

Hello there, Welcome to issue 8 of Fire and Ice. Yes, I know there is no cover but someone didn't send me any new artwork. In fact, almost no new material arrived by post. So out of the window went the idea of doing a christmas edition of F&I. Still the Southampton lot came through again, and so this time it is a special two issue affair for December. Hope you like what we have done.

At this point I would like to take this chance to thank Rob for throwing such a enjoyable party. A pity that more of you couldn't make it. Still I am sure that Mike & Richard join me in thanking you, as this resulted in more alcohol for us to drink. I was going to tell you more, but you should have been there. A few facts are given in the lettercolumn.

Next I would like to wish belated birthday greetings to Andrew, believe it was your birthday at the start of the month. Next all the best to Adrian on your 21st birthday. Hope everything goes well. Last happy Birthday to Paul. I know your birthday is in January, but I am not sure if the next issue is out in time. If I have missed anyones birthday, best wishes to you as well.

So how are things. Well having to do 5 assessments in the last 2 weeks, including 3 due in the last week plus the zine has resulted in very little sleep. The christmas celebrations have been a little less frenzied than last year but they have so far been very enjoyable. A pity I miss the Friday round due to now going home for Adrian's birthday. Shame.

Most of what I had got to include in the zine, made it in. Unfortunately the music page had to be dropped with a Pendragon concert review and my review of the new Berlin & Debbie Harry Lps. The Berlin album 'Count three & pray' is not up to their first album 'Love Life'. The lost of half the group has not too badly effected the group. 'You Don't know' is brilliant, almost as good as 'Dancing in Berlin'. Even the worst track 'Trash' grows on you. The new Debbie Harry is less good. Must say I didn't like her first solo release. This one relays too much on gimmickry lyrics and weird sounds. Better than her first try at being a solo artist but not up too her work in Blondie.

As I have a small space, a quick word on the future of F&I. At present I really don't have that much time that I can give to the zine. So I intend to cut down the number of articles per issue and to concentrate on the games. Future F&I will have few Garfields and no Pot Head Pixies in them. In general artwork will be dropped. Reviews will remain about the same. I will perceive with the Twilight Zone. The page count will be around 8 pages (16 sides). New subscriptions will 35p per issue up to issue 15, which is the last in Southampton and so I don't know how much it will cost me after I leave here to photocopy it.

Jack Kirby - The King of Comics by David Glover

Those of you who have ever had an interest in American Comics will probably recognize the name Jack "the king" Kirby. Of all the myriad talents who have worked in the American Comics industry, none has had the same impact or exerted the same influence. As the artist-historian James Steranko wrote in his two-volume "History of the Comics", 'without him there may not have been comics to write about'.

Kirby was born in Essex street on lower east side of Manhattan on August 28th, 1917. It was a poor, depressed area and life was one continuous fight against poverty and squalor. The harshness of the ghetto had a disturbing effect upon the sensitive boy Kirby and to lessen its impact 'I fantasized a dream world more realistic than the reality around me'. His dream of becoming a movie star stifled by his mother, who needed every penny he could generate selling papers at the start of the depression, his fantasies found another creative outlet-drawing.

His raw talent landed him a job as an inbetweener at Max Fleisher's animation studio in 1935, working on the 1st Popeye & Betty Boop cartoons. His job was to finish the animator's work by drawing the intermediate frames in-between the poses that the animator had drawn - in other words, most of the hard-work that went into producing smooth, continuous movement was his. But this way he learned a great deal about fluidity in motion that was to greatly benefit his later career.

When Fleisher moved from New York to Florida, Kirby was not allowed to follow by his mother. So, he joined Lincoln Newspaper Syndicate in 1936 producing short-lived newspaper strips such as "Socko the Seadog" and "Abul Jones".

The following year he joined the comic studio run by Will Eisner & Jerry Iger. Here, he developed not only a firm respect for those two men (who were also to become comic legends on the "Spirit" strip), but also a profound passion for comics and a much more professional approach to his work.

After leaving Eisner & Iger in 1939, he drew for a hotch-potch of firms producing work for characters such as Blue Bolt, Blue Beetle and even Captain Marvel.

