

CEREBUS REX in its entirety

Cerebus Rex: Written by David R. Sanderson.

Copyright 1991, 1992, 1995 David R. Sanderson

Disclaimer: Cerebus and all related characters are copyrighted by Dave Sim. Cerebus Rex is a guide to Cerebus the Aardvark, and is not meant to infringe on any of Dave Sims rights or works.

I do not discourage the redistribution of this guide, but do ask the following:

- 1) No monetary charge is to be made (as if anybody would pay money for this anyway.) It would be wrong to make money off of Sim's work (not to mention mine!)
- 2) All materials remain intact, including my name and this introductory material.

CEREBUS REX (_____ | _____) by: David R.
----- | _____ > Sanderson
----- | _____

Background:

Cerebus started as the mascot for an ill-fated fanzine that Deni Loubert was trying to have published. The fanzine died at the press due to some alleged crooked business dealings by the printer. Deni and Dave Sim, Cerebus' creator, decided to try again. This time with a comic starring their cute fanzine mascot. They started a publishing firm called Aardvark-Vanaheim, the two names suggested by Deni's siblings. Dave was made President (and entire creative team), and Deni became publisher.

The comic was to be called Cerberus the Aardvark, but Deni made a spelling error along the way. So we now have Cerebus the Aardvark. Some mistakes are for the best I think.

Cerebus has grown into a well respected book with healthy sales, for an independent. It's sales peaked during the B&W explosion several years ago. Circulation dropped steadily for a while, but leveled out around 20,000 per month, before Sim stopped printing the circulation figures. You'd have to write him directly to get the details now. Cerebus is unique in that it's creator has promised to make 300 issues, assuming sales continue to be strong enough.

Deni and Dave were divorced a couple of years after Cerebus started publishing. Dave took sole control of Aardvark-Vanaheim, and along the way brought in Gerhard to help with the art and business chores. Deni moved away and started another comic publishing company, Renegade Press. When Deni was with Cerebus each issue opened with a "Note from the Publisher." She would tell stories about the creation of that particular issue, events happening at A-V, or tour schedules. Since Deni left it has become "Note from the President," and has become a place for Dave to express his emotions. It rarely has anything to do with the story, but rarely fails to be interesting.

Cerebus has developed many quirks unique to the title. Having an aardvark as the main character helps. Jokes about "the earth-pig born," or how aardvark fur smells when it's wet aren't possible in a title like Superman. Dave has developed a 3-dimensional world for Cerebus to wander in. It's a world full of political and religious intrigue. Populated by interesting and sometimes wacky characters.

Cerebus can be bought in the original run, if your rich enough and lucky enough to find them. The first 25 issues were reprinted in Swords of Cerebus, with an introduction to each issue added by Dave Sim. The first 25 issues were reprinted more recently in Cerebus Bi-Weekly, and included the introductions from Swords of Cerebus. Continuing the Bi-Weekly series are Cerebus: High Society (reprinting issues 26-50), and Cerebus: Church and State is currently reprinting issues starting with #51.

The last option is to buy the so called telephone books. The telephone books are reprints contained in a single, large volume. The volumes; Cerebus (issues 1-25) and High Society (issues 26-50) may be available at your local comic specialty shop. I believe (not certain) that the telephone books for the Church and State novel are only available from Aardvark-Vanaheim directly. They will probably become available at comic shops as soon as the Bi-Weekly reprints are finished with the Church and State novel.

This week: Issues 1-10. All have a cover price of \$1 (Canadian and U.S.), and were printed bi-monthly.

Issue 1: Dec 1977 - Jan 1978. The first issue of Cerebus is far from being the high point in the series. The art is crude and the story uneven. Sims lettering borders on unreadable at points. In its favor, this story has that special Cerebus "feel" that attracted me the series in the first place. The "feel" is a part of Sims writing, and that is the main reason no one else could ever write Cerebus.

Cerebus is hired by two thieves to help steal a gem from a powerful wizard. The story progresses like just about any other Sword and Dragon tale, and ends up being quite predictable. Even the surprise ending isn't much of a surprise. This issue gives our first glimpse at Dave Sims unusual sense of humor which becomes so refined later in the series. At one point Cerebus is suffering from hallucinations caused by a room full of unusual flowers. Cerebus, winding his way through the distorted building, says, "If Cerebus is to be defeated let it be by sword or necromancy...not...by...damned...Petunias!" There is also a generous sprinkling of hints about Cerebus' training in necromancy sometime in the past. One last thing of note in this issue, Cerebus has an unusually long snout. Cerebus of the current issues has a large nose, but only about half as long as issue 1.

Issue 2: Feb - Mar 78. In an introduction written for the Swords of Cerebus reprints, Dave Sim writes that the success of issue 1 filled him with dread as well as joy; because now he had to come up with something funny every two months. He decided to try and infuse a little more humor, and tighten the story. He succeeded in both cases. Issue 2 contains the first hysterical, roll off the bed laughing, joke of the series (not the last to be certain.) Cerebus is captured by some barbarians, and challenges their biggest warrior to a duel in order to save his life. The duel is to be with knives.

The opponents are joined together by a two foot long strap clenched in their teeth. The barbarian warrior being VERY tall and Cerebus being less than four feet tall causes a slight problem with the strap being only two feet long. Cerebus travels with the barbarians, who are attacked by mysterious warriors. Cerebus nearly succumbs to this mysterious force that has enslaved the warriors. Only his aardvarkness saves him.

The art in this issue is noticeably cleaner than issue 1, but still has a rather crude quality about it. Issue 2 also contains the first and, as far as I can recall, last appearance of the dreaded "snout punch."

Issue 3: Apr - May 78. Issue three marks the first appearance of Red Sophia, the first of many recurring supporting characters. Sophia, a spoof on Red Sonja, is a strong willed, busty woman who will only have sex with a man (or aardvark) who can best her in combat. Cerebus finds out Sophia is at her most dangerous when she's trying to be helpful. Sophia's father, Henrot, hires Cerebus to go and torture a man who insulted his daughter. Cerebus manages to find the ultimate form of torture.

Issue 4: June - July 78. As the cover says, Cerebus comes "face-to-waist with Elrod." Elrod, who appears in many more issues, is based on another Conan character, Elric. Elrod speaks incessantly, I say, nonstop that is - as Elrod would say. He also thinks Cerebus is a young lad wearing a bunny suit.

Issue 5: Aug 78. Cerebus meets Bran Mak Mufin, a "paranoid schizophrenic with delusions of grandeur." Bran is the leader of a group of religious zealots called Pigts. This story seemed almost pointless by itself, but plays a fairly major role during the High Society novel. This issue also hints at the possible importance of Cerebus' ancestry, and is the first time we get to see the effect water has on aardvark fur.

Issue 6: Oct - Nov 78. Issue 6 is the first half of the first true multi-part story in Cerebus. The story itself is not important to any future Cerebus stories, but something important does happen. Jaka falls in love with Cerebus. Jaka is a key character throughout the rest of the Cerebus stories published so far. She even gets her own novel roughly 100 issues later. Jaka herself is an exotic dancer of obvious lower class upbringing (a discrepancy with future revelations.) She is supposed to be the most beautiful woman "east of the Sofim." Unfortunately Sims pencils are still little better fanzine quality at this point, and Jaka's beauty is nothing compared to the Jaka of future issues.

Issue 7: Dec 78 - Jan 79. The continuation of the story started in issue 6. Jaka doesn't appear in this one, but we get a very humorous appearance from Elrod the Albino. Elrod and Cerebus sneak into the temple of a death worshipping cult. At one point Elrod actually tries to shake Cerebus out of his "bunny suit."

Issue 8: Feb - Mar 79. This issue marks the beginning of Cerebus as a semi-continuous story. Cerebus is captured due to wounds received in issue 7 (that's as far as the continuation goes.) The Conniptons, Cerebus' captors, are impressed with his prowess. They decide to make

him a puppet God-King of their armies. A situation Cerebus is not sure he likes.

Issue 9: Apr - May 79. Cerebus' first act as God-king of the Connipton armies is to invade the city of Imesh. Cerebus discovers the Conniptons aren't really warriors. He decides they're actually cheerleaders (they have their war chant down perfectly.) To make matters worse, how do you invade a walled city that has no door.

Issue 10: June - July 79. Cerebus, alone and with broken ribs, wanders the snowy wastelands tracking a rabbit that he intends to eat for dinner. When suddenly he is tickled from behind by...Red Sophia. Keeping himself from fainting, due to being tickled on a fracture, Cerebus joins forces with Sophia (seeing as how she has already captured the rabbit.) Cerebus and Sophia plot to deprive a traveling merchant of the Black Blossom Lotus.

=====

-----	_	_____	by: David R.
CEREBUS REX	(_____)	>	Sanderson
-----	_		

This week: Issues 11-18. Issues 11-15 have \$1 cover price, issues 16-18 are \$1.25 (Canadian and U.S.) Printed bi-monthly until issue 14 where all issues become monthly.

Issue 11: Aug - Sep 79. A Classic issue! Cerebus travels to Beduin, the city that "epitomized the worst aspects of Lower Felda." Once there he meets a sorcerer-turned-merchant-turned-bug. The Cockroach to be exact.

