



Sextra Curricular Activities

Letter From the Editor

Volume 1 Issue 5

June 2005

Some of you may have noticed last month that my "Letter from the Editor" and BBBen's "This month in AIF" column had nearly identical content. I thought about ways to keep that from happening again, and the first thing that occurred to me was to write a random-sounding Christopher Kimball-type essay*. Then I remembered that I always start reading his essay, give up halfway through and flip to the rest of the magazine, so that clearly won't work.

One posted message did spark my interest enough to write something topical; that was BBBen's inquiry as to how to get more people to participate in AIF. So I'm using this forum to re-print a letter that I recently posted on newsgroups rec.arts.int-fiction and rec.games.int-fiction addressing that very issue. I encourage all AIF'ers to follow and contribute to the discussions on those newsgroups.

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This Month in AIF by BBBen

I thought it was a bit shameful that the hugely award-winning *SSIV: CotD* still hadn't been reviewed, so I've written one this month. I don't know about you readers, but I'm really starting to enjoy having this newsletter around – it's producing quite a bit of worthwhile AIF related stuff to read and gives people a way to be more involved in AIF than just by playing the games whenever they come out.

Keep an eye out for the AIF Community Portal - it's not ready yet but the word is this could become an exciting new portal for AIF. Since the AIF Portal ceased to be maintained the AIF Archive on Yahoo has been a fairly good centre for AIF – it has a links section, an archive and a forum – but it's a long way from being a really good portal. Thanks to the aifcommunity.org server we're able to get back on track now and I'm hoping a good portal will make the community more newbie-friendly.

During the course of the month I mentioned this on [AGX](#) but I thought I might mention it here again anyway; I think it would be good to attract more people into the community. We have plenty of spare bandwidth and institutions (like the [newsletter](#) and the [Erins](#) – if you can go so far as to call those "institutions") that can accommodate and encourage a much larger community. I think we'll probably always have a high ratio of lurkers to actual active members and to tell you the truth I don't have a big problem with that, but if we want more active people around (and we do – it means more games, more reviews, more discussion on the forums, more votes in comps etc.) then we need more people period. Out of the new people that come in there will be a few that will become active participants, and I for one would like to keep the new blood coming in.

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An Interview with Christopher Cole, by A. Ninny

Christopher Cole has written more quality AIF than any other author. Some of his games, especially *Camp Windy Lake (parts 1 and 2)* and *The Gamma Gals* are often listed among AIF players' favorites. He has also collaborated on several very popular games, including *Prom Night*, *Pool Party* and *Dear Brian*.

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Newsletter Highlights

In this issue:

Our interview with Christopher Cole, numerous game reviews and a look at several free programming text file editors.

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Meet the Staff

AN: Hello, Chris, thanks for agreeing to this interview.

CC: Thank you very much. I'm happy to oblige.

AN: I suppose to start out, you could tell us a little bit about yourself, if you care to share an insight into the real Chris.

CC: Well, my online "persona" certainly only scratches the surface of the "real" me, but over the years I have shared a few things about myself which I can sum up here. I'm an Australian-born Canadian who spends a month or two out of the year in New York. I'm a freelance writer who's dabbled in acting. A girl I dated a few years ago is now on the Naked News. I enjoy erotica (and certain types of porn!). I'm 5'11, with an average build. I jog three times a week. I'm a Doctor Who fanatic.

AN: How did you become interested in writing AIF?

CC: I can't remember why or how exactly that I came across "Xtrek" by Badman, but once I played it, I was hooked. I had played interactive fiction when I was a kid ("Masquerade", "Sherwood Forest", "Zork", etc), but found that I had grown out of it. I'm not saying anything against regular IF, but I'll stick with cards or Xbox when I want to play a 'normal' game. I play AIF for the sex. I like sex, I like erotica, and I like the interactiveness of AIF. For me, it makes IF fun again. After playing "Xtrek", I decided to start an email game (an erotic Star Trek play-by-email game). It went over quite well, but proved too difficult to keep going. I was basically trying to create an interactive game with 15 or so players (and me acting as the program would in AIF - sort of a super GM), and it proved too much for me to handle. I then decided to actually look into creating the same type of game that inspired me in the first place... AIF.

AN: In addition to your successes with your own games, you've been extremely successful at collaborating with other authors on games; you've collaborated with three different authors (Choices, Sir Gareth and A. Bomire). Why did you choose to collaborate, and what led you to collaborate with those authors on those particular projects?

CC: "Prom Night" (with Sir Gareth) and "Dear Brian" (with Choices) were a case of the author contacting me and asking if I would like to contribute to their games. In both cases I really only added text to the games. Both authors were open to my suggestions and many were implemented, but as the games were in TADS (and I really struggle with TADS) I didn't do any of the actual coding for the games. I was **extremely** honored to be asked by these two to collaborate on a game, and jumped at the opportunities. Both games have been very well received.

In the case of "Pool Party", this was a game I conceived while camping (of all places). I could have written the game in ADRIFT, but for a variety of reasons, I saw it more as a TADS game (the main reason was I wanted to try my hand at a TADS game again). However, very early into the process, I realized I'd never be able to finish a TADS game on my own. I knew I needed help. A. Bomire answered my call and I handed the coding over to him (along with the writing for certain characters). It was a fulfilling collaboration and I'm very happy with the way the game turned out.

AN: What do you see as your role when collaborating and what is the role of your collaborator?

