Thousands die as
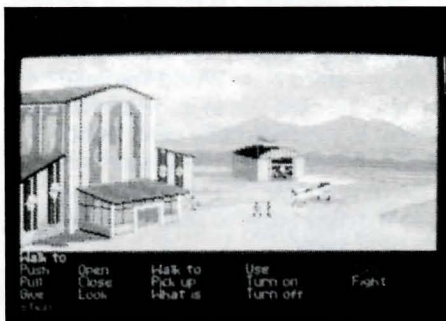# Nintendo booth collapses at CES!

Hey! Where'd that headline come from? Must be another sensationalistic attempt at satire by Nuyu, the QB news editor—since the Nintendo booth, as gargantuan as it may have been, never even tipped over on one side or leaned threateningly in the direction of the hordes attending the summer Consumer Electronics Show at McCormick Convention Center in Chicago the first week of June, let alone... well, you've already read Nuyu's fictitious headline, so let's get on with the story. [For Official Disclaimer, see page two, column one.]

My first stop was the Lucasfilm booth,

By Bob Guerra

where Noah Falstein demonstrated *Indiana Jones and The Last Crusade*, a new graphic adventure based on the flick.

De plane, Indy, de plane!

Like *Maniac Mansion* and *Zak McKracken*, *Indiana* uses a point-and-click, no-typing interface and animated characters. In addition, at several plot junctures during the story you'll be able to put words into Indy's mouth by choosing one of three lines of dialogue. Your choices will help determine how the plot unfolds. In situations that you just can't talk your way out of, there'll even be some key-pad-controlled fighting sequences.

If you've seen the movie, don't worry that the adventure will be too easy to solve. The game follows the movie's story line pretty closely, but you'll meet characters and visit places that didn't appear in the film. In fact, you'll even be able to handle some situations better than Indy did in the movie. *IndianaJones* will support the Ad-Lib sound board (IBM in July, Amiga in September).

Loom looms for Lucas

Also at the Lucasfilm booth was another point-and-click IBM graphic adventure. It's called *Loom*, and the project leader was Brian *"Beyond Zork"* Moriarty. Bobbin, the main character, is a faceless member of the Weaver's Guild who must learn spells and interact with other guilds such as glassblowers, shepherds, blacksmiths, united auto workers (just kidding), etc., to learn why the elders of his Guild have mysteriously disappeared.

To avoid detracting from the game's stunning graphics, Moriarty incorporated a no-words interface that assumes the shape of a segmented staff with eight corresponding musical notes. Everything you do is accomplished by learning spells as specific patterns of notes, then playing them back on the staff.

The game will ship with a 30-minute audio cassette to familiarize you with Bobbin and the story's background (IBM in September, Amiga and ST in October.) Lucasfilm has jumped off the Mediagenic bandwagon, and distribution is now being handled by Electronic Arts.

Other EA affiliated labels in the area

Tangled Tales: ribald role-playing

Hah...haha ha HOO haaa heeheehee ha ha(cough hack wheeze) ha ah...er...ahem. Excuse me, I was laughing so hard I didn't hear you come in. Just couldn't help myself, because I've been playing *Tangled Tales: The Misadventures of a Wizard's Apprentice*, and Gary Scott Smiths' RPG is one of the most amusing, FUN games to hit the market since *Hitchhiker's Guide!*

The game drapes you in the robe of a bumbling, if not well-intentioned, apprentice to the Great Wizard Eldritch. A slight mishap during one of your training quests has left your master without any adamantite dust (you spilled it all over this tiny little squirrel...), so he's a bit peeved at you. As penance for your ineptitude, he erased your spell book and sent you forth into the world to obtain more dust. You start the quest alone, picking up recruits to help solve logical

puzzles that revolve around object orientation and magic.

That's where the fun begins. In order to solve the game, you must complete three quests assigned by Master Eldritch, rebuilding your repertoire of spells in the process. As you advance, your character's statistics go up and you find more powerful spells, better armor and weapons, and stronger assistants. Reflecting a trend in RPGs, character stats are described in the text rather than represented by raw numbers.

| Type: Fantasy Role-playing Game |
| System: Apple (64K), C 64 |
| Conversion planned: IBM |
| Version reviewed: Apple |

If you played *Times of Lore*, ORIGIN's other entry-level RPG, you'll find that the player interface (my mark of a good game) is similar yet surprisingly simpler and easier to use. Instead of driving the entire game by joystick, *Tangled Tales* offers a choice of keyboard commands or stick-selected point-and-click icons. It's best played directly from the keyboard, using first-letter mnemonics for the commands, but those who prefer using the joystick will find the icons easy to understand and

By Bruce E. Wiley

AD & D Month in August

After designating August "AD & D Computer Products Month," SSI celebrated the occasion by releasing 10,000 Fire Giants in downtown San Francisco. OK, so it was only a dozen Fire Giants. Whatever—the point is, if you buy *Pool of Radiance*, *Heroes of the Lance* or *Hillsfar* from a participating retailer in August, you'll get a coupon good for a free, corresponding cluebook worth $6.95 to $12.95. And your name is automatically entered in a drawing for a "lifetime" supply of AD & D computer products (they don't specify *whose* life), TSR Forgotten Realms prize packages, t-shirts and posters. A second such drawing will be held this month at the GEN CON game fair in Milwaukee, from names of people who sent in warranty cards from *Pool*, *Heroes* or *Azure Bonds*. (Look for specially marked *Pool* and *Bonds* packages for more details.)

Me and Carmen

Talk about documentation! The new Carmen Sandiego adventure—*Where in Time is Carmen Sandiego?*—comes with the 1,300-page *New American Library Desk Encyclopedia* to help "interpret clues." It's set for a fall release for IBM and Apple II.

Commodore Magazine Deleted by New President

Among Harry Copperman's first acts as new president of Commodore was the official axing of *Commodore Magazine*. October will be the last issue. Copperman said they decided to "direct our attention on our primary business." The press release did not say what business that might be, but we hear they're flying channelers in from the Coast to find out. If you've followed Shay Addams' "Adventure Road" column in *Commodore*, it will be reincarnated in *Info*, starting with the November/December issue.

Official Disclaimer

This is the Official Disclaimer referring to the "Nintendo Booth Collapses at CES!" headline (just *had* to see it in print one more time!). It is a joke. If you don't like an occasional joke with your game reviews, just head down to the nearest magazine rack, where you'll find plenty of computer magazines with no sense of humor at all. If you're a Nintendo attorney, GOTO 1.

Bug Report: IBM M & M II

You say you freed some Hirelings, but they never showed up where they promised? Or you're having problems with a party transferred in from the IBM version of *Might and Magic I*? Contact New World Computing right away for a special exec program that will remedy the situation without affecting your currently saved game. You might also find it on CompuServe, GEnie or another on-line network.

Warranty Cards—Why Bother?

Why bother sending in warranty cards from computer games? Try reading the last story—since New World automatically sent the exec file to all IBM owners who sent in their warranty card. Mindcraft did the same for C 64 gamers who got the first version of *The Magic Candle*, so it makes sense to send in those cards right away.

Missing in Action?

To reduce the chances of your sub not showing up in the mail next month, check the accuracy of the mailing label on this issue, especially if it arrived sans envelope. We've learned one reason they occasionally go astray in the mail is the tiniest typo, such as AR instead of AZ for the state. Another good way to make sure you don't miss a single issue is to renew your sub right now.

Taito Tackles Adventure Genre

After turning a number of arcade hits into computer games for various machines, Taito has decided to move into the adventure genre with *Rambo III*, a role-playing action adventure based on last year's film. It's a British import for C 64, ST and Amiga. An IBM version, with Ad-Lib support, is set for later this year.

New Conversions

Sir-Tech's *Wizardry III* is out for C 64 and 128. Electronic Arts now has a Mac *Bard's Tale* (no color on Mac II) and a 512K IBM *Demon Stalkers*.

More Keys to the Kingdoms!

Due to all the positive mail we've received since making "Keys" a page and a half, we'll make it two full pages starting with the next issue. That also means we'll have two winners who'll get the game of their choice (but the Random Drawing will fade into oblivion).

Dear QuestBusters:
I'd like to renew my subscription. But please, in the future can you tell Shay Addams to stop dumping on SSI, which has done some great games! Does he have a grudge against SSI or something? Also, is he getting some kind of favors from Infocom and Electronic Arts, since QuestBusters has so many good reviews of their games, even though I don't think they're so good. One more thing: I think you should be concentrating on games like *Dungeon Master* and not as much on text and graphic adventures.
  Kevin Taft

"Precisely," says Addams. "Ever since my entire party was wiped out by a gang of baby dragons in Phantasie, I've been out to get even! But other than the usual monthly deposits to my secret Swiss bank account, I've never accepted favors, gifts, gold or cash from EA or anyone else." In reality, most of our reviews are written by Contributing Editors (Addams is far too busy spending all that money in his secret Swiss bank account), so it wouldn't matter if he did bear a grudge (or Bugbear a grudge). Look over the last few issues, and you'll probably be shocked to see that Addams commented favorably on SSI's Hillsfar, while some EA and Infocom titles got less than enthusiastic reviews from other writers. The type of adventures we review is really up to the manufacturers, since we cover all adventure games for all computers.

QuestBusters™
The Adventurers' Journal

Sneak Preview: Swords of Twilight

Thirty years ago, Jon Freeman wrote his first fantasy novel—and this year part of the plot surfaces in a remarkable multiplayer game originally called *Rainbow Road*. After he told me about it a few months ago, I couldn't wait to play it, so I asked EA for an advance look at a near-finished beta version. When it arrived last month, Freeman said he and co-author Anne Westfall were mainly fine-tuning the intelligence of the computer-controlled characters by then, so this preview offers a hands-on look at a unique role-playing game in which up to three players can act and interact simultaneously.

Though the name was changed, the premise still centers on the magical Rainbow Road, which connects a series of fantasy lands. The Road, "...once infinite, is now warped and bound," the result of a dark plot by Witch Queen Prytania. This also put a damper on magic in Albion, where your quest commences. Albion's Queen Gloriana charges you with restoring order to Albion by entering one of the Gates and hitting the Road.

She won't say *how* to do this, so you'll have to chat up the citizenry to discover the legends of seven magical weapons called Baneswords, dark tales of the dreaded Shadowlords, and stories of the mystic Stones that must be recovered. (Freeman, who's been working on the game for three years, was surprised to hear the term Shadowlord had been used in *Ultima V*.)

From a roster of 31 potentials you choose three party members, already outfitted with weapons, armor and other gear. By pressing the up/down cursor keys, you view the names of each member of the chosen class (Knights, Champions and Mages) one-by-one, names Freeman revealed are based on a set of miniatures he owned many years ago. The program directs the actions of members party not controlled by people, and the Regroup option enables you to switch control from computer to human or vice versa at most any time during the game.

