

HERO SystemTM Almanac 1



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HERO SYSTEM ALMANAC I™

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the first *Hero System Almanac*. The Almanac is a new type of product for us, a forum for optional rules, campaign information and *Champions Universe* updates. It is also a place where we can reprint some classic articles from the *Adventurers Club* magazine.

In many ways, this Almanac, and the others that will follow, are *your* books. Your ideas are what will make these books special and useful. We're doing something very different with this book. We're presenting *optional* rules. None of the rules or rules changes in this book should be considered official. But you should read them over and try them out anyway. If you like them, let us know. If you don't like them, let us know. Use the survey form in the back of this book. The things that you like might just be made official. And the things that you hate won't become part of our rules. But only if you let us know.

For future Almanacs, we're interested in what you have to say. We'd like to get articles on new rules, optional rules, and campaigning from you. We're planning on making the Almanac an annual event, and we look to you to help us make it one.

The Almanac is split into three sections. Here's what you'll find in each of them:

NEW RULES

In this section, you'll find a whole bunch of optional new rules. There are new Advantages and Limitations, information on how to GM negative characteristics, even a method for converting your old *Justice, Inc.* characters to the 4th edition rules. One of the most exciting systems in this book describes how to deal with spirits in the *HERO System*. Spirits is, perhaps, the major offering in this volume. It takes up almost a full third of the book, and shows you how to write up, and play, everything from a vampire to an android to a genie in a bottle.

We can't stress strongly enough, though, that all of the rules presented in this section are *optional*. They are not intended, at this point, to become part of the permanent rules. They won't be used in any of our other supplements. Now, depending on your feedback, they might *become* part of the permanent rules. But for now, they are optional.

Throughout this section, different voices give commentary on the different rules that are presented here. We've given these voices names, and are using them to help explore some of the ramifications of these new rules. Some of the commentary is from the author of the article, designed to point some things out. The rest of the commentary is from a specific point of view. Let's introduce you to our commentators.



STORYTELLER

The Storyteller is the voice of the Game Master. She is interested in the rules, but she is mainly interested in telling a good story. She knows that there are times when the rules get in the way, and need to be ignored. She also knows that there are things that can be done with the rules that should not be done. The Storyteller looks at these new rules with an eye to plot and fun for her players.

GAME MECHANIC

The Game Mechanic is the voice of the rules lawyer or power-gamer. He may be interested in story, but his main interest is in the rules. If it is written, it can be done. If it can be done, it can be played. He's not really interested in game balance or the like; he wants to push the system to the limit. And beyond. The Game Mechanic has read these rules with an eye towards their use and abuse.



ROLE-MAN

Role-Man is the voice of the good player. He is interested in the rules and writing up good characters. He is also interested in the Storyteller's story and plot, and like to cooperate with her to get the story told. Role-Man may be attracted to the Game Mechanic's point of view at time, but is primarily interested in playing in a good game, and have a good time. Role-Man has read these rules with an eye towards how they affect the player.

...

This commentary is there to help start the thought process about these new rules. Some of them can have quite far-reaching affects on your game. Read over the rules, and the commentary, and then decide what you want to use and what you can leave out. Remember, the choice is up to you.

CLASSIC AC

This section reprints some of the best material from the *Adventurers Club* magazine. The AC has been published for over ten years, and a lot of good material has seen print and then faded out of sight. The Almanac will keep that material from vanishing forever.

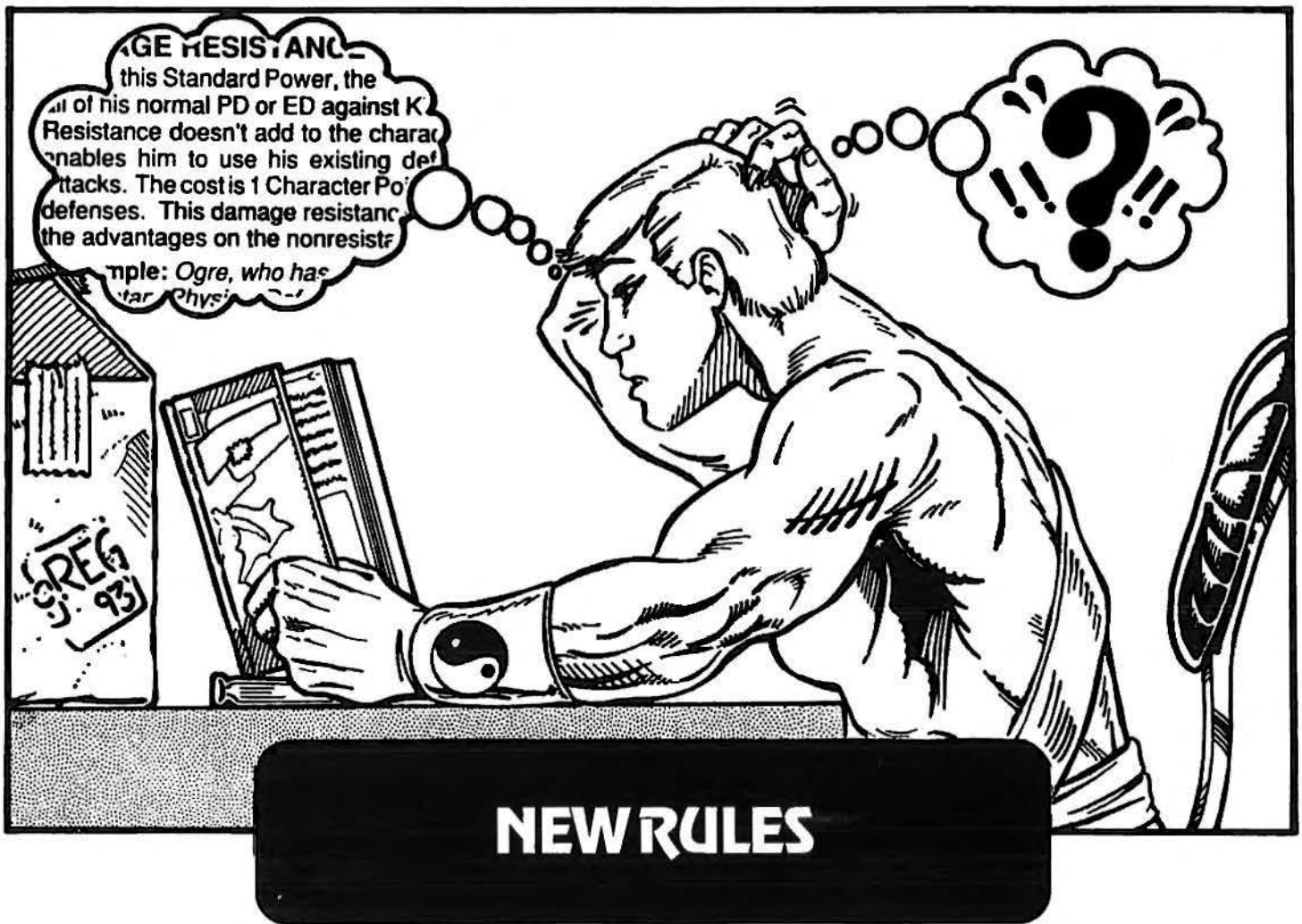
People have long since been of the opinion that things published in the AC were "official." To a great extent, this is true. But it does cause some problems. When Steven Long wrote *Dark Champions*[™], he made reference to an article that was published in AC #8 and 9. That article, *Sound the Alarm*, is an excellent look at different type of security system, and how to defeat them, and certainly was germane to Mr. Long's book. But *Sound the Alarm* was published back in 1986, well over seven years ago!

This section, then, will help correct that problem. We've reprinted *Sound the Alarm*, along with some excerpts from Doug Garrett's old *Covert Action* columns. Doug's advice on ref'ing the disadvantages was aimed at *Espionage!*GMs, but is applicable to *Dark Champions* and other Hero Games.

CHARACTERS AND CAMPAIGNING

This section contains articles on how to run your campaigns. We have articles on how to create good timelines, how to set your power levels and how to create a super team name. We even have a *Champions Universe* update. So read and enjoy!





This section contains all of the new rules. Remember, *all of the rules in this section are optional*. Don't feel obligated to use them, and, if you are writing something for publication, don't include anything from these rules. If you see something

you like or hate, let us know via the feedback form in the back of this book. Please return that form in any case; we'll be using it to help determine which of these rules, if any, will become part of the official body of rules.

ADVANTAGES & LIMITATIONS

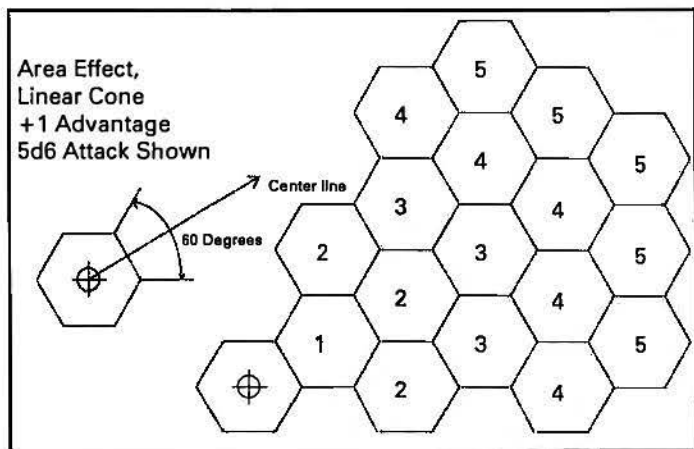
NEW POWER ADVANTAGES

SUPERLEAP WITH NO SKILL ROLL

Some leapers in the comics, particularly martial artists or acrobats, have full control over their leaps. Starburst, a fairly inaccurate person, never flies to the wrong spot. Why should Dragon Master, a master of Kung Fu, miss-target a leap? To correct this problem, buy Superleap with a +½ Advantage: Requires No Skill Roll. This advantage allows those leapers to jump from place to place with no chance of missing their target. Superleap with No Skill Roll is a +½ Power Advantage.

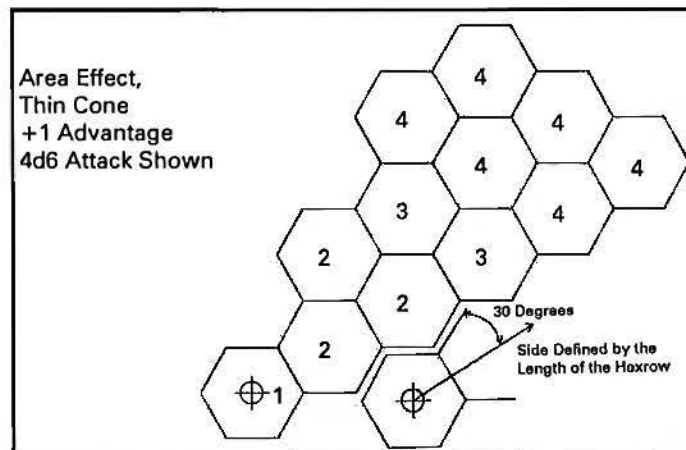
AREA EFFECT (LINEAR CONE)

This creates a 60 degree cone of effect which radiates out from the target hex. The size of the cone is defined by the length of the center line; the length of center line equals 1"+1" for every 5 Character Points in the Power not counting the Area Effect Advantage. Thus a 1" cone effects 1 hex, 2" effects 2 hexes, a 3" cone effects 5 hexes, a 4" cone effects 8 hexes, and so on. Area Effect (Linear Cone) is a +1 Power Advantage; to double the length of the center line is an additional +¼ Advantage. See the diagram for an example of a Linear Cone.



AREA EFFECT (THIN CONE)

This creates a 30 degree cone of effect which radiates out from the target hex. The size of the cone is defined by the length of the side defined by a hexrow; the length of side equals 3" for every 10 Character Points in the Power not counting the Area Effect Advantage. Thus a 1" cone effects 1 hex, 2" effects 2 hexes, a 3" cone effects 4 hexes, a 4" cone effects 6 hexes, and so on. Area Effect (Linear Cone) is a +1 Power Advantage; to double the length of the side defined by a hexrow is an additional +¼ Advantage. See the diagram for an example of a Thin Cone.



NEW POWER LIMITATIONS

RESTRAINABLE

A power with this limitation defines an area of the body as generating the power. If that area is restrained, entangled or otherwise held, the power is unusable. As soon as the restraint is gone, the character may use the power without restriction. Restrainable causes the power to be treated like a power with an OAF Limitation for purposes of grabs and entangle and is a -½ Limitation.

Example: As Deathhawk flies along, she is ambushed by the bounty hunter Tangler. Tangler, living up to his name, snares Deathhawk in a net. Deathhawk's Flight is bought with the Restrainable Limitation, using the special effects of great wings. Since Deathhawk is entangled, she can no longer use her flight, and she starts to fall. Deathhawk attempts to use her claws to rip free of the net. But the villain HKA was bought with the Restrainable limitation as well! Fortunately, Deathhawk is very strong, and is able to break free of the net before she hits the ground. Tangler, choosing the better part of discretion, leaves.



CONVERTING JUSTICE INC. TO HERO SYSTEM 4TH EDITION

by Allen Shock & Steve Peterson

One of our favorite games has always been *Justice Inc.*, the game of two-fisted adventure in the Twenties and Thirties. For any fan of Indiana Jones or the great pulp heroes like Doc Savage, the Saint and the Shadow, *Justice Inc.* provides a fulfilling adventure without the need for a flashy costume and world-breaking powers. Unfortunately, when the Hero System underwent its big revision, *Justice Inc.* became woefully out of date. In an effort to help *Justice Inc.* avoid becoming as big a collector's item as the pulp magazines which spawned it, here's how to update *Justice Inc.* characters to the new and improved Hero System. The specific changes you'll want to make depend largely on what genre of pulp adventure you play; if you don't use Psychic Powers, then obviously that part won't be of much use to you. But hopefully *Justice Inc.* players and GMs who want to get "modernized" will find this useful.

POINT TOTALS

"Classic" *Justice Inc.* was designed for either "Talented Normals" built on a 50 point base, or "Hero" characters built on 75 points plus disadvantages. This corresponds to the "Competent Normal" and "Heroic" types listed on page 11 of the Hero System Rulebook. In general, "Heroic" level characters better reflect the abilities of the heroes of the adventure pulps and serials. For the "Masked Avenger" types, a 100 point base with up to 150 points in Disads allows for the amazing abilities these crimefighters possessed. See *Dark Champions* for an extensive set of rules and suggestions about creating street-level superheroes; these suggestions work very well for *Justice Inc.* heroes.

SKILLS

Many of the Skills on the *Justice Inc.* Skill List now have different names, or have been moved to other sections. The costs of many skills have changed as well, with many becoming cheaper. Here's a guide to those skills that have moved:

Ambidexterity is now a Talent (*Hero System Rulebook*, p.46)

Linguist is now a Skill Enhancer (p.41)

Resistance is now a Talent.

Safecracking is no longer one skill; it has been spread across the skills of Lockpicking and Demolitions. The character may also want to buy KS: Safecracking.

Of course, not every skill you'll find on the *Hero System Rulesbook* list will work for a campaign set in the Thirties. GMs should prepare a list of the skills available in their campaigns. You can even rename the skills back to their original names using the original *Justice Inc.* list as a guide, for increased pulp flavor.

TALENTS

Most of the "Weird Talents" from *Justice Inc.* are Talents in the 4th edition of the Hero System. Height Manipulation doesn't exist per se, and some others have turned into Powers; one, Animal Friend, is now done using the Followers Perk! Notes on specific changes are as follows:

Hypnosis is now done using Mind Control requiring an Obvious Accessible Focus (-1), eye contact with the victim (-½), an Extra Time limitation (5 Minutes is the suggested level, -2), and Requires a (Hypnosis) Skill Roll (-½), based on EGO (+1). The Invisible Power Effects Advantage (+½), and Incantations (-½) ("you are getting sleepy...sleepy...") might also be in order.

Missile Deflection is now listed under Powers. *Justice Inc.* characters should be limited to 15 points (everything up to bullets) and should not be allowed to purchase Reflection.

Height Manipulation can be done in the following manner: Buy 5 points of Growth, Limited Height Adjustment Only (-2, which allows you to adjust your height up to about a foot), No END Cost (+½), Persistent (+½), with the Requires a Skill Roll (-½) and Extra Time (1 turn, -1) Limitations, total cost 2 points. The skill is a General Skill called Height Manipulation, which costs 3 points, so the total cost is 5 points for an 11- roll, +1 to the roll for 2 points. The Height Manipulation skill will act as a complementary skill for almost all Disguise skill rolls.

PSYCHIC POWERS

The Psychic Powers as originally presented in *Justice Inc.* differed radically from their counterparts in *Champions*, as a way of differentiating the pulp characters from those caped usurpers who came after them. *Justice Inc.* powers often had set effects, were usually used by making a Characteristic based roll and were not easily controlled directly by the user. If you want psychic powers to maintain the feel of the original *Justice Inc.* versions, then you could use the No Conscious Control (-2) and Requires a Skill Roll (-½) Limitations.

If No Conscious Control is a bit much of a Limitation (and at -2, it's pretty restrictive, you can just assign a general difficulty modifier to the use of psychic powers in your campaign. For instance, a -5 modifier would certainly make things difficult. To make matters more interesting, this modifier could vary according to the phase of the moon or the positions of the stars or other variables (including location).

Each of the psychic powers are presented in detail below. Following the descriptions of the psychic powers are some notes on using psychic powers in various Hero System genres.

AURA VISION

This is the ability to see auras around living beings and objects. An aura is a brightly colored radiance that extends for several inches about a person, with colors that have meaning to those experienced in perceiving auras. (See the Aura Color Chart for details.)

All objects have a basic blue-white aura; living things have more variation in their aura colors (though objects that are magical or otherwise unusual are an exception to this). Creatures and monsters also have auras. It's important to remember that it is impossible to "disguise" your aura; this could be handy when you're trying to figure out who is a werewolf in disguise, for instance. Auras are not very specific (it's not as if each person has a unique pattern of colors), but a supposedly meek, mild-mannered person with a blazing red aura is not right somehow.

A person's aura is rarely composed of one color; it's normally a mixture of several or many shades, and this mix changes with the current emotional state of the person. The effective range of Aura Vision is only about 3" (6 meters) in dim light, or 1" or less (2 meters) in bright sunlight. The GM should apply modifiers to the Aura Vision roll for ambient conditions, such as bright lights (-1 to -3), many people crowded together (-2), distractions (-1 to -3), and so on.

The GM should use the Aura Color Chart to good effect in a game; use this creatively to describe the various patterns and colors that a hero sees in an aura. Describing the aura of an evil creature can be particularly chilling. The GM should also feel free to add more colors to the table, and also the meanings of different colors in combinations or patterns. It's more fun when the meanings of colors are ambiguous, and the players must interpret them for themselves.



AURA COLOR CHART

Color	Meaning
Blue-white	The basic aura color; the color of all inanimate objects.
Pink	Compassionate, warm, sociable.
Pale Pink	Psychotic; indicates weakness or confusion.
Rose	Generous, unassuming, motherly.
Red	Energetic, a leader, extroverted; anger, moodiness.
Dark Red	Emotion, desire, sensuality.
Orange	Sincere, open-hearted, a sense of justice, fair play.
Yellow-orange	Friendly, witty, humorous.
Dark Yellow	Cowardice, fear, inferiority.
Yellow	Intellectual, a teacher, deep thinker.
Pale Yellow	Idealistic, humanitarian.
Yellow-green	Greedy, stubborn; also jealous, deceitful, distrusting.
Green	Practical, composed; also indicates a love for nature.
Light Green	Brooding, lonely; often a loner.
Dark Green	Envy, hate, maliciousness.
Blue-green	Psychic or spiritual powers, a seeker after knowledge.
Blue	Peaceful, calm, a strong character.
Light Blue	Creative, spiritual.
Dark Blue	Blind faith, superstitious, fearful.
Lavender	Conservative, sensitive, civilized.
Violet	Excitable, easily swayed by arguments, loves variety.
Purple	Royalty, majesty, calm; a true leader.
White	Purity, innocence, honesty; often found in children.
Gray	Sickness, anxiety, a negative attitude.
Black	Rage, anger, savagery, black magic, extreme illness.
Gold	The color of saints; the highest, most spiritual color

Aura Vision is bought as Detect Aura, Sense, Discriminatory, for a total cost of 10 points. Though Aura Vision has a range, that range is so limited that it's more of a special effect than an added cost. Aura Vision is based on a standard 9 + (INT/5) or less roll, +1 for 2 points.

CLAIRVOYANCE

This is the ability to see visions of other places and events. Clairvoyance is purchased using the Clairsentience power for vision only, at a cost of 20 points.

CLAIRAUDIENCE

This is the ability to auditory equivalent of Clairvoyance. Clairaudience is purchased using the Clairsentience power for hearing only, at a cost of 20 points.



DOWSING

This is the ability to detect water, minerals, metals, and even caverns by use of a forked stick as a Focus. The character dowses by walking across an area, concentrating on whatever substance she is seeking. Dowsing characters walk at no more than 2" per phase and are DCV 0 (Concentration, -1 Limitation) while dowsing. The GM should apply negative modifiers if the substance being sought is very deep (-1 per 3" down), very small, or otherwise difficult to detect.

Dowsing can be used to find buried treasure, lost graves, hidden tunnels, and similar things of interest to heroes. Dowsing works best on large things, like underground rivers or oil deposits; a lost ring would be very difficult to find (at least -5 and maybe -8 or more). The dowser may specialize in dowsing for specific things, such as water or metal; the Detect that forms the basis of Dowsing would be changed to reflect this specialty.

Dowsing is bought as Detect Underground Objects/Substances, Range, Discriminatory; OAF Forked Stick, for a total of 7 points. You may buy +1 to Dowsing for 2 points. Dowsing is based on a standard 9 + (INT/5) roll.

EMPATHY

This is the ability to detect basic emotions of other people (and animals, too; even spirits, if you've bought Empathy with the +½ Affects Spirits Advantage). To use Empathy, make a successful ECV roll to target the subject, and then roll the amount of dice of Empathy to determine the emotional information you get from the subject. Empathy can serve to provide important clues in an adventure or to help communicate with people or creatures that cannot speak your language (by reading their emotions and reacting properly to them).

Empathy is purchased using Telepathy with the -1 Limitation Only to Read Emotions.

MEDIUM

A medium is a person who can contact the spirit world, converse with spirits, and sometimes even have spirits manifest themselves in the real world in some fashion. This is discussed in some detail in the Spirit article elsewhere in this Almanac, but we'll mention it here, too. A medium should buy Mind Scan, Affects Spirits in order to go looking for spirits; this is bought with the following Limitations: Concentration DCV 0 (-1), Extra Time (variable depending on the power of the medium, but usually 1 hour; -2½), and Side Effects (Failure to make the Mind Scan Roll brings the wrong spirit, -1). Additionally, the medium should buy some Telepathy (at least the minimum cost of 10, and usually more) in order to converse with the spirit; the Telepathy is purchased with all the same modifiers listed for Mind Scan, with the addition of Linked and without the Side Effects.

A medium may require that a seance be held, where a number of people gather in a darkened room with the medium and hold hands in order to help the medium's efforts to contact the spirit world. Requiring this setting is an additional -1 Limitation to the Mind Scan and Telepathy powers. The GM should apply modifiers to the Mind Scan roll, as specified under Seances in the Spirit article.

The cost of being a medium can vary greatly depending on the power of the medium.

PRECOGNITION

This psychic power allows the user to get glimpses of future events; see page 60 of the *Hero System Rulesbook* for details. Precognition costs 40 points.

PSYCHOMETRY

This psychic power is the ability to gain impressions and information about someone by handling objects associated with that person. Information gained can include facts about the person, his personality, current whereabouts, current status (alive or dead), etc. The amount of information depends on the amount the PER Roll is made by. The GM should apply modifiers to this chance based on the degree of association an object had with the subject (for instance, a wedding ring would be worth a +3 bonus or more); objects seldom used or used long ago would take a negative modifier. The GM should use Psychometry to provide clues to the heroes, help set the mood, increase tension, and other useful plot purposes.

Psychometry is bought as Clairvoyance, vision, with Retrocognition (-2, Only To See Person Associated With Object), OAF object (-1; whatever is the subject if the Psychometry). Psychometry costs 10 points and is based on a standard 9 + (INT/5) or less roll, +1 for 2 points.

RETROCOGNITION

This psychic power allows the user to get glimpses of past events; see page 60 of the *Hero System Rulesbook* for details. Retrocognition costs 40 points.





Commentary by Storyteller: *To get the true Justice Inc. feel, make all psychic powers require a Psychic Roll of 9 + EGO/5 or less instead of using INT. Then apply a generic campaign modifier reflecting the difficulty of using psychic powers: -5 to -0. Perhaps this doesn't apply to all powers; maybe things like Sensitive are exempt from this, in order to give the heroes a little more information. In some campaigns, in order to be called a psychic (and to buy any other psychic powers) you must buy Sensitive. This ensures that all psychics can detect the use of similar powers. If you want to make the list of psychic powers more extensive, you can add some Talents to the list, like Simulate Death, Bump of Direction, and so on. Other powers could even be included, like Telekinesis (though this should be extremely low-power).*

USING PSYCHIC POWERS WITH OTHER GENRES

Here are some suggestions for using psychic powers with *Champions*, *Fantasy Hero*, and other genres.

CHAMPIONS

You can add more powerful effects to these psychic powers, and increase the overall amount of active points in them. Use psychic powers as a unifying special effect for use with other powers like Suppress, Drain, etc. You can also add other powers to the list (the possibilities are almost endless) by adding to the same unified special effect. In most *Champions* campaigns, psychic powers do not require a Psychic Roll to activate (though it's still necessary for detection type abilities). Note that other more powerful abilities may substitute for the psychic powers listed (e.g., Mind Control for Hypnosis). While psychic powers are generally much more powerful in a superhero campaign, even small amounts of psychic abilities can come in very handy.

FANTASY HERO

Psychic powers are a distinct special effect from "magic." A standard Suppress or Dispel won't work against psychic powers. You may not want to allow psychics to know magic, or magic users to have psychic powers. Magic and psychic powers don't normally combine or work together. Psychic powers are thus an excellent way to get a different type of character involved in the game, and provide a new feel to the roleplaying experience.

OTHER GENRES

Generally, in heroic level campaigns psychic powers should be kept to less than 30 active points. Otherwise the abilities become so useful they start to overwhelm the non-psychic heroes.

A FINAL NOTE ON CONVERSIONS

When a character is converted from *Justice Inc.*, she should never turn out less competent than before. If after conversion the character is more expensive, the GM should spot the player the points needed. If it turns out less expensive, the player should get those extra points to spend as if they were experience.

Well, there you have it. See you in the pulps!

SENSITIVE

This psychic power allows the user to detect the peculiar "vibrations" of magical or psychic phenomena, whether latent or currently in use. This includes the ability to detect the presence of spirits, though without any idea of direction. The GM should give this sense a bonus for very powerful phenomena; perhaps a +1 for every 10 active points in magic being used. The Sensitive takes a -1 to the roll for every 1" distance away from the target, -0 for the first 1". Physical objects between the character and the psychic/magic power tend to block the vibrations, so apply a -1 for every 2 DEF and -1 for every 2 BODY in the intervening objects. Sensitive may be able to tell a little more about an object with a half roll, but not very much; this psychic power isn't usually very discriminating.

