

Old School Interviews

Volume 2



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Introduction

I'm back with Volume 2 of "Old School Interviews". Detailed within this document are people of the "OSR", old school publishers, role players, graphic artists, cartographers. It's been my pleasure to read their responses, invest time in researching what makes them tick. I look forward to sending out more emails with the subject line "it's your turn!"

Thank you very much:

Chris, Gennifer, James, Glynn, Eric, and Diogo. Without you, this would not have been possible. Please enjoy.

Shane

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An Interview with Chris Gonnerman

Friday, October 7, 2016

1. How did you get your start roleplaying? What system did you use?

I saw an ad in a science fiction magazine for Dungeons & Dragons, specifically the Moldvay Basic edition, and I thought it looked like fun so I asked for it for Christmas. That was 1981, and the red book in the hot pink boxed set was still brand new.

I got a game started with some friends, and as soon as I could afford it I ordered the Cook/Marsh Expert Set. Yes, I was a game master, for years in fact, before I ever got to play.

2. How and when did you discover the OSR?

When I created BasicFantasy RPG, there was no such thing as the OSR. BFRPG was the first game to try to replicate the mechanics of a classic game (though I did deviate in a few specific ways, particularly in the choice to use ascending AC). There was another game, still popular now, which predated BFRPG but it substituted a "core mechanic" in place of the varied resolution methods used in classic games. Shortly after I began releasing BFRPG in PDF, OSRIC appeared on the scene, and not long after that was the advent of Labyrinth Lord and then Swords & Wizardry.

So in a way, I didn't discover the OSR, I helped to create it.

3. Tell me about Basic Fantasy, how did it start?

I wanted to run a classic game, like the ones I ran back in high school in the early '80's. I dug out my old game rules and found they were falling apart; I needed something I could really use, something I could get legal copies of for my players.

At that time, there was a lot of talk about the possibilities of cloning classic games using the OGL and d20 SRD as a basis, but other than that one game I mentioned (which due to OGL rules I can't call by name)

nobody had really tried. I wasn't the first to have the idea, but I was one of the first to actually try to do it.

4. Tell me about Iron Falcon, what was the thought process behind that?

Hah. That's a funny story, at least to me. When BFRPG and OSRIC and LL and S&W were all still new, they were all called "retro-clones" as they were considered clones of classic games. Time moved on and I did my own thing and really didn't participate in many "OSR" discussions (not that I have any problem with the "OSR movement" but rather that I just didn't have time). So I was surprised when I learned that Basic Fantasy RPG was no longer considered a retro-clone since it did not attempt to "properly" replicate a specific classic game.

I could have argued the point; by that argument, LL and S&W might not qualify either, but no one was questioning them. I'm not either, mind you; they are absolutely retro-clones in my eyes. But it did irritate me... I had been a retro-clone author, but I had been kicked out of the club.

Parallel to that, I had been wanting to learn more about the early genesis of the world's most popular RPG (you know, that one). I chose a target year of 1975 and set out to write a game that replicated how the game was played (as much "by the books" as possible) in that year. I got a lot of help from Simon Bull and several other fans of the truly Old School games in understanding those old, hard-to-read rules.

And I did most of the work in about a month and a half. I'm still proud of that.

5. What are you currently playing?

Basic Fantasy RPG. Still running the campaign I started back in 2003, using my earlier rule system called Project 74. Don't bother looking, it's there but it's not nearly as nice as BFRPG. I switched the rules over around 2007, after the game was in print. The campaign world, Glain, is the world I originally created in 1982 for my very first games.

6. If you could campaign in any world which would it be?

Glain. Obviously. Though I have run some games in FFC-era Blackmoor and some in the Western Lands, the campaign world I sketched out for our module BFIMorgansfort.

7. What is one of your favorite adventures other than something that you've released?

X2 Castle Amber. It's SO much fun to run!

8. When you get a chance to play a character, what type of PC do you like to play?

In a new group, I always play a vanilla fighter. If I know the GM pretty well, I sometimes play an illusionist... I'm pretty good at that, but only if the GM is cool.

9. What are you most excited about in the RPG scene currently?

Hah. I have no idea. I live in the Basic Fantasy RPG world, and pay pretty much no attention to the larger RPG scene. I don't even know what's going on in the OSR community most of the time. We just do our thing, run our games, write our adventures and supplements and so on, happy as clams in our own little world.

10. Tell me about the adventure module "Castle By The Sea"

I created the original adventure for a convention appearance. I wanted something short enough to run entirely in a 3 to 4 hour session, and in doing so I also created a dungeon map that fits entirely on my two battle mats. It was so good, finally having an adventure that would really show the game off in a short format.

But it was just one adventure. I go to conventions about twice a year, and see some of the same people every time. I couldn't run that nice little adventure again, not for a couple of years anyway. What to do?

