



Contents

A Letter From the Editor	1
This Month in AIF	1
This Month at TF Games	2
This Month at the Collective	2
Christmas Micro-comp	4
The Aprodite Chronicles	5
Top 10 List: Purple Dragon	6
Group Discussion: Sam Shooter Series	8
Centerfold	15
Rev: Ideal New England Prep School	16
Logically Speaking	19

Mission Statement

Inside Erin is written and published by people who enjoy AIF. It is done for fun, but we also have some goals that we seek to achieve through the newsletter:

1. To encourage the production of more quality AIF games by providing advice from game developers, and by offering constructive criticism that is specifically relevant to AIF.
2. To encourage activity and growth in the AIF community. We aim to generate a constant level of activity so that there aren't long periods in which people can lose interest in AIF.
3. To help document and organize the AIF community. This is done through reporting on games and events, as well as by helping to organize community-wide activities such as competitions and the yearly Erin Awards.

Welcome one and all to another edition of your favorite newsletter. I usually try to keep my comments in this letter somewhat under control as to length, limiting them to the first page whenever possible. However, this month, it just isn't possible. I have a lot of things that I need to go over, and I think that most of it is good news so try to bear with me.



Let me start with the bad news. Last month I said that *Coder's Corner* would be back this month. I'm sorry to say that that is not going to be the case. In fact, you have probably seen the last of the feature as you know it. This is not to say that it is gone for good, and rest assured that it will make a reappearance in one form or another in the near future.

That's it for the bad news. See, that wasn't so bad, was it? Now, if you want to hear the good news, in the form of some new features that we're starting up, just click on that link right there, hop over to page three and check it out.

Continued on page 3

AIFGames.com is apparently being overhauled to improve the site's functionality. While this is a good thing, we're going to lose our existing forum posts! Hopefully we can sort something out to rescue the more important stuff. The other surprising thing about this news for me was the number of registered users the site apparently has – according to Sexton it's now well over 15,000! That really makes you think about how little actual forum activity goes on there.



A lot of discussion on the AIF Archive concerned the rules for next year's mini-comp. While the comp is in no way imminent, the conversation has been quite lively and it is still ongoing, with no real conclusions reached so far. The talk centres around whether to loosen, tighten or leave unchanged the restrictions on the size and scope of the games. The main things under discussion seem to be the room limit and the amount of sex.

Because of the closure of Geocities, A. Bomire had to move his site and join us over on the aifcommunity.org server. The new address is: <http://abomire.aifcommunity.org/> It should all be the same as before, except that there aren't any ads any more. Welcome to the server, A. Bomire!

New Games

Lady's Story, by aifsecavian2. Released Oct 9th 2009 for TADS. Becky is married and unsatisfied, so she is having an affair with you. You visit her at her house for a rendezvous.

Sorority House, by JustaHackWriter. Released Oct 26th 2009 for Adrift 4.0. The story deals with a protagonist who lives next door to a sorority house. One night, he notices that a popular girl named Ginger has fallen asleep in her room after a wild night of partying. It's here that he decides to take his chances at getting into the house and sleeping with Ginger, or anyone else he might come across. ♦

It has been noted by my mighty editor that I might come across as a little negative. Using my powerful (ish) analytical mind I reckon it's one of two reasons:

- 1) I'm tired and cranky, and probably rushing to write this article on the day it's due. And tired people shouldn't be allowed to write at all. And for the record, this article is a whole day early.
- 2) Something in the forum has irritated me.

The second one is the subject of this article of course, see it all segways together beautifully.

You see most of the tension between the group is related to the game engines being used. It's not an everyday occurrence, just a couple of time per month, enough for a couple of days of mild discussion to slightly warming flame war.

Not me personally, I mean I'm not adverse to getting heaped up at post but I've always subscribed to the think once, think twice, then post (or most often not) and the never post in anger rules. Or if they're not rules they should be.

Now I get why people should get a little defensive about systems, especially if it's not the dominate system. The system which is used first tends to dominate the board of forum it's on, especially if it is used by the best authors on the board. With everyone banging on about a system and how it's better than everything else you're bound to get a little upset, especially if you think your system is better. Or at least that one of my pet theories.

The thing is, I'm a live and let live kind of girl. Maybe it's because I started with one and switched to another, whilst still liking the original. Maybe it's because, unlike the grumpy persona from my article, I'm actually quite calm and easy going.

Continued on page 3

This Month At

TGames
FSite



By Nandi Bear

Happy Day after Halloween from the Collective!

Let's see what treats we have this month...

Version 15 for Slavemaker has been released... You can find that here: <http://rapidshare.com/files/291149241/SlaveMakerv15.part1.rar> and <http://rapidshare.com/files/291155199/SlaveMakerv15.part2.rar>

The Version 15 update for V14.2 is here.
<http://rapidshare.com/files/291142618/Updatev15.rar>

And the discussion thread is here: <http://hypnopics-collective.net/viewtopic.php?f=11&t=12603>

TinaB posted a Halloween game which you can find here: <http://www.tfgamesite.com/phpbb3/download/file.php?id=2>

There is a new version of Space Ditz (V 1.3) which you can find here: <http://www.megaupload.com/?d=D228FF53>

Firstborn has started development on version 14 of Spell 4 All and is looking for help!
You can join in the fun here: <http://hypnopics-collective.net/viewtopic.php?f=11&t=16323>

And finally, New member Cook posted a demo game called Cupid's Kiss which you can find here:
<http://www.megaupload.com/?d=HS448OVF>

The discussion thread is here: <http://hypnopics-collective.net/viewtopic.php?f=11&t=16447>

And that is all of the Collective October Treats!! ♦

**COLLECTIVELY
MADE...**

**This Month
at the
Collective...**

By TeraS



LFTE, Continued from page 1

Now for the good news. This month we're starting three, count them, three new features. Two of them are here because of comments on the AIF Archive by thegravedigger, and I thank him for his suggestions. See, good stuff can happen if you speak up.

The first one is a monthly top 10 list. This is an idea that has been batted around from time to time, but usually people are trying to compile an overall list, which just doesn't work out so well. This feature will list the top 10 favorite games of a single person every month. This means that not everyone is going to agree with every entry on every list, (was that too many everys?) but I'm guessing there will be quite a bit of overlap, and the ones that don't will hopefully point people to some games that have been a bit overlooked. I'll lead off the lineup this month, but others will follow. The staff are all planning on writing up their own lists, but of course, we don't want to limit this to just the newsletter staff. So if you want to send in your own list, please do so. You just need to list out your top 10 favorite games with a paragraph or two telling why each made the list and send it in.

Our next feature is a group discussion of a specific game or games. This month we actually bit off a pretty big chunk by doing the whole Sam Shooter series. We ran the discussion via e-mail between the staff this month. It worked out pretty well, and I think we'll keep going with that format. However, there is no reason why we have to limit the discussion to only the newsletter staff. Next month we will be discussing both *Moist*, and its authorized sequel, *Malaise*. If you would like to be a part of the discussion just let me know and we'll include you in the forum. I'm only too happy to include anyone who wants to take part, but I would ask that if you come along for the ride, you make at least one comment during the course of the month. Not too tall of an order I think, and the more opinions we get the better.

Next on the list is a completely different kind of feature. I know that the vast majority of you liked all the pictures in GoblinBoy's recent *School Dreams 3*, and I was thinking that it might be time for the newsletter to have its own centerfold. GoblinBoy has graciously agreed to step up and do a few for us. Our first girl is Becky from The Camping Trip (and other games of course, but that's where this picture comes from). Her turn ons include...well, let's not get carried away huh?

