

Gary's Clarifications

When I saw the *Zagyg's Wisdom* super-thread on Dragonsfoot, I thought what a great idea it was to have a section where Gary answered questions about D&D and offered clarifications and interpretations about the game he created. And if he isn't around to answer more questions, at least we can benefit from what people asked him when they had the chance.

Reading through the thread, it occurred to me that all these clarifications could be gathered up into a single document for easier reference, sorted by category. Steve at Dragonsfoot liked the idea, so I got started...and found that sorting them wasn't as neat and easy as I'd expected. I've had to make a lot of judgement calls: for instance, should a question about true neutral clerics go under Classes or Alignment? So I apologize if the organization of this document seems a little haphazard, but I've done what I could with it. There are a very few posts from one category that I copied into another, but for the most part I tried to make a single choice and hope it was the right one.

I've included some categories that aren't exactly D&D or that wouldn't be relevant to every campaign (Greyhawk, for example), but they're in their own sections so they can be ignored by those not interested. These "related" sections are generally unsorted, as they didn't lend themselves as well to discrete categories.

In the interest of keeping it short, I generally removed people's greeting remarks ("Hi Gary," etc.), though I left in whatever Gary said in case it should be helpful in assessing his "gut feel" reaction to the question. I also left all typos, wrong words used, etc. so as to show all posts verbatim, though I did add some editorial remarks—in brackets—for misspellings and grammatical errors that people now seem to think are correct English ("glad to see your doing well", "I was mislead", etc.).

Leon Baradat

Alignment

elementalawe wrote:

Gary, thanks for your reply, but I want to know what you think about generality and true-neutral. Can generality be related to the alignment of true-neutral instead of nature connected to true-neutral?

Well Amigo...

I think my definition of [True] Neutral alignment in the DMG is sufficient, and the neutral isn't a generalist but one who believes in the harmony of creation and a balance between all of its forces. It's up to you to rationalize any changes you wish to make in the alignment for your own campaign.

SOURCE: <http://dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=10004&start=90>

richardstincer wrote:

Gary, in my signature below, I have the belief that TN is a general alignment--am I correct? All of the other 8 alignments seem to be more specific.

hi richard,

TN is True Neutral, those that believe that all other alignments are simply a part of the whole picture, each necessary to counterbalance the others. To maintain the cosmos, the True Neutral holds that each of the other eight ethoi must remain viable and active. for example, this view holds that one can not know good without evil.

richardstincer wrote:

Thanks for your response, Gary. In your 1979 DMG for ADandD 1st edit., it is printed that the TN alignment is narrowest in scope or focus. Does 'narrowest in scope' mean it is easy to follow the alignment of TN? I like a simple, tit-for-tat equality whereas Mordenkainen likes the alignment of TN to be complex.

Simply put, alignments are for the use of the DM in the development of the nations and the peoples that inhabit them, principally the dramatis personae that will interact with the group of player characters. It is meant to serve the DM as a measuring stick against the performance of the PCs in the campaign, after each has elected an alignment as a general template for the ethical and moral views of their game persona. In the same secondary role, they are meant to be useful in regards use of magical spells and magic items that require the imbuing of some spirit (force) in their making.

As compared to the reasons for which I created them, alignments are generally misused by DMs and I am sorry that I did not originally stress their principal meaning and uses.

SOURCE: <http://dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=10004&start=450>

richardstincer wrote:

Gary, a druid of early ADandD 1st edit. is the only adventurer-class profession that is required to have the TN-alignment. Why were nondruid general clerics not allowed to have the TN-alignment? Is it because TN is not a divine enough alignment for a nondruid cleric to have?

Well...

Considering that the entities served by the Evil clergy are far from divine, I wouldn't say that the deities of the druid class are not more divine than demons and devils, but...

The general concept conveyed by the admonition regarding the ecclesiastical servants of the [True] Neutral alignment position is this: In the fantasy milieu, only the druid class adheres to the precepts of this alignment. thus only druids, not other sorts of clerics can claim this alignment.

In short, if a cleric is truly neutral, he is per se a druid.

SOURCE: <http://dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=10004&start=480>

richardstincer wrote:

Thanks, Gary, and I think I understand your answer above, but I'm not sure. Another thing that I don't understand in the alignment section of the 1978 ADandD 1st edit. PHB is: "naturally, there are all variations and shades of tendencies within each alignment." I understand the shades of tendencies part, but I don't understand what variations can there be. Can I say that my variation of TN is practical, philosophical, simple, or nonphilosophical for example?

Remember that the alignments as set forth are primarily for the use of the DM. In any brief survey of moral and ethical considerations meant for a game, that describing the treatment of Alignments you refer to, no complete metaphysical discussion of the moral compass shown is set forth.

As with people, if you lined them up for visual grading there would be great difficulty, as each would be at least marginally different from those to either hand, even though they seemed to look alike. The variation within a moral and ethical grouping is as diverse as the people that fall within its parameters.

In light of that, it is virtually impossible to answer your general question.

SOURCE: <http://dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=10004&start=480>

richardstincer wrote:

Gary, when you mentioned dichotomies in the neutral paragraph of the alignment section in your 1979 ADandD DMG, does that mean the opposite things of nature or TN-alignment can exist at the same time? I mean if purity and defilement, good and evil, life and death can all exist at the same time so that I can be a TN-alignment undead PC.

With all your learning get understanding...

Any creature or person centered on one aspect of balance, True Neutrality, cannot perform, be of that ethical belief. That the True Neutral holds that there must be opposites does not by any leap of imagination mean that one is of any such opposing forces it in itself of balance, only that the True Neutral understands their role in the cosmos.

A graphic example might be darkness and light. both are necessary for balance, but neither is balance per se.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?t=11762>

richardstincer wrote:

Thanks for your reply, Gary. I have always had trouble with reading comprehension and quick learning. For ADandD 1st edit., can there be a TN-alignment undead character, creature, person, or

humanoid? I'm thinking that positive energy and negative energy can both be used to animate the dead. Also, the state of undeath has a balance of life and death at the same time, so should that allow a TN-alignment undead?

No problem, Richard. I have trouble with higher mathematics 🤔

The short answer is no. All undead are of negative plane energy, and can not be of neutrality.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?t=11762>

Driver wrote:

Another "just curious" question. If you were going to assign an AD&D alignment to Cugel the Clever from Jack Vance's "Dying Earth" stories, what would it be? He doesn't seem to *actively* seek to promote evil, or any other ethos for that matter, but then again he's a git, and does some pretty nasty stuff in the stories.

I'd put him as Chaotic Neutral, but I'm curious how you'd rate him.

Cugel is Chaotic evil--note the small e there. He isn't demonic, but he is malign, never seeking to do good for anyone but himself, never hesitating to sacrifice anyone in search of his self interest.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=11762&start=60>

Bombay wrote:

I had a situation come up. The group had been ambushed by a group of Ogres, and managed to fight them off and capture the remaining one. They questioned it (By tying it upside down and hanging it by its feet from a tree.) They learned that it was part of the assault group that had just attacked a keep some days before. And this PC group was part of the defense of the keep. The paladin in the group, once finding out that no more harm will come from this tribe. That this is the last ogre, decides to execute the Ogre. Their mission is to get to the highfolk, and thus they don't have time to drag a ogre to authorities. Its clear the ogre will only slow them down. The Dwarf who was doing the questioning, gets pissed at the Paladin for jumping in and finishing off his prisoner. Walks over to the Paladins horse and ...

Phoebewedh walks over to Ivric's horse and slits its throat.

"Don't tarry when you run to catch up with us.

If you ever so much as interfere with my prisoners again I will gut you like a pig and feed you to my boar. " he says to the paladin.

I explain to the character that this is not a good act (the dwarf.), I am thinking that he needs an alignment change to CN from this act. Furthermore killing a Paladin of Heironeous's warhorse isn't going to sit lightly with the paladin, and likely a duel to the death will take place here. What would you do in this situation (the dwarf is CG).

What would I do as the DM in the above situation?

I'd carefully referee the combat between the paladin and dwarf, for the former surely must not allow such an affront to occur or else lose his paladin status

BTW, I'd give the paladin a +1 to both hit and damage his opponent due to rage at the foul act of attacking a horse.

Rob wrote:

Just for clarification, this was a normal horse, not the paladin's special warhorse.

So...

That it wasn't the paladin's warhorse makes the matter less serious, but only marginally so. The paladin's honor was besmirched by the dwarf, and as the DM I would call that to the attention of the player of the paladin if there was less than great umbrage taken. To allow the incident to pass without punishing the offending dwarf would be a dark stain on the honor of the paladin.

Paladins are not stupid, and in general there is no rule of Lawful Good against killing enemies. The old adage about nits making lice applies. Also, as I have often noted, a paladin can freely dispatch prisoners of Evil alignment that have surrendered and renounced that alignment in favor of Lawful Good. They are then sent on to their reward before they can backslide.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=11762&start=60>

Since slitting the throats of prisoners is an evil act, and since I don't like putting Lawful Good PCs in the position of having to make such choices, I let them off the hook by adding in: "You notice the ogre drawing a blade he secreted on his person -he is about to lunge at you!" or some such, giving them a justification to kill the ogre prisoner. This might seem overly contrived, but it's better than imposing Sophie's Choices on PCs. I remember Moore's article, but I found it less than satisfactory. I agree that Good isn't stupid, though.

Even in a fantasy game, I don't much like the idea of someone who supposedly adheres to Law and Good who in fact adheres to a phrase ("Nits make lice.") coined by John Chivington, a man and his words who could not be accurately described as Lawful, let alone Good.

An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth is by no means anything but Lawful and Good. Prisoners guilty of murder or similar capital crimes can be executed without violating any precept of the alignment. Hanging is likely the usual method of such execution, although it might be beheading, strangulation, etc. A paladin is likely a figure that would be considered a fair judge of criminal conduct.

The Anglo-Saxon punishment for rape and/or murder of a woman was as follows: tearing off of the scalp, cutting off of the ears and nose, blinding, chopping off of the feet and hands, and leaving the criminal beside the road for all bypassers to see. I don't know if they cauterized the limb stumps or not before doing that. It was said that a woman and child could walk the length and breadth of England without fear of molestation then...

Chivington might have been quoted as saying "nits make lice," but he is certainly not the first one to make such an observation as it is an observable fact. If you have read the account of Wooden Leg, a warrior of the Cheyenne tribe that fought against Custer et al., he dispassionately noted killing an enemy squaw for the reason in question.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=11762&start=60>

DMPrata wrote:

Gary, seeing how you define Lawful Good, to what alignment would you ascribe the qualities of mercy, benevolence, and -- dare I say -- pacifism? Would you consider such traits Chaotic? Evil?

To my mind, the example you just described of "an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth" represents Lawful Neutral. That is, for society to be viable, order must be upheld at any cost. Those who do not conform to the will of society forfeit their right to exist within it, and are subject to whatever punishment (death included) best serves the society.

I am not going to waste my time and yours debating ethics and philosophy. I will state unequivocally that in the alignment system as presented in OAD&D, an eye for an eye is lawful and just, Lawful Good, as misconduct is to be punished under just laws.

Lawful Neutrality countenances malign laws. Lawful Good does not.

Mercy is to be displayed for the lawbreaker that does so by accident. Benevolence is for the harmless. Pacifism in the fantasy milieu is for those who would be slaves. They have no place in determining general alignment, albeit justice tempered by mercy is a NG manifestation, whilst well-considered benevolence is generally a mark of Good.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=11762&start=60>

cildarith wrote:

DMPPrata wrote:

Gary, seeing how you define Lawful Good, to what alignment would you ascribe the qualities of mercy, benevolence, and -- dare I say -- pacifism? Would you consider such traits Chaotic? Evil?

Lawful stupid? 🤡

With regard to pacifism, that is apropos, also with regards to atheism in the FRPG where there are active deities. Only idocy or mental derangement could explain such absurd beliefs in such a milieu.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=11762&start=60>

Elfdart wrote:

Because there's so much contention over what is Good, what was Good and what might be Good, I always make it clear from the outset what would be allowed from a Paladin. There's a big difference between a lawful execution and a lynching.

A paladin is qualified to be judge and jury--assuming he is acting according to the oath he took to gain his status.

Elfdart wrote:

If I'm going to have a Paladin in the group, I make sure he is given the legal power to dish out justice (like US marshalls used to) and the right to try and string up bandits and the like. This way he is being both Lawful and Good.

That is logical and correct in my estimation.

Elfdart wrote:

As I wrote earlier, I don't believe in putting PCs in the position of "What do we do with all of these baby goblins now that we've killed the adults?". I simply don't include them, or contrive some reason why the PCs don't have to deal with them. In other words, I don't put PCs in the position where doing an FRPG William Calley is an option.

An astute manner of managing such a dilemma.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=11762&start=60>

DMPPrata wrote:

Gary, I'll spare you the philosophical debate 🤔, but I'd like to ask a more practical question pertaining to

the whole "killing prisoners" matter. If it is perfectly acceptable in the game milieu for Lawful and Good characters to execute prisoners, then why on Oerth would any foe surrender to them? It seems as if we can pretty much throw out the Morale rules, as there is no reason not to fight to the death.

As a matter of fact, to me this whole discussion is rather pointless. however, I'll answer more of your questins and somments:

Pray tell how do humanoid foes know the alignment of their opponents?

Why is it that in actuality troops would surrender even knowing that the victors were prone to slaughtering captives. The Japanese did that as did the Nazis.

When I am DMing, humanoids do usually fight to the very last,

How you wish to run your game is your business, and debating my take on the matter is not going to validate how you choose to manage matters. that needs no validation.

DMPrata wrote:

I feel as if I've been playing the game "wrong" somehow for the past 23 years. In my games, evil humanoids tend to surrender quite often when they're being trounced by the PC's. I figure, from their perspective, they've been taught that "those goody-goody humans don't have the stomach for killing. If you surrender, you'll live to fight another day." If, however, even paladins -- the paragons of purity and righteousness -- have a reputation for executing their captives, I can't see how any opponent would consider surrender an option. Every battle would be a fight to the death, it being deemed a better alternative to die fighting than to die on one's knees pleading for mercy.

If the foes of these humanoids are so foolish as to accept surrender and allow their prisoners to eventually go free and perform further depredations, your "Good" forces are really "Stupid."

Neutral and Evil PCs in my campaign would indeed accept surrender of humanoids, enlist them to fight on their behlaf, and thus they would die for the profit of their human or demi-human masters.

DMPrata wrote:

Does anyone ever surrender in your games? If so, why? If not, then why present it as an option in the Morale rules?

Hope springs eternal. Fear, sheer exhaustion, and panic are all reasons for surrender. The surrendering troops have no certain knowledge of how they will be treated.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=11762&start=90>

DMPrata wrote:

That said, I think I am starting to come to terms with this. If nothing else, I can see how releasing potentially dangerous prisoners would be a Chaotic act (sparing the individual's life to the detriment of society at large). If I may pose one (hopefully) final question, what would be an appropriate way for the Lawful Good PC to deal with humanoid females and young? This comes up frequently in my games, and generally the PC's release them to fend for themselves. I can see the argument being made, though, that they will become the next generation of evil, and thus must be exterminated.

Would you care to opine? Pretty please? With bourbon on top? 😊

If the bourbon is Jack Daniel's Single Barrel you have a deal!

Ah well, back to reality 😞

I offer the following:

The non-combatants in a humanoid group might be judged as worthy of death by a LG opponent force and executed or taken as prisoners to be converted to the correct way of thinking and behaving. A NG opponent would likely admonish them to change their ways before freeing them. A CG force might enslave them so as to correct their ways or else do as the NG party did. CN and LN opponents would likely slaughter the lot. Evil opponents would enlist, enslave, or execute them according to the nature of the Evil victors and that of the survivors. Enlistment would be for those of like alignment, slaughter for those opposite the victors' predisposition to order or disorder. Enslavement is an option for any sort of Evil desiring workers.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=11762&start=90>

richardstincer wrote:

Thanks for that, Gary, but I am having trouble understanding your last sentence in your above post. For early ADandD 1st edit., does that mean my PC nondruid human cleric can have the alignment of NG(LG) if my alignment is between LG and NG for example?

Of course your PC can be of any alignment you desire regardless of where on the planes he calls home-- although being of other alignment in the outer planes dedicated to a specific alignment makes such a character problematical, likely short-lived.

A character can certainly have a differentiation from the nine primary alignments. A LnG Pc for example, or a NiG, the lower-case indicating the propensity towards the second alignment while remaining in the main one. For example NiG= Neutral (with a leaning towards lawfulness) Good.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=11762&start=90>

Fid wrote:

Gary, one more alignment question if you don't mind. Trust me you'll get a laugh after I fill you in. What alignment is this character?

He chooses what rules/laws to obey, with an eye toward the likelihood of apprehension/retribution in deciding which ones must be given public lip service.

His actions are highly organized and reflect pragmatic behavior within a society of 'laws'. He lives within the parameters of a code established by his own thoughts, not imposed from the outside. (He thus has little respect for 'authority'.)

He has no evil motivations, and has been known to be kind, merciful, and generous. However, the general orientation is produced from within.

Howdy Fid,

I'd judge the character to be Lawful Neutral, as he ignores the societal norms and adheres to his own sort of law and order. Although he has no Evil intent, it is well known that "The road to Hell is paved with good intentions."

Fid wrote:

Very good. This was Frank['s] description of himself when I asked him what his alignment was! Frank concluded by saying:

So I guess, bottom line, that I'm an overweight LG/LN Monk with no religious affiliation and no training

in martial arts. Go figger.

Thanks for playing "What's my Alignment?"

One small point,,,

It is not logical to be a monk without religious affiliation. that is a practical impossibility in all cases, and totally unthinkable in a deity-active fantasy milieu 🤔

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=11762&start=90>

Anonymous wrote:

Gary, I'm on the precipice of belief between the alignments of TN and NG. What is the letter notation symbol for that? Whatever it is, that is my alignment for ADandD 1st edit. or ADandD 2nd edition. I want the alignment of neutral-good to have its fair share of glory. After all, good makes sense because it is beneficial. Almost everything that people do is for getting some kind of benefit or credit. The alignment of neutral-good gives credit where credit is due and so does true-neutrality.

Alignment gives nothing. Sentient beings and creatures of alignments might do so if envy or jealousy or suspicion or hatred or pride or social class difference or the like doesn't prevent such acknowledgement. 🤔

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12147&start=180>

Anonymous wrote:

Gary, I have noticed that ADandD 1st edit. and other versions of the game don't mention if there are any TN-alignment dragons. Does such a creature exist for any version of the game?

In a word, no.

There are many non-intelligent creatures of [true] neutral sort, of course....

Anonymous wrote:

thanks for your answer, Gary, but I thought there should be at least one type of dragon that goes with each alignment. The TN one that I am talking about can embrace the ethos of balance intellectually? After all, the dragons who already exist are known to have above-average intelligence. For your ADandD 1st edit. game, can a TN-alignment dragon be created by the DM and used by players as an adventuring partner?

Dms can always do as they wish, including creating a strange TN dragon that is not primarily interested in itself or some greater purpose.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12147&start=180>

Anonymous wrote:

Gary, Beregon says that there is a TN-alignment Cloud dragon in MM2. Do you think that the TN-alignment Cloud dragon in MM2 is for ADandD 1st edit. during the time of 1987? I think MM2 was a late '80s hardcover book for ADandD 1st edition. It seems then, that the Cloud dragon is the only TN-alignment dragon for ADandD 1st edition.

Sure, and I recall the cloud dragon, so why not?

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12147&start=210>

richardstincer wrote:

if I get a TN-alignment dragon to pull it, it ensures the quality of my life and travelling. I will have it as my equal partner to spread fairness and balance, which is TN(g).

Oops!

I don't think a TN individual would be much interested in spreading his beliefs, only seeing that those who have opposing views do not gain a preponderance in the scheme of things.

Live and let live is a good TN motto;)

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12147&start=210>

Anonymous wrote:

Gary, what about if I am a TN-alignment nondruid cleric of Fharlanghn in your GreyHawk campaign for ADandD 1st edition. Fharlanghn's alignment is listed as N(g), which to me is awesome. That is exactly the TN-alignment variation that I am. N(g) means true-neutral with a beneficial overview for all persons, characters, and creatures?

To force the ethos of True Neutrality, let alone good, upon others violates the major tenet of the alignment, that is truly neutral in regards all things.

If one is Neutral Good one is not a TN, but rather one determined that Good is superior to all other ethical views--something I personally agree with, but that has nothing to do with the game alignments.

Anonymous wrote:

Gary, I forgot to add in my above Guest post about Fharlanghn: for ADandD 1st edit., can my PC intellectually embrace a variation of TN-alignment that spreads the ideals of balance and fairness? Each alignment in ADandD 1st edit. has all variations and shades of tendencies as you stated in your 1978 PHB for early ADandD 1st edition.

That's up to your Dm, but I would tulle that the cleric in question is Neutral Good, no two ways about it. Fairnedd is not a TN concept, save as a counterweight to unfairness;)

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12147&start=210>

phasedoor wrote:

Gary, the DandD 3.5 game has it printed in the PHB or DMG that each alignment represents a broad spectrum of personal philosophies or personal outlooks. Does that mean the same thing as the different wording in your 1978 ADandD 1st edit. PHB that states: naturally, there are all variations and shades of tendencies within each alignment--the descriptions for each alignment are generalizations?

In a word, yes. The alignments are broad general ethical grouping. /as wuth lining up people by height, there is a gradation towards the extremes of the spectrum at either end, and there is no real mean.

Of course alignment is meant mainlu as a DMS' tool to judge PC behavior, guide clerics, and use as a hook for adventures in lding the dastards and the allies;)

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12147&start=270>

Anonymous wrote:

Here, Gary, is the first variation within the alignment of LN for ADandD 1st edit. that I have in mind: can my PC claim to be LN by adhering to my own personal code or principle? Or does LN for ADandD 1st edit. mean that it has to be the law, code, or principle of at least two or more persons, characters, and creatures?

Law is not personal in society. It is established by members of the society. The Lawful Neutral ethical viewpoint puts adherence to the Law over Good or Evil.

Law id force. Remember that.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12147&start=270>

phasedoor wrote:

Gary, i remember you saying in a reply to me that fairness is not the same as TN-alignment. my character in ADandD 1st edit. likes fairness, so what is his alignment? am i correct to think that the ideal or value of fairness in the world of ADandD 1st edit. can be represented by any nonevil alignment.

Fairness and equity are likely best represented by Neutral Good. Lawful Good would place Law above its equitable component. Any other alignments will likely consider fairness to[o] abstract a concept to be a major consideration

...

I mean the classical sense of the English word, impartiality and justice according to natural law, those defining fairness.

phasedoor wrote:

thanks Gary. i suspected that TN(NG) best represents fairness and equity in the world of ADandD 1st edit. so that my character's afterlife existence can be very close to the white disk portal between Elysium and ConcordantOpposition.

[True] Neutrality is an ethical and moral alignment that is disinterested in the concerns of Good and Evil, Law and Chaos, seeing them as necessary for the overall harmony of the human cosmos. the principal value judgements of the True Neutral concern balance, and what causes any particular position to become overbearing is unharmonious and so to be opposed.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12918&start=270>

phasedoor wrote:

thanks for your effort, Gary, to explain TN-alignment in general for ADandD 1st edition. what about if i am 50% TN and 50% NG because fairness and equity are the only aspects or things within the NG-alignment that i like. because i like only two things out of the many things or aspects that make up NG, am i correct to think that it would be more accurate for me to be 50% NG and 50% TN?

One is of one alignment only. It is not possible to be of two alignments. One ethical bent will prevail.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12918&start=300>

Anonymous wrote:

I wrote: "OK, something all the uber-geeks have always wanted to know, what is your alignment?"

You wrote:

"To be frank I do not think of myself in terms of any RPG"

I [k]new I was pushing it. 🤔

A funny and true story. My sister is a psychiatrist in Denver, and every now and then when doing her brain squeezing during analyses, explains YOUR alignment system to her patients (without saying AD&D of course), having them identify what they think they are; thus forcing them to generalize about themselves and come to some conclusions. Anyhow, she swears this is helpful. A nut cracking nuts...

Well...

Just consider me as the one who set for the alignments as a tol for others to use 🤓

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12918&start=300>

phasedoor wrote:

For ADandD 1st edit. from 1977-1988, if I am basically good with my true-neutrality, what is my letter symbol notation?

Pardon?

One can NOT be True Neutral and of Good alignment. The closest alignment to that is Neutral Good.

If one favors Good then one is not True Neutral, of curse, as one is biased towards Good, i.e. Neutral Good. True Neutral is of disinterested concern in regards Good and Evil, Law and Chaos, save as they are balanced one against the other.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12918&start=360>

phasedoor wrote:

Have a happy and safe holiday time, Gary. There is one more important thing to know that I have in mind about the neutral or true-neutral alignment. Your 1979 ADandD 1st edit. DMG has it printed that neutral or true-neutral is narrowest in scope. By narrowest in scope, what do you mean?

Christmas Cheer!

That alignment has less moral, ethical, and philosophical leeway in their adherence to what they believe than do the other alignments. It is as simple as that. Those of that alignment are promoting no particular aspect--Law or Chaos, Good or Evil--but rather seeking to maintain a balance between those polar opposities.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12918&start=540>

meomwt wrote:

My wife always queries why Assassins have to be 'evil.' Her argument is that there are those with the same abilities who kill not for personal gain, but in the name of a cause (e.g. covert operatives who kill enemies of the state). They would qualify as assassins in all but alignment, and that could be considered subjective, based on the viewpoint of the person assessing the killing.

Sorry to be getting philosophical here, but my wife is that kind of role-player. 🤔

She answers her own question by phrasing it as you note, "not for personal gain." Soldiers are not assassins, nor is someone defending against aggression. A hunter is not an assassin, unless they hunt humans.

Murder in cold blood for payment is unquestionably Evil.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=240>

Asrogoth wrote:

To follow up with this post -- and to query as to something I've wondered....

Where does the professional soldier/governmental assassin (i.e. James Bond type) fit it here?

As a professional soldier, one is likely to be Neutral. As a government agent, one is likely to be the same alignment as the government for which he or she works.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=240>

Classes

Cavalier

DMPrata wrote:

I have a problem with the cavalier's ability to function at negative hit points. As I understand the rule, any other character reduced to 0 hit points (optionally as low as -3, if from the same blow) is rendered unconscious, and subsequently bleeds away 1 hp per round until death occurs at -10 hp. A good cavalier, however, can remain conscious down to a negative hit point total equal to the hit points rolled at 1st level (i.e., -4 to -13).

My problem with this is that, as written, the cavalier essentially has no choice but to run away at this point. It is expressly stated that he cannot continue fighting, but must bind wounds and seek further healing. This doesn't strike me as particularly heroic. Everyone else in the party is knocked out and bleeding to death, while the brave cavalier gets to flee for his life. This has come up a couple of times in my game so far, and seems distinctly out of character.

Am I misunderstanding how this was supposed to work? How did you adjudicate it in play-testing cavaliers (assuming it came up)?

Huh? I don't think I get what you are saying...

I can't understand your problem with a rule that calls for a thinking character to retreat post-haste when in imminent danger of dying. Being brave and chivalrous does not equate to being stupid and throwing away one's life. It isn't heroic to die for no reason, and that applies to all including paladins.

The cavalier has no obligation to waste his life in foolhardy posturing. When he is near death getting away and tending wounds is logical. As the DM I would allow the admonition to be tempered by circumstances such as saving the lives of others, but otherwise what the rule says it says, and I won't suggest any contradiction 😊

SOURCE: <http://dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=10004&start=450>

Mr. Awesome wrote:

I just remembered one I've been wondering...

For the cavalier, it says they're uncontrollable in battles, attacking enemies in a given order. A lot of people interpret that to mean any combat, but I think it means large-scale battles. Am I right?

You are essentially correct.

In a combat situation where the cavalier is nominally under the command of another, the cavalier will ignore orders and attack whenever he is so moved. Any player with a cavalier PC should read up on knights in combat so as to know how to properly play the role of such a character in such situations--and to do that in general social interaction as well.

SOURCE: <http://dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=10004&start=480>

Mr. Awesome wrote:

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SOURCE: <http://dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=10004&start=480>

DMPPrata wrote:

Gary, on the subject of cavaliers, I have two questions I'd like to run by you if I may. First, with regard to training, when you wrote that, after 6th level, the cavalier no longer needed "formal" training -- that his normal daily regimen would suffice -- does that mean that you no longer charged cavaliers training costs for level advancement (such as you proposed for the barbarian and your post-TSR "hunter" class), or, rather, do they simply start self-training as name level characters (albeit at an earlier level)?

The former. The cavalier at higher levels need nothing but on the job training.

DMPPrata wrote:

Secondly, are a cavalier's retainers meant to remain in service indefinitely, advancing in levels alongside their master, or should they be released at higher levels and replaced with new low-level types? In the game I ran in the 80's, we went with the former, and ended up with a 16th level cavalier and four 12th level retainers, which seemed a bit odd. ("Come, squire, help me into my armor. Slay that dragon later." 🤪) On the other hand, the way I'm running it in my current group (which includes two PC cavaliers) is to release the retainer at 4th or 6th level (haven't decided yet) and recruit a new low-level replacement. Granted, there's no real-world, historical equivalent of "levels", but which method do you think is closer to the original concept?

This isn't a matter of rules but of DM management of his campaign. If it is generally not related to historical precedent, then a swapping out of higher level retainers for lower level ones is okay.

Logically, in a milieu based on the medieval, then vassalage and feudalism will prevail. A cavalier gaining in rank will rise in knightly status, build a stronghold, possibly be ennobled, see his loyal vassals (retainers) have estates of their own, and have lower level retainers too.

SOURCE: <http://dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=10004&start=660>

Paladin

On the topic of alignments, mentioned above, am I right to assume that the paladin was never intended to be as chivalry-good as it has later been implied and codified? (since the cavalier fulfills the role of the knight).

For example, a paladin would have no difficulty using a longbow to soften up a charging orc horde (since doing so is neither chaotic nor evil)

The real question, I guess, revolves around deception and dishonesty. Assuming that the cause is good or at least benign, when does such cross over into being a Chaotic act (as opposed to just sneaky) ? Is chaotic intended (as far as the paladins ethos is concerned) to be actively destructive to law and society, or is it a more personal thing ?

Also, upon close inspection (I started with AD&D2nd edition and worked backwards to 1st) it appears that Rangers do not loose [sic] their status by committing an evil act, but only if they actually switch alignment to non-good. Is this to be understood as Rangers being capable of committing questionable or outright evil acts, provided they, overall, stay within the confines of Good (for the greater good and all) ?

As for AD&D questions, i find them pretty tedious, as the game system is out of print and not supported by any publisher. That said, I'll respond briefly:

Paladins are indeed meant to be the bravest, most loyal, and purest of knights. If there is societal proscription against something, including a knight using a bow, then a paladin would not do so unless it was to save the life of some honored figure, such as his liege lord. that duty would likely over-ride his honor. another example is the killing evil prisoners that have surrendered and asserted a change of alignment to the paladin's own. This is not generally unacceptable, for that act assures the former lost ones will go on to a better reward in the after life and no returning to their evil ways.

As for rangers, they are not goody-two-shoes sorts, and they do not lose ranger status for occasional slips of conduct that might be deemed evil as long as they repent and do not make a habit of such behavior. The DM is charged with noting the latter and taking appropriate measures.

SOURCE: <http://dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=10004&start=480>

Traveller wrote:

Is it possible for a character that starts out play as an Assassin to ever become a Paladin?

IMO those two classes are so opposed in their principals and ethics that an assassin could never become a paladin, although a paladin could become an assassin. That is, one of evil nature can not expiate their former wickedness so thoroughly as to become a paragon of goodness, but any character can fall into evil to become the nadir of wickedness.

SOURCE: www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=600

Philotomy Jurament wrote:

garhkal wrote:

In your opinion, would a paladin be able to stake an unsuspecting and undefended vampire?

I'm not Gary (obviously), but...are you kidding? Of course a Paladin could stake an unsuspecting and undefended vampire! The vampire is evil, and the Paladin would be performing a service to both the vampire (freeing it from the bondage of undeath) and to society.

What Philotomy said!

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=630>

Cleric

(True Neutral clerics – see the Alignment section)

Hi Gary,

I've just started a 1st ed game with some friends from work and it's a classic party - 2 fighters, a cleric, a thief and a magic-user.

I can see how most of them have weak spots, but the cleric seems awfully well-off - good armor and weapons, wielder of divine magics, protected and treated well by the others for his healing abilities.

What's the downside? There must be some sort of weakness to tap into there. Is it temptation?

Good job with the game, BTW. I've never DM'ed this version before. It's a treat!

Best wishes to you and yours,

Well Greg...

Glad you are having fun with some OAD&D:)

The Cleric is not as good a combatant as a fighter, spells are not as manifold and potent as those of a Magic-User, have limited magic items to gain, so those are the downside. Also, one must indeed be careful of all actions or risk getting in hot water with one's deity.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?t=11762>,
<http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=11762&start=30>

richardstincer wrote:

Gary Gygax, in the nondruid cleric class description of the ADandD 1st edit. PHB for 1987, does it say that the nondruid cleric can be dedicated to one or more deities? If that is the wording used, should the deities be from the same pantheon or can they be from different pantheons? As an example, can my human male PC nondruid cleric be a cleric of three or more different deities who come from different campaigns?

To put it plainly, clerics are dedicated to a specific deity of a pantheon, or to a single pantheon. A cleric of Thoth would certainly be reverant to all the other deities of the Egyptian Pantheon and might, for example, offer incense to a non-Egyptian deity that was similar to Thoth. however, the individual would be a priest of thoth and no other deity.

If a cleric of multiple deities, it would be those associated together. Using the above example, the priest might be one of Thoth and Maat. another example would be one of Osiris and Anubis, a priestess of Isis and Nephtys.

Anonymous wrote:

thanks, Gary, i think i understand it. If i am a cleric of more than one deity, it should be two or more deities from the same pantheon. I cannot be a cleric of: one Greek deity, one Finnish deity, one Celtic deity, one ForgottenRealms deity, one Lankhmar deity, one Greyhawk deity, and one DragonLance deity--am I correct?

Correct indeed!

Furthermore, the cleric of multiple deities is always one that serves associated deities as indicated as such in the pantheon or logically so according to the GM of the campaign.

livewirerc wrote:

Another interesting thing to look at is that since clerics regularly commune with their deities, they seem to have a higher "lightning rod" (for good or for ill) for divine interference than many others around them. I'd think that a cleric serving multiple un-related deities would have to walk a very straight and narrow road in order to please them all simultaneously, if they could even do so at all. Of course, a cleric displeasing a deity could spell doom for said cleric, so be very careful which gods you serve... 😊

Jason

A cleric might actually serve the 12 Olympians, but as you note the demands would be taxing in the extreme. More likely one might serve the Numina or the Titans.

There were a number of deities worshipped in triads, though, so that is a likelihood for the case of multiple deities being served by a cleric.

...

As for serving deities from two or more pantheons, that's not likely, unless it happened to be the same deity under a different name in the disparate pantheons.

Greg Ellis wrote:

That could make for an interesting campaign.

The general populace has no idea, perhaps even the ruling nobles are ignorant.

But certain parties within the various religious organizations at least suspect that there are a lot fewer gods than it seems.

Imagine a god of war rallying an entire kingdom to wage war on his counterpart in another culture who just happens to be... himself!

The Greeks went to a lot of trouble to match up their deities with those of the Egyptians, and of course the Romans made their deities and those of the Greeks virtually one and the same.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12147&start=180>

DMPraata wrote:

Gary, waaaaaaaaaaaaay back in *DRAGON*® #71, you introduced Kelanen, the Prince of Swords (designed with François Marcela-Froideval, if I recall correctly) as the prototypical "Hero-Deity" for the *WORLD OF GREYHAWK*®. He was later reprinted in the '83 boxed set. Now, when compiling *Deities & Demigods*™, Jim Ward, I believe it was he, established the rule that demigods could grant clerical spells of up to 5th level; lesser gods, up to 6th level; and only greater gods could grant 7th level spells. (I don't know whether or not you approved of such a rule, but I'm operating under the assumption that you did.) If it's not already glaringly obvious, here's my question: Did you intend for the hero-deity Kelanen to have clerics, and be able to grant spells to them? If so, what level of spells would he be able to grant?

(P.S., I hope to have an order in to the Trolls this weekend for the required "Gygaxian Fantasy Worlds" books. Don't count me out of the YGGSBURGH Expanded Details project just yet! 😊)

Felicitations!

Well, the rule regarding granting of spells is not one that I approved, and I would not deny any considerable deity the ability to grant spells of any level to one of his clerics within the region of that deity's worship. That's really a call for each DM to make, IMO.

As to Kelanen the Sword Lord, you have it right. In this case, the entity being a demi-deity and a rather specialized one at that, I should suppose that any of his clerics would be sword-slingers and have limited spell capacity beyond those used to honor Kelanen and perform services to him. Perhaps in addition to a specialized spell gained at each level they might be able to employ regular clerical spells of 1st through 3rd level, few, and gain in level happening in stages of around 4 levels, so one 1st level spell beginning at 1st level, four at 4th, and a 2nd level spell gained at 5th, etc.

As the Ip belongs to WotC, I will not attempt to suggest the special spells that such clerics would gain, one per level, but any imaginative DM can surely create them without my assistance, for the nature of the deity directs the sort of clerics he would have serving him, and their abilities.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12918&start=120>

DMPPrata wrote:

Hey Gary, I have one quick AD&D® question, and then I promise to stop misusing my time and get back to work. 😊 Did you intend for non-human shamans and witch doctors to be able to turn/command undead, or was that ability restricted to "actual" clerics only?

I always envisaged the power of turning Undead to be restricted to clerics, not held by shamans and witchdoctors. The latter would have spells that proscribed Undead from areas, but not the capacity to turn/destroy them by their very presence.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12918&start=210>

DMPPrata wrote:

Hey Gary, here's a topic we've been tossing around. This isn't so much a "rules" question as it is a "flavor" question. With regard to clerical holy symbols, in the Players Handbook you listed iron, silver, and wooden symbols. Was there an in-game reason for a PC to shell out the 50 gp for a shiny silver symbol over, say, a nice cheap wooden one? Personally, I've set up my priesthoods such that different deities prefer different materials (wooden for a nature god like Beory, iron for a metalworking god like Bleredd, and even more elaborate materials, such as gold or jade, for others). Was this your thinking (unlikely, given my track record), or did you have some other rationale for the different materials?

The materials mentioned are all inimical to serious sorts of evil creatures according to myth and legend. Silver is supposedly a poison to were creatures and evil spirits, iron to many demons and enchanted creatures (including evil elves), and wood to some demons and to vampires, of course. That, coupled with the power of good imbued into a holy symbol make them potent in two ways.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12918&start=330>

rabindranath72 wrote:

I recently bought all the books for AD&D 1st edition, after having played for years with Classic D&D and AD&D 2nd edition. When I entered the RPG hobby in 1988 the first edition books were next to impossible to find here in Italy. I must say that I find your books quite refreshing; I really enjoyed reading the PHB, DMG and MM (and really love UA!).

One thing that picked my curiosity was your criterion for deciding why a Cleric is only allowed to use bludgeoning weapons. From the description in the PHB it seems that it is for ethical/moral reasons; but in

the multiclass descriptions, it seems it is not so, since a cleric which multiclass with fighter is allowed to use, e.g., swords. This would imply that it is for a "skill" reason. What is the "truth"? In my campaigns, I would go for a mixed answer: some (warlike) deities allow swords, some other not.

Ciao Antonio,

Glad you are enjoying the OAD&D books!

The original reason for allowing clerics blunt weapons only was one of game balance, and I used Bishop Odo of Normandy as the exemplar--no shedding of blood.

As the AD&D game developed, the cleric became less of a spell-casting fighter, and so by the time UA was published there was no reason for concern about balance between classes if clerics could use edged weapons.

That's it in a nutshell;)

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12918&start=480>

General Karthos wrote:

Hi Gary, I'm not sure if I thanked you last time for the help with the large-sized human. If I didn't thank you. If I did, thank you again. And now I have another debate-related question.

If a fighter/thief attacks from behind with intent to backstab, must he use his thief Thac0 to make a backstabbing attack?

Those who say he must, say he must because backstabbing is a thief ability, so only thief Thac0 should be used to calculate chances of a hit, citing the Cleric 5/Magic-user 5 who can only cast magic-user spells as a 5th level magic-user because spell-casting is a magic-user only ability.

Then there are those (like myself) who say that fighter Thac0 can be used. A similarity I'd draw would be that a thief making a save to avoid a trap he sprung when trying to disarm it would use the most favorable save, even if it wasn't thief related. Attacking from behind is not a thief-only ability, just the backstab multiplier, (and the +4 bonus from behind), which do go up slower, as they are based only on thief level.

Finally, I thought that Thac0 was something where you ALWAYS use the best Thac0 when making an attack as a multi-class character.

Of course, I could be wrong, so I put it before you, to "settle the debate."

Welsome, of course:)

As backstab and its bonus damage is a Thief ability, the thief PC must use his THAC0 number to determine the success of the attack, indeed. If the target is unsuspecting, then there is a bonus to the roll, a +4 IIRR.

I was playing a thief in a OAD&D game run on the tabletop by my son, Ernie. It was a large multi-player miniatures-based one where a number of PCs and their associates were attempting to gain a potent artifact. I learned that a nighthag PC had the item, attempted a backstab, and rolled a 1. Needless to say, that was the end of my character...

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12918&start=510>

Druid

DMPrata wrote:

[sheepishly asking yet another AD&D® question when he should be reading Living Fantasy] 🙄

Gary, there's a bit of a debate raging in the 1E forum about whether or not druids receive bonus spells for high Wisdom. (OK, it's not much of a debate; it's basically me vs. everyone else. 🙄) The *Players Handbook* errata, as printed in *DRAGON*® #35, states that the bonus spells are for both clerics and druids. However, the following quote from your "From the Sorcerer's Scroll" column in *DRAGON*® #92 seems to imply otherwise:

A secluded sect of the followers of the deity Ehlonna of the Forests erred grievously at some time in the past. Its clerical and druidic members misled the people, caused them to do evil things, and used fire to harm life and the beloved woodlands as well. Most of the wrongdoers were slain, but some survived and were repentant. Mercifully, Ehlonna forgave them, but each and every one of these formerly unfaithful, as well as those who came after them, would be prohibited from ever again using spells (or magic items) that cause destructive fire or things associated with it.

Furthermore, clerics are permitted only staves as weapons; druids are allowed only staves and slings, and no druid is allowed to use his shapechange ability to assume the form of a carnivorous beast.

There is now a small Shrine of Ehlonna, as well as a Sacred Grove nearby. Here the descendants of the transgressors reside, shepherding the neighboring farmers and woodfolk, human and demi-human alike. However, all those trained here are not permitted the following spells: cause (any sort of) wounds, curse, protection from good (any), putrefy food & drink, cause blindness, cause disease, bestow curse, poison, dispel good, flame strike, slay living, harm, wither, energy drain, destruction, fire trap, produce flame, produce fire, wall of fire, conjure fire elemental, fire seeds, chariot of Sustarre, finger of death, and fire storm. As was mentioned before, weapons are limited, and druid members of the group cannot take the form of any carnivore. These prohibitions seriously weaken both orders of followers, and no deity would so jeopardize its followers without some counterbalance.

After faithfully serving and reaching 2nd level, clerics are granted their choice of "knowing" any permitted druid spell of 1st level, and vice versa. This continues through 4th level. At 5th level each gains a druid/cleric spell of 2nd level, and this continues through 7th level. At 8th level the granting of 3rd-level spells commences; at 11th level, 4th-level spells; and at 14th level, 5th-level spells commence and continue through 16th level. Clerics of 9th level are able to assume animal form (a noncarnivorous mammal only) once per day, just as if they were a druid. **Druids of above-average wisdom are allowed bonus spells, just as if they were a cleric**, i.e., 14 wisdom allows one bonus 1st level spell, 15 wisdom a second 1st level spell, etc.

It seems here that you were granting bonus spells to this particular sect of druids as an exception, which would seem to support my belief that they were not intended to get them in general. Is there any chance you'd be willing to weigh in on this? Pleeeeeeease? 🙄

Well amigo...

I have to say that the case you use to support your argument isn't germane to the broad class of Druids. As Wisdom is their principal measure, they are to receive bonus spells.

Specialized spells for sects is another matter entirely, those being taken in place of the general list. The general mention of bonus spells for the Druids of Ehlonna was included to reinforce the broad grant, to indicate that they too got those as did other Druids.

Sorry not to be able to concur with your position, but...

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12918&start=240>

DMPrata wrote:

Gary, if I may pester you with a quick Greyhawk question 😊 You pretty much pioneered what became the 2E concept of the specialty priest, with clerics of different deities being granted varying powers. Clerics of Ehlonna, for example, were given the ability to track as rangers, and could cast *animal friendship* at 5th level. Did you intend for these extra abilities to also apply to druids, or did you feel that their basic class abilities (charm immunity, *shape change*, etc.) were sufficient?

Seriously, as far as I was concerned the druid class was sufficiently powerful without added spells or abilities as awarded to clerics of specific deities.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12918&start=540>

Barrataria wrote:

I've wondered for quite some time about that... 10th isn't so awfully high for druids as to be followed around by 9 nasty underlings, so I guess that particular challenge didn't come up for you as DM.

Sorry to hear about the demise of Curley Greenleaf... I think character sheet loss is the most tragic way for them to go...

High level druids are not much for dungeoneering, eh?

My own PCs and those of a couple of others I DMed for were often followed by a train of henchmen, typically when the session involved only one or two players and the situation at hand was demanding.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=60>

ScottyG wrote:

Gary, did you give druid PCs wisdom-based bonus spells?

Short answer: No. I believe that the class has sufficient power without adding to it.

DMPrata wrote:

Well, I for one like the short answer better than the [long answer](#), which was entirely different:

I have to say that the case you use to support your argument isn't germane to the broad class of Druids. As Wisdom is their principal measure, they are to receive bonus spells.

Specialized spells for sects is another matter entirely, those being taken in place of the general list. The general mention of bonus spells for the Druids of Ehlonna was included to reinforce the broad grant, to indicate that they too got those as did other Druids.

Then but all means use the short answer 😊

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=540>

Julian Grimm wrote:

2) I see religion as a mix of Osage beliefs and Nordic. Since both seem to have more pull to Druids and such how should clerics be handled in this respect?

The Scandanavians had little in the way of formal religion, so you are ocrrect in approaching the matter of a priesthood--these would be shaman or medicen men. Druids do not really fit that mold. You might want to check the Shamanasim rules I developed for the LA game system. I believe they can be found at www.lejendary.com The Trolls will be publishing them in a optionnal core rules supplement to the LA game, *Shamanism & Witchery*.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=810>

Fighter

Thorg wrote:

BTW you may have missed my question on fighters of high level getting 2 attacks in 1E. Sorry if this is in the wrong forum...it["s 1 or 2 pages back.

Basically the question was, if a fighter of high enough level attacks 2 times in a single round, and that fighter is using a weapon in each hand, could that fighter attack 4 times (or does this only apply to 1 hand).

Indeed I did miss it. Sorry:(

I would say that the two-attack ability applied only to the main-hand weapon, so a fighter able to attack once with each hand would gain a second attack with his primary-hand weapon only, thus three attacke that round.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=30>

Styre wrote:

You wrote in response to Thorg:

Thorg:

Basically the question was, if a fighter of high enough level attacks 2 times in a single round, and that fighter is using a weapon in each hand, could that fighter attack 4 times (or does this only apply to 1 hand).

Gary:

I would say that the two-attack ability applied only to the main-hand weapon, so a fighter able to attack once with each hand would gain a second attack with his primary-hand weapon only, thus three attacke that round.

Is this a house rule you use or did you intend for the original rules to state this?

Here in the DMG it seems to indicate 4 attacks per round (if a high level fighter is attacking with a weapon in each hand).

DMG page 62-63 wrote:

Initiative For Creatures With Multiple Attack Routines: When one or more creatures involved in combat are permitted to use their attack routines twice or more often during the round, then the following initiative determinants are employed.... Note that a routine is the attack or attacks usual to the creature concerned, i.e. a weapon (or weapons) for a character, a claw/claw/bite routine for a bear (with incidental; damage assessed as it occurs - the hug, for example).

Did you mean to say this, or was it an error in editing etc.

Hi Styre,

I meant just what I said in regards to PCs. Two attacks due to increase in level was meant to apply to the main weapon hand for such characters.

What is said in the DMG doesn't contradict that, as when an additional attack is added the PC would then have four attacks using two hands. That is, the capacity of attacking twice in one round, once with each hand, is already a bonus.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=60>

Barbarian

weasel fierce wrote:

Is the intention of the barbarian['s] hostility to magic users, that he cannot at all participate in the same adventuring party, or simply that he will not "cooperate", such as receiving beneficial spells, will mostly ignore the magic user in a fight, etc ?

the latter. I meant for the barbarian to be a thorn in the side of all spellcasters, but a most useful adjunct to the mixed adventuring party nonetheless;)

SOURCE: <http://dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=10004&start=480>

Ranger

TheDungeonDelver wrote:

Lastly, in AD&D how would you handle an out-and-out ambush set up by monsters, particularly if a party has a very-difficult-to-surprise character (like a ranger)? I'm talking about a situation where the party is observed from a distance by the monsters and the creatures make good their set-up and are ready to spring it on the party at the appropriate time. The way I've been handling it is to treat the monsters as having a surprise score of "6" no matter what, then roll a single d6 for the party and adjudicate accordingly.

I think I'd have the ranger check for detecting the ambush with a second, opposed roll, check if the initial check would otherwise succeed in spotting the waylayers.

SOURCE: <http://dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=10004&start=30>

DMPrata wrote:

Gary, here's a quick one that came up in one of the other forums. (I must admit, in 23 years this hasn't occurred to me. 😊) Since rangers can't read spell scrolls, how do they learn magic-user spells at higher levels?

Simple:

They learn them and record them in a spell book.

Scrolls are someone else's version of any given spell. A trained cleric, mage, etc. can read it by understanding the underlying principles it contains.

How's that for rationalization? Better than saying "It's magic," or else, "The game is fantasy, and that's the rule."

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=11762&start=30>

Greg Ellis wrote:
Yeah, good question Prata.

I've got a Ranger in my party, and the surprise thing is getting a bit silly.