So I made it a contest. A forum member had put up money for promotional purposes, and I used it as the prize. \$25.00 in the form of an Amazon gift certificate to be given to whomever could create the most interesting key for the 22 room, two-level map. Forum members voted on the submissions, and then we collected them all into one multi-module. Of course, I did not participate, but my adventure is in the book (at the back, titled the Call of Doom).

I've run one of the adventures already at a convention (the prize winner, Caer Mortling) and I plan to run another one at Necronomicon in Quincy, IL in November.

11. What was the first adventure module that you published?

Good question. I started out doing editing for Dragonsfoot back around 2001 or 2002, I don't remember exactly. I edited a number of adventures before I started writing them. The first DF adventure I remember getting on their site was the Haunted Tower, but that was a collaborative work.

If we're talking adventures in print, BFI Morgansfort was the first.

12. Any funny gaming stories that you can share?

Last year (2015) at Quincon I ran the Castle D'Angelo adventure from Strongholds of Sorcery. It was just a taste; the adventure contains a truly huge amount of madness, much of it courtesy of Stuart Marshall (the OSRIC guy). That adventure includes a magical effect that can cause madness, mostly in the form of delusions.

The dumbest guy in the party (who had penalty levels of both Intelligence and Wisdom) was afflicted with a delusion that he was the smartest guy in the party. The player really played it up, and it was absolutely hilarious.

Is that a "funny story?" I don't know... all I can say is, it was really fun to be there.

13. Cheezies or chips?

Both, of course. Kind of partial to Jolly Ranchers too.

Editor's Note: Once in a while at our gaming table we have some twizzlers, I've never thought of bringing a lot of candy, and now I have a craving for a jolly rancher (thanks Chris). They do however get stuck in the back of my throat for some reason. As well I think there's a difference between the Canadian & American versions of them. More research is needed.

14. What are the plans for basic fantasy this year? Anything in the works?

We always, and I mean always, have something in the works. CS1 Castle by the Sea is in progress now, going through the seemingly endless cycles of editing that precede getting something into print. My three large Glain modules, Strongholds of Sorcery, Ruby Mountain, and The Lost Pyramid are also under revision, though none are as close to publication as CS1 Castle by the Sea. AA2 Adventure Anthology Two is in progress as well.

No idea what will make it to print first. The Basic Fantasy Project isn't run like a business; we publish when we are ready, and we don't rush.

15. Where can we find you on the web?

www.basicfantasy.org

An Interview With Ms Gennifer Bone

Wednesday, October 5, 2016

1. How did you get your start roleplaying? What system did you use?

I started at the age of 12, with Dungeons and Dragons 2nd Edition. I got a hold of the Monster Manual, and was playing within a month. We played in the Dragonlance Setting. (I had already read the books) I played a Kender, and killed a snow golem with burning pitch.

Editor's note: Same as me! I started around that age playing 2e.

2. Funniest Session?

The funniest session was a 3.5 game. We were in a pirate campaign, and I was B'essa Dorra, one of my favorite characters of all time. I was stuck on the ship while others were fighting on a wreck about a hundred meters away. Thinking quickly, I had a wizard friend freeze a section of ocean to ice, and, clambering on top, I surfed my way into battle!

3. How and when did you discover OSR?

I found out about OSR when I joined up with G+, about 5 years ago.

4. Tell me about your art, when did you start? What your influences?

I've always made artwork. There hasn't been a time in my life when I wasn't making something. My influences are generally other artists, like H.R. Geiger, Wayne Reynolds, Masamune Shirow, and many more. I do a lot with real-world reference as well- I have many folders of terrifying reference pics.

EDITORS NOTE: I need to see the terrifying reference pics.

5. What role playing game are you currently playing?

On the computer- Fallout New Vegas. IRL- Pathfinder

6. If you could campaign in any world which would it be?

Eberron. For me, it's a perfect blend of steampunk and high fantasy. Plus, CTHULU!

7. What is your favourite artist?

Last I checked, it was a human. The exact one changes quite a lot, though I really love TerryL Witlatch's work.

8. What rpg products have you provided art for?

Let's see... Lusus Naturae, Swords and Wizardry (3rd Printing), Chill, Westward, Lamentations of the Flame Princess, and a lot more. Almost more than I can believe, really.

Note: If you don't know, +Gennifer Bone provided artwork for the monsters in the 3rd printing of Swords & Wizardry. To which +Stacy Dellorfano has been designing it, along with a host of talented artists. The good news is, as of this morning the kickstarter is funded! (Well basically its exceeded its goal and there's still like 38 days to go!)

9. When you get a chance to play a character what type of PC do you play?

I love playing Bards and Paladins. Charisma and magic are awesome to have.

10. What are you most excited about in the RPG scene currently? And art scene?

Well, just about anything from Lamentations of the Flame Princess, Scrap Princess, and Zak Smith.

