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## Magic Arcana Wednesday, September 17, 2003

# Magic Dossier: Doug Beyer

## The people that make the game go

**Name:** Doug Beyer

**Job title and duties:** I'm a web developer in the Online Media department (a.k.a. the web team). I do the technical gruntwork behind MagicTheGathering.com, various **Magic** product pages, the **Magic Online** site, and the Wizards.com message boards and chat rooms. I've also moonlighted as a flavor text writer for **Magic** since *Odyssey*.

**Age:** I'm 29.

**Education:** I have a sorta useful Bachelor's in computer science and philosophy from the University of Kansas (1996), and a totally useless Masters degree in philosophy from SUNY-Binghamton (1998).

**Began working at Wizards:** Summer of 2000.

**Previous job:** In Binghamton, NY – a little, gray town from which all possible life or enthusiasm had previously been sucked – I made extremely boring intranet web pages for IBM, in a little, gray cubicle from which all possible life or enthusiasm had previously been sucked. I hated it but it paid the post-grad school bills. (No offense to anyone fond of New York's Southern Tier or of Big Blue.)

**How you got your job here:** A friend heard about a web development position opening up at Wizards. I was moving to Seattle anyway (from the rainy Northeast to the rainy Pacific Northwest, go figure) and the timing was good, so I applied. Luckily it worked out well, and I was working at Wizards after having lived in Seattle for about a month.

**Magic accomplishments prior to working here:** I've been a Johnny-ish, Spike-ish casual player since *Fallen Empires*. I went to a couple prereleases before I got hired on at Wizards.

**Expansions or projects you've worked on:** I've been among the flavor text writers for *Odyssey*, *Torment*, *Judgment*, *Onslaught*, *Legions*, *Scourge*, *Mirrodin*, and *Fifth Dawn*, and am currently on the world-building team for the "Earth, Wind and Fire" block (the one after *Mirrodin* block).

**Favorite part of your job:** I like getting to create new "web toys" for MagicTheGathering.com, like the Orb of Insight, the autocard window, sortable spoiler lists, the searchable Saturday School database, the *Apocalypse* "virtual booster" promo, Buehler's in-article polls, Rosewater's more interactive columns, and some new goodies that I'm cooking up for future use. I love working on anything that is fun and useful for you folks who visit Wizards.com. I also enjoy writing that flavor text – it's great to be part of the process of making the game I've played for 8 years. But it's probably the work environment here at Wizards, where being clever and creative is weighed more



heavily than, you know, wearing Dockers and showing up at 8AM, that really brings me the most job satisfaction. Blurring the line between career and hobby is... broken. In half.

**Least favorite part of your job:** It's frustrating whenever there aren't sufficient resources – usually time, but sometimes budget or manpower – to be able to implement a good idea. We have to toss half the cool ideas we have around here, and I wish that that creativity would never go to waste.

**Thing you've worked on that you're most proud of:** Definitely MagicTheGathering.com. It's been my main job since it launched in January 2002, and although its vision was extremely ambitious, I'm very proud of how it's lived up to that vision.

**Other games you currently enjoy playing:** Lately I've been splitting a lot of my free time between playing a lot of poker (Texas Hold 'Em) with my roommates and playing *Star Wars Galaxies* on the PC. I also intermittently check in on my *Animal Crossing* town on the Gamecube, and at work we *still* play *San Francisco Rush 2049*—Battle Mode—on the Dreamcast.

**Favorite Magic card(s):** I like devastating sweeper spells like *Jokulhaups*, *Armageddon*, *Pernicious Deed*, *Decree of Pain*... Besides the card advantage benefits, there's something viscerally pleasurable about wiping the board clean, especially if you have something mean left over and the other guy doesn't.

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