PART ONE OF A FOUR-VOLUME SET!







EVERYTHING YOU'VE WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT THE ORIGINS OF ROLEPLAYING GAMES...

Designers & Dragons: The '70s is a comprehensive picture of the beginnings of the RPG industry. This second edition expands the original single book into a series of four, and we've added over 50,000 new words to this volume alone. Learn about the colorful history of TSR and the wave of D&D inspired games (and gaming companies) to follow, and dip your toes into wargaming trivia. Regardless of your gaming background, Shannon Appelcline's meticulously researched history won't disappoint.

In this volume, you'll find:

- A foreword by Greg Stafford, creator of Glorantha and author of King Arthur Pendragon
- Profiles for thirteen 1970s gaming companies including TSR, GDW, and Chaosium
- The inside scoop behind games like D&D, Traveller, and The Fantasy Trip
- Ten things you might not know about roleplaying in the '70s
- An extensive bibliography and index

Meet the characters behind the characters and the gamers behind the games in **Designers & Dragons: The '70s!**











Designers & Dragons: The '70s Credits

Shannon Appelcline
Author and Researcher

John Adamus Editor

Karen Twelves

Rita Tatum & Shannon Appelcline

Fred Hicks and Adam Jury

Daniel Solis Graphic Design

Andrew Bosley

Cover Art

Chris Hanrahan
Business Development

Carrie Harris Marketing Manager

Sean NittnerProject Manager

An Evil Hat Productions Publication www.evilhat.com • feedback@evilhat.com @EvilHatOfficial on Twitter facebook.com/EvilHatProductions

Designers and Dragons: The '70s Copyright © 2014 Shannon Appelcline All rights reserved.

First published in 2013 by Evil Hat Productions, LLC. 10125 Colesville Rd #318, Silver Spring, MD 20901.

Evil Hat Productions and the Evil Hat and Fate logos are trademarks owned by Evil Hat Productions, LLC. All rights reserved.

> Softcover ISBN: 978-1-61317-075-5 Kindle ISBN: 978-1-61317-076-2 ePub ISBN: 978-1-61317-077-9

Printed in the USA.

All covers, ads, and other images from other publishers remain the property of their respective owners and are used here under fair use provisions for criticism, commentary, and scholarship.

No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, without the prior express permission of the publisher.

That said, if you're doing it for personal use, knock yourself out. That's not only allowed, we encourage you to do it.

For those working at a copy shop and not at all sure if this means the person standing at your counter can make copies of this thing, they can.

This is "express permission." Carry on.

Contents

The Magic of Beginnings	vii
Foreword: The '70s	1
Part One: Founding Days (1953—1974)	5
TSR: 1973—1997	7
A Brief Introduction: 1958+	7
Gary Gygax & Chainmail: 1967–1971	8
Dave Arneson & Black Moor: 1969–1972	9
Publishing the Fantasy Game: 1972–1973	12
Selling the Fantasy Game: 1974–1975	14
A Year of Innovative Products: 1975	17
A Year of Innovative Changes: 1975	20
A Year of Expansion: 1976	22
Allies & Competitors: 1975–1982	25
The Tolkien Connection: 1974–1977	27
Basic & Advanced Dungeons & Dragons: 1977–1980	30
Growing Staff, Changing Priorities: 1977–1980	33
Back to Basics: 1981	34
D&D Supplements & Growth: 1978–1981	35
Mutants, Gunfighters, Spies, Gangsters & Knight Hawks: 1978–1983	43
A Hysterical Interlude: 1979–1982	45 46
Rapid Expansion & Growth: 1980–1983 The Blumian Revolution: 1981–1982	40
The SPI Takeover: 1982	40 49
The Lawsuits, Round One: 1982–1984	51
The Book Explosion: 1982–1983	52
D&D Soldiers On: 1982–1984	53
The Bubble Bursts: 1983–1985	55
Dragonlance & Other Media: 1984–1985	60
Marvel Super Heroes & Other Color-Chart Games: 1984–1986	61
The Gygaxian Counter-Revolution: 1985–1986	65
Lorraine Williams vs. Gary Gygax: 1985–1986	70
Enter the Forgotten Realms (and Mystara): 1987–1989	72
Other Media — Books, Computers & Comics: 1988–1993	75
The Rest of the Hysteria: 1982–1990	79
AD&D 2: 1984–1989	81
TSR West: 1989–1992	85
Early Second Edition Lines: 1989–1991	92
New Settings: 1989–1994	94
Basic D&D Ends (Triumphantly): 1989–1996	96
A Buck Rogers Interlude: 1988–1995	98
Other Games: 1987–1994	99
The Lawsuits, Round Two: 1987–1994	100
AD&D's Nadir: 1993–1996	102
Innovation to the End: 1994–1996	104
TSR's Demise: 1996–1997	106
Thoughts on a Rise & Fall: 1997	108
Thoughts from the Future: 2013	108

