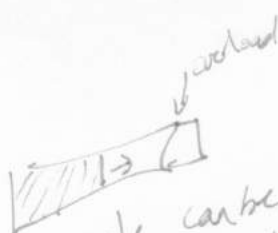


THE DIG

Project Kickoff 12/6/90

Energy
W/S → 
cells can be used twice?
by others

lock key puzzle 9 for bits → 200 info

Space. An earthlike planet dominates the screen. Earthlike - but not Earth. The clouds have a violet tint from the reflected sunlight, deepening to a dusky purple at the planet's terminator. Suddenly, from behind the P.O.V., a spaceship zips by with a "swoosh", scaling down towards the planet.

Cut to planetscape. A few plants are in the foreground, giving way to a vast desert plain, with mountains in the distance. The sky is an odd shade of violet. In the foreground, a six-limbed alien being is eating -- leaves? -- from a -- bush? A rumbly "whoosh" sounds overhead, distracting the creature. It turns its head, tracking the spaceship as it comes in over the plain. The screen scrolls with the ship, which is obviously slowing (and not just because of the scrolling!). The animal in the foreground scrolls off, and the ruins of a long-abandoned alien city scroll on. The ship settles down to land nearby, in a cloud of dust.

Roll opening credits:

THE DIG

A Science Fiction Roleplaying Adventure
From Lucasfilm Games

Last update 12/4/90

Our story starts in the control room of a battered passenger and cargo-hauling Starship. She's a small ship, only 20 standard cargo tons capacity, and she's seen better days. You were recruited for this mysterious mission by a tall, handsome man who looked like he came straight off of a recruiting poster for the Interstellar Corps. But given your own background, his promise of high pay -- in cash -- and his reluctance to answer any questions, it seems rather likely he comes from a rather less reputable organization. "Call me Major Tom", he says, with a wry smile. And so you do.

Everyone donned their suits, and followed the Major into the airlock. Soon they were out on the surface, on an open, rolling plain, covered in rocks and brush. The plants were low to the ground and bushy, with thin streamerlike leaves. A few taller treelike poles stuck up nearby, with more streamers rippling in the breeze from their highest points.

Major Tom glanced around. "Wait here for a moment, I'm going to get a better view." He strode to a nearby hillock, and up its gentle slope.

Or began to. A huge winged shadow appeared on the ground, racing toward the hill. A four winged creature, a cross between a prehistoric pteranodon and a bat, swooped down with claws outstretched. Before anyone could react, Major Tom was grabbed, and carried away as the creature rapidly disappeared in the distance.

Panic ensued. A stocky woman looked vainly for a weapon, grabbed a handy rock, and backed slowly towards the ship. The wizened little man who had remained quiet for much of the journey stayed with her, looking left and right, his catlike gait betraying no sign of his age. The others ran and scrambled for the airlock. There was no sign of any other creatures. Presently they were all inside, the airlock sealed.

The remaining six people went through decontamination and took their suits off. They looked around at each other.

"Let's get out of here!" said the stocky woman, who had donned an Australian bush hat.

There was general agreement, and in minutes they had all strapped down. Slick, the youngest of the group, but an accomplished pilot, sat in the command chair and began to go through the startup procedure.

"Let's see, safety locks on, main view active... main view... Zat! Who's got the computer interlock module? The controls are frozen without it.

Everyone looked around at each other, with puzzled expressions that gradually turned to startled recognition, then horror. "Major Tom..." someone whispered.

"Holy Zat! What do we do now?" wailed Slick.

The old man who had been the only one to remain calm broke into a tight little smile. "I think perhaps we should elect a new leader. Are there any volunteers?"

.....

At this point the player is able to make some choices. Each of the characters can be directed to speak their piece, introducing themselves and saying why they think they should lead the group. The player will then "vote", selecting the person they'd like to become and control for the duration of the game. A cut scene will be played out, rationalizing the choice, and showing the reactions of the others. From then on, the player will control this nominal leader, although the leader's authority will be based more on his or her actions than on the election results. At first, the player will be able to switch control to any of the other team members to get them to go out and explore. But the characters will gradually assert themselves, and the team of six will naturally split into two loose coalitions. One group, usually composed of Quo, Slick, and Fredricks, will be motivated primarily by the prospect of personal gain. They'll want to cut and run with the loot, keeping the existence of Ozymandias a secret. The other group, usually including Ng, Kanda, and Ryan, will come to the realization that the existence of an intelligent alien race is too important an issue to be monopolized by a few people. They'll be trying to get the information back to civilization, and spread the word. The split will eventually separate the crew into two groups, with the characters in the player's group the only ones still subject to his control. You'll be able to trade with the other group, but they'll stay separate until almost the end of the game.