The Cockroach is a character that will go down in comic book history. Loosely based on The Batman (after Dave was inspired by Marshall Rogers), The Cockroach is a wealthy merchant suffering a split personality. Unfortunately for him both of his personalities are bonkers. By day he seeks out magic objects so that he can save the world by destroying them. By night he puts on the garb of The Cockroach - antennae included. He prowls through the night hunting down the killers of his parents, and finds them too, over and over and.... Besides Cerebus himself, The Cockroach is most amusing character in Cerebus. Fortunately Dave realized the potential humor of this character, and uses him in many later issues.

Issue 12: Oct - Nov 79. This time Cerebus' greed gets the better of him. He goes back after The Cockroaches gold (the money piles up when you steal from criminals, merchants, and whoever else gets in your way, and then hide it in a wall.) Cerebus plays Robin to The Cockroaches' Batman - it works because the Cootie, as Cerebus calls him, is so unbalanced that he's highly susceptible to suggestion. When Elrod shows up things get really interesting.

Issue 13: Dec 79 - Jan 80. Dave himself sums up this issue in three quotes from the story. "He had spent four days adrift on the Felda river only to be waylaid by a bunch of farmers who lived in mortal fear of a hermit magician who sculpted sixteen foot paperweights in his

spare time." Cerebus thinking to himself, "Cerebus always feels out-of-place asking intelligent questions in Lower Felda...."
"Tarim! Cerebus was the only normal creature in the whole damned country."

Note: Tarim is the (a) God in Cerebus' world. The name is often used as a curse or exclamation. The Church of Tarim plays a major role in the Church and State novel.

Issue 14: Mar 80. Cerebus travels to the city-state of Palnu. There he is hired as the chief of security, and given the title "Kitchen Staff Supervisor." The title is part of Lord Julius' bureaucratic system. Lord Julius IS Groucho Marx. If Groucho Marx had been the leader of a city-state he would be Lord Julius. Lord Julius is one of Cerebus' more interesting nemeses, and one of the few who can actually outsmart the earth-pig born (on occasion.)

Issue 15: Apr 80. As Kitchen Staff Supervisor Cerebus uncovers a growing plot against Lord Julius. Lord Julius, on the other hand, more concerned about the Festival of Petunias. Lord Julius and Cerebus enter "The Pits." Cerebus looking for revolutionaries, Lord Julius looking for a good place to celebrate petunias.

In his introduction for Swords of Cerebus Dave mentions how he learned a few things from fellow artists at comic cons. This is the first issue that I noticed a marked improvement in his renditions of people.

Issue 16: May 80. It's time for the Festival of Petunias, and Cerebus still has a conspiracy on his hands. How do you protect a powerful dictator from zealous rebels at an underground party when your own guards are part of the conspiracy. Easy, just get the guests to throw herring-and-onion dip at anyone holding a sword.

This issue we get a glimpse at just how smart and dirty Cerebus can be in a fight. At the same time he's negotiating with Lord Julius for more money he manages to come up with a plan to take out the enemy before getting into sword range.

Issue 17: June 80. Taking the money promised by Lord Julius, Cerebus heads for any place but Palnu. A horse with a broken leg and the purchase of a hovel later, Cerebus gets a visit at his new hovel. The T'Gitans, a Saxon like people, are looking for a headquarters for their invasion force. The leader of the army, Gudre, convinces Cerebus that an invasion of Palnu is possible. The only flaw is there's a city in between them and Palnu. A city guarded by Commander Krull. Cerebus has an idea of what to do about that.

Gudre looks just like Sgt. Schultz from the TV show Hogan's Heroes. Not too surprising since Dave admits he had an idea for this issue while watching that particular program.

Issue 18: July 80. The T'Gitans have captured Fluroc, the outpost of Palnu. They find there isn't enough loot to help them with the invasion of Palnu. As luck would have it, a caravan of wealthy Merchants show up. Cerebus has to explain all the bloody bodies in the streets, and get the goods from the heavily guarded merchants.

=====

----- | | _____ by: David R.
CEREBUS REX (_____) > Sanderson
----- | | _____

This week: Issues 19-25 and a special reprint. Issues 19-22 have a \$1.25 cover price, issues 23-25 are a \$1.50 (U.S and Canada). All issues were monthly except for the special reprint which was part of the Bi-Weekly series.

Issue 19: Aug 80. Cerebus and Graus, one of the T'Gitan warriors, go to Togith to trade the jewels (that they cheated the merchants out of in issue 18) for mercenaries. The Duke of Agerden agrees, but only if Cerebus "acquires" the twin of a golden owl that was among the jewelry. The twin owl happens to be in the cellar of an inn where men have been disappearing if they enter the cellar. Cerebus bets a gold coin on himself, at twenty to one odds, before entering the cellar.

I won't tell you what happens in the cellar, but Cerebus makes a deal with Henrot, Red Sophia's father. On his way out of town Cerebus stops for a drink, and gets slipped a drug. This leads to the events of issue 20.

Issue 20: Sep 80. Issue 20 is by far the most unusual issue up to this point. It is titled "Mind Game", but is referred to as Mind Game I, since other Mind Game issues show up later.

Cerebus has been drugged and captured by Cirinists. The entire issue takes place in a landscape of Cerebus' subconscious mind. Cerebus is able to communicate with both the Cirinists and Suenteus Po, the founder of Illusionism and frequent mind traveler.

There's a special trick to the art work in this issue, which Dave freely explains in his Swords of Cerebus introduction. Figuring it out on your own should make the issue even more interesting.

Issue 21: Oct 80. Cerebus wakes up in Beduin, having no idea how he managed to get there. He decides he needs a fast horse so he can get back to the T'Gitan army, for the invasion of Palnu. Looking for the horse Cerebus comes upon a strange scene. Elrod dressed up like Bucky, Captain America's sidekick (in this case he's called Bunky) and The Cockroach dressed as Captain Cockroach (guess who he's supposed to be...), and their selling war bonds. Cerebus manages to meet the master-mind behind this strange duo, President Weisshaupt. Later Cerebus discovers drinking wine after having been recently drugged by Cirinists isn't a good idea. Particularly when being hunted by a Sopai assassin.

Weisshaupt is an interesting character that Dave describes as, "too smooth, too self assured, too aware...too Weisshaupt." There are some very amusing situations in this story, especially Cerebus trying to fight the assassin in a drug and alcohol induced stupor. A makeshift sling in the hands of a drunk is a dangerous thing.

Issue 22: Nov 80. The Sopai gets Elrod, dead as a doornail, that is. But, in a parody of DC's Deadman, he returns as Deadalbino. Weisshaupt comes up with a plan to use Deadalbino's ability to take over other peoples bodies. With some preparation they head out to take control of the military tribunal that runs Beduin. With Elrod on your side you can count on something going wrong.

Cerebus joined this crazy scheme because he found out that the T'Gitans had been slaughtered before they could capture Palnu. Cerebus had been drugged longer than he had first thought.

Issue 23: Dec 80. If you've seen the Clint Eastwood movie, "The Beguiled", you know the entire plot of this issue. Cerebus is wounded in the leg (in quite a funny manner) escaping from Beduin. He manages to make it to a girls school in the marshes. Cerebus, with only three girls and a head-mistress to protect him, seems to be in the middle of the Sepran armies travel route.

Issue 24: Not all is as it seems at Profes...Madame Duforts School for Gifted...for Young Ladies. We are introduced to Professor Charles X. Claremont and his apocalypse beast Woman Thing.

Dave has a bit of fun at Chris Claremont and Marvels expense. Unfortunately it is one of his weaker parodies, but still quite amusing.

Issue 25: Professor Claremont, Woman Thing, and our hero head out to start ravaging the world - after all that's what apocalypse beasts are for. Their first stop has quite a coincidence for them. It's the home of another beast, Sump Thing. We find out what happens when a Woman Thing and a Sump Thing meet each other.

Cerebus Bi-weekly - Nov 24, 1989: This Special issue reprints stories that originally appeared outside of Cerebus the Aardvark.

"Magiking" - This story takes place between issues 12 and 13 - while Cerebus is floating down the Feld River. Cerebus is transported to a platform in surrealistic surroundings where a wizard lives. We find out aardvarks are a focus or magnifier of magic. The wizard uses Cerebus to create a weapon to tip the balance of power. A U.S. marine would have a better chance using the weapon he got.

"Silverspoon" - Set between issues 13 and 14. Cerebus is aboard a ship with Lord Julius' son, Lord Silverspoon. After a few adventures we see how Cerebus came to be in Lord Julius' employ. This story was originally presented in installments of one page each. Dave's story telling suffered greatly from trying to fit in one "big" joke at the end of each page. Most of the jokes made me groan instead of laugh. Cerebus Bi-Weekly features single-page stories from other artist / writers at the end of each issue. Some are better than others, but "Silverspoon" shows Dave's talent is for longer stories.

=====

 CEREBUS REX (_____|_|_____) > by: David R.
 ----- | | Sanderson

This Week: High Society part I, issues 26-33. All issues have a cover price of \$1.50 (Canadian and U.S.) All issues printed monthly.

