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The object of *Manhunter 2* is, among other things, to explore various places throughout San Francisco. That is done with the help of an on-



A building is swallowed by a mound that appears in Manhunter 2: San Francisco.

screen marker that's smoothly controlled using the cursor keys or the joystick.

The marker is interesting and itself becomes an important part of play. It changes shape when positioned over important objects, and the shape it assumes gives useful hints. For example, an open hand indicates that you can take or manipulate the object; a pointing finger tells you that you can press or push something; and a magnifying glass suggests that you can take a close look at something.

Further exploration may turn your marker into a question mark, which indicates that something is displayed in the message bar at the bottom of the screen. Read it, and you may get a useful clue concerning that object.

After exploring a particular screen, it's travel time. Pressing F3 brings up the travel map. Your current position is shown by an X, and orb-approved destinations are indicated by blinking squares. You can move to the next map section by moving your marker to the edge of the screen.

As you track Phil through San Francisco, you'll do more than manipulate markers. From time to time the view will shift to third person and you'll be faced with arcade-style

Less experienced adventurers will like the game's interface because it eliminates a lot of frustration. More experienced players, however, may wish for a greater challenge. But players of all levels will appreciate the exceptional graphics, the variety, and

the alternating tension and humor.

The game's command summary card, a quick-reference sheet, and the Official Manhunter's Field Guide are a lot of help to the neophyte adventurer. *Manhunter 2* runs on systems with Hercules, CGA, EGA, MCGA, or VGA monitors.

Admittedly, Manhunter 2 is probably a bit simplistic for dyed-in-the-wool adventure fans. Even so, it's addictive. If you're a newcomer to the genre or you're just curious about why the Transamerica Pyramid is being buried by that mysterious growing mound, then here's a game you'll enjoy.

STEVE HUDSON

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CRIBBAGE KING/GIN KIN

or those times when human opponents are scarce, Cribbage King/Gin King substitutes admirably. The people at The Software Toolworks have almost completely captured the feel of these two card games. The package is a two-headed deal—both Gin King and Cribbage King on the same disk.

In Gin King, the only drawback is that you can't arrange your own cards. Otherwise, the game is very accurate and entertaining. You can choose between two styles of gin: gin rummy, in which you can knock (end a hand) with ten or fewer points, and Oklahoma gin, in which you turn up a card from a separate deck and must knock with fewer points than that card indicates.

In Cribbage King, the only drawback is that you can't peg your own points on the cribbage board. An especially nice feature, however, will count your points for you or let you count your own. The second option awards any miscounted points to your opponent, though, so be careful. As in Gin King, the different options in Cribbage King really add to the game's appeal.

In both games, you can choose from several opponents of varying skills. If you don't know how to play cribbage or gin, the Help menu will teach you. Another option lets you play the same hand several times, looking for the best possible way to play the cards.

Graphics are good, with sharp reproductions of the playing cards and a dark green background that looks like a felt tablecloth. The cribbage board is shaded so that the wood looks textured and 3-D.

If you love to play cards, or if you just want to learn some new games, draw *Cribbage King/Gin King* from the stack of computer packages. You'll enjoy your electronic opponents, and maybe you'll learn some tricks for the next time you face a human across the card table.

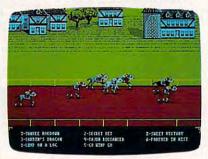
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HORSE RACING

port of kings, that's the way thoroughbred horse racing is described. But that moniker seems less related to regal breeding and high-society cliques than it does to the size of the bankroll you need to enjoy this sport in style. If you're part of the two-dollar-window crowd, SportTime's Horse Racing gives you the chance to try your handicapping skills without risking your wallet and



Enjoy a day at the races without affecting your wallet as you play Horse Racing.

redefines the phrase off-track betting.

Horse Racing is designed to offer players an expandable game format through use of software modules.

With the original package, you receive the Handicapper's Tournament and the Track 1 disks. If, after you've played the game for a while, you want

to discover other aspects of horse racing, you can buy separate disks to add to the original system. So far, SportTime has released two supplementary disks: Track 2 and Stable Owners.

The Handicapper's Tournament is a competition between you and 19 other racetrack rounders. Up to four humans can play; the program generates its own bettors to make up the 20. All players start with the same amount of money, and you can set the skill level to Easy, Normal, or Hard. The game ends after one of three criteria that you define is met: A certain number of races are run, a certain number of race bets are made by each player, or one of the bettors reaches a predefined dollar amount.

Once you've established the ground rules, it's time to head for the track and the game's main menu. To begin play, select Entry Information; you'll move to a screen that resembles the program at many tracks. Here's where you can see the names of the horses and their jockeys, the number of times they've finished in the money, the total number of races each horse has run, the track conditions, the post positions, and the odds.

This information, while helpful, doesn't go too far in picking a winner. For that you need the the racing form. This game compiles its own cumulative collection of stats on each horse, which you can see by highlighting the horse's name and pressing the Enter key or by using your joystick. My only complaint about the game concerns its lack of mouse support; if there ever was a game that begged for a mouse, this is it. SportTime should offer a mouse-support upgrade in the future.

Reading the racing form takes practice, but you can pick it up pretty easily with Horse Racing's version. In this game you have a Past Performances screen that, if used wisely, can give you a very definite edge over the other bettors.

Back at the main menu, you move to the betting window. This was the most difficult part of the game for me because as a kid I lived near Keeneland, a small and very traditional racetrack in Kentucky where the most exotic bets allowed were the daily double and six-dollar combination. In Horse Racing, I could choose not just from the normal win, place, or show bets, but also from such strange breeds as the quinella, exacta double, triple box, and more. Fortunately, the manual explains these exotic wagers pretty well.

If you're stumped on a bet, and you have a least \$100, you can buy a tip from one of the computer handicappers. The cost of the tip relates directly to the handicapper's success at the window, but not always to the bet that the handicapper will place on that race.

Select Run Next Race from the main menu and you're transported to the grandstand. The track and the horses are rendered in CGA graphics, but don't set yourself up for disappointment. To their credit, the game's designers have made good use of the four-color palette. The result is a detailed and attractive view of the racecourse. (SportTime's Track 2 module sports EGA graphics.) The running horse figures give way to numbers when the horses are in a turn, but you shouldn't find that too distracting.

I couldn't believe how well Horse Racing captures the feel of a real day at the track. The entry information is a gold mine for stat nuts, the competition among handicappers is fierce, and the races are exciting and extremely realistic. What's more, by compiling a history of statistics for each horse and rider, the game becomes even more lifelike as you continue your parimutuel betting adventure.