No stats are provided onscreen or in the manual, which will contain purely biographical material. A number of characters are women, and it's rare to see a computer game so authentic that the female Mages are described as members of

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Type: Multi-player Fantasy RPG
System: Amiga (512K)
Planned conversions: None

Wicca, a contemporary organization of real witches. And for a refreshing change, you can complete this quest *without* a Mage in the party.

Multiple Window Interface

Each character has his or her individual window in a corner of the screen. The fourth corner is reserved for an image of the leader of groups of Knights, Commoners and other NPCs you encounter. By jabbing the button or Amiga key, you bring up each character's horizontal menu of main options like Talk, Take and Shift. These lead to sub-menus facilitating more actions, such as Use, Offer (your name, purpose, an item), Ask (about the NPC, items you've found or the locale) and many other options. Again, cursor keys or sticks are used to move horizontally across the menu and highlight your selection. It took me a day or so to get used to this interface, especially since I didn't get detailed docs (except for a few pages relating to magic); soon it became second nature, for the most commonly used options are handily located.

Joysticks are used to move and control fighter types, the keyboard for Mages. The group is restricted to the same general vicinity, a message reminding you when one goes too far from the rest. And you almost always need several characters to open a door by leaning on it, another design element that prevents them from wandering off in too many directions at once.

You can transfer items and weapons amongst party members by having one person Offer something, though you may have to seize direct control of computer-controlled characters to make sure the right person accepts it. Thoughtfully, one of the computer-controlled characters offered me an Elixir when I had been seriously wounded and didn't have one. *That's* intelligence, the kind I'd like to see in more RPGs. Little sacks and other graphics depict the Iron-shodded Staff, for example, if dropped by a dead foe; your gang can then grab it with Get.

Graphics and Music

When you enter a castle, town or Gate on the outdoors map, its picture is displayed in a center-screen picture window while a tune sets the tone for the locale

you're about to enter. In one case I saw a digitized photo of a castle instead, which caught me by surprise. Inside, you see the maze from an overhead, oblique-angle view that fills the picture window. Mazes are not big enough to pose major mapping nightmares. The rest of the graphics are outstanding and employ a generous spectrum of colors and patterns for floors, walls and the wide range of costumes. (I especially liked the purple-hooded Wraiths.)

A screen dump, not a screen shot

Animation is achieved by cycling through a series of various poses: as a Knight walks west, for instance, four pictures make his limbs seem to move, and his shield and helmet twist and turn most convincingly. While you're talking to Acolytes, Drees, Commoners and other folk, members of each party don't just stand there, but walk around and right up to each other. Scrolling and other animation was slow, which Freeman attributed to "debugging stuff" still on my beta disk; he said the latest version runs at least 50% faster.

Commoners, Sages, Knights and other characters will drop clues on where to go and what to do; if someone can't answer your question, he may tell you to ask a Sage or someone else. Like your characters, NPCs are ranked from levels one-seven, the higher ones possessing more

By Shay Addams

The Omnicron Conspiracy

Well Ace, nobody said being a Captain in the Star Police would be easy. Sometimes it seems almost impossible to patrol six planets, keep an eye on the mentants and watch out for droid assassins—especially when nearly everyone clams up at the first glimpse of your badge. To top it off, your PAL robot has just informed you a drug ring is operating out of your sector. Some days, it just doesn't pay to get out of bed!

As *Omnicron Conspiracy* begins, you are walking the floor in Ace Powers' bedroom. Not very surprising, considering you'll be playing Ace for the duration (which means your Ace will *really* be on the line this time!). The game is basically a three-dimensional graphic adventure that tosses in a couple of minor role playing aspects for good measure. The emphasis is on searching for clues and special items, though some limited combat is included.

Just The FAX Ma'am

To start with, your PAL will provide you with the coordinates of the planet Cron, where the main part of the game occurs. As you make progress, other sets of coordinates become available. Eventually you must find and destroy the secret drug ring, locate the evil Limarr Quattro and foil his plans to destroy the universe with a (dare I say it?) Death Ray, and reprogram the dangerous Sarbai droids to be a bit more mellow.

Ninety percent of your adventure will be completed by walking around, talking to people and searching for hidden objects. Some things will have obvious uses. Others, like the Marry Banilow holodisk, are more subtle in function and design. Many will be of little use, and others (like your Star Policeman's badge) will be a hindrance in most circumstances. Though this is not a game for people who like intense puzzles, there are several medium-grade riddles for you to solve before you can finish.

Windows & Meters

A large window in the center of the screen provides your view of the surrounding area, three square boxes on either side representing your pockets. Inventory is limited to one item in each of the six pockets. All items can be examined, used or put down by pressing the corresponding function key (F1-F6) then selecting an option from the sub-menu.

Above and below the center window are four narrow boxes. The top one shows your stamina while the bottom displays constitution, referred to as REST and LIFE respectively. The other two boxes display the name of the current location and any items directly in front of you.

The REST meter decreases as you move around, and also in certain other special cases, such as when you use the Stardust. You'll usually have to find a bed and sleep briefly to increase your stamina. The LIFE meter goes down if you are hit by a laser blast, come into contact with a poisonous life form or take a walk in space.

An ACE In The Hole

Certain drugs will increase your constitution. And if you get a chance to "interrogate" Rand Ungar in her bedroom, a CENSORED sign will appear while your LIFE energy increases at the expense of your REST meter. One can only guess what form the interrogation is taking. Fortunately, Rand's Bed is right there. A similar phenomenon occurs when you accompany a certain young lady to her motel room, but I wouldn't advise going to sleep afterwards unless you like being robbed.

You have the choice of keyboard or joystick control. Select the keyboard, and you'll have to hold down the appropriate cursor key until you want Ace to stop. The space bar fires your weapon (no matter which pocket it's in), and the ENTER or RETURN key pulls up a sub-menu facilitating object manipulation.

The joystick works in the conventional manner. Button one fires your Laser weapon, button two pulls down the menu. The keyboard is still used to access your inventory or the special commands that turn off the sound and speed up the ac-

A Droid to Avoid?

tion. There is no parser, so the only time you'll have to type anything is when you enter a file name to save/load your game.

In CGA mode graphics are of average quality, but in any of the 16-color modes the high-resolution pictures are excellent. There's a bit of duplication in some of the areas unimportant to the game, such as the houses on Jewel Street, or the bedrooms on Cron's moon, but basically there are about 250 unique locations.

When several characters are onscreen at once, the intense animation causes the game to slow down considerably, but rarely for long. Since the slow mode is default, it helps quite a bit to press the F10 key to increase the game speed. One minor annoyance occurs when inhabitants walk, fly, slither, hop or motor by. This is quite interesting to watch, but there's a very perceptible stall as the picture is loaded. Until you get used to it, you'll probably worry that something has frozen your computer.

A Little Ad-Libbing

I was surprised by the sound. Even though unmentioned in the owners manual, the Ad-Lib enhanced sound card is supported. In fact, the game automatically detects an Ad-Lib and puts it to work playing the opening music. I also tried *Omnicron Conspiracy* on systems that had the CMS and Roland boards, but neither was supported.

Even without an enhanced sound system, the game sports some of the best music I've ever heard from the IBM one-channel chip. The bottom line, though, is that with or without the Ad-Lib, the higher quality music was only supported during the opening. During actual gameplay, sound quality reverts to the clunky but serviceable beep/boop sounds we've all come to know and settle for in IBM games. I was disappointed by this, but an Epyx representative assured me that I'd be able to hear their tires squeal with respect to music support on upcoming games.

At first I thought sound effects were sparse. Then I realized I had inadvertently turned them off at some point. Once I corrected this small oversight, *Omnicron Conspiracy* came to life with a battery of background noise. From the usual footsteps, to the music in each of the taverns,

By Stephen King

there was usually something to listen to wherever I went.

Probably my biggest complaint is that the game could have used a little more fleshing out. For example, I had the idea the PAL droid was supposed to be a rich man's Andy Devine—too bad it floats away to obscurity in the first two minutes, never to be seen again. The real estate office is another good example. There were co-ordinate listings provided for four different locations, but only one proved useful. The rest seem to have been provided for comic relief. There are many other examples of small things that would have given the game more body had they been fully exploited. Speaking 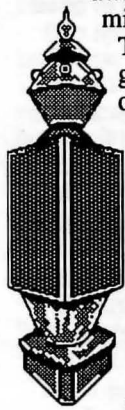of comic relief, the game is heavy on humor. Some of it leans toward an "R" rating, but this is not hidden from prospective buyers. A couple of the more risqué quotes make up part of the artwork that covers the back of the box.

How Many Disks Was It, Steve?

You get three 5.25" or two 3.5" disks. A hard drive is strictly optional but strongly recommended to avoid continual disk swaps. Copy-protection is of the "key disk" variety, which means you can make all the back-ups you want, or copy to a hard drive without worrying about hidden system files. You will, however, need to insert the original master disk briefly to start playing. An obnoxious variation also requires that you insert this key disk whenever you restart the game, so keep it handy. The owners' manual is minimal but sufficient. Be warned that the latter half includes significant hints on how to achieve your objectives in the game. These are printed upside-down and backwards to avoid giving away anything to someone not yet ready to ask for help. **Conclusions:** Epyx hit their intended audience dead center with this one. Not as complex as a role-playing game or most adventures, it would make a very good starter game for beginners or people who don't like to spend a lot of time on character development. Approximate playing time is 20 hours or less.

Skill Level: Beginner
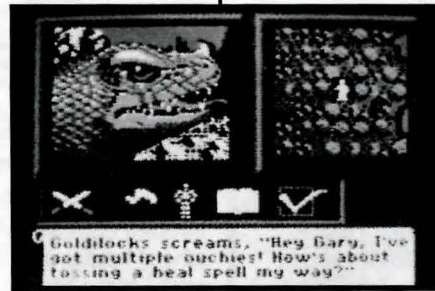**Protection:** Key Disk
Price: $49.95
Company: Epyx

Tangled Tales

grouped together in sets according to the frequency used during typical game play.

Another feature reminiscent of the *Times of Lore* interface is the fairly intelligent dialog box. As you converse with other people, different options appear in the Talk window. These invariably lead to the objects and/or clues necessary to the game's solution.

