VIDEOGAMING

UNCENSORED VIDEOGAMES

WHERE DO YOU STAND?

VIDEOGAMING
AND COMPUTERGAMING ILLUSTRATED

keyboard

An Editorial

Every day, across the country, women and girls rack up arcade scores and devise computer programs that leave the men muttering into their Adidas. These women, however, are the exception, the pioneers. Statistics indicate that very few women are participating in this field. The statistics raise many questions; not questions of ability, only of interest and involvement.

Why do we see so few women in the arcades? For that matter, why are there so few women in computer stores? And, what does it all mean for the videogaming and computergaming industry?

The answers lie in the vastly different socialization processes of men and women. The early video and computergames grew out of the male strongholds of mathematics and technology. They were conceived, designed, and marketed by men, for men. Naturally, they reflected the rather physical values of the male culture: aggression, competition, winning, speed, aim, and violence.

Women, on the other hand, receive a gentler conditioning process. They are reinforced for being good, for cooperating, for being creative. They are not encouraged to tinker with gadgets, to outshine their boyfriends, or to make mistakes.

So, today we have a circular problem: women are not buying or playing many of these games because they are oriented toward men, and the designers and manufacturers are not orienting them toward women because women are not buying them.

"We have a marketing problem," says Roberta Williams, co-founder, creative director, and game designer for Sierra On-Line. "Nobody wants to discriminate against women. But we're faced with a situation where 90% of our market are men from ages 12-34. If a company ignores those statistics, it will not be in business very long. The fact is you don't see many women in computer stores. When you do, I think this will change."

Sierra On-Line does test market their products and does try to design games that will appeal not just to men or women, but to people in general. Ms. Williams sees an encouraging evolution taking place from the early arcade shoot-em-ups where success depended on speed and reaction time to the adventure games where both men and women enjoy exercising the creativity, logic, and wit required to get to the end of the story. "The present educational games are intriguing to both sexes. I think the new frontier will be games for women, and after that home productivity games geared toward the whole family," says Ms. Williams.

Since at least some of the forward-thinking game manufacturers are considering the values of the female market in software design, as well as the profit value of such a move, it is time to ask if there is anything that women themselves can do to speed up the process. In a world of accelerated change, progress must move ahead on many fronts simultaneously. It is not enough for women to sit back and wait for more appealing games to appear.

It is time for women to overcome any fears they may have of entering the technological world, the arcade, or the computer store. Roberta Williams feels that women do have to try harder than men to enter the technological arenas: "There seems to be some stigma in their minds to be overcome. But if women would just get out and do it; if they would get involved, in videogames or computers, they would like it. It would really help convince the industry that there was a market there, which would encourage more product development not just for women but for human beings."

Ms. Williams adds: "Neither the hardware nor the programming is as hard as women think. Computers can be a very creative tool. It's important to try and keep on trying."

—**June Davis**

Which player is snatching victory from the jaws of defeat?

Find out fast. Jungle Hunt is so much like the arcade, you can't go in green. Like the player on the left. He'll get snapped up by the crocodile with the wide open mouth. But get the croc with the partly open mouth and score 200 points, like the player on the right.

Only Atari makes Jungle Hunt for use with the ATARI® 2600™ Game, Sears Video Arcade† systems, and a version exclusively for the ATARI 5200™ SuperSystem.

So explore the stores for Jungle Hunt. And learn it like a native.

Here comes Jungle Hunt® from Atari.

A Warner Communications Company

Introducing five ways to make your Atari® 5200™ more exciting.

GORF
CBS Electronics

BLUE PRINT
CBS Electronics

WIZARD of WOR
CBS Electronics

MOUNTAIN KING
CBS Electronics

K-RAZY SHOOT-OUT
CBS Electronics

CBS Electronics is now the source of a big variety of exciting games never before available on the Atari® 5200.™ Now you can really plug into the excitement five different ways...each one a thrilling test of your skill and concentration.

There's popular arcade games like Bally/Midway's GORF™—where you must muster all your strength to defend against flying Gorfs, deadly Droids, Kamikaze Invaders, Laser Attackers and Neutronium Ships. WIZARD OF WOR™—you must outwit and outshoot the sinister Wizard in the dreaded dungeons of Wor. And BLUEPRINT™—which lets you try to prove that chivalry is not dead. Only you have the blueprint for the machine that can stop mean Ollie Ogre and save fair Daisy Damsel.

Plus there's K-RAZY SHOOT-OUT™—*Electronic Games* Magazine's Computer Game of the Year. It's an incredibly fast-paced test of your marksmanship against alien Droids. And there's MOUNTAIN KING™—an ever-exciting journey through diamond-laden caverns in search of the elusive Flame Spirit...the mystical key that unlocks the Temple Chamber which holds the Golden Crown.

It's five great ways to add to your Atari 5200 video game selection. So check out the video games from CBS Electronics. And discover how much more exciting your Atari 5200 just became.

CBS Electronics
Where the excitement never ends.

eye on

LET'S HEAR IT!

Not content to dazzle us with mere visual images, the videogame makers are increasingly incorporating 'voice'. Following is an update on the latest products and a review of the earliest.

For some time now Odyssey has offered a voice synthesis module. This system has been most effective with sound effects and insults hurled upon the player. The player can also phonetically type words on the Odyssey Keyboard and hear them repeated.

Intellivision's voice synthesis module has made possible their very impressive *B17 Bomber, Tron: Solar Sailer,* and *Bomb Squad,* all of which utilize the voice quite well. Others, such as *Space Spartans,* are tantamount to having your granny nag you from the back seat.

For those not impressed with a prerecorded, impassive voice cartridge, Atari has scheduled an October release for their Voice Controller, manufactured by Milton Bradley for the 2600 unit. The controller plugs into one of the joystick ports; then the player dons a headset and takes command of games designed for the controller. One player is able to use the headset, while the other must suffer along with only a joystick. Since the system is based on voice recognition, more than one voice would confuse it.

There are four games to be released to be used with the Voice Controller: They are *RealSports Baseball, Star Raiders,*
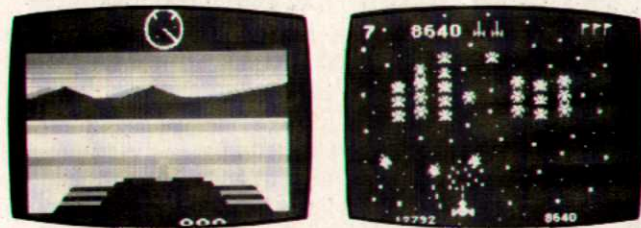
Top: Coleco's KidVid was formerly called the Sound Module One. *Above:* **Battlezone** and **Star Raiders** are among the games that will be voice control-able.

Battlezone, and *Berzerk.* In the baseball game, for instance, the player need only say "first" and the ball will be thrown there, "second" and the ball will be relayed to second base, etc.

Since the game is able to be reprogrammed each time it is inserted, the player can have the pitcher throw the ball with a command of "Goose", and the batter to hit with "Reggie".

Coleco has kept the kids in mind with their KidVid module (formerly called the Sound Module I) for their Gemini unit. This is, again, a voice synthesis module. The games to be released with this module are an all new *Smurfs* game , *The Berenstain Bears,* and a Doctor Seuss game. The *Smurf* game is packaged with the **Module, and** the other two games will be released

simultaneously. 'Voice' comes in the form of audio cassettes which are unspooled in coordination with onscreen action.

A unit called simply Kid-Vid is now in release by Coleco. It incorporates the sound module with the Gemini videogame unit.

KIDDING AROUND

Speaking of younger videogamers, Atari is jumping into the young children's market with both feet, as they will soon be releasing games based on Sesame Street, Walt Disney characters, Peanuts, and the Muppets. These new games are designed to help children improve hand/eye coordination, spelling, mathematical skills, and entertain at the same time. All of these games are for the **2600,** and retail for around $30.45

Cookie Monster Munch:

a maze game that helps children become familiar with directional concepts, as well as hand/eye coordination and counting skills. There are ten levels of play where the cookie kid must pick up pieces of cookies, then put them in a cookie jar. In higher levels of play the player must do so before being eaten by the cookie monster.

Alpha Beam with Ernie: letter recognition and directional concepts are encouraged in this game. The child must fly through space in his shuttle and gather letters that are floating around. then Ernie must beam them down into their corresponding ports in the main spaceship.

Big Bird's Egg Catch: directional awareness is stressed, as Big Bird must catch eggs that are being dropped down several chutes before they splat on the ground. In the easier versions, the chutes are vertical, while in the more difficult games they zig-zag.

Dumbo's Flying Circus: Dumbo flies through the air with the greatest of ease, popping ballons with peanuts from his trunk. Points are awarded for the number of ballons popped, as well as popping balloons with clowns on them while helping the clown safely to the ground.

Donald Duck's Speedboat: Donald must maneuver his craft through a river chockful of whirlpools, seaweed, rocks, fish, and the bobbing buoys of his three nephews. The faster he goes, the more points are scored.

Sorcerer's Apprentice:

eye on
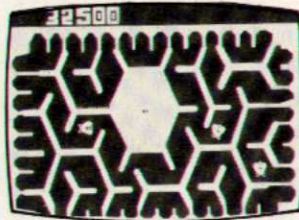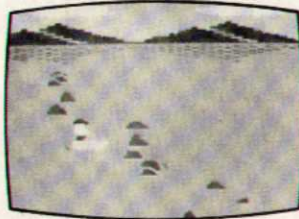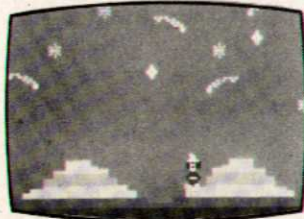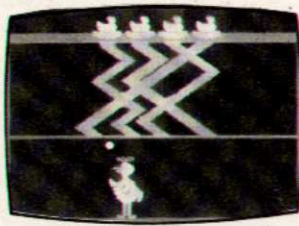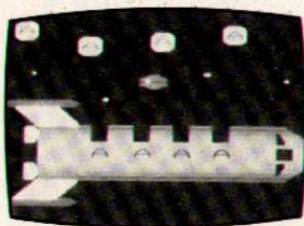
Top left: **Alpha Beam,** *followed by* **Big Bird's Egg Catch, Sorcerer's Apprentice, Donald Duck Speedboat, Sport Goofy,** *and* **Beezer**, *this last item for Intellivision.*

As in the movie, Mickey Mouse must catch falling stars and shoot meteors in order to stop the water-carrying brooms from filling up the Sorcerer's chambers.

Miss Piggy's Wedding: Miss Piggy and Kermit are about to tie the knot, or maybe not. Kermit gets cold feet and leaves Miss P. at the altar. Unwilling to accept rejection, Piggy takes up the chase. The church becomes a maze, as Miss Piggy hunts down her Kermie. Players can choose between controlling Miss Piggy or Kermit.

Pigs In Space: in this parody of space games, the Muppet crew is pitted against three different menaces. First, Link must shoot rows of descending chickens, while avoiding their falling eggs. Second, Miss Piggy must travel to the top of the screen; she avoids falling spaghetti and meatballs. The third game features Dr. Strangepork as he flies through a cavern firing his boomerang-like weapon at menacing Gonzoids.

For kids of all ages, as they say, is Atari's home adaptation of the arcade adaptaton of the movie *Krull.* There are three different skill-and-action sequences in which the player takes the role of one of the film's stars, as they attempt to stay alive against the Slayers, the Crystal Spider, and the Fireball-hurling Beast.

For their **5200** Atari has several new games in the offing:

Road Runner. The player takes the role of Wil E. Coyote. The screen is divided into fifteen blocks of a desert grid matrix. Sections of roadway are marked on each grid; the player must stay on the road while picking up bird seed before the Road Runner gets to it.

Sports Goofy. In the first of two games on this cartridge, Goofy must scale a tricky scaffolding and dive onto a moving target. The second game has Goofy bouncing on squares to pop balloons at the top of the screen. Watch out though, some of those squares have rotating gaps that will put an abrupt end to our hero's antics.

Also for the 5200 in the fall, adaptations of *Dig-Dug, Tempest* and *Xevious.*

For **Intellivision,** from the house of Imagic comes a licensed title, *Beezer.* In this game the player must negotiate his/her way through a maze while avoiding killer bees and their deadly Queen.

Yet another pair of licensed characters have found their way into the videogaming market, this time via Sierra On-Line and Sydney Development. The games, designed for all the major videogame systems and computers, feature the cast of two sets of comic strips created by Johnny Hart, B.C. and The Wizard of Id.

Thor rides along on his prehistoric unicycle in his never ending *Quest for Tires.* Thor must rescue his girl, The Cute Chick, from the slavering jaws of a hungry pterodactyl. To arrive by her side he must wend his way through thirty screens of day/dusk/ night sequences.

Coming from the Kingdom of Id there are currently at least seven titles in the works. They are *Wiztype, Wizword, Wizlab, Wizmath, Wizspell, Dot to Dot Zot,* and *Bung Juggler.* All of these games are designed for younger players, and they each help to develop a different skill.

So optimistic are the Sierra On-Line and Sydney Development people about this merger, that they have planned as many as eighty games based on *B.C.* and *The Wizard of Id.*

On the more conservative side of the coin, Broderbund has announced a mere four titles for videogamers.

Broderbund, which is well known for its software for the Atari, Apple, and Commodore computers, has decided that the time is right to jump into the videogame market. Broderbund will release four "special edition" games for play on the **Atari 2600** and **5200** systems. For the 2600 there are *Sky Blazer,* a multi level air combat game that has been a big hit in the micro-computer field; and *Solo,* a completely new 3-D flight simulation game.

Owners of the 5200 will

Pigs in Space *and* **Miss Piggy's Wedding** *(promo stills).*

be glad to know that Broderbund's popular *Choplifter* and *Serpentine* are now available for that system. "We don't plan to design an extensive array of VCS games every year," states vice president Gary Carlston, "because the market is not short of software. But when we achieve a breakthrough we'll introduce a unique product."

VIDEOGAMES TO GO

For those of you who like to play as you go, there are four new tabletop videogames, one from Parker Brothers and three from Nintendo.

Parker Brothers gives us another translation of *Q*Bert*, while Nintendo serves up *Popeye, Snoopy,* and *Mario's Cement Factory.*

The Nintendo games, which list for $54.95, feature liquid crystal display, serialight for indoor/outdoor play, clock/alarm, and a ninety day warranty.

CARRY A BIG STICK

Here are this month's entries in the "How to Improve on the Standard

Joystick" Sweepstakes.

From Discwasher: Pointmaster Quik-Stik I and II, designed for use with Intellivision I and II respectively. Suggested retail price for the Quik-Stiks is $9.95 a pair. Also from Discwasher is a new keypad adaptor that allows their Pointmaster joystick to be used with ColecoVision, and a second adaptor that match their joysticks with the TI99/4A micro-computer.

Newport Controls gives us the Prostick 2002 for the T.I. 99/4 and 99/4A home computers. The player has the option to select either four way or eight way directional control. The reason for this is that the eight way joystick does not operate properly with T.I. arcade games, such as Munchman. Therefore, when playing these games the player simply switches a selector dial to lock out the diagonal controls. In addition, Prostick 2002 comes equipped with two "soft touch" buttons, one on the joystick, and one on the base.

Gemini is marketing their new Quikstik and Gemstik, which they claim are the lowest priced in

Top: the Gemini line of videogame accessories. Above: the Sansei Super Controller echoes the Vectrex controller.

the industry. These sticks are compatible with Atari's VCS system, as well as their 400 and 800 computers, and with Commodore VIC-20. Quikstick retails for $15.99, while Gemstik goes for $8.99. Gemini Industries also markets other accessories, such as a Gemball (fits over the top of your joystick), gamepaddles, and a game/TV switch box.

By far the most ambitious entrant in the field at this time seems to be Sansei Industries Super-Controller. This controller is for serious gamers who

want that arcade-like feel in the privacy of their own homes, and can afford to pay for it. The Super-Controller measures 14 X 8 X 5, and it sits in your lap. It features, not only a joystick, but left/right and forward/reverse buttons well. This way the player has a choice of how he/she would like to play. There are also two fire buttons, for left and right handed folk.

The most complete line of controllers comes from WICO, who feature some twelve different types of video controllers that fit,

Nintendo games include a clock to monitor idle hours.

or are adaptable to, many of the most popular videogames and microcomputers. The controls include five different types of joysticks (one exclusively for the Atari 5200), Intellivision and ColecoVision), and three trackball controllers (one with a "Y" cord, exclusively for the 5200). Unless otherwise specified, all of these controllers will fit Atari's 2600, Sear's Arcade Game, Atari's 400/800/ and 1200 computers, Commodore 64 and VIC-20, the Apple II, Ile, and II plus, and with an adaptor, they will also fit Texas Instrument's Home Computer, Radio Shack's TRS 80 and Odyssey. WICO also sells joystick extention cords in six and twelve foot lengths.

Comrex gives us two new joysticks, a standard model for the Atari 2600, and 400/800 computers, Commodore's VIC-20 and 64, Sears, and with an adapter it will fit ColecoVision. Then there is their deluxe model which is designed to fit the Apple and Franklin computers, as well as the game

Skywriter's Stick Station.

systems their standard model fits.

LAP DOGS

It is not enough to have a deluxe joystick. No, now you must have something to anchor it to reduce fatigue, or whatever. Here's the latest:

From CBS Videogames, the Joystick Stand and Fastball Control Knob.

Videogames may blaze the trail for onboard computers.

Just set the base of your joystick in this holder, snap the Fastball on the top of the joystick.

The Stick Station, from Skywriter, in Lousiville, Kentucky, is a wide, flat piece of wood, with a section in the center cut out into which you fit your joystick.

Similar to the Stick Station is the Lap-Board from

the Thompson Brothers in Arcadia, Indiana. The Lap-Board is constructed out of plastic, and is about ten inches square.

The Advantage from R. Dobson & Co. in Beverly Hills, California, is for players who like to do it on their knees. With the Advantage, you insert the joystick into a small platform, then set the entire unit down on the floor, and actually kneel on two "wings" that extend from the base.

VIDEOGAMES IN FLIGHT

The friendly skies will soon be humming with video images, especially between Vancouver and Amsterdam.

Canadian Pacific Airlines has introduced six videogames for rent in the non-movie sections of their planes. For $3.50 (Canadian) their passengers will be able to play *Donkey Kong, Snoopy, Tennis, Baseball, Black Jack, Boxing,* and a *Mickey Mouse* game for the duration of the nine hour flight.

The game boards are designed to fit over the dinner tray that folds out of the back of each seat. According to Dave Hewitt, the General Manager of in-flight services, "If the concept proves to be popular with passengers , permanent sets built into the seat trays would eventually become more sophisticated, offering not only games but also flight and safety information and perhaps even computer capabilities."

All-in-all it sounds like a good idea to us, just as long as the pilot keeps his eyes on the. . .um. . .road. □

Wico's The Boss (left), Computer Command and Command Control bat-handle sticks.

preview

Sub Scan
Sega for Atari 2600
Object

You are in command of a battleship whose mission is to blow enemy subs from the water. You can move to any portion of the surface and launch depth-charges fore or aft; the subs travel at different levels from left to right.

A sonar scanner shows you not only what you can see, visually, but pinpoints subs as they are about to enter the screen.

E.C.M.: Welcome to 1976, gang, and the debut of Atari's *Air/Sea Battle.*

Believe it or not, the geniuses at Sega really couldn't come up with something better than that old standard for their videogame debut. The graphics are only fractionally better and, believe it or not, gameplay is actually *slower.*

Sega tested this game in select markets, then decided not to go national with it.

No wonder: it's a skunk. The only time anything happens even

remotely approaching suspense is when a mine sinks slowly toward a low lying sub and there's a will-it-or-won't-it-hit? moment. If you find *Sub Scan* in your area, it will be in the seven-to-nine dollar range—a ripoff even at that price.

Graphics: D
Gameplay: D –

J.C.: As ever, comparative reviews are worthless, since players who don't own *Air/Sea Battle* will find this entertaining.

Sub Scan may not be the greatest game to come down the pike, but there are some interesting challenges: if you miss ten subs your ship blows up; the subs get faster as the game progresses; in later rounds, you must use the sonar to anticipate the location of ships not yet in your line of fire.

Not much flavor, but a fair amount of play value for the price.

Graphics: D
Gameplay: C+

Tac-Scan
Sega for Atari 2600

Object

You're in charge of a squadron of five ships, which move as one at the bottom of the screen. Your targets are enemy vessels who spit laser bolts in your direction.

After destroying ten enemy ships, a round ends. At this time, you can replace lost fighters by rendezvousing with new ones: the ships descend slowly and you must meet them with the docking platform(s) vacated by the destroyed crafts(s). Miss a ship and the next round commences.

J.C.: I gave Sega the benefit of the doubt with *Sub Scan,* but *this* time they get a pie-in-the-face.

In a word, *Tac-Scan* is a mess. The targets are too large and easy-to-hit, the graphics are dull, the whole affair just a watered-down *Demon Attack.*

This has got to be the worst cartridge since *Skeetshoot;* avoid at any cost.

Graphics: F
Gameplay: F

E.C.M.: Remember how much you thrilled to the arcade *Tac-Scan?* That's how much you're going to hate this one. The home *Tac-Scan* would be bad enough on its own, but reeks even worse when you consider the source.

I'd applaud Sega for yanking this from the market if they hadn't been fool enough to release it in the first place.

Graphics: F
Gameplay: F

NEXT ISSUE
Jim Clark and E.C. Meade will review Fathom, *the multi-screen adventure game from Imagic. The player takes the role of a seagull who becomes a dolphin rescuing a mermaid.*

LITTLE GAMES LOST

Have you seen these games? If you have, you're one of the few.

Shown below are the screens of two games that Sega conceived, designed, programmed, packaged . . . and then dumped just as they were being shipped. The games are *Sub Scan* and *Tac Scan*. Our reviewers, Jim Clark and E.C. Meade, obtained copies of these games and their reviews appear on subsequent pages.

We present the reviews, not only as a matter of record and mild interest, but because some copies can be found for a song, as they say.
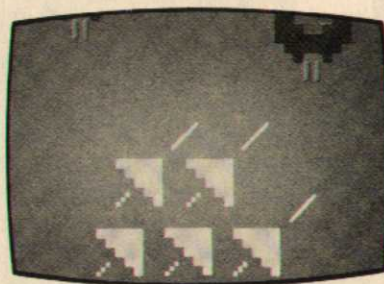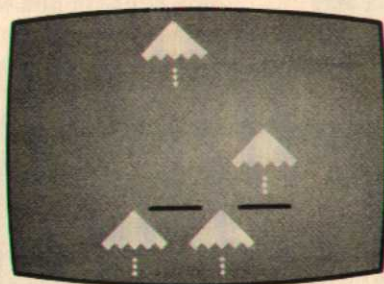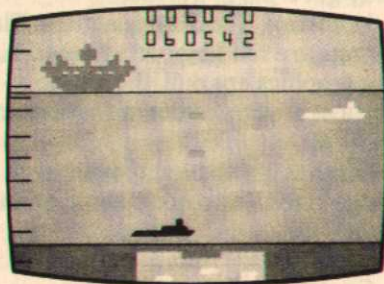
Moonsweeper
Imagic for Atari 2600
Object

Miners are stranded on hostile moons deep in space. You have been handed the task of rescuing them.

But beware! First, you must reach the moons, dodging space bullets, photon torches, flares, and other impasses.

Reaching the orb, you go into a power dive to the surface. There, you fly low over the terrain, passing over miners, blasting enemy structures and vessels.

When you have saved six miners, you must fly through the accelerator rings, which give your ship sufficient velocity to escape the pull of the moon. Then it's on to another moon.

The color of the moon—blue, green, yellow, red—determines how difficult your mission to its surface will be

E.C.M.: What a game! This is *Defender* seen from the cockpit, a spectacular, positively hypnotic cartridge.

The powerdive graphics are sensational, the scrolling of the moon breathtaking. The joystick allows you to slow or speed up to retrieve miners and avoid—or stay with—enemy targets; the slower you go, the more accelerator rings you must negotiate to finally leave the world.

Though there are more than six miners per moon, there's no going back to pick up people you've missed, so players must stay on their toes. You can also blow them up by accident with one of your magnificently rendered projectiles. (No mere streaks, these: they *look* like rockets!)

Graphics: A

Gameplay: B+

J.C.: The deja-vu referred to by E.C. really put me off *Moonsweeper*. I'll allow that, graphically, it puts even the arcade *Defender* to shame, but there's nothing new here. If you discount the graphics, what you've *really* got is *Kaboom!*: the miners appear on the horizon and you must "catch" them as they near your ship at the bottom of the screen. What I *do* admire about the game is the real-world sensation it creates, You're partaking in a fully-fleshed adventure, something which carries you from space to worlds of varying characteristics. The "narrative" is on-going and multi-faceted.

If the designers suffered from a failure of imagination, there's no taking anything away from the people who did the actual programing; they really went all-out. In addition to cramming all of this adventure and graphics into the cartridge, they gave the ship the ability to fire diagonally as well as straight ahead.

Moonsweeper is to videogames what *Return of the Jedi* is to motion pictures: a magnificent telling of a story we've seen before.

Graphics: A

Gameplay: B−
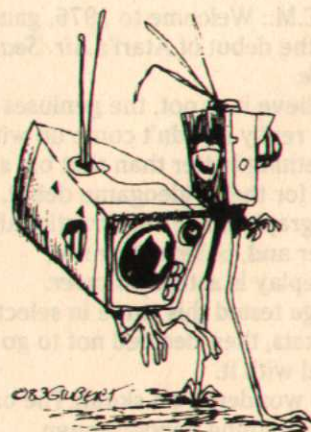
Miner 2049er
Tigervision for Atari 2600
Object

Your name is Bounty Bob and, like Pick Axe Peter before you, your task is to climb various mine levels, leaping to grab suspended treasure and avoid miner-eating demons. Each time you take hold of a gem, the demons become momentarily vulnerable.

At the same time, you must patch holes in the floors of each mine level. This is accomplished by passing over them. Cover all the holes and you progress to the next, more difficult mine.

All the while, a clock is ticking down, bringing you ever-closer to lights-out in the mine. . . .

J.C.: I'd never played the various computer incarnations of *Miner 2049er*, nor was I anxious to do so: it seemed like another *Donkey Kong* climb-'n'-clobber variant.

Needless to say, my feeble-minded self was delightfully surprised to find this a fresh approach to the theme.

The game is unforgiving: jump too short over one of the pits which break up the floors and you plummet to the bottom of the mine. Step too close to one of the chutes and,

again, you slide back whence you started.

My only real complaint—gamewise, since the graphics are too flat to bother discussing—is that the treasure is too easy to grab with a mighty leap, and the critters too easy to destroy thereafter. Compared to the relentless level-climbers of say, *Burgertime* and *Space Panic*, this one is truly a piece of cake.

Graphics: D+
Gameplay: B

E.C.M.: This review is going to enable me to get a lode off my mind.

Jim has accused me of favoring fast-paced games, and he's right. For as good as *Miner 2049er* may well be, in terms of this type of game, I found it tedious.

The demons march to-and-fro in a restricted area and, because you are allowed a too generous allotment of time, there's no impetus to think on your feet.

The game *does* become more difficult on subsequent levels—like the first screen of *Donkey Kong, Jr.,* there are "platforms" rather than floors—but not enough to earn my recommendation.

Pictorially, the game isn't as bad as Jim feels: the animation may not be great, but the colors are quite vivid. Nothing to write home about, but then so little *is* these days.
Graphics: C
Gameplay: C−
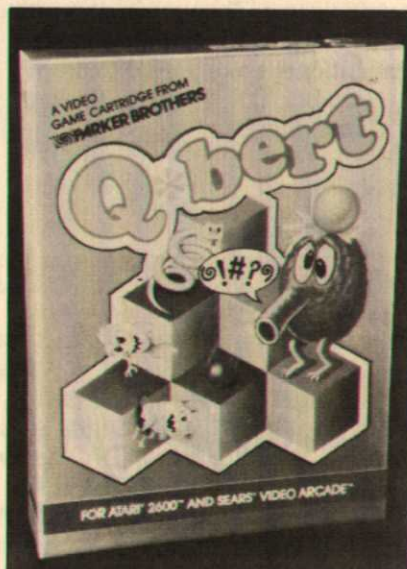
Q*Bert
Parker Brothers for Atari 2600

Object

You must move your little Q*Bert about a great pyramid, hopping from top-to-top of the blocks which comprise the structure. Each time you hit a block-top it changes color; change the colors of them all and you progress to the next pyramid.

All the while you are being pursued by various nasties; if you happen to land on the same block at the same time as they do, it will cost you one of your Q*Berts.

E.C.M.: Any review of an arcade game which has come to the home must be approached two ways: first, is it a *good* translation of the game and, second, is it a good game to begin with?

In the case of *Q*Bert,* the answer to both is *yes*.

You could have knocked me over with a *Congo Bongo* serpent, but this game is a programming gem. The only *tangible* sacrifice in translating it has been the delineation of the creatures pursuing our hero. They are dimly drawn and you may lose sight of them if, for example, your focus in on Q*Bert and the snake.

The disc has also lost some of its luster, through play-wide you use it just as in the arcade game, to fly off the pyramid and lure the snake to its death.

*Q*Bert* remains a novel, provocative game. If you don't own a 5200 or can't wait for that cartridge to be made available, I heartily endorse this version.
Graphics: B−
Gameplay: A−

J.C.: In her enthusiasm, my colleague forgot to mention the sound effects, which are also squooshily faithful to the arcade version of *Q*bert* but not as full bodied or as weirdly appealing. The home version joystick control may take some getting used to; I sent a number of poor Q*Berts to their wailing doom before I got the hang of it.

I, too, give this one high marks; higher marks, actually, since the "dimness" of the characters didn't distract me at all. E.C. tends to get very tight with the antagonist of the moment, blocking out all else.

Parker Brothers has milked Activision-quality from the 2600, and may well have a million-unit-plus seller on their hands.
Graphics: B
Gameplay: A

Name This Game
U.S. Games for Atari 2600
Object

As a diver searching for long-lost riches undersea, you're thrilled to have found them—but considerably less than thrilled to be hunted by sharks and an octopus.

Sharks descend level-by-level, and you must shoot them before they reach the seabottom and eat you.

Simultaneously, you must shoot away the octopus tentacles, piece by piece, as they snake toward you.

Finally, you must watch your oxygen supply: if it runs out, one of your three divers dies. The only way to replenish it is to hurry over to the lifeline which is extended every once in a while by your partner on the surface.

The treasure plays no part in the game.

J.C.: This cartridge was U.S. Games' swan song, the last they released before Quaker Oats put the subsidiary out to pasture.

The cartridge has no real name, since it was up to consumers to provide one—and collect a ten thousand dollar reward. (*Note: we are presently trying to determine the status of the contest, which closed in April of this year. By law, the booty had to have been awarded. Watch for details of Quaker's resolution of*

the contest.)

As a game, this wasn't all that bad. If there was nothing innovative, at least it was effectively presented. In the more difficult levels of play, shark and octopus both came at you mercilessly fast; together, they posed quite a problem, compounded by the fading air supply.

The graphics were effectively cartoonlike—I love the flying hair of the boat-bound partner—and the octopus is quite ominous.

Like all U.S. Games, *Name This Game* is being remaindered for a song. Pick one up: you'll have a great time with it!

Graphics: B–
Gameplay: B–

E.C.M.: While I'm not as high on this game as Jim is, I'm even *less* high on Quaker Oats for cutting U.S. Games' lifeline.

It's old news by now, but this is the first opportunity I've had to vent my spleen: they bought the bloody company and, when it didn't make a fast killing, refused to find a solution. Unless you consider slitting U.S. Games' throat and letting it bleed to death a solution.

A pox on Quaker. You didn't give them a chance *or* support.

Name This Game, while fast, is too unfocused for my taste. Cramming a lot of obstacles into a game, all of them overlapping, tends to create confusion rather than challenge.

You'll be entertained and kept busy; but by no yardstick is this a terrific game. Then again, it must've been tough producing it with the executioner's axe poised to drop.

Graphics: C
Gameplay: C
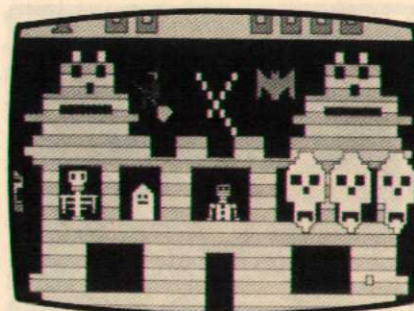
Ghost Manor
Xonox for Atari 2600
(Packaged with *Spike's Peak*)
Object

It's a stormy night with lightning crackling all around. You're a child trying to rescue a playmate held prisoner by Dracula in Ghost Manor Castle.

In phase one, you must chase a ghost or skeleton (depending upon difficulty level) through a graveyard. Each time you touch it, you accumulate spears.

The spears are used in phase two, as you storm Ghost Manor *Space Invaders*-style, shooting airborne ghosts and bats while dodging the Chopping Mummy who is looking to part your hair with an axe.

Survive this level and you're inside the castle trying to pick your way through a maze of corridors lined with caskets. Touch a wall and you're paralyzed; loiter near the moving wall and you'll be crushed. Open caskets for points and Crosses.

Reaching the prison guarded by Dracula, you will use the Crosses to keep the vampire at bay. Imprison the Count and your friend goes free.

All the while, time is running. . . .

J.C.: This is an average game. None of the levels is particularly exciting though, cumulatively, they make for a diverting five-to-ten minute adventure.

The levels come at you fast enough so that you never really settle into a rut; for example, playing "tag" with the ghost or skeleton on level one requires different hand/eye skill than eluding the mummy.

The sound effects are suitably creepy, though the graphics are coloring book simple.

Xonox would have been wiser going into the marketplace with a recognizable figure like Count Chocula. Licenses are one reason Parker Brothers has been able to
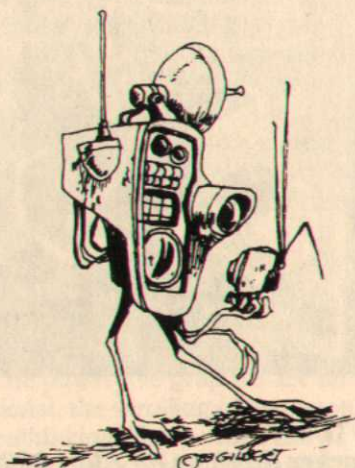
foist we've-seen-it-before gameplay on the public, whereas the late Apollo, U.S. Games, Data Age, et al, could not.

