* (known as *Ultima III* and *IV* for computers) and *Heroes of the Lance*. On the way are FCI's *Pool of Radiance*, *The Bard's Tale*, *Ultima: Runes of Virtue* (a brand new adventure written exclusively for the Game Boy). Even graphic adventures, such as *Shadowgate*, *Maniac Mansion*, and *Deja Vu*, are being converted to cartridges.

You'll soon see an original *Ultima* for NES, *Might and Magic II*, *Faery Tale Adventure*, and *King's Bounty* (all three for NES, from New World).

Electronic Arts' *Centurion*, *Wizardry* and *The Immortal* are already out for the NES, and you can count on seeing more conversions and new RPGs and adventures.

Some, such as *M & M*, feature battery back-ups for saving games in progress. Others, such as *Faery Tale*, give you a password at certain points in the game; type it in when you restart, and you'll return to that point.

Ultima on a Cart

Exodus and *Quest of the Avatar* are very good adaptations of their computer counterparts. In fact, it is easier to play them on the NES than on a computer. The interface was better designed, the graphics are more colorful and the command menu is just one button away.

Both follow the storylines and contain the locations in the original games, and it takes as long to finish the NES versions. An *Exodus* hint book is available separately, while the *Avatar* hint book is in the manual.

Avatar is better than *Exodus*. The graphics are nicer, especially in the dungeons, and FCI improved the interface to make it more complete. Plus, the Moon Gates and all other features of both original products are in them. I recommend *Exodus* for anyone just getting into role-playing games for the Nintendo, and *Avatar* for more advanced players.

In either case, I was surprised with what FCI could accomplish on the NES with games of this magnitude, and enjoyed these versions more than the originals and their single keystroke interface.

Ye SSI Quests

Heroes of the Lance was a tough game from the start. On the NES, it is just as tough to play. The graphics aren't as nice as in the *Ultimas* but more than do the job.

Dragons of Flame,

Heroes' sequel, was better. FCI should have converted it instead. *Heroes* is hard to map and play, despite the easy-to-use interface. As you can see, FCI hit right on the money with these conversions.

If I had to choose between computer and NES versions, I would go for NES. I didn't think this would be my conclusion. Good computer graphics are mostly better than NES graphics, but after putting this aside the NES games are easier to control and play.

Even graphic adventures are being converted to cartridges

By Russ Ceccola

Walkthrough: Escape from Hell

At the outset, open the chest, take the contents, and save your game. The cross is needed to defeat Satan at the end, so don't lose it. Your strategy is to recruit two NPCs on the first level, go to level two and replace one NPC with Alan, go to level three and replace the last NPC with Alison, defeat Satan and leave Hell through the gate. Do not fight with any creature that is not hostile, or you may not be allowed to use the gate! Save before making any critical decisions, as the NPCs may desert you, taking useful items. Before replacing one NPC with another, trade the outgoing character's useful gear to someone else.

Level One, City of Eternity: Recruit Stalin and Khan. Get mirrored shades from prisoner in Fire Pit, trade them to singer for trench coat. Get garbage can lid from rear of Minos court (repeat for each character). Get items from chest in side room of court. Get gun in exchange for matches. Get lead forks. Get laptop.

Limbo: Recruit Ach-Chu in place of Khan (optional). Get Tudes tape from dispenser. Get pistol in toilet, wrist rocket under bed. Don't take Burr's sketches. Give **I218 f47k** to Burr for police special and shield. Richard learns Archery from Thucydides in library, others learn Melee from Anthony in library.

Recruitment Center: Use bluff skill to get badge from sergeant, and use Picklock to reach examination room where Richard learns pistol skill. May get demon shield in treasure room.

Training camp: Dante and Booth willing to join (optional). Richard learns picklock, others learn dueling. All learn rifle. The statue in front will give free healing, so this is a good area to gain levels with repeated fights.

Sergeant at table: Trade Tudes tape for parachute.

Hamlet: Give Yorick's skull to Hamlet, and he will join quest (optional).

