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Contents

SPECIAL FEATURES

FREE! KULT POSTER

Courtesy of Heartbreaker Hobbies

SCENARIO FEATURE

27 THE FORESTER KNIGHT

An adventure for Chaosium's game of chivalry and magic, Pendragon.
By Ben Chessell

SUPPLEMENT FEATURES

10 PIRATES OF THE MAROKLARA

Source article for Unae, the Australian Realms fantasy campaign setting.
By Paul Aebersold and Colin Taber

14 TREVOR'S TERRIBLE TEAPOT

A whimsical adventure hook for your favourite fantasy roleplaying game.
By Andrew Boswell

16 THE TIMES, THEY ARE A CHANGING

How to introduce the constant of change in your campaign.
By Jonathan Spear

23 BLOOD RED

Revealing more secrets of Mars in the Cyberpunk SolSpace campaign.
By Paul Mitting, Lee Sheppard and Colin Taber

32 THE UNITED CATHOLIC CHURCH

Unofficial source material for FASA's Shadowrun game.
By John Pope

36 ROLEPLAYING IN 3D

For starting referees, how to improve your encounter descriptions.
By Paul Aebersold

REGULAR FEATURES

2 EDITORIAL/LETTERS

4 GAME REVIEWS

39 BOOK REVIEWS

40 THAT WAS THE NEWS

APOLOGY: We're sorry, but the KULT! poster did not arrive from the United States in time for this issue. We hope to bring this or another poster to you in issue 28 (April). Until then enjoy good reading, great gaming.

favourite features: Full screen graphics - literally. Gorgeous spell effects. Monsters whose movements are based on live actors. Vibrant sound effects (scraping footsteps, sword swipes, crunching impacts, blood-curdling screams, creaky doors) that are crisp and real. Motion picture quality music which changes with each setting and really underscores the action. A journal that records your character sheet progress, clues to your quests, has an great autopmap function, and into which you can write your own notes. And a well-written storyline with plenty of atmosphere, humour and surprises.

Stonekeep has as good a role-playing feel to it as any computer game I've seen. The interaction with non-player characters, friend and foe, is very well-scripted. To begin with your alter ego Drake is alone but your party can be as large as four people. A series of allies join at various times to help you before going off to pursue their own goals. Even some of the "enemies" surprise you with unlooked for aid. It pays to ask questions first, bash later (hey, Peter?).

There are only a couple of minor things wrong with Stonekeep. The unlimited capacity of the inventory is both a blessing and a curse; after scrounging gear from scores of defeated opponents the inventory becomes so cluttered that retrieving the right item for the job at hand can be tedious. Plus the monsters, although intelligent enough, tend to lack aggression. Some would say this is a good thing as, coupled with relatively easy puzzles, steady progress is assured without the endless grind of combat featured in some other computer RPGs.

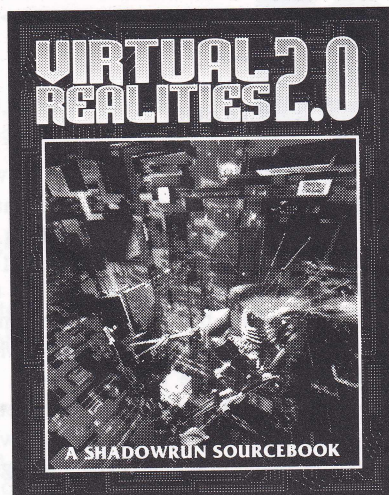
I am thoroughly enjoying this game. Stonekeep is the best computer adventure game I've ever seen or played. It's a 10!

VIRTUAL REALITIES 2.0

Shadowrun Sourcebook
FASA Corporation
Reviewed by John Pope

For a long time one of the curses of cyberpunk games, has been the impracticality of running the computer hacking side of them. Both R.Talsorian Games and FASA Corp put forward ideas which most of us considered to be completely unusable for player characters. You know the scene, it's time for the Decker to jack in and everyone else yawns and starts going to sleep. Well, FASA have apparently been listening to our cries of "This is drek!".

Virtual Realities 2.0 completely rewrites the rules for decking and the Matrix in Shadowrun. It radically simplifies the process of designing a system and in turn hacking that system. No longer does the GM have to map out every little sub section (you know those funky little maps with squares and circles, and assorted other shapes you



ignore in all the books). Now it is all covered by the System Rating (a number), Security Code (the colour) and the Sub-System Rating (numbers). The Sub-system Rating is divided into five parts each representing a different portion of the system (eg. Access and Files). Much better.

Apart from the massive re-write on the basic rules, this book offers three other very good ideas. The first is SOTA, or State of the Art. If you do not pay the SOTA cost, you are slowly overtaken, until your cutting edge program is useless drek. The second, is how to handle AI's in your Shadowrun game, and the last is the rules for running Otaku. Otaku are the Cyberadepts and Techno-shamans, children of the Matrix first mentioned rather cryptically in the Denver sourcebook.