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It's hard to explain the thrill of horse racing to those who have never participated, but this game provides a satisfying glimpse into what the thoroughbred world is all about. The program wins high praise for its meticulous detail, imaginative use of graphics, realistic play, and thoughtful modular structure. It's a sure bet for the winner's circle.

PETER SCISCO

Amiga—\$49.95 IBM PC and compatibles—\$49.95 Track 2 support disk-\$14.95 Stable Owners module (others still to be released)-\$19.95

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erious research is tough work, but computers have made things easier. Word processors, encyclopedias on CD-ROM. online databases—these and similar modern-day tools have improved productivity while easing the pain commonly associated with writing research papers. DatAid's Get-a-Ref version 4.1 allows researchers to create their own source lists, search them for relevant data, and move that data directly into word processing documents without tedious retyping.

The complete Get-a-Ref package consists of six individual program modules: Get-a-Ref (a pop-up utility), GarInst, CreForm, GarList, GarSort, and Convert. All of these work together to simplify the handling of abstracts, reprints, and other source materials that are commonly used by

researchers.

The Convert utility is a great tool with which to begin a thesis. It reads ASCII files taken from online databases such as MedLine, BIOIS, IRIS (a database for ophthalmologists), Chemical Abstracts, and Excerpta Medica and transforms them into Get-a-Ref's file format. It creates a separate record for each reference and places titles, authors, and other data into predefined fields. The result is a fully functional file filled with scientific abstracts. Those who use networks not already supported can accept DatAid's offer to write additional Convert routines upon request.

To continue with the process,

Get-a-Ref, a 106K RAM-resident reference manager, can be loaded. Among its other features, Get-a-Ref allows you to load files, delete unnecessary entries, and modify records as desired. Once you've converted the files you have downloaded, you can combine them with Get-a-Ref's Append command. The familiar menu bar and drop-down menus provide sufficient guidance for most situations. To complete a file, handwritten references have to be manually entered using the program's built-in editor

In automatic mode, Select finds all entries that match a given search string. Alternatively, records can be manually located and selected. Once all relevant entries have been marked. the Write command will create a file.

Now the actual writing begins. On a 640K computer, Get-a-Ref works in tandem with most popular word processors. Pressing the ALT-R key combination activates the Get-a-Ref TSR (Terminate-and-Stay-Resident) module. From here, quotations can be marked and copied to a word processor or automatically documented with a citation in long- or shortform footnotes. Just a few keystrokes will do it all.

Footnote formats can be established with CreForm, a utility that lets you design footnote-format files. Set up the format once and Get-a-Ref handles everything from then on. Those who use different formats for different professors or journals can



You can easily organize your research for maximum efficiency with Get-a-Ref.

design as many format files as necessary and choose from them.

When it's time to write a bibliography, GarSort sorts entries by source, author, or year. GarList creates an ASCII text file and saves it on disk. From there the list can be printed directly through DOS or appended to a word processing document.

The recently revised manual comes in a loose-leaf binder with extensive screen illustrations. It provides clear and adequate assistance to

ensure success with the program's functions.

Overall, Get-a-Ref performs its job well. Keep in mind, however, that this is a highly specialized application designed to fill a specific purpose. But for those with the need, Get-a-Ref will simplify the process of researching. writing footnotes, and organizing bibliographies.

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haunted house sets the perfect stage for adventure. Your heart races: your hair pulls away from your skin; you sweat. What a wonderful feeling.

Accolade's first attempt at role-playing games, Don't Go Alone, is a journey through a haunted house so large

that you'll think you're in a mall. Nasty creatures lurk around every corner, down every hall. Some, you can conquer in one battle. Others keep coming back for more.

Patience is the key. You can't finish this game in one sitting; the action isn't very fast-paced, and the interface is sluggish. The story line has great potential, but it unfolds too slowly.

The premise of the game is fertile ground for a good suspense tale. Your grandfather tried to prove that this large house is haunted. In the process, he disappeared into the depths of the old building. On the bottom floor, ten levels away, you'll meet up with the Demon of All Demons. Beat him in battle and your grandfather will go

As ghost stories go, this game isn't strong on plot. You move from room to room and, most of the time, at least one monster attacks you. Special weapons and magical chemical concoctions are your only defense. As the levels get deeper, so does the trouble. Besides monsters, you'll encounter other dangers, such as darkness squares and fear squares.

You see the adventure through four characters: a technician, a chemist, a psychic, and a fighter. They start out as beginners, but, as they gain experience, they advance in rank and become more powerful. If you could

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Satisfied SimCity players say it best...

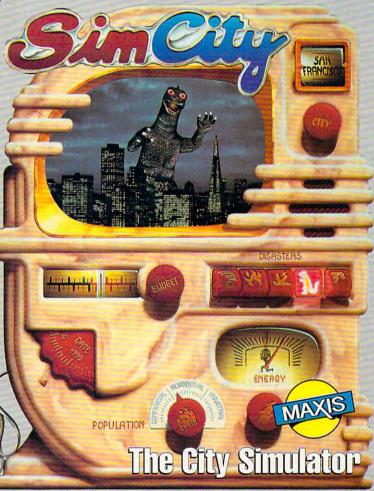
Great game! I'm hooked . I've got SimCity syndrome! . I find SimCity to be the most addicting, educational, and the best game I have ever played! . Amazing! . I may quit my job so I can play more... well, nah . You guys are Maximum Pinheads • SimCity is not just a game, it's a way of life . Simply the best computer game I've ever played! . SimCity should be outlawed!! It's addictive . Fantastic! I've been playing almost nonstop for 4 days! • Excellent game! But I've been losing a lot of sleep since I bought it . Wow!! . It's a blast! . TERRIFIC! FANTASTIC! • Awesome!! . Super!!! . The airplane pilots are psychotic · Amazing-all mayors need to understand this too; mine doesn't . It's like an electronic ant farm • Outstanding! . What a fantastic program! • My 4 vear old loves it too! . Excellent program! Learning

can be fun and addicting

Best game ever for the

Amiga • My wife and I really love this software • I stay up until 2 a.m. playing it everyday! • Thank you for a piece of intelligent, educational and thought-provoking software • Absolutely wonderful idea and program • Excellent product, I wish I'd thought of it!! • I've never seen a program like this • Make more Sim games, nothing even comes close • On a scale of 1-10 this one's a 20!!! • This is a totally different, stimulating, engrossing and visually enjoyable program. • Spiffy! • Great, Great and Great! •

(These comments are from the correspondence from real SimCity users. *Honest!*)



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play an active role in the party, this four-person group would be very interesting. Except for guiding the characters through the mazelike house, however, you aren't directly involved.