The first goal is clearly to find Major Tom -- or as it turns out, his remains. The ship's controls and computer system are frozen without the interlock that Major Tom carries, and survival, much less escape, will be chancy until he is found. The personal speedercraft in the hold of the ship are also inaccessible without the interlock, so the initial exploration will be on foot. The desert environment that the player starts in will have the ruins of an alien city as well as several outlying buildings of interest, and it is in some of these ruins that Major Tom's body is found. This initial section of the game will be fairly easy, taking perhaps 5-10 hours to complete, and serve to introduce the player to the interface and the basic structure of the puzzles and survival. In the process of finding the interlock device, the team will be introduced to a variety of tantalizing clues about the alien ruins, raising some questions about the disappearance of the race that built them. Once Tom's body (and the interlock) has been found, the ship will come alive, but the computer will deny them takeoff clearance because they lack the authorization code. The only place to find the code is in Major Tom's stateroom, in a boobytrapped case. We'll arrange things so that the player can find the code, but as the case is opened, it triggers an explosion in the engine room of the ship.

As the team assesses their situation, complications will become apparent. The ship will be disabled from the explosion, incapable of leaving

the planet. The food supply will be contaminated. The power plant will eventually give out. The other team members will start to dissent, and soon will be going off on their own. And a general tension, a touch of paranoia, will settle over the mission. The team will be caught up in the effort to survive, while exploring the planet, searching for ways to repair the ship, and trying to unravel the mystery of the apparently absent intelligent race of builders.

The heart of the game, comprising the majority of the 20 to 30 hours of projected game play, will focus on these efforts. The team will travel to four major cities on the planet, using individual skycycles. The cities are each in different environments -- one half-buried in desert sands, one overgrown with jungle life, one sheathed in ice, high in the mountains, and one on the coast, its buildings half submerged in a humid, swampy area. The player will contend with shortages of food and energy, finding the former from the plant and animal life, and the latter from the alien ruins, and the downed rovers. In the various areas around the city the player will encounter intelligent but primitive aliens, apparently aboriginal descendants of the race that built the cities. These aliens will have myths and legends about their ancestors, and will worship some of their artifacts, but they won't understand most of the technology. They'll have tantalizing clues that point the player towards the caverns beneath the alien cities.

The ruins and rovers will also hold the key to fixing the ship, although the final critical item to restore the ship's powerplant to full power, permitting takeoff, will only be supplied by the hibernating intelligent aliens encountered at the game's end. The important items to be found in the ruins will not be lying about, ready for the picking. They'll have to be dug up, using the special detection and digging tools on board the ship. Impatient use of the tools will destroy the delicate items being unearthed. The skills and abilities of the six characters will come into play in all these areas, with many of the gadgets, weapons, and devices being most useful in skilled hands.

There are several puzzling things about the planet that will gradually become clear to the player. Who was "Major Tom" working for? The answer may be found in his surviving documents and other clues related to the malfunctioning probes that found Ozymandias. As mentioned before, the process of looking through his private documents will set off an explosion that wrecks the food processors and damages the ship's powerplant, starting the quest to repair the ship. Also puzzling are the primitive intelligent aliens, clearly related to the city builders, but apparently culturally degenerate. All the cities found have been abandoned for a period of hundreds, perhaps thousands of years. And the cities show some signs of chaos, as well as sections that were methodically shut down and closed up. Beneath the desert city, the player finds a vast cavern filled with a massive biological storage facility. The millions of vials there are broken, shattered, their contents long

since decayed. A city half-overgrown by jungle in particular shows signs of war, and looks as if it was besieged shortly before the inhabitants disappeared - or died.