Example - The party is preparing to open a new door, but the Ranger is in the back (not the front) and someone else (say a thief) is opening the door.

We roll the surprise dice and they come up 3 for the monsters and 3 for the party.

So the party is not surprised, but the monsters are, because there's a Ranger in the party, and Rangers surprise on 3/6?

Maybe I'm just not getting the idea behind the rule...

I'm not having trouble with the opposite - i.e. scenarios where the rest of the party is surprised but the Ranger is not - that makes sense to me.

Forget any special surprise in a mixed party. the ranger would have to be alone, or with only others that are stealthy, to get the special bonus.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12147&start=210>

Beregond wrote:

1.) When you run AD&D how do you handle things that would fall under the concept of "skill checks" (for lack of a better term)? For example say my ranger is trying to find a rare herb in the wilds, or whether I would know the correct one to pluck in the first place that cures toxins, and you as the DM need to determine success or failure? Or maybe I'm trying to swim an underground stream? My gaming group is migrating back to AD&D and this is something we're struggling with on how to handle- especially in the areas of perception-spot checks.

2.) In the PHB rangers were strictly limited to humans and half-elves. In UA the class is opened up to elves. I've always viewed the profession of ranger (and druid) as something of a human phenomenon, existing because of the human relationship with the wilds/woodlands. Whereas elves never needed a "ranger" sort in their society or culture, they had a different relationship with the woodlands, they were part of the woodlands/wilds, or more in harmony with it, etc.

I always wondered why the ranger and druid class were opened up to elves in UA? It gave a change of "feel" for elves because elven society now possessed rangers and druids. Nothing earth-shattering, but a definite change of feel. I was interested in hearing your reason/opinion behind this.

Howdy Beregon,

As AD&D is a class-based game, there is little recourse to skills. A ranger, for example is assumed to know a lot about survival in the wilderness, that including what plants are poisonous or beneficial. I use something like 5% chance per level, plus Intelligence for chance of success when the demand is difficult, otherwise just allowing the find or whatever to happen on a die roll of 1-3, 4, or 5 on d6 depending on how likely it is the object sought for will be there.

As for broadening the ranger and druid classes to include elves, it is logical that the members of the demi-human race in question would assume such roles because of their association with humans. Of course that assumes a human-dominated world--which is the case in the vast majority of campaign worlds I know of.

the addition also makes the elves a tougher bunch to mess with 😊

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12147&start=210>

DMPPrata wrote:

...An exception was then listed for rangers who choose to use one of those proficiency slots to specialize in an allowed weapon, such that obtaining the fourth proficiency could be delayed until 7th level. Does this same exception apply to a ranger who chooses to double-specialize, or does he have to wait until after he's filled the other required slots (at 10th level) before he can spend a third slot in his chosen weapon? Oh, and, uh, what kind of wine do rangers like? 😊

No double specialization for rangers at all, in my campaign, but at 19th if you must coddle them...

As rude woodsmen, rangers will favor sweet wines, even those made of fruit other than grapes (shudder!) :roll

DMPPrata wrote:

-- but, but, that's not in the book! 😊

But the limitation on weapons selection and specialization suggests it to the DM so inclined 😊

Maraudar wrote:

Thanks Gary...sigh... I can't believe it took 20 odd years and that comment to actually make me see that...

Pish1

No fault on your part.

Why didn't I suggest that limitation outright in the UA book is a valid question though...

Rangers are plenty potent without double weapons specialization 😊

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12147&start=270>

Spork wrote:

I have a question concerning Rangers. If a ranger ran into a monster that surprises on 1-5 in 6, and that is

surprised only on a 1 itself; how would this be resolved on the surprise role.

My understanding is that the ranger would still have to role [sic] a 1 on that d6 role to be surprised (and thus can only be surprised for 1 seg max by this critter), and that the monster has to role [sic] a 1 as well to be surprised (and thus can only be surprised for 1 seg.) so the ranger's ability to surprise this creature on 1-3 would not work (as this monster is very atune etc.). Is this correct?

If so, if the ranger has a high dex which gives him a +1 to surprise, how would this be resolved?

If a fighter was in the ranger's place in the above example and roled a 4 say, he'd be toast (4 segments of attack), but could only surprise the monster for 1 seg. max.

Close, but I'd do it this way:

Deduct the ranger's three from the critter's five, and you have a difference of two, so that means the critter against the ranger has 2 in 6, the ranger only 1 in 6. When two sneaky types are about to bump into each other I think surprise is pretty unlikely on the part of either adversary.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=60>

Surprising and being surprised are components of the surprise factor. That has to do with stealthy approach and alertness. If both parties in such a situation are stealthy and alert, then chances for surprising and being surprised are minimal.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=90>

rabindranath72 wrote:

Dear Gary (I address you so, following your comment above)

how did the idea of a spellcasting ranger was born? Was Aragorn from The Lord of the Rings the main inspiration?

I do not like the idea of a spellcasting ranger, how would you suggest modifying it? For example, in terms of XP reduction (to leave it as-is, but without spells), or giving it some other skills to replace spellcasting.

Hi Antonio,

Joe Fischer designed the original Ranger Class character, and it was published with such credit in an early number of *The Strategic Review*. I merely fleshed it out so as to be more compatible with the AD&D game.

As I have no problem with Rangers having minor spell use, I have never thought about how to remove that capacity from the class. IMO it makes the Ranger a sort of fighting Druid. Anyway, as I play the LA game most of the time these days, and for the last nine years, it would take a lot of time and effort for me to properly advise you on a proper modification of the class.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=18412&start=60>

Magic-User

RobertFisher wrote:

...

On the subject of spellcasting: Do you give MUs 4 initial spells like in AD&D? Do MUs get any new

spells when the train for a new level, or do they have to find/research all their spells beyond their initial allotment? (Do the OD&D booklets even address spell acquisition? I don't remember seeing it...)

Do clerics have spellbooks as Vol. 1 seems to suggest?

(There's been a lot of discussion of OD&D in the classic forum. It seems there are a few of us who are considering going back to the original game or--like me--trying it for the 1st time despite years of playing its descendants.)

We didn't have training needed in the original D&D game, and if new spells were wanted, the character had better get out and about and find some, contacting a friendly m-u of higher level or gaining spells on scrolls or spell books as treasure.

That answers the book question as well, eh?

SOURCE: <http://dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=10004&start=150>

ScottyG wrote:

Gary, did any of you m-u characters have familiars? I know they had charmed characters and monsters, henchmen, armies, but what about a cat, or a toad?

Hi Scotty,

As a matter of fact none of my m-us ever possessed a familiar. I didn't think the potential benefits outweighed the drawbacks.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=330>

Thief

JASON THE RULESREADER wrote:

My gaming group had a helluvanight. The last hour of the session er wait..was it three hours?.was devoted to players arguing over whether or not, thieves in the party should be stealing from other party members. For me (the DM) I inderstand that it is what thieves do after all. I have not prevented it from occuring because I let the chips fall where they may. the players will find out what occurs if they keep doing it.

Have you had players who are of the Thief class, who steal from other party members? I understand that it is in the character role, but it does tend to bog the game down when everyone argues about it. Should it be banned?

The players of the class feel that it is their "right" by way of thier profession to do, and other thives dont like the theft of thier own person. Well duh!

WELL, the way I look at it, the thieves are getting a taste of what its all about.

I guess one way to prevent it would be assuming everyone were chums with one another and the thieves only take what extra treasure they can when the opportunity presents itself. But not if it[']s from another player.

JASON THE RULESREADER,

Characters should have as much free will as possible in an RPG, don't you agree? The concept of the DM banning them from class-bestowed activity is odious.

If the thieves expect to be protected by the other party members, healed by clerics, given a share of party treasure, their pilfering from their comrades should be greatly limited. It is up to the other PCs to lay it on the line to the rampant thieves. The majority of the party might well dictate death for theft from any party member, and carry out an execution of a guilty party without loss of any Good and/or Lawful alignment.

Of course, as a DM I encourage thieves who risk their lives scouting and opening possibly trapped containers and all to filch a bit--say a few gems or a piece of jewelry. Reasonable PCs in a party can not seriously take offense at such relatively petty theft.

On the other hand, my PCs have attacked and killed a PC thief stealing party treasure for his own gain at the expense of the remainder of the party,

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12918&start=30>

TheDungeonDelver wrote:

Gary: Backstab rule in 1e - meant to be melee only, or can it work ranged (e.g., "sniper fire")?

Not for a Thief--hand-weapon strike only in such case. For an Assassin I would allow it.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12147&start=150>

Assassin

SemajTheSilent wrote:

This may have been covered before, but I don't recall if it ever was.

A lively discussion has been going on between a few of us. In the transition from OD&D to AD&D, the assassin made an alignment shift from Neutral to any evil alignment.

The PHB alludes to the assassin being motivated by profit for his activities, therefore he must be evil. Yet there are several scenarios in which an assassin may use his skills for reasons other than financial gain...for instance, the half-orc cleric/assassin as a priest of some sick cult, or the Kuo-Toan C/As of D2.

It has been suggested that perhaps you drew inspiration from Leiber's strongarms of the thieves guild in your design of the assassin PC class. True or no?

Not true. I used historical fact and a whole lot of authored fiction on the subject to devise what I deemed to be an appropriate archetypical class for OAD&D, the Assassin.

SemajTheSilent wrote:

Secondly, and I understand if you don't remember, was one reason for assigning evil status to assassins due to fantasy-societal perceptions of the assassin as evil, or was your viewpoint that an assassin was evil by his own nature no matter what his motivations for coldblooded killing?

A gnarly topic to be sure, but I'm curious as to your answer.

Your stated assumption regarding the very act of assassination as a means of livelihood being inherently evil is correct. An assassin is likely Neutral Evil, but never not evil.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=240>

Other, and Multiple

Dragon Fire wrote:
Mr. Gygax, we are debating this in another thread:

Why are elven F/MU's (also F/MU/T's I imagine) and Rangers allowed to cast magic-user spells while wearing armor and other classes not? Does this only apply to elven F/MU and not half-elf ones also?

That rule was to stifle complaints from Tolkienists about elves in the D&D game not being sper-human. Half-elves were not given such a break.

SOURCE: <http://dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=10004&start=150>

Draco Caeruleus wrote:
In the original D&D booklets of 1974, it says that elves can advance either as fighting-men or magic-users. They can switch between these classes between, but not during, adventures.

What does that mean exactly? Do they only gain XP for one class at a time? Do they only get the benefits of one class at a time? If the latter, would that include things like hit points?

Or is it just an ambiguity that was fixed with the later multiclassing rules?

Thanks!

Heh...

More water under the bridge 😊

Actually the booklet is quite clear in this regard. An elf can act as a Frighter and use armor, gain XPs in thwt class, or one can act as a Magic-User and likewise gain XPs. What isn't clear is the HD. When an advance in level is indicated, the elf gains one-half a HD whether the advance is in the Fighter or M-U class. Thus the elf is operating at a disadvantage, not an advantage, in regards HPs.

SOURCE: <http://dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=10004&start=300>

Yorlum wrote:
A question for the Master:

I am in the ongoing process of introducing my children to one of the joys of my own youth, AD&D. In doing so, I occasionally run into stumbling blocks when I try to describe character classes. Would you be willing to list out a person or character that leaps to your mind for each of the character classes and races?

I had a terrible time explaining that the elves were not toymakers, what a 'Cleric' is, etc.

Actually, yes I would have a problem with that 😊

The main difficulty is that some of the archetypes assume a reasonably broad knowledge of literature and films. Of course one might point to Ropbin Hood as a ranger, and the Sheriff of Nottingham as a fighter, Friar [Tuck] as a model for a cleric (although no spell use or undead turning are evident), and then go to Arthurian legend for Merlin as a magic-user, Galihad as a paladin. there are no ready models of a thief, druid, assassin, or monk.

You could use Bilbo, the dwarves, Gandalf, and the rest from The Hobbit as examples. John Bellairs Face in the Frost supplies excellent examples of magic-users with one a near cleric model IMO.

I do hope that helps a bit.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=11762&start=150>

Elfdart wrote:

I already posted this in the 1E section, but I thought I might run this by the Master Dungeon Master himself:

I had a player who wanted a Robin Hood-like PC. What he had in mind was part Ranger, part Thief. So we agreed he could create a half-elf Ranger/ Thief. I thought that Thief and Ranger went at least as well together as the Druid/ Ranger from Unearthed Arcana.

No problems with player or PC, aside from mediocre rolls for hit points. My questions:

Did anyone ever suggest such a combination to you before?

Did you allow it?

Are there any pitfalls with this combination I might have overlooked? As I said before, there's been no problem, but I wonder if I might have given away the keys to the store and don't know it yet.

The major problem I see is that Robin Hood was not a thief class character in any sense of the AD&D term. He was a ranger and a bandit.

You might look into the Archer class that Len Lakofka, IIRR, proposed in *Dragon* magazine.

No one ever proposed the combination to me. I see many obstacles in merging thief and ranger, but it could be done with care.

Elfdart wrote:

What are those -er, what should I be on the lookout for?

Most of the thief abilities do not apply to a ranger-type individual. Maybe hiding in shadows, but only in outdoor settings, certainly not picking locks, picking pockets, and all of those functions...including backstabbing.

It seems to me that the player is looking for an unfair edger by asking for the combination.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?t=12147>

oldschooler wrote:

I'm a little stuck on elves as written in OD&D (no supplements or any of that). I get that they can change

classes (from fighting-elf to magic-user and back again) on any given adventure, but how does a Referee award experience? one total that the elf's player uses for the chosen class, two totals (whole or two halves) that go with each class, etc.. When would one add hit dice? What combat level or 'spells cast per day' does one use? Should I just use multiclass rules as later's AD&D puts it? Sorry if this sounds stupid, but many have fought over the "right" way to judge elfs in this particular version of The Game and I'd like to do it as originally envisioned.

If the elf PC acted in one class only, then all XPs went to that class, if both were employed, then the XPs are divided between the two classes. when a level is gained, the die is rolled and half of its total is gained, because having two classes does not bmean two HD per level gaines in each, rather one-half of one for each level in a class, one for a level gain in both.

Attacks and saves are at the most favorable level of the elf PC.

Not stupid questions at all 😊

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12918&start=390>

DMPPrata wrote:

Gary, I was reading through S1 *Tomb of Horrors* last night (looking forward to some PC-killing 😡) and I came across something odd. One of the pre-gens is listed as a cleric/ranger/magic-user. This would appear to be an illegal class combination. I'm just curious whether this was an editorial "improvement" 🤔 or if you did actually allow such a combination in your games. (It seems that it would be quite a potent one!)

To the best of my recollection I did not make that pre-generated PC...although I did allow druid/rangers in my campaign.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12918&start=420>

Bombay wrote:

I was Curious how you would tally up a multilcass 1st level Ftr/Magic user whos [sic] Con is 18. 1's rolled for each. Would it be:

$$(1+1+4)/2 = 3$$
$$HD+HD+con/2$$

or

$$(1+1+4+2)/2 = 4$$
$$HD+HD+Con+Con/2$$

Are you suppose[d] to give the con bonus for each class? Or just the highest class? I have always played it as the 1st example, but the more and more I read it and think about it, I think it should be the 2nd example and give the con bonus to each class.

Howdy bombat!

As for the Con bonus, I would give it for both classes, the second example you state above.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=120>

DMPrata wrote:

Gary, how (if ever) did you handle cases where a PC's ability scores were more-or-less permanently reduced below the prerequisites for his class? (I have to make a ruling on this re: a ranger who has been raised one too many times and whose CON has thus fallen below the 14 minimum for the class.) I guess the broader question is whether the ability requirements are only for entry into the class or are mandatory for continued advancement; e.g., is the ranger now a fighter with d8 hit dice?

the ability scores for PCs are requirements to enter the class and to progress within it thereafter. In the case you cite, the PC would no longer be able to gain levels, but he would remain a ranger of whatever level he had attained before dropping a point of Constitution so as to be ineligible for continued advancement.

JASON THE RULESREADER wrote:

That[']s not a bad suggestion. I myself would probably let the PC advance as a fighter from there on out.

IS that a good idea?

It is if the PC is a worthy one from a player that simply had a run of bad luck. Also, keeping the HD gain to a d8 of the Ranger Class is a good compromise in the bargain. After all, a Ranger is a fighter of sorts, so allowing progress thus is logical. I must say that if the Ranger PC was played poorly I would as the DM be inclined to simply freeze the character at the Ranger level extant at the time the qualifying ability was lost.

JASON THE RULESREADER wrote:

That makes sense too. I guess then a player who merited continuance with his PC has to fill in assumptions in the role for this attribute loss to help explain why he could not continue. (outside of the obvious play balance scheme)

In the case of Constitution, it sounds to me like the erstwhile Ranger is getting to the point that being outside all the time is not his bag anymore. this in turn might hinder his wilderness skills.

I wonder what kind of role assumptions have to be considered in such cases?

Hi Jason,

The main assumption to follow is that a credible fantasy game does not seek to simulate reality beyond that stage necessary for the participants to immerse themselves in it.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=240>

Nikosandros wrote:

I'm curious about the design process that lead [sic] to the AD&D experience tables.

The basic idea is pretty straightforward... exponential increase until about name level and then linear increase.

However, there are plenty of exceptions like the druid who's very fast at first and later extremely slow, the rangers that has lower requirements then the fighters at some levels, etc...

I was wondering if there were any recollections about this that you'd be willing to share...

That's going back a far piece...

I did the level increase steps based on a lot of intense play over about four years. The variations you note were determined for purposes of game balance. Druids, for example, have a limit on their ultimate progress.

That's it as I recall things.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=450>

Joe Maccarrone wrote:

...And another thought that struck me late last night, when I should have been sleeping, after reading the appendices to Castle Zagyg:

I think the dual classing method you presented in the optional rules would work just fine for human characters in AD&D, replacing the unpopularly restrictive (at least among my players) dual classing rules in the PHB. The rules in CZ provide a practical method that isn't a route to excessive character power.

Since AD&D character classes top out at different numbers of hit dice, not a standard 10 as in C&C, the 'total character level' at which the dual-classed character stops gaining hit dice would have to be something other than 11; I'm thinking it should be the level at which he stops gaining hit dice in his first/primary class...

Any holes in my idea that I'm not considering?

Actually that sounds fine, but I am not in accord with the standard d10 for character hit points. I would use the range of possibilities from d4 through d12 as in OAD&D.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=720>

chrisspiller wrote:

Gary, IIRC, you've mentioned that all of the UA classes were used at one time or another in your campaign. I was wondering, however, did any of your players ever make use of the Hunter class you designed for Trigea?

In case you're interested, the class write up is actually posted on DF at <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?p=52737#52737>

I went and read the material, and I only vaguely remember the article and the Hunter Class detailed therein. To the best of my recollection, the only play of such a PC was done in an offhand manner by my son Luke for a single game session with me as the GM.

While there is no "Hunter Order" in the LA game, one could develop a Forester Order Avatar to resemble the class very closely by the player adding Savagery and Waylaying Abilities, keeping rustic as the 5th initially chosen one so as to gain the additional Health and understanding of those animals Savagery would not provide.

SOURCE: www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=810

Game Mechanics

Death's Door

RobertFisher wrote:

Are PCs dead at 0 hp or can they still be revived by a cure spell or healing potion?

At 0 the PC is unconscious (with a further -1 per level, so a 4th level fighter can be at -5), but a potion or a cure wounds can restore them immediately

SOURCE: <http://dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=10004&start=180>

TheDungeonDelver wrote:

Was the original intention of *death's door* to negate the 1-week required recovery time for sub-0 HP wounded characters, or just to make them ambulatory (once other healing was applied) so they could make it out of the dungeon?

The original purpose of the Death's Door spell was to enable the battered PC to be ambulatory and escape from the dungeon or other dire locale in which he was brought low.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12147&start=390>

Evreaux wrote:

Hi, Gary. My apologies for bringing up another AD&D question--if you've already answered this, please say so and I'll begin the delve through the various Q&A threads. I don't recall seeing it addressed, but I probably haven't caught every page so far.

The PHB says that 0 hit points or below = death. The DMG introduces the descending -10 system. Neither is mentioned as being optional by their respective texts, but the consensus over in the 1E forum is that the DMG method supercedes the PHB by virtue of being published later.

So, I'm curious as to your reasons for introducing the different system. Were your campaigns simply proving too deadly for PCs at the time? Or did you enjoy presenting the tactical challenge of having to negotiate aiding fallen comrades in the midst of a fight? Or something else entirely?

Thank you very much in advance for your feedback.

The DMG system was introduced to allow players to have a chance to keep their PC alive without clerical spell casting and the chace of being raised failing. Neither the 0 = dead nor the -10 equals dead mechanics are given as hard and fast rules so as to allow the DM to decide which one will be used in his campaign.

I modified the two in my own campaign by allowing the PC to go to -10% (rounded up) of total HPs before being stone cold dead. Not quite as generous as the -10 points, but graded to give higher level PCs a better chance than lower level ones.

I use this in the LA game system too, so that Avatars there can drop into minus Health and still survive in unconscious state.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?t=12918>

Melkor wrote:

Thanks Gary - One last question, and I'll give it a rest. After that, I think I have a good enough grasp of things to feel comfortable with changing initiative in my games.

In a previous question in this thread, I had asked/stated the following:

Melkor wrote:

- A character who's [sic] casting segment time, when combined with his initiative die roll, totals over '10' will act on the segment of the next round based on that total (for example, a roll of 9, and a casting time of 3 would act on segment 1 of the next round). Unfortunately for the spellcaster, after casting that spell, he would not be able to act again until the following round.

In response, you answered:

Col_Pladoh wrote:

$9 + 3 = 12$, so the spell activates on that segment (2) of the next round, and indeed that's it for the spell caster.

My math in my quote was based on the thinking that the 9th segment would be the first segment that the spell was started on - in other words, the first of the 3 segment casting time would occur on segment 9, and there would be 2 casting segments left over...one which would occur on segment 10, and one on the 1st segment of the next round.

From your response, it would seem to indicate that you simply add the initiative roll (in this case, 9) to the casting time (in this case, 3) to come up with the total, which is when the spellcaster gets his spell off.

I went back and looked at another set answers to initiative questions over on this thread:

[http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewt... 544#205544](http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewt...544#205544)

From your quote here to ScottyG, it would seem like my original way of thinking above was correct:

Col_Pladoh wrote:

A 1 segment casting time duration means that the spell is cast in the initiative segment indicated by the die roll. In your example of a 4, that's when the spell is cast. Each casting-time segment above 1 is added to the 4 to find the segment of casting, so a spell with a casting time of 3 segments would be cast in the 6th segment. all action begins at the start of a segment and just before the next spells being cast are active.

Would you mind clarifying which one is correct ?

Spell Casting:

A spell that requires one segment to cast is active on the segment after the one in which it was cast. If that segment was the 1st, the spell is cast at the beginning of the 2nd segment, if the 2nd, then it is cast at the beginning of the 3rd and so forth. The segment time is a whole number, so each segment is added to the initiative segment number. A spell requiring one segment of casting time can not be cast in the same segment as initiative indicated action begins. The spell is started then and cast at the beginning of the following segment as it requires whole segments to cast, not some fraction of a segment, not even 99/100ths.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12918&start=30>

DMPPrata wrote:

Gary, you've enlightened me once before in regards to good cavaliers being able to function (but not fight) when reduced to negative hit points. Here's a follow-up on that topic. Any other character at negative hit points, upon being stabilized, requires a full week of bed rest before being able to resume normal activities. Would this stipulation apply to a cavalier as well, or would it be possible (for example) for a cavalier at -4 hp to drink a healing potion and rejoin combat in the next round?

that's a call for the DM to make. Actually, if a cleric heals any sort of character so as to be back above 50% of HPs I generally allowed normal activity, set aside the requirement for bed rest, of the situation were dire and another person was needed by the party.

Something the deities move in mysterious ways 🤖

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12918&start=90>

Surprise and Initiative

RobertFisher wrote:

Gary, another question about your current OD&D campaign, if you don't mind.

How are you handling initiative & disrupting spells?

Are you using 1d6 for the DM vs. 1d6 for the PCs for initiative? Are ties rerolled or considered simultaneous?

D6 for surprise, 1 = 1 free round, 2 = two free rounds. D6 for initiative, ties meaning simultaneous attacks.

RobertFisher wrote:

Do casters have to declare that they are casting before initiative is rolled? If so, do they have to declare the specific spell? If the caster's side wins initiative, is he safe from disruption? If his opponent's win initiative, do they automatically disrupt his spell with any successful hit?

Yes, as I always require, spell-casters must announce their actions, name any spell they mean to cast. If they are successfully hit and damaged before it is cast, the spell is lost.

In other words, I am DMing those matters as I have for about 33 years now 🤖

SOURCE: <http://dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=10004&start=120>

Blustar wrote:

Don't mean to bother you with minutiae regarding OAD&D (but here I go!) but do ranged attacks get their full ROF's during surprise segments? For example, if a PC has 3 seg. of surprise to work with (and had a bow), could he/she fire 2 arrows per seg.? In effect getting 6 shots off before initiative?

We already play with our own "house" rule but was wondering what the official rule intended. The combat example later in the DMG seems to imply a different reading.

Sorry for the boring question...

regards,

Alex

no problemo:)

As far as my intent went, there was no difference between a blow and a missile attack in regards to surprise. So if there are three segments of surprise, the weapon has a RoF of two per segment, then six attacks could indeed be made thus.

SOURCE: <http://dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=10004&start=180>

ska wrote:

Gary---

When your gaming group played OAD&D as long as a magician "won" initiative (assuming the 1d6 dice being used to determine initiative) could any spell be gotten off prior to attack as long as the spell did not take more than a round to cast?

Just so!

That encouraged spell-casters to stay in the rear of the party too...

SOURCE: <http://dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=10004&start=210>

ScottyG wrote:

Gary, there is one line in the DMG that has caused more debate than any other I'm ware of. In reference to spell casting: "Their commencement is dictated by initiative determination as with other attack forms, but their culmination is subject to the stated casting time." One view is that the line means that casting begins on the segment indicated by the initiative result, and the casting time is added to it to determine when the spell will be cast. For example, a m-u with an initiative result of 4 is casting a magic missile (casting time: 1 segment). The spell would occur on the 5th segment.

My opinion is that the first half of the quote simply means that initiative determines who starts acting first, and has nothing to do with the segment the casting begins. Longer spells will still take longer, but if the casting time is the same, the caster that began casting his spell a moment sooner than the other will get his spell off first.

A 1 segment casting time duration means that the spell is cast in the initiative segment indicated by the die roll. In your example of a 4, that's when the spell is cast. Each casting-time segment above 1 is added to the 4 to find the segment of casting, so a spell with a casting time of 3 segments would be cast in the 6th segment. all action begins at the start of a segment and just before the next spells being cast are active.

Does that clear it up?

ScottyG wrote:

It does. So that means that a high initiative result, and a high casting time could result in a spell not being cast until the next round? A 6 segment spell being added to an initiative result of 6.

Yes, a long spell can stretch into the next round. however, a 6-segment casting time would add 5 to the number of the initiative segment that casting began, as it covers 1 segment. in your example, the spell would be case in segment 1 of the folowing round ($6 + 5 = 11$, so that's the 1st segment of the next round.) If the caster isn't disturbed, that's often a good thing...

ScottyG wrote:

Wow, I must have misunderstood you the last time this came up. That's how I originally used to do it, but I

changed my method because I thought you stated that all actions begin at the beginning of the round. Always learning new things around here.

The action of casting a spell, or doing anything else, begins in the segment of the round indicated by initiative score, at the start of that segment.

ScottyG wrote:

In a situation like this, does the spell caster have to wait for the following (the 3rd round in this case) to begin casting another spell, or can he take some action in the 2nd round after the spell is cast on the 1st segment?

No. Spellcasting takes up the entire round in which it was actually activated, so there is no chance to cast twice in a round or even begin a new spell in the same round that one was successfully or unsuccessfully cast.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12147&start=120>

DMPPrata wrote:

Gary, please forgive me if I belabour this issue, but 24 hours ago I thought I understood initiative. This is a new concept for me, and it effectively invalidates the 20-page initiative explanation I posted yesterday, so I want to be sure I have it right before I go back to the drawing board.

A fighter attacks a magic-user. The fighter rolls a 3, and the MU rolls a 6. If I understand you, the MU's spell will begin in segment 3, and take effect (casting time minus one) segments later. The fighter's attack will come in segment 6.

No, each individual's action begins in the segment indicated. the fighter will attack in segment 3, the M-U begin the spell in segment 6.

I think that's straightforward.

Multiple attacks will be in following successive segments, or delayed as the character wished.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12147&start=150>

Greg Ellis wrote:

Shall we start up a big "spirit of the rules" vs. "letter of the rules as written" discussion now?

Naw, I didn't think so...

Right, I have long ago switched to low roll is first action as the easiest.

If the high roll system is used, just deduct the number from 10 to find when the first action begins.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12147&start=150>

DMPPrata wrote:

Gary, here's a nice, safe, non-initiative, non-alignment question for you. In the AD&D® Players Handbook, elves and halflings are given increased chances to surprise opponents. It is explicitly stated, however, that they must be in non-metal armor, and either alone, with others of their kind, or well in advance of a mixed group. Do these same strictures apply to other PCs with enhanced surprise chances (e.g., rangers and barbarians), or does a mixed group that includes a ranger, for instance, receive the

benefit of his surprise ability in most cases? Simply put, do rangers surprise 3 in 6 when with a party of non-rangers, or only when by themselves?

I'd treat a mixed group with the stealth ability implied in the rule as homogenous--all the same in that regard;)

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12147&start=210>

Melkor wrote:

In the meantime, I'm thinking about moving to a simplified initiative system in AD&D. From emailing you about it previously, I know that you have gone to a D10 system, and seldom use Weapon Speeds (save for battles with important NPCs).

Here's how I am thinking of handling initiative in my AD&D games:

- Each player rolls 1D10. Roll determines when the character acts (so lower is better).
- Spellcasters add casting segment times to the roll.
- Missile Weapon users can deduct Dexterity Reaction Adjustment from their initiative roll.
- Weapon Speeds (when used) only apply to characters acting on tied initiative rolls.
- Longer weapons strike first on a charge.

Does this tend to match what you use ?

If not, would you mind stating briefly how it differs from what you use ?

What you have set forth for initiative is right on in my book. I do usually have only two rlls when a large character party is engaged in combat with a large group of adversaries, though. that makes for speedier and less confusing combat resolution, albeit at the sacrifice of "realism".

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?t=12918>

Melkor wrote:

Thanks a million. That little initiative thing has bugged me for quite some time. I always want to play 'by the book', but since there are so many different interpretations on AD&D's initiative, I decided to go ahead and simplify it.

One thing I forgot to include would be a note regarding what happens if a spellcaster's casting time takes him into the next round. From what I understand (and **please** correct me if I am wrong):

- A spellcaster begins casting his spell on the segment rolled on the initiative die. That segment is considered to be the first segment of the spell's Casting Time.
- A character who's [sic] casting segment time, when combined with his initiative die roll, totals over '10' will act on the segment of the next round based on that total (for example, a roll of 9, and a casting time of 3 would act on segment 1 of the next round). Unfortunately for the spellcaster, after casting that spell, he would not be able to act again until the following round.

9 + 3 = 12, so the spell activates on that segment (2) of the next round, and indeed that's it for the spell caster.

Melkor wrote:

My only other question would be if you still allow attacks against spellcasters from attackers who might have rolled a higher initiative (and thus acted later in the round).

Logically, what would prevent such attacks from taking place?

Melkor wrote:

Forgive me for feeling the need to base what I want to use in my game on judgements from you, but I figured that if it was good enough for 'the man himself', it was certainly good enough for my gaming group and I.

In addition, for whatever reason, that makes me feel like I have satisfied my need to continue debating about the AD&D initiative system (as written) on various forums.....Now, it's on to the purpose of playing games in the first place....FUN!

Whatever initiative system you decide upon is completely correct for your campaign;)

Melkor wrote:

I was thinking for some reason that the '9' would actually be considered the first segment of the 3 segment casting time so it would look like $9 + (3-1)$I never was very good at math though. 🤔

Casting begins on segment 9, and a 1 segment spell would be activated on segment 10, indeed, so a $9 + 3 = 12$ is correct. the 3 segment spell will be cast on the 2nd segment of the following round.

Melkor wrote:

I wasn't clear in what I was trying to ask. My apologies. My question should have been:

Would the attacker still have a chance to attack the spellcaster (out of initiative sequence) **before** he 'got the spell off', thus disrupting his casting, even though the attacker had lost initiative?

I fear that I am not absolutely certain of the question even now....

If a spell-caster is continuing a casting into a following round, any opponent that has an attack coming n a segment prior to the time the spell will be active can attack and with a successful hit destroy the chance of the spell being cast.

An attacker with action coming after a spell caster has completed his spell is powerless to interrupt the process.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?t=12918>

Joe Maccarrone wrote:

When using a D10 for AD&D initiative, do you have characters with multiple attacks space them evenly in the round -- for example, a character with 2 attacks making the second one 5 segments after the first (or during segment 10, if the first is later than 5)? Or does the second attack always come last, after the opposition has had a chance to attack?

If a PC with multiple attacks gets a 9 or 10 he blew the chance for an added attack. Otherwise, the first attack comes on the indicated segment, the second on the last segment.

I figure there must be at least two segments between attacks unless the character has magically hastened reactions, then only 1 segment per attack is needed.

<http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12918&hilit=sttack&start=60>

Anonymous wrote:

I think you may have answered this question some place else, but can't seem to find it. So I will ask it briefly again.

If a spell caster begins casting a 5 segment spell on seg. 6, would that spell carry over to seg. 1 of the following combat round.

$6+5=11-10=1$

Exactly! the five-segment-long spell casting begun on the sixth segment would activate on the first segment of the following round.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12918&start=390>

Anonymous wrote:

A few follow ups, if you don't mind:

Is this the proper interp. of rolling init.

-DM vs. Player (player states intent, DM thinks his, and the two sides role)

DM roles 3 Player roles [sic] 6. The player goes first, starting actions on seg. 3, the DM goes second starting on seg. 6.

That is correct.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12918&start=390>

Experience

GuyinCognito wrote:

Hey, Gary Just would like to say your AD&D is the champ! Mind if I rattle a few questions in?

How do you reward XP for valuables? coins, and magic (examples would be a boon) Say my party ends up finding: A longsword+1 (unidentified), 500 gp, and a crystal chalice worth (375 gp). How and when should I award the XP? Could you elaborate on what "keeping" a magic item means?

Glad to be able to talk to you, this is neat,
GuyinCognito

We always gave XPs for treasure value, monsters killed or eliminated, and for meaningful thieving skill use and spells cast, the latter at 100 XPs per level. that was why the escalation in the number of XPs needed to increase a level was so dramatic as one progressed.

In your example above the award I'd hand out would be 875 XPs.

Keeping an item means it isn't sold to an NPC, is used by a member of the party. Selling an item brings in more XPs as the gold paid counts on a 1 GP to 1 XP ratio. the additional XPs for selling an item are one of a number of means for the DM to get magic items out of play.

SOURCE: <http://dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=10004&start=330>

TheDungeonDelver wrote:

... If they identify it and sell it immediately after the adventure, if I am understanding you correctly, they would get the item's base XP value of 10,000 , plus another 25,000 XP for the sale of it, but if they didn't sell it off and instead carried it around and used some of its powers on various other adventures they wouldn't get an XP reward for a later sale...? Or would they?

Close, but no cigar 😊

If they keep the item they get the 10K XPs for it--the one gaining the item gets that award, not the party. If the item is sold by the party's agreement, they divide the sale value of 25K as XPs. If it goes to one person, and that PC sells it, the 25K XPs go to that PC alone.

SOURCE: <http://dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=10004&start=330>

In my AD&D campaign I watched monetary treasure pretty closely, so that the party didn't get too much in the way of XPs. I also handed them out for success in special abilities associated with a class that were meaningful to the party's activity--tracking, detecting evil, thief activities, spell casting, a clever or life-saving action. the base was 100 points, and that applied to spell level.

Unless spell-casters used weapons, that was their share of monster-kill points, the spell level XPs they got.

SOURCE: <http://dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=10004&start=600>

Greg Ellis wrote:

So we're talking about a new level every 12-16 sessions. That seems to be about the pace my current (1st level) OAD&D group is progressing now. I was getting a bit concerned after hearing about much quicker progressions from some other DM's (like 500-1000xp per level per session).

Regarding training:

I got the impression that the purpose of training was not so much to interrupt the party's adventure, but to extract mass quantities of treasure from them.

The DMG recommends that the DM "rate" the quality of play for each player, and assign a 1-4 week training period as a requirement for the "levelling-up" process.

The catch here was that an Exceptional player would only have to pay for a single week of training (about 1500gp x level), but a Poor player might have to play for 4 weeks (at 6000gp x level).

Did you completely gloss over this stuff in your campaigns?

Was there any sort of rating of "quality of play" going on, and how did it impact the players progression?

Did you use some other method to extract that quantity of loot from the PC's, or just let them keep it?

Hi Greg,

The matter is one in which the DM is the only one to judge how best to manage the level increase.

I did make the players PCs train whenever they hit a rich encounter that brought in a lot of wealth and commensurate XP gain. That took away much of the money even as the PCs had to locate places to be trained--a sort of adventure in itself.

Where adventuring was such that progress in XPs was moderate, I generally ignored training requirements, telling the players that their PCs activity in adventuring brought sufficient "on the job" training to enable them to increase in level without schooling.

The Dangerous Journeys name for experience, "STEEP," is a good thing for all GMs to remember. The gain comes from what the letters stand for:
Study, Training, Education, Experience, and Practice.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12918&start=30>

Joe Maccarrone wrote:

When using a D10 for AD&D initiative, do you have characters with multiple attacks space them evenly in the round -- for example, a character with 2 attacks making the second one 5 segments after the first (or during segment 10, if the first is later than 5)? Or does the second attack always come last, after the opposition has had a chance to attack?

If a PC with multiple attacks gets a 9 or 10 he blew the chance for an added attack. Otherwise, the first attack comes on the indicated segment, the second on the last segment.

I figure there must be at least two segments between attacks unless the character has magically hastened reactions, then only 1 segment per attack is needed.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12918&start=30>

Joe Maccarrone wrote:

Thanks for the initiative info. I stuck with a D6 for 25 years because it was 'traditional', but the D10 makes initiative both more precise and easier to keep straight in the noggin'.. 😊

Yes. the d10 matches the division of the round into segments and so is more intuitively understood 😊

Otto von Grunwald wrote:

Is that why you stuck to the d10 for LA to determine init. order? Did you consider other methods for said?

No, Jeff, it is because the spread is wider than with a d6 or less and the number also fits in better with the Speed Base Rating used.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12918&start=60>

Joe Maccarrone wrote:

I've been using 100 xp/level for meaningful use of a class-related skills (as well as 100xp/spell level). The CZ list notes 20/lvl; perhaps I've been a bit generous...but I seem to recall you mentioning 100/lvl for class-related skills in a prior DF post, not just for spellcasters. Is my memory faulty?

I did indeed use 100/level in my AD&D game, and I thought that was what I'd put into the YGGSBURGH ms. Feel free to use the larger award.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12918&start=90>

Joe Maccarrone wrote:

Thanks! I can well imagine that these xp awards developed over time, because in them I see corrected some inequities that it took me years to really become aware of.

One more question on this subject: the list has thieves gaining 1xp per 5sp treasure value -- thus double the award for treasure, versus other classes? In order to make up for the fact that thieves don't engage in much combat, and thus don't gain many xps for killing bad guys?

Indeed, Joe, the additions to the XP award system came from the experience of DMing for a considerable period.

As for the thieves XP gain, I actually don't much care for the suggested expedient, but as a matter of fact a clever thief shouldn't fight much but should get a lot of loot. However, if the GM awards proper XPs for use of Thief Abilities, then regular 1:1 gp:XP can be used just fine.

Joe Maccarrone wrote:

Ahh, glad to hear it -- because I think there are ample opportunities for thief skills to benefit the adventuring party...Didn't see a need to boost treasure xp. 😊

Depends on the DM, but I agree with your assessment, Joe 😊

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12918&start=90>

oldschooler wrote:

I'm inclined to use the (somewhat simplistic) method of 100 points of experience per level of monster defeated (as per Men & Magic c.1974) with 1 additional point per piece of gold worth taken back home. Is this far too much as you envision or can a decent campaign come out of experience given this fast (when compared to how you do it in Supplement I: Greyhawk)?

I like using as few supplements as possible, but still like sticking with "the book" as it were. Note that I do not give XP for magic goodies as such items often pay for themselves!

I suppose my real question is: would you play in a game where you gain levels maybe 10 times faster than most other campaigns, or feel cheated in not "working" hard enough for such gains?

That isn't a bad way of managing XP awards...if you keep treasure down to a reasonable amount for low-level PCs, increase it as they rise in level.

I am not particularly fond of playing one game session and going up a level. That hardly qualifies as "earned," to my way of thinking. However, if the campaign is set up for very high level play, such increase might be warranted. I did play in and enjoyed that sort of gaming with my French fellows, Francois Froideval being the DM. (My 12th level fighter was a mere peon, akin to a low-level PC, in that campaign.)

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12918&start=450>

ScottyG wrote:

Gary, in your games, and in the C&C rules, you give spell casters xp for casting spells on a 100/spell level basis. Does this include clerics casting cure spells?

As with meaningful use of any Ability, for LA game play Avatars successfully activating an Extraordinary Power (spell) get from 10 to 100 or more Ability Specific Merits depending on how critical the success proved to be. As the average number of General Merits, those usable to increase any Ability, is 100 per hour of active participation in the adventure, the award ranges from a minimal one to a considerable boost that might do away with the need for considerable time spent training. (A point of Baility ranges from 200 to 400 Merits as one's score rises from 1 to 20, 21-50 (250), 51-75 (300), 76-100 (350), and 101 and above. the increase reflecting the greater difficulty of improving.)

Indeed, for OA/D&D and C&C game play, I also award XPs for successful meaningful spellcasting, the award 100 XPs per spell level.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12918&start=510>

Henchmen & Hirelings, and other Followers

DMPPrata wrote:

Sorry -- I remembered one other question after I posted. Did you intend a PC's maximum number of henchmen (based on Charisma) to be a lifetime limit, or simply the most he could have in service at any one time?

Right.

The rule is meant to apply to the maximum number of henchmen a PC is able to command at any given time, not a lifetime number. One or more might be dismissed or be lost, and such vacancies can be filled with new retainers.

SOURCE: <http://dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=10004&start=480>

richardstincer wrote:

Gary, for ADandD 1st edit., if I want to play a 1st lvl. character who does not have an exceptional amount of starting money and who is not exceptionally proficient in adventuring ability, can I be a participant-player at the gaming table by playing only a henchman of another player? I know that as a henchman, I have an adventurer-class profession, but that doesn't mean I have to be as proficient in adventuring as a PC--is that correct? Your 1978 ADandD PHB has it printed that a player can play a henchman of another player at the gaming table, but it doesn't specify if a player-participant can play only a henchman.

Hi Richard,

You will play a PC that you rolled up even if that character is the henchman of another PC. All that being a henchman entails is roleplaying, nothing special in regards the type of character, his stats or abilities of the class chosen.

That clear?

richardstincer wrote:

Yes, and thanks Gary. I have just realized that I can be a PC henchman of another PC and in that way, I am playing only a henchman. There is still one thing that is confusing about henchmen as described in the 1978 PHB and in the 1979 DMG. It is printed that a henchman has a race and a class, but there is no info. about how a henchman was able to acquire 1st lvl. in an adventurer-class profession. The 1979 DMG has it printed that PCs have inherited monies with which to train in the adventurer-class professions,

but a henchman has only a small amount of money or no money and the clothes being worn, so how does a henchman have the money to be 1st lvl. in the adventurer-class professions? Also, remember that the 1978 PHB has it printed that a henchman has a race and a class, but a henchman is never a PC. I understand that I can be a PC who is a henchman of another PC.

Even non-henchmen PCs are not wealthy when play begins. what you will assume is that your PC is the henchman of another character because of some quality of the character your PC swears alligence to, ot because of something that your character has in mind, or a past act such as swearing to a noble to serve that PC. As i said, it is all roleplaying.

The henchman character is like aby other in regards to abilities and money with which to buy equipment. He begins as a 1st level with the usual capacities of any PC.

richardstincer wrote:

Now, I think I understand. A henchman has little or no money left and the clothes being worn because the henchman has already spent the inherited money to train in one or more of the adventurer-class professions. That means then, a henchman is actually another PC in the party of adventurers, but a henchman did not inherit a large amount of money like other PCs.

Actually Richard...

The Henchman PC might be wealthy and the one he serves be poor, that assuming the PC who was serving the other character had made some vow or promise to serve.

Once again, the matter is one of story and roleplaying, and it involves no differences in character stats or money;)

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=11762&start=240>

oldschooler wrote:

Two quick questions:

1. I've often read that henchmen are aquired with an offer of at least 100 gold pieces. Is that to indicate an initial offer with shares taking care of the rest, or does the average henchman expect to be paid 100 g.p. per adventure/week/month or whatever? How do you usually handle the whole "paying henchmen" thing?

Found and a share of loot after being paid to attract them is usual. If their fellows are killed frequently, then the rewards had better be sweet, or the henchmen will leave.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12147&start=270>

Bombay wrote:

As a Player, that is one of the hard things to determine, should I bring my henchmen, or leave them behind. In a recent adventure I was running my MU/Theif elven character. Searching out a lost wizard['s tower to setup operations. I brought my 5 henchmen along, and ended up getting 3 of them killed. Had to trade in my sword of Dancing and a lot of cash to get them raised.

Music to a GM's ears!

Of course as a player I would do the same, and gain experience for all the loss of goodies.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=60>

Elfdart wrote:

Colonel, I have a few questions about henchmen and hirelings:

- 1) When you are DMing and a PC with henchmen gets killed or incapacitated, do you let the Player continue as one of the henchmen? In other words, are henchmen potential 2nd and 3rd-string PCs in your games?
- 2) Did you ever promote men-at-arms to henchman status (rolling stats as though they were a 1st level fighters)? I'm tempted to do this with a man-at-arms who has somehow survived as a member of the party since the beginning (they are all 5th to 7th level now).
- 3) Did you ever have a problem with some players in a group who insisted on bringing henchmen and others who were dead set against it, on the grounds that they didn't want to share experience points? If so, how did you handle it?

Heh...

Yes to all three questions.

In regards to number three, I simply said that the matter was up to the PCs to decide, and the two adversarial parties needed to settle things. That sometimes resulted in a fight. Such is the life of an adventurer 😊

Rob Kuntz's orc, Quij, was an ordinary sort that defeated an ogre in single combat. When I checked his new HPs adding a second die, they maxed out, so I promoted the NPC to 4th level on the spot.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=570>

ScottyG wrote:

Do men-at-arms count when figuring out how much experience points are awarded?, For example, if a party of 4 PCs has 4 0-level men-at-arms with them, would you divide experience earned by 4 or by 8? Scott

Hirelings of any sort usually work for a daily fee plus a share of loot. In that regard they do detract from XPs by lowering the amount of gps gained, but not otherwise.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=570>

Elfdart wrote:

For me it depends on how many henchmen and hirelings accompany the PCs and whether (in the case of the hirelings) they are hired by the party as a whole or by an individual PC. What I decided to do about #3 was to set aside one full share of XP for all henchmen if they were all working for one PC. He is also expected to pay for their upkeep. However, in that case they answer to him and not the party as a whole.

I give men-at-arms who accompany their masters XPs for the money their employers pay them, as well as for equipment and other expenses the employer **pays** for. They get two XPs for every gp they earn to reflect not only treasure they've earned, but what they have learned while adventuring. This comes out of the gold and XP of whoever hires them. If the group hires, the group pays. So a light footman (1 gp per day while adventuring) armed with leather, wooden shield, spear, hand axe and dagger (10 gp) will get 80 XPs if he goes on a one month expedition with his boss. A 0-level hireling who earns 500 XPs can become a 1st level NPC.

Elfdart,

Quite so. the matter is actually one best left to the DM based on the manner in which he manages the campaign.

garhkal wrote:

I was always under the understanding that henchmen and hirelings count for half value. So the 4 pcs and 4 hirelings would be 6 xp shares.

That isn't a rule to follow. If you like it, then use it, but I never did, I simply negotiated for hirelings so as to get as much in the way of remuneration as I could for them. Usually that was more like one share per two men-at-arms or four torch bearers porters.

DMPPrata wrote:

While Scott's question was pertaining to 0-level men-at-arms specifically, in the case of henchmen with class levels, the XP is divided evenly among all participants. In your example, the XP for defeating monsters would be divided eight ways. The henchmen then must further divide their shares by two, to reflect the fact that they were only following the PCs' orders. The rest of their "shares" are lost.

If the henchmen are ordinary, not classed NPC I never bothered to allot actual XPS to them, They simply were laid, and the money, plus the appropriate fraction for kills was deducted from the party's total for the adventure before it was shared out however the group had decided to do before the adventure began.

Maraudar wrote:

Wow Col.. I usually just pay my henchman in coins... 😄😄😄 I tried I swear I tried but the temptation was just to much.

Well, now you know why the circle of Eight was so popular with mercenaries and others who wished to enroll in some military organization 😊

SOURCE: www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=600

garhkal wrote:

Got another one..... Forgot i posted this in the first ed forums (or was it general??).

Why is it, a fighters followers, have to be paid for? Is that not the same as the fighter just hiring men at arms? Do the followers have a higher morale, combat capability???

There is a considerable difference between hirelings--mercenary soldier types--and those that serve as henchmen. Loyalty and morale are the main considerations, assuming that the followers are well-treated. Of course henchmen do increase in capacity to perform while hirelings do not, leave as soon as they are not paid.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=840>

Elfdart wrote:

I think he's referring to the followers a high level fighter attracts when he builds a stronghold.

My answer would be that the fighter doesn't have to go out and recruit them. They come to him. Apparently, they show up with their gear, so the fighter doesn't have to pay for it.

If that's so, you are correct. Of course the group of such followers does not come with magical equipment. That must be gained and bestowed through the offices of the leigh lord.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=870>

Glaaki wrote:

Elfdart wrote:

I think he's referring to the followers a high level fighter attracts when he builds a stronghold.