You can use a mouse or the keyboard to activate directional icons. This makes it easy to get around the



In Don't Go Alone, you'll have to deal with a wide variety of surprises.

house (it's better than typing text directions). But when it comes to battle, the game's interface isn't very good.

Battle is dull. You fight by hitting the left-arrow key, or you build a formula by hitting the right-arrow key. There's no skill involved; the game decides if you hit the monster, if you incurred any damage, if you were scared by the monster, and so on.

During fights, the interface is anything but responsive. Offensive actions take several keypresses. In the meantime, the monster is terrifying your other characters, driving them crazy with fear.

If you don't want your characters to go insane with fear, you must spend a lot of time waiting for their fear levels to decrease. To calm them down, you can either brew up some antifear potions or sit and wait until the yellow fear bar sinks to 0, which slows down the game even more.

All in all, Don't Go Alone lacks the element of surprise. Even when I ran into new puzzles and new frights, I didn't have that fearful thrill that leaps from a good ghost story.

But what it lacks in thrills, *Don't Go Alone* makes up for in intricacy and depth. You can explore for hours and hours. You make progress, so—once you realize that success isn't represented by dramatic victories—you don't get frustrated. The maze is quite involved, with one-way doors and camouflaged secret passages. As your characters build strength, you'll see them improve as monster killers.

People who enjoy role-playing games a lot will welcome Accolade to the flock of software companies that produce role-playing adventures. Newcomers to the role-playing arena will enjoy the game because the graphics presentation isn't as intimidating as the text adventures of the old days.

Don't Go Alone suffers from a slow-moving plot, but if you're content with just exploring the house, the adventure will come to you.

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LAKERS VERSUS CELTICS AND THE NBA PLAYOFFS

hink of the NBA Playoffs, and the Los Angeles Lakers and Boston Celtics usually come to mind. That's why Electronic Arts chose to highlight these two teams in its new computer basketball game, Lakers versus Celtics and the NBA Playoffs.

In addition to the 1988–89 Lakers and Celtics clubs, you can choose from 6 of the remaining 14 teams that participated in last spring's NBA Playoffs or from last year's two All-Star squads. Match up any of these teams in a head-to-head arcade clash and try to make your way through the NBA Playoff bracket and become World Champion.

This five-on-five game features outstanding graphics, and players on every team, including substitutes, are displayed in detail and dressed in official team colors with the appropriate uniform number. Unlike other basketball games, where all the players look alike, *Lakers vs. Celtics* features seven-footers that tower over shorter guards, and distinguishing characteristics such as Kareem Abdul-Jabbar's and James Worthy's goggles.

The animation also gets high marks. Kareem actually performs sky hooks, Isiah Thomas finger-rolls the ball into the hoop, while Michael Jordan does a three-sixty slam down the lane.

Although the game looks good, the sound is less spectacular. Even though the game supports three sound boards, there's no crowd noise, and the sound of the ball bouncing around the basket sounds unnatural. The only realistic sound effect is the horn end-

ing each period. That's not much support.

The game follows official rules, including a 24-second shot clock, 10-second backcourt violations, 5-second inbound violations, overtime, traveling calls, backcourt violations, offensive and defensive fouls, and out-of-bounds rulings.

Game-control options are simple. There are no plays to call. On offense, you can dribble in any direction, pass to a teammate, pump-fake a shot, and shoot. Defensively, you can steal, block a shot, and switch to the defender closest to the ball. A joystick is recommended because, when you're using the keyboard, you can't direct your passes to a particular teammate.

With single games, you can compete in either the arcade or the simulation mode. Tournament games are always in simulation mode, and players can get tired in this mode. You must wisely substitute for fatigued players or your team's performance will suffer. Substitutions can be made only during timeouts or between periods.

The team roster screen shows facts such as each player's name, number, and statistics from the 1988–89 season. These stats are used to determine how well each player performs in the game, but there are no current stats resulting from your gameplay. There's no way for you to



Watch the five-on-five battle in Lakers Versus Celtics and the NBA Playoffs.

know how many points Larry Bird scored or how many rebounds Jabbar pulled down unless you keep the stats yourself.

Some other minor quirks include the facts that the teams never change baskets and players don't foul out. But if you remember that this is an arcade game rather than a simulation, these facts won't affect your enjoyment.

One last word on realism, since these teams are modeled after real teams. The 1988–89 Lakers did have the best record last season, but they lost the title to Detroit. Last year's Boston club barely qualified for post-

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season play. If EA wants to play up the rivalry between the two teams, it should release some disks with great teams of the past. Watching Bill Russell and John Havlicek do battle with Wilt Chamberlain and Jerry West would really appeal to computer roundball fans and make a rousing, in-your-face dunk of a sequel.

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DAVID WOLF: SECRET AGENT

ame players get a peek into the future of computer games with David Wolf: Secret Agent. Billed as an interactive movie, this spy adventure has the look and feel of a James Bond film, from opening titles to closing credits. In fact, it lacks only the Bond music to complete

the mood.

The plot is developed by a series of still-frame digitized images rather than by computer-drawn cartoonstyle characters. Real actors, costumes, and sets were used to create the images, and cinematic techniques such as cuts and fades help bring them to life. The EGA graphics offer rich detail and texture.

The story opens on the cliffs of Dover as David Wolf, agent for Peregrine, an international crime-fighting organization, tests an armed hang glider. He's immediately pounced on by hang-gliding Viper bad guys, and the fight is on. Once the action starts, you're in control of the hang glider, and it's up to you to win the sky battle.

This is the first of six mini simulation games that pop up from time to time. All done in polygon-filled graphics, the games are easy to learn but a little jerky at 10 MHz. And although the graphics are good vector graphics, they look primitive between the digitized photos.

If Wolf survives the glider scene, he'll be assigned to recover a topsecret stealth aircraft, which a defecting pilot has delivered to Viper. In any spy adventure, there has to be a beautiful girl. Missing along with the plane is the brilliant and gorgeous Dr. Kelly O'Neal, chief engineer for the S-2 project.

Wolf's pursuit of the S-2 (and Dr. O'Neal) takes him through a couple of car chases near Monte Carlo, where, again, you're given control of the vehicle. This is followed by a well-done free fall-and-parachute sequence and finally by the big stealth-fighter dog-fight at the end.