Finally, (Yay!) I wanted to remind everyone that the deadline for the Erin Awards is coming up. If you remember (or even if you don't) we moved the deadline to the end of the year, which will probably be the same from now on. So any game that you want to be eligible for consideration needs to be released by December 31st. Also remember that since we did not have the awards last year, all games that have been released since October 31st, 2007 are eligible this year.

Well, that's finally it. Thanks for hanging with me, and I hope you like what we have to offer this month. See you back here next month. Same bat-time, same bat-channel. ♦

TFGames, Continued from page 2

And I have another one of my theories. Don't try to convince others how good a system is by shouting up your system and shutting down the rest, it tends to cause hype aversion. Admit that you don't like the system and move on. Prove your system is better by using it to create the best game you can. If enough people like your game it'll raise the profile of your system, and if enough people use the system it could even take over as the dominate system.

In other word don't make enemies, create allies. And as if to prove or even disprove my point we have a multitude of games in many different platforms this month.

On RPGMaker, TestZero has released a much expanded and improved version of *The Theater*, and Bandit continues to work on *The Siege of Hardcastle* for Inform 7. Whilst on the Adrift front we see the welcome return of Decker with his latest little gem The Rege, Inc. And to prove it's not just old pros, Valeria posted a demo of an intriguing little game called *The Island of Domination*.

But RAGS games still seem to dominate and we have seen a crop of little demos. *The Wand*, by ThatGuy, *Granmother's House* by AnonymousMan, and *Adventues: An Adult Fantasy RPG* and *Busted* by JJ Sweet Girl. TinaB also posted an update of *RoP 2*, and I of *UTBG*.

A Halloween contest by Robyn34 wasn't particularly awash with entries but it did still get two entries. TinaB's total non-TG and MC, kiddie safe, but still fun, *Escape the Haunted House* (RAGS). And Alburn's imaginatively titled *Halloween Contest Entry*.

Well that's it for now, please feel free to contact me and I hope to enjoyed Halloween. Just a month to go till Christmas! ♦

All the recent discussion over at the AIF Archive has got me thinking about comps. Well, actually I was already thinking about it, which is what started that whole discussion in the first place. It seems like some people want the rules looser to promote creativity, while others are leaning toward more stringent, to keep the scope of the games from spinning out of control. There is certainly a lot good to be said about both sides, and we have some more discussion to get through before we decide on the rules for the regular spring mini-comp.

In the mean time, I thought we might give the more stringent rules a try in the form of a Christmas Micro-comp. I'm choosing to call it a Micro-comp, because it is designed to be even smaller than your typical Mini-comp entry. I should mention that I haven't discussed this with any of the other staff members. This is mainly because I just thought of it (literally) a few minutes ago. Now maybe everyone is going to hate this, and maybe we won't get any entries at all, but what the heck, if we don't then we're certainly no poorer for trying right? Here are the basic rules:

- ❖ One room. Yep, this is a single room comp. No closets, no traveling rooms, nothing. Deal with it.
- ❖ One NPC. Again, no "background characters," no crowds, no voyeurism, just the PC and one NPC.
- ❖ No Multimedia. Pictures, music, sound, whatever. All out.

To make matters even worse, I have a little scenario that all entries must start with. Here it is.

It is Christmas morning. You are in the living room of your house with your significant other (I'll leave it to you to decide who that is). Over there in/under/by the Christmas tree is a gift. What does it look like? How big is it? Who is it for? Is it from one of you to the other? Is it from someone else to one of you or both of you? Do you know who sent it? Do you know where it came from? Most importantly, what's in it?

And that's all you get. So what do you think? Does something like this stifle creativity? I certainly don't think so. Like I said, I just thought of this idea a few minutes ago, and I can already think of half a dozen different explanations for that gift and where they might lead. Now, even with the very restrictive rules for this comp is it still possible to turn this into a huge game? Sure it is. That's always possible. Along those lines I'll just say, don't. The point of this comp is NOT to cram as much content into the game as you can possible bend the rules to get away with. The point is to come up with a good story around those two people and one gift, and how it leads them into some hot sex. Or maybe it doesn't. Maybe the gift has nothing to do with sex (although I assume there will be some of that in the game somewhere). I didn't say that it had to directly lead to hot, steamy sex. Use your imagination.

I think part of the reason that the rules always seem to get to people is that they are coming up against them in the wrong context. I imagine that a good number of people start with a game idea and then think, "well, if I'm going to write a game anyway, I might as well enter it in the mini-comp." They then spend all their time and effort trying to make that idea, which was really never a "mini" one to begin with, fit into the rules of the comp. That should not be an issue here. I have told you, at least in general, the setting of the game and what it's about. Now all you have to do is make it interesting.

So how long should this game be? I'm not really going to answer that. 99% of you should be able to read the rules and comments above and realize that the spirit of those rules is that it should be a very short game. I don't think I like the playtime restriction that people have been talking about because it is just too subjective, but if I were to put a time limit on this game I would say that it should probably be able to be finished by the average player (whoever that is) in half an hour or less.

I haven't said anything about a due date yet have I? Are you ready? The games will be due in by December 14th. Yep, that's just six weeks, but if you keep the desired small scope of the game in mind, that should be way more time than you need to write it. You have a good couple of procrastination weeks built in before you even have to start.

Games should be sent to aifsubmissions AT gmail DOT com by the date above. I haven't really thought about how we are going to handle the voting and such. I'm thinking that we will be keeping that much simpler as well. Perhaps even as simple as a single poll on the AIF Archive where you simply choose your favorite game. I guess we can cross that bridge once we see if anyone actually submits anything. I really hope that a few of you get onboard with this. I think it would be interesting to see what you can come up with, and it will make a nice Christmas present for us all. ◆



Christmas Micro-comp

Dear Mortal Men and Women,

Of course I realize the audience for this column is made up of adult interactive fiction enthusiasts. I have noticed that one of the common forms of AIF is the T&AIF, in which the player character meets and has sex with a large number of partners very easily. I often hear AIF players lament about how good it would be if real life was more like AIF - wherein it would be as easy to have sex with an attractive stranger as it is to pick up her dry cleaning.

That is why I have decided that you would all be particularly interested to learn about an alternate plane of existence, a parallel universe if you will, in which life really is like AIF, and people go around having sex with one another, without any guilt or social repercussion, as a routine form of entertainment. Really, it is totally routine for them - just like you play games or work out or watch television or read books in the course of a day as a way to pass time or better yourself, your AIF Universe counterpart would do those things less and have sex more. A lot more. There's just an accepted, casual theme of sex throughout daily life. People act on their impulses and have encounters the way you might strike up a harmless conversation.

As the Goddess of Love, I have the ability to move back and forth between these universes, and it is quite striking how terribly similar they are. You'd think that a parallel you who is having a lot more sex would be markedly happier, but when that's the norm of your existence, other mundane concerns and unhappinesses become just as important to you. Plus, just like you wish you could have sex when and wherever you wanted, the AIF Universe version of you wishes for the ability and time to pursue things that you take for granted: reading books, engaging in competitive sports, something decent to watch on television (oh, wait ... that's a cross-universal constant).

You are thinking that if AIF Universe, as I've chosen to call it, is so mundane, why bother to write about it at all? Well, it's because sometimes, when I feel it would be extremely beneficial to someone, I arrange for him to temporarily trade places with his AIF Universe counterpart. I never tell them that I'm doing it - I prefer to let them feel their way through the alternate reality. What happens when someone crosses over certainly isn't predictable, but invariably it is entertaining; the results are always quite story-worthy for everyone involved. To demonstrate this, I will, over the next few months, tell the story of one man who, as the result of another Aphrodite intervention, spent a day in the place of his alter ego in the AIF Universe.