My answer would be that the fighter doesn't have to go out and recruit them. They come to him. Apparently, they show up with their gear, so the fighter doesn't have to pay for it.

Right. It is the fighter in question's reputation that attracts these followers/men at arms. Now IMHO these need not necessarily be henchmen, though an officer of these men at arms may well be. I would agree that they do come reasonably equipped though any further upkeep is the provence of thier Lord.

Ah but they are henchmen, vassals to their leige lord. They come to serve, place their hands between his, and swear fealty and service.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=870>

Glaaki wrote:

I agree, Col. I was a little unclear. A fighter may only attract a certain number of "Henchmen" IIRC. In my mind these were NPCs with which the Lord had a certain bond and relationship. The X number of archers/med.-hvy. foot/horsemen, etc. that form up around that Lord would not count against his Max. number of henchmen as that number of rank and file soldiers could number in the hundreds.

But then that's just my \$.02. 😊

Hope you are having fun at LGGC! How did the cook out go?

You are correct.

Normal persons, and specially attained henchmen do not count against the number attracted to the successful PC lord.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=870>

Abilities

As an old wargamer myself (Loved Alexander as a kid, btw...nice treatment of a subject on which there is a paucity of historical sources), most results were determined on a d6 linear curve. To me, it was significant that you moved to the bell curve by adding die rolls to determine results. The use of the Bell curve allowed for the occasional 'super-result', while encouraging the majority to fall in an expected range. Can you point to an inspiration for that conceptual leap?

Yes, my desire to get away from a linear curve with 6 outcomes or a bell curve with 36. I wanted a wide variety of both for more interesting random results and put the new dice to work accordingly;)

SOURCE: <http://dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=10004&start=210>

weasel fierce wrote:

Maybe this was asked before, but it was a recent topic..

Is it intentional in AD&D that the Haste spell (causing magical aging) should require a system shock roll, risking death ?

Or was that an unforeseen sideeffect ?

the system shock check was included so DMs has something to use to prevent abuse of the spell, such as when a PC drank a potion of speed and then had a haste spell cast on him.

My players knew better that to try to get cutsy like that when I was the DM 🐉

SOURCE: <http://dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=10004&start=450>

Asrogoth wrote:

Gary,

The Strength scores in AD&D and OD&D can go as high during character generation as 18/00 if I remember correctly.

Why does the extra oomph (01-00) apply only to Strength? I can see a case for all the other attributes to have this special ability as well.

My apologies in advance if this is covered. I do not play AD&D and do not own a copy of OD&D to draw from.

Just curious.

Inusual strength is quantifiable, and the fighter class needed the benefit of increased chance to hit and damage done thus.

None of the other stats have easily quantifiable measurement of addition as does strength.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=11762&start=30>

Joe Maccarrone wrote:

Earlier in this Q&A I bugged you about elven cavaliers; PC cavaliers, both human and elven, are going to figure prominently in an OAD&D campaign I'm cooking up for the boys...

As a bit of a digression, I'm in the midst of composing an article on training to improve ability scores for AD&D characters (when it's finished, I'll submit it for Dragonsfoot). The training ball that started rolling with the cavalier and paladin has been popularly demanded for other classes, and I'm developing a simple system on that model -- a percentile roll at 1st level, with training points added each level. It'll be more modest than the cavalier's training gains, however, because other classes don't quite train with the daily rigor of the knightly types... Just a way for PCs from all classes to increase one, two, perhaps three of their abilities by a point, over the course of a long adventuring career.

Back to cavaliers: elven cavaliers are allowed to exceed their normal strength limit of 18/75, and train up to 18/00. It occurred to me that the gain in bonuses from 18/75 (+2/+3 etc.) to 18/00 (+3/+6 etc.) is much greater than the difference between 18/00 and 19 (+3/+7 etc.). That being the case, should I allow human cavaliers to train to 19?

If so, how might I adjudicate this? My first thought was to have the character plateau at 18/00 for an

additional 100 training points (probably about 9 levels) before proceeding to 19. Thus, a human cavalier with a good exceptional strength at 1st level might eventually train to 19 at a very high level....

If I implemented something of this sort, it could be extended to other abilities/classes as well, allowing truly exceptional characters to train up to a 19 in a key ability for their class.

Just thinkin' out loud here. Am I onto something, or am I on the proverbial pipe? 🤔

Howdy Joe!

the idea is a good one, but I wonder about the practicality of such a benison in regards the long-term aspects of having so many PCs with truly exceptional stats--stats that are generally gained by adventure in which deities give such a boost to a single stat as a reward for outstanding performance, an artifact is gained, or a wish used.

Perhaps the main application for training should be to boost stats to above average. That is, make a character with some average stats move up to above average, qualify as a cavalier or paladin, etc.

As to your direct question, if indeed elven PCs are allowed to boost strength above the normal max, a human cavalier should be allowed to train to 19--or perhaps gain a girdle of storm giant strength 😊

Yrag has one of fire giant strength, but Robilar's is of cloud giant strength 🧐

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=11762&start=180>

JASON THE RULESREADER wrote:

Col Pladoh wrote:

Because the PCs are assumed to be superior, the maximum strength being had by 1 in 216 is more like 1 in 21,600. Then apply the percentages, but assume that about 90% of those with 18 strength will be Fighters.

Cheers,
Gary

ON the above quote, is the factor of 216 simply an arbitrary example for the moment? If not, what is the math source for it. I am really getting into math of late and that number 216 comes up a lot lately...weird.....

If so, just want to know why 216.

On a side note, you may recall that Kepler used the platonic solids in his solar system designs. Cool Cool math there heh!

$6 \times 6 = 36 \times 6 = 216$, 3d6 multiplies to get the least likely result of any roll, so an 18 will come up 1 in 216 on average. Assuming that 1 in 1,000 persons is fit to be a fighter adventurer, that makes a score of 18/00 about 1 in 216,000 as a fair measurement. Of course that does not reflect dice rolls that are fudged, use the best 3 of 4, etc. but my gut says it is a likely actual measurement of human population potential.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=180>

Joe Maccarrone wrote:

What was (or is) your favorite method of character generation for AD&D? Was it the popular 'Method I' --

4D6, drop the lowest, arrange as desired?

I've often used Method V from UA, which is sometimes maligned in these forums as creating overly-potent characters. I like it because the player usually sets out to create a particular type of character, and Method V ensures that the scores will qualify. Also, the scores generated by this method are generally suitable for long-term survival and high level play, should the character make it that far.

What do you think? Do you agree with the detractors of Method V? If using Method I, and the scores don't qualify for the character class desired, do you simply raise them to the minimum (as noted in Method V)?

Hi Joe,

I usually used method I, 4d6, toss out one, arrange the totals in any order desired, for that allows the player to have a better shot at getting the sort of character desired.

There is nothing wrong with method V, of course, as far as I am concerned, or else I would not have included it in the UA work!

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=300>

Role of the DM

JF wrote:
Hello Gary!

I just finished reading the interview you gave to Bill Silvey on his website.

I have a question regarding your comment about the Gamer Master maintaining a professional disinterest in the Players' success.

Let's take G3 for this example and assume the PC's are using stoneskin and heavy protection magics to launch fast raids and sorties and then teleporting away before the magics fail but still managing to inflict heavy casualties to the Giants. How do you maintain the DM indifference when the PC's have a method of decimating the dungeon module without producing a counter attack that would look like a punitive grudge hit?

There is nothing in the role of the disinterested GM that prevents keeping the game a challenge.

If you apply the danger of use of the teleport spell, it is likely that there will be some dangerous times for the PCs. also, after a second raid such as you describe the giants would surely get help not otherwise mentioned in the module, say some objects that dispel magic.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?t=11762>

DMPPrata wrote:

Gary, when running OAD&D combat, did/do you require players to declare all their actions (not just spells) prior to the initiative roll? If so, are they allowed to change their declared actions as the round progresses (perhaps forfeiting an attack to help a fallen comrade, who may not have been "fallen" at the beginning of the round), or are they locked in to what they declared?

Actions must be declared or obvious--such as continued close-quarters combat. If some character desires to change a declared action in a round, then I generally assume that the alteration occurs at mid-point.

What I attempt is to have the party behave as would real persons in a confused situation.

In the LA game actions are in blocks of only three seconds, so there's no changing them.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=11762&start=60>

DMPPrata wrote:

merkholz wrote:

That should teach you to argue with the Master! 😊

No, but it does teach me to quote from Dungeon Masters Guide p. 62:

Gary Gygax wrote:

Example: Party A is surprised only on a roll of 1, but party B surprises on 5 in 6 (d6, 1-5) due to its nature or the particular set of circumstances which the DM has noted are applicable to this encounter. The favorable factor normally accruing to party A is 1, i.e., parties of this sort are normally surprised on 1 or 2, but this party is surprised only on a 1, therefore they have an additional 1 in 6 to their favor (and not a 50% better chance). Party B will surprise them on 5 in 6 less 1 in 6, or 4 in 6. Assume A rolls a 4, so it is surprised for 4 segments unless B rolls a 1, in which case A party's inactive period will be only 3 segments, or if B rolls a 2, in which case surprise will last for only 2 segments (4-1=3, 4-2=2).



Rules lawyers are a pain in the butt 😞

How often I have ignored my own in the PHB, DMG, and more recent systems' core rules books would make a rules lawyer's head spin. As if one can not amend one's thinking due to experience and to simplify the complicated 😊

...

To adhere to rules that do not further the game enjoyment is contrary to the purpose of the whole. The game must be entertaining and enjoyable.

...

To know when to ignore the rules in favor of the game is problematical for many GMs it would seem. The axiom, circumstances alter cases, is quite beyond those who do not understand the reason for the play of an RPG.

...

One must indeed know one's subject thoroughly before setting out to personalize (and "improve") upon it. Otherwise, as you note, the results will merit failure.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=90>

phasedoor wrote:

Thanks for that, Gary. A DM is allowed to change Boccob's religion-color to grey for ADandD 1st edition with the Greyhawk campaign? And as a TN-alignment general mythos nondruid cleric of Boccob, I can wear grey clothing?

Indeed!

As a matter of fact the DM can do whatever he wishes, assuming that his player group generally agree and do not abandon the campaign because of such alterations 😊

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=300>

Dammadon wrote:

Elfdart wrote:

I have a question for you, but it's to all DMs, GMs, Castle Keepers and Judges as well. The set-up:

You have designed an encounter that is to be the grand finale of that particular adventure. A great deal of thought went into making it an extremely tough encounter, taking into account PC weaknesses, strengths and tendencies. You think you're going to give them a real run for their money...

...and then they absolutely trounce it, turning the climax of the adventure into a laughter that takes a single round to decide. It could be luck on their part; it could be that you choked on the die rolls; it could be that the PCs were unusually well prepared; or it could be that you overlooked a strength on their part. No matter -your main encounter turned out like most Super Bowls: after a buildup of dramatic tension, it ends in an embarrassing rout.

Then what?

Three options...

- 1) Bang your head against the wall, weep for a moment, and move on...
- 2) Run them over with a herd of Terrasques (sp?) and congratulate yourself with the thought that, "They probably never saw THAT one coming..."
- 3) Have them find a clue that implies these weren't the real badguys behind everything and try again...

In my own experience, I've usually opted for 1 & 3.... and fantasized about using number 2. 😊



What Dammadon said, with emphasis on option 3.

Greg Ellis wrote:

Some DM's get all out of joint when the characters succeed. Somehow they seem to miss the point that the characters are supposed to succeed.

Hi Greg,

I think the point of his post was that they succeeded far too easily. No challenge often means no enjoyment, loss of interest in the campaign. That is why option 3 is the best, assuming the new material is created so as to make the adventures following very challenging, perilous, and filled with hair's-breadth successes.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?t=18412>

Elfdart wrote:

Regarding my own question, I lean more toward #1, though I would never get upset with anyone but myself (not really upset, just let down a little). I think option #3 might work as Plan B for those who are good at winging it.

In the case of a party that through no fault of its own is losing very badly, I might "call off the dogs" somewhat (if the PCs run away, they aren't chased very far, for example).

As the party will be in jubilation mode for a goodly period, no need to wing material for option 3. the GM will have until the next session to spring the sad surprise on the team--plenty of time to concoct the next scenario...and make it most demanding 😊

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=18412&start=30>

Combat_Kyle wrote:

Here is a question about the opposite situation of Elfdart:

You spend a long time working on a final encounter, taking in mind the parties abilities and such, they get to the final encounter and it becomes clear that the players won't last more than 5 rounds (good GM rolling bad PC rolling, whatever the case) what should you do?

1. Deus ex machina? Have a NPC ally of the PCs come in to save the day. Bady guy's super weapon "malfunctions." I'm not a fan of deus ex, but what are your thoughts?
2. Hold back with baddies? Refrain from using baddies high level spells, special abilities etc...?
3. Kill the PCs and have them make new ones?

I usually go with 1 or 2 myslef (I have only encountered this a handful of times) but lower the total XP for the encounter. I try my best to stay away option 3, it leads to upset players and short campaigns.

Howdy!

If mere chance is the cause of the impending failure, I modify the situation to have the adversarial side be likewise blighted by ill fortune. If I over-powered the NPCs/monsters I do indeed reduce these capacities in some way so as to enable the party to uscced. Thus I favor your options 1 or 2 in most cases.

In the case of sheer foolish play on the part of the players, I let the chips fall where they may, and if that means new Avatars, that's the breaks 😊

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?t=18412>

Combat_Kyle wrote:

True, foolish play is often accompanied by a beverage that spent much of its time in oaken barrels.



Ah, well, that's a separate case. There I cut them some considerable slack 😊

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?t=18412>

Saving Throws

JASON THE RULESREADER wrote:

Gary,

Would you allow a saving throw for level drain?

Never!

Simple as that.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?t=12147>

DMPPrata wrote:

Hey Gary, here's a puzzler for you. (Well, OK, it's a puzzler to me , it may be elementary to you. 😊)
Dungeon Masters Guide, p. 81, lists the types of saving throws to which magic armor bonuses will or will not apply.

Quote:

Saving throw rolls WILL receive an armor bonus against:

ACID, EXCEPT WHEN IMMERSION OCCURS

DISINTEGRATION

FALLING DAMAGE

FIRE, MAGICAL OR OTHERWISE

SPELLS WHICH CAUSE PHYSICAL DAMAGE*

* Exception: Metallic armor will NOT add to saving throws versus electrical attacks, although nonmetallic armor will do so.

Have you allowed saving throws against falling damage? Am I missing something?

Yes, I allowed saves against falling damage, or large and heavy objects falling onto a PC, just as the table indicates 😊

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12918&start=60>

DMPPrata wrote:

🤪 Wow. Talk about learning something new every day! I guess the obvious follow-up would be to ask what save you would call that. Based on other uses, I'm guessing save vs. petrification for half damage. Does that sound about right?

Oops! My bad..

I allowed a save only for items, the character took whatever damage the dice indicated, and all he work had to save vs. crushing blow.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12918&start=90>

Calithena wrote:

I was wondering - was there a principled reason for the distinction between Spell and Wand & Staff saving rolls back in the original brown book rules? I've made up a few for myself over the years but it never hurts to ask The Man Himself.

Howdy!

Indeed there was some fanciful reasoning behind the different saving throws. A person-cast spell was reckoned to be the most potent, then one from a staff, and lastly that from a wand...as simple as that.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=270>

Aranion wrote:

Sorry to bother you with a question from AD&D. This has cropped up on the 1E forum, and while a common sense answer seems evident, getting your take directly would be most appreciated (not that your take is somehow opposed to common sense!).

On page 80 of the DMG, you list the saving throw matrix for magical and nonmagical items. A number of these have 1s and 0s listed; for instance, the saving throw for liquid vs crushing blow is 0. The easiest explanation for this is that, well, duh! - liquids as a general rule can't be hurt by a crushing blow.

However, that doesn't explain the items with a "1" listing. Since you have to roll the given number or below, what was the purpose of giving some items a 1 rating and others a 0, since they work the same for all intents and purposes? Why not just put n/a for those items?

Any thoughts you can share about this would be most appreciated. Thanks for the time and patience, and most of all for the game that fires the imagination and brings friends together for creative, intelligent fun.

Short answer:

The 0s and 1s assume that there can be modification of saving throws that penalize the die roll. Some attack might have a penalty of 5, for example, so one could actually fail a roll with a 0 or 1 save.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=330>

Combat Mechanics

Joe Maccarrone wrote:

Gary, is there a provision I've been missing, all these years, for combatants to be stunned during regular OAD&D melee combat? (As opposed to unarmed combat, spell effects, etc.)

I was struck by this question while reviewing my 'AD&D Combat Notes' -- a tightly packed, double column cheat sheet -- in preparation for running an AD&D game for the first time in a few years...

I use stunning attacks as if they were normal, but only 10% of damage is actual, the balance temporary. When a character gets to 0 HP or below they are out cold for 1 plus as many minutes as they have accumulated negative HPs.

That isn't in the rules, just the way I ran my game sessions. Same for PCs being overborn by swarming attackers. I'd have it automatic if four man-sized attackers succeeded in closing with the character unless OC strength was 18 or better and the attackers weren't also strong and heavy (seat of the pants DMing there;)

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12147&start=30>

Joe Maccarrone wrote:

Thank you -- more juicy bits falling from the Master's gaming table... 😊

I think overbearing is the most frequently overlooked aspect of AD&D combat. A few dozen humanoids should be a serious threat to any lone hero, and force him to look for a position of tactical advantage.

My interpretation is that an overborne combatant must be successfully grappled on subsequent rounds, to keep him on the ground (where he is assumedly being stabbed, smashed, etc.). If a group overbears an individual, I then have them divide their efforts in subsequent rounds -- some holding him down, some delivering weapon attacks (at +4 to hit, with no shield or Dex bonuses, of course). If a grappling attempt fails, or if another condition of breaking the grapple is met (e.g. a bend bars roll), the victim can regain his feet immediately.

Is this the way you handled these situations?

Pretty much, yes. In a skill based system all that can be managed with opposed roles, the defender getting penalties, the attackers bonuses.

An animal pack attacks this way--lions, hyenas, wild dogs, wolves.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12147&start=60>

RadagastTheBrown wrote:
Hello Gary!

A few questions if you don't mind?

Question 1.)

OD&D Volume 2 page 31

ARMOR: Armor proper subtracts its bonus from the hit dice of the opponents of its wearer. If the shield's bonus is greater than that of the armor there is a one-third chance that the blow will be caught by the shield, thus giving the additional subtraction.

Actually, that rule is better ignored, so that the shield is always counted in AC unless the attack is from behind or the unshielded side in the case of two or more attackers against one.

RadagastTheBrown wrote:

Did you mean that, for example, if a character with non-magical leather armor should only gain the benefit from a magical shield (besides the base +1 bonus to AC) only 1/3 of the time?

That is indeed what the rule says, yes.

RadagastTheBrown wrote:

Question 2.)

OD&D Volume 1 page 18

Dice for Accumulative Hits (Hit Dice): ... Whether sustaining accumulative hits will otherwise affect a character is left to the discretion of the referee.

I have no idea what this could mean.

Scarring, lose of some body part, blinding, damage so extensive that it requires twice or more times the usual length of time to heal--such as from a torn tendon or broken bone.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12147&start=150>

Rothe wrote:

I still remember vividly when I first cracked Men & Magic in 1976 and I'm deeply impressed that after all these years you take time to diligently respond to questions.

So are critical hits still not part of AD&D 😊

Howdy,

Not in a game I run...though if the players really insist I can deal with it as I tend to roll a lot of 18, 19, and 20 results for the NPCs/monsters. so if they want their PCs dead quickly, I can oblige;

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12918&start=90>

Anonymous wrote:

2. At what point do you allow archers/missile users to pick out an individual within a group. For instance, if the party lays in ambush as a group of 30 orcs and one magician (guarded from all sides) approach, is there some range where it would be possible to single out the magic user (assuming surprise)? If you would allow the MU to be singled out on a surprise round what about later rounds?

This is all up to the DM. I surely allow that when I am DMing. Archers and spell-casters are usually allowed to select their targets.

Anonymous wrote:

Or was it your intention that a magic user (or any individual) within a tight group can only be singled out with hand held weapons? Oh, and does the official rule on this differ from your house rule?

If there is a rule in the book, then it is official...and alterable by the DM. Again, all of that is up to the DM as far as I am concerned. I do allow PCs to single out their opponents, move to fight them--if they can get there. Other opponents might block their path.

Again, AD&D is not a combat simulator, so such things are really matters for the DM to manage as he finds best for his campaign and group.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12918&start=270>

JASON THE RULESREADER wrote:

I noticed that in CHAINMAIL/OD&D DAYS you had a rule for "pushbacks" in certain hits. Did you allow for this in AD&D?

in fights in the movies like Erol Flynn etc you see them pushing their opponents back and back and back.

Certainly a fight isn't always stationary. There would be some pushing back. Not exactly equal to a "withdrawal" as per the rules as both opponents follow each other.

I guess you just have to assume the withdrawal is an option actually stated and a hit scored never allows for some pushing back in the process.

Imagine hitting a foe, and the cliff is not too far behind him.....

The PC attempts to push his opponent back, hoping to get him to fall off the cliff, although the cliff edge is still 30 yards away. Walls close both sides.....only two ways to go. Either back or forward.

You would think that maybe a hit is in fact pushing your foe back but how far back each hit?

Howdy!

The short answer is no, as the D&D game is not a military miniatures simulation nor does one figure in it represent 20 men 😊

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=240>

garhkal wrote:

Not sure if this got asked before (and have little time to go through the entirety of this and the other threads)..

Would a person get more than one attack when charging?? EG fulsia the elvin warrior has specialized in the spear. He now has (due to hitting 8th level) 2 attacks a round. If he charges, would he get to make both attacks???

What if they are wielding 2 weapons? Does that change anything??

Assuming the system is OAD&D:

If charge movement were short, I would give the character two attacks, but in the case of something like half charging distance was used, I'd limit it to a single attack on that round.

Whether one or two weapons were being employed is not material IMO, as the question pertains to effective strikes.

...

The AD&D combat system came from OD&D, and OD&D came from the original Chainmail medieval military miniatures rules. The armor protection system in the latter rules was progressively higher the better the armor, so the current D20 approach is not a new concept.

For the rest, I do believe that using THAC0 was as complicated as the to hit system in D20, so it is more a matter of personal preference than not in my thinking. I can use either method, but I rather like the old one better, as I do the old saving throw tables.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=300>

garhkal wrote:

Gary. If I can, another question for you. Would a monster only 'hurt' by magical weapons, still take damage from getting thrown/falling? Like if my Monk hit tossed you into the bar, or I grabbed you, flew to 100 feet and let go??

Harumph...

Even though the game system in question is not mine to opine in regards its rules and mechanics, I can pass along how I would manage the question of such special forms of damage being inflicted by creatures normally affected only by magical attacks.

As similarly potent, non-magical, monsters can inflict harm on them, I would ignore the minor damage delivered by throws in hand-to-hand fighting, but allow damage for long falls, heavy objects falling and striking, etc. What I would do in such case is record normal damage, but lost HPs would return, just as a troll regenerates, likely at 1 HP per HD of the monster, as only magical damage can permanently affect the subject.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=570>

deimos3428 wrote:

We always treated the earth as a +5 weapon in regards to falling damage. (There's mithril/adamantite in there somewhere, I figure.) The regeneration rule is an interesting touch.

Actually, a dropped or hurled object of considerable density, hardness, and weight is about the same as that. That said, would a demon really be killed by a fall of even 1,000 feet onto rock? I think not, and the same for most monsters that can be harmed by magic or other monsters. Thus the regeneration.

The DM needs to consider the cause of damage and decide if regeneration is appropriate and at what rate. Some creatures being "killed" by attacks of magical sort or extreme force will merely be sent back to their own plane as is well known;)

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=570>

Glaaki wrote:

Exactly! 😊

Those silly PCs are always expecting some great creature of myth and legend. It is nice to give them an attitude adjustment with a 'lowly' Grizzly Bear or pack of wild dogs.

When animals charge and leap upon a character/Avatar, I assume the defender is overburdened if the attacker alone or in numbers weighs no less than 90% as much as the one being so charged. Of course a pack of dogs or the like can easily pull down a single human not in heavy metal armor.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=750>

oldschooler wrote:

Gary, have you ever had a stealth situation crop up involving the old: "I sneak up behind him and break his neck before he can react!" schtick?

If so, how do you think the best way to handle it would be (for whatever system)?

Yes indeed, I have had such attempts made by players...usually those with characters/Avatars that have no capacity to perform as requested.

First comes the stealth check, and often that ends the matter quickly. If it succeeds and the assailant then manages to accomplish such an attack--hand-to-hand combat ability or considerable physical strength--this requires a successful attack roll with a bonus for attack from behind by surprise--30 or +6. If that succeeds the deed is done, although if the intended victim is also skilled in martial arts and/or physically powerful, I might give an opposed roll chance for that individual.

RPGs aren't combat simulators, but sometimes such details are needed 😊

Glaaki wrote:

What a true statement. RPG combat can and should be engaging and dramatic. However, given that you are engaged in an exercise of the imagination, be that fantasy, sci-fi, or otherwise the idea that combat need be "realistic" is in my opinion absurd. 😊

Agreed,

Only if the RPG being played is one meant to simulate such a thing--a martial arts game for example--is any attempt at realism meaningful.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=18412&start=60>

Psionics

Dragon Fire wrote:

Gary, quick question. Who was/were the contributor(s)/creator(s) for the psionic section of the 1E PHB? Steve and Frank didn't recall and recommended I ask you.

Heh...

Mentzer emailed me about that this AM. the fact is that no one controbuted much of anything to the section, other than urging me to do it. that came from a bunch of gamers from the chicago area. I confess I listened, for the way I tried to accomplish the inclusion was not in harmony with the system.

Psychogenics in the Mythus and Lejendary Adventure games works well, so i eventually got it right...

SOURCE: <http://dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=10004&start=630>

JASON THE RULESREADER wrote:

What are your thoughts of inclusion of psionics in the AD&D game?

My nephew just rolled "00" the other night to see if he had them. (I require that)

So I guess I will honor such a rare event. But he rolled 92 for a base attack strength with his bonuses gives him 100 even. So (groan) now he can unleash a psionic blast upon a non psionic.

In 23 years of playing this is only the second character to qualify for psionics...

To be succinct:

Psionics. as with weapons speed and the table of comparison of varying damage by armor type, was something I got talked into. I never used them in my campaign--other than the Illithids' and like monsters attacks. Frankly, they don't fit with the rest of the AD&D system, and i planned to pull them from a revised edition.

I have a similar capacity in my latest game system, but I wanted it, and so it meshes smoothly, is neither over-powering nor under-powered.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12147&start=90>

chrisspiller wrote:

Hey Gary, just a question regarding your commenst about psionics. If you had ended up pulling them from a revised edition of AD&D what were your plans regarding monsters that were specifically psionic-themed (e.g., Mind Flayers, Intellect Devourers) or monsters that had psionic powers in addition to other powers (e.g., high-powered devils and demons)? Were you planning on keeping them and making their psionic abilities something that only they possessed and weren't available to PC's or perhaps revising the

system in general so it fit better with the overall structure of AD&D (like what you mentioned with LA's psionic system)?

Their attacks would have been revised to be powers, and otherwise they'd have remained in the bestiary for the game. Mind Flayers, the Illithids, were operative before I developed the crappy psionics system I hate to admit I devised

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12147&start=90>

Cab wrote:

Who talked you into including psionics? What was the reason for it, especially as a potential PC ability? I'll confess to never having been particularly fond of that part of the game either; I've dabbled with it a bit, but it never really grew on me.

A mixed group comprised of former wargamers and new FRPGers from Chicago. they wanted to be able to use interesting mental powers typically found in SF novels. As I loved the latter, I unfortunately listened and agreed.

When I reviewed the results of the design I wasn't happy, but i had promised, so I kept it, chump that I was.

The Psychogenic Ability in the Lejendary Adventure game system fits into the overall fantasy milieu quite seamlessly, and it translates to other genres with ease. I suppose that was enabled by my false start with psionics in the AD&D game 😏

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12147&start=90>

Clangador wrote:

Gary, how did psionics first creep in the D&D game? Did you use it in you[r] home campaign?

Gaming fellows from Chicago urged psionics, properly electronically enhanced psychic powers, be included. Foolishly, I accomodated them.

As a matter of fact I never used psionis in my campaign.

Clangador wrote:

So it's not just me that doesn't like them. 😏

Heh!

Heavens no. Along with weapon speed and weapon effect vs. armor, psionics are likely the least used and mostly disliked part of the AD&D rules. OTOH, I have mental powers nicely managed in the Lejendary Adventure game system, so it can be done 😏

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=480>

Movement

DMPrata wrote:

Gary, one more if I may, and then I promise to leave you be for a few days. In an earlier discussion of

movement rates, you mentioned that you felt 9" was a good base movement rate for an unarmored dwarf, gnome, or halfling (and someone recently brought to my attention that this was done with a pre-generated dwarven PC in S4 The Lost Caverns of Tsojcanth). Human PCs have their movement cut in 3" increments as their encumbrance increases -- 12", 9", 6", 3-4" (per Players Handbook). How would you suggest reducing the dwarf's movement rate? A few ideas that I've seen bounced around:

9", 6", 3", 1"

or

9", 6", 4", 2"

or

9", 7", 5", 3"

or

9", 9", 6", 3"

How have you handled this?

The movement rate deduction is in 25% steps, so for a dtyrddy dward I'd say the steps are as follows (one of the options you suggest):

9", 7", 5" 3"

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12147&start=210>

Inspirations & Origins

Classes

Sieg wrote:

In your opinion, what literary figures would be the appropriate archetype example for the Illusionist class?

I believe that the best examples of illusion magic are found in L. Sprague de Camp's "Haorid Shea" stories, with various practitioners using it, the Finnish wizards most generally. there are plenty of others found in fairy tales such as those of Andrew Lang.

SOURCE: <http://dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=10004&start=30>

Handy Haversack wrote:

Hi Gary,

I was doing a bit of inspirational reading in the preface to the AD&D PHB last night and noticed that you thanked one Dennis Sustare. I was wondering if you could tell us who this fellow was, in terms of his connection to D&D, and whether he granted his name to the seventh-level druid spell Chariot of Sustarre. Thanks.

Sure:)

Dennis sent in the material that was used to make the druid a class rather than a sort of evil human monster as it had been in the OD&D game. The spell in question was onded named in his honor.

SOURCE: <http://dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=10004&start=480>

Rulebooks

Mr. Awesome wrote:

Heya, Gary.

A few quick questions: Did you have anything to do with the non-weapon proficiencies in Oriental Adventures or were those David Cook's?

those were all from Zeb the Destroyer 🤖

SOURCE: <http://dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=10004&start=60>

steampunk wrote:

Regarding the non-adventuring NPCs, I was in no-way alluding to players. But I had simply been searching for a "rational" means of explaining high-level NPCs to my players, especially if they (the NPC) doesn't appear to be the "adventuring-type". I would never allow this for players, but simply as

DM-generated background.

One of the drawbacks of a class and level system is just this very sort of thing, explaining/rationalizing high-level NPCs.

There are many ways for a character to gain skill in a field. In the Mythus game I called that "STEEP," as a play on the word "steeped," being extremely knowledgeable. The letters stand for Study, Training, Education, Experience, and Practice. You should be able to use that to build reasonable backgrounds for high-level NPCs. They all have a past history prior to being encountered by the PC party, no?

steampunk wrote:

Two quick, last questions, if I may:

(1) Can you explain the methodology of the organization of the DMG? If this was explained somewhere else, please tell me to bugger off and use google! 😊

No, as I wrote it from the top of my head, did little re-organization, and what is there generally follows the rules organization and what I think the DM needs to know, have help with.

steampunk wrote:

The MM and PHB are just so... different? The DMG feels like a different staff helped with organizing it.

The works in question were published much as I wrote the ms. each. Of course a compilation of monsters is different from a handbook for players... 😊

steampunk wrote:

(2) Did you (or do you) use the dungeon generation material (in the DMG) much? Or were most campaigns and dungeons very carefully crafted?

I seldom used the random dungeon generation system, although I found it useful on a few occasions. That said, I wouldn't call most of my dungeon levels "carefully crafted." Especially themed ones were, and I did my best to make all of them confusing to map, but that's more workmanlike than otherwise. The encounters were likewise a mix of "whatever" and "this will knock their socks off" sorts, but some features of many thrown together as mere mazes levels, had specially designed and placed features.

SOURCE: <http://dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=10004&start=510>

Jerome Steelsides wrote:

This has probably been asked before (and probably many times!) but I wonder, what would 2e AD&D have looked like had you been designing it? Would it have looked like it did (pretty much 1e with some added bells and whistles, IMHO) or would it have been completely different? Or, indeed, for that matter, was there ever a plan for a second edition?

Along similar lines, what do you feel as a designer should be the longevity of a given edition of an RPG ruleset?

Indeed, this question has been posed to me a few times prior to this.

As a matter of fact I was planning a revised AD&D work, one that would have included most of the UA book and some new classes--Mystic, Savant, and likely a Jester. the new work would not have been akin to 2E, although some expansion and detailing of Secondary Skills was planned.

That's all I have to say, and no, I will not go into details of anything I would have added or changed. The game system belongs to WotC now.

SOURCE: <http://dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=10004&start=570>

cimerians wrote:

- Out of curiosity, how long did it take to you to complete the three AD&D books? Did you wait till a book was printed and released before starting on the next?

I write the MM in about six months, then took a break for a month, wrote the PHB with the MM being printed and sold, the second book taking me about seven months to write. I then took a break to write the G Series of modules and then penned the DMG in about eight months--after completing it I write the D Series of modules.

I was always working before the next book was in print.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12147&start=390>

oldschooler wrote:

Howdy Gary! I noticed above you referred to your Yggsburgh setting as a boxed set. I was under the impression it was a largish, hardcover book with included map 😊
Anywho, regarding your first big project of the seventies, I read earlier that you wrote G1-3 after the PHB, but before the DMG, which indicates the DMG was more or less a book of all optional rules to be considered by individual DMs. Forgive me for bringing up a game that "doesn't belong to you", but it sounds like for **AD&D**, the MM & PHB are more or less the *official* rules to follow, whereas the DMG is something more of an options book for enterprising Dungeon Masters (with age vs. abilities, unarmed combat, artifacts & relics, etc.) to use. Was that your intent as you remember it? I ask because it seems that's the way Troll Lord Games is going with their **Castles & Crusades** books and I thought it would be an interesting comparison.

I wanted Yggsburgh to be a boxed set. I guess my wish took over my conscious mind when I write the reference to same. The fact is that I believe firmly that it should be one, but authors propose, publishers dispose.

I took a *break* from rules writing to do those modules. Much of the material contained in the DMG is as integral to the AD&D game as what is found in the MM and PHB--more so, in fact, that the MM's content, that being only stats and details for opponents of the PCs and thus completely mutable 😊

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?t=12918>

galstaff wrote:

Did you ever use or did any one you know use the Dungeoneers and wilderness survival guides? If so which ones are the best.

To be completely forthright, I shunned both assiduously... 😊

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=300>

garhkal wrote:

A non gameing rule one. When and where did the phrase 'BLUE BOLT' come from??

It is likely that it came from the rather hackneyed "bolt out of the blue," referring to a lightning bolt coming from the sky to strike an unsuspecting target, as Zeus was reputedly wont to do.

Hi Clangador,

Can you give the page reference in the OAD&D DMG for the term?

Clangador wrote:
Yes I can.

Page 110 under the HANDLING THE TROUBLESOME PLAYER section.

You can find the text online right [here](#).

Ciao Clangador,

Indeed, I recall composing those admonitions...and I note my expression was "Blue bolts from the heavens," implying as I suggested earlier lightning from an angry deity.

As a matter of fact I did not use them but when a player or players became obstreperous I simply rolled a d6 and informed the miscreants that their PCs had suffered that much damage. Unless they wanted more of the same, all misconduct had to cease. I did roll several d6 damage for a couple of very unruly and rebellious young players. When asked why their characters were taking such damage, I said because they had offended the rest of the group, me in particular, and if they wished to play further they had better note the damage, be silent, and mind their manners.

They did just that.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=360>

Influences on D&D as a System

Gandalf Istari wrote:
Mr. Gygax,

...

I'm wondering about how influenced you feel you've been by the ancient world, as compared to, say, the medieval world. Its obvious from the inclusion of things into the game like the Greek and Egyptian gods, as well as monsters from ancient mythology and lore, that you are knowledgeable about the period. However, I've always felt that AD&D was distinctly medieval in its flavor, and so I was wondering whether the ancient world was simply a period from which you plundered monsters and gods to expand and add variety to the game, or whether you personally feel that it influenced your view of "the game" as much as the medieval period so obviously had?

I've been rereading some of the classics of late, including such epics as the Illiad and the Odyssey, so the question about how influential the ancient period has been upon you and your games came to mind. Does the medieval period hold more appeal to you than the ancient period?

Most of the D&D game's inspiration comes from a mix of the ancient (quasi-ancient Hyborea of Howard's Conan) and medieval (and imaginary middle ages fiction), so there's no way I can measure the relative weight of each. I read pretty well equally in both historical periods. The medieval was a less organized and more individualistic period, though, so that's why general technological and socio-cultural assumptions are set in that time...or later.

SOURCE: <http://dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=10004&start=150>

Ivid wrote:

So you have Swiss roots? - I guessed that since, IIRC, in the *Lost City of Gaxmoor* it is mentioned that you have a daughter named Heidi.

Did that *Teutonic* heritage somehow influence your works? - Because, really, I often thought that especially your earlier books were more marked by the mythology from continental Europe than by the British mythology, as it is with many fantasy authors. 😊

My father told me fantasy stories he made up, so that's likely the Teutonic influence. I also read a lot of fairy tales in addition to mythology, so there is some considerable British influence--Andrew Lang.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12918&start=300>

weasel fierce wrote:

One thing I am enjoying a lot, as I am having time to read more and more oAD&D material (I originally started with Mentzer's D&D and AD&D2nd edition, then got into 1st edition retroactively) is the implied mythology, relations and world views that the game presents, especially as far as monsters go.

I can imagine a good chunk of these things were flavour text, thrown in to make the game more vivid, but how much of the non-generic information was based off your Greyhawk visions, and how much was "this would be really cool" ?

Virtually everything I wrote for the D&D and AD&D game systems through 1979 was drawn from experience in the "trenches" as a DM or a player. thereafter, much of the new material was simply envisaged, put on paper, put into play, then published.

That's about as close as I can come to being definitive in this regard.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?t=15314>

Flash Gordrax wrote:

Glad to see your [sic] doing well and in good spirits. I hope this new year will bring good things for you and that your health will continue to improve.

I have a question concerning the old days. When the idea of the balanced adventuring "party" (3-12 guys each specializing in one thing working together to accomplish a goal) was created, was this a natural evolution of table top war games, an idea taken from television/movie, a favorite novel (for instance: The Hobbit / LOTR wizard, fighters, halfling-thieves), or perhaps inspired by a sport like football (each position performing a role moving toward a common objective).

Anyway, stay healthy and keep working (its good for the soul and prevents yellow mold from taking hold).

The chaps playing the game pretty much developed the concept of a balanced party. When we first began playing most parties were mainly fighters, and we got in trouble when facing spell-casters without our own artillery for fire counter-battery 😊

Eventually, the large parties of PCs dungeon crawling in Greyhawk Castle were arrayed in three ranks with the halflings and dwarves in front, then elves and short humans, and the tallest in the rear--with any additional PCs behind them covering the backs of those ahead.

The short answer is that the concept evolved from play of the game.

chrispiller wrote:

Heh, and this was imported into the DMG example of play for everyone else's benefit, too 😊

Just so!

I felt it was beneficial to share as much of that sort of knowledge, that gained from experience, as possible with those of my fellows who were running D&D game campaigns.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?t=15314>

Differences between AD&D and other Game Systems

Joe Maccarrone wrote:

...

Whenever I start monkeying with AD&D systems for the sake of streamlining or simplifying, I find that AD&D is so ingrained that when I try to make a change, I may as well be asking myself to think in centimeters! A method is only 'simpler' or more logical if it springs to mind naturally...and after the past 25 years with AD&D, well..... 😊

How well I know! I changed all the game patois for the Legendary Adventure system because it is different, and I wished to force all those picking it up to alter their thinking, so as to be able to more quickly and easily grasp the differences. Yet I still find myself using AD&D terminology from force of habit.

The AD&D mechanics were all meshed as are gears in a clock. The LA game parts are as closely intertwined, but as the design is for a multi-genre system, many parts of the rules have more tolerance for "adaptation" 😊

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=11762&start=150>

Cab wrote:

May I ask you something about the transition between D&D and AD&D? I've often found that the simple form and flavour of D&D is more to my tastes than the advanced game, but that there are instances where I'll refer to tables and rules in AD&D for clarifications or rules extensions where I think I need them. Reading the AD&D DMG, that book seems almost written as an extension of the original game rather than as a separate game.

Was it always the intention that AD&D was going to be a separate game, or did you originally envisage a more 'pick and choose' extension to the original game?

Short answer in regards to AD&D. It was written as a separate game. I put part of the new system into a D&D rewrite, though, as the latter was taking place even as I was drafting the PHB.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=11762&start=180>

richardstincer wrote:

Are all of the early ADandD 1st edit. info. rule sourcebooks from 1977, 1978, and 1979 compatible with later printings of those same books--starting with may 1985 and after? I mean the PHB, DMG, MM, Manual of the Planes, DLA, and other such stiff cardboard-cover books.

After 1986 came 3E which was not compatible with OAD&D, as there were many changes of the sort I would cite as unnecessary and arbitrary.

So the answer is no if you are referring to 2E books.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=11762&start=180>

oldschooler wrote:

Not a question as such, but I thought you'd like checking out my OD&D versions of ERB's Barsroom Critters: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?t=14703>
What d'ya think?

Looks fine to me. There are, of course, heroic members of the various humanoid races with levels, right? Too bad I have long lost the OD&D ststs I used for Erac's adventures on Barsroom 😊

One thing I have noted is that ERB didn't have many prey animals for his carnivores to dine upon. That is why I made the orluk a smaller feline-type rather than elephantine in size. The poor beggars would starve there in the cold without lots of even larger prey to hunt.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12918&start=480>

Glaaki wrote:

Col. A while back I mentioned the Dying Earth RPG and you said you had commented on it but had not seen anything regarding it. Here are a couple of reviews from both ends of the spectrum...there are several in the center.

http://www.rpg.net/news+reviews/reviews/rev_5702.html

<http://www.rpg.net/reviews/archive/11/11425.phtml>

Thanks Amigo,

About the only thing I might wish from the Dying Earth would be a world map...

That anything posted on rpgnet must be suspect aside, I have long held that an RPG based in a work of fiction is not going to be much in the way of a game, but that modules utilizing such works based on an established RPG system are likely to be interesting indeed as demi-campaigns.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=18412&start=90>

Monsters and Races

Mr. Awesome wrote:

Was poking around and thought of an old unanswered question... Gary, I know where most of the giants in the Monster Manuals come from, but where do the verbeeg and cloud giants come from? That is, what mythological (or whatever) source material inspired them, if any?

You mean I messed one? Heh 😊

Jack and the Beanstalk was the inspiration for the cloud giant. That's one of my favorite fairy tales.

The Verbeeg was inspired by French Canadians and Paul Bunyon...and you should be able to get the connection easily...

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12918&start=300>

Ivid wrote:

Since I read something about a similar dispute you had during a con earlier, I've a question on your general concept of fantasy too:

Now, without accusing you by any means from copying from Tolkien or any other modern author, like that woman on that con did, most medieval traits about Elves don't let them develop such a human-like civilisation as D&D and fantasy literature in general gave them. Do you happen to know when Elves and Faeries were first described having such a pseudo-medieval culture in literature? - Spenser's Faery Queen maybe? - Because the image of Elves in literature has changed in the 20th century, D&D being the most popular testimony of this change...

Indeed, I believe it was in the Renaissance that elves moved from the folklore model of wild and rude, or basically tiny creatures such as in Shakespeare's *A Midsummer's Night's Dream*, to something more akin to the French version of fairies, tall, courtly, refined, and as civilized as humankind, if not more so. As you note, it might well have been Spenser that brought about the change.

...

Some folklore has fairies as powerful creatures akin to demi-gods. The French fairy folk, the Lutins, IIR, were much like that model.

The Irish fiar folk were of mixed sort, but all with potent magical abilities, and I am not referring to the old gods, giants, or heroes.

That's about all I can add, for I need to be working 😊

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12918&start=330>

Scarecrow wrote:

I've looked through Amazon and a few other places, but I've had trouble finding good books on monsters & mythological creatures. Do you have any suggestions on new or not-long-out-of-print reference works on monsters?

Also, I'm curious about the mythological/etymological origin or inspiration behind some monsters: aerial servants, Type V demons, gnolls (Lord Dunsany?), ixitxachitl, jackalweres, morkoths, and umber hulks.

Hi Scarecrow,

That's some laundry list, and I fear I must beg off answering specifically:

It has been a long time since I did research for new monsters, so I'd have to go through the library in the basement to get a bibliography together, and that just ain't in the cards these days. Check the bibliographies in the OAD&D DMG and in the Dangerous Journeys Mythos books.

Most of those monsters you are curious about I made up off the top of my head. The name for gnolls is from Dunsany, but nothing else. The ixitxachitl is a creation of Steve Marsh. The morkoth isn't mine, so I can't comment.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=120>

K. Boudreau wrote:
Hi Gary,

I was going to ask you during the LA game, but forgot: Do you have an obsession with fungi? It seems to pop up in a lot of your work over the years, usually accompanied with colorful descriptions that always seem to contain the word mauve. Maybe I'm just hallucinating.

Fungi are the only likely vegetable growth in a subterranean setting, so of course I have a lot of them so that such places can have a reasonable, if improbable, "natural" ecology.

Mauve is a fine color, as are puce, fuchsia, cerise, russet, umber, ochre, and citrine...to name a few. Bisque is sadly neglected as is maroon 🙄

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=18412&start=30>

Magic

Spells

Lothar TVNI wrote:

Greetings Gary! First let me say congratulations on lighting a fire under the imaginations of so many people, including myself of course!

In The Dragon #33 Len Lakofka mentions in his "Leomund's Tiny Hut" article that you and he disagreed on certain interpretations on some spells. He mentioned Magic Missile specifically. He wrote about the Invisibility spell but he doesn't mention if you agreed with it or not.

Lenard Lakofka wrote:**Invisibility**

While violence causes the instant negation of Invisibility, I think that other magics do so also. I rule that if a Magic-user is invisible he/she will become visible in the segment during which he/she discharges a magic item or begins to cast any spell. Also, an invisible figure can not receive another spell without negating the invisibility. Thus a figure can be enlarged, strengthened, hasted and then made invisible, but Invisibility MUST be the last spell throw or it is negated at once! Note that a figure's "gear" is not equivalent to another figure. "Gear" above and beyond normal encumbrance will not become invisible and will spoil the effect of the entire spell. Lastly, "gear" can not be passed around to others and remain invisible. The trick of giving all weapons to the Magic-user to hold while Invisibility is cast and then passing the invisible weapons back to the other players is unfair. Invisibility can be used to make an individual weapon, its scabbard (holder) and belt invisible, of course. Drawing the weapon will negate the invisibility.

I had been wondering since reading this article if this was how you ruled the invisibility spell also.

Thanks!

Welcome:)

Len's take doesn't matter al that much, as he isn't the author of the game 🤔

Magic missiles always hit, and that's a rule i have never varied from.

I covered all the invisibility stuff over on the EN world boards thread, and in general I agree that any offensive action,m including casting a apell or picking a pocket breaks the spell. Len could have simplified the "gear" question by simply saying that invisibility covers the person upon whom it is cast as well as all normally worn and carried by the individual.

If that doesn't cover it, come on back.

SOURCE: <http://dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=10004>

chrisspiller wrote:

I was wondering if any of the name-specific spells in the PHB and UA were actually the result of PC research on your original campaign. For instance, did Bigby come up with any of the various hand spells that carry his name?

I am sure some (most?) did not come about this way but I'm curious as to whether or not all of them were made up by you. I'm fairly sure, for example, that "Serten's Spell Immunity" wasn't the result of PC research as Serten was a Cleric, iirc.

Heh, Chris...

You ask that of the game's designer, campaign DM, and the player of the character?

the answer to many is a simple, yes because i wanted my PC to have that sort of spell. some of the others were named for a PC who would have loved to have such a spell but didn't think of creating it, so i did in the name of the PC. Tenser's Transformation, for instance, was simply the magical expression of what son Ernie would do with his PC when Tenser had cast his last spell and still wanted to be in on the action 😊

SOURCE: <http://dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=10004&start=90>

Bombay wrote:

I was DMing last night, and had a player that was stuck in a Wall of Force. He had the spell wall of force's memorized and wanted to use it to escape, i ruled that it wouldn't be possible, based on Teleport's spell description. He also had a[n] amulet of the planes, and i was at a loss at that point as to what to do. Was wall of force intended to be a spell you could not escape from by any means like Teleport, Word of Recall, Dimension door etc?

Short answer:

The Wall of Force spell was not intended to be more than a blocking energy that prevents passage. If it was cast so as to totally surround the character then that individual would be trapped until the spell ended. An Amulet of the Planes would enable escape I would think.

SOURCE: <http://dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=10004&start=600>

Elfdart wrote:

Many moons ago, I was playing a 1st level cleric of Celestian in ToEE. He had one spell memorized (Command). When our group encountered bandits in the Moathouse, my cleric cast the spell on one of them. The command word? One that can't be printed here, but suffice it to say, it rhymes with "luck".

Since the bandit I cast it on failed his save and was standing close to one of his comrades, I tried to convince my DM that the spell should disable TWO bandits (although the second would have been disabled indirectly) instead of one -for at least a round or two. When he cleaned up the soda that came out of his nostrils, he said "NO!". In your opinion, was he adhering too closely to the letter rather than the spirit of the rules?

Well,

It's pretty easy, I should think. If the command was "Whirl", the individual would do that and likely disrupt all those in touching distance of his arms. I agree with Elfdart's suggestion that two of the opponents would have been directly effected by the command spell's activation success.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=11762&start=30>

Dragon Fire wrote:

Elfdart wrote:

....The command word? One that can't be printed here, but suffice it to say, it rhymes with "luck"....

