Infocom's Non-Interactive Non-Fiction

So, why not rewind and see Zabor's story?
Infocomics (1988)

- SG1 - Gamma Force in Pit of a Thousand Screams (Amy Briggs)
- SL1 - Lane Mastodon vs. The Blubbermen (Steve Meretzky)
- SZ1 - ZorkQuest: Assault on Egreth Castle (Elizabeth Langosy)
- SZ2 - ZorkQuest II: The Crystal of Doom (Elizabeth Langosy)
Lane Mastodon

vs. The Blubbermen

Gamma Force

in Pit of a Thousand Screams
The crew consists of three extraordinary beings.

So, why not rewind and see Labor's story?

Elena turned her rowers to the locked doors.

The little town of Rocardi-by-the-Sea was deep in peaceful slumber...

Radnor was defeated. At last Frohbit had the chance to prove himself worthy of Althea's admiration.

Egreth Castle, once the proud home of King Puncanthrax...

The pleasant countryside made Burthark forget his cares. If only every day could be like this.
Quester’s Log

• “What was really cool about these was that the player was able to make their way through the (fairly basic) tale from the unique perspective of each character before reaching the story’s climax, which allowed us to see the characters motivations, fears, triumphs and so forth in a way we would not have been able to otherwise.”
Tom Snyder Productions

- Agent USA and Bannercatch (published by Scholastic)
- Halley Project (published by Mindscape)
- Run For the Money (published by Scarborough Systems)
- In Search of the Most Amazing Thing, Snooper Troops I and II (Spinnaker)
WHEN I WAS YOUR AGE
GAMES WERE CALLED BOOKS
CHOOSE YOUR OWN ADVENTURE 13

THE MALIFESTRO QUEST

$1.95
Zork
THE MALIFESTRO QUEST
A WHAT-DO-I-DO-NOW BOOK #2
$1.95
WHEN I WAS YOUR AGE

SLIDES WERE RE-USED
Fooblitzky

Welcome to the city of Fooblitzky

A computer graphics strategy game
New Release: A Mind Forever Voyaging

A Mind Forever Voyaging, the first advanced-level Science Fiction story from Infocom, is far true text adventure hurl. Why? Because it has more locations to visit (several hundreds), more things to do, more responses, and a large vocabulary (1000s words) than any of our previous released products.

The story takes place in 21st-century Rockwell, South Dakota. The United States of North America has fallen prey to incredibly high unemployment and crime rates. Political indifference, perhaps caused by backward educational systems, or diminishing national resources, has swept the nation. Exploiting this opportunity, Senator Richard Ryden has develop (sic) the Plan for a Renewed National Purpose, stressing partition and a return to American values as it were at the country's peak, the 1950s. The public, desperate for a change, embraces the Plan, but many high government officials are unsure whether it will succeed. That is when you come into the picture.

You are PRISM (Pendleman-Ranski Introductory Solicitation Machine), the first intelligent, self-aware computer. You have been created to enter a simulation of Rockwell, years in the future, and return with recordings of what life would be like if the Plan were to be introduced. While you're busy exploring the future, the scientists and programmers who created you are helping and perfecting the simulation's parameters. Thus, as the story progresses, you can travel further and further in time, watching Rockwell prosper as the Plan succeeds, or perish as it falls. Only you can tell on what course the country sets itself by adopting the Plan.

While there are several puzzles to keep players on their toes, designer Steve Mercurio (author of Planetfall and Source) and co-author of The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy) concentrated more on immersing the player in a vast, highly detailed, realistic world of the destiny of mankind. A Mind Forever Voyaging represents Infocom's greatest step yet away from games, and toward true fiction; a serious, often chilling, look at the future of the human race, reminiscent of such great works of science fiction as 1984 or Brave New World.

What makes an epic game like this possible? Interactive fiction, the latest development system from Infocom, designed to complement our currently used "clue" system.

Run For Your Lives! It's FOOBLOTZKY

A Unique Graphics Strategy Game

Infozoom! Graphics?

No, hell hasn't frozen over. Pinz haven't sprouted wings. But Infocom is announcing its first non-interactive fiction game — and it does have graphics.

"It's a hoot," you're thinking. "Infocom would never use graphics to illustrate locations in its adventure stories. Infocom hates graphics." Well, yes, and no.

Infocom has yet to see computer graphics that add to the quality of a text adventure. There may be ways in which graphics could be used more subtly to enhance your mental imagery. But with today's inexpensive resolution, and even with proposed advancements in technology, graphics could be used to compete with the scenes and characters you can imagine. Therefore, Infocom still firmly believes that words paint the most vivid images in your mind.