Sensitive is bought as a Detect Psychic/Mystic Phenomena, Sense, for 5 points. Note that this is a different ability than Mental Awareness.

TELEPATHY

This is the ability to read the minds of others and to send thoughts to them. Generally, as a psychic power this should be a fairly weak ability, not the terrifically powerful version used by superheroes. Use the Telepathy power in the *Hero System Rulesbook* to buy this, preferably with some additional Limitations, and with no more than about 30 active points.



GRADUAL EFFECT VARIANT

This is a variant system for creating and using powers that have gradual effects. This advantage is primarily used to represent things like drugs, poisons, venoms and diseases which operate over a period of time (rather than instantaneously like combat effects). The current system presented in *Fantasy Hero* second edition presented venoms and poisons as NND Ranged Killing Attacks, which really doesn't represent how poisons really work. This variant is somewhat more complex to create, but equally easy to use. It is also far more representative of the way gradual effects work in the real world.

Generally speaking, poisons and venoms should be bought as BODY Drains (and sometimes against other Characteristics as well). The effects of poisons and venoms are felt over time, and the target also gets a chance to recover some of the damage over time as well.

Gradual effect dice should be bought per time period, not divided among the time period. How do you decide how many dice are done? Buy it the number of times you want it to happen, using charges. Use the Time table to get the Gradual Effect Limitation. Buy the return rate you want on the drain as per usual.

Compare:

Current Rules: Cobra venom: 4D6 RKA (60 pts.), NND (+2) = 180 active points, Gradual (-2), No Range (-½), Must Do BODY First (-¼). Effect: 1D6 RKA every 15 minutes, 4 dice total. Cost: 48 points (180 active).

In the new rules, the Gradual Effect limit chart begins at -¼ and moves in -¼ steps.

New Rules: Cobra Venom: 2D6 BODY Drain (20 points), Recover every 5 minutes (+½), Continuous Uncontrolled (+1½) = (60 active pts.), Gradual (every 5 minutes) (-¾), Must do BODY first (-¼), 12 charges (-¼). Effect? lose 1 BODY every 5 minutes on the average (7 Active points less 5 points Recovered = 2 Active points, or 1 BODY), about 12 BODY total over an hour. Cost: 27 points (60 active).

Of course, this only lets the cobra bite once; venomous creatures generally have multiple chances, which are bought as clips. So a cobra might have 12 charges in 8 clips (+½), or 8 bites; the cost then would be 70 active points, 35 real points. (By the way, this is not the way cobra venom really works; this is an example to show the difference between the old rules and the new rules. See the actual cobra venom writeup in the *Venoms & Diseases* article.)



Commentary by Game Mechanic: *This new version results in a more realistic effect for the venom, and it also results in a far lower active point cost and a lower real cost, which are in keeping with the overall effect of the venom (as compared to, say, a killing attack). Also, there's no need to allow an NND Killing Attack, which is not allowed under the standard rules.*

On the down side, this is a little more complicated to understand, since there are several independent variables (number of dice, which Characteristics are Drained, time between Drains, and Recovery time from Drains). Still, it's really not that hard to deal with; if the Recovery time is much shorter than the Effect time, then the Effect is essentially useless. Or if the Recovery interval is much longer than the Effect interval (say three steps on the Time table or more), then the effect of the Recovery is negligible; what's important is the overall amount of the effect.

You can use the drugs, venoms, and poisons listed in the accompanying articles as examples around which to build your own substances. This makes the process much easier; just take one of the substances listed and improve it or weaken it to fit the substance you had in mind.

GRADUAL EFFECT LIMITATION TABLE (NEW)

This table uses the standard Time table as its basis, from page 140 of the *Hero System Rulesbook*. The Gradual Effect Limitation is taken for the amount of time that the Effect happens over; rather than once per phase, once per whatever time period you choose. Of course, you must then have a power that is bought as Continuous or as a set of Charges in order for this to work. You could even use this to simulate a rather odd magical attack, where you are hit with a Continuous Energy Blast, and then you take damage once a week until the END the caster put into the spell wears off. Strange, but maybe useful to you. The Recovery Advantage listed is the standard as discussed in the Adjustment Powers; this lets you lengthen the time period over which the target of an Adjustment Power loses the effect, at 5 points per time period chosen. Normally, if the GM is feeling generous, you're allowed to spread your recovery evenly over the time period. So if you recover 5 points in a day, you actually get one point back about every 5 hours.

Duration of Effect	Gradual Effect Limitation	Recovery Advantage
1 Turn	-1/4	0
1 Minute	-1/2	+1/4
5 minutes	-3/4	+1/2
1 Hour	-1	+3/4
6 Hours	-1 1/4	+1
1 Day	-1 1/2	+1 1/4
1 Week	-1 3/4	+1 1/2
1 Month	-2	+1 3/4
1 Season	-2 1/4	+2
1 Year	-2 1/2	+2 1/4
5 Years	-2 3/4	+2 1/2
1 Decade	-3	+2 3/4
5 Decades	-3 1/4	+3
1 Century	-3 1/2	+3 1/4

REVISED TIME TABLE

In addition to revising the Gradual Effect Limitation, we have revised the standard Time table. This has been done for two reasons: to smooth out gaps in the original, and to provide more appropriate intervals for drugs and venoms. This new table reduces the 12x jump currently in the time table, and produces a smoother curve. The Limitation bonus shown is for Gradual Effect; the Advantage listed is for increasing the Recovery time for points lost through a Drain or Transfer.

Duration of Effect	Gradual Effect Limitation	Recovery Advantage
1 Turn	-1/4	0
1 Minute	-1/2	+1/4
5 Minutes	-3/4	+1/2
20 Minutes	-1	+3/4
1 Hour	-1 1/4	+1
6 Hours	-1 1/2	+1 1/4
1 Day	-1 3/4	+1 1/2
1 Week	-2	+1 3/4
1 Month	-2 1/4	+2
1 Season	-2 1/2	+2 1/4
1 Year	-2 3/4	+2 1/2
5 Years	-3	+2 3/4
25 Years	-3 1/4	+3
1 Century	-3 1/2	+3 1/4

All of the drugs and venoms presented in this Almanac use the revised Time table. If you wish to use the standard Time table, just look at the Gradual Effect Limitation used in the drug or venom, find the bonus awarded, then reference the original Time table to find the correct interval. For example: if the drug says the effects occur every 20 minutes for a -1 Limitation, you can see that on the original Time table a -1 Limitation is a 1 hour interval instead of 20 minutes. So use 1 hour as your interval instead of 20 minutes if you want to stick to the original Time table.



Commentary by Storyteller: *This revised Time table has jumps that center around 5x, but range between 3x and 7x. Why not just use the straight 5x intervals as suggested in the Hero System Rulesbook? Because people expect to see familiar intervals like one day or one week, rather than two days or ten days. The five year interval may be slightly less familiar than a decade, but, after all, the ancient Romans reckoned things in 5 year periods called lustrums. The 25 year span is equivalent to one generation, which is handy for those long-acting curses.*

Gradual Effect makes it easy to define ways to effect a character over campaign time, not just combat time. I am going to have to closely watch what my players want to do with this rule, but it does make it easier to buy some useful effects, like debilitating diseases or drugs.



Commentary by Role-Man: *These rules make it easier to create lots of colorful and interesting powers and effects. I love the idea of having a very minor power that can effect someone for a whole generation!*





NEGATIVE CHARACTERISTICS

What do you do when a Drain or a Transfer has taken your INT score below zero? What does this mean? Generally, a character with negative Characteristics is limited in his actions; he must make a CHA Roll to execute an action using the affected Characteristic. (Since the Characteristic is negative, the CHA Roll is probably quite difficult. At a value of 0, no CHA Roll is needed; but below that CHA Rolls must be made to perform certain types of actions as specified in the discussion of each Characteristic.

Currently, the Hero System deals with two Characteristics that often go negative: STUN and BODY. In both cases, going negative means the character is at a severe disadvantage (unconscious or dying). Working under the same principle, going negative in other Characteristics also has important consequences. Once a Characteristic has gone to -30 or to negative its starting value (whichever is greater; -20 is greater than -40, for instance), the character is generally rendered helpless. (Example: a hero with STR 20 can no longer move when his STR reaches -20. But a hero with STR 60 is helpless when his STR reaches -30, not -60.)

Characters may use Overall Skill Levels to affect any CHA Rolls called for by this system. The GM may, of course, assign modifiers to the CHA Roll as well, depending on the circumstances.

Example: A character with a -10 INT would have an INT Roll of $9 - (10/5) = 7$ or less.

NEGATIVE STRENGTH

The Strength Table already lists values for a Strength score of up to -25. Characters with a negative STR do no STR damage when they strike without a weapon, unless they have an attack maneuver that adds damage (such as a Martial Punch). Weapons may have a negative STR minimum, and thus could be used by a character with a negative STR (perhaps that little tiny sword you stole from a pixie might work...or maybe your letter-opener).

Negative STR also impairs a character's STR-based movement due to weakness. At STR 0, the character's STR-based movement is halved; halve it again for every -10 points of STR (rounding down). The GM may choose to allow you a minimum of 1" full move (a crawl) until you reach -30 or -STR. A hero with a STR of 15 and a ground movement of 6" would have 3" of movement at STR 0, 1" of movement at STR -10, and 0" of movement at -20 STR (or perhaps a minimum of 1" in a crawl). When your movement is 0", you cannot use STR-based movement such as Running, Swimming, or Tunneling. Flight or Gliding is OK as long as your special effect doesn't involve muscle power (if you use wings, you suffer the same movement restrictions). Teleport would be unaffected by negative STR (unless somehow your Teleport's special effects involved STR).

DCV is affected by negative STR the same way as STR-based movement powers; halved at STR 0 and every -10 STR thereafter.

For every 2x mass this effect occurs 5 points of STR sooner, while for every x1/2 mass the effect is delayed by 5 points of STR. (Example: Moth Girl has x1/4 mass due to her Shrinking, so her movement isn't affected until -10 STR.)

Whenever a character with negative STR wishes to use STR to perform an action, he must make a STR Roll. This includes actions such as aiming a gun, pulling a trigger, or changing a clip. Using a Power doesn't require a STR Roll per se; but while you may be able to trigger your Energy Blast without a STR Roll, you'll need to make a STR Roll to raise your arm and point at your target. If your power is bought with the Gestures Limitation, you'll need to make a STR Roll to use that power.

When a character's STR is less than -30 (or minus the initial stat value), he is considered DCV 0 and cannot move at all (but may still trigger Powers that don't require motion). There is one thing a character can do about negative STR—he can Push his STR in an attempt to temporarily overcome the effects of the STR Drain. Getting to STR 0 via a Push means that you no longer have to make a STR Roll to perform most common actions, which is mighty handy.

NEGATIVE DEXTERITY

At DEX 1 or less a character is CV 0. Characters with negative DEX lose control over their reactions, and must make a DEX Roll to perform actions requiring physical movement. If the DEX Roll is not made, the action cannot be performed that phase. Characters with a DEX of -30 (or minus the initial stat value) or less may make no physical actions. Powers bought with the Gestures Limitation will certainly require a DEX Roll in order to use the power. Note that aiming at a target would require a DEX Roll as well.

NEGATIVE CONSTITUTION

At CON 0 or below, the character must make a CON Roll to expend END points. Any action that requires END requires a CON Roll; a separate roll for each action, if multiple actions are performed in a phase. Characters with a CON of -30 (or minus the initial stat value) or less may make no actions that require END.

NEGATIVE BODY

The effects of negative BODY are already described in the Hero System rules on pages 161-165. However, it should be noted here that it's possible to be at negative BODY but still have STUN, in which case the character is still conscious and functioning. Of course, if you use the optional bleeding rules, the character may not be awake for long...



NEGATIVE INTELLIGENCE

At INT 0 or below you must make an INT Roll to make any decision, or else continue doing what you were doing. Any sort of action at all requires an INT Roll. Characters with an INT of -30 (or minus the initial stat value) or less may make no new actions (they continue doing what they were doing last).

NEGATIVE EGO

At EGO 0 or below you must make an Ego Roll to act each phase. The character will follow all orders given to him from any source unless he makes an EGO Roll. Characters who are unable to make an EGO Roll may initiate no actions of their own. Characters with an EGO of -30 (or minus the initial stat value) or less may make no actions unless ordered to do so. If you make an EGO Roll in a phase, you can not only reject an order given to you, but you are free to do something of your own choice that phase; no second EGO Roll is required. In the absence of instructions, characters with a negative EGO will tend to follow the dictates of any Psychological Limitations they may have, if that's applicable to the situation at hand. Treat such applicable Psychological Limitations as if they were an order from someone. In the event of multiple orders tossed at the character in the same phase, if the character fails an EGO roll he attempts to carry out all orders. If the orders contradict in some fashion, the character does nothing.

NEGATIVE PRESENCE

We all know people like this; when they enter a room it's like two people just left. The character must make a PRE Roll each phase to act offensively or stay around in the face of anything even remotely threatening. If the roll is failed, he runs away. Characters with a PRE of -30 (or minus the initial stat value) or less run away or cower in fear unless absolutely nothing is happening around them.

NEGATIVE COMELINESS

The character may add half the absolute value of his negative COM to PRE Attacks based on fear. Also, a character who has suddenly become ugly will be self-conscious and less effective in certain situations (dealing with people), unless the character can make an EGO Roll to avoid self-consciousness. Take a -1 to all PRE-based Skills at COM 0 and additional -1 for every -5 COM thereafter unless you can make an EGO Roll.

If a character wants to have a negative COM, he must pay for negative COM at the standard positive COM rate. Yes, it costs to be ugly all the time.

NEGATIVE PD, ED

There is no effect from having a negative PD or ED, except to lengthen the time it takes to recover those points lost from the Drain.

NEGATIVE SPD

Once your SPD is 0, you can no longer act; you are essentially frozen in place. You can only take post-segment 12 Recoveries; no other Recovery is allowed. A negative SPD has no further effect except that you will take longer to return to your normal SPD value.

NEGATIVE REC

There is no effect from having a negative REC except that you will take longer to return to your normal REC value.

NEGATIVE END

The character must recover all negative END before he can get back to positive END values. Other than that, there is no effect from having a negative END.

NEGATIVE STUN

The effects of negative STUN are already described in the Hero System rules on page 160-161.

NEGATIVE MOVEMENT

At movement 0" or below, the character may no longer use that movement Power. Negative movement values have no other effect.

NEGATIVE POWERS

When Powers drop below zero points, they stop working. There is no further effect for negative values of a power.



Commentary by Storyteller: *Negative Characteristics give a GM lots more ways to effect a character in interesting ways. It forces the players to respect enemies with certain special attacks. It also allows the GM to easily model some useful effects, like debilitating diseases or drugs.*



Commentary by Game Mechanic: *The Negative Characteristic rules lead every player character to buy much higher characteristics and lots of Power Defense. A cheap 3d6 Ranged INT Drain (only 45 active points) is the fastest way to make a monkey out of most targets with an average INT.*



Commentary by Role-Man: *It seems to me that the effects of the Negative Characteristic rules are too sudden and too harsh. A character with a STR of 1 can move and act normally, a character with a STR of 0 suddenly has to make a 9 or less roll to move or aim. I think the normal reductions in characteristic and skill rolls that come from negative characteristics is enough of a penalty.*

PERMANENT EFFECTS IN THE HERO SYSTEM

There are some powers in the Hero System that can affect you more permanently, such as Transform. (Once you're a Transformed into a toad, you'll stay that way until the conditions for releasing the Transform have been met.) But most effects in the Hero System are only temporary; you recover from damage, Drains, Mind Controls and all the rest of the terrible things that can happen to you fairly quickly.

Sometimes, though, particularly in fantasy games, things can happen to a character that should last for a long time. The example that springs to mind from fantasy fiction is a curse; an evil spell laid on a character that has long-lasting effects. Perhaps not as common is a blessing of some sort—a friendly wizard who grants you the power to speak to birds, for instance. This article presents ways to handle different sorts of permanent effects on characters.

BUYING POWERS USABLE ON OTHERS

Using the Advantages Usable Against Others and Usable By Others from the *Hero System Rulesbook* doesn't allow you to cover all possible implementations of the general ability "give a power to someone else." For instance, what about the case where you want to give a power to someone, but their Limitations on the power are different than yours? Maybe you have a magic wand that allows you to give the power of Flight to others, but they don't need a wand to fly. How do you buy this?

Glad you asked that question, for here's the answer. This system replaces the rules given in the *Hero System Rulesbook* under the Usable Against Others and Usable By Others Advantages.

First, buy the power as your subject will use it, with all appropriate Limitations and Advantages, just as if the person was buying the power for themselves. This will give you a Real Cost for the power, and a list of all the specifics about how it works (its Limitations and Advantages). Second, take this Real Cost and use it as the Base Cost of another power: Usable On Others. Usable On Others is an Instant power, has no range and costs END to use, and has visible special effects. Usable On Others must be bought with at least a +¼ Advantage Target Can Use Power; this power is meaningless without that Advantage (or one of the other two Advantages on the Usable On Others Advantage Chart).

This allows you to have a completely separate set of Advantages and Limitations for the ability to give a power to someone else, and the actual act of using that power. Of course, sometimes those will be identical, in which case there's no difference with the current rules in the *Hero System Rulesbook*. But often, especially in a fantasy campaign, there will be very important differences between the process of granting a power and the process of using that power.

The following chart shows the Advantages that can be bought on Usable Against Others. Usable On Others must be bought with one of the first 3 Advantages list on the chart. The second 3 Advantages are modifiers that can be added to any of the first 3 Advantages.

USABLE ON OTHERS ADVANTAGE CHART

Advantage	Bonus
Target can use power	+¼
Target and owner can use power	+½
Power used on target	+1

Advantage	Additional Bonus
At range	+½
2x targets / 2x mass	+¼
No line of sight needed after initial use	Persistent

TARGET CAN USE POWER

This +¼ Advantage on a power means that the power is usable by any one person that you target with the power. The target of this power controls it and pays any END cost, and is subject to any other Limitations or Advantages that are on the power. You can, of course, target yourself with this power, but only one person can use the power at a time. Naturally, if the target doesn't want to use the power, they don't have to; if you want to force a power on someone, you must use Power Used On Target, below.

TARGET AND OWNER CAN USE POWER

This +½ Advantage on a power means that the power is usable by the owner and by any one person that you target with the power at the same time. The owner and the target of this power controls their own use of the power and pays any END cost, and is subject to any other Limitations or Advantages that are on the power.

POWER USED ON TARGET

This +1 Advantage on a power means that the owner of the power is usable by any one person that you target with the power. The owner of this power controls it and pays any END cost. The target has no choice about being subject to this power.



AT RANGE

This +½ Advantage added to any of the above three Advantages means that you can use the ability at range, with the usual Range Modifiers. However, to maintain a constant power on the target, you must continue to have a line of sight, and you must be conscious. If you want the power to keep working even when the target is out of sight or you are unconscious, you must buy Persistent (see below).

2X TARGETS / 2X MASS

This +¼ Advantage added to any of the first three Advantages allows you to double either the number of targets you can affect, or the amount of mass you can affect (whichever makes more sense for the particular power). For instance, doubling the targets makes sense for Mental Defense, but doubling the mass makes sense if you want to use Teleport on a group of people against their will. (Of course, if you wanted to give those people the Teleport ability, you'd use the +¼ Advantage to double the number of targets). This Advantage can be purchased repeatedly.

NO LINE OF SIGHT NEEDED AFTER INITIAL USE

This can be obtained by buying the Usable On Others power with the +½ Advantage Persistent, which also requires that the power be bought to No END Cost.

Example: *Eledar the wizard devises a spell that will let him grant the ability to create a magical defense to people. He first buys Force Wall (40 points), Transparent to Energy Attacks (+½), Incantations (-½, throughout), and Extra Time (full Turn, -½), for an Active cost of 60 points and a real cost of 30 points. Eledar's Usable On Others power therefore has a base cost of 30 points; he buys it with Target Can Use Power (+¼), Range (+½), Gestures (-¼), Incantations (-¼), OAF — wand (-1), Extra Time (5 minutes, -2), for an Active cost of 52 points and a Real cost of 12 points. So it takes Eledar 5 minutes to give this ability to someone else, and he needs his wand to do it, as well as making mystic passes in the air and saying the proper magical phrases. The subject has the power as long as Eledar continues paying END for his Usable On Others power. When the subject wants to use the Force Wall, he must chant the correct phrase continually while the Force Wall is standing, and it takes a full Turn to bring up the Force Wall (since the Force Wall is continuous, the normal -1 Limitation for Extra Time: 1 Turn is halved). If the subject leaves Eledar's sight, or Eledar is knocked out, then the subject loses the ability to cast the Force Wall. Eledar might want to buy his Usable On Others power to No END Cost and Persistent (a total of +1 Advantage) to avoid those limitations.*

By using Usable On Others with these Advantages, you can construct almost any relatively permanent power. One more thing needs to be added: the difference between Persistent and Independent powers. Persistent powers last while the original user is unconscious or asleep, but they disappear when the original user of the power dies. Also, this a Persistent power counts against the total powers limit, if you're using that optional rule. (The rule states that you can only have a number of powers equal to your INT/5 active at any one time; this is usually applied in *Fantasy Hero* cam-

paigns.) Additionally, Persistent powers are of course subject to being Dispelled, at which point you would have to cast the power on the target once again. (Which might be difficult to arrange if the target is a long way away.)

Since Persistent powers count against your total powers, and they go away when you die, those are two good reasons why you wouldn't always buy your powers this way (rather than just buying it as a normal power). In other words, a power that is placed on you is subject to being Dispelled, where a power you buy for yourself is inherent and cannot be Dispelled (well, you can Dispel it, but then it can be instantly reactivated as a 0 phase action, which effectively means that it's not really Dispellable). And if you've gotten your buddy to give you this power, and then your buddy gets killed, your power is gone.

Independent powers, on the other hand, continue regardless of whether their originator is alive, dead, or in any other condition. Of course, the points paid for an Independent power are separated from the originator; if that power is dispelled somehow, those points are lost forever. The power is still subject to being Dispelled, of course (and Independent powers are even easier to Dispel because you don't have to buy Persistent on them). And there's an additional problem: you've spent some Character Points and can't get them back. If you want to cast the Usable On Others power on another person it will cost you another set of Character Points. You can see why Independent Usable on Others powers aren't handed out freely; even the most generous wizard would quickly run out of Character Points to pass around.

Usable On Others powers don't stack, of course; casting the Usable On Others power in the above example twice on the same person doesn't give them any more Force Wall ability than casting it once. That's especially true of defenses; you can't buy a little bit of a defense and cast it repeatedly on the same subject to give them a high defense value.

BLESSINGS

Blessings are beneficial powers that are bought as Usable On Others, usually with some other combination of Advantages and Limitations. Blessings can be under the control of the subject or not, depending on how they are purchased by the creator of the blessing. Often such blessings are bought as either Persistent or as Independent, so that they will last a long time. Some examples of blessings are presented below.

PROTECTION AGAINST EVIL

This spell provides some protection against evil magic, particularly those nasty spells that take away your Characteristics.

4 PD, 4 ED Armor (12 points), 5 points of Power Defense (5 points), 17 Base points, Against Evil Magic Only (-1 Limitation for this campaign), = 8 Real points (17 Active). The Usable On Others power to grant this blessing is taken at 8 base points, Target Can Use Power (+¼), 8 users (+¾), Range (+½), No END Cost (+½), Persistent (+½), Gestures (-¼), Incantations (-¼), OAF wand (-1), Extra Time (5 minutes, -2), Concentration (DCV 0, -½) = 6 Real points (28 Active Points).



PERMANENT PROTECTION AGAINST EVIL

This differs from the previous version because it is an Independent power; it will cost you 3 points to give this Protection Against Evil to someone. Yes, each and every time you do this it will cost you 3 Character Points.

4 PD, 4 ED Armor (12 points), 5 points of Power Defense (5 points), 17 Base points, Against Evil Magic Only (-1 Limitation for this campaign) = 8 Real points (17 Active). The Usable On Others power to grant this blessing is taken at 8 base points, Target Can Use Power (+¼), Range (+½), No END Cost (+½), Persistent (+½), Gestures (-¼), Incantations (-¼), OAF wand (-1), Extra Time (5 minutes, -2), Concentration (DCV 0, -½), Independent (-2) = 3 Real points (22 Active Points).

UNDERSTAND ANIMALS

This spell lets you grant the power to understand animal speech, as well as being able to understand the speech of animals yourself.

3d6 Telepathy (15 points), Only to Understand Animal Speech (-2), Limited Range — only what you can hear (-¼) = 5 real points. The Usable On Others power to grant this ability is 5 base points, Target And Owner Can Use Power (+½), Range (+½), No END Cost (+½), Persistent (+½), Gestures (-¼), Incantations (-¼), Extra Time (5 minutes, -2), Concentration (DCV 0, -½) = 4 Real points (15 Active Points).

AURA OF THE BLESSED

This spell lets you grant an aura of saintliness to the recipient, giving them a PRE boost for a time. Since Aid is already usable on others, this power requires no Usable On Others power to be purchased.

2d6 PRE Aid (20 points), Fades at 5 pts./1 month (+2), No END Cost (+½), Persistent (+½), Gestures (-¼), Incantations (-¼), Extra Time (5 minutes, -2), Concentration (DCV 0, -½) = 20 Real points (80 Active Points).

BREATHE WATER

This spell lets you grant the power to breathe under water to a small group of people, for a limited time.

Life Support: Breathe Water (5 points) = 5 real points. The Usable On Others power to grant this ability is 5 base points, Target Can Use Power (+¼), up to 8 users (+¾), Range (+½), No END Cost (+½), Persistent (+½), Only Lasts 1 hour (-1), Gestures (-¼), Incantations (-¼), Extra Time (5 minutes, -2), Concentration (DCV 0, -½) = 3 Real points (17 Active Points).

CURSES

Curses are a common part of fantasy fiction, and they can be a part of your fantasy gaming, too. It's easy enough to impose a curse on a hero; the GM can just state what happens, with no worries about point costs. But it's better to have a specific method for the curse that works within the Hero System. This allows the players to figure out specific ways around the curse, without the GM having to rule on the applicability of each method. A little work at the start can save a lot of work later.

A curse is a permanent effect that a character can apply to another character. Curses can be removed by an appropriate Dispel. Can curses be removed by the affected character buying them off, like a normal Disadvantage? Probably not; if a curse is imposed during roleplaying, it should be removed through roleplaying.

Buying Curses depends on the precise effect that you want to put on the target. A curse of weakness is fairly easy; just buy a STR Drain with a very long Return rate on the Drained STR. Turning someone into a frog is pretty easy, too, with the right Transform attack. But some types of curses require a little more ingenuity to figure out.

For instance, to make someone 3 feet tall you could use a Transform attack. Or you could buy this a 1 level of Shrinking (10 points) bought to No END Cost (+½), Persistent (+½), Always On (-½) = 13 real points (20 active points). The Usable On Others power to cast this curse is taken at 13 base points, Power Used on Target (+1), Range (+½), Gestures (-¼), Incantations (-¼), OAF wand (-1), Extra Time (1 Full phase, -½), Requires a Magic Roll (-½), Concentration (DCV 0, -½) = 8 Real points (32 Active Points). To make it really nasty, add 30 points STR Drain, nonrandom output (-9 points STR), Recover per 25 years (+3), Gestures (-¼), Incantations (-¼), OAF wand (-1), Extra Time (1 Full phase, -½), Requires a Magic Roll (-½), Concentration (DCV 0, -½) = 30 Real points (120 Active Points). Total = 38 Real points (152 Active points)

A death curse could be bought as similar to a poison or disease, with the effects taking place over a period of days or weeks.