In 1941 he joined Timely comics, and began his legendary partnership with Joe Simon. This team was to become the greatest of the 40's and 50's. Their first creation was to become their greatest creation - **Captain America**.

Created by American Scientists to become the "super-human" after drinking a powerful serum, Steve Rogers was transformed from a puny 4F scarecrow into the muscular and athletic Captain America. When he first appeared in print, almost literally wearing the American flag, he became an instant success, an American Idol. With Kirby drawing him like a super-human complete with a fluid and exaggerated anatomy, the Captain soon became the country's morale-boosting anti-nazi. Kirby used the idea that because violence is an extreme form of behaviour, his drawings of violence must also be extreme. "I drew the hardest positions a character could get into. I tore my characters out of the panels. I made them jump all over the page."

The Captain America series also saw the invention of the full-page and double-page panel, highly dramatic devices that are in widespread use to-day. In fact, it would be unjust to Kirby if one did not concede that the full-page panel is now a standard dramatic device in comics.

The Captain America series really was the making of the Timely group, which was run by Martin Goodman. At its height it reached sales of 900,000 copies per month. However, Simon and Kirby only handled 35 stories between 1941 and 1942; in that time though, Captain America became a national hero - other than Superman, the Captain is still America's best loved super-hero.

The innovative Simon & Kirby team moved on :- they created a whole new concept in comics - the "kid gangs". First, "Boy Commandos" and then the "Newsboy Legion" both for National Periodicals, the same company that produced (and still produces) Superman and Batman. This started a whole plethora of kid gang comics from many different companies. In fact, kid gangs remained a staple format in American comics for another decade and a half !

As WWII developed momentum for American Kirby was drafted into the army, Simon joined the Coastguard. After the war, they immediately created three new titles for Harvey Comics, including "Boy Ranch". In 1947, they again intiated a new genre of comic book, one that was to become another staple of the industry until into the 70's - the Romance comic. "My Date", a book they produced for McFadden publications was the first comic based on a love story.

Then, in 1956, they dissolved their partnership. Comics as a whole were a less respectable medium in the mid-50's thanks largely to an anti-comics book by Dr Frederick Wertham called "Seduction of the Innocent." This led to the creation of the Comics Code Authority, a censoring body which directly caused the demise of the very innovative EC comics. In this environment, Simon felt that his future was no longer with comics and he left the field to do public relations material for Nelson Rockefeller, who was running for governor at the time.

Kirby, however stayed with comics. He teamed with ex-EC artist Wally Wood on the "Sky Masters" newspaper feature in 1957 and created "Challengers of the Unknown" for National in 1958.

In 1959 he returned to Martin Goodman's Timely, now renamed Atlas. The company was about to close but Kirby, through editor Stan Lee (who Simon has hired for Timely as a writer, when Simon was editor, in 1939) convinced Goodman not to, purely it seems, on the basis of Kirby's past work. Kirby believed that superheros could once again be successful but despite DC(National) revamping the "Flash" in the same year, Goodman was not convinced enough to let Kirby loose. So, Kirby was consigned to drawing the weird monster comics that Atlas specialized in.

Kirby, however, was persistent and fought for the right to do super-heroes. It was not until 1961 that Goodman noticed that DC comics most popular book was the "Justice League of America", a team of the company's most popular heroes Superman, Batman, Wonder Woman, The Flash, Green Lantern.... With this kind of evidence Goodman needed no more convincing. He gave Lee and Kirby the go-ahead to do a Super-team book. The result of this was one of the greatest partnerships in comics history, one which brought about a revolution that changed the face of comics publishing.

"The Sandwich Board Man"

By Robert Dower Barron

He Stood upon the corner
in the morning
foretold all
of death before
the fife and drum
and bugle call.