CC: Again, this could vary quite a bit, but when collaborating on the projects I have, I'm there for story and erotic text. When it comes to TADS programming, I leave that to the wonderful geniuses I've worked with.

AN: Please give us some insight into what works (at least for you) when collaborating on AIF and what doesn't.

CC: Firstly, you both have to believe in the project. Just because someone writes amazing erotica, does not mean the project will be a success if the game is about Doctor Who and your collaborator hates the show.

It's also important for both (or every) side to be able to listen and take advice/suggestions. The level of this may vary depending on who the initiator/"idea man" was.

Finally, you need a lot of patience. I never felt rushed and I never felt things were moving slowly on my collaborations, but I was working with the best of the best. Sometimes your collaborator

may not be able to work at your pace or vice versa.

AN: You recently left the AIF community, and stayed away for over six months. You may not want to discuss your departure, but can you at least tell us what perpetrated your return?

CC: Well, I will briefly touch on my departure. You think I'd know by now that the online community allows for people to be much more rude and obnoxious and down right stupid than they would be in real life. Yet I still allow some people to get to me. Stupidity made me leave. Since my return (with the exception of one instance), I've tried to take a more "reclusive" stance and not get too directly involved. For the most part, it's worked.

I returned because I had more games I wanted to write, and I had enough time to cool off.

AN: Some people would credit you for making ADRIFT the platform for writing AIF.

CC: Part of me is happy about this, the other part of me ducks as people throw things at me for showing certain "authors" a nice platform that can be used to create games that are really not very good. TADS can also produce bad games, but it's much easier to create a bad game in ADRIFT than in TADS simply because it's an easier platform to use. However, I would like to again point out that just because there are a plethora of bad ADRIFT games out there, does not mean that ADRIFT itself is crap. The crappy games are a result of the writers, not the system. If the games were written by the same person using TADS, they'd still be bad. The authors of the crappy games obviously only took the time to learn enough of the system to produce what they call a finished game.

AN: Do you recall why you chose ADRIFT and your first impressions of it as an authoring system?

CC: I chose it as I tried TADS and it was pretty much beyond me (I did plan on moving on to TADS after a game or two with ADRIFT, but found I could do pretty much everything I wanted to do with ADRIFT). I noticed ADRIFT after playing "The Quest". I believe the author mentioned something about the program in his readme, which lead me to check the system out. I like the layout of ADRIFT, and it's relatively easy to use system. I'm still learning what it can do.

AN: What advice would you give someone who is just starting out with ADRIFT and plans to write AIF with it?

CC: Just because it's "easy" to use, don't just jump in and create a game and think you're an expert. Read the manual (even the 4.0 manual is helpful for 3.9). Read the tutorial. Read the Adrift Topic Tutorial (ATTS). These can all be found at the main ADRIFT webpage (<http://www.adrift.org.uk/>) or the ADRIFT Yahoo site (<http://uk.groups.yahoo.com/group/ADRIFT/>). Learn how to use an .alr file (these are covered nicely in the ATTS and are what really make an ADRIFT game fly). Look at my games using the passwords provided on my site to get an idea of what you can (or can't/shouldn't in some cases) do.

AN: What do you feel are ADRIFT's particular strengths and weaknesses when it comes to writing AIF?

CC: Hmm, that's a tricky question. I'm not sure it has any strengths when it comes to writing AIF specifically. I think its main strength overall, is that it gives an option to writers who aren't programmers (like me). I think its biggest weakness is exactly the same thing. It allows bad writers to whip up bad games with relative ease.

AN: Off the top of your head, what are your favorite three AIF games?

CC: *Moist, Rogue Cop, Star Trek: The Sexed Generation.*

AN: What, if anything, is on the horizon for you? Any future games in the works?

CC: Yes, but it's slow going at the moment due to real life rearing its ugly head. I've started *Gamma Gals 2*, but it'll be the end of the summer before I can really get cracking on it. I also have an idea for a non-sexual AIF game based on the *Hellraiser* movie series. A few other ideas are rolling around in my head, but only time will tell if they become games.

Our thanks to Christopher Cole for taking the time to answer our questions. Chris' games (too numerous to list here) can all be downloaded from his web site:

<http://www.geocities.com/cjcole144/cjcole.htm>.

Letter from the Editor (continued)

Dear IF Community:

I am the Editor of a new newsletter serving the Adult Interactive Fiction (AIF) community. The newsletter's focus is to deliver news, game reviews, and authorship guides to anyone interested in playing and writing AIF. AIF, for those of you unfamiliar, is IF with (usually) explicit sexual descriptions and situations. In other words: IF porn. We are certainly under no illusions that AIF will appeal to everyone and are not trying to foist our stuff on anyone who's not interested (a reason we keep our games and discussions off the main IF Archives and message boards).

We are also under no illusions about AIF's poor reputation in the greater IF community. AIF games are usually regarded as being written and coded poorly and to have paper-thin characters and stories. The reputation is, unfortunately, not wholly inaccurate. There are quite a few games in our roster that can be described this way. Wrapped up with the poor reputation of AIF is the fact that many AIF games are developed using ADRIFT – a system that has its own reputation problems – but that is a topic for another forum.

There are, however, AIF games (even ADRIFT AIF games) that are really quite great. More than a handful of AIF authors can not only write a sentence, they can develop interesting settings, create deep characters, design relevant and tricky puzzles, and interweave the porn into the narrative so it doesn't feel tacked on. Other authors simply write great sex and can make at least halfway decent IF to go with it. In other words, there's some quality work going on.