The most dramatic difference from *Times of Lore*, however, is the presentation style. Instead of what's best described as a Submarine Captain's View of the World—the very small screen of your immediate surroundings seen in *Lore—Tangled Tales* shows two windows, both much larger. One holds an aerial view, a la *Ultima*, that automatically maps as you traverse the terrain, while a "snapshot" window shows and describes the surrounding area (from a first-person view as in *Bard's Tale*) and any "special events," such as a nearby Cleric, or the beasties you (hopefully) are about to dispatch to that great bit-bucket in the sky. Also, instead of having to locate an Inn in order to rest as well as to save the game as in *Lore*, both these actions can be exercised at any time.

Note icon bar in center

Apple version

I was most impressed by the game's sense of humor. The mishap that got you into this fine mess in the first place is illuminated in a booklet entitled *A Young Wizard's First Journal* that's part of the documentation. Spend a little time studying it before you play; it will be time well-spent, believe me! It provides valuable information and adds color to the story.

Many surprises can come at any time, such as an encounter where the monsters will elect you "Mr. Congeniality" if you don't engage in combat with them. Or it might be a meeting with one of the wide range of personalities you attract as potential travelling companions, from a dwarf who talks so fast that he speaks in run-on *words* instead of run-on sentences, to a kung-fu movie reject named Bruce Ree, to a split personality Shield Maiden who switches from warmonger to bleeding-heart pacifist at the drop of a hat (usually just before combat).

Throughout the quests you'll be presented with comments from your party's members at just about any time during the game. Watch these carefully, as you never know if they are really a cleverly disguised clues to the nature of your next move.

Tangled Up by Tangled Tales

But this is supposed to be a review of the software, not a blurb on the back of the box. Don't misread me, for I was suitably impressed and quite amused by *Tangled Tales*. It's just that the game does have a few drawbacks. The documentation did not mention making copies of the game disks, so I assume that you must play on the original disks—and as Indiana Jones' father said over and over in *The Last Crusade*, "This is *intolerable!*"

I suggest you avoid using the reset key under any circumstances. I tried to cheat the Grim Reaper by resetting the machine and messed up the disk temporarily. I wound up having to restart the game from scratch. Serves me right. It was all for naught anyway, since the Wizard will resurrect you and your party: good apprentices, after all, are hard to find! Another annoying problem is that the non-player characters tend to drop out of the party with not so much as a courtesy two-weeks notice—taking all the weapons and armor you lent them (I just *knew* I shouldn't have parted with that suit of +1 leather...). All in all, though, the problems I had experienced were really trivial.

Conclusions: A good beginner's game, especially for text/graphic adventurers just getting into role-playing, *Tangled Tales* is very cleverly thought out, and the interface doesn't trip you up with unnecessary Mickey Mouse command. The abundance of humor is very refreshing, and the graphics are what we've come to expect from ORIGIN: clear, crisp and attractive. It would be great to see a more difficult adventure utilizing this game system.

Skill Level: Introductory
Protection: Program
Price: $29.95
Company: ORIGIN

Shogun: insulting Jesuits for fun and profit

"The gale tears at you, biting deep within, and you know that if you don't make landfall soon you'll all be dead. You are John Blackthorne, Pilot-Major of a dead fleet: one ship left out of five, eight and twenty men out of one hundred and seven, and only ten of those can walk. Little food, almost no water, and that brackish and foul."

So begins *Shogun*, Infocom's latest illustrated text adventure. So also begins (almost word for word) James Clavell's best-selling 1975 novel of the same name, later made into the famous ten-hour TV miniseries. And therein lies the problem...

As one of those strange individuals who somehow managed to escape prior exposure to the book and miniseries (except for a few glimpses while passing the TV room), I wondered if I were the right person to review this program. Then it occurred to me that my ignorance might be turned to good advantage; I could cover *all* the bases by first playing through the game without any preconceptions, and later trying it again after checking out the novel and video versions. Reviewing is hard work! As you've already guessed by now, in this game you play the character of John Blackthorne, an Englishman piloting the first Dutch trader-warship to reach Japan; the year is 1600.

Called "Anjin-san" by the Japanese, who have difficulty with your surname, you find yourself plunged into the middle of a political struggle between two *daimyos*, Lord Toranaga and Lord Ishido—both vying to become Shogun, supreme ruler under the Emperor. Your actions as Blackthorne will have a crucial impact on the outcome. In the course of the game, as in the course of the story, you get to pilot ships, fight samurai and ninja, outwit Ishido, advise and assist Toranaga, fall in love with (and lose) the beautiful Mariko, insult Jesuits (my favorite part!) and, most important, survive in a strange and often hostile land.

The game is divided into about 20 scenes based on chapters or incidents from the book. At the end of each, you'll be told how well you scored in that particular section (25 out of 30 points, perhaps) and be asked if you want to continue to the next. Sometimes there's a purely descriptive interlude that advances the plot between the scenes without requiring any input from the player. Because of each scene's brevity, mapping is not really required. This being an Infocom product, however, a randomly generated map does appear on-screen in the middle of the game, representing your furtive trip through Osaka by night. My advice here is simply to create a new saved game at each juncture in the maze, so you can revert easily to a previous position if you make a wrong turn.

Mac version

At the Hour of the Goat the sentries on the bridge stand aside. The cortege begins to cross. First are the heralds carrying banners bedecked with the all-powerful cipher of the Regents, then the rich palanquin, and finally more guards.
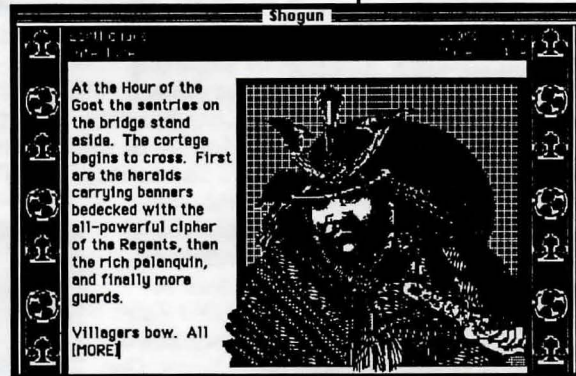
Villagers bow. All [MORE]

Picture This...

Shogun provides a decorative border around the text box, along with a status line at the top of the screen indicating the current scene, number of moves and current score. You can also ask the program to notify you each time your score increases. This is primarily a text adventure, but from time to time a scene or a "look" command will bring up an illustration. These pictures are nicely done in a Japanese style (by the same artist who did *Journey*), but they're infrequent and primarily for atmosphere, not to provide additional clues. The screen shots from the Mac II color versions look spectacular; on my monochrome Mac SE, they are still a pleasant diversion. One difficulty I encountered, though, is that you cannot easily revert to a previous illustration or text passage once it has already scrolled off the screen.

The game package comes with an instruction manual, a reference card for your particular computer, a fold-out sheet describing the construction and significance of a samurai's sword, and Blackthorne's map of the known world—the only form of copy-protection. The map is needed to answer questions Rodrigues the Portugese pilot will put to you; they can't be answered correctly without consulting the map. Luckily, the program itself also includes Infocom's now familiar on-line hints, which in this case turn out to be all too necessary.

Stuck Again, Round Eyes?

So far as I can tell, the puzzles are almost entirely derived from events in the novel. That is, the game will place you in a particular scene and expect you to act exactly as the character Blackthorne did in the book (though not necessarily in the miniseries) in order to score points. For example, when the earthquake strikes, you must first save Lord Toranaga, then Mariko, then offer your swords to Toranaga and join him in trying to urinate on the crevasse you just barely escaped (in the movie, only Toranaga needed saving here). Yes, this is one of the few Infocom games besides *Leather Goddesses* that actually rewards scatological commands in certain places—and includes a dash of PG-13 sex for good measure!

Still, unless you're already very familiar with the story, it's not at all clear to me how you would figure out precisely what to do in some situations: it didn't occur to me to give Toranaga my swords, for example, until I checked the hints. In another case, trying to guide your ship through the reef at the beginning of the game proves particularly frustrating. If, like me, you don't know your starboard from your aft, I can almost guarantee that you'll be driven to the hint menu in short order. Again, without the novel or the on-line hints, I would never guess the militantly anti-Catholic Blackthorne is supposed to "bless" the dying Mariko.

Finicky Parsing

According to the promotional material, *Shogun* uses Infocom's new parser, though I have to admit I detected no noticeable difference. Too often I still sat waiting in front of a "please be patient" message while the computer tried to respond to what seemed like a reasonable command. Too often as well, I was misled by the program's finicky attitude toward minor defects in essentially correct

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Type:	Illustrated Text Adventure
Systems:	Amiga, Mac, Apple II (128K)
Planned conversions:	IBM (August)
Version reviewed:	Macintosh

By Steven Payne

Swords of Twilight

extensive information. The "More" command lets you carry on an extended conversation by requesting the NPC to continue his line of thought without you having to type in key words as in *Ultima*.

Day fades into dusk, the colors of the landscape darken and night finally falls. Then you make camp and take turns standing watch. You've also got to eat, but Acolytes and Gloriana will help out in both cases. After exploring Albion's towns and castles, you'll eventually step along the kaleidoscopically animated Road and witness an orb representing the next world as it slowly fills with color and accompanying text alerts you when to step off. The worlds are color-coded, and the program makes thoughtful use of color throughout.

Like *Wasteland*, *Twilight* packs a stack of alternative solutions—at least two or three solutions to most problems. A stuck door might be opened by bringing in a strong Champion to force it, by casting an Open spell, or drinking a potion to temporarily boost your strength. Even major challenges like taking out the Shadowlords, which is most easily done with the appropriate Banesword wielded by the right character, can also be accomplished with other methods. Once you've looted a chest, its contents are gone forever, and a dead character's name vanishes from the roster—stressing the need for cautious use of material and personnel.

Attitudinal Adjustment Time

I'm not talking about Happy Hour at the local pub: the "Shift" option lets you pick a character's disposition: Friendly, Polite, Wary or Hostile (required for combat). You can get in a lot of trouble walking into a new castle or world with a bad attitude, for people who would otherwise offer tips might attack instead. They'll also recall your actions and treat you accordingly on your next visit to their homeland. The emphasis on attitude is another element that puts this game in a realm all its own.

Depending on your party leader's attitude, an assortment of subtle interactions and exchanges may occur, since a party member's potential responses vary according to his or her attitude. If Wary, Percodan might says he's "Percodan the Impertinent" rather than giving away his full title via the "Who" command, as he would with a less cautious attitude.

Furthermore, the NPCs' responses depend on your character's rank as well as what he says, taking a level four Wizard more seriously than one who's just level two. This makes interaction even more involved than talking with the aliens in *Star Flight*. It's also smarter. Instead of

giving your name (with a Who command) and waiting for the NPC to ask why you're in his town, you can punch in a quick Who and a Why, and both are recognized—a slick interface indeed.