Lucifer's Landing: Trade phone to Sergeant in southern end for a Demon Shield. Find Flicka in northern end. Richard learns Machinegun. Get Care Bracelet.

City of Eternity: Give Bracelet to Juliet in Minos Court. Receive Angelic Powers.

Lucifer's Landing: Use **p171ch5t2** to descend to level two. Stalin may desert.
Level Two, City of Devils: Replace

Stalin with Wild Bill, who has Dark Rifle and Dark Pistol. Wyatt Earp teaches rifle. Statue in rear of city gives free healing. Visit Al's to recharge guns, rifles, and machine guns.

Satan's Halo: Get automatic weapons from in crates in **729t1571nt**. Find random items outside Club Miranda. Khan may desert before entering city.

Prison of Damned: Abdul teaches Richard about Explosives. Get Dark Rifle and Dark Pistol at his house.

Gangster City: Use Dark Weapons. Ed teaches Richard Electrical skill. Get gallon of blood from Bonny and Clyde. Get weapons from Capone's vacation home.

City of Devils: Give blood at bank and get bullet proof suit.

Capone's City: Use Dark Weapons. Fight tough Hell Captains in cafe. Eat food on table in lower right corner for free healing. Attack Capone's mansion. Get Dark Pistol, Tommygun, suit. After you kill Capone, Caesar will give you the database. Destroy mind magnifier.

Gangster's City: Alan can now join the party, replacing an NPC.

Prison of Damned: Use Alan's **9I28g2h1mm27** to break glass cage. Richard learns Bluff, gets asbestos suit.

Satan's Halo: Use Electrical skill to fix speakers, and Mozart will be willing to join you.

Capone's City: Use lower transporter to reach level one. Give database to receptionist in Minos Court in City of Eternity. Get consultant's badge from her sister. When ready, use the phone booth to go to level three, or use upper transporter in Capone city.

Level Three: Dismal Land Learn Swimming from the teacher, or practice in pool. Jekyl will join. Get freaker box.

Dachau: Use Swimming skill to swim east. Field Marshal teaches Rifle. Get Hitler's Diary, give it to him and get access to Armory. Rommel teaches Rocket to Alan.

Beelzebub's: Get magic pyramid. Allow

Code-warrior to replace NPC. (Keep Alan!) Visit clerk. Use the transporter to level 2 to replace ammunition.

Death Alley: Cross bridge. You can get free healing at the halfway point. Code-Warrior can use phone booth to tap into Devil's Fortress, transporting the party there.

Devil's Fortress: Find Alison in lower right corner room. Allow her to replace Code-warrior. Party now consists of Richard, Alan and Alison. Go south to Satan's Room. Fight Satan, using **h416 c7499**. Go through rooms to gate. If "good," the party is allowed to escape from Hell.

Location of Items

Level One City of Eternity: Stalin, Khan, mirrored shades,

trench coat, garbage can lid, gun, chest, matches, lead forks, laptop computer, angelic powers, consultant's badge (Minos Court), phone booth to level three

Limbo: Ach-Chu, Tudes tape, pistol, wrist rocket, Burr's sketches, police special, shield, archery and melee training
Recruitment Center: badge, pistol shield, demon shield

Training Camp: Dante, Booth, picklock, rifle and dueling training, free healing
Lucifer's Landing: demon shield, Flicka, machine gun training, care bracelet, exit to level two

City of Devils: Wild Bill, rifle training, statue (free healing), recharge guns, rifles, machine guns (at Al's), bulletproof suit
Satan's Halo: automatic weapons, random items at Club Miranda, speakers, Mozart

Prison of the Damned: explosives training, Dark Rifle and Pistol (both at Abdul)

Gangster City: Alan (sledgehammer), electrical skill, gallon of blood, weapons (Capone's home), bluffing, asbestos suit
Capone's City: free healing, Dark Pistol, tommygun, suit, database, mind magnifier, transporter to level one

(lower), transporter to level three (upper)
Dismal Land: Dr. Jekyl, swimming training, freaker box

Dachau: rifle & rocket training, Hitler's diary

Beelzebub's: magic pyramid, Code-warrior, transporter to level two

Death Alley: free healing, transporter to Devil's Fortress
Devil's Fortress: Alison, Satan



by Dennis Ewell

An Open Letter To Game Players

from Christy Marx



Rich Heimlich, in his March column, wrote about a sexually oriented game, trouble it caused him amongst his female peers and the automatic allure that an advisory sticker would have to children buying it. Warning bells went off in my head, Rich.