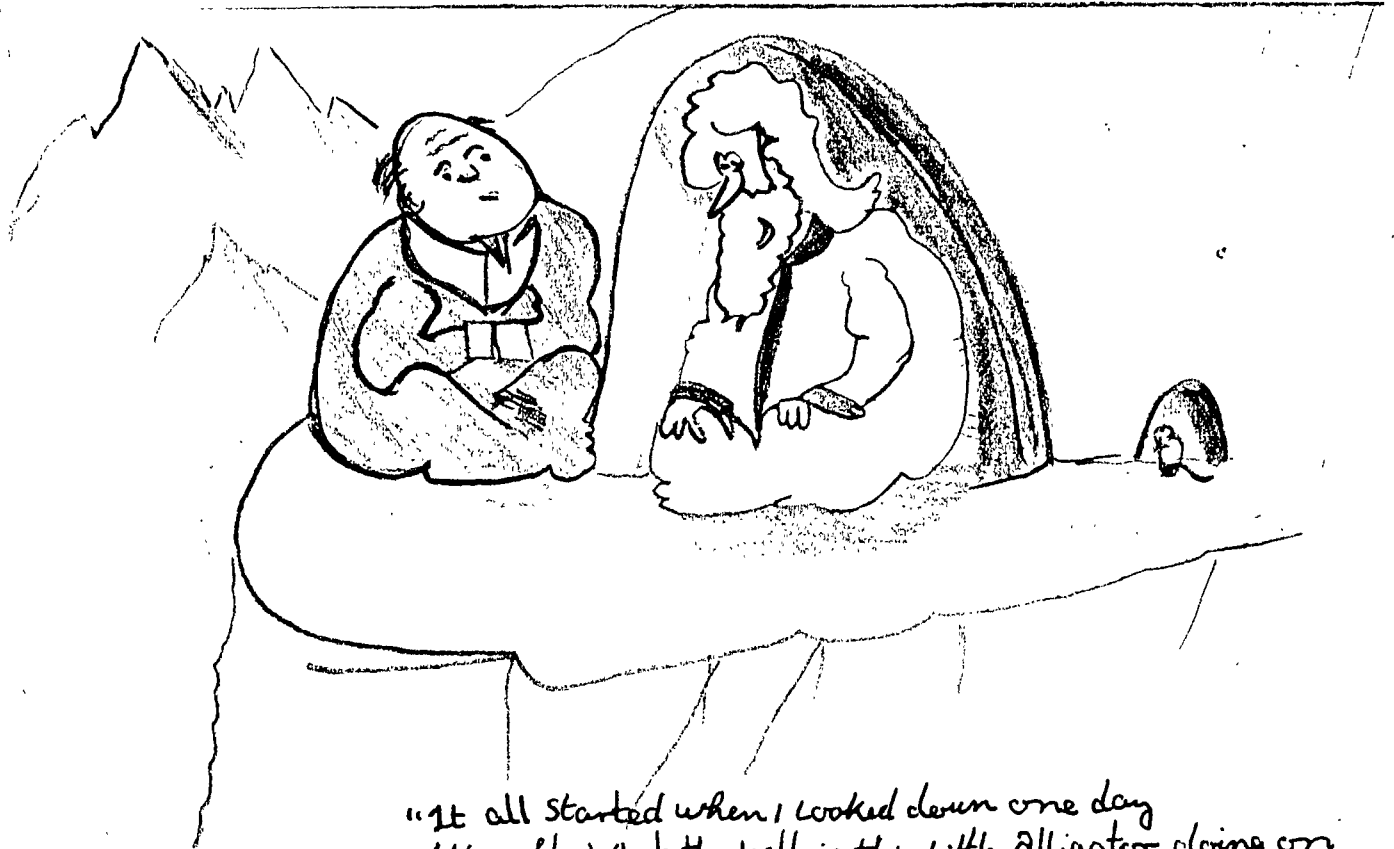
By afternoon the call
enlist !
Yet Shouting
SOON !
He would persist.

He was of course quite right
the death that took us
took us over night.

Now the Vulture in his flight
holds with talons sharp and tight
all that was our countrys might
all those who would stand and fight.

Now all those who say
Might makes right
Look out upon this death dark night
and know that which blood has cost
can never make up for their loss.