Magic and Combat

Four kinds of Mages practice Conjuring, Enchanting, Sorcery and Witchcraft. Spells are ranked in levels one through seven, and there are at least two Mages of varying levels for each type of magic. Only one Mage is allowed in a party, so you'll have to switch them in and out (by returning to Gloriana) in order to avail yourself of their assorted effects.

That means deciding which kinds of magic will be most useful to fulfill a specific task or in a certain castle. For combat, you'll want a Conjurer, who can summon an Earth, Air, Fire or Water Elemental. Your Conjurer falls on the floor, while you direct the Elemental's attacks. Enchanters can affect the party or the enemy in various ways, with spells such as Sleep, Doubt, Bestone and Conceal. Wizards are also combat-oriented, while Witches are good at healing.

In all, there are 44 spells, 28 Elementals and seven spells for determining your degree of power when controlling a summoned Elemental. For some spells, you first type in a mantra, then the spell. Others demand you type the spell's name three times, so a fast, accurate typist makes the most effective Mage.

To attack, you "move" at a foe and hit the button. Diagonal attacks with a stick *and* keyboard controls are allowed, which is convenient and realistic. Vividly penned battle reports—"a hit, a palpable hit!"—for each party member appear in their own windows, and the color of their names indicates health status. You'll enjoy a bit of animation during combat, with swinging, swooshing swords and the clank-clang of steel on armor plate.

You make a copy of the data disk to play on and can save one quest on it (at any time if outdoors, or on revisiting Gloriana). Dual and hard disks are supported, and the pause feature is invaluable. An attractive custom font underscores the impact of the text, whose imagery often exceeds that of the graphics.

Hey Guys! The Quest is over here!

When I played solo, my two computer-controlled party members suffered the same problem seen in other such games, such as *Wizard's Crown*: they insisted on going left when I want them to go right, kept getting trapped in corners, and so on. They went way off-course in castles with small rooms and lots of doors near each other, where I sometimes had to take manual control of a Knight to maneuver him back with the others. I felt like my name should be Larry, because my fighters were acting like "my brother

Darryl and my other brother Darryl."

This should not be as annoying in the final version, since the main thing being worked on as I played this beta version was the computer-controlled characters' intelligence. And Freeman says the docs are supposed to include tips on how to most effectively guide the others around in a solo game, a process that reminded me of one of those puzzles in which you move the numbers into place by pushing one that moves another, etc.

Group Play

I had a lot more fun with a three-person game than playing solo, and was repeatedly surprised when the other people tried things that never occurred to me. The main purpose of the Dragon guarding one of the Gates is copy-protection (he shows a symbol you must identify by matching it with one of those in the packaging), so I never considered offering it a gift. But when someone did, the Dragon gave her a flask of Balm.

Another side of group play is that you can work together, appointing one person to do the talking, formulating strategy and tactics *before* entering a new location, and so on—deeds most of us have never done in a computer RPG, activities that give *Swords* a unique identity and personality.

Imaginative names for places and people—like Tessalon the Green, Adept of the Goetic Order of Albion, and those of Elementals like Bonfire and Clod (whose names I'm convinced are a twisted take-off on Bonnie and Clyde)—enhance the atmosphere of the fantasy lands you'll traipse across in search of the seven swords. And for the first time in an Amiga program, the quality of the prose actually surpasses that of the graphics, as Freeman's writing is the most eloquent I've seen in a role-playing game.

Conclusions: Freeman assures me "Darryl and Darryl" will be far smarter and easier to control by the time the game is released in September. Since this is a *preview* based on a beta version, I'll wait till the finished product is available before arriving at final conclusions on it strictly as a solo game. But with several people playing, you don't have to contend with the Darryls' occasionally erratic behavior—so I *can* readily recommend it right now for two or three players. Distinguished by subtle interactions with NPCs and its well-told tale as much as by its group play capability, *Swords of Twilight* invites you to participate in a new, multi-dimensional adventuring experience. (If it's converted someday, Freeman says it would go to IBM first.)

Skill Level: Intermediate to Advanced
Protection: Off-line
Price: $49.95
Company: Free Fall/Electronic Arts

Walkthrough:BattleTech

The Citadel
Your main goal is to learn how to operate the Mechs at the Training Center. This will take six lessons, between which you can explore the surrounding compound. The game requires time to pass between lessons, so here are some other things to do:

Making Money
Credits are periodically posted to your account, but you'll have to invest in the stock market at Comstar Station (one of the many buildings in the compound) to make enough to buy all the necessary gear. Only two stocks are worth your while: Nashan Diversified (NasDiv) and Baker Pharmaceuticals (BakPhar). Nas-Div is a steady performer, so if you do nothing but put all your credits in this stock, you should amass quite a fortune by the end of the game. BakPhar is a speculative stock that will make you rich in a short time if your timing is right. One strategy is to put most of your credits in NasDiv and a few in BakPhar. Save regularly and check the market often. When BakPhar starts going up, put all your credits in it, and usually your money doubles and doubles again. It is essential to save your game whenever you get ahead, though, for BakPhar's value can drop to zero in no time! After investing, leave Comstar and go do something (explore, rest, visit the weapons shop, take a Training lesson...), returning frequently to assess your holdings. It takes a fairly long time to earn enough credits to buy a serious weapon and good armor, not to mention the money you will need for Training, so you may have to wander about the compound pointlessly, waiting for your stocks to go up.

Weapons, Armor and Other Gear
The Inferno never runs out of ammo and rarely misses, so it's advisable to stay around until you can afford one. But you *can* get by with less firepower. Weapon shops are everywhere throughout Pacifica, and you can also salvage weapons after combat. Buy whatever armor you can afford for you and any allies. Armor shops are in many towns. Get a MedKit (sold at any of several hospitals) and a

Mapper (at the video store in Starport and at a few other towns). Later on, get your Mechs modified at a Mech-It Lube's Speed Shop and you'll become almost invincible.

Skills
:he Citadel is the *only* place to get Combat training, and for this you must have money. Spend your credits to become proficient in as many skills as you can, *especially* the skill pertaining to whatever weapon you're packing. Two other skills, Mech Repair and Medical Training, can be purchased at any Mechit-Lube or Hospital, and there are several throughout the region you will explore.

The Invasion, Starport and the Jail
On the sixth or seventh Training mission, you'll suddenly face real opponents—the Kuritans, who have invaded the com-
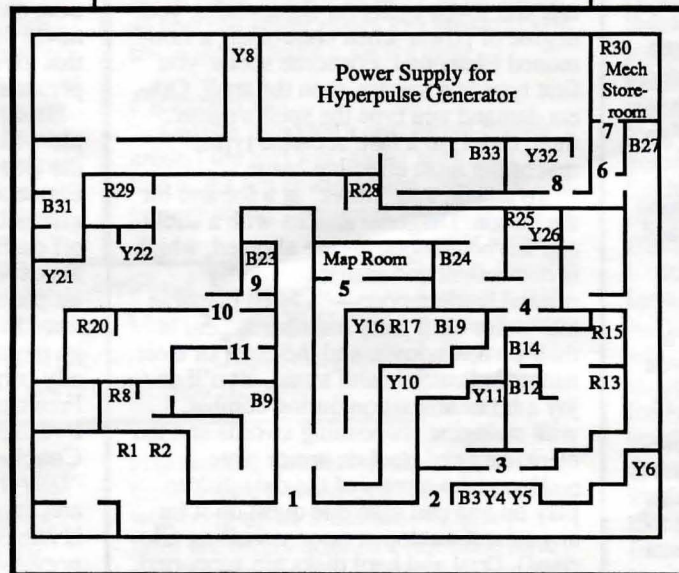

Power Supply for Hyperpulse Generator

pound. You've got to escape to Starport, a neutral city northeast of the starting point. If lucky, you'll escape with a Mech. There are two ways to do so. Choose a Locust for your final mission, then head west when the force field around the Training grounds disappears, and get out of town. Or use a Chameleon and, as soon as you're attacked, walk back into the building you just left. When the walls come down, exit west out of the city. (Some people report being unsuccessful at either method; if that

happens, you can get Mechs at several other points.)

Starport
Head northeast to Starport. Save frequently if you decide to fight attackers in hopes of obtaining money and equipment. Inside, immediately find the Clothing Store and get rid of your uniform to avoid being attacked as often. Then check your stocks at Comstar and reinvest if desired. Check out the Inaugural Hall to learn of the Inauguration, then you might want to earn credits by fighting at the Arena. Repairs can be costly if using a rental Mech, however, and may even exceed your 250-credit payoff.

Rex Pearce and the Crescent Hawks
At the Inaugural Hall later that night you'll meet Rex Pearce, an ally. Save the game before entering, since you might get killed when you leave with him. Rex gives you a box from your father and says he's got a new Commando Mech that Katrina left him. A member of the Crescent Hawks, he says your mission is to round up other Hawks, find a secret cache of spare Mech parts your father hid, and signal Princess Katrina to return to Pacifica for the parts and your team. But the enemy attacks before you can look at the holocard in the box (which is necessary to locate the cache), and the card is damaged. If you survive, you can roam about Starport gathering gear, earning credits and skills, having Rex's Commando modified at the Speed Shop and so on.

The Jail and the Undercover Agent
Go a bit north and east to a small town with a jail and hospital. Save right away, for you may meet an ally who turns out to be an undercover agent. If having trouble getting people to talk, or if services like Mechit-Lube are always closed, you've got an agent in the group. Put him outside on foot and get into a few battles. He'll either be killed by the enemy or Rex. If you don't have your own Mech, steal one from the Jail's parking garage.

By Frank Chin

Finding the other Hawks, Dr. Tellhim and the Cache

There are two places to view the damaged holocard. The easiest, quickest way is to return to the destroyed Citadel and go to your **cbssbdlt**. You'll find a holocard viewer and can see most of the message. The second way is to go to one of the several towns southwest of Starport. One has the Mayor's house in it, and you can pick the lock and enter. Use the Mayor's holocard viewer and you learn that you must find Dr. Tellhim at his hut in the **opsuixftu**. He'll say where to find the cache. (His hut won't appear on the map unless you view the holocard.) Head **opsuixftu**, exploring the various towns. You need to pick up two more Crescent Hawks: one is a doctor, found by visiting hospitals, checking the records and talking to people there. Get him a MedKit to recover faster from wounds. Your other ally is a Tech, found by visiting the Mechit-Lubes and asking to Talk and Apprentice. It's invaluable to get him additional Tech training, for he can scavenge spare parts from enemy Mechs you destroy, thus earning you money as well as simplifying repairs to your own Mechs.