Graphics: D
Gameplay: C –

E.C.M.: Not only have we seen this all before, we've seen it better. This is like a TV dinner: lots of stuff, none of it particularly appetizing.

Especially nagging is the fact that players only get one life. This makes the game difficult in a very annoying way. For example, in level two, if you get clobbered by the mummy the game ends. No second chance, no "force field," nothing but having to plod, again, through the opening tag phase.

Ghost Manor is ambitious but ultimately unsatisfying.
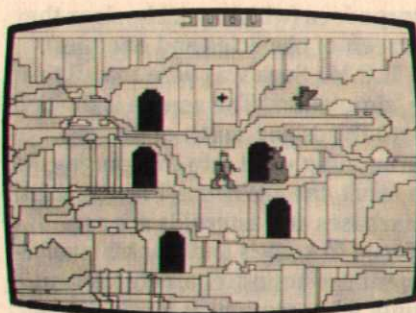
Graphics: D
Gameplay: D

Spike's Peak
Xonox for Atari 2600
(Packaged with Ghost Manor)
Object

Spike is trying to reach the peak of a rather tall mountain. He starts by ascending a path through

meadows, seeking to avoid bears, eagles, and mudslides by jumping them or taking shelter in canyons or caves.

Next Spike must climb from ledge to ledge, avoiding falling boulders and collecting gold for extra points.

Finally, our hero must ascend an icy path, avoiding the avalanches and Abominable Snowman, gathering diamonds for points.

The game ends when three Spikes have died or the flag is planted at the top of the mountain.

E.C.M.: Whatever the flaws of *Ghost Manor*, it's a masterpiece compared to this lemon.

Not only is this like every other *Donkey Kong* knockoff we've seen,

it's one of the lesser specimens. Graphics: flat. Gameplay: imprecise because detailing is smudged and movement jerky. Incidentally, the graphics are nowhere near as detailed as the promo screen shots would indicate.

If the choice is *Spike's Peak* or bust, I'd rather bust.

Graphics: F
Gameplay: F

J.C.: *Spike's Peak* suffers from the let's-do-a-game-like . . . syndrome, wherein the emphasis is on disguising familiar elements rather than improving upon them.

The mountain is the "villain" instead of a gorilla, and there are rocks instead of barrels. But you're still weaving and jumping from side to side.

I can't believe anyone believes (a) there's a market for second best and (b) there are no new themes to explore. Videogames have taken a beating in the mainstream press because they haven't been selling. Games like *Spike's Peak* are the reason why.

*Graphics:* F
Gameplay: F

Hardware Preview

Editor's note: Xonox is the first company to offer piggyback cartridges, two completely different games in one casing.

Herewith, VCI critics E.C. Meade and Jim Clark provide their views on the concept.

E.C.M.: The idea of having one game on top and another on the bottom is absurd. The concept is aimed at bargain hunters, not videogamers. Ace Books used to do that with science fiction novels: if you got tired of interstellar war, there was always a genetic mutation to turn to. The fact that there *was* that buffer allowed Ace to buy generally inferior works.

What Ace did, and what Xonox is doing, is dishing up entertainment by the pound, like salami. Xonox can argue that now slide-and-shoot fans and multilevel fans *both* can be satisfied for the price of a single cartridge; that's acceptable if you're giving them *Donkey Kong* and *Galaxian.* But they're repeating Ace's mistake, trying to boost the sales of crap (*Spike's Peak*) with
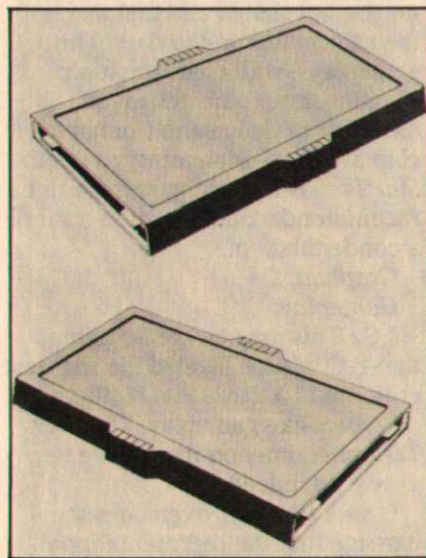
semi-crap (*Ghost Manor*). It just isn't going to work.

Great games will sell on their own. Anything else will die on the vine.

Next up (you read it here first!): a *Krull* home videogame with five cartridges radiating from a core. . . .

J.C.: E.C.'s argument is that the games stink, therefore the concept stinks. The games aren't good, true, but the concept is wrong for *other*

reasons.

Xonox obviously feels they *have* given the consumer topnotch games. They're misguided, but that's beside the point. To dismiss E.C.'s analogy, Ace Books *had* to publish two skimpy novels in order to fit them into one package; Xonox hasn't had to "cut back" on circuitry since the cartridges, though physically connected, are electronically independent.

Xonox *could,* theoretically, put *Donkey Kong* and *Galaxian* in one package.

My concern is that the Siamese games will prove psychologically offputting. The piggybacking is likely to give consumers the *impression* that neither game could survive on its own, whether that's true or not. If you're a baseball card collector, wouldn't you feel that two players on one card means neither is up to snuff?

Commercially, I would also point out that consumers can now pick up any *four* Data Age or U.S. Games cartridges for the price of one. The fact that they're in different packages will neither hurt them nor help Xonox.

Star Trek
Sega for Atari 2600
Object

You are being considered for the post of Captain of the *USS Enterprise*. To make the grade, you must pass this mission simulation which propels you far from home into hostile regions of space.

The simulation is divided into ten progressively more difficult sectors, each of which contains six rounds; these include dogfights with marauding Klingon ships, navigation of asteroids fields and meteor showers and, finally, a confrontation with the mine-laying Nomad.

The gamescreen is divided into three sections: the pilot's view through the *Enterprise* bridge port, an overhead radar scanner view of the action, and a gauge board which monitors the status of energy shields, photon torpedoes and warp drive. By docking with a starbase, the trainee can replenish flagging power.

The joystick controls forward thrust, rotation, and the employment of warp drive, phasers (inexhaustable) and limited use of photon torpedoes (which quickly clear the screen of obstacles and enemies).

E.C.M.: Sega was wise to call this a 'simulation.' The screen is divided into thirds and much of the programming went into the gauges. As a result, the *Enterprise,* Klingon ships, starbases and asteroids are reduced to kernels and blocks. Involvement is wanting, character is wanting; what remains is fairly clinical. Theme music and an *Enterprise* silhouette are not enough to draw the player into the *Star Trek* universe.

The tri-screen arrangement was not so much a problem in the arcade version; the superior graphics and the closer stance that arcade players normally assume made the game moderately absorbing.

Sega should have eliminated either the first person or the overhead screen, preferably the former, for this 2600 adaptation. To play well, you don't really need the first person screen. I kept my focus on the overhead and let my eye take mere impressions of the first person screen.

Having employed heavy doses of hindsight to redesign Sega's game for them, I should add that this is their finest offering to date. The gameplay—with claustrophobic Klingon ships to be destroyed, asteroids to dodge and Nomad to chip away at—is pleasingly varied. *Star Trek* is not strong enough to be recommended; neither does it merit a condemnation.

Graphics: C−
Gameplay: C

J.C.: This may be the first time that E.C. Meade leveled the slightest criticism at a game that features *Asteroids*-like gameplay. The *Star Trek* phenomenon must leave her very cold indeed.

I think that E.C. overstates the damage that the representational graphics inflict on *Star Trek*. A game does not necessarily need character and atmosphere if it has other strengths. This one does.

As E.C. mentioned, the variation of gameplay within each round is the game's selling point: in very short order the player will engage Klingons and Nomad in open-space battle, and navigate asteroids and the Nomad's mines.

There *is* strategy involved in economically exploiting photon torpedoes and warp drive. There *is* suspense in the inevitable dash to find a starbase while your indicators bleep their hunger for replenishment. Just learning how to properly use the joystick may require a few games (a joystick overlay is included but slips and slides uselessly).

Though it is not the best new game available for the 2600, interested players will get their money's worth.

Graphics: C
Gameplay: B−

London Blitz
Avalon Hill for Atari 2600
Object

It is the height of the London Blitz of World War II. Virtually every night, the Germans drop bombs on the city by the Thames. Most bombs explode on impact, but some sit for minutes or hours before detonating.

The player, as a member of Britain's Royal Engineers, must run through the streets of London, find and defuse such unexploded bombs.

The fire button controls the alternation of two screens: a first person, street-level maze and a scrolling overhead map of the city streets with flickering lights that represent

the location of the bombs.

Once the player has navigated through the maze to a bomb site, the inner mechanism of the bomb is displayed. The procedure for defusing the bomb involves manipulating slides into the correct alignment in a time-pressured trial and error ordeal.

The game contains eight levels of difficulty and three types of bombs, each with its own defusing procedure.

J.C.: Avalon Hill, the board game company, has quietly slipped into the videogame market with two games and a third, I understand, to follow. They needn't have been so modest. This is a very impressive debut.

A good deal of thought, craft and care have gone into this game. The explosions of distant bombs is poetically animated; once inside the vicinity of a live one, the flickering effect is faintly stroboscopic.

The graphics of the "streets" are less contoured, colorful and detailed than *Escape from the Mindmaster*, for example; in fact, the colors are rather drab throughout. But the people at Avalon, as opposed to their counterparts at Imagic or Activision, are obviously not interested in dazzling us; they have more devious things in mind.

The time limitation—and the limit on the number of attempts—on the defusing of the bombs makes for a high pressure situation. The procedure, not as complex as Intellivision's *Bomb Squad* by half, still will tax the memory and patience of most gamers.

Maze game fans, and videogame players who also enjoy a good board game, will want to grab this one.

Graphics: C+
Gameplay: B

E.C.M.: Avalon Hill has wisely gone with their strengths in their first electronic effort. *London Blitz* does contain a board game flavor in complexity and challenge while retaining adequate videogame play.

I agree with Jim's assessment of the game, but with some gripes.

As with most of these first person perspective maze games (Starpath's *Mindmaster*, Fox's *Crypts of Chaos*), negotiating a turn is clumsy and irritating. I find myself wondering if this is supposed to be *enjoyable*.

The skill doesn't seem to carry over from game to game; it has to be relearned with each one.

The prototype for CBS' upcoming *Tunnel Runner* allows the player to advance through the first person maze in increments, which is preferable.

Once I overcame that obstacle, however, I had a fine time with *London Blitz*. Whether the central task of defusing the bombs is to every player's taste I have my doubts. Perhaps the game is best played in teams: one with his/her eyes glued on the screen and the other scouring the instruction booklet for crucial information while the bomb clock ticks away . . . .

London Blitz is a far cry from *Space Invaders*. An adult videogame that venturesome children should get a huge kick from.

Graphics: C+
Gameplay: B

Death Trap
Avalon Hill for Atari 2600
Object

On a mission to deliver an important message across the galaxy, you have been seized by IT and enfolded in ITs force field. IT is a huge,

malevolent space station.

By sliding horizontally across the screen, the player can dodge ITs intelligent plasma fireballs and at the same time squeeze off shots between sliding shields. ITs power generators must be destroyed to destroy IT, but the player must avoid energy shields which border the gamefield.

As the game progresses, the energy shields begin to close in, drastically reducing the player's playfield.

E.C.M.: Yet another variation on the slide and shoot format, the Methusaleh of the industry. Though the game does add a few new wrinkles, wrinkles is what this type of game has plenty of.

I have to give the Avalon Hill creators credit though: they seem less interested in pleasing the arcade-honed gameplayer than in pleasing themselves, an artistic instinct to be nurtured.

Case in point: the relatively slow speed of the player's salvos in *Death Trap*. This actually enhances the gameplay, but arcade speed demons may be annoyed. They shouldn't be; the slower speed allows the player time to guide the shot's flight with the joystick. It also makes it more difficult to thread the needle of the horizontally sliding shields. In any event, the game pace quickens as the ultimate showdown with IT draws near.

Similar to the difficulty of bringing down an AT-AT Walker in Parker Brothers' *Empire Strikes Back*, destroying IT is a long haul. Many hits are required and much weaving and dodging of its (excuse me: ITs; surely a joke at no one's expense.) return fire. Balancing offensive and defensive tactics is crucial to the strategy. Yes, there *is* strategy to this slide and shoot, though that may not save it.

Graphics: C
Gameplay: B−

J.C.: Thirty dollars is alot to pay for a few new wrinkles.

I had fun with *Death Trap* but I wasn't all that reluctant to stow it in my cabinet either. This is one of the better new horizontal scoot and shoots; emptier praise you won't find this side of *Good Morning America*.

Character and atmosphere? None at all, and I'm surprised at my col-

league for not saying as much. There is strategy involved, which is refreshing, and I too enjoyed the slow pace of my laserblasts; it does not slow the game at all.

This game doesn't fool around either: if you touch the force field, the game is over. No three chances here. And, thankfully, there are no dramatic or shaming musical flourishes to mark the occasion, just a silent 'try again' graphic.

Avalon Hill has proved that they can provide challenging games with wit and fun but no condescension or nonsense either. I'm looking forward to better efforts than *Death Trap*.

Graphics: C+
Gameplay: C+
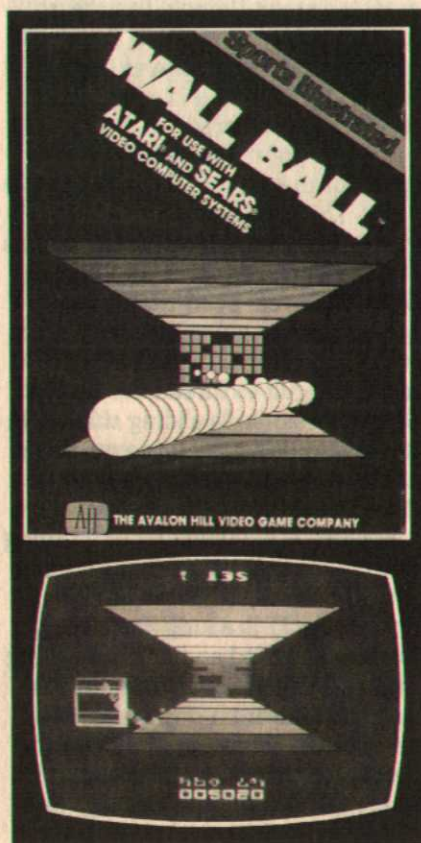
SPORTS ILLUSTRATED WALL BALL
Avalon Hill for Atari 2600
Object

You're in the back of a handball/raquetball court, swatting the ball forward, Each time the ball strikes a fresh section of the front wall, that small, square section vanishes.

If you clear away the entire front wall before you run out of balls, you progress to the next level.

If your ball strikes a previously-cleared section, it will still rebound. If you miss the ball, you lose it.

E.C.M.: This reminds me of the game in the movie *Outland* where players had to slam a ball against lit corners of the court's front wall. I say that not to imply plagiarism, but to point out the futuristic feel of this game. It is, in essence, *Breakout* from the paddle's point-of-view.

If the ghosts of any Apollo programmers are still haunting the 2600, I call their attention to this minor gem. It's everything their *Racquetball* isn't. And not only is the game a good one, but the perspective is phenomenal: the ball changes size as it approaches and recedes.

All of the action is quite authentic, and while we've had realistically bouncing balls since *Pong,* it's nice to see *everything* mesh—which is undoubtedly why *Sports Illustrated* elected to sponsor this cartridge.

The court has sacrificed realism for color, which I found distracting, though not terribly so.

I can't say there's going to be a large market for *Wall Ball,* but it's a dandy game.

Graphics: B+
Gameplay: B+

J.C.: I found this an interesting game, though extremely finicky. Granted, I only played for an hour or so, but I never discerned the bud of any real strategy. The ball takes *so* many rebounds before arriving at the front wall, there was no way really to *place* it.

The only suspense was whether I'd run out of balls before chance, and an occasional inspired placement, cleared the front wall (it didn't—not *once*).

Wall Ball is another example of a game which is more a record of the game designer's skill than a challenge for consumers.

Graphics: B
Gameplay: C–
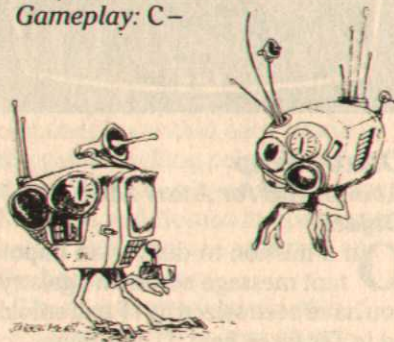
VECTRON
Mattel for Intellivision
Object

There are Hungrees, G-Spheres, Splits, Sweeps, and Prizums all trying to prevent you from filling the screen with Energy Blocks.

You are able to move one Energy Block at a time to any position on the screen. Having done so, you must fill it with an energy blast from the V-Gun at the top of the screen. Only when you've done this can you add on another Energy Block.

Meanwhile, the game's nasties are busy eating away portions of previously-placed Blocks. If you don't shoot the Diamond-backs, Blue Meanies, et al, you'll have to replace your nibbled and decayed block.

When the screen is a completely realized Energy Base, you move on to the next level.

E.C.M.: I've got seriously mixed feelings about *Vectron.* You see, it moves like a rocket in a powerdive, but it's just as unwelcome.

I've been down on Intellivision for complicated games like *Bomb Squad* because they're too damn complex; this one isn't complex, just
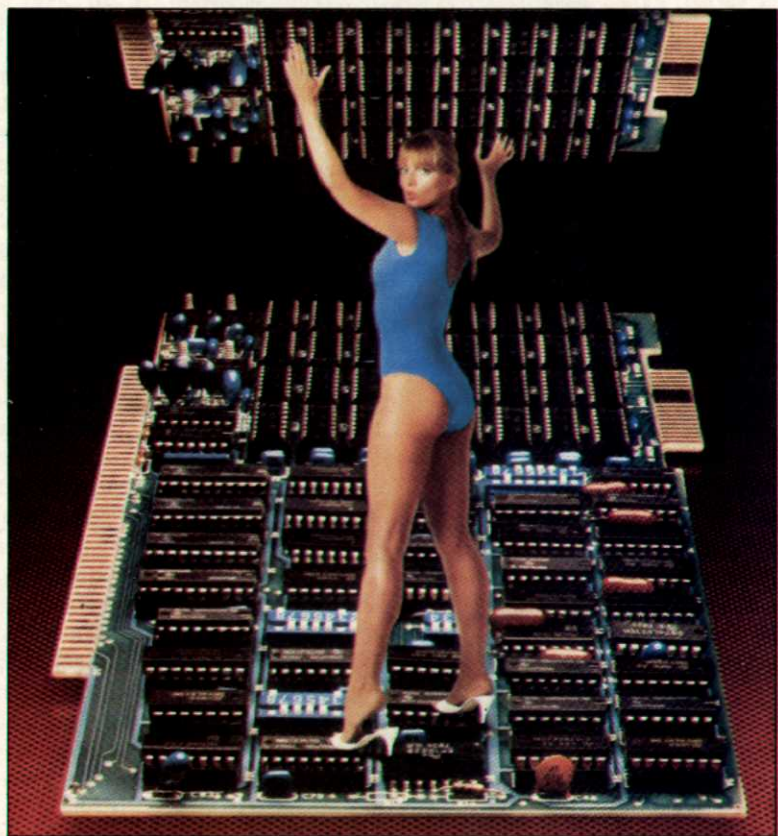
UNCENSORED VIDEOGAMES

PHOTO: ROSS M. HOROWITZ

Are Adults Ruining It For The Rest Of Us?

by Tim Moriarty

I n a conference room in the New York Hilton in October of 1982, members of the press and interested retailers gathered to preview a new videogame.

Outside the hotel, 250 women and men gathered to protest that activity.

The game was *Custer's Revenge*. It was the first X-Rated, or adult, videogame, and if sex-related electronic games ever had a chance of sliding into the American scene quietly and with minimum

resistance, *Custer's Revenge* scuttled those chances forever.

One of the organizers of the protest was Kristin Reilly, who serves on the steering commitee of Women Against Pornography. Members of that organization were joined by those of nationwide chapters of the National Organization of Women and the American Indian Community House.

Speaking of *Custer's Revenge*, Reilly says, "The game features an enactment of a white male, General

Custer, ravishing an Indian woman who is tied to a post. Once there was alot of furor over the game, the company (American Multiple Industries) denied that it was rape. They claimed that it was mutually consenting visual images, which is really asinine."

MYSTAQUES

Perhaps it was inevitable. There are few aspects of American life that remain untouched by sexual innuendo. In addition to the arts and

communications (and the peripheral products and the selling thereof), there are erotic chocolates and cookies, hood ornaments, watches, cups, glasses, pens, Christmas ornaments, playing cards, board games, and need we say more? If it has a shape, a surface or a function, someone will find a way to eroticize it. The sexual revolution may be over. We live in its wake.

And perhaps it was inevitable in another way: with digitally sanitized violence rampant in videogames, could sex be far behind?

As in films, books, and bowling, the approach is all-important. Sex, introduced in any form, no matter how subtle or sanitized, is bound to offend someone. Many others will, if not accept, tolerate material that is presented with sensitivity and good taste (define *that* and win a million dollars).

Whatever the definition of good taste, American Multiple Industries mangled it with at least two of their first three releases, which were distributed under the label Mystique. In addition to the rape/ravishment theme, *Custer's Revenge* gameplay is as boring as boring can be, consisting of simply running from screen left to screen right.

A second release, *Beat 'Em and Eat 'Em,* features *Kaboom*-style gameplay that grows tedious before the player can reach triple figures. And its scenario, which cannot be described here, is enough to send the most liberal sexual enthusiast staring at his/her shoes in abashment.

The third Mystique game is *Bachelor Party.* In gameplay similar to *Breakout,* a bachelor "hits on" a phalanx of females at a party. The bachelor's technique is to bounce off the walls and to slam into the guests. True to life, the women quickly disappear after he has hit on them.

The protests which followed the Custer game, the many letters that AMI and Atari received, and the resultant lawsuit that Atari filed against AMI for wrongful association of the game with their product (the Atari 2600) (a lawsuit that languishes today because of the slippery nature of the prey)—these factors have made it difficult for game designers who are considering creating games with adult themes.
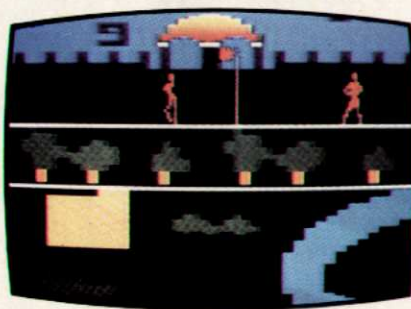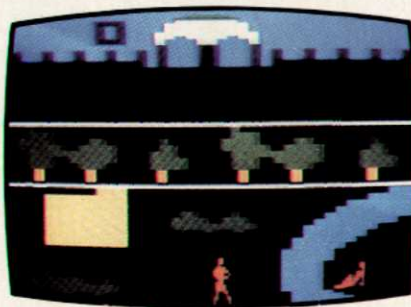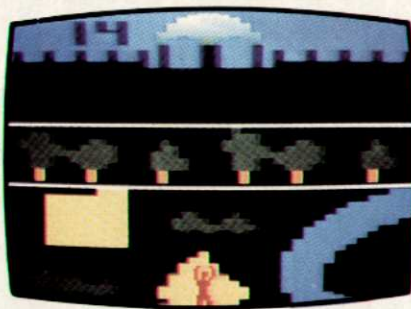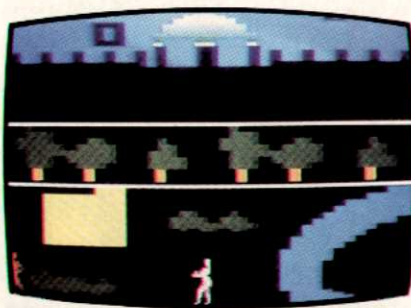
With lush graphics and suggestive rather than blatant gameplay, Multi-Vision hopes **Harem** *will be a hit.*

Alan Roberts, formerly a director of industrial and adult films (*Young Lady Chatterley*), created a game with an adult theme—*X-Man*—through his Game-X firm, and then found the atmosphere among distributors and retailers less than warming. "The response from players has been enthusiastic," says Roberts. "Women and men. We were anticipating terrific business, but it has been hindered as a result of the Mystique line and the bad press that came from it. It was a very negative beginning for the

adult game business. It created a problem on a store level. Certain stores think that because *Custer* was a bad game, all adult games are bad games. That's not true at all. As Atari learned with their *E.T.* game, each game rises and falls on its own merits. It's gameplay.

"We have not had the full support of the major wholesalers in the U.S.," Roberts continues. "They have designed corporate policies in many cases in reaction to the bad publicity of the Mystique games. They have decided that all videogames are naughty."

Eugene Finkei is the president of Multivision Ltd. Once a photographer for *Penthouse, Oui,* and many European publications, Finkei has also ventured into the adult theme videogame field and he is experiencing similar difficulties. Like Roberts, he minces no words in describing the Mystique games: "In my opinion the whole thing was designed as a scam. The games must have been designed very hastily. They were crude. Interaction between player and game was minimal. Action was minimal. They're just lousy games. The distributors and the public are wary of the product as a result of AMI's Mystique games."

SIMPLY EIFFEL

To prove that adult games need not be offensive or boring, Finkei and Roberts are working hard to market their games, games they are proud of. To date, the response has been quite good in Europe, not quite so good in the United States.

In Roberts' *X-Man,* the player controls a fellow running a maze and dodging clamping teeth, crabs and scissors. If the player reaches the center of the maze unscathed, the screen changes to a bedroom. There, intimate goals must be achieved before time runs out.

"We are currently working on *The Rescue of Emmanuelle,* based on the famous Emmanuelle character," says Roberts. "It is a male-oriented action game where one has to rescue Emmanuelle, the rewards being that, if you are skillful enough to save her, she is going to thank you, bestow her kindness on you.

"It's a climbing game. It takes place on the Eiffel Tower. The

hardest part in designing the game is that the tower doesn't fit well in the TV screen. We're working on a scrolling system.

"We had hoped that if we had a success with *X-Man* we would design a similar game for women, one that would have concepts that would appeal specifically to women. And many of our people want mixed gameplay, where both male and female play."

The question may well be asked: why go to all this trouble to create a game that is inevitably going to catch flak? Why erotic games? Alan Roberts says, "I love all kinds of games. My favorite is *Demon Attack*. I would love to do games like that. I just felt that there was no way a small company could compete with Atari or Activision or Imagic. They are doing a great job of delivering high quality games to the market.

"Since my experience has been more with the erotic field, it was a natural for me. I don't rule out in the future doing something in the regular field. At the time I thought this was something that was unique and could get us a little piece of the market for ourselves."

Also hoping to carve out a slice of the market and to grow from there is Eugene Finkei. He is the president and founder of Multivision Ltd. and he is the designer of the company's games.

"We create games that will appeal to adults, but not necessarily with sexual themes," says Finkei. "We're not pandering to any weird notions of sex. Our games would be rated R, rather than X.

"*Harem* is a fantasy story game," Finkei relates. "The action happens outside the harem in the garden. The player must penetrate defenses to get into the garden. Various ladies are waiting for him at various points. Once he gets to the ladies, the idea is to match their rhythm with the joystick. If he stays with one lady too long, he gets into trouble.

"*Battle of the Sexes* is played simultaneously by two players. It's very innocent. Each player has surrogate partners scrolling across the screen. Each player must score with as many surrogates as possible while trying to knock out the surrogates of the other partner.

"There are different skill levels and variations: it can be played by two guys with girls scrolling across the screen or by women with men scrolling across the screen. To score, the player directs the figure to bounce together with the surrogate for a fraction of a second. No genitalia. And you don't *shoot* the other's surrogates, you merely get them out of the way.

"*Heartbreak* is also played by two players simultaneously. Each player has a maze with a surrogate partner waiting in the center. The player who is first to the center of the maze finds his or her heart glowing. The other's heart breaks. If they arrive simultaneously, both hearts glow."

GAME OBJECT

"The objectification of women has found its way onto a whole new medium," laments Kristin Reilly of Women Against Pornography.

Creators of sex-related materials have always been condemned by some on religious grounds; relatively new are charges of corrupt sexual politics. Games such as the ones we're discussing risk the label 'sexist'; they risk the label 'exploitive'; the label 'corruptor of youth'; they are open to charges that they cheapen women and degrade them by reducing them to objects, targets.

Defendant, how do you plead?

"I don't have a definite answer there," admits Alan Roberts. "But it is certainly a concern. I have always had, and I hope I always will have, a good relationship with women. I have a good marriage, a happy marriage. I don't think I've treated women with disrespect, or at least I hope that's not a quality that I have, and I hope my games don't either. A game, like a movie or a book, can only be a reflection of the person who's designing, a statement of

The maze sequence from X-Man.

what his or her thoughts are. My thoughts sexually have always been fun and wholesome and healthy. I love beautiful women and sexual themes. I have always treated sexual matters in a humorous way rather than a violent way. I don't know what the answer is because I don't understand it."

But Roberts does understand that you don't knowingly create a product that will not gain acceptance: "A sexist game would not be a success in the home because the woman would not want it to be played while she is around."

Not surprisingly, the game designers claim they have elicited favorable reactions from women on their games. Says Eugene Finkei, "I haven't met any woman who has played the game (*Harem*) who has objected to any part of it. Sexist? I don't think so."

Ditto, says Alan Roberts, "I've seen women playing *X-Man* and really having fun, which surprised me since we really didn't design it for women. But I get a kick when a woman player gets into the door and she gets control of X-Man. That to me is the funniest. The game really comes to life at a party. When the man plays it, very often a woman will comment, 'That's just the way you are.' When the woman plays it, she's in there going crazy! 'This is really it, boy, I've finally got control over it!' "

INCITES

Going crazy. Control. Key words, words which open the door to criticism of videogames in general and adult videogames in particular.

Videogames have always come under fire for fostering aggressiveness and violence with the recurrent, wholesale destruction of cities, planets, and galaxies in game after game. Whatever then are we to think of games with sexual pleasure, or a woman, as the goal?

Kristin Reilly comes to the point: "These games are active participatory games. They involve the player seeing the woman, in most cases, as some kind of target for sexual aggression. And because they're active, they take the player closer to what could be real life enactment of any kind of sexual harassment or aggression toward

vip
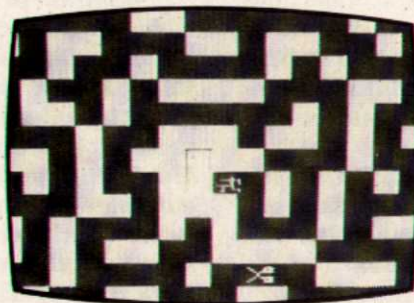
VIDEOGAMING ILLUSTRATED PROFILE:

Gloria Steinem & Lindsay Van Gelder

Interviews conducted by June Davis

Two of the country's most prominent feminists discuss women and computers, women and the computer industry, videogames (X-Rated and otherwise), competition and computerphobia.

Gloria Steinem is currently an editor and writer for Ms. Magazine, **which she helped found in 1972. Her new book,** Outrageous Acts and Everyday Rebellions, **has just been published by Harper & Row. She also travels extensively as a feminist lecturer and organizer.**

After graduating Phi Beta Kappa from Smith College, Ms. Steinem spent almost two years in India, studying on a Chester Bowles Asian fellowship. Her work has appeared in magazines, newspapers and anthologies in the U.S. and Europe.

Among the organizations Ms. Steinem helped to found are the National Women's Political Caucus and the Coalition of Labor Union Women. She was also a founder and now serves on the Board of the Women's Action Alliance; the Ms. Foundation for Women; Women USA, and Voters for Choice.

A contributing editor to both Ms. Magazine, **and** PC: The Independent Guide to IBM Personal Computers, **Lindsay Van Gelder will serve as an inspiration to anyone who has ever felt just a litle intimidated by computers or videogames.**

In addition to her computer expertise, Ms. Van Gelder is a freelance writer for Rolling Stone Magazine, Town and Country, New York Magazine, Madamoiselle, **and many others**

Her previous experience includes daily newspaper reporting for the New York Post **and the Manhattan section of the** Daily News. **She also works as a United Feature Syndicate feminist columnist and an adjunct Professor of Journalism at New York University graduate school.**

Ms. Van Gelder is listed in Who's Who in American Women **and** Who's Who in The East.

VCI: *Generally speaking, women seem to be reluctant to involve themselves with computer technology and the games that stem from it. Do you think the problem lies more with the manufacturers or with the women themselves?*

LVG: I feel that the computer industry as a whole is changing. There are many more women in the field today than ever before. The industry seems ready to hire anyone who can do the job. Computergames are gradually moving in a direction that interests women. I remember when I worked for the *New York Post* and was forced to use a word processor. I was nervous about it. I was stupefied by the lingo. But I became hooked really fast. When I was pinkslipped , I didn't mind losing the paycheck, but the idea of losing the system was awful. I was bereft. So I bought a computer.

GS: I think the problem has to be solved on many fronts. In consumer electronics showrooms, there has been great resistance to hiring women. But in the instances where women were hired as salespeople, they were much more successful with both male and female customers. The female customers were more comfortable because they were not talking to someone who would say: "Why don't you bring in your husband?" The male customers felt comfortable because they felt: "If she can understand it, I can." So, you see, a lot of images and self-images have to be changed here.

Incidentally, we tell our readers that before they go into a computer showroom as a customer, they should be sure they have a business card. If they don't have one, we advise them to get one printed. The card will cause people to treat them differently.

I think the problem with these games and with computers in general is that they are presented as a high-tech activity which enters the culture in a masculine way. They appeared either through the math department in school or through the entertainment arcade in a section of town which is thought of as men's turf.

LVG: Men got to computers first. They applied values from the male culture to a neutral technology and produced violent male-oriented games in a high-tech setting. Women now look at computers shooting aliens, doing exotic things with numbers, and they decide they don't like computers The less input they have, the less they like the games. That grows on itself. It does affect how they see computers as a whole.

VCI: *So you'd say that women are less violent basically?*

GS: I'm not suggesting that women are more moral. But we have not been raised with a masculinity to prove. You can see it in the public opinion polls regarding military spending. Women have been opposed to every war since World War I. They were among the first to be opposed to Vietnam.

