Net Topics

From

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This Book is compiled

And

Edited by

Muad´Dib The Nightbringer

This book could never have been done
Without the work of
The members
On

ADND-L Mailing List

An accessory for all to use
In any game they want……

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Foreword:

One day I was reading the mails I had received through the mailing list, and I find a thread that I really liked, I decided to compile so I could have a reference sheet for my own game, when suddenly it hit me, perhaps others were interested in this too….

Then the idea came, quickly I wrote to the list owner if it was allowed, and then at August 1st it became a reality now known as ”The Readers Tips”….

One day I was sending request messages to the members of the list, I got contacted from a member (Unfortunately I have lost the file in a computer crash, so I don´t remember who it was) who really liked the work being done to this, and he had a suggestion, that one day this should be compiled to Netbook for easy reference to, and I agreed. So now here is the netbook of ”Net-Topics”….

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Book 1

Beholder Questions:

Greetings All,

I'm going to running my players through the Beholder series of adventures (Eye of Pain, Eye of Doom, and Eye to Eye). I have the I, Tyrant sourcebook and have read it, but I still have a few question, and I hope you can give me some suggestions.

1. How exactly does the anti-magic ray work with respect to spell effects that enter its' a.o.e.? Does it just temporarily negate the spells' effect while in the a.o.e., or does it totally and completely kill the spell? If the negation is only temporary, when the main eye is destroyed, would the spells begin to function immediately or would they begin again in the next round?

2. I, Tyrant says "...control over its eye attacks is not perfect; the beholder can never be sure that his attack will hit with pinpoint accuracy. Often, the beholder will need to make tiny adjustments to its aim in order to hit a target." How does this translate into game mechanics? Does the beholder have to make an attack roll every time he targets a new creature with an eye power? If he misses the first round, and is targeting the same being, does he automatically hit in the second round or would he just get a bonus to hit for every round spent zeroing in on the target?

3. Should AC bonus for physical armor apply since the eye attacks aren't physical in nature?

4. If the character is using a shield, would it be possible to block the eye rays since they are visible as beams of light? How should this be resolved? If this is possible, should the shield be able to block multiple rays, depending on their size, using the standard number of physical attacks each shield type can block?

5. I you look disintegrate up in the PHB, it says that "Only the first creature or object struck can be affected." Now, if a fighter was wearing a full suit of plate mail with no helm, and the beholder's disintegrate ray struck him in the chest, would he be affected or would you allow that if the armor failed its save that it was disintegrated? (This is somewhat a character preservation question. That and it makes things more interesting for them. "Oops, that ray just caused you plate mail +2 to disappear. What's your armor class now?" :-)) If this is a viable option, I plan on using a hit location chart.

Off Beholders - If a character has a pair of Bracers of Defense, and one bracer is somehow destroyed, would the character lose all protection or would the intact bracer still protect him some (say at 1/3 of normal protection, rounded to the better AC). I didn't see anywhere that stated that both bracers had to be worn, but I remember reading/hearing something like it some time ago.

(Anonymous, no email)

>1. How exactly does the anti-magic ray work with respect to spell effects that enter its' a.o.e.? Does it
>just temporarily negate the spells' effect while in the a.o.e., or does it totally and completely kill the
>spell? If the negation is only temporary, when the main eye is destroyed, would the spells begin to
>function immediately or would they begin again in the next round?

IMO, the ray negates spelleffects while in use. (see spell Wall of Blackstone in I, Tyrant pg 33) if the
spell duration is spent with the anti-magic ray in effect then the spell is gone. If a spell is permanent it
would depend on the nature of the spell. (ie a wall of iron is gone but all those cure light wounds are
unaffected.)

>2. I, Tyrant says "...control over its eye attacks is not perfect; the beholder can never be sure that his
>attack will hit with pinpoint accuracy. Often, the beholder will need to make tiny adjustments to its
>aim in order to hit a target." How does this translate into game mechanics? Does the beholder have to
>make an attack roll every time he targets a new creature with an eye power? If he misses the first
>round, and is targeting the same being, does he automatically hit in the second round or would he just
>get a bonus to hit for every round spent zeroing in on the target?

I would say a new attack roll for each use of an eye power, "zeroing in" would only be an option if the
target were stationary.

>3. Should AC bonus for physical armor apply since the eye attacks aren't physical in nature?

I say yes because I like my players...

>4. If the character is using a shield, would it be possible to block the eye rays since they are visible as
>beams of light? How should this be resolved? If this is possible, should the shield be able to block
>multiple rays, depending on their size, using the standard number of physical attacks each shield type
>can block?

only if you agree with me on question #3, if armor has no effect then neither should a shield.

>5. I you look disintegrate up in the PHB, it says that "Only the first creature or object struck can be
>affected." Now, if a fighter was wearing a full suit of plate mail with no helm, and the beholder's
>disintegrate ray struck him in the chest, would he be affected or would you allow that if the armor
>failed its save that it was disintegrated? (This is somewhat a character preservation question. That and
>it makes things more interesting for them. "Oops, that ray just caused you plate mail +2 to disappear.
>What's your armor class now?" :-)) If this is a viable option, I plan on using a hit location chart.

Again how much do you like the characters? If you want a deadlier encounter the armor can be ignored
(after all they DO get saving throws...)

>Off Beholders - If a character has a pair of Bracers of Defense, and one bracer is somehow destroyed,
>would the character lose all protection or would the intact bracer still protect him some (say at 1/3 of
>normal protection, rounded to the better AC). I didn't see anywhere that stated that both bracers had
>to be worn, but I remember reading/hearing something like it some time ago.

I would say that a single bracer provides no magical bonus, it still looks nice though.

M.D. Bielinski earthden@M7.SPRYNET.COM

>I'm going to running my players through the Beholder series of adventures (Eye of Pain, Eye of
>Doom, and Eye to Eye). I have the I, Tyrant sourcebook and have read it, but I still have a few
>question, and I hope you can give me some suggestions.

I have already run my party through the first two. Now, they are on other adventures gaining enough
levels to be able to survive the last one. :-)

> 1. How exactly does the anti-magic ray work with respect to spell effects that enter its' a.o.e.? Does
>it just temporarily negate the spells' effect while in the a.o.e., or does it totally and completely kill the
>spell? If the negation is only temporary, when the main eye is destroyed, would the spells begin to
>function immediately or would they begin again in the next round?

It destroys all temporary spells. Permanent effects/items continue functioning properly as soon as they
are out of the area of effect. What would be nasty is to have a beholder that requires +1 or better
weapons to hit. As long as the beholder faces its opponent, it could never be hurt!

> 2. I, Tyrant says "...control over its eye attacks is not perfect; the beholder can never be sure that his
>attack will hit with pinpoint accuracy. Often, the beholder will need to make tiny adjustments to its
>aim in order to hit a target." How does this translate into game mechanics? Does the beholder have to
>make an attack roll every time he targets a new creature with an eye power? If he misses the first
>round, and is targeting the same being, does he automatically hit in the second round or would he just
>get a bonus to hit for every round spent zeroing in on the target?

I play it as an automatic hit, but give the beholder a +3 initiative modifier for the first eye, and then
each consecutive eye takes +1 (thus, one eye that needs to be repositioned, requires a +1 initiative). I
do this because the beholder has only one brain and I think the delay seems more realistic, and
increases the drama of the combat.

> 3. Should AC bonus for physical armor apply since the eye attacks aren't physical in nature?

If you play that a to hit is needed, you need to use the armor class. Do you really need a to-hit to look
at something? Have you ever attempted to look at something and missed?

> 4. If the character is using a shield, would it be possible to block the eye rays since they are visible as
>beams of light? How should this be resolved? If this is possible, should the shield be able to block
>multiple rays, depending on their size, using the standard number of physical attacks each shield type
>can block?

Well, if the player is completely obstructed then the beholder must target what he can see. So, I would
say that the disintegrate (for example) would destroy the shield or armor, whichever the beholder hit.
The item would get a save, and not the player. If the player wants a save, then have the eye blast affect
both him and the armor.

> 5. I you look disintegrate up in the PHB, it says that "Only the first creature or object struck can be
>affected." Now, if a fighter was wearing a full suit of plate mail with no helm, and the beholder's
>disintegrate ray struck him in the chest, would he be affected or would you allow that if the armor
>failed its save that it was disintegrated? (This is somewhat a character preservation question. That and
>it makes things more interesting for them. "Oops, that ray just caused you plate mail +2 to disappear.
>What's your armor class now?" :-)) If this is a viable option, I plan on using a hit location chart.

I think the PHB was referring to items not ON the player unless specifically targeted. For example, say the players are behind a rock, tree, or other obstruction. But, you can target the armor, IMHO and IMC.

> Off Beholders - If a character has a pair of Bracers of Defense, and one bracer is somehow destroyed, >would the character lose all protection or would the intact bracer still protect him some (say at 1/3 of >normal protection, rounded to the better AC). I didn't see anywhere that stated that both bracers had >to be worn, but I remember reading/hearing something like it some time ago.

It would not function. In fact, if one was actually destroyed, I think the other would lose its magic (maybe over time). This is a good idea for an adventure. The party uncovers one bracer from a set of bracers of defense (AC 2) and must find the other.

Lance R. Marrou   marrou@lasetech.com

Calculating XP for Character classes

One of the things I have always been a little confused it is the amount of XP to give when a party defeats enemies that are character classes themselves. Does anyone have anything they use to do this, other than the xp table in the DMG? Do you have any guidelines on how much xp a 6th level thief, or an 8th level cleric, mage or fighter is worth? How about Dual or multi classed opponents? Hope someone can help.

Phil Naughton Phil.Naughton@XICON.COM

In the chapter entitled Experience in the DMG 2ed there is a table which gives xps for levels and various other facts. I cant quote it to you because i dont have the DMG with me but that is the best place to look i would say.

(Anonymous)

>Do you have any guidelines on how much xp a 6th level thief, or an 8th level cleric, mage or fighter is >worth? How about Dual or multi classed opponents?

I had read somewhere (and I really have no idea where) that for killing/defeating a PC-type class opponent, you got 10% of the XP it took for them to get where they are. So to kill a 2nd level fighter, you'd get 200 xp (if I'm remembering the XP tables properly). I have always thought this to be a little high, though.

Paul, Brett Brett_Paul@KNE.COM

It isnt really high given that a properly played character can be amazingly more destructive than a generic monsters of equivalent Hit Dice, excluding weird monster powers.

(Anonymous)

> Has anyone got a chart or technique that they use to work out how much xp to give for an 8th level
>mage or a 5th level Thief etc??? I have found the chart given in the DMG is a little difficult to follow
>in this case.

I personally just use the DMG chart. It's generic, but I don't have much trouble using it for classes.
Translate the class level to hit dice. Magical weapons count as magical attacks, and wizards and priests
would count as having spell ability. Multiple attacks for fighters could increase the XP rating,
especial-ly if they do 20 or more points of damage in a round. I ignore NWPs unless they apply to
combat, such as blind-fighting, which I consider a special attack form. The tumbling NWP could be
considered a special defense since it can be used to dodge attacks. A thief's thieving abilities wouldn't
even be considered in the equation since they don't help him in combat.

BTW, for those who use the DMG's XP chart, I'd like to get your opinions on something. The chart has
a category to add +1 to the XP calculation if the creature does 20+ points of damage in a round. Let's
say you have a creature that does 10-30 points of damage in a round. Does he gain the +1? I'm trying to
decide if the rule means the creature does a minimum of 20+ or a possible 20+.

Brenton Miller   brent@gryffon.com

>I personally just use the DMG chart. It's generic, but I don't have much trouble using it for classes.

Hey, try using this on your group's characters. My DM in h.s. used this to gauge who really had the
most powerful character (and thus, who got attacked the most).

>A thief's thieving abilities wouldn't even be considered in the equation since they don't help him in
>combat.

Um... what about backstabbing?

Jason E Hubred   jinxmchue@juno.com

> Um... what about backstabbing?

I wasn't considering that a thieving ability, but yes, I would consider it a special attack. For thieving
abilities, I meant pick pockets, hide in shadows, etc.

Brenton Miller   brent@gryffon.com

I have always used the chart that is in the 1st edition DMG. (Ah, the wonders of 1st edition.) Anyway,
with that list, you get a base XP for the HD of the character, then you get to add or subtract XP for
either special abilities (for the additions) or because of certain inate problems with the creature (for the
subtractions). I still think that this is one of the best ways to come up with XP's for creatures like NPC's
or new monster types.

autozzzzz@EARTHLINK.NET

>>Has anyone got a chart or technique that they use to work out how much xp to give for an 8th level
>mage or a 5th level Thief etc?

I still use the original chart in the 1979 DMG (yeah I know I'm old) that got me started as a DM. It is on page 85. Since it is way out of print I will post you the whole shabang! (not quite word for word)

Experience Level or Hit Dice	Basic XP Value	XP per Hit Point	Special Ability Bonus(each)	Exceptional Ability Bonus(each)
up to 1-1	5	1	2	25
1-1 to 1	10	1	4	35
1+1 to 2	20	2	8	45
2+1 to 3	35	3	15	55
3+1 to 4	60	4	25	65
4+1 to 5	90	5	40	75
5+1 to 6	150	6	75	125
6+1 to 7	225	8	25	175
7+1 to 8	375	10	175	275
8+1 to 9	600	12	300	400
9+1 to 10+	900	14	450	600
11 to 12+	1300	16	700	850
13 to 14+	1800	18	950	1200
15 to 16+	2400	20	1250	1600
17 to 18+	3000	25	1550	2000
19 to 20+	4000	30	2100	2500
21 and up	5000	35	2600	3000

Peasants, levies and 0 levels as "up to 1-1"
Brigands, men-at-arms, guards as "1-1 to 1
All leveled NPC's & PC's as n+1, where n=level

SPECIAL ABILITIES: 4 or more attacks per round, missle use, AC 0 or lower, special attacks (blood drain, crush etc.) special defense (regeneration, magic to hit etc.), minor magic (basically defensive), high intelligence/organization that affects combat.

EXCEPTIONAL ABILITIES: level drain, paralysis, poison (strong), major breath weapon, magic resistance, spell use, swallowing whole, max damage over 25hp for a single attack, 30 for two, 36 for three, or 42 for all combinations in one round.

Chris Knudson cknudson@gocougs.wsu.edu

Court martial

In one of the games that i am playing, we have a small problem with court martialing. It is in the forgotten Realms in the place called Cormyr. But the issue is ADND relevant everywhere. How would you run a trial against the Characters, so that they would feel that they really was in the court-room and could hear the grumbling voting of the jury.

This is the case, One of the Characters friends are a lord of Suzail, a petty lord, but a lord. they feared for his safety, as they learned that A powerful undead was in his house. This they told their friend the lord. Who took of in a jiffy up to his estate. The remaining party then armed themselves with holy Water (as much as they could find). And took to the Lords Estate. At the gate they were stopped by a priest of mystra. The lord is a high priest of Mystra. and the person who were allowed entrance discovered the Undead via a Detect Undead spell. He then moved out to the others, who took the consequences. They gained entrance by knocking the priest in the head, several times with a blunt instrument........actually it was a crowbar!!!!!!. and then they moved in to the perimeter and took the perimeter hostage, they cast a web spell to hold some of the combatants in there, mainly warriors, but one of the warriors who had fallen back, to call for backup. Was severely battered and mangled with the same horn he used to call for backup. He was not killed though. well the intruders then start to test for undeads once again with their Detect Undead, and discovers that there is no undead anymore. and then they run off. leaving the person to die.

As i see it:

The crimes that has been done is.
Manslaughter, (not murder)
Assault and Battering.
Breaking and Entering.

the question is here, what will the trial be like? What kind of sentences will they receive??

Christian liberg nielsen webmaster@liberg.dk

>> the question is here, what will the trial be like?<<

Well, that depends on the type of government in the city and how much a friend their lord friend is and also how influential he is. If this lord wants to keep them from being punished, at least too severely, the incident might be kept quiet and there will be a private trial in which the characters get a slap on the wrist. If the lord is repulsed by what they did and wants to see them punished, then the characters can look forward toa very biased trial which is basically only going to go through the motions, since the judge will have already decided he's going to rule for the strictest punishment possible.

>>What kind of sentences will they receive??<<

This too depends on many factors. Was the priest who died a noble or influential or important in some way? Are any of the PC's nobles? They are friends of a lord, so again, is he on their side? If so, punishments would be minor, if any. If the lord wanted them punished, I'd say they could very likely be put on the gallows. Everything depends on the importance and reaction of the lord and on the publicity the event received, so I'd need more details before I could give a more detailed opinion.

I would say that (assuming the lord is a good friend), the lord would be very disturbed by the killing of the priest. He would probably overlook the other events, but would feel the need for some form of justice for the dead priest. He may understand the PC's didn't murder the priest, but he would at least be disappointed in the PC's' negligence. Perhaps the sentence would then be an important service to the church of Mystra and/or the priest's family, if any, to atone for their transgression.

Brenton Miller brent@gryffon.com

Ooh, a trial. I like trials.

First, I am not sure if the concept of Trial by Jury of One's Peers existed in such times. But I am not an expert on FR. In mideval times, to my beleif, the local lord heard such matters and pronounced sentence. Since the victim was a priest of Mystra (I guess that is the person left to die), the temple of Mystra may ask that the matter be handed over to them, and priests of magic can have fun ways of discovering the truth of the situation. As for the entire situation, I am not sure what exactly happened from your description. But looking at the situation, the charge would probably be murder. I do not believe there were such distinct
degrees of homicide as are present today.

First, I would suggest giving the PC's access to council. Have the PC's briefed on the rules of the courtroom for this particular place. Playing their council, brief them on the situation and develop a strategy. Then, either let one of the players take the part of council, or say that argumants must be conducted directly by the responsible parties. Then take the part of the prosecution. I reccoment leaving the burden of proof with the Prosecution, as it gives the PC's power. Prosecution presents the case. Keep a list of each point of evidence presented. Then let the Defense answer to each point. For each point made by prosecution, if the arguments by defense were effective, give them a point. If it was not, subtract one. Add more points if the defense presents a good argument in their favor. Subtract points if the stick their foots in their mouth. Have each side present a closing argument, and add/subtract points based on the outcome. Count other circumstances, like a PC's political pull and such.

To determine the outcome, make a Charisma check for each PC, and apply the points to each roll (if the score for the trial was 5, subtract 5 from each roll, this improving their chances, and if the score was -5, well you get the idea). If there were more successes (or a tie, if you are nice), the PC's are found innocent. If there were more failures, they are found guilty.

I have used this system before, and it has taught my PC's the value of good looks.

Chris Hawkins chhawkin@VT.EDU

>>In mideval times, to my beleif, the local lord heard such matters and pronounced sentence.<<

Possibly. There were judges way back when. According to what I've read, The Middle Ages, Volume II, Readings in Medieval History, a court session was held every once and a while and folks could come or were required to come before the travelling judge to make their case. Of course, the idea of medieval justice is different from our (American) own. The Law captial letters required was evident and eternal. Laws weren't created by men to serve men, but were as fundemental and omnipresent as gravity and entropy. A law was the right and proper way to do things, the proper order or course of things. Now, if my understanding is correct, the judges were a leige of a lord and travelled to all the lord's holdings to mete out justice. He came around every few weeks and if you were lucky, you didn't have to attend or have any reason to want to attend. (After all, court sessions take valuable time away from farming.) There were some sessions for which all adults (people twelve or older) were required to attend. These sessions were a time in which the "bargain" between the peasants and the lord were examined to make certain the peasants were living up to their end of it. But I guess this is something of a tangent. Oh well.

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<u>Destroying Misc. Magic Items</u>

Where in the world do people get the idea that ANY destroyed magical item (from glass baubles enchanted with Cont.. Light to magical weapons) will explode extremely violently? There is no mention of this in any rule book (just for items with a Retributive Strike ability). Sure, it may seem

cool to have every item do this, but it cheapens the ones that should be the only ones to do that. Plus, it makes it too easy for PC's to win. (Kill someone by shattering a glass sphere enchanted with Cont. Light? Give me a break! That's about as bad as having an enemy protected by "1000 Stoneskins.") Don't get me wrong, though. The destruction of any magical item should be noticeable, just not that destructive. Verey minor items (such as the afore mentioned glass sphere) should probably just break with no decernable effect whereas the more powerful items (like a Holy Avenger) might explode enough to injure, but not kill. And I'm almost afraid to think of what would happen if someone broke a Wand of Wonder...

Jason E Hubred jinxmchue@juno.com

>Where in the world do people get the idea that ANY destroyed magical item (from glass baubles
>enchanted with Cont.. Light to magical weapons) will explode extremely violently?

Actually it in the DMG pg 89 under the section DESTROYING MAGICAL ITEMS, it says that breaking a magical item should result in something more dramatic than the breaking of a vase or windowpane.

> Plus, it makes it too easy for PC's to win. (Kill someone by shattering a glass sphere enchanted with
>Cont. Light? Give me a break!

Actually it says that it's very difficult to break magic items in combat. It also says that something like the glass sphere would only do 1d8 points of damage.

> That's about as bad as having an enemy protected by "1000 Stoneskins.")

Please don't start up that Stoneskin thing again! :-)

> Don't get me wrong, though. The destruction of any magical item should be noticeable, just not that
>destructive. Verey minor items (such as the afore mentioned glass sphere) should probably just break
>with no decernable effect whereas the more powerful items (like a Holy Avenger) might explode
>enough to injure, but not kill.

I agree somewhat. I modify what is in the DMG. I do damage in incriments of 1d4. Your Holy Avenger would do 5d4 because it's a +5 weapon. For charged items, I do 1d4 for every 10 charges. For other items, I base the damage off of the spell level of the power (Ring of wishes - 9d4 per wish). I impose a limit of 10d4 maximum, unless it's a really powerful item (like a ring with 3 wishes, hehehe)!

> And I'm almost afraid to think of what would happen if someone broke a Wand of Wonder...

At full number of charges (100) that would be 10d4 damage. Ouch!

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I don't know where they got the idea of the glass sphere, but I have read about the violent discharge of wands and other "chargable" items somewhere. I thought that it was in the Book of Artifacts, but I can't seem to find it anywhere right now. I know that I have heard and used the retributive strike from the staff of the magi and staff of power, but with the wands and stuff, I think that the damage was only 1

point per charge left or 2 points per charge for rods or something. I don't really remember and can't find it right now.

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>I agree somewhat. I modify what is in the DMG. I do damage in incriments of 1d4. Your Holy
>Avenger would do 5d4 because it's a +5 weapon. For charged items, I do 1d4 for every 10 charges.
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>I impose a limit of 10d4 maximum, unless it's a really powerful item (like a ring with 3 wishes, hehe)!
>And I'm almost afraid to think of what would happen if someone broke a Wand of Wonder. At full number of charges (100) that would be 10d4 damage. Ouch!

Not trying to insult you or anything, but I find this a tad dull :-) Most players don't destroy magic items every session, so we don't need detailed retributive strike rules. But I'd make it up as I go along, depending on the item:

 Potions & scrolls: No effect

Wands should always, IMO, have SOMETHING happen, based on the wand's function. For a Wand of Wonder, I'd probably roll up 1d4 effects on one of the extended tables from the 'Net for the Wand of Wonder or Wild Magic affects, then execute them all at triple power. It might be the most potent magical explosion ever seen, but not likely; maybe the guy breaking it changes sex, is covered in flowers, and a large hole opens in the ground in front of him.

Rings are pretty hard to destroy without melting them, and I'd say a ring is pretty strong magic (Remember the end of Lord Of The Rings? Then again, that would be an artifact...) But if a ring's being melted there won't be anyone holding it, like with other items....

We rule that it'd be harder than average to break a magical sword ANWYAY, so the PC attempting this better have high str and be set on his task. But I wouldn't have much effect from this anyway - I don't view magical weapons & armor as having special enchantment if they're just +n. If they're, say "+5 versus goblins" or better yet, a Sword Of The Planes or Armor Of Etherealness, that's something else entirely. Breaking one of these last two might open a portal to either a random plane for the sword or the ethereal plane for the armor...permamencey up to DM :-) And, of course, stuff can come through BOTH ways (What do you MEAN, you released all the demons of the abyss?)

And oh, in reply to the original Continual Light question, I'd rule there was a "big flash of light" and maybe blind everyone for 1d4 rounds, rolled seperately for each person that was looking at it. The players would quickly start to take advantage of this, though.

Anyway, there's my take on it. Summary: All enchanted items should have some effect, but not neccesarily a major or harmful effect; it could even be helpful. But SOMETHING should happen...

Darryl Shpak dos021@FREENET.MB.CA

I was in a group a long time a go where they destroyed a Wand of Wonder. We were doing the first Ruins of Undermountain Box. At the end you have to escape a large drow city. The drow PC in our party levetaited to the roof of the cavern and created the distraction for our escape. We had accidentaly made a big entrance, so everyone knew that this drow wizard was with us. He wedged a wand of

wonder into a small crack in the cavern ceiling, and set it off to destroy it. Whether that is a legit way to destroy one, or not, when the herd of rhinos that erupted from the wand, it literally brought the house down. The item's destruction had collapsed the entire cavern killing a lot lot of drow.

(Anonymous, no email)

EPIC CAMPAIGNS

Hello out there in ADND-L land!

I'm currently running an epic campaign on my homegrown game world of Goodvale and I have a problem. The campaign revolves around eight "lesser" gods trying to usurp four "greater" (creator) gods. Now, this is all fine and dandy and the PC's are doing a smashing job. . . BUT. . . what do I do when the adventure is over? After saving the world what should I follow up with? Nothing is going to seem quite so exciting or fullfilling as defeating the gods. So, what do you guys think?

Dan Koziar, koziard@cyberbeach.net

Its an interesting question, and One which my main Char, Zargul had to face with my DM at the time. Here I was, I had just defeated the God of Evil, and the whole world lay at my feet. What to do, how about uniting the known world under one order (just happens to me me who got to do it huh?). Well the fight to get 9 majoir race, in 21 different nations togehter and under my just rule proved to be a massive campain that lasted 8 years real time, and about 1,000 years game time. Then Zargul gets this realy egotistical isea, why not get rid of all evil. So I start an inquisition. Then I really get ambitious, why not get rid of Evil permanently, starting with the God of Evil who i imprisoned in a mountain with most of his minions about a millenium ago. After 9 years playing this character, and about 84 levels, (trying to figure out the XP for level 80 was allmost as impossible as trying to get that much xp in the first place) I decided to end it all in a massive cataclysm. Try looking up the High Level campains. Most of what you can get out of these books and moduals are interesting. And if your a Good DM, new plot lines are always a thought away. Since you are trying to get rid of the old gods, why not add a couple of plot tickeners. Like have the fabric of reality begin to fray, because the new gods don't know what to do. The PC's could begin a quest to find some way of getting the knowledge from the old gods to the new gods. Ther is plenty one can do after the first campain is done. Hope this helps

Zargul09@aol.com

I understand what you're saying ("Lesse...we just defeated the GODS and saved the world, and you want to hire us to find a lost talisman...?"). A few things that you might want to keep in mind:

* Regardless of the "epicness" of a scenario, unless the ultimate end is the destruction of the world, there will be consequences in dealing with the aftermath. Despite having dealt with one "threat" or whatever, you may find another one has come along to take it's place. In the real world, the end of World War II pretty much rolled right into the Cold War between the US and the Soviet Union. In a fantasy world, look at what could happen next:

* Servants or allies of the gods the PC's defeated want to exact revenge on them and their kin (like the

Drak'h (sp?) or those parasite thingies that attached themselves to the Centauri in Babylon 5)

* There may be another group that has been waiting for the turmoil or conflict to weaken the factions so they can make their move (i.e.; let everyone else beat the crap out of each other, then we'll move in and take over). There was a book I read in college that suggested Stalin was going to do this after World War II (the author claimed that Joe wanted to get the "Imperialist" nations (Germany, Japan, the US, Britain, France, Italy) to weaken each other in a battle of attrition, and make it easy for the USSR to take over Europe). Whether this was the case or not is irrelevant; it's example of the idea.

* During the struggle to defeat the gods, the PC's may have done things or make promises that they now need to follow-up on. Some of these may have larger ramifications that they initially released ("O.K., you used my Sceptre of Mystic Power to defeat Zoojambo the Dark...remember our agreement to clean out the Pit of Despair? Excellent where is it? Why, the Outer Planes, of course oh, that's right your people call that place "the Abyss").

* The PC's may be called upon to help create the "new world" following the conflict (sort of like the New Republic in Star Wars or the Interstellar Alliance in B5). This would open itself up for more political and social gaming, but that might not be your players' cup of tea.

Another idea is to continue the campaign, but with different characters. This would be a better choice for dealing with an "aftermath" situation, as things would probably be more challenging with lower-level PC's (who hadn't taken on the gods themselves! :) I did something like this a few years ago in college. The PC's in the campaign I ran my freshman year achieved a level of fairly heroic proportions (Hi, Merrick!). The next year, with a few of the same players and a couple of new ones, the campaign was in the same world, but years later and with new PC's. The players who'd played in the old campaign played characters that were children of the original "heroes". This in itself can present interesting role-playing situations for the PC's ("Why can't you be more like your parents, Elana?" "Well, they're both *archdukes* and my father is a Steel Dragon! Give me a couple years, for Alyara's sake!" <ahem> long story... :) These ideas may or may not work for you, but they're just suggestions...

Bruce Gulke akira@starnetinc.net

Well, I am currently in your situation, but in my case the job is FAR more difficult for my PC's. And worse yet, events are like dominoes in my world. Everything you do effects everything else. After my PC's do or don't do something, I ask myself about what I think would logically be the next step. What happens if you don't kill the big cheese? Or, you kill it and there's a power vaccuum? I suggest you look at (or buy) the Dm's Option: High Level Campaigns book. It has a lot of suggestions for this sort of thing.

Ask yourself this: Why bother figuring out what the PC's will do next? Let them figure out what they do next. The possibilities are infinite. If they complain, tell them that you aren't going to hold their hands any more, that they have earned the privilege to guide themselves. Then, look at what they have done in the past. Find some loose ends and ask yourself: Okay, since this was not resolved, what would the NPC's involved do? What is the logical next step for them, considering what you (in your privileged position as DM/God) know about their personalities/worldviews?

Just some ideas.....

Scott Funk   Scott.C.Funk-1@tc.umn.edu

The other option, which is what I'm planning on - is to jump ahead in time. Go down a generation - they can start over playing their PC's kids. *Anything* can happen in the future.

Another idea, which could be a *lot* of fun would be to do as above, but introduce time travel - have the kids come back in time because an NPC that got away (or someone else allied with the bad guys, or one of *their* kids) came back in time and is going to try to stop it all from working. They can *re-play* the adventure, with the mysteries half-solved, but they have to worry about when this person - who read the same histoy books as the PC's kids - will strike. Or will that kid tell the bad guys what the good guys *did*. Make it a one-way type of trip - they'll never be able to go home again, and the nature of the magic means they cannot exist at the same time as a double - they'll vanish once they're conceived or something... I dunno.

Nathan Burgoine   nburgoin@CHAT.CARLETON.CA

I'm assuming you don't want to abandon Goodvale. What about taking things to a personal level now? Are there unresolved issues that you could focus on now - like finding out if everyone's family is okay - and throw in some consquences to the events as the characters deal with these?