So why this letter? Well, we figure there are quite a few IF players who already play AIF. Most people don't like to admit they look at porn, but they do it anyway – which could explain why porn sites are more profitable than most other Internet sites but (of course) nobody I know spends money on Internet porn. Others of you may simply be curious about AIF but don't really know where to start. Either way, the AIF community is reaching out to you: we're looking for more players, more game authors, and more people to participate in our discussions.

Please start by looking over our newsletter. It has five issues released so far, and in those there have been three instructional articles addressed at authors related to testing and one instructional article aimed at beta-testers (demonstrating our commitment to getting our authors to make games that actually work), numerous game reviews (demonstrating that even porndogs can discern good games from bad), interviews with respected authors, and other related content. It also has an issue dedicated to the recently-completed AIF awards.

For those of you interested in just jumping right into some games, I highly recommend:

Dexter Dixon: In Search of the Prussian Pussy by A. Bomire, which is a character-driven noir AIF written in TADS;

The Backlot, TADS, also by A. Bomire, a concept- and puzzle-oriented game in which all IF is created in Hollywood-like studios;

Sam Shooter III: Come in Sixty Seconds and *Sam Shooter IV: Children of the Damned* by One-Eyed Jack, both TADS, which are all-time favorites of the AIF community, largely because they are literally laugh-out-loud funny;

Ideal Pacific Coast University by NewKid, TADS, is a huge recently-released game that has it all: great characters, puzzles, story and porn;

Gamma Gals by Chris Cole, ADRIFT, is a lightweight romp that is another favorite of AIF players for its terrific sex;

British Fox and the Celebrity Abductions by Lucilla Frost, ADRIFT and (ported to) TADS, is of interest for having a female PC. It also has lots of tough puzzles and great writing and is thematically very dark;

Of course, there's the all-time classic *Moist* by Scarlet Herring – that game has hooked many of our current AIF fans.

We welcome your comments, flames, compliments, etc., and thanks.

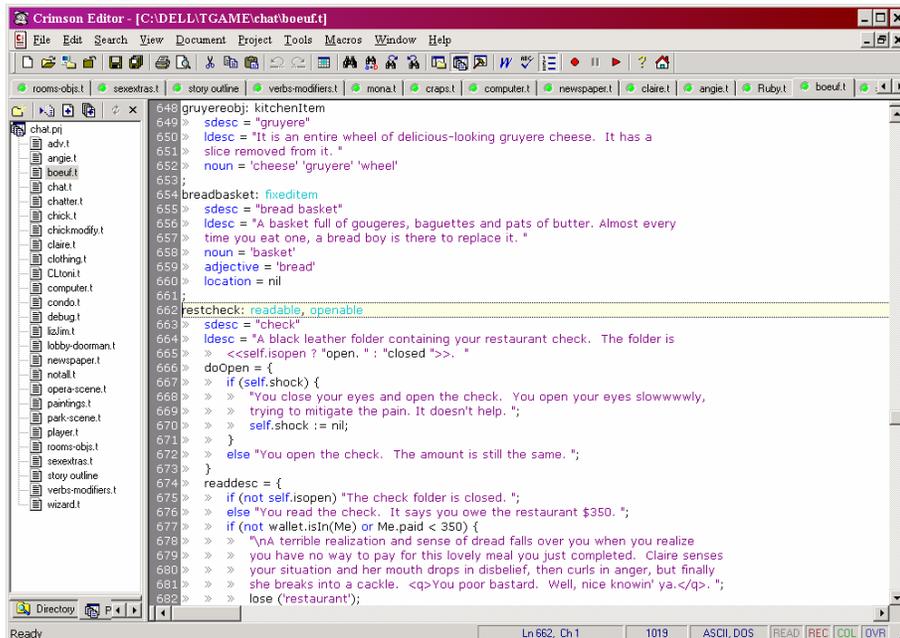
A. Ninny
Editor

*Christopher Kimball is the Founder and Editor of *Cook's Illustrated* magazine. At the front of every issue he writes a page-long editorial that has little to do with anything else in the magazine.

Software Review—Programming File Editors by A. Ninny

Authors who write IF in object-oriented programming languages (such as TADS or Inform) can be greatly aided in this task by a good text editing program. As Lucilla Frost so eloquently put it in her article about TADS and ADRIFT, “trying to write TADS in Notepad is a recipe for suicide.” Common features that make text editors far superior to Notepad include multi-document support, line numbering, indentation and text formatting based on content. In this article, I will review two very different freeware editors: Crimson Editor 3.7, which is an all-purpose programming file editor; and Imagine 1.5, an editor specifically designed for editing IF code.

Crimson Editor 3.7



Crimson Editor with project navigation pane (left) and code window. TADS 2 formatting shown

Pros:

Crimson Editor is a general-purpose text editor that is equally at home with IF as it is with HTML or C or any other ASCII-based programming language. It provides tabbed multi-document access along with a handy project navigation that makes it very easy to jump from one file to another. It automatically remembers what files were open and reopens them all (to the last viewed line of code) every time you start the software, making it extremely fast to jump into your project without browsing through your hard drive for your files. It provides built-in code formatting for TADS 2 (written by me and contributed to the software’s publisher before the current release) and Inform, but currently lacks formatting for TADS 3. Creating and modifying formatting schemes is easy as the scheme files are all text files, but instructions as to how to do it lack detail. Crimson Editor comes with a built-in spell checker that highlights misspellings as you type, a feature that I consider essential. The spell checker is far from perfect, but has still saved me a ton of time in searching for misspelled words.