LVG: Girls are less inclined to violence. One of the many studies on this subject involved first graders playing a game where the reward was to shoot an alien. The girls were totally unmotivated. When the program was changed so that the reward showed a dog wagging his ears, the girls became more interested.

VCI: Pac-Man *and* Ms. Pac-Man *seem to be exceptions. Do you think women play these games because they're less violent?*

GS: Yes. At least *Pac-Man* gets away from the militaristic theme, and the player isn't killing people.

LVG: Psychologists love to talk about the Freudian parallel in *Pac-Man*—the female principle of devouring. How many times have you been called a devouring female? But, in any case, munching is not threatening.

VCI: *Do you think it would help if more women designed video and computergames?*

GS. I think so. There were a few designers in California who developed some software for games which were more consciously universal in appeal.

LVG: There are lots of women in the field, but it is a male industry, and the female designer is constrained by the audience. She is writing mostly for men.

GS: That's right. Most games are designed and marketed by men who are experienced in technology which is still perceived as being a male field.

Not only do most women not know about technology, but if they become involved, women *devalue* it for men. We run into this with our advertisers at *Ms.* Lionel Trains has a boy on the package. We said to them: "Look, girls like trains too. Don't you want to make money by appealing to the female market too?" We were told that a girl on the package would make little boys not want it.

VCI: *But don't you think this prejudice is less true in the adult world?*

GS: The automobile industry has firmly decided that while women pick out the upholstery, men buy the cars. A huge percentage of women buy sportscars, but the Detroit decision-makers still direct their advertising toward the males who they feel are the primary market.

The foreign car manufacturers were the first to advertise with us, but only after it was clear that women were buying a large share of their cars. The same battle is going on in consumer electronics. Today, only a very narrow segment of high-priced sound equipment is marketed toward women (and males 18-30). Readers of *Ms.* buy as much electronic equipment as readers of *Playboy*. The same is true of beer.

I used to think before I was an editor that all companies were guided by a desire for profit. Now I only *wish* that they were!

LVG: It is definitely assumed in the packaging that boys will buy videogames—white boys. This can be a real turn off if you are not in that group. You just feel

© ALVINO-MANZIONE 1983

GS: Women are determined not to be left out of this. In a recent issue of *Ms.*, we asked our readers through a response card if they wanted information on computers, word processing and technological developments. We got an unprecedented response. So we are starting a column on technology.

LVG: My personal ax to grind is that I don't like to hear women saying that the computer is a male machine, because it's not really true.

VCI: *How much of women's aversion to computers and related technologies like video/computer games is due to conditioning?*

GS: Women are punished for winning. It's not supposed to be feminine to win.

LVG: I think more women would play these games if they were introduced in a different setting than the arcades. Girls often find themselves confronted with a game as part of a social male-female relationship. Either they are shy because they lack the experience with games and don't want to make a mistake, or they don't want to outshine their boyfriends.

VCI: *Do you really feel that the modern woman caters to the male ego?*

that it's not appropriate for you to be there.

VCI: *Do you think that unisex packaging could help solve the problem?*

LVG: Yes, but we can't expect packaging or software programs to solve the problems rooted in the government, the church or society.

   Computers seem to magnify conflicts and cultural differences. You see it in men and women, blacks and whites, the affluent and the less fortunate. The computer world is white. Do blacks enjoy playing white games? Computers appear in the homes of the upper middle class.

VCI: *Isn't it true that more and more minority groups are becoming involved in technology?*

GS: Progress is very slow. Females are still discriminated against in technical fields. You can see historically the effects of the introduction of technology. Look at the third world countries before and after technology: the role of women was diminished; polarization was greater because technology's secrets are taught only to men.

VCI: *But wouldn't you say that women now have an equal opportunity to enter the field of technology?*

GS: No. There are still law suits that show female discrimination in technical and trade schools. There is tremendous bias in the professional fields where there is a lot of money to be made.

VCI: *What do you think women can do?*

LVG: Well, there *is* a difference between women at the time I was in college and women now. But it still is culturally more typical of women to fear making a mistake. I have a friend who was in rock 'n roll; she recalls that girls would practice the guitar to perfection before they would go out on stage. It was scary to them. The boys would think nothing of going out on stage and making an ass of themselves for four to six months. There wasn't the same penalty attached to showing off and making a mistake.

VCI: *Would you say then that women are intrinsically less competitive than men?*

GS: We aren't trained to compete. Of course that's all cultural, not biological. But I think that's why many women are turned off to games.

LVG: Males definitely have more cultural pressure on them to compete. For women, it's not so pleasurable to compete for winning—to enter day-to-day competition over nothing.

VCI: *Do you think games would appeal to women more if they weren't "over nothing"? Would women enjoy, not necessarily competing, but problem-solving concerned with something more real?*

LVG: Dr. Beva Eastman, Assistant Professor of mathematics at the William Paterson College of New Jersey, thinks that adult women might enjoy adventure games more if they related less to the fantasy world and more to real-life problems, for example sexual harassment on the job. The player would be fighting

arcadia

The Perils Of Pixel-ated Paulines

by Richard Meyers
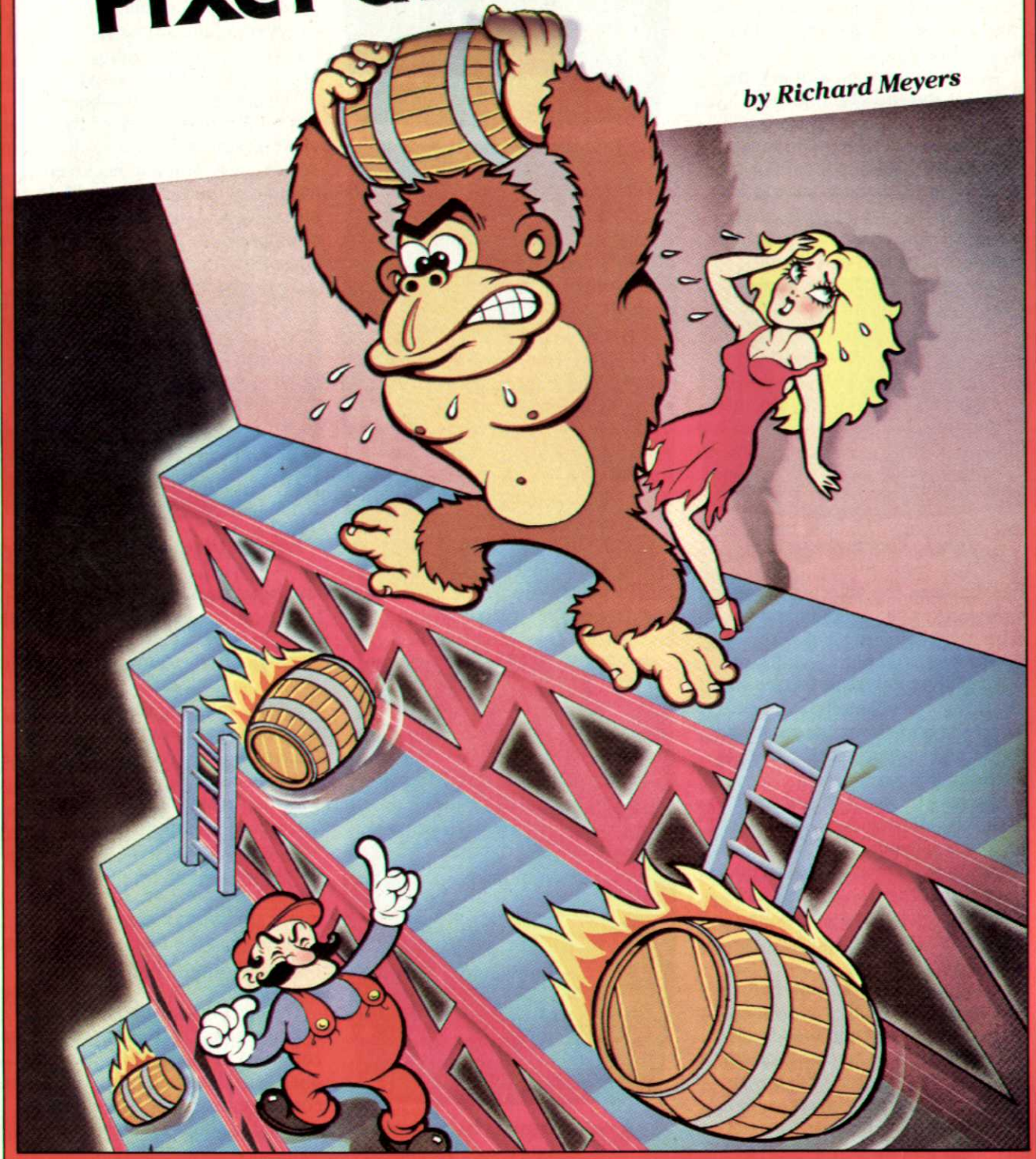
"This is kind of a weird subject." Thus spake Karen Harth, a representative of the Taito Corporation. "Women in these games have always been damsels in distress." She ought to know. Her company is the distributor of *Jungle Hunt*—the reworked version of the "Tarzantype" game *Jungle King*. Although the video hero of this game was electronically altered from a fairhaired ape man to a pith-helmeted explorer, the object of his dangerfraught search remained the same: saving a beautiful girl from a fate worse than death.

"When it comes to winning the 'prize' at the end of the screens," Harth continues, "the prize is always a woman." Sure enough, after the jungle king does his jungle hunt by swinging from vine to vine, braving gator and jellyfish-infested water, leaping and ducking flaming boulders, and then avoiding

Climactic reconciliation in **Kangaroo.**

Jungle King to the rescue!

headhunters, the object of his desire comes into sight—a bound and seemingly helpless maiden roped above a stewing pot.

His video reward for hazarding all the threats is a digitally animated kiss. Cute and clever? Absolutely. Sexist and stereotypical? Some say "definitely!"

"It's nice in one way and lousy in another," Harth judges. "But it isn't all just in videogames. It's the same situation in all media. The woman is the prize. Either that or she is pictured as a 'superwoman.' Neither of those stereotypes is a good representation."

Harth may have a point. Female videogame characters are not exactly overabundant in the arcades. Then again, most studies declare that the arcades aren't filled with female videogame players, either. Nevertheless, stereotypes are not

smiled upon by those who carry the banner of feminism. They are not happy that female machine personalities are either being lusted after, set upon, or rescued from fates worse than "Game Over."

FEMININE FIGHTERS

For every rule, there is an exception, and for every arcade, there are a few strong video females. The strongest manufacturers have the strongest women characters, not surprisingly. On the one hand, there's Atari's *Kangaroo,* with a mother marsupial bashing chimps, ringing bells, downing fruit and saving her young. On the other hand, there's Midway's *Ms. Pac-Man,* the lipgloss-encrusted orb who can become the Germaine Greer of
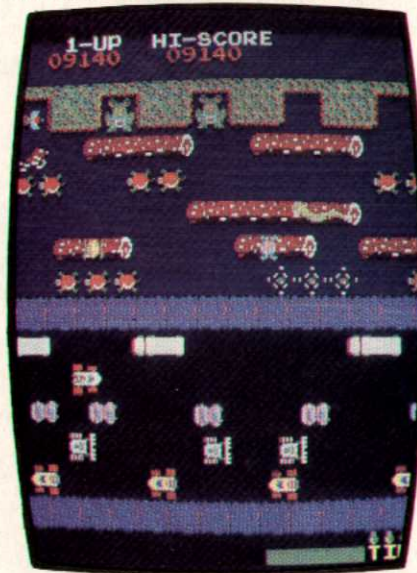
The female **Frogger** *is but a dependent.*

video with the gulp of a power pill.

Elsewhere among the rank and file, Universal boasts a skittering *Lady Bug,* who looks like an insect on screen, but is pictured as a comely lass in an abbreviated costume on the machine cabinet. Aside from these precious few however, the videogame world is one of dog eat dog, ship blast ship, and man rescue woman. In Cinematronics' *Jack The Giant Killer* and their fabulous new videodisc game *Dragon's Lair,* an innocent Princess-type is in constant peril. In Sega/Gremlin's famous *Frogger,* all the female frog does is hang around logs waiting to jump on the nearest male toady.

The only game of this type that can't really be blamed for its subservient treatment of women is Nintendo's *Popeye.* The famous love triangle of the sailor man, Bluto, and Olive Oyl had already been established for fifty years before game designers had the emaciated

Popeye's Olive: our kind of woman.

amoreuse hurl hearts, music, and letters for her hero to grab. At least the *Popeye* machine has the Sea Hag, who hurls obstructions instead of epithets.

All this rescuing stems from Nintendo's other arcade giant, *Donkey Kong.* The now famous tale of Mario climbing and jumping all over haphazard constructions for the love of a girl has led to two videogame spinoffs and as many hand-held toys and home versions—almost all, surprisingly minus the captive dame. *Donkey Kong Jr.* and the *Mario Brothers* get all the breaks while the desperate girl languishes in the twilight zone.

The Japanese designers of the *Donkey Kongs* were unavailable for comment in the English language, but Edrick Haggens of the Japanese company Data East had plenty to say on the subject concerning his

company's position. "We had a game called *Pro Tennis* which pictured a male against a female whom the player controlled," he remembers. That is quite a switch from the majority of games which either picture a male fighter or an asexual craft of some kind. In fact, one of Data East's big 1983 winners, *Bump 'N' Jump,* pictures just such a sexless car. But their other success, *Burger Time,* has an all-too-male chef racing the homicical hot dogs, emasculating eggs, and persecuting pickles.

"I wish *Burger Time* had a female chef," Haggens admits. "I don't see why it would make any difference to male players one way or the other, but it might make female players more inclined to try the game. My feeling is that we're losing a lot of the market by ignoring the needs of the female players."

THE JARVIS SOLUTION

One reason the *Burger Time* Chef might not be a woman is that female characters, by nature of their natural curves, are harder to animate than their more linear counterparts. One person who knows that first hand is Eugene Jarvis, designer of *Defender* and *Stargate*—with their asexual ships rescuing spacemen from destruction. . . .

"Now wait a minute," Jarvis says. "The *Defender* ship may be more male than female because it's always spewing stuff out and it doesn't like taking stuff in, but then again, it spends a lot of time picking men up. Maybe it's the mother instinct. That's why they call them 'Motherships.'"

Needless to say, Jarvis is not only a nifty designer of videogames, he also has a piquant sense of humor: even about his own *Robotron*—his only game so far with a woman in it. Although most of the screen is taken up with killer robots and a lone hero, his job is to rescue the future's family; a man, a child, and a woman.

"Yes, there's Mommy, Daddy, and Mikey," Jarvis admits. "I don't want to be accused of being a sexist because Mommy is wearing a dress. Maybe she should have been pushing a shopping cart or carrying a purse since Dady had a briefcase. Oh, well . . . women in videogames
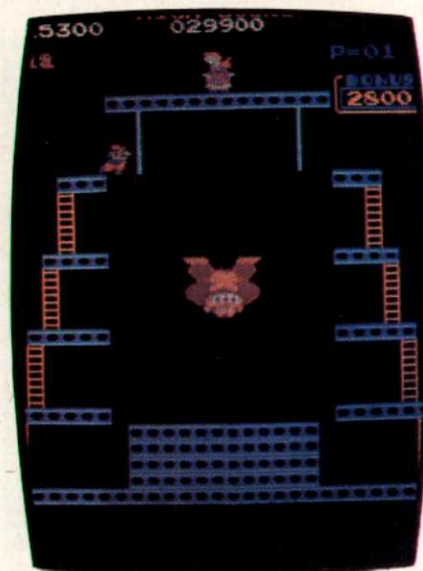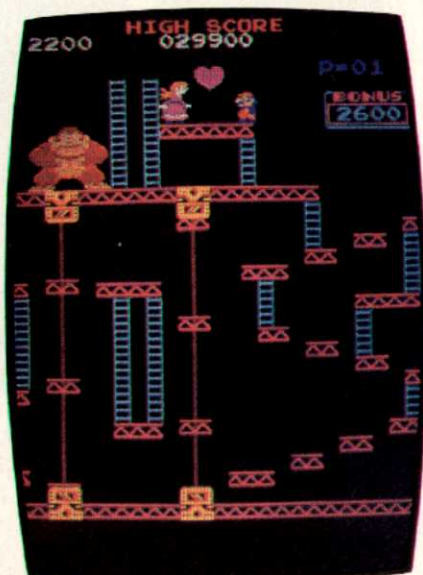
Donkey Kong, *a truly popular game, is truly typical: the woman is helpless.*

Dragon's Lair: *thank you, thank you.*

have been stereotypical helpless maidens up to now and in *Robotron* the cliche continues. I don't think that's good or bad, I just think that's the way it is."

What is bad, however, is a society

that puts disadvantages unto a person just because of their sex. The videogame industry was no different than the rest of the world in sexism, but Jarvis thinks the times are a-changing. "More women are coming into the arcades and into the industry. So many more, in fact, that we're toying with the idea of a button that will picture the player as a boy or a girl, depending on what they choose. I think the role of women in videogames will mirror the roles of women in society. Already in books and the mass media, women are changing from helpless victim to heroes who can kick the bad guys in the nuts. It's evolution. And whatever the public responds to is what we'll be designing. It's big business.

"Right now everything in the arcades seems to be directed to the young male adolescent who wants to have fun, so there's a lot of violence and a lot of action. In home video, there's probably a larger female audience, so there's more female designers in that field as a result. It seems as if the females who are attracted to this stuff are more aggressive. So watch out for these women. They will probably be your bosses one day."

HEART TO LOCKHART

There's one person in the industry who would probably agree with Jarvis about aggressivness and being the boss one day. That's Betty Lockhart of Rock-ola, manufacturers of juke boxes, mechanical machines, and videogames. "Yes," she concurs, "no matter what a woman does, there is always some sort of barrier. But no, I believe a woman can be accepted in any profession based on her knowledge and ability to push forward. It's just that this field is dominated by men, so you have to work even harder. Ask any successful woman and she will tell you about the hours she spends. They have to do all the work a man does but they also have to strive to be taken seriously.

"Being a woman is more difficult, because first they look at you as a woman, and only after you convince them that you know what you're talking about will they accept you on a business basis. Men don't have that initial wall to climb.

supergaming

FREEZE!

Install Your Own Pause Button Without Delay

by Bob Guerra

The game's *Turmoil*. You reach level eight and the alien traffic lanes become invisible. Five different types of enemy ships dart dangerously back and forth across the center alley. You spot a prize up in the top left corner but it's too late. It becomes a Supersonic Cannon Ball. You fail to blast an arrow in time and it becomes a fast-moving Tank. Your palms sweat as you struggle valiantly to hold on to your last remaining ship. You continue to zap enemy ships but your aching left thumb feels as if it's about to break off. An indestructable Ghost Ship closes in but there's nowhere to go. In a last ditch effort, you reach for the pause (Color/B&W) switch on the console . . . sorry, your last ship has just been reduced to space rubble.

When companies such as 20th Century-Fox and Spectravision began employing the Color/B&W switch as a pause for their Atari VCS compatible games, they almost did a great thing. While a pause switch is invaluable when playing fast-paced action games like *Turmoil, Nexar* and *Cross Force,* having to reach for the game console during the heat of battle often results in the loss of a game life.

Fortunately, for about $10.00 you can turn your standard Atari joystick into a Superstick, which will not only allow you to pause certain games (without taking a hand off the stick), but will provide game select, and game reset functions as well. On these pages are the simple, step-by-step instructions to perform this modification.

Here are the materials you will need:

1. One 6′ joystick extension cable. Suncom, Inc. (270 Holbrook Dr., Wheeling, IL 60090) makes a beauty that retails for only around $5.95.

2. One subminiature SPST toggle switch, (catalogue number 275-612 from Radio Shack is a perfect size and will only set you back $1.69).

3. Two miniature push button switches, (momentary SPST contacts), also available from Radio Shack, come in packages of five for only $2.49. (Catalogue number 275-1547). Be sure to get the "normally open" type.

4. A soldering iron.

5. Rosin core solder.

6. An electric drill.

7. Wire cutters.

8. A small Phillips head screwdriver.

9. An X-acto modeling saw.

The Pause Button as it will appear on the front of the VCS joystick.
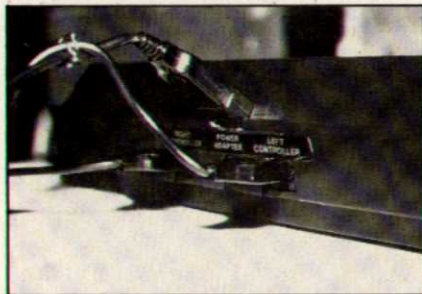
Rear of the console with both the modified and regular joystick attached.
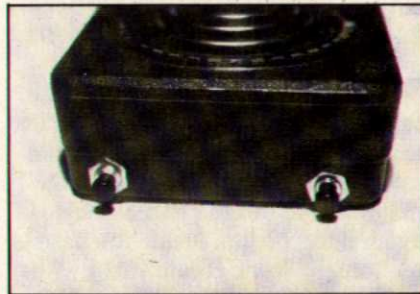
Game Reset and Game Select buttons on the rear of the joystick.

Wiring detail of the Atari VCS Color/Black & White Switch.
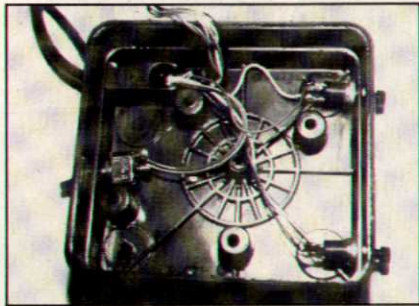
The internal wiring of an Atari joystick switches.
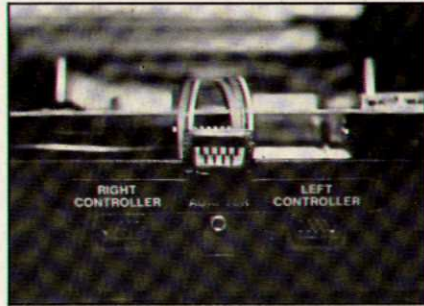
The jack in position at the rear of the VCS console.

MOUNTING THE SWITCHES

Begin by removing the four Phillips head screws from the bottom of the joystick. Lift off the top portion of the stick and set it aside along with the red action button. Be careful not to lose the small spring that the button rests on; springs are carpet-camouflaged.

Inside the base you will find a rectangular circuit board attached to six colored wires. Leaving it attached to the wires, gently lift it out of the base. Now you're ready to drill three holes for your switches.

The toggle should be mounted as low as possible, in the center of the front of the base. Mount the pushbuttons about two inches apart, on the rear of the base. (See photo). The holes should be just big enough to allow the threaded shafts to slide through snugly.

Once the holes are drilled, remove the hex nuts from the switches, slide the shafts through as far as possible from the inside, and secure the switches in place with the hex nuts.

ATTACHING THE EXTENSION CABLE

Cut the joystick extension cable into two pieces at about eighteen inches from the female, or jack end. Set this section aside. Take the cut end of the remaining long section, and squeeze it through the same hole in the joystick base where the regular joystick cord enters. Pull it through until the two plugs are the same distance from the base. You may have to cut the end of the cord again if the porton inside the base is too long to work comfortably with.

Carefully strip off almost all of the black casing from the end of the cable inside the base. Use the wire

cutters but be sure not to sever any of the thin colored wires inside the casing. Fortunately, the Suncom cable holds nine colored wires, so if a couple accidently get cut, you'll still have enough for this modification.

Select six of the nine wires and strip about ¼ inch of insulation off of the end of each. Solder two wires to the two solder lugs on each of the three switches. The remaining three wires should be cut back to the cable casing to keep them out of the way. Now write down which colors you've chosen for each of the three switches so the proper connections can be made inside the console of the VCS.

Set the circuit board back in place (it should sit nicely above all the new hardware you've installed), reattach the top portion of the stick, and you're ready to prepare the console.

MOUNTING THE JACK

Begin by removing the six recessed Phillips head screws from the bottom of the VCS. *Do not remove the two exposed screws in the center of the base.*

Once the top panel is removed, cut a 7/8 inch wide notch in the plastic above the words *"Power Adapter"* at the rear of the console. Carefully push apart the twelve colored wires at the back of the circuit board, and feed through the remaining cut end of the extension cable. Run it below the board toward the reset switch. At the end of the board, bring the cord up and around the front of the board. The end should reach the Color/B&W switch.

With the jack sitting firmly in the notch you've cut, strip off the black casing, back to about eight or nine inches from the jack itself.

It's now time to do some more soldering.

You'll notice that all of the game's switches sit above six flat metal posts (three on each side). To connect the jack, begin by soldering the two colored wires corresponding to the colors soldered to the toggle switch, to the right center and right bottom posts of the Color/B&W switch (see photo). Likewise, solder matching pairs of wires to the same posts of the Game Select and Game Reset switches. By selecting the proper pairs of wires, you can determine which push-button at the rear of the joystick will control each of the two functions. Again, cut back the three unused wires to the casing, to keep things neat.

Finally, a large notch will have to be taken out of the cover where it hits the new jack. Be sure the jack fits tightly, however, so it will stay in place once the top panel is in place and the screws have all been tightened. Once the VCS is reassembled, plug in your newly modified joystick, (both plugs) and you're ready to go. Or should I say stop?

In addition to freezing the action of certain games, the toggle switch on the front of your joystick will also control the raising and lowering of shields when used with Starpath's *Phaser Patrol*, summon the Galactic Chart during a round of *Starmaster* by Activision, or allow you to check your wound/thirst scores when trying to solve the *Riddle of the Sphinx* (Imagic). In fact, the more uses game designers devise for the Color/B&W switch, the more useful this modification will become.

Even with all the new functions on the joystick, all console switches will work as they always have. Enjoy the project and happy gaming! □

Dragonstomper

To the Editor:

Having played over two hundred hours of *Dragonstomper*, I must correct Ron Rampolla's advice in your August issue.

First, the bridge guard can indeed be killed. To do so, follow this advice: Save at least four of the magic items (potions, crosses, etc.) that raise your strength points. Build your strength up to about thirty five, and your dexterity up to fifty, then battle the nasty fellow. You will need to use about four crosses during this battle, or about one hundred fifty strength points. However, the guard can only withstand one hundred twenty points of damage! When you kill him you receive ninety-nine gold pieces and a virtualy useless shield. You can then cross the bridge.

In screen number two, wait until after you visit all three shops before enlisting warriors. Ignore Vision, Flash, Elixir, Chains, and Lanterns and sell all of your possessions. Buy Protect, Stun and Blast (unlock is optional, as the gateway will open anyway once the Dragon is killed), and then enter the cave.

In screen three, the dragon is a real wimp. If you drop into the first pit, you can usually destroy him after using only two vitamins (you should have six). So for fun, journey farther into the cave, pass-

ing the dragon's hole three or four times. Then descend into it, and you will be facing a tougher, meaner foe!

Jim Cirik
Yonkers, NY

Tron

To the Editor:

On *Tron*, I've seen a lot of people during the MPC screen simply shoot enough of the cone away to be able to charge up through it. A better strategy is to stand just under the rotating blocks on the left side and shoot up continually. When the blocks get too close, *then* shoot against the rotation. Even after most of the blocks stop coming, stay on the screen as long as possible. If you stay long enough, you can destroy all of the blocks for an extra one thousand points. To get all of the blocks (and the thousand points), simply aim at the top left corner where the topmost blocks emerge.

Steven Weber
Galion OH
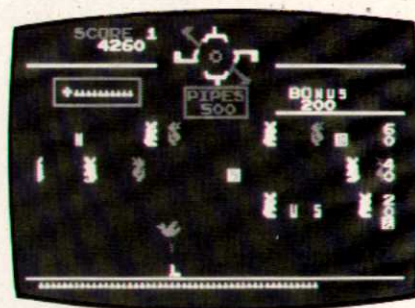
Carnival

To the Editor:

Recently while I was playing *Carnival* on my ColecoVision, a set of initials appeared where the bonus is usually located, and it appeared right in the midst of gameplay.

I figured out how to make the message appear every game. You must play on game # 4. Simply get to the third rack and quickly shoot any letter beside B. This will empty the space formerly occupied by the bonus score. Then just move all the way to the far right of the screen and shoot the music target which shuts off the Carnival theme music. This should cause the three letters "REG" to appear where the bonus score used to be.

If this is an Easter Egg message programmed into the game by its designer, then just who is this REG character?

Is this trivial enough for your "tips and trivia" column?

Tony Ciccarello
Norcross, GA

Yes.

Mad Planets

To the Editor:

I don't see why *Mad Planets* isn't an arcade smash. I love the game. Let me share my enthusiasm with some strategies I've developed.

Once an embryo planet has developed into a full system, move away from it since collision with either the planet or any of its moons means instant death.

Take care in aiming. Firing at the planet itself is of no value until all of its moons are first obliterated. "Slide" around the planet in order to take out its moons. Once the last moon is destroyed, fire at the planet

itself.

Occasionally a moon will break its orbit around a planet, turn fiery orange, and sail towards the player's ship. Shoot these attacking moons; but if your aim is not spot-on, move to the side and let the attacking moon glide off screen.

During the "humanoid wave," keep the ship to the center of the screen, moving it back and forth only slightly. (The men naturally gravitate toward the center of the screen.) Let the men fall into the ship by themselves as you keep a watch out for the deadly comet which will enter play. Destroying the comet repeatedly will prolong the humanoid wave. However, once the comet accelerates to the point where you can't be sure of hitting it, move the ship to one side and continue firing. This will remove the ship from immediate danger.

At the beginning of each level, position the ship approximately mid-screen with the nose pointing to the left. This allows for rapid extermination of embryonic planets before they grow to complete planet-and-moon systems. A four to six thousand point bonus is awarded for completing any round in this fashion, and is a key to high scores.

Luke Fullop
Atlanta, GA

Tempest

To the Editor:

I discovered a very unusual bit of information about *Tempest*. When playing the game, if you should score between 180,000 and 220,000 points and also have a score that ends in twelve, the computer will give you forty free games. Evidently this is actually programmed into all of the arcade games. I learned about this phenomenon when a customer of mine walked into my store, scored 195,312 points, and proceeded to play my machine for the rest of the afternoon. He claims that every one of the machines he has played does this.

Dave Armstrong
Derby, CT

TAKING IT TO THE STREETS.

Roving reporter Bob Sodaro visited a number of arcades and elicited the following strategy tips.

Dragon's Lair

Editor's note: Because of the unique nature of this game, events described below do not necessarily follow in sequence.

During the water sequence in the tunnels, always paddle to the branch of the tunnel that the light flashes in. On the rapids, stay to the center of the screen, in the more lightly shaded path of water. While you're crossing the pit of fire, jump to the first rope as soon as the music sounds or the bridge will retract and you'll fall into the fire. On the "roller-balls" section, wait until the last second before running away from the black ball, and into the roller-ball trap. Then wait until the small colored ball rolls in front of you once, before crossing its path. Repeat this with all of the balls. During the fight with the Lizard King, the pot of gold will magnetize your sword and fly away, causing you to chase after it. Each time it comes to a doorway it will turn to the right or the left. Wait a second as the pot will then turn and fly the other way. As soon as it changes direction, run after it. If you move too soon you will run into a wall and the Lizard King will club you over the head, killing you. Once you step on the falling platform, wait until it drops to the third level, then jump, and keep on moving. When you reach the end of the tunnel that splits in three directions, there will be an earthquake; as soon as it starts, break for the door on the right. Remember, the princess is counting (and waiting) on you!

T. Gray Daws
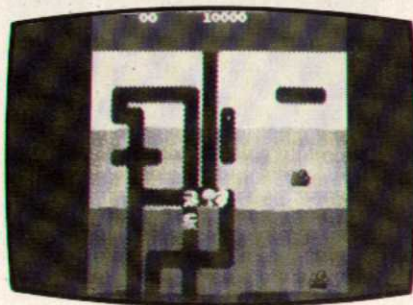
Dig Dug

"Try to make sure that you are not too far away from the top of the screen when you kill the second to last Fygar or Pooka, as the last one will immediately beat a path to the top in order to escape. So make sure that you will be able to catch him before killing the one before."

Bill Jackson

conquering

MARIO BROTHERS

by Randy Palmer
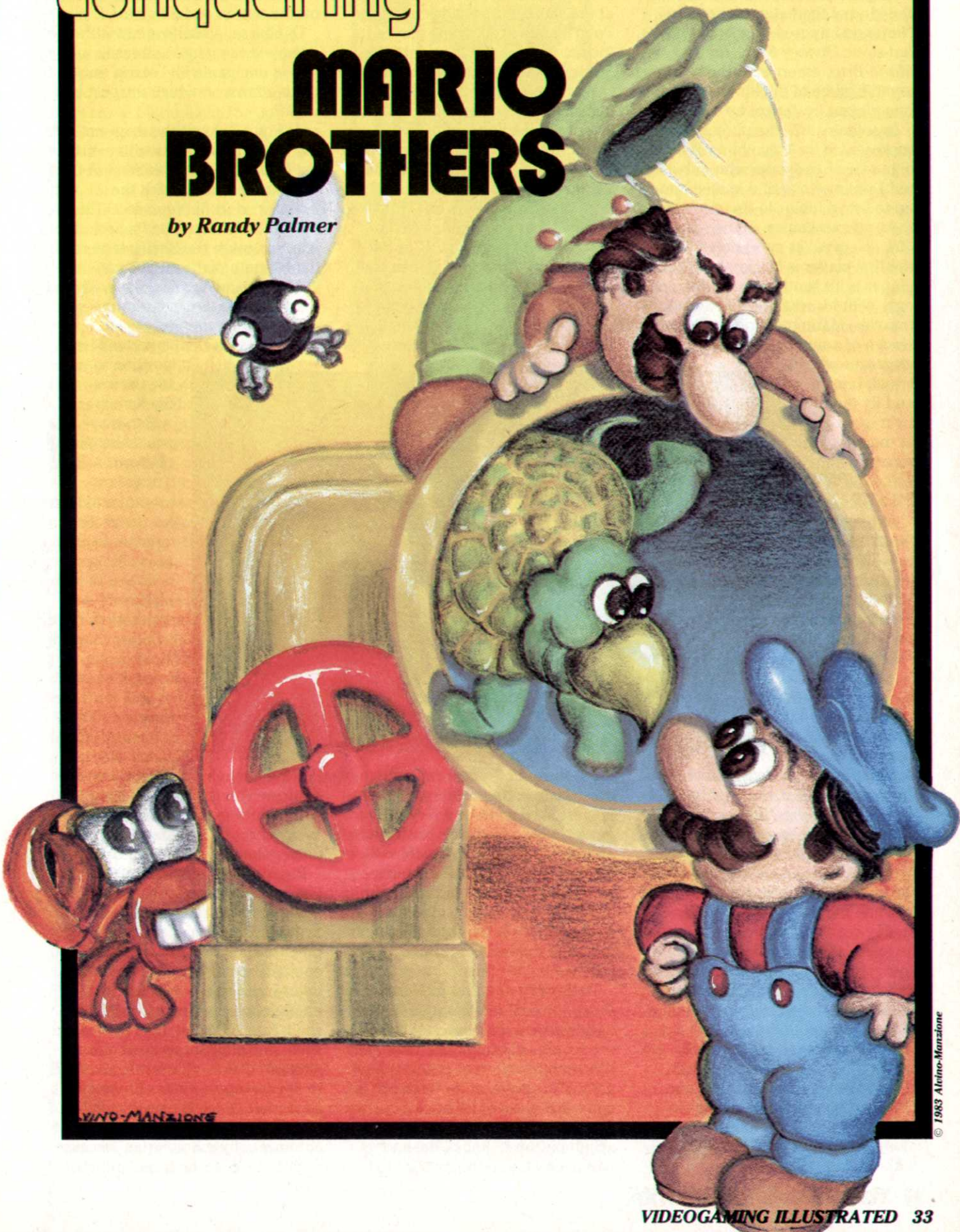
Mario Bros. is not so much a "sequel" as a *spinoff* of the *Donkey Kong* line—and that is its greatest attribute. Free from the kind of thematic restrictions Nintendo imposed on their colorful-but-static *Donkey Kong Junior*, *Mario Bros.* emerges as the most enjoyable game of the lot. It's fun for one player, hysterical for two!