11. What draws you to particular artist's work?

When it comes to what attracts me to an artist, a lot of it is when I see what I want in my own work- life, weight, a sense of place. The expressions of body and face are very important to me. I love to see other artists that use ink line effectively. So yeah, it's emotional power and technical skill all the way.

12. Doctor Who or Sherlock Holmes?

Batman. (Doctor Who)

Editor's Note: Fair enough! Twas a silly question. Also my pick would be Batman as well.

13. What are you plans for the next year? What should we look out for?

Well, there's going to be a website, and I'm hoping to publish a book of monsters...

14. Anything else we should know about?

I know where you are, and I saw what you did.

15. Where can we find your art online?

*Currently- <http://ladyredfingers.deviantart.com/> or:
<http://onwingsofink.blogspot.com/>*

OR: <https://www.patreon.com/ladyredfingers>

16. If someone is interested in hiring you, how do they get a hold of you?

Send me a message on my email: [genniferbone AT hotmail DOT com](mailto:genniferbone@hotmail.com), or contact me on FaceBook or G+ (both Gennifer Bone)

17. Favourite Session Bevy? The green dew?

I don't drink soda, so my gaming beverage is either juice or a good dark beer.

Note: If you liked this interview, I did a pile more! You can read them here (its free)

An interview With James George

Pits & Perils Designer

Tuesday, January 3, 2017

1. How did you get your start roleplaying? What system did you use?

I started playing in 1978. It was OD&D, judging by the books the DM used, although I think I spotted some Judges Guild stuff as well. Back then, players only needed to know what was on their character sheet, so I was an enthusiastic player more than anything else. Long story short, we moved and I lost touch. No more D&D until 1980, when I found the Holmes Basic set at K-Mart and (not too subtly) asked to get it for Christmas. Robyn played some 2nd Edition D&D in the early 90s (as an indulgence to me), but started really getting into it in 2002, around the same time I started feeling the itch to return to the hobby.

2. Tell me about Pits & Perils, what was the genesis of the game?

I'd been away from the hobby for over a decade. Career and family rightly took precedence, and the military was pretty demanding. But by 2002, things had settled down and I began to feel the itch. Robyn had discovered Morrowind and few other computer RPG's, so she was game (so to speak) as well. Unfortunately, we had no rules and nothing but the Monopoly dice in the kitchen drawer. No problem. I knew how the games worked and put myself into developing an original system that was simpler and would emphasize our personal interactions. The rest

developed over time, and Robyn, my principle player, had a HUGE hand in how it evolved.

Anyway, we tried to formalize the kind of negotiation and on-the-spot rulings typical of these games and make them a part of the rules. P&P is a game where the referee can say: *The dwarf and fighter have the ogre pinned down, so the elf can fire their bow at +2.* And there's specific provisions in the rules to allow for this and to give it some sort of objective underpinning while HIGHLY encouraging house rules.

3. What was the first adventure you published?

The Ruined Abbey of Saint Tabitha, which was actually a pivotal episode in our campaign. Nargh converted and is now a saint! If you've played the adventure or just read it, you'll know what this means!

4. What is your favourite OSR clone?

White Box. I don't know, it just captures the feeling of OD&D + Holmes Basic.

5. What are you currently playing?

Pits & Perils (it's a game we designed for our own enjoyment), White Box, and One DiceSupers. Oh, and too much Mount & Blade: Warband and Fallout 4!

6. What is your favourite published module other than yours?

The Keep on the Borderlands. It's just THE essential starter adventure and campaign toolkit.

7. If you could campaign in any world which would it be?

Blackmoor with Arneson running or Greyhawk with Gygax at the helm. Hey, you asked...

8. What are the plans for the future of Old House Rules?

We're working on an expansion to Blood of Pangea called Opherian Scrolls, which is based more on Lieber and Moorcock: the OTHER swords and sorcery tradition. There's also a (small) combat companion booklet and a hardcover collection of the Blood of Pangea rulebooks (much like the collected Pits & Perils) with an exclusive cosmic horror supplement. We're basically trying to finalize out existing titles and get them into hardcover.

9. When you get a chance to play a character, what type of PC's do you like to play?

Atypical fighters with something other than strength as their strongest ability. There's actually MORE room to be flexible and creative. Robyn does elven thieves. Very well, I might add (she's scary).

10. What are you most excited about in the RPG scene currently?

The ability for people to correspond online (and in real time) and share their creations. It's everything the early gaming scene aspired to be and more. Oh, and the DIY ethos of the hobby absolutely THRIVES here.