Crimson’s search feature is also extremely powerful. It can search for a string of text in all the files in a particular folder at once, and provides in-context results to its search in a separate pane. If you double-click on the search result it will take you directly to the line in the file where the string was located.

Brace and parentheses matching is extremely straightforward in CE. All you need to do to find a matching brace is click next to either an open or close brace (or parenthesis) and its pair will be highlighted instantly. You can also right-click to tell CE to select the entire block of code contained by a brace pairing.

Another benefit to CE is that it does not lock files. Instead, if an outside source changes the content of a file open in CE, it will ask the user if he or she wishes to load the new version. This makes it extremely useful for annotating ADRIFT transcripts during beta-testing.

Crimson Editor is also extremely lightweight. The download is 1.2 MB, small enough to fit on a floppy diskette.

Cons:

The main negative about Crimson Editor is its poor documentation, although peer support is available on CE's web site. The publisher of CE is not a native English speaker, so the help files are both minimal and cryptic. There are also a few bugs in the program, one being that if you try to split a window vertically you cannot scroll one half independently of the other.

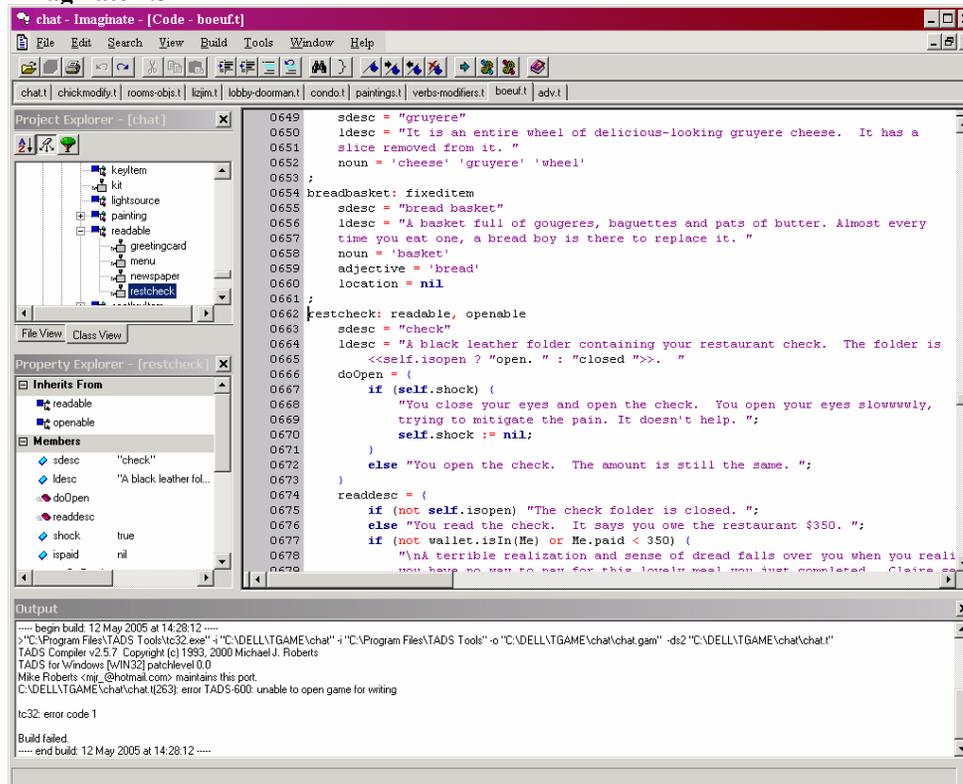
Another item on my wish list for CE is in-string formatting. A common construct in TADS code, in-string methods

(*property* = "text text <<self.variable ? "variable is true" : "variable is nil">> text text. ");

are those within the << >> that reference some other piece of code. It would be helpful for the text editor to recognize that << >> is a signal that what comes within is not part of the string, but is, instead, something else.

Aside from these few small issues, CE is solid, easy to use and fast.

Imagine 1.5



Imagine with Project Explorer pane, Property Explorer pane, Output pane and Code window showing TADS 2 formatting

Pros:

Imagine is a different kind of animal altogether. It is specifically tailored to IF authoring and has many features that are of exclusive use to IF authors. First and foremost among them is that you can compile your game in Imagine; the Output pane gives you the result of each compile attempt. You can't play the game in Imagine, but at least you can see if your game compiles. If it fails to compile and returns errors, you can double-click in the Output window and the line of code where the error was found will display in the code window.

In TADS 2 mode (the mode used in this evaluation), you open your .tcd file in Imagine and the property explorer lists all the included files. You can then double-click on a file name in that window to open the file in the code window. If you even single-click a file in the Project Window, all the objects, functions and classes in that file will be shown in the Property Explorer. You can then double-click an object in the Property Explorer and that file will open and the object will appear in the code window. Another useful navigation feature, you can place the cursor on an object definition (a class name, say), click search → Goto Definition (or hit F6 key) and be taken to the object in which the definition originates (but not to its most recent modification, which can be problematic).

