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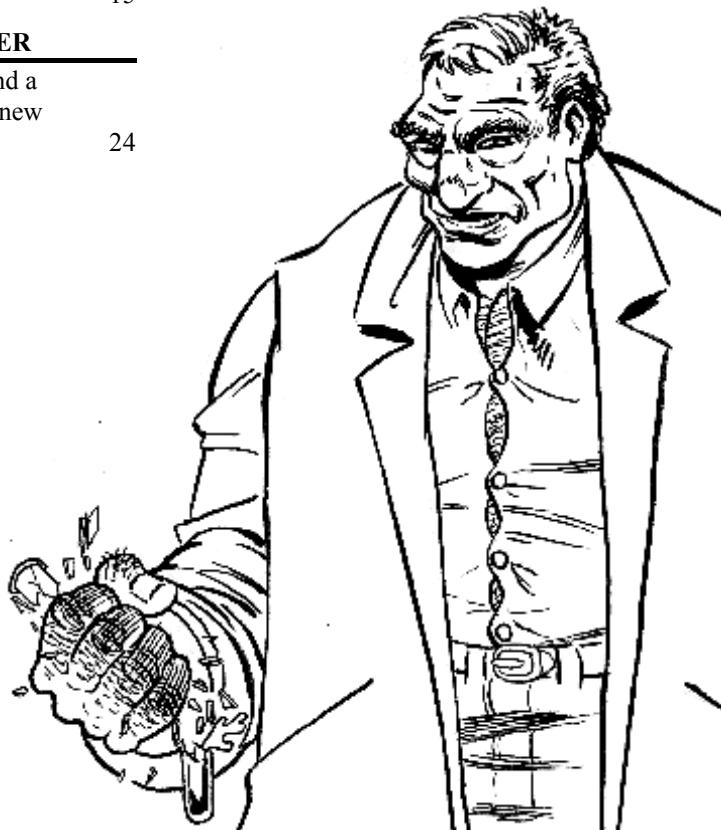
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Issue #9 (April 2003)

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## CONVENTIONS

Hero Games will be at these conventions. Stop by and visit the booth, and play in some games!

### KublaCon

May 23-26  
San Francisco, CA  
[kublacon.com](http://kublacon.com)

### PortCon

June 13-15  
Portland, ME  
[portconmaine.com](http://portconmaine.com)

### Origins

June 26-29  
Columbus, OH  
[originsgames.com](http://originsgames.com)

### GenCon Indy

July 24-27  
Indianapolis, IN  
[gencon.com](http://gencon.com)

### ConQuest

August 29-Sept 1  
Palo Alto, CA  
[con-quest.com](http://con-quest.com)

### GenCon SoCal

December 11-14  
Anaheim, CA  
[gencon.com](http://gencon.com)



## WHEN WE TWO PARTED

When we two parted  
In silence and tears,  
Half broken-hearted  
To sever for years,  
Pale grew thy cheek  
and cold,  
Colder thy kiss;  
Truly that hour  
foretold  
Sorrow to this.

The dew of the  
morning  
Sunk chill on my  
brow –  
It felt like the warning  
Of what I feel now.  
Thy vows are all  
broken,  
And light is thy fame:  
I hear thy name  
spoken,  
And share in its  
shame.

They name thee  
before me,  
A knell to mine ear;  
A shudder comes o'er  
me –  
Why wert thou so  
dear?  
They know not I  
knew thee,  
Who knew thee too  
well:  
Long, long shall I rue  
thee,  
Too deeply to tell.

In secret we met –  
In silence I grieve,  
That thy heart could  
forget,  
Thy spirit deceive.  
If I should meet thee  
After long years,  
How should I greet  
thee?  
With silence and  
tears.

# You Gotta Have Character

by Jason Walters

“Life is lived forwards, but understood backwards.” — Kierkegaard

## LOVE LETTERS

My dearest Teresa,

I have read this book in your garden; my love, you were absent, or else I could not have read it. It is a favorite book of yours, and the writer was a friend of mine. You will not understand these English words, and others will not understand them – which is the reason I have not scrawled them in Italian. But you will recognize the handwriting of him who passionately loves you, and you will divine that, over a book which was yours, he could only think of love. In that word, beautiful in all languages, but most so in yours Amor Mio is comprised my existence here and hereafter. I feel I exist here, and I fear that I shall exist hereafter – as to what purpose you will decide; my destiny rests with you, and you are a woman, seventeen years of age, and two out of a convent. I wish that you had stayed there, with all my heart... or, at least, that I had never met you in your married state.

But all this is too late. I love you, and you love me – at least, you say so, and act as if you did so, which last is a great consolation in all events. But I more than love you, and cannot cease to love you. Think of me, sometimes, when the Alps and the ocean divide us...