A particularly nasty curse is to buy a Suppress for magic users, preventing them from using some or all of their spells at full power. This is the way you can simulate those situations in fantasy novels where a wizard's power is "taken away" by another wizard. You see, it's not really gone, it's just Suppressed. (Though if you insist on being able to remove the magical power of a wizard entirely, you could do this with a major Transform.)

For non-magicians, affecting them in combat hits them where they live. We've already seen how you can affect Characteristics for a long period of time (functionally forever, if you like). But we can also apply Negative Skill Levels to victims as a way of simulating Unluck. Each -1 OCV or -1 DCV is a 5 point level. So to make a victim -4 DCV, you would spend 20 points. Of course, that's at No Range, and it costs you END. The GM should be very careful about allowing this ability into the game, of course.



Commentary by Storyteller: *I can always use these as leverage to get characters into a scenario. Geases and Curses can give characters a reason to search out a cure. Blessings can be a good way to reward characters or give them the power to handle a situation that would otherwise be beyond them.*



Commentary by Game Mechanic: *Geases and Curses are just another way for the GM to zap the player characters. None of my characters would have them. The blessings might be cool, especially if they would stack! But I'll just have to add a big Dispel slot to my multi-power to get rid of Geases and Curses.*



Commentary by Role-Man: *Having a character Fall under a generational curse or a gease is a great way to set them apart. How does it feel to under a gease? What is it like to find out that you are truly cursed because of your actions? There are lots of interesting possibilities in play.*

CHARACTER DISADVANTAGES AS CURSES

Since Character Disadvantages can't be used as powers, some other way must be found to duplicate their effect for curses. The following suggestions show ways to recreate any Character Disadvantage as a condition that can be imposed by a curse on a character.

Accidental Change

You could use Mind Control for this, giving the hero an uncontrollable urge to change into superheroic form. But a Transform can be used to more accurately depict this Disadvantage. For instance, the Transform might be triggered when the hero becomes angry, and the Transform is reversed when the hero calms down. 2d6 Cumulative Transform (45 points), Triggered by Anger (+¼), restored by calm, No END Cost (+½) = 79 points. Because of the nature of this particular Transform, it should be bought as Usable On Others, base cost 79 points; Power Used On Target (+1), then put on as many Limitations as you can to bring the cost down to something reasonable.

Age

Aging a character prematurely can be accomplished with a Transform attack. A cosmetic transform would merely give the appearance of old age without altering any Characteristics; a Major Transform could be used to reduce any or all Characteristics at the GM's discretion.

Berserk

This is a specialized Mind Control with an extended Recovery period (see Extended Mental Powers elsewhere in this Almanac). You give the victim a command to become berserk in certain situations; you can use the standard Berserk Disadvantage for guidelines on how to run this. The level required to make this command stick is usually EGO +20 or more.

Dependence

To simulate this as a curse, use Gradual Effect and treat it as a poison. Only in this case, the absence of substance causes the effect, rather than the presence of the substance.

DNPC

Again, this is a specialized Mind Control, where you command the victim to fall in love with someone (or at least be deeply concerned for them). It's even more fun for the villain to make himself into the hero's DNPC... lots of possibilities in that plot twist!

Distinctive Features

This is essentially a Cosmetic Transform attack, since this doesn't affect the victim's Characteristics

Hunted/Watched

This one's a little more difficult; use Mind Control usable on others (you inadvertently make people hate you).

Normal CHA Maxima

Similar to Age, this is a Major Transform.

Physical Limitation

Use a Major Transform to create any Physical Limitation.

Psychological Limitation

This is a specialized Mind Control command.

Public Identity

This one is perhaps the hardest of all the Character Disadvantages to simulate with a power. After all, if you just publish the hero's name in the paper, you've effectively done this. If you really insist on duplicating this with a power, use Telepathy with a gigantic Area Effect.

Reputation

Similar to Public Identity, any good PR firm can take care of creating the desired Reputation with a little work. If you want to do this with a power, try Mind Control Area Effect to make people feel the way your Reputation says they should.

Rivalry

This is a Mind Control command that the victim should feel a Rivalry with someone.

Secret Identity

This is rather fun; give the victim a Mind Control that causes them to go out and create a new Secret Identity. Perhaps even a split personality... "OK, Seeker, you're going to create a second career as a villain, and you won't remember anything about it!"

Susceptibility

This can be created as an NND Energy Blast with Limitations like No Range, No Conscious Control, and the like.



Unluck

This can be done as an Area Effect negative Skill Levels, or just as a Change Environment. Assume 1d6 of Unluck equates to 10 points of Change Environment. It should be noted that if you allow this, don't overplay Unluck by any means. It shouldn't come into play all the time, especially not if an overwhelming advantage is held by one side. Unluck is something that should tip a delicate balance, not overwhelm opponents all by itself.

Vulnerability

Buy this as an Energy Blast or an HKA with Limitations like No Range.

GEASES

This is a classic element in fantasy fiction: a spell of command laid upon a character that forces him to carry out instructions. Often a geas can last for months or even years, forcing a character to undertake perilous quests to fulfill the terms of the geas.

In game terms, a geas is bought as an Advantage to Mind Control, allowing you to buy up the "recovery" rate similar to Adjustment powers. That is, you can move the target's chance to make an EGO Roll against the Mind Control down the Time table, +1/4 for each +1 step. The progression starts at 1 Turn for +1/4. You get a chance to break free at every new interval thus purchased, so you needn't buy down the END cost of the geas or continue to pay END (which makes it much cheaper). This way, you don't need to spend points permanently, either. A +2 will get you a 1 month geas, which should be good enough for most purposes (you can always recast it if necessary). This would be 150 active points, but then again you should be able to buy enough Limitations on it (especially for NPCs) to bring the cost down to a reasonable level.

Geases are often bought with substantial Limitations on them, since they are performed infrequently. Some common Limitations would include No Range (you have to place the geas by touching the victim), Extra Time, a specific location is needed, Focus, Gestures and Incantations, and even the Independent Limitation can be used.



Commentary by Game Mechanic: *You could buy a geas as a permanent Mind Control, one command (-1/2). This is very expensive. The problem is that even with a low roll, if you get to roll every phase you'll break out within minutes. Thus for an average target with a 10 EGO, an unbreakable Mind Control (must roll less than a 3 to get loose) would cost 95, 105, 125, or 145 points base. So it depends on how tough you want your geas to be. A geas that would require a 6 or less to break free from, for a 10 EGO hero, would be 100 pts., single command (-1/2), No END (+1/2), Persistent (+1/2), Independent (-2) or 57 real points. Ouch! Geases should probably be done as a regular spell, bought to No END and Persistent. But the cost is still ridiculous; 200 active points or more.*



ARCANA AND MAGICAL STYLES

Using the Fantasy Hero Magic System To Model Differing Magical Styles

by Bob Simpson

INTRODUCTION

One of the features that makes the Hero System ideal for running fantasy campaigns is that it allows the referee to define wildly different powers or spells in a consistent fashion. The differences in magical philosophies can be modeled by creative use of package deals, and advantages and limitations applied to spells. The requirements and restrictions of the spell caster's package deal helps define how all spell casters of a specific college view and use their powers. The advantages and limitations allowed or required spells of their college define the benefits and limitations their style of magic has.

This article presents an unusual magical philosophy that can be used in addition to or in conjunction with the 'standard' Fantasy Hero magic system. Several existing skills and limitations are examined and several new concepts are introduced:

- Limitations to the "Magic" or "Spellcasting" skill are introduced
- Skill levels with an individual spell are defined
- Spells of differing colleges may belong to similar categories
- "Raw Magic" may be found and collected
- "Raw Magic" may be used to manipulate the power of spells at the time of casting
- "Raw Magic" may be studied, allowing spell casters to learn to manipulate the power of spells on a regular basis

SPELLCASTERS

One of the most important things a referee can do to create a unique "look and feel" for their campaign is define the differences and similarities between the spell casters of the important cultures. In this system there are several abilities that, in general, set spell casters apart from other people.

COMMON ABILITIES

First (and most obvious) spell casters can be trained to control magical forces, cast spells, and create enchanted items. This is represented by a Knowledge Skill: Magic Theory, a Spellcasting skill roll with their spell college, and a Knowledge Skill with their spell college.

In addition, spell casters can sense magic if they are in contact with it. All spell caster package deals have *Detect: Magic* as a basic power. This detect was keyed to touch, but can be changed with the permission of the referee. This also allows spell casters that are the target of spells, or in the target area of effect, to be aware of the presence of magic.

Example: *Zerel, our sample mage, has a number of starting skills:*

College Spells:

1pt: Fresh Air

10pts: Guardian Wind

14pts: Lightning Bolt (includes bonuses to Spellcasting roll)

6pts: Predict Weather

9pts: Steal Breath

SPELL CASTING

Spell casting characters must purchase a separate Spellcasting skill (and Knowledge Skill) with each college of magic they study. Beginning spell casters usually know spells from only one college. Experienced spell casters might know two or, possibly, three colleges.

The Spellcasting roll is limited to its base characteristic roll for beginning mages. It can only be increased after some special event, unusual experience or long study, i.e., studying under a master of your style, being tutored by an exotic and magical creature, constructing and outfitting your first laboratory, training your first apprentice, taking a familiar, etc.

Example: *Zerel knows magic from the College of Air Spells. The referee has decided that this college's Spellcasting roll is based on DEX. Zerel's DEX is 15, giving her a Spellcasting: Air Magic skill roll of 12. Zerel also spent six months in the Aerie of the Bird-Men and studied their unusual magics. Because of this unusual experience, the referee has allowed her to raise her Spellcasting: Air Magic roll to 13-.*

LEVELS WITH INDIVIDUAL SPELLS

Since most spells impose a penalty to the Spellcasting roll, spell casters may purchase one point skill levels with individual spells. These levels can be used to increase the characters chance to succeed in casting that spell or other elements of the skills and powers of the spell. These levels are subject to no advantages or limitations, and the characters base chance to cast any spell may not be increased above the spell caster's base Spellcasting roll.

Later, Zerel studies the *Summon Winds* spell, (*Fantasy Hero*, page 207) and adds it to her list of known spells. This spell imposes a -2 to her Spellcasting roll, and has a real cost of 6 points.

If the player spends 6 points on the spell, Zerel can cast the spell on a 11-.

If the player spends 7 points on the spell, Zerel can cast the spell on a 12-.

If the player spends 8 points on the spell, Zerel can cast the spell on a 13-.

In the above example, notice that if the player purchased additional levels with the *Summon Winds* spell, Zerel's chance to cast the spell is still 13-, equal to her base Spellcasting roll. The additional levels can be used to offset any additional penalties, increase her OCV with the spell, or increase the DC of the spell in the same way Combat Skill Levels can increase the DC of a hand-to-hand attack. (*Hero System Rulesbook*, p22.)

Example: *After miscasting a Lightning Bolt spell while carrying a huge sack of gold and gems (the DEX roll penalty for encumbrance applies to her DEX-based Spellcasting roll), Zerel decides to increase her mastery of that spell.*

The player has spent a total of 14 points on the *Lightning Bolt* spell, (*Fantasy Hero*, p205) and Zerel can cast the spell on a 13- (Base 13 -4 +4). The player increases this to 16 points. Zerel still will cast the *Lightning Bolt* spell on a 13-, but can ignore up to two points of penalties. For example, the DEX roll penalty associated with carrying a 12 kilogram sack of gold and gems...

When not using these levels to off-set penalties, Zerel can use these levels to increase her OCV by two when targeting her *Lightning Bolt*, or use them to increase the DC of the spell from 8 DC to 9 DC.

KNOWLEDGE SKILLS

Most spell casters will not start with many specific levels to help them cast their more powerful spells. In order to give them a greater chance of success, they are allowed to increase the casting time of a spell one place on the Time Chart (*Hero System Rulesbook*, p140) and use their Knowledge Skill with that magic college as a complimentary skill. If the character takes additional time, they receive a bonus of +1 to both rolls per level on the Time Chart. This allows spell casters that are 'studious' rather than 'adventurous' to have a reasonable chance to cast difficult spells without requiring they have a high Spellcasting skill or spend an extreme number of points on levels with individual spells.

Example: *Zerel is casting a Predict Weather spell. (Fantasy Hero, p207.) Normally, her Spellcasting roll is 9- (Base 13 -4 for Predict Weather). The spell is a '0 phase' action. Zerel decides to wait the full phase and use her Knowledge Skill: Air Magic as a complimentary skill. She rolls an 11 versus her Knowledge Skill: Air Magic 15- adding 2 to her Spellcasting skill. This makes her chance to successfully cast this Predict Weather spell an 11-.*

If she had waits one full turn, she can add one to both her *Spellcasting* and her *Knowledge Skill*. With the same rolls, her chance to succeed is be 13- with this spell casting. (Base 13, -4 for the *Predict Weather*, +1 for extra time, +3 for the complimentary skill, Total 13-)

This structure allows experienced spell casters to have a distinct advantage with the more difficult spells without requiring them to increase their Spellcasting skills to unreasonable levels. In addition to having a higher base Spellcasting roll, 'elder' spell casters usually have a number of levels with their most frequently used spells, and a high complimentary skill. It also allows spell casters that spend extensive time in study rather than in the field, (i.e., high Knowledge Skill, low Spellcasting) a reasonable chance to cast difficult spells.

Keeping the maximum starting success chance equal to the base Spellcasting rolls also allowed spell casters to have spells of similar power with dissimilar success rolls.

Example: *Zerel and her companions are in a tight spot. The Emperor of the Clouds is immune to her Lightning Bolt so she decides to try a less familiar spell. Even though Steal Breath (Fantasy Hero, p205) is a less powerful spell (-3 to Spellcasting) she has no specific levels with this spell. She has a 10- chance to cast Steal Breath. (Base 13, -3 for the Steal Breath spell.) If she lives through this, maybe she should give some thought to studying her 'less useful' spells a bit more closely.*

ARCANA

At certain times, in certain places, where magic was strong, the essence of that magic can be collected into specific physical forms. Once collected, this "raw magic" (or Arcana) can be used by spell casters to power spells or can be studied to increase their basic understanding of magic and give them the ability to modify the workings of spells during casting.

Students and apprentices can increase their understanding of magic by studying and experimenting with Arcana. Experienced spell casters can use Arcana in their researches to help them push the boundaries of their knowledge even further. Enchanting magical items required Arcana to ready the object and to complete the process.

As sources of Arcana become known, mages will begin trading differing types so they can expand the scope of their research, and to ensure they had the proper Arcana for specific spell castings or creations.



A ...	of ...	Collected from the ...	Other terms
Star	Arcana	Aether or Ether	Star, Sun, Moon, Comet, Nova
Pawn	Chak	Anima Shakti	Pawn, Rook, Bishop, Queen, King
Squire	Flux	Astral Plane	Squire, Knight, Baron, Duke, King
Deuce	Juju	Corona	Deuce, Jack, King, Queen, Ace
Note	Mana	Chaos	Note, Chord, Bar, Coda
Leaf	Power	Effulgence	Leaf, Twig, Branch, Trunk
Priest	Vis	Flux	Priest, Cardinal, Bishop, Primate
Primus	Zaa	Lux	Primus, Secundus, Tertius,
Private		Nimbus	Private, Captain, Major, General
Nail			Nail, Hammer, Anvil, Forge
Wand			Wand, Pentacle, Cup, Sword
Club			Club, Diamond, Heart, Spade

TERMINOLOGY

The occurrence and strength of magical 'auras' is measured in different ways by each important magical culture. Each culture's terminology reflects their individual biases and approach to magic. A sampling of terms is presented below. You should select evocative terms to describe the type and amount of Arcana used during the game. It adds a certain amount of color to the game when a spell caster uses "four Barons of Mana" to power an important spell rather than simply spending "points of power."

In the following examples, we will refer to "raw magic" in usable form as Arcana. One "unit" of Arcana will be a "Star", five Stars are a "Sun", five Suns are a "Moon", etc. Stars of Arcana are distilled from the Ether. These terms and relationships are purely for example; if you prefer different terms and ratios, we encourage you to create them.

CREATING SOURCES OF ARCANA

Any magical occurrence, occasion or creature in your campaign can be a source of Arcana:

- A magical fountain that produces Arcana when the sun strikes it at dawn
- The skull or teeth of a werewolf (or other magical beast) might yield Arcana, when it is slain
- Quartz crystals in an ancient cavern may, on the evening of the equinox, produce Arcana
- Spellcasters may trade (or contest) with a village of elves once a season for Arcana

TYPES OF ARCANA

You may want to create sources of Arcana that have some relationship to the types of spells in your game. In addition to organizing spells into colleges, each spell has a pair of "elements" that describe the magical "intent" in simple terms. The definitions should be simple and direct. Some general categories are listed below.

Methods

Create Earth
 Manipulate Air
 Alter Fire
 Destroy Water
 Knowledge Spirit/Mind, Body/Form, Plants, Arcana

Forms

Sources of Arcana usually embody only one Method or Form. It is relatively easy to find correspondences for Form Arcana, but the occasional Method Arcana adds variety to the selection available to spellcasters in your campaign. For example:

- A magical fountain that produces Arcana of Water when the sun strikes it at dawn
- The skull or teeth of a werewolf (or other magical beast) might yield Arcana of Alteration, when it is slain
- Quartz crystals in an ancient cavern may, on the evening of the equinox, produce Arcana of Earth
- Spellcasters may trade (or contest) with a village of elves once a season for Arcana of Plants or Arcana of Spirit

Example: *Zerel knows a number of spells, including Fresh Air (Create Air) Fantasy Hero p206; Lightning Bolt (Manipulate Air) Fantasy Hero p205; Predict Weather (Knowledge Air) Fantasy Hero p207; Steal Breath (Destroy Air) Fantasy Hero p205; Summon Winds (Manipulate Air) Fantasy Hero p207;. She can use any type of Arcana to enhance her spells to some degree. The Ki-rin feathers containing Arcana of Air will be especially useful for all her spells. The three drops of Basilisk Venom with Arcana of Destruction will greatly enhance only her Steal Breath spell.*

ENHANCING SPELLS WITH ARCANA

Arcana can be used to change a number of components of a specific spell. It can be used to:

- make a spell more powerful, by adding to the active points of the spell
- increase a spell caster's chance to successfully cast a difficult spell by creating one-use levels
- make the spell self-sufficient, by creating a temporary END reserve
- make the spell easier for the mage to maintain, by changing how often the mage must spend END to maintain the spell

MAKING SPELLS MORE POWERFUL

Arcana used to make a specific spell more powerful increases the total Active points in the spell. These active points do not affect the skill roll, END cost, or any other component of the spell. You should be careful to take into account all the appropriate advantages when recalculating the base effect of the spell.

The basic nature of the spell cannot be changed by using Arcana. You cannot add an advantage (Armor Piercing, for example) to a *Lightning Bolt* spell, or remove a limitation. Arcana can increase the effect of advantages that are already part of a spell, however. If a spell has the Area Effect: Line advantage, the number of hexes affected is increased.

Example: *Zerel discovers that The Emperor of the Clouds is strongly affected by her Steal Breath spell. Perhaps he's vulnerable to Destroy Air spells? Because The Emperor has her friends backed into a corner, she decides to use Arcana to ensure she can draw his attention and give her friends a chance to escape.*

Using her Ki-rin feathers, she increases the active points in the spell by 30 points. Normally this is be an increase of 6d6 but, because Steal Breath has +2 in advantages, the damage rises from 2d6, NND, Continuous to 4d6 NND, Continuous. Her chance to cast the spell remains a 10-, and the END cost is still 3. The referee decides that, if Zerel maintains the spell, the END cost will remain 3 (rather than rising to 6) as she used Arcana to enhance the spell.

If this works, The Emperor of the Clouds will be most unhappy...

CREATING ONE USE LEVELS

Frequently, spell casters are presented with situations where they can not be sure that can successfully cast spells. They can use their Knowledge Skill as a complimentary skill, but this takes time and, if they miss the roll or the spell is unusually difficult, this still will not insure success. Arcana can be used to increase their chance to cast a single spell, or be used to enhance other aspects of a single spell. For example, they may be used to:

- increase the OCV of an attack or blocking spell
- add to the DCV of a 'dodging' spell
- raise a skill roll associated with a 'climbing' or 'fast draw' spell
- modify the spell caster's Spellcasting skill roll

These levels must be used in a fashion consistent with the powers contained in the spell. Arcana cannot be used to increase your OCV when used with a *Detect Magic* spell, or increase your Perception while casting a *Lightning Bolt*.

Example: *Zerel decides that her Steal Breath spell is the only thing that stands between her friends and death at the hands of The Emperor of the Clouds. She uses more Arcana to ensure that she will succeed in casting this spell.*

Using Arcana of Air to create one-use levels, she raises her chance to cast the spell from 10- to 16-. Zerel decides a successful casting is useless unless she can hit The Emperor with her spell. Spending even more, she raises her OCV by 6. The END cost is still 3 per action.

Now if she only has enough END to keep the spell running long enough that The Emperor of the Clouds won't simply ignore her first attack...

CREATING TEMPORARY END RESERVES

Spell casters can use Arcana to create an END Reserve with no REC that may be used to power a specific spell. The spell caster may still use their own END to power the spell but, if the spellcaster (or the 'target' in the case of Usable by Others spells) falls unconscious, the spell is automatically powered by the END in the reserve until the reserve is exhausted. This, in effect, makes the spell Persistent for a limited period of time.

Example: *Confident that she will be able to cast the spell, Zerel is worried that The Emperor of the Clouds will defeat her before he succumbs to her Steal Breath spell. She decides to spend even more Arcana to keep the spell active, regardless of what happens to her.*

This Arcana creates an END reserve with 40 points of END. The Steal Breath spell requires 3 END per action. This reserve will power the spell for (40/3) 13 actions. Zerel thinks this will be enough to get The Emperor to stop attacking her friends and see to his own defense...

CHANGING THE INTERVAL OF A SPELL

Normally, a continuous spell requires the spell caster to spend END every action to maintain the spell. Spellcasters may spend Arcana to change the interval on which the spell requires END. If the spell requires 3 END per phase, and the spell caster spends the requisite amount of Arcana, the spell will operate normally with the exception that the spellcaster spends END once per minute, or once per five minutes, etc. The spell is considered Persistent until it requires an END expenditure. If there is no END spent for the spell at the beginning of the next interval, the spell expires normally.

Example: *Now that Zerel has the undivided attention of The Emperor of the Clouds, she casts a Guardian Wind to protect her from The Emperor's Lightning Spears. Dead on her feet, she spends her last Arcana to change the interval on which she must spend END from once per phase to once per five minutes. As long as she remains conscious, she should be able to deflect his attack.*

Note that the **Creating Temporary END Reserve** and **Changing The Interval of a Spell** options may operate in concert. This allows a spell to draw END from the temporary reserve at a reduced rate.



DANGERS AND DRAWBACKS

To this point, using Arcana has been universally beneficial. There are two ways to discourage the liberal use of Arcana during adventures. If the spell caster used Arcana to enhance a spell in any way and did not successfully make the Spellcasting roll, there is a magical backlash based on the amount of Arcana used. First, if the spell has specific Side Effects, they are increased by the amount of Arcana used.

Example: *One the trip home, Zerel and her companions are regaling each other with tales of previous adventures. Flambeau, the group's fire mage, tells them of the time he lost control of an Arcana-backed spell and the backlash nearly got all of his previous companions killed...*

Flambeau cast a Blinding Flames spell (Fantasy Hero, p222) using one Sun of Arcana to enhance the spell. Missing the spell casting roll, the side effect increases from 30 active points to 130 active points! Instead of a Side Effect: Flash 2d6, Explosion, Flambeau is the center of a Flash 9d6, Explosion. Now we know why Flambeau is no longer welcome in his previous group of companions.

Most spells have some sort of Side Effect. Usually, the specified effect is debilitating rather than deadly. If a character unsuccessfully cast an Arcana-backed spell that has no Side Effect, the referee should impose a Drain END based on the amount of Arcana used in the failed casting.

A Note About Side Effects

There are a number of things in the Hero System that are undefined. For example, a character subject to a Side Effect of one of their powers gets no defense from that Side Effect. If (as in the example above) the Side Effect causes damage to others nearby, do the others get to apply any appropriate defenses? Some referees decide that only the character that used the power with Side Effects receives no defense. You may decide differently.

Another problem is the cost of certain powers that are frequently used as Side Effects. For example, *Fire Blast* (Fantasy Hero, p221) has a 30 point Side Effect, 3d6 of Drain STUN. *Fire Bolt*, immediately below it, has the same limitation but the effect is a 6d6 Energy Blast. The spell caster that unsuccessfully casts *Fire Bolt* takes 6d6 (STUN and BODY) with no defense. The difference in the effects seems backwards somehow; the Drain STUN can be recovered in a turn or two, but the Energy Blast had serious long term effects and did twice the number of dice.

One change that makes Drains more 'threatening' as a Side Effect and comparable to other more permanently damaging Side Effects you might decide that Drains used as a Side Effect are based on a cost of 5 points per die instead of 10 points per die. A spell caster selecting a spell from the Fantasy Hero Rulesbook can either double the number of dice of Side Effect (The Side Effect for *Fire Blast* goes from 3d6 to 6d6) or reduce the recovery rate by four steps on the Time Chart, effectively a +1 advantage on the Drain.

STUDYING ARCANA

Arcana can be used as the basis of magical research and as a justification to purchase levels with a Method or Form of magic. The spell caster commits a number of Arcana to a research project. At the end of one week the spell caster must make a Knowledge Skill: Magic Theory roll, with modifications. If the roll is successful the character may purchase level(s) with a Method or Form of magic. These levels can be used to enhance a Spellcasting roll, increase the spell caster's OCV or DCV, or skill roll (with appropriate spells), to increase the DC in a spell (see Combat Skill levels, *Hero System Rulesbook*, p22), or to duplicate the effects of Arcana.

Be careful when allowing spell casters to research these types of levels. Arcana and levels with Methods and Forms are very powerful, and once a spellcaster has earned several of these levels, they will be able to enhance many of their spells.

PROCEDURE

Researching skill rolls with a Method or Form is not supposed to be easy. Excessive numbers of skill levels make Arcana obsolete, and research into specific spells unnecessary. Be careful when allowing repeated research levels with Methods and Forms.

The spell caster dedicates a number of Arcana to the research project. After one week has passed, they make an Extremely Difficult (-5, from the Skill Modifiers table, *Hero System Rulesbook*, p18) Knowledge Skill: Magic Theory roll. They must subtract one for each level of the same type they already have, and may add one for each Arcana dedicated to the research project.

Bonuses and penalties from the Skill Modifiers table may apply for the quality of the spell casters laboratory, assistants, or equipment. The spell caster may also take extra time to increase their roll. Each level they move down the time chart (*Hero System Rulesbook*, p140) increases their Magic Theory roll by 2.