11. Any funny gaming stories you would like to share?

This one time, at Band Camp. No, maybe something else. Ok, there was this AD&D adventure in 1988 where a friend's thief stole from my character and I avenged myself with a clever Ventriloquism spell when we were taken before the throne of the Elf Queen. The details aren't safe for work or particularly wholesome. He didn't like it, but I had a blast. As I recall, he had to roll up a new character! And the moral is...

12. Buck Rogers or Duck Dogers?

Duck Dodgers. Yeah, absolutely. Robyn agrees...

13. Favourite gaming beverage and snack?

Diet Pepsi and Cool Ranch Doritos for me, Ice Mountain and a veggie tray for Robyn. She'll live to be 100. Me? Not so much!

Note: Shane needs to find out what the heck Ice Mountain is!!!

14. Where can we find you on the web?

There's our official page at <http://www.oldehouserules.com/> and our home on google+ (just search for us by name). We love hearing from folks, so oldehouserules AT yahoo DOT com is always open.

Thanks again, and many thanks! Stay warm up there...

An interview with Glynn from Monkey Blood Design.

Monday, April 24, 2017

1. How did you get your start roleplaying? What system did you use?

Back when I was around twelve or thirteen, a good friend of mine introduced me to the game. We initially played Mentzer Red Box D&D, and then moved onto AD&D, which is where I started to DM games myself.

2. How and when did you discover the OSR?

On G+ about 3-4 years ago, although I have collected all the old modules for years, so finding the Revival/DIY scene was fantastic!

3. Tell me about Monkey Blood Design, How did it start?

I was painting miniatures/modelling, as well as drawing map symbols and posting my work on G+. I was contacted by ProFantasy to work on a symbol set and that pushed my brain into thinking that what I was doing was worthwhile and valuable to others. I then decided I would formally build on that and created MBD. It really took off, and I've had little spare time since haha 😊

4. Tell me about your upcoming release "The Miederlands"?

My first ever MDB-published work was The DemonStones. It's got two flavours, Pathfinder and S&W Complete. This was effectively an experiment to learn about the whole self-publishing scene and see if I could do it.

I see that as the groundwork for The Miederlands. Firstly, here is a link to the G+ page where I put a lot of the WIP posts;

<https://plus.google.com/b/116933315993109548253/collection/wJXME>

The Midderlands itself is a twisted, medieval-fantasy version of a region fifty-miles across centred on where I live in England. It's an S&W Complete-based, OSR, mini-campaign setting with bestiary of monsters/NPCs and race-classes, and a hex-map, and whilst it's not a hex-crawl, it could be used as such as some hexes are described.

Midderlands sample/WIP map below (keep in mind this is a WIP and things will change a bit, it's however super friggin cool!).

I like to think that the book contains a lot of "game-juice". No rigidly-defined character and history, but more seeds to allow a GM to go where they want with it. I've tried not to over-describe everything, but just make it engaging and hopefully useful and fun. Many of the locations exist but I've put a Midderlands spin on them. For example; Blacken Rock in Hex 1816 is described as such;

Blacken Rock. For a start, it's not black. A large, dark-grey boulder some ten-feet across sits here next to a small pond. This boulder is not of local stone, and there appears no explicable reason why the fifty-tonne piece of solid hellstone should be here. Hellstone is only found in the northern parts of Scotland. This strange stone is flecked with crimson glass-like deposits, and reported to ward off evil spirits. Many "treasure-hunters" have tried to chip off chunks of this super-hard substance - all to no avail. No-one has ever managed to budge the boulder, not even Big Owge from Alderwych. It is based on this in real-life; <http://www.geograph.org.uk/photo/2652579>. I've worked on a lot of the setting writing, and setting look-feel, the initial creature illustrations, cartography and layout.

*These endeavors are rarely one person's work though, so I have had help from Edwin Nagy with the creature/class builds and mechanics. He has done a lot of work with Zach over at Lesser Gnome (now Frog God Games) with *Death & Taxes* and *The First Sentinel*. Edwin worked with me on *The Demon Stones* conversion to S&W previously, and he's awesome! I've also got some supplemental artwork in progress with Jim Magnusson. We have mutually admired each other's work for quite a while and it's*

been great to have him on-board the process. It's still work-in-progress, but currently weighing in at 150 pages in A5 format at the moment. I expect it to be PoD with some way of getting printed versions of the setting map (which I have to finalise). I have a liking for profanity too, so there could be swear words involved – be aware.

5. What are you currently playing?

I don't get to play as often as I would like as the day-job, family commitments and MBD take up pretty much all my spare time. I do however currently play in an occasional campaign of The Cthulhu Hack by Paul Baldowski. It's a friend's game and I play a Smuggler called Joe Malone.

