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# Advertiser Index

Avalon Hill	38
Cyborg Games, Inc.	3
Digest Group Publications	2
Empire Wargames	2
Emprise Game Systems	11
Flying Buffalo, Inc.	10
Game Systems, Inc.	18
Geo-Hex	back cover
Graaf Simulations	54
Kingslayer Publications	17
Lance and Laser	55
Lion Rampant	55,59
Majestic Graphics	16
Reality Simulations	43
Scenario Publications	50
Stellar Games	13
Steve Jackson Games	40
Tansfaal Enterprises	57
Vigard Simulations	6
Waterford Publishing House	5
White Knight Publishing	47
White Wolf Publishing	4, 53
Wishful Thinking	18

# CONTENTS:

<b>RUNES</b>	2
Stewart Wieck discusses a force behind the early science fiction who should not be forgotten.	
<b>Letters</b>	3
Some more letters from the readers, including a reaction to some art in issue #14.	
<b>Cammarata's Irregulars</b> by Edwin King	5
A mercenary unit for use with the new HIGH COLONIES game.	
<b>Life's a Beach</b> by Stellar Games	7
A SF adventure for the EXPENDABLES game.	
<b>The Turzig Jousts</b> by Ramon Moore	14
Another SF adventure. This one introduces a new race for the MANHUNTER game.	
<b>Segment Jorune</b> by SkyRealms	19
More information on how to get your character to Jorune.	
<b>The Star Wars Scene</b> by Stewart Wieck	27
Reviews of some recent products for STAR WARS RPG from West End Games.	
<b>Let the Dice Decide</b> by Sean Stevenson	28
Random character generation rules for STAR WARS RPG.	
<b>The White Horse</b> by Richard Thomas	30
A SF adventure involving a rather immobile horse.	
<b>People of the Land</b> by Chaosium, Inc.	37
These Chaosium designers present a cult for use with RUNEQUEST.	
<b>Demon Killer</b> by Steve Tymon	44
The great novella continues with part III. It's a truly spectacular fight scene.	
<b>Skill Mastery</b> by Jonathan Tweet	50
ARS MAGICA utilizes a skill based system. These rules explain how to master a particular skill.	
<b>The Silicon Dungeon</b> by Jim Trunzo	52
Jim takes a look at great computer game, Dungeon Master.	
<b>On Your Mark</b> by Stephan Wieck	54
The winners of the scenario outline contest.	
<b>Capsule Reviews</b> by Stewart Wieck	56
A look at a handful of very different SF games.	
<b>Writer's Guidelines</b>	58
We welcome unsolicited submissions. Read over the guidelines and send something our way.	
<b>On the Horizon</b>	60
A look at what's coming next issue in the annual PBM issue.	



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"The function of science-fiction is to indicate wrong answers, and why they're wrong, as well as suggesting right answers and possibilities." (The John W. Campbell Letters, vol. 1, page 536).

I certainly hope that you are familiar with John W. Campbell. If not, then you don't realize the weight that the statement above (written in 1968) carries. John Campbell, once editor of Astounding Science Fiction, almost single-handedly created what we view as science fiction literature today. I restrict this statement to literature because much, perhaps too much, of science fiction today is truly only a story in a setting with trappings of science fiction. Campbell demanded that writers of science fiction be knowledgeable of science and be able to build a story around science. He forced writers to push themselves to the limit. He encouraged them. He provided plot ideas. He helped authors like Asimov, Heinlein, van Vogt, and others develop their skills.

In fact, the profound influence of John Campbell is readily admitted by Isaac Asimov. I have read on several occasions in various books of how John Campbell helped provide the impetus for Asimov to transform a simple short story in the massive and amazing Foundation series. Asimov also maintained that it was John Campbell who created the famous Three Laws of Robotics, but John Campbell evidently denied such and explained that the laws were already in Asimov's stories and simply had to be put into words.

John Campbell blazed a trail for science fiction in the days prior to science fiction books. All of the science fiction before the late 1950's appeared exclusively in magazines. There was no resale potential because there were no books. And this led to the second great advance instituted by John Campbell. He refused to view the writing of science fiction as something possible only as a hobby. It had much greater potential, for science fiction, he thought, was the only true literature because of the author's ability to construct his setting so that it could universally apply to all times and all people.