Dynamix has gone out of its way to make things easy for the player. Its Smart Start system automatically sets the game to match your computer at the beginning so you don't have to answer a long list of questions about your graphics, sound cards, joysticks, and disk drives. And the VCR-style interface lets you fast-forward through parts of the game or skip parts you've already completed. It also lets you adjust the level of difficulty at any time during play.

The game has a lot going for it, but it has some problems that can't be ignored. First, its movielike quality works against it: Most of the time you just sit there watching pretty screens and dialogue go by. Except during the simulation scenes, there's no interaction with the game. Because of this passive stance, you never get that "reality shift"; you never feel like you are David Wolf.

Second, it doesn't last long enough. I played the entire game, including some of the simulation sequences several times, in a just over two hours. I applaud Activision for



Pilot your hang glider and shoot down the Vipers in David Wolf: Secret Agent.

not punishing the user by killing off the character every five minutes and requiring you to put in 50 hours of game time. But 2–3 hours is just too short, especially considering the \$49.95 price tag.

Dynamix certainly is on the right track, but this look at the future is just that—a hint of things to come. Game players are looking for more substance behind the flashy graphics. But if future Dynamix releases offer more con-

trol over the character and have a more entertaining plot, I'll be first in line to buy them.

RICHARD SHEFFIELD

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GRAVE YARDAGI

ctivision's Grave Yardage represents what would have happened if Boris Karloff had been named commissioner of the NFL. Instead of brawny linemen, fleet-footed receivers, and crafty quarterbacks in the National Football League, you'll command a lineup of

ghouls, ogres, zombies, gargoyles, and goblins in the Monster Football League.

The MFL plays on fields that are more hazardous than Astroturf. In addition to mud and weeds, land mines plague your players. If one of your grim grid warriors triggers an explosion, the demonic ref slaps your team with a penalty for littering the field with body parts.

The game resembles football, with a few gruesome twists. Touchdowns are called *smashdowns*, but crossing the goal line is not enough to win the game. You must "ace" your opponents on a regular basis by hacking, smashing, gouging, and eventually killing them. Hit the quarterback for a loss of snargs and you'll pick up more points.

Grave Yardage is an excellent arcade game, but features such as play calling and substitutions tend to slow down the pace. Other unnecessary parts of the game include the team construction, playbook design, and field design options. But, if you're bored with sports simulations that imitate the pros on television and you enjoy carnage more than a good clean hit, then Grave Yardage is the football game for you.

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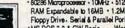


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ond movies beg for translation into computer games. James Bond's name conjures up visions of fantastic car chases, totally impossible escapes, great-looking women, and dry martinis. Brøderbund software has come out with a game that attempts to flesh out the vision. Based on, and named after, Bond's most recent film, Licence to Kill, the game takes six scenes from the movie and puts you in the position of our hero in this arcade-style offering.

Your mission is to catch Sanchez. The first scene has Bond and his CIA counterpart, Felix Leiter, chasing the evil Sanchez in a helicopter. With Sanchez racing off in a jeep, you must maneuver past varyingly tall obstacles, dodge gun emplacements and try to prevent Sanchez's escape. To help you do this, there are control panels describing the amount of damage your chopper has taken and your current altitude. The joystick controls your direction, altitude, and speed; and it fires your gun.

Next, Bond is chasing after our villain on foot. You're given a finite number of bullets (although you can get more), and you must dodge explosions and ambushes. Graphically and strategically the most interesting of all the scenes provided, this situation demands thought and inventiveness.

Scene 3 sends us back into the air as Bond tries to jump from his plane to Sanchez's. This setting becomes a mere exercise of coordination, as you must time your jump perfectly before time expires and Sanchez leaves U.S. territory.

Scene 4 features our intrepid hero swimming underwater and attempting to interrupt a drop by drug smugglers. You're given only a limited amount of oxygen, and staying under is the only way to avoid being shot. A tough one.

In scene 5, Bond shows off his water-skiing skills and you show off your reflex skills as you race though all kinds of obstacles, trying to catch you-know-who. If you have played any of the popular race games, this scene will hold few surprises.

The final scene requires completion of two separate actions. The first is to successfully drop from a plane to a truck. The second is to drive the truck, destroying tankers as you go, until you finally stop Sanchez in the lead tanker.

The hardware requirements nec-

essary to play Licence to Kill are EGA. CGA, or Hercules capability and 512K of memory. This allows practically anybody to play the game, but the question is would anyone want to?

There are several problems that make this game ultimately unsatisfying. One is the lack of documentation. There are literally more words in this review than there are in the manual. The game's instructions tell you only what the joystick does and what the situation is, and then it lets you go at it. It doesn't explain the symbols on the control-panel menu, how to win or lose, or what the symbols on the map mean. At the least, I would expect a demo game. I might have been able to figure the mechanics while watching the computer play. Starting with such limited knowledge decreases the game's pleasure and playability.

Another major fault is the matter of subject interest. Essentially, this game is six different arcade games in one package. But the differentiation between one scene and another is so slight as to suggest not six different games but one game six times.

On the plus side, the graphics are truly terrific, especially in EGA. Unfortunately, that's too little to earn a recommendation. I expect a lot more from a game that carries the name of James Bond. This is one package I wish I had a license to stop.

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ecommended for mature audiences. That warning on the Bar Games box should ensure plenty of sales for Accolade, but this collection of five classic bar games should sell on its own merit. It's fun, varied, and has a sense of humor.

Liar's Dice pits you one-on-one with a beautiful barmaid. Guess the best hand that combines your dice with hers, and then try to bluff her into thinking your hand is better than it is. I never understood this game in real life, and it's just as confusing here.

In Air Hockey my paddle seemed a little sluggish, but the first opponent was a pushover. Win two out of three games and advance to a tougher opponent. Graphics in this game are great, and so are the women opponents. Male opponents may be handsome, but I never noticed.

As the bartender in Last Call, you slide frosty mugs of beer down the bar to thirsty customers. Use a power gauge to determine how much force to put behind each slide.

Wet 'N Wild is a wet T-shirt contest. The wetter the shirt, the more it reveals. Contestants wander across a stage, and you try to douse them with buckets of water from a catwalk above. It gets tougher and zanier as the contest progresses. Did I mention there are male contestants, too?

Brush off your opening lines in Pick-Up Artist. You have to determine which line works best on three beautiful women, and one has her eve on you. Use the wrong line on the wrong girl and she'll melt you faster than a snowball melts in San Diego.