If the Arcana used in the research project has both a Method and a Form, the spell caster must specify which type of level they are researching before the roll is made. The Arcana dedicated to this experiment is consumed, regardless of the outcome of the subsequent skill rolls.

Example: *After surviving her adventure in the Court of The Emperor of the Clouds, Zerel decides to increase her ability with all her Air College spells by researching four of the six Stars of Arcana of Air she left in her laboratory. She dedicates four Stars of Arcana of Air to her project, spends a week in the lab, adding nothing for her average lab and lack of assistants. Her chance to successfully acquire a skill level with Form: Air is 12- (Magic Theory 13-, -5 Extremely Difficult, -0 for current levels, +0 for extra time, +4 for Stars of Arcana, Total 12-).*

One limit to spell casters researching many levels with a Form or Method is the increasing difficulty of making the research roll.

Example: *Flambeau decides to increase his knowledge of Form: Fire magic. His Magic Theory is the same as Zerel's, but he already has three levels of this type. He dedicates four Stars of Arcana of Fire to the project, and spends a week in the lab. Her chance to successfully acquire a skill level with Form: Fire is 9- (Magic Theory 13-, -5 Extremely Difficult, -3 for current levels, +0 for extra time, +4 for Stars of Arcana, Total 9-).*

If you feel levels are too easy to research and still wish to use them in your campaign, increase the initial difficulty by two to four points, or double the penalty for levels the spellcaster already has, or both.

RESULTS

If the roll is successful, the spell caster may purchase skill levels with the Method or Form of magic embodied by the Arcana used in the research. If the roll is made by three (Extremely Difficult), the spell caster may purchase two skill levels. If the roll is made by five or more (Sheer Folly), the spell caster may purchase three skill levels. Skill levels with a Method or a Form cost five points each.

If the roll is missed, the mage can continue this particular experiment, but may not roll again until they have increased their skill roll in some fashion: extra time, an increase in the Magic Theory skill itself, improving their laboratory, acquiring a tome that adds to their Magic Theory roll, hiring an assistant, etc.

Additional Stars of Arcana may be added to an experiment once started. The spellcaster can, of course, simply mark this project a failure and start again.

Example: *Zerel fails to make her Magic Theory roll at 12-. Not wanting to waste the two Stars of Arcana she dedicated to the project, she hires an assistant, adding one to her roll (Total 13-). At the end of another week, she tries again.*

Suffering from a streak of bad luck, she fails once more. Determined to learn something from her research, she spends an entire additional month in the lab. She can't afford the assistant for a month, but the +2 for extra time (-1 for the loss of the assistant) brings her roll to 14-. Zerel decides to ensure her success and adds her last two Stars of Arcana of Air, bringing her roll to 16-.

Finally, she succeeds, rolling an 11. She can now purchase, not one, but three levels with Form: Air, Once she has the fifteen points to spend.

Maybe Zerel did learn something in the Court of The Emperor of the Clouds...

	Using levels with a Method or Form to modify a spell.	Using Arcana of any type to modify a spell.	Using Arcana of the same Method or Form to modify a spell.
Creating Levels	N/A	One Arcana can be used to create 2 levels for use with a single casting of a spell.	One Arcana can be used to create 3 levels for use with a single casting of a spell.
Adding Active Points	Two levels can be used to add 5 active points to a spell	One Arcana can be used to add 10 active points to a spell.	One Arcana can be used to add 15 active points to a spell.
Creating END Reserves	One level creates an END Reserve with 5 END and 0 REC Levels used for this purpose are "locked" against further use until the END Reserve is exhausted, or voided by the caster.	One Arcana can be used to create an END Reserve with 20 END and 0 REC	One Arcana can be used to create an END Reserve with 30 END and 0 REC
Changing the interval	Two levels per END required by the spell changes the interval by moving it one step up the time chart. Levels used for this purpose are "locked" against further use until the END Reserve is exhausted, or voided by the caster.	One Arcana per END required by the spell can be used to change the interval by moving it two steps up the time chart..	One Arcana per END required by the spell can be used to change the interval by moving it three steps up the time chart.



LABORATORY ACCIDENTS

One of the drawbacks to doing "bleeding edge" research into the workings of magic is the occasional laboratory accident. This may be one reason that spell casters are, to some degree, disliked and feared in your campaign. Failed research usually results in an interesting anecdote to write up for the next conference but, on occasion, a research project blows up in the researcher's face, resulting in:

- Simple explosions. (Base the effect on how badly the roll was missed and how much Arcana was being used.)
- Minor magical effects in the neighborhood. (Perhaps the kitchen mice begin singing for their supper, or small motes of light follow happy people near the laboratory)
- Temporary or permanent changes to the mage or innocent bystanders. (The spell caster's hair might turn white, green, or begin shifting in an unseen breeze. Perhaps an item of laboratory equipment begins to give off a faint 'whiff' of magic or brimstone.)

Example: *Zerel didn't notice, but when her first attempt to research levels with Form: Air failed the sigils on her robe began to slowly change and move. Most people won't notice, but it will make them feel... creepy... around her.*

MECHANICS

In most campaigns, Arcana should be fairly rare. Zerel uses 11 Stars of Arcana of Air in her attack on The Emperor of the Clouds, and six Stars of Arcana of Air in her research in the above examples. This amount of Arcana represents a major treasure. Other spell casters would pay huge sums of gold to acquire this much Arcana at one time. The following descriptions of the various levels of power are based on that assumption. If you make Arcana more common, or wish Arcana to be more powerful, please feel free to change the definitions to suit your campaign.

If you decide not to classify spells into different types, no Arcana is assumed to be the same Method or Form as any spell. Use the 'Any Type' column below to determine the effects of using Arcana with an individual spell casting.



SAMPLE SOURCES OF ARCANA

Source Fountain
Aspect Water from the fountain
Type Arcana of Water
Production 1 Arcana every two weeks
Description An old 'hacienda' has a fountain in the run-down garden. No Arcana is produced until magic is performed nearby, magical creatures visit, or mages meditate in the garden with some regularity. From that point forward Arcana of Water may be 'distilled' from the waters of the fountain. A quantity of water is taken from the fountain at dawn and slowly distilled. At the end of two weeks, one point of Arcana of Water will be contained in the sample.

Source Transformed Roses
Aspect Buds or seeds
Type Arcana of Plant or Arcana of Alteration
Production 8 weeks per year (spring), d4 roses per week, Potency d4/d4
Description Rare individuals have a single magical talent. One such individual can change small objects into roses if he was drunk and a pretty lady walked by. The objects became 'convinced' that they were roses, some more strongly than others. Some of the most fervent of the converted were planted in the garden. The most magical rose produces Arcana of Plants, or much less commonly, Arcana of Alteration. During the spring, d4 of the roses contain some portion of Arcana. Most commonly, a single rose contains one point. The weakest contain a fraction (1/4) of a point and the strongest contains four points. On the average, 20 points of Arcana of Plants is produced in the 8 week period.

Source Moon flower
Aspect Juice / salve
Type Arcana of Destruction
Production 1 Arcana per 2 weeks (Cycle of Allseer)
Description Allseer is one of two moons in this campaign. It was visited in a dream and several objects were brought back. One was a purplish flower about the size of a grapefruit. It seems to be a type of pitcher plant with a hypnotic scent. The acidic (psychoactive?) secretions may be treated to produce one point of Arcana of Destruction when the moon is highest in the sky, once per two weeks.

Source Spires
Aspect Crystal
Type Arcana of Spirit/Mind
Production 1 Arcana per 2 weeks (Cycle of Allseer)
Description Allseer is one of two moons in this campaign. It was visited in a dream and several objects were brought back. One was a crystal the size of a roll of quarters. If the crystal is cut when the moon is highest in the sky, once per two weeks, there is a small explosion of growth in the crystals and the shards contain one point of Arcana of Spirit/Mind.

Source Dream sand
Aspect Moon dust
Type Arcana of Spirit/Mind
Production 2 Arcana
Description Allseer is one of two moons in this campaign. It was visited in a dream and several objects were brought back. One was a handful of sand from the shore of a small, strange lake. It contained two points of Arcana of Spirit/Mind.

Source Mother's ancestral estate
Aspect Flower oil
Type Arcana of Earth
Production 1 Arcana per month
Description The ancestral keep is not used, as the family is in decline. However, the flowers grow thick around the northwest tower and, if gathered and turned into oil contain one point of Arcana of Earth.



VENOMS AND DISEASES

Presented here are examples of venoms for different time scales (instant, minutes, hours, days) and "lethalities" (deadly, major effect, minor effect). This should cover most needs for people endeavoring to create poisons or drugs.

Magical venoms tend to operate nearly instantly; only a very few real-world poisons operate in seconds (some nerve gasses, for instance). Many drugs (including poisons) operate in minutes (though the effects may last for hours). Most naturally occurring venoms act in hours, and the effects may linger for days. Diseases generally have a incubation period (where they don't act) of one or more days, then the effects occur over a period of days, and recovery may take weeks for serious illnesses. Of course, the total effects for each of these different things may be minor, major, or deadly.

These are often Linked with other attacks, such as a bite. Usually the bit is less costly than the venom, so the bite, rather than the venom, would take the Linked Limitation.

DEALING WITH HALF POINTS

Often when you are doing a Drain, you will be left with a half point. Such as the case where you roll 7 active points of BODY Drain; does the victim lose 3 BODY or 4 BODY? The best answer is to use the lower amount of BODY (in this case, 3) and keep track of the half BODY and combine it with the next die roll (so if you roll a 9 next time, you drain 5 BODY). If you're still left with a fractional point at the end of the venom's effect, ignore it; give the victim some small benefit, anyway.

MAGICAL VENOM

This is much faster than a natural venom would act; this can be used for the venom from magical creatures, or fantastic animals that are far deadlier than normal. This may also represent very deadly nerve gasses or very deadly injected poisons.

Magical Venom: Recover every 6 hours (+1¼), Continuous Uncontrolled (+1½); Must do BODY first (-¼), 3 charges (-1¼).

Effect	Cost
Deadly: 4D6	60
Serious: 2D6	30
Minor: 1D6	15

INJECTED DRUG

This is the standard operating time for fast-acting drugs and poisons. Some operate on 1 Turn intervals, and some operate at 5 minute or even 20 minute intervals.

Injected Drug: Recover every 20 minutes (+¾), Continuous Uncontrolled (+1½); Gradual Effect (every 1 minute, -½), (Must do BODY first (-¼), 3 charges (-1¼).

Effect	Cost
Deadly: 4D6	43
Serious: 2D6	21
Minor: 1D6	11

NATURAL VENOM

This is the standard operating time for most normal venoms, poisons and drugs taken orally, and some very swift diseases. Most venoms don't operate right away, but instead take up to an hour or more to take effect. However, many people experience symptoms right away due to shock (of course, heroes probably don't do this).

Natural Venom: Recover every 1 day (+1½), Continuous Uncontrolled (+1½); Gradual Effect (every 20 minutes, -1), Must be eaten or injected (-¼), 3 charges (-1¼).

Effect	Cost
Deadly: 4D6	46
Serious: 2D6	23
Minor: 1D6	11

DISEASE

This is the standard operating time for diseases and slow-acting poisons. Many diseases have a latency period before they take effect, usually several days to a week.

Disease: Recover every 1 day (+1½), Continuous Uncontrolled (+1½); Gradual Effect (every 1 day, -1¾), Must be eaten or infected (-¼), 3 charges (-1¼).

Effect	Cost
Deadly: 6D6	56
Serious: 4D6	38
Minor: 2D6	19

NEW LIMITATIONS

Here are some specific Limitations that apply to drugs and venoms:

Limitation	Bonus
Must do BODY first (DC 1 or 2, a light wound)	-½
Must do BODY first (DC 3 or more, a heavy wound)	-¼
Must be injected	-½
Must be ingested	-½



If a substance must be injected to take effect, that means that a syringe must be prepared and used. A syringe isn't big enough to do BODY, but obviously it won't penetrate certain types of armor. A substance that must be ingested has to be eaten or drunk in order to have an effect, and therefore must be introduced into the victim's food or drink somehow. Unless the drug is bought with Invisible Power Effects (+½ Advantage), the victim can detect it with a taste or smell Perception Roll. That's assuming that the victim takes the time to do that, of course; that usually doesn't happen unless the victim has reason to be suspicious.

Heroes who are really concerned with detecting drugs or poisons in their food could buy Detect Poison, which would even allow them a PER Roll when a drug has Invisible Power Effects (unless the IPE was bought specifically against that Detect).

If you use any of these Limitations to represent a natural poison, drug, or disease, the following optional Recovery rule can be used. Instead of a Return rate of 5 active points per interval (the standard for Adjustment Powers), use the victim's REC instead. This results in a slightly greater effect for normal people, and heroes (especially superheroes) recovering faster from the effects of natural poisons, drugs, and diseases. Unless, of course, their REC is also being Drained...

The one problem is that under this rule, some superheroes might be able to ignore the effects of some poisons, drugs, or diseases because their extremely high REC means they

get back all Characteristics lost from the effect. In such cases, you may want to rule that the REC occurs only at the end of the interval, so that at least during the period of the interval the victim is feeling the effects of the drug, poison, or disease. Or you may want to reserve this optional rule for heroic campaigns only. On the other hand, it may seem perfectly reasonable to you that the incredible Strong Man can ignore the effects of the deadly plague that's decimating the city.

REPRESENTING REAL VENOMS

Real animals don't necessarily inject the same amount of venom every time. If you want to represent this in game terms, use a dice roll to find the number of charges injected. For instance, if the total effect is listed as 12 charges, instead use 8 + 1D6 to find the actual number of charges injected with any given bite. This is not considered an Advantage or a Limitation, so there is no change in cost.

And if you really want to add some tension, don't tell the player what you rolled.

IMMUNITIES

Here's where the Immunity Talent becomes very useful. If the GM is using these venoms and diseases you may well want to purchase some Immunity to the more common effects. It's a very inexpensive way to avoid some very deadly problems in the future.

TREATING VENOMS & DISEASES

Antidotes to venoms and diseases can be created using Suppress or Dispel (this also works for powers or spells). Note that the Suppress or Dispel works against the total points of the drug, venom, or disease, not against an individual charge. If you only manage to Suppress a few charge's worth, then those are taken off of the back end of the total effect. For example, if you manage to Suppress some of the cobra venom's 70 active points, say by 25 points, that would take off about 4 charges. The venom would still continue its effect, but only until 8 charges are expended; the last 4 charges would be gone.

Note that Suppress doesn't do anything about any damage you may have taken or will take from a venom. To deal with that, you will need to use the appropriate Aid. That's another way to deal with a drug or a venom: treat the symptoms rather than the cause. For instance, you may not be able to neutralize a cobra venom directly, but you might be able to cast Aid on the victim to keep restoring the lost BODY.

Practicing appropriate first aid for venoms may result in removing 1 charge with a successful Paramedic Roll (2 charges if the Paramedic Roll is made by half). Thus, if the venom would ordinarily have a total effect of 12 charges, with a successful Paramedic Roll it will only do 11 charges. Modern hospital care will remove another 1 to 3 charges (roll ½D6).



DYING

When your BODY score reaches 0, you may start dying. In the Hero System rules, it states that after you reach that point you lose 1 BODY after every Segment 12 until you die (reach -BODY). For more precision, the Bleeding rules (page 165 of the HSR) can be used. By the rules, this includes BODY lost to Drains or Transfers. However, neither of these rules works well for venoms, poisons, and diseases.

Here's a better optional rule to use for BODY loss from poisons, venoms, and diseases: Once you're below 0 BODY, lose 1 BODY at the interval of the Drain unless you can make a successful CON Roll to avoid this. For example, if your hero was losing BODY from a venom that took effect every 20 minutes and his BODY dropped to 0 or below, he then would lose 1 BODY every 20 minutes (in addition to any continuing damage from the venom) unless he made a successful CON Roll. Every 20 minutes, the hero could attempt a CON Roll to avoid losing another 1 BODY.

The GM can apply modifiers to this CON Roll for conditions (bed rest, food, etc. might be +1 to +3; bad conditions like being outside in poor weather would be -1 to -3). A successful Paramedic Roll can stabilize the victim's condition so that no more BODY is lost in this fashion, as in the Bleeding rules (see page 165, *Hero System Rulesbook*).

BODY lost under this optional rule is recovered at the same rate as BODY lost to ordinary damage. That is, you recover this BODY at the character's REC per month.

One note: under this optional rule, poisons or venoms that drain CON as well as BODY would be very deadly.

VENOMS

Most natural venoms listed here have effects that take place in a few hours, but you can spend days recovering from them (assuming you haven't died, that is). Stories to the contrary, the actual lethality of most venoms is rather low if the victim is in good health and gets to a hospital swiftly. People that are in poor health, or children, are at a greater risk, as is anyone who cannot get medical attention swiftly for whatever reason. Remember, most venomous creatures have evolved their venoms to kill small animals, not humans.

Venoms are bought as clips of charges, with the Gradual Effect Limitation to spread the charges over time. Venoms also have the Must Do Body First Limitation (-1/4 or -1/2). And venoms are normally bought with an extended Return rate on the Drained Characteristics. Usually venoms will Drain more than one Characteristic, sometimes with slightly different effects for each Drain.

Most normal venomous creatures (such as snakes) are most deadly when they surprise their victim. Striking unawares from concealment, the snake uses the Leg Shot on the Hit Location table (see page 163 of the *Hero System Rulesbook*). Then you'll see why so many adventurers wear heavy leather boots.

The cost on the Venom Table is real cost, with the active cost in parentheses.

COBRA

This snake is greatly feared, though its venom is not as deadly as some other snakes. The cobra's reputation comes from its fearsome appearance and large size, and also because it's a very common snake in Asia. The cobra is responsible for thousands of deaths every year. The largest cobra is the king cobra, which can reach lengths of 18 feet. Cobras (and related snakes such as the mamba, coral snake and the krait) do not have large fangs like vipers, and thus must resort to grasping and chewing to inject their venom. Cobra bites do 1 BODY damage as a Killing Attack. So a little bit of armor can go a long way toward protecting you.

The spitting cobra can launch its venom up to 1 hex away, aiming for the eyes. (This is usually an attack on a Surprised target at DCV 0, which gives the -8 attack a better chance of success.) Cobra venom in the eyes can act as a Flash attack, blurring the victim's vision for 2d6 phases. Occasionally it can cause permanent blindness (4 continuing charges of 3d6 Cumulative Transform attack, 8 or less Activation roll).

Cobra venom is a neurotoxin, and death results from paralysis of the heart and lungs. The paralytic effects (DEX loss) will wear off in a couple of days, assuming the victim survives. But the pain (STUN loss) and general debilitating effects (BODY loss) will take up to a week or more to heal.

Name	Effect	Period	Charges/Clips	Recovery	Cost
Cobra	1d6 BODY, 1d6 STUN 2d6 DEX	20 minutes	8/8 6/8 for DEX	1 day DEX 6 hours	56 (159)
Coral snake	2d6 BODY, 1d6 STUN 2d6 DEX	20 minutes	6/4	1 day DEX 6 hours	64 (195)
Dragon	2d6 BODY, 3d6 STUN	1 phase	12/8	1 day	149 (225)
Giant spider	4d6 DEX, 1d6 STR, 1d6 STUN	1 turn	8/4	1 hour	112 (210)
Mamba	3d6 BODY, 2d6 STUN 3d6 DEX	20 minutes	4/4	1 day DEX 6 hours	95 (312)
Mantichore	3d6 BODY, 3d6 STUN	1 phase	6/8	1 day	165 (240)
Rattlesnake	2d6 BODY, 3d6 STUN	1 hour	2/8	1 day	53 (200)
Scorpion	1d6 BODY, 1d6 STUN, 2d6 DEX	20 minutes	6/2	1 day	47 (160)
Viper	1d6 BODY, 1d6 STUN	1 hour	8/4	1 day	27 (80)

1d6 BODY Drain (10 points), 8 clips of 8 charges (+1/4), Continuous Uncontrolled (+1 1/2), Recover per day (+1 1/2), Gradual Effect (every 20 minutes, -1), Must Do Body (-1/2) = 17 points (42 active); 1d6 STUN Drain (10 points), Linked (-1/2), same Advantages and Limitations = 14 points (42 active); 2d6 DEX Drain (20 points), Linked (-1/2), 8 clips of 6 charges (+0), Recover per 6 hours (+1 1/4), other Advantages and Limitations the same = 25 points (75 active). Total = 56 (159 active)

CORAL SNAKE

This tiny relative of the cobra is found in the United States, and is often confused with a harmless variety of king snake. The snake is small and not aggressive, so it rarely bites people unless it's handled. But its venom is quite deadly. Coral snakes do 1 BODY HKA with their bite.

2d6 BODY Drain (20 points), 4 clips of 6 charges (-1/4), Continuous Uncontrolled (+1 1/2), Recover per day (+1 1/2), Gradual Effect (every 20 minutes, -1), Must Do Body (-1/2) = 29 points (80 active); 1d6 STUN Drain (10 points), Linked (-1/2), same Advantages and Limitations = 12 points (40 active); 2d6 DEX Drain (20 points), Linked (-1/2), Recover per 6 hours (+1 1/4), other Advantages and Limitations the same = 23 points (75 active). Total = 64 (195 active)

DRAGON

Some types of dragons may have a terribly lethal venom instead of breathing fire. Woe betide anyone who lets themselves be bitten by a dragon, even assuming they survive the physical damage. Dragon poison is said to be excruciatingly painful as well as deadly. This poison can also be used for wyverns or hydras.

2d6 BODY Drain (20 points), 8 clips of 12 charges (+1/2), Continuous Uncontrolled (+1 1/2), Recover per day (+1 1/2), Every phase (no bonus), Must Do Body (-1/4) = 72 points (90 active); 3d6 STUN Drain (30 points), Linked (-1/2), same Advantages and Limitations = 77 points (135 active). Total = 149 (225 active)

GIANT SPIDER

These mythical creatures are said to have a paralyzing venom that they use to keep their prey immobile until feeding time. This venom could also be used for other types of mythical animals (like giant snakes or giant scorpions), or for magical beings. The victim is paralyzed very quickly, and stays that way for many hours. The giant spider's bite only does 1/2d6

4d6 DEX Drain (40 points), 4 clips of 8 charges (+0), Continuous Uncontrolled (+1 1/2), Recover per 1 hour (+1), Gradual Effect (every turn, -1/4), Must Do Body (-1/2) = 80 points (140 active); 1d6 STR Drain (10 points), Linked (-1/2), same Advantages and Limitations = 16 points (35 active); 1d6 STUN Drain (10 points), Linked (-1/2), same Advantages and Limitations = 16 points (35 active). Total = 112 (210 active)

MAMBA

This is representative of the deadliest venomous snakes. Close relatives include the krait, sea snakes, and tiger snakes. This venom can also be used for venomous sea creatures such as cone shells. The bite of a mamba would do 1 BODY HKA.

3d6 BODY Drain (30 points), 4 clips of 4 charges (-1/2), Continuous Uncontrolled (+1 1/2), Recover per day (+1 1/2), Gradual Effect (every 20 minutes, -1), Must Do Body (-1/2) = 40 points (120 active); 2d6 STUN Drain (20 points), Linked (-1/2), same Advantages and Limitations = 23 points (80 active); 3d6 DEX Drain (30 points), Linked (-1/2), Recover per 6 hours (+1 1/4), other Advantages and Limitations the same = 32 points (112 active). Total = 95 (312 active)

MANTICHORE

This fearsome mythical beast has an incredible venom in its scorpion-like tail.

3d6 BODY Drain (30 points), 8 clips of 6 charges (+0), Continuous Uncontrolled (+1 1/2), Recover per day (+1 1/2), Every phase (no bonus), Must Do Body (-1/4) = 96 points (120 active); 3d6 STUN Drain (30 points), Linked (-1/2), same Advantages and Limitations = 69 points (120 active). Total = 149 (225 active)





RATTLESNAKE

This common snake in the US is a form of pit viper. The rattler (and its cousins the cottonmouth and water moccasin) are dangerous, but they rarely kill healthy adults.

2d6 BODY Drain (20 points), 8 clips of 2 charges (-¾), Continuous Uncontrolled (+1½), Recover per day (+1½), Gradual Effect: Every 1 hour (-1¼), Must Do Body (-½) = 23 points (80 active); 3d6 STUN Drain (30 points), Linked (-½), same Advantages and Limitations = 30 points (120 active). Total = 53 (200 active)

SCORPION

This can be used as an example of any venomous insect, such as the black widow spider or various tropical insects. There are, of course, many insects with venomous bites that are far less deadly than this. Insect and arachnid bites do no BODY damage, being too small to do that. Yet they must penetrate the skin, and so are thwarted by resistant PD of any kind.

1d6 BODY Drain (10 points), 2 clips of 6 charges (-½), Continuous Uncontrolled (+1½), Recover per day (+1½), Gradual Effect (every 20 minutes, -1), Must Do Body (-½) = 13 points (40 active); 1d6 STUN Drain (10 points), Linked (-½), same Advantages and Limitations = 11 points (40 active); 2d6 DEX Drain (20 points), Linked (-½), same Advantages and Limitations = 23 points (80 active). Total = 47 (160 active)

VIPER

This is a generic snake of the pit viper family; examples include the Fer-de-lance and the Gaboon viper. Vipers generally have a hemotoxin, or a blend of a hemotoxin and a neurotoxin. Their venom causes tissue destruction and internal bleeding, leading to a general breakdown of the internal organs. This is, of course, very painful.

1d6 BODY Drain (10 points), 4 clips of 8 charges (-0), Continuous Uncontrolled (+1½), Recover per day (+1½), Gradual Effect: Every 1 hour (-1¼), Must Do Body (-½) = 15 points (40 active); 1d6 STUN Drain (10 points), Linked (-½), same Advantages and Limitations = 12 points (40 active). Total = 27 (80 active)

DISEASES

The disease presented here are a mixture of the magical and the mundane. Real diseases generally have a latency period, which is a period of time where you have no symptoms yet you carry the disease. Magical diseases generally suffer from no such restraint, of course.

BLACK HAND OF SET

This dreaded disease is magical in origin, unleashed by the priests of Set when they wish to cause death on a vast scale. It acts with unnatural speed, often slaying its victims within hours. The Black Hand of Set is transmitted by touching infected material or people.

2d6 BODY Drain (20 points), 4 charges (-1), Continuous Uncontrolled (+1½), Recover per week (+1¾), Gradual Effect (every 6 hours, -1½), = 24 points (85 active); 1d6 STUN Drain (10 points), Linked (-½), same Advantages and Limitations = 10 points (42 active); 1d6 CON Drain (10 points), Linked (-½), same Advantages and Limitations = 10 points (42 active). Total = 44 (169 active)

BLACK PLAGUE

This was the classic killer of the Middle Ages; it appeared in several different strains. The most deadly version was pneumonic plague, which spread via airborne germs. The bubonic plague is spread by flea bites; rats carry the disease from place to place. The disease rapidly induces a fever which leads to delirium (hence the INT Drain). The latency period after infection is generally about 2 days.