For me, it's equally entertaining to tell the story from the perspective of the man originating in your universe as it is from that of his AIF counterpart. But since you're reading this in a familiar, 'normal' vernacular, I'm certain you'd like to hear what happened to the man when he woke up and spent a day in AIF Universe. This month I'll start by telling you a little about him, and next month I'll start offering you some of the exciting (and titillating) details of his visit to the "other side".

Alan is our subject for this tale. He is another suburban man, this one in his early forties. He has been married for a dozen years or so, and has a couple of kids younger than ten. His life is very routine - he works nine to five in a local office of the federal government, he drolly enjoys putting it, as an 'operative'. His wife works too - she's a teacher - so between them they can easily afford the house and cars, some discretionary spending money, and still have a bit left over every month to put away for the kids' educations. That's the snapshot version. I felt he could benefit from a day of AIF after I discovered that he was suffering a series of deep infatuations for his co-workers and other women he encountered regularly, while at the same time his libido has increasingly outpaced that of his wife. He was despondent about these developments, and felt that his sex life was going to be essentially a drab monotone forever.

I wished to give him a life-changing day. You'd think that after a day in AIF Universe, its visitors would pine away for the sex they believe should be freely available, but that's not how it goes. Instead, of course they return with some great memories to fantasize about, but more than that they get a more nuanced view of their sexuality and a greater respect for everyone else's.

Again, Alan's story will carry over the next few months of chronicles, but for now this seems a good place to break. Until we meet again, I wish you all wonderful love.

Aphrodite



Each month we will be bringing you a new top ten list. You should not for a minute believe that the following represents the newsletter's official view on the matter (we don't have one). Rather, this is one person's personal list of favorite games. Speaking from personal experience, it's hard to narrow the list down to ten games, and even harder to rate them in order so you should probably consider any game on any list to be well worth playing. If you don't agree with something, then by all means feel free to write up your own list and send it in. I'll be more than happy to print it.

This month's list is by Purple Dragon. Hey, that's me, cool.

Tomorrow Never Comes by A. Bomire

I'm normally skeptical about games that are too linear, so it may seem funny that TNC tops my list. It is written and presented as though you are in a James Bond movie, which naturally means that it has to progress from scene to scene with no chance to go back and visit earlier ones. All that would normally have the potential to make you feel railroaded, like you don't have any control over what's going on. The thing is, that it is done so damn well that you (or at least I) never feel like that is the case.

The writing and plot (yep, some games have those) are outstanding, the puzzles are unique and engaging, and the sex (although optional) is hot enough that I can't imagine anyone wanting to skip it. To top it all off the game uses multimedia in a unique and very effective manner. From the classic opening Bond sequence, to perspective shots at scene changes, and right down to the closing credits, the multimedia binds the whole thing together and gives you the feeling of actually being in the movie. Plus, you get to do Money Penny, which is worth the price of admission right there.

Ideal Pacific Coat University (IPCU) by Newkid

Newkid has quite a few good games, and I have liked every single one of them. Still, when considering which one to put on my top 10 list, there was never really a choice for me to make. This is my favorite.

It has a good story and a clear objective that guides your actions throughout the game. There is a lot to do along the way and a lot of sex to be had. The puzzles are tough at times, but never illogical, and the sex is hot, varied, and abundant. In short, this game is just a blast to play (even if you can't get into Sarah's bikini).

Malaise by A. Ninny

I debated long and hard about rating the sequel to Moist above its predecessor. I almost gave Moist top billing just because it was the one that led the way. In the end, I decided to do it this way because I just like this game better. Malaise retains just about everything that made Moist good, while at the same time adding in some extras that really do put it over the top.

The first thing I noticed is how well A. Ninny captured the characters. They really do feel like the same ones we visited so long ago. A bit older maybe, and changed by time and circumstances, but essentially the same people. As good as Moist is, it is showing its age just a bit nowadays, and Malaise does a good job of fixing a few of the (very small) problems and inconsistencies of the first game. Of course, if you're looking for sex (and who isn't) then the fact that Malaise features not one, not two, but three threesomes should be enough to push it over the top for anyone.

Moist by Scarlet Herring

It really is amazing how well this game stands up today, ten years after its release. I mentioned above that I think it is showing its age a bit, and while I believe that is true, it is still unquestionably one of the very best games ever written. Don't believe me? Let's just wait and see how many of these top 10 lists it makes it onto.

One of the main things I like about this game is the characters. Not only are they very unique from one another, but they just feel more real than a lot of characters you see in games, and they stay consistent throughout. It is also an extremely open environment, giving the player the freedom to solve some of the puzzles in different ways, which leads to a game that is not only a lot of fun to play, but one that is actually nearly as fun to re-play.



Gifts of Phallius 2: Key to Eternity by GoblinBoy

When *The Baron's Plot* came out I thought, hmm, this guy has potential. When *The Camping Trip* followed a mere three months later it pushed my opinion even higher. But this is the one that really won me over. I mean no disrespect to his recent mammoth hit *School Dreams 3*, but in my opinion this is still GoblinBoy's best to date.

First of all, you get to play as two different characters throughout the game, one male and one female. They alternate chapters until the end scene when they finally come together (sic) and you can change back and forth at will. The story is great and the sex, which is hot to begin with, is made even more so by the fact that you can learn extra sexual positions as the game progresses. You can't go wrong with any game by any author on this list, but don't miss this one.

Crossworlds: Part 0 – The Girl Next Door by BBBen

When I first started thinking about my top 10 list I knew that one of these games would be on it, but which one? They are all good, and if you haven't played them then you really should. I like all the games in their own way, and I freely admit that this made my list based more on the incredible series as a whole than on any one game, but in the end I chose this one for a couple of reasons.

First, I'm a bit of a sucker for origin stories. This one being in the guise of a prequel made me a bit skeptical, but it is just so well done. BBBen took two of his earlier games (*The Sleepover* and *Janey's Diary*) and combined them, adding in some new content to boot. I also really like the fact that the PC changes between three different characters throughout the game, and you get to experience a sex scene from each perspective. This game introduces the Crossworlds series beautifully, and does a much better job of it than the two standalone games ever could have. Somehow he managed to add one plus one and come up with six.

Graduation Day (Sam Shooter I) by One-eyed Jack

First of all, there have been four games in the Sam Shooter series, and if you haven't played them, you should run out right now and do so. They are all very good, and I have to admit that the others have both more developed stories, and more advanced game mechanics than the first one does. Yet I will still have to say that this is my favorite of the bunch.

The reasons why are hard to put into words exactly. First off, as I mentioned above in the Crossworlds section, I like origin stories. The writing, especially in the sex scenes, is top notch in all the games, but maybe because there was less of a plot, they just seem to stand out more in my mind. I also feel that One-Eyed Jack's outrageous sense of humor, while certainly present in all the games, is more apparent in this first one. I guess it all just comes down to the fact that I enjoyed this one more, but like I say, you shouldn't miss a single one of these.

Camp Windy Lake 2 by Christopher Cole

I think that *Camp Windy Lake* might have been the very first AIF game I ever played. I liked it a lot, so when I found out that there was a second one as well, I naturally couldn't download it fast enough. Sequels aren't always a good thing, but it certainly was in this case.

I didn't have a lot bad to say about the first game, but I was amazed when I found that even the few problems I did have were all fixed with this one. It's a good story with a lot of great sex and near perfect pacing. I even liked the surprise ending, although I understand that I might be in the minority on that one. Chris has a *lot* of good games, and technically speaking this might not be his best, but nostalgia was enough to push it to the top of my list of his games.