If you want to include decking in your game then I recommend this book as well worth the money. Also, by adding 10 to various numbers, VR 2.0 gives you a very useful set of rules for R.Talsorian's *Cyberpunk* game.

COMME IL FAUT

Castle Falkenstein Sourcebook
R.Talsorian Games
Reviewed by Lee Sheppard

This is simply a *must have* for any potential players or hosts of the Castle Falkenstein RPG. **Comme Il Faut**, the players/hosts guide, is split into two sections. The first contains an alphabetic listing of all of those things that one should know if one intends to base a campaign in the Castle Falkenstein universe - how to behave, entertain, join a club, how long it takes to travel from place to place (with some nice illustrations of the interiors of a typical train carriage and passenger vessel), even a list of current events for the years 1869 to 1880. This section serves its purpose extremely well, removing much of the initial learning curve required to play in the world of 1870's New Europa (or at least wade through a number of encyclopedias).

The second section provides rules

updates, answers to frequently asked questions (and most of mine have now been answered), an alternative combat and feat resolution system (I may never use dice again), a much simpler magic system, how to play Falkenstein as a LARPG, various ideas on how to develop campaign themes, and perhaps this section's best feature, how to do away with practically all of the rules and simply *role-play* each situation. Easy to read, wonderfully humorous and just simply *innovative*.

OK, there *are* a few simple editorial errors, the most glaring for us down-under being the placement of Melbourne where Brisbane is on a map of the main sea routes. But at least they haven't left any tables out this time (one of the Lorebooks was left out of the original rule book - did anyone else notice?).

At first glance, the emphasis in *Comme Il Faut* seems to be squarely aimed at the typical "Boy's Own" type of swashbuckling adventure. Not that there's anything wrong with that. However, reading between the lines, you soon discover that there are so many other levels on which this game can be played, should that be your desire. Power gamers, fun-loving monster bashers, angst-ridden "Oh, God, I can't have a meaningful role-playing session unless I end up depressed" players, lovers of dark, violent horror (trust me, the Unseelie are *nasty* pieces of work) - all can be accommodated with an obliging and clever host. This game has everything.

By now, it should be fairly obvious how I feel about this game. It's the sort of game that I joined the role-playing hobby to find, even if it does come 18 years after I started. For me, the Castle Falkenstein RPG remains R.Talsorian Games' crowning achievement.

PARANOIA: Fifth Edition

Dark Humour Roleplaying Game
West End Games
Reviewed by Andrew Daniels

In the not too distant future Orwell's Big Brother predictions run full tilt into Huxley's "Brave New World", resulting in the nearly high tech world of Alpha Complex where everyone and everything is the product of the almost omnipotent Computer and where a clone's every move is under surveillance. On the surface all is as it should be, each vat-bred citizen has his or her allotted task (with appropriate Security Clearance) and thrives under the beneficent rule of the Computer. But there are rumours of dissent and discontent in Alpha Complex, aberrant citizens who are unhappy with their lot; enter the players. They are given the role of Troubleshooters, special agents of the Computer tasked with the job of rooting out these subversives. This is where the fun

Kithain. The nature of the interactions between the Seelie and Unseelie courts, for example, could have been detailed in more depth. And it's a very demanding game. I'm not sure if this is a criticism or not, but it requires quite an effort to surrender totally to the mood of the game, to capture the seriousness of a child hard at play and the frivolity of an adult hard at work. For the Kithain are both playful and serious, ridiculous and profound. For any role player, this is a tough challenge.

But persevere, for this is a game which will make you dream again. You'll rediscover the importance of helping your four-year-old nephew (secretly a dragon warrior) banish his nasty next-door neighbour (the evil wizard) to the compost heap (actually the dragon's tomb) with an ostrich feather (the mighty feather-sword). If you yearn for the magical days of your childhood, when anything was possible and there was always time to rescue the kidnapped prince (or princess) one more time, then you need this game. After all, life would be pretty banal without it.

DRAGON DICE

Collectible Dice Game

TSR, Inc

Reviewed by Chris Johnson

As I opened the box, one thing was sure, this is no Magic rip-off and that's probably its attraction. While opening the packs, I had little idea what I would find. With several races, five colours of magic and dragons, the feel is not unlike that of M:TG. This could be TSR's collectable winner. The races in this release are Coral Elves, Dwarves, Goblins and Lava Elves. The game works with three armies from each side paired off against each other, trying to manoeuvre up and down a terrain in an effort to capture it or defeat the other forces. There are 60 units to choose from with each specialising in Melee, Manoeuvres, Missiles, or Magic. With the rare units having some specialised action.