What's going on? The player will pick up clues, helped by the other crew members, solve puzzles along the way (in the traditional SCUMM sense), and eventually arrive at this answer:

The intelligent aliens that built the cities were a race at war. The Tseвори were much more contemplative and less competitive than humans, comparatively a race of philosophers. They never developed space travel technology, and in general excelled more at architecture, biology, and communication than at physics, astronomy, or high-tech engineering. But like human beings, they had their differences, their saints, their dictators. And this was the cause of the war. Some years before the end, a Tseвори genius named Badger developed a new philosophy. This system of logical deductions and proofs had an electric effect on all who took the time to learn its precepts. They set forth a new way of looking at the world, and at all its inhabitants. Everyone who was exposed to the philosophy came inevitably to the conclusion that war and conflict were inferior ways to resolve differences. The philosophy set forth a technique of dealing with disagreements, so that any two individuals or groups could find ways to compromise and work together. It was a powerful idea, and spread quickly throughout all the diverse cultures of the Tseвори -- except one. On an island continent called Hook, geographically and culturally isolated from much of the rest of the planet, a totalitarian dictatorship had emerged. The ruling cabal of this country held rigid control over all lines of communication, and for long before the rise of the Badger philosophy they had been arming and building their military might. The philosophy did little to disrupt the independent but open and democratic governments that it originated in, but the rulers of Hook correctly concluded that it would disrupt their own system and cause their downfall. They made it a crime punishable by death to read or speak of the Badger teachings, prompted by the loss of their defense minister when he got into a discussion with a foreign envoy. But the free peoples had no desire for conquest, and it's difficult to defend against ideas. In a matter of months the Hook dictatorship crumbled, from the edges to the center, as its citizens passed on the wonderful new ideas to each other. Pushed to the limit, the dictators threatened to release a biological weapon, a deadly plague that would kill all Tseвори on the planet, and make it uninhabitable to them for 50 years. Frantic preparations began in the capitals of the three leading free nations to put as many of their citizens into a kind of biological suspended animation as possible. They would be reduced to their essential genetic components, with a special organic matrix to hold their personality and memories. There was only one catch -- regrowth and recovery was a complex process that could not be automated. A few Tseвори would have to be put into a different kind of hibernation, within an experimental stasis field, to awake long after the

plague had dissipated and regrow the others. The Hook people made similar preparations, choosing to save their few remaining loyal military. When the end was inevitable, rather than relinquish control, they released the deadly plague. Tseвори all over the planet succumbed instantly. But unexpectedly, a few proved to be immune. Just a handful, enough to slowly rebuild their numbers, but not enough to carry on civilization. Within a few generations, all that remained were legends and myths, and a few useful technological items, lovingly passed on through the years. Many generations later, even the myths had evolved into new forms. And then the humans came.

The team will gradually uncover this story. The ruins will have accounts of the final days before the end of the war, in the form of written texts and video recordings. The free cities will have a variety of versions of the war, while the Hook city will have only one consistent party line. After the interlock device is located and the team can travel to different cities, they'll start to find villages of the primitive Tseвори, and be able to learn much about the language and culture of their ancestors through interaction and observation. Most interesting about these primitive cultures is their unifying religion. They all worship their ancestors, and oddly enough, each of the major groups found near each of the cities has a most holy relic, an artifact from ancient times that, they have been told, represents the eventual return of the good old days. These special relics are foretold to be the means by which their ancestors will return. And the aliens are right! It turns out that these relics are in fact the timers that had been set to release the hibernating Tseвори. The early generations of surviving Tseвори gradually found their way through the automatic defenses left around the hibernaculums, and took the release timers out of innocence, not malice. But it becomes the toughest puzzle of the game to obtain the one remaining functional timer. This is held by the Shaman of the Mountain tribe, and you must defeat him in a magical challenge to get to it. But this is not possible yet. But there is one stasis field with an external power source. Eventually the player will find it, and disconnect after installing the timer, either intending to free the aliens or to use the power to restore the ship to flight status. For whatever reason, disconnecting the power does release the aliens. The group that lies frozen beneath the city of Hook.

The two Tseвори released from stasis are surprised, and apparently grateful. They even have the technology needed to fix the players' ship. But they're also armed to the teeth. Before they can do anything about it, the remaining team members are thrown into captivity. Anyone not with the team at the site of the release are hunted down and herded into the "jail". Realizing the importance of defeating their common enemy, the two factions within the crew agree to work together, apparently by now a moot point. It looks like, after taking a week to regrow their hibernating troops, the Hook Tseвори will find and destroy the other hibernaculums before using the player's ship to extend their empire to Earth.

