



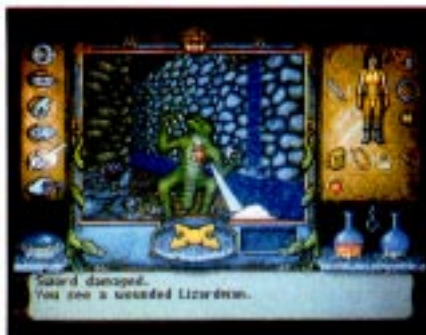
Ultima Underworld (Origin)

starting troops, limited magic, slow advancement rate), a paladin (high starting gold, has magic abilities), or a sorceress (weakest in leadership but strongest in magic), a barbarian (the best leader, but weak magic skills). As you try to recruit troops wherever you go, you must decide what factors to spend money on—without a boat rental, for example, it's highly doubtful you'll get very far, but that costs 500 gold pieces a week.

Using a point-and-click interface, five panels on the right side of the screen show you which villain you are currently under contract to capture, whether you have the equipment necessary to manage a castle siege (where villains are captured), whether you have spell-casting ability, and the puzzle map. The latter is a small representation of 25 map pieces you need to win the game. Lastly, you can see how much gold you are carrying. You also can view your army at any time to learn its strength, efficiency in battle, morale, and weekly maintenance cost. Always be on the lookout for treasure chests—some contain money that you may keep or distribute to the peasants to increase your leadership; others contain magic scrolls or reasons for the king to increase your weekly wage.

You can find allies, cast spells, and fight battles. There is a lot of solid gaming in this offering that would have garnered it a higher rating had it not suffered from occasional crashing. This occurred when entering Command-P while viewing the map and the army icon. Up comes the miniature map puzzle. Click Cancel or Exit and the screen indicates that a resource error has occurred and the player is dumped out of the program.

With a variety of interesting creatures



Ultima Underworld (Origin)

and magics to use, *King's Bounty* holds promise for excitement and adventure. However, with commands that do not subscribe to Macintosh human-interface guidelines, we hesitate to recommend its purchase. The game's options are B&W, 16-, or 256-color mode; 1MB RAM for B&W, under System 7.0, 2MB of RAM.

Super Space Invaders

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Domark/Acolade, PC/MS-DOS

It was *the* game that launched the video arcade, one of the classic shoot-'em-up games of all time. It has now received a facelift and is ready for your home computer. It is *Super Space Invaders*.

What's so special about shooting aliens that attack you in a scroll down the screen in neat rows? Well, this version has a few new tricks up its sleeve. First, the aliens got smart and don't travel down the screen in neat little rows anymore. They might rotate around the screen or move in other patterns. The invaders might not blow up from your fire but might expand, taking several more hits to destroy. The alien craft that flies across the top of the screen not only gives you points, but it might award you with a special weapon to help you eliminate these nasties. Forget about hiding behind a bunker—that's been eliminated and is replaced with shields that can protect your ship from certain doom, but just for a few seconds. There is even a bonus stage where you have to save cows from being taken captive by dairy-hungry space creatures.

Updated with VGA graphics and sound board support, *Super Space Invaders* is a greatly enhanced version of the original arcade game. Unfortunately, it's still outdated because there are so many faster and better shoot-'em-up games on the market. The idea of shooting aliens that attack in a specific pattern gets boring after a while. Although those special weapons add a little original spark to the game, they aren't enough to bring it out of the mediocre category. For those who still want to remember the good old days with an added taste of the new, *Super Space Invaders* is for you. We reviewed this game using VGA graphics and SoundBlaster options.

Ultima Underworld: The Stygian

Abyss

Origin, PC/MS-DOS

Ultima Underworld: The Stygian Abyss (Abyss) is another entry into the world of computer entertainments. As is becoming quite evident, most FRPGs can now be classified as single-character adventures or as quests involving a party of characters. *Abyss* is one of the former, and it breaks new ground in graphics, animation, scrolling, and sound presentation. To put it mildly, *Abyss* will leave you quite dissatisfied with other adventure games. We gave this game six stars on our normal five-star system.

To say this is the best dungeon game

we've ever played is quite an understatement. Imagine a world of virtual reality, where you become one with the computer-generated world around you. No, *Abyss* doesn't embrace all your senses, but there are times you'll swear you're in the dungeon trying to find the villain who kidnapped Aerial, the daughter of Baron Almric. You've been accused of the crime—after all, you were in her room when the guards broke through the door—and have been tossed into the Great Stygian Abyss to locate the true abductor. You'll find yourself in an enormous adventure that will determine the fate of Britannia.

Abyss offers fantastic auto-mapping that allows you to make your own note entries on the map itself. The magic system revolves around the use of runestones that, when their letter combinations are combined in the correct sequence, enable you to cast many helpful spells. The combat system is real-time—you arm yourself by clicking on the Fight icon and draw back to strike your opponent. You can tilt your view down, up, or remain at eye level. The former is perfect for striking those nasty attackers who are smaller than yourself, while an upward view can alert you to the presence of flying beasts intent upon your destruction. By keeping an eye on the level of the vitality and mana flasks on-screen, you can see when you need to rest and regain those attributes. Should your vitality reach zero, you're dead. (By the way, find the Silver Sapling on the first level, plant its seed, and you'll find you'll recover a lost life!) Mana measures the amount of magical energy you possess.