Issue 26: May 81. Cerebus has just trudged into Iest from the swamps. He's had a bad day. He couldn't find a place to stay, and is ready to give the Regency Hotel desk clerk the hardest time of his life. Suddenly everybody is being nice - free rooms, free meals, and business men are giving him outrageous sums of money just to remember their names and products. All this kindness is not what Cerebus wants when he is in a bad mood.

It seems Cerebus' reputation as Lord Julius' Kitchen Staff Supervisor has preceded him. Since Lord Julius himself is not accessible to most people, an aardvark in the Palnu cabinet is the next best thing. We get another glimpse at Lord Julius' version of a bureaucracy. These business men have tried going through the channels of Palnu's government. For example: one got stuck when he reached the "undersecretary of the External Affairs Task Force on Aging in the Streets." There is a directory of Palnu's government agencies available. Send some money for a copy, and get a letter back saying, costs have gone up send more money. Send more money, and get a letter saying, thank you for donating to "Lord Julius' study group examining metropolitan forestry." The problem is you need the directory to find out who to get the money back from. Issue 26 is an excellent start to an excellent story.

Issue 27: June 81. Dirty Fleagle McGrew and his brother Dirty Drew try unsuccessfully to kidnap Cerebus. Cerebus decides to be kidnapped anyway. Writing and delivering his own ransom note, via crossbow bolt. Cerebus and the brothers go into hiding to wait for the ransom to be delivered. Cerebus passes the time by manipulating the rather dull brothers into a game of diamondback, the meanest card game invented.

Issue 28: July 81. "Mind Game II" - Cerebus has been knocked unconscious, and is floating in the eighth sphere. He spends the entire issue talking with Suenteus Po. A great deal about the political situation in the world is revealed. We learn more about the Cirinists, Kevillists, and Illusionists. An important issue for the understanding of Cerebus' world as a whole.

Issue 29: Aug 81. Cerebus wakes up in the Regency Hotel. The brothers McGrew have been arrested for the kidnapping, but the ransom (which was only a statue of a "duck") is gone. The Prime Minister of Iest is demanding that Cerebus repay the ransom. With the help of the Regency Elf, a sprite like creature that only shows herself to Cerebus, Cerebus begins to work on a plan to repay the Prime Minister. Then he'll make some money for himself.

Issue 30: Sep 81. The Prime Minister is desperate for money. He'll forgive Cerebus' debt if Cerebus can arrange for an even larger debt the Prime Minister has to be cancelled. Just when things have worked out, a large, stone, crescent moon spoils it. It's the Moon Roach! A parody of yet another Marvel character (Moon Knight, of course), the cootie is back, and apparently crazier than ever.

Issue 31: Oct 81. Cerebus chases down the cootie to find him hiding out with his lover, Astoria. We get to see how Moon Roach came to be (supposedly.) It's at the end of this tale that we get the classic line, "It felt...like he was having an origin." After some slick maneuvering, by Astoria, Cerebus heads for home only to run into the inquisition. It seems he's just going to get a severe warning when another stone moon strikes home.

A large part of this issue is The Roach's conversations between his main two personalities; Moon Roach and his biggest fan, and occasional dialog assistant, Kevitch. We don't get to see much of Astoria in this issue, but we get our first glimpse at her skills as a manipulator. Astoria is one of the strongest females in all of comics. She's very strong willed, intelligent, sly, and attractive. She can also be very dangerous. The kind of woman you definitely want on your side. Except for using more tact in place of force and possibly having greater willpower, she has a very similar personality to Cerebus himself.

Issue 32: Nov 81. Cerebus is trying to figure a way out of his troubles when Astoria and Moon Roach show up. Astoria has a plan to help Cerebus get the money he needs. Cerebus, paranoid about losing his new found source of money, yells at the Elf for making him doubt Astoria's intentions. Getting an elf angry is something Cerebus knows is a dangerous thing to do, but he can't help himself. As a result of the Elf's scheming Astoria gets high on some narcotics. In her relaxed state, declaring she'd start drooling if she got any more relaxed, she tries to seduce Cerebus. The Moon Roach, who you must remember is Astoria's lover, walks in to find them lying on the floor together.

Issue 33: Dec 81. Astoria manages to control the Moon Roach, and suddenly seems to be much more sober than when she was seducing Cerebus. In his anger the Moon Roach decides to go it alone, and drops a moon on someone he shouldn't. Cerebus has his own troubles with the Elf. Messages about Cerebus' bathroom practices are showing up in public places signed, "You Know Who." To top it all off, on the last page Cerebus hears a distinctively Elrodish, "Y'all seen a kid in a bunny suit around h'yar? Locally, that is...."

=====

----- | | by: David R.
CEREBUS REX (_____) > Sanderson
----- | |

This Week: High Society part II, issues 34-41. All issues are published monthly, and have a \$1.50 cover price (Canada and U.S.)

Issue 34: Jan 82. Cerebus tries to prove to Astoria he can take care of himself. With Elrod hanging around and the return of Bran MacMufin (leader of the Pigts - last seen in issue 5) it isn't easy. Moon Roach shows up to tell Cerebus he'll kill anyone who tries to help Cerebus. Astoria discovers Lord Julius intends to make Elrod the new "ranking diplomatic representative of Palnu in Iest." The position Cerebus holds now.

Issue 35: Feb 82. Astoria makes Cerebus buy a new suit in preparation for the fight against Elrod and Lord Julius for ranking diplomat. They

meet with the Prime Minister to sway him to their side. During the meeting nobody except Cerebus notices that Lord Julius is serving their coffee. Cerebus gets a note from Jaka, asking him to meet her.

Issue 36: Mar 82. This is a simple, but very effective issue. Jaka has come to visit Cerebus. Cerebus has only vague memories of his first encounter with Jaka, but knows he was in love with her. Jaka admits she's broke and would like to live with Cerebus, but refuses his offers after he mentions that Astoria told him old "friends" would come out of the woodwork. Jaka spent all of her money buying Cerebus' sword (lost in issue 12) from a salvage merchant.

In Dave's own words, "It was the first Cerebus issue with only one joke...." This issue was the first truly dramatic issue of Cerebus, and it's success probably encouraged Dave to let Cerebus grow into a more sophisticated, more rounded story - without losing the humor, of course. The reappearance of Jaka demonstrates the growth in Dave's pencils. The Jaka from this issue could pass as the most beautiful woman "East of the Sofim," unlike the first rendition of Jaka. The backgrounds in this issue are also note worthy. All around issue 36 is so far the most pleasing visually. One more thing revealed in this issue involves Cerebus' sword. Jaka says the salvage merchant claimed, "...it was like no metal he had ever seen before."

Issue 37: Apr 82. Lord Julius' Petuniacon is here. In a spoof of comic book conventions, Elrod and Cerebus give autographs and draw sketches for the government representatives. Bran suggests Cerebus run for Prime Minister, a suggestion Astoria goes off to investigate. At one point a representative asks Cerebus what it's like to be living with Lord Julius' ex-wife, Astoria.

Issue 38: May 82. It's day two at the Petuniacon. Cerebus sits on a couple of discussion panels with Elrod, Lord Julius, and K'cor (King of Imesh, last seen in issue 9.) The representatives are clearly on Elrod's side, and Cerebus loses his temper. Cerebus challenges Elrod to a sword duel, a turn of events Elrod clearly does not like. Astoria convinces Cerebus to stop by telling him all the perks he'll get as Prime Minister, but that he won't get them if he gets lynched after killing Elrod.

Issue 39: June 82. Blakely, a man of some influence in Iest, comes to see Cerebus, in order to determine whether or not he should back Cerebus' run for Prime Minister. A series of visitors interrupts the discussion, starting with Lord Julius. Lord Julius confuses Blakely in his normal bungling-that-isn't-bungling manner. Next it's Dirty Fleagle and Dirty Drew McGrew, newly escaped from prison and looking for revenge. It just so happens Moon Roach is on the scene to take care of the brothers, and then take care of himself. The last visitor takes a flight around Blakely's head before Cerebus convinces the Regency Elf to leave. It's Cerebus' tactical denial of even having seen the Elf that convinces Blakely to back Cerebus.

Issue 40: July 82. Astoria leads Cerebus on an election campaign through several areas of Iest. Accompanying them are Moon Roach and the McGrew brothers, acting as body guards (it's the one thing their good at - maybe a little too good.) Astoria set the conditions of support for most of the areas, the local Cirinist Abbess sets her own

it was, "the good Father's natural justice at work, paying me back for aiding and abetting polyticians in the commission of an election."

This issue has a hysterical sequence with Moon Roach and Astoria, blind drunk on white lightning, having a "duel" as they "become" various Marvel characters. The only part of issue 44 that I don't like is that the pages were drawn sideways. I've always found it more difficult to hold comics drawn this way. Except for issue 49, which is totally different, the rest of High Society is drawn sideways.

Issue 45: Dec 82. "Cerebus' Six Crises: Crisis Number One." Cerebus takes of Iest as it's new Prime Minister. Disbanding the legislature, selling the Papal lands, and fencing the inauguration jewels. Cerebus raises an army of mercenaries. The plan, to invade Lower Felda and capture the treasury in Beduin. Unfortunately Beduin is broke, having only a fraction of the money Cerebus spent to capture the city in the first place. On top of that Lord Julius sends a bill for Lower Felda's outstanding debts.