In solitaire *MB*, the player is represented by Mario himself—the legendary handyman who outwitted Donkey Kong and locked him up to bring Junior to the rescue in the previous games. (In two-player *MB*, discussed in more detail below, the first player is Mario; the second player is his brother, Luigi.) Armed only with his wits and sturdy leg muscles, Mario must rid the video screen of a number of pesky creatures which crawl, tumble and fly out of twin drain pipes at the top of the screen.

DRAINPIPE PESTS

At the player's fingertips are a two-directional joystick and one action button. Pressing the action button results in Mario leaping into the air with one fist raised in anticipation of stunning the drainpipe creatures. Although Mario can jump-in-place, much of the time he will be required to make running jumps, in order to ascend from one platform to another. Because it can prove tricky to maneuver Mario through the platform gaps (especially when the screen is cluttered with creepy-crawlies), some care must be exercised in the use of the hand controls. The floors are slippery, and running and jumping without thinking ahead will usually result in Mario sliding *into* the enemy, costing the player one game life—so don't throw caution to the wind!

Mario begins the battle at Point One (see accompanying diagram). You will want to see Mario perched along the center platform of Row B without delay since two

Shellcreepers (turtle-like pests) will emerge from the drainpipes almost immediately. While it is not impossible to get rid of both Shellcreepers at the same time, a quick ascent to Point Two will allow the player to kick at least one of them into the "water" at the bottom of the screen.

Without tripping the "Pow" mechanism (center of Row C) by accidentally leaping into it, move Mario to Point Two. This move only requires two running jumps: from the floor to platform C-R (Row C, right platform), and from C-R to B-C. Mario can as well arrive at Point Two by jumping from C-R to B-R and moving right—the screen is a wraparound—to come out on platform B-L, *then* jumping to Point Two; but the first method is quicker. If Mario arrives too late (missing his

mark through the player's carelessness; the running-jump must be perfected so there is no delay in getting Mario from one platform to another), *both* Shellcreepers will escape. However, since all pests which get by Mario and reach the drainpipe entrances on the floor will re-emerge from the top anyway, the player can choose to remain where (s)he is.

To destroy any pest in *Mario Bros.*, the pest must *first* be turned upside-down, and then kicked off the screen. Although the method is different for different pests in the game (Sidesteppers, for instance, require *two* kicks to be turned upside-down), the player always uses the action button to knock the enemy upside-down and the joystick to

make Mario run across the temporarily-stunned creature. When Mario runs across a stunned creature, the creature is "kicked" off the screen and eliminated.

Of course, actual *contact* with any enemy in the game will result in the loss of one game life. Mario must hit the *platform* on which the pest is walking.

At Point Two on the diagram, Mario will be in position to overturn the Shellcreeper on platform A-L. Without hesitation, kick the 'creeper' in *its hindquarters*. This will not only turn it on its back, it will also cause the Shellcreeper to tumble onto platform B-C on which Mario is standing. The player should then immediately move to the right and eliminate the pest

At this point the player will be in position to tumble the second Shellcreeper which is approaching from platform A-R. Turn Mario around and leap for the second 'creeper as it nears the gap between the platforms. A well timed move will drop it onto Mario's platform. Move left to kick it off the screen.

If these moves aren't made quickly enough, the Shellcreeper on platform A-L will drop by itself onto B-C (right side up, of course). If the 'creeper drops into Mario's way, the player should *jump* Mario over it.

Running the opposite way (jumping onto B-L, emerging on B-R and jumping once again onto B-C) to avoid the Shellcreeper will allow time for the first one to regain its composure as well as its feet! An overturned Shellcreeper, given enough time, will climb out of its shell, turn right side up, replace the shell, and move onward *at a faster pace*. Of course, this is not germane to Shellcreepers alone. *Any Mario Bros.* pest which is overturned but allowed to regain its feet will automatically move faster. Because of this, it's important to eliminate

pests as soon as possible once they have been stunned. To expedite the elimination of pests, always kick them at an angle which will cause them to tumble down to the platform on which Mario is standing. Otherwise Mario will have to leap to another spot to eliminate the pest.

For illustration, return to the diagram. If Mario kicks the Shellcreeper on platform A-L directly at its midsection, the 'creeper will land in the same spot and Mario is then forced to jump onto platform A-L to eliminate it. If the 'creeper is kicked near its head, it will land at a point farther back on the same platform. Although it won't always be possible to do so, the pests in *Mario Bros.* can be eliminated at a faster rate if the player uses his/her judgment and kicks the creatures in a manner which will always cause them to fall to Mario's level.

In addition to the various pests which assail the player, rolling Fireballs will occasionally pursue Mario. The first usually appears near the top of the screen and meanders between platform rows A and B. When a player is tardy in finishing off a given level, a second fireball will come into play between rows A and B.

The Fireballs must be avoided at all costs. Many times this will mean the player must forgo eliminating a pest which has just been stunned, since a Fireball may hover near the creature. Don't take chances. Although a pest which regains its feet will speed up and become more difficult to catch, it's not worth losing a game life over.

Fireballs can be jumped over, of course, and players should take advantage of the fact. They can also be destroyed and earn the player one thousand points. To destroy a Fireball, leap and punch just as the Fireball skims the surface of a platform. If the move is executed properly, the flaming menace will be extinguished immediately. The Fireball-elimination punch must be on the nose, however, else it won't work.

Merely running away from a Fireball will surely result in the loss of a game life. Always aim for a leap away from a Fireball, or opt for dropping onto a lower platform if there are no pests in the way.

In the midst of the proliferating
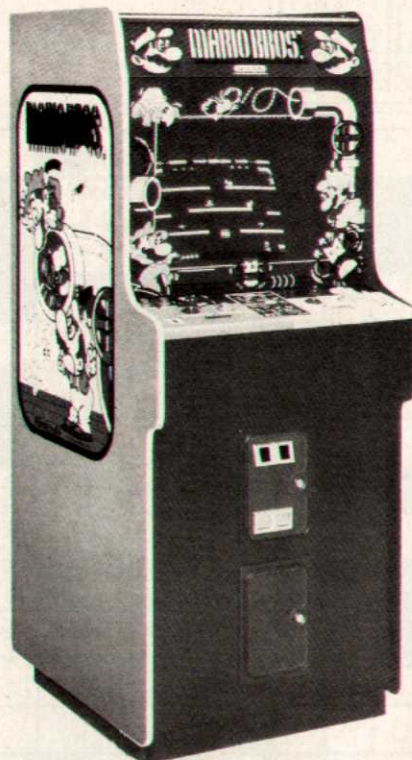
pests and Fireballs come bouncing coins which the player may attempt to capture for bonus points. There are three ways of capturing the coins: by jumping into the air as they bounce; by punching a platform as a coin touches it; or by letting a dropping coin fall onto Mario.

Going for the coins is a minor point. The elimination of the creatures is your number one priority. However, whenever a player is not directly threatened by an approaching pest, and the opportunity presents itself, (s)he should go for the bonus points the coins offer.

The coins are most safely obtained by hitting them from below, as they touch down on a platform. Any that fall between platform gaps will bounce along the next platform below. Move Mario left or right to scoop up coins which bounce along the platform on which he stands.

THE BONUS ROUND

After the successful completion of a number of screens the player has a chance to earn up to five thousand points on *Mario Bros.* bonus round. Ten coins will be dangling from short chains attached at various points to the platforms. To get the five thousand point bonus, all ten coins must be picked up within twenty seconds.

Move Mario to the left, leaping and plucking the first coin from the

bottom left of the screen. When he emerges on the right, pluck the bottom right coin, then leap up to Row C and snatch the coins along that row. Continue moving in one direction; switching directions wastes precious seconds.

THE POW MECHANISM

The Pow block, located between platforms C-L and C-R, is a device that will switch all enemy objects on the screen to their next "stage" at any given time. This means that, for example, Shellcreepers will flop on their backs when the Pow block is punched by Mario. However, any 'creepers (or other pests) which are *already* overturned will be set right side up at the same time. Similarly, Sidesteppers would advance from "normal" to "angry" when the Pow block is hit; any which were already "angry" would be flopped on their backs.

The player may use the Pow block several times. It becomes smaller with each use until it disappears. It's wise to move to the lower reaches of the screen and activate Pow whenever there is a massive assault by pests and Fireballs. After activating Pow, move quickly to kick off any overturned creatures before they regain control.

TWO-PLAYER MB

When two players operate *Mario Bros.*, the first player is Mario; the second is Luigi. *Both players play the same screen at the same time.* Care must be used so as not to block each other's paths.

When two players play, the most efficient method for ridding the screen of pests is for one player to remain stationed along platform B-C, the other remaining at Row C, and moving from platforms C-L and C-R as needed. Such positioning allows for one player to dispose of pests as they come out of the drainpipes while the other "cleans up" pests which get by the first player.

Remember that, in the two-player game, when one person loses a game life, the other continues playing without hesitation. When the second person re-enters play (from the descending platform at the top of the screen), (s)he should move immediately to his/her chosen spot—and continue fighting to the finish.

golden pons
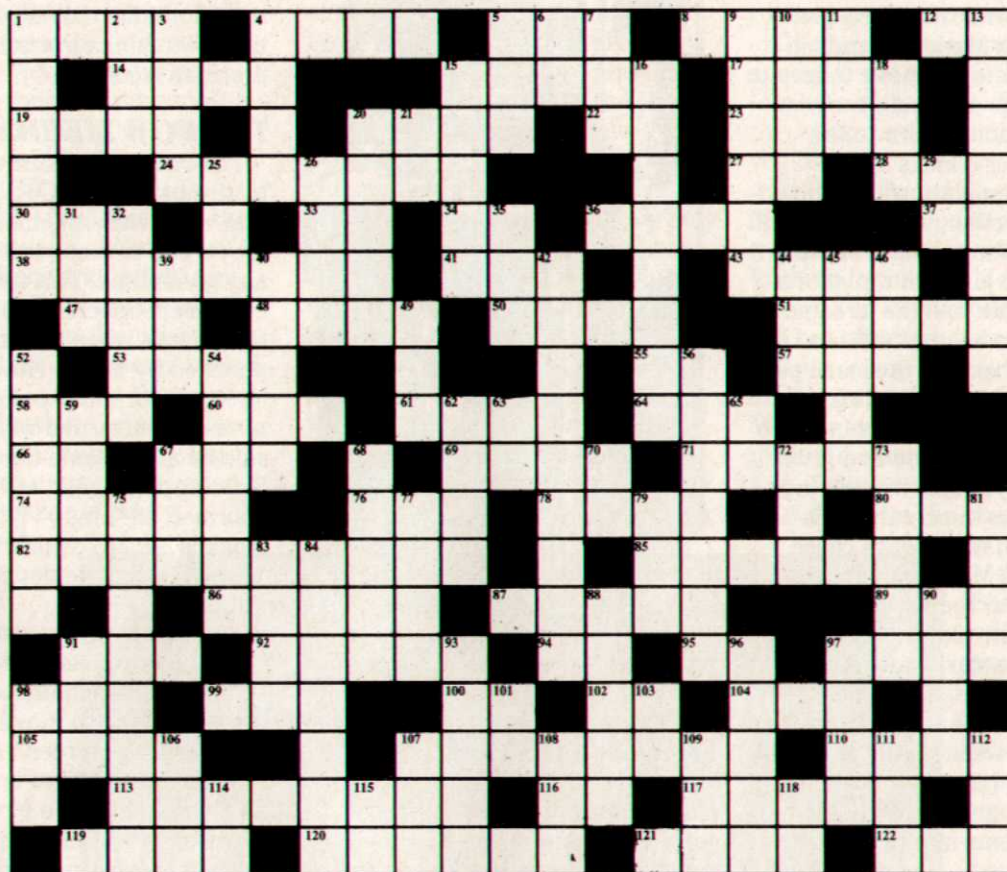
CROSSWORD PUZZLE

Across

1. Activision game
4. Odyssey insects
5. *White Water* implement
8. Missing from *oblast*
12. __ __ Games Company
14. *PGA Golf* word
15. *Dig-Dug* foe
17. __ Man
19. Lisberger's hero
20. Never-released *Mr.*_____ cartridge
22. __ __ D, U.S. Games cartridge
23. International League of Atari Engineers (abbr)
24. Bongo is one
27. Cosby's place, backward
28. *Wargames* defense site: __ __ __A D
30. Indy's quest
33. A *Conquest of the World* continent
34. What 'Atari' means
36. Data age game, with 18 down and 51 across
37. Bond foe ignored in Parker Brothers game
38. Atari rebound game.
41. _____ *erman*
43. Object in soccer
47. Any videogame color
48. Bunch o' bits
50. ____ Ball
51. See 36 across
53. What 30 across is
55. Suffix for program or moth
57. Unhappy incarnation of hero from 1 across
58. *2001* computer
60. Videogame expert
61. Good to get in *Blackjack*
64. The Spellbinder
66. Atari flop
67. DK jr. to DK sr.
69. Earth's joystick
71. *Space* ____
74. Computer order
76. The D&D
78. Imagic vampire, to intimates
80. *Quest for the* ____
82. First Apollo game
85. ____ *Conflict*
86. Telegame outlet
87. Look reserved for videogame critics
89. Object in *Adventure*
91. Victor's species
92. ____ *Attack*
94. Most of TLC
95. *Mr.* __
97. Rock-Ola bomb
98. *Dragster* function
99. Real life *Horse Racing* adjunct
100. Desired direction Donkey Kong Jr.
102. Two, too, __
104. American Byte Association (abbr)
105. They don't make videogame elevators
107. Demons become them
110. Price
113. Atari superhero
116. *Ms. Pac-M* ____
117. ____ *Driver*
119. What you're in after bumming quarters
120. Ancient prototype for 113 across

121. Fox Wargame
122. *Keystone Capers* hero
Down
1. Atari western
2. National *Frogger* Organization (abbr.)
3. Donkey or King
4. Mr. Pooh's genus
5. Popeye's Olive
6. Two-thirds age
7. Computer term
9. Slope cartridge
10. Pinball no-no
11. Electrics pioneer
13. Atari blockade game
15. They're captured in Atari game of squares
16. Real-life "videogames"
18. See 36 across
20. *Laser* __
21. Heart of 20 across
25. The worst score
26. The 500
29. 2600 setting
31. *NFL Football* cheer
32. Recent movie/videogame

tie-in
35. *Baseball* call
39. The lion
40. *Robotron* sans 25 down
42. Mr. Levy's of Activision
44. Organization of *Star Hawks* (abbr.)
45. Mr. Morgan's videogame company
46. Like *Out of This World* lander
49. *Time Zone* yardstick
52. Chuck E.
54. Videogame category
56. Cancelled Coleco cartridge
59. *Battlezone* object, destroyed
62. Colloquial cartridge
63. *Zaxxon* has two
65. Defunct company initials
67. Observe
68. *Utopia* hazard
70. DK to Jr.
72. Atari column game
73. Smug
75. What TVs do
77. Just average

79. *Biplane* pro
81. Demographically, most video-game players
83. Attribute of $.50 *Turbo*
84. *Sub Hunt* sites
88. Pinball Wizard star
90. Slippery ones
91. *Horse Racing* opener
93. What's left after bad *Missile Command* round
96. *Riddle of the Sphinx* locale
97. Games cost $.25 ____
98. Big Bird
101. ____ ____ C-Man
103. Not off
106. __ *Scan*
107. *Canyon Bomber* target
108. *Kick* __
109. Genetic stuff not found in *Microsurgeon*
111. Organization of *Targ* Champions (abbr.)
112. Winning hint
114. __ __ *Barnum's Acrobats*
115. Mrs. Pac to Baby Pac
118. Same progression as across

WORD SEARCH

The object of a word search is to find and encircle twenty different arcade game titles hidden within this grid. The words run vertically, horizontally, and diagonally, frontwards and backwards.

```
D E F E N D E R L F P T R O X P
P N E F E D E P I T N E C A B O
G O T S V H G A L A X I A N B C
C P A R P E Y P M Z S O T R O N
E R K A S A C K J A X Y U L M S
N O H W G L C T P X N T B Q U T
Q B E R T I O E B X A X O T U F
V O H A K Y S Y I O M O V F E I
E T U T P A C M A N J K E R R N
N R Q S B H R O P Z V B B O G O
T O I N Q D O N H T Q A S G P Q
U N X G U I J E Q K Q P D G A V
R H F R O G V B N T U V L E M A
E P N X X D R B U I I W M R R P
E I W A S U O I V E X E V L T S
V O B U T G R J S B E R Z E R K
```

Answers on page 81

Yours Free From E.T.™*
With Membership

Get Exclusive 5 Minute Record "E.T. Speaks" When You Join His Official E.T. Fan Club

Listen to E.T.™ as he speaks his first words, "phone home," "be good," and "ouch," plus other movie highlights. You can't get this special record anywhere else. It's yours FREE as a member of E.T.'s brand new, Official E.T. Fan Club.

You also get:

Big E.T. Color Photo—you'll love this 8" x 10" prize photo of E.T. hugging his friend Elliott (ready for framing).

E.T. Coloring Poster—detailed art poster of E.T. The Extra-Terrestrial from one of the most exciting scenes in the movie.

Official Membership Certificate—featuring a color photo of E.T. and Elliott and bicycle, complete with E.T.'s footprint signature.

Fan Club Membership Card—an exact replica of the stage pass worn by the "E.T." cast and crew.

PLUS MORE

You also get 4 fun and adventure-filled issues of the E.T. Fan.Club Newsletter. Each quarterly issue is chock full of artwork, news and photos of E.T., Elliott, his family and friends...letting you relive the film's unforgettable moments and your favorite scenes. Enjoy "insider" interviews with E.T.'s Director Steven Spielberg, the cast and crew. Go behind the scenes of the "E.T." movie studio...learn the special effects secrets and other movie magic. Find out things about E.T. only his closest friends know. You also enjoy the first chance to get limited Fan Club collectors items...be among the very first to hear about new Steven Spielberg movies...plus much more!
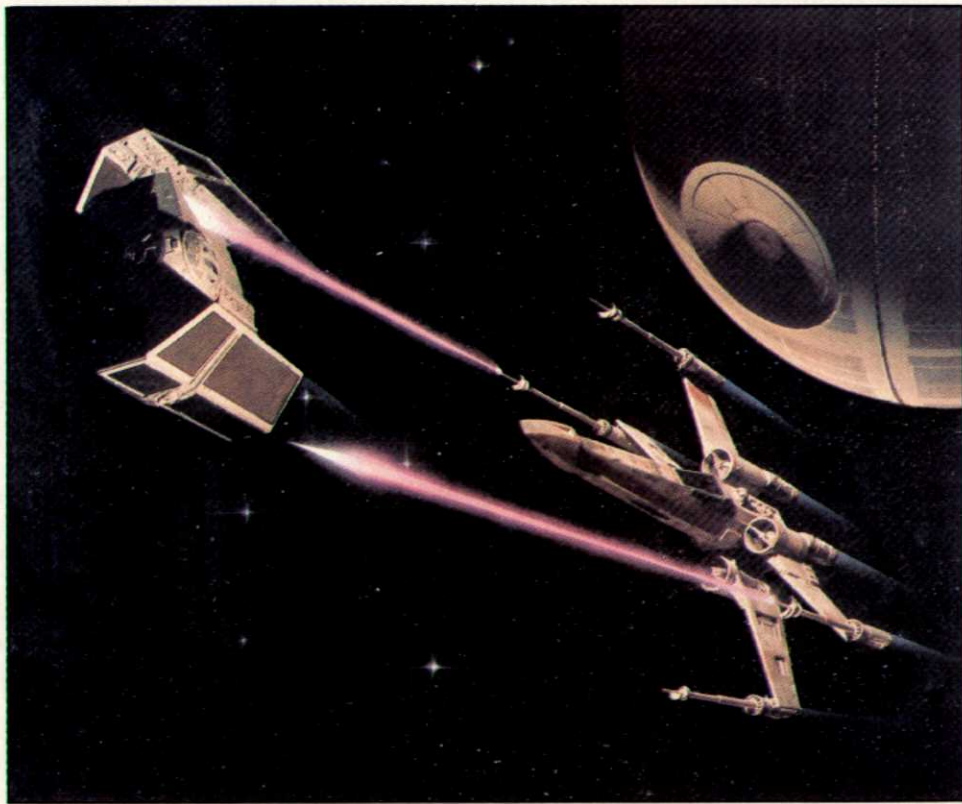
© LucasFilm 1977

STAR WARS

by Randy Palmer

There truly is a dark side to The Force. The danger in the arcade game *Star Wars* is that players will want to be absorbed into its helter-skelter wonders and never return. Atari has worked some magic here.

Atari had been tinkering with the idea of creating a *Star Wars* arcade game for three years, but it was not until a final agreement was signed with LucasFilm late last year that work in earnest began. That agreement, incidentally, calls for three games in all to be developed.

With Mike Hally calling the shots, the largest team of designers, engineers and technicians in the company's ten year history was assembled to create the game. Selected scenes of the *Star Wars* movie were examined virtually frame by frame, then a scenario was proposed to LucasFilm, and accepted.

The result is a vector graphics marvel, driven by three microprocesssors, five sound chips and a gaggle of custom integrated circuits. In the cockpit version, two speakers under the seat rumble with explosions while two more, over the player's head, provide more sound effects, music, incessant chatter from R2D2, Obiwan, and Darth Vader. A flight controller, gripped in both hands, complements and enhances the fluidity of the onscreen action.

There is little in the way of strategic challenge or complexity, and in that sense the game mirrors the source material.

The player takes the role of Luke Skywalker, climbing aboard his X-Wing fighter, Red Five, with R2D2 by his side and the Empire's Death Star looming ahead.

With a never-ending supply of fuel and firepower, the player starts out in good shape. What is at risk here is the number of force field units available. The player's ship can take six hits; the seventh will destroy it and end the game.

Play begins with a deep space battle. Groups of evil Empire tie fighters whoosh by, lofting energy fireballs at your ship. These fireballs must be your primary targets—at least, for the moment—for each one that escapes laser fire will strike the ship, robbing it of one force field unit.

Begin with the gun sight pointed toward the center top of the screen.

Six years ago, Star Wars *stunned the world with its seamless special effects...*
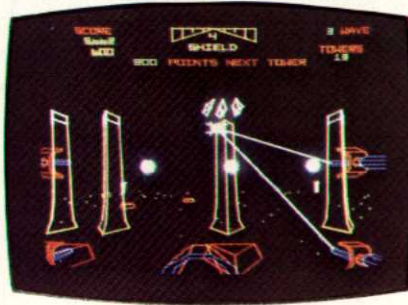
...which Atari has recreated in the highly underrated vector graphics medium...
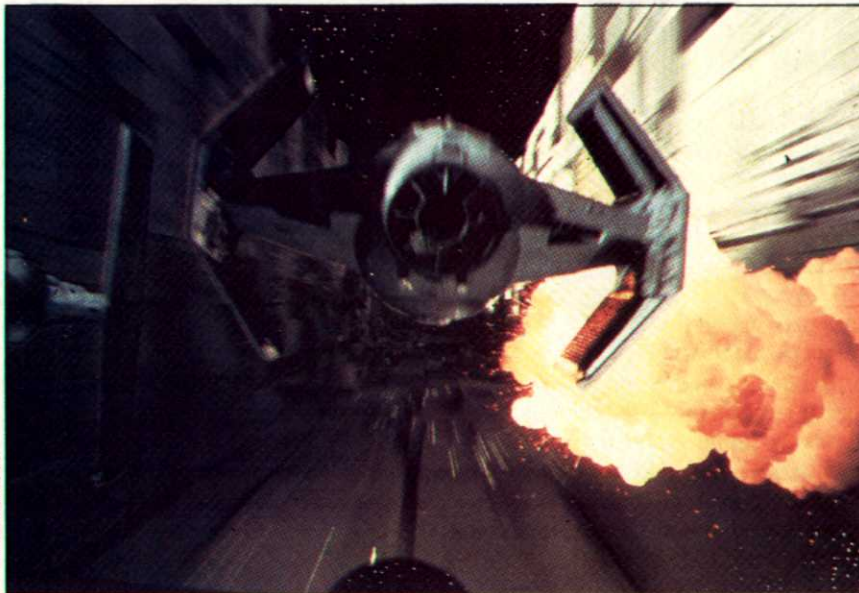
...to bring to life the dazzling action in the trenches of the Death Star.

Waste no time in discharging fire, even before the enemy ships appear on screen. These ships must be struck dead-center with laser fire. Tagging just a wing tip, for example, simply won't work.

As each ship passes by, move your laser in an arc. This increases your chances of downing the ship (as opposed to lining up the sights and firing; remember that the *Star Wars* enemies are never at a stand-

still). However, whenever a fireball is released, change your sights and destroy the fireball before it reaches your ship. When two or more enemy ships are lofting fireballs, the game requires quick repositioning (usually from side to side) of laser firing in order to evaporate all the incoming 'balls.

Ships usually release anywhere from three to seven fireballs in a stream as they weave around the screen. Try to isolate one ship at a time in order to avoid having to deal with a congeries of lethal fireballs at once. Ships can be isolated by following the sky pattern; that is, steer your ship *with* the background, not against it.

Several enemy ships can be taken out at once as your approach the Death Star. Fire around the perimeters of the Death Star as it looms up with the Empire starships heading toward it. At this point no fireballs should be plummeting through the sky at you.

Inside the Death Star trench, blast fireballs as they form. Pilot the ship to one side. Using a side position will enable you to eliminate fireballs from *either* side, while at the same time allowing for fireballs which form close to the ship (but opposite its flying side) to pass by harmlessly.

Subsequent trips through the Death Star trench require the player to pilot the ship defensively over and under narrow barriers. Fire constantly, especially from side to side. Look ahead; watch for approaching barriers and be prepared to dip down or scoot above, as required. Collision with a partition results in the loss of one force field unit.

A single shot must be successfully fired down the Death Star's exhaust port at the end of the trench. The screen will flash a verbal alert ("Exhaust Port Ahead") to the player, who must line up the laser gun with the fast approaching port. This can best be achieved by flying high, since the exhaust port appears on the floor of the trench. If the port is missed, one unit of force field is sacrificed and the trip through the trench must be repeated.

The sequence of red bases and white towers, which appear on subsequent descents into the Death Star, are best handled at low flying

conquering

CRYSTAL CASTLES

Arcade Strategy Tips

by Randy Palmer
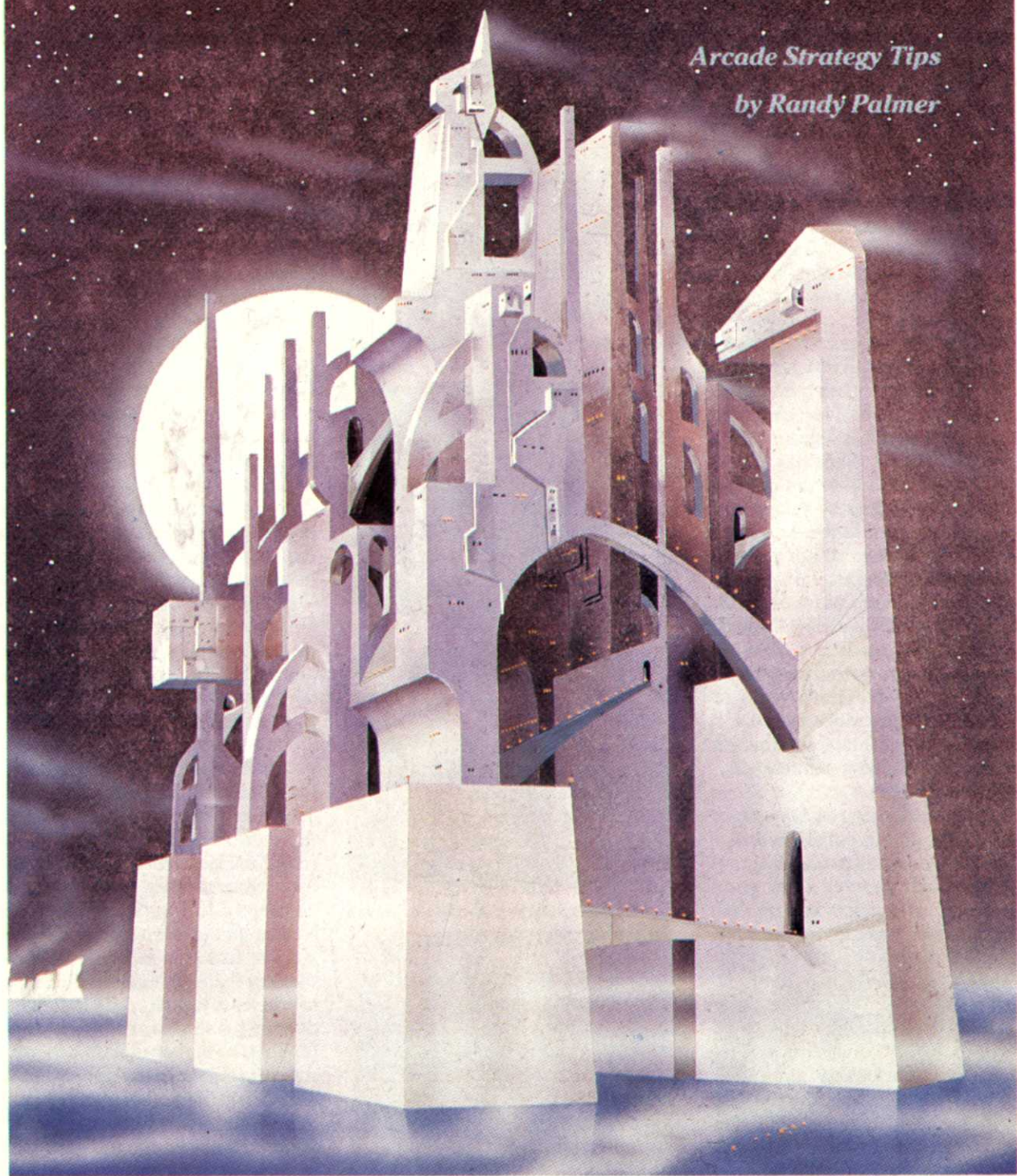
The Hidden Ramp, Nasty Tree, and Bethilda's Castle are just a few of the terms players must come to grips with in Atari's *Crystal Castles*.

With the aid of an oversized Trak-Ball, the player controls the versatile movements of one Bentley Bear, whose task it is to pick up gems from the floors of the castles. The various antagonists of the game can gobble the gems themselves—although some are merely content to pursue Bentley Bear round and round.

Since it is impossible to capture all the gems on any layout, always move away from your adversaries as soon as any screen begins. Let them busy themselves picking up gems on one side of the castle while you go to the other side. Leave a few gems scattered at various points on the screen so that the gem-gobblers will not pay one hundred percent attention to the location of Bentley Bear.

A small bonus is awarded when Bentley captures the last gem on the board—nice to have, but nearly insignificant; and besides, should an enemy pick up the last gem, the screen advances to the next level anyway. With this in mind, don't endanger Bentley Bear by scurrying around after a few lone gems when the beasts are on your tail; the gems aren't that valuable!

The gem-gobblers can be erased from the board by moving through them, but only when they have just swallowed a gem (when the red gullet is at the top of their necks). Clear out as many monsters as possible in this fashion, and the screen will become much less cluttered.

Since the structures in *Crystal Castles* contain three-dimensional features on a two-dimensional surface, think 3-D. Bentley won't go around a corner unless he's on the correct path. Watch closely; study the structures to see where certain ramps and stairways lead. Keep Bentley away from the back corners of the castles where he becomes difficult to see. Use the entranceways to the castle interiors as infrequently as possible. Bentley can easily be trapped should a beastie follow him inside, since the player cannot tell exactly where either figure is.