I come from a background of writing for film, TV, comic books, animation and other commercial writing. From this perspective, and knowing something of history, I see continuous cycles of censorship and repression. I see this country and Canada in the middle of a particularly dangerous and vicious cycle of repression right now.

In the 1930's, the Hollywood film industry was hit hard by censorship in the form of the Hays Commission, which stifled creativity and did its best to drive any form of sexuality or sensuality from the screen. Eventually, Hollywood shed this leech, but only after adopting a system of restrictive self-labelling.

In the 1950's, the comic book industry fell prey to the attack of a nutcase who published a ridiculous and misleading book accusing comic book writers and artists of all sorts of perversions. In a desperate move to save itself, the industry adopted a straitjacket of limitations called the Comics Code Authority which had to approve and put its stamp on each comic going out.

In the past few decades, comics have had a rebirth. The archaic Comics Code is all but forgotten, replaced by a label advising "For Mature Readers". New and innovative and creative material is being done for the "mature" readers.

Yet there are those who refuse to accept that comics are for anyone but children and act accordingly. A label isn't necessarily enough protection. In one case a man was arrested for selling explicit, labelled adult comics to an adult!

Have any of you missed out on Tipper Gore's attacks on the music industry? Or the labelling of music? Or the arrest of a Florida man for selling 2 LIVE CREW music, the repressive legislature that followed, and the arrest of 2 LIVE CREW themselves for daring to perform their

own music? This is only the tip of the iceberg.

And how about those cute folks who decided that anyone who played D&D was a dupe of Satan? And the museum curator who was arrested and tried (happily, cleared) for displaying the Maplethorpe photographs? Thanks in great part to good ole' boy Jesse Helms and his moralizing crusade in Congress against the NEA.

I hope by now that my message is clear. We are under attack by moralizing lunatics and Media Sluts. A Media Slut has nothing better to do with his or her life, so he/she starts a censorship campaign. That's why TV and animation studios run scared from Media Sluts like Peggy Charron, religious nuts like Wildmon, and academic frauds like Radecki.

In comics, I've been directly affected by censorship which cost me a publishing deal. I've seen friends nearly have their careers destroyed and so on. I've seen the Federal RICO acts, (anti-racketeering laws) turned against a Libertarian bookseller, against comic book shops, against music stores. And these are only the ones I know about.

Do you know what the State can do with RICO? Here's a possible scenario: a computer store sells a labelled but sexually explicit game to a 17-year-old. He'll turn 18 the next day, but it doesn't matter. On the day he buys it, he's still 17. He takes it home. His parents see it and are deeply offended. They press charges. A crusading, publicity-hungry District Attorney, sensing a kill like a shark senses blood, uses the RICO act to arrest the seller, seize all the assets of the store — every game, every computer, all sales records, etc. — and forces the owner into a long, expensive legal battle to refute the charges, get his stuff back and continue in business.

If this happens a *second* time, the RICO act can be used to permanently shut down this business and possibly jail and/or fine the store owner.

Am I a fear-monger weaving a bizarre fantasy? No. This has happened to people selling comic books, to people selling videos, to people selling music.

So what does this have to do with computer games? Gee, we aren't that kind of a threat, our stuff isn't that bad...is it?

Let's put it this way — all it will take is for one Media Slut, one over-eager government official, to decide that computer games are a prime target and you'll see trouble you can hardly imagine.