Byron was the Romantic Movement's most flamboyant figure, a revolutionary spirit who fell into writing because he didn't have the temperament for politics... and who gave critics plenty to discuss outside of his poetry. His own epic story included a broken marriage, an alleged affair with his half-sister, a flight to the Mediterranean and the Near East, bisexual promiscuity, an involvement in the Greek revolution, and a gruesome and untimely death. He created his own cult of personality, the concept of the "Byronic hero" as a sort of outlaw-cavalier; a defiant, misunderstood, melancholy young man who broods constantly on some mysterious, unforgivable sin in his past. Byron's influence on European poetry, music, novel, opera, and painting has been immense, although the poet was widely condemned on moral grounds by his contemporaries.



**SPECIAL THANKS**

In addition to Ray Greer, Ronald M. Green, and Kerry Connell, whose help and influence have been noted in the main article, I would like to thank the original Hero Auxiliary Corps, Keith Hannigan, Marc Blumberg, and Mike Maloney for inspiring the structure and moral dilemma aspects of the event; Sue Grau and the other GMs of Infinite Imaginations, Inc., who have carried on the HAC tradition of great HERO System events and continue to inspire me to this day; past and present incarnations of Hero Games, who have provided prizes for these events; the many GMs and fellow players from the original campaigns which gave birth to many SuperSquad America team members; and finally, all of the players from SuperSquad America events, who have shown me new sides to old characters and who, through their roleplaying and decision making, have influenced the direction of past and future events. All of you have helped make running the SuperSquad America events an entertaining and satisfying experience.



# Playing the Con Game

by Rod Currie

## Life as a Convention GM

### Humble Beginnings

Many years ago, at Origins '85 in Baltimore to be precise, I stumbled onto the *Champions* tournament run by the Hero Auxiliary Corps (now Infinite Imaginations, Inc.). My views on convention gaming changed forever. The HAC *Champions* tournament was an annual event using the same team of characters every year, with each year's adventure building on what came before. In short, it was an ongoing campaign with one game session per year.

But the ongoing campaign aspect of the HAC tournament was not the only thing to capture my interest, it was also my introduction to "moral dilemma" *Champions*. That is, each tournament built to the team needing to make a big decision at the end of the second round (which featured the best players from several runs of the first round), usually with various team members falling on different sides of the issue. This often led to entertaining roleplaying. And because I had always been far more interested in roleplaying than in just beating up villains, these events had tremendous appeal to me.

After several years of playing in a variety of HAC events, Ray Greer, one of the original Hero Games partners, began to ask me when I was going to run something. I usually brushed him off with some comment like, "Nah, I have too much fun playing," but in the back of my mind, ideas began to brew.

In 1991, I became involved with a local gaming convention, and decided it was finally time to give this convention GM thing a whirl. Unfortunately, low attendance prevented my game from really coming off, so I put the idea on the back burner.

Finally, at Origins '96, I decided to try again at a major convention where I knew the pool of potential gamers would be greater and the event was successful. That was the first of five different SuperSquad America events I ran at GenCon and/or Origins over the next several years.

Based on the comments of players who have participated in my events, I think I have done a pretty good job, so I thought that some of you out there who are thinking of running a convention game might like to hear about how I put together the team, the world, and their adventures.

### Creating The SuperSquad America Team

Once I decided to run a *Champions* convention game in the Hero Auxiliary Corps style, the first thing I needed was a superhero team to feature. I started with the name: SuperSquad America. I had used the name for an NPC hero team in a couple of my campaigns and had grown fond of it. Plus, it felt right. It clearly indicated that this was a superhero team, likely one of some prominence, since they had taken on a national name, as opposed to calling themselves something like SuperSquad Altoona. It also indicated the five-color (four-color with a touch of gray) feel I was aiming for with the event.

At this point, I also chose to base SuperSquad America in New York City, a city seemingly made for superheroic adventuring. And, again borrowing an idea from one of my campaigns, I would give the team a headquarters in a former Broadway theatre.

Now that I had a name and base of operations for my team, I needed to fill out its roster. To do so, I followed the example of my good friend, Ronald M. Green, who had created a convention superhero team from characters he had played in various campaigns.

Like most *Champions* players, I had played a variety of characters over the years, so I had a good selection from which to choose. However, when it came to putting them together as a team, I looked at four aspects of each character: their powers, their personality, their role in the team, and their potential for looking at issues differently from their teammates. Each character's powers should be somewhat unique on the team, his personality and role on the team should provide good roleplaying hooks, and finally, his differing outlook should serve to intensify any argument surrounding the solution to an adventure's moral dilemma. To accomplish this, I would need to make some changes to each potential member of the team.