Fever Cabin by Godog

When this game first came out it caused quite a stir. There was a lot of discussion on the boards as players tried to find all 777 points to claim the prize for being the first (I never did find them all by the way). The author is the same person who did the "O Erin" comic strip for the newsletter, which means that he had the graphical abilities to add some very interesting multimedia to the game. No, not pictures of naked girls, but rather just some little touches that helped make the game feel more immersive.

The game itself consists of jumping from one scene to the next with a puzzle to solve at each step before you can move on to the next. It can admittedly feel a bit disjointed, but I suspect that is exactly what the author was going for. There is little sex in the

game until you get to the final scene. I know that this will not appeal to everyone, but the general tension in the game, combined with a couple of sexual appetizers thrown in to hold you over till the main course worked well for me. The main course is where the payout comes for all your hard work. It is one of the hottest, most fully implemented threesomes that I have ever played, and well worth the effort it takes to get there.

Rogue Cop by Choices

This one almost didn't make my top 10 list because the game certainly has its problems. There are quite a few technical issues and borderline guess-the-verb situations. The theme of the game itself is also a bit darker than I usually like, but even with all that I still put it on here for two reasons.

First, it is one of the most unique games out there. The introduction sets the stage, and I found myself really interested in the story and figuring out the mystery, rather than just in the sex scenes. That, by the way, is the second reason. The sex scenes in the game are great. They are very well written, full, and engaging scenes that add a few extras that help to set them apart from many games. I definitely wish an updated version had been released as was talked about, but even as it stands, it's well worth a play. ♦

Welcome to the discussion of the Sam Shooter series by One-Eyed Jack. Before I say anything else, I wanted to warn everyone that this discussion contains heavy spoilers. If you haven't played these games then you should read the following at your own risk.

This series of games includes incest, underage sex, murder, rape, sex with non-humans, and a whole lot of other messed up crap like that. Since I don't normally care too much for any of those things could someone tell me why I like these games so much? Well, never mind, maybe the discussion will sort that out. Following are the games that we are discussing and the author of those games. Abbreviations in parentheses are used throughout this discussion.

Games:

Graduation Day (SSI)

Sam Shooter II: Through the Dimensional Rift (SSII)

Sam Shooter III: Come in Sixty Seconds (SSIII)

Sam Shooter IV: Children of the Damned (SSIV)

Author:

One-Eyed Jack (OEJ)

We'll start off with some of my general impressions of the games, then move on to brief discussions on each game individually, and close things with a general discussion on the series as a whole.

Story

Each game has its own story. Sure it's thin at times, but there are also times when it becomes surprisingly detailed. I think this is seen even clearer when you look at the series as a whole. These are really four separate games, and can be played that way, but there is also a common story running through them all that makes the overall series more than just a sum of its parts.

Writing

One of the things that make these games so good is the writing. Although the style might not be to everyone liking, OEJ clearly has a good grasp of the English language and how to use it to accomplish his goals. I'm not just talking about the writing in the sex scenes here, (although that is certainly part of it) but also the overall story and individual little snippets that stand out. He's even a poet (sort of) as shown by the series of poems in SSII. The poems might not be outstanding, but they're not bad either.

Humor

This is definitely one of the main reasons that I like these games. OEJ has a great sense of humor. He pokes fun at just about



everything at one time or another (including himself). While recently playing back through these games there were times when I actually laughed out loud, and that's rare. The humor takes all forms, including a few "out of character" comments (see the first example below) which might be seen as breaking mimesis, but somehow never really hit me that way in these games. I've included a couple of my favorite lines from SSI below.

>ask Kelly about dirk

Oh god, he's gone Sam! Dirk is dead! His body is still in the bathroom where someone bashed his skull in because someone was too lazy to program a more reactive environment. Oh god, it's so sad!"

(from the scene with Amy in the doctor's office)

You turn her around and place your hands against her ass, covered by the thin patients robe, feeling her firm and wide hips and tight cheeks. "Tell me Amy, do you ever let anyone penetrate your ass?"

"Penetrate doctor?" she asks innocently. "I would never let anyone penetrate me! What does that mean anyway?" she adds with a look of wide eyed stupidity.

"Do you ever let guys fuck your ass?" you ask blatantly to break through the barrier of stupidity.

"Oooh that! Of course, doesn't everyone?"

Technical

From a technical standpoint, there are certainly cleaner games out there. I'm not saying that there are any major problems, but there are a lot of the little errors that you see frequently. Things like missing objects, missing responses, and spelling and grammar errors. I think that the four games also vary quite a bit as to how technically ambitious they are, although overall each of them is more so than a lot of games out there.

Sex

There is a wide selection of types of sex scenes in this game. Although some are your run of the mill ideas, there are a few that are very different. This is either because of the participant herself, or because of how the scene is written. For instance, sex with the Succubus in SSIV is different because you don't often have sexual partners with wings and tails (duh). On the other hand, sex with Kelly in SSI is different not because of who she is, but because of how OEJ wrote the scene. Having her talk non-stop about Dirk as you proceed is funny, and by the end you can feel Sam's frustration that she doesn't just shut the hell up.

Sam Shooter I

'trix: The first game, it seems to me, is one of those male wish fulfillment games about having sex with every girl in school. There's lots of those in the canon. Its characters make it stand apart, and the writing. The sex scenes are kinda funny, and the protagonist is cheerfully amoral. It's a big game, and with enough puzzle elements to make it fun and keep your interest.

Purple Dragon: I agree that this is the most "ordinary" of the games, but strangely, I still think it's my favorite of the group. Maybe it's that "male wish fulfillment" thing you mention.

A. Bomire: "Ordinary" being a relative term, as none of the games struck me as being mainstream - even for AIF. I'd have to reclassify this game as being less "out there" than the rest of the series.

I actually found the "male wish fulfillment" aspect of it offputting. There is such a thing as too much freedom, I guess. The fact that Sam can literally get away with murder in the game with zero consequences (in fact, he is rewarded for it) just didn't sit well with me.

'trix: If every game was like this, where you are free to use violence to solve your problems and indulge your inner homicidal maniac, I would probably be longing for a game with a little moral restriction. But the majority of IF games don't let you solve problems that way, even in circumstances when it would make sense. The freedom in SS1 to kill a couple of people who are being obstacles is a nice break from the norm. It's not over-used in the game: most people cannot be murdered for some reason, and it's an interesting way of revealing the character of Sam as someone who has no internal impediment to bashing people about the head with a bat.

Knight Errant: In my opinion, SSI is more than just a typical “wish fulfillment” game, it’s also an excellent and funny parody of the typical “wish fulfillment” game. It’s fun and silly, Sam has no more moral qualms about impersonating a doctor, beating to death an inconvenient boyfriend, or blackmailing the principal. I personally think it’s poking fun at how many AIF games (particularly of that era) allow a person to get away with a lot of craziness without consequences ... SSI takes it to the illogical extreme.

Purple Dragon: Those are all good points. My classification of this game as “ordinary” should by no means suggest that it is a typical AIF game. If someone were to tell you the basic plot of the game it would, at first, appear to be just that. A high school senior needs to find a way to pass his failing classes, acquire his dream car, and have a lot of sex along the way. There is really nothing out of the ordinary there at all. The “out there” part comes when we start looking at the characters and situations themselves. Each person and case is pushed to its extreme.

Muncho isn’t just fat, he’s disgustingly obese. Dirk isn’t just a jerk, he’s the world’s biggest asshole. Amy is so stupid that she mistakes a high school student and brother of her friend (who she has met before by the way), as a doctor. The teacher is so much of a slut that she completely loses control when discussing literature (makes you wonder what her day to day classes were like). On and on, in every case, the situations are ridiculous. If it were a little closer to home it wouldn’t work, but the fact that it is so out there somehow lets you accept the altered state of the game world and enjoy yourself.