The Project Explorer is very powerful. The Class View tab gives you an alphabetical list of every function, class and object in your entire project (including those in adv.t), and lets you

jump directly to that object by a simple double-click. It also lists objects in relation to their parent classes and it lists classes in relation to all the objects (and classes) that inherit from them. Better still, when you click an object in the Project Explorer, it opens up in the Property Explorer, which then lists all the properties and methods within that object. If you double-click the property or method in the Property Explorer, Imagine will, again, take you to the line of code that contains that property or method.

Imagine help files include the TADS 2 Manual, and it also provides context-sensitive keyword help, in which you can place your cursor in the TADS code and press F1. If an article corresponding to the text under the cursor exists (i.e. the built-in function 'rand()' or 'switch' statement), it will open the appropriate article in the Help window. Very cool.

All in all, Imagine is extremely powerful when it comes to navigating IF projects, but there are some serious drawbacks:

Cons:

The main problem with Imagine, and one that I cannot fathom the author omitting, is that it lacks spell checking. IF uses so much real language that to not include a spell checker simply makes no sense. This alone, in my opinion, makes it almost not worth all the fabulous navigation, help and file compilation tools. Another negative is the lack of a feature to search multiple files for text. It can search one file for text and bookmark all the lines containing that text, but unlike CE, it still can only search one file at a time. Imagine can also only open files that are included in the active project. While this may not seem like too big a problem, there are occasions where you want to borrow or refer to a bit of code from another game and you'll have no choice but to open that code in another application. Imagine also has a brace and parenthesis matching feature, but you're required to click an icon to use it, and you cannot select all the code contained between two braces automatically. Another feature I find it odd to not be included is that class names are not, by default, syntax highlighted in the code window. Considering that Imagine knows all the classes in the project (including custom classes), for it to not highlight them is a serious omission. Of course, CE only highlights built-in classes and only because I thought it was a good idea for it to do so--class highlighting is useful simply because when the class highlights you know you spelled and it properly and used proper letter casing.

Incidentally, Imagine also lacks in-string method evaluation (refer to my discussion about this in my Crimson Editor review).

I heartily recommend CE to anyone who programs any file type including and beyond IF languages. Its multitudinous syntax files cover the gamut of different programming languages, and its users are active in adding more. It is extremely fast and easy to install and use and makes programming a breeze. Imagine, on the other hand, once you overlook its lack of a spell check feature, is amazingly powerful for IF authoring.

Crimson Editor: <http://www.crimsoneditor.com>

Imagine: <http://www.imagine.free-online.co.uk/>

This Month in AIF (continued)

You know, since this publication started we haven't had a month without a new game release. I'm glad we decided to go with a monthly publication. I'm also increasingly surprised at how relatively busy the first month we published – January 2005 – really was.

New games for May 2005

Escape Pod (full version) – by LoveLetterstoLove, 7th May 2005 – The new, greatly expanded version of the mini-comp game *Escape Pod* that scored 2nd place in A. Bomire's 2004 mini-comp. You find yourself confined in the escape pod of a space ship with two sexy women, some free time, confined spaces and a lot of possibilities.

Weekend – by Pierre, 26th May 2005 – A prequel to Pierre's earlier game *Cruise* (using some of the same characters), *Weekend* sees you spending, appropriately enough, a weekend in the mansion of a wealthy industrialist.

AIF Scuttlebutt by A. Ninny

Hey, Kids! I don't know too much more about new games than I did last month, and most of the stuff I reported as in-progress last month must still be in-progress. I do have a few things to talk about, though.

The main thing is that development of our new portal web site (to be located at portal.aifcommunity.org) is well underway. The site will have the usual game downloads, walkthroughs, and reviews, and it will also have forums and private messaging. At the moment it is rather generic-looking, but hopefully the site's intrepid creators, **DrisArter** and **Zeiram**, will come up with some good designs. If you're interested in helping them out with the portal, send an e-mail to the newsletter and I'll get one of them in touch with you.

Another point of interest: **David Welbourn** (IF Wiki nickname: Dswxyz) and **Richard Otter** (IF Wiki nickname: rotter), though not AIFers, have been updating the IF Wiki with lots of information about AIF authors and games. David is an IF author who claims minimal AIF interest beyond cataloguing it. His IF web site (<http://webhome.idirect.com/~dswxyz/ifindex.html>) is worth a look for its amazing catalog of IF miscellany. For instance, he has lists of "XYZZY" and "PLUGH" responses from hundreds of IF games.

Richard is particularly active in the ADRIFT community and has an interest in promoting ADRIFT games. Since AIF authors favor ADRIFT, his interest in cataloguing AIF on the Wiki grows from a desire to be thorough in showing how active the ADRIFT world is. Richard's web site, <http://www.delron.org.uk/> is similar in content to **David Whyld's** Shadowvault.com and even uses Shadowvault as a primary source of its information. As a result of their efforts, the Wiki is beginning to cover AIF in a fairly thorough way and is definitely worth a look at <http://www.ifwiki.org>.

BBBen was kind enough to send me an update on *Pervert Action Crisis*, his hentai-style game. He tells me he's found a co-author in **Mike Phillips** and that together they're making good progress, but they still have a long way to go.

If you're working on something and want it mentioned here (or if you think I know about it and want it concealed), write me at aifsubmissions@gmail.com. See ya next month!

