

# Clear Ether!



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## THE DE-LIBERATION OF D & D

The mythos of *Dungeons & Dragons* is firmly rooted in the Courtly Love Tradition. Thus, when Your Friendly Neighbourhood Anarchofaned came across the game half a year ago, he noted the lack of a character based on Charisma—and of the Damsel (usually in distress).

Now it came to pass, in the fullness of pubbing, that yon Richard Eney came to put forth his Charismatic female in the pages of yon *A&E* 6, and I waxed wroth over my dalliance. But lo, all was not lost!

The Courtesan is *not* a damsel. Fortunately, Dick's character is not lawful and actually has very few of the qualities of the Courtly Love Maiden. So thanks for the kick in the sternum, Dick, and here is the character.

So far I have just begun to play-test my first Damsel, *Cheerliedre*. She was in a large party in which most of the characters saw little action. Interestingly enough, it had *no* fully eligible males in it (by coincidence), just dwarves, elves, a female cleric and a Protestant Cleric (who is actually eligible, but as Zwingli is another of my characters, he big-brothered it), half-elves, a female centaur, and a hobbit. The one ordinary male was a *neutral* seer. But as I said, little happened. Then Cheery went on a second expedition, and was again consigned mainly to lantern-holding. She rejected walking a certain spiral to acquire wishes along with Zwingli as overuse of magic and hence not super-lawful. However, she did make it to second level.

The Thornton created a Damsel as well, naming her Athena. Athena worked out beautifully, being captured by a group of wererats into ransom. And sure enough, she was ransomed. Her Distress Call did not save her initially, but it was used as a device by the DM to bring in another character (attracted in by the Call) of a player who wished to enter late. More on Cheery, Athena, and any others next ish.

Finally, having submitted my first draft to such perceptive critics as Steve and Sandy McIntosh, Barry Gold, and Jack Harness, I received only one substantive criticism: What is a damsel *doing* on a Dungeon expedition? Well, she could appear (say locked in a room of a sorcerer you just trashed), or (in higher levels), she could be seeking specific objects that she heard about, and gathered an expedition, or she could be looking for a lost relative, or following her True Love. Rationalizations abound. It's up to the Party and the DM.

But then, what is a Village Priest doing on an expedition, instead of ministering to his flock? And why is a fighter not in an army? And why should a mage not climb up a tower and conjure everything to him? Adventure stirs the hearts to noble deeds—including the Heart of a Schoolgirl.

## DAMSEL

*Prime Requisite* Charisma

*Augmentation* Dexterity 2 for 1, Intelligence 3 for 1.

*Alignment* Lawful only. Damsels losing lawful status become Courtesans. (Cf., R. Eney, *Alarums and Excursions* 6).



*Race* Any race or mixture, but see below. Must be *female*, unless spider-like.

*Armor* A damsel donning armor loses all but Distress Call Wiles, and that only on those males who have seen her without it. Specially tailored leather armor may be worn, with appropriate vulnerability for cut-away parts and slits. Chain-mail bikinis (*a la* Red Sonja) are recommended for Fighter-Damsels. (See below).

*Weaponry* Knives of any type. Light Bows (*a la* Diana/Artemis, the Huntress).

*Wiles* Damsel Wiles are not chosen like spells, but automatically acquired with each level of experience gained. They are as follows:

**First** *Distress Call*, which is the prime spell of all damsels. It requires no casting time, but either voice, visual signal, or thought (if recipient has ESP, for example). It has varying effect depending on the recipient. The recipient may be either Compelled ©, Have a Saving Throw of X, or be unmoved. Lawful Male of same species and member of the expedition, if "eligible," ©, if not (S = 20 and subtract one for each level, adding one for level of the damsel). Chaotic Males will be Distracted by Distress Call, and will attempt to rape/devour damsel preferentially. "Not Eligible" males are such as married men, celibate clerics (but paladins are compelled for other reasons even if celibate), child fighters and elderly men. Neutral eligible males have saving throws of 20-2×level of neutral+level of damsel. Not eligible neutrals have 10-2+1 etc. Males of a different race (i.e. dwarves answering human Distress Call *a la* Snow White) have saving throws as neutral male humans, if lawful, and same as ineligible male neutrals if neutral. Any non-humanoid species is totally impervious to a Distress Call, reacting only as to another member of the Party in distress. "Straight" female fighters, magic-users, etc. are also immune. If the male in question is not in the expedition, he is still compelled if lawful-eligible, but gains an extra point for saving throws otherwise.