Tellhim is in a building located near the **xbufs**, near sector **uijsuz-six/gpsuz** x **gpsuz-ojof/uxfouz** on the map. With the proper crew and gear, you'll pass his tests and he'll tell you that the cache is on an **jtmboe** to the **tpvuifbtu** (**uijsuz-ojof/tjyuz** x **gjfuz-gjwf/tjyuz**). Once there, enter the cave.

The Computer Terminals

You are in a maze full of locked doors and computer terminals. You have a keycard that needs to be imprinted with a different Red number, Blue number and Yellow number to open each door. Each computer throughout the complex has its own special color coded number that can imprint to your keycard, and each computer's code can be used only once. You must open eleven different doors (that's 33 different computer color imprints you must find) to get to the Map Room and the Power Transmitter. See the map for location of the computer terminals.

After you open door E, you find yourself in the Map Room and must activate a combination of planets to get the password (**Qftiu, Cfokbnjo, Tlzf, Tvnnfs, Szfstpo, Lbuijm, Bdifsbobs**). Activate the planets by touching them all, then walk over to the control panel on the west wall for your password. Leave the Map Room, go back through the maze to the upper control rooms, and turn on the transmitter to call Katrina (you do this by walking into the panels).

Map Key: BattleTech
A: R28, Y16, B24
B: R8, Y21, B9
C: R25, Y10, B33
D: R20, Y22, B27
E: R30, Y32, B23
F: R13, Y4, B31
G: R29, Y6, B12
H: R17, Y26, B19
I: R2, Y18, B7
J: R15, Y11, B14
K: R1, Y5, B3

Adventure Hotline

Sword of the Samurai

MicroProse hopes to get their follow-up to *Pirates* off to market this summer, according to a press release dated June 20. Set for 384K IBMs first, it mixes text windows with battle screens that allow three kinds of combat: real-time land wars between armies, single-handed battles and dueling. Like many new IBM games, it supports the Ad-Lib music board.

Contest Winners

This winner of this month's "Keys to the Kingdoms" contest, Sandy Poynor, will get the game of her choice. So does the Random Contest winner, Kenneth Kirchoff.

Lost City Contest Winner Lost by Lackadaisical Editor

Last month we incorrectly identified the winner of the The Lost City contest as Ken Lin, who incorrectly guessed Kathmandu. Ken still gets his prize, but so will the real winner, whose entry we lost during a recent move. Just write & remind us of what you said in your letter, while we continue our search for it. Let's see…what's under *that* stack of papers?

Quest for Clues II

Here they are, all the adventures covered in our latest cluebook.

7 Spirits of Ra
2400 A.D.
A D & D: Pool of Radiance
Alien Mind
Azarok's Tomb
Bard's Tale III
Beyond Zork
The Colony
Dark Lord
Deja Vu
Dondra
Dr. Dumont's
   Wild P. A. R. T. I.
Dream Zone
Eternal Dagger
Faery Tale Adventure
Guild of Thieves
Jinxter
King's Quest IV
Leisure Suit Larry I & II
Manhunter
Maniac Mansion
Plundered Hearts
Police Quest I

Quarterstaff
Questron II
Return to Atlantis
Sherlock Holmes
   (Infocom)
Space Quest I & II
Star Command
Talisman
Tangled Tales
Times of Lore
Tower of Myraglen
Twilight Zone
Ultima V
Uninvited
Wasteland
Willow
Wizardry IV
Zak McKracken

Order from QuestBusters, and you'll automatically get three free issues added to your sub (two for Canada and Adventure Express, one for overseas). That means you won't have to rip the coupon out of your book. $24.95, plus shipping ($3 US, $6 APO/FPO/Canada, $12 Overseas--US funds only, no credit cards).

The Scoop on The Scoop: Agatha Christie Returns

Where was this game when I needed it? Specifically, 1983: the year I got hopelessly stuck on my first text adventure, the much harder *Deadline*. *The Scoop* is easier, yet even those who solved *Deadline* will face some thorny puzzles as they snoop about England in 1930.

A crime reporter for the Daily Courier, you must unravel a mysterious series of murders that began with Geraldine Tracey's death and led to the killing of one witness—not to mention another reporter working the story. A time limit of about a week is imposed: fail to "scoop" the rival paper by cracking the "Bungalow Murder Case," and you'll wind up writing obituaries again. Besides determining whodunnit, you must set up the killer and be there when Scotland Yard nabs the villain.

This means tracking down people and questioning them, then comparing their information and alibis. Of course, it helps to look for physical evidence such as a gold brooch and an IOU, which you can show around to elicit reactions and more leads. A blurb on the box implies death is a possibility; I was merely knocked unconscious, never killed, but maybe I just didn't alienate the right people.

Some help is available from your editor, Mr. Wrightwell (the journalistic counterpart of Mr. Goodwrench?), who will often suggest a fresh line of inquiry. Early on he told me to visit Scotland Yard for more information on the murder weapon and where to go from there. One Scotland Yard detective also serves an advisory capacity, and another plays a more active role while conducting his own investigation.

Travel between the cities of Brighton Beach, London, Southhampton is quickly accomplished by train. Upon arrival, you might call a cab (the only comic relief, a caricature of a British cab, rolls in when you do), while some of the game's 80-plus locations are reached only by bus or on foot. (If another character leaves in a taxi, my favorite option—Follow that cab!—becomes available.) Rudimentary mapping is involved, but you won't have to worry about locked doors, for they're all wide open. As night

falls, you eventually get sleepy and must go home to bed, or eventually the program sends you straight to bed.

Your character, whom others will call by any name you enter at the start, may be male or female and is illustrated with a semi-animated figure. Buildings, trees and other background elements lack color and visual depth, but a plethora of original patterns imbue the black and white art with a charming style. People appear in color, and animation is limited to moving your character left or right by guiding him across the screen via cursor keys, joystick or mouse.

Amethyst Manwaring and Beryl Blackwood, Arthur Potts and Mr. Tracey—over the course of the story, you'll meet more than 30 characters, most possessing at least one-dimensional personalities. Some won't talk right away; instead they say when and where to meet for a discussion, and you'll miss crucial gossip if you miss certain meetings. At the inquest and in other situations, you keep running into Denis Oliver, who's covering the story for a rival paper, and the sense of competition that emerges is rare in a one-player game.

A sub-menu allows you to grill people about themselves, someone else, their alibi, or show them an object. Talking to people was too repetitive a process for me to enjoy, though I had fun harassing the judge at the inquest by asking him about *his* alibi, which got him thoroughly upset. While you're talking to someone, his expression may shift during the conversation.

Agatha Gives Good 'face

Thirteen verbs fill a menu below the picture, but you don't use them to interact with onscreen objects as with interfaces in *Zak McKracken* and *Uninvited*—only with things you've already taken. One unique verb, "Observe," lets you listen to the conversation of others in the room. That's handy for novices: since the other characters do the talking, you don't have to fret over exactly what to say to whom.

The "Search" verb works on the room

itself, not on different pieces of furniture in it, so you don't have to worry about forgetting to rummage through everything. That's one aspect that, despite the crime's complexity, makes *The Scoop* accessible to novices.

However, you'll have to revisit key places and search them again, for many pieces of evidence get moved about as the story evolves. It's also crucial to talk to people again as you learn what's really going on, for their responses to the "What's on your mind?" option changes now and then. Menu options are expanded to include names of new people and places, to which you can then travel and query. Subtleties such as these impart a sense of genuine depth to the gaming experience. There is no "Use" verb, which eliminates significant object manipulation—instead, the focus is on "clue manipulation," which must be done in your head.

Weak points are few: a dearth of humor and special effects, minimal sound effects, and some illogical consistencies. One such inconsistency occurred after Wrightwell told me to check out Beryl Blackwood's death. I used "ask about someone" on him to refresh my memory—and he said he had not "the foggiest notion" who she was!). It's a two-sided Apple disk that supports a mouse on the II c and GS.

The IBM version comes in both disk formats that are sold in separate boxes (unless you prefer to pay more for a box with both). You may save eight games on a separate disk. Both versions support dual drives; hard disks are supported for IBM.

Conclusions: An appealing disk drive detective game, *The Scoop* has a limited yet effective interface, blocky but pleasing graphics, and enough fine points in the game design (particularly time-related ones) to satisfy mystery enthusiasts of all ages The plot twists about here and there, providing an occasional surprise just when you think you've got it all figured out.
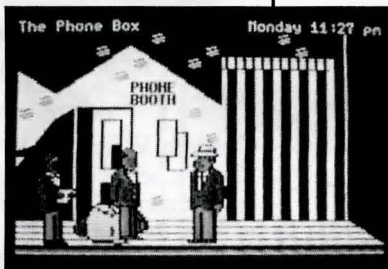

Type: Animated Mystery Adventure
Systems: IBM (256K for CGA, Tandy; 512K for EGA); Apple II (128K)
Planned conversions: None
Version reviewed: Apple

The Phone Box — Monday 11:27 pm — PHONE BOOTH

Apple version

Skill Level: Intermediate
Protection: Key Word
Price: $39.95; $49.95 for box with both IBM formats
Company: Spinnaker

By Shay Addams

Barbarian Chain sword Massacre: The Sword of Sodan

Seek and Slay the Evil Wizard! That must be the second oldest formula around for computer games—right after Shoot the Marching Aliens. The Seek part is easy here: you just stride from one screen to the next and kill everything that gets in the way. Sounds simple, but slaying that carrion-bloated slug, Zoras the Necromancer, at the end will require every bit of swordsmanship, wit and perseverance you possess.

It's a familiar story: Zoras took over a fantasy land, slew its rightful ruler and unleashed hordes of horrific monsters. The Prince and Princess were spirited away to the most distant part of the kingdom to live and train with Sodan, a legendary warrior who turns out to be their grandfather. When he thinks you're ready, he'll give his magic sword to your character (who may be male or female; this is not a sexist game) and sends you off to slay the wizard. The rest is pure hack and slash, with just a bit of thinking along the way.

Gameplay centers on timing and furious assault. The more blows you land on the enemy, the faster he falls. You can't leave one level for the next until all foes are vanquished, or in rare cases, bypassed. Eventually you'll find potions that might zap the enemy, give you a magic shield, boost your hitting power or even bestow an extra life. Along with your sorcerous blade, you also have five lives—useful in an action arcade game, but completely out of character for this story. March far enough into the game, and you'll also get extra lives. Lose them all, and your quest ends. Gloomy blue clouds spell out GAME OVER while a mournful dirge plays.

The few problems, such as how to feed the hungry bird-beast or cross the lava pits, pose elementary challenges at best. Any half-decent arcade gamer will have long ago mastered all the techniques for solving such basic tests of skill. Since there's no better swordsman than Ken the Barbarian, I fought my way through one unlikely trap after another.