6. If you could campaign in any world which would it be?

When I was younger I played in Lankhmar A LOT. I even overthrew the overlord and ruled it. For years it was Forgotten Realms though. I played Dungeons & Dragons Online for a few years and really got to like Ebberon. As it stands nowadays, I really like the Astonishing Swordsmen & Sorcerers of Hyperborea setting created by Jeff Talanian. I worked on the large world map for the 2nd edition, soon to be released) so I got to study it in detail. Jeff has created a beautifully-rich setting and game. Also, I've spent a lot of time working with Venger over at Kort'thalis and his Alpha Blue setting is a marvelous kaleidoscope of gonzo, sleazy sci-fi action with extra pleasure!

7. Tell me about your art & cartography, when did you start? What your influences?

I've been a technical drawing guy since I left school, so that's has shaped a lot of the ability. I've always loved to draw since I was a kid, so when all that comes together with a hobby you love, it's like a dream. I love the work of Mike Schley, and going old school Paul Ruiz (Geoff Wingate) of the UK series of TSR modules and Imagine magazine.

8. Who is your favourite artist and or author?

Artist is probably anyone from the 80's that worked on Citadel products, like Tony Ackland and John Blanche. Author is Raymond E. Feist (Magician, Silverthorn, Darkness at Sethanon)

9. What is one of your favorite adventures other than something that you've released (or worked on)?

I loved the 3E City of the Spider Queen – I GM'd it and wiped the party out in Szith Morcane. Not sure if they have forgiven me yet. I have fond memories of playing CM3 Sabre River

(https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sabre_River) and the gold piece hoard, as well as the Lankhmar modules.

10. When you get a chance to play a character, what type of PC do you like to play?

Usually a meat-head fighter if I don't want to do much thinking. There is something intensely satisfying about rolling big dice when you score critical hits.

11. What are you most excited about in the RPG scene currently?

Crikey, there is so much. The amount of talent is overwhelming. The Scandinavians are creating some of the best-looking stuff I've seen outside of the indie-scene. Tales of the Loop, Mutant Year Zero, Symbaroum – lovely to flick through and admire art and layout alone.

12. Would you rather be a Tiefling or an Orc?

Orc = meathead, so Orc.

13. What are the plans for Monkey Blood Design this year?

Get The Midderlands out, and continue to offer my services. Hopefully I will be as luck this year as last. I've got all manner of personal projects bubbling away. I've also worked on a big project for LotFP for 13 months, so that should manifest this year, as well as Clint Krause's Driftwood Verses, Venger Satanis' Trinity of Awesome Returns, Jeff Talanian's AS&SH 2E, Liz Chairaditkul's Monster, amongst others.

14. Cheezies or Nacho Chips?

We don't have Cheezies here in the UK, but they look like Cheetos in the US or cheesy Nik Naks here in the UK. Nacho chips are presumably Doritos in the UK. To be honest I don't like either much... but give me Smokey Bacon-flavoured anything and I'm like a rat up a pipe.

15. Where can we find you on the web?

My web-site which I really, really need to update and restructure;

<http://www.monkeyblooeddesign.co.uk>

I am always found lurking on my Google Plus stream;

<https://plus.google.com/+MonkeyblooeddesignCoUk>

I can also be found lurking on Twitter, Facebook and Pinterest

<https://twitter.com/Monk3yBlood>

<https://www.facebook.com/monkeyblooeddesign>

& <https://www.facebook.com/glynn.seal.9>

<https://uk.pinterest.com/glynnseal/>

An interview with Eric from Bloat Games

Thursday, August 31, 2017

1. How did you get your start roleplaying? What system did you use?

I remember very clearly knocking on the door of a guy I didn't know too well, to see if he wanted to hang out. When he let me in I saw around 10 people huddled around a dining room table. There were books, and papers and dice everywhere. They were all standing, shouting and laughing. I had absolutely no clue what I was seeing, but it looked and sounded awesome!

Turns out, they were playing 1st Edition Advanced Dungeons & Dragons. They asked to play, so I made a character and haven't stopped since.

2. How and when did you discover the OSR?

It was in late 2015. I was doing random RPG related searches on YouTube and I don't remember where I heard it first but I do remember after hearing it a couple of times, I had to Google OSR to see what the acronym abbreviated meant, and then I fell down the rabbit hole only to find what I'd been looking for in gaming since my early days in the hobby.

3. Tell me about Bloat games, how did it start?

I've always been a writer and a creator and as such always wanted to create my own RPG or to write for TSR/WOTC or Palladium Books. Around the same time that I discovered the OSR, I also found Drivethrurpg. I saw that there was an avenue for self-published authors and creators to create RPG products and get the product to the consumer. I decided, having absolutely no idea how to do it, that I was going to start a game company. I asked some of my childhood gaming pals if they wanted to help me and Bloat Games was established.