Level	Dice for Accumulative Hits	Fighting Capability	Wiles	Experience Points	Retinue Females	Fighters	Turn Away/Realign
1 Schoolgirl	1-1 (1 min.)	Man-1	Distress Call	0	—	—	—
2 Wench	1	Man	Kiss	1000	—	—	—
3 Handmaiden	1+1	Man+1	Nurse	2000	1 Schgrl (option.)	1 Vet. (opt.)	—
4 Lady-in-Waiting	2-1	2 Men-1	Charm Vertebrate	4000	1 Wnch/Schgrl	1 Vet./Warrior	—
5 Lady	2	2 Men	Fascinate Evil	8000	Handmaiden+1 lower (optional)	Up to 3, one higher in command	---
6 Countess	2+1	2 Men+1	Nobility	16000	Handmaiden+1 lower (must)	At least two (must)	Level 1
7 Princess	3	3 Men	Enchantment	32000	Lady-in-Wait. +1	At least two	Level 2
8 Queen	4	4 Men	Enthral	64000	1 Lady+2 or more	1 Higher-Level Commander + at least two lower	Level 3
Higher Levels	Add 1	Add 1	Increase Potency	Add 32000	Add level & No.	Add commanders and fighters	Add level

*Example* Thus a neutral Swashbuckler passes a Party threatened with extinction by a Wyvern. The party's Damsel, Lady Mevrian, issues a Distress Call. The Swashbuckler preferred not to get involved, and made a saving throw of 11. He is "eligible," so he needed  $20-2 \times 5 + (5 \times 1) = 15$ . Not being a member of the expedition, he gets his extra point (11+1), but still fails to make it. So he whips out his +2 sword and, from the rear, whacks off the Wyvern's sting, aiding the Party. (Since all the members of the Party are already engaged in combatting the monster, no further effect is made on them.)

**Level 2 Kiss** Favoured Swains fighting for their damsel have a +2 morale factor and hit points (for duration of melee). All other party members gain +1 morale from the Kiss of the damsel. Factor remains until recipient has time for reflection. Rejected suitors have no morale boost, and if hurt feelings, -1 on morale. *Kiss* only works for damsels in Attractive Mode; those wearing plate armor, for example, cannot cast this Wile. Note differences with Clerical *Bless*. Besides the +1 hit points for all affected party members, if a percentage probability of striking is used, 10% is added (i.e. instead of "under 35" being needed, it would be under 35+3.5 or under 38.5).

**Level 3 Nurse** Good for both disease and wounds. Patient gains +1 extra hit point back from immediate treatment and +1 for each day of care over and above normal recovery rate. Additionally, *Nurse* is a skill as well as "spell," so even female and non-humanoids can gain +½ in such cases. Level 3 Hand-maidens attending higher-level damsels add to her desirability by attendance (+1 from saving throws). *Will to Live* applies only to betrothed males to a damsel. If they drop to exactly zero on a blow, they will cling to life, and can regain points as above if she (and only she) nurses him. (Queens can give the Will to Live to favoured members of their retinue, including females.) The Favoured Swain of the Damsel can also give her the Will to Live, but cannot *Nurse* her.

**Level 4 Charm Vertebrate** Equivalent to Magic-User's Charm Person but not applicable to Sentients. Vertebrates are high-order animals—Fish, Amphibians, Reptiles, Birds and Mammals. Animals will obey simple commands they could be expected to understand, but cannot communicate anything back to the lady be emotions. Semi-sentient plants such as trees in enchanted forests or flowers in singing gardens are also vulnerable. (Saving Throw =  $15-2 \times \text{level of Vertebrate} + \text{Level of Damsel}$ ).

**Level 5 Fascinate Evil** At this level, the damsel need only fear accidental death or being taken along in the self-destruction of a defeated Chaotic. She will not be harmed by any Chaotic except in warding off any blows she may throw, and whatever the Chaotic needs to restrain her. All intelligent Chaotics except Dragons and Undead will attempt to capture her and hold her until rescue (no matter how many centuries it may take!) All lower-level chaotics will be forced to immediately turn the captured damsel over to a higher-level Chaotic. (Balrogs and Sauron-types may decide to do her in as a long-considered, deliberate matter of policy.)