Issue 46: Jan 83. "Crisis Number Two." Lord Julius and Duke Leonardi of New Sepra, a parody of Chico Marx, come to Iest for a trilateral summit. Lord Julius' suggestion that the New Seprans are stupid and rich causes Cerebus to change his plans of conquest. Cerebus also gets a couple of Tarimite bishops totally sloshed. From them he finds out the importance of the albatross. This issue overflows with witty dialogue, and Dave makes great use of the Marx brothers style.

Issue 47: Feb 83. "Crisis Number Three." Lord Julius cuts Cerebus' financial backing by cutting the value of the New Sepran crown. Moon Roach, in an attempt to be helpful, causes Cerebus all kinds of internal problems. Bran and the Pigts disappear after being sent to capture the New Sepran treasury. The Iestian forces in Lower Felda are driven back to Iest. And, to top it all off, someone is now invading Iest.


Issue 48: Mar 83. "Crisis Number Four." The Hsiffies are invading, the Anarcho-Romantics are making silly demands, and Cerebus has serious financial strains. Cerebus deals with most of his troubles in a typical aardvarkian fashion, especially the Anarcho-Romantics. But things get worse when the mercenaries find the New Sepran treasury empty, and Cerebus well as they leave. Jaka comes to warn Cerebus that he's in more danger than he knows. Jaka's visit hints at a much deeper conspiracy that is interested in Cerebus.

Issue 49: Apr 83. "Crisis Number Five: the Last Stand." Astoria runs the show while Cerebus sleeps off nearly four bottles of Borealan Whiskey. Moon Roach tries to bring Cerebus out of his dazed state (thinking Cerebus was "doped") with a bucket of water. Everyone clears the war room immediately, since they all have functioning olfactory organs. Astoria makes plans for her and Cerebus to go into exile, but when the "Hsiffies" come within sight Cerebus grabs a sword and heads out to fight them single handed. He's greeted with a chant, a chant he recognizes. It's the Conniptins, the "cheerleaders" from issues 8 and 9.

Dave had a little fun with the art in this issue. At times you have to physically turn the book to read the story as each panel angles off slightly from the last.

Issue 50: May 83. "Crisis Number Six: Denouement." The New Pontiff of the Tarimites surrounds the Executive Mansion with tarimite troops. All of Cerebus' advisors, except Astoria, go crawling back to the Church. Cerebus walks out on Astoria, who was already making plans to rebuild their power elsewhere. Cerebus goes back to the Regency to get his stuff and say goodbye to the Elf. In the process he discovers something that could have given him the power he had lacked when his plans fell apart. He literally throws away the now useless symbol, and walks away.

=====

CEREBUS REX () > by: David R. Sanderson

This week: Issue 51 and Church and State part 1, issues 52-57. All issues were published monthly. All issues have a \$1.60 Canadian and a \$1.40 U.S. cover price.

Circulation: 51 - 18,000
52-57 - ?

Issue 51: June 83. Cerebus makes it to the docks, where he is smuggled on board a ship headed for Togith. He soon discovers he's not alone. Like rats deserting a sinking ship, Elrod and Lord Julius are already on board. Cerebus decides it's time to kill these two nuisances. Every time he gets ready someone quite literally drops in on him. Duke Leonardi and a former member of Cerebus' cabinet come alone. The McGrew brothers come in a large load of potatoes.

This issue is the only appearance of the Purely Platonic Priest Roach - not a Marvel parody for a change.

Issue 52: July 83. This issue is unusual in that it contains three short stories. The first story has Cerebus sitting in a tavern starting to write his book, "On Governing." Sitting next to him is a big, hairy lout telling a gruesome story of dismemberment. The lout spills Cerebus' ale all over his writings....

The second story was written as a tribute to Wendy and Richard Pini. Cerebus, in a less than sober condition, is visited by two "cute" elves. The word "fluff" comes to mind when trying to describe this story.

The third story reintroduces the young Lord Silverspoon, Lord Julius' son. He makes arrangements to go to the estate of the Countess Detin, and then teaches Cerebus to play the card game "Priestess." When the Countess sends money and an invitation that stipulates Silverspoon can only come if Cerebus joins him, Cerebus arranges to leave Silverspoon behind.

Issue 53: Aug 83. Cerebus arrives at the Countess' estate. The Countess and Cerebus probe for each others reasons for their meeting. Cerebus writes some more entries in his book, revealing some amusing secrets about Lord Julius. Cerebus also agrees to fix the Countess' tax problems. The Countess makes two mistakes. The first was to send 500 crowns to get the Palnu "Directory of Tax Officials." The second, to push Cerebus into a fountain as a joke. The issue ends with the arrival of the Countess' "Uncle Artemis," the Wolveroach.

Issue 54: Sept 83. Michelle, the Countess, relates the story of the Roach's evolution, including how he ended up with Astoria - a completely different version than Astoria told. Weisshaupt, last seen in issue 22, shows up to offer Cerebus the position of Prime Minister again. It seems Weisshaupt has managed to get the agreements he needed to form the United Feldwar States. This issue has an interesting conversation in it about a "Sir Gerrik." Some people have guessed that the mysterious Gerrik may be another aardvark.

Issue 55: Oct 83. After the Wolveroach mangles a fellow house guest Cerebus tries to talk with him. The Wolveroach is more interested in smoking a wad of toothpicks. The Countess and Cerebus have a violent argument, and Cerebus goes off to work on his book. Wolveroach goes over the edge, deciding to challenge the New Sepran soldiers who are searching for him.

Issue 56: Nov 83. Wolveroach takes care of the New Sepran soldiers, and then hides in the Countess' wine cellar. Cerebus is guided to the hiding spot by a voice in his head. Inside Wolveroach's body is the powerful telepath Professor Charles X Claremont, supposedly killed in issue 25. The professor wants Cerebus out of the Countess' house for an unknown reason. We see just how vulnerable Cerebus can be to suggestion when the Professor starts to implement his plan.

Issue 57: Dec 83. Cerebus wakes up in a hotel room in Port Seprania, but he's not alone. Sharing his bed is his new wife, Red Sophia. Before long Weisshaupt pokes his head through the door. Weisshaupt unabashedly admits to drugging Cerebus, and Sophia confirms that the marriage has been "legitimized," at least twelve times. Weisshaupt informs Cerebus that abandoning the marriage would result in his hanging. Cerebus has no choice but to become a puppet Prime Minister. On top of all that he meets his mother-in-law for the first time.

=====

```
-----
CEREBUS REX ( _____ | | _____ ) by: David R.
-----                    | |                    > Sanderson
                           | |
```

This week: Church and State part 2. All issues are printed monthly. All issues have a \$2 Canadian and a \$1.70 U.S cover price.

Circulation: 58-62 - 20,000

Issue 58: Jan 84. Cerebus has settled into being Prime Minister again. Blakely has come to dinner, but Cerebus and Mrs. Henrot-Gutch, Sophia's mother, make it more lively than most dinners. While Cerebus is in bed, not "getting any" from Sophia, a messenger summons him to

Circulation: 63 - 22,000
64-67 - 21,000

Issue 63: June 84. "Mind Game IV." Unlike the two previous Mind Game issues Cerebus is conscious in this one. Cerebus has a conversation, apparently with himself, mostly debating on how much whiskey to drink. By the end he's complaining of a headache, stomachache, and aching eyes. When someone says he's been nominated eastern Pontiff he thinks, "And on top of everything else, Cerebus is hearing things."

You may have noticed a discrepancy in the numbering of the Mind Games. "Game III" is hidden in this issue as well.

Issue 64: July 84. Weisshaupt's control is slipping. Bishop Powers and Cerebus both send Weisshaupt off in a childish tiff. Mrs. Henrot-Gutch is hunting Blakely, threatening extreme physical damage. Archbishop Posey, "a limp-wristed pucker-faced sack of suet," brings Cerebus his robes. Cerebus exercises his new-found power by denying a meeting with Bishop Powers and ordering his "family" to pack-up and shut-up.

Issue 65: Aug 84. Cerebus has moved "to a hotel on the east wall" and has hired mercenaries as a personal guard. Bishop Powers sends Posey back to Cerebus, knowing Cerebus is likely to kill him. Instead Cerebus "arranges" Posey's allegiance to Cerebus. Most Holy, as Cerebus calls himself, goes to a room at the front of the hotel to make a speech to the crowd outside. He casually consigns the rooms occupant to an "eternity hip-deep in molten lead" on the way to the window. After making a MOST unusual speech Cerebus claims that he'll put in a good word with Tarim for anyone who gives him all their gold.

Issue 66: Sept 84. Cerebus announces the world will be destroyed "unless Tarim gets enough gold." Cerebus throws a baby into the crowd, and later plans to throw people out the window while giving a speech. The demand for gold starts to upset the Iestian economy. A mysterious light appears above Cerebus, and then disappears. Mrs. Henrot-Gutch is hunting for a guard who ate her dinner, and Bran MacMufin points the way for her.