The look of the dice is quite nice too. While the single colour dragons are a bit dull, the multicoloured races have a sort of plasma field mix of their colours, rather than alternating flat sides. Anyway, it makes a change to cardboard. Even so, there are problems. While it's almost right, it seems that Black Magic is somewhat overbalanced, and as the game progresses and the balance of power shifts, it tends to tip violently too quickly, making it obvious who's going to win quite quickly. Also a short, good run of luck can devastate your opponent in a small game.

In conclusion, this is a totally new, promising product. With a few bugs ironed out in the expansion, it should continue to build into a decent game.

D-DAY: AMERICA INVADES

Computerised World War II Board Game

Avalon Hill

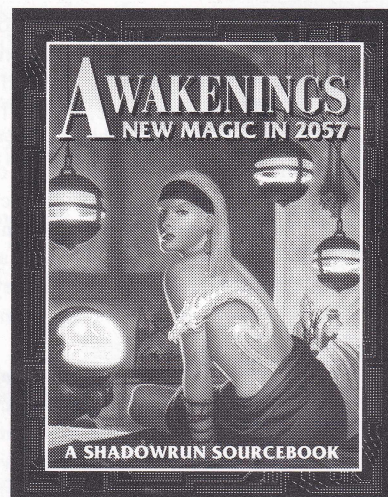
Reviewed by Graham Holman

D-Day: America Invades follows on from the highly rated *Stalingrad* game released last year. As the title suggests, it concentrates mainly on the American landings at Utah and Omaha beaches, and largely ignores the landings at Gold, Juno and Sword. Scenarios commence after the initial beach landings have been completed and include the first pushes to link both beach heads, or the survival of the SS counterattacks around Carentan. All scenarios can be weighted in favour of either the Allied or German forces, and provide plenty of variety for those players who are tired of trying to overcome the historical advantages given to either side.

The game is aimed at the serious board wargamer and has no annoying arcade sequences or video battle recreations to detract from the playability of the game. Rightly so, Avalon Hill have concentrated on what they know best; producing quality historical recreations, using the vast amount of board game experience they have accumulated over two decades. In converting their gaming systems over to the computer they have been able to incorporate all the great things true board gamers wish to have without the hassle of sorting thousands of counters and calculating hundreds of formulas to determine supply points and combat results. The only thing missing is the joy, or misery, of throwing your own dice. There is a comprehensive game guide and plenty of on screen advice to work out how to play the game. The system uses standard Avalon Hill rules which take into account Terrain, Armour Effects, Supply, Leadership, Fatigue etcetera. There is no air combat, as air superiority is factored into the ground support factors available.

As in *Stalingrad*, both sides move concurrently, so not all troop movements are guaranteed to occur, as enemy action and interdiction cause havoc with your best laid plans. Options such as enemy strength, air superiority, fog of war, hidden movement, weather are all variable. Tasks such as allocating supply, artillery, air support, naval support, movement and attacks can be handled individually or handed over to the computer. Be careful though, as these over eager subordinates will quite readily move all your unallocated troops and resources if you forget to give them your own orders.

If you want a top wargame to while away the hours, then grab a copy of this one. I just hope the British (and other Allies) half of *D-Day* turns up soon. I'm sure the Americans didn't do everything on the day.



AWAKENINGS: NEW MAGIC IN 2057

Shadowrun Supplement

FASA Corporation

Reviewed by John Pope

You remember that scene. From the movie "When Harry Met Sally". You know, the cafe scene. Yes. Yes. Yes.

Well, if you have a Shadowrun game with a lot of magic then this book is a definite must have. First it balances out the rules for Physical Adepts (if you think they have some sort of advantage over Street Sams and company. using just the basic rules, then you are not running something right). Second, or perhaps more importantly depending on your stance, it provides rules for creating your own magical Traditions, and Totems. It also includes Voodoo (if you know a lot about Voodoo then you will have to adjust your thinking a little), and Totems for para-animals.

But wait, there's more!

Yep this just covers the majority of the new rules. There are more rules that are mainly clarifications of existing rules, new spells, all the sort of things you expect in a good supplement for a game. As is standard for Shadowrun products this book is divided between the fictional section, where 'runners give out the good oil in entertaining text, and the rules section; roughly half for each section. In addition to being a good read and informative, the fiction section offers some really handy hints for how to run your spell casters, as both a Shadowrun player and referee.

All in all *Awakenings* has lots of really good stuff in it (even if the art is still lacking a bit, for mine. But someone out there must like it as this style has dominated the last three Shadowrun releases.)

Yes, in my opinion (and that of my fellow players) this book is a necessity for a Shadowrun player. In fact we rate it as one of the six most essential books for playing the Shadowrun game.