**Level 6 Nobility** The damsel at this point must have a retinue when embarking on expedition. Should she lose it for more than one turn, her desirability falls a level. She must have at least one traveling companion of a damsel no lower than three levels below her, and at least one other female (may be neutral courtesan) who may be of lower level. She must also have at least two fighter-bodyguards, and if more than two, one must be a higher-level captain. Retinue loyalty is same as usual, except for ladies-in-waiting (lawful) who will only desert if they are successfully wooed by a dashing young adventurer. Countesses may Turn Away First

Level Chaotics as Clerics turn away undead. (Princesses 2nd Level Chaotics, Queens 3rd Level, etc.) *Exception*: Male Human Chaotics may choose *not* to be turned away, but will be realigned to neutrality at that point, and the damsel may use other Wiles upon him. (He may revert to Chaos later, when not under the damsel's influence.)

**Level 7 Enchantment** The Princess acquires Berserker loyalty from dwarves (up to seven), unless she is dwarvish, or not at least half-human. Dragons and Vampires are now Fascinated and will attempt to hold captive or marry rather than devour/bite. Only balrogs remain immune. Other undead (above Second Level) remain immune. Enchanted animals, trees and objects, will desert Chaotic Magic Users and Anti-Clerics to serve Princess. Princesses rejecting High-Level mages will be put in Castle room and put under permanent sleep (until awakened by Kiss from an eligible Lord or Dispell Magic Spell is successfully cast), but not harmed. Princesses will also have a high sensitivity to such things as peas under the mattresses (may detect some traps, for example). And the *Kiss* of a princess upon Transformed Men (*a la Beauty and the Beast*) will revert them to Lawful Male Humanity. (Saving Throw: 10-Level of Monster-Level of Damsel.)

**Level 8 Enthral Glance** By mere looks, a Queen may (1) Paralyze a lower-level male lawful, neutral (see saving throw under Distress Call), and even Chaotics affected by *Nobility*. (2) Enlist as retinue all such *plus* damsels four levels below *plus* neutral courtesans four levels below. Queen may build castles like Lords, but will send passerby's on cleric-like Quests. Queens *Fascinate* balrogs and all female monsters (except Chromatic Dragons—ninth level Queens also fascinate Chromatic Dragons and Sauron-like types). Queens are immune to all spells seven levels below them, such as Sleep. (In captivity, they will constantly be subverting their guards.) Queens *Call* also females of five levels below who are lawful fighters and magic users as Lawful Males (eligible) five levels higher. Eligibility no longer counts, though a lower level damsel can still outcall a Queen for her own betrothed.

*Honour* Damsels choose death before dishonour (in classic sense), yielding their chastity only to males married by Cleric. The damsel then becomes a "consort" and may raise children. Failure to maintain honour (including submission to rape without suicide!) drops the damsel to a courtesan. Clerics may *absolve* (neutral) courtesans to damsel status—but only for sincere repentance. Only Clerics of Village Priest or higher can absolve (or one could make this a specific clerical spell), and improper absolution costs cleric his alignment and status. Absolved courtesans drop two levels to become damsels (experience counts for something!). Tarnished damsels drop all the way to Jilflirt. Wishes can also be used for absolution.

*Frailty* The damsel actually may have good constitution and/or strength. She will generally try to conceal it, unless it is necessary for survival. She will never carry heavy articles for the party, unless it is all-female.

**Combinations** *Damsel-Fighters* are possible, but experience points will be divided evenly only if Damsel-Fighter wears bikini-Chain Mail, or cut-and-slit leather armor. (Shields are allowed but not helms.) Damsels may only use knives and light bows; damsel-fighters may also use one-handed swords, light crossbows, and javelins. No bludgeons (e.g. Clerical weapons) or axes, or two-handed swords and spears. Fighter-damsels have fanatical loyalty from steeds and damsel-influence over retainers. Even Damsel-Fighters of high-enough level must have a retinue including ladies-in-waiting.