Oldies But Goodies

Boffing Both Generations, a review by Markaedw

Game Info:	<i>Boffing Both Generations</i> , version 1.1.1 released August 6, 1999
Author:	Heloburp
Platform:	AGT
Size	153KB (zipped)
Content:	m/f, m/f/f, voyeurism
Game Type:	T&AIF, SCI-FI
Length:	Short
Reviewed:	May 2005
Extras:	None

BasicPlot:

You are a Commander and an instructor in Starfleet sent from your job at the Starfleet Academy to fill in for Riker for a few days on the Enterprise. You have no set duties, but you can score with all the women of both the *Next Generation* and the original *Star Trek* television series.

Overall Thoughts:

Heloburp has only this one game that available (that I know of). It is a good game, but suffers from the lack of varied sex commands that seems endemic to all AGT games. Luckily, the detailed sex descriptions make up for the minimal number of sex action options. There are no guess-the-verb problems but the only oral sex available is done on you, and the items in the game are easy to use.

Puzzles/Gameplay:

There are a few puzzles in the game and although they do need to be solved to finish the game you are warned before you go too far.

Sex:

The commands are few but they result in lengthy descriptions so the game is still worth your time to play, especially if you are a *Star Trek* fan. There are no sex toys to use, but enough women give themselves to you to keep you going, and although you can stay with each woman for unlimited sex, once you leave her you cannot return for more.

Technical:

This has more women and more rooms than any of the *Star Trek*-themed games of its era but the commands are about average in terms of their flexibility and the number of options available.

Intangibles:

This is the only XTREK game that covers all the women of both *Star Trek: The Next Generation* and the original *Star Trek* television series.

Final Thoughts:

It is a must have for all *Star Trek* fans. It is worth playing once in a while.

Rating: B**One Girl, a review by A. Ninny**

Game Info:	<i>One Girl</i> released November 14, 2001
Author:	Dr. Kehl
Platform:	Inform Z-code
Size	104KB (zipped)
Content:	m/f, water sports, S&M, rape
Game Type:	Sex Simulator
Length:	Short
Reviewed:	May 2005
Extras:	None

BasicPlot/Overall Thoughts:

One Girl has no plot. Instead, it is simply an experiment in expanding the number of commands the player can use and increasing the number of permutations in which the PC can have sex with an NPC. The NPC will participate in pretty much anything you can dream up, and will have 'lifelike' emotional reactions to your actions (she becomes angry and frightened when you rape her, for example). At various points in the game you receive additional objects (a rope, a dildo, etc.) to add to the fun. Your goal, if you can call it that, is to score all eight points (earned through various sex actions) and read all the sex descriptions.

Puzzles / Gameplay:

There are no puzzles, per se, but it is tricky to figure out all the different available sexual permutations needed to score all the points.

Sex:

The sex is well written and hot, although some of it goes beyond what some would even consider to be distasteful—everything you might think of is included and fully detailed, including water sports, domination, a dildo that gets stuck in an orifice, fisting and rape.

Technical:

As this game is an experiment in sex coding, it is extremely well done. It doesn't know the word 'rub' though; use 'grope' instead. Also, the girl doesn't understand as many commands as I'd have liked her to.

Final Thoughts:

One Girl is a fun sex simulator to play, and the writing is strong. I recommend that you try it, but I can't really give it a grade, since it isn't truly an AIF.

IPCU, a review by Grimm Sharlak

Game info:	<i>Ideal Pacific Coast University</i> released April 23, 2005
Author:	NewKid
Platform:	TADS 3
Size:	560 kb
Content:	m/f, f/f, m/f/f, voyeurism
Game Type:	Puzzle-fest
Length:	Long
Reviewed:	May 2005
Extras:	None

Basic Plot:

As the leader of Alpha Beta Omega, a University fraternity that has spent four long years off campus due to struggling grades and bad behaviour. This year, however, you swear to get your fraternity reinstated, no matter what the evil Pi Pi Pi house and the elusive Dean have to say about it!

Overall Thoughts:

Do I even need to review this game? This follow up to the classic *Ideal New England Prep School* (HI) has been eagerly anticipated ever since NewKid announced its pending release, and it has generated more talk before and after release than any game in recent memory. It lives up to the hype, and is a great game, with tough but logical puzzles and not only hot, but innovative sex scenes with well formed characters. It certainly lives up to the name of "Ideal".

Puzzles/Gameplay:

The main puzzle you will face in this game is "how do I get Alpha Beta Omega reinstated?" From this overriding task, you discover smaller puzzles to help you along the way, such as organising a party to grab new members, or helping fellow frat members with their studies. NewKid has managed to make the majority of puzzles relate straight back to the player's main motivation. This means the player never truly feels lost, or more importantly, has to ask "why am I doing this?" Aiding the player in solving the frat puzzle is an in-game character who will basically give you a laundry list of what you need to achieve.

One early gripe with the game was the size of the play area. IPCU doesn't feature just your campus, but also a downtown area and an opposing University's campus. As TADS has no map feature, some found themselves getting lost easily. However, this could be solved through extended play (I could find my way through the game blindfolded these days) or by having a look at the map that *fellatrix_uk* kindly provided. If you have yet to play IPCU, download the map as well to avoid some early frustration.

The puzzles themselves, as stated, are fairly logical, and quite clever in places. The only problems I had were with the finding the tequila, and making money, which leads me one of the only other real gripes with the game. Money is a driving force in one of the games larger events, and the only source is working for a certain party. However, if you have money on you when you visit said party, they won't answer the door and therefore won't give you any work. So, you drop your money somewhere, so you can go get it later, right? No dice. The money disappears when you drop it, which is quite frustrating when first encountered. It turns out that this is by design (NewKid apparently doesn't want you to have more than a certain amount of money at once), and it is not difficult to return to the source for more money when you run out

Outside of this, however, the game plays like a dream. There is little to no guessing of verbs, and there aren't really superfluous items or red herrings to cloud the issue. There is also a decent learning curve in the game, with early tasks being fairly straightforward, while the deeper into the game you get, the more difficult and complex the puzzles become.