Hhmm. Would people of that era even know/use that a word? Was that a word back then? 😊 Might just be jibberish otherwise. 😊

Let us be reasonable. No one should expect players to use the language of a bygone era--shakespearean english, for example. The object is to play a game, not stage a theatrical production aping Elizabethan or earlier times 😊

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=11762&start=60>

Bombay wrote:

Gary, once again thanks for answering our questions. I feel like I ask one too many, but being still "New" to 1e ed DND, I have alot [sic] of questions.

This one is to the spell "Enlarge", was it ment to increase only size? Or would you include Hit Points, Attacks, Hit Dice? We have played that we increase everything, so if your enlraged 100%, you double your Hit Points, your attack of 1-8 is now 2-16(we are not talking of weapons etc... this is mostly just animals.)

We have had some nasty encounters with Dragons that Enlarge themselves, and breath a breath weapo.... 😊

Enlarge affects only size. It isn't a superspell, after all;) I could have sworn I mentioned the enlarged subject did not gain any added benefits from size...

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=11762&start=180>

Runecrow wrote:

Hello Gary, I have a quick question. I am almost ashamed to ask it because I'm sure it's probably been asked a million times; but I am having somewhat of a time coming to a conclusive call on this.

I was wondering about the original intent behind the protection from evil spell. This was brought up by a player recently and I've been contemplating it for a few days. Now, was it originally meant to be that the "hedging out of enchanted/summoned creatures" effect was to be suspended if the spell recipient attacked such a creature; or was it meant to be that the cleric/magic-user could attack and the "hedging" ability remained effective? I have looked and looked but found nothing stating that the "hedging" effect is suspended if the recipient attacks.

If the "hedging" ability was meant to be suspended, was it meant to be universally suspended? That is, if the cleric were fighting 4 elementals, and attacked one, would all 4 now be able to attack the cleric?

If a paladin attacks, and the intent is for the "hedging" to be suspended, for what duration, since the paladin's ability is effectively continuous? Is the paladin's aura suspended in relation to that attacked creature permanently? Or only for the combat duration?

As I read the rules, it seems to me that attack should not suspend the "hedging" ability, from a 'written rules' point of view. I thought I would ask you so that, if the intent was originally to suspend the "hedging"

upon attack, I could at least say, "Because Gary Gygax said so" to answer my player's question of, "Why?" when I said the effect would be suspended.

Also, I hope all is going well, and that any personal studies beyond the game are also going well.

The protection from evil spell keeps said foes away from the protected. If the latter chooses to move into range to assail the evil opponents, there goes the hedge. simple as that. It is a protective spell, not one of offense.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=11762&start=210>

richardstincer wrote:

Gary, I don't remember if any printing of the ADandD 1st edit. PHB or DMG--from the years of 1978 to 1988--mentions something about what time of day a nondruid cleric can pray for magic spells. Does the 1988 GreyHawk Adventures hardcover rulebook, which is compatible with ADandD 1st edit., mention the time of day when nondruid clerics can pray for magic spells? If none of the ADandD 1st edit. rulebooks mention it, can the player choose evening twilight as the preferred time?

Ho richard,

That's more that's up to the DM. Generally its assumed by most, as clerics are adventuring, they sleep through the night, say their morning prayers before the new day's action commences, and thus have their spells renewed, even as magic-users are cracking open their spell books to memorize their new ones for the day.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12147&start=120>

Faraer wrote:

Hi Gary, I'm reacquainting myself with the AD&D rules right now, as well as LA for the first time.

So do we take it that spell-casting is interrupted by a successful attack that occurs at any time in the round before spell completion, even before the spell is begun (on the spell-caster's initiative)?

Okay... one needs to do such things, as memory tends to fade 😊

No, a spell-caster attacked before he or she begins the casting is not prevented from starting thereafter....if life remains 😊

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12147&start=120>

Elfdart wrote:

In UA, you had a rule for PCs casting spell directly from spellbooks with a chance that by doing so, POOF! -the whole book would disappear. IMC, this works out nicely, since PCs have thus lost all but one or two spellbooks and with them, a huge amount of gold since the books are worth so much money. They only remembered to copy spells a few times! 😊

Was this intentional on your part to get greedy PCs to throw away so much money or is this just serendipity on ours?

Hi Elfdart,

As a matter of fact I am often belabored for my cruelty in causing loss of PCs' magic items and money. I created the rule so as to allow someone in *extremis* to have a change of surviving, but that coming with a terrible risk on the theory better a live PC without a spellbook than a corpse with same beside it.

That your players are using the rule in careless fashion is pure serendipity, so enjoy. It is always good to be able to give marvelous treasures when you know that they will soon be gone;)

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12147&start=180>

Handy Haversack wrote:

I have an AD&D question for you that I hope is not too annoying. The MU spell *feather fall* has a casting time of 1/10 of a segment. Since it is the only spell with a casting time so short, my feeling is that you wrote it that way so that the MU could cast it in an emergency, even after having declared casting another spell that round or perhaps after having cast another spell, depending on when the necessity of casting *feather fall* is made clear. Is this what you intended? That is, could an MU declare he was casting *magic missile* or *sleep* or *fireball* or something, see that an ally is thrown into a pit (or something), and change to *feather fall*, perhaps also sacrificing the spell he had already declared as he interrupts the casting? Or could the same MU, after having cast another spell, see the sudden falling danger and just rip out the *feather fall* in time to make a difference?

Just wondering what the intention was behind the casting time.

Whoa!

Never should an M-U be allowed to change from one announced spell to another, nor to cast two spells in the same round.

The very short casting time for *feather fall* spell is to allow the M-U to cast it when plummeting downwards from mischance--into a pit trap or otherwise deadly depression, or in escaping by precipitating himself from some high place.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12918&start=180>

merkholz wrote:

A short spell query, if you please? The 6th level M-U Death Spell notes that affected creatures are slain instantly and irrevocably! Does the irrevocably part mean that those slain by the spell cannot be raised? Gone forever? Or does it just mean that there's no save to avoid death?

Good point!

Despite the rather ambiguous wording, I meant that the target subjects affected received no Saving Throw to avoid the effect of the spell, not that they were not allowed a chance at being brought back to life by some means.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12918&start=240>

Bombay wrote:

Hey Gary, in seeing the answer about Death spell, its clear ive been playing it wrong, thanks for the info.

I had two questions that I was unsure about the intent of.

Protection from Evil 10'r - When trying to attack a creature that cannot break this circle, can you willingly

allow it to enter your circle when your trying to attack it, or must you always force it into a corner to break the circle?

Detect Evil - It says that it will allow you to detect Objects Evilly cursed, Is that anything from a Scarab of Death to -2 Backstabber? Or just really potent evil items like the Spider Statue of Lolth(In D3) or the Lich Treasure in D1?

Bombay, sorry, I missed this post until you called my attention to it.

The Protection Circle can be permanently dropped by the caster at anytime. forcing an evil opponent to have no place to go but into the circle involuntarily breaks the spell.

Teh spell was written with the capacity to detect any evilly cursed item, from minor sorts to major ones. If it is played as written then it detects the whole gamut of such items.

Bombay wrote:

What would you do in the Case for a Paladin then, in regards to his Pro Evil?

The paladin's Protection from Evil is no different from the spell of that name in such case, so I would treat it as if it were a spell, and if the paladin purposfully broke it, the circle would cease functioning until the adversary concerned was destroyed.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12918&start=270>

Anonymous wrote:

A few questions: 1. Does detect evil allow the paladin or caster to detect evil NPCs, PCs, and monsters; just what are the limits of this spell/ability?

It allows whatever the AD&D rules says it allows. I am not going to be arbiter of WotC's property 😊

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12918&start=270>

Handy Haversack wrote:

In your games or in your original thoughts behind the rules, is it possible for a PC to forego making a saving throw. Especially when spells are used by his allies. For example, both enlarge and levitate call for a save to negate the effects, but both of these spells can also usefully be used intraparty for combat advantage. I know that a lot of spells specify that an unwilling recipient must make a save; should this be extrapolated to all spells?

Indeed, the rule should be extrapolated to allow a willing recipient to be effected by a spell sans any saving throw. the save for one unwilling represents their active attemkpts to avoid being affected.

Handy Haversack wrote:

As another wrinkle: what if a PC did not know that a potentially friendly spell is coming. Say an MU sees somehting bearing down on her fighter friend and tries to levitate that fighter out of harm's way. Should the fighter be forced to make a save since he does not know the origin of the magic?

There's a whole other issue about whether magic resistance can be intentionally lowered, but we'll stick to this for now.

I would say that the PC unaware of the origination of a spell aimed at him would have a saving throw apply, as that individual would not be willing it to work on him.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12918&start=330>

Handy Haversack wrote:

Another AD&D question to interrupt your editing work (heck, asking it is interrupting my editing work, so it's a win-win!):

In your games or in your original conception of the rules, did you intend that MUs and clerics could only rest and recover spells once per day, or did you allow them to cast their spells and then rest for four hours (or however long was needed) and, provided this time was uninterrupted, memorize their spells? That is, can that spell memorization rest be done a couple of times a day or ONLY at night and ONLY once per day for the next day's spells. The PHB implies the latter, while the DMG implies the former. Thanks, as always, for your time.

HH (Michael)

Very busy indeed...

Spell-caster resting to recover spells was contemplated to occur once per day, just as one normally sleeps, but light condition/time of day is not a factor. The once per 24-hour period is the measure.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12918&start=390>

Anonymous wrote:

-A spell caster does not loose [sic] their spell if hit before they cast within that round. (ex. a MU intends on casting MM but is hit on seg 2 before he can begin casting his spell on segment 3.)

A spell-caster struck and losing HPs thereby before completion of spell casting does indeed have the casting interrupted, the spell fails and is lost.

If the spell isn't begun, then the hit does not affect his intent unless he wishes to alter it.

Anonymous wrote:

-To loose [sic] a spell the MU would have already had to started casting (ex. MU starts casting Fire ball on seg. 1 but is hit on seg 2 before the spell goes off).

correct.

-A MU does not loose [sic] his dex. bonus to AC until after he begins casting, and regains his AC after his spell has been cast.

(ex. MU intends on casting web, but can't act until seg 3. From seg 1-2 he gets his AC bonus of -2 so his AC is 8. On seg 3 he must stop all positioning and begin casting eff. losing his dex bonus. Thus from seg 3 to seg 5 his AC is a 10. The spell goes off on seg 5, and the MU gets his AC dex bonus back on seg 6.

correct, and I generally allow a spell-caster to retain his dexterity bonus to AC even when he is casting.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12918&start=390>

Anonymous wrote:

Gary, if a spell caster stated they intended to cast a fire ball spell before initiative is rolled, they loose [sic] initiative (and the enemy attacks) can they then choose to cast a different spell (since they have not yet

begun casting the spell). (ex. a magic user runs into a monster. Before initiative is roled the MU states he will cast a fire ball spell. The MU looses [sic] initiative and is attacked but the creature misses. Can the magic user at that point choose to cast a different spell other then [sic] fire ball? Say, opt to cast a magic missile spell realizing this particular creature would not be effected [sic] by fire.

A change of spell means that that the spall-caster's action for the round was doing just that, changing his mind.

Getting actions for PCs before the round commences fixes the action, and changing it is possible but limited to not so acting, not to doing something different, just doing nothing because the PC is "dithering."

Anonymous wrote:

If the MU wins initiative must he cast the spell he stated he would cast before initiative was roled? For instance if the Monster will go on segment 6 and the MU can start casting on seg. 3, can he choose to change the spell he chose to cast (with the idea that for 2 segments before he can go he has a moment to change his mind), or is he committed to that spell.

Once again Gary, thanks for your close association with your fans. 😊

This is the same situation as n oted above. The planned spell must be cast or nothing can be done as the realization that it would be a waste comes, and a new spell is planned for. So again the PC would do nothing that round.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12918&start=390>

Anonymous wrote:

Scotty, do the rules actually say that a spell caster looses [sic] their spell if they are hit before thier action segment? I'm just not sure where your [sic] getting this from (besides "thats how everyone plays it").

Just because a player states that at somepoint in the next round they will perform a certain action, does not mean they are saying there [sic] going to start immediatly. Any inteligent MU is going to get behind some cover before they start casting. Your example of "At the start of each round, the DM says something like, "the human in robes begins casting a spell". is not correct IMO. The DM should say something like, "there is a guy in robes that looks like they are about to start casting a spell". Just as you would say "you see a fighter preparing to hit you with a sword".

As far as I recall, I do believe that I write a stipoulaion in the rules that a spell-caster struck in process of casting lost the spell then and there.

Statement of intended action means thatis what the PC is contemplating and meaning to do. Arguing against making a player stick to such a statement is weaseling 😞

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12918&start=390>

Anonymous wrote:

-EGG "correct, and I generally allow a spell-caster to retain his dexterity bonus to AC even when he is casting."

This makes as much sense to me as anything else I've read.

And thanks again EGG, I didn't mean to pull at so many teeth. 😊

As the rules are for a RPG not a cmbat simulation, you bet it makes sense! the would-be spell-casted doesn't suddenly become immobile, go blind and deaf when in the act of casting a spell 😊

CapN wrote:

What if the enemy spellcaster suddenly cast *hold person*, *cause blindness* and *cause deafness* at you?



That would be some combination casting, easily observed and ducked in the overly complex warmup obviously required for it 😊

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12918&start=390>

DMPrata wrote:

Gary, in your AD&D® games, do you permit spell casters multiple attempts to deliver touch spells? For example, if an MU casts *shocking grasp* and fails to hit his opponent, can he continue making attack rolls each round thereafter until successful? (The corellary to this, of course, is a high-level cleric casting a powerful reversed spell like *harm*. Multiple attack rolls in this case could be hugely unbalancing.)

Short answer: No. Blow the attempt to touch, blow the spell, as the caster must be launching its intended effect as the attempt to touch the subject is made.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=180>

Greg Ellis wrote:

How would you determine whether that touch attempt (*Shocking Grasp*) is successful?

Specifically, what is the target's AC for this determination?

Is it regular AC (Armor + Dex + any Magic Plusses), or just AC10 + Dex + Magic plusses, or something else?

Would it matter whether the armor is metal or leather?

Howdy Greg,

AC is as normal, except that metal armor equals no armor, and that goes for magical metal armor that isn't specifically enchanted to prevent electrical attack. Dexterity counts, of course.

If a target subject is not expecting sich an attack a hit is automatic, but completely unprepared targets are not usual, eh?

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=210>

Greg Ellis wrote:

We're having quite a discussion in the 1E forums about whether a spell caster can move and cast in the same round.

How do you handle this in your own AD&D games?

I know that a PC can't move WHILE casting, but since the casting time is frequently less than a full round, would you allow the caster some movement before or after the spell?

If so, how would you work out how far he can go? Base move times available segments? Or something else? Does initiative factor in?

Howdy Greg,

Yes, I would allow a PC or NPC to move and cast. Distance is available segments -1 as a % x normal movement rate, as movement has some reaction time to proceed and halt.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=240>

Greg Ellis wrote:

Thanks Gary, I was thinking the same thing.

And if that caster happened to take a hit while moving (i.e. before he had started to cast his spell) how would you rule?

- the spell is wasted
- the spell is not wasted but he is too distracted to cast it on this round
- he can cast the spell, since the hit came at a time when he was moving, not casting

Or perhaps something else?

Would it change things at all if the hit he took was from a melee attack vs. a ranged attack of some sort?

Heh, Greg,

Now this is getting into the area of combat simulation...something an RPG is not...

I would simply rule that the would-be spell-caster can cast or hit while moving, regardless of the sort of attack that was successfully made. If the spell-caster had ceased moving, then I would rule that casting was in progress and the spell was lost.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=240>

Bombay wrote:

Would Mind Blank spell protect you against Symbols of Stunning etc...

I think not. It would work only against attempts to read one's thoughts or take control of one's mind.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=300>

garhkal wrote:

Gary. What wall spells are supposed to be affected by magic resistance? I.e., if I cast a wall of iron over a drow, would the drow get squished, or would his MR kick in? What about rock to mud under their feet???

Ciao!

As a matter of fact I did not allow a wall spell to be cast save if there was some surface the bottom edge it could rest upon.

If you allow them to be cast into the blue, then MR will not affect one in falling, as it is not a spell. MR does not affect blows from magic weapons, eh? The same goes for rock turned to mud.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=480>

garhkal wrote:

Here is one that came up ONCE in a game. I was wondering if i handled it right..

Cleric (or druid) casts call lightning. Completes his turn, and casts a second, while waiting to use his additional bolts from the first, delaying the additional 'bolt' until completion of the spell. USES both bolts, then casts a third one, while waiting, and delays them too...

That's a tough question.

I am not so sure that a druid could delay the gathering of the electrical energy to make the lightning bolt...

I'd have a check based on his level, with a roll equal to it or less meaning the attempt was a success, otherwise, it would fail, and the bolt would hit-- more or less willy-nilly if the check roll exceeded 17.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=540>

garhkal wrote:

Bringing in a new one, from over on planetadnd..

What is the restrictions (if any) on clerics casting resurrection/raise dead on those NOT of the faith? Are those restrictions lessened when the cleric is a PC?

Heh...

That's one I prefer to leave in the capable hands of the DM of the campaign to decide. I allow any Good alignment cleric to cast resurrection/raise dead on a like N/PC, with the "donation" varying from reasonable to quite otherwise depending on degree of alignment difference--and the relationship of the two deities served, if different.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=870>

ScottyG wrote:

Gary, would you let a spell caster memorize their daily spells in chunks, or is it all at once?

For example, could a druid memorize predict weather, cast it, and then based on that decide to memorize call lightning or some other 3rd level spell?

Hi Scott,

Absolutely all at once is the intent for all spell-casters memorizing spells. After having their mind refreshed by rest they must needs read or prat to store away all the spells they are sble to choose to remember for a time until activated.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=18412&start=90>

Illusions

A tricky matter that I hope you could provide some feedback on:

Illusions in AD&D. I take the "phantasm" part of the spell description to mean that illusion spells do not work solely on the brains of those affected. That is, I assume that there are some "real" things evoked by the spells. Therefore, for example, an illusionist could create the illusion of a wall and hide behind it, perhaps lobbing missiles over it; even if his enemy successfully disbelieves in the illusion, he still cannot see through it--the hologram-type image is still there, but the enemy now knows he could simply walk through it or that his missiles could penetrate it, though he cannot pinpoint the location of the illusionist hiding there. Does this jibe with your feelings about illusions when you wrote the system or in your games?

As a corollary, if someone were to disbelieve an illusion with some depth, what would he see were he to stick his head in it? Example: you disbelieve the illusion of the dragon and to prove your point you walk right into it; what do you see? Nothing? A gray haze? Illusionary dragon guts?

Or if one disbelieves in, say, an illusion that conceals a hole--on sticking one's head (foolishly!) into that hole, can he see? Or does the nondispelled illusion still block light, requiring that a light source be introduced into the hole in order for a visual inspection to be made?

Or, of course, perhaps in your games disbelieving an illusion dispels it entirely for the disbeliever?

I can say that the typical illusion is just that, and IMO if it is penetrated all portions of it are dispelled. Only in advanced illusion magic where a percentage of actuality is included in the magical effect generated would portions of the spell remain in effect to the viewer otherwise penetrating the illusion.

Illusions are particularly difficult to manage in game play because they are based totally on make-believe from make-believe magic. they have no basis in reality as "normal" imagined magic generally does.

SOURCE: <http://dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=10004&start=180>

DMPPrata wrote:

Gary, does the presence of the *detect illusion* and *dispel illusion* spells imply that *detect magic* and *dispel magic* are ineffectual where illusions are concerned?

Just so.

The magic used for illusions is considered to be of a different sort than the other kinds. That is why there is a separate sub-class for Illusionists.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=870>

merkholz wrote:

Another quick AD&D question for you, Gary. The illusionist is a sub-class of magic-user, was there ever any talk of having other sub-classes such as conjurers or necromancers? Or did you see the illusionist as a special case?

Indeed, I viewed the illusionist as a very special sort of magic-user, one using magic to simulate magic as it were.

Conjurers and necromancers in the AD&D system would have been only specialists in forms of regular magic.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12918&start=210>

Thorg wrote:

I have another question if you don't mind concerning illusionists. You mention in your description that the illusionist spell phantasmal force/improved Ph force do real damage (if believed).

The question I have is, what is the limit of this spell in the amount of damage that can be inflicted? For instance a victim that believes they fall into a pit trap and land on 3 spears after falling 15 feet might take 3d6 damage. But then, couldn't the player make this a fall from 30 feet onto 8 spears for 8d6? When you had illusionists in your AD&D games, how did you (as DM) handle what max damage could be inflicted? One way this is commonly done is the use of a house rule 1d6 per level of the illusionist per target. So a first level illusionist casting a bolt of lightning on a group of 10 orcs would inflict 1-6 to each orc in the target area. A 2nd level illus would inflict 2-12 to each etc. Did you, as DM or sitting for Rob ever use such a rule?

Oh, also with phantasmal force. If a target goes to -10 from the illusion do they die, do they get a system shock save, or do they stay at the brink of death. I've sat for DMs that do all three.

The illusion can be as complex as the Illusionist desires, but a check for disbelief can be allowed for each special circumstance. For instance the spikes in the pit. Adding them means the subject of the illusory trap must "see" them as he "falls" into the "pit." Thus a check against the subject's Int or Wis might be allowed.

In any event a victim believing he is done to death by an illusion is dead. The heart stops beating.

As I have said before, illusions are most difficult to deal with because they are shades of unreality, magic.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=30>

Bombay wrote:

Overtime there have been somethings our group has been mulling over. I split dming with another guy in my group, and we try to keep things consistent, but there are some things we are disagreeing on. And perhaps if you could give us some insight to the intent, or how you would rule in your game if the situation happened.

Situation #1

We are fighting a mage, what we thought was a mage, but really is just a Project Image. Realizing what it was, the group tries to dispell, but fails. The following round one of the players cast Wall of Force around the Project Image. I argued since Wall of Force cannot allow magic to go in and out, that it basically nullifies the spell. But the other says that since it is an illusion, it can still walk through the wall.

Situation #2

A Demon with MR% attacks a cleric who has cast Protection from Evil 10r, does the demon get a check for MR% The basic question we have been mulling over is, Is the intent of MR% only spells that are cast at you, or any spells that are currently in effect?(Pro Evil or Darkness?)

Situation #3

Mirror of Mental Prowless, this is an extremely powerful item. Using the scry ability to look upon someone, its not clear as to how much you will actually see when you do find that someone. I was going to rule that however far you can step back and see the mirror clearly, thats how far you could see of whats going on around.

Thanks Gary, and ever thought about posting a journal of your current group for us to see? Would be interesting to know whats going on in one of your tabletop games.

Ciao Bombay,

To cut to the chase:

#1: The projectide image is the source of the actual m-u's magic, so the wall of force would block it from emanating from that image. Of course the m-u could still cast effectively in person.

#2: The MR of any NPC/monster applies only to magic directed at the person of the one possessing MR. Protections, and magic weapons will not be affected by MR, nor will things the possessor encounters be checked for that effect.

#3: this is the most difficult one to manage. In general I would rule that the scrying mirror enables the viewer to see the subject and all around that one to a distance of about five feet on either side and 20 feet behind. As the subject moves, so does the picture.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=30>

Magic Items

RobertFisher wrote:

I hope you don't mind my questions about your OD&D campaign. I'll play the game my own way, but if I didn't value your opinion, I wouldn't be playing games you wrote. 😊

From Deogolf's recountings, it seems like the players are identifying magic items pretty quick. Do you just tell them up front what a magic item they've found is, or do you make them work to identify it?

As the players don't seem particularly interested in town adventures, I skip all that and simply take away large amounts of money when they are in the city regaining health, resupplying, etc. That obviates the need for them to do what they would consider a waste of valuable adventuring time in hunting up a magic item for them.

I do require that they taste potions and experiment to find out what the liquid does.

If they discover something unusual, likely I'll have them visit the Stripped Mage to have the object explained...

SOURCE: <http://dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=10004&start=180>

Bombay wrote:

Hey Gary, glad you have taken the time to do a Q&A, A lot [sic] of your answers have been very helpful and insightful.

I have always had questions about magic items. Many of the modules made for AD&D are loaded with magic items. Sometimes I think there must be an assembly line that is making +1 longswords and +1 plates. Those in my group, we started brainstorming and got off onto a tangent that perhaps that a +1 longsword made, is actually a failed attempt at say a Frostbrand. Or maybe you can "mass" produce +1 longswords for all of your henchmen.

If you care, could you elaborate on the production of such items.

Thanks, appreciate it.

Fast reply:

What do more cautious and retired mages do? why they make magic items to earn a handsome living, of course. So indeed there are perhaps 100 each of various sorts of +1 swords--easy to enchant for a moderately able caster. As those blades don't wear out or get destroyed easily, many are likely to be several decades old, some older, some newer. And those +1 swords are scattered over several kingdoms with many millions of inhabitants.

Really, what's so common about 1 +1 sword per 10,000 persons? (-:

This calls to mind the heated debate about smelting and fashioning platinum. I pointed out that any wizard could manage it easily. The twit contending against the use of the metal then demanded why any mage would do that. "To become filthy rich without risking life and limb," I suggested. End of debate.

SOURCE: <http://dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=10004&start=480>

DMPrata wrote:

Gary, here's (I hope) a question that hasn't been asked before: In the Dungeon Masters Guide, you set a precedent (later expanded upon by others) that meteoric iron could be enchanted up to +3, mithral-alloyed steel to +4, and adamantite-alloyed steel to +5. Then, in Unearthed Arcana, you introduced the Sword +6, Defender and Sword +6, Holy Avenger. Did you have some other mythical metal in mind for these +6 weapons? Pure (as opposed to alloyed) adamantite, perhaps? Or maybe glassteel? My players appreciate this added level of detail, as opposed to, "Ho hum, another magical sword. . . ." 🙄

Actually, that's the sort of detail I dislike giving, as it seemingly encourages players to have their PCs attempt to create magic items that are meant to be won by adventuring success.

If I must, pure adamantite would be the metal of a +6 weapon.

SOURCE: <http://dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=10004&start=630>

ScottyG wrote:

Gary (and others) I'm looking for opinions on this matter. I've recently given control over some of the Temple's forces to players to compete with the regular party that has been adventuring there. One player requested to play the wizard Falrinth.

Falrinth is in possession of the Orb of Golden Death. Do the real leaders of the Temple know where the Orb is? Falrinth seems more like a hired gun than a devotee of the Temple, and in true chaotic evil fashion, his goals have nothing to do with those of the Temple.

Hi Scotty:)

To cut to the chase, his possession of the orb is not general knowledge to the leaders of the Temple--only the general location of the object inside the place. Falrinth is as you describe him, self-interested and not particularly devoted to the aims of those who are in charge of the place.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12918&start=180>

xyzchyx wrote:

Prompted by something mentioned in one of the AD&D forums recently, I have a question I'd like to ask you. In the DMG, you say that most magical blades produce light when drawn from their scabbard (and elsewhere it specifically describes the radius of such luminance), listing only a handful of exceptions to

this.

However, this strikes me as making Detect Magic less useful with respect to such weapons, as you could tell that it was magic immediately without the need for any spell.

So my question therefore is what, exactly, was your intention in AD&D of having most magic blades shed light?

Heh,

there shouldn't be much mystery about a sword being enchanted. What its particular magical powers are, though, is another matter entirely. and there is where spell determination comes into play with such brands

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=270>

Bombay wrote:

Had a couple of 1e questions, if you don't mind.

I noticed that a potion of Giant Str states that it only grants the bonus on damage. While a Girdle gives you bonus on damage and to hit. I guess it doesn't make sense to me that a potion that gives you giant str, does not function the same way as a Girdle. Is this just a misunderstanding?

Not at all. the potion is a weak thing, the girdle a potent item far more difficult to enchant.

Bombay wrote:

And finally, an loun stone, would that stay floating over your head while you sleep? If not, and you say have an loun stone that raises your level, and your a cleric, could you then after sleeping and you go to pray for your spells, use the loun stone then and get the ability to get more spells for being a higher level?

loun stones always orbit the possessor's cranium. When that individual is asleep they circle above.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=360>

Bombay wrote:

That's understandable, just out of curiosity, what would you make one of your players do to enchant a Girdle of Storm Giant Str?

Pcs create magic items before they achieve high level and retire? Never!

What on earth is adventurous about manufacturing?

If they sought a special magic item they quested for it.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=390>

DMPPrata wrote:

Thanks, Gary. One more, if I may... 😊

It is generally advised for the DM not to reveal the specific functions of magic items to the players, leaving them to discover an item's powers through experimentation. Thus, no DM should blurt out, "You found a **sword +5!**" How, then, would you recommend adjudicating the use of a **defender** sword? The basic

operation of the item (assigning some of its "plusses" to one's AC) requires the player to have specific knowledge of the sword's numerical bonus. My PCs have just found one, and I'm not sure how to go about revealing this information. Do you have any suggestions for the perplexed DM? 😊

Heh...

Sure:) Have runes or like inscriptions in a most arcane language engraved somewhere on the sword. If the party takes it to some NPC that can decipher that writing and they are willing to pay, and pay plenty, for his services, they learn the secret. Otherwise, it remains a weapon of normal sort that has a magical aura...perhaps as if someone had cast a low-level spell on it to dupe others.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=870>

DMPPrata wrote:

Sorry to belabor the point, but would you just have the NPC sage/wizard/etc. tell the PC, "It's a **+4 defender**"? I generally make the PCs expend spells & resources to learn what their magic items do, but I try to couch such revelations in the vaguest terms possible. Thus, an NPC might *identify* a **flame tongue** sword as such, but would not get into the "+2 vs. this, +3 vs. that" minutia.

However, with a **defender** sword, the PC must know how many "plusses" it has in order to allocate those points between attack and defense each round. I guess the gist of my question is this: How (if ever) did you handle this in your games? Did you just tell the player, "It's a **+4 defender**," once he had expended the necessary cash, or did you use some other in-game mechanism to account for a sword's "plusses" without straining suspension of disbelief?

Hmmm...

I wonder what part of, "Have arcane runes or glyphs written on a weapon, and only a paid sage or mage can read/interpret them correctly," was not understood.

I don't care if a +6 Defender is in question. They need to have it deciphered in order to use it 😊

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=870>,
<http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=900>

gideon_thorne wrote:

dcas wrote:

gideon_thorne wrote:

Honestly. I don't see why the issue of a magical weapon bonus should be so complicated? One can demonstrate the effects of a magical weapon without resorting to telling anyone the numbers at all. The wielder might get a clue when he realises he is hitting much more often, or getting hit less often, and ought to realise there is something up with the weapon or armour.

As DMPPrata pointed out, the PC actually decides how many of the "plusses" of the defender sword he will allocate to improve his armor class, and how many he will allocate for his attack and damage rolls.

smiles I got that bit. Hence my suggestion of random determination, initially, for instinctive use of a weapon they are learning to use. Getting the 'feel' of it as it were. A number of fiction writers pull this off well. When the hero finds a particular item with a number of abilities, they don't just go down to Joe's Identification Shop, they learn by experience.

It might not have been the object of the 'design' but I always figured that's one reason why magic items

had experience points attached to them. ^_^

Pish & Tosh!

That is quite impossible with items that require a command word, and that was a stipulated condition.

gideon_thorne wrote:

impish grin I know, I know. Im a maverick who changes rules at the drop of a hat.

I wonder who's gaming style inspired that eh? *pokes* 😊

Bah!

Command word requirement is virtually immutable in all but Monty Haul play 😊

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=900>

rabindranath72 wrote:

I asked around for clarifications, but there seems to be no common opinion on how to deal with the argument.

The "problem" is the following:

At 10th level thieves can cast spells, and there is a 25% chance that they misunderstand the contents.

Now, the PHB, p27, second column, second paragraph continues:

"Furthermore, magic spells from scrolls can be mispronounced when uttered, so that there is an increasing chance per level of the spell that it will be the _reverse_ of its intent".

I searched through the PHB and DMG, but I could not find any hint as to how handle such case. How to determine this chance? The closer thing I got is in the DMG p.128 "Magical Spell Failure", but therein is required the level of the spellcaster.

- Are thieves supposed to have some caster level?

- Is the "misunderstand" chance a prerequisite for the "reversal" of spell effect? That is, does a thief have a chance (whatever it is) to "reverse" the spell if he misunderstands it? Or, if he misunderstands it, the spell simply does not work?

Hi Antonio,

Have the chance for a thief character messing up a spell remain as noted, 25% regardless of the level of the Thief. If you don;t feel comformatble with that, then make up a house rule that you like--perhaps 25% at 12th, -5% per level thereafter, but always with a 5% chance of mis-speaking even at 17th level.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=18412&start=30>

rabindranath72 wrote:

Thank you for the clarification! I was mislead [sic] by the subsequent "Furthermore..." sentence regarding the increasing chance of failure.

With your suggestion the system is mechanically similar to Basic D&D.

Perhaps a table such as this:

CHANCE FOR 12th LEVEL THIEF TO MIS-SPEAK SCROLL SPELL

Spell Level

1st or Protection: 5%

2nd: 10%

3rd: 10%

4th: 15%

5th: 15%
6th: 20%
7th: 20%
8th: 25%
9th: 25%

Reduce each category by 5% per level of thief above 12th, but there is always a 5% chance of mis-speaking any scroll's spell.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=18412&start=30>

TheDungeonDelver wrote:

I'm using a Book of Infinite Spells in a module I'm hard at work on (as we speak, the laptop is running and I'm keying in the encounter!). The item's description states that the "owner" of the book need not have it in his or her possession to use the spell(s), but assuming someone else (in this case, possibly the party - although getting past the glyph of warding (lightning) and the Xeg-yi are going to be challenging enough!) gets possession of the book that negates use by the original owner, yes? I feel it's a yes, but set me straight.

Short answer: Yes, a change of possession negates the ability to use the book by the former possessor.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12147&start=240>

Oddball Magic

KewlMarine32 wrote:

I noticed some time ago (Dec 2000) that you did a superb preface for Relics and Rituals (a Sword and Sorcery supplement for the Scarred Lands campaign). I have a few questions...

Within the preface, You liked the concept of "Tattoo Magic" as it was introduced in the book and then you mention "you wish you had thought of that concept". You also stated that "it will certainly be brought into your own work and campaign."

Do you use "tattoo magic" in any of the games you are running??? Is "tattoo magic" contained within LA and if not, will you incorporate such a concept into LA in the future?

The concept of tattoo magic is a good one, but it would logically be restricted to primitive societies whose shamans employ such devices. I have not had time or energy to create a campaign module set in such a culture, and thus introduce the several likely uses of tattoos that I think likely--protection, attack bonus, luck, possibly shape-shifting.

I do use Extraordinary body paints that provide protection, that concept being more likely to be widespread.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=11762&start=60>

Greg Ellis wrote:

I'm reaching a point in my AD&D game where I think it's time for the party to start encountering enemy spellcasters.

While researching this, I've just noticed that the tribal shamans and witch doctors have remarkably limited

spell lists (DMG p.40), missing many of the common tricks such as *Bless*, *Hold*, *Silence*, *Web*, etc.

What was your thinking on why the spell lists would be as they were for these tribal casters?

Did you actually stick to these guidelines during your own play, or did you sneak in a few extra spells when you felt like it?

Did you (or would you) bolster the powers of tribal casters through the use of scrolls and wands and such (for spells not otherwise accessible to them)?

Hi Greg,

The limited spells for primitive spell casters is both logical and something that I personally stuck to when DMing. however...

In special circumstances I would create new magic items for them--such as a ferish, mask, rattle, drum. bone whistle, skin painting, or medicine bag that had either protective or offensive capacity, or perhaps both. Thus the special primitive spell caster(s) encountered were a definite challenge for strong PC parties.

garkhal wrote:

Sounds fun... And reminicing of some films..

What about enemy casters of the normal races. like an evil human mage... or elvin one... How did you develop their spell repotoir...?

Whatever is logical for the NPC, and would be most useful in attacking foes, defending against their attacks, is how I select spells and magic items--keeping in mind that the PCs might well end up with the spell books and/or items.

One needs to walk a fine line when devising antagonists for the party to face.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=390>

DMPPrata wrote:

You mean except for the savant? 😊

(...which we'll never get to see thanks to the POG [Lorraine Williams] 😡)

Maybe...

...sometime after I have shuffled off this mortal coil someone going through the mess of junk I have accumulated will discover the lost notes for the Savant and Mystic and such other stuff that might have squirreled away in some obscure envelope, folder, and/or box.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12918&start=210>

Monsters & Races

Monsters

Sieg wrote:

Finally, what is your opinion of the 'popularity' of the Drow? I know they were originally made as kinda 'one shot' monsters for the G-D-Q series, but do you approve/disapprove of the direction the race has been taken in?

...and nothing about dragons. Honest! 😊

The drow were actually created to be the dominant human-like race in the vast subterranean world. what little i know about how they have been treated by other authors since then is not at all palatable to me. The drow are purely malign by temperment, as hateful as wolverines, as opportunistic as hyenas. they have absolutely no angst, save when facing an immediate threat from a more powerful drow or demon 🧐

SOURCE: <http://dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=10004&start=30>

serleran wrote:

Was it ever intended that a Wraith be a subrace/subspecies of a Wight, or vice versa. The 1E MM descriptions seem to indicate they are related to each other, in my humble opinion.

No, there is no relationship as in developmental status. they are related in being undead, and that's that. A wight is more closely related to a lich than a wraith, eh?

SOURCE: <http://dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=10004&start=240>

Maybe this has been answered somewhere, and if so, then I'm just blind and dumb. But... why are there at least 3 versions of the Drow? There's the one from the MM, one from FF, and the stat method and character classes options in UA.

Hmmmm...

I don't recall any drow in the MM. AS a matter of fact I know there were none there, as I created the race after the MM was written. As for drow appearing in the UA work, those details there were for DMs who were looking for information on how to create potent NPCs of that race.

...

Drow were not detailed in the MM.

As for the rest of it, the details were devised when I had a setting for the race 🧐

SOURCE: <http://dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=10004&start=300>

Dragon Fire wrote:

What was your "reasoning" behind a cleric's turning ability, as in how is it able to function?

The folklore example of a vampire being turned by a cleric presenting the cross.

Dragon Fire wrote:

Is the cleric turning the spirit/soul within the undead?

I don't understand what distinction you are attempting to assert. the undead are turned, be they material or spirit, as indicated in the mechanic.

Dragon Fire wrote:

Or is the cleric turning the unholy vessel (body)?

That too.

Dragon Fire wrote:

Does every undead have a spirit/soul bound to it?

No soul but the assumption is that some form of malign spirit or spirit force motivates the undead creature.

Dragon Fire wrote:

Was the Groaning Spirit (Banshee) created as an undead?

No.

Dragon Fire wrote:

Or was it some other form of creature that has undead characteristics?

Another form of spirit creature entirely, that has some powers that are also held by some undead.

Dragon Fire wrote:

If it was created as an undead, what row would it have been turned as (Spectre maybe) on the Cleric Turning Table?

It is not an undead creature.

Dragon Fire wrote:

Also what is the definition of a soul and spirit in game terms? We know which beings have souls and spirits and those with spirits can't be raised/resurrected, but what, if any, are the definitions of each?

Only humans have souls. All living things might have spirits. Deal with such metaphysical questions as the differences between soul and spirit as you see fit. the Egyptians believe that a human had a soul, spirit, shadow, double, name, and two other components in his makeup. This is about a game, isn't it? Thus I don't attempt to deal with such esoterica in rules interpretation 🤔

SOURCE: <http://dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=10004&start=330>

Gandalf Istari wrote:

Col_Pladoh wrote:

Would this include undead created via an animate dead spell, such as skeletons and zombies? It's been asserted that you always held undead such as skeletons and zombies to be nothing more than automatons, powered by magical force with no "spirit possessing the remains" as you put it.

Thanks in advance for any clarification.

Not that any of this matters a jot or tiddle, but...

Right you are about mindless skeletons and zombies. They operate as golems, by magical energy, although some malign intellect might direct them. Animated dead are not akin to the true undead--ghouls and wights and the rest.

This is not to say that a malign spirit could not possess a skeleton or a corpse, so as to make something more potent and dangerous than the usual. the juju zombie was an example of such a concept, and skeleton "lords" are likewise.

SOURCE: <http://dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=10004&start=360>

rogueattorney wrote:

Col.,

Where did the name Lolth come from? Is it any relation to Lilith, the apocryphal first wife of Adam and purported mother of vampires?

R.A.

Actually, I created the name "Lolth" as a name that seemed "right" for a spider-like demoness. I was not thinking of the mythical Lilith when I made up that name.

If you have ever read the Extraordinary Book of Names, one of the reference books in the "Gygaxian Fantasy Worlds" series, you'll understand the thinking processes that go into creating names for a fantasy milieu 😊

SOURCE: <http://dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=10004&start=390>

predavolk wrote:

ALL RIGHTY THEN! 😊 I wrote out the logic but couldn't follow it myself- that's a good signal that I should go for lunch as clearly my brain has already gone without me! 😊 But the female was very old (7) x medium size (6), while the male was ancient (8) x large (7), so 42/56 works for me.

FWIW, what I was planning in a revision was giving dragons a base d12 rather than a d8.

predavolk wrote:

Oh, and before I do go for lunch (break is almost over researching this module!), any comments on Braz's purpose Gary? Ooh, and one more question about G3- did you have any specific Greek titan in mind for the captive titan? OK, OK, I'm going...

Braz' was just hanging around with pals of his 😊

Titans in OAD&D were generic, not tied to Greek mythology.

SOURCE: <http://dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=10004&start=630>

Handy Haversack wrote:

Hi Gary,

If this is not too specific, I was wondering about some reasons for a couple of AD&D choices, viz., why are only evil nonhuman races listed as having shamans and witch doctors? Specifically, I am thinking about centaurs. It seems like they would be a good candidate for shamans. Was there a specific reason you limited this to evil humanoids?

And if YOU were to bend the rules (hush yo' mouth!) and let, oh, say, centaurs have shamans, what level might you cut them off at?

Again, if this is too specific, just ignore. Thanks.

Well...

As far as any of my reading in mythology went, i never got the slightest hint that centaurs and their ilk had and religious inclination whatsoever. In the AD&D system, if I was to consider they did, I would be more inclined to allow them druidical individuals, the same with satyrs and sileni.

As to levels of any clerical types, I would suppose something around 7th would be tops.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?t=11762>

Guest wrote:

2. Do you remember your reasoning behind tying the Mummy in the *Monster Manual* to the Positive Material Plane?

Hi Scott:)

The mummy being indicated as from the PMP was a typo. It was meant to be Negative as all undead are.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?t=11762>,
<http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=11762&start=30>

Driver wrote:

Col_Pladoh wrote:

The mummy being indicated as from the PMP was a typo. It was meant to be Negative as all undead are.

Thanks for the quick response! When I was a kid, I made up a rationalization having to do with mummies being "Egyptian" and tying in to Osiris as "tomb guards," but I like your answer better.

EDIT: By the way, I was recently admitted to my state bar, and I'm not exaggerating when I say D&D was the major catalyst for the love of reading and puzzle-solving that carried me to what limited academic success I've achieved ... so you get to share some of either the credit or the blame for minting another lawyer, depending on your viewpoint.

right!

I too have used Osiris to demonstrate that negative (a god with a still heart) can be benign as well as malign at times--agathocacological. His plane is shadow and definitely negative.

Appreciate your generous sharing of your personal achievement. It is good to know that my work aided you in realizing your own potential

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=11762&start=30>

T. Foster wrote:

What was the reason behind allowing drow elves to be rangers in UA? The concepts of the race and

class seem almost entirely antithetical to me (the former utterly chaotic and evil and dwelling deep underground, the latter good-aligned and dwelling in the wilderness, serving as protectors of civilization), and even more pertinently it seems to encourage the sort of "angst-plagued good-aligned drow" cliché (most famously embodied by R. A. Salvatore's Drizzt -- who is of course a drow ranger) that I find quite noxious and I believe you've expressed disdain for as well. So, what was the idea with allowing drow to be rangers and opening the door to all those Elric-wannabes?

Short answer:

Because alignment overrides other considerations, and Drow rangers are as chaorically evil as any other Drow.

They are allowed rangers so as to be viable as a fighting race that needs scouts and trackers. On the usrface (pun intended) a Drown ranger seems out of place, but being that they need such work done underground, and when venturing above, it is logical that the race have rangers.

T. Foster wrote:

So the drow ranger isn't the 'standard' ranger class/archetype found in the PH, but rather a 'ranger-like' class that fulfills many of the same functions (and thus has analogous abilities) but in a manner appropriate to drow society (i.e. evil-aligned, mostly underground-based). That actually makes a lot of sense, certainly much moreso than the anomalous good-aligned surface-dwelling drow rangers I was picturing (thanks for nothing, R.A. Salvatore...).

Your assessment is as I envisaged the Drow rangers, indeed. As it happened, circumstances prevented me from further developing the matter as I had thought to--the Drow as the main social denizens of the Underdark, their contention with the Illithids and the Kuo-toa and the Gray Dwarves. (I never did really develop anything special about the Sunless Sea, but i imagined it with strange islands and ships plying it's waters, monstrous marine monsters of fearsome mein...)

Anyway, don't be too harsh in your judgement of Bob Salvatore. After all, he is an fiction author seeking to earn his livelihood, and I am sure Lorraine Williams gave him free rein in regards the AD&D material.

But as for surface-dwelling Drow rangers, Drow of any sort for that matter, about as likely as desert-dwelling polar bears 😊 Drow will visit the "Roofless World" of the surface, rove about outside on on cloudy and dark days, after sundown, but they like the sky and the open spaces not at all.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?t=12147>

Yorlum wrote:

Did you ever have any plans for expanding the Derro? I found their brief write up in MM2 almost inviting a campaign set up centering around the savants...

Just curious to see how you'd intended to fit them in.

Heh...

Richard S. Shaver and his "Mysteries" 😊

Yes indeed, the Derro were to work with the evil Dwarves, the former not being too numerous, needing the dwarven race to assist in working their malign plans for surface dwellers. Who needs orbiting mind control lasers when there are rays focused from below for the same dark ends?! 🤪

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?t=12147>

Paul J. Stormberg wrote:
Howdy Gary,

...

Ya' know I was just thinking about this. Re-reading the whole paragraph in the Monster Manual, were you referring to adjusting the amount or chance for treasure?

My players just faced 10 wraiths and lost several levels, however, due to the low % for each treasure type they got doodly squat. The mean is 7 wraiths out of 2-12 possible.

My interpretation is that it is the chance. In my example above the wraiths normally have a 25% chance for 1,000-8,000 gold pieces. With 10 appearing that multiplies the chance by about 1.7 or 42.5% chance for gold or is it instead a 25% chance for 1,700 to 13,600 gp or even a 42.5% chance for 1,700 to 13,600 gp?

What say you?

Hi Paul!

Just mentioned your name a few minutes ago on a post on EN World boards in regard to The Strategic Preview and the "Ultimist Class" spoof. anyway...

With my generous nature, when a party faced 10 wraiths, I'd have upped the percentage chance for treasure being found, right across the board, and then added a to the amount of treasure, or its worth, by about 10%--a +1 on a d6 to d10 roll, a better magic item, that sort of thing.

In essence, it's a case of DM discretion 😊

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?t=12147>

Mr. Awesome wrote:

Interesting stuff about drow rangers... How about drow cavaliers? Surely they're not supposed to ride horses? I've never been able to figure out what the idea behind drow cavaliers is, and I'd love to lay this niggling distraction in the back of my mind to rest. 🤔

Drow can and should have a warrior class of aristocratic sort, viz. cavaliers.

Of course they would ride such steeds as are common in their environment.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?t=12147>

Elfdart wrote:

Maybe they ride those pack lizards from D1-2-3.

I stopped rolling treasure type about the same time I stopped rolling hit points for monsters/ NPCs. I just figure 5hp/ die for regulars; 7hp/ die for tough ones. I do the same with treasure. I just assume a proportional average based on how tough the monsters are. That way I don't end up with 30 orcs guarding a massive hoard (which can happen if you go strictly by the dice). When I have extra time, I use the various equipment lists and "go shopping" -I convert a large part of the cash into various goods as described in the DMG.

When winging it, I just pick treasure I think fits the monsters and ignore the treasure type tables. I've found that using modules like Hommllet and the examples from the DMG as guidelines works better; it's quicker and has a more natural feel to it. For example, if I have a group of bandits, I'll give them treasure in the form of livestock (especially horses!) and the sorts of things a group of outlaws might have stolen. For a ringer I made one of the horses a prize stallion (which the bandits themselves don't realize) worth a bundle of money. The PCs turned up their noses because there was no "real" loot and turned the animals loose.

Lizards are a likely sort of steed for a Drow cavalier, yes.

As for the manner in which you select treasure, it is sound and logical IMO.

Large amounts of portable wealth--coins, jewelry, and gems are likely only where the surrounding society, or passing merchants, have such things, robber barons and pirates spring to mind as examples of encounters where portable wealth in quantity would be the norm.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?t=12147>

Driver wrote:

Hey, Gary. Some questions that have probably been addressed elsewhere.

1. It seems like some of the monsters in the Monster Manual are "metagame monsters," designed to discourage a certain type of PC behavior, or to attack certain PC archetypes. The two that come to mind while I'm sitting at work without my MM are the ear seeker for the former, and the rust monster (or any of the "psionic killers") for the latter.

Were these monsters designed to bedevil specific PCs (the guy who listens at every door; the guy who's loaded up with too much magical armor, weapons, and assorted other boodle; the guy who lucked out on his psionics roll) or parties? It just seems like some monsters were introduced for a specific in-game purpose, and I'm curious if you have any remembrance of why you introduced any "purpose-driven" monsters.

All monsters were purpose driven, the purpose to bring more challenge to playing the AD&D game. The specific ones you note were created to allow the DM to encourage more fast-paced and interesting play. Clwevel players quickly moved to an ear trumpet for listening at dungeon doors, but no easy answer for dealing with a rust monster was ever discovered--short of carrying a lot of poisoned scrap iron around;)

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?t=12147>

DMPPrata wrote:

Gary, if I may trouble you with two questions that we're debating over in the 1E forum:

1.) Ghosts are listed as having a magic jar attack. Is a receptacle required, as in the spell of the same name? If not, where does the possessed creature's spirit go in the interim?

The dispossessed spirit goes to that place where the spirit of the ghost resided.