Eleven levels of play await, each made up of three or more screens that scroll by as your character moves past. Graphics span three bit planes: foreground features, a middle level where the animated characters fight, and the background. Watch the middle and background sections for minor spot animation

and other special effects in some of the later levels. It's a clever implementation of the Amiga's abilities—but sometimes detracts from the fun, for the view of your character and foe may be obscured by foreground elements when you need to see what's going on in the battle.

The joystick-only interface (no mouse or keyboard controls) arms you with 10 options, such as kneel, kneel and thrust, etc. It reminded me of the swordfighting sequence in *Pirates* and is certainly as good.

The Sword's Good Point

Sodan's chief pleasure emerges in its beautifully crafted backgrounds and monsters. Background and foreground features are all superbly drawn, and fighting figures are quite large, well-conceived and smooth in their animated combat routines. You'll hear a musical score that's heroic, mournful and has a catchy beat that I could dance to. The bad guys speak to you, and a voice-over narrator tells you what to do in each sequence, in case you have trouble figuring it out.

Each mini-episode begins with a quatrain of poetry giving a cryptic description of the current goal, which really sets the mood. If you (or your Amiga!) have a megabyte of RAM, a novel "replay" feature lets you play back your last attempt as a kind of Saturday morning cartoon you can use to study your mistakes. The program passes out points extravagantly for each blow you strike, and you can save the Hall of Fame's five highest scores to disk.

Drawbacks of the Sword

Sodan's originality was lavished on the art. As far as story lines go, even games such as *Gauntlet*, *Barbarian* and *Rastan* show more creativity in terms of characters and obstacles to overcome, and there's no valid comparison to a dedicated RPG like *Faery Tale Adventure*.

You've heard of—heck, you may even be a fan of—splatter movies. This is a splatter computer game, which some people might consider a good point! Every

Ken the Barbarian at work

time your sword bites into the flesh of a foe, blood gushes like oil from an Exxon tanker; when *your* character is hit, however, there's not a trace of gore. Well, maybe a few drops, but it's just Kool-Aid blood: it splashes nicely but doesn't flow or coagulate.

The bad guys get a few lines, such as "Halt, stranger!", but you're limited to grunting in pain or screaming in astonishment when wounded or surprised. The digitized sound is high quality but unoriginal. Just once I wanted to stop playing and type in some heroic speech for my on-screen ego to declaim: a good "Crom, count the dead!" or a Tarzanesque ape call would have made me feel good.

As the Fantasy World Scrolls

Scrolling also presents a problem: your character, driving the enemy back as he moves from left to right, can move faster than the screen can scroll right to left. Thus, you often find yourself in a situation where enemies hiding just off the screen can still attack you—so most of the fighting occurs offscreen in such cases. That's no fun to look at, and makes it hard to tell how you're doing. Several times I walked into monsters I couldn't yet see. (After finishing one foe, go slowly until you meet the next.) One last quibble: since one of my players is a Barbarian Princess complete with iron bra, I wish they'd given me a really exotic beauty instead of this mousy heroine.

Documentation is skimpy: eight half-sized pages mostly filled with art, credits and the clichéd story. But for real docs, don't start with disk one. Boot disk three instead, and Soran explains technical details of the game's creation. He won't reveal any secrets, but the hacking info should amuse most Amiga fans.
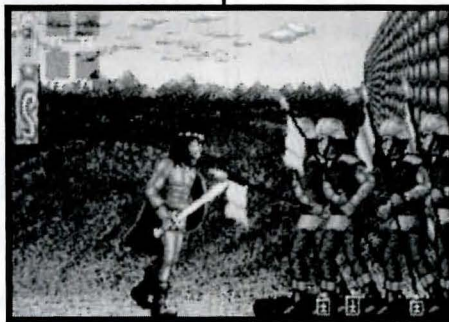**Conclusions:** If you're really into personal combat, *Sword of Sodan* may be the program for you. I only wish the story was up to the technical virtuosity evident in the graphics and sound.

Type: Action Adventure
Systems: Amiga (joystick required)
Planned conversions: GS (fall), maybe IBM

Skill Level: Beginner
Protection: Program
Price: $49.95
Company: Discovery Software

By Ken St. André

CES: "The horror…"

included Strategic Simulations, New World Computing (who also left Mediagenic for EA recently), Interstel, Strategic Studies Group and Miles Computing, where Ali Atabek of Mindcraft was burning the *Candle* at both ends, so to speak. Besides *The Magic Candle II*, Ali is also working on a project called the *Keys to ?*. All he's revealing at this time is that the question mark will be replaced by a city's name [as long as it's not *Keys to the Kingdoms*!].

New World Computing officially released *Might and Magic II* for the PC. This version features more than 90 spells, over 200 weapons and items, more than 250 animated monsters, a large graphics window that uses 16-color, double hi-res graphics and at least one bug [see Hotline]. Nearby, Interstel was showing *Starfleet II*, which should be out for IBM in August. SSG, better known for their wargames, will soon release their first fantasy adventure, *Fire King*. While this game looks like it will be very action-oriented, it should also challenge your puzzle-solving skills.

Live and Let Die, Die, Die

At SSI's booth, Linda Blanchard was showing *Curse of the Azure Bonds*. After I complained about a 20-minute tavern brawl that my party was innocently dragged into the last time I played *Pool of Radiance*, Linda assured me the marathon combat sessions that frustrated many *Pool* players were eliminated from *Bonds*. (IBM, C 64 in July, Apple later.)

Mediagenic's suite at the Ritz had plenty to offer adventurers, with new titles from Interplay, Microillusions, Dynamix, Activision and Infocom. Interplay demoed a nearly completed Apple *Dragon Wars*—an auto-mapping FRPG set in the mostly water-covered world of Oceana. The game is essentially *Bard's Tale IV* and, in fact, will support characters from the first three *Bards*. (C 64 soon IBM by fall)

Reached over a year ago, the licensing agreement between Hanna-Barbera and MicroIllusions will soon see the release of four graphic adventures based on *Scooby Doo* and *Jonny Quest* (both IBM, C 64), *The Jetsons* (Amiga, Mac),

The Flintstones (GS, C 64, IBM). *The Jetsons* and *Jonny Quest* looked the most promising, but all four should bring back some fond memories.

The big news at MicroIllusions, however, was the announcement of the soon-to-be-released *Questmaster I: The Prism of Heheutotol*, the first of a trilogy of illustrated text adventures. The GS version will feature Super HiRes graphics, music and digitized sound effects, while the IBM version will support VGA and the Ad-Lib sound board. Both will have over 100 graphic screens and more than 30 animated sequences.

On an IBM, one of the best-"looking" new titles of the year was at the Dynamix table. It's an interactive movie (haven't I heard that somewhere before?) called *David Wolf: Secret Agent*, which was created by using color digitizing to capture still frames of live actors. The game uses a unique VCR interface with options such as "Fast-Forward" and "Scene-Skip." The only real problem is that, aside from four action sequences, it looks like the type of game you'll spend a lot of time just watching. If this turns out to be the case, you're probably better off renting a James Bond video for three bucks than paying $49.95 for this IBM game.

Activision introduced an August release for the IBM version of *Manhole*, originally written in HyperCard for the Mac. The goal is simply to explore the worlds above and below the *Manhole*, but there are no puzzles to solve and no scoring system. It will support all your favorite graphics modes, as well as the Roland MT-32 and Ad-Lib sound boards. *Arthur: The Quest for Excaliber* was the only new Infocom title announced at CES (Mac, Amiga now, Apple II and IBM later).

A strong candidate for the worst-named introduction at the show is Activision's *Cosmic Osmo*. Like the original *Manhole*, Osmo is a HyperCard-based "fantasy exploration title" for the Mac. This time there are four worlds to explore, with several animated sequences,

It Came from the Desert

Dragon Wars, from Interplay

but again there are no rules, puzzles or points.

FREESCAPING on the Dark Side

While at the Ritz, I decided to stop up to the Cinemaware suite, where I found an enthusiastic Jerry Albright with three new quests. The first was a three-dimensional space adventure called *Dark Side*, which will test your puzzle-solving skills. It uses a three-dimensional system called FREESCAPE—the same system used to create last year's *Space Station Oblivion*. FREESCAPE allows travel in all directions through a smoothly scrolling world (IBM, Amiga, ST, C 64).
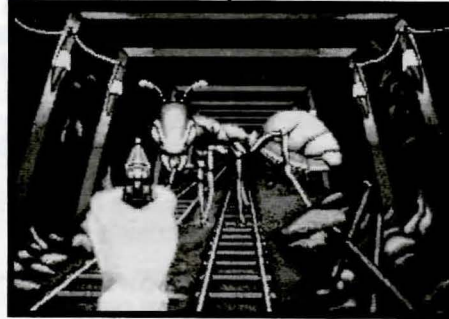
Not satisfied with bringing the "interactive movie" to the home computer, Cinemaware has released the first 3-D interactive stage production. Based on the musical *The Kristal of Kronos*, *The Kristal* combines graphic adventure with action sequences such as swordfighting and space battles. (Amiga and ST out now, IBM planned)

The third new title showing at the Cinemaware suite was actually two new graphic adventures—an Amiga double-feature called *It Came From The Desert* and, playing on the same disk, *It Came From The Desert II*. In the first game, you must convince the inhabitants of the quiet desert community of Lizard Breath, California, that they'll be overrun by giant ants if they don't help you locate the ants' nest and destroy them. The townspeople, however, seem more concerned with several sub-plots involving blackmail, jealousy and strange cults in the desert. Besides winning the community's trust through dialogue, you must also combat the ants in several arcade sequences. Both games feature music, sound effects and cinematic visual effects that will remind you of all those great 50's horror movies.

Meanwhile, back at McCormick, Accolade was entering the graphic adventure and role-playing genres in a big way with the introduction of three new games for the IBM. *Conspiracy: The Deadlock Files* is a graphic adventure that weaves more than 500 digitized photos of New York City into an intriguing plot that involves the FBI, CIA, KGB and a conspiracy to overthrow the U.S. government.

Another new Accolade title, *The Third Courier* is a role-playing spy thriller set in East and West Berlin. In this one, you as-

sume the role of a secret agent responsible for finding and recovering NATO's defense plans before a courier can sell them to Moscow. The third new Accolade title, *Don't Go Alone*, is a role-playing game that requires you to battle it out against demons in a haunted house. Your party consists of four characters you can select from a pre-built roster of 16 characters including scientists, psychics, scholars and adventurers. All three titles should be available for IBM sometime this fall.