He was right. Science fiction does have limitless potential. You don't have to enjoy science fiction to see what the genre has done for us all. Arthur C. Clarke invented TV satellites by making use of the devices in one of his stories. Asimov's Three Laws of Robotics may someday see practical application.

My RUNES of WHITE WOLF Magazine #13 discussed how, as I see it, some mediums are maturing these days. I pointed to comics, RPGS, and science fiction literature. While the quality of fantasy literature, in my opinion, continues to tail-spin, science fiction literature has continued to grow and broaden its scope. The recurring theme of fantasy literature is that of a superman figure, a hero who is at once strong, wise, and honest, that saves the day (rescues to prin-

cess, beats back darkness, etc.). Recently, because of the popularity of wizards, this hero has been split into two characters. The intelligent wizard and the strong warrior. And no offense to Margaret Weiss and Tracy Hickman, for their work is among the few readable fantasy books, but their Dragonlance characters Raistlin and Caramon are the epitome of such a relationship. The fact that they are twins only strengthens the idea that they are really two aspects of a single character.

The strength of science fiction, the fact that it can and does apply to all times and all men, makes it a much more powerful tool for commentary on the species called homo sapien and the universe in general. This quality of science fiction is due in large part to John W. Campbell.

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### Contributor Bylines

---

**Cerny, Robert**- Robert's illustration of a female Turzig with a power sword accompanies the MANHUNTER adventure, "The Turzig Jousts".

**Cerny, L. Lee**- Lee, coauthor of this issue EXPENDABLES adventure, is co-owner of Stellar Games.

**Cliffe, Ken**- WHITE WOLF Magazine's cartographer, Ken has numerous freelance writing credits to his name, including several articles in WHITE WOLF Magazine.

**Gray, Geoff**- Geoff's adventure, "To Rescue a Scarmis", is part of this issue's SEGMENT JORUNE. A native of England, Geoff looks to becoming more involved with SkyRealm's operations.

**King, Edwin**- Edwin is the designer of the SFRPG HIGH COLONIES.

**Leker, Amy and Andrew**- The guiding forces behind Sholaris everywhere, this brother/sister team creates SEGMENT JORUNE for WHITE WOLF Magazine.

**Menges, Jeff**- A very talented artist, Jeff is this issue's cover artist.

**Moore, Ramon**- Ramon is the designer of the SFRPG MANHUNTER.

**Mytczynskij, Walter**- Walter co-authored the EXPENDABLES adventure in this issue. Corner him at a convention and have him pronounce his last name for you.

**Petersen, Sandy**- A well-known RPG designer, Sandy's credits include the Call of Cthulhu RPG by Chaosium, Inc.

**Stafford, Greg**- Greg, President of Chaosium, Inc., is a prolific game designer. His PENDRAGON game is a favorite of the WHITE WOLF Magazine staff.

**Stevenson, Sean**- A native of Pennsylvania, Sean promises more STAR WARS RPG material in the future.

**Thomas, Richard**- Richard is the Art Director of WHITE WOLF Magazine and in addition to several pieces of art in this issue he also wrote the fantasy adventure, "The White Horse".

**Trunzo, Jim**- A veteran computer man, Jim is in charge of the "Silicon Dungeon" column.

**Tweet, Jonathan**- Jonathan is a co-owner of Lion Rampant. His freelance credit includes work for Different Worlds magazine.

**Tymon, Steve**- In addition to involvement in several movie productions, Steve has been published in Isaac Asimov's Science Fiction Magazine. Part III of his novella, "Demon Killer", appears in this issue.

**Wieck, Stephan**- The Assistant Editor of WHITE WOLF Magazine, Steve writes the contest column and judges the numerous contest entries.

**Wieck, Stewart**- The Editor-in-Chief of WHITE WOLF Magazine, Stewart is responsible for the day-to-day business of WHITE WOLF

# Letters

## You need a letter column

Dear Stewart, Stephan and Company,

May your imagination never dwindle! I enjoy your magazine, you know. WHITE WOLF Magazine is a very good magazine, but it lacks a letter column. A good prozine communicates with its readers on an unpatronizing, one-to-one basis. Surely a letter column is vital for this?