DMPPrata wrote:

2.) Demons and devils have a number of spell-like abilities defined as "at will". Does this mean that these abilities can be performed simultaneously with other actions (melee, spell-casting, etc.)? Does the same apply to the various magic items which can be activated "at will"?

Thanks once again for sharing your eminent wisdom, oh great Dungeon Master. 😊

The "At will" refers to the fact that the creature in question can use the power whenever it chooses, unlimited times unless otherwise stated, with no need for memorization or a spell book or the like. It does not mean the user is able to do anything else save to will the power to take effect. The same does apply to magic items that enable the wielder to use them at will. but willing the power to work requires the full attention of the one so doing.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12147&start=90>

T. Foster wrote:

But OTOH gnolls, bugbears, ogres, and trolls (i.e. the more powerful humanoid races) are all CE, IIRC. This suggests perhaps that the weaker races are more lawfully-oriented as a matter of practicality -- the only way they can survive is to work together in an organized fashion with clearly delineated chains of command and such -- whereas the races that are more individually powerful don't feel the need for such cooperation and organization and can thus give freer reign to chaotic impulses.

Quite right:)

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12147&start=90>

Joe Maccarrone wrote:

As if you didn't have enough queries awaiting your attention... 😊

Gary, I read somewhere -- here on DF, IIRC -- that you once intended to use different HD for different types of AD&D monsters, but for some reason stuck with D8 for all. Is that true, and what was the reason?

Howdy Joe!

Indeed, I intended to use the range of d4 through d12 for monsters. that would give a more intyeresting range for the chance to hit and the amlunt of damage creatures could sustain. Small fast ones wuld have d4, large ones d12, so thus there could be a pair of 10 HD monsters, one with 25 HPs and the other with 65 🤔

Joe Maccarrone wrote:

Ooh, I feel some juicy house rules brewing! Those dragons need more hit points... 😊

Did something happen around the time the MM was produced, that led to D8 for all?

Sadly, there's no truly interesting tale to twell here. It was just a matter of inertia, with so much new material being created for the AD&D game system that the HDs for critters was given shirt shrift. The same is true fordamage bonuses for the big, really fearsome monsters. For example, I now tend to give a +1 damage for every HD of an ogre, giant, or dragon.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=330>

Joe Maccarrone wrote:

I like that, thank you! For some time I have been using the strength damage bonus for all humanoid-type monsters, inspired by Len Lakofka's article in Dragon #44. For example: Frost giants get weapon base 2-16, +9 for 21 strength. Trolls using claws: 1-4 plus a strength bonus of +3 to +6. This has basically the same effect as the +1/HD bonus you mention, and the latter could be easily applied to non-humanoid beasties like dragons. 😊

For hit dice, it would be easy enough to convert modules on the fly by adding a point or two per die, if going from D8 to D10 or D12....And probably not a bad idea, with fighting characters specialized in two-handed weapons... 😊

It is indeed easy to do that, and to use a bonus to damage based on the critter's HD.

All of my mature giants, for example, have HPs ranging from 7-12 per HD too 😊

Joe Maccarrone wrote:

Wow! Now that is frightening. Such a conversion would put the 'G' modules in a different light, as if they weren't hard enough already... 😊

I'd want to go in with a squad of rangers specialized with bastard sword, and heavily armoured dwarves! 😊

Beefing up the bad guys does increase the sense of wonder and excitement in the game, and that's a good thing. Killing a roomful of giants should be something for the bards to write a song about, not just the routine work of a few melee rounds... 😊

Well, the editors of the *Castle Zagyg*, *Yggsburgh* setting were a bit hesitant to use my enhanced stats, but that does make monsters in general more dangerous, so it increases the sense of danger.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=360>

Nikosandros wrote:

Another question, if I may...

One race of creatures that has always fascinated me from AD&D is the Modrons. I can't quite place my fascination with those alien, geometrical creatures, but somehow they strike the same cords with me as Abbot's Flatland, De Chirico metaphysical paintings or Escher's impossible geometries.

Anyway... enough of my inane ramblings, my question is: where did you get the inspiration for the Modrons?

Heh...

Oddly enough, I was just thinking of the Modrons earlier this week, mainly because of some questions about alignment. Onwards!

The fact is I can not remember if I initially envisaged that race or if another of the designers at TSR did. I do recall vividly detailing them, but who conceived the Modrons I can not say. They do fit into the LN plane perfectly, though, I do believe.

Nikosandros wrote:

Just so. I've recently used them to good effect in a very funny non-combat encounter in which the PCs had to deal with the modron bureaucracy of Nirvava...

The paladin and the LG cleric were [sic] especially miffed when they were fined for chaotic behaviour... 😊

Heh,

Single-minded attention to duty is the motto of the modrons. As I would relate to my players when their PCs encountered them:

"Work. Work. Work."

Whatever was set forth was what all their attention got.

I do like your fining the LG PCs for chaotic behavior 😊

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=450>

ScottyG wrote:

Gary, when characters are dealing with stirges, would you allow a hit from a PC to kill an attached stirge, assuming the PC just pulls the critter out and squishes it, or twists its head around, etc. All of the groups I've DMed for assume they need to hack away at the attached monsters with swords, etc. inflicting normal damage.

Attempting to kill stirgies by hand is possible, but I'd give the attacker a penalty of about half normal chance to hit to manage such a feat.

In short I like hacking away, with misses having the chance to strike the character to which the strige is attached 😊

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=18412&start=60>

serleran wrote:

I must say I like the variations of the LA monsters over those of other fantasy games, including the ones of my own making. Very intriguing buggers. Which leads to my question:

Why did you decide to make LA kobolds the way they are? Based more strictly on folklore?



Thanks Serleran,

Your kind words are appreciated. I do have fun creating critters!

As kobolds were the scum of the D&D game, and as I had done so well against PC parties with that sort of humanoid in the old castle in the few years before I did the LA game, I decided to make the kobold more of an attractive, folklore-goblinsque sort of race. It, and all the official Alfar come from a Faerie World, of course. If I ever get around to it I plan to detail it, for that place has weak links to our own planet 😊

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=18412&start=60>

Character Races

dcs wrote:

gideon_thorne wrote:

I dunno if its accurate. But poke around on Page 16 of the AD&D 1e PHB and look under the strictures of Elves via multiclassing.

As I thought, it is not just elves but all "non-human and semi-human race characters who are multi-classed." Under "Fighter/Magic-user" on pp. 32-33 this is stated explicitly without reference to a particular character race (although it notes that "Elves and half-elves may be fighter/magic-users"). So Elves aren't an exception, as they are in 2e AD&D; they follow the same rule as everyone else. All multi-classed characters, no matter what their race, can use the most favorable armor according to their character classes, with the exception of multi-classed thieves, who can't perform thief functions in armor heavier than leather armor.

The fact is that only elven chain was allowed for casting of magic-user spells in my campaign. A multi-classed elf could manage to get away with wearing even plate armor and casting, but not thieving, but not a half-elf, or gnome.

Actually, whatever suits the DM and the player group works for me!

SOURCE: <http://dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=10004&start=150>

elementalawe wrote:

By physical material nature and in accordance with the ADandD 1st edit. info. rule sourcebooks, what do the ears of a dwarf look like and what do the ears of an orc look like? Unlike elves, I'm hoping that a dwarf has rounded ears like a human and that an orc has rounded ears like a human. Also, in accordance with the ADandD 1st edit. info. rule sourcebooks, are the details of a human character's appearance-- whether natural or magical--decided or determined by the player?

FWIW, I envisage dwarves with shell-like ears ala humans, only proportionately larger. My vision of orc ears is a somewhat lop-eared look as was the case in the LotR films.

The specifics of a PC's appearance should always be left to the player, the details based on the GM's racial description paramaters, of course.

SOURCE: <http://dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=10004&start=210>

DMPrata wrote:

Gary, there are several abilities granted to demi-humans in the OAD&D Monster Manual that are not included in the Players Handbook. Specifically:

Elves and halflings are considered invisible in vegetation (in addition to their improved chance to surprise).

Elves have the ability to "split-fire" with their bows.

Halflings are +3 to hit with bows and slings.

Gnomes receive a saving throw bonus vs. poison (in addition to their bonus vs. magic).

Are these editorial oversights in the PHB (akin to the infamous falling damage debacle), or did you intend for these abilities to be restricted to NPC demi-humans only? Thanks once again for your time!

I did oindeed intend the advantages to be for NPCs, but there's no reason not to use them for PC's.

Split-fire and move means half movement, archery, then remaining movement, of course.

SOURCE: <http://dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=10004&start=570>

Rhuvein wrote:

Hello Gary. I haven't seen this asked before, but forgive me if you've answered this elsewhere. Which race is the oldest, among the gnomes, elves and dwarves?

Actually, no one has ever asked me that question;)

As far as I am concerned, the racial age is the same for the lot of demi-humans.

SOURCE: <http://dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=10004&start=630>

DMPPrata wrote:

Gary, no doubt this has been asked of you before, but I haven't been able to find a "definitive" answer. Did you intend for dwarven PC's (and other small demi-humans) to move slower than human PC's, or were the Monster Manual movement rates (6" for dwarves & gnomes, 9" for halflings) written to reflect units of armored troops as opposed to individuals? There seem to be two schools of thought on this one. On a related note, what do you think it would take to get one of those pokey, curmudgeonly, bearded types onto a horse to keep up with the rest of his party?

The rates of movement given indeed were for troop units, not individual PCs--not that a fully armored dwarf PC would move faster, or that a halfling PC like-armored would move 9.

As for mounts, would you believe pony horses or ponies? 🤪

SOURCE: <http://dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=10004&start=630>

PapersAndPaychecks wrote:

I've never understood the thing about dwarfs not wanting to ride horses. Did that start with Dragonlance?

Short, burley people with short legs do not make good horsemen 🤪

A small horse or a pony makes the task easier.

SOURCE: <http://dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=10004&start=660>

DMPPrata wrote:

The player of the dwarven PC in my group is going to be very happy when I tell him he can now move at the same base rate as the humans 😊 (subject to armor and encumbrance, of course). In later editions of the game (gr 🤪), dwarves were specifically given lower base movement rates, but I wasn't sure that that was actually your original intention. Clearly now it wasn't. Thanks once again Gary!

Be careful now...

An unencumbered human has a base movement rate of 12, I'd give the short-legged folk a base of 9.

Obmi the Dwarf, one of my favorite villians, relied on his boots of speed to escape human pursuers...which infuriated the players, of course.

SOURCE: <http://dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=10004&start=660>

uaintjak wrote:

Oops, thought of something else. Sorry it's another AD&D question.

For the new races introduced in Unearthed Arcana, how did you envision their stat modifications?

Would you have given a wood elf, for example, a +1 strength, -1 intelligence only?

Or would you give the wood elf the basic elven adjustments as well, so the character would get +1 strength, -1 intelligence, +1 dexterity, -1 constitution?

The basic racial adjustments apply to varieties of that race, so as you note, the Wood Elf character would get +1 strength, -1 intelligence, +1 dexterity, -1 constitution.

Clarification of that question was overlooked, as were a number of others, because of the haste needed in producing the book.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=180>

Nikosandros wrote:

I have a question about the progression of Strength in AD&D compared to that of the other abilities.

The progression of strength is slower than that of the other ones... for instance at str 16 there is just a +1 to damage, while one gets +2 defensive bonus from dex, +2 hp from con or +2 to saves from wis. Furthermore it takes the quite uncommon score of 18/00 to be able to get a +3 to hit (even though it's true that there's also the huge +6 to damage).

I was curious about the reasoning behind the progression... thanks in advance! 😊

The reasoning is this:

Many creatures are very strong, and if humans were granted greater strength bonus benefits, so would critters, and the much stronger ones would have some really devastating hit and damage bonuses thus.

In addition, really strong persons are quite rare, more so in my estimation than are really wise or dextrous. Like constitution, strength is limited in its benefits until the upper end.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=180>

Joe Maccarrone wrote:

I agree, thanks! I'll continue to use method V [from UA for rolling stats] for humans, and method I for demi-humans...for which some might lambast me as a humano-centrist... 😊

The whole of the AD&D game was designed so as to center around humans. All players are human, as am I.

Making up the origins, religions, history, mythology, legends, philosophies, cultures, and societies of a non-human race, let alone races, that truly differs from that of mankind, is an undertaking for a genius that wishes to dedicate a lifetime to that, and from which a game world might or might not eventuate.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=300>

Geoffrey wrote:

This helps illustrate why I insist that my players take the role of human characters/avatars. In my experience, players with non-human characters/avatars simply act like they are human beings with some super powers and perhaps an idiosyncrasy or two.

What you say is often true, but good players can assume the role of a non-human character/avatar with some success in regards behaving as if they were of non-human race. That is, of course, enabled by the fact that the lore of dwarves, elves, etc. is basically proffered as very akin to that of humans, mainly because the authors of such information have, perforce, created from a humanocentric standpoint.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=330>

Bombay wrote:

We have ruled in our game that an elf can go many days without sleeping because a[n] elf "Meditates" instead. There seems to be no set time for how many days you can go. Is there any set time? Or perhaps 2-3 days without sleeping for a[n] elf is a reasonable time? Time for them is much different (they live 1,000 years) compared to a human.

That's strictly a DM's call. I do agree with your general assessment, that a few days without sleep is not difficult for an elf if he can spend time meditating.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=360>

Combat_Kyle wrote:

What kind of racial diversity is there in the fishing village of Garham in the Yggsburgh book? Other than the dwarf blacksmith and half-elf bowyer fletcher is the village human? I was thinking of making the village more diverse and taking the names of many of the villages and making many of them halflings and half-elves. I realize that a CK can make the module his own, but I was just wondering your intentions when you created this village.

Heh...

The lack of diversity was quite purposeful. I meant the hamlet to be mostly human, just as Cloverdale is mainly demi-human of halfling race.

Amongst the fair folk, if you will, there are not many boatmen and fishers, and so too in Garham as I envisaged it 😊

Combat_Kyle wrote:

That works great for me. I should be starting a new campaign in a couple of weeks, we are just finishing one after 15 months. We have some new players and I want to start the whole group at level 1, and I really love the Yggsburgh book and the environs. Thanks for the help Gary.

Welcome Amigo,

The hamlet of Garham is the place where I figured many a CK would select for an interesting 1st level base--that or Cloverdale. When all the Yggsburgh Town district and suburban detail modules are completed and available, play can begin in or near town, or by that time, near the abandoned castle too--Stonewyck or Hawfair Green as likely bases for forays. Of course by the time the castle is ready for adventuring, likely early adopters of the setting will have relatively strong PCs to act as mentors or masters for the new PCs meant to explore Xastle Zagyg.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=18412&start=90>

DMPrata wrote:

On a related Yggsburgh note, Gary, what kind of naming conventions do the non-human folk of the East

Mark follow? I know you included sample surnames for dwarves, elves, gnomes, and halflings, but what about given names? Do they use typical human names, or did you have yet another list that was cut from the published book? 😊

Howdy!

As to given names for demi-humans, I used a mix of human and inventive ones when I identified them in the text. Just as the list of suggested surnames is short, allows for CK addition, the given names can be as are desired in the campaign.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=18412&start=120>

The Planes of Existence

ScottyG wrote:

Gary, there's a rule that first appeared in Q1 stating that magic items lose pluses based on how many planes removed they are from the Prime. I thought I remember reading on a recent thread elsewhere that you weren't fond of that rule, and would have handled it differently had you had the opportunity to release some planer material, but now I can't find the thread or the quote. Is that correct, or is my memory off?

Your memeory ios correct. the value of magical weapons might remain unchanged, increase, or decrease on different planes. that is a comples matter and depends on the nature of the magic used to enchant each particular sort of weapon. fortunately, it is no longer something i need concern myself with, or I'd have a difficult task of classification and table-making on my plate 🤔

SOURCE: <http://dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=10004&start=450>

richardstincer wrote:

Gary, I think I remember reading in your 1979 DMG, in the section about alignment and the planes, that the inhabitants of the gray area planes between the nine alignment-planes have a world view similar to the inhabitants of the prime physical material plane. Does that mean those gray area planes with the inhabitants can be considered true-neutral? For example: if I am a PC human nondruid cleric of early ADandD 1st edit., can I be between LN and LG for my alignment or does being between LG and LN make me have the TN-alignment and thereby disallowing me to be a nondruid cleric?

What it means is that those areas have much the same nine alignments as are found on the PMP 😊 The location on the alignment azis indicates the predominant alignment of the area, be that tendency slight or considerable.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=11762&start=90>

PapersAndPaychecks wrote:

Just curious about the ethereal plane really.

My understanding: The ethereal plane exists in parallel with the Prime Material and the Inner Planes, and also occupies the space between those planes. Travel through the ethereal is swift and tireless, but occasionally risky.

Example: A group of high level player characters want to travel from Tusmit to the Kingdom of the Schnai with reasonable speed, but aren't prepared to risk using teleport for some reason. Instead, their cleric plane shifts them to the ethereal and they get going. The players can now sprint or gallop at maximum rate for several days, emerging in the chilly northeastern region of Greyhawk in less than half the time it would take them to travel overland. However, they experience 3 wandering monster checks (beginning, middle and end of their journey) and have a 1 in 20 chance of encountering an Ether Cyclone.

Characters in the ethereal are invisible, inaudible and otherwise totally imperceptible to creatures on the Prime Material unless these creatures are listed as having special senses which extend to other planes (so basilisks could see an ethereal creature). On the ethereal plane the characters could pass through Prime Material solid objects.

I'm unsure whether a character in the ethereal can (dimly) perceive objects on the Prime Material.

I'm also unsure how you'd respond to a group of characters who decided to use the ethereal plane as their resting spot between adventures. Strikes me that they could (for example) venture into the Glacial Rift of the Frost Giant Jarl, get into a serious fight in the caverns, then plane shift out into the ethereal, wait up for a day or so, heal up and regaining all their magics, then pop back to the Prime Material and start hacking up giants again from right where they left off. That's a pretty safe bet with standard encounter chances.

Those on the Ethereal Plane are able to see the PMP vaguely, as if through a thick haze or several layers of gauze. Assume vision extends out to a maximum of 30 feet, although movement of large objects could be noted at 60 feet distance.

That you suggest for using the Ethereal Plane as a resting place is chancy, for many potent monsters can become ethereal and do so, traveling the plane. If PCs playing in my campaign tried the tactics you suggest, they'd end up getting little rest and fighting a lot of opponents more dangerous than giants

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=11762&start=120>

PapersAndPaychecks wrote:

Hmm. Strikes me that many players would wish to use the medium for scouting purposes, in that case. It's also certainly the safest way of getting to old Acererak's tomb - even if whole hordes of demons flock to attack the cowardly, lazy and greedy PC who uses these tactics...

Does the Astral plane operate on similar principles?

When a few dismembered carcasses of PCs come flopping out of the Ethereal Plane I suspect the consensus will be that it is not a viable means to cheap success in quests of heroic sort.

Indeed the Astral Plane is similar to the Ethereal, albeit there are even worse perils to risk when hazarding that plane other than for direct travel to a destination. (In short, it is up to the DM to make certain that the players do not get away by cheap tricks, the louts!) 🤨

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=11762&start=150>

serleran wrote:

Hello, again, Mister EGG. 😊 I don't want to bother you, or bore you, so feel free to ignore the question... but, I've noticed (or perhaps, it's my own inclination to see) a propensity of extra-planar material in your works, whether that is adventures across and on multiple planes (especially Hall of Many Panes) to the transversals of something like The Temple of Elemental Evil, and I was wondering in planar composition and arrangement is simply a subject that fascinates you, whether scientifically, or religiously, or if I'm just reading much into nothing. Thanks.

The latter.

Using such material is simply a device for creating what I consider interesting adventure material.

As an aside, I truly enjoyed the old PJ Farmer novels about the created pocket universes and also the A Merritt and de Camp & Pratt books that utilize the same general vehicle, different universes.

In all, don't be trying to read into these gaming works some special meaning that isn't plainly stated in words or by clear inference.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=11762&start=150>

PapersAndPaychecks wrote:

Col_Pladoh wrote:

(In short, it is up to the DM to make certain that the players do not get away by cheap tricks, the louts!)

Cheers,
Gary

nods

Therein lies the rub!

The astral and ethereal are useful game mechanics which help explain things which would otherwise be anomalistic, and also offer access to the best way of expanding the game for regular play past around level 14-15. The challenge for the DM is to define and describe them in such a way that the player characters can understand the basics of operating in these planes, and interact with them meaningfully, but simultaneously to prevent the players from using them as a workaround to dodge the poor DM's carefully-planned challenges and take quick shortcuts to the loot on the Prime Material!

Thus on the one hand, it needs to be possible, if dangerous, for player characters who can access the planes to begin exploring them, in other words some areas of planar travel need to be appropriate for PCs as low as (say) 9th level. They need to be able to dip their toes into the (relatively safe?) waters of the ethereal, and maybe learn to cross that plane to the Elemental Planes, with risk to be sure, but with some chance of success, around this point in their adventuring careers.

And yet on the other hand, for reasons you've already explained very graphically, in some situations a short hop of one or two hundred yards across the Ethereal needs to be more dangerous than crossing the Tomb of Horrors.

You said "other than for direct travel to a destination" which strikes me as the key to this. Having listened to you, I now perceive the astral and ethereal planes as places where it is most unwise to dawdle!

Maybe a fast-moving creature can almost skim through the "waters", passing virtually unnoticed on ethereal or prime material, but also glimpsing little of either plane through the mists as they flash past. Maybe as the creature slows down, it has a larger impact on the ethereal/astral, sending out bigger and bigger ripples which attract attention like a droplet of blood in shark-infested waters... until moving at an exploratory pace through the ether of (say) a dungeon results in the descent of the horrible, hungry hordes on the poor unfortunate soul who sought an easy ride.

PapersAndPaychecks,

What you declaim is reasonable, as are the assumptions you propose for allowing and managing travel in the Astral and Etherial Planes. I can offer no further consol.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=11762&start=150>

Bombay wrote:

Just coming off a Total Party Kill(Demon webs at the pyramid with the drow/zombies.)

One real issue i came up with is the bonuses on items while on another plane, was hoping maybe you could shed some more light on a couple of items, would you give the saving throw or AC bonuses to the following.

Boots of striding and springing(+1), Staff of power(+2), Cloak of Displacement(+2)

I initially ruled no, but was unsure, thanks.

Off hand I'd say that all three of those items would likely function normally on a netherplane. Nothing there would interfere with their powers.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12147&start=210>

serleran wrote:

Is there an elemental lord for those which are composite creatures, such as the "quasi-elementals" of mud or ash, for example? Are they, elemental lords in general, worshipped by mephits?

Well...

that's the call of the DM using the system. I don't envisage a series of quasi-elemental planes that kack more potent entities than the ordinary, so there would be a hierarchy thus--even if not one of conscious subservience, more akin to that of animals in nature.

As for worship, surely some sentient creatures somewhere are foolish enough to do that 🙄

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=60>

Weapons

Handy Haversack wrote:

This came up recently on the 1e board here and in my game on Superbowl Sunday (during the Superbowl of Blood, as we called it). It's a bit nuts-and-boltsy, but:

During a charging attack while mounted (say, with a lance) or from a centaur with a lance, how far past the opponent is it necessary to take the attacker? That is, does the full charging move need to be completed, or can the charger slow down and begin to turn during that move?

And I assume that only the lance attack could happen on a charge, not the hoof attacks?

Thanks so much. It's an honor and a pleasure to see you communicating with all of us.

Spears, sabers, or any other sort of weapon can be used in a mounted charge. The lance just allows for attack contact sooner than do such other weapons.

Most charge attacks were done at a trot or a canter, not a gallop, except perhaps two mouned units having at each other.

A quarter of a move should suffice for the charging unit to pass through and turn the mount. for example, a charge of 24", with impact after 12" distance has been covered, would ene 8" beyond the point of impace, with the figure wheeling to the left or right if so desired. Otherwise, the move would end 12" beyond the point of impact.

That isn't perfect, but at best such things are loose simulations of actual combat.

SOURCE: <http://dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=10004&start=30>

RobertFisher wrote:

Another OD&D question...

When you are DM, is there any advantage to choosing a sword over a dagger or spear? Is there any reason to choose a two-handed sword rather than a single handed weapon + shield? Would you do anything if you felt a player was "abusing" the fact that all weapons do the same damage to only buy the cheapest kind?

(Or does it not really matter in the long run because PCs will be using magic weapons they've found instead of bought weapons?)

All the weapons do the same amount of damage in OD&D, yes. Howwever, in cases of tied initiative, the longer will attack first, and swords are more durable than weapons with woden hafts.

As for the advantage of using a cheaper weapon, it is logical, and a club kills as surely as a sword. Only social class distinction is concerned in regards to what weapon is used for the deed;)

SOURCE: <http://dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=10004&start=240>

DMPrata:

Gary, you most likely have a much more extensive knowledge of medieval weaponry than anyone here. (BTW, I greatly enjoyed your illuminating discussion of the subject at the Higgins Armory a couple of years ago.) Given this, would you care to comment on the list I've compiled (from another thread) regarding which weapons should require two hands to wield?

DMPrata wrote:

From my understanding, the following weapons require two hands to wield (assuming a man-sized wielder):

Bardiche

Bec de Corbin

Bill-Guisarme

Blowgun

Bo Stick two-handed per Oriental Adventures p. 41

Bow (all)

Crossbow, Heavy

Crossbow, Light

Fauchard

Fauchard-Fork

Flail, Footman's

Fork, Military

Garrot

Glaive

Glaive-Guisarme

Guisarme

Guisarme-Voulge

Halberd two-handed per Oriental Adventures p. 41

Hammer, Lucern

Hook Fauchard

Man Catcher two-handed per Oriental Adventures p. 41

Partisan

Pike, Awl

Ranseur

Sling

Spear two-handed per Oriental Adventures p. 41

Spetum

Staff, Quarter

Staff Sling two-handed per Oriental Adventures p. 41

Sword, Two-Handed two-handed per Oriental Adventures p. 41

Trident two-handed per Oriental Adventures p. 41

Voulge

One-handed weapons would include:

Aklys

Atlatl and javelin

Axe, Battle

Axe, Hand

Club

Crossbow, Hand

Dagger

Dart

Flail, Horseman's

Hammer

Harpoon

Javelin

Jo Stick (though normally used in pairs)
Knife
Lasso
Mace (all)
Morning Star
Pick (all)
Sap
Scimitar
Spiked Buckler
Sword, Bastard (one- or two-handed)
Sword, Broad
Sword, Falchion
Sword, Khopesh
Sword, Long
Sword, Short
Whip

All real pikes, not merely awl pikes, are two-handed weapons.

A sling is used one-handed after loading the pouch with a stone or lead bullet. Only a staff sling is a two-handed weapon.

Most spears and a trident can be used effectively one-handed, although they can be used with both hands.

SOURCE: <http://dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=10004&start=600>

ScottyG wrote:

Hey Gary, this is probably one of the most debated facets of the AD&D combat mechanics. I know the AD&D questions can be quite tiresome, but I've never seen this one asked, and it really would settle many, many debates, so here goes. The DMG lists 2 methods for determining when in a round an attack against a spell caster will occur. The first is simple enough, the relevant initiative result is compared to the casting time of the spell, whichever is lower occurs first. In this instance, regardless of who wins initiative, there is a good chance that a spell with a short casting time will occur first.

The second involves using a weapon's speed factor. The example in the book has an attacker that lost initiative subtracting his initiative from the speed factor of his weapon, and yadda dadda da, to determine if the attack can still occur first. In the second method, is it always assumed that if the attacker wins initiative the blow will come first, or does the caster still have a chance to get the spell off.

Aargh!

Forget weapons speed factors. I must have been under the effect of a hex when I included them in the bloody rules 😞

The first system for determining what happens is the best one, the only one I ever used. If the weapon-wielder has the initiative and strikes the spell caster, the spell is blown. If he moses, or the spell caster wins, the casting time allows, then the spell is activated and takes effect.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=11762&start=120>

ScottyG wrote:

Well, speed factor doesn't jive with the minute long round where numerous attacks are assumed to occur.

It would indicate that only the first attempt mattered.

Mythus, which also uses speed factor, has a 3 second ct where one attack really is just one attack. In this case I can see speed factor coming into play.

Psionics and speed factor, two very maligned parts of the AD&D system, both made it into Mythus, although psionics was much improved and became psychogenics. Psychogenics made in into LA, is speed factor still part of the LA rules?

Indeed, I believe that i got the use of mental powers right in the LA game, and as Psychogenic Ability they are neither obtrusive, alien, dominant, or useless. In short, the Psychogenic Ability is a integral part of the system.

As for weapon sped factor, I use it only when two closely matched opponents are in combat. In mass-melee situations the added calculation takes too much time, detracts from the action, for combat simulation is not featured in the LA game.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=11762&start=120>

Joe Maccarrone wrote:

An observation:

I love the weapon specialization Knacks for LA, on page 39 of HoMP. 😊

A question:

What do you think of using a single damage figure for AD&D weapons, as later editions of the game do, rather than S/M and L damage? At first I hated this idea, as I love the unique aspects of AD&D, but it would streamline combat a wee bit, and streamlining is often good...

If doing so, I have a notion to split the difference as much as possible; for example, 1-10 for a long sword rather than 1-8/1-12. Thus, S/M creatures would get hit a little harder, which isn't necessarily a bad thing, and big critters would be a little scarier to fight, which also isn't a bad thing....

Howdy Amigo:)

I put the damage differentiation into the AD&D game so as to give small opponents a better chance, humand a better chance against large opponents. In the system it worked well, and the amount of bookkeeping required is minimal, so I would not change it.

As for the LA game system, the permise therein is that all of the deadly weapons are capable of killing a normal human with a single, truly effective, blow, with the minimum harm dome from any hit the variable.

As the hit points/Health od all creatures are a part of the weapons effect, tinkering with the latter means the latter will likely have to be adjusted.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=11762&start=120>

ScottyG wrote:

Gary, how specific did you intend weapon proficiencies to be? Would long bow cover composite long bow? Would a seperate proficiency be needed for light and heavy crossbows, or any of of the horseman's/footman's weapons?

Very specific. Thus the limit of proficiency being by type of sword. that same stricture was meant to apply to each and every separate weapon, for the bonus is considerable.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12147&start=30>

Joe Maccarrone wrote:

Rather than a fixed number, I use a range of non-proficiency penalties for each class, based on how similar (or not) the non-proficient weapon is to one the character has proficiency in. For fighter classes, well versed in the physical mechanics of armed combat, the range is 0 to -2.

This means, for example, that if a fighter proficient in the long sword picks up a broad sword -- which may be wielded with identical movements -- there is no penalty. A short sword might be handled at -1, and something out of the ballpark -- say, a pole arm -- would incur the full -2.

Just throwing the idea out there... Don't mean to preempt the good Colonel!

Sure Joe...

Seriously, your system is fine for those who want combat simulation, and plenty of weapon specific data. for those who don't, follow my advice 😊

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12147&start=30>

Maraudar wrote:

Now on to an actual question. Why the devil did you put weapon speeds and THACO in th PHB when you know your average 13 old boy at the time was going to look at them and go "HUH?"....

As I have said all too often wghen asked that very question, in a moment of madness i listened to a couterie of combat simulators who urged me to include that sort of detail.

As a matter of fact I never used modifiers, and speeds only when there was a critical duel abnd there was an initiative tie.

So yes, mia ciulpa, and I should never have put those things in there 😊

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12147&start=90>

SemajTheSilent wrote:

Gary...we're having a discussion at the Knights & Knaves board about this...

When you introduced darts into D&D, is this what you had in mind?



and



I decline to go to read other boards--to bloody much else to do. I will say here that the darts considered are of large size, a foot or more in length, veined and heavy so as to have good penetration.

In some history books the "dart" referred to is a short, veined javelin, but those in the AD&D game are envisaged more like yard darts/

...

Grumble, grumble...

Okay, I went and had a look, and those missiles depicted in the two pics are indeed along the lines of the dart as envisaged for D&D weapon of that name 😎

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12147&start=270>

oldschooler wrote:

Hey! Something I've always wondered about, but kept forgetting to ask about:

Morning stars; what are they (in **AD&D** terms) exactly? Spiked balls *chained* to sticks (I thought that was a horseman's flail)? Spiked balls attached directly to sticks (I thought that was a mace)? Could you clear these three weapons up for me as they appear in **Advanced Dungeons & Dragons**?

The Dungeon Master's Log pictures a horseman's flail as a spiked ball(s) chained to a handle. There is no such picture of a mace or morning star.

My assumption: a mace is a glorified club, consisting of a blunt weight at one end of a shaft. A morning star is the same thing, but with blood-drawing spikes attached. Am I far off?

Heh...

Any good book on arms & armor will show various examples of the morning star. the main one is a club set at the business end with a steel ring from which spokes project as do the rays from a star. think of it as the size of a baseball bat.

the other weapons you describe are correctly identified, although a spiked ball is properly a morning star, not a mace, as they are generally smooth-headed or have phlanges.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12147&start=390>

Anonymous wrote:

...What did you base your damage done by crossbows on? I was always under the impression the typical crossbow did more damage than the typical long bow (that is before the advent of the English Longbow, and composite bow).

Damage from heavy crossbow bolts was generally severe because of the size of the missile and its penetration. Of course there were no longbows used in Europe before the Welsh longbow came into play in the hands of the Plantagenet English operating in France.

Anyway, keep in mind that the OA/D&D systems were never meant to be combat simulators, and all wise DMs ignored the few portions that lead in that direction. Damage and hit points in any game are most probably based on game considerations that have nothing to do with actual human or animal frailties, if you will. A 6" knife will kill a person just as dead as a 6' long two-handed sword, for example.

The actual measure of harm inflicted is tissue damage from weapon penetration of flesh, and shock to tissue--as well as vital organ damage and blood loss, of course. In a game, details of such things are pretty well minor considerations, never to be dealt with in any sort of mechanic that is based on actuality, or else the whole reason for the game form, adventure on an ongoing basis with a heroic game persona, is lost.

DMPata wrote:

Ooh, ooh, I know this one! Light crossbows do less damage than self bows, and heavy crossbows do about the same amount, but take a look at the armor type adjustments. The crossbow generally has a better chance of penetrating a plate-armored foe.

At close range the heavy crossbow is deadly. Its penetration falls off sooner than that of the longbow, and the latter had a longer effective range and a much greater rate of fire than does any but a repeating (Chinese) crossbow. The repeating crossbow has poor penetration and short range at best, however.

Anonymous wrote:

Wow, never caught that before. At some point, I thought crossbows were outlawed because of their advantages in warfare, but I can't remember if it was their increased accuracy, effectiveness or just that they were less expensive.

I always assumed crossbows were easier to fire in plate mail (or heavy armor) than a long bow. This is just an assumption though.

Of course heavily armored nobles didn't like weapons that made them vulnerable to mere commoners, especially at ranges where they were unable to cut them down.

No outlawing of the crossbow was ever effectively made.

The longbow was much more effective at penetrating armor than the crossbow (Agincourt, Crécy, and Poitiers demonstrate this amply) likely because of volume of fire, as a longbowman could release a half-dozen or more arrows in the time it took for a crossbowman to load one quarrel and crank up his bowstring to release it.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12918&start=300>

Dwayanu wrote:

I've long refereed "little booklets" D&D, enjoying AD&D as a player. Lately I've been delving into the books with an eye to DMing.

One curious omission is that they do not specify which weapons must be wielded two-handed.

The most (but far from only!) contentious subject in my experience is the "battle axe." In my own view, the "hand axe" would include the francisca; the "bardiche" seems to me to cover two-handed battle-axes shorter than a poleaxe. In game terms, the "battle axe" seems a poor choice if two-handed.

Whatever guidance you care to offer would be much appreciated.

First and foremost, the FRPG is not a combat simulation. It is something entirely different. 😊

As for what weapons need to be used with both hands, well that's a matter of common sense. The bow is one, so is the two-handed sword. All pole arms, long spears, and pikes need both hands. A battle axe is a relatively short-hafted weapon that is wielded with one hand. Although two can be used as with a bastard sword..

...

To halflings most weapons they can wield are two-handed. To ogres and their ilk most human weapons that they can use are one-handed. To worry about that sort of thing verges on wargaming...combat simulation 😊

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=690>

Other

elementalawe wrote:

Somewhere at the back part of the 1979 DMG for ADandD 1st edit. is a list of natural herbs as medicine. When I saw and read that info., I started using oregano for my teeth because it is a germicide and painkiller. Pepper is good for sprains and I think something else, but I forgot. Is that list of medicinal herbs true for real life? If it is, you might want to try some of those natural remedies listed instead of unnatural medicine for your health. I have noticed that doctors don't give all the info. that is cheapest and the most useful. Your 1979 DMG for ADandD 1st edit. has helped me in real life and it might help you. Just choose a herb that you think matches the symptoms that you have and that doesn't have any side effects that you can think of.

As I recall, the list of herbal remedies was taken from actual books listing such natural medications. In that vein I do plan to check into chelation therapy soon.

SOURCE: <http://dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=10004&start=90>

chrispillier wrote:

Hey Gary, I was wondering if you could give me your thoughts on running an "All Gygax, all the time" campaign. There have been several threads on DF regarding which order people would run modules in and I was wondering if you'd like to add your input/critique my tentative list

First, in what order would you run a 1e AD&D module-based campaign? You can use works from other authors, of course, but I'd be interested in knowing also what modules of your own design you'd use and in what order.

Second, what do you think of this list of mine? In order of play:

B2 Keep on the Borderland
T1-2 Temple of Elemental Evil
S4 Lost Caverns of Tsojcanth
WG4 Lost Caverns of Tharizdun
WG 5 Mordenkainen's Fantastic Adventure
G1-3 Against the Giants
D1-2 Descent to the Depths of the Earth
D3 Vault of the Drow
S1 Tomb of Horrors
WG 6 Isle of the Ape

I know T1-4 is designed for beginning characters but I have a soft spot for B2 in my heart, and it would allow for a couple of levels for the PC's before they made it to the moat house

If you notice, I left out Q1 as I am not exactly thrilled with it as a finale to the Giants-Drow saga. Also, if you can think of a good place to fit in S3 Expedition to the Barrier Peaks please let me know! I was considering putting it after WG 5 but then I was worried PC's might be a little too powerful for the giants.

A bit strapped for time of late, so pardon the brevity of my response. Here's the order I would use, and I do agree with you about omitting the Queen of the Demonweb Pits module. I never liked it.

Keep on the Borderland
Village of Hommlet

Temple of Elemental Evil
Dungeonland
Land beyond the Magic Mirror
Lost Caverns of Tsojcanth
Forgotten Temple of Tharizdun
Steading of the Hill Giant Chief
Glacial rift of the Frost Giant Jarl
Hall of the Fire Giant King
Mordenkainen's Fantastic Adventure
Tomb of Horrors
Descent to the Depths of the Earth
Shrine of the Kuo-toa
Vault of the Drow
Isle of the Ape
(Necropolis, final portion)

SOURCE: <http://dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=10004&start=420>

Yorlum wrote:

How did your typical small town in Greyhawk react to the presence of adventurers?

Was it Fictional old-west like, where most people were pretty normal, but used to seeing weapon-toting strangers?

Or semi-medieval, where anybody not a noble bearing weapons and armor were thrown in the clink?

Or something else entirely? On the one hand, I find the idea of a three or four blokes in platemail clanking down the streets and having a beer in a tavern a little silly, but on the other hand, it seems that fighter-types are really penalized if they are stigmatized (and of course they, with the most obvious weapons and armor are going to have the most to lose...).

I wonder how the idea of non-armed persons being the norm became so prevalent in the PRG community. Likely from watching too many samurai flicks...

In the medfieval period almost everyone was armed with whatever they could manage. True. some societies forbid swords to non-aristocrats, that prohibition disappearing as time moved towards what we name the Renaissance.

Anyway, in a fantasy world full of magic and monsters, the unarmed and unprotected by armor would be the first to fall, so I assume that a party of adventurers is a fairly common sight. Local persons are wary of them, as these strangers might want to slay, loot and pillage. Once the strangers prove to be friendly, they are welcomed--for their money. The local ruler might well resent their intrusion. A bit of this is covered in Living the Lejend, coming soon from Troll Lord Games 😊

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12147&start=180>

Yorlum wrote:

As an aside, I just figured that it would be hard to relax in that much armor. I do assume that most adults are carrying some weapon, for self-defense if nothing else, but your reply does help bring it into perspective.

Metalarmor is unusual wear for walking about in town unless one is a knightly type or a soldier.

Most ordinary citizens will have a dagger, the better class wear a sword, while common folks have a staff or walking stick (club).

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12147&start=180>

oldschooler wrote:

2. In some modules (namely The Village of Hommlet), NPCs living in town are listed with stuff like "scale mail, shield, spear and long sword". Would these be items they normally have on them at any given time, or just a list of what they can easily get ahold of if they have to? In other words, do farmers in Greyhawk normally wear armor and carry weapons on the job?

I'm looking into starting up an Advanced D&D campaign sometime and would like some advice in handling the above from the source

Only soldiers and the like wear armor and carry shields around in a community. The equipment listed is for when they are arming to protect their home.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12147&start=270>

dcs wrote:

Gary, you make some good points in Living Fantasy about how folks in the Middle Ages and Renaissance might find our modern notions of gun (or other lethal weapon) control to be a bit silly. Have you ever written anything on the subject of taxation or ownership of roads during that same period?

Actually taxation is part and parcel of feudalism and manorialism. The taxes were usually paid in goods and labor service for the lower class. In most FRPG world settings there is plenty of hard money, though, so one should assume that many of the peasants are free and pay rent, I mention that vassals generally own their temporal lords both service and a portion-- a tithe or some such -- of their income, as the spiritual lord is owned the same.

Road ownership is more of a thorny problem, as the suzerain will likely demand such as his purview, commerce being reliant of roadways and water routes. commerce along with agriculture produces most of the wealth in states of the sort being considered. To the point, though, I have not actually written about toll roads and bridges.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12147&start=300>

JASON THE RULESREADER wrote:

Thanks for the answer Gary. I am always in awe of your consummate skill in felling the querying prey.

I have thought the training rules were pretty good for emptying excess gold from PC's. The rating become a qualitative factor to the xp. So NOT all xp is created equal. I guess one could instead of the ratings just give more xp to the one who pulled more of their weight, but xp should be for the character attaining these ends through "professional means".

How long should it take in AD&D for a character usually to attain-- say the 10th level if the group with the character is meeting once a week? Two or three years? Or longer? Just a way to gauge not giving away too much too fast to avoid the MONTY HAUL campaign?

Thank you:)

A group playing once a week for three to four hours, playing well as a team, should see a 1st level PC that make about one level every three or four months on average. So that should get the typical party member to 9th level at the end of two or three years as you suggest.

I played a multiplicity of characters, but did so several times a week, and for long periods of adventure. thus many of my PCs hit such levels in a year realtime. Of course I do believe I played them pretty well too, aiming for rapid gain in...**power** :wink:

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12918&start=30>

General Karthos wrote:

First off, is it possible to have a human/demi-human character of "Large" size?

Secondly, if it's not too much to ask, if such a character were to occur, what bonuses/penalties would you give him, to keep him balanced?

As humans do sometimes surpass seven feet in height, it is indeed possible to have one that is "large," not "man-sized." It isn't possible to have a demi-human of such mass, unless one considered a half-orc in that category.

If I were the DM for a 7' or taller character, I would certainly give the PC a +1 on Strength and Consitution, with a minimum of 15 for each no matter what the roll, then award the +1s, so 16 for Str and Con would be the least such a character could have. I would certainly also give a -1 on Dex and Cha. BTW, if an 18 were rolled for Str, I would treat it as 18/50 and allow a confirming d% roll to check if it were above that score.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12918&start=120>

Clangador wrote:

You have mentioned in the past that you don't care for Third Edition D&D. With that said, why is it that you do write stuff for Dragon magazine, which is almost all Third Edition. And why do you allow some of your works to be converted for use with said system?

All i wrote for Dragon magazne were tales of adventuring using OAD&D, and if I do a new Gord short story for them it will use that same sort of base.

As for D20 material, I allowed some dual stating because fellow gamers who enjoy the new system wanted that, and who am i to deny them?

However, I am not going to continue with that as I find it unduly messes up the LA system's presentation...so i guess I am ging to deny them that after all 😊

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12918&start=150>

CapN wrote:

Gary, back in the 70s, how long did it normally take for characters to level up?

Good players could manage to gain low levels for their PC in a half-dozen or so adventures. Poor ones, those just goofing around couldn;t manage that in a dozen adventures.

As a DM I had to learn the hard way about giving out too much treasure and not loading the NPCs with magical things that the PCs could pick up when they trashed my encounters 😊

By the time AD&D was being played, all that had been ironed out, and the good players were still gaining a level for their PCs every couple of months until mid;kever, say around 8th.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12918&start=450>

phasedoor wrote:

Does your ADandD 1st edit. Greyhawk campaign allow me to be a human male PC who is 5feet and 5inches tall at the age of 45 years?

sure, why not?

I'd likely have taken one point from Dexterity due to age and added one to Wisdom, but that's about all I'd have required in regards that PC.

phasedoor wrote:

Thanks for your answer, Gary. The reason I asked about a 5ft. and 5in. tall human male is because I want to be sure that short-height humans are allowed in a campaign setting for ADandD 1st edition. It seems that humans who are taller than 5ft. and 5in. are more prominent among human adventurers who are PCs and NPCs. The short-height humans are disproportionately represented among NPCs and PCs.



Does that make much difference in a fantasy world?

No dwarves, elves, gnomes, halflings, or orcs at all here...

Elfdart wrote:

I always let players choose height, weight, build, hair color, eye color, complexion and age for their PCs as long as it was within reason and certain racial parameters.

Agreed, and that is the way I ran my D&D campaign, still run my LA game one.

Elfdart wrote:

I used to think the height/ weight charts in the DMG were unusually high (@6' for human males) until I read *The Year 1000*. The book points out that the average man in Northern Europe was @5'10" a thousand years ago. Malnutrition didn't start seriously stunting growth until the early 14th century and didn't stop until centuries later (The average French soldier in WW1 was 5'4").

No question that the Germanic tribesmen were a lot bigger than the Romans, and there were some really tall Vikings.

Just FYI, the extensive French losses in the Napoleonic war lowered the average height of the nation by a good bit.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12918&start=450>

Elfdart wrote:

True, but their American, British, Italian and German counterparts weren't much bigger. The loss of so many alpha males (as Gore Vidal put it) hurt, but malnutrition took an even bigger toll. Shortly before the Franco-Prussian War, the French government and industry leaders came up with the harebrained idea of cutting off butter rations (butter being one of the few sources of calcium and calories) for workers' families

and substituting a kind of margarine made from palm oil and rendered beef fat. Rioting, mutiny and the Paris Commune followed very quickly.

Col_Pladoh wrote:

Perhaps for the challenge...or to suit a mental image of a character such as a mage or ecclesiastic.

Elfdart wrote:

You're right. It's just that in 25+ years of gaming, nobody I've played with has ever *asked* to be that age - especially not when starting out. I'm open to the idea, though.

As far as PC height, build etc are concerned, on those rare occasions when I've rolled very high STR and CON, I usually made that PC bigger than average. I tend to think of humans with 18/00 STR and 18 CON as being the same size and build of some of the larger NFL players.

Hi Elfdart,

To be in the Guard, a Frenchman had to be at least six feet tall, so there were surely some thousands of tall men in France in Napoleon's time.

No matter, as I agree that diet affects size and health. Interestingly enough, though, the current increase in average height seems to be an anomaly, for it is occurring where diet has not been significantly improved.

For 18 Constitution I think of Mountain Men. For 18 Strength I envisage the participants in "The World's Strongest Men" contests 😊 The latter are generally above average height.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12918&start=450>

Handy Haversack wrote:

Hi Gary,

Another incredibly picayune AD&D question for you: do you think that if age raises a fighter's STR to 18 he should then get to roll for exceptional STR?

The fate of nations hangs on your answer! Well, OK, the fate of one half-orc we made at a bar last night. But maybe I'll make the player name him Nations!

Actually, following my stats for Conan, I'd have to say yes, there is a need to roll, but the table will need to be adjusted.

Initial roll under 51 = 18/xx Str comes in d2 years
Initial roll 51-75 = 18/50 Str, and 18/xx comes in d2 years
Initial roll 76-90 = 18/50 Str, 18/75 comes in d2, 18/xx in d2 more
etc.

Handy Haversack wrote:

So you're saying that the fighter grows into the extra STR as he gets more into the mature age?
Hmmmmm. A very interesting wrinkle.

So a base of 17, when he hits mature, goes up to 18 and rolls d% then follows your progression above?

Salut HH:)

right, the initial rll determines the character's potential greatest Str.

The growing strength as the fighter matures subsumes active physical exercise to build the greater prowess.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12918&start=480>

putting on the ritz wrote:

Hi Gary, I love Original AD&D and have compared it to Castles and Crusades. I must say that I much prefer OAD&D! It is character based and not cluttered at all.

Castles & Crusades seems to be lacking in my opinion. The SIEGE engine makes no sense and the artwork is, frankly, very bad.

Why did you choose to align yourself to this game system and not just produce a generic adventure for use with the older OAD&D? Also, the editing and format of the Castles & Crusades Players Handbook I bought was horrible. I hope their next product with your name on it is paid better attention to.

Lots of people don't like OAD&D, so I am not at all taken aback that you can't enjoy the C&C system. One can not please everyone. Personally I think the the *Lejendary Advenutre* game is far superior to both of those systems 😊

The C&C game is a living one, not dead as is OAD&D, and I find it reflects the same spirit as OAD&D. Thus found it enjoyable to use it as the vehicle for recreating material from my old Greyhawk campaign.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12918&start=510>

uaintjak wrote:

In the ToEE, were the following characters named by you? If you can't remember, that's fine, but if you do remember, that'd be great!

Calmert and Terjon (the clerics at the church of St. Cuthbert), Jaroo Ashstaff (the druid of the Grove), Zert (evil fighter in the Inn of the Welcome Wench), Spugnoir (magic-user at same), Furnok of Ferd (thief at same), Kobort and Turuko (fighter and monk), Y'dey (the cleric in disguise in Nulb), Murfles (Otis's elven henchwoman), and in the Temple itself, Wonnilon (captured gnome), Tillahi and Juffer (captured elves), Kella (the druidess disguised as a hill giant).