Use the jump button to escape monsters on the prowl. A twist of the Trak-Ball is necessary to make a successful jump. (Jumping in place will only result in Bentley coming straight back down in the midst of approaching Nasty Trees, Beeswarm, or what-have-you.) The greater the twisting of the Trak-Ball, the farther Bentley can jump. But be careful to turn the Ball in the direction it's safest for Bentley Bear to travel.
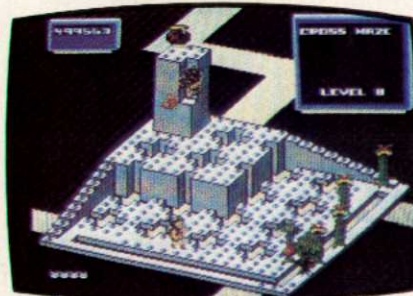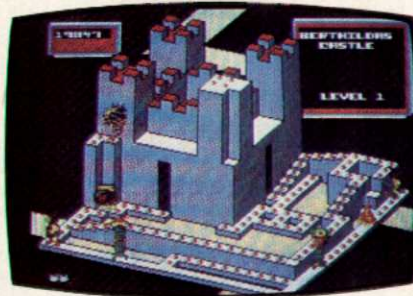
Each jump over an enemy will temporarily stun it and cause it to slow down. Take advantage of the fact that several back-and-forth jumps over the same creature will keep it at a virtual standstill for a longer period of time, and use that time to travel around the foe. (You can even move right up to it—one gemstone space away, actually—without it touching Bentley.)

When possible, save picking up the Honeypot until late in each stage. The Beeswarm will hover around the honey. Once it's taken by Bentley Bear the bees have a tendency to follow *him*—and that's definitely not good news!

SCRAMBLE

Scramble is one of a handful of videogames which have proven their superiority and popularity over the years.

Sector One (Rockets): Keep as low to the ground as possible. Since only two bombs can be dropped at a time, flying low allows the bombs to hit targets without hesitation which replenishes the player's bomb supply instantaneously.

Always launch two bombs when crossing a mountain peak; then immediately begin your descent. The bombs should destroy the first two Rockets at ground level, thereby clearing your flying area. Laserblast all the remaining targets. If a Rocket launches itself away from your laser beam, ignore it. Concentrate on getting what remains at ground level.

Never pass up fuel depots, even if you don't need fuel. At eight hundred points a piece, the fuel tanks are your best source for increasing the score.

Sector Two (Saucers): Fly as far forward as possible, using laser fire constantly. Staying at mid-level will ensure that nine out of ten Saucers will run into your laser. Those few that dip through a gap in the laser can be easily destroyed by slowing down your ship's speed (causing it to move to the left side of the screen) while maintaining laser fire.

Since there are still many ground targets remaining in Sector Two of *Scramble*, point accumulation will increase dramatically if you follow Sector One's suggested flight pat-

Bentley Bear is the pseudonymous author of this issue's Paws Button article.

tern. Many Saucers will escape, but their point loss is over-compensated by the amount obtainable on the ground. Be cautious as you pilot the ship over the small hills, however, since this briefly puts your ship back in line with the Saucers. Scoot back as you ride over a hill to allow bombs to destroy approaching Saucers. Never fly higher than mid-level on Sector Two.

Sector Three (Meteors): Fly as close to the ground as possible. (Meteors are, of course, indestructible.) The Rockets in Sector Three are stationary. Fly as close to them—and the Fuel Tanks—as allowable, destroying them with bombs. (The hilly terrain in this sector makes laser fire ineffective.)

When a mountain forces your ship into the streaking Meteor zone, slow down the ship's speed, holding steady near the mountain top. When a gap forms among Meteors, scoot up and over the mountain and quickly lower the ship to ground level once again. This move should be fluid and made without hesitation.

Sector Four (The Wall): Fly the ship at mid-speed. This will allow for quick backtracking when a Rocket launches from in front of you. Since most of the Rockets launch from recesses in the Wall screen, drop bombs from about an inch before such recesses to be sure the bomb hits the Rocket and not part of the Wall structure itself.

When short rows of ground targets appear, drop to their level, destroy them with laser fire, and immediately ascend to the top of the screen again.

Sector Five (The Tunnel): Laserblast all Fuel Tanks which block the Tunnel. In order to get through the maze-like Tunnel without crashing, it's imperative the player fly at *full speed* through *horizontal* sections.

In the *vertical* caverns, use one of two methods: pull back on the joystick to reduce the ship's speed as much as possible while ascending or descending; or ride the ship at *full* speed *halfway* through the cavern (bringing the ship's nose close to the cavern wall), then reduce thrust to its minimum to complete the second half. In either case, remember that the fiery exhaust from the ship's tailpipe can

touch a wall. Don't treat the exhaust flames as part of the ship's overall length!

Sector Six (Base): The diminutive Base appears flickering with lights at the bottom of a cavern or recess. Bring the ship down into the recess, flying at minimum velocity in order to keep the ship as close against the left wall as possible. Let the ship almost touch the Base; then drop your bomb. The ship will then crash into the right wall but there is no penalty since the mission is accomplished once the Base is destroyed.

TEMPEST

Tempest is one of the classic video arcade games that has yet to wear out its welcome. The rules are simple, but gameplay is fast and always fun. Here are a few strategy tips of which you may not be aware.

The Shooter (or "Claw") can fire up to six shots at a time in rapid succession. Once those six have been spent, six more will become available instantaneously. With this in mind, a player who is trapped in a spiked lane as the Claw readies itself to plummet down the Hole can still get out alive. Here's how:

Once the Claw begins its descent down the lane, *wait* to fire at the Spike until the Claw has *almost* reached it. Then hold the fire button down. Since each shot breaks off a piece of the Spike, the bullets will continue to emerge with no lapse as groups of six shots are spent. Firing too soon will cause the Claw to impale itself on the Spike.

When a Tanker is shot, two Flippers appear in its place. Line up the Claw with the approaching Tanker, fire a shot to break it, then quickly fire shots from the two adjoining lanes to vaporize the Flippers. *Twist* the control knob—don't spin it—

with a back-and-forth motion.

Tankers can also house a Fuseball as well as Flippers in high levels of *Tempest*. These "surprise Tankers" will allow the Fuseball to rush up the lane incredibly fast, so the Claw must be rotated away from the lane once a Fuseball-carrying Tanker has been popped by a Claw-shot. (The Fuseball will rush to the rim of the Hole and, after a second or two, rush back down about halfway, where the player can then dispose of it.) Learn to differentiate between a Fuseball-carrying Tanker and a regular Tanker. Tankers harboring a Fuseball have a small glowing dot in their centers, where regular Tankers do not.

When a Fuseball climbs out to the rim of the Hole, it will vaporize the Claw when they touch. However, the player *can* spin the Claw *through* a Fuseball under one condition: watch the Fuseball as it slowly scours the Hole's rim. When the *center point* of the Fuseball is touching the *border* of two lanes, spin the control knob quickly. Your Claw will pass through the Fuseball unharmed.

When *two* Fuseballs appear on the same Hole (in high levels of play), they will follow a pattern: each Fuseball, in turn, will charge up the border of the lane it is in, ride the rim of the Hole until it touches the next border, then return halfway down the Hole. When the Fuseball is midway down the Hole, it is an easy target. However, as soon as it touches a lane border deep down in the Hole, it will rocket back up to the rim again.

Since Pulsars will destroy a Claw by electrifying the entire lane when they pulse, the player must constantly reposition his/her Claw. Remember that once a Pulsar pulses once, it will flip over into the adjoining lane, pulse again, move on to
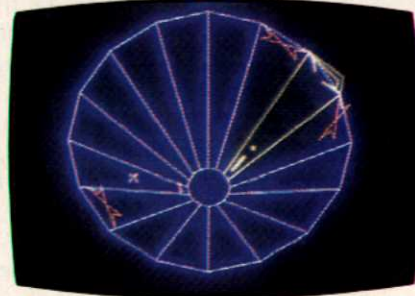
Tempest, months old, has earned a spot in the "golden oldie" category.

the next lane, and so on until it reaches the rim and turns into a Flipper. Wait for a Pulsar to pulse. Once it has done so, quickly move the Claw into the lane the Pulsar will *next* electrify, fire several shots, and jump back out of that lane. Your shots will reach the Pulsar just as it is about to send out another jolt.

Don't forget that the indestructible "electric bullets" which the *Tempest* creatures eject travel up lanes with Spikes *faster* than lanes without Spikes. Also remember that destroying a Spiker will *not* eradicate the Spike it leaves in its trail.

When any Hole is almost devoid of creatures, shoot at Spikes for some point gain. Then zap the few straggling creatures making their way up the lanes.

FOOD FIGHT

The player controls a small boy who's eager to devour an ice cream cone, located at the left border of the screen. Along his way, the boy must avoid various bits of food which are hurled by mischievous chefs, as well as "slots" (holes) into which he might fall.

Each screen begins with a full scoop of ice cream in the cone. The player must reach the cone before all the ice cream melts—if (s)he doesn't, one game life is forfeited. Obviously, then, players should make directly for the cone rather than battling the chefs for points.

Set the boy running on a roughly V or A shaped route. (Making a beeline for the cone won't work; you'll run into a tangle of chefs.) Select one of the two depending on whether more chefs appear in the top half or bottom half of the screen.

Arm the boy with his weapons (the various foodstuffs which dot the video arena) as soon as possible, but try not to veer too much off the suggested path. Don't throw the food about aimlessly! The action button will release it in the direction the boy's eyes are looking (the eyes, of course, being controlled by the joystick).

Food thrown by the chefs can be dodged. If two are approaching from opposite directions, move out
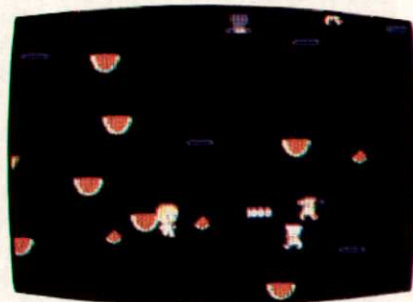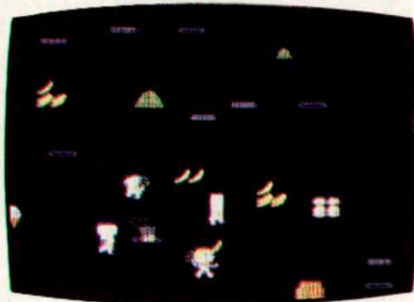
Wherever good party animals are found can be heard the cry, "Food Fight!"

of the way as they hurl their bric-a-brac. Good timing will result in the chefs' knocking each other out instead of you!

Try to save whatever food-weapon(s) you may have picked up on one screen; it will carry over onto the next level, and you can begin that next level with a weapon already in hand. If you've been forced to fight and are about to reach the cone empty-handed, take a side step into a food patch (if there *is* one near the dripping cone) to "reload."

Never backtrack to pick up food. Always move forward! When a chef is in pursuit and readying to clobber you with a rotten tomato, *pause* long enough to aim the boy's eyes

and throw; *don't* reverse direction! Doing so will only allow the other chefs to crowd you more easily while the ice cream melts.

Chefs may occasionally travel together or even in groups of three. One throw of one piece of food will knock them all out if your aim is precise. Try to dodge the objects hurled by loners, and save your bananas, watermelons and so on for those chefs travelling in groups.

Two rules which should be adhered to for better gameplay are: (1) avoid the middle of the screen (where it is easy to become trapped by chefs approaching from every side), and (2) don't walk across the slots out of which the chefs appear (you'll slip right in).

BLACK WIDOW

As many as eight different insects can attack the player during any level in *Black Widow*. With the two *Robotron*-like joysticks, the player can maneuver the Black Widow spider anywhere on the web, firing in one direction while moving in another.

Mosquitos, Beetles and Hornets all become "grub steaks" ($) when shot. Move the spider in to tag the grub steaks for anywhere from fifty to five hundred points (the closer they are to the center of the web, the more points they're worth). The Beetle will attempt to devour the grub steaks, so move quickly to pluck them from the adhesive clutches of the web.

The Hornet will lay eggs on the $. Eggs must be pushed off the web before they grow into full-blown insects. Firing at an egg will elicit no reaction. They must physically be pushed from the web. Each egg pushed off awards the player from five hundred to twenty-five hundred points.

A Grenade bug explodes when shot. Because any other bugs caught in the resulting shock wave will die, try to avoid shooting Grenades until other pests creep into their vicinity. Make sure your spider is not caught up in an exploding Grenade's shock wave, otherwise it will perish.

A formation of Grenades will occasionally attack by themselves. When this happens, move *away* from the formation while firing.

Thunder Bugs also attack in formation. Again, move away while firing. Exploding all Thunder Bugs in the formation earns five thousand bonus points.

The Rocket Bug is invulnerable to your fire. They launch projectiles at you from *other* (regular) bugs which they first touch. Keep far away from Rocket Bugs since they generally touch bugs closest to the edge of the screen. Scoot away from projectiles, and fire at them as they whiz past. Each projectile that the player destroys will earn him/her a respectable one thousand points.

The web itself will sometimes change color. When a strand of the web turns red, it marks a boundary which the player cannot cross. Red webbing must be moved *around*. Keep your eyes open for a change in the color of the webbing in order to avoid becoming trapped as a new bug-wave rains down dozens of ornery insects.

BUCK ROGERS

The novice *Buck Rogers* player should start off using the "slow speed" button only, until a sense of familiarity with the different screens sets in. Your quarters will last longer that way. Ride at high speed only when you know the game.

Use some judgment when firing at approaching enemy objects. Since *Buck Rogers* really puts players' sense of depth perception to the test, it's not advantageous to guess at which angles the enemy is approaching!

Attempt to destroy the flying saucers while they are still fairly distant from your ship. The closer they get, the more deadly they become. One tactic which will help is to shoot at an oncoming enemy repeatedly, moving your line of fire along a vertical or horizontal axis. The resulting "arcing" motion of your ship's fire is likely to strike the target since the objects in this game take erratic flight paths. Of course, as any target moves in closer to the ship, the width or height of the "arc" will have to increase accordingly.

Duck under saucers which escape obliteration and come swooping in close to your ship. Swing to either side, as required, to avoid a head-on collision.

When more than one target appears on screen, aim at the most distant target, making sure to avoid contact with the closer object.

Fire at the giant walking robots

when their legs touch the ground. Fly low, aim high. The robots are difficult to hit when in motion. Anticipate their next move and be ready to fire. As they close in, be prepared to shift position from right to left and vice versa, since they are able to crush your ship.

When shooting at targets in space, aim from the borders of the screen. Pull the ship up as enemy saucers dive forward. Obliterate as many ships as possible while they remain in formation. Dodge projectiles by scooting your ship back and forth across the bottom of the screen.
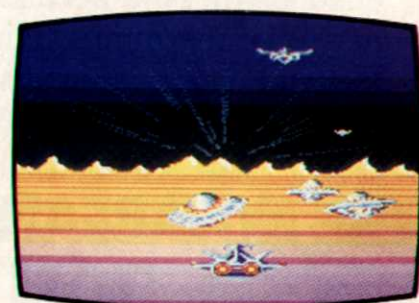
Buck Rogers **is in many ways a standard space shoot-em-up, but the lustrous graphics set it apart.**

IT WON'T DOMINATE A ROOM.
UNTIL YOU LET IT.

The Novabeam® Model Two is a portable video projection monitor that makes it easy and affordable to bring the excitement of high quality, three tube projection television home.

With a VCR or TV tuner as a source, the Model Two projects a bright, clear 5'4" diagonally measured picture directly onto any matte white wall or roll-down screen in a darkened room. And because it combines new engineering techniques with Henry Kloss's innovative Novatron® tube/optics technology, the Model Two delivers superb performance.

For viewing, the Model Two is easily moved into position since it is no larger or heavier than a 19" color "portable" set. Yet it can be tucked away against a wall when not in use. The price — just $2200* — makes the Model Two even easier to bring home.

Call 800-343-1155 for full information and the name of your nearest Novabeam dealer. In Massachusetts, call collect 617-547-6363.
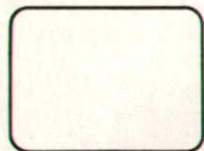
NOVABEAM®

THE NOVABEAM MODEL TWO PORTABLE MONITOR.
PROJECTION TV THAT'S RIGHT AT HOME.

In The Eye Of The Beholder-
Videogames As Art

by Stephen Bent

N.Y. Times *(May 11, 2051): London, U.K.—In the midst of global depression, the art world witnessed yet another record sale today as fierce bidding by collectors packing Sotheby's Hyde Park gallery here climaxed in the auctioning of an original ROM by American artist Dona Bailey. Representatives of Indian asteroid-mining magnate Sarva Ramakrishnan bid a reported 23M currency units for Bailey's 1982 "Centipede," the largest amount ever paid for a visual display from the late 20th-century video period.*

In 1925, the Brooklyn Museum of Art displayed an upright glass rectangle, roughly nine feet high and five feet wide, from which lead wire and tin foil hung in a tangle, the work of a French artist named Marcel Duchamp. The piece, entitled "Large Glass" (subtitle: "The Bride Stripped Bare by her Bachelors, Even"), was dismissed at the time by critics and other artists who questioned whether "Large Glass" could even be called art.

Almost a decade earlier, Duchamp had submitted a urinal, under the title "Fountain," to a large Parisian exhibition of contemporary art. As you might expect, the critics also dumped on him then and "Fountain" was rejected by the exhibition's organizers.

Yet now Duchamp is recognized as a major figure in the development of modern art who, perhaps
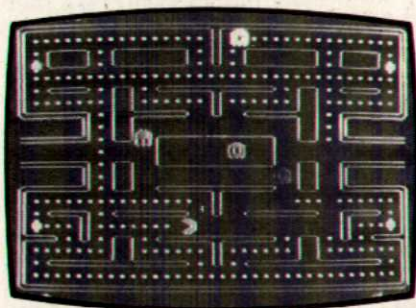
Pac-Man *is a much-copied game.*

more than anyone else, transformed the way we look at art and the world. And "Large Glass" is generally considered his masterpiece.

In February of this year, the Corcoran Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C. opened for a single evening a "Video ARTcade," replete with coin-operated games, wall-to-wall. Proceeds from the "ARTcade" exhibition, which attracted establishment luminaries of every description, went to a scholarship fund for the Gallery's School of Art. But the underlying significance of the show didn't escape that noted social critic and art connoisseur, Art Buchwald, who told the *Washington Post*:

"I have a feeling that if they covered up the coin slots on the machines, people would call it art. Videogames *are* art."

Undoubtedly, many people would strongly take issue with Buchwald's basic premise: namely, that videogame displays are worthy of

display in their own right, as embodiments of the game designers' artistic expression. But if the shifting perception of Duchamp's work is any guide, those who now deny that videogame art is really "Art" with a capital A, may someday find themselves outdistanced by critical and popular opinion alike, maybe even before the year 2051.

And, oddly enough, the courts are pointing the way.

It happened like this: about the time coin-operated videogames really started to hit it big, say, around 1977-78, after the basic skullwork needed to get games like *Breakout* and *Space Invaders* on line had already been done, the imitators began moving in for easy pickings. Often operating from offshore havens like Taiwan and Hong Kong, they might expropriate a game design outright, knocking off duplicates of a best-seller for sale to worldwide markets. Other times, they would tinker with a popular format, make some minor alterations, and then market the result under a confusingly similar tag, like *Pac-Pac* for a thinly disguised rip-off of the original *Pac-Man*.

The games' creators were frantic to protect their stake in the booming market, of course, and they began casting about for some kind of countermeasure, a legal weapon they could wield effectively against the legions of plagiarists. Patenting

the games wouldn't do—although a game can be patented, patent protection is generally ill-suited for the task, being too expensive and too difficult to obtain to be useful in most cases.

Instead, the game designers turned to a traditional harbor for artists and writers, a form of proprietary protection called copyright. Of ancient lineage, copyright in the United States is based nowadays principally on the U.S. Constitution, which empowers Congress "to promote the progress of science (meaning, in 18th-century parlance, to enhance the sum of general knowledge) . . . by securing for limited times to authors (that is, those who create) . . . the exclusive right to their . . . writings." And Congress has been doing just that since 1790, when it passed the first Copyright Act, by granting "authors" the right under federal law to prevent, for a prescribed period, the unauthorized copying of their creations.

The safeguards of the current Copyright Act are invoked with relative ease, more quickly, and much less expensively than is possible via the patent route. Consequently, the copyright seemed tailor-made for the harried videogame designers. But there was a catch—to succeed, the designers (or, more accurately, their lawyers) would have to shoehorn the essence of an electronic game into a constitutional pidgeonhole labeled "writing," for without a "writing" to copy in the first place, there could be no action for copyright infringement later.

So just what *is* a "writing," anyway? Clearly, it isn't only a concatenation of written symbols, a literary work in the narrowest sense. Instead, the U.S. Supreme Court has liberally interpreted "writing" in copyright law to include "*any* physical rendering of the fruits of creative intellectual or aesthetic labor" (my emphasis). The Copyright Act now in force contains a non-inclusive list of seven broad categories of copyrightable "works of authorship," including dramatic works, musical works, pantomimes, and audiovisual works, as well as literary works.

The strategists planning the legal counterattack for the game designers focused on the latter two categories, theorizing that the display of a videogame could qualify as an audiovisual work, while the computer program driving the display was arguably a literary work. After all, movies were routinely copyrighted as audiovisual works, and a videogame display is sort of like a movie, isn't it? And weren't computer programs said to be "written" in a particular "language," just like any book? I mean, nothing could be more straightforward than the copyrightability of videogames, right?

Listen, bubbala, if things were that simple, you wouldn't need attorneys.

In fact, the complexities of the situation quickly became apparent when, in the early 80s, a flurry of copyright infringement actions were filed in district courts across the country by plaintiffs like Midway Manufacturing Company, which held U.S. copyrights for *Pac-Man* and *Galaxian*, among others, and Atari, which had also acquired rights as a licensee under the copyright to *Pac-Man*'s audiovisual display. The named defendants in these suits, including individuals and smaller companies like Omni Video Games (accused of knocking off copies of the game *Scramble*) as

well as biggies like North American Philips Consumer Electronics (whose *K.C. Munchkin* maze-chase game was alleged to infringe the *Pac-Man* audio-visual copyright), threw up a barrage of threshold defenses, the principal themes of which were (a) videogames are not copyrightable and, (b) even if they were, the scope of protection afforded would be narrow indeed.

The line of reasoning leading to the conclusion that videogames can't be copyrighted drew support early on from arguments generated by a parallel controversy swirling around attempts to copyright computer software and firmware. Experts in copyright law had divided during the late-70s over whether sets of computer instructions, contained in a stack of punch cards, on a storage disk, or in a circuit etched on a silicon wafer, were copyrightable in the same way that music recorded on magnetic tape is copyrightable. One school of thought held that a computer program was neither a "writing" nor a "literary work," since its role was not to communicate, but rather to direct and control a machine, much the way a paper roll carrying the appropriate pattern of holes can cause a player-piano to play a tune. The program was considered when it was used, essentially a part of the
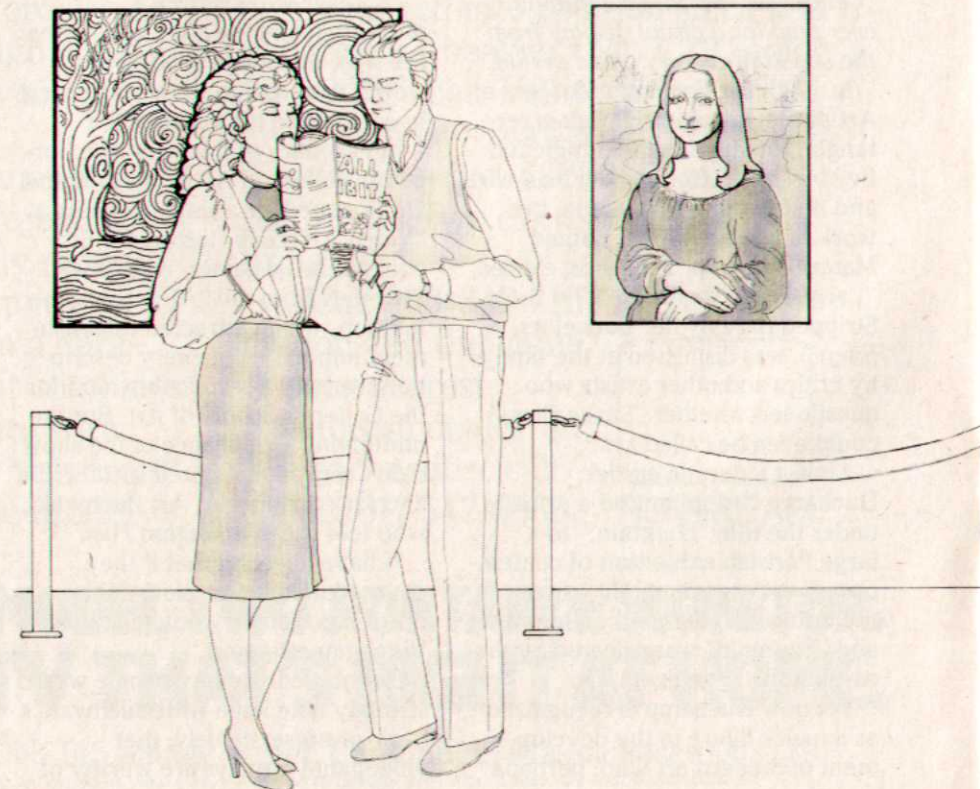
computer and, therefore, utilitarian in nature, properly the subject of patent law (if it were protectable at all), not copyright.

Adherents to this viewpoint also found no practical or legal distinction between a program designers' *idea* for a particular instruction set (definitely not copyrightable), the expression of that idea in some high-level computer language like FORTRAN (the "source program") or in a series of binary-coded machine commands to open and close switches (the "object code"), and a microcircuit embodying the object code (a ROM or some other memory device). For a computer program in any of these guises, they felt, idea and expression were inseparable—use of the former necessarily required use of the latter. Just as the owner of a cookbook copyright cannot prevent others from cooking a meatloaf according to a recipe in the cookbook, so too should the owner of a computer program copyright (if there were such a thing) be unable to prevent the copying of the program for purposes of use, say, by reverse-engineering a ROM in which the program is fixed.

All this was sweet music to defendants in the videogame cases. At once, they had readymade arguments both for the non-

copyrightability of the ROM-incarnated computer programs that drive videogame displays ("the programs are utilitarian and not covered by the Copyright Act") and, alternatively, for lending very limited protection under any program copyright found to exist ("since idea and expression are indistinguishable, the program copyright safeguards only against *identical* copying").

The idea/expression theory was also available to restrict coverage provided by the copyright to the videogame displays themselves. For example, when Atari and Midway Manufacturing teamed up to halt distribution of *K.C. Munchkin*, one of the primary rejoinders by North American Philips was that it had, at most, borrowed only the "idea" of *Pac-Man* (a maze-chase game in which a player guides a central figure through a labyrinth while avoiding collisions with independently moving opponent figures), not copied the game's "expression."

But the typical first-line defense of an alleged infringer of a videogame's audiovisual copyright was the contention that game displays weren't really "audiovisual works" within the meaning of the Copyright Act. Pointing to the statutory definition—"audiovisual

works" are "works that consist of a series of related images"—the accused copyists reasoned that, while a given videogame display certainly consists of "images," the images aren't in a "related series," and hence do not constitute copyrightable subject matter.

A "related series of images," they argued, must have a predetermined, fixed sequence, with a set beginning, middle, and end. Since the elements of a game display—the gargoyles, spaceships, gongs, and such—have no predictable pattern, in that their sequence differs each time the game is played, the display no more presents a "related series of images" than does a kaleidoscope.

According to the defendants, copyright to such a display, authored not by the game's designer but by the interaction of player and computer, would, if given legal substance, cover virtually every permutation of sound and image that has or ever will result from operaton of the videogame. Surely, the defendants cried, surely Congress could not have intended such an abomination when it defined "audiovisual work" in the Copyright Act!

Devilishly clever, this logic, but there was one problem.

Almost nobody bought it.

In case after case, before either a trial judge or appellate tribunal, the interests of the copyright owners have been largely vindicated. Most courts faced with the issue have concluded that game displays and programs are independently copyrightable when they're embodied (as the statute requires) in a tangible medium, such as a ROM, and are capable of being perceived, if only with the aid of a machine. Moreover, the protection available under a videogame copyright has been judged, with few exceptions, to be no more or less limited than the protection provided by copyrights in other kinds of works. Elements of a copyrighted game which are expressed in a non-stereotypical manner, with even a modicum of originality (say, *Pac-Man*'s "ghosts," as opposed to a simple maze grid), are covered.

One after another, then, the arguments against the

Subterranea, *new from Imagic for the Atari VCS, is a streaking treasure hunt through monster-infested caves that combines strategy and reflex.*
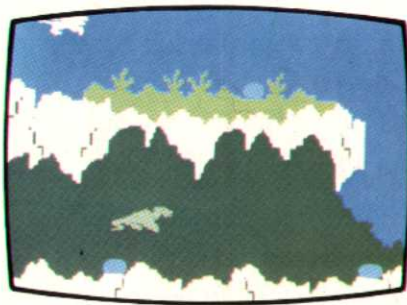
That's a switch! The player takes the role of a dragon protecting its young in Imagic's Wing War *for the VCS, Intellivision and ColecoVision.*
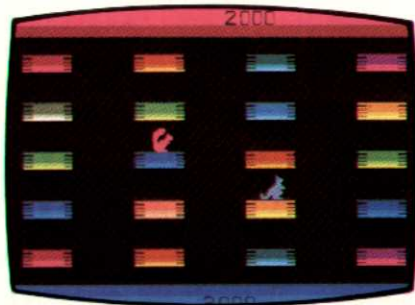
In Imagic's Quick Step *for the VCS, and later for ColecoVision and Intellivision, two players must capture positions on a quickly descending field.*

Up to four players can sleuth competively or cooperatively in CBS Electronics Mystery Master: Murder by the Dozen *for the Apple computers and the IBM-PC. Twelve different murder cases are contained in the game.* Roc 'N Rope *(right) from Interlogic, is an arcade game in which the player, armed with a rope gun, searches for a Roc while avoiding dragons, cavemen and creatures.*
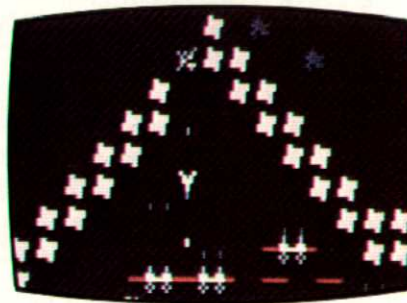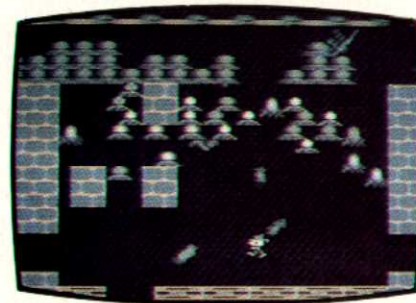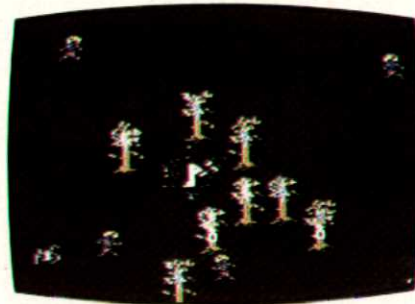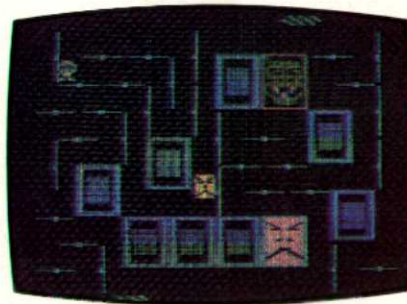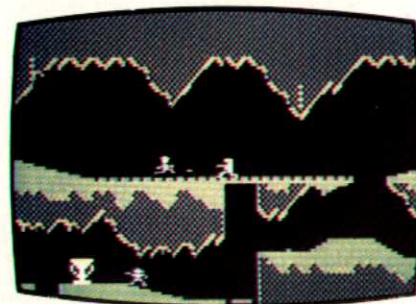
One of the most innovative software companies producing games for the Atari computers is Synapse. A sampling of their current releases: Pharoah's Curse *(top left) is a multi-level, multi screen quest.* Drelbs *(top center) is a grid chase taking place on the cusp of two dimensions.* Necromancer *(top right) invites the player to bring forests to life and work many other wonders.* Shamus II *(second row left) is a shameless follow-up to the original best seller, again involving the dastardly and elusive Shadow.* Survivor *(bottom row center) is a space shoot-em-up in which four players can play simultaneously and cooperatively.* Shadow World *(bottom row right) is also simultaneous/cooperative.*

Let Us Praise

I would like to tell you why I purchase your magazine over the rest, after sampling each videogame magazine extensively.

Unlike *Electronic Fun,* which stocks its letters column with fictitious, contrived fans endlessly praising their magazine, your letters are honest and genuine. You've even printed quite a bit of criticism about your own product (admirable, though an industry no-no). Bravo! As a managing editor of a national adult magazine who conceives and writes falsified letters each month (the industry norm, readers), I find it easy to sort the contrived from the authentic.

Unlike *Electronic Games,* which publishes mostly copy-padding (full page art without copy, etc.), obsolete and sometimes inaccurate information, your magazine has the *meatiest* copy—about three or four hours' reading time, cover to cover. Your competitors aren't even close.

Finally, you people have *chutzpah!* Your writers are cocky, cool, intelligent. Your reviews are honest, though if anything, too kindly toward the manufacturers. Of course, this is much less true of your magazine than the others, many of which often praise value-less games. How about calling some products simply terrible? I'm anxiously awaiting the day when someone will bury *Pac-Man* and its mindless ilk once and for all.

Incidentally, one comment from your July issue bears re-emphasis. One of your reviewers recommended that Coleco begin innovating some creative, fun games that aren't mazes, slide 'n shoots or played-out arcade licenses. Absolutely true! But let's be realistic. If they did, no one would tire quickly of their cartridges and buy new ones. Witness *Donkey Kong's* intentionally repetitive, one-measure "music," which simulates Chinese Water Torture after a mere minute of play.

Case in point, as they say.

"Nils C. Bols"
New York, NY

Thank you, "Nils," we couldn't have written a better letter ourselves.
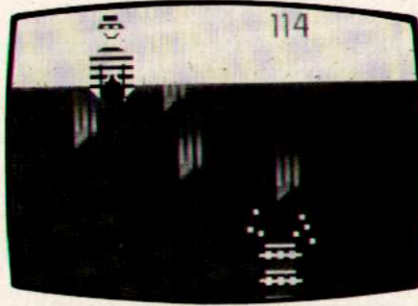
Kaboom!

Paddle Flap

On page 22 of the July '83 issue, E.C. Meade states that the ColecoVision joystick has a knob on it that serves as a paddle for their Atari 2600 expansion module. If she took the time out to play any game at all, she would have known that it is not a paddle, or any other control at all, as it is rigid and does not move. This is a control?