I think of it a little bit like watching a Three Stooges movie. Most people simply can’t fall off a building or get hit in the head with a hammer and then get up to retaliate, but once you accept the fact that such things are possible in that particular universe then you can sit back and laugh your ass off.

BBBen: I’ll step in here and comment that I think SSI is perceivable as “ordinary” because of the genre of the “young guy wandering around getting laid” genre. These are often non-linear games, and there have been a number of them, especially set in suburbs. I actually happen to think that many of the games like this have, in fact, been emulating SSI, so in that sense SSI is something of a trend setter, rather than just a conventional choice. I’m fairly sure it was a significant influence on me when I wrote CW1.

On the topic of the content of SSI, I do think it’s a bit odd that the extreme content of SSI sort of slips under the radar, and I agree it’s because of the inherent wackiness of the game. However, I’d also point out that the more taboo stuff in the Sam Shooter series (incest, etc.) were more popular, even common when SSI was written. In fact, incest was almost everywhere in AIF for a little while, in a way that girl stealing/sharing has become a common theme lately.

A. Bomire: Looked at in that manner, yes the game plot is certainly common in the AIF genre. And I think PD was making the same point. But it is certainly carried out in quite the extraordinary manner, to which I think we are all agreed.

Sam Shooter II

***trix:** The second game stands out a lot more, particularly from a technical standpoint. Your pc finds himself in a fantasy rpg, with a party of adventurers. What’s really impressive is you can get all the members of your party to have sex in N different ways with each other. That’s the sort of combinatorial explosion that just makes you want to stop writing it come up with something else. But it’s all done, and it’s fun, and quirky and funny. GoblinBoy’s works remind me of One-Eyed Jack’s in their scale, their characterisation, their fantasy settings, their humour, and the amazing rate he produced his games at.

Purple Dragon: It makes my head hurt just thinking about it. I also like how each character has their strengths. Of course, just like in RPG, you have the fighter, the thief, etc. but this translates to the sex as well. All the girls laugh at Fingers when he tries to fuck them, but when he -- er -- fingers them, look out. Good stuff and it mixes things up a bit.

This game also has one of my favorite lines in any AIF game. It’s when you encounter the mime’s body.

“It’s the corpse of a mime, which apparently has been run over by an out of control haycart. What a shame, because everybody knows that a Mime is a terrible thing to... OH I CAN’T TYPE IT IN! IT’S TOO STOOPUD!”

It was also pretty amusing that mimes are the only thing that Lothar is afraid of. I can relate brother.

A. Bomire: After the almost mindless simplicity of SSI: Graduation Day, I was also struck with the immediate jump to complex

multi-partner scenes in this game. I guess every author has to try it once - once!

Knight Errant: Not only is it amazing in the sheer complexity of the coding, but the characters aren't simply interchangeable ... Princess Fireloins has her obvious differences from Laurie, Sam Shooter's descriptions are different from Fingers, the Dryad has her own needs, etc. The final scene with Kaylista was also well done, in my opinion. It's the only non-consensual scene I've seen that's been arousing instead of appalling, mostly because it's so unbelievable and outrageous.

'trix: It's an awesome thing to be able to pull off. But I do think the freelove team does encourage the player to start playing algorithmically to try and get every point, which can stop it being fun.

Purple Dragon: Exactly. I think if you try to do it that way it most definitely does stop being fun. I think it's a mistake for an author to put point values on every (or even most) sexual actions in a scene like this. I realize that there is a tendency for the author to want the player to read every line of the scintillating prose they have created -- I've been there myself -- but putting a lot of points in almost forces the player to take a methodical approach to the scene if they want to get them all. Of course, some people could care less about points, but if they are there I try to get them all and I find that, while I like games to have points systems, I tend to enjoy the sex scenes more if the points aren't concentrated too much in them. It gives me the freedom to pursue the lines I want to and skip the rest. In a normal one-on-one scene this isn't as much of an issue, but when you have four participants, working your way through every possible task can be pretty daunting. Okay, a bit off topic there but what are you going to do?

BBBen: Okay, I think I should step in on that one, since I'm one who uses that system. In fact, I could be wrong but I have a vague idea that people weren't really doing it much when I started writing back at the end of '03. I'd like to find out if this bothers other players, because if it's something that is really unpopular I'll probably stop doing it. The reason I, for one, started using it was that I always found the points systems in other games to be a little bit mystifying and intimidating. Not being a completionist player myself, I just thought I'd use the points system to help players who want to know if they've missed any sex - not to say that "you haven't really won until you've got 100%".

I have, in the time since, developed more of a sympathy for the completionist player because they tend to be players who will really get into a game and give good feedback. Therefore, I'm inclined to tweak the points system to make it more enjoyable for those players who are inclined to give something back to the author. I've already tweaked the system somewhat for my current WIP, and I might tweak it even more.

A. Bomire: My first game, "Dexter Dixon....", was based upon a pretty extensive points list with points for every sex act and almost every action in the game. I gave it up after the first game not because of any sympathy for the player but simply because it became a pain in the ass to keep track of all of those points. Quite frankly, I don't know how GoblinBoy does it/did it in his School Dreams series.

Sam Shooter III

'trix: The third game has some of my favourite elements. The mcguffin of recovering Sam's car is not very gripping, but as a premise it leads to my favourite part of that game: you go around seducing women, and then when you get far enough into the game, you can bet your conquests on a race, so they have to perform sexual forfeits when you lose. And, of course, you lose repeatedly so you can watch all the forfeits. It's a great game mechanic, giving you an extra bonus for each woman you've seduced. And there's something very funny about these earnest girls putting their virtues at stake on Sam's racing ability, only for you to deliberately throw the race over and over again.

Purple Dragon: I took Sarah to the race, and although I lost on purpose a couple of times, I won the last one. Can you take all the other girls as well? Do they each have a full scene with Sam fucking her in front of the racers before the race starts like Sarah did? I always meant to try that again, but never got around to it.

A. Bomire: You know, I don't think I ever intentionally lost any of the races. Perhaps I should play the game over again to see what I missed!

'trix: Yes you should.

Knight Errant: I've never been that fond of SSIII, honestly. The concept seemed forced and it just didn't seem to have as much of OEJ's outrageous humor. It just didn't really catch my interest like the others.

BBBen: You know, this is a little strange, but SSIII is the only one I haven't played very much. It's not like the game doesn't appeal; maybe it's just that it gets off to a slow start (a big reason a lot of good games don't get their due).

Sam Shooter IV

'trix: The fourth game is a bit more hit and miss. It has a female pc (Sam's sister) in addition to Sam himself, which immediately makes it a huge amount more enjoyable for some of us. But the gameplay is very much on rails, quite unlike the previous games. As a punchline to the series, it works well. You find out the truth of Sam's origin (more or less) and you have sex with demons and battle the devil. Who's not going to like that?

Of course the big problem with the Sam Shooter games is that it has "tits" as a vocab word for men's chests, which is very irritating.

Purple Dragon: Yeah, the "tits" thing got to me too. I agree that the game felt like it was on rails. It just feels like you don't have any say at all in what is going to happen. Of course, this also means that from a story standpoint I think this one is actually the strongest. It's like reading a book where the author is bouncing back and fourth between two groups. When you're reading about one of them, you don't want him to change over to the others because you want to find out what happens with this group. Then when it's ready to switch back, you want to stay with the second group to see what they're going to do.

A. Bomire: Yes! I also find that distracting in books. But I did like that you could play the game from two different viewpoints, and OEJ did a pretty good job of cutting it up in logical points so that it didn't feel *that* distracting.