Yes, to the best of my recollection all of those are names I made up.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=180>

phasedoor wrote:

For ADandD 1st edition, I once asked Mark J. Young about a henchman character who gains weight while aging or a PC who gains weight while aging. He sent me back an email reply stating that the starting weights do not change as a character race ages. He answered that Arnold Shwarzenegger, for example, did not gain weight as he has aged. For ADandD 1st edition, can I have my human henchman character gain weight as he ages? The rulebooks don't mention anything about it, but one of them does have the information that strength, dexterity, and constitution goes down at middle-age for any race. From that, I am thinking I can have a fat human male character at 45 years of age to reflect the decrease in physical ability scores. Is that what the decrease in physical ability scores is indicating for any human or demi-human?

Okay...

If your DM allows weight gain, or loss, for PCs and NPC henchmen, you can indeed have such a thing occur. As a matter of fact it is a realistic thing, although not automatic if the character is conscious of physical conditioning. Many a boxer and other sort of athlete, not to mention non-athletes, put on excess weight as they reach age 30 or so.

Be careful, though, as the DM might have it as a personality trait determined at random. Your NPCs might all be the sort that eat to live, while your main PC turns out to be one of those ;people that live to eat 😊

phasedoor wrote:

Thanks, Gary. Now I know the answer to that. For any campaign of ADandD 1st edition, it is a physical characteristic of a human character or demi-human character that the DM can allow.

About the only race that might be excepted is the elven. Not many chubby elves in folklore or fiction, but they might become too lean.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=300>

Le Noir Faineant wrote:

My players spent a long while exploring the farm and the environs [of Gaxmoor] before the attack, so the destruction of the farm hit them quite hard...

The most memorable moment of the adventure was certainly the party confronting the bull - we almost had a TPK, and the gnolls and goblins had an easy game with the PCs...

My players indeed keep telling me that our expedition to Gaxmoor was one of our most memorable adventures, standing back only to the experiences they made in a certain village of Nulb years ago... 😊

The bull came from my earliest memories of being on a farm. I was about five years old, and the Seymour Hatch family had a really mean one in a closed pen. It would snort, bellow, and shake the whole barn now and then when we were there. Mr. Hatch showed me how he could clip a haft to the ring in its nose and calm it down.

Anyway, I am most gratified to learn that your group enjoyed the whole adventure. My soldier from the city proper was rather taken aback by the ogre with a breath weapon. That nearly killed him 😊

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=390>

rabindranath72 wrote:

what do you think of the Castles & Crusades game? How would you compare to (dare I say it) AD&D? Do you think it is a "better" game in terms of design, ease of use, game mechanics etc.?

Heh...

I prefer the old system of THAC0 and saves, but the C&C game is close to that and vital, something that can not be said for OAD&D.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=510>

garhkal wrote:

I find the concept of honor to be a bit difficult to add to a normal campaign. I know that you are credited with the book's overall "editing". How involved were you in the production of it? What concepts did you think should be in there that eventually weren't (if any)? What concepts did you find to be less than desirable but that you still kept? Just curious.

On the Honor part. The best part of it I liked was the class specific rules for honor gains and losses.

Ah Dang!

I forgot to address that part 😞

The system is really specific to a campaign based solely on the Far East and does not translate well to any other style of campaign. So I concur with your assessment, and believe that honor is better ignored in campaigns that extend beyond the Oriental culture setting.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=660>

Julian Grimm wrote:

I was reading the forward to MMII and you hinted that there would possibly be more Monster Manuals in the works. Did you have a set number of volumes planned or was it more make them as the ideas come?

I had no special number of volumes in mind, but I surely did plan to expurgate the Fiend Folio and eventually revise the volumes of monsters into a set akin to an encyclopedia.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=660>

Julian Grimm wrote:

2) Of all the versions of D&D you have overseen which was most enjoyable to work on or holds the best memories?

I don't compare things in such fashion, but I must say that when I do DM I usually use the OD&D (three booklets) with some house rule changes or OAD&D rules

Julian Grimm wrote:

3) In the future do you see table top gaming surviving the number of video and computer games out there?

Of course I think that paper RPGs persist despite electronic ones. So far computer versions are not really role-playing at all, as there is no one to which one can role-play. Anyway, the game form has features that can not be duplicated such as personal contact and association.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=690>

garhkal wrote:

Ok another for you to ponder.

When you played and gmed, how were undead energy drains handled... When the pc got hit, did they roll the HD for lost points, or did they 'remove what they rolled' when they gained that level?

the loss was determined by the number of HPs gained when the now-lost level was attained, or were gained...

If there was no record, then the total HPs for the unfortunate PC were averaged per level, and that number was the loss for each level drained.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=750>

dcas wrote:

I think some people believe that one should keep the details of how things work hidden from the players in order to increase the "suspension of disbelief" factor. 😞 As if owning a magical sword in the first place isn't enough! 😊

Heh...

With my regulars, it is not a matter of suspending disbelief but rather one of enjoying a game session to the max. If that means I need to spill the beans regarding some magical object or apparatus I'll do it without a qualm. Of course in the LA game there is Arcana Ability to cover that.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=900>

Julian Grimm wrote:

Where would some good starting points for a group of Greyhawk Newbies be? Also do you have any tips for running that crucial first adventure to get the feel of teh setting across?

Sure, if you are playing OAD&D rules the *Village of Hommlet* is the best place to begin, although B2 is also fine if you do a bit of conversion.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?t=18412>

Gary's Old Campaigns, etc.

elementalawe wrote:

ADandD 1st edit. DM Gary Gygax

I don't have a DM, so I want you to be my DM temporarily. If I would be playing in your Greyhawk campaign and the time is 1977 to 1988, would you allow me to play a half-dwarf and half-human? If so, which human of Greyhawk-Oerth mixes with which dwarf subrace?

That's easy! There were no half-dwarves in my campaign, although I suppose if pressed I'd allow a dwarf-orc mix... (J/K)

SOURCE: <http://dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=10004&start=180>

Gnarley Bones wrote:

Gary, I have heard (probably incorrectly) that you did not (and do not) play with psionics in your game?

If so, how do you handle mind flayers in your game? I'm interested in doing away with psionics altogether and would like to replace their psionic powers with comparable spells (charm, suggestion, power word stun, etc).

Right you are. there were no psionic or psychic powers in my campaign. A mind flayer did its blast and/or used spell-like powers to affect others, just as you are doing in your campaign.

Psychogenic Ability in the *Legendary Adventure* game system worrks very much that way, and it is easy to use, can move into genres other than fantasy as well 😊

SOURCE: <http://dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=10004&start=180>

Gandalf Istari wrote:

Actually, a question in two parts. It[']s obvious that your life-long love of games had an influence on you when it came to inspiration and the perspiration of creating the (A)D&D game. Would you say that different bits and peices of the game came to you over time as you worked through various board games, card games, war games, etc. before roleplaying in the D&D sense was invented, or was it like a "Eureka" moment where you saw the potential for a great game wherein people mathematically represented a character in a fantasy world? In other words, was it a gradual process of thought that slowly over time lead you into creating a role playing game, or was it a flash of insight that brought together a lot [sic] of stuff that had been floating around in your subconscious?

the material for the initial D&D game's content came from over 30 years of game playing, more than 20 years of intense reading of imaginative literature, nearly as many years of studying history and military history, and a decade of active game development and design work. The specifics for the D&D game sort of fell into place automatically after the Chainmail "Man-to-Man" and "Fantasy Supplement" material was published and Dave Arneson related that his college group were playing the system on a pure player-for-hero (or wizard) basis, with mercenaries for hire to add to the force.

Gandalf Istari wrote:

Second part of my question is probably much more mundane. When you did come up with the concept of D&D roleplaying (regardless how you arrived at that concept), did you have a gut instinct that you had

a race horse on your hands? Did you just KNOW that it was a hobby that was going to take off once people got their hands on it, or were you unsure and only became convinced of the longevity of roleplaying as it gained popularity over the years?

Thanks again for posting here to answer our questions. 😊

I was absolutely certain that the D&D game would be popular and have legs back in 1972 when I completed the initial draft of the rules. That assurance never wavered from then on.

The size of the potential audience was not ascertained by me or anyone else, however. I was thinking of the customer base being military game fans and imaginative literature (SF, fantasy, horror, occult) readers--maybe 100,000 persons or so. That's why I was careful to add as much as possible to appeal to the fans of J.R.R.T. so as to broaden the audience base.

SOURCE: <http://dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=10004&start=180>

Gandalf Istari wrote:

...

So if I'm reading that right, you thought (A)D&D would take off among people who wargammed and among readers of various fantasy genres, but you didn't expect the game to expand much beyond those specific customer groups? If I am reading that right, then you must have been quite surprised when (A)D&D caught on as well as it did outside of the demographic groups you had in mind for the game.

30 years later and gaming is going strong. 😊

No, by the time I was writing the AD&D game I was well aware that the audience for the game was much larger than I had thought in 1972-5, and virtually world wide in scope. My initial assessment was based on the D&D game and changed only after we had published it for two years.

By the end of 1975 I was very much aware of the broad appeal of the game. The appeal was to almost anyone with an active imagination, as the theme of the game is the heroic quest one of mankind's folklore and legend.

SOURCE: <http://dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=10004&start=180>

oldschooler wrote:

What size graph/hex paper have you used the most throughout the ages?

I've heard 5-6 squares/hexes is best...

I use graph paper of four, five, and six squares to the inch. when my eyes were better I sometimes used eight...

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=11762&start=60>

PapersAndPaychecks wrote:

Moving away from the alignment question for a moment, how do you handle the capture and interrogation of prisoners, Gary?

Is it common in your games for the players capture an intelligent creature and put it to question, possibly with the use of charm or similar magics to enhance its co-operation? If that does occur, and the players ask it (for example) to draw a rough map of its lair and mark the location of any traps of which it is aware, or for detailed intelligence about the number of foes and their usual deployment, or other information that

you might reasonably expect the monster to possess, would you tell them what it knows, thereby making the adventure that much easier for them?

Heh, and how I love to play the role of a stupid humanoid that has been captured and is being interrogated! Also, it is fun to roleplay a humanoid that is sly and cunning and seemingly cowed and/or charmed, but is neither.

Of course the lazy, greedy, and cowardly lot of PCs will do their best to make their adventure a cakewalk, but the GM is there to see the matter is dangerous and demanding 🤨

If the team actually succeeds in charming a relatively knowledgeable humanoid and properly questions that individual, then they will indeed gain much. They must use cleverness and real cunning to outwit or impress the GM to manage such a feat (sorry), though.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=11762&start=90>

Driver wrote:

In another thread, you mentioned that on occasion you've fudged to give players "outs," avoiding total-party-kills.

I'm not going to ask how often you've found it necessary to do so, specific instances, etc. That's like asking a lady how old she is.

But I'm curious ... how often did long-running PCs like Mordenkainen, Robilar, Tenser et al actually die in y'all's campaigning? How hard was it to get PCs resurrected or raised?

With mechanics like instant-kill poison, death magic, and so on, it seems like sooner or later, even a very careful and competent player would find his PC on the wrong end of an individually unlikely die roll or sequence of die rolls. How often did it happen to y'all, and how did it affect the campaign?

Hi Driver,

With the campaign set as it was in the vicinity of the city of Greyhawk, getting brought back to the land of the living wasn't much of a problem, only costly, very costly.

All of the major PCs bit the dust one way or another--petrified as was Mordenkainen, poisoned as was Bigby, etc. Wish items were greatly prized and carefully hoarded, reserved for use in such extremis.

On the rarest of occasions a particularly ill-fated adventure would be chalked up to a collective bad dream.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=11762&start=150>

oldschooler wrote:

Col_Pladoh wrote:

...On the rarest of occasions a particularly ill-fated adventure would be chalked up to a collective bad dream.

Cheers,
Gary

You had Do-Overs in your campaign?! WOW, who'd a thunk it?

Exactly two: Rob got one, and Rob allowed one other.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=11762&start=150>

RadagastTheBrown wrote:
Hello Gary!

I was wondering while playing OD&D did you ever use the chainmail combat system instead of the "Alternative Combat System"? If so which do you like better (I assume the Alternative Combat System because it was intergrated into AD&D)? If this is true then why was the original chainmail system introduced into OD&D?

No to the first.

When I wrote the original D&D ms. I wasn't sure how many of the players would be coming directly from CHAINMAIL. when it became apparent that only a small fraction of D&D fans were also miniatures players, I went with the system that suited the game.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=11762&start=180>

chrisspiller wrote:

Hey Gary, I was wondering something about the crossover between the Gord books and the World of Greyhawk. In the books you have several characters from your campaign show up (Mordenkainen, Tenser, Curly Greenleaf, etc.) but was there ever any reverse crossovers? For example, did your players ever run into Gord and Chert or was Rexfelis the name of the Catlord in your campaign?

Howdy Chris,

As I was playing only semi-regularly then, there wasn't much chance for me to plan out such material, so it never happened...other than Melf's meeting with Keek.

Of course after 1985 I quit most AD&D play and then dropped the World of Greyhawk as my campaign setting.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=11762&start=180>

Faraer wrote:

Gary, it's interesting that as the father of the first and most traditional RPG, most steeped in wargaming, your way of playing has so much in common with more recent games that saw themselves as reacting against the combat-simulation rules of the Rolemasters et al. (and perhaps of AD&D when misinterpreted as a game of hard-and-fast rules). While, to you, RPG play is very much a game rather than a story, it seems to me that what you call a game is a great deal like what some others would call a story, so that -- those rare and ineffective GMs who try to write the story in advance aside -- the matter is as much of terminology as of practice.

So it seems to me!

Hmmm...

I have slimmed down the body of rules I use in my games, but not much else has changed over the past 30 years.

As for a story, that's an adjunct to the "adventure" the PCs experience. the players and the GM do create something that might be a story dull or exciting, dramatic or comedic....if it were written or told after the fact. that isn't the aim of the game though. An RPG is to entertain and amuse the participants through play 😊

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12147&start=60>

Llaurenela wrote:

On that topic [judge, ref, DM, GM, JM, LM] I do have a couple of questions for you, although I don't know if you would want to answer these or not. Who are the 5 best that you have played under (in no particular order) and why did you like each one of them/what was unique about their style that made them great? The second question is similar, what are your strong points as the GM and what makes your style unique?

If you would rather not answer, I am cool with that, but curious just the same.

The GMs I remember as providing outstanding adventures are Russ Stanbaugh, Rob Kuntz, Jim Ward, and Ernie Gygax. Likely there are a couple I don't recall, as my playing is rare compared to my being the GM.

As for my own virtues in the role in question, I suspect the main one is love of the game and conveying that to the players. If I have any special qualities, those for whom I serve as GM are better able to answer that. Frankly, I think I am not all that special 😊

...

I can add Bob Blake to the list. He was a fun GM for sure, and until you asked about Russ I forgot that as I hadn't had a chance to play in a game run by Bob in so many years.

In general the ideas that the GM presents to the players, the level of mystery and challenge, and the sense of lurking danger or looming threat tend to appeal to me. I like to be captivated by action and problem solving, explore, and if there is some fun roleplay in the process, so much the better.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?t=12918>

oldschooler wrote:

Multipart character sheet question for you Gary:

In most of your games (regardless of system/genre), what do you see most in character records: notebook paper with the bare essentials; preprinted forms all officially laid out; long essays of background, followers, history, likes/dislikes, etc.; or something totally different?

Do you have a preference as either a player or as a GM?

the information sheet I usually use is a printed form backed up with a page or two of lined note paper. I am not so lost in make-believe that I spend a lot of time detailing the imagined game persons...that's for novel writing perhaps, but not for RPGing 😊

As I have to GM more often than play, I prefer to play. Otherwise, I am happy to do either;

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12918&start=90>

The rule reader's maiden wrote:

How do you genrally get players in your campaigns to set guidelines for what is acceptable intra-party conduct?

That's seldom an issue with mature players. If someone is behaving badly I simply admonish them then and there, firmly and openly. Only a very few times have I had to resoprt to actual removal of a player, and that was back when we had groups of 15 to 20 playing.

SemajTheSilent wrote:

I have to say something here.

That has never happened to me, and I just can't comprehend having to tell someone to leave the table. Thankfully, my gaming experiences and my time as a gamemaster have never included such an event; given that once someone finally gets under my skin, I really explode...that's a good thing.

I'm sorry you had to do that in the past...in fact, I'm sorry anyone is so petty, uncivilized and self-indulgent that they'd ruin the fun for everyone else. I mean what kind of person says to himself "hey, I'm gonna go to Gary Gygax's house and make a total ass out of myself...argue with him about the rules he wrote...and see how long it takes for him to eject me! Time me!" ???

Heh...

No biggie. The offenders were young lads, and the main cause of such obstreperous behavior was personality conflict between them.

I did have to take aside and speak to one of my (young) sons about his personal dislike of another, older member of my group. He grumbled, but behaved well enough, did not attack that one's character with his own to remove the player from the game. He could have done that but refrained, made only ascerbic comments on the playing ability of the disliked person.

As a matter of fact, his assessment was on target, and eventually the person dropped out and none of the others was particularly sorry that occurred;)

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12918&start=240>

CapN wrote:

Gary, back in the 70s, how long did it normally take for characters to level up?

Good players could manage to gain low levels for their PC in a half-dozen or so adventures. Poor ones, those just goofing around couldn;t manage that in a dozen adventures.

As a DM I had to learn the hard way about giving out too much treasure and not loading the NPCs with magical things that the PCs could pick up when they trashed my encounters 😊

By the time AD&D was being played, all that had been ironed out, and the good players were still gaining a level for their PCs every couple of months until mid;kever, say around 8th.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12918&start=450>

TigerKing wrote:

...just a simple question (or two): what creature do you think you have made the most use of in your own games? And least, perhaps?

I can not single out any particular creature, but as a class, the humanoids are far and away the most used in most everyone's campaigns. The general dungeon clean-up crew critters are always popular in subterranean settings as well. In the days of OAD&D, that would be the rats, carrier crawlers, gelatinous cubes, otyughs and neo-otyughs, plus the jellies, molds, puddings, and slimes 🤪

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=180>

uaintjak wrote:

Also, if you have about 10 seconds, do you think you could let us know of any characters you played that didn't make it to Mordenkainen's Oerth-shattering stature? Maybe "So and so the gnome" who died on his first adventure, or anything like that?

Like I said, I just like using your names for flavor in my own up-coming campaign. Anyway, thanks for reading.

I don't recall the names of several PCs of mine that lost their lives early in their adventuring career. My two main mid-level PCs are Nigby and Slidell of Fax. My lowest level PC is Snurre Shapnose, a gnome illusionist-thief of around 4th level (I seem to have lost his CRS).

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=180>

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SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=180>

dcas wrote:

Just bumping an unanswered question of mine:

Do you have a penchant for thief-type characters? I note that in the LA core rules one sees basically one Order for each of our favorite archetypes -- except the thief-type. Instead, one can choose between being a Desperado, Outlaw, or Rogue (or perhaps even a Jongleur). If membership in the Orders is evenly distributed, one will have a lot of thieving types running around one's campaign world.

No, I do not particularly like thief-type characters.

As for the LA orders, notice that Stealing Ability is paramount in the thief, and now re-check those archetypes to see if that is an Ability they possess. Only the Desperado has Stealing as the first Ability.

Weapons Ability being mandatory for virtually all Avatars does not mean I favor fighters either 😊

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=180>

ScottyG wrote:

Gary, did any of you m-u characters have familiars? I know they had charmed characters and monsters, henchmen, armies, but what about a cat, or a toad?

Hi Scotty,

As a matter of fact none of my m-us ever possessed a familiar. I didn't think the potential benefits outweighed the drawbacks.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=330>

CapN wrote:

Gary, I was reading your *up on a Soapbox* articles on an old Dragon magazine, and at the end you write: "for those readers wondering about the actual enigma, maybe when your PC is exploring the dungeons beneath the ruined castle of legend and locates the Great Stone Face, he or she will be successful in discovering the answer...". Is there really a solution?

Also, at the same article you write a story about a mage which put a *magic mouth* spell on the statue to trick his friend into giving him some magic. Who were those two characters?

There is an answer providing your DM or CK decides there is one in his version of things. Rob and I are not likely to engrave one in the modules in which the Great Stone Face is found.

The players involved were Jim Ward whose m-u placed the Magic Mouth spell and Ernie Gygax who was semi-duped by that ploy. I can't recall the PCs names now, some 30 year's later, although Ernie's was likely Tenser. I can ask Jim if you wish.

ScottyG wrote:

Jim Ward's magic-user Bombadil cast the spell, one of Ernie Gygax's characters, Erac's Cousin I think, fell for it.

Heh...

Right! Bombadil it was for Jim's PC, but I do believe Ernie was still playing Tenser, not Erac or Erac's Cousin back then. The event in question happened in c. 1974.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=330>

garhkal wrote:

Gary. If i can, another question for you. Would a monster only 'hurt' by magical weapons, still take damage from getting thrown/falling? Like if my Monk hip tossed you into the bar, or i grabbed you, flew to 100 feet and let go??

Harumph...

Even though the game system in question is not mine to opine in regards its rules and mechanics, I can pass along how I would manage the question of such special forms of damage being inflicted by creatures normally affected only by magical attacks.

As similarly potent, non-magical, monsters can inflict harm on them, I would ignore the minor damage delivered by throws in hand-to-hand fighting, but allow damage for long falls, heavy objects falling and striking, etc. What I would do in such case is record normal damage, but lost HPs would return, just as a troll regenerates, likelt at 1 HP per HD of the monster, as only magical damage can permanently affect the subject.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=570>

deimos3428 wrote:

We always treated the earth as a +5 weapon in regards to falling damage. (There's mithril/adamantite in there somewhere, I figure.) The regeneration rule is an interesting touch.

Actually, a dropped or hurled object of considerable density, hardness, and weight is about the same as that. that said, would a demon really be killed by a fall of even 1,000 feet onto rock? I think not, and the same for most monsters that can be harmed by magic or other monsters. Thus the regeneration.

The DM needs to consider the cause of damage and decide if regeneration is appropriate and at what rate. Some creatures being "killed" by attacks of magical sort or extreme force will merely be sent back to their own plane as is well known;)

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=570>

Elfdart wrote:

Colonel, I have a few questions about henchmen and hirelings:

- 1) When you are DMing and a PC with henchmen gets killed or incapacitated, do you let the Player continue as one of the henchmen? In other words, are henchmen potential 2nd and 3rd-string PCs in your games?
- 2) Did you ever promote men-at-arms to henchman status (rolling stats as though they were a 1st level fighters)? I'm tempted to do this with a man-at-arms who has somehow survived as a member of the party since the beginning (they are all 5th to 7th level now).
- 3) Did you ever have a problem with some players in a group who insisted on bringing henchmen and others who were dead set against it, on the grounds that they didn't want to share experience points? If so, how did you handle it?

Heh...

Yes to all three questions.

In regards to number three, I simply said that the matter was up to the PCs to decide, and the two adversarial parties needed to settle things. That sometimes resulted in a fight. Such is the life of an adventurer 😊

Rob Kuntz's orc, Quij, was an ordinary sort that defeated an ogre in single combat. When I checked his new HPs adding a second die, they maxed out, so I promoted the NPC to 4th level on the spot.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=570>

Clangador wrote:

Gary, who was Melf?

My son Luke's main PC.

dcas wrote:

A M[agic-using] elf!

Actually, Melf as multi-classed. Luke was a pre-teen when he began playing that character.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=630>

Julian Grimm wrote:

Speaking of Venger. Did you ever use him as a baddy in your game or were you ever tempted to?

Actually no to both.

At the time most of my DMing was for my son Luke and his young friends--around age 15, and such an NPC would have been looked upon askance. When I was DMing for others Venger would likely have been an unrecognized entity.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=720>

Rhuvein wrote:

Hehe, I don't know why, but this comment struck me funny and I'm reminded of why I like to read your posts.

In addition to being informative, they are witty, humorous and good natured and for that I appreciate them.

Say, have you read the names of colors in the big crayon boxes lately. Simply amazing - macaroni and cheese, granny smith apple, robin's egg blue, royal purple with ruby red glitter! 😊

I enjoy - wisteria, burnt sienna, lavender, tumbleweed and orchid. 😊

By the way, Rob was talking on his forum about how Darlene misread the V in Mauve Castle and wrote Maure instead! Great bit of trivia. 😊

Thanks!

In most cases I am having fun posting, enjoying the virtual conversation with others interested in gaming 😊

while I used to paint in acrylics, I have always loved color, and when I was in first grade I was distraught that my Swiss father would not buy me the largest box of Crayolas, only the minimum size required by the school. I have not looked at crayons in years, but colored pencils are much the same in name identifiers 😊

We have a wisteria vine growing (all over) out back porch, and as a Nero Wolfe fan I too like orchid 😊

Quij, Rob's orc hero, was named thus by me, after a "word" he tried to pass off in a *Scrabble* game.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=18412&start=30>

DMPPrata wrote:

On a related Yggsburgh note, Gary, what kind of naming conventions do the non-human folk of the East Mark follow? I know you included sample surnames for dwarves, elves, gnomes, and halflings, but what about given names? Do they use typical human names, or did you have yet another list that was cut from the published book? 😊

Howdy!

As to given names for demi-humans, I used a mix of human and inventive ones when I identified them in the text. Just as the list of suggested surnames is short, allows for CK addition, the given names can be as are desired in the campaign.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=18412&start=120>

fiscused wrote:

Hi Gary! I'm always interested in the history of D&D and other games, and this is a queation I've always wondered about: When you wrote the AD&D rules, had anyone played a Gnome in your games yet? Or a Half-Orc?

Thanks for so many hours and hours of enjoyment over the years!

Indeed, as I was drafting the PHB, one of the group had a gnome PC. As for half-orcs, yes to that too, including my own half-orc cleric assassin. The other half-orc PCs in out party let him bite the bullet, though, because he was too likely to become dominant.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=18691&start=120>

Shane H wrote:

2) Have you ever DMed or played in the Known World of Mystara setting?

Not to the best of my recollection.

Shane H wrote:

3) Have you run any of the OD&D adventures (besides presumably *B1, In Search of the Unknown* and *B2, The Keep on the Borderlands*) as part of your home Greyhawk campaign?

Lots of them that I make up on the spot. I still run OD&D adventures now and then, albeit they are mainly dungeon crawls.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=18691&start=240>

Shane H wrote:

Col_Pladoh wrote:

As if I would recall that sort of trivia. I would put in an module's location wherever it suited the camoaign at the time...mainly neart where the PC party was

Aww nuts 😊. Though I know it's a venerable tradition in RPGs (especially Greyhawk) for DMs to make the setting their own, I was hoping to find out where these places are located in "Gygaxian Greyhawk". I think it's weird and neat to imagine Mystaran locales such as the inverted pyramid of the drug-crazed denizens of the Lost City of Cynidicea in "Gygaxian Oerth". I'll get over it though 😊, and I'm grateful for your (Gary's) sharing.

Hi Shane,

To be blunt, most of those places never existed in my campaign world 😊

There was no need for them as I had no problem creating new adventure material for those that played in my campaign.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=18691&start=270>

Deogolf wrote:

Well, there are those who don't think it's so silly (Grodog's poll)! So, Rob isn't the only one!

OTOH, I'll be happy to see it finished in one form or another!! 😊

Really Marketing Genius?



How many of the actual audience of over three million active D&D players did that poll reach? It is absolutely meaningless in the marketplace. It merely indicates a few dozen people would *possibly* be willing to spend more money than they should for shoddy copies of something.

As I said, it is a silly idea, and those that think it is a good one are not considering the ramifications of the whole matter. There is no earthly use to most GMs for reproductions of sloppily hand-drawn maps and one-line encounter notes, other than to say they have a copy. The heart of all the adventures in those dungeons was improvisation. Production of such copies will also spoil the opportunity for creating a truly usable dungeon complex based on the material broadcast thus.

Furthermore, there is only "original" Greyhawk Dungeons, that being the 13 or so maps I first did. Most players adventured in those when they were altered by previous PCs' actions, then by my additions of side levels, finally a whole re-design of the castle that I made and added some maps from Rob to flesh it out. The dungeons went through three or four incarnations to get where they are now...material which is generally unusable without a great deal of alteration and additional text; a new fifth incarnation.

So pish & tosh to the notion espoused by the unthinking! 😊

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=18691&start=270>

John Stark wrote:

If EGG doesn't want to publish CGH in its original form, that's his call.

Pray tell, what is it's [sic] original form? The first level I drew up, the 2nd, etc. Maybe all the 13 I had--but wair! those were altered by PC actions. then there was the second version with continual changes, and the third which is fairly static.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=18691&start=300>

wheggi wrote:

I think many people desire to see Gary's original material in much the same way that music fans enjoy recordings of loose jams, studio rehearsals, and early demos from when the artists were just starting out. Behind the scenes footage on DVDs hold the same allure. We love the finished product and are fully aware of the artist's capabilities, but also enjoy listening to the process of how the artist got there or viewing the director's deleted scenes. Its a window to the inner workings of a creative mind.

For getting such insights try reading my published work and the freebie posts and interviews I give in profusion, and stop demanding that I alter my creative direction to suit another's vision 😞

SOURCE: www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=18691&start=300

predavolk wrote:

On a related note, did any folks at the "original" TSR ever practice WMA? E.g., did you ever get to whack at Frank with a practice sword? 😊

As a lad I tried combat with real swords (prevented from fulfilment by watchful parents), a foray with garbage can lid shields of hand axe versus home made flail (destruction of can lids and pain in hand from force of blows ended that), and a hot fight with locally cut quarterstaves (where both my adversary and I took long swings at thge same time dur to rage and thus both ended up with mashed hands); the only martial arts practised thereafter, during the days of TSR, were SCA fighting. Dave Sutherland did a lot of it, I did some practice work. Frank was too wise to get bruised and battered thus before an audience of onlookers in the Library Park here in Lake Geneva 🤪

SOURCE: www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=18691&start=300

Zudrak wrote:

Indeed. It seems to me that there's a certain group of folks who'd rather have years-old notes based on a hypothetical Gary's Castle (of which we are told are at least 3 forms) in AD&D format than the anathema known as C&C. That's how I view it anyway. YMMV.

But...but...

AD&D *per se* is as dead a system as Latin is a language, while the C&C game has much the same spirit and nearly the same mechanics. So why not accept the latter, and if so determined, make the easy conversion to OAD&D (never 2E!) 😊

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=18691&start=360>

Julian Grimm wrote:

Sorry if this has been asked before but I was wondering if you created Greyhawk during your working on D&D or if it came during your chainmail campaigns. The number of references to troop numbers in the folio seems to hint it may have come from a wargaming background.

Also what was your inspiration for Greyhawk?

For certain the WoG product as published by TSR came into being about two or three months before the date of its printing and sale. Brian said that a campaign setting was needed, so after ascertaining the

maximum size map sheet we could have printed, I free-handed the land outlines on those two sheets of paper, used colored pencils to put in terrain features, located the cities, and made up the names for everything. that took me about 1 week. Then I went to work on the text while Darlene made prettier maps out of what I had done. Two or three weeks after the rough maps were done I turned over the text, as there was a big rush to get the product out.

Of course a good deal of my wargaming experience, knowledge of history and geography and use of such in other projects came into play in creating the map and the states on it.

My personal Greyhawk world was a version of earth, but as many players were involved in the campaign, I did not want to use that as a base. the funny thing is that about a month after the printer WoG was out I liked it better than what I was using, so for the most part my campaign play moved to Oerth, Oerik.

Inspiration came from much reading, map making, writing of historical and game materials, and the necessity of producing something that would be lots of fun for everyone. Imagination and creative thought then took over... 😊

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=19381&start=120>

Natural00 wrote:
(Sorry for the non-LA question - but at least it's not about D&D!)

Do you ever play Scrabble?

Heh-heh...

Yes indeed, although I have not played for many years now. I have a deluxe set with swivel board somewhere in the vast clutter here.

As a matter of fact I named Rob's orc hero "Quij" after Rob's attempt to claim that was word when we were playing *Scrabble* 😊

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=20641&start=330>

Lunamancer wrote:
Would you believe this group actually used a hearts desire to bring a flunkh back to life because they wanted to "gamble" a bit more.



Indeed, and the odds with that silly monster are better than those of a Deck of Many Things...something my players and many other like groups seem to have loved messing around with 😊

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=20641&start=330>

zhowar1 wrote:
Gary, any memorable stories or anecdotes regarding the "Dungeon Hobby Shop Dungeon" that is being

auctioned for Ernie this week on Ebay?

Heh...

I have no plans to steal my son Ernie's thunder. That is his creatuon, and the war stories about it are his. That said, a 10th level magic-user PC of mine, one Slidell of Fax was part of a large party exploring a lower level of Ernie's dungeons when the majority of the young players had their PCs cavorting loudly at the end of a long passage as they were smashing through the wall there. Slidell withdrew back up the corridorsome 70 feet, entered an empty room there, and seriously contemplated sending a lightning bolt into the racous agglomeration to silence them. Alex's character retreated with mine, and he urged that Slidell let'em have it. As I considered that such an act would ruin their enjoyment of the game, I refrained...but avoided playing with that group thereafter 😞

Ernie has the patience of a saint 🙏

SOURCE: www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=20641&start=360

Glaaki wrote:

Ugh! 🙄

Gary, I have to think that folks would be a wee bit nervous to DM you through anything they had created...

Say, did your daughters ever show any interest in RPGs?

As a matter of fact, back in 73-78 not many gamers were so constrained. Rob Kuntz DMed for me all the time, and severa; others were ready todo so when I was available and they were around to do so.

My eldest daughter was one of the two original play-testers of the original, pre-published version of the D&D game, Her older brother Ernie was the other. Elise played for several months before losing interest. Her two younger sisters, Heidi and Cindy, player a few years later, a few adventures with me as the DM, and then with their younger brother Luke in that role.

When Luke, then about age 7, came to me and asked if his sisters oucld dictate to him what monsters were encountered and what treasure they had, I set him straight on the role of the DM. His sisters quit playing soom thereafter.

Glaaki wrote:

Oh my Gary. That is priceless. I can just see the girls trying to strong-arm poor Luke and then Luke returning full of confidence and armed to the teeth in the ways of the DM after a consult with dad.

Over the years our group size has varied usually hovering around 5 but there have been as many as 10 and as few as 1 or 2. It is certainly not unheard of for a player to go off on their own from time to time with the support of heirlings and retainers.

Right on both counts 🍷

One of the reasons I discouraged a lot of outdoor adventures was that the PC or PCs doing that were on a vastly different time track from the others that remained "at home" and adventured in the community or a dungeon setting.

Of course, the dedicated players had two or more PCs so that they would not be left out of any sort of adventure.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=20641&start=360>

themattjon wrote:

Ahhh, Dungeons & Dragons: Bringing families together since 1972!

I hear mention of many games in which only one or two folks played (not including a Referee). Was this more of a norm, or were most games in "olden times" colossal affairs with a dozen or so players each game?

Or to put it a similar way: How easy was it for Robilar to venture into Greyhawk, when the dungeon was apparently designed for a full-sized party of 8-12? Tons of hirelings or *really* nice DMs?

Ho Oldschooler!

Party size varies from one to about 20 or so in weekends. I often adventured alone, with two or three PCs, or one and some hirelings. Rob would DM for me while I worked.

The better players--Rob, Ernie, Terry--would offer adventure as a party, but sometimes alone. It was very rare that they got into something that they could not handle...or escape 😊

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=20641&start=360>

Clangador wrote:

The Dungeon Hobby Shop Dungeon that is currently being auctioned off. I have a couple questions about it. Do you have any idea if it is set in a specific world of campaign. Did you ever adventure in it? And, I know that it is your son's creation and all, but is it a "good" dungeon as far as design. What does your son do these days? Does he still game? Does he have an online presence? I dunno why, but I've always been curious about Ernie.

All I can say about Ernie's dungeon is that it entertained many a gamer, a lot of them from the now closed Great Lakes Naval Boot Camp, at the old Dungeon Hobby Shop; also it was played a lot later on at the Game Guild. I did indeed adventure in Ernie's dungeon. It had no particular world setting but could be used in virtually any milieu.

I play boardgames at Ernie's apartment many a Monday afternoon with Tom Wham, Dennis Harsh, Russ Ingram. and various others that come by. Ernie doesn't RPG much these days, but he is gaming still. HE has an email address, but does not post to any boards.

He works for Abbott Labs.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=20641&start=390>

Mr. Awesome wrote:

Gary, I know you played with a lot of the classic D&D designers and writers, but how about the artists? Did you ever game with any of the artists from the early days of D&D/AD&D?

The main RPGers amongst the illustrators at TSR were Dave Sutherland and Dave LaFroce (DSL). I played a lot with Sutherland, both EPT and D&D. Dave Trampier loved boardgames, and he and son Ernie played a lot of Tramp's *Titan* game. The other artists came on board after the time that all of us used to gather together and play games.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?t=23153>

Kersus wrote:

Heh, I've been toying with LA Yggsburgh. Certainly if I use CZ, it will be with LA I imagine.

The dungeons are designed for progressively higher PC levels. That is the sole advantage of a character-level based system. One can have the players adventure in them surely, but the challenge is different, and so too will be the sense of progress and reward.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?t=23153>

Elfdart wrote:

Colonel, in this [thread](#), Greyhawk fans are going over their most memorable experiences as players in the world you created.

I was wondering if you ever DMed *The Village of Hommlet* with a beginner gaming group. If so, did you ever have a group of PCs do the kinds of insane things ours did and get away with relatively few casualties?

As a matter of fact I play-tested the VoH, ToEE, and the unpublished, lost *Bandit City of Stoink* with a large group of players including my Son Luke and Skip Williams. It was the base for a whole new campaign I started,

I have DMed for so many people that after so much time has passed since running adventures in the Villiags' [sic] and environs, I'm quite unable to recall the many details of those events. I do not usually make noted of gaming sessions, save for correcting the working draft of the scenario of when doing campaign reports--that I have little time for or inclination to labor over.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=23153&start=30>

rabindranath wrote:

While we are at it, might I ask what schools of magic would you ditch in AD&D to reproduce the Howardian feel? I was thinking about Alteration and Invocation/Evocation. I would allow all the spellcasting classes provided these "offending" schools are removed. So, clerics would be seen as sorcerers whose powers are rituals taught by demonic entities. Druids would be sorcerers devoted to Jhebbal Sag or some other similar "natural" entity. Illusionists would mostly be oriental sorcerers (from Kithai, Vendya etc.), while magic-users would model the independent/covenant sorcerer without any ties to religion (e.g. the Black Seers). What do you think?

As for adapting the magic in AD&D to the world setting of REH, I believe that a few M-U spells of the type sorcerers would be able to employ and a few Cleric spells for priests should be it. The DM managing the campaign must go through the lists and personally decide which few remain usable in the milieu.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=23153&start=210>

Stormcrow wrote:

Also note that artifacts were designed so that the referee chose its powers. There was a problem at the time of players memorizing the powers of all the magic items in the game, and this was one way to combat it...



I did create an Artifact for son Luke's PC after that worthy had gone through severe tests. I told him to that if he found a needle in a haystack in an hour's time that Zagyg would reward him with a special weapon. Durned if the lad didn't burn the hay and find the "needle" easily.

Thus that PC came into possession of the Spear of Zagyg. It is a needle until drawn forth from fabric and commanded to become a weapon. A d8 is rolled and the weapon size and plus is determined thus. Somehow, though, a +8 pike is not the favored result 🤔

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=23153&start=210>

ScottyG wrote:

Speaking of Hommlet, wasn't this when Luke first started? What age was he when he started playing?

Heh...

Noppers! Luke began at around age seven as a conscripted DM for his older sisters Heidi and Cindy. They told him what opponents they should face, what treasure they should gain from their defested adversaries...until he complained to me, and I set matters aright 🤔

He played quite regularly in my campaign from the time he was around 10. Hommlet was the first campaign in which he actually played in a reasonably mature manner. The older fellows in the group used to both razz him a good deal and also assist him in developing RPG skill.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=23153&start=240>

IlexGarodan wrote:

My D&D group disbanded yesterday, apparently due to a lack of interest. I can't help but feel there was something I could have done to have kept interest. My players claim that it wasn't my fault, but... Needless to say, I feel really down, especially since one player, the real spirit of the campaign, refuses to join another campaign that I'll be making later in the year.

My question being.. What did you do when things like this happened?

I typically go to a new RPG and get new players. the composition of my group changes periodically for many reasons.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=23153&start=240>

clore wrote:

Sounds like those bastards needed to spend a few minutes facing the dreaded Uber-Flumph!

Actually I can sympathize about the evil characters. When I was thirteen I went to a little tournament held by some kids at a nearby high school. Each person (I think I was the only one from outside their own group who showed up) got two level four characters, and whoever ended up with having earned the most XP won.

I was feeling pretty good as we ended the adventure, as only two of us had survived. Then, as I was waiting for the DM to tally up the XP, the other guy who made it through had his characters attack. As he had made them Drow, which I hadn't heard of before (a copy of the Fiend Folio, then just released, was the prize -- I would have raised a real stink about it if I've realized what was going on, since having Drow characters was clearly against the rules at the time), so there was no contest. As his XP then included all of the treasure that I had gotten as well as the XP for killing my characters, he of course won.

They DM who held this little contest had actually created a pretty good dungeon, so it was good fun, until that point.

Attacking other PCs was never encouraged in my campaign or in tournaments I ran...except of the other PCs were acting in a hostile and aggressive manner.

Once my fighter PC, Ytag, was adventuring with the PCs of son Ernie, Rob and Terry Kuntz. It was in a Dave Arneson dungeon, and Dave allowed fighters to use wands, so Ytag had a Wand of Lightning. Rob's and Terry's PCs were threatening mine because I had the most treasure, began a whispered conspiratorial planning session. I warned them to cease that, but they ignored the warning. I 'bolted both, they got into a melee with the pair. Ytag eventually dropped both of them, as Ernie's PC watched...hoping to end up with all the loot from the three in combat.

The elven watchers in the dungeon put Ytag on trial, but the verdict was justifiable homicide.

What an odd adventure session 🤔

That was the last time a PC of mine ever fought a duel to the death with another PC of the party.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=23153&start=330>

Dagger wrote:

In the games you've game mastered/played in, do the participants generally speak "in character" or do they speak about their characters in the third person? I've played in many games where the participants refer to their character as "my guy". Other groups I've played in are more insistent on playing in character. I was just curious what your groups have done over the years. Thanks!

In the very early days most of the players used the first person, "I," or third person "my fighter," when referring to what their PC said and did.

After a few years this changed to a mix of those two with in character speaking. The latter sprang mainly from my speaking in character of NPC during the course of play.

Personally, I do not much care how players convey information to me as long as it is clear and complete.

After all, it is a game, not a stage play 😊

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=23153&start=360>

Stormcrow wrote:

Speaking of *Dungeonland*, what sorts of players did you bring to it most often? Did you mostly play it tournament-style, starting players falling down the shaft, or was it usually encountered as part of an ongoing campaign in Castle Greyhawk?

Did anybody ever fall for the trick where the Herald reads the charges, "The Queen of Hearts, she made some tarts..." and the players start quoting verse? What happened next?

Members of my regular group could discover the entrances to the various non-dungeon-area places such as *Dungeonland* and the *Isle of the Ape* on one or another level of the castle dungeons. they ventured into such places of their own accord, and the resulting play was part of the ongoing campaign. Because of group separation, most of the player group had two or more PCs.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=24626&start=120>

John Stark wrote:

I was wondering, is the name "Belgos," the vampire from *D3 Vault of the Drow*, a contraction anagram of **Bela Lugosi**?

Sho' 'Nuff!



I was a huge fan of Lugosi's as a youth and stiull very much enjoy his work 😊

John Stark wrote:

Neat! I was sure you were going to say, "You're reading too much into things," so its fun that I was right about the Bela Lugosi connection. Has anyone else ever caught this bit of "lore" previously?

As for Bela Lugosi, what's your favorite? While Dracula is the obvious reference point for many, I think my favorite might be *The Raven*. His role as the mad neurosurgeon was superb, and having Karloff in the movie didn't hurt either...

Hi John,

You are the first one outside my family and confidants to note the relationship between Belgos the vampire and Bela Lugosi.

When I was a teen my dear friend Tom Keogh would sometimes make-up to look like Lugosi as a vampire--a pretty faur imitation too, and tom had made a costume similar to Lugosi's with a high-collared cape too.

My favorite role os his is that of the original Dracula, but "Bateman" and "Purifying torture!" were very popular with us too, "us" meaning my group of friends when I was a teen.

If you ever make it to a con here in Lake Geneva let's have a beer and I'll tell you some of the tales of youth that involve Tom Keogh and others of my buddies then, the supernatural, and horror-related stuff. Some of those are really amusing 😊

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=24626&start=120>

The Welshman wrote:

Suddenly, this Winter Dark Con just became a lot more appealing... Global warming might even make it feasible... Gary, when you run an OD&D dungeon crawl, how does that work exactly? Do you let players bring their own characters, or do you pass out characters? What levels are they? Is this a classic jaunt to Castle Greyhawk's dungeons?

The usual is to have all the players roll up 2nd level characters--fighters, clerics, magic-users, dwarves, elves, of hobbits. I have house rules so that any score above 14 gains a bonus of some sort for the PC, As all the team os 2nd level equiment is whatever on the list is desired.

15 + attribute score chart:

STR +1 to hit for all (& +1 damage for fighters)

INT +1 1st evel spell (for m-us)

WIS +1 1st evel spell (for clerics)

DEX +1 to AC (for all)

CON +1 to each HD (for all)

CHA +1 to reaction checks (for all)

The party then enters the original 1st level of my dungeons and goes on from there.

This ensures that there is compatability of PCs, and believe me there is plenty of exploration and action to be had.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=24626&start=150>

John Stark wrote:

Gary, do you run wilderness campaigns very often? If so, any pointers on how to keep wilderness gaming sessions from becoming a dialogue between the DM and the party mapper? In a dungeon environment, there always seems like there is plenty of stuff to keep the party interested, but out-of-doors exploration always seems to end up with the DM telling the group, "You've crossed another hex grid of forest..." Heh.

Also, the dungeon serves as a great way to channel the player characters into certain directions, force them to make certain choices, and so on. Plus, its a lot easier to have material prepared for a dungeon exploration, as the DM knows all of the places the party can end up. Wilderness explorations is so wide open it seems impossible to ever be prepared enough, as the players (in my experience) always seem to head in a direction I didn't expect or have time to prepare for.

About the only successful wilderness exploration I've run has been when the players were headed off into a specific direction or route with a certain goal or goals in mind (get to this town, look for this dungeon, and so on).

On another note, how much do you incorporate wargaming into your campaigns these days? This is an angle for role playing games that I think is sadly little explored these days, and one we are planning on

including more and more as our campaign goes along (particularly as character reach name level and begin developing strongholds, gaining followers and henchmen, etc.).

Outdoor adventures are mainly treks to reach some destination or exploration expeditions.

Never mention hexes or squares, of course. Just say that the party has traveled what seems like X miles. Terrain description is the way to channel the team--roads, tracks, game trails, gullies, canyons, passes, whatever. "There is thick brush to the north and a cliff to the south, so continuing westwards seems the most likely route through this area."

Of course you should have a map where there are set encounters that can be used to keep the session interesting. Of course, regular random encounter checks in wilderness--three in daylight, three in darkness also liven things up...even if no encounter occurs or the result is a weather change.

As the GM be prepared to invent a lot in such adventures 😊

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=24626&start=150>

serleran wrote:

Did you ever use the random dungeon creation system found in the OAD&D DMG? That section has always been something of great interest to me (so much, in fact, I wrote my own soon to be published by our Trollish friends.)

Heh...

But of course.

What appears in the DMG is the result of my devising and using the random dungeon generation system 😊 I just didn't use it very often with my player group, as I had lots of dungeon levels ready to go. It came in handy when a dungeon was discovered during a free-form outdoor adventure.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=24626&start=150>

chrispiller wrote:

I was just wondering if you have ever made use of the quasi-deities described in the Greyhawk Glossography and, if so, to what extent. Kelanen Prince of Swords was always a favorite of mine and more than one Fighter PC was a follower of that hero-deity.

Howdy Chris,

Things should be livening up on the Talk List...

I did the quasi-deities late in the game, so to speak, so only minimal use of them was made by me in the campaign. As the highest level PCs were then in the Evil alignment, they were not at all interested in seeking out such quasi-deities...and getting their butts kicked.

harami2000 wrote:

A quick OD&D query to humor me, if you don't mind, Gary.

Did you smile to yourself when you came up with the stats for this beastie and do you recall the first time you unleashed it?

Heh...

As near as I can recall the rust monster was brought into action first on the sand table in my basement at 330 Center Street back in early 1973.

At that time elementals were rubbery dime store critters about 65 mm scale, each vaguely reminiscent of the element it represented, the fire figure a red and orange, the water one shades of blue, Can't recall the color of the air one, but it was whirled I think. The earth elemental figurine was sort of man-like and lumpy perhaps. Memory begins to fail me after some 35 years.

gideon_thorne wrote:

The rust monster always had to be one of the most feared creatures in my game. Mainly for the embarrassment factor. One can beat up, abuse, harass, damage and otherwise do all manor of unpleasant things to a character, and they would sit and take it.

But dissolving their nice shiny plate armor was always something these same characters would crawl over broken glass to avoid. Especially otherwise dignified paladin types. 🤔



Yes indeed!

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=24626&start=300>

Harami2000 wrote:

I hadn't spotted your comment that the monster concept had sprung forth Athena-like until someone gave me a nudge that the original ecology article had been "updated" in Dragon #346 with a sidebar note to that effect. Took me this long to find a copy...

Ah... those days of semi-improvisation before one felt obliged to hand over \$ to obtain the 'proper' minis. (Hold on, something wrong with that picture... 🤔)

Do any of those other "originals" (and the bulette) still survive, out of interest?

Harami2000,

When the sand table was moved from my basement to Don Kaye's garage those figurines went with the table. The Hauser 40mm Elastolin figurines were too expensive to not retain at my place, but all of my WWII tripps and AVFs, many of them conversions such as M36B1s and the M4 howitzer tanks, went with the table. All were lost when Don passed away.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=24626&start=300>

IlexGarodan wrote:

What is your opinion on gag items? Of the roleplaying games you've developed, which ones (if any) were

your favourites? I know we've all hurled joke items at least once as referees.. 🤨

I absolutely love an occasional joke magic item. I hope that Troll Lord Games will publish my *Weyland Smith Catalog* as part of the Gyaxian Fantasy Worlds reference book series. It is jam-packed with all manner of joke items, far more than in the booklet version that Hekaforge Productions released on a limited basis about five or six years back. Some are actually useful for characters to employ, and there is a method of obtaining the items given in the work.