Seanchai0@aol.com

So, asuming the PC's are on the side of the new gods, they could be taken out of circulation by becoming heavenly creatures, sort of like saints. In most campaigns, this would mean the PC's become NPC's, but you never know. Or you could get Planescape (which I can't comment on, not having looked at it) and send your PC's out exploring the planes. And who says the overthrown gods are going to stay gone? Perhaps they'll comeback, or their remaining followers will be out to get your PC's.

Adam Collinge: acolinge@uvic.ca

I don't know about the system of power in your godly system but you may want to run the same problem the Greeks had when they usurped the greater gods, power. All of a sudden you have eight gods in control of what four could comfortably handle. In the case of the Greeks they had an heir to the throne so to speak through Zeus. IF you don't have this then it makes it all the more interesting because they have to decide on who is going to control what. Then the fun begins. The players then have to decide on which god to base loyalty on or if they want to try to try to remain respectively neutral. After this it becomes a game of gods undermining the power of other gods with the players stuck right inside of everything. This power struggle then can last for years or decades. Always be careful when you divide the powers between the gods. It needs to be equal enough so that no one has enough power to enact control over all. A good way to set it up is like our government. Not because it is a good government, but because it allows for adventure and intrigue. As a side note, the nature of the lesser gods can come into play; are they good, evil, or what.

Troy Wieck (no email)

Fight Descriptions

I am Dming a campaign, when the inevitable fight scene comes around, I like to add a bit of color other than swing, hit, miss etc. However never having put on a piece of armour or weilded a mace or morning star etc. I don't know how to relay the impressions across effectively. I imagine that a piece of armour stoping a mace is still going to hurt, likewise a shield a two handed-sword numbing the arm etc.

Does anyone have a list of combat effects/descriptions that could be used randomly to create great fight scenes?

hans.neser@auepg.mail.abb.com

From various descriptions of fight damage in various TSR porducts, It seems that these effects are factored in. The arm numbing blow of a 2 handed sword to a shield could be a hit that scored only 2 or 3 points of damage. "Misses" are when the attack completely missed the target or was deflected in such a way as to not harm the target (the sword hits the shield at an angle and glances off sideways...)

Chris Hawkins chhawkin@VT.EDU

What is needed is a combat system that allows the defender active rolls in his/her defense. Palladium has such a system and it isn't too difficult to incorporate. Shields become worth their weight in gold for the parry bonuses and Large shields (like the famous Norman Kite) could even provide missile protection (be careful of the long bow however). Using a combat system like this allows you to embellish the actions that are being resolved by the mechanics (strike, parry, dodge).

(Anonymous, no email)

Just out of curiosity, though, wasn't the original poster looking more for descriptive colour in his combat, rather than rules adjustments?

If so:

I can't really add any specific info on how weapons work, BUT I'd highly recommend getting in touch with a medieval reenactment group in your area. I could supply a list of three or four in the area that I live in, but that would be next to useless. Some of the international ones, like SCA, will most likely have a web presence, and someone who is more than happy to talk to you over email.

I find it's the little touches that are often important when describing combat. I was running a convention event recently, and one of the party encountered a carrion crawler. Now, just before I ran the encounter I checked out the size of the carrion crawler, in response to a question as to which size category it is. Large. 9 foot. Double-take.

NINE FOOT? THAT'S THREE METERS LONG!

So, suffice to say, the carrion crawler reared over the wee little fighter, dwarfing him with its size. He blanched a little, not so happy about the fight suddenly. I *never*, at any time throughout the entire

encounter, referred to it as a carrion crawler, either. Just a bulbous, nine foot worm with insectoid legs and a writhing mass of tentacles (well, I didn't give the description, either).

If you want to gross people out, death scenes for bugs like the carrion crawler can be cool, too. He ripped the thing in half with a solid blow from his mace, and was showered in green goop and small, maggoty creatures that had been growing inside the carrion crawler. He walked away from the fight **extremely** relieved and very nauseated.

And that's just carrion crawlers. Think about the descriptive potential that a dragon provides the DM with...

Laughing Wolf lwolf@globec.com.au

>Just out of curiosity, though, wasn't the original poster looking more for descriptive colour in his
>combat, rather than rules adjustments?

I find it easier to describe combat when the mechanics follow closer to actual combat actions. I did a little SCA in college and that helped. I also fenced (Epee primarily) in High School and a little in College which is what motivated me into an alternative combat mechanic in the first place. After beating my fellow human with ratan swords wrapped in duct tape, or a really good hit on the funny bone fencing Sabre, I found it even more difficult to visualize ADND combat using their mechanics. Its really hard to describe combat in a gaming session when we are working with THACO. IMHO of course :)

good Gaming

>If so: I can't really add any specific info on how weapons work, BUT I'd highly recommend getting in
>touch with a medieval reenactment group in your area. I could supply a list of three or four in the area
>that I live in, but that would be next to useless. Some of the international ones, like SCA, will most
>likely have a web presence, and someone who is more than happy to talk to you over email.

Good suggestion. Also any good fencing clubs in your area might help with more of a swashbuckling type of combat. SCA also does some Rapier type fighting. Another suggestion is the Movie called 'The Duelest' staring Kieth Carradine (probably spelled wrong he's the guy who starred in Kung Fu's Brother - David Caradine?). All aspects of Dueling from the original Epee (a truely savage weapon) to Sabre from both ground and horseback, finally to pistol dueling (the real way - not the 10 paces turn and fire).

(Anonymous, no email)

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GUILDS

I would like to ask what the various people feel about Wizard Guilds, or any others for that matter. What I would like to know is, do the Guilds charge people entering them? How much? What do the members get from membership? What happens if a member is traveling from one side of the world to the other, does membership in one allow him access to another? What happens if he tries to enter another guild? How long are they members of one guild? Any thoughts?

(Anonymous)

There are many guilds: wizard, assassin, thief, etc. There is almost always a price to become a member of a guild and sometimes one must prove themselves to attain entrance. The price can very, depending usually on the size of the guild, the city or town in which it resides and the "status" of the guild. Membership in a guild gives you priviledges to that one guild, if you are a guildmember of "The Nightmasks" you don't have any rights(necessarily)in another guild. As far as becoming a member of two guilds, I think that would be rare and definitely dangerous(betraying a guild could be grounds for torture or even death!). The term or length of time that you are a member of a guild is somewhat up to the member and/or the guildmaster.

This is how I envision guilds but I'am sure you will get different responses.

(Anonymous)

Actually Mage Guilds, Thieves Guilds, etc. are based upon real world guilds. Such as Cobblers Guilds, Masons Guilds, etc. these guilds could be almost ridiculously specific as in Glovemakers Guilds (vice a general Tailor) and Nailmakers Guilds (vice a Blacksmith). Obviously in these situations it was possible to belong to more than one Guild at a time, but all these guilds had limited geographical power (usually just one city or town), but just try to sell gloves without being a member of the Glovemakers Guild. Most Guilds required a period of apprenticeship sometimes over a decade. After this the prospective member became a journeyman until he created his "Master-Piece" and became a full member or Master in his craft. Fantasy Guilds can be less restrictive but exist for the same reasons as the real world ones. To protect the interests of their memberships and wield power over non members. Tork off the Nailmakers Guild and you will never see another nail in your life. That's why Thieves don't steal in a new town until they've maid the right contacts. Mage Guilds can operate in the same way, but usually don't. Some wrongheaded notion of "free trade of knowledge" when we all know this only applies to members.

M.D. Bielinski earthden@M7.SPRYNET.COM

According to the "Rules of a Merchant Guild" A documant from Southhampton England 1192, this merchant guild is to create a rulling body. Each member is to vote for an Alderman, a Steward, a Chaplain, Four Skevins and an Usher. Each guild member is to pay the Alderman fourpence (I use 4 copper peices myself) the steward twopence, and the usher one penny.

Membership is for life, and the sons of the members are also to be inducted into the guild, to recieve training. The money raised through the tithe is for charitable funds to the sick and infirm of the city as well as the care taking of the members of the Guild. Membership is exclusive. You cannot travel to a new city and join a new guild. However if you are on official bussiness from one guild, a fellow guild could help put you up for the stay. If a guild member is in another city than he can go and find the local Alderman or Steward of the same guild group (merchant to merchant, silk spinner to silk spinner ect..) and ask for help. The Alderman has the right to deny aid to a forien guild member. If someone tries to sneek into a guild he doen't belong to, he can be killed by the guards. Hope this helps. If your interested in guilds, check the book "Western Sociaties, A documantary History Volume 1, by Brian Tierney and Joan Scott.

Zargul09@aol.com

Hand Movement & Spell Casting

The Dragon Lord dbordeau@snet.net

Dear Members of The List:

In our present adventuring our chracters have encountered quite a few nets. Each time we are netted our DM "assures" us that my mage has no room to move his hands to cast a spell that requires movement. Is this so? Does anyone know of a roll, or something of that nature to tell if casting a spell is possible? Thanks.

Jeff Bourne bournej@CS.TAMU.EDU

As DM I never(almost) tell anyone that something is impossible. I may strongly suggest that it is quite improbable, maybe give some possible bad things that could happen (again maybe), and then come up with a quick probability distribution...you just gotta see their faces when you tell them to roll a d1000 :)

Sheila Dennison   sheila.dennison@acssd.com

When I DM, I usually have the outrageous percentage roll and then I roll to see if the spell did or did not go off the way they wanted it (something like a wand of wonder roll). You know your hands could get tangled and you do the wrong gesture or mumble the wrong word.

Tony Evans   tony@TAGMAN.DEMON.CO.UK

Hmm, being in a net is indeed likely to prevent a mage from casting a spell which requires hand movement. I suggest,

1. wriggle to the edge of the net, stick your arms through and then cast
2. use spells which have no requirement for hand movement (there are some)
3. invent a new spell, along the same lines as vocalise which allow you to cast spells which normally have a requirement for movement, without having to move (this could be an adventure in its own right)
4. avoid getting into the net
etc.

In other words, roleplay the situation out - don't pray for a dice roll to save you!

Too often do people rely on the dice to save them - instead of quick thinking or fast action.

Steven L. Cox   slight@BEV.NET

IMO, the somatic component requirement calls for full freedom of hand and arm movement. Even the slightest deviation should disrupt the spell, and this seems almost assured with the mage's arms being caught, slowed down, or hindered by the close proximity of a net. If AD&D spell mechanics allowed for %chance of spell failure, I would've suggested tacking on a 75% penalty. Since AD&D does *not* have such rules as part of the official system, I'm inclined towards an "all or nothing" ruling - nets prevent the effective somatic requirement of spellcasting.

Calvin & Tammy   cutter64@MEMES.COM

Might I add having the other party members push away and create a small space in which the mage can work?

How can "tracking" be fun

I am currently in the process of creating an adventure that needs to "feature ranger skills." Consequently, it's an outdoor setting. Also consequently, it involves tracking. My question is this, what have other DMs (or Players) done to make tracking more fun--more than just a success/failure roll? Let's say, for example, that the party--armed with one ranger--is supposed to find a Griffon and bring back a wing-feather. So, the party is plopped down in the middle of the wilderness. What's next? (besides a series of tracking rolls?).
Just lookin' for ideas.

Scott C. Bates scbates@LAMAR.COLOSTATE.EDU

When last I worked with tracking, it was during war time. 3 Fighters and a Ranger and a Thief were on the hunt for a gorilla unit. I made them hunt down the other unit and destroy it and dispose of any traps they found. If you have ever seen Gama World, I moved to a system similar to theirs for understanding artifacts, for disarming simple, intermediate and complex traps. This split up the action into a few roles of varying difficult, which allowed me to heighten the tension. Some traps even took two or three people. A lot of this was role play. I had a map and continual described the area. Had the enemy unit place a few false clues. LOTS OF TRAPS. Had the enemy unit double back and attack them. This whole scenario worked well and last about 2.5 hours. REAL HIGH TENSION. If they are going after an intelligent animal (or semi, like a bear), the animal could double back on the party. Or, place a second party doing the same thing, which would allow for some traps or "Red Herrings". I had to work to get this to work right (DM wise). But it was worth it.

Robert Barton rbarton@MAIL.JJC.CC.IL.US

How about giving out a series of clues that would be handdrawn pictures of clues they might find. You could give them a track of thecreature that they are tracking (assuming they know what it looks like?) and then give them pictures of partial tracks. Have the creature go through streams and over rock and make them tell you what they do to try to relocate the spoor. Have them run into some other adventures

while tracking, making the track older and harder to find. Then they would have to travel back to where they lost the trail and start again with older tracks. Roll weather out of the Wilderness Survival Guide and give them detailed descriptions of how they are feeling as they huddle under their rain gear in the pouring torrent thinking about all the tracks being washed away. If they are clever enough they can then use this to their advantage by figuring out where the creature might go and then using the mud created by the rain to find a recent track. Hope this gives you some starting points.

Calvin & Tammy   **cutter64@MEMES.COM**

My suggestion is this: Don't even have a roll. Make things up. If you think they're skilled enough as trackers, make up what they would find. Ask the PC trying to track exactly what he/she is looking for, and tell him/her what he/she finds.
PC: I'm going to look for Griffon prints.
DM: You don't find any Griffon prints, but there are several deer, rabbit...etc.
Have them do verbal tracking (ie, ask people what was seen. "Good sir, have you seen or heard anything about Griffons in this area?" If yes, "Could you point me in the direction you heard/saw them last?" If no, "Could you direct me to who I could ask that would know?") I find this plays a better part in role-playing instead of roll-playing.

Wyndstar

As DM, you may prepare a without-roll tracking, deciding how events happen... To let players think that it's not pre-rolled, you may prepare some typical tracking possibilities and make them play the one who is more accurate to their actions (or you prefer as producer)...

edarnt@hol.fr

Any task can become a roleplaying event if you want it to be - as a player I've quite enjoyed roleplaying the tracking events. Where tracking was all-important (or the main activity) we took the time to describe the scene, possible clues and other features. While you may not want to spend ages talking about prints in the dirt, if it's a major component of the adventure, there should be a fair amount of time spent on it. Look at it as a new kind of puzzle...

After your GM gives you some (possibly false or misleading) clues such as print size and shape, spoor type, shape, size and odour and the nature of other clues (incidental damage to plants, drag marks in the dirt, hair samples, etc) you should be able to make a few guesses, and ask more leading questions. Are the tracks large? How many are there? Do they show claw, hoof or pad-prints? Hopefully you will be able to guess a little of the truth, and this could translate as a bonus to your final tracking roll. Other intuitive guesses, magic/ability use or further investigation could add to your roll (if you're using one). Of course,
it's always an amusing experience when you critically fail your roll and charge into a hibernating bear's den thinking it's a bandit lair...

Maybe you (or possibly the GM) doesn't know that much about tracking but then, neither do I (or my GM) so you should be able to come up with a simple flow chart or list of typical features if you spend a few minutes brainstoming it up... Scott, mail me if you want a few suggestions (although the broad outline above should get you started). I hope this was of interest to you,

Andrew Quee andrewq@DELM.TAS.GOV.AU

How to deal with munchkins.

I have a problem ... my players are munchkins. Some of this is my fault but not all of it. My question is this what would be a good way to encourage them to be do more roleplaying? I have tried but I guess my ideas haven't worked yet. Any input would be greatly appreciated.

Jeremiah Mitchell kodith@CVALLEY.NET

There are two ways you could try to deal with it:

1) present them with a foe they cannot possibly beat.
2) present them with a problem that cannot be solved with a big sword.

Who dunnit type things can be good. (2) is far better than (1). The first may not work (they may just learn to become even bigger munchkins). The only problem with (2) is that it is much harder to DM and much harder to write the adventures. Give them some problems that they need to think to solve.

Samuel Davey samuel.davey@DSTO.DEFENCE.GOV.AU

My best suggestion is to start a campaign that is not as combat intensive. Thus, PC's who script their characters to be Ultra-Tank-Men will not be as useful. Have a large variety of NPC's for the PC's to interact with, and encourage, no, force roleplaying the interactions. Do not let the PC's use the line "I ask the man" Tell them to "Ask" him. Assume the character of the NPC and don't step out of the role. Soon the players will get the hint. Encourage the players to develop their characters through the roleplaying, like ask the Dwarf PC's player to imitate the Character's menacing squint and his gruff voice. Coach the priests in a little priestly lingo so they can sound like priests. Remember, even if the roleplaying you coax out of the players is more of a parody of the stereo typical character's, the players can still have fun.

Chris Hawkins chhawkin@VT.EDU

I'm going to assume your munchkins are the same munchkins everyone else has. Start making adventures that rely almost solely on roleplaying and PC/NPC interaction with very little dice rolling and ability comparing. that way it almost doesn't matter what they have on their sheets, it's what's in their imagination that counts. Make extra effort for them to have fun and get into the game. After a while explain to them what you did and why you did it. Then explain that 'this is the way AD&D was meant to be played.' See what they think. If they don't like it, suggest they find another DM and you find another group to lead.

– Graey   slayer@LUVEWE.OPS.USA.NET

Appeal to their munchkinness . . . pay them to roleplay. There is a list in the DM's guide for individual XP awards. At the end of each session I give each player a paper with his XP for the session. It looks something like this:

450 XP (10 orcs, 2 trolls, 1 bugbear) 50 XP (That wall climb sure save the day) 100 RP <roleplaying points>

$$600 \text{ XP } + 60 \, (10\%) = 660 \text{ XP}$$

Of course only the thief got the 50XP for the wall climb. Maybe the cleric cast a dynamic, well-timed protection spell; or the mage used fireball to wipe out a hive of giant wasps before they could organize for a real swarm; etc. After the players get more comfortable with roleplaying, I actually lessen the RP I give.

Another possibility is to penalize them (tiny penalties, please) for talking OOC at the wrong time, or asking 'How many hit points does he have?', or referring to their PC as 'he' instead of 'I' too often. And of course, you, the DM, must also roleplay the NPC's if you expect the players to roleplay the PC's. Hope this helps. I'm sure there are more experienced DM's out there with equally good advice. Use what works for you and file the rest.

Kay   Ferrell gferrell@SONETCOM.COM

Some pointers:- Stay away from 'slash & grab' adventures, where there isn't much more of a goal other than killing the bad guys and stealing their treasure. Though these adventures can be fun, too (in previous groups this type of adventure would sometimes be requested, "Money's getting low DM - timefor some 'slash & grab' please...") they encourage munchkinism due to the amount of available booty. I remember a passage somewhere in the 1st Ed. DMG where itsays something (about money) like, be generous - but make sure they pay for everything, thus keeping their pockets(almost) empty and the motivation to go adventuring full, or words to that effect [grin].- Come up with a really 'thoughtful' adventure, one where the emphasis is off combat and on strategy. My favorite example of this is a 'who dun it' kind of situation, where the PC's are confronted with some event (a murder, a theft, etc.) and presented with a collection of NPC suspects and have to solve the crime through deduction and evidence gathering. This requires a great deal of preparation on your part, as you have to know how the NPC's with react and answer to your PC's actions and questions. Make the reward great to keep them interested - but we'll get to that....This kind of thing works best in some sort of enclosed environment, i.e., a remote mountain keep during a storm or a riverboat or ocean going vessel, just somewhere where the NPC's (and PC's) can't just up and disappear (and when one does....). If you go for this kind of 'role-playing stimulation,' make sure you don't forget to throw a few red herring in to keep things exciting and encourage (enforce?) them to carry out their 'investigation' in character.- Treasure, rewards and magical/powerful items: whatever monies they manage to accumulate - find some way (within reason) to take it away ("That'll be costing you x pieces of your gold...unless you want to _swim_ across."). As far as magical/powerful items are concerned, AD&D wouldn't be the same with out them. Just remember: always add a really unpleasant (but not deadly) side-affect or two. This will(should [shrug]) teach them caution, esp. if they spend the better part of a game year trying to find the Holy Shrine of Whom ever to get one of their comrades cured from whatever the item did to him (lycanthropy can always be fun [laugh]).If you decide to go for this be subtle - don't let the side affects become apparent until the item has been used a certain (predetermined by you) number of times, or until the next full/new moon or something you want the PC's to respect this type of item, not run in the other direction every time one is presented. Let me know if this was any help,

John Robert Buckley jrbuckley@yahoo.com

Place them in situations (subtly) where combat and stats are not worth anything. Don't entirely replace the game with this type of encounter, or you'll scare them off. But introduce situations where all the characters can do is play-act. And if they say, "Oh, I say this, what do I roll", say, "Why don't you try it on me...." and don't let them roll. Carefully and slowly - and keep their favourite elements in the game. Try to avoid 'teaching them a lesson' by putting them up against something huge, 'cos they'll just get bugged and want to beat it next time. Try to avoid taking things away from them, 'cos they'll get upset and leave. Just put them into situations for which they have no relevant attributes, so they have no choice but roleplay.

1. detective style adventure, with some combat, but where most of the game involves interviewing other NPC's, and make the players role-play it out

2. mediating between two forces, who are opposed to each other in some way, and the PC's need to negotiate some compromise. Again, some combat to keep them happy, i.e. they get ambushed by one side and have to work out whether it was a direct attack, or if it was supposed to direct their attention somewhere else. Main aim is to get the PC's to talk and role-play finding out what both sides want.

Tony Evans   tony@TAGMAN.DEMON.CO.UK

First thing I did was drop subtle hints. First character to actually do any real role playing developed an interest in some city affairs (a plan to build a new park). No action, no battle, no mighty mages hurling fireballs. Just a bunch of people who wanted a park.

At the end, the city awarded the PC a minor title for his help in the plan. With the title, he was wooed by merchants wanting contact with nobility, and became something of a known power in the local lord's court. When the other players saw that there was more to the game than hack and slash, they soon began to explore other venues.

Garry Sled thanatos@INTERLYNX.NET

One approach I have used in the past, and am considering using again, is to give in. Completely. This only works if your game can survive it, and if there aren't non-munchkin players who would be hurt by it. Long ago, I had a group of munchkin players. When I got sick of trying to control them, I just let them lose. Everything they fought, they killed in one blow. Every treasure had a ring of 12 wishes. No one, not archmages, not gods, were a match for them. Nothing could threaten them, nothing could stop them. Nothing.

Two games later, they had recreated the game universe in their image. And then they complained the game wasn't fun anymore. Then I managed to have a discussion with them about game balance. Just an idea. Play Well!

Owen Stephens OStephens@AOL.COM

Motivation and Inspiration

I need some help getting started again. I've been playing for over 15 years 8 years seriously and the last 2 so so. I really want to get back to gaming but I lack the time motivation to sit there and make an adventure any more. I was wondering what does anybody else do when in a rut. I was thinking about reading the Dragonlance Chronicles, I heard that the characters are really cool. Any suggestions would be helpful.

(Anonymous, no email)

Try reading anything of the Dark Elf novels by RA Salvatore. I had already been playing, but these novels got me to enjoy reading again, and strengthen my playing. The descriptions of his fight scenes are 2nd to none.

Icewind Dale Trilogy -- Crystal Shard, Streams of Silver, and the Halfling's Gem;
Dark Elf Trilogy -- Homeland, Exile, Sojourn;
The Legacy, Starless Night, Siege of Darkness;
Passage to Dawn.

Skippy wclarke@PDQ.NET

You haven't really said "why". Is it the players that boring you? Is it the game system you use? Is it the 'world' you use? You may just be burned out of playing. You may need to take a vacation from it and re light the fire. You may need to just put all of it away until you start falling back into adventure creation mode naturally. If you just need to relight your fire by kick starting some life into a game get... NEW Players!! Nothing kicks a new game off like new players who haven't seen your world or your favorite DM tricks. Change the night, change the players, change where you play. If your the DM... stop... play for a while... bring in a new DM. You may need a new system. Try running or playing something new. I would immediately suggest White Wolf's Changeling. Good stuff here. Lots of roleplaying. If you run modules I would suggest not running them and getting together with the players to co create something new and original. If your tired of your own world... ditch it for something new... run a few modules to mix it up and see what stimulates. When I get into a rut, I usually take a break from it for awhile. Once the batteries are recharged I go back. Its just a hobby, not a lifestyle. Reading novels can light your imagination. I would say try some non Tolkein based fantasy like Charles de Lint or Sci Fi like Julian May for new inspiration. Music can also offer inspiration. Your favorite music can often clear your head to find new inspiration. Movies as well.

[...I was wondering what does anybody else do when in a rut...]

If I'm burned out and I finally admit it to myself, I go away from it so I can give my all later. If I just need to kick start the game, reading - anything from history to mystery to fantasy is good, something other than traditional fantasy material is good. Play another game system for a while, and look for a new player to bring new thoughts to the game table. These are all good things to do.

Eddie W. Presley Jr. epresley@iu.net

Re-reading 'Lord of the Rings' always seems to do it for me (but I admit that it's rather long). Try something by Jo Clayton (esp. The 'Skeen' trilogy). Also she writes more SCI-FI than fantasy, her character Skeen (Graverobber/Thief) spends quite a bit of time trapped on a world where, as one of the characters puts it, 'Where I come from needle and thread are hi-tech items.' I've had more than one good idea after reading her....

John Robert Buckley jrbuckley@yahoo.com

YES! DO read the Dragonlance books. The Chronicles (i.e. the "Dragons") trilogy, followed by the Legends (i.e. - the "time travel") trilogy, and then the "Dragons of Summer Flame." I actually cried at the sad parts of these novels (and thus, they are among my favorite books). Anyway, I found them to be quite motivating as far as getting into the mentality to play AD&D. Also, I recommend listening to music (like the Braveheart soundtracks - there ARE two now). As far as creating adventures, if you are in a rut, steal without shame. Take a familiar theme or plot and mess around with it a little. (For example: I've got a Shadowrun adventure based on "Little Red Riding Hood.")

Jason E Hubred jinxmchue@juno.com

Multiclass experience

Is there any reason why you can't combine the experience requirements for all levels of a multi-classed character? If you are a fighter/thief, simply add together the experience requirement for fighter with the XP requirement for thief, and when you have gotten that many XP, you go up a level in both classes. On the surface, it seems to make sense to me. If you are both a fighter and a thief, the time you spend being a fighter dilutes your advancement in your thieving skills, and vice versa. Anyway, this would eliminate the extra recordkeeping, etc., and the confusion of getting half of this now and half of that later and so on that is involved in advancing the classes independently.

Paul, Brett Brett_Paul@KNE.COM

In the modern ADND game, surely what Brett says is quite right. The "split xps" system is a creaking anachronism from ye olde dayes - especially now that there are specialist subclasses, skills, powers, and basically everything else barring weapons pods! :) Also, the customisation pages allowing streamlined character xpt/level calculation for unique or custom characters begs the question of why older types of effectively unique character (fighter-mage, etc.etc.etc.) should be trated any differently...

The Astronauts' Guild geckoes@ozemail.com.au

> Is there any reason why you can't combine the experience requirements for all levels of a multi->classed character?

The one reason I can think of is players grumbling. Especially those who are *****/Thieves as their thief level will go up reasonably quickly. Another would be how do you deal with bonus experience for high primary stats? This one is tougher. Unless you are willing to work out the bonus as you figure the experience and can show this to the player to make sure he knows it is fair It might be apain. I don't use

the 10% bonus IMC as those with higher stats have some advantage already. I do give bonus XP's for good role-playing and creative solutions (even if they do not work).

>If you are a fighter/thief, simply add together the experience requirement for fighter with the XP
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>being a fighter dilutes your advancement in your thieving skills, and vice versa. Anyway, this would
>eliminate the extra recordkeeping, etc., and the confusion of getting half of this now and half of that
>later and so on that is involved in advancing the classes independently.

In principal I like the idea and I might use it in my next campaign. Until I have a chance to see the effect in action I will withhold final judgment.

Chris Knudson cknudson@gocougs.wsu.edu

>Another would be how do you deal with bonus experience for high primary stats? This one is tougher.

If you have two classes and one class qualifies and the other does not, you get a bonus 5% to all experience. If both qualify, you get 10%. However, I do see a problem possible with the class bonuses, such as getting (an obscene) 200 xp for thieving abilities, or XP for casting useful spells. It gets a little hairy if you have three classes and one or two of them qualify for the bonus.

Paul, Brett Brett_Paul@KNE.COM

I do it like this:
In the po system, but may do it in whatever game you want, get monster xp and anything else that is not class based. (Individual, monster, item xp) Divide this between the # of classes. Award class based xp this goes to ONLY that class. Then, add the 10% to each class total adventure xp. Assign Con bonuses to hp and cp to different classes. Ex I get a Con bonus of 3 hp upon level up. When I go up in fighter, I get 2 additional hp. When I go up in mage, I get 1 additional xp. If I get 5cp upon level up, I will assign 3 to the fighter class and 2 to the mage class. When I go up in mage, I get 2 cp; when I go up in fighter I get 3 cp.

These assigned values are chosen by the player upon creation, and can never be changed. Say I reach max level limit in one class and I still have a ways to go in the other. Should I continue with the values as assigned, or give them the full Con bonus and cp amount? I am still thinking about it.....

Scott Funk   Scott.C.Funk-1@tc.umn.edu

For multiclass characters I've always ruled that their XPs are split equally between their classes no matter how they were earned and when the character had enough XPs in a particular class they could go up one level in that class (after training of course) with full benefits for that class.

For example:

Fairven the Mage-Thief has 1100 / 1100 XPs (total XPs = 2200). He earns 400 XPs in the next adventure which are split between his classes for 1300 / 1300. This allows him to rise to level 2 in his Thief class. So he rolls a 1d6 and adds a CON bonus (if any). Once he reaches 2500 / 2500 (or more)

he can rise to level 2 Mage and level 3 Thief (after training of course). At that point he would roll 1d4 + CON for Mage AND 1d6 + CON for Thief.

This method seems to go against the process described in the PHB which has the character split XPs, but then get only HALF their HPs each time they rise one level in either class. I felt the half hit point rule with split XPs was too limiting. Now if you don't split XPs then this would make sense, but I like the simplicity of rising a full level for each class. It just takes longer to get there.

Walker Donald-LDW001   DWalker911@aol.com

I allow my players to split any experience points received between their classes however they decide to split it. The 10% class bonus applies only to the portion of the experience they allocate to that class. However, they must abide by one simple rule. Dual class - The max allocation is 75% of the experience to any one class. Tri class - The maximum split is 40% to one class, 35% to the second class.

Scott Fetzer tigereye@NB.NET

Nonlethal Solvable Traps

I'm looking for any traps that are NOT lethal and can be solved with a little bit of thinking. The classic find/remove traps percentage roll is just becoming too boring.

MR STEVEN A MASKE   MGFY43C@PRODIGY.COM

Rather than a trap, change it to a puzzle that the group has to solve to get into the next area of the dungeon. Not only do they have to find the hidden door, but then they have to figure out how to open the darn thing. Something like two persons on either side of the door having to turn something on the walls at their given placements while a third has to push on the door or something like that could take them a while to figure out and still fit in most game scenerios.

Our DM also made use of a checkerboard flooring pattern that you had to follow a pattern in crossing, the pattern having been seen earlier in the dungeon or even in a walling pattern in the room in question. Another time he used a patterned floor that as you stepped on a pattern something happened that wasn't nice. Flamestrike equivalents that touched only the pattern stepped on, blades that shot down from the ceiling, that type of thing, and the group had to figure out how to get past it all safely. This was solved when one of the mages cast a wall of stone in such a way as to cover the floor with it. The party traveled the floor without ever touching it to spring the traps.