Your reviews seem over-praising. WFRP deserves a 4? It's a hackneyed mixture of outdated concepts, an unwieldy mish-mash of rules, and an outdated world. Hardly an "excellent" product. We Brits do produce good stuff-- outside the GW monopoly, but it's amateur and hard-to-find. Afterall, fandom is the hobby; the large companies seem out of touch.

I can't see that computer games and strategic (i.e. computer moderated) PBMs have anything to do with role-playing. Is WW a role-playing magazine? The same applies to boardgame reviews.

David Castle  
England

*David: Thanks for your praise but it is obviously your critiques which I would like to address. First, I obviously disagree with your opinion of WFRP. You are certainly welcome to your opinion and the reviews I write never attempt to tell a person what is right for them. If I like the game a good deal, I usually recommend "if you like this sort of setting, then you should check out this game". I don't insist, I simply suggest. I have made the point over and over (and again elsewhere in this issue), that a very vital component for a great game is the presentation of an atmospheric environment. Can you tell me that when you play WFRP you don't see filth all around, cloudy skies and screaming hordes of chaos beasts?*

*As to your second point, yes, WW is a role-playing magazine. So why do we cover computer games and PBMs? For the very simple reasons that 1) they very often overlap with RPGs (e.g.SSI's AD&D computer games) and 2) they are a lot of fun and we think our readers should be aware of them. I dread to receive your letter of comment on next issue's special section: PBMs. --Stewart Wieck*

## Clothe That Character!

Dear White Wolf Publishing,

Since issue #8, I have been watching the growth and development of your magazine into the best alternative magazine in the industry. The quality of the product; fiction, reviews, articles and art have all improved with each mailing. Issue #14 was no exception. The cover by P.D. Breeding-Black was powerful, living art. It held on to the edges of the magazine, yet it reached out to each reader.

I'm afraid I can't say the same for all the art. More specifically, the art for the saga "Something's Rotting in Dankmart". I believe that WHITE WOLF Magazine's standards should go beyond the offensively sexist. "What?" some readers will say, "she has clothes on!" Frankly, a remanent

of cloth and the pelt of an immature ferret doesn't really count. Realistically speaking, it doesn't make sense. Few characters wear that little protection, and, when they do, they seem to ignore that there are many reasons people clothe themselves: warmth, cleanliness, and protection from bugs to name a few.

Let's not allow tradition to stand in the way of progression. Role-playing is headed for a new realm, and all the aspects of fantasy (fiction, discussion and art) should embrace that idea, not suppress it.

Darin Eblom of Lion Rampant  
Northfield, MN

*Darin, this is a sticky subject to discuss. It is much easier to agree on facts, but when emotions and values become involved things become difficult.*

*Why is it unrealistic for the woman in the drawings to be dressed so? There is absolutely nothing unrealistic about it, in my opinion. It is not as though the picture portrays a female knight who should by rights and for historical accuracy be garbed head-to-toe in encasing metal. No, this woman is obviously (because of the animal pelts, tatoos, etc.) a barbarian. And not all barbarians come from the frozen north and need a lot of clothing (Eskimos of the past did spend much of the winter naked). The woman is dressed for the environment of which she is a native, presumably a jungle or semi-tropical area. This dismisses the first reason for wearing clothes that you mentioned: warmth. Obviously the case could even be that her people wear no clothing at all! But to depict that **would** have been tasteless.*

*As for the other reasons you mention for wearing clothing (cleanliness and protection from bugs), you, as a part of the group which produced the authentically medieval "Ars Magica" game, should be aware of how dirty and insect infested most (if not all) peasants were during the Middle Ages despite their clothing. These folks wore clothing because it was socially unacceptable not to do so. Perhaps clothing contributes to dirtiness. This, of course, is in times prior to such modern facilities as showers and washing machines which allow people to remain cleanly on a daily basis.*

*So, while I certainly agree that tasteless presentations of women (or men, for that matter) does not have its place in role-playing, I take the stand that such was not the case in WHITE WOLF Magazine #14. --Stewart Wieck*

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