Plenty of varied action in this one. Play for five minutes or five hours, Bar Games is different each time.

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ug, that lovable, huggable monster, is back in First Byte's The Puzzle Storybook. This time, he's here to teach kids about shapes, encourage them to write stories, and tempt them to do puzzles. The Puzzle Story-

book is designed to appeal to children between ages 3 and 8. The graphics are bold, the colors are bright, and the menus use a combination of words and pictures to

make it easy for even nonreaders to understand how to get around the program.

Kids can choose from three activities: Picture, Puzzle, and Story. The Picture option lets children create a series of storybook pictures. They can

add a background, a person, a moving object, and a building to each scene. They can print the picture or use the Keep option to save the picture in the library on the program disk.

The Puzzle Game is actually two different games, Shapes and Tiles. The Shapes Puzzle asks you to identify six basic shapes: oval, circle, triangle, parallelogram, rectangle, and square. The Tiles Puzzle divides the picture into large blocks which are shuffled onscreen. The goal is to unscramble the image one piece at a time, trying not to make any mistakes.

My favorite part of Puzzle Story-book is the Story activity. Start by creating a new picture or choosing one from the library. The right side of the screen then changes into a talking word processor. Depending on the settings selected in the Helper Control Panel, the computer reads back your youngster's work either letter by letter, word by word, or sentence by sentence. By selecting the Radio icon, you can hear the whole story read repeatedly, either for enjoyment or to make corrections with the phonic clues provided.

When you finish a story, you can add it to the library, print it out for bedtime enjoyment, or have the computer read it out loud just for the fun of hearing it talk.

The speech quality in the *Puzzle Storybook* is excellent. In addition to the speech generator, there is a phonic dictionary of frequently used words and an editor to make manual corrections to special words, such as the names of friends and pets. Attentive youngsters will quickly learn how to correct their work independently, just by listening for words that don't sound quite right.



Kids can create a series of storybook pictures with The Puzzle Storybook.

The program does have some frustrating features. Even with all the images supplied with the program, the pictures you create quickly begin to look very similar. To add to the irritation, pieces can only be put in preset locations, which severely limits story-

creation possibilities. Printing routines are similarly limited; pictures and stories can be printed in only one size, and it's impossible to predict how the page layout will come out.

While all the youngsters I let work with the program loved creating pictures and writing stories, the Puzzle section was less well received. Neither the Tiles game nor the Shapes game keeps records, and Zug's reaction is independent of the effort required in both games. Additional challenge in this section would have definitely improved the program.

Overall, *The Puzzle Storybook* succeeds with children because it appeals to their sense of fun, and it works well because the choices make sense to them.

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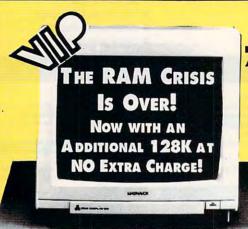
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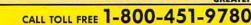


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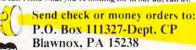
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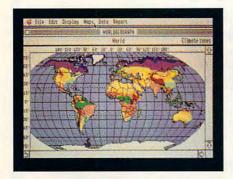
















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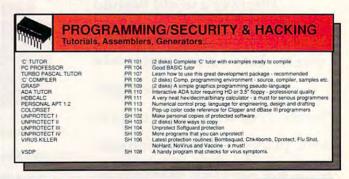
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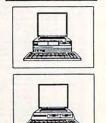
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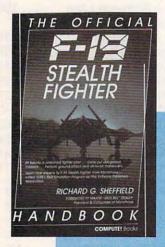
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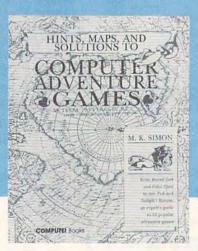
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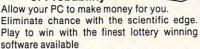
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CONVERSATIONS

THE VIEW FROM EUROPE

KEITH FERRELL

ome of your favorite games may be European.

If not now, then tomorrow. Entertainment software is an increasingly global business. That's nowhere more evident than in Europe, where dynamic continental and United Kingdom markets are spawning games for both domestic consumption and export.

Simon Treasure, general secretary of the European Leisure Software Publishers Association, sees the growth of European software as inevitable.

"I don't think manufacturers are any longer concerned about domestic penetration of any one country," Treasure says. "They regard Europe as a whole. Obviously, with the arrival of a more integrated European market in 1992, this becomes even more essential."

There are economic factors as well. "The cost of developing a major product today is so large that it cannot possibly be recouped in a single country. The game has to sell across Europe at the least, and, if possible, be licensed into America, just as American companies such as MicroProse, Electronic Arts, and Activision have large European operations."

Powering the expansion is the current generation of 16-bit computers, led by the Amiga, the Atari ST, and upper-end PCs. This is new, especially in the United Kingdom, which early on embraced 8-bit, cassette-driven computers such as the Commodore 64 and gave little sign of being willing to give up the machines.

The European 8-bit market was a frenetic environment. With games priced at just a few pounds—less than \$5, U.S.—new games had to sell tens of thousands of copies to turn a profit. Shelf life for a game could be as brief as a couple of weeks, after which new products were tossed into the fray.

The shift to 16-bit products has come rapidly, but the leading European companies have prepared for it. "Companies like Psygnosis, Mirrorsoft, and others made decisions to invest heavily in the 16-bit market. And it's starting to pay off handsomely." Among the other advantages of 16-bit products is the higher price point the games bear—£15 or so, or \$25 and up, in line with American prices—and a longer shelf life.

Which machines are leading the 16-bit revolution? "The Atari ST obviously has much greater potential in Europe than in the States. The Amiga has been equally successful. On the software side, Amiga and ST software are of great importance to all U.K. and European publishers." The past year, Treasure points out, has seen a surge in the popularity of 16-bit MS-DOS machines, led by Amstrad.

As in North America, the transition to 16-bit machines has brought with it a new, more sophisticated type of game. "Arcades were by far the most popular 8-bit games," Treasure says. "Sixteen-bit is a lot more pure, as far as game design goes. Simulations, flight simulations, and roleplaying games are all finding great success."

The new machines are bringing in a new audience as well. "Historical-

THE COST OF DEVELOPING A MAJOR PRODUCT TODAY CANNOT BE RECOUPED IN A SINGLE COUNTRY

ly, the 8-bit gaming audience was composed of boys from 10 to about 16. They played computer games until they outgrew them and moved on to other interests. We're finding a more mature audience for 16-bit games."