You can save or recall a saved game any time you wish during your adventure. There are four saved-game slots. You can converse with most of the characters in the game. It is highly advisable that you do so, instead of automatically assuming they're evil. "Talk first, strike later" is a good strategy. There are also all manner of things to be found by looking around, like weapons and armor, runestones, potions, food, and secret doors. You must also learn the mantras that allow you to increase specific abilities at the Shrines located throughout the Abyss. Should you find yourself slowing down a bit, try using a room as an area to collect found booty. It makes no sense to bog yourself down with items you won't need.

All interaction with the game is point-and-click (if you have a mouse) or uses the keyboard. The icons are well designed, and you should have no problem running the adventure. With duration, targeted, and area spells at your command, you can find yourself rebalancing the scales of fairness throughout your adventure.

The release version has a bug that causes your inventory to disappear if you store more than seven items within a container (such as a bag, backpack, and the like). There is a patch available on such information services as CompuServe that fixes this bug for you. Just download

the patch, place it in the same subdirectory as the game, and run it. From that point on, you'll find your game behaves correctly.

What is truly amazing is the smooth, constant scrolling afforded you as you move throughout the three-dimensional dungeon. You'll run, walk, and turn, all in real time. The walls glide by as you run. You'll fall, learn how to jump, and look for oddities in the normal construction of walls. You'll feel as though you are inside the Great Stygian Abyss. This adventure will leave you wondering how other game entertainments can ever stack up against the new standards *Abyss* sets for single-character adventure games. This is an adventure that PC/MS-DOS gamers have to purchase right away for their systems, as long as they have the hardware and memory needed to run the program. This game requires a 386 or 486 system with at least 2MB of RAM plus an expanded memory manager, a hard drive, and a VGA graphics card. Music and sound effects require a combination of Roland, AdLib, Sound Blaster, or other compatible sound board.

Clue corner

Eye of the Beholder (SSI, all computers)

Here are the solutions for seven of the special quests:

Level 1: Place a dagger on the shelf after removing the Armor and Bless scrolls. Remove the dagger and notice that it has changed shape. Your new dagger destroys any monsters on the first level with a single hit.

Level 2: There are four dagger inscriptions on the walls in this level. Press a dagger into each and receive food and a potion of extra healing.

Level 3: First, place the four blue gems into the left eye of the face inscriptions in the alcoves. After the four gems are placed, the eye color changes and secret passages are revealed. Removing the left gem from all the faces completes the quest. Your party receives potions of giant strength and extra healing.

Level 4: Enter the level via the north ladder on level 3. After dealing with Taghor the wounded dwarf, "push" the "retreating" wall until the dwarven key is found. Exit the area to the north, then immediately travel east until you see a chain set in the wall. Pulling the chain completes this quest, and your party receives extra XP.

Level 5: In the dwarven hall, find the pantry. Place at least six food packages on the pantry shelf to complete the quest. Use the smaller food packages, because this special quest converts them into larger food packages.

Level 6: Place the kenku eggs in the "nest." There are 10 eggs. Throwing one of the eggs against the back wall reveals a secret room. In the room is a +5 halberd!

Level 7: Go to the room where there are many portal entrances. There are three

shelves along the southern wall. To solve the bonus: First, remove all items from the shelves. Second, place the stone medallion on the eastern shelf. Third, place the stone dagger on the center shelf. Finally, put the stone holy symbol on the western shelf. (Note: The items that need to be placed on the shelves activate the portals on the north wall.) Three scrolls appear, one on each shelf, and they provide additional game clues.

Level 9: On the wall of the gem-to-jewelled-key exchange room is the inscription: "It is written, the key lies on the other side." Throw a dagger or key at the wall to reveal a secret room. In the room are three orbs of power.

A general clue: Watch your characters' experience points closely. Save the game just before your characters are ready to advance. If they gain only a few hit points for advancing, load the game from the last save game, and try again.

Captain Alan T. Statham
Fort Benning GA

Eye of the Beholder II (SSI, all computers)

1. In order to open the door in the room with the nine pressure plates, form an X.

2. To please the six greedy mouths, be sure you have: rotten food, a cursed weapon, a mantis statue, a potion, a red gem, and five rocks.

3. The crystal green door can be shat-

tered by a crystal green hammer. Search the lower room on the map with all the illusory walls.

4. Save all the polished shields.

5. Unless they are original members of your party, don't divide the scrolls amongst the party.

6. Don't kill yourself at Khelben's request.

7. To advance a level of any member of your party, dispel the left face twice. Enter the room that will be revealed.

8. Use the sticky paper to keep the flying rings stationary.

9. The two coins you find must be made into one. Search the room where you find the shrunken giant.

10. Dispel the two magic triangles.

11. Before facing Dran, cast all preparatory spells, then give everyone weapons, even your mages. Magic is useless against him.

12. The key to defeating Dran is dodging, then striking.

Tim Bryant
Fremont CA

Frederik Pohl's Gateway (Legend, PC/MS-DOS)

1. In order to go on a mission, you must get a blue badge. To get this badge, make certain you attend a ship-handling class at 1500 hours (3:00 P.M.). It is held in Room T20 on Level Tanya. You must wait until 1500 hours. Then, read Hector's lecture



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