Anyway, I have had an hilarious time with Boots of Dancing, and I role-played my fighter Yrag with the first Ring of Contrariness ever in play, and that was a thigh-slapper for sure. A ring of Delusion can be fun, and a Wand of Wonder is always a hoot.



Gary

P.S. From the above it is obvious that I do not take myself or RPGing too seriously 🤪

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=24626&start=300>

Clangador wrote:
Hey Gary, do you still keep in contact with Robilar?

Time to answer a real question!

As a matter of fact, Rob Kuntz and I have parted company since he reneged on his agreement to co-develop the Castle Zagyg campaign project material, doing so in a most ungentlemanly manner. I was taken aback at that since he originally approached me to do the work and then agreed to terms set forth in a written agreement, accepted an advance payment.

All I can assume is that he is going through some rough personal times.

Of course I could convince neither of my two older sons to assist me in the project, but nonetheless it is now going forward full bore.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=24626&start=420>

John Stark wrote:
Gary, having come to the game (D&D) late in the day (circa 1981, with the Moldvay Basic set and then shortly thereafter into AD&D), I never played the Original D&D game. Given that game's wargaming roots (evidenced in particular in Chainmail), I'm wondering if you could comment about the various war games that you played that were the particularly influential in your thinking when designing OD&D (and especially those war games that influenced the development of combat in OD&D).

Also, in general, what were your favorite wargames back in the day, or the ones you considered to be the best for play?

Do you still wargame at all?

Do you ever incorporate wargaming into your rpg campaigns these days?

I've always felt that it was a shame that wargames weren't more integral with the playing of rpgs, particularly given that characters of higher levels establish strongholds. I've been looking at the Battle System wargame for use in my own campaign (since it attempts to integrate AD&D with a miniatures ruleset), and was wondering if wargaming comes into play in your campaigns nowadays.

Howdy,

There was no medieval board wargame nor any miniatures game rules for me to reference when I wrote the Chainmail "Man-to-Man" material. I made them up as I went. Of course I had a lot of knowledge of medieval military history, weapons, and armor to draw upon.

I play a lot of boardgames, but few wargames these days. No boardgame opponents nor any military miniatures buffs here.

As for the rest of your questions, perhaps this post of 4 January from the Troll Lord Games boards will serve to answer them. If not come on back:

"Heh...

I began playing The Avalon hill Game Company's wargames back with original Gettysburg back in 1958. I have played virtually all of TAHC board wargames produced thereafter through c. 1970. Besides the Alexander' game I did the PBM rules for TAHC Stock Market game. Alexander and Dunkirk, France 1940, were originally published by Guidon Games--who did the exmapnsion "ALexander's Other Battles.". Avalon Hill approached me to write the game that eventually became Squad Leader, but I was too busy with other work to accept.

I was a play-tester for Jim Dunnigan's Anzio game, a design that I loved but TAHC turned down in favor of what I found an inferior game.

TSR published my Little Big Horn board wargame...and yes, Custer had a chance of winning as wasthe historical case.

Amongst my favorite TAHC games are:

AFRIKA KORPS
BISMARCK
CHANCELLORSVILLE
D-DAY
GETTYSBURGH (hex)
RUSSIAN CAMPAIGN
STALINGRAD
WATERLOO

About my favorite all-trme game is Operation Overlord.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?t=26882>

Gord Clarifications, etc.

JASON THE RULESREADER wrote:

I just found my SAGA OF OLD CITY, ARTIFACT OF EVIL books. Found them in storage after 10 years.....

Just wondering, does the combat in those books follow the logic and flow of AD&D? It seems like it does, almost reading like a combat example without the mechanics.....

Just so.

I wrote those books to give readers dramatic examples of what an adventure world operating on the AD&D game principles could be like.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12147&start=30>

Asrogoth wrote:

Gary,

I am pretty sure you had nothing to do with Dragonlance, but I wondered what you thought of the story, particularly the first novels that came out.

Have you read them? If so, do you consider them to be representative of a D&D-type world, or do you envision the worlds of D&D differently? (i.e. magic-use, dragons, gods, etc.)

If you haven't read them, well... how's the weather? 🤔

I prefer action in my fantasy 😊

Asrogoth wrote:

LOL!



Thank you. Very good summary/response.

Well...

That was indeed my way of saying that the novels in question were not the sort I found to be compelling reads. Certainly they appealed to a large audience, and I have no problem with that. Different strokes for different folks and all that 😊

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12918&start=210>

trollwad wrote:

I think I recall that in one of the Gord books, you had one of the characters note that the Sun revolved around Oerth? Were you making fun of Oerthian worldview or did you really mean for that to be so? For example, the Greyspace spelljammer supplement that later came out assumed the literal interpretation.

Do you remember anything about what you thought of the Oerthly planetary system?

Heh,

My concept of Oerth's solar system is rather akin to our own 😊

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=60>

The Welshman wrote:

I didn't realize your legal use of those characters was that limited. I had once heard that you could use any of the names used in the first two Gord books, and that was why some of the names of characters introduced in Books 3+ had different names or spellings (Gigantos for Boccob, etc.). But some of the characters, like luz, lggwilv, Obmi, etc. you could continue to use. But maybe I am wrong about that.

Just so... 😊

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=210>

GutboyBarrelhouse wrote:

I've been meaning to ask: In your *City of Hawks* novel, is Gord's childhood mentor "Uncle Bru" in fact Gellor? They're both eyepatched, bearded agents of Balance, I notice.

A good question...and blamed if I can say for sure. One of those things that seem clear at the time, that you mean to make a note of somewhere, then forget in the barrage of other stimuli and thoughts that offur.

From what you point out, though, my instinct is to say yes, I was basing the character of Uncle Bru on that of Gellor. The latter was a sort of guardian of young Gord...

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=300>

Barrataria wrote:

As always, apologies if this has been asked before. But the other day I was looking through some of the Gord novels for some info, and it occurred to me that I never knew whether Gord and the stories he stars in were based on things that happened in your campaign, whether you ever played a thief named Gord, etc...

Also, what, generally, was the impetus for writing/publishing the novels, originally? Was it supposed to tie in with some other product, to flesh out Greyhawk without publishing a zillion "sourcebooks", or (gasp!) did you just want to write a good story?

Howdy!

The Gord yarns were completely based off of my imagination, although I did have a scene or two played out to test my assumptions in plotting things.

As for why, it was because I love to write, and I thought I could do some entertaining swords & sorcery for the fans of TSR's games.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=450>

uaintjak wrote:

... I figure I'll make you feel worse by asking you an AD&D question 😊

I'm rereading your Gord novels and quite enjoying them (much more so than the first time I read them, actually), and I noticed that the cavalier Dierdre is mentioned as being a former cleric (so presumably you envisioned her as a character with two classes). Also, in Sea of Death, Eclavdra is mentioned as having a couple of half-drow minions, cavalier/magic-users.

I wondered if you included such multi-classes in your own game, and if so, how they worked out. I'm toying with the idea myself, but since you speak with the voice of experience, your input would be helpful.

Howdy!

While i was pretty liberal in allowing dual- and multi-classed PCs in my campaign, those characters mentioned in the Gord yarns were generally not even NPCs in it. There are exceptions such as Obmi and Keek, as well as actual PCs such as Curley Greenleaf and Melf.

I played a half-orc cleric-assassin PC for sa brief time in Rob's campaign.

Having such PCs in a campaign shopuld cause no problem if the challenges they encounter are commensurate with their abilities. Rob saw to it that my half-orc didn't survive very long...quite proper for such a villain that associated with a pack of like scoundrels.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=20641&start=60>

merkholz wrote:

With your presence on this and several other message boards I'm not sure if this has been asked before so I beg for your indulgence in answering nonetheless.

When writing Saga of Old City had you already decided upon Gord's true ancestry and great latent powers or did that evolve as you wrote the stories?

Do you remember and care to tell who it was that buried the "warning device" hidden in the old cairn, guarded by the Cataboligne demon in Saga of Old City?

Howdy,

I had the parantage of Gord in mind when I began writing the initial book in the series, Mind you not all the details, but the general outline of who he was and what he would becme.

As for the second question, no, I do not remember. As I will be reading and polishing the ms. for the reprint of Artifact of Evil, thet might trigger my memory as to the character that placed the hidden alarm.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=20641&start=450>

Blue Blaster wrote:

Gary, from your Greyhawk Adventures novel that I am reading, I noticed that it mentions blue lightning during the beginning part of the book about a battle to take Strandkeep Castle. For the 1E ADandD rpg, that means magic of any spell level can have any color of light for its visible physical effects? And according to an article about your two 1980s Greyhawk Adventures novels, they follow the 1E ADandD rpg by covering things about Greyhawk that didn't show in the 1980-1983 Greyhawk campaign settings.

Howdy Blue Blaster,

The color of lightning or any other spell's effect is strictly up to the DM, no? The blue is for a special visual effect in the reader's mind. I would have used fuchsia or mauve, but I thought such terminology would not have the desired effect...

As for the seven books I wrote about Gord, their contents are to be read as fiction, not necessarily as material from my Greyhawk campaign or the World of Greyhawk setting.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=23153&start=180>

merkholz wrote:

I hope you are recuperating well from your fall, Gary.

I noticed that I posted a question almost a year ago that was never answered so I'll ask it again and see if I get any greater luck this time.

In the novel Artifact of Evil there was a green dragon rider attacking the chariot of fire in which Gord was travelling (also prominently featured on the cover) and I wondered if the rider was meant to be Robilar. If so, why would he try to stop Gord and the others? A simple grab for power? What a sad state for Mordy's old friend.

Sorry I was so remiss in regards your question.

The charioteer in the novel in question was not meant to be Robilar, not was the character inspired by Rob's fighter with his green dragon. I simply chose a green drake because it is powerful and likely more tractable than would be a red or blue one.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=26882&start=30>

Rafe wrote:

I am a long time fan of your game book series "Sagard the Barbarian".

I wanted to ask you what the writing technique behind such adventure game books is.

Did you write the whole story in a row, and then go back to work out different outcomes for each scene? - Or did you conceive all different ways to complete the adventures right from the start?

- Sorry that my question is very vague this time. My English has some boundaries, for sure...

Hi Rafe,

Now that question is a memory test for sure...especially since Flint Dille was also involved in the creation of those four books, and son Ernie assisted as well.

IIRC, we graphed out an action tree with multiple branches, location and end result shown on each, then wrote the text from that diagram.

Rafe wrote:

😊 Thank you very much!

I had guessed something like that. Did you two write the pieces together, then, or did you exchange your ideas through correspondence/occasional meetings, etc?

Writing a book like that seems extraordinarily complicated to me. 😊

First I write up the combat system, then Flint and I sat down and worked out the sorting boards for the four books.

Flint and Ernie were at our California headquarters every day, Ernie living there as did I, and Flint using the barn-converted-to-a-studio to do much of his creative writing.

So collaboration was generally a daily matter.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=26882&start=180>

Greyhawk Clarifications

Deities & Heroes

chrisspiller wrote:

Hey Gary, I was just looking through the 1983 Greyhawk Gazeteer and noticed something a little odd. The listing for the various deities indicates the racial origin of each deity (C=Common, O=Oeridian, S=Suloise, F=Flan, B=Baklunish, U=Unknown). When you come to Raxivort, the god of the Xvarts however, the origin is listed as "M".

Is this a typo? Or, perhaps, does it stand for "Monster" as the deity's racial origin (since Raxivort apparently began as a normal, though gifted, Xvart)?

Chris,

That's an interesting catch, and I've never noticed it prior to your mention above.

I should think that it's a typo for the proper ID for Raxivort, that should be N for Non-human deity, all those of the Demi-humans and humanoids.

SOURCE: <http://dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=10004&start=180>

Driver wrote:

3. Another of my favorite settings is Harn. (In fact, I'm moving toward using the Harnic pantheon as my Oeridian deities, and the Tekumel deities for the Suloise).

Harn, as you're probably aware since it was one of the first major published settings, is much more "medieval-simulationist" than is Oerth. This obviously makes it tougher to justify a party-style game with a band of freebooters wandering around with no real place in the medieval social structure, and frankly I've come to the conclusion that Harn is beautiful as an "idea mine" and something to read and enjoy, but not so great for actual gaming. Then again, I tend to game with other chuckleheads who also have trouble doing "deep immersion roleplaying" with a straight face. 😊

My point is, using medieval culture obviously carries more gaming baggage the deeper one gets into the simulation.

I am quite unfamiliar with Harn.

I concur that as one attempts to develop any sort of simulation, the greater the need for actual data. fortunately, neither AD&D nor the World of Greyhawk demand that.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?t=12147>

DMPPrata wrote:

NOT AN AD&D® GAME MECHANICS QUESTION 😊

Hey Gary, did you ever do any development on the lesser-known Greyhawk deities (e.g., Allitur, Atroa, Berei, Bleredd, Delleb, Geshtai, Joramy, Kurell, Lirr, Myhriss, Rudd, Sotillion, Telchur, Velnius, Wentia,

Zodal, Zuoken)? As of 1983, they were only one-line entries in the boxed set. If so, would you care to share any of it with us WOGies? 😊

the short answer is a simple no.

If it were yes, it would still be no, as the material in question now belongs to WotC, and I have nothing to do with it...

Thus, as a matter of fact, WotC is the only source for information regarding the material in question.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12918&start=30>

trollwad wrote:

First, thanks for your excellent campaign setting.

I use the greyhawk deities in my campaign and I was curious what you think about the application of some of them to the Yggsburgh deities. For example, Yggsburgh has six moderately generic deities by my count. I need some help with setting appropriate matches?

Sadly, I am unable to comment in regards to the IP won by WotC.

The LA game "Tenoric" deities principally honored I envisage for the setting are:

Odin (Wotan) & Jord
Thor (Donner)
Frey
Freyja
Baldur
Heimdall
Stormkarl
Ivaldi
Holde
Gerda

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12918&start=90>

phasedoor wrote:

For AD&D 1st edit. from 1977-1988 with the GreyHawk campaign: as a cleric of Fharlanghn, can a PC cleric be a 1st level TN-alignment nondruid cleric and reach a maximum of 7th level? What symbol does a TN-alignment nondruid cleric of Fharlangn carry?

Is Fharlanghn a True Neutral deity? If so, then the obvious answer is "yes." However, if he is not such a deity the cleric in question can not be ordained to serve Fharlanghen.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12918&start=330>

DMPPrata wrote:

Gary, I have a crack team of volunteer illustrators working on images of various deities for my [Greyhawk® Deitybase](#). Your write-up of the "lost" Baklunish god Dorga Torgu was published in *Oerth Journal* 12, but there was no descriptive information included. Might I persuade you to comment on how you envisioned his appearance? (I've already sent Len Lakofka a picture of his lost Suel deity, Akwamon, courtesy of **ArtMercenary**.) Whaddaya say? 😊

Heh...

Lots of luck me recalling minor details such as you request after decades have passed 🙄

Actually, I can vaguely remember what I envisioned for said deity, Dorgha Torgu. He was based on the Mongolian, so picture a Ghengis Khan-like warrior with a head similar one of the Chinese "General" deities--oni-like, dark blue or bright red, with bulging eyes and protruding tusks and fangs. Garments like those worn by the Mongol leaders, weapons also.

That's about it.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12918&start=480>

chrispillier wrote:

I was just wondering if you have ever made use of the quasi-deities described in the Greyhawk Glossography and, if so, to what extent. Kelanen Prince of Swords was always a favorite of mine and more than one Fighter PC was a follower of that hero-deity.

Howdy Chris,

Things should be livening up on the Talk List...

I did the quasi-deities late in the game, so to speak, so only minimal use of them was made by me in the campaign. As the highest level PCs were then in the Evil alignment, they were not at all interested in seeking out such quasi-deities...and getting their butts kicked.

chrispillier wrote:

Pansies 🙄 lol That's too bad they didn't see any play in your campaign. Mine either, for that matter, although as I stated I thoroughly enjoyed Kelanen and always thought of bringing him into the action at least tangentially when the PC's progressed high enough.

I recall when a good friend brought to class a copy of Dragon magazine with figures such as Murlynd, Heward, Keoghtom and the Price of Swords. More glimpses into the developing game; great stuff! I particularly enjoyed seeing the namesakes of the (in)famous magical organ and Keoghtom's Ointment. (IIRC, Murlynd's Spoon didn't appear until the release of UA.)

Kudos again for such an intriguing (and fun!) game!

Yes indeed. An imaginary entity that draws power from all of the swords in the world and posthumous tributes to a couple of my dear departed friends and a cousin did actually add to the mystique of the game



SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=24626&start=180>

Cultures & Politics

DMPrata wrote:

" . . . and now for something completely different. . . ." 😊

When you introduced the barbarian class in Dragon #63 (and later in Unearthed Arcana), you described the skills and weapons which would be appropriate for various barbarian cultures in the World of Greyhawk. One group that I feel was overlooked are the Paynims. My guess is that they would be similar to the Tiger and Wolf Nomads, wielding light lance, short composite bow, and scimitar, with the secondary skills of horsemanship and long distance signalling. What do you think, Gary?

Ah, that could be so, the oversight. I don't recall and haven't any material at hand to check.

You are correct in regards the Paynims, they being much like the tiger and Wolf Nomads. All three do have some medium cavalry. the Paynims do not have the long-distance signalling, but have ambush skill.

SOURCE: <http://dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=10004&start=630>

ScottyG wrote:

Gary, the published information was intentionally vague, and left the details up to each individual DM, but you have said that in your view the more advanced nations of the Flanaess were on a technological level equal to the Tudors. The same Renaissance Era technology is expressed much more clearly in the Epic of Aerth. Not being familiar with LE, I was wondering if you kept the same flavor for your newest setting.

Hi Scotty!

Yuppers

While I keep feudalism and vassalage, manorialism too, the overall technology level is akin to Tudor England, a bit advanced from there in regards to transportation (ships, canals, coaches), in the LA game world.

If you take a glance at the Gyaxian Fantasy Worlds book dealing with the socio-economic aspects of fantasy worlds you'll note that the tech level suggested there agrees with the way I have constructed the Legendary Earth world setting.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=11762&start=30>

oldschooler wrote:

I'd like to run a theory by you regarding the original rules (1974):

The supplements that came after (Greyhawk, based on your campaign; Blackmoor, based on Arneson's, etc.) were individual Referee's house rules on the original system, maybe taking previous supplements into account (or so I believe). Taking this into consideration, could anything coming from the original rules (regarding hit dice, initiative, classes, etc.) be just another supplement, albeit, unpublished?

Technically, a supplement coming from the author of a work can not be considered as house rules for an individual campaign 😊

Of course you can alter the rules however you think will improve the playing enjoyment for your group, and that is as valid for your campaign!

oldschooler wrote:

In other words: could I make up, say, Supplement VI: Blue Lion (for example), including alternate methods of ability determination, initiative, damage, magic, sub-classes, etc.. and still call it D&D? Or would the game differ so much as to be a different fantasy RPG?

Feel free to ask questions if I haven't made myself clear...

Who is to say thee nay? As long as it is for your own use, that's perfectly acceptable. Just announce all the pernenent changes to your players, maybe give them a copy of the material 🤔

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=11762&start=120>

Driver wrote:

Many of the states in the Flanaess are obvious analogs of medieval Earth cultures. Did you ever really care in your games (original Greyhawk or published) about such things as chivalric weapons laws, sumptuary laws, movement across manorial boundaries, and other "realistic" medieval concerns, or were the medieval cultures just flavor-text backdrops for getting to the adventure?

As always, thanks for taking time out to do this!

Actually the states are very loosely based on actual historical ones so as to enable the DM to have some idea as to what the culture and society in each will be.

Happy to be here exchanging posts with you all!

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?t=12147>

Driver wrote:

2. Did any of your players' characters ever adventure in the Baklunish states?

Yes, a little. the culture was basically turkish/Persian.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?t=12147>

DMPPrata wrote:

Gary, I have an old (but common, I'm sure) WORLD OF GREYHAWK™ question for you. I'll completely understand if you don't recall this little factoid from 25 years ago. 🤔 Both the 1980 folio and the 1983 boxed set list the capital of the See of Medegia as Rel Astra. However, Rel Astra is detailed elsewhere as a free city. Assuming an editorial oversight here, do you remember what was supposed to be the capital of Medegia? (I'm guessing Pontylver, as it's the next largest city.)

As I wrote it Rel Astra is the capital city of the See of Medigia--named for a wargame opponent of mine, BTW, than no one has ever asked about or picked up on, Mike Magida. Perhaps i made the error, or more likely a bucy editor inserted the "free city" tab for Rel Astra. One can live with a free city as a capital, of course. London was a free city and the capital of England.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12147&start=330>

DMPPrata wrote:

Thanks, Gary. Hmm . . . I am perplexed. For sake of reference, here are the relevant Gazeteer entries:

MEDEGIA, SEE OF

His Equitable Nemesis, the Holy Censor of Medegia (Cleric, 15th level)

Capital: Rel Astra (pop. 39,800 +)

Population: 200,000
Demi-humans: Sylvan elves (see GRANDWOOD FOREST)
Humanoids: Some
Resources: foodstuffs, cloth

The Holy Censor was originally the chief cleric of the Great Kingdom. **Clerical holdings were granted from Rel Astra to Pontylver** south of the Mikar and Flanmi Rivers, including a portion of the Imperial Preserve (Grandwood Forest). This fief became so strong as to be virtually independent when the Malachite Throne went into decline. The Holy Censor still remains one of the chief advisors of the Overking, however, and he reigns oppressively over the peasant masses with full approval from Rauxes. The clerics and nobles of the See have grown exceedingly rich, and their mercenary forces harry the Olvenfolk in the Grandwood and loot across the Flanmi in the Glorioles and Hestmark Highlands where the Censor has extended his holdings to these very foothills, contesting with dwarves and gnomes without quarter.

REL ASTRA (City of)

His Most Lordly Nobility, the Constable Mayor of Rel Astra (Assassin//Magic-User, 6th//9th level)

Capital: Rel Astra (pop. 58,700)

Population: 90,000+
Demi-humans: Very few
Humanoids: Some

The city and constabular fief of Rel Astra extends from the precincts of the city northwards to the Lone Heath south of the Mikar, including the town of Ountsy, whose mayor is subject to Rel Astra. This trading and mercantile port city is held in hereditary fief by a rival noble house of the Aerdi who are secretly conspiring against the royal house of Naelex, although they are careful to allow no proof of this to fall into their enemies' hands. **They desperately seek close ties with Medegia** and the Sea Barons to balance the weight of the Overking's kinsmen in North and South Province. It is reported that the Overking views these machinations with ill-concealed delight, for they are seen as check and balance, as the monarch fears his own at least as much as he distrusts others. In any case, **the lord of Rel Astra at the same time desires to check the growth of the Censor's lands and holdings**, and secret plots with the freefolk of Grandwood Forest and the Herzog of the South Province are rumored. The Constable Mayor fields a strong force of cavalry and foot, as well as squadrons of warships. His horse has a nucleus of nobles and knights numbering about 100, and their esquires and sergeants add some 400 medium cavalry; light horse contingents round the number to a full 1,000. There are an equal number of men-at-arms, about half of whom are crossbowmen. Levies and militia numbering 1,000 horse and 6,000 foot can be called up from Rel Astra, Ountsy, and the surrounding lands on short notice. Recently the Rel Astrans have employed mixed human and orcish scouting bands as light troops in the Grandwood and similar troops on the Lone Heath.

I've marked the most contradictory passages. Perhaps if you could tell me which was written by you, I could disregard the other. Thanks again.

Indeed, and if the WoG was my property I'd have to do a lot of corrective work to bring the text into agreement. As it is, it belongs to WotC, and they need to do that.

If I were using the setting in a campaign of mine, I'd ignore most of the material you have as the second entry and assume that Rel Astra is the seat of power in the See of Madigia.

DMPPrata wrote:

Thanks for the help, Gary (and sorry to make you walk that fine line of giving the IP holder free advice 😊). I think I'll go with your suggestion and simply make Constable Mayor Drax subservient (at least on

paper) to the Holy Censor, Spidasa.

You have the picture exactly 😊

If you place the Constable in a role that is second to, and jealous of, the overlord, the Holy Censor, there is perfect grounds for much intrigue. I did not envisage the Medigian aristocracy as kind and generous folk given to courteous amenities....

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12147&start=330>

Fid wrote:

In case you don't know it, some of us are working with Len Lakofka to finish up the L series of modules for publication here at DF. Anyway, in a recent e-mail to me, Len Lakofka wrote:

"it's NOT suppose to be READY'REAT as i recall. who can we ask about READY'REAT vs READY'EAT?"

So I figured I'd ask you. Was Ready'reat a typo?

...

The correct name for the month is "Ready'reat." I recall that I had a contraction in mind, but after all the time that has passed I'll be baked if I can recall what it was.

As I haven't my WoG material handy, can you advise me what season the month fall in? If so perhaps that will jog my memory and I can remember the contraction.

In any event it is not a typo 😊

Greg Ellis wrote:

Ready'reat comes in late Autumn, after Harvester, Brewfest and Patchwall, but before Sunsebb and the mid-winter festival of Needfest.

Okay:)

I was thinkig of "ready for reaping" when I conied the name, thought of how language is distorted over time, and thus came up with "Ready'reat," a Septemberish month 😊

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12918&start=540>

Joe Maccarrone wrote:

I think my Greyhawk question might have gotten lost amidst my lamentations about the D&D movie, so I've separated it here:

Speaking of the WoG, Gary, there is a question I've been meaning to ask: was there a nation you saw as a cultural parallel to medieval England?

In my game it has been Furyondy, partly because it was once the western frontier province of the Great Kingdom, just as Britain was once the northwestern frontier of the Roman Empire. Mostly, though, it was just convenient for me: I have the strongest historical grasp of (and interest in) medieval English culture, and much of the game action was taking place there.

Is there a more appropriate nation I was missing? Some cultural parallels are more obvious (Perrenland, for example), but most seem open to fairly broad interpretation, other than having a general western- or eastern- European, or middle-eastern feel to them.

Hi Joe!

furyondy is sort of an idealized medieval Great Britain with the Norman influence. The Yeomanry is the idealized English countryside, including the Lowlands of Scotland.

Perrenland is based on the Swiss Confederation where both my father and Feff Perren's were born 😊

Joe Maccarrone wrote:

Thanks! Just as I was seeing it -- I've even been imagining Furyondy with Norman architecture... 😊

Spot on in my book, amigo. In the same vein Aerdi has Gothic architecture, BTW, while the Great Kingdom has Byzantine...

DMPyata wrote:

Um, aren't those both the same place?

Noppers! The Great Kingdom has parts other than Aerdi, does it not?

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=720>

DMPyata wrote:

Not that I'd ever deign to disagree with the guy who wrote the book 😊, but the Great Kingdom is "The Kingdom of Aerdy." Are you referring to the outlying dependencies (North/South Province, Medegia) as "The Great Kingdom" (with Byzantine architecture) whilst the central lands around Rauxes are "Aerdi" (with Gothic architecture)? Please enlighten the uninformed masses. 😊

The United Kingdom is often referred to as England, but it included Wales, Scotland, and various parts of Ireland during the middle ages; it also included Normandy and various other parts of contemporary France.

Think of the Great Kingdom as an empire, Aerdi as the core. It is the Great Kingdom because it rules all the other parts outside of Aerdi, just as Great Britain was and is more than England.

DMPyata wrote:

Ah! That makes sense. Thus, architecturally speaking, the Great Kingdom's Byzantine influence would likely be seen in Almor, Nyron, Ratik, Sunndi, all lands that were once part of the empire, but have since seceded, while the central Aerdi lands would feature the more Gothic style. Methinks I understand now. Much obliged!



Of course I made that all up, and it isn't graven in stone anywhere, so you could as well have the Aeridian architecture being of the Roman style and the former dependencies have Grecian, and Byzantine styles as their base.

In short, whatever makes a region interesting and vital to you is what counts 😊

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=750>

merkholz wrote:

Gary, I was wondering what your view was on the mad Overking V, Ivid. Rob Kuntz described him as a

lost, innocent soul in the clutches of an evil wizard in his Maze of Zayene series. In Saga of Old City it is obvious that the ruler of the Great Kingdom was a tyrant and in the '83 box it seems evident that the line of Naelax are mad, evil, devilworshipping fiends. Did you see Ivid as a non-evil monarch in an evil nation or an evil madman at the head of a court of evil nobles?

As the one that conceptualized the character of Ivid V, Overking, I assure you he is demented, malign, and thoroughly evil. Think of the Emperor John Ominer in *The Broken Lands* by Fred Saberhagen, and then make the mental image more vile and scheming.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=24626&start=360>

Geography

oldschooler wrote:
What's really at the bottom of the Nyr Dyv?

Jimmy Hoffa's remains?

If the Nyr Dyv has a bottom, whatever lives down there is likely to not want anyone visiting its abode. However, I should think it's mostly primal ooze lying in cold and darkness.

The good thing is that any DM that so desires can have something really interesting down there 😊

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12147&start=30>

Julian Grimm wrote:
If someone wanted to run Gaxmoor in Greyhawk where would you suggest placing it?

Whoa!

I have not given that a single thought, but...

I believe that the best place for the area to be is somewhere on the borderlands of the Great Kingdom, exact location up to the DM, but I should think east and south somewhere.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=23153&start=90>

Background, and Gary's Campaign

DMPrata wrote:
Gary, I made an observation today that may be insightful, or may be just plain stupid, depending on your response! 😊 I'm well aware of your position as to the minimal impact of Tolkien's works on your writing. In the published World of Greyhawk setting, though, is it possible that Queen Yolande of Celene and Count Hazendel of Sunndi were in some way inspired by Lady Galadriel of Lothlorien and Lord Elrond Half-elven of Rivendell?

Not by any stretch of the imagination is there any such inspiration.

DMPrata wrote:

There seem to be a number of parallels. Both Yolande and Galadriel are Queens of the heart of elvendom in their respective worlds. Galadriel is described (by Gimli) as, "... an elf witch of terrible power." Yolande is listed as a level 7 fighter / level 11 magic-user. I believe Yolande is Chaotic Good, which seems to fit Galadriel's behavior as well. The only point of divergence I see is that Galadriel is a High-elf who wedded a Grey-elven lord, whereas (I assume) Yolande is supposed to be a grey elf herself.

Concidences all. To the best of my knowledge JRRT's elven queen was not a warrior either.

DMPrata wrote:

Over in Sunndi, Count Hazendel is listed as a level 5/8/8 cleric/fighter/magic-user. I assume that this makes him a half-elf, as those were the exact level limits for half-elves as printed in the Players Handbook. Lord Elrond Half-elven, while presumably possessing the "fighter" and "magic-user" abilities inherent in all elves, also has a reputation for maintaining Rivendell as a place of sanctuary and healing, so I can see the clerical background as well. I've inferred that Hazendel was intended to be Neutral Good, which also seems to fit in with Elrond's disposition. The only question remaining would be if there was any relationship between Yolande and Hazendel, as there is between Galadriel and Elrond (i.e., she's his mother-in-law).

I imagine if one searches hard enough, one can find parallels between many fictitious and even actual persons. However, there is no connection between Hazendel and any of Tolkien's characters.

DMPrata wrote:

Please forgive the long post. I'm really not one of those Tolkien crackpots you adore so much 😊. I'm mostly just trying to get a handle on these two NPC's, as they figure prominently in my own Greyhawk campaign. If, indeed, the "Creator" modelled them after the Tolkien characters, then I would have a wealth of background flavor for them at my fingertips, and could develop them thusly. As always, your thoughts are greatly appreciated. Thanks!

The NPCs are as they are presented in the text, no more, no less. Certainly individual DMs can alter and augment the information as desired, for that was the express purpose for the work as presented.

SOURCE: www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=11762&start=120

ScottyG wrote:

Gary, in your home Greyhawk campaign, you used North America as the basis for your map. I've read that the civilized area was east of the Mississippi. I know Greyhawk was Chicago, did you have any important kingdoms detailed for the civilized area? If it was similar to Aerth, it looks like city-states were the primary divisions.

There were various states on the continent there were akin to those shown on the later WoG map I did. the Great Kingdom was around NY, and Dyvers was a place, a city-state north of Greyhawk that was larger than a relative Milwaukee compared to Chicago would be.

Downriver around the Gulf of Mexico were the piratical states.

Other than the West Coast being a pliestocene environment, I can't recall much, for all the maps and notes have been lost for decades now.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12147&start=30>

oldschooler wrote:

I'm curious as to your opinions and/or memories of play regarding things you haven't written such as (for example):


Forgotten Realms (or other game settings)
I1 Dwellers of the Forbidden City
U1-3 (Saltmarsh modules)
S2 White Plume Mountain
anything from later D&D (Isle of Dread for example)
...etc. etc. as nauseum.

Never touched it [Forgotten Realms]. I was a Greyhawker, of course!

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12147&start=240>

Maraudar wrote:

Being a big fan of the under used Bugbear I was wondering did you ever plan or do any adventures in the Burneal Forest in the far north with the Blue furred ones mentioned in the original folio. Also dd you ever stick any kind of lost keeps, castles, dungeons and or civilizations there as well.

Nope, I stayed well away from the woodland as folks there couldn't find a decent drink with both hands


Seriously, my players['] PCs never got there for any serious exploration, so it is a wilderness.


SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12147&start=240>

Guest wrote:

Since I've never before posted on this or any of the other threads you answer questions, I first wanted to thank you for being so accessible to obsessive nuts like myself who love the games you pioneered.

I have a bit of an odd question that might be answered on one of the other boards you post to...but I woke up in the middle of the night wondering about this (of all things to wake up about!):

When you originally played the Greyhawk campaign using a map of the Lake Michigan area (I've read here or elsewhere that Greyhawk=Chicago and Dyvers=Milwaukee), did you locate the Village of Hommlett where the town of Lake Geneva actually stands? If so, does that mean the TOEE would have been located in...Kenosha?

I didn't use actual maps of the area, but roughly speaking Homlett would be further north--maybe around New Glarus, and the ToEE centrally located, not on the big lake...mut Naduison seems a likely location for such a place 

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12147&start=300>

Clangador wrote:

Gary, your original Greyhawk campaign. Was it based on a fantasy version of America?

Yes indeed it was--easier to use existing outline maps than creating a world setting from scratch. Greyhawk was about where Chicago is, and dyvers was about where Milwaukee is.

The West Coast was isolated by higher mountains than the Rockies, had many volcanoes and Jurassic-like flora and fauna.

Clangador wrote:

So that's why there were so many dinosaurs in the Monster Manual. Did your players ever venture into the Jurassic area?



The PCs went there only by accident. Dinosaurs and cave men have little in the way of treasure. This was learned by Terick, Robliar, and Tenser as they separately returned from China.

Clangador wrote:

So you had a fantasy version of China too? One would think dinosaurs might have parts that could be used for spells and such. No?

Yes, there was an Orient, Middle East, Africa, Europe, and even a South America and Australia.

AS for body parts, one did not have to worry about material components for spell casting in OD&D

Clangador wrote:

So you had a whole fantasy version of earth going on. Why is it that you changed all that when Greyhawk was published?

Ho-ho-ho!

I wasn't about to detail a whole bloody world 😊 Besides the amount of effort needed to do that, the time required was not acceptable. TSR wanted a world setting in a month. Thus I asked what the largest map size possible for us to produce was, hand-drew two continent-spanning maps, and while Darlene was converting one to a proper version, I wrote the explanatory material for the other, then did the same for the other map.

Clangador wrote:

I didn't know OD&D had no spell components. I've never played it. I started play Holmes basic and AD&D around 1978. I now wish I had got the chance to play it.

The set edited by John Eric Holmes was more like AD&D than D&D in many respects, because at the time he turned over the ms. I was completing my own for the AD&D PHB. I included material from the latter into the D&D game to update it.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=660>

Julian Grimm wrote:

1) Was the original Kara-Tur intended for Greyhawk or was it intended as a separate setting entirely?

Kara-Tur was not Greyhawk.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=690>

DMPPrata wrote:

I do have a blast-from-the-past question for you (but of course...). Way back in the 1980 *World of Greyhawk™ Gazetteer*, the entry for the Spindrift Isles contains the following quotes:

The isle furthest to the south was once ruled by a mighty wizard, one Lendore, **according to stories**.

...

Lendore Isle is named for the Arch-Mage who founded it, but tales of him and the fellowship he brought to the Spindrifts are all but lost.

Do you perchance recall the origin of this attribution? I ask because Len Lakofka vehemently denies that Lendore Isle was named for "Lendore the Arch-Mage," further stating that he named the island (for his own reasons) with your blessing. I'm confused because if he didn't write it, and you didn't write it, then who did? 😊

Lendore and Lendor, Len's campaign and Gary's, the latter borrowing a bit from Len's 😊

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=18691&start=210>,
<http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=18691&start=240>

Julian Grimm wrote:

Sorry if this has been asked before but I was wondering if you created Greyhawk during your working on D&D or if it came during your chainmail campaigns. The number of references to troop numbers in the folio seems to hint it may have come from a wargaming background.

Also what was your inspiration for Greyhawk?

For certain the WoG product as published by TSR came into being about two or three months before the date of its printing and sale. Brian said that a campaign setting was needed, so after ascertaining the maximum size map sheet we could have printed, I free-handed the land outlines on those two sheets of paper, used colored pencils to put in terrain features, located the cities, and made up the names for everything. that took me about 1 week. Then I went to work on the text while Darlene made prettier maps out of what I had done. Two or three weeks after the rough maps were done I turned over the text, as there was a big rush to get the product out.

Of course a good deal of my wargaming experience, knowledge of history and geography and use of such in other projects came into play in creating the map and the states on it.

My personal Greyhawk world was a version of earth, but as many players were involved in the campaign, I did not want to use that as a base. the funny thing is that about a month after the printer WoG was out I liked it better than what I was using, so for the most part my campaign play moved to Oerth, Oerik.

Inspiration came from much reading, map making, writing of historical and game materials, and the necessity of producing something that would be lots of fun for everyone. Imagination and creative thought then took over... 😊

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=19381&start=120>

Fid wrote:

When making Castle Greyhawk and other dungeon maps in "ye olden times", did you ever rely on the Random Dungeon Generation tables in the 1e DMG (or something similar) as a starting point?

No, not for Castle Greyhawk. There I always had an idea in mind, drew out each level with ruler and template.

I did use random dngneon generation for such places discovered in outdoor adventuring by the PC party.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=19381&start=300>

Barrataria wrote:

Col_Pladoh wrote:

The World of Greyhawk map and text took me about a month to write.

Wow 🤔

Was it (1) a crazy deadline, (2) because much had already been kicking around in your head as you DM'd the Castle campaign, or (3) just because you are a great writer?

I've always had the impression that what actually got into the WoG folio was a fair bit of new material, as opposed to material from your home campaign, so that seems like an unbelievable job. Particularly absent ghost writers, computers/word processing systems, etc. You must have worn out a few of those silly old typewriter erasers 😊

Brian asked me to create a world setting for the A/D&D game as quickly as I could. I took him at his word. First I found out the maximum size map we could print, then hand-drew the double-sized map that appeared in the *World of Greyhawk* product.

That entailed putting in the terrain features and names, names of states, location and names of major population centers. The naming part was more work than was placing the map features. That took me about two weeks time.

Writing the material for the whole was fairly easy, as I could look at what I had drawn and let my creative imagination have free reign. Of course having been a DM for many years by that time I was well aware of what sort of variety would please the gaming audience. It was also relatively easy to manage, because I purposely left much of the detail for individual DMs to insert, thus making the setting their own.

As Darlene was working on printable version of the map, I went back and did a bit of further development and polishing to the ms., and that was that. A month of dedicated and constant attention to the project, and finished after about 250 hours work time. Frank Mentzer did some further development, adding his and my later material, for the boxed set version.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=24626&start=330>

Other

shadzar wrote:

albeit maybe a touchy subject, and you may not wish to even answer this...

whether speculation or actual truth a discussion brewing about greyhawk is in the general discussion forum here. many, i think feel; would love to see it return to you even if you did nothing with it, should "they" drop it and offer the license to someone else.

would greyhawk be able to once again find a place in your home or heart?
if not in (A)D&D, but maybe any new game system you are working on?

As I have pointed out, the property belongs to WotC, so I have nothing to contribute to it.

Even if they should decide to license it out, anything I might have for the setting would most certainly contradict most of what has been added to it since 1986, so the prospect is not a favorable one.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12918&start=60>

DMPrata wrote:

I think a fairly large number of us would be perfectly content to see you back the timeline up to 579 CY or so (i.e., 1985) and ignore everything that's been published for the setting since your departure from TSR. Of course, such a thing will likely never come to pass, barring any sudden head wounds to Hasbro's board of directors (hmm... 🤔), but you can't blame us for dreaming!

There were many howls of anguish at the very mention of that possibility on the Greytalk list, so I suspect about half of the audience would be lost in such case...

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12918&start=90>

Vengeance of Thor wrote:

Any views/opinions on how the new system ("3e") started off by using the WoG as it's "standard" setting, yet has obviously started to move away from it, and might even "kill" the world off (for a second time)?

All I can suggest is that it's par for the course 🙄

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12918&start=210>

trollwad wrote:

I think I recall that in one of the Gord books, you had one of the characters note that the Sun revolved around Oerth? Were you making fun of Oerthian worldview or did you really mean for that to be so? For example, the Greyspace spelljammer supplement that later came out assumed the literal interpretation.

Do you remember anything about what you thought of the Oerthly planetary system?

Heh,

My concept of Oerth's solar system is rather akin to our own 😊

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=60>

Joe Maccarrone wrote:

A couple of queries, old & new:

First the 'old': You mentioned in the World of Greyhawk guide that the population figures listed for demi-humans only pertained to "fighting males," there being not enough information available (to the

sage/author) to list overall populations. I take "fighting males" to mean literally all males capable of fighting, not a standing army of some sort... In trying to estimate total populations based on the fighting males figure, I first thought to multiply it by four, but then thought three might be closer to the mark -- demi-humans living longer than humans, and theoretically having a much longer window in which a male is in fightin' shape.

This could apply to any demi-human fantasy society, I suppose, not just the WoG -- what percentage of a demi-human population would be capable of taking up arms to defend the homeland?

The multiplier of 4 is likely the best, as it would account for females as well as both immature and elderly members of the race.

Of the males and females, I envisage about 17% of the former, 3% of the latter as being prime specimens and, then another 53% and 12% militia. That comes to a hefty number compared to human populations of course.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=19381&start=300>

Darius wrote:

1. I ran across the World of Greyhawk Folio released in 1980. Is everything that is contained in that also contained in the box set released a few years later?

1. The original folio presentation of the WoG is replicated and expanded upon in the enlarged boxed edition.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=20641&start=390>

merkholz wrote:

Gary, I hope I can bother you with another tedious Greyhawk query.

You noted on another messageboard that you never intended to advance the timeline for the World of Greyhawk, instead letting each DM go with their own home campaigns. If so, what was the meaning of the articles in the Dragon that not only detailed the various armies of the Flanaess but also certain events occurring after those described in the '83 boxed set?

I was also wondering when you decided to have Graz'zt as the father of Iuz. It was first hinted to be Orcus but then Graz'zt was caught with his pants down, so to speak.

Even though it is not a LA game, or even a C&C game, question, I will respond cheerfully!

Those were simply informational pieces that the DM could utilize or not. The dates were those of my campaign...where tikekeeping was not strictly adhered to. If the material presented was included in any DM's campaign the date could easily be altered to conform to their version of the WoC.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?t=23153>

Old Times at TSR, D&D History, etc.

Cab wrote:

It's been really informative reading what Frank has had to say about the five set D&D game, and most enlightening reading through what you've said about the AD&D game, as well as on other topics.

Really, this follows on from some of what Frank has said. While much of the substance in the first two (basic and expert) was based on the earlier versions of the game, from the Companion set onwards the game went off in new directions. Did you have much input into the further development of D&D (as opposed to AD&D) after that point (companion onwards)? Was there a particular effort at that point to see the two games develop in different directions?

No, as Frank worked directly under my office, I gave him his creative license to develop the D&D game as he thought best based on the Basic and Companion sets. He would seek my input now and again, but the project was his.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=11762&start=180>

Yorum wrote:

Speaking of women...

Mr. G, can I ask you about Jean Wells? I personally have considered her as one of the reasons that I went from being a simple hack-n-slasher to what I consider a 'roleplayer'. I felt that her work, as Sage, her pc Ceatiltle, and her work in B3 really seemed to be more story-driven, and it pulled me away from playing to minmax my PCs into creating a persona and playing to the character.

I don't care about B3, people have done that topic to death. Is there anything that you'd care to share about her tenure at TSR? Do you feel that she made the impact that you'd hoped to when you brought her on?

Howdy!

Sure I can tell you about Jean Wells.

I did a search for talented module designers, and amongst the candidates were Harold Johnson, Lawrence Schick, and Jean Wells. I decided to hire all three even though Jean's mother discouraged me from that when we spoke on the telephone. She was worried because her daughter was overweight... 🤔

Jean came to Lake Geneva, cooked excellent fried chicken for my family, and we all really liked her. She got along well with the other creative folk at TSR too. It was a farce when Kevin Blume pulled B3.

Anyway, Jean had good design ideas, ran compelling game campaign sessions, and I was sorry when she decided she didn't want to continue working for the company. She did include action in her material, but Jean did encourage roleplaying above hack & slash, I agree. Although the latter is more popular, there is no question in my mind that hacking must be leavened with yakking to make gaming a complete experience.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=11762&start=210>

cimerians wrote:

- One more for nostalgia: Did you design the Dungeon boardgame? I'm one of those who liked it, it got me hooked and introduced me to D&D with that catalog that was packed in with it. I guess I'm a rarity who wasn't introduced to D&D by someone else but I'm probably wrong. Very well done IMO.

Dave Megary was the original designer of the game, he using the *Chainmail* Fantasy Supplement material as the basis for the characters and monsters. I agreed to be his agent and developed the rules and encounters, re-designed parts of the board. The Avalon hill company turned it down so TSR published it about two years thereafter.

I wrote the expansion material that appeared in an early *Dragon* magazine, of course.

I too still enjoy playing the *DUNGEON!* boardgame;)

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12147&start=390>

predavolk wrote:

So, here's the question: Do you ever see a time when the major RPGs (be they D&D or something different) return to a simpler style that leaves more to the DM's imagination? Or are we doomed to go down the road towards increasingly rules-regulated simulations?

True, the DM can always play the trump card of DM's Call. And true, there are simpler, less regulated games out there. But I fear that with more and more rules, fewer and fewer new DM's are going to be comfortable "being their own boss", making it rarer and harder for them to do so. Maybe it's just the rainy day, but the future of RPGs as I know and love them looks kind of bleak from here.

2E was what it was because T&R wanted to remove me from the game system, stop paying me royalties--about 2% of cover, BTW, very reasonable. When the sales plummeted, all sorts of splat books were published in hopes of making up for loss of customers by selling more to the remaining audience.

I believe that the days of rule-playing are absolutely numbered, and less complicated systems will prevail in time--a few years yet, bit relatively soon.

It is really up to the GMs to determine. If they collectively decide to labor under stacks of rules books than do not empower them, then rule-playing will prevail...and pretty well destroy the RPG as a hobby. that's why I think the days of rule behemoths are limited.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12147&start=390>

Llaurenela wrote:

I have a few OD&D questions for you. From the 1st printing through the 6th printing, I know that the 5th printing still has hobbits, ents and balrogs and the 6th printing does not. I also know that the errata sheet applies to the 1st thru 4th printings and that the errata corrections were made starting in the 5th printing.

My questions are these: were there any text changes made between the 1st printing and the 2nd, 3rd or 4th printings? Were there any text changes made between the 4th printing and the 5th printing other than the errata being corrected? Is the 6th printing the first printing where changes were made due to copyright issues?

Just wondering if you had this information or not.

The answers to your specific questions are quite beyond me. That sort of thing was managed by the editing people without consultation with me.

As to the removal of hobbit, ent, and balrog, that I can speak to. One morning a marshall delivered a summons to me as an officer of TSR. It was from the Saul Zaents division of ELan Merchandising, the sum named was \$500,000, and the filing claimed proprietary rights to the above names as well as to dwarf, elf, goblin, orc, and some others too. It also demanded a cease and desist on the publication of the *Battle of Five Armies* game.

Of course the litigant was over-reaching, so in the end TSR did drop only the game (the author had assured us he was grandfathered in, but he and his attorney too were wrong) and the use of the names hobbit, balrog, and ent--even though hobbit was not created by JRRT, and ent was the Anglo-Saxon name for giant.

Mike Carr is the chap most likely to be able to answer your technical questions.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12918&start=120>

Elfdart wrote:

I've never heard of a singer being hauled into court for sounding like himself. Of course I'm every bit as flabbergasted by people who think Tolkien invented magical rings. A little Wagner usually corrects the latter. A little Creedence/ Fogerty should have cured the former.

Frivolous litigation is a tool used by many entities with large reserves of cash to eliminate competition by spending them out of court.

TSR was suggesting that I could never write another fantasy RPG again because it would infringe on the A/D&D game, those being written by me and their IP. Of course that would not have held up in court, and they were not able to continue the expensive litigation, had to settle and agreed to pay us cash.

I have recounted this experience before, but I'll do so again: When I was part of a large con panel on the East Coast, one young twit of an editor for a major publisher also a panelist asked me before the audience why I had stolen dwarves from Tolkien. I responded in august tones: "I beg your pardon, Young Lady," but I stole my dwarves from the same source the Good Professor did, Norse Mythology."

She was pretty much silent for the rest of the session.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12918&start=180>

Rhuvein wrote:

And of course, I hope everyone know that Trolls are a favorite monster in Norse Mythology/ and Scandinavia to threaten kids with. My mom always told us that trolls will get us if we didn't . . . make our beds, clean our rooms etc!

And she was right! A troll scared me half to death one night, when I was reading comic books after not cleaning my room!

Indeed!