Things look pretty bad for our heroes. But the vicious nature of the Hook dictators they've released works in their favor. The local primitives come to the rescue, either because the players befriended them earlier, or because the Hook dictators were so violent and evil that the primitives feel the humans are their only hope for salvation. And so they prove to be. Sprung from jail, the reunited team now has the resources to let the player impress the leaders of the Mountain aborigines and become the new Shaman, winning access to their stasis timer. Hounded by pursuers from Hook, who kidnap at least one of the humans, they finally win the Shamanic battle. Now the team can release some of the "good" Tsevari. They have the same problem as the Hook group, with the vast majority of their people in slow hibernation. Worse, they have few with military skills. But they do have a plan. They can supply a recording of the Badger philosophies in the language of the Hook people. If the human crew can retrace their steps, and play the recording over the public address system in the Hook Citadel, the battle will be won before it is fought, saving the day for the good guys.

Finally, the reward. The Tsevari (guided by the surviving characters) repair the ship, and offer each character whatever is in their power to grant. Each comes away with a special gift, as well as the overwhelming gift of a philosophy of peace, which could possibly work for the people of Earth and the colony planets.

The End

The Dig

Characters

Last update 12/4/90

Eleanor Ryan, 37. Raised in Australia, of old-time British convict stock with a touch of Aboriginal blood, Eleanor was a top rate starship mechanic, specializing in maintenance of the McKillip FTL drive pods. Her mother died, and her father moved to California when she was 10. With a BS from Cal Tech in mechanical engineering, an Masters at MIT in electrical engineering, and a PhD in trans-einsteinian theory from the Longworth Institute, she was on a fast track, sought after by many of the best corporations and think tanks. Then, at the age of 29, for a thrill she tried one of the new cyberclubs, promising a computer generated fantasy world more compelling than real life. Interested at first by the technology, she became addicted to the excitement and escape of the cyber-worlds. She even went to the extreme of having a "mod" installed, a small computer port that is located behind her left ear, and allows direct brain-computer interfacing. She lost interest in the real world and her work faltered as she gradually withdrew. In the end it was her pet Verrk, Ruthven (see below) who helped her to break the cycle of addiction, but no one was willing to hire her because of her past. She's been down on her luck ever since. The potential profit of this mission would do much to defray her debts, as well as fulfill her passion for exploration -- this time for real. She hopes the excitement will match that of her fantasy trips. She's always been a bit more comfortable with machines and computers than people, with one notable exception. She's crazy about old, pre-twenty-first century musicals and operettas, and during her extended schooling much of her social life revolved around the theater groups she was in. She'll still light up when she talks about (or sings, in an unfortunately poor voice) her favorite musicals. Eleanor's salvation and most treasured friend is her pet Verrk, an animal native to Sigma Draconis IV, very rarely found off-planet. It's said to have an empathic link to its owner, and some say that a Verrk can grant a limited sort of telepathy. Eleanor's Verrk, which she calls Ruthven (pronounced "Rivven"), was a graduation present.

An incident from her past: When Eleanor was 31, she was working at Kolker Consultancy, an engineering think-tank in Munich, European Union. Her cyber-addiction was still in its early stages, but already it had begun to interfere with her professional work. Never a neat dresser, she now became slovenly, finding time for her work and her addiction, and almost nothing else. She'd come home, flash a meal, gobble it down, and toss a nibble to Ruthven. Then she'd lie back in bed, and plug in. After several hours of exhilarating electronic adventure, she'd drop off to sleep, to be awakened by Ruthven

fled the Shah's overthrow. Hashemi grew up speaking Vietnamese, Farsi, and French. When he was seven, the family moved to Germany to take advantage of the new jobs in the economic star of the new EEC. But resurgent hate groups eventually drove them away, this time to seek work in Egypt. Exposure to so many languages gave Hashemi an edge, and his small frame and bright mind naturally turned him to intellectual pursuits. These beginnings gave him a retiring, shy exterior, but he can be tenacious when fighting for something he believes in. He also has a fierce temper, which is almost always kept under tight control. Usually only overt prejudice and persecution can set him off, prompting memories of his difficult childhood. He's dedicated his long life to language research, and he holds advanced degrees in language and linguistic studies. For a while he was an accomplished hiker and backpacker – an archaic pursuit, made very rare by the lack of suitable wilderness. More recently he's been interested for personal reasons in the newer anti-agathic treatments, that give him at 102 the basic health of a 60 year old. He's learned quite a bit about medical technology and practice. But the new treatments are expensive, and Hashemi was intrigued by the chance for riches. But the clincher in his recruitment was when he was shown a solid (3D "photograph") of a plaque with writing on it -- in no known human language. Hashemi isn't sure it's legitimate, but his curiosity won't let him hold back.