((What a nice piece to print just before Christmas))



"It all started when I looked down one day
and thought, what the hell is this little alligator doing on
my shirt."

I have not said that much myself over artificial Intelligence and so decide to try and write an article. I ended up with two partly written articles which I represent to you.

Some thoughts on Artificial Intelligence

Where should these articles go? Should we discuss the thorny question of what constitutes intelligence? Are we to look at it as if it is ethical to try and create a thinking machine? Or should we consider the tools and languages best suited to creating artificial intelligence. Please let me know what you think.

My own view is that the human mind exhibits intelligence - therefore anything that exhibits the same properties as the human mind is exhibiting intelligence. You might argue that it is only miming, and is not intelligence. View?

How do human rights effect intelligent machines? Should intelligent machines have rights.

Can machines have self-awareness? What of pleasure and pain?

Some of you out there may feel that as you have nothing to do with computers that this serie has nothing to do with you. At present AI is in the hands of a few scientists & engineers, yet AI could be as dangerous as the atom bomb or biological warefare. We may never get to the stage of a all powerful computer taking over all but unless people ensure the brakes are kept on, the full implications of AI may not be seen. Please respond to these articles, don't leave it in the hands of the few.

Artificial Intelligence: Fact, Fiction and the Future

Part1: At the present, all over the world, man is trying to produce a computer has human characteristics. It is unknow if this will ever lend to an intelligence machine, but important progress is being made in some areas like voice recognition.

Most of the research that is done on AI, is difficult to understand. This is not because it is difficult but because it is the result of research by academics and engineers who are only concerned with communicating with other academics and engineers who already know a lot about this subject. I hope these articles will help explain AI allow us to debate this topic.

Part2: The trouble with the term AI is that it is difficult to define the meaning of "intelligence". The traditional answer given by psychologists is "that intelligence is what intelligence tests measure". Problem with this, are that it assumes 'intelligence' is present. Anyhow if we were to use this we would end up with a computer that could answer 'trick' questions.

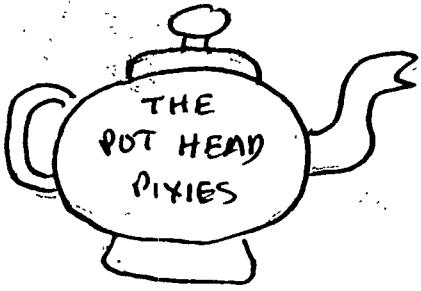
Part3: It is not easy to categories AI but there are 5 basic areas:-
1.Computer vision, 2.Speech production, 3.Speech/voice recognition,
4.thinking,reasoning and problem solving, 5.language understanding and translation.

Part 4: Vision and recognition. This is an important area of research due to its application to industrial robots. At present it takes expensive hardware and a very fast processor.