Kitt kitt@TRISK.COM

There is a line of books available in most gaming and comic stores called Grimtooth's Traps. "Traps Light" is probably the volume you'd be most interested in. There is also a Net book of traps available through most sites that have netbooks. There's the Net Book of Traps and the Net Book of Riddles. I can't quote one site, since I don't know which ones for sure. I've gotten my books from all over. But I

can say that I've used both of these sources throughout my DMing career.

Aaron S. Turpen aturpen@juno.com

If you can still find them, the Grimtooth's Traps series has tons of great traps, most lethal but some not. Most are very very original, too. Last I recall seeing there were 4 books in the series, Grimtooth's Traps, Grimtooth's Traps Too, Grimtooth's Traps Fore!, and Grimtooth's Traps Ate. They were produced by Blade (Flying Buffalo) and I think distributed through Task Force Games.

(Anonymous)

>> This was solved when one of the mages cast a wall of stone in such a way as to cover the floor with
>>it. The party traveled the floor without ever touching it to spring the traps.

What if the wall of stone actually sat on the floor as opposed to hiding the
floor. Wouldn't it then trigger all the traps at once?

Calvin & Tammy   cutter64@MEMES.COM

>>What if the wall of stone actually sat on the floor as opposed to hiding he floor. Wouldn't it then
>>trigger all the traps at once?

Probably not...each "tile" would have to have some sort of frame it s set in to lend support (after all, underneath the tile is only being supported by a large spring or something along those lines) and would likely need to be pushed down further than the lip of this frame. the wall of stone, assuming the frame could support the weight, would push the tiles down to be flush with the top of the frame, and it's unlikely the tiles are any higher than that anyway since that would make their nature a little more obvious.

(Anonymous)

> What if the wall of stone actually sat on the floor as opposed to hiding the floor. Wouldn't it then
>trigger all the traps at once?

The wall of stone could be cast such that the wall was formed 1 inch above the floor (and joined to the walls).

Samuel Davey samuel.davey@DSTO.DEFENCE.GOV.AU

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Potions

While I was DMing I figured out that giving potions away as treasure was far better than money and magic items. It satisfied the players and if they are satisfied I am. So I thought that somehow potions should have some distinct qualities to them. I therefore found it fun to give players potions with

symbols on them. Now, I know that all potions are different and you can't expect to get the same thing everytime, even if the symbols are the same, but somewhere in the worlds of D&D, mages and alchemist have gotten together to make common symbols for potions. I give you this, please come to my sight and see what you think. I am completly open to suggestions, so please let me know what you think.

Ian ianm@alpha1.net

Looks...well-thought-out. You've obviously put time into it, but there's two things I think you've missed:
  - You have smells listed for your potions, but not how they look
  - If people are going to go around labelling potions, in most circumstances they'd use common, or at least their favourite language. Using arcane symbols may be fine for wizards who's business it is to memorize that stuff, but in the dank dark regions of a cavern, misreading one line or mixing up two symbols could have deadly cosequences.

IMO, various wizards will make potions that have similar effects, but are actually different. So labelling makes sense...but having common smells doesn't really. And if you LABEL the potions, well, that makes it less entertaining :-) If, as a player, I had a cabinet full of potions, I'd slip a poison in there with the rest, and not label any of them (or mislabel them).

One thing I have done is create a random list of potion appearances. You can use these when a specific potion is found, roll the description up and write it down, and then later on you can describe other potions with the same appearance. Of course, no one says that ALL extra-healing potions are alike...

The rest of this message contains the tables I've made. Feel free to use them, they'll generate 120 different type of potions. I should drop in smells some time too, maybe using the one's you've come up with:

---- (snip) ---
Potion color (1d20):
1) red
2) pink
3) milky
4) cloudy
5) gray
6) black
7) yellow
8) green
9) red
10) orange
11) purple
12) brown
13) mauve
14) beige
15) clear
16) rainbow
17) blue
18) turquoise
19) white

20) magenta

Potion texture (1d8):
1) fizzy
2) watery
3) thick
4) oily
5) opaque
6-8) normal

Darryl Shpak   dos021@FREENET.MB.CA

>entertaining :-) If, as a player, I had a cabinet full of potions, I'd slip a poison in there with the rest,
>and not label any of them (or mislabel them).

I have a character who has done exactly this. If you have to leave your place would you leave a cupboard of potions with labels like "potion of extra healing", "oil of impact (for external use only)"? You would probably either:

1. Use symbols that you yourself have invented. This means you know what it is (so you don't stumble back home and drink that acid by mistake) but would be thieves do not.

2. Deliberately mislabel things. This works fine as long as you remember what is what. This gives would be thieves a real nasty shock.

Well that's my opinion. Of course you may think that your place's defences are suitably powerful to prevent thieves from getting to the potions in the first place. Most adventurers are more paranoid than that though.

Samuel, Davey samuel.davey@DSTO.DEFENCE.GOV.AU

SEWERS

I'm planning on having first level characters enter the sewers to try and clear out some of the rats that have gotten out of hand. The city offical will pay them 1 sp/rat or 1 gp/18 rats. I also thought about putting some homeless people and a thug or two. Does anyone else have some ideas of what else the characters can encounter in the sewers?

Thanks in advance.
Michelle asimmon@iupui.edu

How about an encounter with a low-level (but higher than the PC's) thief that is fleeing someone or something (perhaps the city watch or members of a rival thieves' guild) and requests the PC's help. Perhaps the thief has been setup (and can somehow prove it to the PC's only) which could provide a quandry for lawful PC's. Or if the thief is fleeing other thieves maybe an offer of shared treasure will

catch the interest of the PC's.

You could also try a doppleganger encounter or perhaps some kind of thing like molds or giant slugs. It could even be something the PC's can't defeat but need to flee from. There was even a Dungeon adventure where baby dinosaurs were let loose in the sewers of Waterdeep by a careless mage.

Ian Istraus@IBM.NET

Well, things like black puddings or green slimes might fit, and possibly some various forms of fungus creatures. There could be a random alligator (flushed down a privy? ;). Also, you could consider rot grubs or the possibility of contracting other diseases. I'd also make navigation fairly dangerous. Slipping and falling into those disgusting waters could be very unhealthy. Leeches might good, too. Have you considered putting in other groups of cutthroats who might want to steal the party's "catch" and get the reward for themselves? Also, depending on the location of the city the sewers are in, you might let a roving band of orcs or kobolds sneak into the sewers, having been on a scouting mission for possible infiltration through the sewers (this could even elicit further reward if the officials learn the PC's foiled this effort).

You could toss a wererat at the party. They probably won't be equipped to handle it, so don't make the wererat out to kill them. Say it's mad at the PC's for killing the other rats. The party might attack it, ineffectively, for a couple rounds while it laughs at them, then it will strike one or each of them once, either infecting some of them with lycanthropy, or just giving them the fear of that possibility. It issues a warning that the PC's better end their hunt immediately. It won't really bug them any more during the adventure, but they won't know that, and the wererat could always return at a later date to exact revenge.

Those are ideas off the top of my head. That should be well more than enough for 1st-level characters, anyway. :)

Brenton Miller   brent@gryffon.com

There are non-sentient things that can be encountered in sewers. Disease, sudden floods (a rising tide makes an interesting encounter), giant crocs (I know, b-grade but it's and idea), locked off areas or rusted up gates so they have to go above and try to talk thier way into someone's basement to get down to the area they want to be in.

If they fall or a washed down a hole then they may get stuck in some unmapped sub-terranian caves. The only way back may require more thought and climbing than just "up that same hole".

Societies darker elements often use sewers, a chance encounter with an assassin or small bunch of thieves would prove interesting, as would if these where first level as well and wanted to talk thier way out of it.

If the characters are down there an extended time, the city may hire another group to either go down or hunt rats. If the new group finds the old group they may want to kill them off so THEY get the 1sp/per.

If the maps are wrong (assuming there are any) then the characters may take a wrong turn and keep getting washed out to sea/river/lake etc, or they may keep coming up in wells and get people throwing

things (rotten tomatoes etc) at them for sitting in thier drinking water.

I think I could go on for ages, so I better stop now..:)...g'luck...

Densial Edmonds D.Edmons@BIGFOOT.COM

Depends on how big the city is and how old it is. If it is an ancient city that has been 'sacked' and rebuilt you may find old layers of the old city with things lurkin within. The old waterdeep stuff had some ideas along this line ...

Admiral admiral@TIAC.NET

Being an experience sewer explorer (I don't know if that is good or not), I can tell you a few things that have happened to me.
1. Alligators.
2. Got lost in a maze section of the sewers (were old sewers met new sewers and some repairs were made). This was very taxing on our nerves.
3. The sewer lead to an underground mausoleum, like in Indiana Jones and The Last Crusade (there we meet up with some grave robbers).
4. When we were higher level, we found ware-rats in the sewers.

Just as a new idea, you always could have the PC's stumble on to a small party of humanoids hunting the rats. Or, GIANT LEACHES.

BobMan rbarton@MAIL.JJC.CC.IL.US

Grey ooze, jermlaines, ochre jelly, gully dwarves, tourists (there are tours of the sewers of Paris), sewer workers, smugglers, crocodilians, pigs (an English problem at one time I've heard), stray children, stray lovers, lizard men (an *ADND* variant of the alligators in the sewer urban legend), kobolds, imps, spriggans, etc. If it's the right size (not too big) and you can come up with a good reason for it to be there, you can use just about anything in sewers. Midget albino lizard men with pet pigs and spriggan slaves. Think of the possibilities.

Alan Kellogg mythusmage@FUNTV.COM

If you're willing to give your player's some silver weapons or perhaps a +1 weapon (rather early), then a Wererat story could easily unfold (a 3+1 HD critter can make for an interesting challenge for the little PC party of 1st level characters). It's easy to build on, to. The Wererat is actually suffering from the curse of Lycanthropy, not a natural state - he's a nobleman or something, and his wererat state on those full moon nights is what is increasing the rat population (and disease in the area). Tracking backwards, the PC's could figure out who he is, and then learn (from him), that he was cursed and framed for the murder of someone while he was under one of his were-rat rages. The wizard who cursed him is actually making a move to gain power and sway within the city... The PC's have to prove his innocence (especially before a lunar month goes by) and show the wizard as what he is - but who can they trust? THe nobleman says the wizard had important people in the cityguard on his side... and so on and so on...

And they thought they were just going to clean up some sewers. Hee hee. B'sides, the rich noble, once helped, can provide a decent reward for them. This kind of adventure also helps flush out the "seedy underside" of a city, as well as making the GM come up with major city personalities, and bringing the city to life with inns, and stores, and other things that bring colour like fountains and parks, and local legends....

'Nathan Burgoine   nburgoin@CHAT.CARLETON.CA

Besides humanoid turtle ninjas? <g> Sorry, couldn't resist. Slimes Oozes and Jellies, as others have sugested. I once ran an adventure where the sewers of a city connected to a series of tunnels which housed, among other things, an underground goblinoid lair. The sewers and tunnells were used by the goblins as a way to mount thieving missions into the city. Maybe the local thieves guild runs messages through the sewers. Hell, maybe the guildhouse is underground and in the sewers.

I believe the city of Lankhmar, in the Grey Mouser tales has humanoid rats living under it. Throw in a few of these, and the players will face someone not too happy about having their "little brothers" eliminated. These have the advantage of not needing special weapons to hit, but your players may think they're wererats and run for it. The ratlings could even pretend to be
wererats to freak out the PC's.

Lets see, what else? Dark cults practicing unspeakable rituals, people running from the law, the homeless, the poor, and oh yeah, The Bubonic Plauge (only if you want to kill the characters). Maybe a lost child? Perhaps a tunnel to the under dark.

Hope this helps.

Adam Collinge: acolinge@uvic.ca

I ran an adventure a few years ago and needed something a little different. So I had the city officials send the party down into the sewers to find some missing Al Norton (sewer workers) types. There were the obligatory rats, deranged homeless people, baby alligators, weakened tentamorts (old Fiend Folio Monsters), giant spiders and a type of sewage eel/snake.

But the section of the sewers that generated the most fun and caused the most fear and horror was the section under the mage district. Down the drain went failed magic potions, mixtures and compounds that caused a great deal of mayhem down in the sewers. There were bubbling piles of goo that moved about on their own (no danger, but they look and smell terrifying), the walls were all coated with different colored stains some of which glowed malevolently and all of the creatures and plant life in this area were mutated in some way or another. The rat mutations included: giant, smaller, flying, phasing, poisoned, hairless, talking, morphing etc. and that was just the rats, the insect changes were just as bizarre and the cockroaches were intelligent, organized and very HUNGRY.

Another concern were the body parts that had been left down there by predators and flushed by wizards and evil priests from above. All had become animated in one way or another so the PC's were encountering: crawling hands, skeletal claws, half-skeletons, whole skeletons, animal skeletons, fish skeletons and zombies, partial zombies, whole zombies etc. There were snake like sections of slithering entrails, pulsing hopping hearts, insidious and horrifying intelligent brains that crawled around with attached spinal columns as stingers that could take over a victim and eat their brain. There were other things too terrible to mention, but you get the idea. I went crazy and the characters loved it.

This area caused much grief and enjoyment for the party and also caused political upheaval in the city above. There were numerous crackdowns on waste disposal and many return missions requested by the city. All of this turned a simple adventure into a long-term campaign that led to the bowels of the local cemetery and eventually the Underdark itself. The characters all started at 1st level, but eventually made it to an average of 7-9th level before biting off more than they could chew. Good Luck and I hope some of these ideas prove helpful to you.

Frank   frank.m.adams@slchicago.infonet.com

<u>WARS</u>

I have a question. I have approached the problem of facing mass combat. In a war currently in my campaign, there are 2 fighting armies (both substantial in size) and I have no idea of how to roll for combat. It would be blasphemy to roll each soldier's attack and such. Plus I have archers, pikemen, infantry, wizard elite, horsemen, etc to account for. What should I do?

Gkguitar   GKguitar@AOL.COM

An EASY way to resolve combats is to come up with attack and defense values for various units. Have the attack be modified by the attack strength, and inflict X points of damage. Remove defending units, adding up the defensive values until it equals the amount of damage. This type of system is used in almost every strategy game I've ever played (save Risk, and A&A) It works fairly well, and its quick... The toughest part is coming up with unit values, and figuring out how the die rolls will modify the attack roll.

Joe Stevenson   sabre@FSI.NET

I don't want to blaspheme AD&D, but I.C.E's War Law provides excellent large scale battle resolution. It also provides for strategy instead of reducing large force combat to a string of dice rolls. War Law can be applied to your existing AD&D wars with few modifications.

Jamie Hushower   hushower@pobox.alaska.net

Short of writing some kind of computer program to resolve this situation I would say the best thing to do is just decide what kind of outcome you want and just describe the battle. If there is some kind of special reason that you want to play out the entire battle (like two players are warring against each other) then you could look for a copy of the Battlesystem rules which was designed for AD&D large-scale battles.

Another idea would be to allow the PC's to take part in the battle on two different scales, allow them to make some kind of command decisions and you just decide the outcome based on how well you think their plans would work. Then to add some excitement to the battle have the PC's get involved in some kind of melee with a small portion of troops from both sides of the conflict.

Ian C. Strauss Istraus@IBM.NET

A large scale combat system was presented in PO:C&T. It was kinda basic for my tastes, but you can modify it to be as complex as you want.

Chris Hawkins chhawkin@VT.EDU

Try this: use the unit tactic. Unit have: AC, HP = # of man in it, Damage – how many enemy it can destroy in a round, Moral, Saving frown and special abilities (charge, spells, large shields - batter AC vs arrows and so on) - depend of unit type. Use simple battle schemes (I mean pictures) - it helps.Ray(Yuri).

Yuri Rugayn   rugayn@ergometall.ru

There are several rule systems for resolving mass combat. The original system is the BATTLESYSTEM combat supplement for AD&D. Unfortuately this system has been OOP for several years. One alternative is the War Machine rules from the D&D Rules Cyclopedia. This system is relatively similar to BATTLESYSTEM. Like BATTLESYSTEM, this sourcebook is OOP. Another option is the Player Option: Combat and Tactics Rulebook. This rulebook has a mass combat system that I am not personally not familiar with but that has generally received unfavorable reviews on the list. The third option is the Mass Combat resolution system from the Castle Guide. The Castle Guide is available for free off the TSR web site.

Hope this helps.

Douglas Rubel drubel@IX.NETCOM.COM

I don't think you should roll dice to determine the outcome of a war that happens in a campaign. Combat between huge groups of NPC's while the PC's are alive should be handled the same way as mass events in the world before they were born. The D.M. simply chooses the outcome and the PC's hear results in bits and pieces as people who know details of the war come in contact with the PC's.

You, the D.M., are proposing that you pick the size of the armies, pick their level of training, pick the quality of their leadership, pick the quality of their tactics, pick the quality of their military intelligence, pick the quality quantity and technology of their weapons, pick the quality of their supply logistics, and then roll dice to determine the outcome? Just pick the outcome and skip the unnecessary steps. If you wish to make part of the outcome random, place several possible outcomes on a 2-12 scale and roll 2d6.

More important than rolling dice for the outcome will be planning how / when the PC's learn information, how much of it is accurate and how much is rumor, and the handling of any tiny portions of the war that they come in contact with. If they are in contact with a major battle, you can simply describe with words both what they see that's beyond their control, and the results of actions they choose to take.

Thinking about you rolling dice to resolve a war reminds me of the game master I saw who role-played,

while we napped around the table, both sides of a conversation between two NPC's that happened away from the rest of the party.

Larry White larryw24@HOTMAIL.COM

Greetings!

I'd just like to comment on the irony of this discussion; it's 1998, and AD&D roleplayers are discussing the best system for doing strategy combat stuff. Way back when, in the far, misty reaches of early, primeval time, (i.e. the 1970's) a bunch of guys who liked to play tabletop strategy games got into using mideaval settings, mixed in some fantasy elements after a bit, and then one night, while storming a castle, they took combat into one of the "underground" levels of said structure, and the first dungeon-crawl took place. Allegedly. Depends on how much of Gygax you believe.

It is certain, however, that the people who were originally into this stuff loved the stategy/scaled combat stuff. The long process of the ideals and ideas of Role-Playing integrating themselves into what was called "wargaming", has now progressed, to the point that many campaigns have abandoned scale maps of any sort. I think good quality role-playing is fantastic, but the scale combat rules of AD&D perhaps deserve another look. You know, having played with other strategy stuff lately, I understand again the fun of such combats. Yeah, lets have our cake and eat it too! Here's to role-playing and scaled, tactical combat!

Xdole (no email)

Book 2
Destroying elementals

While I'm in the mood to post to the list i may as well pose a question that has been nagging me for a while.

how the hell do you do damage to an air elemental?

A character swings his sword through the air all the time and doesn't seem to hurt the air any that i can tell. so even with a +2 or better weapon, what good would it be against a creature entirely composed of air? or fire? or water? or any noncopereal monster like spectres and such?

Let me clarify i'm not trying to argue you can't do it, i'm just looking for an explanation on how you can do it. i just can't picture it in my mind.

(Anonymous, no email)

Just a guess, but the magical properties of the weapon would probably be damaging the 'mental, since it is magical also, I guess like a allergic reaction. :)

(Anonymous, no email)

The way I saw it is that an elemental has a "spirit"...and while the actual body is impervious a +2 magical weapon is powerfull enough and reaches somewhare to do damege to the spirit and an earth elemental's body being too hard to pierce with anything but a +2 weapon and is immune to blunt weapons and 1/2 damage from piercing weapons IMC...also i would say that the other elementals would take damage as skelitons (piercing/cutting weapons) becase it makes more sence and makes the elementals more scary...

CheeZegOd@aol.com

>The way I saw it is that an elemental has a "spirit"...and while the actual body is impervious a +2
>magical weapon is powerfull enough and reaches somewhare to do damege to the spirit

That's pretty much the way I see it as well. A non-corpeal creature has a connection to somewhere (ghost - ethereal plane, elemental – elemental plane, specter - neg. mat. plane, etc) and a magic weapon is needed to hit the "projection" on the current plane.

On second thought I suppose I wouldn't call an elemental non-corpeal. It does have a physical presence.

>and an earth elemental's body being too hard to pierce with anything but a +2 weapon and is immune
>to blunt weapons and 1/2 damage from piercing weapons IMC also I would say that the other
>elementals would take damage as skelitons (piercing/cutting weapons) becase it makes more sence
>and makes the elementals more scary...

That's a good idea, but maybe the shape of the weapon shouldn't really matter since it's the magic of the weapon that is causing the damage - not the physical cut or stab.

If you want to make elementals more scary, give them spell like abilities that match their element. Earth e's could create sinkholes or rise up a pillar of earth. Fire elementals could spit jets of flame, or spontaneously combust things (or people). They could create heat waves to conceal them from missile or spell attacks (like a blur spell). Water could create blasts of water, acid, etc, sort of like a decanter or endless water, or could drown a target by enveloping them. Air could create toxic vapors, or send out pressure shocks to deafen or stun opponents. Or spin around real fast (they like to do that you know) and create dust to partially blind opponents and missile attacks.

As for destroying them, I like Shadowrun's idea where air e's are concerned: if they are contained in a reasonably small, air tight container (like a hermetically sealed room) then they are banished. Extending that to earth e's, assume that earth e's must always keep contact with the ground. If you could somehow cause them to fall or get a giant to pick one up and make a strength check, then they would be toast.

Also like in Shadowrun, you could use your elemental for other things other than attacking. Have your air elemental dissipate poisonous vapors, or a cloudkill spell. My shadowrun mage used one to negate

the effects of a smoke grenade, and picked me up and flew me to the top of a building. Fire elementals could be used to control existing flames, or even put them out (course they hate to do that, but not as much as toasting marshmallows). It is listed in the PHB under the priest's earthquake spell that an earth e present in the earth near a structure has a chance to protect the area around them from earthquake spells.

Basically, elementals should be a little tougher and frightening.

Denzil Kruse denny@research.techforce.nl

>how the hell do you do damage to an air elemental? Or any noncopereal monster like spectres and
>such?

A good question, and one I've wondered about myself.

The best answer I can give is that the weapon itself DOESN'T damage it, per se. What damages it is the magic (since all those creatures are only damaged by magical weapons anyway). Sort of like what one previous poster said about an "allergy", except that I think it's more direct; the magic is MEANT to damage things after all. I would think the magic disrupts their forms.

Of course, this leaves open the question of the case of creatures that are able to hit such entities solely by virtue of having a large number of hit dice. The best justification I could come up with in those cases is that creatures this large or powerful have enough inherent strength in their own souls or spirits that they are able to disrupt such "unnatural" spiritual entities with the force of their own spirits. If you can come up with a better explanation, let me know.

(Anonymous, no email)

>how the hell do you do damage to an air elemental? a character swings his sword through the air all
>the time and doesn't seem to hurt the air any that i can tell. [snip]

As another option, you could consider the Rolemaster method (if you like). The following is IIRC and AFAIK. I realise this is a bit of overkill, take what you like and discard the rest. A lot of this is from IMC too, but most is from Rolemaster's Elemental Companion.

The Rolemaster Elemental

In this case, an elemental is composed of varying-purity elemental compounds. An elemental on the prime plane can be seen as a swirling mass of pure elemental material. RM elementals do not normally take specific forms (although they can do so if they want to) and appear as swirling cloud-like masses, like a willy-willy (small twister), sphere, oblate spheroid, cylinder or similar simple geometric shape.

The interior of an elemental can be described in three stages:

Outer Layer: This layer comprises the majority of the elemental's size. Here the purity of the elemental is at it's weakest through exposure to the prime plane. It has almost no mass, and in itself, cannot normally be felt; nor seen as it is almost transparent. Normal elemental effects occur through

touching this layer (hard wind, burns, frost or wetness). Most lay knowledge attributes this to the 'aura' of the elemental or the effect that is has of modifying the surrounding environment to it's preference.

Innner region: Here the purity of the material comprising the elemental is much stronger than the outer layer. As the outer layer loses elemental material, it is replaced from this region. This explains why elementals can only remain on the prime for a certain duration. For them it is akin to one of us suddenly being transported to the hottest desert - our very essence is drawn out within hours.

It has mass, and feels like a heavy mist, or spiderwebs. It is visible as varying-width bands of pure elemental material which spin around the inner core (see later). This region represents the 'visible' elemental and touching this matter causes an appropriate critical of the elemental's nature (see RMC: Elemental Companion for more information). For AD&D, items must make a save or be transformed to a prime-equivalent of the elemental compound. Creatures must save or take damage. The elemental can change anything it's inner region comes into contact with to the same kind of element. Anything absorbed leaches at the purity of the inner region and adds to the size of the outer layer.

Inner Core: This is a small region in comparison to the rest of the elemental's 'body', but the most important. It is here that absolutely pure elemental material is kept contained away from the environment. This is usually a small sphere-sized region no larger than half a dozen inches in size. This region is normally found in the center of the elemental's 'body' but due to their fluid nature, can be found anywhere in the inner region.

Here the elemental's equivalent of our vital organs are kept, and a weapon thrust to this area disrupts the integrity of the region, causing it to dissapate through the inner region. This causes the elemental to 'die' through disruption of it's unusual life processes in much the same way that a sword thrust to the heart dirsupts ours.

Disrupting the core region of an elemental results in an explosion of high-purity elemental material. At the DM's option, anyone/thing within a certain radius must save or be transformed to elemental material. In RM, this is handled by a point-blank elemental-ball attack with severe criticals applied if the attack is successful. For AD&D, a save should suffice - use whatever outcome you think is reasonable in the event of a failure.

Sorry it's a bit wordy, I hope that this might help you Paula.

If anyone is interested, I have a short story which describes the rise of an elemental magician to (near) demigodship, which deals with this subject in a more descriptive way. I created it as background to a PC paladin's god that he worshipped.

Andrew Quee andrewq@DELM.TAS.GOV.AU

IMO an elemental on the Prime Material Plane is a magical creature. I believe that the magical sword disrupts the fabric of the spell/magic that is used to bind the elemental on the plane and acts a lot like damaging a normal creature. When the hit points reach 0 the spell is completely disrupted and the elemental goes bye bye.

Very similar to attacking a Demon or Devil (Can't get the hang on those new fangled names) on the Prime Material Plane, just the physical manifestation is being killed/disrupted. I don't see that a magical sword has anything mental about it.

The same question about weapons could be asked about a lot of creatures in AD&D and how weapons could affect them: Shades, Ghosts, Iron Golems, Banshees etc. In most cases it can be explained by one magical force disrupting another.

hans.neser@auepg.mail.abb.com

THIEF GUILD

Mike bertalan@telekabel.at

In yesterday's gaming session my thief advanced to 10th level! Now I'm planning to found a small thief guild in a rather large city (Arabel). I'm sure that many of you, have made experience in founding a guild, so I'm asking you for advice:

1. What is a good camouflage for a guild? Trader, Shopkeeper,...
2. How can you keep control over all those little thieves, who always want to betray you?
3. Any good general advices, how to survive?
4. Or is it better to stay alone, and work for yourself?

Thanx for your advice

Joel Murphy murphyje@SPIRITONE.COM

1.   What is a good camouflage for a guild? Trader, Shopkeeper,...

I always prefer the Mercantile (basically a general store) or a Curio Shop. Remember though that whatever you set up, you'll need to maintain it as well as your guild.

2. How can you keep control over all those little thieves, who always want to betray you?

The most important thing is to have as many henchmen as you can because their loyalty is the most important thing. As your flunkies, they'll keep the whimps in line. Also, if your henchmen have henchmen (it's a personal rule which I allow but your DM may not) you can simply form a guild with a heirarchy from you to the lowest members of the guild.

More important than keeping them in line though is protecting yourself from the Upright Man. In most major cities, there is a central guild of thieves. If you try starting a guild at the lowly level of 10 (in the world of guild building, 10 is the scraping the bottom of the barrel) you'll most assuredly run into another guild stronger than you that is getting in your way. You'll either have to disband your guild, leave town, or join the other guild (or die when they kill you <grin>).

3. Any good general advices, how to survive?

Keep your guild a secret society in the beginning. Make sure you don't tell any NPC's about the guild until your character trusts them. Running out to the world and screaming, "HI! I HAVE A THIEVES GUILD" isn't the best way to build an empire. :)

4. Or is it better to stay alone, and work for yourself?

As far as game mechanics are concerned, I've never really been part of a game where the characters were going to stay in one town. Although running a guild is a fun idea, I don't really see a character doing much with a guild. Running a business involves a little more work but they won't really have time to go adventuring (and thus gaining experience). Most of it would be between you and your DM though as to what you were going to do.

Steve v-sgreen@MICROSOFT.COM

What is a good camouflage for a guild? Trader, Shopkeeper,...

One DM I played with ran it as "just another guild" (right along with the craftsmen, merchants, etc.) These guilds paid their taxes (bribes) and were left to their own businesses. All Thieve's Guilds included beggars, too.

2. How can you keep control over all those little thieves, who always want to betray you?

A network of informants, stooges, and guardsmen that are living beyond their means. Information (and its application) can be a handy tool. Look at how effective these networks are in international and industrial spying, law enforcement, and the underworld.

3. Any good general advices, how to survive?

Make sure that the current bureaucracy is willing to put up with a guild of your specialty. Make sure that you include the movers and shakers of the underworld... Nothing upsets people more than getting a new boss that they didn't have any say in promoting. ;) Make sure you can back up anything that might come against you.

4. Or is it better to stay alone, and work for yourself?

The DM mentioned above made our thief "report in" at all major cities. He was a loner. He "knew the thieve's tongue" that was a unifying element in our campaign. Any job being performed had to have the guild's stamp of approval. If it didn't... We all learned a painful lesson on what happens when you flaunt that authoritative faction.

David   No email address.

I had a DM by the name of Jeff that set up a real good thieves guild. I copied it a couple of times in different games and it really works well

1) The guild leader goes into town and sets up a shop. It really doesn't matter what type but it works best if there is only one of this shop. I have had the guild master be a blacksmith , a weapon smith, an armor smith, and a fabric merchant.

2) He or she works alone at first building up the business and using adventures to supplement his or her income. He or she can explain being missing for a week or to as going for supplies, selling goods, etc.

3) As he or she starts bringing in the money, he or she starts spreading a little to the upper and middle class. A jeweled dagger to nobleman on his birthday, and beautiful necklace to another nobles daughter, etc. Just friendly gifts showing the wealth he or she has acquired.

4) He or she will begin to get invited to social events. He or she plays his or her cards building his or her influence and maybe getting special orders for his or her goods.

5) After he or she is well established, he or she lobbies for very hard penalties against theft, the death penalty is the best.

6) Now he or she starts getting members. He or she introduces himself or herself as a recruiter or bagman. He explains the rules for theft in the city. He or she takes newbies to the thieves' secret meeting where everyone's identify is concealed because of the harsh penalties against thieves. There is a wide variety of things he or she can do to reinforce that the guild leader is someone else. Use your imagination here.