Of course, there is a place for graphics today: in a completely different setting and in a completely different kind of game. Infact, Fooblotzky is a game, and has more graphics in it than any other computer game on the market.

But the really important thing about any game is how much fun it is. How enjoyable it is to play, not whether it does or doesn't have graphics. And Fooblotzky is a winner. Already, there are add-ons at Infocom.

Logic, deduction, chance, and social interaction are all big parts of Fooblotzky — just like deductive reasoning is a part of Chez and Micromanage. Fooblotzky reminds some people of a cross between those games, even though its theme is completely different. Fooblotzky is a multiplayer game — 2, 3, or 4 people can play. The name "Fooblotzky" was chosen because it's easy to remember and incredibly difficult to pronounce.

Okay, so the name is goofy. The game is goofy. But it's sophisticated goofiness.

The scores of Fooblotzky go back more than 2 years. Marc Blank and Michael Belfry wanted to develop something unique, something totally different from text adventures — or any other kind of computer game. They hatched a screen-crackerjack idea, Brian Cody, and a programming

Continued on Page 3

Wishbringer Event

This time it was not a museum, but a museum, there were no murders, no clues, not a puzzle to be solved. Not unless you found it a puzzling experience to have a good time. The event was the Wishbringer announcement, and a good time was had by all.

This party was held in the Field Museum of Natural History in Chicago. And it was no coincidence that Summer CES was in Chicago as well. The press, distributors, and many of our own Infocomites (including Wishbringer implementor "Professor" Brian Moriarty) attended an evening of music, dancing, and the 3 pl. presentation, prices, and

Continued on Page 3
$ Fooblitzykky $

- Summer 1985: Released, NZT readers only for 6 months
- Winter 1986: $39.95
- Summer 1987: $14.95 “Classic Titles” list
- June 1987: $9.95
# Foobitzky

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LET'S ADD GRAPHICS
LET'S ADD GRAPHICS

EAT MY SHORTS
little luck. The clouds, dark and heavy, began to rain down upon us. "Look!" said Bergon, pointing at the chain lightning off to the north. Seconds later, the earth shook with the roar of thunder. "It is not far now," he added, as his eyes drifted to the blackening sky.

Runoff from the nearby hills was forming into numerous streams, each coursing into the main channel in which we searched in vain for gold. Crash! A tree nearby cracked in two by a stroke of lightning. Rain was falling now in buckets, and Bergon screamed for us to take cover. As I turned upstream, a great torrent of water was heading right at me!
Let's Split Up Gang!
Seek within the great Oaken feet.
Break the ground down below.
Feel the theurgic earthen beat.
Tis the knowledge they must know.

To gain purchase of the earthen lore,
The Druids of Dark,
Study hard of the root,
The majical store.

Titus?
SOUTH
EAST
EAST
EAST
EAST
EAST
EAST

JASON
BDC

RETURN TO GAME
CHANGE GAME SETTINGS
INSPECT CHARACTER
INSPECT MECH
HEAL CHARACTERS
LOAD A GAME
SAVE A GAME
SHOW OVERHEAD MAP

CREDITS
20
A citizen and friends are watching you. Do you attack?
Yes No
lonely." "May Allah never let you feel lonely." Over three cups of coffee, the two of you inquire after the health of each other's family and friends, calling on Allah to bless and protect them all. Finally, Papa concludes the amenities. «MORE»
BUT WAIT ... THERE'S MORE!

Now for a LIMITED TIME ONLY when you RUSH your Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy order to Megadodo Publications, you'll also get as our SPECIAL GIFT to you ENOUGH THROW-IN ITEMS TO FILL AN ATTIC! So act now and receive all these fabulous bonuses!

FLUFF: Goes anywhere—under the bed, behind the commode, at the bottom of your pocket, inside your nave!

DESTRUCT ORDERS FOR YOUR HOME AND PLANET: Suitable for framing, and great gag gifts at any party!

DON'T PANIC! BUTTON: Perfect for those times when your planet is being bombarded by laser beams, your toaster starts talking to you and traces of radioactivity are discovered in your breakfast cereal!

JOO JANTA 200 SUPER-CHROMATIC PERIL-SENSITIVE SUNGLASSES: You'll look cool and stay cool even when attending a Vogon poetry reading!

NO TEA: Just like the tea professional hitchhikers don't carry!