Issue 67: Oct 84. Cerebus orders Boobah, one of his mercenaries, to write down everything he says, just in case he says something perfect. Bran explains why the Pig army never arrived during Cerebus' first reign as Prime Minister. Astoria talks with the Cirinist Abbess in Iest. Weisshaupt sees the President of the Bank of Iest take a dive from the third floor while in a meeting on the second floor. Cerebus declares the people will suffer from burning nostril hairs if they don't add to the already huge pile of gold he has. Bran notices something strange going on.

=====

CEREBUS REX (_____ | _____) > by: David R.
----- | _____ Sanderson

This week: Church and State part 4, issues 68-74. All issues have a \$2.00 Canadian and a \$1.70 U.S. cover price. All issues published monthly.

Circulation: 68-71 - 21,000
72 - 22,000
73,74 - 22,500

Issue 68: Nov 84. Cerebus teaches the crowd a "valuable lesson" by kicking an old, crippled man off the roof. Bishop Powers is furious with the Western Pontiff's suggestions. Weisshaupt is furious at the bankers' suggestions. Cerebus catches a terrible cold. He decides it's time to go to bed when he punches Boobah, and Boobah doesn't even fall down. Mrs. Henrot-Gutch beats Cerebus to a pulp while he lies helpless in bed. Weisshaupt sets up on a roof across from Cerebus' hotel, and demands that Cerebus give him ALL of Cerebus' gold. Cerebus' response, "uh-oh."

Issue 69: Dec 84. Weisshaupt miscalculated his people's faith in the Pope, and Cerebus' willingness to use that influence. Weisshaupt is about to bring about Cerebus' destruction himself when he suffers a heart attack. Cerebus encounters the glowing sphere again (last seen in issue 66.) This time he hits it, and as a result sneezes flames. Getting some pepper he goes to visit Mrs. Henrot-Gutch. When Mrs. Henrot-Gutch gets wet instead of fried she beats Cerebus to a pulp with her cane. The Regency Elf calls to Cerebus telepathically, telling him of a secret route to the Regency.

Issue 70: Jan 85. This is a light-hearted issue with a lot of slapstick humor. Cerebus has a less than pleasant journey to the Regency, guided by telepathic instructions from the "Elf" (but not THE Elf.) Cerebus has to keep reminding himself, "don't get mad at an elf." The "Elf" warns Cerebus to stop what he's doing. Cerebus agrees, but he's realized it's not the Regency Elf he's talking to.

Gerhard is credited with the backgrounds and tone, but still isn't listed as a regular Aardvark-Vanaheim employee.

Deni says goodbye to everyone in the "Note from the Publisher." Her and Dave parted ways, and Deni moved to California. In California she started Renegade Press.

Issue 71: Feb 85. This story switches back and forth between Cerebus and Bishop Powers. Cerebus is talking with Bran, who is trying to convince Cerebus that all that is happening is Cerebus' destiny. Bran has some convincing evidence, including the fact that most of the gold coins Cerebus has collected are very old (including one minted by Tarim himself.) Bishop Powers negotiates the decision of who will replace Weisshaupt as President. Lord Julius shows up. Julius manipulates Powers like the master he is. By the end he has Powers thinking about taking the presidency for himself.

Issue 72: Mar 85. Julius continues to manipulate Bishop Powers. Eventually he gets what he wants, but is discouraged that it took nearly an hour to accomplish. Cerebus orders the crowd to conquer the Red Marches. Apparently Bran knew the command was coming, but he didn't know which area was going to fall first. Cerebus picks up the

gold coin forged by Tarim, and something strange happens (the gold sphere begins to form.)

Dave officially titled the current story line "Church and State" in his "Note from the President."

Issue 73: Apr 85. Cerebus panics after the reaction the coin had last issue. Sophia and her mother pack up to leave. After Sophia leaves Cerebus decides to get drunk, but is interrupted by the pesky light. The light suggests Cerebus send for Jaka, who is in the lower city. Cerebus waits anxiously for her to arrive.

Issue 74: May 85. Jaka has arrived, but Cerebus isn't entirely happy. Both of them say and do some very hurtful things. In the process Cerebus divorces himself from Sophia (he is the Pope after all.) Jaka tells Cerebus she doesn't want to live with someone who has the power Cerebus does. Cerebus tears off his robes, and puts on his old vest. The issue ends with Cerebus saying, "Cerebus is ready, Jaka...let's go."

In his note Dave mentions how happy he is with the art in this issue. He describes how he and Gerhard staged the whole issue before drawing it. Overall the art is quite good, but the emotionally strong story dominates this issue.

=====

 CEREBUS REX (_____) _____ > by: David R.

 | | _____ Sanderson
 | | _____
 | |

This week: Church and State part 5, issues 75-82. All issues were printed monthly. All issues have a \$2.00 Canadian and a \$1.70 U.S. cover price.

Circulation: 75 - 23,000
 76 - 24,200
 77-78 - 25,000
 79 - 25,500
 80-82 - 26,500

Issue 75: June 85. This issue continues on with Jaka's visit to Cerebus. Cerebus suggests they head north to live in the wilds alone. Jaka has to refuse, explaining to Cerebus that she's going to have a baby. Bran interrupts to say the Red Marches have been conquered. Jaka and Cerebus part again in another heart-breaking segment of their love story.

Issue 76: July 85. Bishop Powers prays for a quick, but painful, death for Weisshaupt. Weisshaupt sends for Cerebus. They parry words for a while; Weisshaupt gloating in his own ego, and Cerebus cheering on Weisshaupt's oncoming death. Weisshaupt tells Cerebus that Suenteus Po is Weisshaupt's uncle, and that there are two more aardvarks in Estarcion. When Weisshaupt asks for absolution Cerebus tells him to go to Hell, and leaves. Weisshaupt lies alone, dying.

Issue 77: Aug 85. "Odd Transformations." Cerebus falls asleep on his pile of gold. Cerebus dreams of his "mother," Jaka, and a host of other odd images. Cerebus stands among floating chess pieces, and Sim foreshadows future events when Cerebus steps inside the moon. Cerebus wakes up and heads for his bedroom. Dave treats us to three and a half pages of Cerebus answering nature's call. He then jokingly announces next issue as, "Dreaming on an Empty Bladder."

Issue 78: Sep 85. "Odd Transformations part two." Cerebus dreams on. Lord Julius, Wolveroach, Woman Thing, Elrod, Astoria, Jaka, and the Regency Elf's hand all make appearances in a surrealistic dreamscape. Cerebus wakes up to find the old farmer, Lord Stormsend (last seen in issue 44 - the "Wuffa Wuffa Wuffa" story), sitting on his bed. Your crazy if your expecting me to try and interpret Cerebus' dreams!

Issue 79: Oct 85. Cerebus is annoyed by Lord Stormsend, and orders Bear, his bodyguard, to throw the old man out. Cerebus gets his cold and blazing sneezes back. Just when Cerebus is getting down to sleep, Lord Julius and Duke Leonardi, who works as Lord Julius' look-a-like, show up. Lord Julius plays "this little piggy" with Cerebus' toes. Bear decides it just isn't worth, and quits.

Issue 80: Nov 85. Lord Stormsend is trying to explain the situation to Cerebus, when Sophia comes back. Sophia is trying to explain her feelings when Cerebus gets pulled by Lord Julius through the hole he's been stuck in. Lord Julius explains "Tarim" wants to talk to Cerebus. "Tarim" turns out to be Thrunck (Necross the Mad's consciousness inside a stone giant - last seen in issue 13). Cerebus refuses to surrender his gold, and Thrunck throws Cerebus into the Lower City. Bran pays the ultimate penance using his own dagger.

Issue 81: Dec 85. It's the beginning of the "Secret Sacred Wars" (a spoof of Marvel's Secret Wars), featuring the Sacred Wars Roach. Cerebus isn't feeling well after falling into the Lower City, but the Sacred Wars Roach comes to the rescue. He can walk on walls, and wears a nifty black costume (does everything except shoot sticky lines from webshooters). The Sacred Wars Roach takes Cerebus back to his hideout, where his flunkies Fleagleroach and Drewroach are waiting. After a lot of silly dialogue and some "character" building, Cerebus KO's the bug. Then the strange light shows up and absorbs Cerebus.

Professor X Claremont still inhabits The Roach's body, but is no longer in control. Apparently The Roach now has the understanding of the Tarot/Ascension connection.

Issue 82: Jan 86. Cerebus lands in the magical dimension from the "Magiking" short story. The wizard from that story and Henrot have a discussion. Thrunck demands that a gold throne be built for him. Astoria is released from prison, she and Lord Julius talk over old times. Another "Tarim" shows up, this one being an amalgam of the Woman Thing (Ethel), Sump Thing (Fred), and the Artist-chap. Cerebus' snout grows long again, and then he's swallowed up by the strange light yet again.

=====

This week: Church and State part 6, issues 83-90. All issues have a \$2.00 Canadian and a \$1.70 U.S. cover price. All issues are printed monthly.

Circulation:	83 - 26,000
	84 - 28,000
	85 - 30,000
	86 - 30,500
	87, 89 - 32,000
	88, 90 - 33,000

Issue 83: Feb 86. Cerebus lands on his head outside Michele's (the Countess - last seen in issue 56) door. She teaches Cerebus how to use a dustpan, and tells him about Weisshaupt. Michele had attended Weisshaupt's University, and was being groomed by him for some purpose. She tells Cerebus that everything she had told him before was a lie.