THE UNITED CATHOLIC CHURCH

UNOFFICIAL SOURCE MATERIAL FOR SHADOWRUN

By John Pope

"Most organized religions make a mockery of humanity..." - Axle W. Rose "Garden of Eden" 1991

>>>>>(The Roman Catholic church is one of the world's most powerful organizations. It has survived the Awakening and is rebuilding its power base from the ground up. All those old spells and rituals that it has recorded are now meaningful, perhaps the men who recorded them had more insight than they were credited with in the late 20th century. The Jesuits are once again a highly active arm of the church, highly educated soldiers of Christ that a smart chummer won't mess with.

The Church is found every where, even in places it is not supposed to be, even in the shadows.)<<<<<

- Judge Theo(16:34:48/21-Feb-55)

THE NEW CATHOLIC CHURCH

On December 24 2011, as we all know, the world changed. On that day the Awakening began, an event that the Catholic church was completely unprepared for, even though the seers of Medjugorje apparently predicted it. The Papacy was not prepared to accept the return of magic, even though in the following years the number of miracles reported would rise as would the number of reports of magical phenomena.

The Awakening brought with it many elements that the Church of the time was not prepared to accept, the first UGE children, the appearance of Dragons and other mythical creatures. Pope John Paul IV proclaimed in March of 2012 that these new creatures and children were abominations in the eyes of God in a Papal Bull. Within two years he died quietly in his sleep at the age of 61.

>>>>>(OK. I know this is old hack but *died quietly in his sleep?*)<<<<<

- Monolith (20:12:08/27-Feb-55)

>>>>>(I remember that it was rumored he died screaming at the hands of some devil worshipping sorcerer's sending.)<<<<<

- Carousel(14:10:43/08-Mar-55)

>>>>>(Pope John Paul IV died from a heart attack in his sleep after surviving the sending. Curiously he died exactly 3 days before the miracle of Garabandal.)<<<<<

- Malachy (13:30:12/15-May-55)

With the death of the Pope the church's international power began to crumble. The first sign of this decay was the withdrawal of several Irish Bishops, who allied themselves with the Church of Ireland. It would take six months before the conclave would elect a new pope.

Pope John XXIV was elected to the Pontificate on February 14 2014. For the next eight years he would prove to be a well meaning but ineffectual man. His reign was spent largely on damage control as the church faced continuing scandals, often organized by the new governments around the world to consolidate their own power. The unofficial acceptance of magic by him would see the diocese of Munster in Germany split in 2014. His only Papal Bull, in 2015, overturned his predecessor's one against metahumans, but it would prove to be too little too late.

>>>>>(That's an understatement with 41% of children born in Ireland being elves. The Irish really didn't like the fact that the church even allowed the original Bull. Combined with Liam O'Conner's manipulation of the media in Ireland pro-elves, it was definitely too little.)<<<<<

- Professor Keel (08:45:19/09-Feb-55)

His weak action would come to be interpreted as the reason Liam O'Conner succeeded in his entrapment of the Bishops of Cork, Galaway, Dublin, and Derry along with many ordinary priests in sexual scandals in Ireland between 2018 and 2024. In his struggle to keep the church in power he neglected many of the seers' portents from Medjugorje, and was like his predecessor unprepared for the next upheaval in the world.

In 2021, what we now call Goblinization began. The church's initial response was unfortunately misdirected and in some cases tragically so. The priests attempted to heal the afflicted, but to no avail. But this was not the major trial of 2021, late in the year VITAS would return again. Here the church had the occasional success with healing people.

>>>>>(What! The Catholics cured some VITAS cases?)<<<<<

- Harvest(01:12:30/01-Mar-55)

>>>>>(Yes. Mainly in California under the guidance of one Bishop Joshua Goldstein.)<<<<<

- Raphael (01:01:01/01-Apr-55)

Tragically in 2022 the world witnessed the first of the new race riots. It was on October 10 of this year that Pope John XXIV was assassinated, through a combination of magical and conventional

means, on the public balcony overlooking the piazza of St. Peter's during mass.

>>>>>(They shot him with a 90mm Recoilless that some trog smuggled in.)<<<<<
- Damien (00:13:32/02-???-??)

Exactly 11 days after the death of Pope John XXIV the election of Bishop Joshua Goldstein to the Papacy was announced. This event was significant for many reasons. Not only had the decision been arrived at by acclamation, but the new Pope was a Bishop. The first non-Cardinal since the 14th century, and he was also of African-American descent, the first non-European Pope since the 1st century. On accepting the Papacy Joshua Goldstien took the name of Peter. Becoming Pope Peter II.