Purple Dragon: I think it's a good literary technique to build both story and tension, and I think it works well here from that point of view. My problem is really that you don't have a lot of freedom in the individual scenes themselves. Of course, I should also mention that I find it hard to see how you could give each section too much more freedom without either ruining the story or having the game spin out of control, so maybe I shouldn't criticize if I don't have a solution.

All in all though, it's a very good story and a good ending to the series (although it wasn't supposed to be the last in the series). I did find the actual ending a bit annoying. I just think it ended too abruptly. You press the button and that's pretty much it. "You feel Sam's hand tighten in yours, and somehow you know everything will be alright..." I would have liked a little wrap up back in the real world, but I usually feel that way when I finish a book too, and since OEJ was evidently planning another game at the ending of this one he was probably saving that for the next game.

A. Bomire: Yes, I was hoping for another game as well, to wrap things up. SSIV sort-of, kind-of did but also left some questions unanswered.

'trix: Also, I think the last game ought to be more cohesive: for a game with such a high concept, it would be better if it felt like the whole game was part of one scheme; but most of the chapters of the game, to me, seem fairly arbitrary. There's a thing with a petrol station I think, and then something with an incubus, and a succubus, and some goblins, but none of it really matters beyond stalling the protagonists until they get to the endgame.

Knight Errant: It's true that SSIV was a bit arbitrary, but that's true for all the games in a way. It's similar to SSII in that it's largely wandering through the landscape going vaguely towards an objective and working through whatever you happen across along that path.

I also really hope OEJ will return to the Sam Shooter universe at least one more time, but all of us authors understand the perils of burnout.

Purple Dragon: Not only is it true of all the games, but I think it's more valid here than in any of the others. After all, we're talking about a trip to hell. How should that actually look? Since no one really knows I suppose this is as good a description as any, and the fact that OEJ pulls out every cliché that he can think of keeps with the general outrageousness of the whole series. I also really liked where it started. Purgatory being a highway in the middle of the desert just seems right. I don't know if he was trying to reference the whole "highway to hell" thing, but it worked for me. As I looked around at the barren desert, the broken down service station and diner, I kept thinking about a line I've heard here and there. "It's not hell, but you can see it from there."

BBBen: The structure of SSIV was less ambitious than the others, but as I stated in the review I wrote some time back, I think this was because he was finding the game hard to write (hence, no SSV has surfaced, nor does it seem on the horizon). I can definitely sympathise - Crossworlds Part 3 and 4 suffered from this (though I wound up just leaving CW4 alone for a while and then coming back to it when I was fresh again).

OEJ seems to write his games around a series of interesting scenes, more than having a clear and driving plot arch. While 2-4 do have a plot (and I sort of has a premise, at least) it seems clear to me that mostly he just has a series of stand-alone episodes of hot smut to be tied together. Still, that said, I think the setting of IV was quite compellingly imagined. What I find compelling is how hot these often really goofy ideas can be. The scene in SSI with the dumb girl in the doctor's office was surprisingly arousing.

General Discussion

Purple Dragon: I think one of the great things about these games is the diversity of characters. As in all AIF, there are more than a few sluts involved (the genre really wouldn't work very well if there wasn't) but each girl seems to be a slut in a way that's all her own. I just never really got the feeling of, "Hey, didn't I just do this girl?" like I do in some other games.

OEJ has given each girl, if not a unique personality, then at least a gimmick of some kind that sets the scene apart. Idiot in a doctor's office, pizza lady with a onion and anchovy fetish, grieving(?) girlfriend, pissed off wife, desperate dryad, Myrim's fireloins, Sheena's demon hunt, and so on.

The SS series of games are certainly not the only ones that do this, but considering the number of scenes we're talking about over the course of all four games, and that it somehow never seems to feel stale, I think they do it better than a lot of games.

BBBen: I'd forgotten about the pizza lady! That was one of my favourites, despite the weirdness. Yeah, I think that unlike some games the SS game certainly don't become sexually repetitive, even if you do sort of cotton on to the formula that every girl is a slut (not so) deep down. And yes, these are usually gimmicks that set them apart but there's something about the way OEJ uses gimmicks that is different from other authors - maybe it's that they are usually quite original, or that they are well written, or that the gimmick tends to suffuse every sexual interaction with the character - but they just work.

'trix: I think that the scenes in SS games are played much more for comedy than scenes in most games. That doesn't necessarily make it more sexy (some scenes definitely not), but it stops it getting boring. So I guess maybe a lot of the motivation of SS games is to make comedy games about sex, and the comedy ideas (e.g. girl continuing to believe you're a doctor; girl continually mentioning her dead bloke; desperate dryad) are the actual reasons particular characters and sex scenes have been included in the game.

Purple Dragon: There is no doubt that humor plays a big part in these games. That's one of the main reasons I like them so much. Are you saying that OEJ set out to write a comedy, thought of funny ideas and then wrote the games around those ideas? Or are you just saying that once the basic plot was in place the individual characters were added based on the ideas? It's an interesting idea to write a whole game around a few individual ideas. I'm not saying it's a bad idea, and I usually have a couple of specific things that I know I want to put into a game long before the whole plot is developed, but to actually write the whole game that way seems a bit backwards.

A. Bomire: I don't know - I wrote "The Backlot" based upon the scene within that game with the Fairy. It was originally supposed to be an entry in the AIF pre-comp, with the player encountering the Fairy "backstage". But, I just kept adding things to it that eventually took it out of the scope of the pre-comp. Of course, once I decided to make a full game of it I did almost entirely scrap my pre-comp entry and start over.

'trix: I think he set out to write an AIF in a certain setting, and then he thinks to himself, what characters and sex scenes can I come up with that will fit into this setting? And the ones he comes up with which tend to make it into his games are the ones with a clear comedy premise, because those are the ones he likes and wants to write. It's hard to write porn seriously, especially porn that's different enough to be interesting.

BBBen: I think it's a particular and odd, but still reasonably common form of sex scene in AIF, where the fantasy situation is clearly absurd but still employed to arouse. The author seems to ask the audience not just to accept whatever setting that the story might take place in (science fiction, high fantasy, whatever), because we're used to accepting stories set in unrealistic worlds;

but also that the characters are patently unrealistic. The Sam Shooter series positively revels in unrealistic behaviour and is not afraid to lampshade it for comedic purposes, but at the same time this allows OEJ to explore certain sexual fantasies that would not otherwise work.

Purple Dragon: I see what you're saying about unrealistic worlds, but aren't we just as used to accepting unrealistic behavior? Leave AIF aside for a moment and look at the movies we watch and books we read. When we read Lord of the Rings, we expect to see dragons, sorcerers, and rings of power. When we watch Star Wars we'd be disappointed not to see Jedi and Sith and people using the force all over someone's ass.

I don't think it is unrealistic behavior so much as behavior that doesn't fit into our idea of what it should be for that particular environment. Take SSI for example. The world itself is as normal as can be; it is the characters themselves that are out there. As I said before, whatever it is, it works, but hell if I know why.

BBBen: No, that was exactly my point; suspension of disbelief is normally applied to things such as magic or future science, and these are easy enough for us to accept. Where we have more difficulty accepting the unbelievable is when it comes to more subtle human behaviours. To use Star Wars as an example, I can let myself believe easily enough that Yoda can jump on the air or lift an x-wing with the Force, but I have trouble believing that Anakin Skywalker and Padme would have ever been a real couple. Improbable human behaviour is much harder to accept than impossible physical events.

The main genre in which we're willing to accept outrageous behaviour is, of course, comedy, and that's why it works in the Sam Shooter games. It's just an interesting combination since he pushes it so far, and AIF is so character based.