*Enchantress* is a combination Damsel and Magic-User who has high-potential but high vulnerability in lowest levels. When casting spells, she loses control over her features and ceases to control, attract, or repel. She may be taken unawares during a spell cast too quickly to issue a Distress Call. She cannot Kiss while casting, nor Nurse after performing magic until bathed and cleansed. (Magic-use is considered "dirty" and "unclean" to an extent. See rule against Cleric changing to Magic-User and reverse as a precedent.) *Charm Vertebrates* is broken by spell-casting, *Fascination* is broken during the casting, and *Nobility* is not perceived. The rationale is that while conjuring, the damsel is dabbling in Art and loses her appeal, as well as concentration on her Wiles. She may recover after the spell by reflex, or after a spell cast is interrupted, though will be momentarily disoriented and vulnerable.

*Vestal Virgins* are combinatio Damsel-Clerics. They may only mate with Clerics of Bishop and Higher, to whom they give full morale boost, etc. They have no wiles over Celibate Lawful Clerics, and are compelling targets for Anti-Clerics, for either rape or sacrifice. They may pledge troth to lower-than-Bishop-level non-Celibate Clerics, but may not consummate before the Cleric reaches sufficient status ("grace"). Fallen Vestal Virgins cannot be absolved as Clerics, only damsels. And, it follows, they lose all clerical spells if they lose chastity. This means Reformed Courtesans are forbidden Vestal Virgin status, though they may pursue a purely Clerical calling if rules otherwise permit. *Half-human Damsels* must have a 15 or higher charisma or have only half-effect (Distress Saving Throw, Kiss Points, etc.) on all Wiles with each race. Note that Mermaids may be included here, assumed half-human and half-female "Mermen," or Triton. (Pure-bred Mermaids will be considered too fish-like to attract human males.) Half-elf Enchanting Vestal Virgins are possible, by splitting all experiences points four way, and with all restriction above. *Elven, Dwarvish, Hobbit Damsels* have no effect on humans with a Charisma less than 15, ½ effect 16-17, and full effect at 18. They have full effect on their own species' males. (Human damsels are viewed equivalently by elves, etc.) Elven Damsels will never attract Dwarves, etc., though Hobbits are strongly affected by Elf-Queens.

*Incubi* are conjured male demons who take females unaware while they sleep (as Succubi do males) or while they are ensorcelled. Since damsels are especially threatened by incubi, they will awaken just before the incubi attacks. They thus will have a saving throw of 15-level of damsel. They can find treasure containing Chastity Protection spells, of course. (Chastity Belts are too unwieldy and ungainly, and uncomfortable, to be considered practical.) For a chaotic assault on her Virtue to be successful, Dispell Magic would be needed.)

*Relationships* Damsels may have bosom friends of either sex, and siblings. Only one lover is permitted (polygamous religions are NOT exempt: the wife falls in stature if she becomes part of a harem, and becomes an exalted courtesan, though possibly "lawful."), and marriage by cleric is required for anything above light snogging (i.e., necking).

*Unicorns* Virginal damsels will always be preferred by these beasts. Note that a Wish can restore virginity to an absolved courtesan if she really wants it.

**Suggested Treasure for Damsels** *Mirror on the Wall* Detects other damsels, rating level and charisma, anywhere in Dungeon or Overland World. Unless otherwise specified, will detect "fairest of them all."

*Diadem of Charisma* Gives wearer equivalent of 18 Charisma and those of 18 Charisma "00" roll—see below.

*Golden Apple* Gives Damsel +2 on Charisma. Will usually be fought over if more than One Damsel present (Apple of Discord).

*Poisoned Apple* Looks like Golden Apple but puts Damsel into suspended animation until awakened by Lord's kiss or Dispell Magic.

*Slippers of Detection* Glass. Once worn, male suitors can follow to find captured damsel.

*Pumpkin of Transport* Changes to coach-and-four with coachman on Wish; always reverts to Pumpkin on stroke of Midnight.

*Sex-Change Girdles* Rather than merely changing gender, it will also change fighter or magic-user to damsel of equal level—and damsel to fighter or magic-user of same level. Clerics can be either immune or changed only in gender to Nuns or whatever.

*Male Damsels?* If some group wishes to go "gay," and remain lawful, it could be conceivable that a gay damsel could make fourth level, and higher toward Gay Vampires, etc. However, straights will

be utterly repelled and immune. Lesbian damsels are undetectable unless they deliberately turn-off males (and hence lose their Wiles over them) and will gain wiles *only* over lesbian females (NOT straight females).