7) He or she talks to the thieves when they come into his shop, getting an idea for their plans and capabilities. He or she buys their goods at a lower value than they are worth. Then takes the guilds percentage. I use 1 gp for every 5 gp the percentage seemed really fair to some of my players. Keep in mind he or she will later sell the goods for more in another city. If the thieves wonder why the value is a little lower then they are worth, he or she can explain that he or she takes a risk selling them and feels he should make a little bit to compensate himself or herself for that risk. If the thief gets to nosey, the guild master uses his or her influence to ensure the pain is removed

8) He or builds his or her contracts in other cities finding out the guilds and merchants..

9) He or she trades a mix a stolen goods and bought goods making a lot of profit

10) He or she makes ties to other guilds to trade stolen items, it gives him or her powerful allies in other cities. Also helps take care of loose ends that leave his city.

11) He takes the thieves with the most potential and sets them up in other cities.. He keeps the guise of a bagman rising in the ranks of the thieves guild. He is now making quite a lot of money off other peoples goods without running any real risk.

12) He or she pays off a few different temples with contributions at set times in the year and asks that if he or she misses a contribution that they should look for him or her and resurrect him or her. This takes care of the off chance someone gets smart and takes him or her out. He also makes ties with a few mages helping with financing their research with the same string attached.

13) Now that he or she is properly setup, he trains an apprentice to take over in his first city. Keep in mind he or she is a really powerful with a lot of friends in high and low places.. If anything happens to him or her, a lot of people will be interested in what happened and how to help him or her.

DK death 1 DKdeath1@AOL.COM

1) having a legitaminte shop in front will be a good cover for 2 reasons 1 you will get a legitaminte profit from it and 2 it will not be the most suspected if you say have a shop that the owner was run out of or killed so the shop is unocupied and going there everyonce in awhile with a light making people

think there is someone there

2) the best way is to scare the living daylights out of them and use magic to keep a check on them

3) the best way is first it should be underground with a good hiding place as in behind a barrel also attach traps to it magical and otherwise that only your guild can enter. also i suggest dont take such a large cut at first so that they dont think your completely stealin from em and not letting them afford to live start with a percent that is enough so you make a profit but no more than 10% later you can move it up to at most 75% and then only when you are successful. the best way to have a sucsessful guild if you can the guards then you will do better

4) both have advantages if you work for yourself there is no need to worry about trust but if you have a guild you will gain money faster

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<u>Overland Movement</u>

I am curious about movement rates for overland travel. I have seen the rules in the DMG and PHB but dont really see what I want. The rules state that for an average day of traveling(10 hours) a character /horse may move twice their movement rate in miles. Then the rules state (by means of the chart in the dmg pg125) that the points listed are spent per mile of travel through that terrain. Is this subtracted from double the movement rate ?

I am also looking for is statistics for carts/carraiges/chariots. Movement rates/ cargo capacity in size and weight / and prices.

Lastly I want to know about roads. The dmg states movement modifiers for roads but what kind of roads is the dmg talking about. Dirt or cobblestone streets or a flagstone/paved highway ? As a framework for this info he technology level is roughly equal to the roman empire. (Aqueducts, and very well mantained roads/highways.)

Harriman, Robert Robert_Harriman@BOSE.COM

> I am curious about movement rates for overland travel. I have seen the rules in the DMG and PHB
>but dont really see what I want. The rules state that for an average day of traveling(10 hours) a
>character/horse may move twice their movement rate in miles. Then the rules state (by means of the
>chart in the dmg pg125) that the points listed are spent per mile of travel through that terrain. Is this
>subtracted from double the movement rate ?

Right. If the movement modifier is 4, every mile you go you use 4 movement points. So if you normally move 40 miles in one day you can only move 10 miles through that terrain.

> I am also looking for is statistics for carts/carraiges/chariots. Movement rates/ cargo capacity in size
>and weight / and prices.

Don't have any info on this, sorry.

> Lastly I want to know about roads. The dmg states movement modifiers for roads but what kind of
>roads is the dmg talking about. Dirt or cobblestone streets or a flagstone/paved highway ?

Maybe I'm just way off here, but I assumed all non-city roads were packed dirt or worse. Cobblestones
or other paving techniques might be found in cities, but once you exit the city you're back to dirt.

Billy Graey   slayer@LUVEWE.OPS.USA.NET

>Maybe I'm just way off here, but I assumed all non-city roads were packed dirt or worse.
Cobbleston->es or other paving techniques might be found in cities, but once you exit the city you're
back to dirt.

In the campaign I am working on the geographical limitations I have imposed have affected the level of
advancement / improvment within the Empire. This results in highly advanced/maintained processes.
(The height of the Roman Empire) Thus the roads between the major cities are well maintained.

Harriman, Robert Robert_Harriman@BOSE.COM

>I am also looking for is statistics for carts/carraiges/chariots. Movement rates/ cargo
capacity in >size and weight / and prices.

There are rules for these in the AD&D book ”Wilderness Survival Guide” by Kim Mohan

Muad´Dib The Nightbringer allanchr@post8.tele.dk

Movement

Does anyone else have the problem that I do that the movement system in AD&D is a little off? A
normal character is said to have a movement rate of 12. Loosely translated, 120 feet indoors and 120
yards outdoors. Isn't one yard equal to 3 feet? A person can walk 360 feet in one minute? I don't think
so. Running, yes. I can see a person walking 120 feet in one minute.

Have any of you come up with a better system of movement? Does it cover spell effects as well? The
rules here are very open to interpretation. I would like to hear what some of you have to say about this
matter. It seems to me that it would almost be better to keep the movement/distance scale in feet and
forget yards. Yeah, there are going to be complaints that this is different, but if you rationalize one for
another, aren't you contradicting yourself?

(Anonymous)

Can you walk from one goalpost to another across a football field in 60 seconds? I can run it in 14
(used to be able to do it in 12 but I've gotten old). It's a brisk walk but only about 4 mph. It really isn't
that far.

Bill Dunn bdunn@epicsys.com

4 miles an hour is actually 352 feet per minute or 117.33333 etc. Yards which is very close to the 120 yards per minute for AD&D outdoor movement.

4 miles per hour is a FAST walk. Most Americans can't walk this fast for the length of a football field.
3 miles per hour is a brisk walk.
2 miles per hour is about how fast most people can walk comfortably.

But if we are talking AD&D adventurers ... well that's something completely different.

Walker Donald-LDW001   DWalker911@aol.com

I just wanted to add that while I was in track I was running the 200 meter, which is roughly 200 yards, in 25 seconds thats 600 feet; and I wasn't breaking records. We had one guy run in 18 secs I think he went to states that year. For a longer distance we had a guy running the 400m,1200 feet, in below 50 seconds; he was breaking records but I want you to consider how much strong and healtier your PC are, unless they are nobles (which would mean eating better), they probable have been working all there life so are in great shape. Also as Heros they are a higher quialty of man or women, which is why a first level pc is so much more than a zero level npc. I wecome any comments to this and why it isn't right,

(Anonymous)

I was under the impression that a different time-per-turn scale was used outdoors than indoors and thus the difference in how far you could travel outdoors... (generally you travel much longer distances outdoors than indoors and if you kept track of each minute, you'd have a VERY long, boring game.)

(Anonymous)

I was allways under the impression that in the 1st ED rules the different speeds meant two things.

1) Outdoor movement was easier, more open and better visibility.
2) Indoor movement was slower and more carefull due to things like deadfalls in caves, pit traps in hallways, fast movement makes too much noise, and slower movement is required to detect for traps and secret doors. For spells and ranged attacks underground the range was less due to the fact that visibility was reduced and arrows and such could not be arced for the better range in hallways.

And remember that a man may move 120' per rnd but a man in plate only moves 60' per rnd, so in your example an unarmored/unencumbered man CAN walk that distance in one minute, but not a man in armor.

Ben cammy@centuryinter.net

Increasing Ability Scores

Has anyone come up with rules concerning raising a character's ability scores through hard work and training or any other method than magic tomes or Ioun Stones? I think that this SHOULD be an option, as people do it all the time.

(anonymous, no email)

True, though it seems that the AD&D ability scores represent a fairly broad range of numbers, such that many minor increases that would come about from training, study, etc., are already taken into account.

The Rolemaster system has a way of handling this:
Each ability score has a current value and a "potential" value. The potential, rolled at creation, is the limit the character can achieve in a particular ability. The current value is where they are presently at. Each level, the character may increase their abilities to a certain degree, but they can never exceed their potential. However, RM's range is 1-100, not 3-18.

The cavalier class in 1st Edition was able to do something like this, with percentages not just for Strength but for other abilities as well (which could be increased as the character grew in level). I don't recall exactly how it worked, but perhaps someone with a copy of Unearthed Arcana at hand could help...

Bruce Gulke akira@starnetinc.net

As a general rule I would think that it should not be allowed, but I can think of a way in which you could implement it. When you say "people do it all the time" I assume you mean something like "Arnie wasn't born with huge biceps he had to work for them". This is true, but few people do it. OK, so our PC's are adventurers - they don't have time to be lifting weights etc. However, while they were training, who knows what they may have done.

Here's a suggestion: when you create a character, allow the player to spend WP slots to buy physical exercise. What this means is that while they were in their formative years, the PC was pumping iron instead of practicing with his sword. Using this you might allow them to buy physical stats (str & con only) with WP. I would say 2 slots buys +1 str&con.

Samuel, Davey samuel.davey@DSTO.DEFENCE.GOV.AU

I think the way ability scores are defined and how the whole AD&D game concept works makes assumptions that must be understood first, before modifications to the rules can be made in a balanced fashion.

Regarding ability scores, I have a few points to make:
-First, the game generally assumes that the scores your PC has in his abilities are those he would have if he maintained his current lifestyle. It assumes that some work out more than others, while some are more curious than others(higher INT due to constant desire to explore and learn). Some have a natural inner stability and others a mysterious magnetic personality. Basically, each PC has the scores he does because the way he has lived his life has produced those scores.

-Second, some if it is based on genetics, for sure. Some people are just born bigger, stronger, smarter, etc. This is not something a PC has control over, so the randomness of the score generation does make

some sense in this regard.

-Third and finally, combining the above 2 points, you can see that a PC will have some control over his scores, but not total control. Since the scores rolled up are those the PC has in his natural state, the way he likes and enjoys to live, they will not change unless the PC changes his lifestyle in some way. If the PC wants to become stronger, he must spend more and more of his day in such a pursuit, one that both consumes a lot of time and possibly money. Thus, the PC will have less time to adventure. Also, some people just seem to find certain living styles more enjoyable than others. One PC may love exercise and physical training, so it produces little stress on his life and seems to just come natural to him. These folks may then spend less time in other areas, finding physical training to be more rewarding. These will have higher STR and CON scores, while suffering in other areas due to lack of development. Others may find learning to be the easiest and most rewarding way to live, but care little for physical exercise. The

hunsaker hunsaker@MOTHER.COM

>Here's a suggestion: when you create a character, allow the player to spend WP slots to buy physical
>exercise. What this means is that while they were in their formative years, the PC was pumping iron
>instead of practicing with his sword. Using this you might allow them to buy physical stats (str & con
>only) with WP. I would say 2 slots buys +1 str&con. just off the top of my head. make it possible but
>hard (discourage munchkins) and no 19s.

I've done something quite similar IMC. I let my players do a one for one trade with weapon slots for physical stats up to 16. After that it was two slots to raise the score to 17 and four to raise it up to 18. I also did the same for non-weapon slots and non-physical stats. The players seemed to like it and it takes quite a few levels to get an 18. And I agree with no 19s.

Steven Damon damon_sj@HOTMAIL.COM

Before implementing my modified non-weapon proficiency rules (on web page if you care), I used to do this:

STR, DEX and CON could be raised by 1 up to your racial max by spending a Weapon proficiency slot. STR, DEX and CON could be raised by another 1 by using 2 more Weapon proficiency slots. ...and so on, increasing the cost each time (first time costs 1, second time costs 2, and so on).

The same is true of INT, WIS and CHA, except that these are raised using non-weapon proficiency slots, in the same manner. This doesn't work under my current proficiency system, but it worked well under the normal AD&D system.

Paul, Brett Brett_Paul@KNE.COM

I would think that the physical attributes might be increased this way, but the mental attributes would not. It is hard to learn to be smarter, or learn to be wiser. One can however learn to be more charismatic, but i think this would be better served if you added a skill that would give a reaction bonus on a succesful roll. Also Intelligence and wisdom both increase with age anyway.

Back to physical attribs. Increasing ones strength is not something that can be done in a week or two. In fact if you look in the DMG your will find a tome that explains exercise techniques that allow for an increase in strength. I don't think that people of the period know how to work on muscle groups to increase strength other than to work harder and this doesn't always work.

The strength scores that a character gets when he is designed are what he would have optimumly. Anything more and special aid woudl be needed "ie magic" I would allow your system if the PC had a stat that was below average, say 7 or less. If only to allow him to negate penalties from low stats as he gains levels. Once in the average area though progress would stop.

(anonymous, no email)

I liked your way of solving this problem. There is just one question left: can, in real life, one rise his basic abilities? If I study hard can I be more Intelligent? Could I be more Wise? If I play a lot with balls and make lots of exercises could I be more dexterous?

My experience of life (which is not great) tell me that we can learn a lot of things, but we can't rise our basic abilities. There could be two exceptions: STR and CON.

STR could be risen or lowered with training and exercises. I would say that if the player really wants to rise it he should work a lot to keep it high, or else it would lower quickly.

CON could be risen or lowered by the things you eat and things like that. This could mean a great change in the way of living (meditating, eating a lot of fish and no other meat, eating lots of grains and vegetables...)

I would say that a player can modify STR by spending weapon proficiency and CON by spending a non-weapon proficiency. Then I would make it clear to the player that his character knows how to rise those scores by one point. If he wants to rise it he should work one hour/day for each slot spent in that way.

I would say that he would lose one point of his ability for each weak of leisure.

Alberto Silva alberto.silva@APIS.COM.BR

A person can easily say something like, "My character is going to lift weights for a while," and the character would go off and do it. Compare this to a real life situation. Look at how many people abandon their diets or New Year's resolutions. If a character is going to try and improve his stats, I think there should be some roll to see if a character has the motivation and willpower to continue the Ability score raising process. That's just my opinion.

Illusion23@aol.com

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>character would go off and do it. Compare this to a real life situation. Look at how many people
>abandon their diets or New Year's resolutions. If a character is going to try and improve his stats, I
>think there should be some roll to see if a character has the motivation and willpower to continue the
>Ability score raising process. That's just my opinion.

Then again, how many people in real life have the motivation to spend decades perfecting their skills in arcane lore or working to master the use of a particular weapon in combat ? Adventurers tend to be (generalization alert) a fairly motivated bunch.

Laughing Wolf lwolf@globec.com.au

GUARDING YOUR LAIR

Question:

I have a question its more curiosity than need so take your time. if you were to protect a house, a lair and a tower, how would you do and what would you use, spell names descriptions on traps and the likes.:

Answers:

The Veiled Vampire c.liberg@INET.ZITECH.DK

1. For The Door I would use "Sepia Snake Sigil" as well as a trap that springs a needle if you presses the handle without unlocking first. For the main room I would place. Some sort of guardian, displacer beast golem or the likes.

Fizban Master of Magic BMAY@NOVELL-1.LSUE.EDU

2. I prefer a much more simple approach, No visible entrances. Hide the windows and doors with magic, good craftsmanship, etc.. This should discourage or at least greatly delay most intruders. False doors are a cool idea to. Of course they are all trapped.

3. As for traps, I've run across some nasty ones that would get rid of the most persistent would-be thief. How about a Wraith trapped in the door. Anyone touches the door and "what exp. level?" . then there is always the spring loaded door. turn the knob and the door flies open and slams the unfortunate into the wall. OUCH!

4. I have a friend who's wizard made his tower completely out of prismatic walls. It takes a high level mage and a good bit of time but it makes for one hell of a defence.

5. How about a trained Mimic as your front door? What a welcome mat that would make. Or perhaps some Gargoyles on the roof (I know it's been done to death but hey, it works.).

The Annihilator stiles@GLAXOWELLCOME.COM

6. Well, usually I take a different approach. I do not make the getting in as much fun as the getting out. As a powerful, and busy foe, I usually do not have the time to spend guarding my possessions. I enlist in aid from others to perform this duty. They are responsible with their petty lives. It is

really amazing how a demon or devil can guard a chamber. Then they weaken the fool and restrain him, until I arrive. Believe me they are begging the demon to kill them long before I get there.

7. Some other really good ideas you can get from the Tomb of Horrors module, if you can find one. I recall a door that was really a Polymorphed Green Slime, that attempting to open it would result in the magic being dispelled. This was great, that is some bad stuff.

8. Poison is also a top choice of mine. I use it quite often.

9. Most of all, use your imagination and be creative. You do not need to be too elaborate, or spend millions in magic to protect a place, just be smart. Also, take into account how valuable the something is you wish to protect. I like to have minions handle this, and just kill any intruder. Some chambers contain valuable items, these are protected by powerful magic's, and more powerful minions... Like Demons.

Hugo Lynch Hugo.Lynch@bellsygma.com

10. It depend what and where are you protecting. If your poison needle is on the front door of a simple town house maybe it' s not a good idea to have dead people in front of your door every time they go see the old man to ask him for a cup of sugar.

11. Secondly if you have people doing the cleaning inside your manor, maybe the displacer beast is not a good idea... and I see only one time a tamed Displacer beast .. so all the ting in your main room will be destroyed...(imagine a 400 hundred pound kitten..)

12. Sepia Snake Sigil...Maybe a little discomfort for everyone going to ask you for something.

13. But if you are a vampire in a distant castle and you don't mind what people think about you, you can place red dragon in your main room a mimic as a door and a invisible blade barrier just after the mimic.

14. With a delayed blast fireball with a contingency if someone open the door and it's not you.

Cearon Dracbane, the Necromancer   houwood@ACS.EKU.EDU

15. It all depends on the measure of security that I would like, as well as the power of the person placing the guards. I have a residence in my campaign that it would take characters at higher levels to get into. Of course, the owner of the residence is the ambassador to the largest Empire is the world, as well as being a very powerful vampiric mage (a whole other story altogether). Here are some of the security devices, and practices that are at that residence:
1) Outer Security
The building is surrounded by a ten foot, marble wall. On the inside of the wall there are lanterns placed along the wall at twenty foot intervals. These lanterns are lit not by oil, but by continual light coins placed in the lanterns each night before dark. Embassy guards walk the perimeter of the walls, on the inside, accompanied by trained dogs. The vocal cords on the dogs have been cut, this increases the ability for the dogs to surprise people coming over the wall. Invisible characters can bypass this fairly easily, if a dog is not close enough to smell the intruder. The guards travel in pairs, a lower level mage or cleric, and a warrior, plus the dog. An area twenty foot around the building itself is armed with multiple, permanent alarm spells. This is only good against people walking on the ground, flying intruders may bypass this with relative ease. All windows are wizard

locked at the level of the ambassador (17th level). The doors are similarly locks, save for the front door, which is always unlocked. The outer area is guarded from flying creatures and characters by Gargoyles. These creatures are perched on the outer walls at the corners, and on the building itself.

2) Interior Security

All doors to important rooms are wizard locked at the level of the ambassador. Several of the more important doors have glyphs of warding, or similar spells cast upon them. Within the foyer, entered by the front door, there are two stone gloms that disguise themselves as statues (not very original, but hey, it works. It also makes intruders extremely nervous when they enter the Hall of Statues :)). There are stone gloms within the Hall of Statues as well. Also, there is a Hall of Mirrors, which is infested by Fetchs (DragonLance, Monster Compendium Appendix) who are loyal to the Ambassador. The Fetches only attack those not accompanied through the household. At the entrances to the Hall of Mirrors and Hall of Statues there is a permanent invisibility purge spell in place. Of course, there are a variety of alarm spells placed in certain areas that are only active at night. There is also security against theft and assassination. Theft is guarded against on certain objects, like the books in the library are all trapped. Several chests are literally bolted to the floor, in a room that has a modified anti magic shell in affect. This causes those that want everything to have to take the time to transport the things out of the room to fill up bags of holding, etc. Assassination is guarded against by two precautions. The first is that the Ambassador does not sleep in the main bed chambers. He is a vampire and has his coffin elsewhere (though only a rare few know of this secret). The second is that there is a Chain contingency spell that protects the ambassador. If the command word is spoken the ambassador is immediately teleported to his coffin, a slow spell is cast, centred on spot where the ambassador had been, and then followed by a Gate spell. While all of this sounds extremely powerful, and saturated with magic, (especially for those of you who noticed my earlier posts on the fact that there is very low magic in my campaign) the original architects of the embassy was the current ambassador, a vampire mage, and a Lich (who is the Emperor, although no one know that either). The combined powers of these two undead lords who have been 'alive' for over two thousand years, have made such great feats of magic possible. No one has tried to break into the embassy, but the possibility does exist. And on top of all the security, there is the ambassador himself, which is an extremely old and powerful vampire. This particular vampire is much like the characters of Elminster in forgotten realms, Sthrad in Ravenloft, or Astinus in DragonLance; he is a major important campaign character and is not meant to be killed. He is also a wonderful adversary and downright devious villian. He always seems to have a plan that works the character's goals into his own. :)

Curtis Retherford   Foorooster@AOL.COM

16. Oh wait, I better say something worthwhile, so here it is. I used to have a mage (yes, I remember him well) who had a small laboratory in the basement of his friend's manor. Well, him, another adventurer, and that friend painstakingly created full layouts, everything for the lab. Snake Sigils. Trap doors. Trick Stairs. Fake treasure (and very real traps guarding it.) Basically, it was like a small dungeon. Well, we had it all done, and we were all happy, just waiting for some poor sod of a thief to get stuck behind the sliding slab of stone, etc. (Of course, we knew where every trap was and how to bypass it. We weren't that dumb.) Well, then, one day, after coming home from a long adventure, we found the whole placed trashed. "What about all the traps?" we said. "Uh, they're trashed too." (Understandably, we were quite pissed, and in revenge ate all the pizza before he got any, and we made him describe how EVERY trap was destroyed, etc.) So, here's the thing. For every trap we had done, all it had become was just another thing for the mysterious villain to destroy. Now I know what every single person on this list is thinking. "Gee, he was just a bad DM, and I'm not like that." Fine. But the thing was, he wasn't a bad DM. He was actually a pretty good DM, and he needed a way to get us on an adventure. The thing is, every DM always turns to the

same thing: "(valued possession) is stolen by what appears to be a (monster type) What will you do?" For instance, kidnapping a henchman or favourite NPC, (or just killing them off) or trashing a house, or (a favourite against wizards) stealing a spellbook, that paladins holy avenger or war-horse, etc. Anyway, I was just wondering why everyone always resorts to this. There has GOT to be another way. Also, I would like to point out not to over defend anything you own, because the bigger they are, the harder they fall. If you defend one thing with every trap and spell in the world, including multiple wishes, even if it is just one little GP, what do you think the DM is going to steal from you? To be honest, the only time a DM would even think about the traps you put on it is when it is during combat, or if he feels like having some sort of thief or something set off the traps to try to be funny. (Oh come on, there has probably been more than one DM on this list that has done something to that effect. Admit it.)

Darkon DeGonnvill   lord_darkon@JUNO.COM

17. When you are aware of unwanted guests...
    *Use the Control Weather spell to make a gloomy fog around the area of your tower. Combind it with Death Fog to give it a little kick in the butt.
    *Using the Guards and Wards spell will also help.
    *Using Mirage Arcana upon the tower should hide it from pass-biers.
    *Mislead (the spell) the opponents for your safety.
    *Monster Summoning will never hurt.
    *Change the landscape with Move Earth, good things could happen that way.
    *Programmed Illusions could throw twists for your opponents.
    *Turn a few Stones to Flesh to freek out a few, draw others, be careful.
    *Make a few barriers between them and the tower.
    *Summon Shadows to do some ill.
    *Distance Distortion is rude but effective.

<u>DWARVEN MOUNTS</u>

Hi all.
I am just about to start playing a dwarf with the rapid response rider lkit. I was wondering whether anyone could give me an idea as to what would be an appropriate mount for a 7th level rapid response rider. It has to be land-based, and preferably common or at worst uncommon. Thanks

Runar Magnusson runarm@ITN.IS

A large goat, reindeer or rothe. Or, have you thought about making the "mount" a chariot or sled pulled by reindeer? My campaign world does not include dwarf *riders*, but reindeer pulled chariots and carriages are the most common (which is not common at all) over-land travel method used by dwarfs (pre-Tolkien plural dwarf spelling).

Paul Schirf Paul@Schirf.com

Well.. thats one of my current kits, and i enjoy it very much. I suggest you to choice bear(one of them). He can eat all, intelligent enough, and common for most worlds.

(Anonymous)

How about a pony? Short, stocky and shaggy, like most dwarves ;) Can you say Pony Express?

Adam Collinge: acolinge@uvic.ca

I remember seeing a picture somewhre once of a Dwarf on a big Silver Cat and a Nasty looking goblin on a Dark Wolf. Charging head to head with weapons draw. I might add the cat looked like a cross between a sabertooth tiger and a huge lion. Maybe that would work. It'd be like having a all terain vehicle with teeth. Or mabey a large version of a cheta that would be a fast ride.

(Anonymous)

Dude! He said "common or...uncommon". He didn't say anything about genetically engineering a long dead animal with a living one! How about the dwarves ride on small ponies. I think you could pretty much pick any variety of small riding animals for this job.

(Anonymous)

How about a giant lizard? I seem to recall reading something about dwarves using them as mounts in some supplement.

(Anonymous)

>Dude! He said "common or...uncommon".

All things being equal and nothing ever equaling out... How do we know what is common or uncommon in his setting?

I once played in a setting where the world was in a Ice age setting. The North and South poles of the planet were unihabitable. The common mount was a type of polar bear. The common pet was a Lynx to keep out the warm blooded snakes which sought out heat in the homes of people. And the common ship was a small flat triangular shape with runners and sails.

Another setting was in a mostly jungle world. There were elves which lived as nomads and their basic mode of transportation was a creature that was a mix of Bat and Monkey. Somthing similar to the creatres on the movie Dark Crystal. Just throwing mud at the wall to see what sticks. Never know. Something might even bounce.

(Anonymous)

Boars are small enough to be used as mounts, large enough to be effective in combat, and in temperment they are a wonderful match for a tenacious dwarf. Plus, they're relatively easy to maintain in an underground setting and can act as an emergency food source for a clan under siege.

Precedent for boars as dwarven mounts can be found in R.A. Salvatore's more recent novels.

(Anonymous)

Well when I played a dwarf that rode a lot she had a war pony. Granted it was a bit large so she also had to learn a bit of acrobatics to get on it.

Kristy dot@rosix.icce.rug.nl

This is directed to everyone who commented on Dwarven mounts, not the poster I'm replying to specifically. aren't Dwarves around 4 ft tall? Some people mentioned riding boar. Well, that would be good for a 2-3' gnome, but a dwarf would be WAY to large and heavy for a boar. A small pony is decent size for a Dwarf, IMO. They are small, not TINY.

Joe Stevenson sabre@FSI.NET

Actually, reference to Dwarves riding boars usually refers to Giant Boars (at least by the Dwarve's Handbook). So, a Dwarf riding a giant boar is quite feasible. In fact, I've designed a Dwarven stronghold in which Dwarven Rapid Response Riders mounted on giant boars act as "shock troops." Really quite effective. :)

Dan Koziar koziard@cyberbeach.net

OK, I held myself back till now, but I can't do it anymore: somebody wrote about giant boars, wow. It IS a great idea I say. However, another SSI game (Death Knights of Krynn) contains an optional quest with a mountain dwarf riding a boar. That IS an exciting quest! And why, I think that it's no matter if the dwarf's (shorty IMO) legs nearly touch the ground. I say that a boar could be proper. (How about a griffon? Fairly common, ain't? ;))

Szucs Gabor h430964@stud.u-szeged.hu

Well, a GIANT boar, yes... but a normal size boar just couldn't carry the weight!!! Remember, dwarves are short, but broad and stocky. They can weigh close to what a human weighs. A deer is BIG enough for a dwarf to ride also, but I doubt that a 175 lb dear could support a dwarf. A large stag, well, that's another thing.

Joe Stevenson sabre@FSI.NET

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DEEP GNOME

Ben Erdin beerdin@davidson.edu

No doubt about it, Deep Gnomes are a powerful race. I am getting my info from the Complete Books of Gnomes and Halflings, and I need some assistance on PC Deep Gnomes. First off, they have a slew of abilities:blindness, blur, change self, AC improves every level after 3rd, Magic Resistance improves every level after 3rd, etc. However, unlike most underground races (Drow, Deep Dwarves) they have no listed aversion to light. Is this correct? Second, one of their listed abilities is "Combat Bonuses." They can make and wield stun darts, resulting in stunning and slowing; acid darts, rsulting in 2d4 extra damage, and crystal caltrops which release a sleep gas. Now, how would yall run this ability? Can they just sit down and make these items? How often? Should they use certain NWP's? Which ones? Should the NWP's be given free? Has anyone else gone through this and can offer info or anyone with ideas? I am most grateful.

Josh Bendor   BendrFendr@aol.com

I agree, deep gnomes are extremely powerful. I have the Gnomes/Halflings book as well, and i think it says nothing about them making the darts – only wielding them. What I decided with a PC who was a Deep Gnome (and tends to be a min/maxer who tries to make super-powerful characters) was that he could start with some darts (which he had to buy), and whenever he wanted more he had to go back to his settlement. Most likely he won't be adventuring in the Underdark, and so he'll have to put in quite a lot of effort to get more darts (also creating adventure material and some interesting campaigns.) He used them quite sparingly, as a last resort. I think this worked well. I would suggest toning the Deep Gnome down, as it is obviously more powerful. The penalties for light would be good, or you could tone down there current abilities (even delete some.) Also, think about PC deep gnomes having mental quirks, based on the fact that they are far away from there home, and also that they're the kind who would want to leave there home and adventure instead of mining for gems. If they hate the light, they gotta be kinda weird to leave their homeland for the surface world. Maybe give them an XP penalty (such as in the Dwarves book and the Elves book), an alignment restriction. Or a -1 to Str. Hope this helps.

Joshua Young   jy8078@ark.ship.edu

OK...I'm not completely sure of this, but I was reading throught PO S&P for the umpteen billionth time about 2 weeks ago and I think that deep gnomes suffer a -1 penalty to their attack rolls when in strong light (i.e. natural sun light). I'm not completely positive about this, but you might want to check it out if you use PO S&P.

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CAPTURED ENEMIES

John Fontaine   johhf@WORLDNET.ATT.NET

Ok. Here is a situation. We are a party of moderate/high level (12-19th) level adventurers. We've just battled some Frost Giants in a minor encounter. One of their number surrendered. Now what? We've got a 12000 pound 20' tall monster he's surrendered. We're good so killing him probably isn't something the gods will look kindly on. Do we just send him away? This presents other dilemas
One thought has been to magically reduce him, and then teleport back to the army we are working for and let them (ie the DM) deal with the problems. Now were about to go to war with these frost giants, so I suppose that we should expect this to happen more often. It probably won't be practicle to use the

reduce/teleport option again (assuming we even use it here). So there are like 800 some reasonably intellegent gamers out there. What do you all recommend.