What is the answer? Fight censorship on every level. It's important to fight for the rights of material we might not personally like. I don't care for 2 LIVE CREW, but I will fight like fury for their right to do their music. Let the market decide. If you don't like their music, protest it with honest discussion and don't buy it, but don't go along with banning it and arresting those who sell it.

I might or might not care for the game Rich mentioned, but its fate could directly affect the fate of similar games, games that aren't remotely as bad but will be dumped into the same category by self-appointed censors. And they are out there. Don't kid yourselves.

My personal opinion is that non-violent, sexually explicit material and healthy pornography has a place as a release and entertainment for males and females. It has as much right to exist if people want it as any other form of entertainment.

Fight censorship. Join a group that fights censorship. I highly recommend supporting People For The American Way, P.O. Box 19500, Washington D.C. 20036. Make your feelings known by writing to the people that count — the men and women in Congress who make such laws as RICO, the men and women in your State legislatures, your local newspapers and TV stations and radio stations. *Speak out.*

Because sooner or later the forces of censorship *will* turn their baleful eyes on computer games. And by then, it may be too late.

Christy Marx is author of *Sierra's Conquests of Camelot* and the upcoming *Conquests of the Longbow*

Keys to the Kingdoms™

Captive

The dice are used to quickly find the combination on the "4 lock" doors. Put one die in a robot's hand while standing in front of the door. Then click on the hand holding the die, and it will show you the first lock to push. Repeat for the next three locks.

Michael Becker

Be sure to clear out the surrounding area before visiting one of the many shops in any base. Take too long in the shops, and a band of aliens might encounter the party and make vital hits before you can react. Leave all your gold in the shops, as it lightens your load (remember to pick it up before blowing up the bases). Explore every cupboard, but cabinets often lead to secret passages filled with monsters. Others that look empty often have a secret switch that gives you access to other parts of the maze. The best way to win a battle is by fighting aliens from a distance. With automatic weapons or handguns, let them have it before they can get close. Keep moving (use a 2 x 2 square battle tactic, as in *Dungeonmaster*) and hitting the enemy before it can turn and face you. You can also use the many doors scattered throughout the base to pound and destroy aliens. Stock up on ammunition at every shop, since ammo runs out quickly when using automatics or your weapons get jammed.

Andrew Phang

The first base: explore the whole base by opening every cupboard and door. Pick up all the sacks of gold. It's a good idea to pick up and write all messages, since you can sell them in the shops. Maps too, since most of them are useless anyway. Your Droids' experience points can be traded in to raise attributes. Concentrate on Brawling skills only for now. To reveal the whereabouts of the next base, you have to find the professor and kill him, get the password to enter the computer and

get the probe (don't leave the base without one). With the probe, you can go back and destroy the generators, then zip back to the green door and take off.

Easy money: you can get up to 18,666 credits by picking up the message from Ratt (after landing) on Butre, returning to the Swan, then landing again. There will be another message from Ratt, so pick it up. Repeat this 88 times, and put all the messages in the backpacks; when they are full, carry them into the hands and one on the cursor. Then enter the base, find a shop and sell all the messages

Arthur Pietroszko

Eye of the Beholder

Level 11: to get the Stone Orb, go to the room of the key. On the wall east from the sign, press the odd-looking block to open a secret passage. Get the Drow key and Orb. Note: when fighting Mind Flayers, have a Remove Paralysis spell ready, and have your Mage Stoneskin everyone in the party.

Level 12: watch out in the room with the three pillars in the middle. Take only the key from the middle pillar, nothing else. **To kill Xanthar:** stay in the doorway, and he won't attack. Move up one space when he's in front of you, swing with your swords and move back. Don't give him time to cast a spell, or you may not survive.

Greg Chatham

Bane of the Cosmic Forge

Don't use Bishops, who advance very slowly. Dexterity and speed are vital, especially for fighting classes, since they enable you to make multiple attacks. The critical hit ability (kirijutsu) can make the difference in tough fights, so include a Samurai, Ninja or Monk. Many weapons and armor can be used only by a Lord, Valkyrie or Fighter, so include one of them. Alchemists are valuable: they can't be silenced, don't need Oratory skills and advance quickly.