Rogues in Space

When I finally made my way to the ORIGIN booth, I was pleasantly surprised by three new games sure to keep adventurers busy this fall. The first is *Space Rogue*, a unique game combining sophisticated flight simulation and space combat with elements of traditional RPGs. The flight simulator portion of the program looked great on an IBM with EGA graphics. Animation was smooth and fast, using solid-filled objects rather than wireframe images.

Designer Todd Porter demoed his new ORIGIN game, *Knights of Legend*. This is the first of six modular FRPs that can be used together to create a single huge world that your characters can travel through and explore. The game features more than 30 towns to explore and over 300 bit-mapped pictures to see. It will feature one of most comprehensive combat systems ever created, enabling you to customize your own weapons and armor. (IBM, C 64 and Apple II, September)
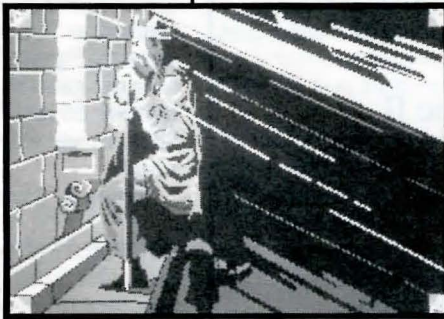
Moebius fans can look forward to the release of a sequel this fall for IBM, C 64, and Apple II. *Windwalker* also blends martial arts action and role-playing in an Oriental setting. The martial arts sequences were created by digitizing photographs of people in the various fighting positions. You trivia buffs might be interested to learn that the game's author, Greg Malone, claims that the model for the ninja assassin was his ex-wife. You should also know that the bearded face in the hood that appears in both *Moebius* and *Windwalker* is Greg—and that an undocumented feature in *Windwalker* will let you manipulate his facial expression by pressing the number keys on your computer.

Sierra's Sorcerian, Two Sequels

This also promises to be a busy fall for

Sierra, who announced seven new titles: the action-oriented *Sorcerian* and more traditional *Hero's Quest*, both RPGs, an adventure/submarine simulation called *Code Name: Ice Man*, a pair of 3-D animated adventures—*The Colonel's Bequest* and *Conquests of Camelot*—plus *Manhunter: San Francisco* and *Leisure Suit Larry III*. All are promised for the second half of '89 and will be out first for IBM, then ST, Amiga, GS and Mac.

For all you role-players who want a game with real "Nintendo-style action," for your $3,000 IBM with VGA graphics (or for a GS) Broderbund announced *The Ancient Land of Ys*, a best-seller in Japan. It's a relatively sophisticated RPG with nice graphics, a great musical score, extensive combat and magic systems, several puzzles and a convenient interface. But many gamers may not take this one seriously because it really *does* look and feel like a Nintendo original.

Broderbund is also importing *Murder Club* for the IBM from Japan. It's an interactive graphic adventure for mystery fans, requiring you you to solve a murder through careful detective work and strict adherence to police procedure. You'll have a police library for research, and a crime lab where you can send the evidence for analysis. As you play, a chart shows how the various areas of your investigation are progressing and lets you know where to concentrate your efforts.

Sierra's Conquests of Camelot

Gumby's Quest

Finally, one of the most exciting new titles at the show came from a most unlikely place—Spinnaker Software. That's right, the people who brought us *Sargon* and the *Better Working* series of business applications, are working on a futuristic role-playing adventure that could be a real winner. *Star Tribes: Myth of the DragonLord* will use conventional computer graphics, 3-D modelling and (get this) digitized "claymation" to create a game that looks like nothing you've ever seen before on an IBM—or anything else except Saturday morning cartoons. The demo turned a lot of heads as the animated clay figures General Thorax and JonJen the two-headed starpoet mugged it up onscreen. If you've ever wondered what it would be like to watch Gumby and Pokey while doing some heavy-duty hallucinogens, this game's for you.

Deathbringer: How do I get Holy Cross? Chameleon Cloak? Also need maps. Tom Page, 96 Haddon Pl.., Upper Montclair, NJ 07043

Dungeonmaster: Where is key that fits at bottom of long stairway? What are necklaces for? How do I defeat cloaked figure on level above gem? Nathan Franklin, 30 Parkview Dr, Feeding Hills, MA 01030

Ultima IV: Need combinations for some altar rooms. Also, where is candle? Tara Lynch, Star Rte Box 209-J, Albrightsville, PA 18210

Police Quest 2: How do you get through hotel scene? Where is scuba certificate? Leisure Suit 2: Where are scissors to cut rope on lifeboat? Chris Elder, 209 Colington Dr, Lynchburg, VA 24502

Wizardry 2: On sixth level, need help with riddle. Robert Judd Jr, PSC Box 5197, APO Miami, FL 34001

Fool's Errand: Need help on three ships, stone wall. Nadia Madden, 5 Willard Circle, Bedford, MA 01730

Bard's Tale 1: need answer to 'name one of cold, foretold, twofold." Bard 2: What to type in for Dreamspell? Brad Andresen, 5742 Princeton Pl., Ypsilanti, MI 48197

Ultima 5: How do I play "Stones" on the harpsichord? Keith Williamson, 144 Patricia Dr, San Luis Obispo, CA 93401

Bard 2-3: need maps and character-building tips. Jamie Squires, Rte 1, Box 251, Mannington, WV 26582

Wizardry 1: need maps, hints, etc. Mark Oehlert, 5041 Bent Tree Loop, Stone Mountain, CA 30083

The Pawn: how do I make lever to get past boulder? Also need help with Guild of Thieves. Erik Hom, 236 Elmira St, San Francisco, CA 94124

Azure Bonds: How do I get shrink-wrap off package? S. Addams, c/o QB

Prophecy

Cast "hold monster" spell to freeze monsters having high hit points. Leave that screen and return; monster will reappear, still paralyzed but with low HP. Kill again for mucho experience points. Repeat to boost character levels.

Dennis Ewell

The Magic Candle

Vocha: hokde, kaflth, pokandajo; god: eftah, eftah, yolimdar, pehriz. Khazan: eksam, rattabl, gangamurt; god: vreamen, eftah, yolimdar, tiz. Shadrum: damlaz, firtarafa, yaklamatofar. Thakass: kuramdafur, tevalato, rekmetrek. Vocha's on the southeast corner of the Isle of Ice. Kazan's on the beach west of Delkona; teleport to get there. Teleportals: three cubes, Pheron-Hidden Vale; three pyramids, Khiriss-Shendy; pyramid-sphere-pyramid, Kherbel-Fubernel; circle-cube-circle, Shendy-Dakland; pyramid-circle-pyramid, Meardom-Knessos; pyramid-cube-pyramid, Shadrum-Shiran; circle-circle-circle, Bedangidar-Shendy. Obelisks (and three Words of Will) are under King's Castle north of **Lofttpt**, in Meardom and on Isle of Vo. The Zirvanad is on level **gjwf** of **Tvephvs**. To enter, knock on Gatekeeper's Door in Lymeric and ask about **Tvephvs**. (You need the Star to get the Zirvanad. Go to Wolf Rock at Pheland and use the **ipzbn**; inspect to get the Star. Also, carry a lens.)

Algis Woss

To boost party's stats to max, replace one member with new member and have new one chant to Sleeping Gods. To rest party without fear of interruption, divide party and send one member to Inn or class. At night, "view" the "safe" member. Levers located next to locations: 1) X091,Y026 2) X092, Y113 3) X073, Y008. Aellin at X019, Y087 sings **sjwfs tpoh**. Suerfin at X099, Y065 sings **tqbsspx tpoh**. Ellidrin at X131, Y035 sing **txbo tpoh**. Elvin cloak is at **TX corner in Ibmm of Esfbnt** in Crezimas.

Dennis Ewell

For better characters at beginning, go to Dermagud's Teleportal Room (chant achunne, reshiptar, ebitonagzi to enter) and use three cubes. In Udar, go northeast to Crystal Castle. Knights' Room is in northwest corner. Choose strongest recruits. Knock on Pildarf's door and ask about **Sjuvbm of Bxbsfoftt**. Kill *all* monsters in Crezimas (under Crystal Castle) and then go to Queen to get crystal

dust. After defeating Ogre King at Shadrum and obtaining his circlet, go to Shiran and search shir-aka tree for shir-aka ash. Use Sherro's High Call (**tifssp, ipz, evnbogjs**) to summon Unicorn, who has green ring. Ask Mad Wizard there about it repeatedly.

Brian Riggs

Demon's Winter

When getting God Runes, make sure you have Wizard or character with Spirit Runs take them so they get the extra 200 Spell Points. To get money, go to White Knight's town and fight powerful Undead with Turn Undead ability. Also, try fighting Demon groups, but avoid Giants. Go to **OF** corner of dungeon in center of Kudsu to enchant weapons.

Might and Magic II

When transferring my characters, I missed my Sorcerers with level nine spells, but solved the problem with a party containing: at least one Sorcerer with spell 3-4, a Robber, and the rest freshly rolled Sorcerers; be sure two members have Mountaineering, learned in Middlegate. To complete this quest, you must free good wizard Yekop (Pokey) and evil wizard Ybmug (Gumby), then meet with Jurors of Mt. Farview for your reward. Take no chances in Castles: run from all encounters but Iron Wizards at the end of the doors. When you go through doors, go to the next wall of doors, then select next door in the pattern. If your best Sorcerer goes down or runs low on HP, return to Middlegate and start over. If you rest, you must fly home, because you'll lose your Walk on Water spell. Before leaving Middlegate, enter temple and pay to be blessed. Exit town, go N1, turn east, cross ferry and follow road to first south (right) turn and go S5, E5, S1. Eat bark to boost Spell Points to 200, level to nine. Retrace steps to Middlegate and take portals to Atlantium. Check in at Inn. Exit town, walk E6 to Isle of Ancients and enter Good Castle (mountain) from the north.

Bruce L. Menard

> The MbMb Mboe edition of the QuestBusters Code: count one letter back—RC = QB.

To become true, each class must complete quests set by Jury in D2, 7, 0, then visit Queen Lamanda in Luxus Palace. Retrieve the Four Talons (one in each (Plane) and the four Castle items (N-19 Capitor, J-26 Fluxer, M-27 Radicon, A-1 Todilor). Enter Dawn's Cave and claim the Orb at 11, 15 with at least one hireling in party. Give Orb to hireling, dismiss him, exit cave and return to Inn where you last saved game; hireling will be there with Orb. Use Wayback Machine at 2, 5 in Castle Pinehurst to reach Era Eight (you only need Sherman the first time you use it). Walk N1 and give Talons and Orb to King Kalohn. Rest to return to present, visit King at 7, 13 in Luxus Palace and save game. Have weapons enchanted as fully as possible before entering Square Lake dungeon and running the gauntlet. Keep going, decline fighting 66 Devil Kings, continue, kill Sheltem and Elementals, enter password **xbgf**.