Closing Comments

BBBen: The Sam Shooter games are, I think, some of the best and most underrated games in AIF history. Oh, I grant you, they've won some awards... come to think of it, SSIV was possibly not so underrated, but the series as a whole was really influential. They're certainly among my favourites, though I promise with 70% certainty that I didn't rip off SSII by setting the second Crossworlds game in a fantasy world. If you're new to the series you should go out and play them.

'trix: SS is among the best AIF series. Some of it is technically impressive, and some of it is a lot of fun, as long as you don't expect your game protagonists to behave believably or in any way morally.

A. Bomire: The "Sam Shooter" series is the most unique in the AIF community. Running the gamut from High School to the Underworld, with just about everything in between, it is probably the weirdest collection of games by a single author. Oh yeah, and also the most fun!

Purple Dragon: I will bow to the general consensus that this is a great set of games. Good games ideas, hot sex, and outrageous situations and character all woven together with a great sense of humor just make them a blast to play.

I want to thank everyone who participated in this discussion and everyone who has managed to read through the whole thing. I hope you enjoyed it. As I mentioned in my opening letter, next month we will be discussing *Moist* by Scarlet Herring and *Malaise* by A. Ninny. If you are interested in participating in the discussion just let me know in the next few days and I'll get you the information you need. ◆

*Rebecca Johnson from
The Camping Trip*



INSIDE ERIN The AIF Community Newsletter



Love Becky

Before the newsletter got started, several people got together to do reviews of a few games. These multiple author reviews were posted, but never printed in the newsletter because, well, there was no newsletter yet. I figured we could remedy that situation by dipping back in the annals of time and pulling them forward. This month we bring you Ideal New England Prep School by NewKid.



Ideal New England Prep School

Game Info:	Ideal New England Prep School (aka HI)
Author:	NewKid
Release Date:	November 3, 1998
Platform:	TADS 2
Size:	535K
Content:	m/f
Game Type:	PF
Length:	Long
Reviewed:	December 2004
Overall Rating:	A-

Basic Plot

The game takes place at a New England boarding high school. As you make your way around the campus, helping out the various girls there, you get an opportunity to get to know your sexy art teacher Miss Wynne in ways that they never explained in the student manual!

A Review by A. Ninny

Overall thoughts

The main thing that I observe about HI is that it is very large, and that it takes a great deal of time (read: days) and dedication to play. While there are other games with more rooms and more characters (HI has about 50 rooms and at least a dozen actors), the scope feels bigger than other large games, simply because it takes quite a while to get a feel for the layout of the map and to get a handle on what kind of tasks are necessary to progress through the game. Plus, the player has to continuously do a LOT of walking around the school, which gets a little tiresome.

It is all worth it.

HI has great atmosphere, characters and sex. It is a fabulous challenge, with difficult puzzles. The description of the school, with its quad and its athletic fields, feels right on, even down to detail of the steam tunnels. The significant NPC's are really quite rich, and even though they don't have many responses to 'ask NPC about TOPIC' questions, they are made to feel real enough through the situational dialog that NewKid gives them. I found myself actually more attracted to some of them than I get to most AIF characters (I was even wishing for an option in which the PC would end up with Laura). Many of the lesser characters are hardboiled, like Liz (the school druggie), who is too stoned to react when you feel her up, and like Muffy (the nose-in-the-air elitist), who won't even look at you, and who (of course) has never had decent sex before you manage to seduce her. The male NPC's are almost completely decoration. Fortunately, the fact that many characters are hardboiled or flat doesn't detract much from the richness of the game. In fact, I found them to add a layer of humor. You know they are minor characters, so you don't really care that they are ridiculous.

The main goal of the story is to score with Miss Wynne, the sexy art teacher. She is definitely a worthwhile goal, and seducing her requires the player to interact with her numerous times over the course of the game, to solve a lot of puzzles, and to sleep with all the other (female) characters. The slow build-up between the player and Miss Wynne is particularly well-written. The excitement and the feelings of mutual desire between the PC and Miss Wynne increase slowly and steadily as the game progresses. Even before the end, the two are nearly overwhelmed by horniness, but restrained by feelings of propriety that must be removed in order to open up the final scene. The number of 'hoops' that players must jump through to get to Wynne makes you want her all the more. All this build up of anticipation is obviously deliberate and is very effectively constructed by Newkid.

Sex

Even if the sex in HI wasn't good, the game as a whole would be pretty fun. Fortunately, the sex is very good. NewKid has a great skill for erotic writing and the escapades are detailed, varied, immersive and very hot. The ultimate scene with Wynne at game's end goes on forever, with changing descriptions based on what room you're in, though for an unknown reason her arousal keeps getting reset to zero and you and she keeps getting dressed. The minor characters' sex scenes are less hot but still entertaining, as they refrain from being generic (they nicely reflect the NPCs' general traits) and instead serve somewhat as sexy humorous interludes.

If I have a complaint, it is that the NPC's are given limited chances to act on their own. There are almost no instances where an NPC will rub their own body parts or give the PC a hand job, and 'NPC fuck me' is not treated differently than 'fuck NPC.' Also, the word 'cock' isn't recognized by the game and no separate object is defined for the player's penis. Despite these few shortcomings, the sex in HI acts to strengthen an already great game.

Technical

HI was the first large AIF game to be written in TADS. It, along with *Moist* (first released in 1996), NewKid's *Generic New York Apartment* and Choices' *Rogue Cop* (both released within about six months of HI), made TADS the language of choice for AIF until the arrival of Christopher Cole and the ascendancy of ADRIFT several years later. I also understand that there were no sex actor libraries available for NewKid to use (he wrote and released his own Chick.t libraries only later), which makes HI an even bigger achievement. This all means that HI is a bit rough. In fact, NewKid wrote at AGX in 1999 that "HI's [source code] looks like the aftermath of the quake in Turkey!" Even knowing this, I didn't find any horrible game-crashers, but there are bugs remaining, even after all this time. As a humorous example, at one point I typed 'give head to Madeline'. Now, at the time I typed this, there were two possible things I could have intended. I did intend 'give Head photo to Madeline' but could have intended to have oral sex with her. The game came up with something completely different, and the response was "You're not carrying a blowjob," which cracked me up. Another example of a funny logic bug is NewKid's insistence that the player not remove his pants before his shirt ("You would look pretty ridiculous with your dong hanging down from under your shirt. Only babies run around wearing a shirt but naked from the waist down!") Unfortunately, he doesn't reverse the process, letting me put my shirt on first so I can run around with my dong hanging down....

Puzzles/Game play

As I mentioned previously, the game play in HI gets annoying, simply because so much walking around is necessary. This seems to be by design: NewKid deliberately made the game difficult and long. There are a lot of characters, some with numerous puzzles to solve, and it is difficult at times to figure out what object(s) go with what puzzles, simply because of the numerous possibilities for each. I found most of the puzzles themselves to be quite difficult. Many of the clues are subtle, and if you miss the chance to read some one-time descriptions, you can miss their clues altogether. On the plus side, the game is fairly circular – you don't have to proceed through many of the puzzles in a set order, though some actions open up other areas of the game and serve to move the plot – and there aren't any rooms that get locked and refuse to let you obtain a necessary item.

Intangibles

HI was the game that established once and for all that AIF didn't have to take place in the Star Trek universe :).

Final Thoughts

HI is in the AIF canon for good reason. It is a classic that, while beginning to show its age a little, is a great deal of fun for any player willing to invest a lot of time playing it. I gave it an 'A' despite the unresolved technical and structural issues, many of which are probably due to HI being in the vanguard of 'modern' AIF and most of the different permutations hadn't been explored within the genre.