Jeremy G. hjrgreen@CYBERZONE.NET

Set them free with the condition that they do not fight in the comming battles or they will tourtured by the gods your PC worship

---

Benjamin Lomax GoblinKing@WORLDNET.ATT.NET

Anyone who has run Against the Giants is familiar with this particular problem. In that series of modules, my players captured maybe a dozen giants over the whole thing and kept having to find places to stash them that they wouldn't get away. In the end, several escaped and they encountered them later, but since one giant looks awfully familiar to another, they only recognized it one time and then regretted not killing the big guy. There is no good way to render giants harmless once subdued so either you kill the prisoner (not something that will get you points from your deity), which takes you out of danger, or wrack your brains finding someplace to stash him where he can't escape to warn the rest. Now if it is just a random encounter there will most likely be little to no ramifications to letting him go and I would advise that, but he may come back with friends. As a DM, I would give you some leeway if you had mercy as opposed to making you pay for keeping him alive, but also penalize you for stupidity if you told him your plans or allowed him to garner information that your foes might find interesting. It's a tough question, regardless.

<<Now were about to go to war with these frost giants, so I suppose that we should expect this to happen more often. It probably won't be practicle to use the reduce/teleport option again (assuming we even use it here). So there are like 800 some reasonably intellegent gamers out there. What do you all recommend.>>

I don't think that you want to drain all your magic energies doing something like the above routine, unless it were a very important prisoner. If you are truly going to war, then use whatever support mechanism you have to keep the beast prisoner until it is resolved, then release him after you win (or lose, though I doubt you will have many options if you lose). If you mean your party is going to war with this tribe, just find someplace that will keep him until you take out the leadership and the bulk of support. Frost Giant tribes are rarely very large (the one in Against the Gianst being an exception) and you should be able to keep the prisoners under wraps in a cellar, treasure room, etc. until the situation is resolved. In an Against the Giants situation, hope for the best because there is no way you are going to win that one quickly and the prisoner will most likely be rescued before you even make a dent. If your DM is a good one, he shouldn't give you too much grief for being good characters. Good luck.

Calvin Armerding - cutter64@memes.com

How about a Geas? How about parole? Any chance that he will give his parole and agree to abide by certain terms if you let him go? Perhaps cast "Know Alignment" on him (a good use for a spell much maligned recently) and if he has good tendencies then this might work.

Morgen Gregory   solus@SCHENECTADY.COM.AU

To avoid the problem of captured enemies I developed a spell for my friend who played a cleric. He had been given the ability to grant prisoners a Word of Honor. It work by the Cleric telling the creature that it had the option of giving its word of Honor or suffering death. The cleric sets the conditions of the The agrrement ie You will not tell anyone about seeing us or warn anyone etc. The creature if we agrred was then bound by the agrrement. If he broke the word of honour the clerics god would begin to punish him. The creature had to be able to understand the ramifications of this agreement. It jsut made it easy for my players to let enemies go.

I think that it is the hardest question in the entire roleplaying system. How do players deal with captured enemies.

Dave Stebbins dave_stebbins@hotmail.com

This leads directly to the spell below. It is from Oriental Adventures which is copyright TSR.:

Oath (abjuration) reversible
level:3
range: 10 yards
duration: permanent
AOE: One Creature
Components: VSM
Casting Time: One Round
Save: Negates

By means of the oath spell, the priest can attempt to force some deed or behavior upon an unwilling creature in return for some consideration from the priest (typically sparing its life). The creature must be able to understand the speech of the priest for the spell to have effect. The oath must be limited to actions that can be accomplished by the natural abilities of the creature and cannot directly cause harm to the creature or another. Thus, a priest could demand that a highwayman swear never to rob again, that an evil monster return to those deserted lands from which it came, or that a lord never overtax his peasants again. He could not demand that a monster commit suicide or force a samurai to attack an encampment of dangerous monsters. The DM must decide if any given oath is beyond the restrictions given. The victim is allowed a saving throw versus spell to avoid the effects of the spell. However, if the victim has been subdued in combat, the saving throw is made with a -2 penalty. Once the spell is in effect, both sides have free will to abide by the conditions of the oath. If the priest (or any accompanying him) break oath, the forsworn creature is instantly freed of it. However, if the victim attempts to break the conditions of the oath, he is struck by wracking pains, causing the loss of one hit point per round until he relents or dies. Oaths can be removed by the reverse of this spell, unbind, or by use of an atonement. The material component for both oath and unbind is the priest's holy symbol.

I have not changed the text of the spell, except to substitute "priest" for "shukenja." It should be noted that, in OA, this spell was only usable by Shukenja, who are good-aligned oriental priests. It might be interesting to have this spell available to evil priests also. I feel this spell is an important and basic part of the priest class, so I would put it in the all sphere.

John Fontaine   johhf@WORLDNET.ATT.NET

Well here is an update for the curious.

As we rejoined the action the players, collectively known as the party, are an assembled group of moderate to high level adventurers who have joined a human/dwarven crusade against the Frost Giants of the North. As an adjunct to the main army (now camped several hundered miles away), we have gone ahead to the town of Wayfarers home to determine whether the army might winter here in advance of a spring campaign. Reports had reached us that the town had been attacked, but not destroyed by a couple of Red Dragons. Upon our arrival at the town we discovered this had been the case. We also discovered that a group of our enemies had set up a camp of sorts at a river to the south of us (between the town, and the army). So we set out to investigate this before delving into the matter of the dragons. We attacked this small garrison of Frost Giants and Ogres, killing all but one of them who surrendered. This lead to our first dilema. What to do with a 10,000 pound 20' tall Frost Giant. Well we couldn't just kill him, we are good after all (my appologies to the antipaladin contingent who are probably cringing at the moment). This is where we stopped as a roleplaying group last week, and where I asked the list for some advice. Our decision was to simply reduce the frost giant in this instance, and teleport him back to the main army for them to do with as they will. This probably won't be an effective solution if we receive the surrender of 10 frost giants, or we are in the middle of a dungeon crawl, but given our circumstances, it seemed prudent. Now we have investigated the affair of the two red dragons. We have after some fortune discovered that a rival ancient green dragon, not possesing the power to defeat either an apparent Silver dragon (hidden away in this little town), or the two reds, who moved into his territory recently, set about to cause them both to fight by hiding their eggs in this town, and blaming the disaperence on the silver dragon. Apparently the silver had hired a group of adventures to delve into the plot of this dragon, but they failed losing several items of power in the process which the silver had given to them. Now we have discovered the eggs, and negotiated an alliance with the reds to destroy this green. Now here is an interesting dilema. You have two red dragons as your allies(questionable at best). Your headed to the lair of an anceint green dragon. Stashed away at your home thousands of miles away are 6 red dragon eggs, which you know you can trade to magess who loves reptiles for a small fortune in gold. How evil would it be to turn on the reds (hopefully they do not turn on you), after you have destroyed the green together?

Bill Dunn bdunn@epicsys.com

Going by the alignments, a Lawful Good character would have to oppose that treachery and other good characters might as well. Once a Lawful character gives his or her word, they follow it because that is the way of things. They have contracted with the other party. Chaotic Good characters might keep that word just as sacred but from a personal honor point of view, not a merely contractually obligating point of view. Either way, forging an agreement with evil dragons and then breaking that agreement is certainly perfidious and nasty. Better to find some way to delay meeting their terms of the agreement ("Oh, we'll deliver the eggs but we need to get a couple of wagons first, then provisions, wait for snowy weather to clear...") in the hopes the dragons will become impatient and break the agreement first.

((miles away are 6 red dragon eggs, which you know you can trade to magess who loves reptiles for a small fortune in gold. How evil would it be to turn on the reds (hopefully they do not turn on you), after you have destroyed the green together?))

Well, it's not really a matter of evil vs. good here, I think it's more of a matter of law vs. chaos. If you have a lawful alignment then you should keep your word, but if you have a chaotic alignment you probably won't be held back by your beliefs. If you are neutral, then you would probably weigh the situation on prevailing circumstances.

Ian Istraus@IBM.NET

Tony Evans tony@TAGMAN.DEMON.CO.UK

Breaking your word is not, in the AD&D sense, evil. It is simply not lawful. For any of your Lawful characters, their word is their bond. However, aligning yourself with two red dragons, for whatever reason, and then turning on them to destroy them, is strictly not a good act either. I would suggest you avoid breaking your word, avoid conflict with the reds, and avoid meddling in the affairs of dragons all-together.

((that agreement is certainly perfidious and nasty. Better to find some way to delay meeting their terms of the agreement ("Oh, we'll deliver the eggs but we need to get a couple of wagons first, then provisions, wait for snowy weather to clear...") in the hopes the dragons will become impatient and break the agreement first.))

Hmm, even then you are technically working against your own alignment, a good GM will let you do it - and then punish you hard for it.

Assassination Methods:

Hi out there. just wonerding, but how many people on this list have role-played an evil characer? I find that they are generally looking more for political power than for "good causes". But, that is not the main point of my post.

What i was wondering, has anybody played as an assassin? Did your DM (or if you DM'ed an assassin) allow you interesting assassination methods, or was it standard backstab fare. I found that the rules from the complete theives handbook to be okay, but just to make it a little more interesting, he used up all his nwp's by getting the anatomy proficiency from the wizard category, and finding interesting things to do with it (base of the neck, throat). It sounds pretty gory, but then again, my character was neutral evil, and he once put powdered glass in someone's food because of a insult, something like "if you don't fight beside me in the next battle, swinging a sword, i will fight you right after"(something like that). Unfortunately, since the DM is a POWERFREAK, he did not allow me to do anything that would upset his precarious game balance. this is the same guy that starts off a game session by saying "You all die!!!" then a few seconds later "just kidding". It gets even more annoying during combat.

(Anonymous, no email)

> What i was wondering, has anybody played as an assassin? Did your DM (or if you DM'ed an
>assassin) allow you interesting assassination methods, or was it standard backstab fare.

I allow players to be creative. While the backstab springs immediately to mind, there can be bow shots, poisoning, traps, and the like. Heck, even pushing them off a cliff. I give extra XPs if the player comes up with something novel.

Mayhem mayhem@wave.co.nz

I have a half-orc assassin, and his favorite method of assassination is to sneak up behind the target and slip his Necklace of Strangulation around its neck. After the target is dead, he cuts off the head and retreives the necklace. As a DM, some of the most effective assassinations I have done have been with a bow. If you enjoy reading about assassins (and magic and sorcery), the Taltos books by Steven Brust are excellent, especially Jhereg, Yendi, and Taltos.

(Anonymous, no email)

We played in a campaign where the island was split into 2 halves, the civilised half and the wild evil half. The DM gave us a choice, be good or evil, well we decided to be evil. So the DM set us up, let us play a few adventures and then we were introduced to our new mentor. Our mentor, as it turned out, was a blind cleric to an evil god. At first this didn't seem too bad, he would heal us and removed a curse from one of us. But then he started getting a little demanding. Then one day my ftr/assassin & his friend the thief/cleric, over heard him talking to an enemy of ours about setting us up in a trap. Well we told the group and they told us to take care of it. Our plan went like this, we followed him (silenced) for a week till we saw a pattern in his movements, set our target area, our time of Execution, and our method. Since he was blind we decided to use silence on him to prevent spells from being used, we also poisoned several arrows, and when the time came, the theif fired a silenced arrow just as soon as the assassin fired a poisoned arrow. It was quite effective considering the assassination roll, the thief backstab x3, the poison and the silence. He never knew what hit him, we looted the body took his clothes and just to make sure he didn't come back we dumped the body into a swamp full of crocodiles and made sure they ate him. Then we waited for his contact the next day, set up a dummy with his clothes and did the same to him when he arrived. The DM gave us quite a bit of exp. for setting this up and the party was quite astonished at how powerful we seemed to be, they never gave us a hard time again. I feel sorry for the th/cl though, he later fought a monk who scored a 00% criticle and ripped his still beating heart from his body and showed it to him right before he died, but that is another story.

Ben cammy@centuryinter.net

ARCTIC MOUNTS

I've got a wilderness warrior in my campaign and he is from the arctic plains of my world. We're trying to sort out what kind of mount would be best for him, He's an archer and a hunter etc. So something sturdy etc is most desired. Anyone have a netbook of mounts out there?

Kristy dot@rosix.icce.rug.nl

How about:

Polar bear
Wolf (of some type)
Caribou

Giant Fish (of some type)

That's all I can think of off the top of my head and I'm sure there are many more. Good luck.

Dan Koziar koziard@cyberbeach.net

Depends on how far north we are talking about. I work with the Iceland Defense System and hence spend a lot of time up there. They have a breed of horse that is perfectly suited for that climate. Very shaggy and is known for more gaits than the normal horse (due to Iceland terrain). If we are talking polar arctic, then a dog sled or similiar arrangement would work best ...

Admiral   admiral@TIAC.NET

If it must be from the Arctic, how about a muskox? Big sturdy, and warm. You can also sell off the wool in the spring. If you're using the first Monstrous Compendium, how about the camel? (According to volume one of the Monstrous Compendium the camel could be found in practically any terrain.)

Alan Kellogg mythusmage@FUNTV.COM

I agree with Dan Koziar that a polar bear would be a good mount. I think a caribou wouldn't be a strong enough mount though, and the same would probably be true for a wolf, unless it is some giant-sized one. About the giant fish, I'm confused. How is that an arctic mount?

A polar bear would be strong enough to carry someone and equipment, and could possibly be bred to be a sevicable mount. Also, it would be a battle ally as well as mount.

William Jahncke Jahncke@worldnet.att.net

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Book 3

Corerules:

Mechanics of Anti-Magic shell

Hey there fellow list-members. I have a small question concerning the spell Anti Magic Shell. If we Have a spell with a duration of lets say an hour. And we put this spell effect into the Anti Magic Shell(having it cast on your self, and then walking into the Anti Magic Shell.) kept the Effect within the Anti Magic Shell, for half an hour. Now we walk out of the Shell. the spell does still work, but for how long???

Does the Anti Magic Shell supress the spell itself and therefore the spell will continue, for (almost) an hour. Or does the Anti Magic Shell supress the spell effect, so that the entire spell still runs within the shell, but the effect does not.

Please excuse me for any liguistic errors i might have made, this is still not my favourite Language.

Christian liberg nielsen webmaster@liberg.dk

According to the spell it does not destoy or dispel existing enchantments. So in answer to your question. The time would still be considered although the effect would not be produced. And after the wizard exited the anti-magic shell from staying in for 30 minutes, and the spell to last 1hr the spell would have a 30 min duration left to it, upon his exiting the field. Wizards Spell Compendium, Book 1, page 52

(Anonymous)

According to the spell, the antimagic shell follows the caster around and only the caster who cast it. Therefore, it would be impossible to escape the magic. As stated in the pHB, not even a dispel magic will affect it. If you're using house rules, and you are able to leave the shell, I would say the spell would continue until the caster left the range. All magic cast by anyone is linked to them and that would be reasonable. If you're a DM, this is helpful to control powerful players. This is to restrict players from stepping inside their shells when the opponent casts spells and steps out to enter melee combat or cast spells of their own.

(Anonymous)

So lets say that A delayed blast fireball was set to 3 rounds, and then a Anti-Magic shell were moved over the delayed blast fireball. and kept there for 10 rounds. now would the fireball go off in a roar of flames, as the Anti-Magic Shell moved away, or would the spell have fizzled all together.

Christian liberg nielsen webmaster@liberg.dk

In truth Christian the spell would have fizzled all together.

(Anonymous)

Mages and backpacks

Here's a question: does a mage have to drop his backpack everytime he's casting a spell? the PHB points out that spellcasting requires a lot of physical requirements, that is, the spellcaster needs his hands free, no armor, et. al. (the backpack got stuffed on rations, books, potions, money, and others).

Khellis gpuyo@HARDWARE.NTEP.NEC.CO.JP

IMC the answer is 'NO'with a proviso: as long as the backpack is not full to the point of encumbrance.

Kay Ferrell gferrell@SONETCOM.COM

I'd say no, unless the backpack was truly huge, like bigger than a camping/hiking type backpack. Sure the mage has to move a lot, but a backpack, unless it is heavy enough to encumber him, shouldn't really make any sort of difference. I mean, although he moves a lot, I doubt part a spell will be scratching his back.

Curtis Retherford   Foorooster@AOL.COM

Not to mention spell components! I'll grant you that it is possible to but a few selected items on top of the pack (that can be removed behind the head) but after that you've got to get it off if you want to rummage inside.....

John Robert Buckley jrbuckley@yahoo.com

I think that removal of the backpack and rumaging through it for spell components is what they mean by "somatic". :)

Jason E Hubred jinxmchue@juno.com

GOLD AND CONTAINERS

I am in a rush, I am leaving to go to a game in a half hour. How many coins fit into each of the following containers.
Small Belt pouch

Large belt pouch
Small Sack
Large Sack
Small chest
Large Chest
Saddle Bags

Harriman, Robert Robert_Harriman@BOSE.COM

This is kind of borrowed from the original D&D rules (and from memory) but:

Small Belt pouch: 20 coins
Large Belt pouch: 50 coins
Small Sack: 200 coins
Large Sack: 400 coins
Small Chest: 100 coins
Large Chest: 500 coins
Saddle Bags: 100 coins / bag

John Kroetch john.kroetch@taylor.com

While I might be too late to help you in this instance, I suggest looking at the maximum weight capacities listed in the PHB. The it's just a matter of simple math: 50 coins = 1 lb. I don't think you need to worry about the volume capacities, since the containers are probably not suited to being filled to the brim with gold (which is a very dense metal, ~20 kg/dm^3).

Staffan Johansson d96sj@efd.lth.se

Dead Magic Zones

What happens to magical creatures, particularly undead, when they enter a dead magic zone, can they enter at all? What about innate powers, do they still operate? What if you have a scroll that is cursed and read it in a dead magic zone? Does the curse take effect right away regardless, only after you leave the zone? not at all?!?...

M.D. Bielinski earthden@M7.SPRYNET.COM

The way I handle a dead magic zone is thus: magic is dead. (pretty tricky, huh?;) Anyhting that relies upon or is enhanced by magic is destoyed, or rendered useless, or returned to it's previous form.

Magical creatures: They die. End of story. A creature that has polymorphed immediately reverts to it's natural state.

Magical Items/Weapons: A magical item used in the zone does not work, but uses a charge/is destroyed if the rules state it is after use. A magical weapon reverts to a normal weapon of the same type, but goes back to it's magical self after leaving the zone.

Scrolls: Any scroll read inside the zone is consumed, without any effect. Even cursed scrolls.

To offset these (somewhat) steep penalties, I give some kind of clue as to when the zone begins and ends (i.e. You feel a slight tingling sensation. Your magic sword, who was making a nuisance of itself, suddenly shuts up.) to keep players from making unconcious mistakes.

Mike Kurtz fnorbenden@YAHOO.COM

Magical Items/Weapons: A magical item used in the zone does not work, but uses a charge/is destroyed if the rules state it is after use. A magical weapon reverts to a normal weapon of the same type, but goes back to it's magical self after leaving the zone.

Erhm...okay, then this is THE way of getting rid of that cursed shord sword -3, isn't it? Since the curse relies on magic as well?

Aghris Mandible aghris@WXS.NL

>> Erhm...okay, then this is THE way of getting rid of that cursed shord sword -3, isn't it? Since the curse relies on magic as well?<<

No, since the curse is one the sword, and the sword functions normally after leaving the zone, the curse remain with the sword, and takes effect after leaving the zone.

Mike Kurtz fnorbenden@YAHOO.COM

Ah, but if you leave said sword behind in the zone, you have gotten rid of it. Since the curse does not function in the zone, you can drop the item.

Randall Eicher   reicher@NKN.NET

Yeah, but what if you enter an area with a cursed sword in hand and bury it there somewhere (I suppose the magic dead area works underground as well, if only for a depth of a few feet), and then leave the place. Would you be rid of it then? And what if someone else found the sword a couple of years later (maybe his dog tried to bury a bone there or something, it COULD happen, don't you think?). Would the new person get cursed by this sword, or would the sword teleport from that place to go to his original owner (that could be fun, finding that damned sword some years later, when you forgot all about it and thought you were rid of it once and for all!!!), or would the two characters fight each other for control over the weapon? This too could be some interesting storyline (that all-powerful sorcerer has his hands on that sword that you actually never wanted in the first place, but you are compelled to fight him for it!!!)

Aghris Mandible aghris@WXS.NL

Actually, if you left the short sword -3 in the dead magic zone it wouldn't be able to follow you out ot it, as the magic is on the sword, not on you. Could make some interesting events if an enemy of the PC gets wind of the fact that he has a cursed sword in a dead magic zone... =)

Stephen Winson   hideo@INTX.NET

Personally, if I was a mage, I wouldn't want to set foot in a dead magic zone. Not for a second, not for an hour. Imagine how naked it would make you feel...

Laughing Wolf lwolf@globec.com.au

Actually, if you stepped into a dead magic zone, would you actually know until you tried to cast a spell, use an item, or try somehting else magical?

ThE13aRd@aol.com

Since magic is the gathering of external forces to achieve a desired affect (Fantasy Wargaming 1st ed) The mage would instantly know that those powers are not available to him. I quote from Timothy Zahn (Heir to the Empire):

"...As if he were waking from a deap sleep, or steping from a dark room into the light, or suddenly understanding the universe again."

I'm assuming that the force and magic kinda go by the same rules.

Mike Kurtz fnorbenden@YAHOO.COM

Here's one for you all to chew on: magical dead and wild zones. How are magical dead and wild zones created (through natural means, magical combat, death of a powerful magical creature, etc.) and is there any way to destroy or create a dead zone or wild zone through magical or other means? I had a powerful wizard in my campaign that wanted to create a dead zone within his tower for the purpose of concealing an artifact from detection. What do you think?

J. Randall   jrandall@gwtc.net

There is no set way to create these areas. Two examples include the destruction of a major magical item or the death of a god (see the Avatar trilogy for Forgotten Realms). It is doubtful that any mortal could create either of these areas without killing themselves in the process. It is possible to "destroy" these areas, but it would take many many many wishes (there was something written about the size of the area that a wish could correct, but I can't find it now - in any case, it wasn't much).

As for a character hiding an artifact, it would be easier to dump it at sea or find a really deep cave to hide it in and subsequently collapse with a liberal sprinkling of spells.

Jason E Hubred jinxmchue@juno.com

Casting Time:

Hello all,

Ok for the longest time the casting time of spells has bugged me... how does it work? some spells have a CT of 1 others are 1 turn and some are 1 rd what is the difference? i know all about how the turns and rounds work but what is a CT of 1 mean??

Bill Sanders waymire@pacbell.net

Time IMC is broken down into Turns, rounds, and segments. A segment is an inexact amount of time, approximately 6 seconds. 10 segments make a round, and 10 rounds make a turn. Thus, a round is approximately a minute, but not exactly, and a turn is about an hour.

IMC, casting time is as follows:

If the spell description states:

Casting time: 1
Then the casting time is one segment. The character rolls initiative (IMC, we use a d10 to determine initiative, lowest goes first and the rest in order. The d10 roll represents in which segment in the round your action will begin.) and adds the casting time to the roll. The number rolled is the segment when casting begins and the roll+casting time is when the spell "goes off". If the caster is struck during this time, the spell is ruined, but if struck before or after, the spell still takes effect.

Casting time: 1 round
Then one full round of doing nothing other than casting the spell is required. The spell "goes off" at the end of the round, or after every other subject who is taking action in that round has completed their actions.

Casting time: 1 turn
Then the spell requires complete concentration for about an hour (no easy feat). I usually rule that completion of a spell requiring more than a minute or two of casting time also requires the mage rest afterwards, as the amount of concentration needed is very draining.

Patrick Gipson pgipson@SELU.EDU

>i know all about how the turns and rounds work but what is a CT of 1 mean??

Three answers:
    2nd edition AD&D: CT 1 = Sometime during the combat round.
    1st edition AD&D: CT 1 = Six seconds.
    Player's Options: CT 1 = Three seconds.

See below for details, explanations, and references.

According to the PHB (2nd ed. TSR product nr. 2159, pg 168) "If only a number is given, the casting time is added to the caster's initiative die rolls." This casting time only comes into effect when the optional group initiative rule is used.

Boy that doesn't help much does it? I can see where that would cause some confusion. What if you're not using the optional group initiative rule? A check of the relevant sections regarding initiative (PHB pages 122-127 (specifically pages 125 and 127) reveals only that 'after determining who won the initiative' "PC's, NPC's, and monsters make their attacks, spells occur, and any other actions are resolved according to the order of initiative." Also; "When a spell's 'Casting Time' parameter is given as a number without any units (for example, rounds or turns), then that number is added to the caster's initiative roll to determine his modified initiative."

Still confused? I am. Basically the spells listed with casting times of 1, 2, 3, etc. Do not have a set casting time. (According to PHB 2nd ed.) The spells casting time simply delays the casters initiative within that melee round. Thus all spells with single digit unmeasured casting times should occur sometime within a combat round (One minute).

I have always found this to be a ridiculous generalization of a rather important game mechanic. What if you're not using the optional rule? What if you're not even using the spell in melee/combat? What if you have to know exactly how long it takes to cast the spell?

To solve this problem I would suggest two options:

Option One:
Use the 1st edition rules regarding casting times. 1 = 1 segment, 2 = 2 segments, etc. The casting times in 2nd ed. were carried over from 1st edition but their original measurements were stripped off. In 1st edition there was a time measurement called a segment. A segment was six seconds long. The segment disappeared in 2nd edition but the casting time remained. This is the reason for much of the confusion. Thus a casting time of 1 in 2nd edition could be considered to be six seconds.

Option Two:
(The method I use) Use the Player's Options: rules regarding casting times. See Players Options: Combat & Tactics page 24. "Spells and spell-like abilities are assigned action phases based on their casting times:

Casting Time	Phase
1-3	Fast
4-6	Average
7-9	Slow
1 round or more	Very Slow"

According to the C&T combat resolution rules, a round is "assumed to be a about one minute long. The combat system round lasts about 10-15 seconds," I place the time at exactly 12 seconds, as this would easily accomodate the 5 combat phases. Very Fast, Fast, Average, Slow, and Very Slow. With each combat phase taking 3 seconds. This would also fit five combat rounds into a standard (non-combat) round. See C&T page 10.

When 2nd edition came around I converted over most of my game. It took a while before I discovered the casting time discrepancy. A player asked how long it would take him to cast a spell with a casting time of 2. When I answered 12 seconds he responded with ...Where'd you come up with that number?..

I had assumed that the casting times were directly related back to the 1st edition segments. (six seconds) After some examination it became clear what had happened. They dropped the segment measurement, but kept the casting times. I kept using the 1st edition measurement until the Player's Options rules came around. I have since found the Combat & Tactics combat rules to solve this and other problems regarding timing during combat. I've used the C&T rules ever since their introduction (1995) and haven't looked back since.

Robert L. Vaessen rvaessen@MYSELF.COM

To simplify, Casting times are like weapon speeds. The listed number is added to the caster's intitiative to determine when he acts in a round.

paulhall paulhall@se-tel.com

Can Shield...?

Hi, I'm zoltar.

I've a question. DMG says:
"...Magical armor allows a saving throw bonus only when the save is made necessary by something physical, whether normal or magical. Magical armor never gives a saving throw bonus against gas (which it cannot block),poison (which operates internally), and spells that are mental or that cause no physical damage..."

WEll, DMG says about Armor, but If I wear a Magical shield is tis bonus comulative? EX: splint mail +2 & Shield +3 = +5 All visual attack. Can this bonus modified regarding shield size?

zoltar zoltar@MAGANET.LOGNET.IT

First off, having a bigger shield +3 doesn't make the +3 any bigger. Secondly yes, the bonuses are cumulative, but only against things they both can block, which is going to be most things either of them could block by themselves. One notable exception, at least logically, would be fireball. A shield just isn't going to do very much for you when you are surrounded on all sides by magical fire. Incidentally, I would give anyone wearing metal armor or a metal shield, magical or not, a -4 penalty to save vs electricity, including lightning bolt. I don't konw if this is written into the rules or not, but it should be.

Billy Graey slayer@LUVEWE.OPS.USA.NET

I would think so but it's up to your DM. but that would only be if you were using your shield. Just saying "I have a +5 because i have a shield . . . " wouldn't cut it.

Randy S. Brown rkbrown@GTE.NET

The PHB has the stats on shields in it's AC table on page 75 of the second edition book. It does not show any AC difference for shield small vs. shield large. So in this case, going strictly by book rules, a shield +3 is just that. AC 10 would adjust for stock splint mail + shield to be an AC 3, then the +5 would adjust that to an AC -2. No other modifier would effect it other than a magical protection which had in it's description the fact that it worked WITH other magical protection things.

As your DM is Gh0d, and the fact that since you are in the game and asking questions.... Maybe you should listen to your Gh0d before he gets tired of the arguing and decides to have the next mage you run into to fight hit you with a lightning bolt where it would hurt?

The question of how closely the DM is going to follow the books is something your group and your DM should work out before any/every adventure the group plans to take...

Our DM generally does not use the spell components aspect of the game, but for one adventure when we'd be going relatively light and to another plane he did insist upon knowing in advance what spell componen-ts we were going to take along with us. Not so much as a bag of sulfur as having us tell him what spells and how many of them we were anticipating possibly having to use. We worked it out that our mages worked night and day pre-packaging the components into tiny little parchment envelopes for carrying in their pouches and bags. Once this was done, it was just a matter of everyone having their list of little packets they were taking and just crossing one off as it was used.

Kitt kitt@TRISK.COM

Well, if I were your DM, I would say yes, they are cumulative, provided, of course, that the attack was from the front or shield flank and the shield had not yet been used to block its limit of attacks (1 for buckler, 2 for small shield, etc)

(Anonymous)

In truth I would say no. Although this is up to the DM. If you were to allow this to combine with magical armor, then you could effectively have a +10 on those saves. This can be achieved by wearing +5 armor and using a +5 shield. I think that +5 is enough, but as I said that is up to the DM.

(Anonymous)

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Bow specialization and elves

I'm having minor difficulty in figuring out the effects of bow specialization. The PHB (p.52) says that a pc specialized in the bow gets an additional range category of point blank giving him a +2 to hit targets 6-30ft away. The pc also can fire before initiatives are rolled if he has an arrow nocked. Strength bonus applies.

So, say I have an elf who is specialized with the bow:

---To hit---
Racial bonus =   +1 (PHB pg 21)
Dex. bonus (16) =   +1 (PHB pg 14)
Str. bonus (17) =   +1 (PHB pg 14)

Base THAC0 at 1st level = 20 - 3 = 17
at point blank range (+2) = 17 - 2 = 15

Now for the questions:
Are my calculations correct? Do you get a +1 for short range, +0 for medium, -1 for long? If so, where can you find this information?

CR Simmons   crsimmons@BLUEBONNET.NET

Yes, that's right. I was a bit in doubt about applying the Strength bonus to a missile attack, since it doesn't specifically say anywhere that you can do it, other than damage bonus, but I suppose higher strength would give more penetration power to the arrow.

> Base THAC0 at 1st level = 20 - 3 = 17
> at point blank range (+2) = 17 - 2 = 15

So far, so good.

> Now for the questions: Are my calculations correct?

Yes.

> Do you get a +1 for short range, +0 for medium, -1 for long? If so, where can you find this information?