It took us a while to find our way, but since publishing our first RPG SURVIVE THIS!! Zombies! in February, we've since published: The Zombie Hack, White Box Zombies, SURVIVE THIS!! Zombies: Welcome to Zombieland, SURVIVE THIS!! Zombies: The Body in The Road, The

Vigilante Hack and A City Full of Sinners (GM's GUIDE for The Vigilante Hack)

4. Tell me about "a city full of sinners"

To understand A City Full of Sinners, I have to first tell you about The Vigilante Hack: The Vigilante Hack is based off of the very popular RPG The Black Hack by David Black. It shares most of the same rules (some adjusted to better serve the genre) but whereas The Black Hack is based in a fantasy setting, The Vigilante Hack is set in a modern day crime riddled city. I am HUGE fan of the Superhero Genre/comic books/Superhero Movies and TV shows so naturally I always wanted to create a Supers game but when I looked at Superhero Games most focused on Powers and Abilities and I wanted to do something street level. Think Batman not Superman, Hit Girl not Wonder Woman, The Punisher not Spider-Man. The Vigilante Hack is heavily influenced by Marvel & Netflix's Daredevil and Batman The Animated Series. The more I worked on this game, the darker and grittier it became.

After the release of The Vigilante Hack, it really found it's audience. People really liked the tone and setting meshed with the quick rules of The Black Hack and the potential lethality in the tradition of the OSR. Based on the feedback as I was getting I wanted to write a supplement as kind of a thank you to the small but growing audience the game was garnering. That's where A City Full of Sinners comes from.

I've always been fascinated by great random city generators like Vornheim by Zak S. or Augmented Reality by Paul D. Gallagher. But those books while amazing are very large and complex and I didn't think doing something like that would fit with the rules light approach on The Black Hack. I decided to take but inspiration from Vornheim and Augmented Reality, and shrink it down, run it through a Black Hack filter so to say, and once I got started I found a really companion piece for The Vigilante Hack.

A City Full of Sinners comes with an optional setting, random city generator, gang generator, Equipment kits, rules for automobile chases

and vehicle upgrades, drugs (borrowed from *The Cyber-Hack* by Mike Evans), Contacts and a starter adventure.

5. What are you currently playing?

WhiteBox Fantastic Medieval Adventure Game by Charlie Mason with *White Box Omnibus* by James M. Spahn

6. If you could campaign in any world which would it be?

Rifts Earth (Palladiums version) because in *Rifts Earth*, anything and everything is possible!

7. Tell me about the Zombie hack?

My first game was *SURVIVE THIS!! Zombies!*, a White Box inspired OSR game about trying to survive a Zombie Apocalypse. The *Zombie Hack* was created because I really liked *The Black Hack* ruleset and I had all this *Zombie Art* that I had access to use in my games, so it was kind of a no brainer (pun intended).

As a pleasant surprise, porting *The Black Hack* into a *Zombie Apocalypse*, turned out much better than I initially thought it would. I had a great round of playtesters who gave me a ton of great suggestions. I think it's a really solid game.

8. Who is your favourite artist and or author?

My favorite RPG artist is Kevin Long of Palladium Books fame. His work is amazing. Even when doing simple line work, it's so clean and crisp, I don't think anyone can touch him.

For currently working, I really like the work of Doug Kovacs from Goodman Games and DCC RPG fame. It's like he has access to my imagination from when I was 12 and first starting to play RPGs.

However, I got to say, Bradley K. McDevitt is amazing too and such a pleasure to work with.

Taking out Gary Gygax as I just don't think it's fair to compare him to others, probably James M. Spahn from Barrel Rider Games. His White Star & The Hero's Journey are two of my favorite books to read to inspire me to want to play games. I would like to give an honorable mention to Harley Stroh (Goodman Games). His adventures are the best around!

9. What is one of your favorite adventures other than something that you've released (or worked on)?

Sailors on The Starless Sea by Harley Stroh and Goodman games. I love reading it, running it, playing in it, dying in it. I just really, really like it!

Editor's Note: I LOVE The cover of that book!

10. When you get a chance to play a character, what type of PC do you like to play?

I tend to play the Warrior type or the Healer. I'm not a very competitive person when it comes to RPGs so I usually let the players pick what they want to play and then I'll play whatever works best for the party.

11. What are you most excited about in the RPG scene currently?

I think we are in a Golden Age of roleplaying games and I'm most excited to see the new products offered from the OSR community and new creators stepping up from our community to publish for the first time.

12. Would you rather be an Ogre or a Halfling?

If it's DCC RPG then a Halfling, otherwise give me an Ogre.

13. What are the plans for Bloat Games this year?

For the rest of 2017 Bloat Games will be focused on launching our first Kickstarter for our game SURVIVE THIS!! Dark Places & Demogorgons, an OSR game set in the 1980s. This will launch in late SEP/Early OCT. Dark Places & Demogorgons is fully written, layed out, has art and is ready to go! It is also the game that I'm most proud of. I can't wait for it to get a wide release and get it into the hands of the people who want to play it.