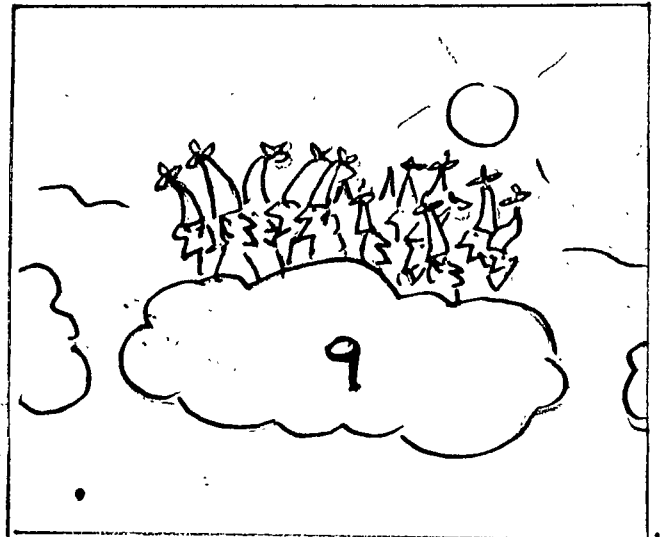
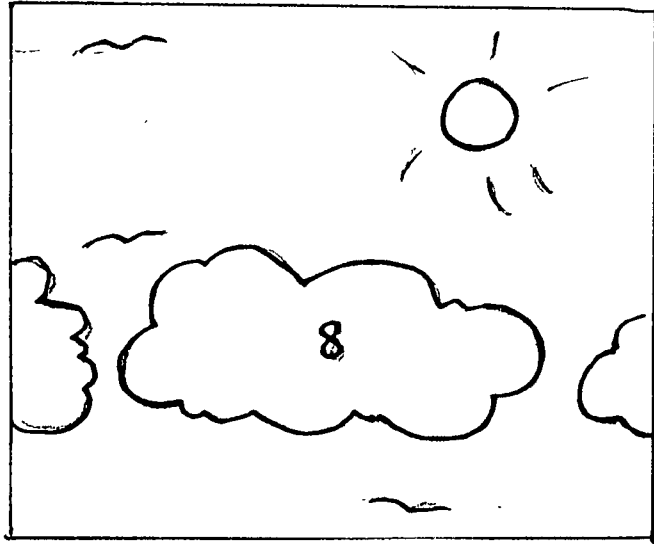
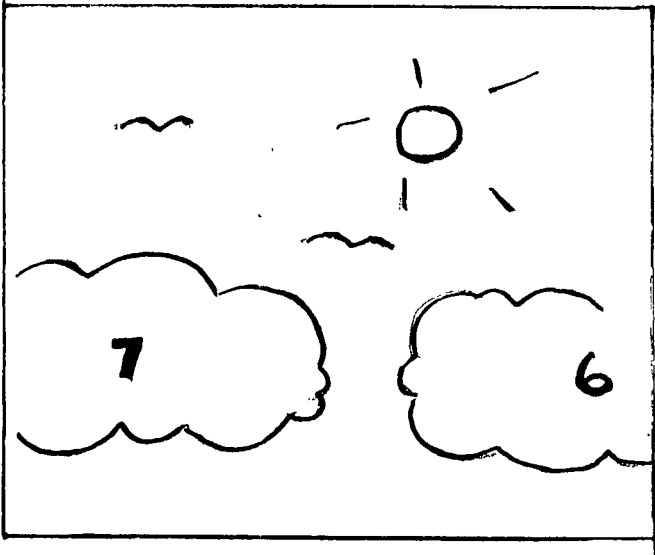
Part 5: Speech production. One of the more successful areas of AI to date. I am planning to get around to doing an article on the principles of speech generation in a couple of issues time.

Part 6: Speech and voice recognition. Haven't really read a lot about this area. Again a fair bit of research has been done with some success.

O U T O F R O O M



by Alan Holt
& Adrian Davies.



The Twilight Zone

Richard Minson. I hope you got back from shrewsbury alright.
((Fine. Why what happen to you ?))

Richard. Rob's party has alot to answer for, like the fact I over slept on Monday morning and missed my first lecture.
((Sorry I asked))

Richard. I think Rob Birthday had one or two good memories, chief amongst them were:

You and me trying to find Robs house. Walking up deserted country lanes in freezing cold mist/fog. The cakes (and very nice they were) and trying to locate the test match on radio 3 at 5 'O' clock in the morning while pissed and carrying on an intellectual conversation ((??)) at the same time

((Yes, I remember the Fog and all the rest. Though I thought that the walk Sunday morning was worth the mention. The locals will never be the same))

David Glover. From your letter to Richard you don't seem to like the format of the 'zine very much, which puzzles me// you're doing a good job, so whatever you do don't fold !!

((Yes, I am unhappy with the present format. More on that somewhere else in the zine. No, I willn't be folding F&I. I enjoy doing it too much))

David. Having said all that, I do agree with you that there does seem to be a dearth of debate in the 'zine. One of the problems in this direction must be the size of the readership; If you're going to limit the size the readership you're limiting the size of the response.

((There is no limit to the size, it is just that I can't afford to do more copies. I pay over 50% of the costs of F&I, something 50p per subber. Having said that I don't mind paying this if the person takes an active part in the zine. Hence, I am slowly increasing the size of the readership. F&I has average 2 new subbers per issue))

Jason Asker. You really need something controversial in the letters inorder to get the letter col going.