MICROSCOPIC SPACE FLEET: Just the thing for attacking microscopic civilizations.

HOW MUCH WOULD YOU PAY NOW?
ONE HUNDRED ALTAIRIAN DOLLARS?
TWO HUNDRED? THREE HUNDRED?!!
Cornerstone

• “A sophisticated database manager for non-programmers”

On November 1st, at a press conference in New York City, Infocom announced Cornerstone™, the first in a new line of interactive business software.

Cornerstone is a full-featured relational database management system. Data management programs have traditionally fallen into two distinct camps: simple-to-use programs with very limited capabilities, and full-featured programs that require the user to have programming skills (or to hire a consultant who does). Cornerstone was designed to put all the power of this second group into the hands of non-programmers.

With Cornerstone you can design, build, and use sophisticated data management applications without writing a single line of code. These applications could be almost anything — a personnel system, a client-tracking system, or a roster of games.

Cornerstone also simplifies data entry. Whenever you’ve entered sufficient characters for Cornerstone to know what you want, it will complete the rest. Cornerstone will also check that your input meets specified constraints (such as minimum or maximum values). And at any point, you can press the OPTIONS key to see a list of all allowable data values. (A lexicographer in a cage?)

Why Business Products?  
See page 6

The other mainstay of Cornerstone is flexibility. You’re never locked into one way of doing things. If you need to look at your information in a new way, you can create a new report in seconds (with no limit to the number of reports). If you need to add a third phone number for
In developing Cornerstone, we've tried at every step to anticipate what a sane (or insane) person might attempt to do next. There's a critical difference, however, between Cornerstone and the games. While the games strive to make life difficult — constantly thwarting your best efforts, posing enigmas, even leaving you dead in some remote wasteland — in Cornerstone, we've done everything we can think of to make things easy. You'll never need InvisiClues to use Cornerstone, because we've given it a HELP key that's always within reach.
No Games This Time Around

CORNERSTONE, FROM GAME MANUFACTURER INFOCOM, IS A SURPRISINGLY POWERFUL PROGRAM THAT STILL NEEDS WORK

BY CYNTHIA W. HARRIMAN

Review Board

If you play any computer games or know someone who does, you have no doubt heard of Infocom, a company that has made its mark producing adventure-style games for various personal computers. Now, Infocom has decided to shed its party hat for a blue suit with its first business product, a database called Cornerstone, which has some intriguing features. But it also has

You can easily define or later change the structure of your database, a difficulty with some other programs. A few shortcuts make entering data easier, too. You can enter “yesterday” or “last month” in a date field, for instance, and Cornerstone will compute the entry. If you’ve specified an entry to be limited to certain values — for example, a client’s name must be in the client file — then Cornerstone will fill in the name as soon as you’ve typed enough letters to identify it uniquely.
TO: Infocom Brothers & Sisters

FROM: The Proud Parents

SUBJECT: Birth Announcement

CERTIFICATE OF BIRTH

CHILD'S NAME: Cornerstone

PARENTS' NAMES: Infocom, Inc.

DATE OF BIRTH: Thursday, January 31, 1985

PLACE OF BIRTH: 55 Wheeler Street, Cambridge, MA

ATTENDING PHYSICIAN: Business Products

A gala birthday party has been planned for Cornerstone on Thursday, January 31, 1985. Festivities start at 5:00, with refreshments to be served starting at 6:00. Second floor here at Infocom. Don't miss this celebration of Infocom's newest family member. A good time is guaranteed for all.
CAUSE FOR CELEBRATION

SOFTWARE HOTLIST

#1 in Entertainment: Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy

#3 in Entertainment: Wishbringer

#27 in Business: Cornerstone BEATING OUT dBASE II
    (which fell to the #28 spot)

5:00 - Celebration

"Friday party" a day early

TODAY!

THURSDAY

11/1/84 Cornerstone announced at NYC press conference.

Jan 85: Cornerstone released. $495.

Sep 85: "A Mind Forever Voyaging". First layoffs due to "Cornerstone"s commercial failure (despite hiring a separate sales and marketing team).

Feb 86: "Ballyhoo". Price cut for "Cornerstone" (to $99.95).

Jun 13 86: Merger. Activision Inc. buys Infocom for stock swap worth $7.5-9.0 million.
The Digital Antiquarian

• “Infocom could quite likely have survived if they’d avoided Cornerstone and made smart business decisions, and the world of gaming would doubtless have been a better place for their tradition of literacy, thoughtfulness, and innovation.”