This issue features a petition at the back to support the return of Jack Kirby's original art that Marvel was holding at the time. From the account I've read this was a considerable amount of original pages.

Issue 84: Mar 86. All the Roaches make asses out of themselves while heading for the dinner table. They wolf down their food, and then head out to "take a Secret Sacred Wars leak." Michele gives Cerebus an envelope from Weisshaupt, it was his dying wish. Inside is a hint on how Cerebus can regain his papacy. Then it starts to snow in the middle of summer.

Issue 85: Apr 86. Cerebus is hiking back up to the Upper City, when he meets a couple of stranded travelers. They turn out to be Prince Mick and Prince Keef (one has big lips, and the other is obscenely stoned.) Mick gives Cerebus a special brew of half whiskey and half codeine. Cerebus suffers some wild hallucinations, and then feels "really GOOD." "Cerebus NEVER feels really good." In the meantime Prince Keef goes off to take a wizz, and runs into Elrod, wearing an outrageous roach suit.

Issue 86: May 86. Prince Mick has to put up with a nice Cerebus hanging off his leg, an albino in a giant cockroach costume, and a totally blitzed Prince Keef. The Secret Sacred Wars Roach is "thapocking" his way up the mountain side. He's on his way to take Astoria, and plans to fight Epop, the Anti-pope. Claremont manages to bring Cerebus out of his whiskey/codeine haze. Cerebus starts to climb after the Secret Sacred Wars Roach. The tower is growing.

This the first issue that Gerhard is credited on the inside cover.

Issue 87: June 86. Things are really starting to escalate. The Roaches are still going up the mountain, pursued by a strained Cerebus. The tower is growing even faster. Thrunk is crushing anyone who won't work for him.

Not a whole lot happens in this issue, yet it creates a feeling of growing urgency. Everything is coming together, with ominous overtones of potential devastation.

Issue 88: July 86. Things come to a head. The Secret Sacred Wars Roach challenges Thrunck (or Epop, as The Roach thinks of him.) Astoria averts her eyes as The Roach goes flying into the Lower City, still carrying Elrod with him. Cerebus finally finishes the climb, and heads straight to Weisshaupt's canons. Cerebus takes back his position as Pope with two violent explosions.

Two special events happen in this issue. Astoria sees a small Cerebus float before her eyes, the first time that type of event occurs. Later Cerebus tells Astoria to go away, and she does - by vanishing.

Issue 89: Aug 86. "Odd Transformations No. 3." Cerebus falls asleep after eating. Cerebus dreams of Bran, Weisshaupt, Thrunck, and the Regency Elf. There is some more foreshadowing, and the foundation for the next stage in the story is set.

Dave does an excellent job with this particular dream story. The whole issue has an eerie quality to it. The dream transformations of the characters are handled very well.

Issue 90: Sep 86. Boobah gets up for a midnight snack, only to find Lord Julius and Duke Leonardi setting up shop. They are planning on charging people to see the Pope (who is immobile, with a glowing sphere around his head.) Sophia shows up to alternately blubber at, and abuse Cerebus. Bishop Powers hauls in the Albatross. The Lion of Serrea has been assassinated, making Cerebus Pope of the United Church.

=====

CEREBUS REX (_____ | _____) > by: David R.
----- | _____ Sanderson

This week: Church and State part 7, issues 91-98. All issues have a \$2.00 Canadian and a \$1.70 U.S. cover price. All issues are printed monthly.

Circulation: 91 - 33,000
92-98 - 31,000

Issue 91: Oct 86. We get to see what was happening to Cerebus while he was immobile in issue 90. Cerebus has a discussion with the strange light about gold spheres, the tower, and the ascension. Cerebus decides to make the ascension. The strange light "returns" Cerebus back in time to meet Lord Julius, Boobah, and Bishop Powers.

Issue 92: Nov 86. Bishop Powers explains to Cerebus that Cerebus now rules a vast empire. Powers asks what should be done, and Cerebus responds, "Conquest." Cerebus heads off to try for the ascension, but is kept from leaving by an intriguing offer from two fellows who want to paint a portrait of him. After some amusing developments the business man has to talk himself and his partner out of trouble. Bishop Powers has been trying to tell Cerebus about the assassin, about

whom Lord Julius says, "sounds like my ex-wife." Bishop Powers responds, "It is."

Issue 93: Dec 86. Bishop Powers explains that Astoria killed the Lion of Serrea, and there was evidence of sorcery. Powers has Astoria chained, gagged, and blindfolded in a dungeon. Cerebus orders Powers to reform the gold sphere, and then heads out to see Astoria. Lord Julius comes along, intending to renegotiate his alimony payments. On the way their carriage hits the already badly wounded Secret Sacred Wars Roach, and pass by Princes Mick and Keef.

Issue 94: Cerebus and Astoria discuss the assassination, and then argue over Astoria's role in Cerebus' success. Astoria tricks Cerebus into her a drink of water. Then Astoria taunts Cerebus by pulling down her panties, and pointing out that a good Tarimite can only have sex when married. Cerebus rectifies the situation by divorcing himself from Sophia (for the second time), and declaring himself married to Astoria.

This story has been the subject of numerous debates. Cerebus replaces Astoria's gag and blindfold before declaring them married, and then proceeds to rape (or "rape" her.) The debates have been over whether or not it was rape (Dave clearly states in a later "Note from the President" that he thinks it is rape.) Nobody said Cerebus was a nice aardvark (except when he's high on whiskey and codeine.)

Issue 95: Feb 87. "Odd Transformation 4." Cerebus dreams of chains that grow and grow, until he is crushed beneath them. Then his sleep is disturbed by a guard, who finds Cerebus still laying on top of Astoria. Cerebus declares himself divorced from Astoria, and then goes back to sleep. He dreams of trouble with slaves, and of Astoria (wearing Sophia's chain-mail.)

Issue 96: Mar 87. Bishop Powers has arranged a trial for Astoria, and ordered a recasting of the sphere, after a flaw was found. Astoria wanders what Cerebus intends to ask of Tarim if he does make the ascension. Cerebus explains how he intends to run Iest now that he has total control. Astoria and Cerebus debate Tarim and Terim.

Issue 97: Apr 87. Astoria and Cerebus discuss the reason Cerebus threw the baby, and Cerebus' apparent leanings toward Kevillism. Astoria convinces Cerebus that the only hope he has is to help Astoria break out of the dungeon, and she gives him a "wedding present." Before Cerebus can break the chains, Bishop Powers comes back for Cerebus.

Issue 98: May 87. The trial begins. Astoria explains what happened to her when she vanished at Cerebus' command in issue 88. She admits to killing the Lion of Serrea, but tells of mysterious circumstances. Bishop Powers objects, declaring that Astoria is a slut and a sorceress. Cerebus asks Astoria if she thinks she is a prophet, and then asks her, "what is truth?"

=====

CEREBUS REX

(_____ |
| _____)
_____ |

by: David R.
Sanderson

This week: Church and State part 8, issues 99-104. All issues have a \$2.00 Canadian and a \$1.70 U.S. cover price. All issues are printed monthly.

Circulation: 99 - 32,000
 100 - 37,000
 101 - 32,000
 102,103 - 31,000
 104 - 29,000

Issue 99: June 87. The trial continues with Astoria's definition of truth. She and Bishop Powers argue over Tarim/Terim. Then Astoria detects "echoes" of events in other times. Cerebus taps into the "echoes" as well, seeing Astoria as an aardvark, and himself as Pope Astoria. It seems that disasters surrounding past attempts at ascension are coming full circle.

Issue 100: July 87. Cerebus is visibly upset by the visions he has seen, and tries to detach himself from the situation (his destiny?) Powers and Arch-Bishop Posey explain that Astoria is technically Pontiff of the Western Church, and Cerebus must pass sentence on her to become true Pontiff of the United Church. Cirin receives word of Astoria's trial. She orders that ALL of her armies be prepared to invade Iest.

Issue 100 is an important issue in that it solidifies the feeling of destiny - Cerebus' inability to avoid what he knows (or at least suspects) must be avoided. It's also important because we get to see Cirin for the first time. Cirin has some interesting features, including only four digits per hand.

Issue 101: Aug 87. Cirin's forces pass on the signals, sadly, but diligently. The Astoria/aardvark knows what is to happen next. Cerebus is in a daze, still in shock from the visions. Then something is different, a box with a present from Weisshaupt. Astoria screams for the Bishops to stop Cerebus, but it's too late as Cerebus takes the present, and jumps through a window.

It seems Weisshaupt finally realized the truth in his last days, and set plans in motion to help Cerebus. Weisshaupt may not have been who he wished to be, but he was the key to breaking the circle of destiny.

Issue 102: Sep 87. This issue starts exactly where issue 101 left off. Most of the issue takes place over a matter of seconds, as Cerebus breaks through the church window. At that same instant strange events occur all over Estarcion. Astoria, Bran (whose body still lies in the hotel), Jaka, and Bear experience the event in different ways. Blakely witnesses the most spectacular event of all, the rapidly growing tower breaking off and beginning to rise into the air. Cerebus manages to hitch a ride on the outside of the tower.