One thing from which European developers have been largely spared is the Nintendo boom, which has wreaked more than a little havoc on American software publishers. "Essentially, volume sales, in the United Kingdom at least, have been based on 8-bit software that costs from \$3 to \$15. At that price point, Nintendo can't compete. It's led them to hold back from this market."

Having anticipated the 16-bit market, what lies ahead for European software publishers? Treasure sees both opportunity and risk. As computer entertainment becomes more widespread, he feels, the industry will attract the attention of mainstream entertainment producers. This trend will be hastened by the arrival of new technologies such as CD-ROM, which will permit both the development of even more complex entertainments and the extension of the entertainment-software audience to a broader consumer base.

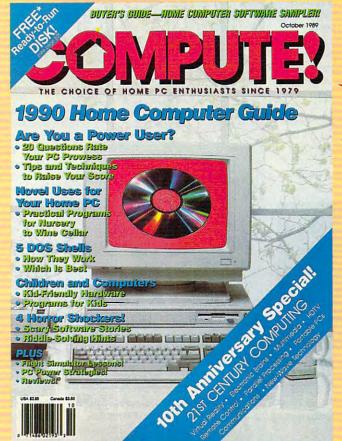
"Already we're seeing major developers and publishers investing in research into new technologies," Treasure says. "As companies like Sony and Philips arrive at standards for the new technologies, you'll see a real explosion of growth among the software developers who have come up from the 8-bit world. It's the beginning of the future, really."

That future will, perhaps inevitably, include the major entertainment producers. "I think you'll see companies like Time-Warner, Columbia, and others investing in our industry, acquiring software houses the way they've acquired movie studios, record companies, and book publishers."

Will that signal the end of the independent software industry? Not at all. "There will always be room for people who are faster and fleeter of foot," Simon Treasure observes.

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NEW PRODUCTS

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Word for Windows

Microsoft Word for Windows is a fullfeatured graphical word processor designed for the Windows graphical environment. In addition to all of the standard features of character-based word processors, this program provides compound document creation, customization, and translation from other word processors.

The retail price of Word for Windows is \$495. For the first 90 days that the program is available, Microsoft will offer a special upgrade price of \$150 for current users of any version of Word for the PC.



Word for Windows features a WYSIWYG graphical user interface.

Microsoft Word for Windows requires an 80286 or an 80386 microprocessor; an EGA, a VGA, or a Hercules graphics card; a hard drive; 640K of RAM; Microsoft Windows 2.11 or higher; and MS-DOS or PC-DOS 3.0 or higher. A mouse is recommended but not required. Word for Windows will ship with a runtime version of Microsoft Windows 2.11. Microsoft, 16011 NE 36th Way, Box 97017, Redmond, WA 98073-9717

Circle Reader Service Number 200.

Save Our School

The Learning Company has released Super Solvers Midnight Rescue!, an action-adventure for the IBM PC and compatibles that's designed to build deductive reasoning and reading comprehension skills in children ages 8 to 11.

Children must read, think, and



Super Solvers Midnight Rescue! combines arcade action and education.

react in time to save Shady Glen School before it disappears. Morty Maxwell, alias the Master of Mischief, plots to paint the school with disappearing paint. He has created five robots to assist him and has disguised himself as one of them to avoid detection. As members of the Super Solvers Club, children must search the school for clues and uncover Marty's true identity, but they only have until midnight.

Super Solvers Midnight Rescue! supports EGA, Tandy 16-color, CGA, and Hercules graphics cards and requires 512K of memory for IBM PCs and 640K for Tandy PCs. The suggested retail price is \$49.95.

The Learning Company, 6493 Kaiser Dr., Fremont, CA 94555

Circle Reader Service Number 201.

Relive History

Joan of Arc: Siege & the Sword from Brøderbund combines elements of strategy and action with historical fact. The game includes Joan of Arc's battles against the English and Burgundians in her campaign to have

Charles VII crowned King of France.

You can't change history though, as Joan is eventually captured by the British and burned at the stake in 1432. However, the game continues until 1456, as Charles VII carries on his fight to drive out the English and unite France.

As Charles, you can choose from 20 options on any given turn including raising armies, collecting taxes, negotiating for towns, ransoming prisoners, dispatching spies, and dispensing royal justice.

You'll visit 73 authentic locales and encounter 31 characters who have different weaknesses and strengths. The game features five action sequences including large-scale battles in open countryside, hand-to-hand struggles with individual English soldiers, and assaults on fortress walls with boulders and scalding oil raining down.

Joan of Arc has a retail price of \$44.95 and is available for the IBM PC and compatibles, Amiga, and Atari ST. The PC version supports Hercules monochrome, CGA, EGA, and Tandy 16-color graphics. Brøderbund Software, 17 Paul Dr., San Rafael, CA 94903-2101

Circle Reader Service Number 202.

In Control

SubLOGIC, known for its flight simulators, has gone one step farther to bring realistic flight to computer pilots. Flight Controls I, patterned after a real aircraft control yoke, provides the tactile feedback essential for proper aircraft control.

The yoke allows you to fly stable and smooth with one hand. Features include a full T-handle throttle and accurate gear and flap switches. Optional rudder pedals are also available.

Flight Controls I can also be used in conjunction with Flight Simulator: Trainer on IBM PCs and compatibles as a serious training simulator for dedicated computer pilots. FAA approval is pending.

The suggested retail price of

Flight Controls I is \$179.95. The optional rudder pedals sell for \$59.95. The Flight Controls I system is compatible with all SubLOGIC flightsimulation programs, including *Microsoft Flight Simulator* version 3.0 and any other analog joystick–compatible aircraft flight simulator.

SubLOGIC, 501 Kenyon Rd., Champaign, IL 61820

Circle Reader Service Number 203.

New Teammates

Data East USA and Sony Magnetic Products have teamed up to bring the computer game ABC's Monday Night Football to Sony disk buyers.

For a limited time, a demo disk of Data East's football simulation is being included in Sony 10-pack disk boxes. Boot up the demo and you'll get a feel for the computer gridiron action while viewing several action-packed plays. As a bonus, you'll also receive the Sony SportsBook, which offers a dozen additional plays specifically for use with the complete ABC's Monday Night Football game.

ABC's Monday Night Football is available for the IBM PC and compatibles and the Commodore 64. Data East USA, 1850 Little Orchard St., San Jose, CA 95125

Circle Reader Service Number 204.