Lots of experience: in the Mines, find the room on the second level that can only be reached through a dark corridor. The fountain there restores Stamina, Hit and Magic Points. Set

spells like Enchanted Blade, restore yourself, stand in the entrance of that room and hold either turn key to attract monsters. You can use magic indiscriminately, easily recharging at the fountain.

R. T. Vicedomini

To use the catapult: search it and find the broken sprocket. Get it and go to Smitty. Say sprocket. Say bye. Give sprocket to him, and he'll fix it. Kill four or more rubber beasts and get their rubber strands. Merge two rubber strands to make rubber braid. Merge two braids to make rubber band. Go to catapult. Use the fixed sprocket and rubber band on it. Go to mountain. On side without treasure chest, get the heavy boulder. Use it with catapult. Launch catapult. Wind the band, and release.

Greg Chatham

Ultima VI

Gorn, on level four of Sutek's catacombs, makes a good party member. Some useful ALT 214 cheats: (type these in on keypad of IBM version, after holding down the ALT and pressing 214; back up your program and saved games before using this trick, just in case). All 0s are zeros.

Empath Abbey: 08B 0DB 0
Serpent's Hold: 223 3B6 0
Entrance to Wrong: 1F4 052 0
Entrance to Swamp Cave: 263 16C 0
Entrance to Spider Cave: 05C 0FB 0
Sutek's front door: 313 3C5 0
Sutek: 313 3AD

Christopher Carter

Chaos Strikes Back

If starting with characters from the Prison section, there are two "hidden" party members you can recruit. The first is Lor (Champion of Good). To find him, face the mirror of Itza Warlord of Uxmal, then walk one step right, one step back, three steps right and one step forward. You'll find yourself in a hidden corridor. Continue exploring, and once you bypass the mummies (easily dispatched with a few Fireballs),

you'll find Lor's mirror. You can also recruit Kazi, a master Ninja. Face the mirror of Petal, then move backwards into the corridor and take two paces left. Go forward into another secret corridor and continue until you find Kazi's mirror.

Andrew Phang

Death Knights of Krynn **Cerebus and the Graveyard:**

Cerebus is a reverse copy of Dulcimer. You may rest at the Inn. Visit the Fortune Teller in the southwest Corner, then go to the Graveyard. When you see the Mayor move, attack him. After the encounter, you will see smoke from Cerebus. Go to the northeast section of the Graveyard, where you will find the Gravedigger clutching a ruby. Grab it and smash it, and the Gravedigger tell you his story (JE 51).

Dig up the Wards and replace them, one on the north side in the direct center of the cemetery, between six and seven headstones from the outer west fence. The west and east Wards one are in a line with the bottom of the building you fought the Mayor in. They are on the east and west fence. The fourth is overhead at the entrance. As soon as these wards are in place head for Cerebus.

C. F. Shaffer

Lord of the Rings

Lindir and Anduril: make Aragorn party leader. Have Aragorn trade the Ghost Ruby and the Blade Part to Lindir when he gives you his message. Have Aragorn get Anduril from Lindir and ready it as a weapon. (Anduril is the most powerful weapon in the game.)

Go south to the "Entrance to Moria?" on the map (but first get Skills from Elrohir and Lores from Erebor). Follow the path to the east, then north until you reach the gate of Moria just east of a lake. Use **m2ll4n** to open the gate. Tentacles will attack you every five seconds until you enter the gate to Moria. Kill the Tentacles and enter Moria quickly. Have Gandalf cast the Illuminate spell. Save the game.

Might & Magic II

The Triple Crown & the Bishops: after at least one character has completed the test just described, win the Triple Crown.