>>>>>(You mean to say in all the time since Christ's resurrection there was only one Pope Peter until now.)<<<<<
- Evenstar (08:32:14/28-Apr-55)

>>>>>(Yes, Evenstar. For Peter is the Rock on which the Lord built his church.)<<<<<
- Raphael (01:01:01/01-Apr-55)

The new Pope quickly made several decisive moves to strengthen the church's position throughout the world. Yet even this would not prevent the scandal of 2025 in Ireland, where a prostitution network was revealed to the public by the politicians of the time. However Peter II took this blow without a second glance, effectively sacrificing the church's power in Ireland. On November 1, 2025, (All Saints Day) Peter II proclaimed his first Papal Bull; this bull allowed any recognized sentient being to enter the clergy. This bull also further embraced magic in the church, though it spoke strongly against the conjuration and binding of spirits and the use of magic for purely offensive purposes, without prohibiting these uses.

2030 would see the Reunification of the Anglican and Roman churches, and then the Uniting church would join the new Catholic church shortly after this. Peter was once again apparently guided by the prophecies of Medjugorje, paving the way for the achievement of a goal that was first seriously approached in the late 20th century.

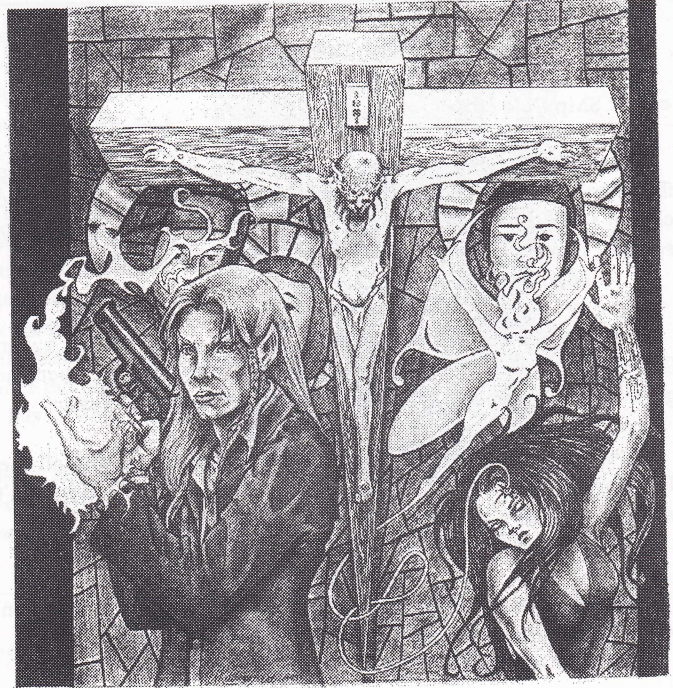
>>>>>(The Anglican church approached the Roman church prepared to make several significant concessions to maintain their temporal power which was seriously undermined by the ascension of the neo-druids to power in England through the Lord Protector.)<<<<<
- Spike (19:50:01/02-Mar-55)

Following the Reunification, Peter made the second of his Papal Bulls in 2031. This allowed married priests,

>>>>>(Something allowed in African nations since the late 20th century.)<<<<<
- Malachy (14:09:45/15-May-55)

women priests, and at last contraception. While the Papal Bull would allow these, the Encyclical would speak strongly against divorce and abortion. The Encyclical pointed to the Bible saying that many of the Apostles had been married, Mary was held up as the example of a woman priest in the Bible. It would then go on to say that contraception was preferable to abortion. The combination of these two documents would shore up the Church through the following 20 years.

<<<<<4Mp Deleted>>>>>



>>>>>(At this point there is a lot of drek praising His Holiness for all the wonderful things he has done.)<<<<<
- Judge Theo (16:50:03/21-Feb-55)

The beginning of the Euro-War saw His Holiness involve the church for the first time directly in temporal matters since his ascendancy. As the Euro-war started he took action to secure Medjugorje, Kibeho and several other sites where apparitions of Mary had occurred.

>>>>>(OK, where are these places?)<<<<<
- Tiger (21:19:00/30-Mar-55)

>>>>>(Don't you have an atlas, Tiger? But for convenience sake - Medjugorje is in what was Yugoslavia (at the time of the apparitions). Kibeho is in what was Romania, OK?)<<<<<
- Malachy(15:10:11/15-May-55)

To do this Peter II re-constituted the holy knighthoods. Specifically the Templars at this time, later as the war progressed he would include the Hospitallers.

>>>>>(These are really nasty fraggers to mess with.)<<<<<
- Scorpion (08:12:37/26-Feb-55)

The Templars would see the brunt of the church's action in the Euro-Wars. Though they did not interfere with the acquisition of territory by either side, they only maintained the sanctity of the sites they were assigned to protect.