Low-Price 24-Pin

Panasonic Communications & Systems has introduced the KX-P1624, a wide-carriage, 24-pin, dot-matrix printer priced at less than \$700.



The Panasonic KX-P1624 offers 24-pin printing at a low price.

The KX-P1624 prints draft output at 192 characters per second (cps) while letter-quality output is 63 cps. You can choose any one or a combination of the resident five letter-quality fonts or two draft fonts. Graphics output up to 360×360 dots per inch is also possible.

Twenty of the printer's most commonly used functions can be selected directly from the operator panel, including fonts, pitch, form length, lines per inch, micro linefeed, margins, and quiet mode. Three macros are also available for frequently used setups. A fourth macro resets the printer to original factory settings.

The printer offers IBM Proprinter XL-24E and Epson LQ-2500 emulations and contains a 12K buffer, expandable to 44K using an optional 32K RAM card.

The Panasonic KX-P1624 has a retail price of \$699.95.

Panasonic Communications & Systems, Two Panasonic Way, Secaucus, NJ 07094

Circle Reader Service Number 205.

New Hyundai 386

Hyundai has introduced the Super-386S, its latest in a line of 80386SX computers that provide 386 power in a system priced a little more than an AT compatible.

The 8-/16-megahertz-switchable computer has 1MB of RAM expandable to 8MB. It features 64K of ROM, six expansion slots (two 8-bit, four 16-bit), one serial port, and one parallel port. An IDE hard disk drive interface, a floppy drive controller, and a clock/calendar are built in.

The basic system includes a 51/4-inch, 1.2MB floppy drive.

The retail price of the Super-386S is \$1,895.

Hyundai Electronics America, 166 Baypointe Pkwy., San Jose, CA 95134 Circle Reader Service Number 206.

Designer Bookkeeping

Accounting by Design's Bookkeeping by Design for small businesses features lively onscreen graphics and a streamlined program structure. The program takes advantage of Microsoft Windows' graphical interface to create a layered look for many of its bookkeeping screens. Data-entry processes and command sequences have been simplified.

The program provides small businesses with accounts payable, accounts receivable, invoicing, and payroll systems, as well as a general ledger with a report writer. You can use the program to review sales records, write checks, and make payroll entries without leaving the software environment.

The interface lets you have reports up to 130 characters wide, full-width columns of figures, and movable help windows. You can also print sideways and access numerous fonts. Like many other *Windows* applications, *Bookkeeping by Design* will run in the background.

Bookkeeping by Design requires 640K, a hard disk, a graphics card,

and a mouse. It comes bundled with a runtime version of *Microsoft Windows* and retails for \$695.

Accounting by Design, 2140 Shattuck Ave., Suite 501, Berkeley, CA 94704

Circle Reader Service Number 207.

Toshiba 386 Portable

Toshiba America has released the T3100SX, its first battery-powered portable 386SX computer. Equipped with an Intel 80386SX microprocessor, the unit runs at 16 megahertz and is powered by two internal removable and rechargeable batteries that last up to three hours. It also runs on AC power.



The T3100SX is Toshiba's first batteryoperated 386SX portable.

Weighing in at 14.9 pounds, the T3100SX offers VGA screen resolution using an advanced, high-contrast, low-power gas-plasma display. The unit also supports simultaneous internal and external monitors.

The system comes equipped with 1MB of RAM and is expandable to 7MB using 2MB memory modules or to 13MB using 4MB memory modules. It also features a 40MB hard disk drive with a 25-millisecond access time and a 1.44MB, 3½-inch disk drive.

It's equipped with five Toshiba slots including a dedicated modem slot.

The T3100SX retails for \$5,999.

Toshiba America Information Systems,
Computer Systems Division, 9740 Irvine
Blvd., Irvine, CA 92718

Circle Reader Service Number 208.

Computer Toys

Fisher-Price has joined forces with software publisher GameTek to produce six educational computer games for children ages 3–8. Each game is based on a popular Fisher-Price toy.

My Grand Piano, a music pro-



GameTek has teamed up with Fisher-Price to produce educational software.

gram, teaches basic piano theory and musical notes while entertaining children with 30 songs such as "Mary Had a Little Lamb" and "London Bridge." In Bowling Alley, children learn basic math, coordination, and spatial relationships in a bowling game featuring curve balls, computer scoring, and sound effects. The roleplaying game, School Bus Driver, teaches navigation and memory skills as children pick up Fisher-Price Little People at bus stops and drive them to school. Children can develop numberrecognition and visual-recall skills with I Can Remember. In Firehouse Rescue, children assume the role of firefighter, driving a fire truck and rescuing Little People and their cat while learning coordination and decision-

making skills. Children can develop skills in picture and shape recognition with Perfect Fit. This match-and-fit game features sound effects and puzzles involving Fisher-Price toys and has three levels of difficulty.

Fisher-Price computer games by GameTek are available for the IBM PC and compatibles, Commodore 64/128, and Apple II. A color monitor is recommended. Each game retails for \$14.95.

GameTek, 2999 NE 191st St., Suite 800, N. Miami Beach, FL 33180

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Foreign Affairs

Two language-teaching software programs from International Software can perform direct translations from English into either German or Spanish. With Learn German and Learn Spanish, you can type in a simple sentence on your IBM PC or compatible and the program will act as interpreter and display or print the translation.

The programs employ artificialintelligence parsing to ensure that grammar, gender, conjugation, and composition of words within the translated sentences are correct. After examining the translation, you can save each sentence in an ASCII file.

The accumulated text can then be edited with any word processor.

Both Learn German and Learn Spanish contain a large resident vocabulary and a dictionary; separate displays for numbers, verb conjugation, and noun declension; and word exercises that test your knowledge of the language. Each program retails for

International Software, 1954 Nob Hill, Box 747, Running Springs, CA 92382

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GOOKIN

one are the days of the hobbyist, the hacker, the guru, the nerd. Before us lie the nineties, a new decade of issues, buzzwords, and computer happenings. What sounds odd today will be old stuff in a few years. When the twenty-first century dawns, we'll look back on the nineties with wonder and tell tales of that decade's glamour biz. We'll remember:

Exciting philosophical issues, like how Commodore/Atari zealots gained legal status as a religious cult and, therefore, were protected by law from DOS/Mac/NeXT deprogramming methods known as real world training.

Or when eyeglass monitors came equipped with an LED so that the boss could tell whether subordinates

were working or sleeping.