Dave uses text (instead of word balloons) to tell the story in this issue. The text comes from the point of view of a neutral narrator. Dave also makes the art revolve 360 degrees during the issue.

Issue 103: Oct 87. The tower is rising, and spinning faster and faster. Cerebus loses his grip, but somehow ends up inside the tower. Retrieving the gold sphere from its precarious resting place, Cerebus starts hiking toward the top of the tower. On the way he encounters the malevolent spirit of Weisshaupt.

Issue 104: Nov 87. Cerebus is saved from Weisshaupt by Flaming Carrot. Then Flaming Carrot manages to totally dominate the conversation, and forces Cerebus to follow his lead. When Sponge Boy shows up, Flaming Carrot leaves again to take the boy home. Cerebus sees the tower is carrying him straight toward the moon.

Flaming Carrots appearance is completely out of place in this issue. I found the modern dialogue distracting, and think the cross-over detracted from the story.

=====

CEREBUS REX (_____|_|_____) by: David R.
-----> Sanderson
 |_|

This Week: Church and State part 8, issues 105-111, and issue 112/113. All issues were printed monthly, except issue 113, which was published at the same time as 112 (under the same cover, but with a different publishing date.) Issue 105 has a \$2.00 Canadian and a \$1.70 U.S. cover price. Issues 106-112/113 have a \$2.50 Canadian and a \$2.00 U.S. cover price (that's a single price for both 112 and 113.)

Circulation:	105 - 28,000
	106 - 27,000
	107 - 28,200
	108 - 30,500
	109 - 32,000
	110 - 31,000
	111 - 31,500
	112/113 - 29,000

Issue 105: Dec 87. Cerebus reaches the top of the tower, only to find someone(s) is already there. Fred/Ethel/Artist-chap (the combined creatures last seen in issue 82) kick Cerebus' gold sphere away, and then try to convince Cerebus to jump. When Cerebus refuses they squash him instead.

Both issues 105 and 106 have wonderful covers depicting the moon. Both covers were done by Gerhard.

Issue 106: Jan 88. Fred/Ethel/Artist-chap are growing, to what they consider their appropriate "God-like size." Cerebus doesn't like it, especially when Fred starts playing catch with him. The Artist-chap continues to try and convince Cerebus to jump, but it's a combination of growing body and shrinking tower that eventually causes the tower to have only one occupant.

Issue 107: Feb 88. Cerebus arrives at the moon, and meets The Judge (also called "The Watcher" - Marvel cringes again.) The Judge and Cerebus go for a walk, The Judge wishing it was Weisshaupt he was

talking with. The Judge tells Cerebus about ancient history, and answers Cerebus' first three questions.

Dave carries on a debate with Diamond Comics Distributors in the front cover, and a two page spread in the back. Diamond had threatened to stop distributing "Puma Blues" in retribution for Dave's decision to distribute the High Society reprint book himself.

Issue 108: Mar 88. The Judge answers Cerebus' fourth question - who is Suenteus Po? He starts with a fascinating story of Suenteus Po the First. Cerebus fails to pay attention, being more interested with the fact that he's walking on (slightly above actually) the moon. Eventually Cerebus gets left behind, and panics when he realizes it. When he catches up to The Judge, The Judge is lecturing on the "Big Bang" and religion.

Issue 109: Apr 88. The Judge tells of the void (Tarim), and the single point of light (Terim.) Tarim explores Terim, and Terim splits in two (the birth of the universe.)

Dave handles this story in an interesting way. The story is told by a male character, from a male (Tarim's) point of view, but has the female (Terim) "giving birth" to everything of substance. It's simple, and yet throws an interesting light on to the theological "wars" of Estarcion.

Issue 110: May 88. Cerebus witnesses a solar eclipse (would be a lunar eclipse from Estarcion), giving him a spectacular view of what's left of Terim. The Judge tells of Tarim's reaction to Terim blowing up. The Judge also explains that Terim is going to come back, and Tarim is preparing for it.

Issue 111: June 88. The Judge completes his lecture by telling Cerebus of the future. Six thousand years distant NASA carries out the Apollo project, desecrating Terim in the progress. The strange light comes for Cerebus, but before it can take him, The Judge tells Cerebus that Cirin has invaded Iest and taken his gold. The judge also tells Cerebus that Cerebus will "die alone, unmourned and unloved." The strange light drops Cerebus off in front of his hotel. The city is in ruins, and Cerebus is alone.

Issue 112/113:

(112) July 88. Cerebus explores the ruins of the hotel, finding it empty except for his personal possessions, and a rather decayed Bran. To add to his bad mood Cerebus finds that the structure he's walking on has collapsed in one place, and it starts to rain.

(113) Aug 88. Cerebus decides to chuck it all in. Doffing his Jacket and sword, he prepares to jump through the hole in the walkway. After nearly succeeding, he instead heads back to the hotel to sleep off his mood. On his way out of the hotel the next morning, he finds a gold coin (what's left of his once vast stockpile.) He meets an old man who is bitter over the Cirinists rule, but Cerebus isn't phased by the old man's anger. Instead Cerebus just tells the man what he wants to know, "where it all ends."

=====

CEREBUS REX

| |

(_____)

| |

by: David R.
Sanderson

This week: Jaka's Story part 1, issues 114-118. All issues have a \$2.50 Canadian, and a \$2.00 U.S. cover price. All issues are printed monthly.

Circulation: 114-116 - 26,000
117,118 - 26,500

Issue 114: Sep 88. "Prologue." The beginning of the "novel" that is a biography of Jaka's childhood. Sections include the morning ritual, run by Nurse; the introduction of Jaka's doll, Missy, confidant and protector; and the wooden horse, Magic. In between these sections of the biography, we see Jaka and her husband, Rick. Jaka is not pregnant, and there is no sign of a baby. Rick is out of work, and not overly zealous in his search for it.

Dave uses an interesting technique throughout Jaka's Story. He uses text next to a single panel of art for the extracts from Jaka's biography, and then his usual pages for actions in the "present." Another thing to note about this issue is that Cerebus does not appear anywhere in this issue. This is the first time it happens, but if I'm not mistaken, not the last.

Issue 115: Oct 88. Cerebus comes upon a tavern. Inside Mr. Withers is day-dreaming about the conversation he'll be having later. Cerebus interrupts to order an ale. When Cerebus tries to pay with the gold coin, Mr. Withers is shocked. Jaka shows up, and when Mr. Withers tries to have the "dream talk" with her he fails due to his shock. Cerebus recognizes Jaka's voice, and greets her. They go back to Jaka's apartment, where Jaka explains what happened to her, Rick, and the baby. We get to read some more of Jaka's biography.

Mr. Pud Withers is an introverted, lonely man, who obviously has a very deep crush on Jaka. In fact she is about all he thinks about. Pud is an interesting character, who plays an important role through most of Jaka's story.

Issue 116: Nov 88. Cerebus and Rick meet for the first time. Rick tells Cerebus about Oscar (a major character, who shows up later), Cerebus tells Rick that Cerebus loves Jaka. Rick either doesn't care, or more likely, doesn't understand how much Cerebus cares for Jaka. Jaka heads off for work - Rick, Cerebus, and Pud all thinking about her as she goes.

In the biography, the young Jaka spins around, fantasizing of being in the Palnu coliseum. Is this the beginning of her dancing career?

Issue 117: Dec 88. Jaka has an uneventful night at Pud's tavern. Cerebus spends a very frustrating night trying to pretend he's asleep. Rick thinks it might be safer if they called Cerebus by a different name, noting he has the same name as the former Pope.

Young Jaka debates on whether or not to open the door beyond the hidden room. Her fantasies of what might happen finally gets the better of her.

Dave takes a poke at himself in this issue. Oscar talks about ridiculing the author of "Church and State."

Issue 122: May 89. Jaka tries to repair the damage of Rick's comments about "Fred," but ends up only making it worse. Oscar prepares to paint something. We learn a little more of the history of the Black Tower Empire and Suenteus Po from Oscar.

Young Jaka is heartbroken by what she finds behind the hidden door. As a result, she has to hide in the hidden room when Nurse comes looking for her.

Issue 123: June 89. Pud's daydreams take on a darker tone. Rick and Oscar talk about the son Rick wants, until Jaka sends Rick to the market to find work. Jaka despairs over her situation. Cerebus gets all mushy when she mentions the possibility of running away. Cerebus starts feeling smug when Rick comes home without a job.

Young Jaka manages to hold the door shut when Nurse tries to open it, looking for her.

Issue 124: July 89. Pud starts to act out his dark daydream when Jaka interrupts. Cerebus, in his usual "win at all costs" manner, challenges Rick to a ball and bucket game. Jaka gets drunk, and manages to embarrass herself terribly. Then she finds out she managed to embarrass herself in an even worse way. Oscar starts writing "the book."

Young Jaka feels triumphant after keeping Nurse out of the hidden room. She comes to realize that she is Jaka Tavers, of the ruling family of Tavers.

In the back of this issue is an eight page excerpt from Alan Moore's "From Hell."

=====

 CEREBUS REX (_____| |_____) > by: David R.

 | | _____
 | | _____
 | | _____

This week: Jaka's Story part 3, issues 125-129. All issues have a \$2.50 Canadian and a \$2.00 U.S. cover price. All issues were printed monthly.