1d6 BODY Drain (10 points), 6 charges (-¾), Continuous Uncontrolled (+1½), Recover per week (+1¾), Gradual Effect (every 6 hours, -1½), = 13 points (42 active); 1d6 STUN Drain (10 points), Linked (-½), same Advantages and Limitations = 11 points (42 active); 3d6 INT Drain (30 points), 3 charges (-1¼), Linked (-½), Recover per day (+1½), Gradual Effect (every 1 day, -1¾), otherwise same Advantages and Limitations = 27 points (120 active). Total = 51 (204 active)

Name	Effect	Period	Charges	Recovery	Cost
Black Hand of Set	2d6 BODY, 1d6 STUN, 1d6 CON	6 hours	4	1 week	44 (169)
Black plague	1d6 BODY, 1d6 STUN 3d6 INT	6 hours INT 1 day	6 3 for INT	1 week INT 1 day	51 (204)
Blood poisoning	3d6 BODY 2d6 INT	1 week	4 6 for INT	1 week	52 (212)
Mummy Rot	2d6 BODY, 1d6 STR, 1d6 COM	5 minutes	8	1 week	49 (169)
Pneumonia	1d6 BODY, 1d6 END 2d6 INT	6 hours; INT 1 day	12 4 for INT	1 day	60 (200)
Rabies	2d6 BODY, 2d6 INT	1 week	16	1 week	52 (170)

BLOOD POISONING

This is an infection of the blood, usually a result of a wound of some kind that wasn't adequately sterilized. This is much more common in a fantasy setting, of course. The disease takes time to develop, and eventually the victim is overcome with fever leading to delirium. Blood poisoning can lead to gangrene, or the death of tissue. If this occurs in a limb, amputation may be the only course of action that can save the victim's life (that will stop further charges from occurring if a Paramedic Roll is made).

3d6 BODY Drain (30 points), 4 charges (-1), Continuous Uncontrolled (+1½), Recover per week (+1¾), Gradual Effect (every week, -2), = 32 points (127 active); 2d6 INT Drain (20 points), 6 charges (-¾), Linked (-½), otherwise same Advantages and Limitations = 20 points (85 active). Total = 52 (212 active)

MUMMY ROT

This magical disease comes from the demon-haunted tombs of ancient Egypt, where crumbling mummies maintain a necromantic life even after the passage of aeons. Their touch brings a deadly rotting that races through the body like wildfire, and the victim's very flesh falls off the bones in withered clumps before his horrified eyes. Such is the fate of those treasure-seekers who invade the sacred crypts of the Egyptian sorcerer-kings. Not a very pleasant idea, is it?

This disease is only transmitted by the touch of a mummy. The infection spreads from the point of contact; the GM may use the Optional Damage Rules (particularly Hit Location, Impairment, and Disabling) to make this even more ghoulish. There is one way to stop this from engulfing your entire body, and that's immediate amputation (removes any remaining charges). Of course, if you've been touched on the head, the cure may be only slightly better than the disease.

2d6 BODY Drain (20 points), 8 charges (-½), Continuous Uncontrolled (+1½), Recover per week (+1¾), Gradual Effect (every 5 minutes, -¾), = 19 points (85 active); 1d6 STR Drain (10 points), Linked (-½), same Advantages and Limitations = 15 points (42 active); 1d6 COM Drain (10 points), Linked (-½), same Advantages and Limitations = 15 points (42 active). Total = 49 (169 active)

PNEUMONIA

This disease often strikes people whose immune systems have been weakened by exposure to cold, damp conditions. That endless march through the snows while you have little sleep and no food can provide the perfect breeding ground for pneumonia. Victims will find it increasingly hard to breathe, and the fever can lead to delirium. Being under the care of someone with medical skill is the only way to survive in the time before antibiotics. Even then, it's a chancy thing.

1d6 BODY Drain (20 points), 12 charges (-¼), Continuous Uncontrolled (+1½), Recover per day (+1½), Gradual Effect (every 6 hours, -½) = 29 points (80 active); 1d6 END Drain (10 points), Linked (-½), same Advantages and Limitations = 12 points (40 active); 2d6 INT Drain (20 points), 4 charges (-1), Linked (-½), Gradual Effect (every 1 day, -1¾), otherwise same Advantages and Limitations = 19 points (80 active). Total = 60 (200 active)

RABIES

This disease is usually transmitted by animal bites, though it can be acquired by breathing the air of a cave infested with rabid bats (their urine fills the air in a fine mist...you probably don't want to think about this any more, do you?). Rabies is a slow, cruel disease that leads to madness as it attacks the brain tissue directly and kills the victim in a very painful process lasting weeks. While the victim may be able to survive for quite some time, they also become completely insane and often very dangerous (especially rabid animals).

2d6 BODY Drain (20 points), 16 charges (-0), Continuous Uncontrolled (+1½), Recover per week (+1¾), Gradual Effect (every 1 week, -2) = 28 points (85 active); 2d6 INT Drain (20 points), Linked (-½), same Advantages and Limitations = 24 points (85 active). Total = 52 (170 active)

VARIATIONS ON GRADUAL EFFECT AND RECOVERY

If there is an initial period where no effect occurs, then effects begin to occur rapidly, this is bought by taking the Limitation that's in between the two intervals listed, erring on the side of the lower Limitation. If there is no separation between the intervals, then take the lower Limitation and call the initial interval a special effect. Examples: A venom has no effect for 1 hour, then suddenly strikes in 5 minute intervals. This would be worth a -1 Limitation.

Conversely, this could also be used to change the way an Adjustment Power works. For instance, let's say you wanted an Aid that lasted at full power for an hour, then started fading at 5 minute intervals? that would be worth a +¾ Advantage. If the difference is not even, or there is no separation between the intervals, take the higher Advantage. So if your Aid lasts for one hour and then fades in 1 minute intervals, that's still a +¾ Advantage. (The GM may adjust that by providing a -¼ Limitation to the Aid at the same time, to provide a slight difference between the two situations.)

The GM could also allow the Recovery score to be altered by an Advantage or a Limitation. Instead of using the standard 5 points per interval (or the optional rule using the REC of the victim), you could double the Recovery for a -½ Limitation, or halve it for a +½ Advantage.



SPIRITS IN THE HERO SYSTEM

Spirits...

Cannot but by annihilating die;
Nor in their liquid texture mortal wound
Receive, no more than can the fluid air.

— John Milton, *Paradise Lost*

Glendower: "I can call spirits from the vasty deep."

Hotspur: "Why, so can I, or so can any man;
But will they come when you do call for them?"

— Shakespeare: *Henry IV*

What is a spirit? It's an extraphysical entity that, while intangible and invisible to ordinary perceptions, can nonetheless influence the real world in many ways. Call it a spirit, a mind or even a soul, it is a part of many stories, and thus a part of many roleplaying games. From evil spirits that haunt graveyards to powerful djinni that grant wishes to ghosts that slime you, spirits are found in many genres of roleplaying games. Even such plot twists as transferring a person's mind or resurrecting a dead man deal in some way with the concept of a spirit.

This article covers a wide range of subjects that all deal with spirits. First, the nature of a spirit in the Hero System is defined. Next, new powers and advantages for dealing with spirits are described. The next section deals with playing and gamemastering spirits, describing how to handle a number of common situations dealing with spirits. The next section is all about how to create spirits, along with some sample spirits and some objects that deal with spirits. The final section discusses the use of spirits in various genres and offers some story and campaign ideas.

Since spirits are very different than ordinary Hero System characters, there is quite a bit of new material here. While we've covered many of the common circumstances dealing with spirits, there are some areas only partly explored. As you use spirits in your campaign, you will find new uses for them, and perhaps invent new material of your own to deal with spirits. For instance, how about a complete magic system based around the use of spirits? We look forward to hearing from you about your "spirit experiences."

TERMINOLOGY

Container

Any object that is specifically prepared to hold a spirit. While in a container, a spirit is still on the spirit plane, but it is confined to a physical location in the real world. Living creatures with an EGO are also containers.

Living container

Any creature that is alive and has an EGO score is a living body and may be inhabited by one or more spirits. Such a creature is automatically a container, and need not be specially prepared to receive a spirit. The class "living container" is a subset of the class "container."

Manifesting

If a spirit is performing any action that affects the real world, it is said to be manifesting itself. Unless a spirit has a specific power that allows a range, the spirit must be at the spot where it is manifesting.

Spirit form

When a normal living being's spirit is taken out of its body, this is called the being's spirit form. The spirit form exists on the spirit plane like all other spirits.

Spirit Plane

The dimension where spirits can exist freely, without association with a living body. The spirit plane is contiguous with the real world, but the spirit plane is intangible and invisible to the real world.

Spirit

A nonphysical entity that exists on the spirit plane, or the nonphysical component of a living creature. Spirits are intangible and invisible to the real world. Spirits are such things as ghosts or demons, or the spirit form of a living being (perhaps a wizard who has freed his spirit from his body using Astral Projection).

DEFINING SPIRITS

What constitutes a spirit? Basically, a spirit exists on the spirit plane as an invisible and intangible entity. The spirit plane is another dimension of reality subject to its own peculiar laws (more on that later). All living creatures with an EGO have a spirit which is a part of them until they die. However, with the Astral Projection power, a character may free her spirit to wander on the spirit plane while her body remains in a comatose state. There are also spirits that exist independent of a body; these may be the spirits of dead people (ghosts), or supernatural creatures such as demons or djinn. A character's spirit may be removed by her body against her will, transferred to another body, or even destroyed by use of a suitable power (explained later).

Spirits have INT, DEX, EGO, PRE, and SPD; they do not and can not have STR, CON, BODY, COM, PD, ED, REC, END, or STUN. Spirits are completely intangible; this is similar to being Desolid, but with different special effects. Powers bought with Affects Desolid will not affect spirits; Desolid characters cannot perceive or affect spirits and vice-versa, unless other abilities are purchased. Spirits are completely invisible to all normal senses and detects; specific senses and detects that can find spirits are listed later in this article. Spirits can have powers that affect other spirits or they may buy (at extra cost) powers that affect the real world.

Spirits are affected by any Powers bought with the +½ Advantage Affects Spirits and the +½ Advantage Based on EGO vs. Spirits (a total of +1 Advantage). Mental Powers may affect spirits by buying the powers with a +½ Advantage



Affects Spirits (Mental Powers are, of course, already based on EGO). In addition, spirits are affected by Shift Spirit, Consume Spirit, and Spirit Summoning. Only certain special senses and detects can locate and identify spirits. Not all powers can affect spirits, even when bought with the right Advantages; spirits have no physical form, so any powers that affect the physical form (such as Energy Blast, Killing Attack, Entangle, and so on) have no effect on a spirit.

Spirits are found either floating freely on the spirit plane or in *containers*; a container is merely a physical object that can hold a spirit (a container may be a living being). For instance, every living being that possesses an EGO has a spirit as well as its physical form. (Nonliving objects become containers through a special process; see Spirit Containers.) Normally, these spirits are always bound to the living form which holds them, but the Shift Spirit power can free these spirits. A specially prepared object, such as a djinn bottle, can also be a container. Some spirits are bound to places or objects (like a haunted house); such a place is considered to be a container for the spirit. (In fact, the entire spirit plane itself can be considered to be a container, albeit one that is huge; effectively the size of the world or even the physical universe.)

Spirits can be anywhere they want to be with the confines of their container at the speed of thought (in other words, it takes merely a half phase action to be anywhere). However, leaving or entering a container is more difficult; you must use

the Shift Spirit power to accomplish this. Shift Spiriting can be done to yourself or to others. So to have your spirit leave your body, you use Shift Spirit (see Astral Projection). A spirit on the spirit plane (such as a ghost or a demon) must use Shift Spirit in order to enter a body (this is called Possession). If you wanted to swap minds with someone else, you'd have to use Shift Spirit in several stages: first to take your spirit from your body, then to put your spirit into the other body, then to take the spirit out of the other body, and finally to put the new spirit into your body.

NEW POWERS & POWER ADVANTAGES

There are several new Powers and Advantages that are used to deal with spirits. Astral Projection lets a character free their spirit from their body; Shift Spirit takes a spirit out of its container or puts it into a new container; Shift Spirit takes a spirit from a container and turns it into energy; and Spirit Summoning brings spirits to you.

SHIFT SPIRIT

This power allows the user to move its spirit into or out of a container. Shifting a spirit is accomplished by removing the spirit's EGO from its current container and placing it onto the spirit plane, or by taking a spirit from the spirit plane and placing it into a container. Spirits can never be moved directly from one container to another; they must always move to or from the spirit plane first. So if you want to move your spirit out of your body into another body, you must first use Shift Spirit to move your spirit to the spirit plane, then use Shift Spirit again to move your spirit into the new body.

Before you use the Shift Spirit power, you must designate the target of the attack and how the attack will be used. For instance, you may want to shift your own spirit from your body to the spirit plane. Or a demon may want to shift its spirit from the spirit plane into a person (this is called possession). Both of these actions would use the Shift Spirit power. The Shift Spirit power can also be used on another entity; for instance, a wizard may take someone's spirit out of their body and put it onto the spirit plane.

Transferring a spirit to another container is a two-step process. First, you must remove the spirit from its current container and place it on the spirit plane. This requires at least one use of Shift Spirit (probably more, unless you have a large number of dice in the Shift Spirit power). Next, you must take the spirit from the spirit plane and place it into its new container. This requires a second usage of Shift Spirit. (There may be other restrictions, too, depending on how you've purchased the Shift Spirit power.)

The user buys 1d6 of Shift Spirit for every 20 points; the Shift Spirit power requires an EGO-based Attack Roll but has no range. (More on this peculiarity in a moment.) Once you have successfully made the Attack Roll on the target spirit, roll the dice and total them to determine the effect. The effect is treated as an EGO Drain, except that the target's EGO score is only used as a marker; for any purpose other than this power, the target's EGO is not affected.



In order to Shift a spirit, the target's EGO must be "drained" to the negative value of the target's beginning level. Thus, for a character with a standard EGO of 10, this must be reduced by Shift Spirit to a value of -10 before the spirit is shifted. The amount of EGO "drained" is affected by any Power Defense the spirit or the container may have; subtract the Power Defense (if any) from the total rolled on the dice, and the remainder is the number of active points of EGO that is "drained."

Also, the "drained" EGO returns at the standard rate of 5 active points per turn. This time period may be stretched out; each +¼ Advantage moves the return rate one step further on the Time table. Obviously, you may need to buy more dice for the Shift Spirit power or stretch out the recovery time in order to shift a spirit with a high EGO score.

Example: *Kyranus the wizard wants to cast a 3d6 Shift Spirit spell upon his faithful servant Rogi, who is tied to the examining table for this experiment. Since the spell has no range, Kyranus must touch Rogi to make the attack. Once physical contact is made (a Grab roll is pretty easy in this circumstance), Kyranus must make the EGO Attack Roll. Kyranus has an EGO of 18 while poor Rogi has an EGO of 10, so Kyranus easily makes his 14- roll. Rogi has no Power Defense, so he has no defense at all against this attack. Kyranus rolls 3d6 and scores a 13, so Rogi loses 6 points of EGO for the purposes of Shifting his spirit. Rogi's EGO is still 10 for the purpose of making EGO Rolls or resisting further Shift Spirit attacks, but Kyranus must only subtract 14 more points of EGO from Rogi in order to free Rogi's spirit from his body. Kyranus successfully attacks twice more this turn, rolling a 9 for the effect of the second attack ("draining" 4 more points of EGO) and a 12 for the third attack ("draining" 6 more points of EGO). Rogi has now lost a total of 16 EGO, so his spirit has almost been shifted out of his body. But now it's the end of the turn, so Rogi gets back 5 Character points worth of EGO, so after the end of the turn Rogi has only lost 14 points of EGO. Kyranus must attack again until Rogi reaches -20 EGO, at which point Rogi's spirit has been freed from his body.*

Shift Spirit in its basic form is not ranged; therefore, you must be in physical contact with the target before you can use this power. Of course, using it on yourself is no problem. If you are attempting to use this power on a spirit that's in a physical container, then you must make a standard DEX-based Attack Roll to grab the container. You are now in physical contact with the spirit and may make your EGO-based Attack Roll to get the spirit.

Spirits within the same container are considered to be in contact (the spirit plane is not considered a container for this purpose).

The only way you can use the standard Shift Spirit on a free-floating spirit (that is, a spirit that's not in a container) is if the spirit cooperates, or if you have controlled the spirit through Mind Control (telling it to stay put), or if you have confined the spirit to a virtual container (using Power Defense; see Blocking Spirits). A spirit trying to use Shift Spirit on another spirit that's in a container merely has to manifest in the same place as the container; this does not require an Attack Roll (the spirit still has to do the EGO-based Attack Roll, though).

The minimum Shift Spirit is 1d6 EGO "Drain" for 20 points. You can buy up the Recovery rate as with a normal Drain. "Drained" EGO returns at that Recovery rate until you have reached -EGO, at which point recovery ceases and the spirit is considered Shifted from the target. The spirit is then wandering aimlessly in the spirit plane unless it has some ability to sense things on the spirit plane or in the real world (see Spirit Senses). Shift Spirit can be used as an exorcism, to cast a spirit out from its current container (whether the spirit is possessing someone or haunting a castle).

The target of a Shift Spirit has no way of resisting this process except through Power Defense or an appropriate Suppress, preventing the Shift Spirit from taking full effect. So there's no other way to prevent someone from separating your spirit from your body, or to prevent some spirit from entering your body.

Adding the Ranged Advantage to Shift Spirit is extremely useful; this eliminates the need for any sort of DEX-based Attack Roll to grab a container. As long as you can see or perceive the target spirit, you can use the ranged Shift Spirit on it. Thus, you could do a Mind Scan to locate a target spirit and then use Ranged Shift Spirit to move that spirit to some other spot. Ranged Shift Spirit still requires an ECV-based attack roll to use.

The recipient of a Shift Spirit may already have a spirit, in which case there may be a conflict between the two spirits (see Spirit Combat).

ASTRAL PROJECTION

This is the process of the spirit leaving the body and going out on its own, while the body remains behind. This can be accomplished by using the standard Shift Spirit power on your own spirit. Or, if you want to lower the cost, Astral Projection can be purchased using Shift Spirit with the -1 Limitation Self Only. While you are Astral Projecting, your body and spirit are separated. The spirit has the INT, EGO, DEX, PRE, and SPD, while your body has all the other Characteristics.

As with any spirit, a character's spirit form is completely invisible and intangible. The character's spirit can use any powers or abilities it may possess, subject to the restrictions of the spirit form. Obviously, your Stealth Skill or your Lockpicking Skill aren't very useful (though if you had bought Telekinesis at +2 Affects Real World, then your Lockpicking might be handy). Powers can be used as long as they don't require END (they must use Charges, an END Reserve or have No END Cost), but these powers won't affect the real world unless bought with the +2 Advantage Affects Real World. Powers aren't usable if their Limitations prevent a spirit form from employing them (such as a Power with Gestures or Incantations Limitations).

Spirits have a natural affinity for the body that they were created in, if that body is still living. Thus, you can get into your own body automatically without using Shift Spirit (unless someone has placed a barrier on your body) if your spirit can get into contact with your body. (See the rules for spirit contact in the Shift Spirit power writeup.) Note that unless you have bought some senses that can be used while in spirit form, you'll have a very hard time finding your body again. Astral Projection is not for the novice!

If for some reason your spirit can't get back, your body will eventually die (from starvation) unless it obtains advanced medical or magical treatment that can keep the body fed. You may also want to prevent wandering spirits from entering your conveniently unoccupied body while you are gone; see Blocking Spirits for information on how to do this.

The END cost for Astral Projection is borne by the body, since your spirit is in the body when you use this power. Any powers used while in spirit form must use spirit form END Reserves (if any), not your body's END. Or those powers can be bought to No END Cost or on Charges.

You will probably want to buy one or more senses to use while in spirit form, since otherwise you can only sense spirits you are communicating with or fighting. Without any additional senses, you can't perceive the real world in any way while in spirit form.

Astral Projection Usable On Others can be used to send a party of heroes after a spirit. Going after a spirit can be for purposes of resurrection or just for information. This could make for some very interesting roleplaying situations.

If you are worried about other spirits taking over your empty body while you're gone, buy Personal Immunity (+¼ Advantage) on Power Defense and put it on your body while Astral Projecting yourself. This guards against the entry of wandering spirits while still allowing you to get in without trouble.



Commentary: *So why would you want to use Astral Projection? Since travel on the spirit plane is instantaneous, you can go anywhere very quickly in order to look around (assuming you have senses that allow that). Or, if you've bought some powers that can affect the real world while you are Astral, you can do some nasty things to people while they will have a hard time dealing with you. GMs be warned! This power should be carefully monitored for its effect on the campaign.*

The rule about how spirits can get back into their own living body without using the Shift Spirit power makes it easier to use this power. Otherwise, the spirit would have to be able to use the power, which means that the power would have to be bought on Charges, at No END Cost or with an END Reserve.

CONSUME SPIRIT

This power allows you to remove a spirit from its container or from the spirit plane and convert it into usable Character Points. This, of course, destroys the spirit in the process, which means that this is a power the GM should monitor very carefully. The base cost is 1d6 for 30 points; this has no range and requires an EGO-based Attack Roll.

Consume Spirit is used in generally the same manner as Shift Spirit; once you are in physical contact with the spirit, you make an EGO-based Attack Roll. If that is successful, roll the dice and total them to find the number of active points of EGO that are taken from the target. With Consume Spirit, those active points can then be used by the character in any way, just like the Transfer power. You must designate how those points will be used when the Consume Spirit power is purchased.

As with the transfer power, both the opponent and the character have a return rate for the points that are Consumed. Each rate may be moved down the Time table for a +¼ Advantage. Once the target's EGO reaches negative the starting value, the target's spirit is completely consumed and he gets no more recovery of the transferred EGO.

A character whose spirit is Consumed is utterly and completely dead, and cannot be resurrected. It's perfect for soul-draining swords, but this power should be very rare indeed. The GM may well decide that Consume Spirit is too nasty a power to allow in his campaign for this very reason.

If the Consume Spirit is interrupted before the process is complete, then the target can recover completely from its effects (using the recovery rate specified when you buy the Consume Spirit power).

If you elect to merely toss away the points gained instead of using them, that's a -½ Limitation to Consume Spirit.

As with Shift Spirit, adding the Ranged Advantage to Consume Spirit is extremely useful; this eliminates the need for any sort of DEX-based Attack Roll to grab a container. As long as you can see or perceive the target spirit, you can use the ranged Consume Spirit on it. Ranged Consume Spirit also requires an ECV-based attack roll to use.

Commentary: *Shift Spirit and Consume Spirit are presented as new powers, though they can be bought by basing them on existing powers. (Show how.) They are shown as powers because that makes it easier to buy them with other Advantages and Limitations (less calculation), and it seems to represent the costs better. If you like, though, you can base them on existing powers in your campaign.*



SPIRIT SUMMONING

Essentially, summoning a spirit is a combination of other powers. First, you must find the desired spirit, and then bring it to you by communicating with it or compelling it. Finally, if you wish to make the spirit serve you, you must command it or make a deal with it. Seances are a particularly common type of Spirit Summoning, and the modifiers for seances are detailed later in this section.

Finding the spirit is a matter of using Mind Scan with the $+1/2$ Advantage Affects Spirits (this can be bought with the -1 Limitation, Spirits Only). How do you define the area, since the spirit plane is not defined in physical terms? Well, you don't define an area per se; the modifiers are different. Use the time table for modifiers to searching for a spirit that's not in the immediate vicinity (i.e., it's currently attacking or manifesting in some way). The baseline is the last time you were in contact with the spirit, or the last time it was alive (if formerly alive), whichever is less. Take a -2 to the Mind Scan roll for every time increment that's gone by since then, starting with 1 minute as -0 . For instance, if you are searching for the spirit of someone who died a year ago, you would take a -16 modifier (-18 using the revised time table presented elsewhere in this Almanac).

If you're not searching for the spirit of a dead person, you can use modifiers based on the size of the class as determined by the GM. In other words, how many demons are there? If the GM says 1 billion, then your modifier is -18 . You may need to buy your Mind Scan as Transdimensional (see the *Hero System Rulesbook*) in order to search for some types of spirits, at the GM's discretion. For instance, demons may be found only in a particular hell, or the spirit of a dead

comrade may be in Valhalla. The modifier would still be based on the size of the class; if there are 10,000 demons in the particular hell you are searching, the modifier is -8 .

Once a successful Mind Scan is achieved, then you can bring the spirit to you. If the spirit is cooperating, it's easy: Travel on the spirit plane is instantaneous, and the spirit has a way to "home in" on you through the Mind Scan, so the spirit is automatically right there with you next phase. If, on the other hand, the spirit is not cooperating, then you must use persuasion (communicating via Telepathy) or compulsion (Mind Control) to compel the spirit to come to you. Or you can (after the Mind Scan lock-on is achieved) simply use a Shift Spirit to put the spirit into a handy container.

Of course, if you're summoning an evil spirit, you would be wise to take precautions in the event that it answers your summons. You'd better be ready to use Shift Spirit to put it into a safe place, or otherwise control it or prevent it from harming you.

SPIRIT SENSES

There are several senses and detects that can be used to detect spirits. The basic sensory mechanism on the spirit plane is very primitive without buying some additional sensory ability. Spirits without other senses cannot sense the real world in any way, and they can only sense other spirits when they are in communication or combat with the other spirit. Otherwise, there is no sensory input whatsoever. Human spirits that are homeless may suffer sensory deprivation, which can lead to madness over a long period of time.

Spirits may buy these senses for use on the spirit plane, or some senses may be bought by characters trying to see the spirit plane. Senses that are bought Only While In Spirit Form have a $-1/2$ Limitation IF you are a living being that spends most of the time in real form. The senses may also have the Linked Limitation; if they do, they may not use the sense when someone else is using Shift Spirit on them. The Limitation Only In Real Form is worth at most a $-1/4$ (unless the character is usually a spirit!).

Astral Vision

This allows the character to see entities on the astral plane, namely spirits. Only spirits that are "nearby" can be seen; it's up to the GM to define the meaning of nearby (generally, spirits that are bound to a physical area in the vicinity, or that are manifesting in the vicinity). For people in the real world using this power, you are limited in some ways by normal eyesight: You can't see through walls with Astral Vision, so you couldn't see a spirit that was in the next room. (Yes, this does get rather strange when, to the spirit, everywhere in the spirit plane is instantly accessible; but the spirit's attention is probably drawn to specific spots, and wherever its attention is, that's where the spirit is.) Spirits that are inside of containers (such as bodies, a jar, a sword, etc.) cannot be seen with Astral Vision. Astral Vision costs 10 points, either for spirits or for characters.

Aura Vision

See the writeup under Psychic Powers elsewhere in this Almanac for more details. Aura Vision does not allow you to see spirits by themselves (unless you also have Astral Vision), but if a spirit is in a container then you can see its aura. Also, someone who is possessed by a spirit will have a unusual aura (usually, it's primarily the aura of the dominant spirit, but there's always some unusual traces that indicate a second spirit in the body). Aura Vision costs 10 points.

Clairsentience

Spirits may buy this at +20 points in order to perceive the real world. Or characters may buy this at +20 points in order to perceive the spirit plane. Clairsentience costs 40 points to perceive the spirit plane (or the real world if you're a spirit). Spirits can also buy other senses as the basis for Clairsentience; for instance, a spirit might use Radar as the basis for its Clairsentience, and it would perceive everything as shadowy forms with no great detail.

Detect Spirit

This general power can be purchased with a number of different Advantages. Its base cost is 3 points, like any standard Detect. It is more useful to buy this as an Area Effect of some sort, and possibly Discriminatory as well, and maybe with Range, too. A Discriminatory Detect Spirit would give you details about the type of spirit, and perhaps some indication of its powers.