((One thing I can't do is write the letters. It is up to you lot))

David. I'm afraid anything to do with Prince is an inherent turn off to me, so I'm hoping the censerisus of opinion is to give a Prince article the thumbs down.

((It did. Having said that the only Prince article was 'Facts about Prince' and it wasn't written by a Prince fan.))

David. I personally am of the opinion that the popularity of artists like Prince & Madonna and their ilk reflect the dire statè of the charts to-day. Their music is so incredibly forgettable, so spectacularly mediocre. And these are the so-called mega-stars of to-day. From them we go downhill into the depths of tedium frequented by the likes of 5-star & the communards straight through the sheer boredom of number 1 hits like "When the going gets tough", "Lady in Red" and "Take my breath away".

David. What happened to all the energy and excitement of the Punk Revolution ?(I had intended that last sentence to be a **rhetorical** question but its suddenly struck me what I would pinpoint as the event that signalled the end of any influence the early days of Punk might have had on modern music; that event, Folks, occurred the day Kajagoogoo reached no.1 with "Too Shy".)

((Berlin fan keeps quiet))

Alan Holt. I've got ideas for another 2 ((articles)) but people might be getting a bit pissed off by AI after this next article, so let me know if there is a demand.

((A few are 'pissed' off with AI. A few are interested. Most have said nothing. I intend at least one more issue with AI in, just to see were the AI articles are heading.))

Jason. I'd disagree with Jon on AI and in use with human learning and intelligence. Surely people will have to understand how they learn, in order that they can create a computer to copy the same process. How else would a computer learn if it did not imitate how people learn skills etc ?

David. The Turing intelligence test ? I'm not too sure, but I think it goes something this: If you're having a "conversation" with a computer over a terminal and you cannot tell that it is a computer you're "talking" to (i.e. you think there's another human on another terminal somewhere typing messages to you), then that computer is intelligent. Actually, it isn't all that hard to write a program that can produce a seemingly "intelligent" conversation of a few minutes duration.

((Ok, enough of that. Time for something a little lighter))

Jason. I'm not sure I share P.H.Geares enthusiastic response to "man walking a gold fish" by M.Jackson.//Perhaps I'm not opening my mind to the pseudointellecutal consepsts the author is trying to convey, which P.H.Geare has obviously picked up upon.

((Perhaps))

Jason. However, I'm pleased to announce as treasurer of the tate gallery, that I can make an offer for £1 million for the original if the author wishes (providing you can get me out at the mental hospital I'm now in !).

((Well F&I has it fair share of loonies. Now for the only subber who has actual work in a loony-bin))