No, you get a 0 for short, -2 for medium and -5 for long range. These numbers have been hidden away (in my book, anyway) in the upper left corner of page 71, in bold-faced.

Andreas Kjeldsen morkitar@dadlnet.dk

A bow that is "built to strength", meaning built for the character's great power, will give a bonus to damage. Bows that are built to strength cannot be used by others of lesser strength. The DM may judge that the elf has access to artisans who can build a bow for him, at a cost.

Gord Wilcox   Gord.Wilcox@sierra.com

My take on bows and strength bonuses was that not all bows confer the Strength bonuses. The bow must be built to the Strength category, generally at cost multiplier of 5-7 times (not exactly sure of the multiplier, I believe this is in the DMG). These 'Strength bows' are built to a certain Strength category and the bow's, not the user's, Strength is used to determine the bonus. It also should be noted that unless the user has a strength equal to or greater than the bow, he cannot draw it.

(Anonymous, no email)

All missile weapons get the DEX R/A adjustment to hit. Only hand-hurled missiles also get STR, except for specially made bows. For each +1 of damage bonus required, it cost the original amount of the bow. So, if the bow normally costs 75gp, and you can do +3 damage, then the bow costs 75 + 3*75= 300gp.
Moreover, only people with an equivalent strength can draw the bow (effectively use it).

Lance R. Marrou   mailto:marrou@lasetech.com

>All missile weapons get the DEX R/A adjustment to hit. Only hand-hurled missiles also get STR,
>except for specially made bows. For each +1 of damage bonus required, it cost the original amount of
>the bow. So, if the bow normally costs 75gp, and you can do +3 damage, then the bow costs 75 +
>3*75= 300gp. Moreover, only people with an equivalent strength can draw the bow (effectively use it).

According to the nonweopon proficiency, bowyer/fletcher, this is true. However, the specialization bonas which gives the strength bonas applies to any bow, not just strength bows. In the 2nd eddition players handbook, it doesn't require a specific type of bow. Another note is that strength bows allow the bonas even if the person is not proficient, they just need the required strength (and a successful hit).

Shadowspawn the Archmage Assassinator   dombrowb@river.it.gvsu.edu

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Bonuses to Hit

The other day, IMC we had a discussion about whether bonuses to hit are cumulative. The fighter/thief in the party was throwing his dagger, with high strength and high dexterity (not sure exact figures), however they were sufficient to allow him bonuse for strength and missile attack adjustments. I had always assumed, as there is no instance in the rulebooks that says that you only get one bonus. I see logic in both sides, with min/maxing being a problem, but it seems logical that the dex bonus means the attack is more likely to come in contact with the monster, then the strength bonus comes into account, denoting whether it penetrated, thus succesfully hitting. Thanks in advance for any response to this thread.

(Anonymous)

Page 120 2nd edition phb says the str modifier is "always" applied to melee attacks as well as hurled missile weapons.

M.D. Bielinski earthden@M7.SPRYNET.COM

>Page 120 2nd edition phb says the str modifier is "always" applied to melee attacks as well as hurled
>missile weapons.

I was wondering if this strength bonus overrides or augments (adds to) the bonus for missile attacks

from high dex. We were unable to find any details within the rulebooks we had handy. Any opinions on this would be most welcome.

(Anonymous)

I would say it adds to it. There are certain items where only a Dex bonus applies, such as a short bow, and there are items where just strength applies, such as a longsword. If you're throwing a dagger, I'd say you get the bonuses for both strength and dexterity since it combines the use of both attributes.

Brenton Miller   brent@gryffon.com

Yes, with thrown weapons you get the dex bonus to hit and the str bonus to damage.

> Page 120 2nd edition phb says the str modifier is "always" applied to melee attacks as well as hurled
>missile weapons.

Funny, page 120 in my 2nd edition PHB discusses time and movement. However page 90 discusses str and to-hit, and says that str. bonuses to hit and damage always apply to melee and hurled missile weapons. This is contradicted by page 14 that says dexterity missile attack adjustment applies to missile (bow and thrown) weapons. Unless you have an 8 dex and a 17 str. and want to be a munchkin, I suggest doing the logical thing and using dex to modify hurled missile to-hit rolls and not using str.

Billy Graey   slayer@LUVEWE.OPS.USA.NET

Page numbers aside (I checked, mine are accurate. can there be two! 2nd Editions) I see NO contradictions here. If I throw something with greater STR than someone else it will fly straighter and faster (+ to hit, + to damage), my dexterity will also help it to fly straight (+ to hit).

M.D. Bielinski   earthden@M7.SPRYNET.COM

Strength has miniscule effect on hurled items when it comes aim. You can throw a dagger as hard as you want to, but if you don't have the dexterity you won't hit shit. In no circumstances that I know of do you get to combine strength and dexterity. You might average them out or make two checks for certain actions, but you don't combine them. I say again, str. to-hit modifiers do not apply to hurled weapons, use dex instead.

Billy Graey   slayer@LUVEWE.OPS.USA.NET

> Strength has miniscule effect on hurled items when it comes aim.

Then we come back to the age-old question: why is strength used at all for a to-hit roll? Obviously it's your aim with a longsword that lets you hit your target, not how hard you can swing it. The reason strength is used is because the attack roll aims at a person's armor class. If you are stronger, you can sometimes pierce a person's armor to hit him, thus your to-hit roll improves the stronger you are. Think of movies in which the strong fighter broke through an opponent's staff or sword to hit him in the chest. A weaker fighter might not have been able to break through that staff. So if you have a throw item, like

a dagger, your dex to-hit bonus helps your aim, but your strength to-hit bonus will help pierce your enemy's defenses.

Brenton Miller   brent@gryffon.com

>Page numbers aside (I checked, mine are accurate. can there be two! 2nd)

Yes, there can. A few years ago, around the same thime the PO books were published, TSR issued revised versions of the PHB and the DMG, with changes in layout. The newer books look a bit like the PO books, and have about 50% more pages than the old ones, which can account for the disparity in your page numbers.

Staffan Johansson   d96sj@efd.lth.se

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Items:

ARTIFACT CREATION

Surely, an artifact is just a glorified intelligent magic item. A max intelligence magic sword can have just as many powers as an artifact, and a staff of the magi or staff of power is immensely powerful, yet, with enough patiance and ability any mage can by these. BTW, I managed to DM for 2 years before I bought the DMG and MM, and then the only advantages they gave me were to shorten the amount of preparation time. My first game, the DM only had my PHB, and that was the best game I ever had.

Mike Longley

Also, artifact seems to imply age, to a degree. Also, I think artifacts should have a fantastic history behind them, in their creation, in their use, and ultimately, their loss (which is how they are around to be found in the first place) I don't know that an artifact is created to BE an artifact per se. I think its history determines its artifact hood as much as its power. SO, in my campaigns, the PC's can't set out to make an artifact as such.

NOTE : to me, extremely rare items, like Holy Avengers and the like, are artifacts. I treat them as such, anyway. They are unique, and have a long history connected with spectacular deeds. If anyone cares, I'll go into more detail about the artifact weapons in my campaigns. I particularly like Gorge, the Everstriker (aka IMC "The Kingsword")

Joe Stevenson sabre@FSI.NET

I would have to disagree with your comment. There are differences between the artifact and the magic items (even very powerful ones) in two ways.

1) Rules: You can destroy a magic item. Shatter a sword, break a staff, rip a cloak, or what have you. Those items can be destroyed. (It isn't that had to do. Ever had a 15th level mage cast fireball centered at the party? Our party lost about 70% -yes, it was a bad day of our magic items because they failed saving throws; including a sword +4!) Artifacts can be destroyed, but it takes an elaborate and unique way to do so; and it is never easy. (Gods tend to be protective of their stuff.) Also, magic items have a limited number of charges, while artifacts don't. The aura of magic of the two are different. Well, you get my drift, right...

2) Story/role-playing aspect: It is true that a well developed magic item should have a story. Famous past owners, maybe a bit of mystery about how its made or about its creator, and other things that spice the role-playing experience. However, these stories rarely play a large role in the game. An artifact, on the other hand, is a major part of the plot. to make a real world analogy of the impact of an artifact in a campaign (IMHO) take this example:

Getting a major magic item would be like going to your friends and telling them that you just won the lotto, or got a Ferrari. (You'd probably draw some stares and pick up some chick.) I would say that in most campaigns finding magic items (the really cool ones) should equal the odds of those things

happening. In comparison, getting an artifact would be like going to your friends and saying you just found the Holy Grail, or Durandal (Roland's sword). (The whole world would be at your doorstep.)

Rodrigo Apolinario rodrigo@kcnet.com

At the request of some of the list members, I am posting one of the artifacts from my 1st Ed. World of Greyhawk campaign. CONSTRUCTIVE criticism and comments are welcome. NOTE that this was created for 1st edition, so some things may appear odd to 2nd edition players. Feel free to use it in your campaign if you'd like (and modify it as necessary), but please don't use it in print anywhere without permission.

Gorge The Everstriker (The Kingsword, The Banesword)
Gorge, the Everstriker was forged in the fires of the Crystalmist Mountains (Hellfurnaces) for a great Prince of the Suloise Empire, during the Time of Strife (the Suel exodus). This prince desired to unite the Suel under one ruler, namely him. He instructed his magi, priests and craftsman to forge a weapon of great power by which he could overcome his enemies and rivals, and accede to the throne. For months, the craftsman worked, and for many more months many great mages and priests prayed and plied over their creation to give it great power. Their final creation was magnificent, The Kingsword. Using the sword, the prince rose to power to unite the Suel., and stood at the epoch of his power at the time of the Rain of Colorless Fire, at which time he (and much of Suloise as well) was undone. The sword then passed to a series of petty rulers of both the Suel and the Oerid during their wars, and was eventually lost somewhere near the Rushmoors. It is believed that the sword had been found at various times since it passed from history, but that it corrupted and destroyed its weak and short-lived owners.

The Kingsword was imbued with a personality, and is sentient. Knowing its purpose, the sword demands that its wielder be worthy. It yearns for battle and conquest (and life energy). Due to the effects on its user, the sword quickly earned the name of The Banesword. However, its power is so great, that no owner could ever willingly give up the sword, until death. The name of Gorge came from the sword itself , as it loves to gorge on the life-force of sentient beings. Though the alignment of the sword is LN (a king requires law and order), the sword's personality is CN. If taken by a weak individual, or any non-fighter, the sword will attempt immediately to dominate and destroy its user. It knows that it is the Sword of Kings, and will not serve one who does not have the power and the will to become a king. The sword is vain and arrogant, and requires that the user sacrifice vast amounts of wealth in order to retain its powers. The amount of sacrifice is dependent on the current available power (see below).

With this weapon, the wielder always found his mark, never missing his intended target. The sword gave him the power to heal, and to dominate his enemies. However, such power came at a terrible price. The sword draws its power from life essence. In order to overcome the greatest armors and protections, the sword draws life energy from the wielder. As a result, the wielder never fails to hit his target. However, he must still roll to hit as normal. If the roll indicates a miss, then the wielder takes as damage the difference between the actual roll (with modifiers), and that needed to hit (ex : if the PC needed a 15 to hit, and rolled a 10, then 5 points of damage is taken). If a 1 is rolled, then all attack modifiers are IGNORED for purposes of calculating damage.

As the wielder becomes more powerful, it confers more powers upon the user. As the user gains more powers, the price for these powers increases. When found, it confers no bonus to hit or to damage. It also will not give any bonuses to PC's under level 4. Upon reaching level 4 (and every time the wielder would gain a weapon proficiency), it gains +1 to hit and damage, with a maximum of +4 (+1 at level 4, +2 at level 7, + 3 at level 10, +4 at level 13). These hit bonuses are very costly. For each to hit bonus,

the amount of damage taken on a "missed" attack roll is increased by one level per +1. SO, when the attack bonus is +1, the damage taken for "missing" is DOUBLED. At +2, damage is TRIPLED, At +3, QUADUPLED, etc.

The sword literally feeds on the life energy drawn from its victims. As such, the target cannot heal the damage from the weapon by spells, and requires natural healing. Additional powers are listed below, along with the level of availability (before the user attains the level noted, the power simply is not usable).

I Minor Benign Powers
O- Detect Magic 3/day
J- Cure Light Wounds 7/week (NOTE - This power is replaced by Major power D (CSW) at lvl 4)
YY*- Magic Missile 1/day. Usable at lvl 4+
S^- Fly (sword only). The sword can be thrown at the enemy, and will attack as a Dancing Sword for one round, then return. Usable at level 7+

II Major Benign Powers
D^-Curse Serious 2/day. Usable at level 4+
W^- Heal 1/week. Useable at level 7+
ZZ*-Mass Domination (as per Psionic ability, PHB 1) 1/week. Usable at level 10+

III Minor Malevolent Effects
W^-Yearning requires user to never be away from weapon for more than 1 day. User will do ANYTHING necessary to regain the sword. User will go insane in 2-8 days if he does not recover the sword.
Y*-User cannot possess any other weapon

IV Major Malevolent Effects
U^(Q)- User must sacrifice 20,000-50,000 gp gems (OR magic item(s) of equivalent value) 4 times/yr. If sacrifice is not made, the sword will drain the most powerful magic item within 20' of user. NOTE : this sacrifice amount assumes the that all powers are available. Sacrifice should be reduced accordingly for lower level characters).
BB- User takes 5-30 dmg every time using Magic Surge power
Q- Upon using Death spell power, magic is drained from the most powerful magic item within 20'

Prime Power
MM*- Magic Surge allows PC to hit any creature which requires +1-6 magical weapon to hit
G^- Death Spell at 110-200% effectiveness. User must hit target to use this power. Usable at level 10+

Side Effects
R^- If user rolls a 1, he still hits, but takes multiple damage as if he had been struck, in addition to normal damage received from "missing"

legend
* new power (not in the DMG)
^ power is modified by this DM

Joe Stevenson sabre@FSI.NET

Staff of the Magi:

The DMG listing on page 207 says that the SotM has a power of Whirlwind like the Djinni and a power of Plane Travel.

First, when I looked up the Djinni under Genie on page 126 of the MM it fails to list several important stats of the Whirlwind. Does anyone know where the whirlwind is detailed? I really need the Hit Dice of the creature or does it automatically hit?

Second, what is Plane Travel in terms of a power? Do I treat it as a Amulet of the Planes or as the 5th level priest spell Plane Shift?

I could choose anything I wanted, of course being the DM, but I want to know what the intent really is.

Lastly, how have other DMs played the spell absorbtion capability in terms of the timing. For example, the mage with the SotM declares he will absorb and gets a 7 initiative after all mods. The "enemy" casts on 2 and finishes on 5. Is the spell absorbed? After all staves have an initiative modifier of +2. Does the SotM absorb any spell at any time during the declared round? I have personally chose to do the latter until I am presented with a better rational then my own. After all that gives me more time to cause a retributive strike!

Keith Radloff ledzep@erinet.com

I would check out what level of a mage it takes to create a staff. This can determine what you need about the level of the Plane travel. Also if you look in the Al-Qadim Monstrous Compendium I believe you could find the stats on a Whirlwind created by a Djinni. Also I would got on the standard speed factor of using a granted power, spell like ability, or saying the command word of an item that my DM runs and that is to consider the speed factor to be a 3. I hope his helps you out.

(Anonymous, no email)

It was pointed out to me by private e-mail that the Whirlwind is a power of an Air Elemental and is listed in the MM under Elemental, Air.

On page 125 in the PHB, it says that a stave has a +2 initiative modifier, why use +3?

The DMG says that all staves operate as if an 8th level mage unless otherwise noted. So that would be the level of Plane Travel if the ability was documented somewhere. The biggest problem with modeling it after another source is does it get you there with or without accuracy? and can you go to any plane or just familiar ones? Each source for the similiar effect has different rulings.

Keith Radloff ledzep@erinet.com

Death of a Lich

If someone manages to slay a Lich, but fails to find its phylactery and destroy it. Will the Lich then be resurrected or an amount of time or What??

Muad´Dib The Nightbringer   Allanchr@post8.tele.dk

It seems to me the general rule is that if a Lich's phylactery is not destroyed, it needs only to find a new host body. I don't remember if that body must already be dead or not. Also, I think the new host body is supposed to eventually change to look just like the Lich's original form.

Brenton Miller   brent@gryffon.com

Yes.

My Lich is back, and there's gonna be trouble, do-rah, do-rah, the Lich is back. Some Liches are reported to have the ability to form a new body, others must try to possess a dead body that is nearby. How near depends on what level the Lich is. Most Liches start at L18, and typically work their way up from there.

I do have a few questions... For example, how does one manage to destroy a super-genius spell slinger of that caliber. I just don't see it happening. There are many interesting ways of controlling a remote body, even at very low power levels.

If you DO manage to fight your way past a horde of magically enhanced minions guided by a supra-genius intelligence, and work your way through hideous death traps created by a mind with near-infinite amounts of time and evil, and somehow even then penetrate into the actual repository of the body of the Lich, that is when things ought to go down hill.

What DO you do against a foe casting L9 spells, most likely from a handy magic item created for just such an event? How many back-to-back meteor storms CAN a party walk through? And what about that nasty wish spell, anyway? Just to make things worse, there is almost 100% chance that there are unknown spells the Lich has researched that are even more hideous.

OK, the Lich has spent a good chunk of magical energy, and cannot overwhelm the party. So, what then? There are a number of nifty spells, plane shift, teleport without error, word of recall... including "Feign Destruction" which swaps the Lich's body with a pile of bones located somewhere else.

OK, so then the party has managed to block all magical forms of egress, known and unknown. I suppose this is vaguely possible. They manage to keep the Lich from diving into a secret door or other escape route. The only remaining thing to do is damage. Ready for some hand-to-hand anyone?

Now the Lich's host body, if it was even his real one, is now 'slain'. Oh, are you proof against 'Magic Jar'? What about 'Life Force Transfer'? OK, at long last the Lich is forced into his Phylactery, which

could be anywhere on the same plane of existence.

Now you have a really angry foe to worry about!

Michael Schaefer mbs@USERBASE.COM

If you succeed to slay a lich, but do not find its phylactery, you will propably have an annoyed lich knocking at your door, within the next day :)

Christian liberg nielsen webmaster@liberg.dk

I always wondered why your typical enterprising lich didn't just set up his phylactery in some secret vault accessible only by teleport and surround it with 4 or 5 corpses. Then even if his current form was destroyed, his killers would have little to no chance to find it and he would be guaranteed a new host body.

Liches should be darn hard to defeat, but near impossible to kill if played correctly. That being said, the PC's in my game just killed a lich-like creature (kaisharga from DS) to conclude the 4+ year campaign. And he was magically bound to his location, a decaying anti-magic field prevented him from casting 7th and 8th level spells, and he *still* would have killed several members of the party, if they hadn't gotten really lucky. (Basically, he tried Megakinesis on one of the PC's rollled a 20 (crit. failure for psionics) failed his save and fell into a coma for 4 days (he didn't live to emerge from unconsciousness). Suffice to say, it was not how I envisioned the final battle! And even then, his guardians managed to kill two NPC's with the group).

Stephen Posivak POSIVAK@GUNET.GEORGETOWN.EDU

I was browsing some old mail and found this interesting thread. But it's waken up a question that's been nagging me for ages: waht is a phylactery? I know it's where the Lich deposits it's essence, but I want to know what is the physical form of it, how the hell does it look like????

Ed S. Filho edmosf@ISM.COM.BR

Ahh that is the fun part. The phylactery can be most anything and can look like most anything. Von Richten's Guide to the Lich and I think the MM have some blurbs about specifics.

Some of my favorites from games I DM'd or played.

I DM'd a game where I made the phlyactery the intracate inlaid pattern on the cover of a poorly hidden spell book. After the party dusted the lich. They of course went looking for loot. The Mage found the spell book and kept it. That lich kept showing up for ten game years before that Mage lost the spell book in a ship wreak ;-)

On that was done to me was the phylactery as a +3 sword. The next time the fighter killed a creature the lich possesed the body and waited for us to leave. He then went on his way sending undead, usually former residents of towns we had just left, after us trying to get the sword back. Let your cruel streak free and have fun.

Ragnorok ragnorok@gvi.net

It can be whatever you want. The first time I used a Lich IOOMC, I borrowed a character from Lloyd Alexanders Prydain series. IMC the party kept seeing this mouse with a what looks like a toothpick in its mouth. Everyday this mouse would show up. The mage had just lost his cat, and thought I was playing with him. Eventualy the party runns across "the Lich with nine fingers". After fighting the undead host, the mouse shows up again. Finaly the mage catches the mouse. At the end of the campain the toothpich is steped on, snapping it. Poof the mouse turns out to be an enchanted sage, and the Lich turns to ash. The Party is told that the Lich had placed his life force in his ring finger, and then cut off the finger. Overtime the Lich had enchanted a wandering Sage. The Sage in mouse form figured out the Liches secret, and tried to give the party the fingerbone. Pity is most of my gammers had read Alexander, and never caught on.

Zargul09@aol.com

According to my handy-dandy copy of Webster's:

1: one of two small square leather boxes containing slips inscribed with scriptural passages and traditionally worn on the left arm and on the head by Jewish men during the morning weekday prayers

2: amulet

There is a picture that accompanies the definition, but it's not real easy to describe :)

I'm thinking of going with #2, myself...

Bruce Gulke akira@starnetinc.net

Hi Everyone,

A Liches phylactery is the same thing as a mages Magicjar spell or a demons amulet. I have known them to be many things, some rather odd, others fairly ordinary.
A special Orb 3" round
A pillar with a large ruby on top(the pillar not the ruby was the phylactery)
A room with inlaid obsidian tiles(all detected as magic)
A 5000gp moonstone amulet(it really hurt to destroy that one)

It can be anything that the DM wants it to be but should have some occult type or monetary value. A demons amulet would most likely cause fear and unease to any who look at it, and might even have some power to command or charm the finder to protect it. If you make a phylactery that is portable it should be fragile and have a limited range. If you make one that is stationary it should be fairly hard to destroy and should have a long range, say a mile at the very most and more than likely about a 1/2 mile.

Ben   cammy@centuryinter.net

The best definition of a phylactery I can give you is a specially prepared item. Usually a bejeweled piece of artwork. Kinda like the component for a magic jar spell. In fact since magic jar is used to make the potion of the lich, you might consider that the componet of that spell is the phylactery. Otherwise you can come up with your own ideas. I have even heard of a phylactery appearing as a platinum quill, with silver feathers and a diamond writing tip. So work on something like that.

(Anonymous, no email)

It looks like anything the Lich wants it to look like. For example, that nifty +5 vorpal sword? Guess what? <evil grin>

Michael Schaefer mbs@USERBASE.COM

Spells related

What happens if you charm a charmed person?

IMC a 9th level mage decided to charm a person to tell the band more about how he got there. Person in question was dressed in rags and sitting peacefully on the floor in a small dungeon crawling with monsters along with three other "prisoners".

The person was charmed and probably also quite ensorceled. Anyway a 16th Level undead had him under its spell, so how do you determine what happens if the PC charmed it?

I wasn't sure, but since the undead monster could possess the person it did so at that point - I not being really sure about what to tell the PC's or how the charmed one would react.

Luka Rejec   luka.rejec@guest.arnes.si

According to the spell description, how effective additional spells [charms] are is up to the DM. Of course the book does say "simultaneously" rather than "additional" but I prefer to interpret that to mean "at the same time" rather than "cast at the same time". Some possible results could be:

Both charms work at the same time. This could lead to some interesting role-playing later. Especially if the 2 charmers meet and start trying to kill each other. Also, it should be noted that the entire party doesn't share the benefits fo the spell. While the charmed person may consider the mage to be his friend, he may also have prior orders (suggestions) to kill the rest of the party.

They conflict, sending the victim running away screaming or dropping to the floor in a catatonic state until he can "work it out" (dispel one of the charms).

The victim gets a saving throw modified by the difference in levels between the two casters. In this case add 7 to the roll since the caster of the first spell was higher. Successful roll means the first spell is cast off in favor of the second spell.

The 2 spells cancel each other out. Naturally, the victim will be aware that both casters tried to/did charm him. Depending on the situation he might be a bit miffed.

Personally I prefer the first one since it has the greatest potential although I can see situations for all of them. Not that this scenerio is likely to come up all that often. Were I DMing it I would tell the players that judgements are situational which, in my games, means whatever works best for the story.

A note on possession. Foaming at the mouth (etc) may have been a bit much but it should have done the job. Of course the PC's *may* assume the foamee (is that even a word?) has rabies but that's the chance you take when having fun with foam.

If you're looking for good visuals start paying attention to movies. Glowing eyes, that cool double voice trick, or a sudden stiffening followed by a radical mood change are all options. If the possessed is well know to the PC's, slight changes in behavior may be enough. One effect *I* liked was the

possession of Lyta Alexander by the Shadows during the final battle (Babylon 5 for the uninformed ;). The completely black eyes and cold voice were great.

So here's a question which may (or may not) have already been asked. If an Undead possesses a human, would Hold Person work? It's effective against humans and demi-humans but not undead. I'm inclined to say yes except that the Wisdom bonus is applied the save which indicates that Hold Person is more mental than physical and possession, depending on how you view it, is also mental in nature. What do you think?

Schlepp Boy trisswb@PCLINK.COM

> So here's a question which may (or may not) have already been asked. If an Undead possesses a
>human, would Hold Person work? It's effective against humans and demi-humans but not undead. I'm
>inclined to say yes except that the Wisdom bonus is applied the save which indicates that Hold Person
>is more mental than physical and possession, depending on how you view it, is also mental in nature.
>What do you think?

IMO the Hold Person spell affects a person by paralyzing the central nervous system, thereby making it impossible for the victim to control his muscles and preventing him from moving.

The spell would not work on undead (or golems, gargoyles ect.) since they do use magical energies (IIRC) instead of a CNS to move. A posessed person would be affected, however, since the undead inhabits his brain and tells the CNS what to do.

Andreas Kjeldsen morkitar@dadlnet.dk

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Touch spells

How long can you wait before delivering a touch spell before the spell is wasted? Most of wizard spells detail all the particulars, but some don't. (Example: Protection from Evil) Hardly any priest spells detail how long a spell lasts, especially for reverse forms of spells that people don't normally cast. (Example:Cause light wounds). For a spell like 'Cause light wounds' would you negate some armor? Would you be able to touch someone in same round as you cast one of these spells? Please remember that these are just examples and there are lots of other spells. Now answer all these questions for a freak spell like "Destruction" (the reverse of Resurrection). Remember that the casting time for this spell is 1 turn.

Stephen Campey u camp6430@MACH1.WLU.CA

>How long can you wait before delivering a touch spell before the spell is wasted? Most of wizard
>spells detail all the particulars, but some don't. (Example: Protection from Evil) Hardly any priest
>spells detail how long a spell lasts, especially for reverse forms of spells that people don't normally
>cast. (Example:Cause light wounds)

As I recall, the general rule of thumb is that touch-based spells must be used on the round they are cast or are wasted. Sp&M allows for the caster to either make the attack roll as soon as the spell is cast, or to wait until the end of the round. If not used or the attack is missed, the spell is wasted.

>For a spell like 'Cause light wounds' would you negate some armor? Would you be able to touch
>someone in same round as you cast one of these spells? Please remember that these are just examples
>and there are lots of other spells.

Players Option: Spells & Magic has a detailed list of which spells do or do not ignore armor. For the most part, these are common-sense answers. The attacks that are more or less pure magical energy tend to ignore armor. If the spell creates something physical, it does not ignore armor. Most touch-based spells ignore armor. Heck, if I remember right, *all* touch-attack spells ignore armor. Remember that some spells that require attack rolls aren't touch-based, tho. Fist of Stone requires an attack roll, and does not ignore armor - it is not, obviously, touch-based, but a personal-affect spell.

>Now answer all these questions for a freak spell like "Destruction" (the reverse of Resurrection).
>Remember that the casting time for this spell is 1 turn.

Destruction, being a "pure magic"-type effect, should ignore armor. Luckily, the official ruling states the same thing :)

Steven L Cox stevenc@vt.edu

Around our campaigns, we generally allow 1 round/level duration for combative touch spells if no other information is given. For example, shocking grasp would last 1 round/level or until the touch goes off. Until then, the mage will want to make sure he doesn't touch anyone he doesn't want to shock. Any other touch spells cast before the other one is triggered, replace the previous spell. This is done to allow classes with weak THAC0s to still have a chance to use the spell without letting everything ride on a single to hit roll. If the spell is damaging like Cause Serious Wounds, the caster must hit the proper AC of the victim (though we make allowances for Shocking Grasp and metal armors). It just doesn't make sense to cause wounds by touching a breastplate. Then again, we don't allow cure wounds through armor either. That also requires a proper to hit roll unless the creature wants to be healed in which case we figure he allows himself to be easily hit by the priest. Other spells that aren't damaging (like Protection from Evil) generally work even if you only tag the armor. Only Dex adjustments affect AC.

Bill Dunn bdunn@epicsys.com

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__Stone to Flesh and Elementals__

I just had a player to cast a stone to flesh on an earth elemental. I said that the elemental is now flesh. Should the elemental be damaged in some way, such as loss of contact with the plane of earth?

(Anonymous)

I say it's destroyed (give it a saving throw).

Billy Graey   slayer@LUVEWE.OPS.USA.NET

Another possibility is that the spell does not have the normal effect, since it is being cast on elemental earth. This substance/creature differs from simple stone in the fact that it has an innate aura of magic. Perhaps the earth becomes softer, with a more flesh-like resilience to strikes (lower the AC of the elemental). Perhaps part of the elemental is turned
to flesh, and the flesh falls off of the elemental in a little lump (elemental loses 1 hit die), or perhaps part of the elemental simply loses is't magical power, turning to immobile stone. Or perhaps the outcome is completely unexpected (the elemental sprouts feathers). The point to all of this is that prime material spells can have strange effects on critters from other planes. The DM can be creative as he wants to be.

Chris Hawkins chhawkin@VT.EDU

I would just like to point out that the Monstrous Manual entry for the Earth elemental has the specifics on how Stone to Flesh affects it.

(Anonymous)

Indeed! Three cheers for the DM being as creative as he wants to be. Here's another twisted idea: what if it became, say, a "flesh elemental"? (Yes, I know that there is no such plane, but what if this odd situation bent para-reality and suddenly created one! Yuck! Heck, maby the stone to flesh does something weird like double the HD (and mass) of the elemental it's old HD on the outside, and new, fleshy HD on the inside. Of course, one could merely use the same damage guidelines that you get for "stone to mud" against an elemental. (there are some, right? uh...hmm, maby I should look that one up...)

(Anonymous)

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STONE SHAPE

I have been DMing for a friend recently and he cast the spell "stone shape". To me this spell seems pretty obscure in its description in the player's handbook. I want to know if stone shpae can be used in any way to hurt an opponent. He tried having stones fall from the ceiling but I don't think that can be done. Also he tried to create a disc of stone and push a hole for the opponent to fall through. I think something like collapsing a ceiling would be too powerful for a 3rd level spell.

Gkguitar   GKguitar@AOL.COM

IMHO, when casting a stone shape, the caster must be able to touch the stone to be shaped. It must also be one continuous stone. I read the spell as the caster can now mold stone as if it were clay. This means

and no moving holes.