R. Riccobone
Mt. Vernon, NY

Kaboom! *works just fine on our ColecoVision, and it's a paddlegame. Your move, Professor Riccobono.*

'Synergy!' Take That!

I enjoy reading your magazine, but I really get irritated when your critics, Jim Clark and E.C. Meade, put down a ColecoVision game just because they don't like the arcade version of that game.

For example, in July's issue Jim gave *Space Fury* a bad review because he doesn't like the arcade version. E.C. put down *Donkey Kong Jr.* for the same reason, and neither one of them liked *Gorf.* Jim said it was because of its slide and shoot premise, and E.C. didn't like it because she says she can't handle five games in one cartridge.

Don't get me wrong. I like your magazine, and I will continue to buy it. I just hope that J.C. and E.C.M. will take an impartial view of cartridges the next time they review them.

Matt Weaver
Aurora, OH

There can't help but be a negative synergy between arcade games and home counterparts. Metaphorically speaking, if you don't like a movie

on the big screen, chances are it won't appeal to you on videotape either.

Numb Clubs

I would like to make other videogame players aware that they may not always get what is promised by joining manufacturer's videogame clubs. I have had two bad experiences, and I doubt if I will ever rejoin these clubs, or any new ones. The Imagic Numb Thumb Club's response, for example, has been abysmal. It would appear that these clubs consider the dollars more important than the satisfaction of their members.

In February '83 I mailed my two dollars in to Imagic; to date, I have yet to receive any posters or material. I have sent two follow-up requests asking for the reason for delay; I attempted to phone them, still with no results. I know that they received my check, as it was cashed by them some time ago.

The Atari club was somewhat better, although the promised "bonus" *Super Breakout* poster was never received. As with Imagic, follow up requests were never answered.

I hope this may serve to enlighten those who wish to join clubs in the future. Granted, my case may be an isolated incident, but it makes bad advertising and bad business just the same. If you can offer me a remedy, I would greatly appreciate any help.

Mark R. Schultz
Cleveland, OH

We contacted the people at Imagic and Atari and told them your story. Both of them apoligized for the inconvenience and said they would straighten out the matter. Let us know how things turn out.

Space Fury

Complex Inferiority

Your staff has been very diligent in reporting companies whose home videogames lack originality, are rip-offs of established games, or are lacking in gameplay. One company you seem to have overlooked is Coleco, odd as that may sound.

While Coleco has done an admittedly fine job producing games for ColecoVision, they have failed miserably when programming those same games for Atari or Intellivision. In fact, for the most part, the Atari and Intellivision games should not even be titled the same as their ColecoVision counterparts, because of the lack of similarity. Judging Coleco on the basis of their Atari and Intellivision offerings alone, I would rate their efforts very poorly indeed.

Larry Miles
Independence, MO

Our Nybbles columnist, Profundo, claims that Coleco deliberately produces inferior workmanship on their VCS games, perhaps to encourage purchases of ColecoVision units. Twisted and unlikely as it sounds, (s)he claims to have off-the-record substantiation. Both Activision and Imagic have shown that the VCS system is capable of some excellent graphics.

Burning Questions

Does Activision or Imagic plan to produce games for ColecoVision?

Vijay Reddy
Jackson Heights, NY

Activision has nothing in the works for ColecoVision, but they do not rule out that possibility for the future (of course). Imagic has a few titles slated, the first of which will be Wing War.

If I sold my Atari 2600 and bought a ColecoVision, would my Atari cartridges fit into ColecoVision? If not, is there something that I can buy to make them fit? Also my friend has an Intellivision, and has the same questions.

Buddy McLaughlin
Garland, TX

Cartridges made to fit the Atari 2600, 5200, Intellivision, and ColecoVision will fit only those systems for which they were designed. However Coleco does market an adaptor for their console which will accept 2600 games. Reportedly they were considering an Intellivision
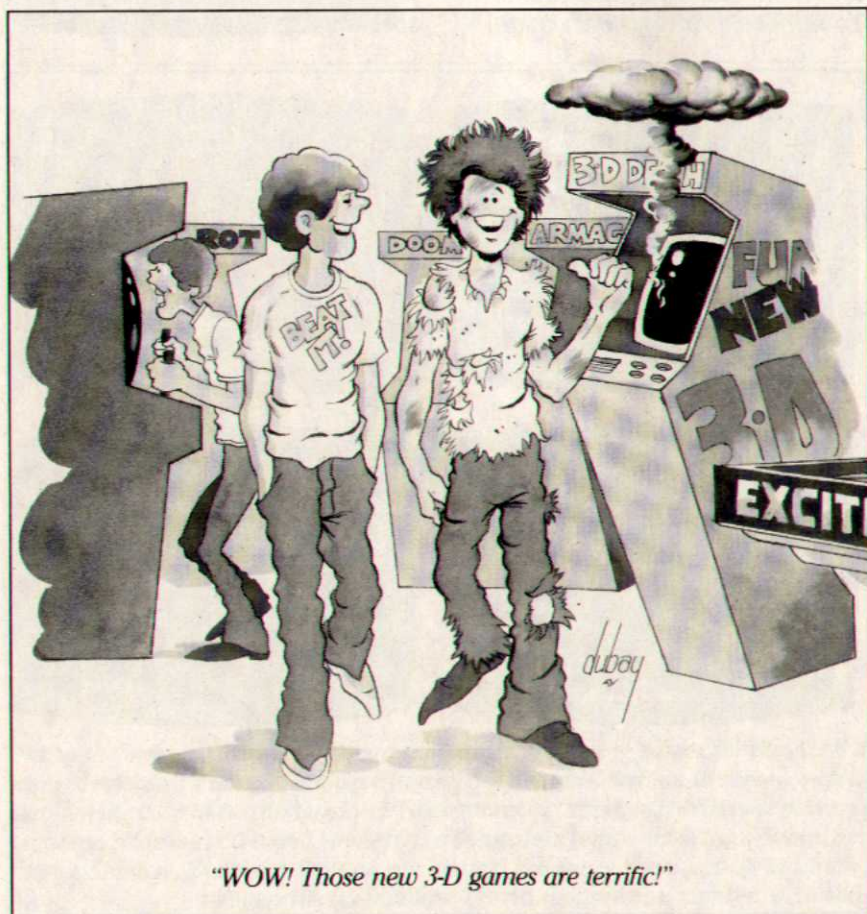
"WOW! Those new 3-D games are terrific!"

Ramblings
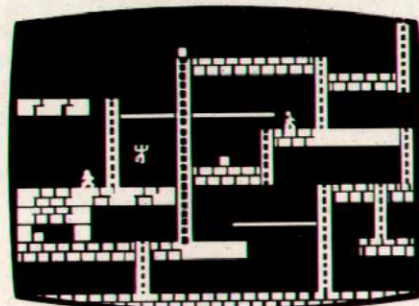
Lode Runner
Broderbund
Apple II

Just when you thought no one could do anything new with the *Space Panic* theme of running up stairs and dropping foes into hastily dug holes, along comes *Lode Runner.*

Play isn't significantly different from the other games of this type. The gamer has five protagonists, losing one whenever the hero tumbles into a pit he/she has dug, or runs smack into a guard of the Bungeling Empire. Guards can be run-over when they fall into a pit, and they drop whatever gold they were carrying—which the player retrieves.

The holes refill after a few seconds; if a guard is in one at such times, it will perish. Players must dig pits enough in advance to ensure this entrapment.

Despite overall familiarity, there are some *very* appealing touches: tightrope-like bars between levels, which must be traversed hand-over-hand; ladders that only appear at certain times; trapdoors, and undiggable floors.

Overall, play is quite fast; the guards are not only fleet but relentless. There are 150 rooms to explore, and the animation is superb.

Special controls allow the player to slow down or accelerate overall game speed, and to freeze the action. There is also a high score listing which accomodates player autographs.

Of particular appeal is the ability for players to create their own screens. The "props" and structural pieces of the game are represented by numbers on the keyboard; by moving the cursor around you can build and populate the screen any way you wish. This can be saved, though only on your own initialized disk, not the master.

Lode Runner can be played either with a joystick or the keyboard.
—*E.C. Meade*

Old Ironsides
Xerox Education Software
Apple II

If you ever wanted *American Heritage* magazine to come to life, this high seas adventure will shiver your timbers. If all you want is an action adventure, this may be a tad stodgy for you.

Old Ironsides pits two early nineteenth century, three-masted sailing vessels one against the other. Two players huddle over the keyboard or paddles to control their ship. The object is to sink your foe. This is accomplished by maneuvering to fire your cannon or to ram. Inflict enough damage or cause your opponent's powder magazine to explode, and the encounter becomes an ex-encounter.

The view is from above. The graphics are ornate, like etchings come to life. The hard, fast blasts from the cannon are particularly evocative of a sea battle. There is also a compass to keep track of your direction when you sail off-screen, and scoring dials that let you know how badly your vessel is damaged.

What there *isn't* is a whole lot of excitement. The game is a bit too true to life: in close quarters there's a lot of fast action, but that tends to be of extremely limited duration (whoever is getting the tar blasted out of them isn't going to hang around). The rest of the time you're prowling, and while there is a cat-and-mouse appeal in this, it can become boring, particularly if both ships are off the screen—euphemistically referred to as "fog" by the designers.

The fog, of course, has strategic value: you can't be hurt if you're in it. Graphically, though, there isn't a whole lot to mesmerize you in the blank screen.

A much higher view, with harbors, land masses, actual rolling fog banks, and so forth, would have made this much more exciting.
—*E.C. Meade*

Mystery Message
Social Systems Corporation
IBM-PC.

How about a fast-paced game with an intellectual challenge? *Mystery Message* is just that.

The message contains one or more words. Dashes are displayed showing the positions of letters in the message. The category of the message (such as Person, Place, or Thing) is indicated. Players take turns attempting to decipher the message.

A player has twenty seconds to choose a letter. Every occurrence of that letter in the message is displayed. The player then receives an amount of money for each correct letter.

All of that is simple enough. However there are a few twists which make the game even more interesting. The player is allowed to guess only consonants. To display the vowels, the player must buy them. Although each player accumulates money throughout the game, only the player who correctly guesses the phrase keeps his money for the next game. Consequently you must decide if the location of an "E" is worth $1000. You must keep in mind that your opponent(s) will also benefit from that information if you are still not able to decipher the message.

Other strategies are involved in

this game. The dollar value of the next letter you guess is determined randomly by the computer.

Occasionally the word "Broke" appears instead of a value. If that happens, you lose all the money you have accumulated during this round. Consequently each time you decide to guess a letter, you gamble your entire winnings.

The player continues to guess consonants or buy vowels as long as (s)he is successful. If the player thinks (s)he knows the message, (s)he types a guess. If it is wrong, the next player takes over. If (s)he is right, his/her winnings from this round are added to the total, and the next round begins.

There are five hundred phrases incorporated into the game. They may be selected sequentially or at random. The game can be played a very long time without repeating a phrase. Even if a phrase is repeated, it is not likely to be recognized at first. All the blanks look alike.

Messages range from "Columbo" to "old soldiers never die, they just fade away." How about "N--L--R D-S--M-M-NT"? It is surprising how indecipherable a message without its vowels can be.

It is fun to play this game by yourself as well as with others. As solitaire, it is you against the clock and the money wheel. Against others, you have more than twenty seconds to make each decision, but that decision could be your last.

It is interesting that in an age when new technologies, and new concepts in gaming, seem to be springing up daily, time-honored motifs such as this one are adapted to the new wave and are rediscovered by a new generation of players.

Mystery Message is a fast, nicely written game. There are plenty of audio and visual phenomena to enhance the excitement of play and strategies can be devised which will improve your chances of winning. It is easy to learn, but is is not a game which you will master. You will probably be playing this game long after games requiring only fast reflexes have lost their appeal.

—*Dale W. Rupert*
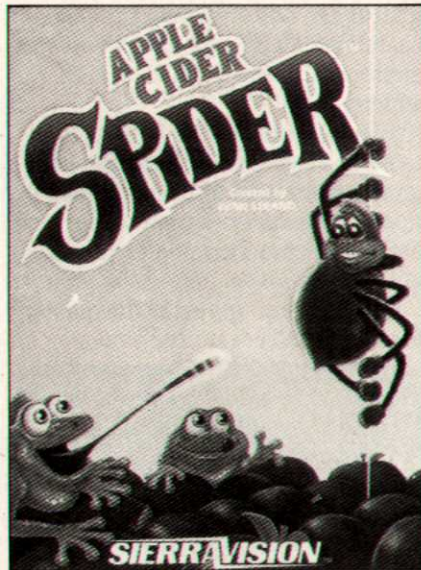
Apple Cider Spider
Sammy Lightfoot
Sierravision Games
Apple Computers

All right, what is it you want exactly? What do you play computergames for? For mental stimulation? For an infusion of imaginative concepts? For a cerebral exercise in strategy and tactics? For an escape into another world; a world of both futuristic technology and ancient legend? Or do you play computergames simply to have the same sort of stimulation you can get with your videogaming console or at an arcade?

To put it bluntly, Sierravision's *Apple Cider Spider* and *Sammy Lightfoot* are variants of the *Donkey Kong* school of games—mastering the skill of getting a screen creature from one place to another without getting squished so many times you give up in disgust. They do not add a new dimension to computergame playing, nor do they utilize the unique game playing features of a computer. They are but pale versions of arcade concepts.

Sammy was worked up by Warren Schwader seemingly in *Donkey Kong Jr.'s* image. In both games, there is a whimsical character bouncing about the screen. The little simian's fervent desire is to free his dad from the clutches of his swarthy mustachioed captor. Lightfoot's wish is to be an action star of the

silver screen.

Schwader and Sierra On-Line Incorporated hastily inform the player that the three scenarios Sammy plays out are actually auditions. Sammy must prove his ability to emote like Clint Eastwood by traversing all sorts of obstacles and confronting a pumpkin with sunglasses. That's right, a pumpkin with sunglasses. Are you beginning to get the feeling this audition concept is just an excuse to compute an otherwise pointless exercize in hand/eye coordination?

Anyway, here goes—lights, computer, action! Sammy starts under a few platforms, decked out with ropes, trampolines, and rolling killer balls. He must bounce onto the platforms using the trampolines, leap from platform to platform, swing on the ropes when the gap is too wide, and get all the way to the top, before the bonus timer runs out or he falls or gets clobbered.

Act one, scene two—having survived the first audition, Lightfoot must run across disappearing platforms, avoiding other errantly floating platforms, in order to reach a flying carpet. Once he reaches that safely he goes on a ride, only the rug is moving faster than he is. Sammy must run in place just enough not to fall off the back or get ahead of himself.

The third and final audition has

A million laughs

SPARE CHANGE™ You are the game-happy owner of the Spare Change Arcade. Two fun-loving, but overworked Zerks—the main characters in your most popular game—have broken loose and are trying to retire from the business. You try madly to stop them. If you can get a coin into the juke box, the Zerks get so caught up in the music, they drop everything and start dancing. You also try popping popcorn and making a pay phone ring—which immediately makes the Zerks stop, answer and start a wild conversation. If you "win" the game, there are rib tickling cartoons by the Zerks to reward your efforts. It's a game full of sight gags, surprises and comedy. From the best. Brøderbund! **For the Apple® II, II + and IIe. Coming soon for the Atari® home computers in disk format.**
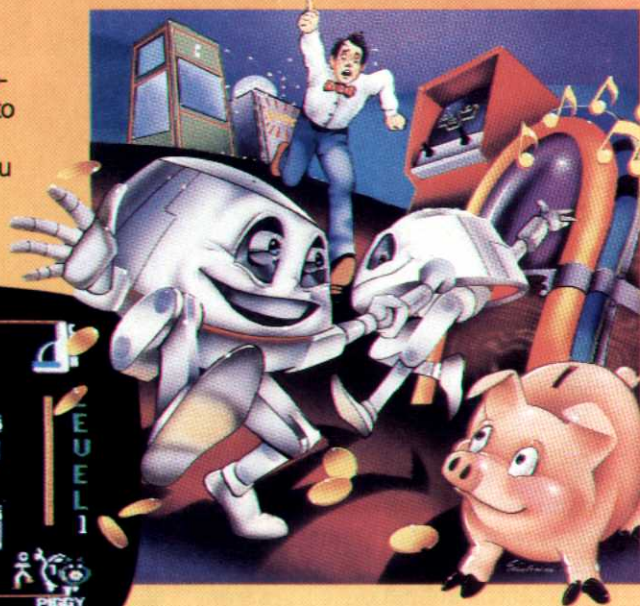
and an endless challenge

LODE RUNNER™ Here's a game that will never stop challenging you. That's because Lode Runner is more than a spellbinding, fast-action game with its 150 different mind-boggling game screens. Lode Runner is also an easy-to-use Game Generator that lets you create your own games. Without any knowledge of programming, you can easily design unique Lode Runnner screens, then bring them to action-packed life. You will maneuver through scene after scene, running, jumping, drilling passages and outfoxing enemy guards in a secret underground hideaway as you pick up chests of gold stolen from citizens of the Bungeling Empire. There's no end to the thrills, chills and challenge. Of course, it's from Brøderbund! **For the Apple II, II + and IIe. Coming soon for the: Atari home computers (disk and cartridge); Atari 5200™ Super System; Commodore 64™; VIC-20™; IBM® PC.**
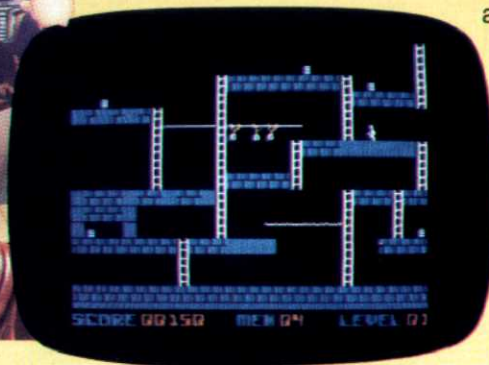
Ask your Brøderbund dealer for sneak previews.

Brøderbund Software Discover the Difference

1938 Fourth Street   San Rafael, CA 94901

computereyes

COMPUTER GRAPHICS

by Dale W. Rupert

The inspiration for the development of motion picture film is commonly attributed to a child's toy, a flip book. Live action film begat animation, and now, hundreds of begats later, the magic wand of today, the computer, is capable of creating animations of varying quality and complexity.

The term 'animation' comes from the Latin 'animus' meaning 'to make alive, fill with breath.' The best that the computer can do is to create an image on the video screen that *appears* to be alive.

The principle of computer graphics is not all that different from the flip book. Draw an object on the screen. Erase the object. Redraw the object at a slightly different position on the screen. Erase it, over and over. Each time the object is redrawn, it is offset from its previous position. If this sequence of ERASE, DISPLACE, REDRAW is repeated rapidly enough, it appears that the object is moving. Fortunately, speed is one of the computer's long suits.

To move your spaceship, a dozen or more Alienships, and a stream of phaser bullets simultaneously on the same video display, handle each object individually. Display the current image on the screen. Calculate where the spaceship should move based upon the position of the joystick. Erase the spaceship and draw another one in the new location. Similarly determine the new position of each bullet and each Alienship based upon their current positions and their directions of motion. After each calculation, erase the old image from the screen and draw another image of the object in
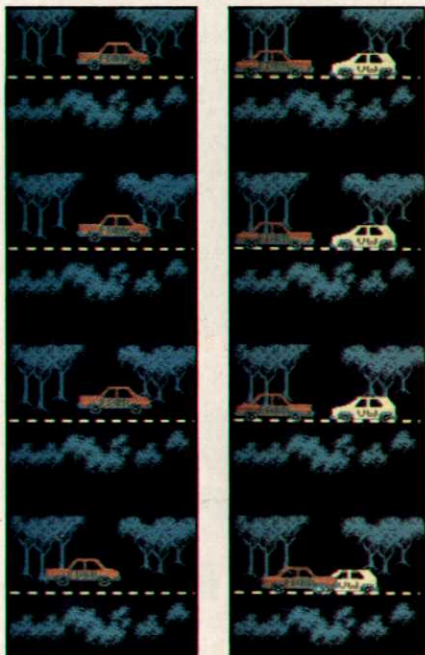
Great Marketing Wars of the 80s *was animated by Mary Beams on IPS' Movie Maker for Atari and Apple computers.*

its new position. If all the calculations can be done rapidly enough, our eyes see these individual, jerky movements as smooth, continuous motion.

Just how fast does all this occur? That depends upon the program and the computer. On an ordinary television, a completely new image is drawn thirty times each second. (Incidentally, the old image isn't erased. It just fades away before the next one is drawn.) Nothing is gained by calculating an updated image more frequently than every thirtieth of a second. In fact, as few as two or three images per second can produce animation, although the motion is jerky.

How does the computer know that one of our bullets has just dealt a fatal blow to an approaching Alienship? The new position of our bullet is determined and stored in memory. The computer then looks at the screen image to see if another object is already at the bullet's next location. The image color at each screen position is stored in a special video memory. If our next location has the color of an Alienship, the computer knows that the bullet has found its target.

What we've just seen is software-generated graphics: the computer program keeps track of each screen object. Some home computers have another graphics capability: sprite graphics. A sprite is a graphics object, defined by software but updated by hardware.

The computer program defines the shape, initial location, and motion of the sprite. From then on, the computer automatically moves the sprite on the screen without program intervention. This gives the program more time to do other things (such as keep score and make sounds).

Complex systems of sprites may be defined. A graphics image may actually be a composite of many layers or planes, with each layer having its own characteristics. Think of several thin sheets of clear plastic with one image on each. When the sheets are placed one in front of the next, you see a single two-dimensional picture. Each sheet may be moved independently of the others. So some images will pass behind or in front of other images.

One way software creates the screen images is with the PRINT

statement from BASIC. PRINT causes the computer to put a character or a string of characters onto the screen starting at the cursor's position.

Each computer's BASIC provides ways to move the cursor around on the screen. In fact there are about as many ways to move the cursor as there are types of computers: PRINT, LOCATE and TAB are some of them. Once the cursor is positioned, the desired character(s) may then be printed.

Today's home computers provide the programmer with a variety of BASIC statements for creating graphics. For example, the LINE, HLIN, and VLIN commands draw a line on the screen between endpoints. SET, PSET, RESET, and PRESET turn on or off one pixel at a time. GET and PUT define and manipulate entire screen objects. PEEK and POKE allow the program to look directly into the contents of the video memory and to update it.

Some versions of BASIC include statements which create circles, arcs, and rectangles. Other commands define screen and object colors or allow the programmer to change the resolution of the display.

The characters are not limited to numbers and letters. On some computers, special characters are available ranging from musical notes and spaceships to happy faces.

Animations on this and following pages courtesy of Digital Effects Lab of New York, Harold Friedman Consortium, Creative Alliance, and Mark Lindquist.

Print a character. Back up and erase it. Print it at a new location. Once again—animation! This type of graphics is called character graphics or block graphics. It is fairly easy to create and manipulate images. Unfortunately the resolution of the image's details is limited.

Resolution can be measured several ways. Typically a home computer displays "so many rows of so many characters per row." For example, a 64 by 16 video display prints 16 rows of characters with each row containing up to 64 characters.

Graphics resolution may be different from character resolution. Some of the highest resolution home computers today can manipulate up to 360 rows of 720 dots per row. The smallest screen object that a computer handles is called a pixel (from "picture element"). Let's see, 360 times 720, that's over a quarter of a million pixels! Keeping track of that many objects can be a workout.

To draw a line on the screen, the computer lights just the pixels along the line. If you look closely, you'll see it's really not a line, but a somewhat jagged collection of dots. The higher the resolution of the display, the more the dots resemble a smooth line.

Another distinctly different type of video graphics exists—vector graphics. With a vector graphics display, images are created from lines instead of dots. A special type of video monitor must be used for vector graphics. The normal television is capable of displaying only dot (or raster) graphics.

As prices have dropped, graphics capabilities in even the least expensive personal computers have rapidly expanded. Keep an eye on the
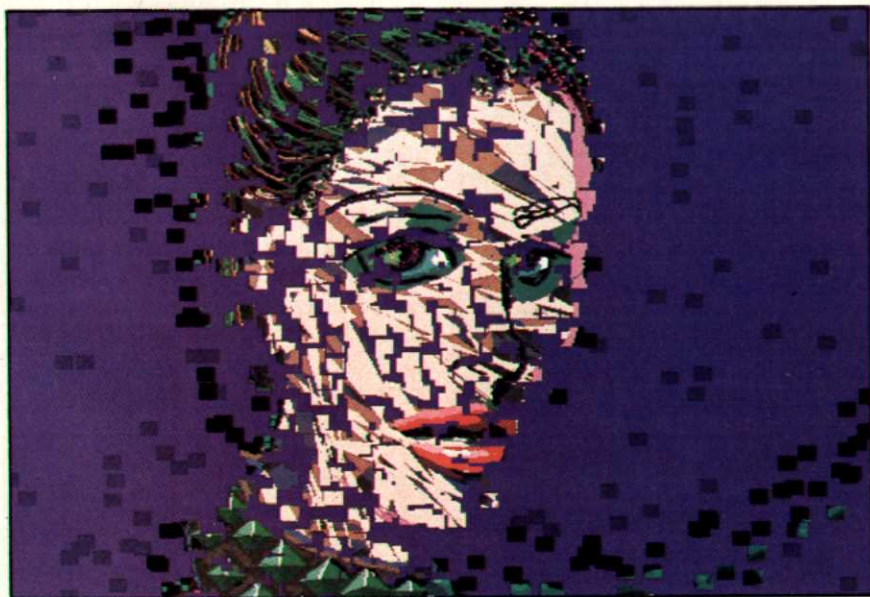
latest innovations and graphics effects in the arcade videogames and on television commercials. In a year or two those capabilities will be available (and affordable) for computerists at home. Flat, two-dimensional images will be replaced by shaded and textured images which appear as life-like as objects on normal television. In the meantime, the arcade machines will become even more sophisticated, and programs will be introduced that will boost a given computer's animation capabilities.

In the August issue of VCI, we covered a new four-part program for the Atari and Apple computers, a real-time animation system that requires no programming whatsoever: *The Movie Maker* from Interactive Picture Systems in New York. The user draws what are traditionally known as animation cels, composing a background and creating characters to move on the field or selecting characters from the program's menu. A number of special effects and sound effects can be layered.

In addition, there are several programs known as Game Generators, such as Broderbund's *The Arcade Machine,* which allow the user to create his or her own arcade game from a menu of characters and movements. Almost every home computer has a graphics program designed for it, such as Datamost's *Paint Wizard* for the Vic 20. Many of these will undoubtedly be updated to add full animation capabilities. And with new hardware peripherals such as light pens being released, it seems daily, almost any computer user can become a Hanna-Barberr-ian in his/her own home.

In less than a decade, commercial computer graphics have evolved from a black and white *Pong* game to today's visual spectacles. Tomorrow, crude technologies like holography may be introduced into computer animation systems, drawing ever finer the line between life . . . and life-like.

Digital Effects Inc. of New York City created these startling images for a teaser for the film Videodrome. *DEI is already working with holography to go beyond "mere" animation to creating entire walk-through environments.*

SEX
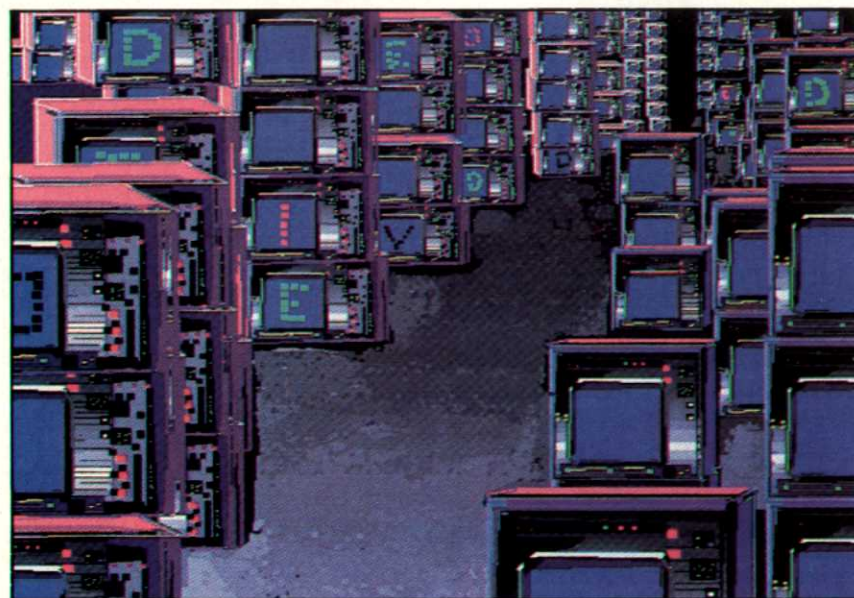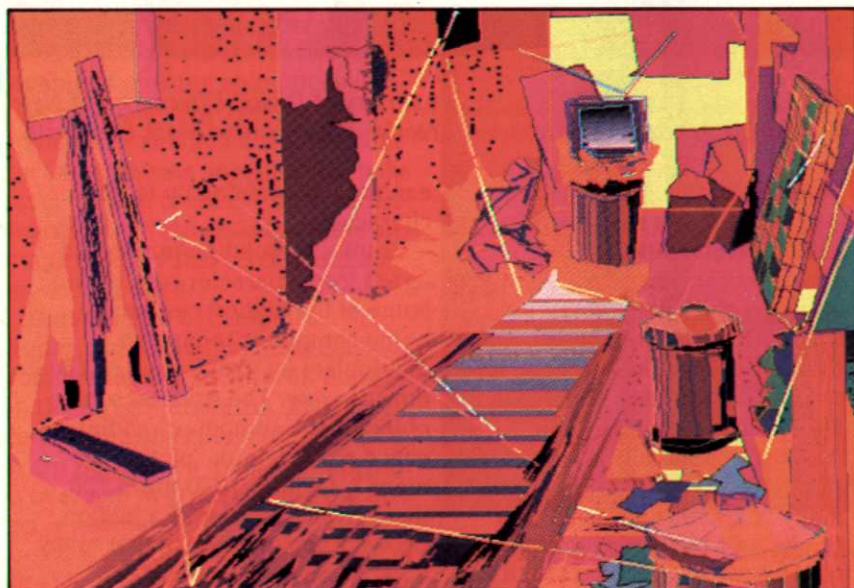
women or girls. It is one thing to look at films or pictures, but this acting out and seeing women as targets and seeing it as entertainment is just one step closer to seeing a woman and saying something to her that she would consider offensive."

"But", says Eugene Finkei, "a videogame doesn't get you excited. You can only stimulate people with something that is real. Our sex is not graphic. It is symbolic, if anything."

"If pornography is defined as arousing prurient interests," says Alan Roberts, "then I have yet to see anyone who has been aroused by *X-Man* or any other adult game."

Roberts admits that these games require special handling. "They don't fit in with the regular games and they don't fit in with adult movies. They're somewhere in between. They're adult, but not pornographic."

Pornographic or not, can these games incite the impressionable to violence toward women? "Absolutely untrue," insists Roberts. "Taking

FriskyTom, *an arcade game from Nichibutsu, bordered on the risqué.*

the Mystique game as an extreme example, I cannot believe that if a man saw that on the screen it would incite him to rape an Indian or any kind of woman. I mean, it is just not arousing. You do not get turned on by this.

"On the other hand, there are movies that are arousing. If you don't know how to deal with being turned on like that, I could see how it might lead to something in a negative vein. That could be a

serious problem, but I don't see it as enough reason to outlaw it. You had the Hinckley matter where a movie definitely had an effect on his infatuation with Jodie Foster and his attempt to kill the President. No question but that there was a correlation between them.

"But I don't think we can live our lives in fear and suppress everything that might incite someone to do something. We would have no books to read or shows to watch. There is a fine line here concerning who we create art for and how."

The arguments are familiar, conclusions are subjective, and the future of adult videogames is unclear. At the moment, Mystique games are still carried by some stores while the newer games struggle to see the light of day.

Although some will claim that uncensored videogames are dangerous, it is possible that some benefit will be realized from the controversy other than enjoyment in the home or money changing hands. Perhaps we will learn more about how media affects behavior as well as the nature (and the unforeseen consequences) of interaction

---

SHELL GAME

Custer's Revenge and two other X-rated videogames were created and manufactured by American Multiple Industries. AMI had contracts to use the Mystique label on the three games.

When the furor began over the content of *Custer's Revenge*—when distributors began to refuse to han-

dle it, when store owners began to return it, and when Atari leveled a lawsuit at AMI—the manufacturing, sales and distribution rights to the three games were briefly obtained by a company called Game Source.

But VCI has learned, through investigations by various diligent women's groups, that the rights to the games now fall under the jurisdiction of a New York company

called Playaround, which was recently formed by Joel Martin who was the partner of Stewart Kesten, the former president of AMI.

A spokesman for Playaround refused to discuss the company's history or its connection to AMI, saying that a discussion of the matter would serve no purpose. He did add that Playaround was developing ten new uncensored games.
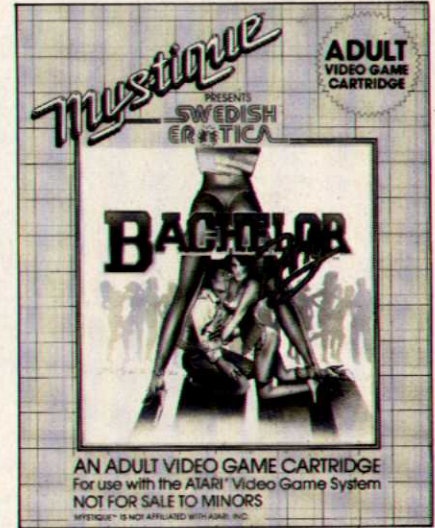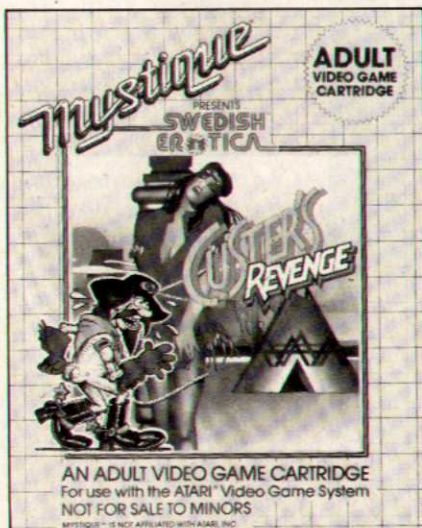
between computer and user. And maybe, just maybe, the games will serve to de-escalate what has been unfortunately termed "The Battle of the Sexes."