**NOTE:** Female fighters, magic-users, clerics are immune to damsels (below Queen, see special effects after that), though they may serve high-level damsels voluntarily. However, they may still compete to some extent for the favours of males, winning greatest favour with "liberated" males. This character was treated hopefully in balance of advantages and disadvantages without any more sexism than the Fantasy Genre naturally contains.

**Charisma Score of 18** (If Playing *Greyhawk* and above);

Damsel characters rolling a raw 18 for Charisma get to add one point per level to saving throws against their Distress Call by neutrals, transformed chaotics, ineligible, etc., and on other Wiles. Furthermore, they can roll for additional abilities:

**Dice Score Additional Abilities and Wiles**

- |       |   |
|-------|---|
| 01-50 | Hesitation by monsters before attacking damsel, usually allowing a melee blow against them.   |
| 51-75 | Above plus <i>Hand Touch</i> now becomes equivalent to Kiss (2nd Level) but available on the First Level. And Kiss adds +2 to party and +3 to suitors.  |
| 76-90 | Both above plus <i>Limited Charm</i> Mammals and Birds <i>only</i> lower or equal level creatures. Saving throw 10-level of pet. (Usable basically for pets, cats, dogs, wolves, cheetahs, falcons, etc.)   |
| 91-99 | All the above plus <i>Limited Potential Nobility</i> . Turn away hostile attacks by Chaotics and Neutral Monsters up to Countess. Saving Throw against Being Turned Away (or staying and being realigned/charmed) = 10-2×level of creature + level of Damsel. Countess gets full Nobility Wile and keeps limited Wile for higher level creatures than Nobility affects. |
| 00    | <i>Unearthly Beauty</i> All the above bonuses plus enthrallment of ethereal servants (Djinn, Efreet, or any Daemon-like entity to be invented)—usually the first encountered in the expedition, and only one at a time;   |

and Summon Steed: damsel can summon Unicorns, Pegasi, Enchanted Lawful Steeds, Rocs—but only one, who remains with damsel unto death.

## EN GARDE AT THE RIPOSTE OFFICE Alarums & Excursions 6

**Jack Harness** Thanks for introducing me to *A&E*. Lee has a good standard to meet.

**Hilda Hannifen** Good stories, as usual. How about my idea: you collecting and editing your own (and others) Sagas of the Dungeon Expeditions, and I'll typeset and have them published. \$! ¶ I seem to be missing a comment page, or did your comments begin with "Werehumans can be any of three . . . ?"

**Lee Gold** Your addition of the Ninja reminds me that perhaps *A&E* should maintain some collection of characters added to mail to neos on request (and \$). I am willing to get involved in the publishing venture.

**Richard Eney** I have a nit to pick on making your Courtesans a subclass of *Thief*. *To say she is a thief implies (1) she steals and (2) Dexterity-Agility are her prime requisites. But neither are true and the rest of the proposal is self-consistent. So why not make her a full class?* ¶ Since you are one jump ahead of me, are you working on a character whose prime characteristic is constitution yet? I am debugging a proposal for an Igor (or Eye-gor, for *Young Frankenstein* fan). ¶ We have yet to work out reactions between a Damsel and a Courtesan. While Law/Chaos will repel obviously, I have left open the possibility of either mistress/servant or even friendship between Damsel and Neutral Courtesans. After all, many a good girl has had a "loose" friend, n'est-ce pas? Also, I have connected the two by Tarnishment and Absolution. Any comments or criticism? ¶ Another Wile of the Damsel which a Courtesan could use is the Swoon, involuntary or feigned. Any suggestions? ¶ Nothing but praise for your Making Out and Special Relations. I adopted them whole in my proposal.

**Sherna Burley** Well, I've sent a full set of the rules to NYUSFS people in New York. I can hope the infection will take and your Parties will soon expand. ¶ I agree fully on alignment. As for blunt weapons, consider them defensive.

**UCLA CC** In Long Beach, (1) Any DM may allow or disallow. We have only just begun to allow taking characters from one Dungeon to another. (2) DM enforce alignment. Nothing “wrong” in being a neutral, it’s simply *unlawful*. As far as morality goes, I never turn my back on a neutral in a party (3) We remove armor when combo mage/fighter wishes to cast. (4) Steve McIntosh is working on it. He should have a zine in this collation. (5) I just read *The Worm Ouroboros* and I don’t get your reference. (6) The first wishes appeared in LB D&D last weekend. You had to walk a spiral and take small hit points on one path for limited wishes, high hit points on different for full wish. (7) ? (8) Cal Tech is creeping into LB.

