

ries is really just the way the role-playing gives the player a great deal of freedom with what his options are at any point in the game," says Garriott. "It's basically a game in which you're living out your life. And you can do anything you want."

Are You Man Or Fuzzy?

In *Exodus*, the third game in the *Ultima* series, evil again walks the land of Sosaria. Will you confront this evil as Human, Elf, Dwarf, Bobbit, or Fuzzy? Now determine your strength, dexterity, intelligence, and wisdom. Choose your profession from among about a dozen possible types ranging from Cleric to Thief. Then, with a band of cohorts, go forth. But be quick about it: *Ultima IV* is already well along in development.

Quite a different approach has been taken—and very successfully—by Sierra in its graphic adventure game, *King's Quest*, for the IBM PC and PCjr.

Requiring 128K of memory and the use of a color monitor, the adventure game actually lets you control the movements of an onscreen knight, Sir Grahame, as he moves about the colorful kingdom of Daventry.

The movement is smooth, the screens are redrawn rapidly, and Sir Grahame is seen walking in front of, behind, and even between objects. He climbs, jumps, ducks, swims, and can be warned of impending danger by sound effects. The command parser for such a game is necessarily much smaller than that used in an Infocom game, but the play requirements are not based on having a huge volume of words.

There are helpful fairies, elves, condors, and a god-mother. But there are also unfriendly sorcerers, dwarfs, ogres, wolves, and an airborne witch.

Roberta Williams, who designed *King's Quest* for Sierra, admits that the game represents a big change from what has



Sierra's *King's Quest*, for the PC and PCjr with 128K, offers the best quality graphics in an adventure thus far.

been done with computer adventure games in the past. "There's nothing like it," she says. "It's innovative."

The interaction between the text and the onscreen graphics is clearly the way many future adventure games will be constructed. One element complements the other.

Bowing And Doffing

For example, as Sir Grahame stands before King Edward, type in the words BOW TO THE KING. As you hit the RETURN key, Sir Grahame can be seen bowing and doffing his cap.

And, Williams adds, subtle clues can be built visually into the game that an all-text adventure couldn't have. When Sir Grahame stumbles upon the house of a poor woodcutter and his wife, the screen shows an old and pitifully thin couple in a rundown house. The room is bare of food, a subtle clue to the player that an offering of something to eat might be very much appreciated by this mysterious couple.

While *King's Quest* uses text to supplement its high-quality graphics in the adventure, such action-adventure games as Electronic Arts' *Seven Cities of Gold*, Epyx's *Temple of Apshai*, and Muse's *Castle Wolfenstein* offer a range of adventure and strategy combinations primarily without text. The gradations in type of game play—as well as quality of play—being offered to computer owners today are already staggering in number. There is, it seems, something for just about anyone.

The tradeoff which programmers and game designers now must make because of computer memory limitations will not always be a problem, notes Dave Albert, executive vice president of Penguin Software.

Penguin has released such adventures and fantasy role-playing games as *Transylvania* (Apple II, Macintosh, Atari, Commodore 64), *The Coveted Mirror* (Apple II family), and *Expedition Amazon* (Commodore 64).