Alan Roberts: "I think it's very hard for most people to talk about sexual matters, especially with members of the opposite sex. I think that's where the problems lie. There's got to be a communication there. And I think there *is* communication when a feminist says that these games are sexist. That at least begins a communication. If what comes out of it is a definition of what is sexist and what is negative, then hopefully people are going to learn by that." □

EXPLOIT!

Spokesmen for the videogame and computer industry are quick to wax sanctimonious at the mention of X-Rated videogames. Yet, at the Consumer Electronics Shows, comely and underdressed women are inevitably hired to attract people to the display booths. We at VCI are shocked at such behavior and are only too glad, as members of the industry, to expose this exploitation and hypocrisy as graphically as possible.

ARCADIA

They are accepted at first, then build a wall with their own inexperience if they don't handle things well. I only know of one other major female executive in the industry and that's Lila Zitner over at Exidy. I imagine that she runs into the same situation I do. I sit down with a client and they're waiting to hear what comes out of my mouth. Very very often, an hour into the conversation I get the same comment. 'Boy, you're really something.' And that big smile."

As the business role of women changes and industry accepts the notion that women make up a sizable portion of the buying public, things will change. They will have to change if the companies wish to continue making profits. In the meantime, the likes of Harth, Haggens, Jarvis, and Lockhart will keep the female videogame character in mind.

"I don't believe anyone should get special consideration," Lockhart sums up. "I want to be judged on my abilities, not whether I'm male, female, black, chinese, pink , purple, or whatever. Sure, it doesn't work that way, but that's what I believe in." □

STAR WARS

levels. Travel in as straight a trajectory as possible. Obliterate all ground bases which appear in front of the ship to clear the flying area, and destroy all fireballs which are ejected from them. Fireballs which get by your line of fire can be avoided by swerving the ship to one side, but bring it back to the original position as quickly as possible and be ready to renew the attack.

Bases which appear at the sides of the video screen are easy targets and their fireballs pose little threat to the ship since they are flung away from the bases at angles which diverge from the ship's flight path.

When the towers approach, blast away the white tops. Two or three towers can be destroyed with a full swing of the laser gun; but again, fly at a low level. Towers are usually grouped in pairs. Fly through the

TAKING IT TO THE STREETS

Star Wars

"When playing this game it is best to remember that the fireballs are always going to be coming at you, so don't wait for them, just keep firing. You should pay more attention to the obstacles, especially in the higher rounds (where there are fewer fireballs). Also, when the computer gives you the all clear signal to fire at the exhaust vent, you will hear "You're all clear, kid". Don't wait to hear "kid"; fire as soon as you hear the word "clear". You'll hit the vent every time."

Rich Maruizio, Colin Krapp

Mappy

"You should change levels as much as possible, don't open the doors unless there's someone right behind you, and always try to open the microwave doors towards you while you are being chased. This way you'll be able to score extra points."

Toby L. Washington

Frenzy

"When hunting down the robots, shoot your way through the non-solid walls, rather than running around them, as you acquire more points that way. Also, shoot your way out through the side of the maze at the end of each screen. After all of the robots have been destroyed, go to one corner of the maze (lower right is best), a hole in the wall below you, and wait for the bouncing ball. You should be able to kill two of them before you have to run away. However try to avoid having a solid wall behind the ball, as when you do kill it off one of your stray shots may strike the wall and ricochet back at you."

David Smith

spaces between each pair. (Attempting to fly through a pair's com-ponents will result in a collision and loss of a force field unit). □
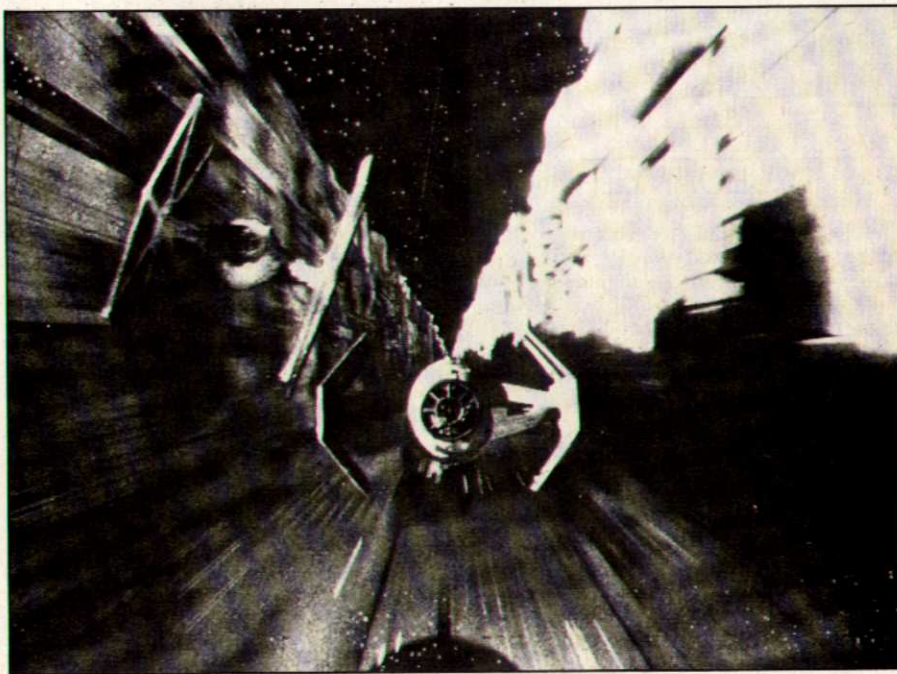
With tie fighters hot on his tail, Luke streaks toward the exhaust vent.

© LucasFilm 1977

From Altruism To Avarice:
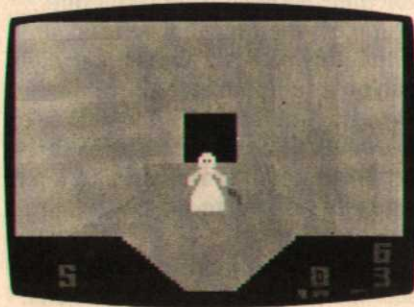# QUESTING GAMES

by Robert J. Sodaro

In the beginning there were the paddle games. Players, using cursors, bounced a ball back and forth at each other. Videogamers looked upon the paddle games and found them to be good.

In times that followed there came the alien invasion/combat games. The player and his home globe were set upon by marauding hordes of ravenous ETs who wished to subject the Earth to horrible, undisclosed atrocities.

And the gamers looked upon these fields of honor and smiled, for all was right with the world.

Yet in recent times, a nobler, more heroic gamer has arisen. This is the new breed of player who wishes to emulate his or her heroes of old, such as Jason and his search for the Golden Fleece; or perhaps (s)he imagines (s)he is a member of the Round Table of King Arthur, riding alongside him in his quest for the Holy Grail. These are the stuff of which legends—and hit cartridges—are made.

This is not to say that we have seen

The Swordquest *Medallion.*

the end of the "nuke the alien aggressor" games. Only that the pendulum has swung in a new direction. The popularity of *Dungeons & Dragons* and other role-playing games have pointed the way, while videogame designers continue to test the graphics, gameplay, and sound capabilities of the videogame units. Thus was born the quest game.

Here, the player interacts more intimately with the game. A prize, rather than points, is the focus of the same, and rescue is more highly prized than slaughter. All of the major videogame systems have, or will have, examples of the genre. Most

of the major software manufacturers have at least one or two in the works.

Quest games are those that contain a narrative, simple or complex, and that hold an overall goal in addition to a variety of obstacles. Some of the quest games offer a menu of choices from which the player can select.

The word "quest" implies nobility in the hero(ine) and some kind of spiritual value to the object of desire. This is not always true of the videogame genre of quest games, but that is not because videogames are corrupt or that the 80s is a decadent era. Questing has never been entirely pure. When Jason stole the Golden Fleece from Colchis, he brought unhappiness and ruin to that country, which rather taints his achievement.

Likewise, greed is the motivating factor of one line of videogame quests. The other basic types are rescues, the destruction of a mighty beast, or the search for a mythical

Mattel's Dungeons & Dragons.
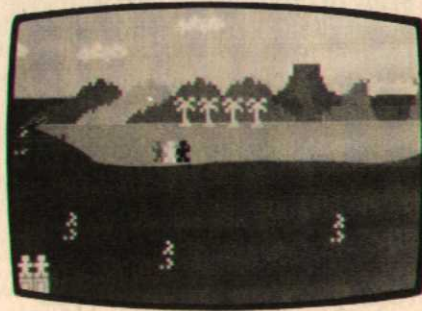
Imagic's Tropical Trouble.

prize, whether the motivation be personal gain or the ennoblement of the State or the individual.

There are several war rescue games, such as *Chopper Command, Defender,* and the like. However these games, while they do involve rescues, are primarily combat games. Quests should involve more than just the elevation of the glories of war. The rescue games run a wide spectrum from Coleco's *Donkey Kong* and *Smurf Rescue* to Imagic's *Tropical Trouble.* Rescue, yes. Heroic or noble? Not quite. Therefore it is up to the eye and sensibility of the beholder to determine if, for example, Sir Dudly Dashley is of heroic stature.

In *Jungle Hunt,* from Atari for the 2600, you are Dashley; you must save your lovely wife, Lady Penelope, from being cooked and eaten by a band of nasty cannibals. To do so you must make your way through the trackless jungles of deepest darkest Africa. Your mode of travel varies from swinging on vines to swimming through crocodile-infested waters to running through a field, complete with bounding boulders out to mash your brains in. Finally you arrive at the cannibal's camp, and must face down two of these deadly savages to arrive at your lady's side.

From the people at Vectrex, two vector graphics quests. In *Polar Rescue,* you must pilot your submarine through mine fields and around denizens of the deep to rescue the survivors of a failed expedition. In an adaptation of Milton Bradley's *Dark Tower,* the player must fight his/her way to Dark Tower and challenge those who reside within to rescue the princess being held captive.

Soon to be released from Xonox for the 2600 and ColecoVision is a series of "double ender" games that contain not one, but two games. Many of these games deal with quests of the heroic myth/rescue type.

First up is *Spike's Peak/Ghost Manor.* While *Spike's Peak* is an exercise in video mountain climbing, its companion game, *Ghost Manor,* is a rescue mission of sorts. You must fight your way into a house that is most thoroughly haunted, reach your friend who is trapped there, and fight your way back out
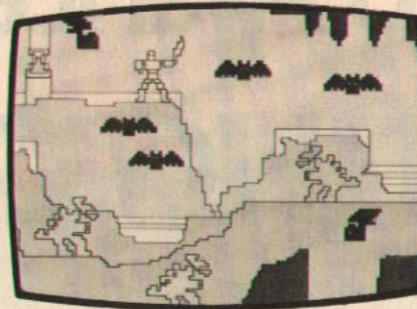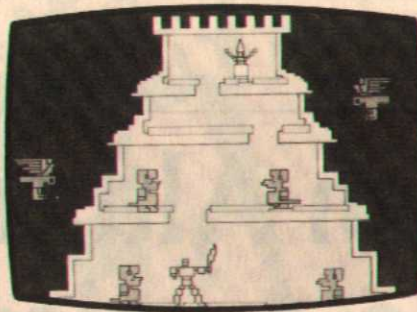

Thundarr the Barbarian *from Xonox.*

to the light of day.

Interestingly, Xonox has included a feature in *Ghost Manor* that allows the player to choose the gender of the hero or heroine. Chivalry is not dead

Thundarr the Barbarian, in addition to being a Saturday morning cartoon, is also a game from Xonox (though not a double-ender). In this game you control both Thundarr and the Princess Ariel (on two separate screens no less). Thundarr must retrieve the Sun sword, and once it is found, rescue the Princess.
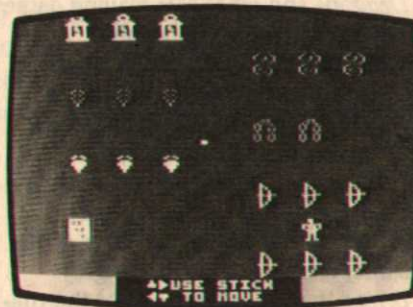
Starpath's **Dragonstomper.**

Yet , as stated, questing is more than just rescuing fair damsels in distress; very often the quest is for an object, or for honor. The quest takes on a mythical or even epic proportion. To this end, many programmers have attempted to design games that encompass the grandeur and majesty of these tales.

Once again from Xonox comes *Robin Hood/Sir Lancelot.* As Robin Hood you have set out to save Maid Marion from the dastardly Sheriff of Nottingham. Simple enough.

As Sir Lancelot you are engaged in a quest for the possession of the mystical Blue Sword. Lance rides on Pegasus, his winged steed, through the sky and then must land to do battle with strange creatures to acquire the Sword.

Another set of double-enders are *Hercules vs the Titans/Chuck Norriss-Superkicks.* In *Hercules,* you must find the herb of invulnerability, and then return to Olympus to defend it against its enemies. As Chuck Norriss you are on a pilgrimage to a sacred monastery in search of Truth. Along the way you must defend yourself from the forces of evil who would deny that truth to you (and no, they're not insurance salesmen).

Perhaps the finest of the quest games is Odyssey's *Quest for the Rings.* This is a unique combination of both video and board gaming.

Quest is for two or three players. One player is the Ringmaster and directs the game, and the other two are the players. These two players, instead of competing with each other, must combine forces to gather together ten rings. They are impeded in their hunt by scores of deadly monsters. Another interesting facet of this game is that the players are able to choose various combinations of powers and abilities to aid them in their quest.

Dragonstomper is from Starpath for their Supercharger that complements the Atari 2600. This game ultimately pits you against a dragon as you attempt to steal from him a Druidic Amulet that is the source of his power. The game features three separate scrolling screens and a full array of powers, money and weapons.

Adventure is another game that sets the player up against dragons. Designed for the 2600, it was one of

the very first adventure/quest videogames. The player is a knight from the days of yore, and it is his/her task to battle past as many as three dragons to find the chalice of gold, and return it to the castle of gold. Although the graphics on this game are sparse, the gameplay more than makes up for it.

Intellivision's *Advanced Dungeons & Dragons* is an advanced form of Atari's *Adventure*. With superior graphics and more complex gameplay, *Advanced D & D* is altogether a different game. The gamer controls three mobile adventurers as they hack their way through monsters and travel the serpentine paths that lead to the castle where the treasure lies.

Haunted House, also from Atari for the 2600, is a variation of *Adventure*. Here, instead of dragons, mazes, and mythical kingdoms, you must venture inside a spiderweb-and-ghost-choked house to retrieve a magical urn that is hidden inside. To prevent you are a number of spiders, bats, and the ghost of the former owner of the house. In this game, both the graphics and sound effects are an improvement over *Adventure*, making this game more than just a rehash.

From Imagic is *Riddle of the Sphinx* for the 2600. This cartridge combines clues in the instruction book with video gameplay; the player must gather several objects and do his/her level best to uncover the Sphinx's riddle. For brainy rather than brawny questors.

For Intellivision, Imagic has developed *Ice Trek*. As the Eskimo, Vali, you must ski across the frozen tundra to the ice palace of Kaltkron the Terrible. It is your task to liberate the Aurora Borealis. Once you arrive at the castle, you lay siege to it by hurling fireballs at Kaltkron.

Swords and Serpents from Imagic for Intellivision invites you to spend time exploring the fortress of the Sinister Serpent, battle Phantom Knights, and collect marvelous treasures.

Again in the mythical milieu are a pair of games from Atari for the 2600. They are *Earthworld* and *Fireworld*, the first two games from the *Swordquest* game series. Now, while these quests may have started out nobly, they have not lived up

to their billing. The first, *Earthworld,* was interesting to play. The gamer had to travel through the twelve chambers of the zodiac, picking up and dropping off various objects in order to obtain several clues to find the secret message. However, the second game is very nearly unplayable: the graphics are

undecipherable and the instructions are no help, being entirely too vague.

Another cartridge from Atari that is even more vague than *Fireworld* is their *Raiders of the Lost Ark*. game, which takes Indiana Jones on his search for the Lost Ark of the Covenant. This game has gathered
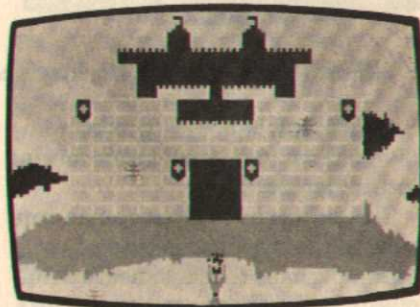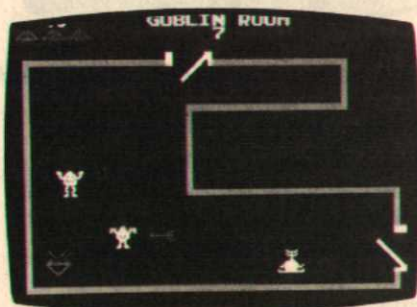
Winky and Vali go for it: Coleco's Venture *(left) and Imagic's* Ice Trek.

The ultimate! The archetype! The yet-to-be-released Quest For Tires!
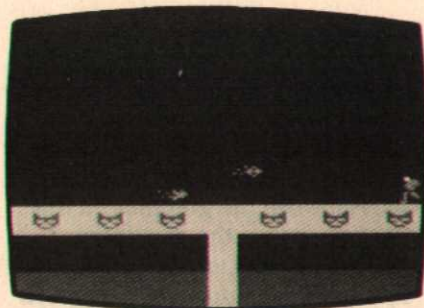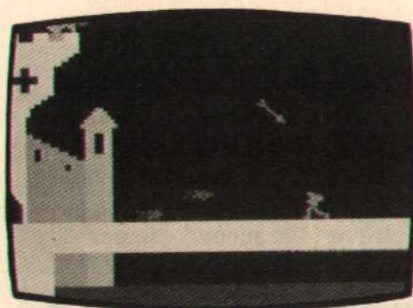
Which is more realistic: Dashley's cartoon heroics in Jungle Hunt *(left) or the mythical difficulties of* Dragonfire?

a loyal following of rugged individualists who laugh in the face of instruction booklets.

This brings us to what can be considered the least noble type of quest; perhaps these games are not quests at all. These are the contests which do not call for the rescue of some unfortunate or for the betterment of a state or country; in these, the hero is out for personal gain. To be sure, many of the abovementioned games do involve acquiring treasures, but that is only as a final reward, for there are also rescues and heroic deeds involved. The following games may touch on some of the aspects of the aforementioned games, but the primary motivation is one of greed. This is not to say that the heroes are not lovable. Who could despise a character named Winky?

Typical of this aspect of questing is *Venture* from Coleco, for ColecoVision and the Atari 2600. In *Venture*, we must again return to ancient times and far off lands to do battle with dragons, and other assorted monsters as we, taking the role of Winky, rush from room to room in a castle gathering all the treasures that we can lay our hands on.

In *Dragonfire* from Imagic for the 2600 and Intellivision, the player is once more forced to do battle with a terrible dragon. The object of this one is very nearly the same as in *Venture*. That is to say, the player

must gather up all of the treasures (s)he can before death closes in.

Another Starpath game to be used with their Supercharger on the 2600 is *Survival Island.* On *Survival Island* (soon to be released) you must swim through shark-infested waters, fight your way across the island, and find a lost treasure-filled temple. This game just goes to show that greed has its place in cartridges with a modern motif.

Greed is but a part of the "means to an end" in NAP's upcoming *Power Lords* for the Atari 2600, Colecovision, and Odyssey. You control Adam and Shaya, the extra-terrestrial warriors who are fighting to defend the universe from (ah yes) hordes of invading aliens. The Battle of The Power Lords is taking place on the mystical Volcan Rock where lies the secrets of ultimate power. You must gain entrance to the caves and grab hold of the glowing touchstones, and seize power for yourself. Presumably, as Adam or Shaya, you will be a benevolent ruler.

The last game in this category is perhaps the most base—and lovable—of all the greed games. It is *Pitfall* by Activision for the 2600 and Intellivision. Harry spends his time running through the jungle picking up bags of money and bars of gold that just happen to be lying around. This is not as easy as it sounds; barring his path are

crocodiles, scorpions, cobras, open pits, and burning fires. There is no one to rescue in this game, no dragons to slay, all you do is line your pockets with megabucks.

More than thirty games have been developed along the lines of the quest, offering an attractive alternative to the TV Turkey shoots that comprise the bulk of videogames. Perhaps this new trend in programmables is a reflection of an emerging attitude within the American culture. Is is possible that we have witnessed far too much random and mindless violence, and are seeking to better ourselves with nobler endeavors?

Perhaps we have learned that all matters cannot be solved at the point of a (laser) gun. Maybe we are subliminally trying to rescue our hostages in Iran, and this time do it right. Could it be that we are hopeful about the future, convinced that matters are in fact resolvable? That sacrifice is desirable for the purpose of long-term gains?

As Steve Martin would say: "Nah!"

The trend is probably just a change of pace, a passing fad, the lull before the storm of more alien invader games. We hope not.

Somehow we can not help but feel that even a quest with greed as its motivating factor is better than a blasting game, the urge to acquire and save stronger than the urge to destroy. □
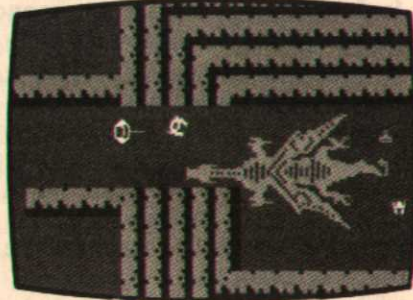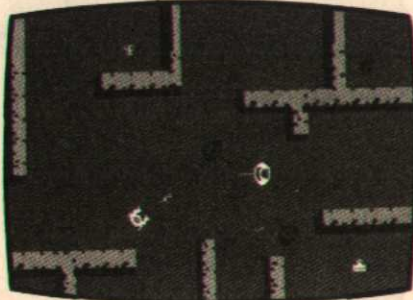
Power Lords (left) is new from N.A.P.; the player may have to undergo a quest just to find Imagic's Swords & Serpents.

RAMBLINGS

the smell of a three ring circus about it: more ropes to swing on as little killer dots and murderous lines seek him out. Finally there is a platform of fire to swing over in order to face the pumpkin. At that point, things start over again, only it gets harder. In fact, there are a dozen increasingly difficult levels programmed into this game.

Take it from me; it sounds just like the real life of an actor. It is just as nonsensical. Although clever, the audition background story of this game doesn't really work. He doesn't get the part in the movie and no one says "Don't call us, we'll call you." Sammy is doomed to forever audition, hopping around on the whim of a pumpkin with sunglasses.

Only if a player is into thespian sadism or clever computing touches is the game worth peeking at. Sierra credits Courtney Smith with "Sound Coordination" and the title of "Sammy's Hairdresser." This is for their vaunted onscreen design of Lightfoot's coiffure, which ripples when he's bopped. Also of visual note is the little disco dance Sammy does when he succeeds with each sequence. Otherwise *Sammy Lightfoot* is a clever concept covering up the same old game.

Things are much the same with *Apple Cider Spider*. Again the best part of the play is the passive prologue. A four-legged spider introduces the Ivan Strand-designed disk with the help of awkward friends. Four other spiders, two frogs and one bird line up just before the main spider is forced to beckon off screen with one of his legs. Then a second bird appears, with the words "Sorry, Chief (sic)" appearing over his head.

The mirth continues as a flying insect sticks his head on screen, asking "Now?" "Yes!!! (sic)"replies the spider, hopping up and down. The insect joins another to become the word "Presents" and the main spider leaps off his perch to create the title of the game. This entertainment over, it's time to get down and playing.

The first screen is impressive if familiar to anyone who has played the Nintendo videogames featuring Donkey Kong, the Mario Brothers, and Popeye. In the lower right is the little spider the player controls. This arachnid must hop onto and climb web strands, avoiding the machinery of a cider mill in full gear. Not only does the insect have to watch out for the apples being mashed into juice, but conveyer belts, bottles and capping machines.

And if that isn't enough, various hungry frogs are hopping about the factory levels. As in *Sammy Lightfoot*, figuring out what you're supposed to do and how to do it is half of the "fun"—if not all of it. There are no directions in the sparse Sierra packaging that tells one how to get the spider up to the safety of the attic, so there are many turns when the player is left to watch the insect get mashed, capped, belted and bottled as the letters "oops!" appear on the screen.

The second *Apple Cider Spider* screen is sparer than the first, but more perplexing. There are conveyer belts and an apple slicing machine for the intrepid insect to circumvent in its quest for life as the bonus counter ticks away.

I might as well admit at this point that these types of games leave me cold. They are just warmed over concepts better suited to the arcade. Where computer games really excel are in the area of brain teasers—not reflex testers.

Personal preferences aside, Sierra does a decent, heartfelt job of programming their games. They are crafted with the phrase "User Friendly" in mind. Both right and left handers can use either the keyboard or a joystick, there are many difficulty levels that can be set as well as other options the player can choose. So if hopping auditioners and climbing spiders are your cup of tea, these Sierravision games were made for you. □

—*Richard Meyers*

INPUT

adaptor, but in light of the lagging sales of Intellivision units, that is unlikely to materialize. We're guessing that the recent legal spat between Coleco and Atari makes a 5200 adaptor equally unlikely.

As a Vectrex owner I am interested to know if any other outside software producers plan on developing Vectrex cartridges.

Brett Atwood
Stockton, CA

Cinematronics will be producing Cosmic Chasm *for the Vectrex, but otherwise, they're on their own.* □
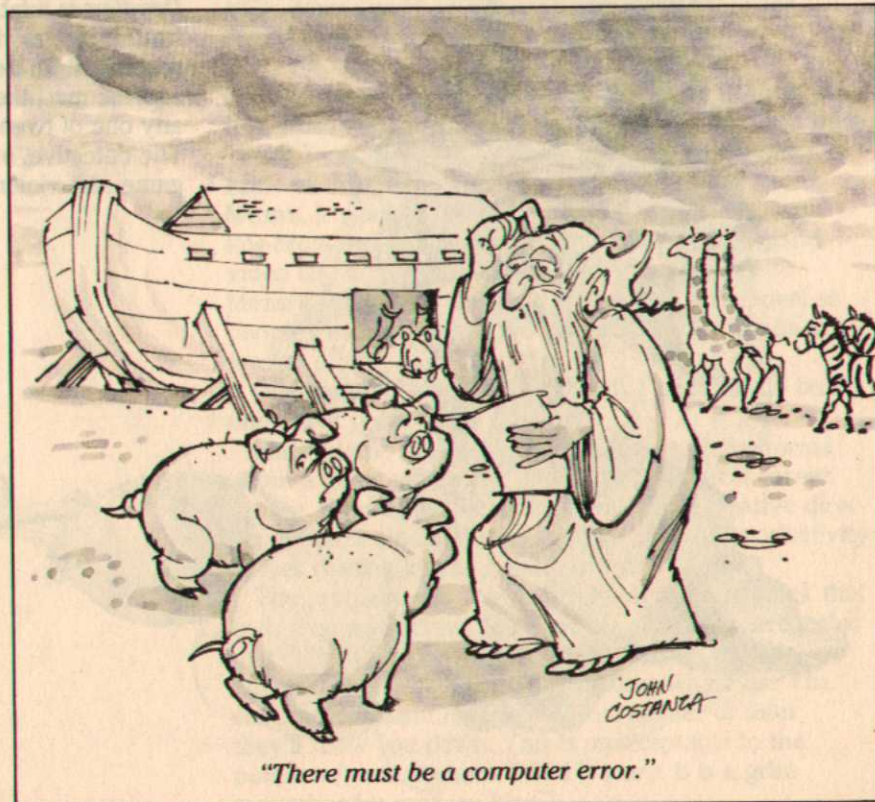
"There must be a computer error."

VIP

off lecherous executives rather than giants.

VCI: *Why do you think women would enjoy a real problem more than a fantasy problem?*

LVG: I think time has always been at a premium for women. The modern woman especially is under more pressure in terms of time. It's difficult for them to see themselves sitting and fooling around with this stuff. Women aren't trained to tinker with machines for the sheer fun of it. For example, most of us tend to think of cars as a way to get from one place to another. I think we look at computers the same way.

Also, women have historically been oriented in a self-improving, do-good direction. Admittedly, this is a hang-up, but it's probably true of most women. So I think a game that painlessly teaches skills would be very much in demand. I personally would love something that taught me German.

VCI: *If winning is an important value to men, what is a comparable value for women?*

GS: Women do well at *cooperative* games. Men grow up with the compulsion to protect the male ego. Women are more free of this. Women can often arrive at a compromise sooner. They definitely make better labor negotiators.

LVG: Academic studies show that the goal of a lot of stereotyped girl games is cooperation. A satisfactory game is one in which everyone gets a turn.

VCI: *How about the computer graphics themselves? Do you feel that women are attracted to different images than men? For example, women seem to be enjoying* Crystal Castles, *where there is a teddy bear and gems.*

GS: I don't think women are any more into "cute" than men are. But they definitely do not like looking at bombs exploding!

LVG: First of all, I should say that I am a visual clod. But I have noticed that women are enjoying LOGO on Apple and Texas Instruments. Of course men enjoy it too. The potential for art, design, and creativity is fascinating for women—the idea of making colors and shapes happen. This "game" was originally developed at MIT and was called "turtle graphics." The object was to study mental processes through watching the players move a turtle around a grid. The result was the first language that described how the mind worked as opposed to the mind adapting to the language of the machine.

VCI: *Do you think literary themes in computer games will appeal more to women?*

LVG: Yes. A lot of women zone in on it; but a lot of males do too. A new trend in adventure games is to borrow from the classics, science fiction, and mysteries. *Deadline* is a fabulous game, a masterful achievement from Infocom where players communicate in English sentences! There is an interaction between the player and the machine. Depending on what the player does, any one of twenty five possible endings can happen. The detective, of course, is a male. But at least the game isn't violent.

VCI: *How do you feel about the fact that most of the video/computer game heroes are men?*

LVG: Naturally, it's a problem for female players to relate to male graphics. Microsoft's superb game, *Decathlon,* features a white male hero with sideburns! Not an androgynous figure at all. My kids, who of course are staunch feminists, deal with this by giving this guy female names. They have developed their own world of mythical athletes. But at their age, I would have thought, 'I shouldn't be playing this game.'

In *Donkey Kong,* there is a passive woman in need of rescue. While she's not raped or killed, it would be a very different game if a woman were to rescue a man.

VCI: *How would it be different?*

LVG: People would notice. No one notices when the woman is passive. I think we need more software that reinforces the idea that the woman can be active too.

VCI: *The stereotype image is that girls are more interested in people than things. Do you think the computer can ever satisfy that basic interest?*

LVG: Women are totally charmed by ELIZA, a psychological game, also developed at MIT. Of course, men like this game too. It started as an experiment to see if players could tell the difference between talking to a computer and talking to a real person, and if they cared. When people found out that they were talking to a computer, they told it all their secrets.

ELIZA is the commercial version of this. It opens with "Hello. What is your problem?" I have a friend who played this game and went home and broke up with her husband! The computer is coded to throw back words like: "I notice you haven't mentioned sex at all," "Tell me about your parents," "Why do you hate your job?" ELIZA makes staggeringly brilliant connections. It's easy to get hooked on the game, no matter who you are.

It's possible to be really creative with ELIZA. I know some kids who told the computer that their problem was

that they were having an illicit relationship with their bunny rabbit and they were afraid their parents would suspect because there were bunny turds in the bed. They love to get the program going!

VCI: *Speaking of illicit, do you think the X-rated videogames are more dangerous than, say, an X-rated film because the player is in a active mode rather than a passive one?*

GS: They're all dangerous. The X-rated games . . . the X-rated movies. They're all justifying and teaching violence *and* teaching that women like it. In the now-infamous *Custer's Revenge,* the woman who's raped appears to enjoy it! Can you imagine a game where the player is to cut off as many penises as possible?

VCI: *I wish we could print that.*

GS: Why not? Why is it OK to print material about women being raped and not OK to print material about men being violated?

VCI: *Do you think there are acquired differences in male and female philosophies that could affect the way in which both sexes view these games?*

GS: It's difficult to generalize. I suppose you could say for discussion that while 70% of the female population does not like war, aggression, and competition, maybe 30% does. There is a crossover. Maybe 30% of the male population does not like it either. Of course, these philosophies are not inborn. I feel that society would benefit as a whole if this form of entertainment had less weaponry and was more humane.

VCI: *What would be a more positive metaphor for future games?*

LVG: There are people who now devote their lives to this. Atari's Chris Crawford focuses on the future in their Think Tank. He imagines that if a person from Mars came to this planet and heard only punk rock and Muzak, it would conclude that earthlings had a very low-brow form of music. Crawford's job is to expand video and computergames to a level equivalent to Mozart. Ideally, he feels, these games would appeal to people's emotions; they would tap motivating human forces.

One game that might speak to that need would be one about gossip.

Marc Blank, Infocom's vice president, brainstorms about a game where the player makes critical career moves. Roberta Williams, co-founder and creative director of Sierra On-Line, sees a future of home productivity games coming for the entire family.

The problem with the games today is this: I think that both men and women have trouble with the concept that you cannot win; not win over each other, but win against space invaders, giants, ghosts, whatever. The concept prevalent in games is that sooner or later they'll mow you down. This is unacceptable to the politics of most women. I find it scary. It is a grim metaphor for modern life.□

© ALVINO-MANZIONE 1983
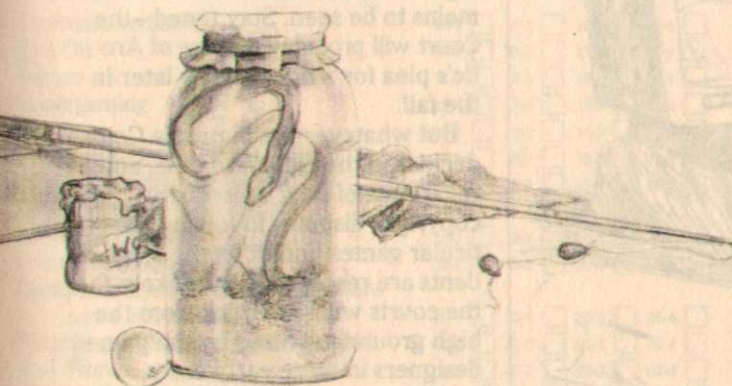
VIDEOGAMES AS ART

copyrightability of videogame programs and displays, and in favor of restricted protection under any copyright found valid, have fallen by the wayside, sometimes with rather startling results.