First buy three green tickets, then win a battle in each of the arenas (at 13, 2 in Middlegate; at 13, 8 in Sandsobar; and at 7, 9 in Atlanteum). Then free the Green Bishop. (Use Lloyd's Beacon to return to the first arena, then repeat this with the red, yellow and black tickets and Bishops. Bishops' locations are listed under "Key Locations by Era," below.) The Green Bishop gives you 3,000 experience points when you free him; if you have already won the green Triple Crown, however, you get 13,000. This is true for the others Bishops, with red worth the most at 200,000.

Chris Steinbeck

Space Quest IV

Escaping the Mall and getting the Ulence Flat Coordinates
Go to arcade. Save game. Walk to far right-hand corner. As soon as the Sequel Police arrive, leave via right exit. Go to escalator room. To avoid the laser shots, keep moving. Don't just stand on the conveyor belt; walk in the direction it's moving. As soon as you're off the belt, turn around and get on the belt going in the opposite direction. Enter Skate-O-Rama, still avoiding the lasers. **9w3m 5p** to the **84m2**. When the Sequel Police have both fired at you and gone spinning off into the distance, **f141t b1ck** to the **f1447**, go back to the arcade and steal the time pod. Write down the symbols on the display: they are the coordinates for the Galaxy Galleria. Use hint book. Reveal answers to the question about the time pods for the first half of the coordinates of Ulence Flats. Open the **g5m w71pp27** for the other half. Punch in these coordinates and press ENTER.

Carl Muckenhoupt

The Savage Empire

The Nahuatla and the Lost City: go to Tichticatl and talk to Oaxtepac (while Aiela is in party.) Ask About Gem. Find out about City. Find Metal head in treasure room (Zipactriotl's chambers in palace at Tichticatl). Go to Fritz' cave (north of Barako) and ask Fritz about Brain. Get Crystal brain from Fritz. The Kotl City: Find Gem holder on Great Mesa. Use gem (Aiela has it) and open trap door. Go to Yunapotli. Use Metal head. Talk to Yunapotli

and say **b713n**. Talk to Katakotl about Generators. Find Black staffs, bug bombs, Moonstone locator device, Healing crystals, and Kotl shields. Destroy generators with **f372 1x2**. Exit City. Find Mochtapatl in Tichticatl and say Unite.

C. F. Shaffer

Wonderland

Part VI: The Mad Hatter

Leave Palace and go to Well along the wiggly-waggly path. NE. NW. W. SW. SW. Enter Beavers Hole. Open hatch. Up. Get lard (in tub) and tub. Open door. East. South. Fold napkin to get the breadcrumbs (*Don't drop*). E. Get canvas sack. W. Open door. S. W.

Into the Teapot: climb onto table. **21t 9m1ll ch5nk** of **m59h744m**. Get onto pot. Eat "small" chunk. Enter pot. Say anything. Get ten of Diamonds. Exit pot. Wait until normal size. Leave Beavers Hole. SW. Get Jack of Diamonds. Go to well.

Fred J. Philipp

Secret of Monkey Island

The Ghost Ship: after reaching the ledge above the Ghost Ship, talk to the head. Ask for necklace. Keep saying "please" until you get it. Use the necklace. Walk to the ship. Go west through the door. Use **c4mp199** on key. Go down the hatch and east. Get the ghost feather. West. Use **f21th27** on feet of sleeping crewman twice. Get the bottle of grog. East. Use the key on the hatch. Walk to the hatch. Use grog in dish. Get cooking grease (glob of grease). Return to the deck. Use the glob of grease on the Brig door. Open the door. Enter. Get ghost tools. Return to cargo hold and use the tools on the crate. Get the voodoo root. Leave the ship. Exit.

Al Giovetti

New QuestBusters Code!

Boldfaced numbers are coded:

1 = a, 2 = e, 3 = i, 4 = o, 5 = u, 6 = y,
7 = r, 8 = d, 9 = s

This month Michael Becker and Christopher Carter were randomly selected to win the game of their choice for sending in Keys. Send in yours today! (All entries become exclusive property of Eldritch, LTD until October 11, 2137, A. D.)



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* indicates cluebook included

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