Normal Senses

This allows a spirit to use a sense in the real world as normal characters do. This is subject to the same limitations as normal senses (such as not being able to see through a wall or in the dark). The standard human senses (sight, hearing, touch, taste, and smell) may be bought for 10 points apiece. This is assuming a base 5 points for the cost of the sense and adding the +2 Advantage: Affects Real World, and the Limitation Only Usable Against Real World (-½). The spirit may buy other Enhanced Senses in this fashion. For instance, buying Radar Sense would cost 30 points (15 points at a +2 Advantage, -½ Limitation). A Normal Sense costs 10 points.

Sensitive

This Psychic Power (described in the Psychic Powers section elsewhere in the Almanac) allows the user to sense the presence of spirits with a successful PER Roll. Sometimes this power is purchased with the Discriminatory ability; that allows the user to get some idea of the spirit's nature, intent, or abilities (in general terms, and only with a good roll). Sensitive costs 5 points.

PLAYING AND GAMEMASTERING SPIRITS

This section discusses how spirits are dealt with in a gaming situation, both by the player and by the GM.

Generally, spirits are used as opponents in a game. An entire adventure can be built around a single ghost or evil spirit. Since spirits tend to be very difficult for the heroes to handle, it's usually best to have only one or two spirits for the heroes to deal with. Of course, if spirits are rarely encountered in a game, then it's unlikely that any of the heroes will have abilities that can deal with the spirits. So it may become necessary to bring in a helpful NPC at certain stages of an adventure. Better still, the GM should try to devise alternate methods for the players to solve the problems presented by the spirit. For instance, finding the body that the ghost used to inhabit and giving it a proper burial, thus freeing the ghost. Or tricking the genie into re-entering its bottle, thus getting rid of it.

THE SPIRIT PLANE

What is it and how does it work? Essentially, the spirit plane is another dimension that is contiguous with every point in the real world. But the spirit plane has some very unusual properties; it is a realm of thought and mind, not physical forms. Physical actions have no effect on the spirit plane; there are no physical objects as such, and spirits have no physical forms on the spirit plane to affect. So powers like Energy Blast have no meaning on the spirit plane; since spirits have no ED or STUN or BODY, they cannot be affected by an energy blast. Nor, for that matter, does STR have any meaning on the spirit plane.

The only powers that have meaning on the spirit plane are those powers that can affect the Characteristics that spirits possess. Adjustment Powers can affect spirits, so can Mental Powers (except EGO Blast). Flash can have meaning if it is applied to a sense that a spirit possesses. But powers like Entangle and Teleport are meaningless on the spirit plane.

All spirits must buy powers at +2 to affect the real world; real people must buy powers at +½ to affect the spirit world (and an additional +½ Advantage to make them EGO-based). When you leave your body, you can still use your powers (unless limitations like Gestures make this impossible); but they must be bought at +2 to affect the real world. Once you're a spirit, your powers will affect spirits without extra cost (assuming the powers have meaning; Entangles have no meaning on the spirit plane, for instance).

Movement on the spirit plane is instantaneous, since the spirit plane is a realm of pure thought and it is coexistent with every point on the physical plane. Spirits can be anywhere they want to be on the spirit plane, subject to other limitations the spirit may have. Spirits may (with proper skills) appear in other dimensions, planes, or realities, such as various heavens or hells. Desolid characters are not present on the spirit plane.

Some spirits may inhabit other planes as well (hells, elemental planes, etc.). The GM may require you to buy the Transdimensional Advantage on your various Spirit Powers to reach those places. Generally, each such dimension is considered as a separate container; spirits must use Shift Spirit to leave their dimension and then use Shift Spirit again to enter another dimension. For that purpose, we assume that there is some intra-universal dimension that contains all others; this is where you go when you Shift out of your current dimension.

Spirits may communicate with one another by directly transferring thoughts; this is treated just as if the two spirits were having a conversation in normal speech. Actually reading a spirit's thoughts require the use of Telepathy. Spirits can only communicate when they can sense each other; there's no way to "shout" on the spirit plane.

DETECTING AND SENSING SPIRITS

Spirits have only the crudest of senses unless they specifically purchase some senses. Without buying additional senses, spirits can only sense another spirit when they are in communication with them or in conflict with them. Spirits cannot sense the real world at all without buying additional senses (see Spirit Senses). Beings in the real world cannot sense spirits at all without buying some special senses.



Detect Spirit or Sensitive tells you when spirits are around; for more information, those can be bought with such additions as Discriminatory. If you want specifics on the appearance of the spirit, Clairsentience or Astral Vision can give you that information. Aura Vision can sometimes be handy for determining the nature of the spirit and its emotional character.

MOVEMENT ON THE SPIRIT PLANE

Spirits can move instantaneously to any point in the spirit plane, and thus to any point they are familiar with in the real world, unless they are confined in a spirit container (or inhabiting a body, which is the same thing). Thus, spirits are usually located where their attention is: if they are looking at something or if they are manifesting themselves, that's where they are. Spirits can, however, stay in one "spot" while manifesting or sensing somewhere else, if they have the right abilities (powers usable at range). Spirits can't teleport into objects (or use teleport on a spirit at all); they must use Shift Spirit to put themselves into a container.

Spirits can't cross an area protected by Power Defense (see Blocking Spirits).

SPIRIT COMBAT

Spirits can't hurt one another normally, since they have no BODY or STUN. Of course, they can use Shift Spirit on one another to force the target into a specific spot. More likely is the use of a Drain or Transfer of some sort to render the opposing spirit powerless, or a Mind Control to control another spirit. Spirits can also erect defenses against other spirit powers, using Power Defense, Mental Defense, or Suppress.

All targeting rolls against spirits must be done based on EGO Combat Value (ECV). All powers that affect spirits from the real world must be bought with +½ Affects Spirits, and must be ECV-based (Based on ECV versus Spirits is only a +½ Advantage). Exceptions are Shift Spirit and Spirit Consumption, which already affect spirits. Mental Powers are already based on ECV.

Spirits attacking spirits need not buy Affects Spirits on their powers. Spirits that are occupying living bodies are subject to any and all powers, just as the original occupant of the body was. Another way of saying this is that spirits on the same plane need no special Advantage to attack one another; but if they are on different planes, they do need some sort of Advantage.

Commentary: *All powers that can affect spirits must be bought with the +½ Affects Spirits Advantage. But should they all be EGO-based, too? On the plus side, this seems to represent spirits better. After all, if they have no physical existence, what then is the meaning of a DEX-based Attack Roll? Spirits have DEX because it's necessary for them to be on the Speed table, and because it's necessary if the spirit happens to buy some powers that can affect the real world and require Attack Rolls. Spirits are pure thought, so it seems reasonable that they have to be targeted by EGO rather than DEX.*

However, if you base attacks against spirits on EGO, that causes attacks against spirits to become more costly, and makes EGO even more valuable for the spirit to have. Of course, that's a good thing, too, since spirits might be tempted to take low EGO values to make their own Shift Spirit easier. This also tends to give Mental Powers a certain advantage, since they only have to be bought at +½ instead of at +1. Seems reasonable; spirits should be difficult to attack, and Mental Powers should be easier to use against them. You can reduce the cost of powers used against spirits by using the Limitation Only Affects Spirits, which would be a -1 Limitation.

MENTAL POWERS AND SPIRITS

Normally Mental Powers used by characters in the real world have no effect on spirits. But Mental Powers can affect spirits by purchasing the additional +½ Affects Spirits Advantage. Spirits can buy Mental Powers that affect the real world with a +2 Advantage. A spirit on the spirit plane can use Mental Powers against another spirit on the spirit plane at no additional cost; similarly, a spirit Possessing a living body can use Mental Powers or have them used against him at no extra cost. It's only when you attempt to cross the barrier that separates the spirit plane from the physical plane that you must pay extra.

Spirits are completely undetectable by normal senses, and Mental Powers can be used on spirits only after a line-of-sight is established. Therefore, you have to buy some targeting sense (see Spirit Senses) to be able to use Mental Powers on spirits. (This is true whether you're in the real world trying to attack a spirit, or whether you're a spirit trying to attack a spirit.) Of course, spirits can move instantly, so you have to be looking in the right place for them. And remember that your senses may be subject to certain limitations; with standard Astral Vision, for instance, you won't be able to see a spirit that's behind a wall.

A spirit in a living body is different than a spirit in a nonliving container. Being in a container means that you are still on the spirit plane, but confined to a physical location. Thus, the rules about which powers can affect you apply as to any other spirit.

A spirit using a body as a Focus (animating a corpse, for instance) can be targeted by Mental Powers only if they have the +½ Advantage Affects Spirits. But you can easily establish line-of-sight in this case merely by using your normal sight, since the spirit is contained in an easily visible Focus.

When a spirit is in a living body AND it's the dominant spirit, that spirit can be reached by normal Mental Powers (those powers don't need to be bought with the Affects Spirits Advantage). Also, the dominant spirit in a body can be affected by any other powers, just as a normal character would be (see Possession). The non-dominant spirit in a body is one level harder to affect with mental powers, provided that you know it's in there. If it's not in there, you have to be able to detect it first! And the dominant spirit will know about any attempt to use Mental Powers on it or any other spirits in that body. In fact, you must make your Attack Roll against the ECV of the dominant spirit in order to reach the other spirit in the body. However, the effects of your Mental Power work against the EGO of the spirit you are trying to reach.

Example: The night-demon Calagar has possessed Rogi and is in control of Rogi's body. Kyranus the wizard attempts to contact Rogi via Telepathy and assure him that everything will be fine once he performs an exorcism. Normally, reaching Rogi for this little chat would only require that Kyranus make an ECV Attack Roll against Rogi's EGO of 10. But since Rogi is dominated by Calagar's spirit, Kyranus must make his ECV Roll against Calagar's EGO of 20. Kyranus succeeds (just barely) and tries to send his message to Rogi. Normally, this would only require that Kyranus roll greater than Rogi's EGO. But since Rogi is dominated by Calagar's spirit, Kyranus must roll greater than Rogi's EGO +10 to send his message. Rogi is pleased to know that Kyranus is working on the problem.



Commentary by Game Mechanic: Enforcing the line-of-sight rule makes mental powers more expensive to use, since the character has to purchase some way of seeing the spirit in order to use a mental power. This does make sense, though (pun intended, as always).

HOMELESS SPIRITS

If a character's spirit has been ejected from her body by Shift Spirit, this is a difficult experience. Unless she has some powers useful on the spirit plane, or some Spirit Senses, she is wandering in a gray formless mist. This is sensory deprivation at its worst. The spirit cannot find its way back to her body without someone else's guidance. You can re-enter your body freely (even without having the Shift Spirit power), but you have to find your body first. This situation is very bad for the character, since her body will begin to deteriorate from lack of food and water, and it will eventually die.

A homeless spirit may encounter other spirits, or indeed be sought out by those spirits. This can lead to some terrifying roleplaying situations, as the helpless character attempts to talk her way out of encounters with the usually hostile denizens of the spirit plane. Or there could be some friendly spirits in the area, too; people whose spirits have stayed around to help those on the real plane. If the GM makes a hero into a homeless spirit, there should be some interesting roleplaying opportunities for that spirit until she is rescued by the other heroes.

BLOCKING SPIRITS

Use Power Defense to prevent Shift Spirit and Spirit Consumption; this is the only way to prevent spirit movement (other than Suppress or Dispel). This is also handy for protecting your empty body when Astral Projecting. Of course, really evil spirits might have a Drain, Suppress, or Dispel to get rid of such barriers to entry.

The Power Defense you buy subtracts from the amount of active points of Shift Spirit or Spirit Consumption. Thus, if you have 5 points of Power Defense that Affects Spirits (which costs 7 points), then a Shift Spirit that does 9 points of effect would actually only do 4 points (Shifting 2 points of EGO, since EGO costs 2 points per point).

Normal Power Defense does not protect against Shift Spirit or Consume Spirit; you must buy Power Defense with the +½ Advantage Affects Spirits. This defense works in one direction only; the direction is defined when you buy the Power Defense. Power Defense that acts in both directions



against Shift Spirit or Consume Spirit is bought with an additional +½ Advantage.

Example: Kyranus buys Power Defense (with +½ Affects Spirits) for himself, to protect against possible possession by demons (an occupational hazard in Kyranus' line of work). Kyranus defines this Power Defense as working against Shift Spirits and Spirit Consumption coming into his body, but not going out. After all, Kyranus doesn't want to make his Astral Projection ability more difficult to perform. Though Kyranus might consider buying Personal Immunity to his Power Defense, so that he won't have to overcome it when he wants to get back into his body when he's finished Astral Projecting.

Next, Kyranus decides to devise a spell to protect his sanctum from incursions by unwanted spirits, or to prevent spirits from leaving without Kyranus' permission. He buys Power Defense with the +½ Advantage Affects Spirits, another +½ Advantage Two-way Defense, and Area Effect at +1 so he can cover his entire sanctum. With the Two-way Advantage, the Power Defense works against spirits attempting to Shift into his sanctum or out of his sanctum.

If you only want the Power Defense you buy to work against spirit powers, that's a -1 Limitation to the cost.

There is no need to have a physical object holding the Power Defense; you can confine a spirit with 1 hex Area Effect Power Defense that Affects Spirits. Though you do have to target the spirit with an ECV-based Attack Roll, which means that you also have to buy it Based on ECV. And not forget you have to be able to see the spirit to target it.

Of course, merely confining a spirit's movement doesn't mean that you have restricted the spirit's other powers. Even though a spirit may not be able to leave, it can still use any of its other abilities unless you take steps to prevent that. You can block Mental Powers by buying Mental Defense; you can block all other powers with Suppress. If you want to make things easier, buy Suppress at 3 points per unit instead of rolling dice to determine the amount (see the Nonrandom Output writeup elsewhere in this Almanac). Thus the Suppress will have a standard level (such as, for instance, 35 points), which will make it easier to determine how much power it can hold on a regular basis.

SPIRITLESS BODIES

Living bodies without spirits are very attractive to wandering spirits; after all, here's a home that they don't have to fight for. Any wandering spirit with the Shift Spirit power can easily enter a spiritless body, unless the body is protected (see Blocking Spirits). Once the spirit is in, it takes up residence without a struggle, just as if it was the original owner.

A spiritless body is essentially in a coma, with no higher brain function whatsoever. In fact, the spiritless body lacks all of the Characteristics that spirits possess: INT, DEX, EGO, PRE, and SPD. Thus any powers which affect those Characteristics will have no effect on the spiritless body.

The spiritless body will breathe, but it will not eat or drink. A spiritless will waste away and die from lack of food unless fed intravenously or magically Life Supported. This can be done by buying Life Support: Doesn't Need to Eat (base 5 points), Usable on Others. Of course, you may want to buy this to No END Cost, Persistent, so that you don't have to be awake continuously to support the spiritless body. Modern or futuristic medical care can provide this service without the need to spend points; a hospital can keep a spiritless body alive for years.

In the absence of such medical care, the spiritless body will soon die. Death from dehydration can occur in a few days; death by starvation can take weeks. It might be possible to force water into a spiritless body with a Paramedic Roll, but without modern medical technology the spiritless body cannot be forced to eat.

MIND TRANSFER

This is accomplished by Shifting the spirits out of both bodies, then Shifting the spirits into the opposite bodies. Of course, this is a complex process. One way to simplify things is to use Area Effect to cut this down to two steps. The classic Mind Transfer machine in science fiction and cartoons is a Bulky, Immobile Focus that produces a 1 Hex Area Effect Shift Spirit (you can easily fit two characters in one hex if they're strapped down). Requiring the targets to be strapped in is worth an additional -1 Limitation.

Depending on how many dice of Shift Spirit you buy, this machine may take several phases to fully extract the spirits from the bodies. (What is the ECV of a hex? Why, a hex is ECV 3, of course.) Once the spirits are extracted, you must be able to hold onto them while you proceed with the second phase of the Mind Transfer, the insertion of the spirits into the bodies. This requires the generation of a 1 Hex Area Effect Power Defense Affects Spirits, so that you know where the spirits are contained. Once you've extracted the spirits successfully, then you merely run the machine again to put the spirits into the desired bodies.

Mind Transfer can create some very interesting roleplaying situations in any genre. Remember, a spirit is unable to use the Skills of the host body, but it can use any inherent powers the body may possess as long as those powers don't require knowledge. There may be some experimentation as the new owner discovers what its body can do. Of course, others may not know of the switch unless they are clever enough to spot the differences in the way the characters act.

POSSESSION

This is a classic situation in fiction, whereby a spirit enters into an already occupied body. This can be the classic demonic possession, or it can be because of psychic powers or even advanced technology.

Whenever there is more than spirit in a body, the question of control arises. Who controls the body? There can only really be one spirit driving the body around; the other spirit is a passenger. In the simplest case, the two spirits will agree to cooperate in friendship, and one spirit will defer leadership to the other. Unfortunately, this isn't likely to happen all that often.

In the more likely case that both spirits want control, this dispute must be resolved. To determine control, all spirits in the body must make an EGO Roll with modifiers. An INT Roll is a complementary skill, so tricky spirits can get an advantage in this battle. Spirits can buy Combat Skill Levels with their EGO Roll; this gives the spirit a +1 for 2 points. Or spirits can buy the skill KS: Possession, which works as a complementary skill.

Other modifiers: +2 for being in your own body, -1 to -3 for unfamiliar type of body (e.g., a dog instead of a human), -1 to -3 for confusion (if you don't really know what's happening to you or you don't believe it).

All spirits make EGO Rolls; the spirit that makes the EGO Roll by the greatest amount wins, and has successfully wrested control of the body from the other spirits. Ties mean that the spirit originally controlling the body still controls it.

Once the results of this EGO Roll are known, the losing spirit can't force another EGO Roll again until the situation changes in some way. Of course, you can always talk to the other spirit in the same body, and maybe persuade it to cooperate. You can change the situation by startling the other spirit, perhaps by using a Psychological Limitation. If the host body is knocked out, then there's another chance to have a contest of wills when the body wakes up. It's up to the GM to decide what constitutes enough of a change to allow for a new contest of wills.

The dominated spirit can still use the host's senses unless the dominated spirit failed its EGO Roll in the domination contest. In that case, the dominated spirit has no sensory input unless the dominant spirit grants it that input.

The dominated spirit can always converse with the dominant spirit. This is one way that the dominated spirit has a chance to break out; by finding the right thing to say that will shake up the dominant spirit enough to force a new contest of wills.

The dominated spirit is prevented from using the body in any way, but other than that it is not subservient to the dominant spirit. If the dominant spirit wants to order around the dominated spirit, Mind Control must be used.

A spirit in a living body is now considered part of the real world, and is no longer on the physical plane. Thus the spirit can now be affected by Mental Powers without those powers having the +½ Advantage Affects Spirits. The spirit can also use its own Mental Powers without needing the +2 Advantage Affects Real World.

The spirit can use any of its own powers plus any of the innate powers or abilities of the host body. So if a spirit possesses a superhero who can fly and throw energy bolts, the spirit will be able to do that, too. But the spirit wouldn't know how to run a powered armor suit, since that requires the knowledge of the owner. A spirit wouldn't be able to cast any of its host body's magic spells, because casting those spells requires the knowledge of the body's mind. Of course, a really powerful spirit might use Telepathy to pry those secrets out of its host body's mind.

When the body is knocked out, so is the controlling spirit. The dominated spirit is awake, but cannot do anything with the unconscious body. However, the dominated spirit is able to use any of its own powers (not the body's powers), free of control.

The possessed body uses either the spirit's or the host's SPD and DEX, whichever is higher.



Commentary by Storyteller: *Why is it that you can't roll for control until the situation changes? Otherwise it's a constant battle for control between two spirits, which given the vagaries of dice rolls means that control would be constantly shifting back and forth. This is not the way this situation appears in fiction, and it would also be a real pain to GM.*

SPIRITS & THE UNDEAD

A body of any kind is a potential spirit container; this is why spirits often choose to animate dead bodies. Spirits in recently dead or well-preserved bodies (those that still have most of the flesh attached, or mummies) may animate the body as if the body was alive. The spirit still has no STUN, END, REC or CON score, though, but the body does have a STR and BODY, and it can have PD and ED (bought as Armor). The spirit can make the body walk, talk, fight, etc. as usual. The GM may rule that the DEX and SPD scores of an undead body are lower than normal, due to the somewhat rotten condition of the body.

The body cannot heal any damage done to it; it is dead, after all. In fact, really rotting bodies may have less BODY than they did in their live state, at the GM's discretion. Once twice the total BODY is done, that body can no longer be animated by a spirit (without using TK). Undead usually have an extra PRE bonus for their horrendous appearance.

The difference between this ability to animate a dead body without paying points and using a dead body as a Focus for Telekinesis is this: the TK costs points, but you also continue to function even if the body is dismembered. Thus, lopping off a hand merely means that the hand now crawls on its own towards you. You have to sever such a body into even smaller pieces before it becomes ineffective.

Spirits can be freed from dead bodies by using Shift Spirit or by destroying the body completely (usually by fire).

A spirit using a dead body as a vehicle in this manner can be targeted by standard mental Powers (they don't need the +½ Advantage Affects Spirits), as well as by Adjustment Powers without the +½ Advantage Affects Spirits.





Building dead bodies for spirits: buy STR, BODY, movement, defenses (if any) at +2 Affects Real World, -1/2 OIF Dead Body. Essentially, all the abilities of the dead body would cost twice as much as normal cost. The dead body is considered an Inaccessible Focus because it can't easily be taken away from the spirit; you have to dismember it or destroy it in order to remove it from the spirit's possession. A simple Grab maneuver won't do the trick.

EXORCISM

The classic way to deal with cases of Possession is to cast out the invading spirit using an Exorcism of some sort. In Hero System terms, an Exorcism is simply a Shift Spirit that can be used to pry a spirit out of a possessed body. Of course, if the spirit has Shift Spirit, it can jump right back in if it wants unless you prevent that from happening somehow.

You must use Transdimensional Shift Spirit (a +1/2 Advantage) to get rid of such spirits, putting it back into its proper dimension or plane of existence (which counts as a container). Or you can destroy the spirit entirely if the GM allows you to use Consume Spirit on it. But in either case, you must be able to restrain the spirit somehow while you do the Transdimensional Shift Spirit on it.

Note that demons come from another plane, and do not have Transdimensional Shift Spirit. How do they get here to possess people? They are Summoned by wizards, usually, or perhaps the demon lord of their plane can occasionally send out a demon. Some demons are physical entities, of course; it all depends on how the GM defines the nature of demons.

RESURRECTION

Yes, there is a way to bring a dead character back to life using these new Spirit rules. However, it is complex and very expensive, so it is rarely done; even when it does occur, it almost always requires an NPC to make it work (players just don't have enough points). Essentially, you have to fix up the body so it is habitable, find the proper spirit, and put the two together.

The first step is to prepare the body for reanimation. Under normal conditions, a body that has been dead less than five minutes merely needs to be healed of any damage in order to be ready for resurrection. A standard Aid spell, if it is large enough, can be used to restore all the BODY lost. Bodies dead for more than five minutes or so will also require a Major Transform in order to restore the body to a completely undamaged condition. Usually this is bought as a Cumulative Transform (+1/2 Advantage).

Cold conditions will lengthen the time period that a body stays "fresh." A frozen body will stay fresh for an indefinite period of time (at the GM's discretion). The Change Environment power can be used to preserve a body in this fashion; every 5 points in Change Environment will move the "freshness" period down one level on the Time table. Of course, the Change Environment power must be applied continuously over this period to gain the benefit described. So that means the Change Environment must be bought to No END Cost, Persistent, in order to have a continuous effect regardless of whether the user is awake or asleep. In hi-tech settings, this ability may well be contained in an appropriate instrument or a setting such as a hospital.

The Major Transform used to make the body complete again will work even if the body is severely damaged or missing parts; even if there is only a small fragment to work with. The amount of effect needed for the Transform is based on the amount of BODY missing from the body. In other words, if the body is nearly complete (missing only 1 or 2 BODY), then the Transform is easy. If you're working from a fragment (missing 20 BODY), then the Transform is much more difficult.

This means that only BODY lost through actual damage is counted; BODY lost through Dying rules, Bleeding rules, or any BODY Drain doesn't count. Only actual wounds caused by normal attacks or killing attacks are counted.

You don't have to use the original body; you could use another body or a construct if you wish. You could bring the person back to life in the body of an animal, or a specially prepared robot, or in the body of some convenient dead person.

Now that you have a body in the proper condition, you can use another Major Transform to turn this from a dead body into a living body. (This could be the way that Pinocchio became a real boy.) Of course, this is a living body without a spirit to inhabit it. Now you have to find the proper spirit for the body. In the meantime, though, you may want to protect the body to prevent the entry of unauthorized spirits, using Power Defense with the +1/2 Advantage Affects Spirits. (It really would be a shame to go to all the trouble of resurrecting someone and find you've got the wrong spirit.)

So you now have a body ready and waiting for the spirit. You can use Spirit Summoning to find the right spirit. In other words, use a Mind Scan bought with the +1/2 Advantage Affects Spirits, and search for the right spirit. The GM should assign penalties using the Time table for how long the spirit has been away from the body. The baseline is the last time you were in contact with the spirit, or the last time it was alive (if formerly alive), whichever is less. Take a -2 to the Mind Scan roll for every time increment that's gone by since then, starting with 1 minute as -0. For instance, if you are searching for the spirit of someone who died a year ago, you would take a -16 modifier (-18 using the revised time table presented elsewhere in this Almanac). Taking extra time, using the proper equipment (a temple dedicated to the resurctee's god, an item that was spiritually important to the resurctee, etc.) can improve the roll. Remember, though, that if you fail to make a successful Mind Scan roll, you may end up with the wrong spirit. And that spirit may try to fool you into thinking it's the correct spirit... an opportunity for more interesting roleplaying.

Alternately, the GM can send the heroes after the spirit by using Astral Projection Usable On or By Others. Then send them on an adventure to retrieve the spirit from Hades or whatever dimension it may be located in (using Transdimensional Shift Spirit). The GM could go to the trouble of writing up all the powers that the heroes would need to accomplish this (such as Astral Vision Usable By Others, for instance), but it might be simpler to just assume that the heroes have some basic senses because of the nature of the dimension that they're in. Once the heroes find the right spirit, they can be returned by the same NPC that sent them there.

Now you have the body alive and undamaged, and the spirit ready and waiting to reenter the body. If there is still some Power Defense around the body, you will need to lower



it before you use Shift Spirit to put the spirit back into the body. Normally, a spirit can reenter its own body without using Shift Spirit. However, the stresses of death and separation from the body in that violent manner means that you need to use Shift Spirit to reunite the spirit and its body.

When you have succeeded in reuniting the spirit and the body, the person is now alive. As you can see, this entire procedure obviously costs a *lot* of points. So many points, in fact, that it's generally done by an NPC. Aside from the point aspect, though, the ability to resurrect has such sweeping consequences to the nature of a game that the GM should at the very least restrict its use, and perhaps rule that only NPCs may use it. Or, in fact, ban it altogether. In any case, though, the above procedure is so involved that it will never be undertaken casually by anyone. There's an opportunity at several points for the GM to turn the resurrection process into a very interesting roleplaying situation. And there are several rolls involved where the GM is free to add modifiers, thus making the whole process somewhat chancy and fraught with danger. The best advice is, of course, don't get dead in the first place.