Hashemi has Vietnamese father had an odd collection of Buddhist beliefs Hashemi, old and obviously well-read as he is, likes to throw pithy sayings like "the I is quicker than the eye" around as a flexing of the wisdom and a way to one-up the younger, stronger characters on a battleground of his own choosing. Most often he is quoting from obscure twentieth-century literature and song lyrics. The more the tension increases, the less sense these quotes will make, and the more frequently they will occur.

Hashemi likes to cook as well, and will offer to do so, but the dishes he prepares (while healthy) are often unappetizing and the other characters may not want to eat them, particularly Eleanor.

In his gear he has some comic books in foreign languages, possibly useful for trade with the simpler aliens, or for starting a fire in a pinch.

Etta Quo, 28. Etta is a big woman, nearly 2 meters tall and built like a hovortank. She's one of the first to put a new twist on the archaic profession of big game hunter. She has a reputation for competence with a variety of weapons as well as hand to hand combat.

Etta's parents were interplanetary travellers, part of a travelling theatre group. When she was six, her mother died of an alien plague on the planet Sigma Draconis IV. Her father took the loss hard, and never remarried. Etta ended up trying to please her rather traditional father by being 'the son he never

had'. Luckily for her peace of mind, she was disposed towards weapons and hunting and became quite good at her new profession. She surprised people who don't know her by being very fond of animals in general, and she comes down hard on clients that hunt indiscriminately. But she has a chip on her shoulder, and often comes across as brusque and arrogant.

Etta carries an antique Philippine war weapon, a round mahogany (perhaps teak) object attached to a string known as a "yoyo". She's practiced with it and is able to do a number of impressive looking tricks, as well as use it for its original purpose. It's one of the prizes of her collection, and the only one small enough to easily transport on a long space voyage. She values it highly and will not readily allow anyone else to use it (though if she becomes friendly enough with Slick during the course of the game it might be a nice sign to have her teach him a trick or two 'round the campfire).

Ordinarily quiet, Etta has a temper which has been known to get her in trouble. Often she will respond to comments about her intelligence (she's sharp, but lacks conventional education) with threats of violence. This will get worse as she crosses horns with the altruistic members of the team, as she has a strong dislike for "softies", masking a shame at her parents theatrical leanings.

Benjamin Roderick Hargrove (Slick) 19. Ben is the youngest of five sons, from a wealthy mainline Pennsylvania family. He's very bright, and very rebellious. He often is very successful initially at most things he attempts, and then, apparently by coincidence or bad luck, he manages to screw them up. From an early age he's been able to fix almost anything mechanical or electronic, and at first received a great deal of support from his parents. Then he fell in love with piloting. After a few years in the very expensive and dangerous sport of spaceship racing, his father pulled strings to get Ben into the Interstellar Corps, "to teach him some discipline". Ben stayed in long enough to learn more about flying everything from big cruisers to one man courier ships, and then deserted, taking one of the latter. He's been travelling incognito as "Slick", but his youth has gotten him into trouble. He lost the courier ship in a poker game, and has been one jump ahead of the Corps Police for several months now. He desperately needs cash, wouldn't think of contacting anyone from his old life, and was looking for a way offplanet when "Major Tom" found him. Slick tries hard to look older and tougher than he is, but rarely succeeds, unless he's not in visual contact with the person he's trying to impress. On the cyberlink, or even on the phone with vid turned off, he can appear to be a completely different person.

An insomniac, Slick is always searching for ways to keep amused when by himself. As a child he would stay up nights watching movies on a video unit he'd fixed up, mostly the adventure and action type, but he developed a soft spot for some of the classic towering romances as well. He's a bit embarrassed

about this bit of "culture" as he normally disdains such things, and consequently will say little about it, but on occasion will catch Hashemi quoting from something he's seen.