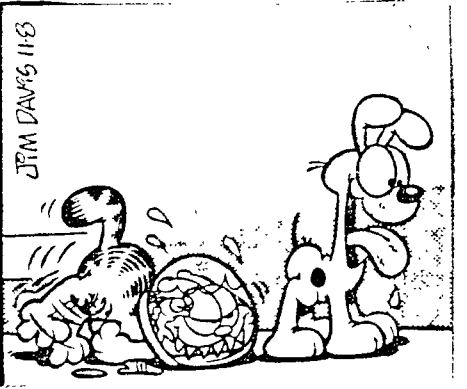
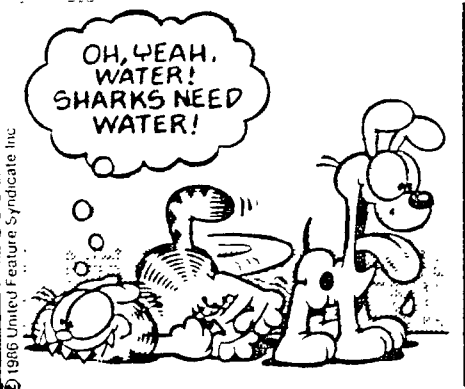
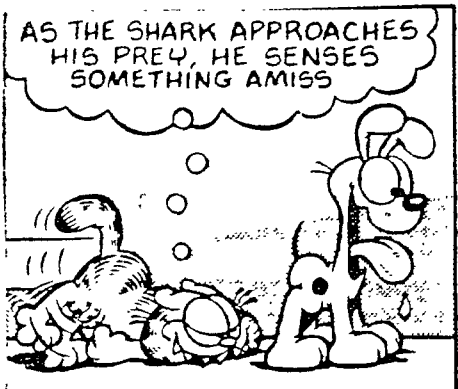
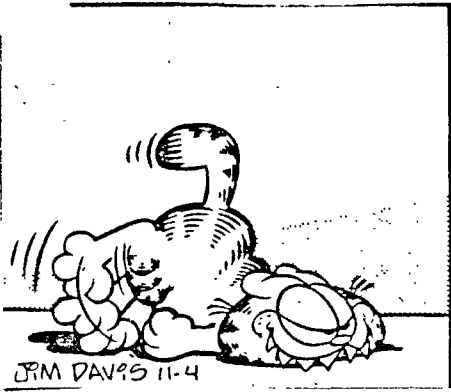
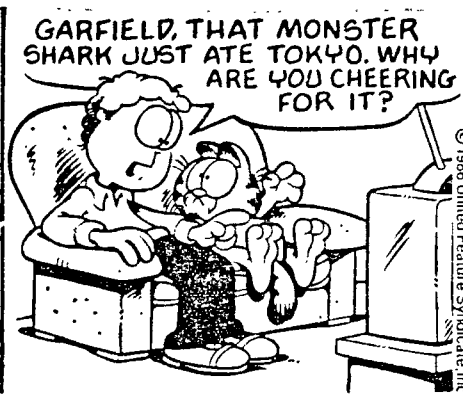
Adrian Davies. Just read the book 'Howard the Duck'. A bit disappointing. Still quite funny in parts.

Adrian. Do you have much spare time, what with the zine and assignments. ((It is now 2.46am and this is far from the last page of the zine I have to type up before I go to bed))

Paul Geare. Please mention me in the zine for sending the silliest letter of the month

((Hope that is what you wanted))

Richard-Rob: I enjoyed the party, is there any cake left ?



The Printed Word

Poland (pp 849) by James A. Michener

This book almost spans the whole history of Poland. It follows three fictitious families showing how the changes to Poland effect their lives. The characters are fictional but most of the events that occurred are faithfully presented such as the battle of Grunwald.

The book starts with the Tatars (1204 and their invasion of Poland in 1241) moving onto the present day (1983).

Not a particular good book. It does capture some of the spirit of Poland. Worth reading but due to the fictitious parts may miss lead any who don't already know some of the history of Poland.

The Valley of Horses (pp 588) by Jean M. Auel

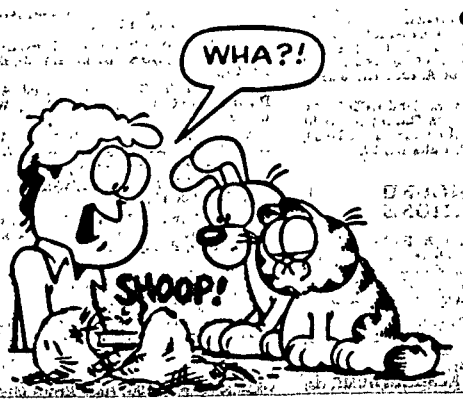
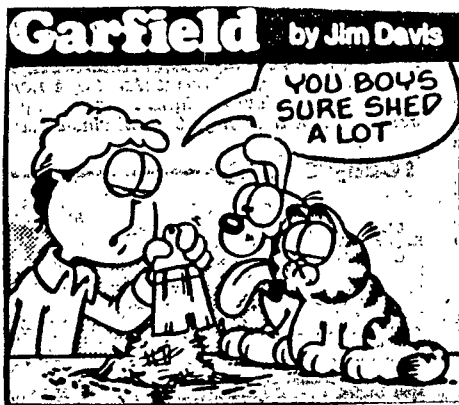
This is the second in the saga of Earth's children. In the first (The Clan of the Cave Bear) we met Alya. Born to the others, she is bought up by the clan. Upon Broud becoming chief, Alya has the death curse place on her. In the eyes of the clan she is dead and it is her spirit they see.