>>>>>(Yeah, and that was every little church, every so called holy site and so on.)<<<<<
- Hern (00:00:00/31-Oct-55)

>>>>>(Yes, Hern. But if you didn't mess with those sites they left us alone.)<<<<<
- Minx (09:03:11/21-Mar-55)

>>>>>(Yeah right, Minx. They included any collateral damage to these sites. I saw 'em scrag a whole unit of Allah's soldiers because some shrapnel hit the church for frag's sake. Not that we minded though.)<<<<<
- Hern (00:00:00/31-Oct-55)

>>>>>(Like I said. Nasty fraggers)<<<<<
- Scorpion (12:30:50/01-Jun-55)

<<<<< 8Mp Deleted>>>>>

>>>>>(Once again they carry on praising Peter II's actions in the Euro-Wars. Let's just say that he didn't sacrifice any of the church's interests, and is responsible for all those lovely little hot spots in Europe. Though he also keeps them cool.)<<<<<
- Judge Theo (17:05:41/21-Feb-55)

The presence of the Templars at Guadalupe prevented the Aztlan Government's destruction of this important site in 2041 when the government prohibited the church from functioning in Aztlan.

>>>>>(That's not how I understand it. I understand that all the Templars died but when the Azies tried to blow the place it didn't work. Any ideas why?)<<<<<
- Matador (13:27:56/12-Mar-55)

>>>>>(Might it have something to do with the 10 million visitors the place got a year perhaps, Matador.)<<<<<
- Raphael(010101/01-Apr-55)

As they were unable to evict the church from that site they have encircled it and allow no access.

>>>>>(Why do the Azies want this spot so bad?)<<<<<
- Tribune(08:30:43/12-May-55)

>>>>>(Well there is the fact it's pretty close to the middle of old Mexico, and only just outside Tenochtitlan. Then it seems to have been the location of some sort of Aztec ruins.)<<<<<
- Malachy (15:40:20/15-May-55)

>>>>>(Typical. Church builds on yet another power site.)<<<<<
- Crystal (02:28:08/07-Jun-55)

Even in the face of persucutions such as in Tir Na Nog and Aztlan the church contiues its mission of evangelism. Striving to spread the light of the Lord throughout the world. Today's message is one of acceptance and help for your fellow sapients.

>>>>>(Yeah but the message is backed by big guns.)<<<<<
- Damien (00:13:32/02-??-??)

THE HOUSE OF GOD

>>>>>(This section has been compiled by one Brother Marcus Tarn. I'm not sure what order he belongs to but when I started poking around on the church he came forward and was very helpful. Just how good his data is you can decide for yourselves.)<<<<<
- Judge Theo (17:25:40/21-Feb-55)

The modern church is a roughly semi-circular building designed to hold between one and two thousand parishioners. The parishioners sit facing the altar in that semi-circular pattern. The altar typically contains the "table of the lord", a seat for the priest, the tabernacle and one or two lecterns. Older churches vary widely in pattern ranging back to the old crucifix shaped churches, to a selection of random shapes having more in common with a Dali than architecture. But the altar in all of them follows the same general pattern.

>>>>>(So?)<<<<<
- Scorpion (08:39:25/26-Feb-55)

>>>>>(Well now you know that when you leave your little street hangout you can expect the same basic things to be in the church. You also know that if the church is roughly semi-circular then it's fairly new. Fairly new means fairly modern defense systems. Use your brain, Scorpion, or you'll be crushed underfoot.)<<<<<
- Spike (20:09:45/02-Mar-55)

The meaning of sanctuary in a church has returned, and once given you better not frag with the place. The modern church has at least a powerful magical barrier of either a hermetic or medicine lodge nature.

>>>>>(Medicine lodges? Ain't the church against shamanism and totems on principle?)<<<<<
- Chisel (23:58:00/15-Apr-55)

>>>>>(No, berk. The Church's totems are the Saints and Angels.)<<<<<
- Tuck (16:54:54/29-Apr-55)

>>>>>(Places of Faith often become Medicine lodges when considered to be magically active. Regardless of whether the priest is hermetic or a shaman, or even active.)<<<<<
- Shotgun Mary(05:09:01/30-Apr-55)

>>>>>(Even active? What are you saying? Are you trying to imply that a whole lot of drek heads in a church fraggin prayin have magical power?)<<<<<
- Tribune(08:55:43/12-May-55)

>>>>>(Yes.)<<<<<
- HedgeRow(15:34:00/14-May-55)

>>>>>(If they believe.)<<<<<
- Damien(13:32:00/02-??-??)

>>>>>(Shotgun Mary neglects to mention this is why the various apparition sites mentioned in the previous section are so powerful. This is why Aztlan cannot take Guadalupe, 10 mil Faithful a year by 30 years once magic was happening, let alone before that. Remember this place was powerful before magic came back, as were many other church sites.)<<<<<
- Rook(23:50:13/01-Jun-55)

With the cathedrals and larger parish churches having spirit or elemental guards as well as mundane defenses.