Slick is rash and irreverent. He seems to take great pleasure in pinpointing shortcomings and sensitive points in others and needling them simply to provoke a reaction (as the game and romance progresses, Slick will begin to defend Dr. Kanda from the others instead of calling her a hick). If anyone makes a disparaging comment about him, he'll get defensive and may clam up. Slick will say (or do) just about anything to focus attention on himself. This will be amplified as tensions increase, as will his general intolerance for everyone and his destructive nature.

Slick's wealthy father is in fact biochemist/businessman Cosgrove Hargrove, known throughout the galaxy as the developer of Hair-In-A-Jug, the hair restoration formula that works. Slick kept his head shaved between the ages of thirteen and sixteen as a protest of sorts.

Slick is able to use the yoyo, though not nearly as well as Etta.

Dr. Lysanthia Kanda 33. Finnish-Irish-Japanese ancestry. Lysanthia (Sandy to her friends) comes from New Eden, second planet of the Epsilon Eridani system. Her parents emigrated there from Earth in 2046, part of one of the first large groups of colonists. New Eden is a quiet, pastoral place. The largest city, Second Chance, has a population of only 74,000. A stunning redhead with an exotic appeal from her Japanese grandmother, Sandy found early on that she had brains to match her looks. She got her medical training literally in the field. She's had to become almost as much a veterinarian as an M.D. To further complicate matters, she's had to learn Eden biology and biochemistry, to help the imported Earth crops and animals survive along with the comparatively primitive but better adapted native flora and fauna. Sandy is frustrated and embarrassed by her rustic upbringing, and jumped at the chance to travel to Earth for a conference on exobiology. But she was put off by the crowding, dirt, and noise of real cities, and hurt over an unhappy love affair. The possibility of being the first expert in an alien ecology made her a natural for the Ozymandias expedition.

Sandy is a bit naive when it comes to dealing with the sort of people to be found on this mission. Too open and trusting at first, she'll get her feelings hurt a few times. She's quite insecure and worries that she doesn't fit in. Eventually (with perhaps a bit of help from Slick or Eleanor) she'll overcome this enough to hold her own, though the intra-crew conflict will promote this insecurity and she'll just want to hide.

The transition from the rural society of New Eden to that of Earth has left other marks on Sandy. The difference in rules of property was surprising to her (New Eden is largely communal) and she has overreacted a bit (subconsciously worried about being denied access to the things she needs when she needs them), becoming a bit of a kleptomaniac. This will prove to be quite a problem as she strives to solve the secrets of the alien ruins.

Bob C. Fredricks 46. Canadian mother, father unknown. Bob has had, to hear him tell it, a lot of bad breaks. A self-taught archaeologist, Bob was starting to make a good living finding Incan artifacts (that he smuggled out of Peru to sell to wealthy Southeast Asian collectors) when he was trapped in the war between the South American Union and Brazil. Forcibly enscribed, he fought in a zombie regiment, held enslaved by virtual conditioning and hypnosis. Pinned down by a long Brazilian assault, Bob's regimental officers were all killed or wounded, and he came out of the conditioned haze long enough to desert, and make his escape. But the aftermath of the zombie treatment has left him irritable and prone to irrational rages. He's wandered about Earth, learning quite a bit about modern archaeological methods, and making a few bucks selling artifacts on the side. But he's rarely been able to hold down a steady job for long, and Major Tom's proposal came at a welcome time.

On one expedition before he became a POW, Fredricks made a legitimate archaeological discovery. He made a map of all known early Incan villages, compared it to a topographical map, and inferred the existence of an undiscovered site based on village spacing and fertile land. Fredricks tried to raise some money to fund an expedition, even going to Dr. Stratford, an old rival at the University of Toronto's archaeology department to try to drum up interest. But Stratford just laughed him out of the office. Discouraged, Fredricks returned to his smuggling to try to scrape together enough cash for a serious expedition. Six months later he was enraged to see announcements of a major discovery of a previously unknown Incan village site at precisely his predicted location - by Dr. Stratford of Toronto! Fredricks sought out Stratford, confronted him, got into a fistfight -- and ended up spending six months in jail.

Time in the zombie regiment appears to have left some scars on the mind of Mr. Fredricks (in addition to the occasional rage). For one thing, his first name is really Humphrey, although he hates being called that. Often he mixes up words or entire phrases, apparently unaware that he is doing so, and is annoyed when corrected. He carries with him a set of pieces from the popular board game "Cosmopoly" which he jingles in his pocket and nervously fumbles with. On close inspection, they will all be found to be "the hat". He also carries an old "quarter", even though the planet has long since gone on a purely computerized monetary/credit system. If asked, he'll

cryptically state that you never know when you might need to make a phone call.