**Jack Harness** I think there is a basic confusion in terms here. You are not proposing a *Neutral Cleric* but a *Neutral Mage* with clerical spells (or can simulate the results of Clerical Spells). I am inherently opposed to a purely Neutral Cleric—though another L.Ber is just as strongly for it. The dividing line we use is human sacrifice being required, then it is chaotic, otherwise Lawful. Note that druids *did* practice Human Sacrifice, so they are Chaotic.

**LAST MINUTE IDEA:** I am about to try out a Chaotic Party, and I have come up with an idea to compensate (though not necessarily act the same way) for the lack of cooperation among Chaotics. How about the bonds of *conspiracy*? I am whomping up an Illuminati fivesome including one of each of the five categories, and of mixed gender. Clearly, Chaotics will care little for sib relations, and anything between two members of the opposite sex will be just sex. But a *conspiracy*! That would bind them together and inhibit them, at least, from doing each other in until they have achieved power! Next ish for **A&E**: Maybe the Igor will be ready, and reports on the Damsels and Illuminati. Also, reports from the first Long Beach overland, *Terra Supra*, meant to be a trial-grounds for my eventual Competitive Quest: Melluria. —SEK3

## APA-L 554 Ripostes

**Table of Contents** Good party with fine people listed there.

**Tom Digby** But is there a market? Well, come to think of it, Edward Gorey’s doing well. You’ll package it as Something—Probably.

**Bill Warren** Sorry. A myth? Recount? Histoire? Chanson de Warren? ¶ I think Dan was projecting his own idea of a libertarian over the Real Live One. An all-too-common failing in our midst, I fear. ¶ Is your allergy limited to cigars or does pipe tobacco also discomfit you? ¶ There should be a review of *One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest* in *NLW 6*.

**Allan Rothstein** In “H’wd Fwy,” is the apostrophe similar in pronunciation to that Hebrew letter? ¶ There’s a difference between a few first generation anti-semitic immigrants and mass popular sentiment for pogroms. I have to agree with Ted. (And if I’m wrong, remember that Hitler got to the Anarchists long before he rounded up all the Jews.) ¶ Of course your attack methods would be different. So were mine, if you remember. ¶ “The Israeli government allows . . .” “The Israeli government does not prevent . . .” Notice that the only good things you can say about even your favourite state is that it refrains from kicking people around. And when you stop banging your head, it feels so good . . . ¶ I agree with you on this one. Zionism is not the Israeli State. It is therefore inimical only to the extent it serves said State. Actually, we had a couple of Anarcho-Zionists in the NYU Libertarian Alliance so a moral form of Zionism is at least theoretically possible. ¶ Not that I have already agreed to the importance of this debate, though *my fear is that Jewish fears of anti-Semitism could be used to drag North America into a World War.* ¶ I agree with you again on the Pope lipping off, even though I may occasionally agree with what he says. My Catholic friends also wish he’d keep his nose out of politics.

**Dan Goodman** Upward spiral seems to map the data points best. ¶ A filk! A palpable filk!

**Dan Deckert** Yeah, that episode fits your (non-)premises. As a story, it was fun. “Hammer”-“Smith”? Hmm.

**Jack Harness** I cause “*braid* deterioration”? And all those fine libertarians with full heads of hair around me!

**June Moffatt** Je sais que je pense parce que je pense que je sais. ¶ Richard Kyle does not seem as sure as Fred about the closing.

**Lee Gold** Your follow-up of Digby’s idea would force the States to either monopolize (a World State) or disband. Competing governments could not withstand teleportation. ¶ The latter reason is probably true; like any good conversationalist, you find the other person’s interest. ¶ I don’t think I’ll get to Hubbard for awhile. I’m looking for Cabell’s books, you see . . .

**Hilda Hannifen** Of course you made me eat my heart out missing the endgame. ¶ Wishes are abused? I have yet to see one is all the D&D I’ve played. Maybe LB D&D is more restrained. (We also aren’t crowded with 9th and 10th levelers.)