14. Taco's or burritos?

Burritos. You can stuff more food inside them.

But for the record, I'll NEVER turn a taco...unless it's a seafood taco...those are gross.

Editor's Note: Try a fish taco man, I'm in LOOOOVE with them!

15. Where can we find you on the web?

You can find me here:

<https://www.facebook.com/bloat>

<https://plus.google.com/u/1/+EricfromBloatGames>

Eric from Bloat Games

you can find Bloat Games at

www.facebook.com/bloatgames

www.bloatgames.com

and on Instagram @bloatgames

An interview with Diogo Nogueira of Old Skull Publishing

Thursday, September 21, 2017

1. How did you get your start roleplaying? What system did you use?

Well, I don't know if that counts, but I believe my initiation was with Fighting Fantasy Gamebooks, and then with the Dungeoneer RPG (which is an Advanced Fighting Fantasy version). I played many of their first gamebooks and then started to try make something similar with Dungeoneer. It was only with Tagmar (a Brazilian Fantasy RPG that functioned similar to the TSR Conan RPG) that I really started to understand the differences between gaming books and proper Role Playing Games.

2. How and when did you discover the OSR?

I think it was around 2010 or something. I had just got back to playing RPGs, and bought a bunch of 4th edition D&D books. I tried to play a campaign with them for about an year, but in the whole time, we didn't finish even 3 adventures. It wasn't like the D&D I remembered. Then I started looking around the internet to see what people were playing and I found about this whole "let's take a look into the origins of our hobby" thing and discovered Labyrinth Lord. I immediately wanted to try it out and it worked so fine (in a 3 hour session we did things we took months to accomplish in the 4th edition campaign), I became like an OSR fanatic, hunting everything I could find about the older editions and the things they were inspired now.

3. Tell me about Old Skull publishing, how did it start?

One of the things that I found really fascinating about the OSR was how everyone had their own vision of how the game was, and how it could be, and even shared these visions with the community, publishing games of their own. It was really refreshing. I realised we didn't really need a big company dictating what game we should play, how the setting was, what

story we should be telling now. We could do our own thing. The game was really ours, and we could do anything with it. So over the years I played many many OSR games and each one there was something I really liked, but didn't have something another game had. So, the logical step was to make a game myself that would combine what I wanted to have, stealing bits and parts from a bunch of other games and put it out there, and see how it goes.

4. Tell me about "Sharp Swords & Sinister spells".

Sharp Swords & Sinister Spells is a game I made for myself. It's a light sword and sorcery RPG with strong Old School influences. It's not so light that you can't have significant mechanical bits and the rules almost don't matter. They do, and they have an important impact on it, but are easily manageable. If you need to create a character, you can do it in a few minutes. Need a monster? It's even quicker. It is inspired mainly by the stories of Robert E. Howard's Conan and Fritz Leiber Lankhmar series, although there are influences of other authors such as Clark Ashton Smith, Lovecraft, Michael Moorcock. And the actual system is a mixture and reimagination of various bits of different systems (it has parts inspired by Black Hack, White Hack, DCC RPG, Beyond the Wall, Call of Cthulhu, Edge of the Empire, Fiasco, and a bunch more), most of them from the OSR, but there is a thing or two outside of this realm of influence. I wanted to combine everything I liked in other games into my own, and the result is something unique, but that seems familiar too.

So, in the end, SS&SS is a simple yet robust system, that let me create things for it quite easily, without requiring too much work from me, while also giving me the elements I want to work with for the style of sword and sorcery adventures I like.

5. What are you currently playing?

I am currently playing Sharp Swords & Sinister Spells and Dungeon Crawl Classics RPG. I am beginning a SS&SS urban crawl kind of campaign, inspired by the Lankhmar stories, with a bunch of generators to create gaming elements, hooks, places, NPCs, conflicts and other stuff (and I

plan to publish the setting and city tool kit for the game later). For DCC RPG, I basically play a bunch of one-shots of the modules.

6. If you could campaign in any world which would it be?

That's a tough question. I love playing The One Ring, which takes place in Middle Earth, Star Wars RPGs, that happen in that universe... But I think one of the settings that really fascinates me is Edgar R. Burroughs' Barsoom. It is futuristic but medieval at the same time. The ruins, the mysteries, the different civilizations that live and lived there, the legends and superstitions. I guess I really want a good Barsoomian campaign someday!

7. Tell me about the SS&SS Addendum, and spell books.

Well, when I published SS&SS core book, I wanted it to be compact, and having everything you really need to play a sword and sorcery RPG, with some tools. But the Addendum is that little extra, that spice you can put on your food to make it tastier. The Addendum brings some optional rules inspired by the sword and sorcery genre, like a Luck boost drunk people receive, a rule for a strong bond with your adventuring companion (like Fafhrd and Grey Mouser have), carousing, the use of true names and things like that. Not to mention a whole lot of tables and generators to help players and referees come up with stuff during play, or during prep time.