Dobbs is greedy and mistrustful of people in general. (Perhaps if something happens to Sandy we could use him as a kleptomaniacal substitute.) He plays poker and frequently accuses his opponents of cheating.

The Dig

Misc Kickoff Deliverables

Last update 12/2/90

Positioning Statement

The Dig is intended to reach for a wider audience than our previous graphic adventures, though mostly appealing to current computer game players. The Spielberg tie-in will hopefully gain the attention of people that haven't previously played our games. The hybrid graphic adventure/roleplaying aspects of the game should help capture some of the Ultima/Bards Tale players as well as the folks that contribute to Sierra's success. It is meant to be of moderate/easy difficulty to play through once, with unusually high replayability (chiefly through choosing different characters to control) to hold the interest of more experienced gamers.

Scumm Expansions

We'll need some of the 5.0 enhancements to make the game work.

Specifically, the ability to have objects with transparent background, and the ability to pick up an object and have its image and/or code be loaded from another room (it's OK to have to specify which room).

We plan to use vertical scrolling, although we don't have any critical puzzles that couldn't be modified for horizontal.

We need different background colors from a buffer in the verb area.

Objects/verbs/images at pixel boundaries instead of just character boundaries at any place on screen with draw-object-at.

Better array and variable management (we'll have to talk about our needs here, but 2 dimensional arrays would be a good start).

We'll need the system to know about relative Z distance between actors.

The Dig

Pass 1 Tasks

Last update 12/2/90

Simple one paragraph description as requested by "kickoff deliverables":

By the end of the first pass we'll have most of the game up and running, but in a very simple form. Some of the features will be in, and you'll be able to play through a lot of it, but there will be puzzles and plot elements to refine, and few frills. First pass artwork will be done for a majority of the rooms, with a number of the finished rooms requiring additional work.

Longer, actually useful description:

The following sections of the game will be completed as described by the end of Pass 1, currently slated for March 1, 1991.

Interfaces

The main interface, already running, will be tuned and perfected. At least five human and ten alien gadget subscreens will also be operational, running on the lower right section of the screen. The basic system to show closeup faces will be running, but the faces may be placeholders. A first pass on an inventory management screen or subscreen will be up, with a way to keep track of the mass and bulk of each character's inventory.

Artwork

Thirty to forty rooms and a dozen psuedorooms will be done in first pass quality by this point. We may decide to go for more rooms in outline form, or more work on psuedorooms and less on unique rooms depending on artist availability and skills. There will be animation for the main characters and Major Tom, as well as a generic intelligent Alien and some filler animation for creatures to encounter. The six crew will be sketched out, and computer closeup-insets will exist for at least two members in several emotional states.

Puzzles

The following "plot puzzles" and associated sub-puzzles will be implemented with at least single path solutions (many will have multiple ways to be solved, implemented in pass 2): Find Major Tom, Find Food and Energy

(largely through Encounter System), Fix Powerplant, Fix Food Processor, Reveal Fall of Alien Civilization, Awaken Aliens (Bad Guys), Escape from Bad Aliens. Remaining plot puzzles for pass 2: Awaken Aliens (Good Guys), Stop Bad Aliens, Fix Ship's Engines. I estimate that in game play terms, about 75% of the game will be done in single-path playability, with about 90% of the roleplaying aspects in place.

Roleplaying

The Encounter System will be up and running, with at least eight different kinds of plants and animals to encounter. Tuning will be needed on the behaviors of these creatures. At least five gadgets from the ship will be operational to some extent in encounters. The energy and food gathering and utilization will work.

Digging

A first pass digging system will be running, allowing you to dig in the sand environment. There will also be a plan for expanding the system to the other environments.

Character Development

At least three cut scenes or dialogs will be done by this point for each character, showing off some critical parts of their personalities. They will be initiated based on developments in the rest of the game, and show the building tension within the group as their conflicting desires come to the fore.

Alien Interaction

Many puzzles will involve dealing with the tribes of surviving aliens. There will be several villages or nomadic groups (four or five, time permitting, at least two if not) that the player will get to know, have dialog and standard puzzles with, and occasionally meet in random encounters. A trading system will probably not be up until Pass 2.