And how the trend toward portability died when Ashton-Tate put a Handy Tote handle on its 47-pound dBase VIII package and Egghead installed customer forklifts.

Not to mention how the personal computer craze nearly crashed when a philosophical tome written by the most advanced computer neural network system of 1999 was published under the title The Ultimate Peripheral: Your Head.

And don't forget the groundbreaking legal issues, like the major defect in hard drive auto-spring-loadedeject systems (standard in most 1998 PCs) that brought a rash of suits from users suffering severe chest bruises.

Or the Columbian government's suit against the manufacturer of the

coffeeproof keyboard.

And the suit brought by Denny's against Apple Computer for borrowing its menu-with-pictures metaphor.

Or the Apple suit against the state of Washington for unrestricted use of its own state fruit.

And, last but not least, the Supreme Court's landmark decision that IBM owns the English alphabet but Lotus retains the rights to all the spelling in perpetuity.

We'll look back on the common complaints from the year 1996: "I just can't live with this 256-characterfilename limit!"

"This Portable Mac IIxver must have been designed by a weightlifter! At two pounds, it's killing my kneecaps!"

"Eighty bucks for a gigabyte of RAM! These people must think I'm

crazy to ask that!"

"This word processing software is a joke! Not only does it lack its own UNIX-like programming language, it doesn't even have a hard disk unformatting feature."

GIVE US THE BIZ

"It just goes to show you: I spent six years learning the C language and they come out with D."

"This program requires six megs just to load! I remember when you could write a decent program in only 1.5 megs of RAM."

"I need a new graphics board. This SPORVGA card only has a 5 × 5 meg pixel grid and a paltry 4 trillion colors. It doesn't even do holography."

"This software would be easier to use if it didn't rely so much on the Alt-Shift-F91 key combination."

"We need to find a better way to interface humans and computers. This stupid bioconnector keeps slipping out of my ear."

"It just goes to show you: I spent four years learning the D language and

they come out with E.'

"The batteries in this laptop are useless! How can I get any work done on the moon shuttle with only 29 hours of power?"

"It just goes to show you: I spent six months learning the E language and they come out with F."

We'll hear the echoes of the buzzwords and phrases from around the house in the year 1998. "Look, dear! I found your laptop here behind the sofa cushion.'

"Honey, did you see the keys to my i986?"

"Mom! The toaster won't boot." "I didn't buy a \$9,000 HDTV for you to hook up your Tandy Color Computer 8 to it.'

"Billy's been using the laser printer all morning-tell him to get off."

"Honey, I can't find the Honda's boot disk."

Hardly a day will pass when we don't look back on all the other happenings that made the nineties so exciting. Like in 1991, when PC computers stopped snorting and beeping and began to warble and yawn instead.

And the computer-store headache pill, perfected in 1992, became available in three strengths: beta, 1.0, and mail order.

And how bright, snappilydressed, attractive women finally constituted, in 1997, a majority in the personal computer world.

Or when the last WordStar holdout converted to WordPerfect in 1998 but continued to lament the loss of his beloved cursor-key diamond.

And who can forget when the "real world" was discovered in 1999, but wanted nothing to do with us?



SOFTWARE BESTSELLERS FROM AROUND THE COUNTRY

HOME PRODUCTIVITY

1. Quicken

Manage your finances. Intuit IBM, Macintosh

2. The Print Shop

Make banners and more. Brøderbund Apple II, Apple IIss, Commodore 64/128, IBM, Macintosh

3. PC USA

Explore the United States. PC Globe

4. BannerMania

Print banners, pennants, and more.
Brøderbund
IBM

5. Managing Your Money

Allocate your income.
MECA
Apple II, IBM, Macintosh

6. Calendar Creator Plus

Create many different calendars. Power Up IBM, Macintosh

7. WillMaker

Get help in writing a will.
Nolo Press
Apple II, IBM, Macintosh

8. Print Shop Graphics Library

Add variety to your *Print Shop* creations.
Brøderbund
Apple II, Apple IIss, Commodore 64/128, IBM

9. PC Globe 3.0

Explore world demographics. PC Globe IBM

10. Adobe Type Manager

Better fonts for your Mac. Adobe Macintosh

HOME ENTERTAINMENT

1. Flight Simulator

Head for the wild blue yonder. Microsoft IBM, Macintosh

2. SimCity

Run the world's first simulated city. Maxis Amiga, Commodore 64/128, IBM, Macintosh

3. Their Finest Hour: The Battle of Britain

Turn the tide in the WWII air war. Lucasfilm Games

4. M1 Tank Platoon

Thrilling tank action.
MicroProse

5. John Madden Football

Take to the field with the pros. Electronic Arts Apple II, Commodore 64/128, IBM

6. Tetris

Deceptively addicting falling-block game. Spectrum HoloByte Amiga, Apple Ilss, Commodore 64/128,

7. Mean Streets

Become a digitized detective. Access Commodore 64/128, IBM

8. Hero's Quest

Your chance to become a hero. Sierra

9. The Duel: Test Drive II

Fast-paced car racing. Accolade Amiga, Apple Iles, Commodore 64/128, IBM, Macintosh

10. Battlechess

Animated action on the chessboard. Mediagenic Amiga, Apple Ilss, Commodore 64/128, IBM

HOME LEARNING

1. Where in Time Is Carmen Sandiego?

Can you find Carmen in time?
Brøderbund
IBM

2. Math Blaster Plus!

Teaches basic math concepts. Davidson & Associates Apple II, Apple IIss, IBM

3. Where in the World Is Carmen Sandiego?

Chase Carmen around the world. Brøderbund Amiga, Apple II, Commodore 64/128, IBM, Macintosh

4. Where in the USA Is Carmen Sandiego?

The chase moves to the USA. Brøderbund Amiga, Apple II, Commodore 64/128, IBM, Macintosh

5. The Children's Writing & Publishing Center

A desktop publisher for kids. The Learning Company Apple II, Apple IIcs, IBM

6. Reader Rabbit

Helps children learn to read. The Learning Company Apple II, Commodore 64/128, IBM, Macintosh

7. Mavis Beacon Teaches Typing

Learn to touch-type. Electronic Arts Apple II, Apple IIcs, Commodore 64/128, IBM, Macintosh

8. Learning DOS

Learn the ins and outs of DOS.
Microsoft

9. Think Quick

Children learn problem solving. The Learning Company Apple II, Apple IIss, IBM

10. Math Rabbit

Build early math skills. The Learning Company Apple II, Commodore 64/128, IBM, Macintosh

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