Patera patera@teleport.com

First off Stone Shape is FIFTH level, not third. The write up states that 1 cubic foot of stone per level can be affected by this spell. The write up also says that the range of the spell is "touch", and that the stone will reshape itself to a sump of clay that is used in the casting. This implies that the during the process of the spell the stone will assume the same general liquid properties of clay, highly viscous. To cast a fifth level spell the Mage must be at least ninth level. With those assump-tations made your player could have made a rope of stone peel itself off of the wall and land on the target to be injured. However a hole is out of the question because the stone must be able to flow into the desired shape. As a good rule of thumb assume that a liquid will not flow uphill unaided.

Since there is no damage listed for the effects of the spell I would recommend that you assign a d6 for every three cubic feet of stone showered down, allow a save for half damage.

Ragnorok ragnorok@gvi.net

If the character used this spell on a solid piece of floor and assuming there was a basement or that the rock was very deep. Could the object of the attack sink up as if in quicksand...only a little slower. Or at the least become a very slippery giving surface that with too much weight would collapse into the next floor. Effectivly creating a hole.

(Anonymous)

If you will look at the last line of the spell description it states that the materialcomponent(clay) must be touched to the stone when the spell is uttered. This should take care of any ideas to make the cieling collapse(or at the least a 8 ft cube at 5th lvl).

Ben & Camille Cook <cammy@CENTURYINTER.NET

I am in agreement with Ragnarok, with one exception. I would allow this spell to do (level)d6 damage, just as Wall of Ice. However, the mechanics of *how* the spell does the damage must be explained at time of casting. Dropping a plug of stone from the ceiling onto a target is possible, but only if the mage can touch the ceiling...

James M. Hendricks   moondog@gvi.net

If there is a space below and the affected stone is within the confines of the spell, a trap door could be formed, or in a modification of what I said before, the caster could "poke a hole" in the floor. However that hole would be stationary and would deform the floor around it.

Ragnorok ragnorok@gvi.net

The Stone Shape IS a powerful spell, though it cannot be used to part rock into smaller pieces. So, the caster can make a bulbous outgrowth of the ceiling, but cannot make it fall down. however, the 'string' that bears it, might be as thin as he/she desires, so a little effort could be enough to cause the block to fall down: hurling a small pebble at it might be sufficient. But don't forget to count the maximum size of the stone that can be affected.

IIRC, the topology of a stone object cannot be altered, either. If not so, I would rule it that way, however. So if there is a *minimal* sized hole on the disk, it can be expanded. But NO HOLE CAN BE CREATED FROM NOTHING. (note: don't accept the argument that "submicroscopic holes" should be on any surface. This is magic, and magic works iff the DM says so ;-))

PS. one of my friends used this spell to make stone darts: he shaped a larger rock into the shape of multiple darts joined linearry at their side, then broke them apart with little effort. These were crude weapons, however, causing only 1d2 pts of damage, and attacks were made with a –2 penalty.

Szucs Gabor   h430964@stud.u-szeged.hu

Levitate as a weapon

Greetings!

My players sometimes uses the levitate spell as a weapon, especially when facing a dangerous opponent. They levitate the opponent so that it may not advance. Then they start smashing it against the roof untill it's defeated.

It's a briliant way for a weak character to defeat a powerfull opponent, so I often give them some extra XP-bonus for this.

Last time they used this tactics was against a crystal golem in the Ravenloft adventure Lady of the Mist. The golem was immune to all magical attacks except shatter and mend.

I ruled that the levitate spell would work as it affected an area (golems body) like the shatter spell The golem could only be damaged by +1 weapons or better, but I figured that with a constant banging against the roof it eventually had to break.

Question 1) Do you have any oppinion on wether or not the tactic would work on the golem?

Question 2) I do not want the levitate spell to be equivalent to an automatic kill. How can I prevent this?

Jon R. Johansen   llenda@online.no

Q1) I'm not familiar with Ravenloft monsters, but I'd be likely to rule it does - except for the insintric problems I list below.

Q2) Well, first of all, the Levitate spell gives a saving throw to negate. Second, it has a vertical move of 2 - meaning 20' in one minute (normal AD&D) or 10' in 12 seconds. That equates to 0.1 or 0.25 m/s,

which is hardy a dangerous speed (0.36 or 0.9 km/h). I would only allow Levitate to make the creature unable to move, and (if outdoors) to levitate the victim up Up UP, and then drop him (2d6 or 1d6 per round buildup [depending on AD&D or C&T], to a maximum of 20d6, as per falling rules).

Staffan Johansson d96sj@efd.lth.se

I disagree. I once played twilight 2000 (actually I bought the boxed set, as you do when your young) and I liken monsters who require magic weapons to be hit to a tank. No matter how many times you shoot a tank with a common handgun your just *not* going to get through. It's not that it does so little damage, it's that it actually does *no* measurable damage.

If you players disagree, I would bring up the point of magic. The golems skin, IMO, is impenitrable to non-magic weapons because it's magically protected.

Densial Edmonds D.Edmonds@bigfoot.com

We recently had a situation like this in the campaign I play in. We were doing some wacky us versus them attack/trap thing similar to chess. The fun apart was when we pitted our Firbolg against their Abiashi (however you spell that, the demon) We somwhow shrunk the demon down to a rather small size (I forget how we did that) and had the Firbolg grab him. We wanted him to just smash the demon or rip its head off (remember, it easily fit in the giants hand) but the DM disallowed it, saying that the Abiashi could only be hit by magical weapons. We argued about unescapable death and such, but the DM said no. SO we had the giant swallow the demon. Problem solved.

Ben Erdin beerdin@davidson.edu

My players have often used the same tactic. However, at a movement rate of 2 per round, I do not think the force would be significant enough to cause damage. Whenever someone comes up with a fantastic new idea, I will often do the same. However, I do not award xp bonuses for further applications of the same idea.

Q1) I read the spell effect differently. The target receives a save vs. levitate; ergo, I do not consider it to be an area effect spell
(whereas a spell such as reverse gravity is an area effect, ergo no save). As it is then a targeted spell, the golem would be immune to levitate.

Q2) Well, as I said earlier, IMO the spell's movement rate would not be sufficient to cause damage. In a dungeon situation, a movement rate of 2 means 20 feet per round. If you're using the old rules, a round is one full minute. 20 feet in one minute is not particularly fast. Even with the new rules, 20 feet in 12 seconds is still pretty slow (imagine jumping out of a second floor apartment and taking a full 12 seconds to fall to the ground).

Garry Sled thanatos@INTERLYNX.NET

Hm. Give me a tank, a gun and a coupple of tons of bullets and I could do quite a bit of damage: Blow open a hatch, destroy the belts etc. Actually: I believe that as long as the damage inflicted is large enough, the +1 or-better-weapon-rule should be wavered. A great fall, being hit in the head by a

mountain etc. would cause damage to almost any creature. But I agree that in this particular case the damage from the levitate spell would be too small to inflict any real damage.

Ahhhhh.... I hadn't considered the levitation speed. Then something as unbreakable as a crystal golem might be unaffected. Actually: I could argue that in time, a continous stream of impacts could result in the golem's destruction, but it would take too many spell points to destroy it.

Still: The party imobilized it, and technically defeated it, (even if I allowed them to destroy it) so they earned the XP.

I'd say it would break/smash/splat/destroy almost any monster in impact (or at least do ALOT of damage) to any creature as long as it hadn't been designed to withstand such a fall.

Jon R. Johansen llenda@online.no

Q1) I think that This will work verry well and is another sign of charicters becoming even more resourcefull in the face of newer challanges. Unfortunatly it does cause a problem for the DM.

Q2) Well here's a thought. Use the amount of damage recieved from faling from the same hight as the ammount of dammage inflicted. That is if the levetator is having the object / creature fall up at roughly the same speed as you'd fall down.

If the players get tricky, so should the DM. Ok the golem is going up and is gonna do some dammage to the ceiling too, right. So what about an untimly cave-in. If it is encountered in a building, why not have the building colapse in on the players... Let's see if the wizard is willing to try that manouver again. We DM's have to be one step ahead of the players. I believe someone said it best: "Fool me once, shame on you. Fool me twice, shame on me."

(Anonymous)

Isn't the levitate spell very limited in the rate that it allows you to move up and down? I don't have a PHB on me, but I don't think you could move something fast enough to do a lot of damage. (This covers your 2nd point too).

Also, I don't think that the golem should be damaged by this attack. Constant banging does not cause a sword to work, so why a wall? The attack might be different if it were used to drop the Golem from a great height - you might be able to argue that as some form of crushing blow. Also, telekenesis can be used to throw large objects (such as opponents) into walls, over cliffs etc and I think this has a greater potential for damage (although it would not do much good against the Golem I guess).

It is however a very good way of incapacitating an oponent (lift him up and then turn him into a pin cussion).

Samuel Davey samuel.davey@DSTO.DEFENCE.GOV.AU

[comments on levitation speed snipped] IIRC levitate has a limit on the weigth that can be lifted. I didn't check on RL golems, but a stone golem weighs about a ton. It is questionable if a PC mage is

able to lift it off the ground, much less bang it on the roof. Just thought I'd mention it

(Anonymous)

Identify

I have some question about identifying items which have been confusing me for a while. If a person puts on an item (ex. a robe) does he/she figure out its properties even though it's not identified? I originally thought no item displayed powers until after being identified unless it was cursed, however I noticed that the magic item Robe of the Archmagi causes damage to a character of the wrong alignment when it is put on, even though it is not a cursed item. Will all of the robe's properties then show up? What about the books such as Tome of Leadership and Influence? Does it need to be identified considering it is a book that is read, and not an item with special properties? Please help I have a group of PC's which I'm afraid I might be making it too difficult for them to divine the properties of their fought for treasure.

Alex Janevski   alien69@EOS.NET

I have always believed that a magic item with a continuous effect always applies it's effects, even if the user can't quantify them. Say a fighter finds a longsword +3 that he hasn't "ID"d yet. The swords would grant him the +3 to hit and damage, but he wouldn't be able to grasp that the sword was +3 until he had ID cast on it. How the DM can apply the bonuses without hinting at the power of the sword is difficult at best. But clever DM's can figure out a way.

This may not answer your question, so to directly tackle each of the issues. A character does not figure out the properties of an item by using it, but the properties still apply. With the Robe of the Archmagi, a character who wears it may get shocked, burned, or hurt in whatever way you desire, but the characters would gain no insight as to what the robe does (except hurt people). The book can be read without identifying it, and with the full effects. But these effects would not be known beforehand, so any reasonable group would want to ID it first so the appropriate person can benefit from it.

The general idea to this is that the ID spell is not an ON switch, and most magical items arent going to jump up and say "Congratulations, you have discovered me, here is what I can do" when a character wield it, wears it, etc. A character could be using a vorpal sword for a long time, thinking it was a normal sword with an unquantified plus, until he rolled high enough to decap an opponent.

Chris Hawkins chhawkin@VT.EDU

You can always modifies your npc's baised on the bonuses, and you should always allow your players to get priests to id iteams for a donation(best to roleplay this) and you can let them try to get a wizard to do it for a lot more gold but one question is what are they doing with +3 weapons but not be high enough to id iteams(such as with improved id a second level spell! forthought is never as good as insight,

(Anonymous, no email)

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>puts on an item (ex. a robe) does he/she figure out its properties even though it's not identified? I
>originally thought no item displayed powers until after being identified unless it was cursed, however
>I noticed that the magic item Robe of the Archmagi causes damage to a character of the wrong
>alignment when it is put on, even though it is not a cursed item. Will all of the robe's properties then
>show up?

Well, in my groups I always had it this way: an unidentified item showed its properties even if no one knew what is was about. I modified the stats in secret. Considering how long an identify takes and how much it costs, it's not very unusual if you have found anything on your way, not to be able to identify it and use it nevertheless (in cases of dire straits so to say). Identifying makes the usage of a magical object only predictable ;)

>What about the books such as Tome of Leadership and Influence? Does it need to be identified
>considering it is a book that is read, and not an item with special properties?

About books: since you have to read the tomes of whatsoever to gain the bonuses, it might be able to read them w/o knowing what they're about, but that's a risky job. And since the books take a while to read as well, you might as well identify them in advance.

(Anonymous, no email)

It is my understanding that in order to ID an item it must be put on, worn, held, etc... This means that the wizard is at great risk. Whatever happens will affect the wizard. Some items do broadcast thier powers to the weilder, but this is rare indeed, most items not IDed can only have thier powers discovered by trial and error. As to the books, I believe that I read somewhere that books just look normal or like other books on the shelf and cannot be IDed but can be divined, so the only way is to open it (reader beware). I do not recomend that you cast this spell in the woods, but in a safe place.

Ben cammy@centuryinter.net

One could always use the Spectral Hand spell which allows you too identify an item without actually touching it. Then read an Identify off a scroll (avodding the Con Penalty) and you are in business.

Oliver Townshend oliver@zip.com.au

>I have always believed that a magic item with a continuous effect always applies it's effects, even if
>the user can't quantify them. Say a fighter finds a longsword +3 that he hasn't "ID"d yet. The swords
>would grant him the +3 to hit and damage, but he wouldn't be able to grasp that the sword was +3
>until he had ID cast on it. How the DM can apply the bonuses without hinting at the power of the
>sword is difficult at best. But clever DM's can figure out a way.

That's an easy one. In my campaign, we use THAC0 so whenever someone rolls to hit, I just have them say what AC they hit. If they are using a known +x weapon they can figure in the weapon bonus, otherwise they would need to let me know that they're using this or that weapon and I'll figure in the bonus if any behind the scenes. All they need to know is if they hit or not

Also, if it's very close a hit they wouldn't have made without the weapon's bonus I'll do a secret int check for them and if they make it I'll mention that they were sure they should have missed, but it was almost as if something were drawing their weapon to the target. Every once in awhile I say that even if they're using a normal weapon, just to throw them off. Heh heh. It's always fun when they ID a weapon 5 times and still get "non-magical" as a result. "But it HAS to be magic! Try again!" "Sorry, the wizard is out of pearls."

(Anonymous, no email)

>If a person puts on an item (ex. a robe) does he/she figure out its properties even though it's not
>identified?

Well, the way I play, is that magic items are always magic, whether you know it or not. Sometimes the effects are obvious ("You drink the red potion and feel much better") and sometimes not ("You put on the gray tattered cloak. Nothing obvious happens"). If someone wants to try to figure out what an item is by using it, I say go ahead. Sometimes you come across a 3-foot polished stick with the word "Elkaril" engraved on it. Most adventurers would identify this as a wand or staff without any magic at all, and some of them will try it out. After all, to the experienced adventurer, this has a 9 in 10 chance of being a wand with a command word. If they say "I concentrate on the rock and say 'elkaril'", well, look at the description of the item, and see what happens ("A fireball engulfs the rock, and you too").

Most of the TSR/SSI computer games I've played work the same way, notably Dungeon Hack, which has a lot of unidentified magical items scattered throughout. This game works on the idea that once an adventurer knows the effect of an item, they know what the item is. If you drink a speckled potion and it makes you move faster, your character knows from then on that speckled potions cast haste.

IMO this is the kamikaze method of identifying items kind of a form of russian roulette. Sip the potion, read the book, put on the cloak, grab the weapon. Sometimes you'll know what's happening, sometimes you won't. Sometimes it'll be cursed. ("I put on the cloak" "Nothing happens" "I take off the cloak" "You can't." "Damn.") One thing my party does a lot of is gather up all the treasure we've found that session, dump it in a big pile (out of our bags of holding) and cast "Detect Magic" on the whole whack. We pick out all the magical items and try to guess what most of them do. Whatever we can't figure out, we keep for later, and identify it.

This doesn't ALWAYS work. I had a character that found a staff with a command word engraved on it. I read the command word, and turned invisible. "Great!" I thought. Three sessions later, I'm at 3hps and we run into a bunch of something-or-others. I tell the DM "I use my staff of invisibility". He says, "WHAT staff of invisibility?". Ten minutes later, the DM realizes that I wrote "Staff of Invisibility" on my sheet, but it was actually a "Wand Of Wonder" and he happened to roll Inivisibility the first time I used it. This time he rolled "Fireball" and I ended up killing the meanies. So really, identifying items by using them can work, but it's both dangerous and unreliable. Potions are probably safest, there's very few harmful potions made (though you might find acid or poison). Wands are probably the most dangerous to use on yourself, so you normally have to target another creature or inanimate object to see what happens. Cloaks and magic weapons are next to impossible. What are you going to do, say "My guy pulls out his character sheet. Did any of his stats change?"...it doesn't work. All you can do, really, is say "Okay, we know this is magic. I pick it up. Can I put it back down?" and that's dangerous :-)

Darryl Shpak dos021@FREENET.MB.CA

There is no need to use identify or any other magic to determine the function of an item. For example, lets say the PC's discover a ring of telekinesis. Reg the rogue puts the ring on. He trys to take it off (this is always the first thing I do). It comes off (whew it wasn't cursed).

Since the ring has no command word, Reg can simply try to do what ever he can think of to work out its power. This can often be entertaining to watch. I once had a mage who climbed to the top of a 100 foot plateau to get to the treasure horde. When he found a ring and put it on the scene went along the lines of:
Go invisible? Fly? Read other guys mind? Jump?

oh shit. Now the mage is 30ft up in the air falling off a 100 foot ledge. (good thing I had feather fall).

Many magical items can be at least partially identified by trial and error. Rings of protection and such may gradually become apparent if a PC wears one for a long period of time. Also, certain items may always be made to have a distinctive appearance. A PC may recognise and assume the identity (not neccessarily correctly) of an item based on this.

Finally books. Magical books should be obvious as soon as a PC opens the cover and reads the first page. But note that certain books have very bad effects if a non-aligned PC does this. The PC may wish to use identify rather than risk it. (This applies for all items)

PC's should never learn the true magic of weapons armour etc unless they use identify or some other encounter makes it obvious (the magic sword doesn't hurt the elemental - hmmmm)

Samuel, Davey samuel.davey@DSTO.DEFENCE.GOV.AU

I game with two different groups, and each group handles the situation differently. In one group, we rotate the DM'ing between just about all the players. Thus, eventually everyone but the owner of the item would know everything about the item (We all insist upon knowing all the properties of an item before letting it into our adventures, and reserve the right to disqualify any item). In this group, once a character "claims" an item (i.e. sips a potion, puts on a ring or cloak, etc.), its magical abilites become known to the "claimer." The players in this group have been gaming for almost 20 years now, and this just speeds up the "trial-and-error" approach to figuring out an items properties.

The other group I game with also rotates the DM's, but an items magical properties do not become known upon claiming the item. One quick comment about the Identify spell. "The item never reveals its exact attack or damage bonuses (and thus implying defense bonuses as well), although the fact that it has few or many can be determined." Same with charges. Thus my 26th level mage developed the Improved Identification spell. This spell is 6th level, and given enough time, can determine all of an items properties. For a "modest" fee he will identify items for the lower level characters (and, yes he is truthful, or he would lose a valuable source of income (research is expensive!!)).

Both ways work. It just depends upon your group, and how much information you, as the DM, want to keep track of for your players characters.

Azrahelm@aol.com

Using items will reveal some or all of their powers:

A fighter makes use of that shiny sword he found, and eventually learns it is a flame tongue. (But Identify is required to find the command word). Reading any magical tome will give the result the tome produces, Identify is unnecessary in this case. (Watch out for cursed books which reduce inteligence, wisdom, etc.)

The Robe of the archmagi will appear to be a cursed item to the person who got zapped and (luckilly) escaped before it killed him! (if you explain to the player that the character feels a terrible burning when he starts to put on the robe, he should naturally attempt to remove it. Someone might even try casting a remove curse to help the poor person out of the predicament! Then you tell him how much damage was done.) Never trust a smiling DM. (This DM is always smiling!)

(Anonymous, no email)

IMC, a cursed item doesn't reveal its cursed nature until it is *suspected* to be cursed. So, if a hit with the sword surely should have hit, and missed, and the character becomes suspicious (ie. the player says "I hope it isn't cursed" or sg like that), the curse takes effect, and he cannot release the item. Once a mage found a mace in a doppleganger's lair which proved to be magical. He took it to the local bard who said "I wouldn't touch that weapon if I were you..." "Why, it isn't cursed!" "Sure it is." "No, it isnt. Look, I can put it... DARN!!!..." (Imagine a mage with a mace in his RIGHT hand ;) I gave a tennis racket in the player's hand not to forget that he still has the mace in his hand)

Szucs Gabor   h430964@stud.u-szeged.hu

Detect Magic

Here's the question. When a mage or cleric casts detect magic, does the object glow for all to see, or does it only radiate magic for the caster?

It would seem that the player's book leans toward the later, but I read something recently that would contridict that. Yet, I have no idea where I read it. Can DMs out there let me know what they do? Is there printed material to back it up?

(Anonymous, no email)

The second edition PH says it is seen by the caster only. First edition and D&D caused them to glow for all to see. In Dragons of Autumn Twilight (and probably other novels), the heroes are able to escape by casting Detect Magic on theirn items and scaring their draconian captors.

(Anonymous, no email)

I have it that only the caster can see the glow. Firstly it is a divination spell, and I figure that it does not physically alter the outward appearance. Secondly, it would not be fare for the mage. Everyone would know that a mage cast a spell(or cleric) and if he was trying to keep it a secret, it would not work. Say if a mage/thief wanted to take an item off a body without the party knowing, he could not. I haven't got any material to back me up, but you don't need it.....you are the DM.

Paul Sheppard s353874@student.uq.edu.au

In the groups I've run, I have it be a more loose divination spell. The caster is aware the SOMETHING in the area has magic, but which object is up to them. As they progress in levels, I make the spell more specific, thus a 1st level character would be able to tell that something within a 15' radius is magical, but could not really discern what it is. Compare this to an 8th level character where they are pretty confident the sword in front of them is magical...

William Farrar wfarrar@MINDSPRING.COM

I usually go with having that a Detect Magic spell would only make the mage aware of a magic something nearby, and as he went up in level he could usually pinpoint the exact object. I would then have a Reveal Magic spell which would cause a magic object to glow, the glow would be visable to others (unlike detect magic) and would be brighter depending on the strength of the magic - eg a +5 sword might glow bright white where as a +1 would glow a dim blue.

I'd never tell the players "oh, you see that the sword in front of you is +1 with +2 against dragons", anything like that is silly, I just inform them it's magical and leave them to work out exactly how powerful it really is.

A Cleric could have those 2 spells also except that I'd go with only people of his/her faith would see the glow of a reveal magic.

Adam Watkin adam@pasdex.com.au

IMC, only the person casting the spell can see what is magical. Since most of the players are going to reveal to the others what is magical or not, I usually tell everyone. There are times, and this is something that I have adopted more recently, when I write down on a piece of paper what is magical. This allows the person to know and not everyone else. Then it's in the hands of the player to inform everyone.

I'm not sure if there is a specific ruling on this, this is just something that I do.

John Tomkins gr8dm@ACRONET.NET

I have seen it done both ways. In my campaign, only the caster sees the magic. This helps prevent confusion between the two variations as well as prevents too much player information being used. It also seems more plausible to me.

(Anonymous, no email)

I've always run it that the glow was visible only to the caster, thus the mage gets the opportunity to either be honest or dishonest about what he tells the other party members. "Oh, there's a few magic items here, there's that sword, the mace and the girdle. I'd like this magic ring, and could I also have this non-magic one (which really is magic)?"

If the mage is perpetually honest about it, then I eventually tell the whole party, but if not, let him get away with what he can!

(Anonymous, no email)

>I've always run it that the glow was visible only to the caster, thus the mage gets the opportunity to either >be honest or dishonest about what he tells the other party members.

I also prefer that the DM hand lists of things found or detected to the individual. No matter what character you are playing you may have reasons of your own for keeping something secret from the party. I would always allow the individual to tell the party himself.

Calvin & Tammy cutter64@MEMES.COM

<u>Creative Spell casting</u>

Okay, let's hear some creative uses of spells. Here are two I've used IMC.: A delayed blast fireball, pre-detonation, is roughly the size of, what, a BB? I cast one at someone and "Color Cantrip"ed it gold. The particular guards in question picked it up to look at it and. Trap the Soul has no saving throw if the target touches the gem. When we went on a manhunt for an arch enemy, I readied one and used it as a sling stone. It was particularly nasty since he had Gloves of Missile Snaring, which equalled an automatic hit! (Note that I use 1st edition almost exclusively, so if these rules no longer apply, don't flame me. Count the typos in the two editions, though.)

Dale R Critchley dale.critchley@MAILCITY.COM

Hmmm...Let's see...

A trick I've used in the past is good if you have a sling or bow proficiency. Simply get some hollow glass beads (for slings) or arrowheads made, and cast "Fire Trap" on them. They hit the enemy, and bang :-) If and how this works is up to the DM...for instance, he may rule that, since the caster of the spell can not set off the effect, the items must be used by another party member, or he may rule that breakage won't set it off. Glass beads with firetrap dropped in your trail while fleeing a band of enemies is always useful too :-)

Also something I saw in one of the survey at WebRPG (www.webrpg.com) is a magic trap: Use a wand of fireballs or some other offensive spell that has a command word, and mount it somewhere, aimed at a particular spot. Then cast a "Magic Mouth" to say the command word (more than once?) when someone STEPS on that spot.

A VERY useful, but often overlooked use of the spell "Dimension Door": It has NO verbal or somatic components. Very useful in getting out of those ropes...or out of the clutches of that demon. A mage in my party was in the grasp of a Tana'ri (sp?), and I was dragging our unconscious fighter away. But a simple Dimension Door got him away from the demon and out of the room before us.

If you missed it, there was an interesting suggestion on the list a few weeks back: cast "Levitate" on an opponent, lift him up a ways, and then end the effect. Naturally, he falls. "Hold Monster" works well on most flying enemies...

And "Teleport" is also useful. We used it when we were in an area that was trapped against Teleport spells. Anyone using teleport magic was transported to a random area of the Abyss. Our cleric used it, then planeshifted back to us. (Whoops!) But then in a battle with some particularly difficult enemies, a mage in our party used "Teleport Other" on a couple enemies....no save, either, if I remember...they went straight to the Abyss. or, you could always teleport them off a cliff, up into the sky, into a mountain (Yikes!), into a cage, or just about anywhere.

Probably the most multipurpose spells in 2nd ed are Cantrip and Phantasmal Force, both 1st level spells that are really limited only by your imagination. A nicely done cantrip can induce fear in many enemies; it appears to show you as a powerful wizard. Likewise, phantasmal force can fool people into all kinds of things. One of my favourite things I've done with cantrip is to make some local bullies pants fall down while they were harassing me in bars. Of course, stuff like this could cause MORE trouble...

Oh yeah, the Complete Wizard's Handbook also has a section on creative spellcasting. One thing they have is the use of "Enlarge" or "Reduce" on objects: enlarge a rock to block a passageway, reduce a stuck door so that you can open it...Actually, inserting a wedge into something and enlarging the wedge should be able to open just about anything; I wonder how much force Enlarge has? The CWH also says you can use "Web" to cushion people from falls: It says "A web of at least 5 feet of thickness protects a falling character from damage regardless of the height from which he falls." So, you can fly or feather fall down a cliff, make a nice big web, and everyone else can jump (If they trust you!)

Darryl Shpak dos021@FREENET.MB.CA

>Also something I saw in one of the survey at WebRPG (www.webrpg.com) is a magic trap: Use a wand >of fireballs or some other offensive spell that has a command word, and mount it somewhere, aimed at a >particular spot. Then cast a "Magic Mouth" to say the command word (more than once?) when someone >STEPS on that spot.

Nice idea, but it doesn't work. Magic MOuth specifically can't use command words.

>A VERY useful, but often overlooked use of the spell "Dimension Door": It has NO verbal or somatic >components. Very useful in getting out of those ropes...or out of the clutches of that demon :-) A mage in >my party was in the grasp of a Tana'ri (sp?), and I was dragging our unconscious fighter away. But a >simple Dimension Door got him away from the demon and out of the room before us :-)

You mean no somatic or material components... but it *is* a practical spell.

>either, if I remember...they went straight to the Abyss. or, you could always teleport them off a cliff, up >into the sky, into a mountain (Yikes!), into a cage, or just about anywhere.

Unfortunately, you must "aim" the teleport at empty space where you are supported - you can't teleport into a mountain or up in the sky. At least, you can't do that with the Teleport and the Teleport without Error spells (you can "miss" the teleport, but you can't "aim" for thin air). I don't know about the "Teleport other" spell, since it isn't in the PHB, Tome of Magic, Complete Wizard's or Spells & Magic.

>Probably the most multipurpose spells in 2nd ed are Cantrip and Phantasmal Force, both 1st level spells >that are really limited only by your imagination. A nicely done cantrip can induce fear in many enemies; >it appears to show you as a powerful wizard. Likewise, phantasmal force can fool people into all kinds of >things. One of my favourite things I've done.

Agreed... though the things done with a cantrip are obviously magical, and are essentially unable to do anything that would require game stats.

>Oh yeah, the Complete Wizard's Handbook also has a section on creative spellcasting. One thing they >have is the use of "Enlarge" or "Reduce" on objects: enlarge a rock to block a passageway, reduce a >stuck door so that you can open it...Actually, inserting a wedge into something and enlarging the wedge >should be able to open just about anything; I wonder how much force Enlarge has?

The PHB says "If insufficient room is available, [...] attains the maximum possible size, bursting weak enclosures in the process, but is constrained without harm by stronger materials." Then again, there is a trap in a published TSR adventure that says that this does not apply to things that are enlarging from a Reduced state, but I tend to be suspicious of such things.

>The CWH also says you can use "Web" to cushion people from falls: It says "A web of at least 5 feet of >thickness protects a falling character from damage regardless of the height from which he falls." So, you >can fly or feather fall down a cliff, make a nice big web, and everyone else can jump (If they trust you!)

Of course, you need somewhere to anchor the web. Just ground doesn't work - it must be two diametrically opposite points (such as two rocks). Of course, I'd rule that you would be stuck in the web as a consequence, but that's just me.

Staffan Johansson d96sj@efd.lth.se

You mentioned using phantasmal force as a spell. We were using the phantasmal force spell to knock off large rooms of goblins and orcs. The mage in the party would cast it and make it look like a fireball was going off. The creatures were allowed two saving throws. One for the phantasmal force spell if they made it they suffered no unusual effects. If the failed then they got a saving throw for the fake fireball. Those that failed their save vs. the phantasmal force fell unconscious easy prey for the party after they took out the rest with their weapons.

(Anonymous)

>At 19:06 1998-04-02 -0600, Darryl Shpak wrote: either, if I remember...they went straight to the Abyss. >or, you could always teleport them off a cliff, up into the sky, into a mountain (Yikes!), into a cage, or >just about anywhere. Unfortunately, you must "aim" the teleport at empty space where you are supported >you can't teleport into a mountain or up in the sky. At least, you can't do that with the Teleport and the >Teleport without Error spells (you can "miss" the teleport, but you can't "aim" for thin air). I don't know >about the "Teleport other" spell, since it isn't in the PHB, Tome of Magic, Complete Wizard's or Spells & >Magic.

What you could do, though is make a platform over a massive drop, and teleport teh victim there. Just make the platform so it won't tke the weight. The problem is that if you need to go to all this trouble to

deal with the bad guy he probably won't die from a mere 1000' fall.