Part Two: The Floodgates Open (1975—1976) 113

Flying Buffalo: 1970-Present	115
PBM Beginnings: 1970–1975	115
Enter Tunnels & Trolls: 1975	118
Other Roleplaying Beginnings: 1975–1980	120
Death, War, Traps, and Retail: 1980–1981	122
Blade Appears: 1982	124
A Hysterical Interlude: 1979–1982	126
The Crunch: 1983–1985	126
RPG Endings: 1986–1997	129
Quiet Years: 1995–2004	131
The RPG Revivals: 2005–2009	131
Flying Buffalo Today: 2010-Present	132
Games Workshop: 1975-Present	134
Before the Dwarf: 1975–1977	134
The Birth of White Dwarf: 1977–1978	137
Citadel & Explosive Growth: 1978–1982	139
Fighting Fantasy: 1980–1995	140
The End of the Beginning: 1982–1985	142
The Move to Nottingham: 1986	146
The Last Years of Roleplay: 1986–1988	147
Beyond Roleplaying: 1989–2004	149
The Black Library: 1997-Present	152
Back to Miniatures: 2008-Present	154
GDW: 1973–1996	156
Wargaming Beginnings: 1972–1975	156
The Path to <i>Traveller</i> : 1975–1977	157
Traveller the RPG: 1977	158
Little Black Books All the Same: 1978–1984	160
The Early Licensees: 1979–1984	163
The Rest of Classic Traveller, 1982–1987	165
Wargames and Twilight. 1977–1987	166
The First New Traveller: 1986–1989	168 169
DGP and MegaTraveller. 1985–1987 Hard Times: 1987–1991	171
The New Era Dawns: 1990–1991	173
The New Era Emerges: 1991–1995	174
The Dangerous Journey: 1992–1994	177
Final Days: 1991–1995	178
Latter Days: 1996-Present	181
Judges Guild: 1976—1983, 1999—Present	184
The Founding of the City State: 1974–1976	184
The Initial Subscriptions: 1976–1977	187
Becoming a Business: 1977–1978	189
A Dungeoneer Interlude: 1975–1981	194
Meeting the Competition: 1978–1980	196
Licenses, Licenses; 1978–1982	198
Guilded Heights & A Fall: 1980–1981	200
Judgement Day: 1981–1983	202
Rebirth: 1999–Present	205

Part Three: The First Wargaming Wave (1976—1977) 209

Metagaming Concepts: 1975—1983	211
Board Game Beginnings: 1975–1976	211
Roleplaying Beginnings: 1975–1977	214
The MicroGame Breakout: 1977–1982	217
A Fantasy Trip Begins: 1977–1978	218
The Metagaming/Jackson Split: 1980–1981	220
TFT after Jackson: 1980–1981	221
The Rest of The Fantasy Trip: 1981–1982	223
Final Trends: 1981–1983	224
Fantasy Games Unlimited: 1975—1991	228
Scattered Beginnings: 1975–1976	228
A Chevalier Rides Through: 1976–1979	231
Other Early Publications: 1978–1980	233
Space Opera & The Rest of Simbalist: 1980–1984	235
Picking Up Other Lines: 1981–1983	237
The Good Times: 1981–1986	238
FGU's Waterloo: 1987–1988	242
Aftermath (Not the Game): 1988-Present	243
Chaosium: 1975-Present	247
Board Game Beginnings: 1975–1981	247
Roleplaying Beginnings: 1977–1980	250
The Birth of RuneQuest: 1977–1983	251
Other Supplemental RPGs: 1979–1987	253
The Birth of <i>BRP</i> : 1980–1982	257
BRP Growth & Change: 1982–1987 A Licensing Interlude: 1979–2000	260 263
The Emergence of Arkham Horror: 1984	263 264
The Waking of the King: 1985–1987	265
The First Downturn: 1985–1988	266
The Second Golden Age: 1989-1992	268
Fiction Lines: 1992–1997	270
Another Boom & Bust: 1993–1998	273
The Chaosium Split: 1997–2000	274
Modern Chaosium & The Third Downturn: 1999–2003	275
Mostly Monographs & Reprints: 2003-Present	276
A BRP Renaissance: 2008-Present	280
Gamescience: 1965—1969, 1974-Present	282
Wargaming Beginnings: 1965–1969	282
Lou Zocchi, Independent Author: 1971–1973	284
Lou Zocchi, Independent Distributor: 1973–1975	285
The Early Dice Chronicles: 1975–1980	286
The Return of Gamescience & The Start of Roleplaying: 1974–1977	289
The First Superhero RPG: 1977–1978	291
Soldiers & Martians: 1978–1980	292
The Empire Strikes Back: 1980–1987	295
The Rest of the Roleplaying: 1987–1995, 2010	298
The Rest of the Dice: 1983-Present	300
Winding Down: 1997-Present	302
Heritage Models, 1974—1983	304
Separate Paths: 1964–1976	304
The Boom Years: 1977–1979	306
The Year of Change: 1979	309
The Final Years: 1980–1983	310