James B. Simpson

Buy Force Potion in Sansobar. Go to cavern under Sansobar and get characters poisoned by Arcanoids (don't fight). Then use Force Potion and raise HP, rest. Your HP will be about half what you raised them to. Buy potions before you're poisoned, since you can't do anything in shops unless you're well.

Old Gold

Neuromancer

To get through Microsoft's back door, link up to Tactical Police database (**lfjtbutv**) with password **tvqfsubd** and edit a warrant with name **mbssz npf**, Bama #062788138. In back room, Lupus will sell you an Evasion chip. For better software and info, link up to LOSER with password LOSER. For Comlink 6.0, call Tozoku (**zblvab**) with password **zbl**.

Robert Grossi

Deathbringer

Armor: leg mail is in forest of Good Elves (you must kill for it). Arm mail (one piece) is in forest of Dark eEves, one piece in the caves. Shields are carried by Lord Thull and High Priestess' Ogre. Chest mail is on High Priestess of Set, and a helm is carried by one of the High Priests. Green Key is on one of Minotaurs; Gold Key is carried by Priest of Set; White Key is held by the Wraiths.

Paul Shaffer

Swap Shop

Trade or sell your old adventures with a free ad. (Adventures only, no pirated software, limit of 10 games per ad.
<u>*Please state system.*</u>

APPLE

Want Police Quest 2, Space Quest. Pablo Manguy, POB 3609, San Ysidro, CA 92073

Sell only—$5@: Suspended, Deadline, Starcross, Zork 2. $20 @: Wizard's Crown, Ultima 4. 11 more, mostly $5, send SASE for list. Paul Hart, 4848 Pleasant View Dr, Pocatello, ID 83202

Macintosh—$20 @: Beyond Zork, Alternate Reality: City. $15 @: Spellbreaker, Lurking Horror, Stationfall, Portal, Tass Times. Will also trade. V. Jayasankar, 74 Country Dr, Weston, MA 02193

$20 @:Neuromancer, M & M 2, Gold Rush (GS), Wizardry 5, King of Chicago (GS). David Berol, 8521 Ave Ondas, Lo Jolla, CA 92037

Wanted: M & M 1. Will trade. Have large collection. M. Wiley, 3431 E. Glenn, Tucson, AZ 85716

$20 @: Moebius, Times of Lore. $10 @: Shadowkeep & others. Want: Bronze Dragon and sequels. J. J. Parus, 1156 Lawson Cove Cir., Virginia Beach, VA 23455

Trade/sell ($15 @): Times of Lore, Ultima 1, Bard 1-3 (w/hint books), Shadows of Mordor, Usurper. AR: The City, $5. Tower of Myraglen (GS), $20. Want: Neuromancer, Zak McKracken, any Space or King's Quest. Greg Minton, 3340 E. Red Bud, Knoxville, TN 37920

Pool of Radiance, $25. $18 @: Autoduel, Phantasie 3, Questron 2. $15 @: Wizard's Crown, Phantasie 2. Robert Breezley, 4922 Coco Palm Dr, Fremont, CA 94538

Trade/sell ($20 @): Deathlord, Black Cauldron (both w/clue book), Xyphus. Want Ultima 4 or Pool of Radiance. Bruce Menard, 324 S. Boyer Ave, Sandpoint, ID 83864

Wanted: Scot Adams' 1st 12 text adventures—unillustrated, all-text versions only. Will pay full retail price. Walter Compton, POB 182, Waco, KY 40385

Trade/sell: Bard 2-3, Beyond Zork, Leisure Suit Larry, Ultima 5, 2400 AD, Bard 1-2 clue books. Want Pirates, Space Quest 1-2, Police Quest, and guy who wanted my Beyond Zork (I lost your postcard). John Pontaoe, 816-A S. May, Chicago, IL 60607

COMMODORE

$20 @: Bard's Tale, Wasteland, Pool. $15: Pirates. Write for list. Robert Schwartz, 17 Valentine Rd, Northboro, MA 01532

Trade: Times of Lore, Realms of Darkness, Technocop, Pool (w/clue book), Guild of Thieves, Fairlight—want M & M, Ultima 3 & 4, Moebius, Bard 1, 2 or 3, Zork trilogy, Deathlord. Gabe Montez, 12887 Cortez, Turlock, CA 95380

$10 @ or trade for Amiga titles (these are all for 64): Pool, Legend of Blacksilver, Wasteland, Legacy of Ancients, M & M. Fran Maye, 493 Hurley Rd, Coateville, PA 19320

$20 @: Ultima 1-4, Bard 1-3 (all w/clue books), Phantasie 1-3, Questron 2, Realms of Darkness (w/clue book), Times of Lore, Wasteland, Pool, M & M, Moebius, more. Will take offers. Tom Norwood, 6162 S. Street, Halifax, N.S., Canada B3H 1T5

Amiga: Dungeonquest, Heroes of Lance, Battletech, more. Sell/trade. Send list & phone. Michael Pearson, 5918 S. Elizabeth, Chicago, IL 60636

Shogun
Continued from page three

commands. When Mariko "faints" aboard the galley, for example, you must first "help Mariko," then "ask for *mizu*" (water). But for some unknown reason, if you "ask for *mizu*" immediately the program acts as if it doesn't know what you're talking about. Again, try to "distract Ishido" one move too soon while covering Toranaga's escape in the closed litter, and you'll simply be ignored, as if you were on an entirely wrong track.

Shogun Control Laws Needed?

In short, somehow this *Shogun* just doesn't seem to work as a computerized adventure. I've often wondered why there are so few good adventure games based on stories from other media, when there are so many great film adaptions. I think part of the reason is that a movie is *supposed* to be a spectator sport; even if you already know the plot, you can sit back and enjoy the way the director and actors interpret it.

By contrast, I expect an adventure game to be truly interactive, with lots of room for exploration and creativity. In *Shogun*, however, progress is very linear, and you're allowed very few mistakes. Unfamiliar with the story the first time through, I felt as if I had been dropped without a script into the middle of a play where all the other characters had their parts down cold. It's no great fun stumbling through a scene with the other actors constantly grumbling at your stupidity, impatiently waiting for you to come up with the right line, and ready to behead you if you neglect the least rule of etiquette. I'd much rather fire up the popcorn popper and watch Richard Chamberlain go through the hassle!

Conclusions: I really regret sounding so negative about *Shogun*, because in many ways it's a polished product and I've always enjoyed Dave Lebling's work. The biggest problem with this game, however, is that it adheres *too* slavishly to the original story (as you might guess from the fact that the game's full title is not simply *Shogun* but *James Clavell's Shogun*). In my opinion, Lebling would have done far better by putting some of the same characters in new situations.

As it is, he tried to faithfully condense a novel that runs to over 1,000 pages in the paperback edition; obviously, much of the historical background, sub-plots and so on had to be cut out. For those who don't already know the story, there-fore, plot development will seem choppy and sometimes arbitrary; you'll have a hard time following the action, keeping track of all the characters (most of whom have nothing to do in the game) and typing in those long Japanese names and phrases. On the other hand, if you've recently read *Shogun*, you might know what to expect in each situation—but then where's the suspense? Maybe the ideal player would be someone in-between, who has a reliable but not too detailed recollection of the original novel. For myself, though, I'd rather wait for something different to play. *Shogun II: The Revenge of the Erasmus*, perhaps?

Skill Level: Intermediate
Protection: Key Word
Price: Apple, $49.95; others, $59.95
Company: Infocom/Activision

Continued from previous page

Trade/sell—$15 @ (shipping included): Dallas Quest, Crimson Crown, Transylvania, Ootopos, Death in the Caribbean, Swiss Family Robinson, Mindshadow, 7 Cities of Gold, more. Send SASE for list. Helena Bouchez, POB 967, Lakewood, CA 90714

Trade/sell: Bard 2/3, Wizardry, Pool of Radiance w char. editor. Want Ultima 4-5, Questron 2, Wizardry 2. Jeff Behnke, 2691 Glen Valley, Leonard, MI 48038
Buy/trade: Ultima 1, Wasteland. Will trade ultima 5, Wizardry 1, Pool of Radiance. John Ransbottom, POB 491, Chesapeake, OH 45619

IBM & QUEST-ALIKES

Trade: Future Magic, Star Command, Battletech, Breach, Last Ninja. John Hefferman, 102 Main St, Port Monmouth, NJ 07758

Trade: Prophecy, Wasteland, Police Quest 1-2, Manhunter, Ultima 5, Nobunga's Ambition, 2400 AD, Space Quest 3, Rocket Ranger, Pool, more. Want King's Quest 1, 2, 4 (512K), Larry 1-2, Maniac Mansion, or send list. Michael Loftus, 8619 Crescent, Raytown, MO 64138

Trade: Bard 2, Ultima 4 (both w/clue book), Space Quest 2, Ware in Middle Earth. Make offer or send list. T. Dauer, HQ V Corps DEH, AETV-EHP-PP, APO, NY 09079

Wasteland, $25. $15 @: Pirates, Scavengers. $10 @: Starflight w/clues, Icon Quest for

Ring. Tony Ellison, 407 N Division, Lowell, MI 49331

Pool or Hillsfar, $25. Sentinel Worlds, $15. Tim Berta, POB 1218. San Juan Bautista, CA 95045

Sell/trade: The Colony, King's Quest 4, Leisure Suit 2, Police Quest 2, Hollywood Hijinx. Send list or requests. Marlene Simmons, POB 72, Richford, VT 05476

Manhunter, $15 or trade for King's Quest 4. Paul Shaffer, 1705-C O'Shea Ave, Bowling Green, KY 42104

War in Middle Earth, $35. E. Su, 11 Kuchler Dr, Lagrangeville, NY 12540

ATARI

8-bit—sell only: Alternate Reality, Ultima 1 & 2, 7 Cities of Gold, Gemstone Warrior, Return of Heracles, Zorro, more. Write for list. Bob Albright, 912 Mt Rose Ave, York, PA 17403

ST—sell or trade: Phantasie 1 & 2, Mercenary, Moebius, Captain Blood, more. Bob Albright (See above for address).

ODDS AND ENDS

Want Sierra hint books, new or used, and anyone wanting to join a Sierra pen-pals group. Kevin Wagner, POB 36, Fombell, PA 16123-0036

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For the next few months, we won't be selling any computer games. We're setting up a new system for doing so, one that will provide much faster and more efficient service than in the past. Meanwhile, QuestBusters' products are still available at the same low, low prices.

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Kit B: (for role-playing games) $8
(Each kit contains 100 sheets of mapping paper designed for that kind of game).

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