Rupert Boleyn rboleyn@clear.net.nz

Crawling Claws

Are crawling claws a form of undead or are they a magical construct? If they are undead what are they turned as?

(Anonymous)

What a quinky dink. I was just looking at those pesky little creatures (or parts of as the case may be) and I can tell you that they are not Undead, Though they do come from dead creatures. They are magical constructs that mages and priests use for a variety of "Guardian" Jobs.

(Anonymous)

Well, I don't know if they are considered undead or not, but if they are, they are turned as a skeleton, due to the fact that under their Hit Dice entry in the MM it says 2 - 4 HP.

If you look at the Turn Undead table (pg 96 in the black-cover DMG), you will see that each entry either lists a monster, or a monster and a hit die. For example, the first entry is "Skeleton or 1HD", which means any undead creature with 1 HD is turned on the same row as a Skeleton.

Elric afn50378@AFN.ORG

According to the Necromancer's Handbook, crawling claws can be raised up by a priest or wizard of at least first level. It also calls them animated limbs. I like the idea that they are animated by the same magic force that animates skeletons and zombies. But of course it is a DM call. I mean if you want them to be magical constructs like variant golems, go for it. If you do decide to see them as undead, you could have them turned as skeletons, or you could decide as zombies just to give them a little umph.

Of course with crawling claws the question comes up, if they have no eyes nor even eye sockets how do they see their target and do they see illusions like mirror image. If this question has been asked and answered before, forgive my impertinence for daring to ask it again.

Chad Thornton chadthornton@HOTMAIL.COM

>Of course with crawling claws the question comes up, if they have no eyes nor even eye sockets >how do they see their target and do they see illusions like mirror image. If this question has been >asked and answered before, forgive my impertinence for daring to ask it again.

The mage or priest controls the claw by issuing a command using a basic form of telepathy. This is also how the claws communicate with the other claws.

(Anonymous)

>The mage or priest controls the claw by issuing a command using a basic form of telepathy. This >is also how the claws communicate with the other claws.

Yes, but they can be given commands like to attack anyone who enters an area (much like skeletons and zombies). Then because they are undead and animated on thier own a hundred years could go by, the mage could die and they would still foloow out their orders. So the question is: if they have no sensory organs and no one to command them how do they see?

Chad Thornton chadthornton@HOTMAIL.COM

Well, They use telepathy, Why can't they have a psionic sight abiltity. Just something to think about.

(Anonymous)

> Well, I don't know if they are considered undead or not, but if they are, they are turned as a skeleton, >due to the fact that under their Hit Dice entry in the MM it says 2 - 4 HP.

Actually crawling claws are undead, but they cannot be turned. While I have the complete stats, here are some relevant facts:

SD: As undead, but immune to turning or control.
SW: Cold based spells increase all damage rolls against them by +1 per die.

Stephen Campey u   camp6430@MACH1.WLU.CA

FR Dungeon Crawl UNDERMOUNTAIN: The lost Level bla,bla,bla....... Crawling Claw : AC.......SD As undead, but immune to turning or control (unaffected by death magic or raise dead spells , also have standard resistance to charm, hold and sleep spells as all undead).

To be or not to be undead, in this case, it seems to be the same...

erdarnt edarnt@hol.fr

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Alternate spell casting

Is it possible for a character to learn to cast spells using only one hand? For example the wannabe mage was born with only one arm. What about people who lose an arm? Do the learn new forms of their spells through research, or just find a ring of regeneration to grow a new arm? Can moster/human

creatures like mongrelmen cast spells, they probably only have one human arm, and may not even have a human hand?

(Anonymous, no email)

You could use a rule snippet from the bladesinger kit in the elves handbook. The bladesinger, as you all probably know by now, can use a weapon to parry with one hand and cast a spell with the other. If I am not mistaken, casting a spell in this way increases the casting time by 2, or gives a +2 (bad) to initiative, or similar hindrance. This could be applied to the situation of the one armed mage.

Usually a person without an arm (who lost the arm) would pursue an opportunity to get another. A person born w/o the arm or whose arm was missing for years may or may not want a new arm, but I think mosat would. I would still apply the one armed penalty for a while, since the person would tend to favor the one armed way of life until they adjust to the new limb.

As for mongrelmen, I am not sure they can be mages. But if it were allowed, the momgrelman would have to have at least one hand capable of fine manipulation, with the limitation listed above, or two capable hands and cast spells as normal.

Chris Hawkins chhawkin@VT.EDU

I personally would think that if a Mage lost an arm that he would try to get it back as soon as possible, but if he knew that it would be years before he would get it regenerated then he would definitely try to relearn any spell that could be cast with one arm. I would also expect the Mage to learn any spell that only needed one hand or had no somantic component, theres quite a few. Also keep an eye on the material components as some require two hands to use(like srtiking a miniature gong).

Ben cammy@CENTURYINTER.NET

In addition, Elven Bladesingers' training take several decades to complete. Of course, this includes their special fighting style (Bladesong), but I would think that the one-handed spell-casting would take up a significant part of this. Perhaps three or four years of study with an Elven Bladesinger?

Andreas Kjeldsen morkitar@dadlnet.dk

With this in mind, I would have to say that if you are going to allow a mage that only has one arm (or some other type of creature like a mongrelmen for example) the casting time would have to be increased for each spell by at least 2-4. Other possible restriction would be to make the character start out older than they would normally, have them get more XP before going up to the next level, and/or restrict the maximum level that they can achieve.

autozzzzz@EARTHLINK.NET

Book 4

Top ten things NOT to give to the party's kender

10. Instructions of any kind

9. Keys of any kind

8. Potion of Speed

7. Wand of Enemy Location

6. Sphere of Annihilation

5. Bag of Tricks

4. Wand of Wonder

3. Deck of Many Things

2. Cubic Gate

...and the number one thing that you don't want to give to the kender in your party is...

1. A Bag of Devouring

Paul, Brett Brett_Paul@KNE.COM

Things to Do With a Dead Beholder:

Every now and then a party actually manages to kill a beholder. Being typical adventurers they usually loot the monster's lair, but all too often they ignore a potential source of lucre. I now present one way to use a dead beholder.

The first thing to do is to skin the beholder. Do this carefully, it is easier than you think to ruin the hide. Next you remove the eye stalks, clean out the central eye, and clean out all meat and gristle. Once that's done you tan the hide. Once the skin has been tanned, you close up the holes where the eye stalks used to be, pack the central eye socket with cotton or wool, and sew up the mouth. The final step is to pump the hide full of air. Lo and behold, you've got a beholder ball. Beholder balls are popular among giants as basketballs, soccerballs, and kickballs. Some humans use beholder balls for games like push

ball or siege ball. (Siege ball is where you have one team on a wall, with the other team assaulting it. Instead of rocks the two teams throw beholder balls at each other.) Depending on who you sell it to, a beholder ball can gain you anywhere between 25 to 100 gold. (Your best bet is a stone giant mother with a bunch of rowdy 10 year olds to entertain.)

What do you use dead beholders for?

Alan Kellogg mythusmage@FUNTV.COM

Wen da ork heeroz killz a beholder, we cleanz out da insides, see, and we driez and tanz the hide. Da shamanz makez the eyez not rot wit da magik. We havez a barbecue and drinkz lotsa orkbroo. When da hide is tand, we makez it so me an' Grotz can getz in da fing and walk aroun', wit jus' our bootz stikin' out. Den we goez to one of da humiez' costoom parteez! Hee hee! It iz fun, be wez uzually get kiked out, sinz alla da humie heroz getz skared. Hee hee!

   -- Ogz, Orc Fighter

Judson Powers powers@rjsonline.net

Well do the same as above, but instead of air, fill the hide full of dried beans, feathers or whatever, and voila, you have a beholder skin beanbag chair. Or, don't fill the hide at all, put a drawstring around the central eye hole and you have a nice bag. Going for groceries with a beholder skin bag on your shoulder stops most people cutting in line.

Oh, and I don't know if people have mentioned this, but after you kill a beholder, you've probably punctured it's skin, which would allow this gas or whatever to escape, especially if put a sword or something through it.

Adam Collinge (no email)

What you do is this:

All adventures should carry around with them gum arabic and tar. A little of each of these mixed together with bee's wax produces and excellent sealing material. Using this gap filler, seal all of the beholder's gas chambers tight so that no gas can leak out. This ensures that the carcas will float. Now, carefully remove the eye stalks and replace them with gem stones. I recommend rubies, emeralds, diamonds and saphires. Clean the inside of the carcas and mount a pearl with continual light inside. Now close up the main eye, polish the scales and voila- instant disco ball.

For the more craft orientated, tanned beholder skins make excellent pyjama holders (they fit nicely under your pillow) and what about that stylish beholder throw rug you've always wanted?

Samuel, Davey samuel.davey@DSTO.DEFENCE.GOV.AU

Well, I have an idea somewhat along the lines of the crazy illiterate orc's story about dressing up as a beholder, only more complicated:

You preserve the hide, along with spells to keep the eyes looking intelligent, then "reduce" a mage, who crawls inside. He casts "fly" on himself, and then tools around inside his beholder suit, frightening the shit out of anyone he runs into - perhaps with a spell to make the suit transparent from the inside, so that the mage can more fully play the role with appropriate spells if he is attacked . . .

(Anonymous, no email)

Top ten things to do with a dead beholder:

10) Scare the hell out of your wife

9) Make some mean head cheese

8) Deflate it and turn it into a bowling ball

7) Stick candles in the eye sockets and turn it into a chandelier

6) Use the eyes as billiard balls

5) The holes are the perfect size for wine bottles....

4) See how many goblins you can shove in there

3) Take out the gas sacks (if not punctured) and stick 'em on your belt. Who needs Levitation?

2) Try to kick a ball into the central eye socket

And the number one thing to do with a dead beholder is...

1) Paint it white, paint yourself blue, put it on your head and run around yelling "I'M PAPA SMURF!!!!"

Mike Kurtz fnorbenden@YAHOO.COM

You know you are a gamer if

Ok I dont know if it was officially decided whether or not this is a vaild heading so I am gonna try to post it anyways this is a list that my friend came up with after reading a webpage on the internet and I bring it to you for the lists enjoyment so without further ado I bring you.

You know you are a gamer if:

- you buy dice as a hobby

- you NEED snacks during play in order to keep from dehydrating

- you sang an album about the game

- you get bored talking to your friend about the game and hook up with about fifty other people around the world

- you know these people very well

- they know you very well

- you are hooked up on so many lists that you and your friend accidently end up sharing each other's gaming plans for the other, without realizing who they're talking to

- this is the only game you play

- you sign your school papers with your game name

- your teachers know that the papers are yours

- your teachers call you by your game name

- your family calls you by your game name

- you played an entire game by mail (not e-mail)

- you do your homework and complete it by applying it to game situations

- all of your gifts from your birthday and Christmas are AD&D related

- you dress for your part in the game

- you know more about the game than TSR

- you can psychologically break down the aspects of the game and what TSR was intending

- you were right

- you've created more campaign settings than TSR

- you dream that you are in the game and caught in a predicament

- you aren't dreaming and are caught in a game predicament in real-life

- you've discovered every grammatical error that was made in the PHB, DMG, and MM

- you have every edition of the game, going back fifty years

- you were the only one playing the game fifty years ago

- you visit the Tower of London and map it out

- you map out every building you go to

- you insult people by calling them game terms (berk, banshee, yugoloth, dragon, gorgon, harpy, sprite, medusa, basilisk)

- you carry dice in your pocket so that have something to jingle because you have no change

- you look at the pictures of women in the handbooks instead of Victoria's Secret

- you take into consideration every aspect of the game (eating, sleeping, moving, light, encumberance, sex, exercise, clothes)

- you own every size of dice possible

- you can apply aspects of the game and adventures to real-life, like Wilson, from Home Improvement ("I'm reminded of the great cleric Morganth, who said, 'I can't leave without my candle. The candle represents his will, strength, and courage, much like your wife.")

- you go ballistic every time someone bad mouths the game

- you go ballisitic every time someone calls it "the game".

- you preach the game to your friends and family

- your religion corresponds to one from the game

- you have a character sheet of yourself

- you walk into a hobby store and everyone knows your name

- you get pissed when you graph the room wrong

- you get pissed when your friend graphs a room wrong

- you finish a game for your sibling after they quit

- you have more game supplies than school supplies

- all of your books are gaming books

- you get pissed when the word dragon is mentioned in the title of a book and there isn't a single damn dragon in the whole thing

- your a dumbsh*t in school but a super-genius with god-like intelligence in the game

- you criticize the artwork in a game

- you have an abbreviation for every word and term in the game

- TSR elects you as their president

- you know what TSR means

- all of the above apply to you!!

Bill Sanders waymire@pacbell.net

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Book 5

Archery & Hit Points

I have been mulling some house rules for AD&D combat. I like the abstract idea of hit points being a combination of luck, stamina and skill along with actual physical toughness. However, I also want to represent better the idea of attacks against specific body parts/criticals (like archery attacks) and/or systems (e.g. by poison). What I came up with is a variant of the Fantasy Hero system and I'd like to get some feedback on it.

For all PC's, Body Points = CON (or HEALTH for PO:S&P types). Then, roll Stamina points using the normal rules for hit dice and CON bonuses, etc. The two totals remain separate.

During melee, hits are taken first from Stamina and when that is reduced to zero, then BODY points are ticked off. Actual physical damage occurs only when BODY points are involved. That represents the point at which scars occur, etc.

Now for the fun part: Attacks that by-pass the presumed combat round actions of dodge and strike/counter-strike attack BODY points directly. (These are essentially the "killing attack" from FH.) These attacks include missile fire, thief backstab attacks, attacks on helpless/sleeping foes, etc.

Why assume a split? Basically because I like the "Feel" of it. I have never understood why archery, which was historically devastating at such battles as Agincourt, and the fabled penetrating power of the longbow and crossbow translates to a piddly d6 or d8. I know that C&T has revised this somewhat, but I can't get over the feeling that a well-placed arrow can kill a person in reality but almost NEVER does so in AD&D. That's why these attacks will go right to BODY and when that is reduced to zero, you're dead. (Or you start the clock running on 10 negative hit points ala "death's door".)

I see a lot of advantages to this rule. It makes archers formidable warriors at last (without needing artificially inflated character class abilities). It also allows "backstab" attacks to be very deadly and so would tend to make thief characters subject to very stringent rulings on their hiding and silent moving skills to use it effectively. It will also make even high-level characters more aware of their mortality when facing sharpshooters or the occasional thief with killing on his/her mind. And it does so without an artificial instant death roll.

I have some idea of the disadvantages also, but I'd like to get the experienced (and not so experienced) eyes of the List to examine this idea for flaws I've missed. So let me know what you all think. Thanks!

Patrick Seymour patrick.seymour@prudential.com

This idea has been proposed many times, and is fine for those who wish to use it for the feel it gives them. But, I see an error in your reasoning only concerning archery. Why do you think arrows are any more deadly than daggers or swords? Sure arrows could and did kill but so did swords, horse

trampling, mauls, daggers, etc. I see no justification for making missiles special. You sight Agincourt as so so so many people do, and think that arrows killed everyone. It just did not happen like that, as I think the list has discussed before, but I fail to remember the details. Arrows are a big factor, to be sure, but just as much a factor was the French strategy(or lack of one), terrain effects, lack of room for the masses of the French to even breath much less fight in, etc. Plate armors of later periods could resist arrows, and even bullets! Yep, that is right, armorers would test armor against the best guns of the day at point blank range, leaving a dent that proved the armor could resist them. The armor of the knight did not disappear from use because it could not stop bullets, or arrows or whatever, but precisely because it could! What I mean by that is the fact that armorers were keeping up with weapon advances just as they always did, however, their own ability to actually fabricate armor that was bulletproof spelled the end of their trade as it had been known for 1 reason, the bloody armor just became too damn heavy to wear! Sure, 3 mm of modern day steel plate can stop a 44 magnum cold(nominal rating), so it sure could stop a medieval gun! We may have armor piercing shot and guns with more punch than a 44 magnum, like a 30-06, which can penetrate up to 12 mm of steel, but my point is that wearing a suit of armor 3 mm thick in all places is going to weigh far more than most knights could reasonable bear. I am talking 100 pounds and up! Well, since I went way off my point, I basically end by saying I think arrows should be treated just as other weapons. But special attacks, like backstabs or such, might be justified to attack those body points as you pointed out.

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OK. Your idea is a good one, but let me tell you why archers in my world have a good chance of doing damage. Thieves as well--and they seem to abound in my world. When a character can't see an attack (i.e. invisible foe, hidden foe, archer in the tree "snipering", mass battle, etc.) then their AC bonus for Dexterity no longer applies. Shields have a 50/50 (unless it's from behind) of becoming involved, and the player never knows this unless it directly affects them. When I have them fill out "battle order" which is a small list of stats that I keep in front of me for easier in-play bookkeeping , they list their AC and their non-Dex modified AC. Usually this amounts to one or two points of difference, sometimes it makes no difference. So when an archer attacks you from a hidden point in a tree or behind a brush, you are easier for him/her to hit. The chances for knowing where the attacker is aren't too great, unless that attacker hasn't hidden him/herself very well. All they know is that it "came from behind" or "came from ahead" or "the side." Basically, they know which direction the arrow is sticking in them. I sometimes add cumulative damage if they pull out or tinker with the object that has been placed inside their body. I usually count damage of 1 or 2 points to be a "graze" and a few other details. Generally, though, crossbowmen, archers, etc. do a lot more damage than usual in my campaign because they don't "stand there and shoot," they move around and hide.

In mass battle, the same situations come out. Three people may be hitting you at once. You can't dodge ALL of them--I don't care how many Kung Fu movies you've seen. You can dodge them one at a time, but melee doesn't work that way. It's all at once or one only. If that makes sense. This is a simple system that I use that requires no real keeping track of--it's just an "off the head" kind of deal. I don't have to write more than how many points were taken. I thrive on simplicity in my DMing. :)

You have a good idea, though. If it works for your campaign, use it. I'm just offering what I use for you and others to consider as well. The less rules I have to keep track of, the easier and more flowing the game becomes for me and the players.

Aaron S. Turpen aturpen@juno.com

>This idea has been proposed many times, and is fine for those who wish to use it for the feel it gives
>them. But, I see an error in your reasoning only concerning archery. Why do you think arrows are any
>more deadly than daggers or swords? Sure arrows could and did kill but so did swords, horse
>trampling, mauls, daggers, etc. I see no justification for making missiles special. You sight Agincourt
>as so so so many people do, and think that arrows killed everyone. It just did not happen like that, as I
>think the list has discussed before, but I fail to remember the details.

I appreciate your comments, however you are making some pretty broad assumptions about my level of knowledge. I do not think, and never have thought, that "arrows killed everyone". The archers at Agincourt played a major role both in channeling/directing the flow of the French charge (to avoid the arrows)and in taking out the horses of the French knights and rendering them very vulnerable in the cramped conditions you mention. (Which is what early firearms were really designed to do. Remove a horseman's horse and you have a really poor footman!) However, to assume that the archers played anything other than a major role is simply wrong. I also do not need a primer in armor development, thank you very much. However, I am not seeking a flame war so I'll get back to my point.

During melee combat (i.e. swords and daggers, etc.) you are parrying with your weapon and blocking attacks with shields, etc. AD&D also assumes a lot of feints and dodges, etc. This level of action drains the participants which in part accounts for the abstract hit point rules of AD&D.

Missle attacks are a different ballgame entirely. (And yes, I know you can devote your attacks to dodging, I'd probably use the -4 AC parry rule for doing so.) When they succeed in hitting you, it is your body that is hurt. And while many swords and daggers (not all) do slashing damage, a piercing wound is much more likly to kill as it damages the internal organs (or leads to peritonitis for those nasty gut wounds seldom cured by medieval medicine).

Of course, my ideas assume the very deadly bows developed during the ancient/medieval arms race which could pierce armor and then some. A light bow would not stick the arrow in far enough to do any major damage. But we are talking about the longbows that could literally staple a riders leg to his saddle and the crossbow which was so efficient that the Pope declared them immoral to use. (At least against christians.) These weapons are meant to defeat armor and the protection it gives.

I would assume that a sword or dagger thrust into an un-armored opponent would do as much damage as a longbow war arrow, but the energy expended by melee weapons just in breaking through the armor reduces their damage potential. (And yes, I am over-simplifying this for brevity and ignoring the melee weapons designed for armor piercing also (like stilletos).) Hell, the increased energy imparted by the powerful bow (or the atl-atl for javelins) makes these weapons more deadly than "arm-powered" attacks.

Suffice to say that IMO, archery IS different enough from melee to justify different handling in the rules. Of course, the DM is always free to use his or her own judgement.

My purpose in the original post was to get some feedback on the mechanics of the idea itself. Where are the holes? How much would this disrupt the standard magic system (if at all)? etc.

Patrick Seymour patrick.seymour@prudential.com

I still do not see why you would want to give missile weapons more effect than melee weapons. This is the only hole I see in your proposed system. Arrows are not more deadly than other weapons. In America, when US soldiers were fighting the native Americans, almost all dead soldiers had from 6 to

12 arrows in them. Now, native Americans did resort to scalping and such in frustration over US aggression, but would not keep shooting a dead man over and over, giving you some idea of just how many such arrows it took to finish off a US soldier in no armor at all. Many medieval soldiers would survive arrow hits, even multiple arrow hits. Arrows are not more deadly, as far as I can see, in any form than other weapons to give them such an advantage. They can penetrate some armors at closer ranges, but are defeated by others. Melee weapons could also breech armor, and even if not actually penetrating, the shock of a blocked impact could harm the target of it. Archery is already deadly enough, why make it even more so, and for no solid reason? Your hitpoint system is fine if that is how you look at hitpoints. I do not see hitpoints as just stamina, but a fundamental part of the AD&D concept of heroics. They are a mystical or divine protection representing many factors in abstract form. If you want to make backstabs and arrows do such deadly damage, what about dragon breath, fireballs, lightning bolts, poisons, etc. All these are far more likely to kill than an arrow. It seems you want a Fantasy Hero game without all of its complexity, which is fine, but it is not AD&D as you are removing a basic element, hitpoints, and replacing it with a far more "mortal" concept. Personally, I like the extremes myself. I like AD&D as it stands on hitpoints due to the heroic deeds it allows that no other game out there allows. In almost every other game, a dragon will kill you no matter how powerful you are. That is what makes AD&D a high fantasy game. When I want to play a low fantasy game, I head for Pendragon, Harnmaster, Fantasy Hero, etc. The former 2 really give a "realistic" medieval feel as far as death is concerned, since even a skilled warrior can die from relatively meager causes. It puts a greater sense of urgency and caution into the game, making it have more of a real life feel. I like this at times, but when I want to run an epic campaign, no other system does it for me like AD&D. Where else can you kill dragons, challenge demons and hell itself, and even talk to the gods on their own home turf like AD&D?! Maybe some are getting tired of this aspect of AD&D, and for them I say, play Harnmaster, after a few sessions of bleeding to death, dying of infection, having permanent injuries due to broken bones and such, you will yearn for the freedom and epic flavor AD&D can give. There are plenty of ways to strike fear into the heart of a PC without messing with the hitpoint system.

hunsaker hunsaker@MOTHER.COM

>Arrows are not more deadly, as far as I can see, in any form than other weapons to give them such an
>advantage. They can penetrate some armors at closer ranges, but are defeated by others. Melee
>weapons could also breech armor, and even if not actually penetrating, the shock of a blocked impact
>could harm the target of it.

I agree with this except for crossbows. Crossbows can do some major damage regardless of what armor you have on(unless magical). Crossbows were outlawed in England at one time because of their freakish power.

(Anonymous, no email)

>During melee combat (i.e. swords and daggers, etc.) you are parrying with your weapon and blocking
>attacks with shields, etc. AD&D also assumes a lot of feints and dodges, etc. This level of action
>drains the participants which in part accounts for the abstract hit point rules of AD&D.

I use a stamina system that I designed. I think of stamina as the ability
to resist damage, and parry (general defensive moves not an actually parry)

>Missle attacks are a different ballgame entirely. (And yes, I know you can devote your attacks to
>dodging, I'd probably use the -4 AC parry rule for doing so.) When they succeed in hitting you, it is
>your body that is hurt. And while many swords and daggers (not all) do slashing damage, a piercing
>wound is much more likly to kill as it damages the internal organs (or leads to peritonitis for those
>nasty gut wounds seldom cured by medieval medicine).

Maybe Im the only one but how many times in heroic tales or movies is the hero or villian struck by a
grazing shot that makes blood run into their eyes or scrapes their hand and makes them drop an item.

> Suffice to say that IMO, archery IS different enough from melee to justify different handling in the
>rules. Of course, the DM is always free to use his or her own judgement.

What I think you are trying to get at is when a character with a bow aims from a castle wall or sniping
position to shoot a foe. I would use called shot rules for this(and melee weapons). If a character
declares a called shot and succeds in the attack roll then their attack does damage directly to the body
part aimed for and thus hit point damage rather than stamina damage.

> My purpose in the original post was to get some feedback on the mechanics of the idea itself. Where
>are the holes? How much would this disrupt the standard magic system (if at all)? etc.

I would like to exchange ideas on hit point / stamina point systems as I am
using a stamina system currently in my campaign.

Harriman, Robert Robert_Harriman@BOSE.COM

>In America, when US soldiers were fighting the native Americans, almost all dead soldiers had from 6
>to 2 arrows in them. Now, native Americans did resort to scalping and such in frustration over US
>aggression, but would not keep shooting a dead man over and over, giving you some idea of just how
>many such arrows it took to finish off a US soldier in no armor at all. Many medieval soldiers would
>survive arrow hits, even multiple arrow hits. Arrows are not more deadly, as far as I can see, in any
>form than other weapons to give them such an advantage. They can penetrate some armors at closer
>ranges, but are defeated by others. Melee weapons could also breech armor, and even if not actually
>penetrating, the shock of a blocked impact could harm the target of it. While I am not an expert on
>Amerind bows, I believe that in general they were nowhere near as powerful as the european bows.
>For one thing, they were not produced in response to increasing armor protection. As I mentioned in
>my last post, lighter bows do not do as much damage because they do not penetrate as well.

Rather than get into an endless debate about arrow and bow physics, I'll accept that your interpretation
of archery is different from mine. That being said, I have to take issue with some of your further
assumptions.

>It seems you want a Fantasy Hero game without all of its complexity, which is fine, but it is not
>AD&D as you are removing a basic element, hitpoints, and replacing it with a far more "mortal"
>concept. What I want is to have AD&D fulfill my expectations of what a fun RPG needs to model. I
>am not "removing" hit points, in fact my system is giving the PC's significantly more hit points than
>the standard rules. What I am doing is modifying the system to distinguish between effects that can
>be altered by the actions of the character (proactive) and those that the character cannot alter by any
>actions (reactive for lack of a better term). A character can duck and cover from dragon breath or
>fireballs, and that "heroic" element of hit points is not changed at all.

IMHO, all this change does is to make PC's more considerate of their actions. Is it heroic to stride into a hail of arrows or is it just stupid? What sets a 15th level fighter apart from a 1st level one; the fact that he can soak up more damage or that he has the experience and skill to know when to NOT try a straight ahead charge?

Another option that I hoped to achieve with this system is to enable some spells to effect BODY points directly and perhaps make poisons act directly against BODY (and of course re-work the damage potential of poison). Using this system can also let a DM use the BODY total itself as an "ability" check to resist the stresses of exertion, or exhaustion, or even as spell points for the poor Mage who is literally burning himself out to power one last casting (for those using spell points).

>Maybe some are getting tired of this aspect of AD&D, and for them I say, play Harnmaster, after a
>few sessions of bleeding to death, dying of infection, having permanent injuries due to broken bones
>and such, you will yearn for the freedom and epic flavor AD&D can give. There are plenty of ways
>to strike fear into the heart of a PC without messing with the hitpoint system.

I find this arrogant statement simply amazing. First, nowhere did I suggest getting anywhere near the detailed level of bleeding or determining bone damage. (And yes, Harnmaster is a great set of rules. So is Fantasy Hero and Runequest and GURPS and whatever other game you care to play. It is just a matter of taste.) Second, this list is supposed to be a place to discuss ideas and variants of AD&D, a set of rules that is intended to be modified to fit the particular needs of a DM and his players.

When did "epic flavor" become an immutable law, and/or defining element of AD&D? If we don't play according to your definition of AD&D we should not play AD&D??? BOLLOCKS!! If I or anyone else sees a chance to improve our game(s) with ideas or elements from any other source, game or otherwise, why should we feel that our AD&D is broken or inferior? I really hope that your DM and/or fellow players can experience the richness and diversity of AD&D with more open-minded appreciation of it's possibilities.

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You are correct about native American bows not being near as powerful as longbows, but I was just pointing out this as an example of missile fire not more deadly than any other attack form. Your archery rules concerning BODY points is the problem I personally see with the system you devise. Of course, I also do not agree with guns doing open ended damage, as they do in AD&D. This is just the way I see it personally, and my opinion comes from the way such attacks do damage. They do damage depending on where they hit, not just how hard. A bullet or powerful crossbow bolt or arrow or whatever could hit in the soft tissue of the shoulder blade area, for example, and all 3 would no doubt go clean through the body. This would is not a severe wound, yet, according to your body rules would strike at the target's body points, where as a similar blow from a knife, which would leave a bigger wound, and cause more bleeding due to the slashing nature of such a weapon, hence more damage, would only take away from the stamina points. If the arrow hit the throat, it could kill, but so could the knife thrust. So, I do not see why you want to give arrows more damage potential. I mentioned other game systems as an example of those that use a similar hitpoint system. Fantasy Hero uses body and stun points. Harnmaster uses injury descriptions, so no hitpoints are used per say, but they use wound level points, or whatever they are called, I forget, to define the degree of such descriptive injuries. And these points can cause side effects of their own. I have seen a GURPs web page where the DM uses the normal damage system and added a "bruise" damage of his own, basically like the stun/stamina system of Fantasy Hero. These are just to give examples of other similar ideas. What makes AD&D different, is the abstract nature of the hitpoints. Loses body points or stun points in all other system s has a defined effect. It means you were

hit in the body and took damage, or the shock stunned you a bit. In AD&D, taking 10 points of damage does not mean any of that necessarily. It could mean the blow never even hit, or it caused only a scratch, or it was a death blow! It depends on the original hitpoints of the target. I am sorry you took offense at what I said, as I did not mean it in the way you took it. I am playing the role of spoiler and trying to see if your idea makes sense from another view point. It is not meant to say anything about you, just present another view point so you can either see if it has something you did not know or missed, or is just useless babble to you. If you want to use a body/ stamina system, that will work as far as my experience goes, as I tried it myself. I liked the abstract hitpoint system better in the end, but you may like this system better. I also make many rule changes, and do not play normal AD&D. That is why I mentioned those other systems, to place you with people like me, who like to create new ideas and systems to "improve" AD&D in our opinions. I would not say I play normal AD&D at all, but, a few of the basic concepts I have kept as I like the feel of them. My opinion is that arrows should not have special treatment regarding damage, neither bullets or bolts, with the exception of special considerations of armor piercing power, which has to do with the hit roll, not damage roll, in AD&D.

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