For example, a federal appeals court recently agreed with a district court's decision that a sped-up version of *Galaxian* is a "derivative work," meaning that it is based on a preexisting work in the way a "Readers' Digest" version of a novel is based on the novel. Under the law, a copyright owner has the exclusive right to prepare (or to license the preparation) of derivative works based on the copyrighted original; accordingly, the appeals court upheld the lower court's determination that the sale of circuit boards which speed up the play of *Galaxian* when they're inserted into a videogame machine constituted an infringement of the game's audio-visual copyright. In reaching its conclusion, the appeals court dismissed as meritless the contention of defendant Arctic International that *Galaxian* didn't qualify as a copyrightable audiovisual work because the creative effort of playing the game was sufficient to render each "performance" the player's own creation, not that of the game designer.

In July, a trial judge went one step further and found infringement of the computer program copyright for *Pac-Man* in the absence of infringement of the game's audiovisual copyright. The defendants in the case had manufactured and distributed a kit of five computer chips with instructions on how to substitute them for the chips that drive the *Pac-Man* displays. Substitution resulted in a new maze game, called "Cute-See," with characters bearing no resemblance to Pac-Man, Inky, Blinky, and the rest. Since it had none of *Pac-Man*'s distinctive features, the judge concluded that "Cute-See" didn't infringe the audiovisual copyright held by Midway Manufacturing.

But that was not the end of the case. Rejecting defendants' argument that Midway's chips, embodying the object code for the *Pac-Man* program, were utilitarian objects not covered by copyright, the trial judge found substantial similarities between Midway's object code and that of the defendants. Conclusion: The *Pac-Man* computer program copyright was infringed, and further sales of the "Cute-See" substitution kits were prohibited.

The last word on all this has yet to be heard. Arctic International, which sold the speed-up circuits for the *Galaxian* game, have asked the U.S. Supreme Court to decide, once and for all, whether videogames fall within the legal definition of audiovisual works. In its petition, Arctic likens a copyright covering a videogame display to a hypothetical copyright for the movie *Casablanca*:

No one ever suggested to Congress that it should, and Congress never indicated that it desired to, grant copyrights on a kind of "Casablanca" motion picture in which, depending each time on audience participation, the series of screen images would sometimes show Bergman catching the last train from Paris together with Bogart, sometimes show Bergman trying to persuade Sam to play "Deutschland Uber Alles," sometimes show Bogart getting on the Lisbon plane with Bergman, and sometimes show the Nazi officer shooting Bogart—the plot and display of images being different, and the copyright covering all possible variations that could ever be made on the "Casablanca" theme.

You recognize this by now. It's the "related series of images" argument again, very neatly packaged, to be sure; but whether it'll fare better before the Justices of the Supreme Court than it has so far before various federal courts remains to be seen. Stay tuned—the Court will probably dispose of Arctic's plea for a final review later in the fall.

But whatever the Supreme Court decides in the *Galaxian* case, and regardless of how subsequent copyright disputes involving particular games and different defendants are resolved, it is unlikely that the courts will backtrack from the high ground captured by the game designers in these early cases.

Videogames as art may not be your cup of tea, but they are now, at least in the eyes of the law, the expressive creations of authors. □
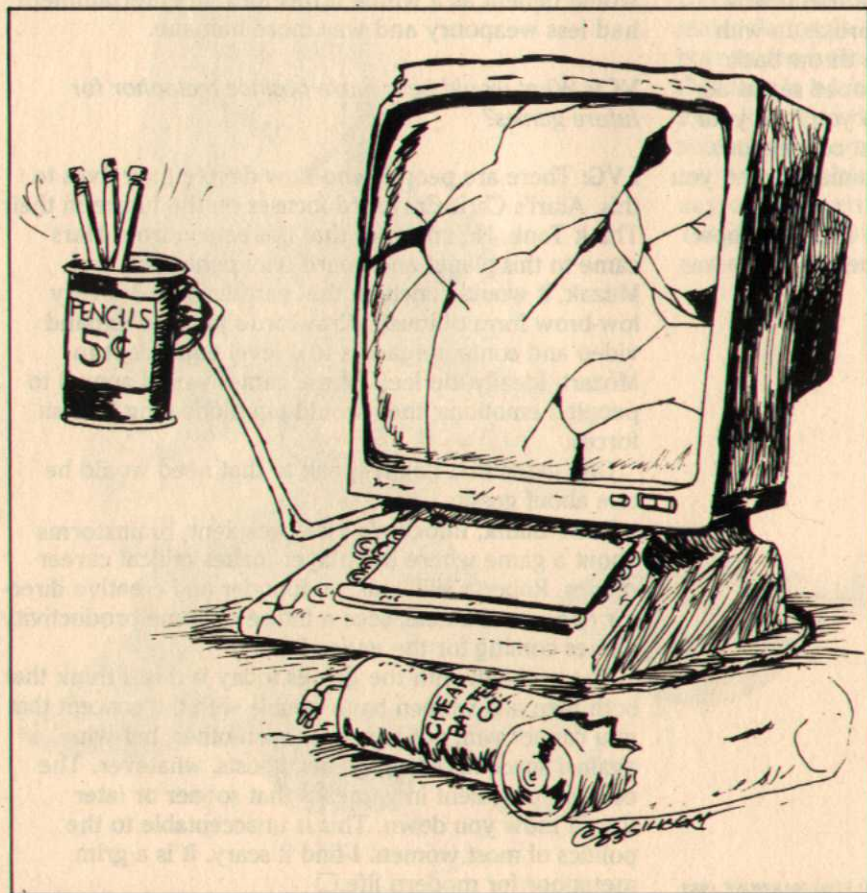
READER POLL

Our readership is growing with every issue. Accordingly we want to 1) thank you, and 2) find out as precisely as possible who you are.

If we are to make **Videogaming & Computer Gaming Illustrated** the best magazine it can be; if we are to deliver the kind of information and entertainment that you want to read, we have to hear from you. So please fill out the form below.

Return your form to:
Ion International
45 West 34th Street
New York, N.Y. 10001

Your reward for completing and returning this survey will be a free Videogaming t-shirt, valued at 8.95. Your survey form must be mailed no later than Sept. 15, 1983.
Please state size 1-1 ☐ **small** 1-2 ☐ **medium** 1-3 ☐ **large** 1-4 ☐ **extra large**

To complete form: Check boxes and/or fill in data where necessary.

sex and age
2-1 ☐ male   2-2 ☐ female   age_____

marital status
3-1 ☐ single   3-2 ☐ married

no. of children
_____

Household income
4-1 ☐ under 10,000
4-2 ☐ 10,000–14,999   4-3 ☐ 15,000–19,999
4-4 ☐ 20,000–24,999   4-5 ☐ 25,000–29,999
4-6 ☐ 30,000–34,999   4-7 ☐ 35,000–39,999
4-8 ☐ 40,000–44,999   4-9 ☐ 45,000–49,999
4-0x ☐ 50,000 or more

Number of automobiles owned
5-1 ☐ one   5-2 ☐ two   5-3 ☐ three or more

Home
6-1 ☐ own   6-2 ☐ rent   6-3 ☐ own a second home

Educational level completed
7-1 ☐ elementary   7-2 ☐ high school
7-3 ☐ junior college   7-4 ☐ college graduate
7-5 ☐ masters degree   7-6 ☐ phd

Occupational category
8-1 ☐ professional/technical   8-2 ☐ management/administrative
8-3 ☐ clerical/sales   8-4 ☐ student
8-5 ☐ house person   8-6 ☐ unemployed
8-7 ☐ other _____

Involvement in editorial
Number of issues read last year
9-1 ☐ one 9-2 ☐ two 9-3 ☐ three 9-4 ☐ four 9-5 ☐ five 9-6 ☐ all

Please rate the following **Videogaming & Computer Gaming Illustrated** features from:

	poor	fair	good	excel.
Keyboard (editorial)	10-1 ☐	10-2 ☐	10-3 ☐	10-4 ☐
Eye On	11-1 ☐	11-2 ☐	11-3 ☐	11-4 ☐
Fiction	12-1 ☐	12-2 ☐	12-3 ☐	12-4 ☐
Supergaming	13-1 ☐	13-2 ☐	13-3 ☐	13-4 ☐
Cinema	14-1 ☐	14-2 ☐	14-3 ☐	14-4 ☐
Conquering (player strategies)	15-1 ☐	15-2 ☐	15-3 ☐	15-4 ☐
Preview (cartridge reviews)	16-1 ☐	16-2 ☐	16-3 ☐	16-4 ☐
Arcadia (arcade features)	17-1 ☐	17-2 ☐	17-3 ☐	17-4 ☐
Meet the Original	18-1 ☐	18-2 ☐	18-3 ☐	18-4 ☐
Print Out (book reviews)	19-1 ☐	19-2 ☐	19-3 ☐	19-4 ☐
Computer Eyes (computer hardware news and reviews)	20-1 ☐	20-2 ☐	20-3 ☐	20-4 ☐
Ramblings (computergame reviews)	21-1 ☐	21-2 ☐	21-3 ☐	21-4 ☐
Star Words	22-1 ☐	22-2 ☐	22-3 ☐	22-4 ☐
Golden Pons (puzzles)	23-1 ☐	23-2 ☐	23-3 ☐	23-4 ☐
Facetiae	24-1 ☐	24-2 ☐	24-3 ☐	24-4 ☐
Video Victor	25-1 ☐	25-2 ☐	25-3 ☐	25-4 ☐
You Read it Here First	26-1 ☐	26-2 ☐	26-3 ☐	26-4 ☐

Which other video or computer magazines do you read regularly?

Lifestyle interests
27-1 ☐ attend live theatre, ballet, concert, movies
27-2 ☐ attend sporting events
27-3 ☐ write articles or books for publication
27-4 ☐ active participant in sports or exercise programs
27-5 ☐ travelled within the U.S. in the last year
27-6 ☐ travelled outside of the U.S. in the last year

Ownership of electronic products
Which home video games or computer system do you own?

Which home or video game or computer system do you plan to buy?

typical uses?
28-1 ☐ business applications   28-2 ☐ educational uses
28-3 ☐ game playing   28-4 ☐ other_____

Other electronic products owned/services used
29-1 ☐ Color tv   29-2 ☐ Projection tv
29-3 ☐ Calculator   29-4 ☐ Still camera
29-5 ☐ Slide projector   29-6 ☐ Car stereo
29-7 ☐ Hi fi system   29-8 ☐ Typewriter
29-9 ☐ Video cassette recorder   29-0x ☐ Videodisc player & services
29-x ☐ Cable household
29-y ☐ Own _____ Casette programs/movies
29-yy ☐ Bought _____ blank tapes in last year

Electronic product/service use
How many hours do you spend playing home videogames each week?

How much money do you spend on video games each week?

How much time spent playing coin operated video games each week?

Do you use a computer or computer service at work?

30-1 ☐ yes   30-2 ☐ no   which one_____

Your copy of Videogaming and Computergaming Illustrated
From which of the following sources did you obtain your copy?
31-1 ☐ newsstand   31-2 ☐ subscription (mail)
31-3 ☐ from a friend or family member
31-4 ☐ other_____

If not currently a subscriber, do you plan to become one?
32-1 ☐ yes   32-2 ☐ no

Please send my T-shirt to: Name:_____
Address:_____
_____
Zip code:_____

See reverse side of this card

AUGUST 1983
READER POLL SERVICE CARD

IN THE FOOT

Texas Instruments, as reported here in previous issues, is reeling from projected pre-tax second quarter losses of $250 million as well as the loss of some of its top executives.

TI99/4A owners, fear not. There are a number of developments that will help keep that a viable unit.

• Milton Bradley's MBX Expansion System will soon be available for the TI. The MBX is a voice recognition system. Milton Bradley is planning to develop ten software packages for it initially, each of which will have an overlay for the MBX keypad.

The system includes a sixty four position membrane keypad unit with a built-in electronic speech synthesis and voice recognition control center, a special microphone that allows the user to boss the computer around, and a joystick. The MBX plugs into the TI joystick port.

The system will list price at $129.

• Romox Inc. is trying to keep Texas Instruments from once again shooting itself in the foot.

TI is reportedly going to modify the TI99/4A's operating system to accept only cartridges programmed in its patented GROM format. This modification would in effect force software publishers to license their software to TI or find some other computer to play with.

In the past, publishers have been only too glad to do just that, and this

Milton Bradley is fast becoming the voice synthesis and voice recognition maestro.

has hurt TI. The best software publishers have been avoiding TI because of TI's insistence on marketing all software themselves.

Romox to the rescue. With their new Gameport, which plugs directly into TI's IO port, that computer will accept any standard ROM cartridge as well as Romox's new ECPC cartridges, the reprogrammable cartridges we discussed in our August issue.

The Gameport directly addresses the TI microprocessor and effectively takes over the computer. It adds 8K ROM and a similar increment of RAM to the TI's addressable memory, which allows routines for performing advanced graphics and more sophisticated gameplay.

The Gameport lists for $40.

• Having said that no

software publishers will submit to TI's severe conditions and restrictions, Imagic has announced that they will be adapting a number of their hit games to the TI99/4A.

The titles include *Demon Attack, Microsurgeon, Fathom* and *Wing War*. All the games will employ voice synthesis.

If TI owners haven't heard of Imagic or don't know what the above

mentioned games are about (granted, *Wing War* is new), they haven't been paying attention.

• TI has introduced a modem for the 99/4A and the compact Computer 40. The HX-3100 telephone modem is a 300 BAUD, full-duplex, direct connect, Bell 103 compatible, battery powered unit that will retail for around $100.

With the modem, TI users will have access to
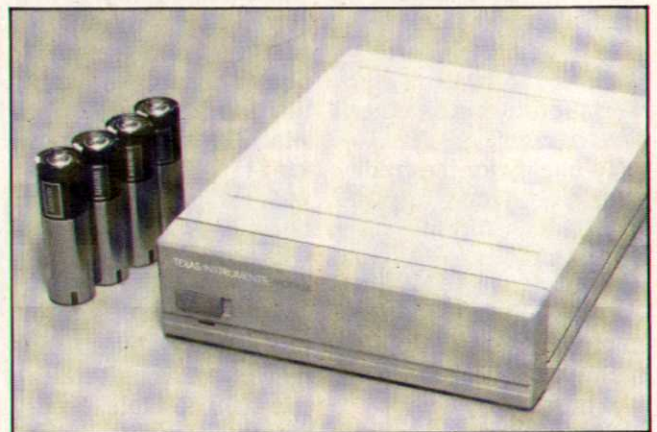
TI's new modem—the indispensable item of the eighties.

Demon Attack *for the TI.*

the TEXNET information service, which includes The Source.

• A company called Emerald Valley Publishing Company is introducing a line of software for the 99/4A that will sell for around ten dollars a pop.

Called 99er-PAK software, the cassettes contain educational, home management or game programs, and each also contain contains a programming lesson as well.

TEMPTATION

While Texas Instruments flails about on the battlefield of the home computer wars, **Apple** has fashioned a formidable new weapon, one which will lure many an impulse buyer toward Apple products.

The weapon is the Apple card, a collaboration of Apple Computer, Inc. and General Electric Credit Corporation (GECC). With the Apple card, a consumer will be able to buy Apple hardware and software without drawing on other lines of credit.

To qualify for the credit card, a consumer must go to a participating, authorized Apple dealer and purchase an Apple computer and finance a minimum of $850. Up to ninety percent of the initial purchase can be charged by qualifying customers; credit can be

authorized while the customer waits in many cases.

The buyer will then receive the Apple card by mail for use in future purchases of over $100 in Apple-branded peripherals or Apple compatible software. Finance charges on Apple card balances will be "competitive" with other bank card charges.

SALVOS FROM SUNNYVALE

Just to extend the warfare metaphor well past its breaking point:

While TI regroups and Apple plays its plastic gambit, **Atari** is modernizing one of its weapons systems and developing new ammunition to make its current weaponry all the more deadly.

Having tried your patience, we will hasten to the facts.

• Two new products—one from Atari, one from an independent—will make their low-cost 400 more useful.

Atari's 48K Memory Expansion Kit will upgrade 8K or 16K capable 400s sixfold or threefold respectively. Atari Regional Repair Centers will install the board for a cost of $130. The bold user can install the board him or herself, purchasing the board through the Atari Program Exchange for $110. The unit comes with complete instructions and a ninety day warranty.

Microtronics Inc. has developed a stepped keyboard that locks snugly over, and manipulates, the 400's obsolete, clumsy membrane keyboard. The keyboard is called the

Membrane No More with Microtronics' Joytyper.

Joytyper. Microtronics is located at 2343 Kodiak, Ft. Collins, CO 80525.

• To enhance all **Atari computers** graphics capabilities, the company is introducing a Light Pen and Touch Tablet.

With the Light Pen, the user can draw directly on the TV screen, move objects or make menu selections—but only with compatible programs, those programs yet to be announced.

With the Touch Tablet, the user touches a stylus or a finger to the tablet's 4½ by 6 inch drawing area, and corresponding images or designs will appear on the TV screen. Two buttons on the tablet and one on the stylus can be used as fire buttons, for menu selection input, start/stop line drawing or other programmable functions.

• A new external microprocessor upgrade for all Atari computers will allow CP/M software to be used, which in one stroke expands the business capabilities of Atari computers many times.

• The Atari Expansion Box will allow control cards and special peripherals to be connected to Atari's line of four new computers. The Box provides eight expansion slots, two RS-232 ports and a bi-directional parallel bus.

• *AtariWriter* is a one hundred dollar word processing program that requires a minimum of 16K memory.

AtariWriter features include: full key editing onscreen, an onscreen format preview that will show the user exactly what will be printed, an
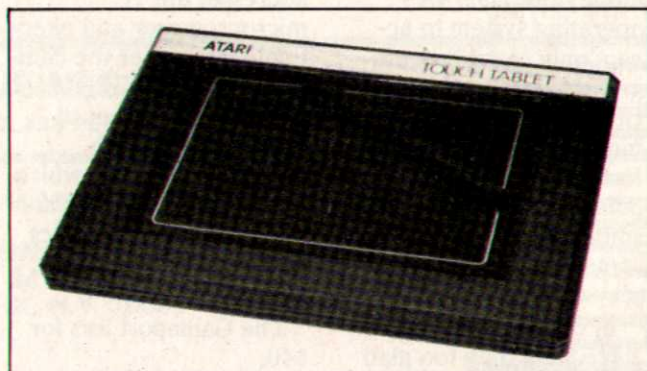
Interactivity marches on! Behold the Touch Tablet.

undo command to recover data mistakenly deleted (it happens, it happens), automatic page numbering, global search and replace, a form letter option, and centering or right justifying headlines. Type can be printed in standard, condensed or elongated type.

AtariWriter is available in that company's new "bundled" package, a package which may well

Atari gives its seal of approval to a Word Processor.

give Coleco's Adam system a run for its money: The Atari Writing System All-In-One-Pak includes their new 600XL Home Computer, their 1027 letter quality printer, *AtariWriter,* a writing guide, and paper (yes! paper!) for a suggested retail price of six hundred dollars.

WORK HARD, PLAY HARD

After you're finished knocking off a chapter of your new greatamerican-novel or, for that matter, your quarterlyreport-withflowcharts, an arcade game may be just what the doctor (shrink or sawbones) ordered. Here then is a random roundup of upcoming or current

games.

For the **Apple** computers and **IBM-PC:**

Buzzard Bait from Broderbund. The player, onboard a ship, rescues shipwrecked passengers beset by three voracious buzzards. Delicious!

From CBS Electronics, a more sedate offering: *Charles Goren: Learning Bridge Made Easy.* This bridge tutorial covers such topics as hand evaluation, opening bids, response and rebids, and provides a hundred sample hands for practice in play. Disk comes with a 144 page book.

For the Apple computers only, eleven new titles in disk form from Datamost.

Roundabout (a cartoon animation shoot-em-up), *Snowbound* (play a billygoat, defend yourself with icicles from monsters), *Argos* (alienblast), *Monster Smash* (trapped in a cemetery with pursuing monsters, bash them on the head with tombstones), *The Biletoads* (get this: Biletoads are creatures that do all the horrible things that humans of the future find

too distasteful. Game action involves finding your robot and avoiding interfering robots. But what happened to the B-toads?).

Conquering Worlds (combines strategy and art in a cosmic plan to conquer other solar systems), *The New Human Fly* (climb a building), *Ardy the Ardvark* (Dinner time! Zap those ants and spiders!) *Space Ark* (no relation to Ardy: rescue abandoned passengers with a capture ray while fighting off aliens), *Cavern Creatures* (pilot your space ship through caverns).

For **Texas Instruments 99/4A:**

M*A*S*H (rescue and operate), *Sneggit* (as a chicken, guard your eggs from snakes), *Moonmine* capture treasure stolen from earth by Mighty Zygonaught and his merry monsters), *Entrapment* (patrolling the earth's atmosphere, fight off horrid alien insects born of flying larvae).

In our last issue we covered the upcoming games for the Commodore computers rather extensively. Two quick

notes:

For the **Commodore Vic 20,** Imagic will be adapting the following titles: *Moonsweeper, Fathom, Wing War, Dragonfire,* and *Nova Blast.*

For the **Commodore 64,** from a new company called Bubble Bus in Kent, England: *Hustler,* a table pool game with six variations.

For the **Atari** computers:

From DataMost, *Topsee Turvee* (an upside down 3D grid game) and *Cosmic Tunnels* (the fourth in the Captain Sticky adventure series).

From Imagic: *Moonsweeper, Fathom, Wing War* and *Atlantis.*

From Broderbund: *Matchboxes* (a grid game of memory and intuition) and *Cargo Bay.* (The player operates a maneuverable electromagnetic crane to keep rescue supplies moving to devastated islanders. Boasts 3D perspective graphics.)

From Atari, *Paint!* is a graphics program. Mix paints, create patterns from circles and lines. You

Top left; Snowbound. *Top right:* M*A*S*H *for TI. Above left:* Nova Blast. *Above right.* The Cosmic Tunnels.
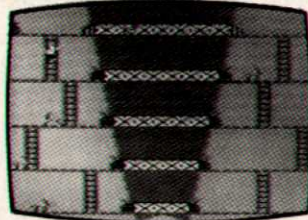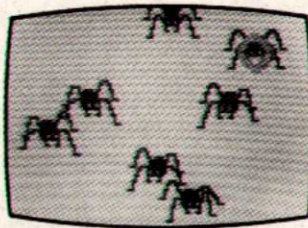
Top left: **Mickey in the Great Outdoors,** *then* **Klendathu, Doubleback** *and* **Canyon Climber** *for the TRS-80.*

can zoom in on one phase of your work and zoom out again to check the overall look. Three programs in one: *Paint, Superpaint* and *Art Show,* in which your works can be displayed continuously.

Also from Atari, adaptations of selected arcade hits: *Donkey Kong Jr., Ms. Pac-Man, Pole Position, Joust, Pengo, Robotron 2084, Eastern Front (1941)* (a strategy game), *Football, Soccer,* and *Tennis.*

From Walt Disney Telecommunications: *Mickey in the Great Outdoors.* Described in some detail several issues back, this is a two part Mickey Mouse learning adventure for children ages seven to ten. Grammar, spelling and math skills are challenged.

The Disney people say this is but the first of fifty programs that will be introduced this year. *Mickey Better Hurry.*

From Syncro Inc., *Cave of the Evil Jinn.* In search of treasure in a magnificent underground palace, the player must avoid traps in one hundred subterranean caves, passages and waterways.

Stargate Courier. Aliens are guarding the stargates through which you must pass to deliver your messages. Game contains a scrolling game screen, a planet screen, and a galactic map screen.

For the **TRS-80 Color Computer:**

Klendathu, based on the book *Starship Troopers* by Robert A. Heinlein. One or two players are dropped onto the surface of the planet Klendathu during the Bug Wars. Object is to blast as many bugs as possible in a limited amount of time. Somehow lacks the depth and psychological motivation of the novel.

Canyon Climber. Maneuver your plane through canyons while avoiding mountain goats, Indian arrows and falling rocks.

Doubleback. Score points by encircling objects that appear at random on the screen.

Also, in Program Pak format, four new games: *Castle Guard, Robot Battles, Monster Maze* and *Shooting Gallery.* All four games require a minimum of 16K memory.

THE NEXT VOICE YOU HEAR

Soon, talking to computers will become as commonplace as talking to human operators, or at least that is what the people at Periphonics are hoping. They have designed a voice-response system that will allow people to place orders, check on their bank balance, and perform other operations without ever having to deal with another human being. Periphonics has attempted to make the voices as pleasant sounding as possible.

According to Al Fleener, vice president of marketing, computer-to-computer communications over the phone have been very difficult, as companies would have to set up special phone lines, and then try to match whatever computer system they were "talking" to.

The Periphonics system is designed to be used with the dial on your push button phone. Their unique method involves a digital "live" voice which asks the questions; the user answers by pushing buttons on the phone, which virtually turns an ordinary touch-tone phone into a computer terminal. Either a screen message or a live voice can clear errors.

Periphonics, an Exxon affiliate, was established in 1969. They have been developing various types of computerized voice processing systems that have covered a wide range of applications.

TAXING PROGRAM

While we do realize that

April fifteenth is still some time away, just thinking about filling out those tax forms always gets us talking to ourselves. Have no fear, there may be help for you this year.

Practical Programs Inc. of Brookfield, Wisconsin has developed Tax Command, a Federal Income Tax calculation program. This program, now in its second year of production, is compatible with most of the popular home micro-computers. Tax Command provides a line by line method of calculating income tax for federal forms, including the 1040, income averaging, Schedule A. capital gains and losses, as well as several other functions. There are additional schedules on computers with over 48K capacity.

The Tax Command program will perform all mathematical calculations automatically, as it contains built in tax tables. However the program will not print on the actual tax form, you still have to do that yourself. Still, it will print (or list if you do not have a printer) each entry you need to make.

Tax Command has been developed for the Commodore 64, VIC-20, Atari 400/600/800/1200/1400 /and1450, the Timex Sinclair, TRS 80, TI 99/4A, Apple, and Osborne computer systems. Practical Programs states that all of the known "bugs" have been eliminated from the program, and users of last year's program were very pleased with the control it gave them over their tax preparations. The suggested retail for Tax Command is $24.95 □

GOLDEN PONS ANSWERS

```
D E F E N D E R L F P T R O X P
P N E F E D E P I T N E C A B O
G O T S V H G A L A X I A N B C
C P A R P E Y P M Z S O T R O N
E R K A S A C K J A X Y U L M S
N O H W G L C T P X N T B Q U T
Q B E R T I O E B X A X O T U F
V O H A K Y S Y I O M O V F E I
E T U T P A C M A N J K E R R N
N R Q S B H R O P Z V B B O G O
T O I N Q D O N H T Q A S G P Q
U N X G U I J E Q K Q P D G A V
R H F R O G V B N T U V L E M A
E P N X X D R B U I I W M R R P
E I W A S U O I V E X E V L T S
V O B U T G R J S B E R Z E R K
```

PREVIEW

cluttered.

It's not just the cast of thousands that bugs me. If you're an Intellivision owner, you know how appealing the multi-nasty *Microsurgeon* is. The difference between that game and *Vectron* is that *Microsurgeon* had a sprawling, scrolling canvas on which to unfold its drama.

With *Vectron*, everything is crammed into a small, stuffy space with very abstract graphics. You're going to feel like you've skidded into a mixmaster.

To see this theme better-done, take a look at the Odyssey *Blockout/Breakdown* game. Simple quadrilateral designs and humanoid figures are the key to a successful decay-rebuild presentation.

I'll say *this* for *Vectron*: it's as colorful as they come.

Graphics: B–
Gameplay: C-

J.C.: When I switched on the game and saw the title written out by a spark of electricity, I knew that Intellivision was trying to do something special. And they have.

Contrary to E.C.'s mewling, *Vectron* is geometric art with a very solid game. It may not be as straightforward as, say *Astrosmash*, but players who stick with *Vectron* and master the controls—for example, knowing when to switch from random to "pattern" placement of the Blocks, and alternating V-Gun fire to destroy nibblers or energize the Blocks—will be rewarded with a tight, taut challenge.

Incidentally, Mattel is to be commended for making this relatively complex game playable *without* constantly having to look down at the keypad.

Vectron is the fast strategy-demanding game *Reactor* should have been.

Graphics: B+
Gameplay: B
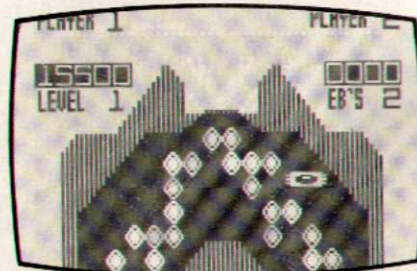
You Read It Here First

In this issue's article on adult or X-Rated videogames. Eugene Finkei makes a valid point: the word 'adult', when applied to communications or the arts, has come to be synonymous with 'sex-related.'

This was not always the case. Material that appealed to adults used to deal with a broad range of concerns such as aging, health, marital stress and so forth, of which sex was only a part.

To redress the balance, our staff has created descriptions of nonexistent games that are adult games in the purest sense of the term.

The fun's over, gang; it's time to play real life.

FLAB ATTACK

Gameplay is similar to *Defender*, with two exceptions: rather than *streaking* across the screen, the cursor plods; also, if an enemy is not hit in time, it attaches itself to the cursor rather than destroying it. Naturally, controls become more sluggish and the pace flags as the game wears on.

Rounds include Flab Attack, Cellullite Smash, Cholesterol Swarm, Wrinkle's Revenge and Jowl Jihad.

RAT RACE

A ladder-climbing race in two parts.

In the Professional mode, the player must climb the ladder as fast as (s)he can while keeping a lookout for "deadwood," malingerers from above that make easy targets, and "comers," dangerous targets from below that boast superior speed and ability. The player has an allotment of but three innuendo and sabotage bombs with which (s)he can destroy opponents and reach the top.

In the Social Climber mode, the player has no bombs. To win, the player must distinguish, through visual and musical clues, the 'right" people from those that are "declasse' " and attach him or herself to the "right" people. The player must then determine where the top of the ladder is and remain there while keeping other climbers out. If the player approaches the

game too hastily, (s)he risks Humiliation, at which point the player's figure turns bright red and falls, never to climb again.

HOME MAKER

Once this game is undertaken it cannot be shut off for fourteen hours.

The player must keep up with one (or two or three) normal (read: hyperactive) children: feed them, clean them, keep them out of mischief, and keep them from crying (the ultimate in annoying videogame sound effects), all the while keeping the house in order and arranging a meal which must be completed by the end of the fourteen hour period.

Should the player succeed, little recognition or esteem will be earned.

DOOMSDAY: APRIL 15

Round One is an electronic boardgame; it is similar to *Monopoly* except the empire is a tad more modest: it involves cars, two weeks vacation, good schools, toys, a country club membership etc.

In Round Two (Doomsday), a lumbering giant with white goatee and stripe-starred hat begins to scoop up the empire and gobble it down. The player must fight off the giant using every trick at his/her command.

SWINGING SINGLES

A graphics and text adventure in three parts.

In the first part, on a screen similar to *Robotron* or *Journey/Escape*, you must fight through swarms of smug couples to find the very occasional single. Once the single is pursued and pounced upon the second round begins.

You have followed the single into a bar; now you must attract him/her with your cool. The single is represented by a pair of eyes onscreen. While the eyes are looking away from you, you can perform the given series of tasks any which way; while they are looking toward you the tasks must be completed with poise and style. The tasks include lighting a cigarette, picking up change from the floor, removing toilet paper that is clinging to your shoe, and catching the eye of the bartender without being obnoxious or looking like a wimp.If the onscreen eyebrows flutter provocatively, you have won the second round and may proceed to the third round.

The third round is a textual battle of wits with the computer, which represents the single you are pursuing. You are not allowed to input information about yourself, you can only ask questions. Volunteer any information about yourself and you will turn the computer off, literally.

The textual answers will scroll by at a rate too fast to digest. The player's challenge is to push the "Y" key (for yes, I agree) or the "N" key (for no, absolutely not) at appropriate moments; one wrong response—or no responses at all—will ensure that you'll be playing one-player games for some time to come.
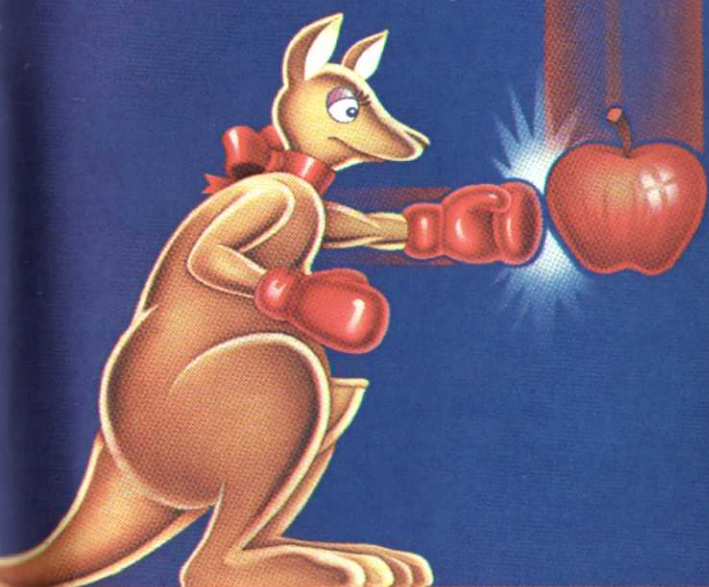
Which player is about to hit the jackpot?

Think quick. This two-fisted Kangaroo is a ringer for the one in the arcade. So don't pull your punches. Like the player on the right. He'll only score 100 points for punching a <u>thrown</u> apple. But the player on the left will score twice as many for punching a <u>falling</u> apple.

Only Atari makes Kangaroo for the ATARI® 2600™ Game, Sears Video Arcade† systems, and a version exclusively for the ATARI 5200™ SuperSystem.

So get Kangaroo. It's a knockout.

Here comes Kangaroo® from Atari.

Ⓦ A Warner Communications Company