>>>>>(Hey isn't the church supposed to be against the binding of spirit beings?)<<<<<
- Evenstar(09:10:14/28-Apr-55)

>>>>>(The beings in question are not bound they are free spirits.)<<<<<
- Shotgun Mary (05:09:41/30-Apr-55)

In large cities, parishes often have at least one magically active priest. (Just why the church has so many magically active people is unknown. Perhaps it's a miracle). This priest is usually hermetic or a physical adept but some are shamans. Remember, as Peter II pushes, that faith in the Lord and the display of that faith is what really matters, your power source doesn't really count.

>>>>>(But it does.)<<<<<
- Damien (00:13:32/02-??-??)

>>>>>(Hey what is it with this guy's sig.)<<<<<
- Curious(08:40:36/01-Jun-55)

>>>>>(I think he's referencing Revelations.)<<<<<

- Rook (23:50:54/01-Jun-55)

>>>>>(The answer is - 10,314,424,798,490,535,546,171,949, 056. You just need the right question, Damien.)<<<<<

- Deety (21:23:32/02-Jun-55)

>>>>>(I'm even more confused now.)<<<<<

- Confused not Curious (04:14:06/03-Jun-55)

>>>>>(Deety has referenced the 20th century author R.A. Heinlein. He proposes that 666 is not the right number rather Deety's is.)<<<<<

- The Librarian (15:48:54/03-Jun-55)

These priests are usually the parish priest with the mundanes as the assistants. These priests can often be found out on the streets, particularly if they belong to one of the many orders, helping the poor (or if they happen on a scene of violence, then the injured also). The Church represents a considerable problem to both the shadowrunner and his corporate foe. If the person you're after makes it into a church it is wise not to go in after him guns blazing. If the defenses don't get you the lawyers will. (Of course you are allowed to go in and talk to them and the priest, but don't mess with it if they give sanctuary).

>>>>>(Heed the bro's words, chummers. I know this real wiz chummer who messed with the sanctuary of a sleazy corp. He figured the corp was closer to the Inferno than he was so the Lord would see his point. He busted the barrier, and put the priest down for the count. He's heading out with the corp on one shoulder when the building shudders. The doors slam in his face then there's silence. A little while latter the priest comes out and throws his hands to us. They've got these 20cm nails through em.)<<<<<

- Uriah (07:26:29/24-Feb-55)

>>>>>(The Lord is merciful, but prone to a quick temper.)<<<<<

- Raphael (01:01:01/01-Apr-55)

For magicians the local church represents another problem. They all have an elevated background count. The problem represented by churches outside of Europe is rarely particularly large. In Europe, however, where the early churches were regularly built on power sites mages occasionally face the problem of extremely high background counts near them. In Europe and any location where there is a holy site, or even significant temporal trouble, you can expect to find Knights Templar. They'll be guarding the church in addition to anything else that the Church may have may have an interest in there.

<<<<<5Mp Deleted>>>>>

>>>>>(I deleted a whole lot of stuff on the Templars at this point to save repetition, as I am currently compiling a whole wad of stuff on the Orders. I will post it ASAP*. Oh, and by the way the word temporal means of worldly rather than spiritual (with regards belief in God) affairs.)<<<<<

- Judge Theo (17:30:14/21-Feb-55)

AUTHOR'S NOTE: In presenting this history of the major Christian faiths I have tried to stay consistent with the published Shadowrun books. These books, however, have tip-toed around the Church and dealt it a weak hand. Not a particularly convincing vision when you consider the power and history of the Catholic Church. This is why I altered the current pope.

* To be published in issue 28 of *Australian Realms*. ■

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Competition Winners

Back in Issue 25 we announced a number of competitions that you, the readers, could enter and win great prizes. Well, all but one of those competitions have now been decided (sorry Castle Falkenstein entrants - but RTG staff *are* looking over your entries as you read this...). Once again, we must offer special thanks to the many gaming companies who provided all the wonderful prizes. And here are the winners...

Earthdawn - Corey Swallow
Call of Cthulhu - Patrick Williamson
Unae Short Story - Michael Wolfenden
Quest PBM - James O'Rance
Lords of Midnight - Charles Howard,
 Scott Muir, Elaine Martin, Andrew Ng,
 Dennis Chantler, Barbara White.

Congratulations and/or commiserations to all who entered the competitions. Prizes will be forwarded to the lucky winners, just as soon as we find out where Nick's dog has buried them all.

Conventions

Once again, we only have one convention flyer waiting in our in-tray.