The second book picks up her story. After leaving the clan, Alya heads north to find the others. At the same time two brothers set out on a journey (a long trip of discover). The book unfortunately this book fails to capture the emotion/feelings of the first. The most enjoyable part of the first book was the relationship of the clan to Alya. The second book should have studied the relationship of Alya to Jondalar (one of the brothers) in a similar way. Alya doesn't get to meet Jondalar until the book is almost over (some 380 pages).

Jean M. Auel tries to show the others to us in the detail that the clan are in the first. To do this, Jean has the two brothers meet three different groups of the others. We gain some inside to 'the others' but too much time is wasted.

Jean makes Alya too perfect, too beautiful, too intelligent. She is after all only one woman. I must say I enjoyed the book it is just that the Clan of the Cave Bear was a better book.

((Have just had the chance to see The Clan of the Cave Bear on the video. This film has the problem of trying to transfer feelings to the screen without any of the stars saying one complete sentence. For the most part the film is faithful to the book. It does make a few changes to the second part which don't at first appear major but they are when added up. In general the film is about as good as they could have made it but is not one of the better films I have seen this year.))



Downfall Diplomacy

'Krakow'

Gamestart

So we have a second gamestart and our first Diplomacy variant. These people have expressed an interest in playing: Tim Wald, Adrian Davies, David Glover, Robert Barron, Michael Jackson, Richard Minson & Jason Asker. I seem to remember someone else asking me to put them down to play but I can't remember who. If that person lets me know, they will play instead of Michael Jackson. Can I have confirmation and preference list for next time please.

Downfall III - Province list

Ano Anorien	Gap Gap of Rohan	Shi The Shire
Anr Andrast	Gla Gladden Fields	Sil Silverlode
Anu Anduin	Gre Greenway	SDo South Downs
Anf Anfalas	GHa Grey Havens	SGo South Gondor
Ang Angmar	GMO Grey Mountains	SIt South Ithilien
Ash Ash Mountains		SMi South Mirkwood
	Hrd Harad	SRh South Rhun
Bel Belfalas	Hdw Haradwaith	
Blu Blue Mountains	Hld Harlond	Val Vale
Bra Brandywine	Hav Havens of Umbar	
Bre Bree	Hol Hollin	WEm West Emnet
Bro Brown Lands		Wil Wilderland
	Iro Iron Hills	Wit Withered Heath
Crn Carnen		Wiz Wizards Vale
Cel Celebrant	Kha Khand	Wol Wold
CMi Central Mirkwood		
Crk Carrock	Lam Lamedon	Fortresses
Cit City of the Corsairs	Leb Lebennin	
	Lhu Lhun	Bar Barad-Dur
Dag Dagorland	Los Lossarnach	Ere Erebor
Dru Druwaith Iaur		Ise Isengard
Dun Dunland	Min Minhiriath	Lor Lorien
Dol Dol Guldor	MDO Mount Doom	MTi Minas Tirith
		MMo Minas Morgul
EEm East Emnet	NHa Near Harad	Mor Moria
Eas Eastfold	Nen Nenuial	Riv Rivendell
Edo Edoras	Nin Nindalf	Udu Udun
Ene Enedwaith	NIt North Ithilien	
Ett Ettenmoors	NDO North Downs	Seas
	NMi North Mirkwood	
Fan Fangorn	NRh North Rhun	BAY Bay of Belfalas
Fld Forlond	NWa Northern Waste	GUL Gulf of Forochel
Fln Forlindon	Nur Nurn	ICE Ice Bay of Forchel
Edw Forodwaith		SOU Southern Sea
Fcl Forochel	Rhu Rhudaur	TOL Tolfalas
Fra Framsburg	Riv River Running	WES Western Sea
Far Far Harad		

Anyone without a copy of the rules let me know. Also if you wish to query any of the rules, please let me know. Well that seems to be it. Nothing else to say. Here is a nice piece of space to do what you like to.