The "Three Billy Goats Gruff" was a favorite story of mine when I was a wee tyke 😊

Thus for the first *Chainmail* Fantasy Supplement game played in my basement a great ugly troll rushed out from under the bridge one side's forces had to cross. fortunately one of their leaders was a hero and defeated it 😊

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12918&start=210>

JASON THE RULESREADER wrote:

I was just wondering what inspired you to create the game we all love to play so much?
thanks. Jason the rules readers wife 😊

To answer that would require a very long, essay-length response, and it isn't going to happen;)

The *Crusader* is running a series of articles I wrote that actually covers this topic, and I recommend that the truly interested reader should refer to that series. The quick and dirty answer is that much of my life experience in the 30-some years prior to my authoring the D&D game was the source for that.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12918&start=240>

oldschooler wrote:

... In 1974, when the barrage of questions for Dungeons & Dragons first started coming in, did you have any idea that you'd still be answering these same questions over thirty years later?

You take a guess 😊

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=12918&start=390>

Barrataria wrote:

I posted this question on a board belonging to one of your co-writers, and got no answer, so I'm hunting you down here.

Did any of your players in Lake Geneva advance a druid character to high levels? I always wonder how high-level play with the most senior druids in AD&D (and all their followers, pets, multiple heat metal spells, and so forth worked out for you all, if it ever came up). How high did you advance Curley Greenleaf?

Bruce

Hi Bruce,

As I am busy editing I must be more terse than desirable. Sorry....

Tim Kask, a regular in the Greyhawk Campaign, played a druid, and as I recall that PC got up to around 10th level.

Curley Greenleaf made it to 7th level druid. I have lost his CRS though:(

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=60>

oldschooler wrote:

You've written a lot of classics over the years. A LOT of classics! *Against the Giants*. *Vault of the Drow*. *Temple of Elemental Evil* (sort of). *Tomb of Horrors*. Etc., etc..

My question: Have you ever written **crap**? I mean, have you ever made an adventure, or published something you wish you could take back? Just what is it you consider to be a "bad" adventure?

I have run some crappy adventures, but I do not believe I have ever written one for publication that i wasn't pleased with.

A poor adventure is one that doesn't challenge the party of PCs, rather bores them or just is not enjoyable for the group. Totally silly material is also bad news.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=180>

zhowar1 wrote:

Col_Pladoh wrote:

Ther coloring book was done without my oversight, and as far as I know only Serten was based on an actual PC.

Really? Did you write the text for the coloring book? I think everyone has always assumed that you wrote it, because your name is on the front. Please correct me if I misunderstood what you said.

Another question. Did John Eric Holmes write the Sample Dungeon in the original Basic Set? I always assumed he did, because it refers to the wizard Zenopus and Xenopus is a frog often used in biology studies (Mr. Holmes being a doctor it seemed like an in-joke). Also, some of the thematic elements are similar to his later published novel Maze of Peril.

Indeed, I wrote the text for the coloring book because it needed something other than those line drawings. I was given the lot and had to work up a story from what I had before me...including the names for the characters depicted as given on the illustrations.

Yes, J. Eric Holmes did design the sample dungeon in the first D&D Basic Set.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=180>

uaintjak wrote:

Hi Gary!

Kind of an oddball question here, but I always wondered about the pre-generated characters that were included in the published modules. For instance, in your module S4 Lost Caverns of Tjoscant, there were a group of 6 pre-gens (with two alternates).

Did you yourself create and name the pregenerated characters that were included with your modules? Were they based on actual characters that people played? How did you decide what kind (and how many) of characters would be appropriate to a module you were working on?

Oh - and the characters presented in the old AD&D coloring book...I know Serten the cleric was based on an actual character, what about the others? Krylla the rangeress, Adelhardt the paladin, Ibli the dwarf, Regalan the magic-user, etc (not that I expect you to remember them, but maybe the names might joggle something).

In modules I authored I created and named the characters for player use. this was done without reference to any existing PCs.

Ther coloring book was done without my oversight, and as far as I know only Serten was based on an actual PC.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=180>

galstaff wrote:

For miniatures in your chainmail game did you just buy little toy miniatures, except a lot of them and made rules for combat and such?

The *Chainmail* military miniatures rules were originally four pages of typed rules written by Jeff Perren for the 40 mm Hauser Elastolin figurines he had recently acquired (back in c. 1969). I loved those figurines, enjoyed his rules, so I expanded them into around 16 pages and called the enlarged material the Lake Geneva Tactical Studies Association Medieval Military Miniatures Rules. When Guidon Games wanted to publish rules for that period, I expanded the material by creating the Man-to-Man Rules, Jousting, and Fantasy Supplement sections.

The short answer to your question is contained in the lengthy explanation above. The Fantasy Supplement demanded all sorts of figurines not then available, so that's when conversions and dime store miniatures came into play.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=240>

gideon_thorne wrote:
Just an offhand sort of idle question.

Was there anywhere put forth any sort of correlation between class level and military rank?

As for class level and military rank in the D&D game, no such comparison was ever done...unlike the Soldier Order in the *Legendary Adventure* game.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=270>

phasedoor wrote:
Gary, did you have any involvement with the 1989 or 1990 ADandD 2nd edition DMG and PHB? I like the front cover trademark symbol-logo for the words ADandD in white letters, 2nd edition in red letters, and a blue background. Also, I like the blue ink print headers on the pages, the tri-column formatting on the pages, and the overall format that those books are presented in.

Short answer:

Noppers! I separated from TSR as on 31 December 1985.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=330>

DMPPrata wrote:
Not to speak for Gary, but I believe he parted ways with TSR as of 12/31/1985. I think he was "consulted" by Peter Adkinson et al regarding D&D® 3.0 in the late 90's, but he had no involvement with 2nd Edition.

That is essentially correct. I was under contract with Wizards of the Coast in regards consultation on the new D&D game.

Joe Maccarrone wrote:
Hmm...I never knew that. Gary, can you comment on your input for 3e?

Only to the extent that what I suggested was totally ignored 😞

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=330>

Clangador wrote:

So, you were consulted on 3.0 D&D. I'm just wondering what you think of the whole feat system. Do you think that aspect of the game adds to the game or detracts from it due to the increased complexity they add to the game mechanics?

Indeed, I was under contractual agreement with WotC to consult with them regarding new D&D. As I have said before, all of my suggestions were ignored.

I do not believe "feats" have a place in a FRPG, as they are more akin to comic book superheroes...or "Doc Savage" or "Remo Williams" novels.

Clangador wrote:

So, are you against all similar mechanisms in RPGs, or is it just feats and how they are oriented to be superheroic?

If the special prowess are of comic book superheroic sort, I am very much against them...save perhaps as something possible to an archenemies NPC.

Minor advantages that are awarded for character individuality and/or otherwise earned are fine in my view. For example a PC that is able to speak so eloquently as to temporarily fascinate an audience of intelligent listeners able to understand the words is something of a feat and not unreasonable

Clangador wrote:

Okay, I got you. So, if feats were more toned down, would they be acceptable for you? I note that 3.0 (and kin) tend to play similar to a video game, and I can see how that would appeal to some people.

As a matter of fact the *Legendary Adventure* game has Knacks, some of which are akin to petty feats, if you will. Those were devised c. 1997. They are offset a good deal by Quirks. In shorty, yes, I believe such things assist in making diverse and interesting characters.

In regards the new D&D game resembling a computer one, indeed, I fully concur. That is a clever decision, for far more people play them than they do paper RPGs.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=390>

rabindranath72 wrote:

which of the many Campaign Settings produced by TSR saw your approval (formal or informal)? Which one would you like to play in (or DM) nowadays?

Heh...

Who can recall such relatively petty details after two or three decades have slipped away 🙄 I did pass on most of the adventure modules published through 1981, not many thereafter.

As I mainly play the *Legendary Adventure* game these days, and have for some eight years now, it is difficult for me to somment of OA/D&D modules. I have polayed in the G series within the last five yars, but that's about it.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=390>

serleran wrote:

Have you ever devised an encounter, or situation, solely for the purpose of killing off an entire party, or,

even, a single adventurer? If done to destroy a party, was it so you could "restart" as it were, with a new band of characters? If the latter, was it because the player was being a twit?

I'm interested because I note a trend amongst some gamer types who take pride in the ability to decimate characters, which I find to be funny. Of course the DM can destroy the characters... that's easy.

Oh, and, about a Gaxmoor C&C conversion... I could do it, though, I don't think I could write additional material, as module writing is a thing I tend to avoid.

The short answer is no.

For gaming conventions I have created scenarios where elimination of the PCs is most probable, and players know that, get a signed character sheet stating that their PC was slain or survived the trials.

I have indeed also devised very difficult challenges, singular or modular, for expert players, but never with the purpose of "killing" PCs. Bad and careless players manage that pretty well on their own without special attention.

As a matter of fact I find execrable those GMs that find it amusing to destroy their players' characters on a regular basis.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=390>

Clangador wrote:

What do you recall about these mega-dungeons you and Rob use to create and DM. I mean, the levels of Castle Greyhawk were far bigger than the nominal level size in a published module. Also the tricks, traps and devices seems rather more devious than encountered in published material. Castle Greyhawk seems so much larger than life than the average D&D campaign. Did you tone down what actually saw print because you didn't think the average play could handle it?

Howdy!

We had about 40 or so levels, plus side excursion levels reached by transporter locales. Some of the levels were done on 22" x 17" graph paper of 40 or five lines per inch, some on standard size sheets with varying lines per inch--4, 5, 6, or even eight. One level was done on paper with a hex grid.

None of the traps were such that clever play could avoid their worst effects. I'll say nothing more, as Rob and I are working on updated dungeon levels now that are based off of those original ones you mention above. The whole will not consist of as many levels as we had, but there will be plenty 😊

Clangador wrote:

I know you're working on that. My question is more about the type of material that appeared in your own campaign vs. what ended up being published. I know that the original Castle Greyhawk has never seen print, but from what I've gleaned it flavor of it was much different from published material. Your original Greyhawk campaign wasn't the same as the Greyhawk Campaign Setting that was published.

Clangador, the crap published as "Castle Greyhawk" was nothing coming from me. I had separated from TSR by then. My dungeon levels are generally like those you've undoubtedly seen in various modules I have authored.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=450>

Barrataria wrote:

You succeeded! I just reread City of Hawks for the umpteenth time. It was also great that you set a nice precedent for Rose Estes to follow 😊

I've wondered about Gord for a long, long time- one of the guys that taught me to play in (very) rural CA assured me that the blond guy with the horned helm on the back of "Isle of Dread" was "Gygax"[s] thief PC".

To the best of my recollection...

The only thief PCs I have played were demi-humans with that class as one of two or more possessed, like my gnome illusionist thief PC that is my most recent OAD&D character done up only about five years back.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=450>

ScottyG wrote:

Gary, a question pertaining to the releasing of the Nine. I've heard that this encounter won't be detailed in the CZ material, so it may be safe to ask. After Robilar freed Hextor, it seemed to set off a chain reaction that released the others. Was there anything Robilar could have done to avoid the chain reaction? Was that a DM call to save Robilar from being mauled by the many-handed demi-god?

IIRR...

Robilar took off in great haste, went to another of the doors and opened that one, ran off again, and did the same in his efforts to escape the raging demi-gods. Eventually, those that were freed went and opened the other six gates so as to fight with or rescue the others. After some unpleasantness the lot then removed themselves from the PMP to play revenge on Zagig 😊

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=480>

Arlo wrote:

Gary, have you seen the DandD 3rd edition or 3.5 edition Player's Handbook by Wizards of the Coast? Every time I read the physical description paragraph about humans, I want to know if my character can have a plain physical material appearance. The DandD 3.5 PHB has it printed that humans can be showy or austere. Does austere mean I can have my human cohort character to appear without tatooing, without piercing, and without scaring for body art?

Howdy Arlo,

Sarcasm noted...and appreciated 😊

Indeed, under contract I read the unpublished draft ms. for the new PHB, as well as that for the DMG, and sent an extensive critique to WotC, all of which was ignored.

I certainly agree that the punk aspects of the game are quite inappropriate for the genre.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=480>

rabindranath72 wrote:

Hello Mr. Gygax,
is there some role playing system on the market today that you consider particularly "good"?

Howdy do!

You ask that of the author of the *Legendary Adventure* FRPG?

What sort of a fellow would I be if I didn't believe it was the best RPG going? 🤪

For one that i did not author, I like James M. Ward's *Metamorphosis Alpha*.

dcas wrote:
The new version as well as the old?

Absolutely!

The new MA game is as much fun as was the original...and Jim is likely to put Total Healing back into the mix for mutant humans (inside joke--my favorite old MA game PC had that mutation) 😊

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=480>

Clangador wrote:
Hey Gary, did you have any idea you were spawning a whole industry when you came up with OD&D?

Ho-ho-ho!

I hadn't a clue back in late 1972 when I sat down at the old portable typewriter and tapped out the initial draft rules of some 50 pages length. Even in the spring of 1973 when I had had feedback from about 20 diverse gamers of hardcore stamp who loved the game, asked so many questions that I had an easy time expanding the draft rules to some 150 pages, I was far too modest in my estimation of the popularity of the game and game form.

I told my eventual partner in Tactical Studies Rules, Don Kaye, as well as friends, fellow gamers, and family, that I foresaw the game selling no fewer than 50,000 copies, mainly to military gamers and SF/fantasy fans.

I wised up beginning in late 1974 when fan letters from all sorts of people that were neither military game players nor SF/fantasy book readers were contacting us. By the middle of 1975 I was finally aware of the phenomenal popularity of the D&D game and the RPG form in general.

Clangador wrote:
With that in mind, how do you feel about the RPG industry as it stands today? I hear a lot of talk about RPGs being a dying lot.

By the way, my eight-year-old son just walked by, saw your avatar, and says: "hey, it's the guy from Futurama the rolls the dice all the time."

No question that the growing gaming area is that of electronic/computer games. RPGs are not going to grow much if at all unless the only big publisher, WotC, expends money in advertising a beginner's game to bring in young new players. That said, I firmly believe that paper RPGs will be around for decades to come, just as the stage play has survived the motion picture and television. Computer games are the motion pictures of gaming, online MMPs are the TV

As for your son, tell him the guy from Futurama rolls the dice and says, "Go away kid, you bother me." Make sure it is in a W.C. Fields voice of course. (Actually I have six children and seven grandchildren and dearly love such kinder!)

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=570>

DMPrata wrote:

Gary, I noticed something in one of my books yesterday that I'd apparently overlooked. The title page of *Unearthed Arcana* cites, "© E. Gary Gygax," whereas the earlier AD&D books were all, "© TSR." Is there a story behind this (and, if so, is it one you're willing & able to share)?

Sure!

It was me finally getting tired of being the goat for ungrateful partners at TSR. thus I insisted that if they wanted my work they would have to treat it as if they were real publishers, give me copyright up front, rather than in a contract allowing them to claim the right.

Of course I eventually gave up that copyright in settling matters with TSR.

DMPrata wrote:

Well, that was certainly long overdue. Oh, what might have been.... 😞

Just what I thought...especially since the majority shareholder management of TSR had run the company into near bankruptcy and I was the only one that could bail them out so I came back from running D&D Entertainment on the West Coast and was thanked for my efforts by having them sell their controlling shares to an outsider that actually managed the company worse than had been done:roll:

SOURCE: www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=600

Asrogoth wrote:

I have read through the Oriental Adventures Compendium a couple of times.

I find the concept of honor to be a bit difficult to add to a normal campaign. I know that you are credited with the book's overall "editing". How involved were you in the production of it? What concepts did you think should be in there that eventually weren't (if any)? What concepts did you find to be less than desirable but that you still kept? Just curious.

Zeb Cook had the lead on the OA ms, and he rode roughshod over the work that Francois Marcela Froideval, ignored my direction, and by the time I discovered all that we had to go forward with the work as presented. At the time TSR was in severe monetary difficulties, and the corporation needed OA as a follow up to the UA success to get it back into the black.

I was both overseeing the compilation of UA and adding parts to it, and working full time seeing to the operations of TSR.

garhkal wrote:

I find the concept of honor to be a bit difficult to add to a normal campaign. I know that you are credited with the book's overall "editing". How involved were you in the production of it? What concepts did you think should be in there that eventually weren't (if any)? What concepts did you find to be less than desirable but that you still kept? Just curious.

On the Honor part. The best part of it I liked was the class specific rules for honor gains and losses.

Ah Dang!

I forgot to address that part 😞

The system is really specific to a campaign based solely on the Far East and does not translate well to any other style of campaign. So I concur with your assessment, and believe that honor is better ignored in campaigns that extend beyond the Oriental culture setting.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=660>

Clangador wrote:

What? Just think of it, you could be just now publishing the 25th volume on Fantasy Earth covering the frost giants of Antarctica. TSR would still be in business and AD&D(1e) would still be going strong. 😊



TSR bit the bullet because of management, not because of me. I do believe that had I prevailed in the lawsuit over stock ownership, TSR would still be an active, viable, game company...and the D&D films would not have been a disaster and then a release for DVD only, not theaters.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=660>

Clangador wrote:

Gary, how did the D&D cartoon come into being? I mean, why a cartoon? After 20+ years, what are your thoughts about said cartoon? How much creative control did you have over it?

A knock-off of the D&D game was proposed to some West Coast production entities as a cartoon show c. 1981. It was turned down as there was no "name" connected to have audience pull. Early in 1982 TSR was approached to license a D&D-based cartoon, and I was put in charge of that, sent to California, for three reasons, least important to most.

3) Amongst the corporate officers I had the most ability to deal with such matters.

2) I had single-handedly cut the first book trade distribution of games with Random House, doing so on very favorable terms (that were later lost when Kevin Blume was the CEO).

1) It got rid of me as a thorn in the side of Brian and Kevin Blume, so they could (mis)manage TSR without my constant demands for different approaches.

As for control, I had absolute control over every script coming from Marvel entertainment, assisted in creating the springboards for several of them, and only CBS could alter my decisions...which never occurred. As a matter of fact the relationship between D&D Entertainment (me), Marvel, and CBS children's Programming was most cordial. Thus a spinoff of the D&D Cartoon Show that I proposed was in the mill in 1984 when I had to return to Lake Geneva because of TSR's near bankrupt state. When I lost control of the company thereafter, the new cartoon show, as well as a boorman-directed fantasy film based on the World of Greyhawk, were dropped by the folks out west 😊

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=690>

Asrogoth wrote:

Regarding the D&D Cartoon....

Many people have speculated about the origin of the main antagonist of the series, Venger.

Some have even gone so far as to say that Venger was "Dungeon Master's" own son gone bad.

A few years ago, I read an article (well, supposed script) of the last episode of the D&D cartoon where

this information is revealed and the chitlins all go home, preparing for a new season (and hopefully new kids with all different character classes -- based on the Oriental Adventures?).

Can you enlighten us any with the inner-workings of the cartoon?

Hi Kenny:)

Some of that is correct, some is not.

Venger was the creation of Dennis Marks, whom I worked with for much of the run of the series. Michael Reaves did indeed write a concluding, 27th episode script, a marvelous one in which it was revealed that Venger was Dungeon Master's son. That episode was to air just before the new show began.

The new series was going to have all of the original cast save Bobby and Uni--they had to remain at home, Bobby in school and Uni as his pony. Hank and the others would be called back, this time without the rather lame weapons, but instead relying on their own character class abilities, improving them as they met and overcame challenges. Thus the show was to be both for a slightly older audience and better reflect the actual game. One script for the new series was completed and approved, two were working, when I left the West Coast to return and manage the difficulties at TSR in Wisconsin.

There was no plan to move the setting to an Oriental one.

chrisspiller wrote:

Oh, thank God! Even back as a lad of 11 or 12 or so Bobby and Uni were the bane of my existence when watching an otherwise quite good Saturday morning cartoon! A shame that the second series never made it on air.

Speaking of cartoons, movies, etc., Gary, you ever give any thought to trying to develop a Gord movie? (I don't know if legal issues would allow it, given that you no longer own the IP rights to Greyhawk.) Or even, dare I say, a *Mordenkainen* project? I know I'd give big bucks to see an onscreen rendering of the big run in with Rob's infamous Iron Golem!

Howdy Chris,

Indeed, not many of the audience over the age of five years or so appreciated Bobby and Uni 😊

The character of Gord and those aspects of the stories not using Greyhawk material are usable IP, I do believe. Of course no one is beating down our door asking to license the rights... 🙄

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=720>

Julian Grimm wrote:

Speaking of Venger. Did you ever use him as a baddy in your game or were you ever tempted to?

Actually no to both.

At the time most of my DMing was for my son Luke and his young friends--around age 15, and such an NPC would have been looked upon askance. When I was DMing for others Venger would likely have been an unrecognized entity.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=720>

Elfdart wrote:

Is it true that the late James Goldman was to be your co-scriptwriter?

Not really.

Jim did a script that the Blums did not approve. One producer out in Tinsel Town suggested I should write my own version of Goldman's material 😊

The script that Orson Wells and and Edgar Gross reviewed was one done by Flint Dille and me. It was nothing like the script that James Goldman authored.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=720>

Grubbiv wrote:

I wanted to ask you what Jeff Perren was doing and where he was living when you guys developed Chainmail back in 1968-69. The reason I ask is because the Wikipedia article on Chainmail opens with

Chainmail (1971) was a medieval miniatures wargame created by enthusiasts in the late 1960s at the University of Minnesota.

The part about the University of Minnesota seems wrong, but then again maybe Jeff was a student at UM.

Bah!

That Wikipedia bit is absolutely incorrect. Jeff Perren was living in Rockford, Illinois, attended a GenCon here in Lake Geneva, brought four pages of medieval miniatures rules for a ratio of 1:20 to play on the sand table in my basement with his 40mm Hauser Elastolin figurines. I so loved the game that I acquired the figures, expanded his 1:20 medieval rules to about 16 pages, and these were published in the IFW's magazine, The International Wargamer sometime in 1969 as the Castle & Crusades Society Medieval Miniatures Rules. In 1970 Don Lowry of Lowry's Hobbies and Guidon Games wished to publish the rules, so I added the Man-to-Man, Jousting, and Fantasy Supplement portions, and the whole was published as Chainmail by Gygax and Perren in 1971.

About the only involvement of gamers at the U. of Minnesota was playing the rules after they were published 😊

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=720>

oldschooler wrote:

So if you think about it, the whole RPG hobby came initially out of Jeff's lil' four page pamphlet of minis rules 😊

Well...

That and the fact that I was active in wargaming since the 1960s, was creatively motivated, and Jeff's medieval miniatures rules inspired me to expand them and add the fantasy element to them, that pretty well covers things. Of course going way back, one might as well say that my father's bedtime stories about magic rings and cloaks of invisibility and my mother's reading fairytale to me were the progenitors of the RPG as we know it. Or perhaps that as a teenager I was fascinated by castles, medieval history, and secret passages and hidden treasure rooms 😊

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=750>

Glaaki wrote:
On another note...

I have finally aquired all the editions of Lejend Magazine in a combination of hard and electronic copy.

Are the shamanism and witchery orders and information going to remain largely the same in future Troll products?

Also it is a shame that the mag faded away, it is a damn fine product.

The Shamanism & Witchery rules in the ms. for the book are pretty much the same as in the *Legends* Magazine articles, although as I recall there are some additional Powers and Extraordinary Items in the former.

It was a sad day when the zine folded, but it had to be. Keeping such a periodical running demands more outlay than could be afforded. *Dragon* Magazine was a cash drain until c. 1979...

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=15314&start=840>

Richard wrote:

Gary, I just bought Basic D&D, Rulebook 1. It has you and Dave Arneson as the authors. It is dated 1980 and it has on the front cover: a female arcane magic-user who is holding a green fireball and she is wearing bright red lipstick and blue eyeshadow, a fighter holding a wooden shield and he has a spear for offense, and a green dragon in a stone-looking dungeon room. In that book, there is a square for a character sketch. For the campaign setting of a stone-looking dungeon room in accord with that book, does that character sketch mean that my human or nonhuman character can have any physical material appearance description that I want? Also, in accord with that same campaign setting and that same book, the physical looks of my magic items, my magic item effects, and my magic spell effects can be any color that I want?



Ever hear of "Artistic License"? that was what the illustrator used in creating that cover for the game.

Of course if your DM wishes to allow anything in his campaign, including what you suggest, that is up to him. That said, cover art is not part of the game system or rules 😊

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=18691&start=240>

Shane H wrote:

1) What part did you play in the development of the Basic-Expert-Companion-Master-Immortal OD&D product line?



A very big part, as all of those works were derived from my own. I also reviewed and approved the final drafts. In the Holmes Basic Set I inserted all of the now character information found there that was not in OD&D.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=18691&start=240>

Richard wrote:

Wow! TSR, inc. had many persons working for it. An artist who can do pictures and a font for lettering or|and a single person for the way all of the printed text looks.

Gary, can the Unearthed Arcana book and any rulebooks for later ADandD 1st edition be applied in reverse time to earlier ADandD 1st edition?



And Dave did cartoons of me and many of the others there at TSR back then too...as well as help to carry in big shipments of product from the printers as we all did 😊

Indeed, the UA book was meant to augment the previously published core rules books, it being an "Official" offering. So whatever is in it can be applied to the PHB, LML, and/or MMs as the DM determines desirable for the campaign.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=19381&start=120>

Shane H wrote:

Gary, I couldn't find an entry for Froideval in the Pen & Paper RPG author database, though his Wikipedia page states he's been a prolific comic book writer. I was wondering, what part did Francois play at TSR? Was he an employee? How was your working relationship with him?

Francois is a dear friend of mine. He became that after I met him in the early 1980s when he came over for a GenCon. He stayed several weeks at my house with me thereafter. At the time he was co-publisher of *Causus Belli* as well as an avid AD&D game DM. Eventually, Francois was employed by TSR here in Lake Geneva, and he was set to manage a subsidiary, TSR France, HQed in Paris. That was totally screwed up by the Blumes...who else. He DMed for me often, played in my campaign. IMO his Oriental Adventures material was far superior to what David Cook ended up ramrodding through in the published work. Francois. He is currently residing outside Paris and is a best-selling graphic novel author.

When I separated from my first wife, I shared Francois' apartment briefly before getting my own place. Alone and with my wife, Gail, I have visited him several times when he lived in Paris and later on when Francois removed to a country village in Normandy. Son Alex and I were his house guests in 1999, and he visited us here in 2001. We are expecting him to come here again in the autumn if all goes well.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=19381&start=270>

Mars wrote:

I was looking through some old TSR catalogs and had a few obscure questions that you might be able to help me with:

- 1) The 1985 Catalog lists a new RPG called Proton Fire and 4 modules. I don't think this got produced but did it get turned into anything else? Who was going to develop this?
- 2) In the 1986 catalog, there are a few products such as supermodule G1-4 Revolt of the Giants, Unearthed Arcana II, and WG7 Shadowlands. I believe the Acaeum has some info on Shadowlands but what were the ideas for the other two?

3) There was a silver anniversary module called Against the Giants. Does this contain the info that going to be used for G1-4?

1) As I was busy trying to keep TSR solvent, fend off the bank that wanted to perfect the IP rights secured against their loans, I had virtually no input into production outside of the AD&D line, the chief horse for the company. Whatever the game was, it was scrapped as a waste of precious resources--for once, unlike the Honeymooners game.

2) As I departed TSR on the last day of 1985, I can not comment on anything thereafter.

3) Can't say for sure, but it might have G1-G3, and maybe D1-D3 and Q1 as well. Again. it was done after i left the company.

DMPrata wrote:

Against the Giants: The Liberation of Geoff was authored by Sean K. Reynolds (though Gary is rightfully credited as a co-author, since he wrote the series on which it is based). It includes the original G1-3 modules ("updated" to 2E stats) and about 60 pages of new material expanding upon the original. It does not include any of D1-3 or Q1.

Mark, thank DMPrata for the real information...even though I personally am not find of the person that used my name as a co-author *without my permission*. Had I known of that ploy to sell the product, i would have sent off a cease & desist demand immediately 😡

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=19381&start=420>

uaintjak wrote:

... I figure I'll make you feel worse by asking you an AD&D question 😊

I'm rereading your Gord novels and quite enjoying them (much more so than the first time I read them, actually), and I noticed that the cavalier Dierdre is mentioned as being a former cleric (so presumably you envisioned her as a character with two classes). Also, in Sea of Death, Eclavdra is mentioned as having a couple of half-drow minions, cavalier/magic-users.

I wondered if you included such multi-classes in your own game, and if so, how they worked out. I'm toying with the idea myself, but since you speak with the voice of experience, your input would be helpful.

Howdy!

While i was pretty liberal in allowing dual- and multi-classed PCs in my campaign, those characters mentioned in the Gord yarns were generally not even NPCs in it. There are exceptions such as Obmi and Keek, as well as actual PCs such as Curley Greenleaf and Melf.

I played a half-orc cleric-assassin PC for sa brief time in Rob's campaign.

Having such PCs in a campaign shopuld cause no problem if the challenges they encounter are commensurate with their abilities. Rob saw to it that my half-orc didn't survive very long...quite proper for such a villain that associated with a pack of like scoundrels.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=20641&start=60>

Calithena wrote:

I was curious about internal attitudes towards the original Dragonlance modules at TSR during the time that they first came out. They have an implicit style of play very different from what came before. They were obviously popular and made some cash for the company, but were there members of the staff who disliked them, or worried that they were going to give people 'odd' ideas about the game or how to play it, or anything like that? Or was it pretty much 'let a thousand flowers blossom'? Were these kind of issues much discussed at the time?

Welcome!

I am unable to say what the various officials and creative people at TSR felt about the game merits of the *Dragonlance* modules. They sold well, so these products were discussed mainly in those terms.

Not a few gamers complained about them, though, as in many places the modules forced results to conform to the storyline the authors desired.

Brian Blume was in charge of the creative output of TSR at the time, so he is the only person that could answer your question regarding discussion of the merits of those modules in AD&D game terms.

Calithena wrote:

Thanks Gary!

Maybe a follow up then. I knew about the Blume 'hostile takeover', and your brief return in the mid-eighties, but I guess I had sort of thought you still exercised some control over business, etc. during the early eighties even when you were out doing the D&D cartoon in California and such. Is that not the case?

If it's not too painful to recall, how did your authority as a TSR executive wax and wane over the years from the late seventies to the early eighties?

Actually, after 1981 the Blume brothers were pretty much in the driver's seat at TSR. I was the Chairman of the Board, with five hostile directors, but no longer an officer of TSR when I was managing the D&D Entertainment Corp.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=20641&start=210>

Calithena wrote:

I wonder if it's a coincidence that the new products produced by the company (with a few exceptions, like Frank's classic boxed sets from the mid-eighties) started a gradual decline in quality starting in 1982-3....

Without comment as to the product quality, when TSR made \$16.5 million in fiscal 1981, \$4.25 million of which was pre-tax profit, the Blumes reorganized the corporation. There were three of us comprising the BoD, and the Kevin Blume as President of Operations, Brian Blume as President of Creative, and me as President of TSR. This was touted in the annual report for the year as "the corporation with three presidents." In theory, the two "under-presidents" reported to me, but as they also comprised a majority of the board, the new organization effectively boxed me off from any real control of the company on any level.

The lesson to be learned is that money alters companionable interaction.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=20641&start=210>

serleran wrote:

Maybe a not-needed question, but curious nonetheless: how did things like Empire of the Petal Throne and the Judges' Guild stuff get to be official D&D products? I think that happened under your watch, but I dunno (and don't delve too deep into the histories of TSR.)

The Blumes met with the JG people and agreed to a license for them, to use TSR copyrights and trade marks on products that TSR approved.

I, on behalf of TSR, contracted for EPT with Phil Barker, and the Corporation published the RPG, owned the rights to it, IIR, and returned them to the author when it was no longer in print by TSR.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=20641&start=210>

StuartR wrote:

Hi Gary -- I had a question I was hoping you'd be willing to answer (and if you already wrote something about this online, maybe someone will post a link).

I read that you were brought in as a consultant by Wizards of the Coast while they were working on D&D 3. You made some suggestions that they didn't end up using -- one of which I believe was that killing monsters should earn no experience points.

What sort of other suggestions did you make that weren't used in the final game? Were these things you implemented in one of your other post-D&D games, like Legendary Adventure?

I was indeed contracted by WotC for various services including a review and critique of the new version of the D&D game. I am precluded from commenting on the matter in detail, but I did urge that the experience point system be made more contemporary, with far less emphasis on killing adversaries to earn increased level reward.

That suggestion, along with virtually all of the others I made, was not implemented.

Ron wrote:

I wonder which ones they accepted.

Only WotC can comment on that.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=20641&start=210>

Darius wrote:

I have to wonder why they brought you in. I am sure you are not complaining about the money, but really if they were serious about having a "Gygax approved" D&D game they either should have given you a huge amount of money to redesign the game or at least designed the game in another way than they did.

I do not think you subscribe to the "it takes a village to design an rpg" design theory. 3E is what happens

when you allow the worst of gamers to submit feedback and attend focus groups in an attempt to build a better product. 3E has sold what 25% of what 1st did? 2E lost 3 million a year right? Meanwhile when you were there and in charge TSR made a lot of money, and even when you were not in charge, AD&D sold a huge amount of books.

Although you are in semi-retirement and would likely be sued, I would encourage you to put out at least one OSRIC title before full retirement. Perhaps as you have done with other LA material someone has converted it to 3E, maybe someone can convert it to OSRIC (I think it would be fitting to have one last good AD&D adventure from you even if LA is a better system).

My friend Peter Adkison brought me under contract with WotC, but he was not in charge of the use of my critique of new D&D.

About 50% of the AD&D audience was lost when 2E was released.

3E rules books might have sold 75% of what OAD&D did, but that does not apply to adjunctive support materials, and the number of players actively using the newer versions of the game is well below the peak number that played OAD&D.

I am given to understand that sales of 3.5E were less than those of 3E. Possibly that is why a radically different 4E D&D game is rumored to be in the works.

All of my class-based RPG designs will be for the C&C system.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=20641&start=210>

Julian Grimm wrote:

A couple of quick questions for you:

1. Did you have any input on the D&D toy line that came out?
2. Concerning the climate of Yggsburgh and Greyhawk; I was wondering if this was done to facilitate adventuring easier or if the idea came about some other way?

The head of the bendy toy project was Duke Seifried. Duke reported to Brian Blume.

The climate in the Yggsburgh region was meant to make the place more interesting for all sorts of reasons, including the environment for human inhabitants, regional flora and fauna, as well as facilitating adventures in the outdoors.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=20641&start=270>

Sieg wrote:

Mike Stewart here...the blind guy on your couch watching (listening) to Gangs of New York during the Winter LGGC. 🤔 Actually, that's got me looking for books on the period now but that's neither here nor there.

Anyway, two questions I meant to ask then but got distracted....

1. As I said there I've been buying up old issues of Wargamers Digest (and Little Wars, BTW). Anyway, it seems that the mid 70s WD's were good about having articles regarding fantasy miniatures games (even an EPT game) but after about 1976 or so that all stopped rather abruptly. Any ideas as to what was going on with that? Did Gene McCoy have issues, or with Dragon & Little Wars did such articles just gravitate to the TSR publications?

2. I've also just purchased some of Avalon Hill's General mags and one that had an Origins '82 brochure inside. In the list of games, it lists all by name....but no A/D&D. Oh, it mentions Runequest, Dragonquest, etc....and several games that are only listed as "Medieval FRP Adventures". As one of the latter mentions Chaotic Evil Magic Users, IMO it[']s obviously A/D&D.

Do you know what was up with that "snubbing"? 😏 Seems rather juvenile of the Origins Steering Committee IMO.

BTW, if you've already answered these in earlier threads just ignore this and I'll take that as the hint to go looking. 😊

G'Day Mike!

I recall you both at the Winter Dark Con and at my place on Sunday evening.

Gene McCoy was a nice chap, but his audience for WD was not too fond of fantasy, so he quit publishing material of that nature to satisfy the majority of his readership.

Despite what is professed by them, the Origins/GAMA lot were very much against the highly successful TSR and GenCon. After we pretty well crushed Origins in Detroit with GenCon XII, they stopped trying to outdo GenCon, but would not give any support to it or TSR.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=20641&start=270>

Sieg wrote:

Ah, yeah I understand about WD's audience. Wargamers at the time were kinda antagonistic toward D&D weren't they? 😊

Re: Origins, <sigh> Ah well, you can't stop others from being jealous, right? 😊



Professor Leon Tucker, a co-author with Michael Reese and me of the WWII era tactical military miniatures rules set *Tractics*, refused to speak to me after I published the D&D game. Hard core military miniatures buffs dislike fantasy to this day.

Indeed Origins was meant to steal GenCon's thunder, GAMA formed to counter the success of TSR. there was a lot of envy and jealousy around back then.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=20641&start=300>

Julian Grimm wrote:

On an unrelated topic I just got the D&D cartoon set and have loved watching it again. Was any map of the realm ever done or were there plans to have a 'tie in' game product with the realm in it ever planned or discussed?

Screen writers are not interested in map making, as that will likely confine their creative ideas.

Only TSR could make such plans, and as the BLumes were not much interested in the cartoon show, they made no such plans. About the most ambitious extension was my proposal to Marvel and CBS that when the original series concluded, a spinoff bedtime with a more mature theme--older heroes not relying on magical props in order to survive and succeed, but rather use their own skills to accomplish those ends.

That was accepted, and one script was done and approved, two more being written, when I had to leave LA to bail TSR out of looming bankruptcy. When Lorraine Williams took over the company a few months later, CBS and Marvel Productions canceled the planned new cartoon show.

SOURCE: www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=20641&start=360

Julian Grimm wrote:

Any reminiscent thoughts on working on Dragon? I thought it appropriate in light of the news of it's [sic] demise.

It is a great error on the part of WotC to cease paper publication of that magazine.

I began it with the creation of *The Strategic Review*, then realized a more fantasy-oriented periodical with a catchy name was needed, so I hired Tim Kask to be the editor of the new magazine, *The Dragon*. At its peak circulation was over half a million.

I have nothing else to say about this sad matter.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?t=23153>

ScottyG wrote:

Gary, I remember hearing about a project called Hornet's Nest, but I am blanking on the details. Was that the Stoinck adventure?

DMPPrata wrote:

Not Gary, but I believe that was called *Wasp Nest: City State of Stoinck*.

I did not write that material. Someone purloined my map of Stoinck from my office when I was in litigation with TSR...just as they did a lot of my personal books and games I had there 😞

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=23153&start=30>

themattjon wrote:

I noted your post on another thread that warrants the following question: Am I to understand that the Dungeon! boardgame was published (or at least finished) *before* Dungeons & Dragons? I always thought

it came out just after.

Absolutely!

Dave Megary had a playable version of the *Dungeon!* game sometime earlier in 1972 that I wrote the first draft of the rules that became D&D. I was Dave's agent, revised the game board, cards, and rules in hopes of having The Avalon Hill Company publish it...without claiming any part of it despite its obvious derivation from the *Chainmail* game rules.

TAHC turned it and D&D down, so eventually TSR published it. Later on Tom Shaw come back and expressed interest in both games, but it was then my turn to laugh 😊

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=23153&start=120>

Ivid wrote:

Have you and Mr Arneson come to a reconciliation on a personal level?

- I mean, can you have a beer together and tell about the good ool' times, or has this professional conflict also spoiled your friendship/comradeship, however one may call it?

I can be civil to Dave, but the personal attacks he makes on me are quite low. Thus I prefer to give him a severe letting alone, and, as I have stated frequently, let my work speak for me, Dave's for his own creative ability.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=23153&start=120>

Darius wrote:

Just a quick question. Who do you know from Games Workshop? Do you know Paul Barnett?

From the old days I know Ian Livingston and Steve Jackson quite well. I chose them to be the exclusive distributor of TSR products in the UK, and they stayed with me when they visited the USA.

I know the chap that became the CEO a few years back fairly well. He was with TSRUK and actually did most of the real management of the company. Can not recall his name at the moment...my bad.

I noted am not particularly good with names, so I confess to not recalling having ever met Paul Barnett.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=23153&start=180>

Plaag wrote:

Guess this is the place to ask...

I'm wondering about the history TSR had with Judges Guild. Also since some of the earlier products seem to give credit to the Chainmail, Greyhawk supplement books and Dungeons and Dragons, how much input did you provide, and what restrictions if any did you specify for their material?

Howdy,

The license arrangement with JG was made by BNrian Blume, not me. He gave them permission to use

the TSR copyrighted works you note.

I disapproved of the arrangement, as there was no TSR quality control.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=23153&start=180>

Mr. Reaper wrote:

Hi Gary, I had sent you a Private Message but then realized that you probably get a billion of them and so don't check them, so I thought I'd pop in here and ask for your assistance....

Could you kindly help me identify these buildings that were along the bus tour? I'd greatly appreciate it! Frank helped me out with some of them, but I'd like to get your comments on them too (again).

Happy to oblige 😊



"House on the Corner"

Frank wrote:

The old Dragon Publishing building.

Actually that is the first real headquarters of TSR at 723 Williams Street. It had a game shop in the front two rooms, an office and a former kitchen as a shipping room in the rear, offices upstairs and inventory storage on the front porch and basement. We soon outgrew the place, had several people working in each small room, mine included.

It was intimate, fun to work and play-test there, and the Pizza Hut just across the street was a bonus.



"Green House"

That is 842 Sage Street, the former residence of Donald Raymond Kaye, my original partner in Tactical Studies Rules. When we began the business his former pantry was the stock room for *Cavaliers & Roundheads* as well as the D&D game in a few months, and we assembled and shipped D&D sets from his dining room table.



"White House"

That is 330 Center Street, the place I lived in for many years in LG, where the pre-GenCon gamer gathering called GenCon 0 was held.

When Don died the TSR operation moved into the basement there, and it remained until the fall of 1977 when the 723 Williams Street building was acquired.

I was the first full-time employee working down there. Then came Brian, part-timer Terry Kuntz, and the Tim Kask as the thrid regular employee of the company. Believe it or not we actually sold other companies bag games and miniatures out of the place, gamers somehow making their way to the house and getting down into that dungeon.



"Some Building"

Frank wrote:

That's the old hotel downtown, which TSR used at the time I first started there in January 1980

That is the former Claire Hotel, Lounge, and 12-lane basement Bowling Alley and Bar. When TSR took it over the Dungeon Hobby Shop was where the Lounge used to be, the Hotel rooms became offices, and the basement was used exclusively for stock warehousing--a hideous error on the part of Brina Blume, as there could have been monthly mini-cons held in a part of the space that would have been great promotion and brought in income as well.

And I think all of these are the gigantic office building that TSR moved to when Loraine Williams was in charge:



It was just too large.... Gary said they had all this space and furniture, and not nearly enough people to use it all.

He said his office had been right where these windows are, on the end:



Frank wrote:

The big warehouse with adjacent staff offices & Executive Office area were indeed TSR, but Gary oversaw construction. Gary was interviewed at the time by a Milwaukee TV station, wherein he was shown working in his office in the 'old' Sheridan Springs building, and then outside with the construction going on in the background. (I still have a copy of that show on antique VHS tape.)

The building was acquired by Brian and Kevin Blume and me. It had been built some years before it was purchased for use by TSR. Alterations were then made so as to make it suitable to the company's operations. Note that the extensive shipping and warehouse area, as well as the fancy facade were added by Williams after she took over the company in 1986...and proceeded to run it into some \$36 million in debt 12 years later.

Somehow Kevin Blume imagined that the considerable space would be filled with employees, so he leased and purchased system furniture, all four panels hardwired, for some 600 employees that never were hired. The boxes were stored in the great empty and dark spaces on the first floor. There could well have been a product showroom and game shop located in the place, but the concept was unacceptable to the Blumes, and as they had controlling interest in TSR, that was that.

The location of my office is correct. When we moved in the space where my office was to be had no windows, so three long and narrow ones were made. It was the showplace for the company, with an

impressive desk area, a round conference table for four persons, a couch and armchair for more relaxed meetings, and a full wet bar seating four persons. It gave onto an en suite bathroom, a sauna, and then into a small hallway linking the offices of Brian and Kevin Blume to those facilities. At the other end were two small offices, a reception room where my secretary was located, and a side room for my assistant.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=23153&start=240>

g026r wrote:

I've got a question related to Dangerous Journeys, which I hope hasn't already been asked.

Basically, I'm curious what other genres, outside of the Mythus fantasy setting, were in the pipeline for it before the plug got pulled.

A horror genre version was actually done and ready before the FRPG one was.

A science fantasy genre DJ game was in process of development when TSR sued.

After that was completed we planned to work on yet another genre.

g026r wrote:

Any particular reason the FRPG one came out first? Was it supposed to be the "main" setting for DJ, or was it a case where GDW figured that a FRPG with your name on it would sell better than a horror one would?

Or am I just making completely wild stabs in the dark here? 🤔

Short answer:

The Japanese companies financing the main part of the deal, NEC included, wanted fantasy first. The *Unhallowed* RPG was ready to go, but we had to go for immediate development of the *Mythus* game instead.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=23153&start=240>

Yorum wrote:

How would you describe your early relationships with other RPG companies? I've heard you had gentlemen's agreements with The Chaosium, and Marc Miller credited you with inspiring elements of *Traveler*.

It seems to me that, in the early going, at least, you all got along as an extended family who were putting out similar products, not cutthroats trying to one-up each other. Is that wishful thinking?

We've heard a lot about the TSR people, good and bad. Can you share any insights as to these other fellows in the industry?

As a matter of fact relations with other RPG publishers were generally good, save for where Brian Blume was concerned, or when dealing with knock-off artists.

All of us at TSR got along well with the GDW bunch, and for a time there was an *En Garde* campaign

running at our office.

Brian broke the agreement I had made with Greg Stafford of Chaosium. I had obtained permission to use Melnebonean deities for the A/D&D game personally from Michael Moorcock. Meantime his agent had licensed the material to Chaosium. To be friendly I called Greg and suggested we plug each other's game works, and he liked the idea. Brian hated it, so ripped out the Melnebonean material from the *Deities & Demigods* book rather than assist another RPG company.

When TSR became the clear leader in the hobby gaming field, many of the competing publishers became far less friendly, but who wants to hear about that sort of negative stuff?!

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=23153&start=480>

Buttmonkey wrote:

I am wondering what were the best/worst bribes you were ever offered by a player hoping to secure some sort of advantage in a game you were running. Even if no one ever came out and said "I'll give you \$20 if you let me have a <insert desired magical item>", surely somebody brought you some of his wife's special cookies and then stared at you with puppy-dog eyes when a level-draining monster was reviewing the party to pick targets.



Boy, if any player ever did that, did they have the wrong vampire! Once the action is underway I notice nothing of that sort, and anyone hoping to curry favor thus is plain out of luck. (My wife says I am unobservant in such regard... 😏)

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=24626&start=30>

Fid wrote:

In your notes at the end of the Dungeonland module, you mention that Dr. Joyce Brothers had adventured in this module (or its CG predecessor). Any recollections?

Joyce was interested in getting a better idea of how the D&D game was played, what it was all about, as she was serving as a spokeswoman for the company. All I recall is that we played with me as the dm and she was mildly amused...mainly by the setting.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=24626&start=120>

cimerians wrote:

Hi Gary just a few questions and maybe some that have been asked before (sorry).

- Dragonlance. Your thoughts on the novels and other matters when you were with TSR way back then. Basically was it something that you approved etc.

I had no connection with the project, and I found the modules less than satisfactory for any RPG system as their outcome was too scripted.

The novels were very successful and made a fair amount of profit for TSR. I found them lacking the sort of swashbuckling action that I enjoy in my fantasy reading.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=24626&start=330>

Barrataria wrote:

Col_Pladoh wrote:

The World of Greyhawk map and text took me about a month to write.

Wow 🤩

Was it (1) a crazy deadline, (2) because much had already been kicking around in your head as you DM'd the Castle campaign, or (3) just because you are a great writer?

I've always had the impression that what actually got into the WoG folio was a fair bit of new material, as opposed to material from your home campaign, so that seems like an unbelievable job. Particularly absent ghost writers, computers/word processing systems, etc. You must have worn out a few of those silly old typewriter erasers 😊

Brian asked me to create a world setting for the A/D&D game as quickly as I could. I took him at his word. First I found out the maximum size map we could print, then hand-drew the double-sized map that appeared in the *World of Greyhawk* product.

That entailed putting in the terrain features and names, names of states, location and names of major population centers. The naming part was more work than was placing the map features. That took me about two weeks time.

Writing the material for the whole was fairly easy, as I could look at what I had drawn and let my creative imagination have free reign. Of course having been a DM for many years by that time I was well aware of what sort of variety would please the gaming audience. It was also relatively easy to manage, because I purposely left much of the detail for individual DMs to insert, thus making the setting their own.

As Darlene was working on printable version of the map, I went back and did a bit of further development and polishing to the ms., and that was that. A month of dedicated and constant attention to the project, and finished after about 250 hours work time. Frank Mentzer did some further development, adding his and my later material, for the boxed set version.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=24626&start=330>

Asrogoth wrote:

I just bought a copy of one of my favorite movies from my youth -- "Krull".

As I sat rewatching it the other night, I thought... "Wow! What great D&D fodder! It's like this movie was made FOR D&D!!!"

As I was perusing the net to find out more information, I came across a statement that "Krull" was originally going to be an '80s movie MADE for Dungeons and Dragons.

Gary, can you confirm that statement? If so, why did it not make it as the D&D movie? It would have been

an EXCELLECT choice, quite better than the most recent "D&D" movies, even if full of 80s cheese.

To the best of my knowledge and belief the produces of *Krull* never approached TSR for a license to enable their film to use the D&D game IP.

It is a fact though that in 1983-84 I was working with FLint Dille on a script for a major motion picture based on the D&D game and the *World of Greyhawk* setting after the BLumes refused to move foreward with a James Goldman script based on the game.

Orson Wells had agreed to play the main supporting role in our fulm, and I was in negotiation with Edgar Gross to have John Boorman direct it. Lorraine William's taking over TSR ended the matter, as no one in the entertainment business wanted to deal with her.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=24626&start=420>

ScottyG wrote:

Gary, did you design the luz minifig? Was there a reason he was given evil halflings as henchmen? It strikes an odd cord, but I dig the idea. I actually made four evil halfling NPCs to represent them in y campaign as player adversaries.

Darned if I can recall...too many years back for such details to be recollected.

I had evil halflings as his henchmen to underscore just how vile he was--much the same as the malign dwarf Obmi assisting giants.

SOURCE: <http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=50&t=26882&start=30>