Aside from the obvious use of resurrecting a dead character, this process can also be used to bring an ancient wizard back to life, or perhaps to reanimate a mummy. The nature of the Major Transform involved in bringing a dead body back to life means that the GM must think of some way for the Transform to be negated. In the case of an ancient evil wizard, this may be as simple as a powerful Suppress or Dispel. For characters, though, it's sufficient to say that normal means of killing someone is enough to negate the Transformation.

SEANCES

This is essentially a Spirit Summoning with some extra Limitations. The person conducting the seance is called a medium. The medium goes into a trance, in which state the medium is very open to spirits. The trance state is defined as intense Concentration (-1 Limitation), where the medium is DCV 0 for the duration of the seance, and is unaware of the surroundings. Additionally, the medium often requires extra time to get into the trance state (up to one hour, depending on the ability of the medium).

And the fact that an evil spirit can be called up may be considered Side Effects (-1 Limitation): if the roll isn't made, the medium calls up the wrong spirit (sometimes an evil spirit that may try to deceive the players, possess the medium, or worse).

Modifiers to the Mind Scan roll: +1 to +3 for appropriate conditions (quiet, darkened room, magical spot), -1 to -3 for bad conditions (noisy, bright lights, skeptics present).

CREATING SPIRITS

Spirits are intended to be non-player characters, because their abilities and their disadvantages can be so overwhelming. While it may be possible to play a spirit as a player-character, it's probably not desirable. A spirit would be awfully hard for the GM to handle, and spirits would have a hard time working well with other characters. So these notes are provided to aid the GM in constructing spirits for use as NPCs (usually as opponents) in the campaign.



First there's a discussion of how to create spirits in general, then a listing of specific Character Disadvantages that spirits might take (along with some new interpretations of old Disadvantages). Finally, some complete spirit writeups are presented; these serve as examples of how to create spirits.

Spirits are intangible and invisible to the real world (treat this as Desolidification and Invisibility to all normal senses with no fringe effect). Because of their nature, spirits have no physical Characteristics and are not affected by any physical attacks.

Spirits start with INT 10, EGO 10, DEX 10, PRE 10, SPD 2. There are no standard senses or other standard abilities for a spirit; spirits have no movement and no Everyman Skills. Spirits can start with any number of base points the GM deems appropriate, though for most purposes you can start with 100 base points and add Disadvantages to go up from there. Given the cost of spirit abilities, though, powerful spirits will likely need very large Bonuses in order to balance their points. Balancing the point cost isn't the most important thing, though; what's important is determining the powers the spirit has and the amount of power each one has, so that heroes can attempt to do something about those powers when faced with them.

Spirits may possess Skills, Talents, Perks (if appropriate) and Powers. Spirits may not buy Elemental Controls, and they shouldn't use other Power Frameworks unless they are allowed in the campaign. Skills, Talents, and Perks are purchased with the normal cost structures. Powers may also be bought at the normal cost, but then they would only affect other spirits, and they would have no effect on the real world.

Commentary: *While it makes more sense to just define spirits the way they are and leave it at that, some people insist on buying it through the existing system. So if you really have to, the costs for spirits can be figured out thusly: the Spirit Package gets you Desolid (40 pts.), True Spirit Limitation (No physical stats, affected by spirit powers, -1), Fully Invisible (60 pts.) True Spirit Limitation (-1), both bought to No END, Persistent, Always On. (32 + 48 = 80 pts.) Spirits start with 10 INT, 10 DEX, 10 EGO, 10 PRE, SPD 2. Sold off STR, CON, BODY, COM (55 points), no physical senses or movement (25 points). Note that this basic spirit power cannot be attacked by Drains, Dispers, etc.; these are merely a way of describing the entity and are not separate powers. Rather than just a 0 value for the physical stats, spirits have no physical stats whatsoever; they can't be Drained or Aided.*

But it's much cleaner to just define spirits the way they are; then their essential nature cannot be drained or attacked in any way. It would be rather silly to have a spirit drained of its "spiritness" and suddenly become tangible and visible.

SPIRIT POWERS

Spirits must buy all powers at +2 in order to affect the real world. However, if a spirit has entered a living container, it may use any powers it has against the real world even without having paid the +2 Advantage. Spirits in a living container are also subject to all normal powers and abilities and effects, just as if they were an ordinary person. See Possession for more details.

Since spirits have no END, all spirit powers must be bought with charges, No END Cost, or from an END Reserve.

Non-physical powers (especially magic) can function in spirit form, but only on other spirits. For instance, you could use an INT Drain against other spirits. But an Energy Blast would have no meaning on the spirit plane.

POWERS ON THE SPIRIT PLANE

These notes refer to how useful each power is on the spirit plane. Spirits may buy any of these powers for use in the real world for a +2 Advantage. Or a spirit might buy one of these powers at normal cost even though it's not useful on the spirit plane, with the intent of using the power when the spirit is Possessing a person in the real world (where the spirit can then use any and all powers as a normal character would).

Absorption: Only useful if bought against powers that operate on the spirit plane, such as Drains or Mind Control. A spirit that wanted to use Absorption against real world attacks must buy it at a +2 Advantage.

Aid: Useful on the spirit plane for Characteristics that spirits possess (INT, DEX, EGO, PRE, or SPD). Not useful on the spirit plane against any other Characteristics.

Armor: Not useful on the spirit plane.

Change Environment: Only usable on the spirit plane when it affects a nonphysical condition. For example, a Change Environment that makes you feel vaguely uneasy or afraid.

Characteristics: Useful on the spirit plane for Characteristics that spirits possess (INT, DEX, EGO, PRE, or SPD). Not useful on the spirit plane against any other Characteristics.

Clairsentience: Useful on the spirit plane.

Clinging: Not useful on the spirit plane.

Damage Reduction: Only useful on the spirit plane when taken against Mental Power or Adjustment Powers.

Damage Resistance: Not useful on the spirit plane.

Darkness: Not useful on the spirit plane.

Density Increase: Not useful on the spirit plane.

Desolidification: Not useful on the spirit plane.

Dispel: This can be very useful on the spirit plane.

Drain: This power is extremely useful on the spirit plane; of course, it only has an effect on Characteristics that spirits possess.

Duplication: This power can be useful on the spirit plane. Certain spirits may be able to split themselves into functional duplicates, and then later recombine. This power may even be easier to justify on the spirit plane due to the non-material nature of the inhabitants.

EGO Attack: Not useful on the spirit plane, since spirits don't have STUN points.

END Reserve: This is a very useful power on the spirit plane, since all powers must either have No END Cost, Charges, or an END Reserve.

Energy Blast: Not useful on the spirit plane.

Enhanced Senses: Only a few are useful on the spirit plane; see Spirit Senses for details.

Entangle: Not useful on the spirit plane.

Extra-Dimensional Movement: Not useful on the spirit plane, since spirits don't have any sort of physical movement. Spirits that want to visit another dimension must buy Shift Spirit with the Transdimensional Advantage on it. Traveling through time is an extra +½ Advantage on top of the ordinary Transdimensional Advantage.

Extra Limbs: Not useful on the spirit plane.

Faster-than-light Travel: Not useful on the spirit plane, since spirits don't have movement per se.

Flash: Not useful on the spirit plane against ordinary senses, but this may be bought against specific Spirit Senses like Astral Vision.

Flash Defense: Useful on the spirit plane if attacked by Flash attacks against Spirit Senses.

Flight: Not useful on the spirit plane.

Force Field: Not useful on the spirit plane.

Force Wall: Not useful on the spirit plane.

Gliding: Not useful on the spirit plane.

Growth: Not useful on the spirit plane.

Hand-to-Hand Attack: Not useful on the spirit plane.

Images: This is useful on the spirit plane only if you've bought the Images as affecting one or more of the Spirit Senses (such as Astral Vision).

Instant Change: Not useful on the spirit plane.

Invisibility: Useful on the spirit plane if bought against specific Spirit Senses, such as Detect Spirit or Astral Vision. Invisibility to each Spirit Sense must be purchased separately.

Killing Attack (HKA): Not useful on the spirit plane.

Killing Attack (RKA): Not useful on the spirit plane.

Knockback Resistance: Not useful on the spirit plane.

Lack of Weakness: Only applicable on the spirit plane against Adjustment Powers or other powers that are meaningful on the spirit plane. For instance, if an attacker has Find Weakness with Shift Spirit, Lack of Weakness would protect against this to some extent.

Life Support: Not useful on the spirit plane. All spirits are immortal, immune to all ordinary types of damage, and have no need to eat, drink, or breathe in any event.

Mental Defense: Very useful on the spirit plane, since many of the attacks used may be Mental Powers.

Mental Illusions: Useful on the spirit plane.

Mind Control: Useful on the spirit plane.

Mind Link: Useful on the spirit plane.

Mind Scan: Useful on the spirit plane.

Missile Deflection and Reflection: Not useful on the spirit plane.

Multiform: Spirits may, with the Multiform power, have a "real world" form. This is useful for representing those spirits that can manifest themselves in the real world. Of course, once in a "real world" form, the spirit is treated like any other character (rather than being intangible, invisible, etc.). The GM must decide what happens to the spirit if Shift Spirit is used on a spirit Multiform. Generally, if the spirit is Shifted out of a Multiform, then the Multiform should probably disappear. Also, the GM should decide

what happens if the Multiform is destroyed. Often, in fiction, this results in the destruction (or disappearance) of the spirit. (This may be considered a -1 Limitation on the Multiform cost.) Or, at least, if that real world form is destroyed, the spirit cannot use it again.

Power Defense: Very useful indeed on the spirit plane, as most of the attacks will involve this defense.

Regeneration: Not useful on the spirit plane unless you use the new General Regeneration rules found elsewhere in this Almanac, and apply the Regeneration to one of the Characteristics that spirits possess.

Running: Not useful on the spirit plane.

Shapeshift: Useful on the spirit plane only for fooling those who are looking at you. Some spirits may want to appear as something other than they are. Of course, this is only effective against those characters that can perceive the spirit somehow (using Astral Vision or Clairvoyance, for instance).

Shrinking: Not useful on the spirit plane.

Skills: Potentially useful on the spirit plane.

Stretching: Not useful on the spirit plane.

Summon: This may be useful on the spirit plane. However, it is suggested that you use the new Alternate Summoning rules, as this will be a better representation of what occurs in a Summoning.

Superleap: Not useful on the spirit plane.

Suppress: Very useful on the spirit plane; this is a general defensive power that can be used against a wide range of other powers.

Swimming: Not useful on the spirit plane.

Swinging: Not useful on the spirit plane.

Telekinesis: Not useful on the spirit plane.

Telepathy: Very useful on the spirit plane; this is the only way to communicate with other spirits, other than by Mental Illusions.

Teleportation: Not useful on the spirit plane.

Transfer: Very useful on the spirit plane, if you apply it to Characteristics that spirits possess.

Transform: Not useful on the spirit plane, since nothing has any BODY points there.

Tunneling: Not useful on the spirit plane.

SPIRIT POWER ADVANTAGES

Generally, all the usual Advantages listed in the Hero System can apply to powers that spirits buy. An additional Advantage is required for spirits that wish to use their powers to affect the real world: +2 Advantage Affects Real World. For heroes that want to be able to affect the spirit plane, one or two Advantages are necessary. First of all, powers that affect the spirit plane must be ECV-based. In other words, powers other than Mental Powers must be bought with the Advantage Based on ECV. Usually, this Advantage is a +1 Advantage; but in the case of spirits it's only a +½ Advantage, because of the additional difficulties in targeting spirits. (You must establish a line-of-sight contact, as with any ECV-based power, but to do this with spirits you must have one of the Spirit Senses.)



Additionally, all powers that can affect spirits from the real world must be bought with the +½ Advantage Affects Spirits. So most powers that heroes would buy to use on spirits would be bought at a total of +1 Advantage or more. One more note: spirits do not need to buy any Advantages on their powers if all they want to do is use those powers on other spirits in the spirit plane. It's only when you are on the spirit plane trying to affect the real world, or in the real world trying to affect the spirit plane, that you need to buy an Advantage.

SPIRIT POWER LIMITATIONS

Any of the existing Power Limitations are acceptable for spirits to use, subject to the GM's approval. There are several new Limitations that are of special interest to spirits. Spirits may buy powers with the Limitation Only While In Spirit Plane (-½), which means that they cannot use their powers while Possessing a body. This Limitation might be worth more or less, depending on the amount of time the spirit spends in Possession (i.e., the amount of time the spirit spends in the real world). A spirit that never Possesses anyone would not get any bonus for this Limitation.

Conversely, a spirit that spends almost all of its time in someone else's body would get a -1 Limitation. A real person who takes this Limitation (such as a wizard who wants to buy powers usable only when Astral Projecting) would get a -1 Limitation. Also, powers may be bought Linked to Astral Projection (-½), and also with Usable Only While In Spirit Form (-1). If you have the Linked limitation, you can't use the powers unless you are using your Astral Projection. This could be a problem if you are cast out of your body by someone else.

Spirits may also take powers with the Limitation Only Usable In This Location (-0 to -1). Spirits that are Bound to a particular location might only get a -¼ Limitation or even no bonus, depending on how likely it is that the spirit might be taken away from its location. (Even though a spirit is Bound to a spot, someone might come along and forcibly remove it.) Spirits that can roam freely might get more of a bonus, unless it's very likely that they'll be found in a particular spot.

Spirits may also buy powers usable Only While In Real World (-0 to -2). This is the inverse of the previous Limitation; spirits can only use such a power when they are Possessing someone. Obviously, a spirit without the ability to Possess someone would take a -2 Limitation here (on the off-chance that someone else might put the spirit into a body). A spirit that's in the real world much of the time would get a bonus of only -½ or even no bonus at all.

For spirits that have powers that could be used to affect both the spirit plane and the real world (i.e., powers that have meaning on the spirit plane and are bought at +2 Affects Real World), if the power only affects real world targets they can use the Limitation Only Usable Against Real World (-½).

Only Usable Against Spirit Plane (-1).

SPIRIT DISADVANTAGES

Disadvantages that have been reinterpreted or redefined especially for spirits are listed here. Spirits should only use those Disadvantages listed here; other Disadvantages are not available for spirits (unless the GM makes an exception). These Spirit Disadvantages are presented as a helpful guide when creating spirits, so that the GM can balance the power of the spirit with some compensating problems.

All of these Spirit Disadvantages can be placed on spirits in the course of play; if that happens, of course the spirits don't suddenly receive Character Points for them. However, it's important to note how heroes can (in the course of an adventure) impose some of these nifty problems on the spirits they meet. For a more thorough treatment of how to recreate Disadvantages by using Powers, see the section on Curses elsewhere in this Almanac.

Commentary: *You'll notice that spirits can get an amazing amount of points for some of these Disadvantages. That's appropriate for two reasons: First, some of these Disadvantages can destroy a spirit very quickly, and second, being a spirit is expensive—they need the points!*

Examples of these Disadvantages as they apply to spirits can be found in the various spirit writeups provided in this section.

BERSERK

Spirits can certainly take this Disadvantage, but of course they are unlikely to have friends handy to help snap them out it.

BOUND

This Disadvantage means that the spirit is bound to a specific spot or item, and may not leave that spot. Being Bound may be a Psychological Limitation, a Physical Limitation, or a combination of both. There are also some additional modifiers to consider beyond the standard ones for these Disadvantages.

A Psychological Limitation binding a spirit often occurs as a result of the circumstances of the death of the spirit's body. As part of this Disadvantage, the GM should define a set of circumstances that will dissolve the bonds and free the spirit. For instance, if a person is murdered violently and their body is not given a proper burial according to their customs, their spirit may be bound to the spot until the murderers are brought to justice or until their body is properly buried with full rites.

Spirits can be bound by other means, too, other than this self-imposed limitation. Spirits may be bound by a geas (see the Geas article elsewhere in this Almanac); while the means are different, the points granted for the Disadvantage are the same. However, in the case of a geas, the only way to release the spirit (other than using Shift Spirit, or destroying the spot that binds the spirit) is to fulfill the terms of the geas or to cast a large enough Dispel or Suppress to break the geas.

Psychological Limitation: Bound is worth 25 points (Very Common, Total).

Being Bound physically means that while the spirit may want to leave, it is prevented from doing so. This may be because the spirit lacks the Shift Spirit power, or because there is sufficient Power Defense (or Suppress) on the area to prevent the spirit from using its Shift Spirit power.

The spirit may be removed from the place where it is bound by a Shift Spirit. The spirit is automatically freed when the place or item it is Bound to is destroyed. As part of this Disadvantage, the GM should define a set of circumstances that will dissolve the Bonds and free the spirit.



Example: A wraith requires the consumption of souls to sustain its undead form of life. While it can subsist on a meager diet of animal souls, it really prefers the much juicier portions afforded by the occasional adventurer. If the wraith isn't fed for a while, it grows steadily weaker. *Dependence: must consume souls frequently (Consume Spirit), Very Common (5 points), occurs once per day (-25 points), 6d6 (60 points); total 40 points.*

HUNTED AND WATCHED

Spirits can be Hunted or Watched, but this is generally not meaningful if the spirit has taken the Bound Disadvantage. Only a free-moving spirit should be allowed to have this Disadvantage. And any Hunters should be able to do something about the spirit; this Disadvantage isn't meaningful if the Hunters can't harm the spirit somehow.

PSYCHOLOGICAL LIMITATION

Spirits can certainly have these; in fact, it's very common among spirits to have a number of severe psychological problems. After all, being bodiless is not normal, you know. The most common problems are covered separately in the Bound and Repelled Disadvantages listed here. Among other common problems, a spirit might well have an unusual fixation on certain things (a severe hatred of soldiers since it was slain by a soldier, for instance). Or a spirit might be unusually stupid and easily tricked (as are many djinn). Spirits can often be immensely overconfident, not unreasonable since they can be immensely powerful. Spirits are often capricious or whimsical, too. In short, spirits are at least as whacky as the normal beings you're likely to meet, and often more so.

PHYSICAL LIMITATION

The obvious physical problems that a spirit has (like lacking the ability to manipulate or sense the real world) isn't worth any points, since it's built into the basic nature of a spirit. The only specific physical limitations that spirits can have are covered separately under Bound and Repelled.

REPELLED

This Disadvantage means that the spirit is repelled by a specific circumstance or item, and may not approach that item too closely. Being Repelled may be a Psychological Limitation, a Physical Limitation, or a combination of both. There are some additional modifiers to consider beyond the standard ones for these Disadvantages.

The most common circumstance for evil spirits is to be repelled by holy places and holy symbols.

A Psych Lim: Repelled means that the spirit cannot approach the item, and cannot even attempt to affect it directly in most cases if the Repelled is Total. For instance, a spirit Repelled by churches would not be able to enter a church, nor would it be able to use any of its abilities on anyone or anything in the church. However, some powerful spirits may only have this Disadvantage to a lesser degree; thus, while they hate entering a church, they would do so if their need was overwhelming.

Psychological Limitation: Repelled is worth up to 25 points; this should be bought like any other Psychological Limitation.

Physical Limitation: Bound is worth 25 points (All The Time, Fully) as a base, with the following modifiers:

Bound Location is:	Points
Small (item)	+5
Fragile (1 DEF)	+5
Large (estate)	-5

So a spirit that is Bound both physically and psychologically to a small, fragile item gets a 60 point Disadvantage. A large area is less limiting to the spirit, so if the spirit is bound to such an area (like the grounds of an estate, or a certain valley) this is a -5 (or even -10) modifier to the Disadvantage.

DEPENDENCE

Some spirits may have a Dependence, usually on something unsavory like human blood or souls. Or a vampire may be dependent on sleeping in its native soil every day. Since spirits don't take STUN damage, read each die for the amount of BODY and treat that as an equivalent amount of Consume Spirit directed against the spirit's EGO. Each BODY done results in one EGO lost by the Spirit as a Consume Spirit; the recovery rate for this lost EGO is 5 Character points per day. Because of this, each 1d6 of Dependence is worth 10 points, beginning with the first 1d6. The amount of dice taken in the Dependence can be more than 3; each additional die is worth 10 points.



Being repelled by a cross is a Psychological Limitation; being repelled by magic is a Physical Limitation; a magic cross would be both. In this fashion, you could distinguish between a cross made on the spur of the moment (by holding up two sticks) versus a well-made, blessed cross. Of course, a common requirement is that the wielder of the cross believe in its power for it to be effective; this may make the Repelled Limitation here Infrequent rather than Frequent.

Repelled can also be a Physical Limitation if the spirit cannot be made to affect the object of its Repelled Disadvantage. This can be because of the godly power in a holy object or place creating a massive Suppress field against evil magic from spirits, or field of Power: Defense over an area that prevents a spirit from entering. Note that while a high Power Defense (like 20) may be sufficient to prevent most evil spirits from entering a location, some very powerful spirits may be able to overcome this. Physical Limitation: Repelled is usually a Fully Impairing situation that occurs Frequently (since spirits tend to have their weaknesses exploited by knowledgeable players).

Examples:

Repelled by garlic: Physical Limitation 15 points (Frequently, Greatly Impairing)

Repelled by holy places: Physical Limitation 20 points (Frequently, Fully) and Psychological Limitation 20 points (Common, Total).

SUSCEPTIBILITY

Spirits often have Susceptibility to certain conditions. While some spirits may avoid holy symbols or holy places (see Repelled), if forced into contact with them spirits may take damage. Since spirits don't take STUN damage, read each die for the amount of BODY and treat that as an equivalent amount of Consume Spirit directed against the spirit's EGO. Each BODY done results in one EGO lost by the Spirit as a Consume Spirit; the recovery rate for this lost EGO is 5 Character points per day. Because of this, each 1d6 of Susceptibility is worth 10 points, beginning with the first 1d6. The amount of dice taken in the Susceptibility can be more than 3; each additional die is worth 10 points.

Examples:

Vulnerable to holy symbols: 3D6 Susceptibility, Common, per segment: 55 points.

Die when container is destroyed: 10D6 Susceptibility, Common, per phase: 120 points.

Sunlight: 5D6 Susceptibility, per phase, Very Common: 75 points.

UNLUCK

Spirits can be just as unlucky as living beings.

VULNERABILITY

Since spirits cannot take damage in the ordinary sense, this is actually a variant on the standard Vulnerability Disadvantage. A spirit (or any character, for that matter) that takes damage from an attack or an effect that wouldn't normally be damaging gets a bonus according to the following table. This is used instead of Susceptibility when the attack or effect uses dice (such as a Flash or a Drain); Susceptibility is used when the effect has no dice rating of its own (such as sunlight or green argonite).

Remember, an Uncommon attack is worth 5 points, a Common attack is worth 10 points, and a Very Common attack is worth 15 points as a base. The following table serves to modify those values when you are Vulnerable to an attack that normally doesn't cause damage.

Modifier

Bonus

Takes STUN damage	x2
Takes BODY damage	x3
Takes x1½ damage	+x1
Takes x2 damage	+x2

Example: *If you want to take STUN damage from Flash attacks (ruled a Common attack), that would be worth 20 points (10 points x 2). If you take BODY and STUN from Flash Attacks, that's 30 points. If you took x1½ the damage rolled on the Flash attack as STUN and BODY, that would be worth 40 points.*

This could apply to any power at all, from Mind Control to Change Environment. If the effect you want is not damage, use the active points of the attack to determine how much effect to use.

In the case of spirits with this Vulnerability, BODY damage from attacks (or any other power, for that matter) is treated as an equivalent amount of Consume Spirit directed against the spirit's EGO. For instance, a spirit that takes BODY damage from magic weapons (a Common attack in a Fantasy Hero campaign) would get a 30 point bonus. (Spirits are particularly vulnerable to this sort of attack, since they are not able to buy any defense against it.) Each BODY done by an attack results in one EGO lost by the Spirit as a Consume Spirit; the recovery rate for this lost EGO is 5 Character points per day. Thus, if you slash a spirit that has Vulnerability to Magic Weapons with a magic sword and do 7 BODY, it loses 7 EGO. Of course the first line in the bonus table about STUN damage does not apply to spirits (since STUN does not affect spirits).

Some common examples of this Vulnerability for spirits in a fantasy campaign:

Vulnerability

Points

Magic weapons (normal damage)	30
Magic weapons (1½x damage)	40
Magic weapons (2x damage)	50
Flash attacks (normal damage)	15
Dispel magic (2x damage)	25
Fire attacks (2x damage)	75



Commentary by Storyteller: *These rules might be useful for defining villains in horror runs, but it would change my normal campaign a lot to use them all of the time. Perhaps my next campaign should deal with spirits. All of the characters can be spiritual investigators and then they will all have the abilities to adventure on the spirit plane.*

I also have to watch out for the netrunner problem that happens in some cyberpunk style games. This is where only the netrunner can effectively play when the net is involved. If only one player character has spirit abilities, then only that character can play when I run an adventure on the spirit plane.



Commentary by Game Mechanic: *What am I supposed to do with these rules? Now I have to buy Power Defense with the Effects Spirits advantage, Astral Vision, and add a slot in my multi-power for an attack that effects spirits. Its going to make all of my characters much more expensive.*



Commentary by Role-Man: *Spirits sound like fun. Since I can't normally fight them, I'll have to research their history, discover their weaknesses, and try to talk them out of their destructive passions. This could lead to some interesting roleplaying!*

SPIRIT EXAMPLES

Here are some sample spirits for use in different genres. Of course, the nature of certain types of spirits may vary in your campaign according to your view of them. Vampires, particularly, vary widely in the literature, according to the way the author defined them. The particular type of vampire presented here is a way of treating one as an evil spirit rather than as a corporeal entity.

Spirits includes such beings as djinn, ifrits, genies, ghosts, (some) demons, poltergeists, banshee, will-o-the-wisps. Some spirits may have realistic seeming manifestations, using Telekinesis and Images to present the illusion of a body (even adding Force Wall if necessary). Of course, they cannot be destroyed by ordinary means. Djinn and ifrits are good examples of such extremely powerful spirits. Some demons may also manifest in this way. Ghosts range from very innocuous spirits that merely create a harmless Image or two (a ghostly figure, a rattling chain and a moan) to powerful spirits that can affect the physical world with TK or even spells. Poltergeists are spirits with TK (often area effect TK). Note that Djinn would have a very high EGO and thus be very difficult to put into a jar. They might even have Power Defense to help defend against Shift Spirits.

Barrow wights would be types of spirits also, as would skeletons, liches, and zombies. Essentially, these are spirits that have physical manifestations of some sort. This makes them very, very dangerous, since they can attack you in physical ways, yet they cannot be directly hurt by physical attacks. Sometimes the spirit is bound to its physical manifestation, and destroying that can free the spirit. A lich might be a spirit bound to some old bones; a skeleton would use the bones as a Focus for its Telekinesis.

It's important to note that many of these spirits have Disadvantages that allow them to be hurt in some fashion by ordinary heroes (those without special powers that can affect spirits). Unless a spirit possesses those types of Disadvantages, though, normal heroes can't do much to them unless they have some powers or weapons designed to affect spirits.

The spirit rules can also be used to write up more diverse creatures, such as extremely tough trolls, androids, or even certain types of aliens. Generally, such unusual interpreta-

tions of spirits are considered different special effects for the spirit rules. For instance, a standard Shift Spirit wouldn't work on an android.