8. Who is your favourite artist and or author?

Well, art wise, the name that always comes to my mind is Peter Mullan. I don't know what it is, but his art really leaves me amazed. I can stare at it for hours. He has something of Erol Otus in the early days but with something more. The details, the scenes, the weirdness of it. They are really something to be studied, and I do try to do that with my own art.

In terms of RPG authors, that's a tougher one. I really enjoy Harley Stroh adventures. They are so pulpy, so exciting and have a hell of sword and

sorcery shenanigans that's right up my alley. As for proper game rules author, I really like the style of how DCC RPG was written. It's really inspiring, and is not just a gaming manual but a style and inspirational book. So, I guess Joseph Goodman.

But it just now occurred to me you might be talking about literature authors. Well, as of right now, I really like Fritz Leiber. Fafhrd and Grey Mouser stories are exciting, sometimes dark, but they always have a light side to it too, some funny bits that makes you smile now and then.

9. What is one of your favorite adventures other than something that you've released (or worked on)?

Hummm... Let me think. As I said, Harley Stroh stuff is really right up my alley. I love Tower of the Black pearl, even though it is pretty straight forward. But it mixture rumors of legendary places, pirates, mysterious wizards, a tower that comes out of the ocean. In game play, it has a time limit that pressures the players. There are puzzles and problems they need to figure out themselves, without rolling dice. There is opportunity for roleplay and epic combat. There is everything in there.

10. When you get a chance to play a character, what type of PC do you like to play?

I don't get to play as much as I'd like, but when I do, I usually like to play the seedy scoundrel type of guy. Like Grey Mouser or Han Solo. The type that can handle themselves in combat, but prefer to solve problems with a bit of wit and subterfuge.

11. What are you most excited about in the RPG scene currently?

Setting toolkits that generate stuff for you to play and use on the table, instead of just reading it to memorize details. Like Yoon-Suin, Hubris, Vornheim and things like that. Setting that are tools for you to play them and create content for the actual game, instead of just boring

descriptions of every single detail you will never actually use in play. I really want to prepare the SS&SS setting like that!

12. Would you rather be a spell slinger or a beefy warrior?

Well, considering I am all about sword and sorcery, and that sorcery corrupts and deforms you in this type of fantasy, I will stick with the beefy warrior. I want to find ancient gold and spend with mundane pleasures!

13. What are your plans for Old Skull Publishing this year?

Wow, so many! But I need to focus at one at a time to finish them! I am currently writing a few short adventures to release for SS&SS and at the same time writing Solar Blades & Cosmic Spells, which will be Science Fantasy version of Sharp Swords & Sinister Spells. It will be literally sword and sorcery in space. Barbarians side by side with robots, aliens, sorcerers, psionics, mechanics and everything. It's going to be like Dark Sun meets Star Wars meets Hyborea or something. After that, back to SS&SS with it's setting!

14. Sushi or Dim Sum?

I don't know if there is a secret meaning behind this, but I love sushi. I do enjoy a Yakisoba though!

15. Where can we find you on the web?

You can find me on Google+ (<https://plus.google.com/+DiogoNogueiraXP>), Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/diagonog>), Instagram (https://www.instagram.com/diogo_nogueira/) and Twitter (@diogoxp). Old Skull Publishing stuff can be found at RPGNow (<http://www.rpgnow.com/browse/pub/10771/Old-Skull-Publishing>) and Lulu (<http://www.lulu.com/spotlight/OldSkull>).

About The Interviewer



Shane started out playing Fighting Fantasy (TM) books when he was 13. Around the same time he played his first game of D&D (TM) with his cousin. Later he started writing his own adventures for the Advanced Fighting Fantasy game (TM) and played many hilarious adventures with his friends.

Fast forward a few years later, a snowy Christmas morning in Canada, he opened up his first present to find that he was given copies of all the main books for AD&D 2nd Edition (TM). As he got older he found less time to play games and read books and took a few years of sabbatical from all things RPG. (Insert sad face).

As of last year he was asked by his cousin in law to teach him how to play D&D (TM) and his love affair was re-born! Having never really spent much time on Google +, he decided to check it out and found this HUGE community of these apparent “gronards” that played this game called OSR. What the heck is that? Check it out on Google + it’s an amazing community of likeminded RPG-er’s (is that a word?) that really dig the early version of the “World’s Most Popular Role Playing Game” (TM). Shane found all these cool clones of the original set of rules and fell in love with RPG’s all over again! (Do yourself a favor if you don’t know about the OSR go on and google it).

Check out www.3toadstools.blogspot.ca to read Shane’s daily rambling about RPG’s

Cheers! And keep those dice rolling!