DwarfCon I will be held Friday 8th to Monday 11th March at the Lyndale Secondary College, Gladstone Road, Dandenong, Victoria. Role-playing games, Warhammer miniatures battles, Bridge Crew, the inevitable Magic: the Gathering tournaments and other events will be featured. As for us, well we just want to see photos of the Lego Wars tournament (for Lego Space figures - classic). Contact DwarfCon I at 7 Leslie Street, Dandenong VIC 3175 for more information.

WotC Sell M:TG!

Ha! Ha! - made you look!!! Seriously though, there *was* an important message from WotC on the Internet the other week that we thought you might find interesting. Basically, it stated that WotC are downsizing much of their interest in alternate products, thereby concentrating their efforts on their flagship items - Magic: The Gathering and similar collectible trading card games.

Although no firm decisions have been made as yet, it's highly likely that we will see less novels, no new board games

(although support will apparently continue for existing products) and the sale and/or dropping of nearly all of WotC's interests in the role-playing game market. Indications are that some of these RPG products (Ars Magica, SLA Industries, Everway) could be picked up by other gaming companies or even *former* employees of WotC, so we'll just have to wait and see...

Travellers No More...

Another recent message on the Internet had a far more startling effect on us here at the Realms offices. The sobering news is that one of the longest standing gaming companies in the business, *Game Designers Workshop* is now *out* of business. Actual details as to why and when are still sketchy, but it definitely appears as though the company that gave us *Traveller* (the first non-fantasy game than some of us veterans ever played), *Space 1889*, *Twilight 2000*, and the *Dark Conspiracy* RPGs has ceased production.

Whatever the reason, be it lack of support from customers, the onslaught of the card-craze, the ill-fated Dangerous Journeys project, or simply the inability to keep up with a constantly changing hobby, we think it's a terribly sad loss for the gaming industry. We just wonder who'll be next...

Unae Sourcebooks

OK - you've asked for it, and now you're going to get it! We can now reveal that the first Unae sourcebook will be **Wair-Rae**, detailing the as yet unexplored (at least in the pages of *Australian Realms*) homelands of the elves. Due to be released this Autumn, Wair-Rae will be written by Colin Taber and illustrated by Danny May. At 64 pages and priced around \$15, we expect this to be a real big seller, especially given that this sourcebook will be nearly all completely new Unae material.

Since we started the Unae campaign setting some three years ago, we have teased and enticed you with hints and portents of what the elves of Unae have been up to - now much of that will finally be revealed. But be warned, for each question about the elves that you have answered, so many more secrets still remain to be revealed.

Our second release (due Winter/Spring 1996) is sure to be popular with fans of both Unae and our current How To/Scenario series (Hra Kurban etc). **The Journal of Naldin Three Fingers** tells the inside story of

Unae's most infamous tomb robber. Expect this sourcebook to reveal much about the "other side" of Unae - supernatural forces and deadly creatures, Horned God cults and powerful magics, ancient secrets and hidden fortunes - just waiting for your hardy group of adventurers to get their grubby little hands on. If they live...

New Releases

February 14th. Our thoughts naturally turn to incredibly expensive and yet only mildly erotic Valentines Day cards, when they should be on these new releases...

FASA Corp: have *Magic: A Manual of Mystic Secrets* for the *Earthdawn* RPG. *Battletech* fans have a swag of novels and *The Periphery* sourcebook. Shadowrun followers can pick up the *California Free State* sourcebook and *Super Tuesday*, an adventure pack with five related adventures.

R.Talsorian Games: Castle Falkenstein - *The Book of Sigils, Sixguns and Sorcery, From Prussia With Love* (a novel); Cyberpunk - *Eurosource Plus, Live and Direct*; Cybergeneration - *Generation Gap*; Mekton Z - *Mekton Wars Vol 1, Mecha Manual Vol 2*.

Palladium: *Nightspawn*, Palladium's wicked RPG of the supernatural, has been renamed *Nightbane*. *Between the Shadows* is the first *Nightbane* sourcebook. *Rifts Index Vol 1* should be out now. One for all you Rifts techno-rules-junkies.

Steve Jackson Games: *GURPS Celtic Myth* (very, very nice!!), *GURPS Martial Arts 2nd Edition* and the *Car Wars Compendium* will surely tempt all you SJG punters out there.

TSR Inc: In the first 2-3 months of 1996 TSR will already have released the *Dark Sun 2nd Edition*; *Uncaged: Faces of Sigil* a sourcebook for Planescape; *Bleak House*, apparently the "ultimate haunted house adventure" - a boxed set for Ravenloft setting; *The Book of Magecraft* for the Birthright campaign; and *Silver Key, Den of Thieves and Treasure Tales* - adventure books tied into the core AD&D products (DMs Guide, Players Handbook, Complete Handbooks) ... Crikey! - don't these guys just make you green with envy?

...see you 'round like a D100!

THAT WAS THE NEWS