Rating: A

A Review by S. Welland

Overall Thoughts

It became quite obvious while playing this game that NewKid spent many long hours developing this game. The map is huge, the details superb and the plot as original as they come. This was not one of the thrown together games you so often spot in the archives of AIF. The map itself became a little overwhelming, though, as did the long jaunts between rooms to complete a task. NewKid did make me wish that I could go back in time and change schools, as this was indeed, the Ideal High School.

Puzzles/Game play

As I have said in many of my reviews, I love puzzles, and this game delivered many of them. For the most part, the goals for each puzzle were tied in well to the game play. A few, on the other hand, were drawn out and required a trip or two to the Internet looking for assistance. As with Amy and the lost bracelet, I spent quite some time searching for the bracelet when it was lost. I knew I needed it, but I “couldn’t get there from here”. Not until later did I “stumble upon it”. The bag of Oregano had me going for a long while, as well. I was not able to complete this game without assistance, and I can only imagine that it will be the same for most players.

Sex

The sex scenes were not hot, they were scalding. Each of the five senses was brought into play, as well as a detailed description of the thoughts racing through your mind at the time. There is no doubt that each encounter was taken seriously and the author spared no expense to ensure the boiling point was reached time and time again.

Technical

Technically I found some problems that took away from the game play. To complete the game, you had to have photographs of all of the NPCs, but some of the photos were not easy to obtain. While standing on top of the pile of debris, I was only able to get Amy’s pic by reading the note in the walkthrough. I found neither hint nor mention of there being a vent to look through to get the photo. This occurred on a few other occasions as well.

Final thoughts

HI was an enjoyable game and the sex scenes were the ultimate reward for traipsing through the long halls of this school. The only drawback I experienced was a few important items not being described or mentioned in the descriptions. Had those items not been crucial in completing the game they would have been overlooked as minor little glitches. This game is well worth your time, but do yourself a favor, have the hints within reach.

Rating: A-/B+

A Review by A. Bomire

Overall thoughts

This game ranks way up on my list of favorite games (as evidenced by the fact that I included one of the scenes from the game in my game *The Backlot*). Although it has a lot of difficult puzzles, the rewards are well worth it. The sexual tension between you and most of the female NPCs just builds and builds in a way that no one does better than NewKid. For all of its quirks and problems, this is still an extremely enjoyable game.

Puzzles/Game Play

This game has a lot of puzzles, mostly of the “treasure hunt” variety. However, NewKid does an excellent job of blending them into the storyline so it doesn’t actually feel like a “give girl item A, have sex with girl” type of puzzle. The puzzles are meaningful and integrated into the game. That doesn’t mean they aren’t doozies. Some of them will have you tearing your hair out! There is one “guess the verb” puzzle that throws off most players. At one point in the game you have to “swap” an item with another. You can’t pick up one item and then put the other in its place, you have to “swap” or “switch” them. There isn’t really anything to lead you to this understanding, other than your own inventiveness or frustration so that you are just typing anything to get it to work.

Technical

I was very surprised when I went back to play this game with the intent of reviewing it. I have played this game so many times I thought I had it practically memorized, and yet I found typos, misspellings, and other technical glitches that I had here-to-fore overlooked. There are two glaring ones: two of your female students leave their rendezvous with you to go stand naked in the middle of the quad, despite having descriptions of redressing before they go. So, there they are, blandly strutting about the campus completely naked. Another not quite so glaring issue is the opening scene with Miss Wynn. She comes jogging down the street and goes into her house. Meanwhile, you can go back to the school to find her painting in her classroom. Then, you can return to the house to find her still there in her jogging suit. Most people probably won't notice this as they are too eager to get on with it by joining her in the house, but it is a pretty big issue. The greatest thing about this game is that you are so caught up in the storyline and the characters that you don't even notice these issues.

Sex

What can I say? If you haven't played one of NewKid's games, then go out and download one right now! Play it! Then come back and read this review to see if I haven't hit the nail on the head when I say that he is one of the better writers out there, if not the best. The sex is hot, and made even hotter by the anticipation that NewKid builds into the game. The scenes with Laurie the athlete and with Madeline the foreign exchange student are long and slow, building to the final encounter with each girl. And these are nothing compared to the long seductive dance that takes place between you and Miss Wynne. This is an area where NewKid shines in all of his games, and this game stands out among the rest as the pinnacle of his achievements in this area.

Intangibles

Another area where NewKid shines is in his character development. His NPCs aren't just cardboard cut-outs of typical high school students. You have the stuck up Muffy, whose character changes as the game goes on in a way that I don't think I've seen in any other game. There is the hot teacher Miss Wynne and the nerdy Amy, and many others already mentioned. They all have their own personalities and quirks that make them unique. There are also a host of sub-characters that play along: the pot-head janitor, your computer nerd roommate, the grumpy post office clerk Mrs Grundy, and others. All of them give a feeling of a school that is actually "peopled" instead of the stiff and empty feeling you get from a lot of other "school"-based games.

Final Thoughts

As I said at the beginning, this is one of my top 5 games. I love the way it is written and plays. Up until the time I started this review, I would have rated this game with top marks. Unfortunately, to be fair to other authors I've reviewed I have to knock down my score because of the technical errors I found scattered throughout the game. However, don't be deterred by this. As I mentioned above, once you start playing this wonderful game you'll become so absorbed by it I bet you'll never notice the problems, much as I did for many years.

Rating: B+

This is the solution to the puzzle that appeared in the September Newsletter that I said I was going to print last month (sorry about that). I thought about just skipping it altogether, but then I got a request for it a couple of weeks ago so I figured there might be one or two others out there who want to see it. If so, here it is. Instead of just printing the solution I am reprinting the whole puzzle with the solution filled in at the end. If you didn't have a chance to do the puzzle and want to, I suggest you skip the next page, and go back to the September issue to do it there.

Often the solutions to puzzles like this have a step-by-step explanation for how to solve them. I didn't do that here because the puzzle really is pretty easy, and also because I'm a lazy bastard who didn't want to spend the time it would take to do that.



Logically Speaking

All in a Day's Work

Bob Studmuffin is quite the ladies man. Last Saturday he managed to bag five of the lovelies on the same day, and they were a sight to behold. Each had a particularly sexy occupation (including one who was still just a school girl). Of course, it wasn't all fun and games. Before the girls would give it up, they all required a very specific gift from poor Bob (including a bottle cap, and a cool, refreshing glass of water), but in the end he managed to get them all, implanting his seed a different number of times (10, 15, 20, 25, or 30) in each girl before she begged him to stop. From this information and the clues below can you determine each girl's name (one was Amanda), occupation, and gift received as well as how many times Bob came during the encounter?

1. The five women are Lisa, Sheri, the one who received a pencil, the maid, and the one that Bob came 25 times with.
2. Bob came five more times with Sheri than he did with the girl who received the candy and five more times with her than with the secretary.
3. The number of times Bob came with the nurse was five more than with the girl he gave the stamp to, but five less than during his encounter with Erin.
4. During his time with the cheerleader he came more times than with Heather, but less than with the girl who got the pencil.
5. Neither Erin nor the secretary received an edible gift.

Girl	Occupation	Gift Received	Number of Orgasms
Erin	Schoolgirl	Pencil	30
Amanda	Nurse	Water	25
Sheri	Cheerleader	Stamp	20
Heather	Maid	Candy	15
Lisa	Secretary	Bottle Cap	10

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Bitterfrost is a longtime IF/AIF player working on his first (and last) game, *How I Got Syphilix*.

Dudeman has released one game and is working on a second. He has also released an impressive Inform 7 sex extension to help make it easier for others to write games of their own.

Knight Errant is an AIF player who has released two games and is currently working on a couple of others.

'trix has released one game, *Casting*, which was written in Inform 6, and is sporadically working on another in TADS 3.