Circulation: No longer available

Issue 125: Aug 89. Oscar chooses a foggy day to paint one of the fallen heads from the tower. He and Pud argue, Oscar hinting at Pud's motives for "keeping" Jaka. Lord Julius shows up in a dress, claiming to be Jaka's Aunt Victoria. Julius manages to fluster the otherwise unshakable Oscar. Cerebus does not appear.

Issue 126: Sep 89. Jaka apologizes to Pud for her accident the night before. Jaka and Rick argue over whether or not Rick will fetch more paint for Oscar's guffin. When Jaka goes to work, Pud begins to act out his dark daydream again. This time it's interrupted by a customer. Cerebus does not appear again.

Young Jaka explores her rooms, realizing for the first time that everything in them is hers. She goes to the hidden room, and begins to spin - dance.

Issue 127: Oct 89. Oscar sends out correspondence regarding his book, "Jaka's Story" (not "Daughter of Palnu.") The customer at Pud's tavern gives Jaka a big tip, which she gives to the nearly bankrupt Pud. Pud begs Tarim for forgiveness for his dark daydream. Jaka gets upset when Cerebus and Rick ignore her, too engaged in their game of ball and bucket.

We don't get an installment of "Jaka's Story" due to the fact Oscar is withholding future installments, waiting for payment. The inside back cover of this issue is a foldout picture of Cerebus graffiti on the Berlin Wall.

Issue 128: Nov 89. Jaka finds a note from Cerebus, saying he's gone to fetch the white paint. Oscar tries to finish his book, but can't find a way to describe Jaka's dancing. Jaka and Rick clear some things up, after which Rick goes to see Oscar. Oscar thinks that Lord Julius was the "Fred" that Rick had talked about. Oscar goes to see Jaka dance, writing and rewriting the conclusion of his book while watching through the tavern window.

Issue 129: Dec 89. Jaka and Oscar exchange niceties in preparation for a party at Pud's tavern. Oscar spends a lot of money softening up the crowd in preparation for his recitation of excerpts from "Jaka's Story." Jaka is upset that Rick told Oscar about her childhood.

Young Jaka discovers her clothing allowance, and uses it to maneuver her way up in the dining room hierarchy - along with some sneaky female trickery.

=====

CEREBUS REX (_____ | | _____) > by: David R.

| | | Sanderson

This week: Jaka's Story part 4, issues 130-136. All issues have a \$2.50 Canadian and a \$2.00 U.S. cover price. All issues printed monthly.

Issue 130: Jan 90. This issue hits like a thunderstorm on a clear blue day. Jaka's Story is moving along at a gentle pace, and then suddenly in issue 130 all hell breaks loose. The Cirinists break through Pud's door (even though it was unlocked.) They immediately kill a customer, and then Pud. It's only Jaka's claim of diplomatic immunity that saves her and Rick. Oscar is sentenced to two years hard labor for writing without a permit.

Young Jaka's world comes crashing down when Lord Julius brings home his 17 year old bride, Astoria.

In the back of this issue is an eight page preview of Martin Wagner's "Hepcats."

Issue 131: Feb 90. Jaka is placed in a dungeon cell. The rats, cockroaches, and two buckets (one for food, one for a toilet - her choice) as her cell-mates. In the cell next door is her childhood Nurse. Young Jaka is upset over the reforms put in place by Astoria. She holds a mock trial of Astoria, with Nurse being the jury.

This is the first issue done in Dave's new studio, The Off-White House.

Issue 132: Mar 90. Jaka and Nurse talk about Nurse's arrest, the danger Rick is in, and events from their days in Palnu. Jaka won't use either of her buckets.

Young Jaka gets the key to a suite in the elite part of the house. Along with the key is a letter with the heading, "Department of Don't-Tell-Astoria."

Issue 133: Apr 90. A guard comes for Nurse, she is to be executed for having forged papers. The guard rips out some of Jaka's hair when she protests. Some time later, Jaka is moved to a cell with a window, and is visited by Mrs. Thatcher.

Young Jaka moves into her new rooms. In an attempt to thank her Uncle, she gets some strange results with her letter.

Mrs. Thatcher is based on the former British Prime Minister. For all intents and purposes, like most of Dave's "real" characters, Mrs. Thatcher is Margaret Thatcher - just in the world of Estarcion.

Issue 134: May 90. Mrs. Thatcher comes to teach Jaka the error of her ways. They have a vehement debate over the evils of dance.

It is Young Jaka's twelfth birthday. She receives an invitation to a reception with her Uncle Julius in honor of her birthday. Julius sends dress makers and a hair stylist to prepare her.

Issue 135: June 90. Mrs. Thatcher continues her lectures. Among the evidence is a statement from a tavern owner who told Jaka he would be killed for letting her dance. Even more damning is Pud's diary.

The final preparations are made to Young Jaka's gown, and she is escorted to Lord Julius' elegant offices. When the doors open Jaka is shocked by what she sees.

Issue 136: July 90. Jaka and Rick are reunited in Mrs. Thatcher's office. There Mrs. Thatcher tells Rick that Jaka had used an exotic plant to cause a miscarriage. Rick hits Jaka, and then is taken home to his mother (but not before having his left thumb broken for hitting a woman.) Jaka is turned over to Palnan authorities. Cerebus (who hasn't been seen since he left to get the white paint in issue 127) returns to find Pud's tavern burned to the ground.

Issue 142: Jan 91. Oscar is worried about his debts. Reggie comes to keep Oscar company while Robbie goes out to find someone to cover Oscar's debts. Boobah walks right by Cerebus. Boobah doesn't notice, and Cerebus isn't in a state to care even if he did notice. Princes Mick and Keef show up. They have to go home and marry the "Buttock Sistuhs," or Keef will have to go to jail.

This issue is extra thick because it contains Dave's entry in his "24 hour" comic series. Dave's entry, done in about 15 hours, is a very depressing story about a bitter, lonely woman.

Issue 143: Dino gets upset with Janice when he discovers Cerebus is starving. Reggie and Robbie visit Oscar. Some money arrives from one of Oscar's friends. When Robbie refuses to stay with Oscar, Oscar foreshadows his own death by asking Robbie to buy an urn while he's gone.

=====

-----		_____	by: David R.
CEREBUS REX	(_____ >	Sanderson
-----		_____	

This week: Melmoth: A Short Story part 2, issues 144-150. All issues have a \$2.75 Canadian and a \$2.25 U.S. cover price. All issues were printed monthly.

Issue 144: Mar 91. During the day Cerebus begins seeing things. He sees Astoria in chains (like she was right before the trial), and then he sees Astoria/aardvark and Cerebus/Astoria. At night Cerebus suffers nightmares involving the ascension, the tower, and self inflicted wounds. Dino hires a shy, new waitress, Doris. Reggie writes to Robbie, telling of Oscars worsening condition.

Issue 145: Apr 91. Cerebus suffers through drop cloths and dust as Dino begins the remodeling of his cafe. Doris tells Cerebus a tedious story about her shoe buying experiences. She begins to develop a crush on Cerebus, which is only made worse when Cerebus answers "aye" to her question. Reggie continues his letters. Oscar gets worse, and has to keep his head in ice.

Issue 146: May 91. Cerebus is becoming more active. He tosses nuts in the air to catch in his mouth, and even yells at a passerby for not responding to his "good morning." Reggie witnesses the capture of Archbishop Posie, who is sentenced to five years hard labor. Reggie writes that Oscar is likely to die in three or four days.

Issue 147: June 91. Dino's construction is suffering numerous delays. Oscar seems to improve a little, but Reggie doubts he will live. Doris tells Cerebus about her broken love affair, which reminds Cerebus of Jaka. Doris gets mushy over another of Cerebus' ayes.

Neil Gaiman's "24 hour comic" is featured in it's entirety.

Issue 148: July 91. Most of this issue is made up of excerpts from Robbie's letters about Oscar. It covers Oscar's last few days. Oscar has grown thin. He develops a death rattle, and dies soon after. The issue closes with Doris holding Cerebus' hand.

Issue 149: Aug 91. Robbie has trouble explaining Oscar's use of an alias, and has other troubles associated with Oscar's alien status. A number of poets and others come to pay their respect. The funeral ends up being well attended, despite the fact no announcements were sent out.

The "Note from the President" is exceptional in this issue. Many people have called Dave an asshole or other things (to which he agrees on occasion), but this note shows Dave's gift for understanding and tolerating the differences in people. I personally gained a great deal more respect for him after reading this note the first time. In the back Dave explains that all the text for Robbie's and Reggie's letters was taken from the actual letters written by Oscar Wilde's companions. Certain aspects had to be changed to fit the world of Estarcion, but for the most part they are intact.

Issue 150: Sep 91. Cerebus wakes up in his chair to hear two Cirinist guards discussing what one of them did to Jaka while she was imprisoned. It's at this point Dave (Gerhard more likely) starts using a lot of ink - blood everywhere. Cerebus has a flashback of a mercenary who told him about the Cirinist's swarming ability. If you hurt one it's just best to slit your own throat before the rest arrive. Cerebus considers this, but instead makes a break for it, still holding Missy.

This issue marks the end of the first half of Cerebus the Aardvark.