Sex:

Well! Anyone who's played previous NewKid games knows that he writes some excellent sex scenes, involving excellent female characters. The sex scenes in the game are often quite good,

and at times quite humorous as well; Professor Bird and Bettina immediately spring to mind. NewKid has also brought some innovation to the sex scenes as well, with different positions eliciting different results. While this makes it slightly harder to score maximum points, it keeps the sex varied and interesting, and considering how many sexual encounters are in this game, that's no small feat.

Technical:

I've already mentioned the money, which can feel like a bug, and outside of that I found no real technical issues. NewKid has pulled off some great programming with the different positions of the players affecting the sex scene, and found no errors in that regard, so the overall technical implementation is good.

Intangibles:

Along with the fairly common "What's your name?" at the start of the game, you can also enter your frat nickname; while it isn't used very often by characters in the game, you set it each time you start up, so you can have some fun with coming up with ridiculous nicknames. Wombat calling me "Balls" was a highlight, that's for sure.

Final Thoughts:

NewKid has returned from a long absence with a great AIF game. Logical puzzles and straightforward gameplay aren't always thought of as essential in AIF, but IPCU has these two attributes along with solid characterisation, innovative sex scenes and hot women to have them with. Not to mention a true challenge if you're aiming for the full score.

Now, NewKid, we need a version where you can get with Sarah!

Rating: A

Sam Shooter IV: Children of the Damned, a review by BBBen

Game info:	<i>Sam Shooter IV: Children of the Damned</i> released July 25, 2004
Author:	One-Eyed Jack
Platform:	TADS 2
Size:	259KB (zipped)
Content:	m/f, m+/f, m/f+, f/f, anthro (humanoid demons and stuff)
Game Type:	Linear, story-based
Length:	Longish
Reviewed:	May 2005
Extras:	None

Note: There are a few spoilers in this review.

Basic Plot:

Sam Shooter wakes up in a desert other-world after the end of SSIII. He finds his way to the gates of Hell, and must go through them. Sam's older sister Laurie goes after him.

Overall Thoughts:

"Sam Shooter IV is done and really bad" (or words roughly to that effect) was how One-Eyed Jack advertised the release of the fourth instalment of Sam Shooter's wild and amoral (or immoral) adventures. Obviously the AIF playing public disagreed with OEJ, because this game won seven of the 2004 Erin awards, including "Best Game".

The Sam Shooter series is almost certainly the single most popular series of AIF games, and is also probably one of the most distinctive. No one else has written AIF games with the same insane, loony-tunes evil themes, let alone written them so well. That Sam Shooter ended up in Hell seems almost inevitable, considering the character and the course of the series. I'm really glad it did too, because I loved the setting (and once was planning to write a Heaven and Hell themed game myself, in fact).

I must say that the story of SSIV is actually a good read. I wanted to keep playing not just for the sex, but also to see what was going to happen next which is perhaps what was most satisfying about the game. The story was intriguing and a pleasure to read, not something that had to be ploughed through for the sake of the sex.

Puzzles/Gameplay:

One thing that makes SSIV special is the fact that the player takes the role not only of Sam Shooter, but also of his sister, Laurie, for periods of the game. Laurie pursues Sam through the depths of Hell, and in the process encounters her own sexual adventures.

The game does, however, have the feel of a series of separate mini-chapters strung together in a linear way and at times slightly tenuously. You find yourself in an area that is a few rooms in size, and there will be some sex in this area as well as a puzzle to get you through to the next area. It feels slightly formulaic in that respect, and does not really surprise the player. It's a little hard for me to explain this objection, but perhaps it can be best explained by saying that while playing, I was able to see the puppeteer's strings.

Sex:

One point that OEJ mentions in his readme is that the game may seem a little short on actual sex scenes. This is, I think, because he has a number of sexual sequences that are simple linear blocks, rather than full SSS sequences. However, there are a good number of SSSs to satisfy players, and the non-interactive sex scenes are very good.

In fact the sex is of course the most important thing in the game, and as with any AIF game that is centred on a core of great sex scenes, this one really works well. I would say the sex is surprisingly rich and written with great energy, except that at this point OEJ's skill is no longer surprising, just gratifying. The sex in *Sam Shooter IV* has succeeded in maintaining real fire and is as detailed as ever.

Technical:

The game is nicely slick, though I should probably point out that the rather linear nature of the game does mean it is not especially ambitious. It is much easier to make a technically polished game when it is not technically ambitious, however I can't fault the game too much from a technical standard.

Intangibles:

This game is genuinely funny. I don't tend to laugh out loud at things I read, but SSIV did definitely make me feel genuinely amused. At times I wished that it was being played out as an animated film because the writing seemed to come across that way (particularly in the flash-back where Lucifer fights with Sam's 'father').