**Bruce Pelz** A fan named Joe Stalin? Poor fellow. Hasn’t he got enough trouble without winning the Fughead contest?

**Larry Niven** Right on! and Hard Core!

## APA-L 555 Ripostes

**Ed Buchman** I’d call you Legendary, but Bill’s watching. ¶ Do you have a putridity fetish? ¶ Not “Die, Ethyl!” but “On Gree and Qx, Kimball!” ¶ I am aware of the existence of all States and would-be ones and approve of none. I have “low recognition?”

**Nate Bucklin** Be glad to show you How I Planned to Ride The

**Nate Bucklin** Be glad to show you How I Learned to Ride the RTD In Only Six Months. (“Big Blue Dreamliners” optional.) ¶ Guitar player? We got another Grank Gasperik? ¶ I saw a job open at a McDonald’s on Santa Monica and Wester, but that was Jan. 1.

**Kees Van Toorn** Glad to have finally met you. ¶ With luck like yours, I hope it isn’t catching. Also that this spell is over for you.

**June Moffatt** Yum, yum. ¶ If you didn’t need my description, then it wasn’t for you. ¶ “What we have here is a failure to communicate . . .” ¶ And Vic got to follow your announcement!

**Weinstein, Schirmeister, Diniakas & Graham** \*Warning, warning, oook overload\* fxszzt . . . \*

**Ted Johnstone** Lost a filling myself a while ago. Dr. Klingstein taking on new cases?

**Matthew Tepper** Re Tower Records. Too bad you’ve decided to close down debate. I guess there’s no point in mentioning that you do not choose to take away the guns of the State, only from those who are powerless to oppose the State, and secondly, suppose you had well-trained armed guards standing around or occasionally walking by. What would be the likelihood of those kinds picking you? Yes, I was approached from behind in the East Village by someone threatening a robbery. I didn’t turn around to see what he carried, it was irrelevant. I kept walking, threw back a little patter, and he gave up when I refused to role play “victim.” Note that I needed no weapon except my brains. Note that I am *still* for freedom of ownership, because neither you nor I, Matthew, have any right to tell anyone else what they may own. ¶ Thanks for the compliment. Ishes 2 and 2 should have satisfied your wishes. ¶ I will keep an eye out for “Going.” ¶ “Arbitrariness” of individual value-setting is irrelevant. The argument has been whether people can choose freely (usually gold or silver) or they will be forced to accept that which (because they are forced) they do not value. *This* is the essence of fiat. And I do not argue from tradition. ¶ And to Matthew Tepper, in return, running across a great opera he never heard before. ¶ Welcome to Typo-Land! I have revealed how they are handled in typesetting. The Secret Brotherhood is on my tail, so I can’t reveal . . . ¶ Best reference for Law of Fives is *Illuminatus*. It has to do with a bureaucrat or anybody really trying to control more than four people. Context here was that I asserted confusion grew unacceptable in D&D when more than four players formed an expedition. ¶ What’s so funny? The dead SA who were destroyed on orders of the Wehrmacht in 1934 aren’t laughing. And the Italian *State* invaded the territory of the Abyssinian State in 1934. Fascism in power resembled the struggling young movement about as much as International Communism did the Bolshevik State or Classical Liberalism did the American Corporate State. ¶ As I said before, we have a gun in our backs. But there are libertarians working on private—free—space travel. Since I cannot give any more facts without threatening to blow the operation, do what I first said: Sit back and “observe.” ¶ I have not followed your suggestion to commit carnal acts upon myself. I assume that was meant to increase my pleasure, but alas! My preferred strokes are different and perhaps you will consider my first riposte to you in this ish sufficient? ¶ Why should I love Nixon because I despised Kennedy? Frankly, the only difference I saw between them was tactical. As it happened, Nixon did far more for the destruction of the Myth of the American State so I am glad his term came about so recently. But I don’t think either of us would credit him with *consciously* attempting to subvert the U.S. Constitution—without which there could never have been a *President* Nixon. ¶ I met Kheft Salerno, though I have not met Ms. Deckert. Remark ws meant in light jest, of course. ¶ I’m listening to your theory of the JFK assassination. Who did us the favour? ¶ I wish your Road Thingie had come out better. I could only read the words and it looked like it would be funny.