Final Thoughts:

SSIV: CotD is a really good AIF game, and my only real complaint is that I think I can see the result of OEJ struggling with the project at times. I know the feeling well. It is a really enjoyable read and has particularly hot sex scenes, and can't really be criticised on too many levels, apart from those few I have already mentioned. I can see why the game did so well in the Erins, and it did win on its own merits rather than riding on the back of the popularity of the series. The first Sam Shooter remains, for a couple of reasons, my favourite Sam Shooter game (and one of my top AIF games of all time) but SSIV manages to come in at a solid second.

Rating: A

The Reunion, a review by Mark Black (a.k.a. StrGzr02002)

Game Info:	<i>The Reunion</i> released November 11, 2004
Author:	Moriarty
Platform:	TADS
Size:	555KB
Content:	m/f, mild S&M
Game Type:	Puzzle-fest
Length:	Long
Reviewed:	May 2005
Extras:	None

Basic Plot:

You are a struggling writer who has been invited to your high-school reunion. The only job you've been able to get is writing erotic short stories. However, your sex life, while good when it happens, isn't inspiring you. Your fiancée (who attended the same high school, but thought you were a loser back then) is also attending. To your shock, she wants to 'see other people' during the reunion. At the reunion, you'll find plenty of inspiration for your stories.

Overall Thoughts:

This is a pretty good game. There are some minor spelling mistakes, but they are few and far between. The Pirate scene breaks the 'plausibility' of the game, but other than that, the scenes fit the story pretty well. There's one bug that's fairly irritating, if you examine the microphone, your game locks up for some reason. This could have been due to my version of WinTADS, but it happened consistently.

Puzzles/Gameplay:

All the puzzles are well thought out, and are relatively easy. If you do get stuck, the game has an excellent hint system, possibly one of the best I've ever seen in an AIF game. There's no dead-ends so you can't get the game into a no-win situation. The basic rule of thumb to success is to grab everything you come across.

Sex:

The sex is well written, and the author took care to include all the standard sex commands (although there was no way to 69 that I could find). The scenes themselves also had a good variety. There were scenes involving somewhat un-willing sex (pirate scene, not actually a rape, though), scenes involving tricking a not-too bright blond into doing you, a MILF scene, and a scene where you pretend to be a girl to get it on with a girl who doesn't like you, not to mention a romantic beach scene with your old flame and a real heavy session with your fiancée.

The only complaint I had about the sex scenes was that as the game progressed, it took longer and longer to get your character to orgasm. While this is realistic, it makes it hard to get the text for each orgasm you can get. After awhile, it just doesn't feel worth it.

Technical:

Overall, the game was pretty tight and had few bugs. The only real problem I had was the bug with the microphone. Just make sure you don't examine it, or save the game before you do.

The author was VERY conscientious about putting in descriptions for anything he mentioned in the room descriptions. I found very few things in the room descriptions you couldn't examine for more information (the fungi in the cave comes to mind as one exception).

Final Thoughts:

This is definitely a well written game. It's long enough to take several sessions unless you have a day to kill (first time play could take anywhere from 1 to 4 hours non-stop). Of course, if you use the hint system, it can go as fast as 30 minutes. This game should definitely be in your list of to-play games if you haven't already played it.

Finally, the best part of the game, I think, is that the ending has multiple branches. You are offered the chance (via a tarot deck) to determine how your game ends. You can end up with your fiancée,

your old girlfriend, your old teacher, the Girls-Gone-Wild contestant, the Pirate Girl, the girl who disliked you, or end as a porn star. You sometimes see this in games, but usually you have to go back and replay the game in a different way to get to the different endings. It's nice that you can save at one point, and then see the different endings one right after the other.

Rating: A+

Something To Look Forward To

Next month we'll have another great interview, a critique of AIF game ideas written by Richard Gillingham, and we're hoping for quite a few entries in Chris Cole's and A. Bomire's competition to talk about.

AIF Wants You

If you can write game reviews, articles, cartoons, opinion pieces, humorous essays, or endless blather, we want you. Contact the Editor for suggested content or just write what you want and send it to us.

The newsletter is also interested in publishing your erotic short fiction. Send it to the Editor for review and inclusion in the next issue.

Classifieds

The newsletter will run your AIF-related ad for free. E-mail the Editor for details.

Meet The Staff

Editor	A Ninny is an AIF player, author and frequent beta-tester. His one released game, <i>Parlour</i> received an Erin for Best "One Night Stand" game.
Web Master	Darc Nite is a newcomer to the AIF scene. He is an avid gamer who heard the call for help with the AIF Newsletter.
Staff Writers	A Bomire is the author of several TADS AIF games, including <i>Dexter Dixon: In Search of the Prussian Pussy</i> and <i>The Backlot</i> . His Games have won numerous awards and Erin nominations.
	Markaedw has beta tested one game, <i>Hell in Highwater</i> . He written walkthroughs for <i>Ginger's Island</i> and <i>Hell in Highwater</i> .
	BBBen is an AIF author. He has released six games, including the <i>Crossworlds</i> series and <i>Normville High</i> which won A. Bomire's 2004 mini-comp. Debbie, his popular character in the <i>Crossworlds</i> series won the 2004 Erin award for best female non-player character
	Grimm Sharlak has been writing reviews for us for a couple of months now, so we thought we'd add him to the staff list. He is the author of two AIF games: <i>Breakout</i> and <i>Of Masters and Mistresses: Abduction</i> .
	Richard Gillingham deserves mention here for his help proofreading the newsletter every month.

Where to send your stuff in

Please direct all comments, articles, reviews, discussion and art to the Editor, A. Ninny, at aifsubmissions@gmail.com.