These sample spirits can be created in different ways than that presented here, in order to better represent how things work in an individual campaign.

BUILDING SPIRITS IN A FOCUS

Spirits that enter a living container in the course of play don't have to pay points for any abilities the container has. Similarly, spirits that enter a recently dead body get to use its basic capabilities (like STR and movement) without paying for them. If you want to create a spirit that occupies a physical form, though, you have to pay points for the privilege. Spirits can be created from scratch as occupying a body of some sort, whether it's a corpse, a skeleton, or an android. The spirit's Characteristics are purchased normally, but the spirit can buy additional Characteristics and powers through the body, which is treated as an Obvious, Inaccessible Focus. Spirits built this way can buy (if desired) STR, BODY, PD, ED, END, REC, and COM; but any these that are purchased must be bought from a starting value of 0. Spirits built this way still cannot purchase CON or STUN (since neither have meaning for a nonliving body).

While this "spirit in a Focus" resembles an ordinary character at a casual glance, there are important differences. First of all, because of the nature of the spirit, it takes no Stun damage at all and it doesn't get Stunned. You don't need to buy Life Support for the spirit; the Focus is not really alive in the traditional sense, and thus does not need to breathe, eat, sleep, or other annoying functions. Those can be taken as Character Disadvantages, if you like. On the other side of the equation, any physical Characteristics desired must be bought from a 0 starting value. The spirit in a Focus has no base movement and no senses to begin with; all must be purchased.

All physical Characteristics and all attacks should be bought at a +2 Advantage Affects Real World, with a -1/2 OIF Limitation. Essentially, most things are purchased at double cost under this rule. Skills, Perks, and Talents are purchased at the normal cost, however. Spirits in a Focus are subject to Flash attacks (assuming they've bought some senses, since they start with none) and Entangles. Normal Adjustment Powers will work only against those Characteristics bought through the OIF. Mental Powers and Adjustment Powers that work against spirit Characteristics must be bought with the usual Affects Spirit Advantage (and ECV-based, in the case of Adjustment Powers) in order to affect the spirit. However, you at least get the line-of-sight for free; no special senses are necessary to find the spirit, since it's always in its container.

The Focus Limitation as used here is interpreted differently than the standard Focus Limitation. The body as Focus does not gain any defenses automatically, and is not subject to the "take BODY, lose a power" rule. However, the Focus can lose abilities when damage is taken, according to the special effects. For instance, if you lop off the body's hands, it can no longer use any weapons (or cast any spells that require gestures). If you remove the body's head, it is still "alive" and can still think, but it cannot control its body. (If you want severed parts to continue functioning after they are severed, buy Telekinesis, OIF Body.)



The body Focus does not bleed, but neither does it heal any damage. Damage can be repaired by using Adjustment Powers or with appropriate skills (for an android, anyway; repairing a corpse might be beyond the abilities of hand tools). So it's entirely possible to completely destroy the Focus.

Additionally, since the body is an OIF, you must define some way that it can be rendered inactive. An example might be an Off button for an android, or holy attacks or symbols used against undead.

It's important to note that this is not the only way to create an android or other artificial being. It's equally proper to say that your character is an android, and it's so human that you just happen to feel pain and bleed and do all those other things that normal characters do. The decision is up to you.

ANDROID

Val	Cha	Cost	Combat Stats
30	STR	70*	OCV: 7; DCV: 7; ECV: 3
20	DEX	30	Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
—	CON	—	Costs:
8†	BODY	32	Char: 176 Base: 100
35	INT	25	+ +
10	EGO	0	Powers: 119 Disad: 195
15	PRE	5	= =
4‡	COM	4	Totals: 295 295
4‡	PD	—	
4‡	ED	—	* - Bought with Affects Real World (+2) and
4	SPD	10	No END Cost (+½), OIF Body (-½).
—	REC	—	† - Bought with Affects Real World (+2),
—	END	—	OIF Body (-½).
—	STUN	—	‡ - Bought as Armor; see Powers List for cost.
Cost Powers			
24	Armor, +4 PD, +4 ED		
7	Normal Vision		
7	Normal Hearing		
7	Normal Touch		
7	Normal Taste/Smell		
32	Running 8"		
Cost Skills			
1	Familiarity with phaser		
3	Systems Operation: Starship 16-		
2	SS: Stellar Navigation 16-		
2, 2	SS: Physics 16-, SS: Astronomy		
3	Scientist		
3	Computer Programing 16-		
10	Eidetic Memory		
3, 3	Lightning Calculator, Speed Reading		
3	Gambling 11-		
100+ Disadvantages			
50	Vulnerability to electrical attacks, 2x damage (treat as Shift Spirit to backup system)		
50	Vulnerability to radiation and magnetic attacks, 2x damage (treat as Shift Spirit to backup system)		
15	Repelled by high radiation and magnetic fields (physical)		
15	Distinctive Features: Skin and eyes, speech (concealable)		
10	Reputation: android abilities		
10	Unluck		
10	Psych Lim: Wants to be human		
20	Psych Lim: Code versus Killing		
15	Watched by Federation scientists, 14-		

Note: All Powers are bought with +2 Affects Real World, -½ OIF.

Note: The STR, BODY, COM are all bought from a starting value of 0.

This particular android is a lieutenant commander aboard a Federation starship. His duties include navigation, among other things, and he enjoys playing poker in his off-duty time. He is the only one of his kind, so he is Watched by Federation scientists, who take a keen interest in the technological innovations embodied in his design. Occasionally efforts have been made to determine the lost secrets of his construction, but these have always been thwarted.

His Vulnerabilities are treated as Shift Spirit, rather than Consume Spirit. When he is attacked in this fashion, his spirit isn't destroyed, but it's shifted into backup memory. He remains in that condition until someone else can fix up his body and get him running again, using the correct set of skills (Engineering, Computer Repair, Android Repair, whatever the GM deems necessary).

This is included to show how the spirit rules can be adapted in rather interesting ways. The android is quite expensive, but then again it isn't affected by most ordinary sorts of attacks. Many more skills can be added to the android, if desired. You'll note that by buying STR, the android can now perform all of the common combat maneuvers.

BARROW WIGHT

Val	Cha	Cost	Combat Stats
—	STR	—	OCV: 6
18	DEX	24	DCV: 6
—	CON	—	ECV: 7
—	BODY	—	Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
14	INT	4	
20	EGO	20	Costs:
35	PRE	25	Char: 85 Base: 100
—	COM	—	+
—	PD	—	Powers: 337 Disad: 322
—	ED	—	=
4	SPD	12	Totals: 422 422
—	REC	—	
—	END	—	
—	STUN	—	
Cost		Powers	
175	5d6 STUN Drain, No END Cost		
78	Telekinesis 15 STR No END Cost		
52	Images (sight, sound) 15 pts, No END Cost		
15	Night Vision		
10	Astral Vision		
1	Familiarity with sword		
6	2 Skill Levels w/swords		
100+ Disadvantages			
40	Magic weapons do 1½x damage as Consume Spirit		
75	Susceptibility to sunlight, 5d6 per phase		
50	Bound to barrow, physically and psychologically		
25	Repelled by holy symbols (psychological)		
25	Hatred of living things		
30	Berserk when damaged, 14-, Recover 8-		
15	Watched by local forest spirits, 14-		
62	Bonus		

This undead creature has no physical form, yet it can use its Telekinesis to wear armor and wield a sword. (The armor is mostly for effect, since there's no physical form to protect.) The barrow wight can be destroyed by magic weapons or by sunlight. The barrow wight is bound to its barrow or burial location.

It uses its STUN Drain to take captives, then it sacrifices them at its leisure. The barrow wight uses its Images to manifest itself; it often uses PRE Attacks to make its targets easier prey. The barrow wight can also wield its sword and shield if it's necessary to physically attack its foes.

DEMONFLAME

Val	Cha	Cost	Combat Stats
—	STR	—	OCV: 6
18	DEX	24	DCV: 6
—	CON	—	ECV: 9
—	BODY	—	Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
15	INT	5	
26	EGO	32	Costs:
25	PRE	15	Char: 88 Base: 100
—	COM	—	+
—	PD	—	Powers: 317 Disads: 305
—	ED	—	=
4	SPD	12	Totals: 405 405
—	REC	—	
—	END	—	
—	STUN	—	
Cost		Powers	
47	12d6 Mind Control, Wielder Only (-2), No Range, No END Cost		
47	12d6 Telepathy, Wielder Only (-2), No Range, No END Cost		
90	4d6 RKA (demon flame), 16 charges		
38	2d6 HKA, No END Cost, STR Min 10 (-¾)		
17	1d6 RKA vs. ED, sword flame, Linked to HKA, No Range, No END Cost		
17	1d6 RKA flame, 16 Continuing Charges, 1 Turn, No Range, Linked to HKA		
35	Change Environment (intense heat) 4" radius, No END Cost		
7, 7	Normal Vision, Night Vision		
7	Normal Hearing		
5	Astral Vision		
All powers bought as OAF broadsword.			
100+ Disadvantages			
50	Repelled by holy ground (psychological and physical)		
50	Repelled by holy symbols (psychological and physical)		
25	Berserk when thwarted, 14-, Recover 8-		
20	Psychological Limitation: Cruel and vicious		
160	Bonus		

Demonflame looks like a broadsword, but certainly not an ordinary broadsword. This sword has a demon's head at the quillons, so that the sword looks like a giant fang protruding from the demon's mouth. The edges of the sword are jagged, and it makes terrible ragged wounds. The sheath and the hilt are bound in a blood-red leather that's almost like sharkskin, but it's not—it's demonhide. Two blood rubies form the eyes of the demon, and the pommel is an enormous ruby that seems to glow in the sunlight.

The sword is actually a captive demon, bound there by the Sorcerer King of ancient Serrunis over a thousand years ago. The Sorcerer King was mighty enough to control the demon and bend it to his will, and he used this blade when he went to war. When the Sorcerer King was overthrown by the barbarian hordes of the Northlands, the sword was lost during the sack of the palace. Concealed in the ruins for centuries, the sword lay undisturbed until it was uncovered by traders salvaging marble blocks from the ruins. The trader who found it didn't draw it (which was wise indeed), but sold it to a merchant in Kythros. Whence it now passes into the realm of the player characters...



Demonflame will instantly seek to control anyone who draws the sword from the sheath. And with the amount of Mind Control the demon wields, he's almost certain to do just that. Bored after a thousand years of interminable nothingness, Demonflame seeks sensation first, to glut himself on the blood and screaming pain of anyone he can. But the demon is cunning enough to ensure that his wielder isn't slain out of hand, and risk the chance that Demonflame might be stored away where no one can touch him. So Demonflame, after an initial burst of joy at his newfound freedom, will be cautious, though the bloodlust runs strong within him, and he delights in destruction.

After a while, Demonflame will realize that he can achieve more than just being a sword with a handy servant. Indeed, if Demonflame works this aright, he could lead his wielder to great power over other men. Perhaps someday his wielder will grow powerful enough (with Demonflame's help) to hire a wizard to free Demonflame from the sword, when Demonflame will resume his true identity and rule in his true form. Someday...

This is a very nasty sword that can provide long-term interest in a fantasy campaign. Demonflame's famous quote to its new wielder is: "Hello, hands and feet!" But Demonflame will prove his usefulness in combat with his deadly attacks, including the ability to set things on fire, cast flaming bolts of energy, run flames along the sword, and just generally cause a lot of damage while being light as a feather to wield. But Demonflame will take every possible opportunity to cause pain and slay people, especially those who are dearest to its wielder. A demon loves nothing more than torment, after all.

Demonflame's true demon form could be considered a Multiform, which the GM is free to design to fit the needs of the campaign. The true form would have an entirely different set of powers; this demon in the sword was shaped thus by the magic of the Sorceror King.



DJINN

Val	Cha	Cost	Combat Stats
—	STR	—	OCV: 7
21	DEX	33	DCV: 7
—	CON	—	ECV: 8
—	BODY	—	Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
5	INT	-5	Costs:
23	EGO	26	
25	PRE	15	
—	COM	—	Char: 78 Base: 100
—	PD	—	+ +
—	ED	—	Powers: 522 Disad: 500
4	SPD	9	= =
—	REC	—	Totals: 600 600
—	END	—	
—	STUN	—	

Cost	Powers
101	Transform (create anything) 3d6, No END Cost
169	Telekinesis 50 STR, Area Effect 15" radius, No END Cost
74	Images (sight, sound, -6 PER, 4" radius), No END Cost
38	Images (sound, -2 PER), No END Cost
40	Shift Spirit, 4d6, Self Only (-1), Nonliving containers only (-1), No END Cost
52	Change Environment (weather) 16" radius, No END Cost
7	Normal Vision
7	Normal Hearing
20	Clairvoyance
5	Astral Vision
	All powers (except the minor Sound Images and Shift Spirit) are bought with the -1 Limitation Can't Use While In Container.
2	Familiarity with common melee weapons
3	+1 Skill level with swords
2	KS: Desert environment
2	Fluent in modern language

100+	Disadvantages
25	Bound to bottle, physically
30	Berserk when thwarted, 14-, Recover 8-
25	Psychological Limitation: Very Stupid
420	Bonus

This powerful djinni is stuck in a bottle; his overriding goal is to be free. To that end, he will promise people anything (his minor Sound Images is used for talking to those nearby the bottle). Once he's out, he'll promptly break any promises he's made. And he's so amazingly powerful that only a mighty wizard could put him back in the bottle. Unless you take advantage of his incredible ego and incredible stupidity to trick him back inside. (The djinn bottle is written up in the next section.) The djinni can use his TK directly as Strength to throw the heroes around or punch them, or he can wield a mighty weapon (created with his Transform), or he can combine it with his Change Environment to create immense whirlwinds or other weather effects. The djinni uses his Images to manifest himself as an immense manlike form, normally, though he can take any shape he desires.

Other types of djinn may have greater or lesser powers than this one.

FAIRY GODMOTHER

Val	Cha	Cost	Combat Stats
—	STR	—	OCV: 4
11	DEX	3	DCV: 4
—	CON	—	ECV: 5
—	BODY	—	Phases: 4, 8, 12
15	INT	5	
14	EGO	8	Costs:
15	PRE	5	
—	COM	—	Char: 30 Base: 100
—	PD	—	+ +
—	ED	—	Powers: 233 Disad: 163
3	SPD	9	= =
—	REC	—	Totals: 263 263
—	END	—	
—	STUN	—	
Cost		Powers	
101	Transform (create anything) 1d6, No END Cost		
98	Images (sight, sound, -6 PER, 1 hex), No END Cost		
15	Normal Vision		
15	Normal Hearing		
10	Astral Vision		
2	KS: Fashion design		
2	Fluent in modern language		
100+		Disadvantages	
20	DNPC (generic helpless person), 11-		
20	Psychological Limitation: Always Helpful		
20	Psychological Limitation: Dotty & Forgetful		
103	Bonus		

Well, we had to throw in a nice spirit, didn't we? This Fairy Godmother is adept at doing instant clothing alterations, or minor bits of similar magic in order to be a little helpful to people in need. Of course, the FG is a little bit crazy, and she does tend to forget things, so she may end up being more of a bother than a help. She uses her Images to manifest her appearance and to talk to people.

GHOST

Val	Cha	Cost	Combat Stats
—	STR	—	OCV: 4
11	DEX	3	DCV: 4
—	CON	—	ECV: 4
—	BODY	—	Phases: 4, 8, 12
11	INT	1	
11	EGO	2	Costs
20	PRE	10	
—	COM	—	Char: 25 Base: 100
—	PD	—	+ +
—	ED	—	Powers: 150 Disad: 75
3	SPD	9	= =
—	REC	—	Totals: 175 175
—	END	—	
—	STUN	—	
Cost		Powers	
35	Images (sight, sound, 1 hex), No END Cost		
70	Change Environment (fear) 8" radius, No END Cost		
15	Normal Vision		
15	Night Vision		
10	Astral Vision		
5	Lipreading 12-		
100+		Disadvantages	
50	Bound to house, physically and psychologically		
25	Repelled by holy symbols (psychological)		

This is your basic spirit, a ghost that's haunting a house. He's got a little bit of Change Environment to create an aura of fear in an area, which can add to his PRE Attacks (the amount is at the GM's discretion). The ghost uses Images to create scary sights and sounds, usually with the intent of adding to the PRE Attacks (rattling chains, moans, horrendous visions). He's also got Astral Vision, Normal Vision, and Night Vision so that he can see what goes on. This ghost can't hear, but he can read lips if he has to find out what people are saying. Of course, he can't physically affect normal people, but he can scare the heck out of them. This may cause death or injury, if the ghost picks on the elderly or weak, or scares someone when they're in a hazardous situation (like on a ladder, or a weakened stairway).

His goal in all this is to remove the condition which binds him to the house; the GM should create an interesting set of conditions that the players must bring about in order to end this ghost's haunting. You'll notice that this ghost doesn't have the Shift Spirit power, so he is unable to leave a container once placed there.



LICH

Val	Cha	Cost	Combat Stats
20	STR	47*	OCV: 6; DCV: 6; ECV: 9 Phases: 4, 8, 12 Costs Char: 180 Base: 100 + + Powers: 587 Disad: 667 = = Totals: 767 767 * - Bought with Affects Real World (+2) and No END Cost (+½), OIF Body (-½). † - Bought with Affects Real World (+2), OIF Body (-½). ‡ - Bought as Armor; see Powers List for cost.
18	DEX	24	
—	CON	—	
8†	BODY	3	
25	INT	15	
28	EGO	36	
30	PRE	20	
4†	COM	4	
8‡	PD	—	
4‡	ED	—	
3	SPD	2	
—	REC	—	
—	END	—	
—	STUN	—	

Cost	Powers
47	Life Drain: 4d6 BODY Drain, Ranged, OAF Amulet, Gestures, Incantations, 8 Charges (-½)
213	4d6 Shift Spirit, Ranged, No END Cost Spirit Summoning (all bought with Gestures, Incantations, Extra Time (5 hours), Human sacrifice required (-2), OIF inscribed pentagram (Immobile), 1 Charge. (-9 total Limitation)
16	8d6 Mind Scan, +5 to Roll, Only for spirits (-1), No END Cost
25	16d6 Mind Control, Only for spirits (-1), No END Cost
49	10/4 Force Wall 7", Gestures, Incantations, OAF Amulet, No END Cost
20	Power Defense (15 points), Affects Spirits Both Ways (+1), Linked to Force Wall, Gestures, Incantations, OAF Amulet
96	Suppress Magic, (45 or 15d6), 1 Continuing Charge (5 minutes), Area Effect 7" radius, Gestures, Incantations, OAF Amulet, No END Cost
36	Armor, +8 PD, +4 ED
10	Astral Vision
7	Normal Vision
7	Normal Hearing
28	Running 7"
7	Flash Defense (5 points), OAF Amulet
7	Power Defense (5 points), OAF Amulet

Cost	Skills
2	Familiarity with common melee weapons
6	+2 with sword&shield
3	KS: Magic 14-
3	KS: Necromancy 14-
5	Stealth 13-

100+	Disadvantages
40	Magic weapons do 1½x damage as Consume Spirit
65	Susceptibility to holy water, 5d6 per phase
50	Repelled by holy symbols (psychological and physical)
25	Hatred of living things
30	Berserk when damaged, 14-, Recover 8-
457	Bonus

Note: All Powers are bought with +2 Affects Real World, -½ OIF.

Note: The STR, BODY, COM are all bought from a starting value of 0.

The lich is a powerful undead wizard, essentially an animated skeleton with vast sorcerous powers. The lich will usually be surrounded by servants it has conjured through its necromancy: zombies, skeletons, and the like. The lich should have a set of magical powers consistent with your campaign; the ones listed serve as an example of what a lich could do.

The lich uses its Mind Scan and Mind Control along with its Shift Spirit to bring spirits to its pentagram, where it will use the Force Wall to contain the spirit. In the case of especially dangerous spirits, the lich will use its Suppress to prevent the spirit from causing damage outside the Force Wall. The lich often forces spirits to occupy dead bodies and thus become its servants.

The lich's other powers are used on any who are foolish enough to cross its path. The GM should feel free to substitute a different set of spells more in keeping with the nature of his or her particular campaign.

Note that the lich doesn't have to buy its Mind Scan and Mind Control with the +½ Affects Spirits Advantage, since the lich is still on the spirit plane. This is an important difference between using a body as a Focus and Possessing a body.



POLTERGEIST

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats
—	STR	—	OCV: 4
11	DEX	3	DCV: 4
—	CON	—	ECV: 4
—	BODY	—	Phases: 6, 12
10	INT	0	
11	EGO	2	Costs
20	PRE	10	
—	COM	—	Char: 15 Base: 100
—	PD	—	+ +
—	ED	—	Powers: 160 Disad: 75
2	SPD	0	= =
—	REC	—	Totals: 175 175
—	END	—	
—	STUN	—	
Cost Powers			
135	Telekinesis 20 STR, Area Effect 3" radius, No END Cost		
15, 10	Normal Vision, Astral Vision		
100+ Disadvantages			
50	Bound to house, physically and psychologically		
25	Repelled by holy symbols (psychological)		

The poltergeist is a destructive form of ghost that is mostly Telekinesis. The poltergeist throws things around in the area it is bound to, and works to frighten or injure people. Poltergeists have some root cause which the GM should create; when this essential problem is solved for the poltergeist, it will go away. Until then, though, the poltergeist can give the heroes fits.

POOKAH

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats
—	STR	—	OCV: 3
10	DEX	0	DCV: 3
—	CON	—	ECV: 7
—	BODY	—	Phases: 4, 8, 12
15	INT	5	
20	EGO	20	Costs
15	PRE	5	
—	COM	—	Char: 40 Base: 100
—	PD	—	+ +
—	ED	—	Powers: 70 Disad: 10
3	SPD	10	= =
—	REC	—	Totals: 110 110
—	END	—	
—	STUN	—	
Cost Powers			
35	6d6 Mental Illusions, No END Cost, Only To Talk & Appear to Friend (-2)		
15, 15	Normal Vision, Normal Hearing		
10	Astral Vision		
100+ Disadvantages			
10	Psych Lim: Friendly		

This is a friendly spirit, often taking the form of a giant rabbit that only its friend can see, as in the classic movie *Harvey*. Other examples of similar spirits include *Topper*, *Heaven Can Wait*, and numerous other movies where ghosts appear and only one person can see them. The Pookah is a friendly sort of spirit that just wants to help out the human it befriends.

Of course, the Pookah really doesn't have much in the way of powers; all it can do is observe what's happening in the real world, and report to its friend. This can be useful in the right situations; a little knowledge of what someone else is planning can be very helpful.

Unfortunately, the poor human friend of the Pookah may soon be seen as a real loon by others, since no one else can see or hear the thing that the human is talking to. This can be a very interesting plot complication.

SKELETON

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats
15	STR	30*	OCV: 5; DCV: 5; ECV: 3
14	DEX	12	Phases: 4, 8, 12
—	CON	—	Costs
8†	BODY	32	Char: 81 Base: 100
9	INT	-1	+ +
8	EGO	-4	Powers: 54 Disad: 35
15	PRE	5	= =
0†	COM	0	Totals: 135 135
2‡	PD	—	
2‡	ED	—	
3	SPD	6	
—	REC	—	
—	END	—	
—	STUN	—	
Cost Powers			
12	Armor, +2 PD, +2 ED		
7	Normal Vision		
7	Normal Hearing		
24	Running 6"		
2	Familiarity with common melee weapons		
100+ Disadvantages			
30	Vulnerability to magic attacks as Consume Spirit		
5	Unluck		

* - Bought with Affects Real World (+2) and No END Cost (+½), OIF Skeleton (-½).
 † - Bought with Affects Real World (+2), OIF Skeleton (-½).
 ‡ - Bought as Armor; see Powers List for cost.

Note: All Powers are bought with +2 Affects Real World, -½ OIF.

Note: The STR, BODY, COM are all bought from a starting value of 0.

This is the basic model skeleton. Necromancers prefer spirits that are easily handled when they conjure skeletons, so they look for spirits with a low EGO. This skeleton had basic weapon-handling skills when it was alive; optionally, the wizard could put the skeleton in some armor for added protection. A more dangerous skeleton would be stronger, tougher, or more skilled. A really dangerous skeleton might use Telekinesis instead of STR to animate itself. This would allow it to keep using limbs that had been hacked off, whereas with STR those limbs become useless.



SOULDRINKER

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats
—	STR	—	OCV: 6
18	DEX	24	DCV: 6
—	CON	—	ECV: 6
—	BODY	—	Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
8	INT	-2	
18	EGO	16	Costs
25	PRE	15	
4	COM	3	Char: 69 Base: 100
—	PD	—	+ +
—	ED	—	Powers: 574 Disad: 543
4	SPD	12	= =
—	REC	—	Totals: 643 643
—	END	—	
—	STUN	—	

Cost	Powers
63	3d6 HKA, No END Cost, STR Min 10, 1½ handed sword (-½)
168	4d6 Consume Spirit, transfers to END Reserve, Linked to HKA, No END Cost
24	3d6 STR Aid, Wielder Only (-½), Fade Rate 1 hour (+1)
24	3d6 CON Aid, Wielder Only (-½), Fade Rate 1 hour (+1)
24	3d6 REC Aid, Wielder Only (-½), Fade Rate 1 hour (+1)
24	3d6 END Aid, Wielder Only (-½), Fade Rate 1 hour (+1)
180	1200 pt. END Reserve for Aid
24	Telekinesis STR 20, Sword Only (-2), No Range, No END Cost
7	Soul Vision: sees souls around itself
36	+3 with sword (OCV or DCV only, 8 point levels) All powers bought with the -1 Limitation OAF bastard sword.

100+ Disadvantages

20	Psychological Limitation: Bloodthirsty
10	Vulnerability: 2x Effect from Suppress
20	Reputation: Intensely Evil
10	Distinctive Looks: Rune-carved black blade
483	Bonus

This hand-and-a-half sword eats the souls of those it attacks and feeds the power to its wielder. The points drained from the souls are used to replenish an END Reserve, which the sword uses to feed various Aids that can be given to the wielder. It's important to note that the Aid is completely at the discretion of the sword, not the wielder. The sword will only use Aid when it deems it appropriate. While generally the sword doesn't try to influence events, occasionally its bloodthirstiness will take over and it will use its Telekinesis to direct itself contrary to the wielder's wishes. For instance, sometimes the sword will attack someone that the wielder wanted to spare.

This sword is currently found as the symbiotic companion of an albino prince of a lost race. The prince is a weakling without the sword; STR 5, CON 8, though he is a skilled swordsman and a powerful wizard. But the sword feeds him a tiny trickle of STR when the prince is awake, thus enabling him to function normally. (Occasionally the sword will also supply CON, REC, or END, usually in battle.) The sword replenishes itself by feeding off the souls of those it slays, and its appetite for souls is immense. SoulDrinker has an evil reputation, and for good reason.

Aside from its soul-drinking powers, the sword is a deadly weapon in combat, doing immense damage and almost seeming to direct itself towards the target at times. The sword's levels can be used for OCV or DCV, but only if the sword can see its opponent with its Soul Vision.





SPIRIT KNIGHT

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats
25	STR	58*	OCV: 5; DCV: 5; ECV: 4 Phases: 4, 8, 12 Costs Char: 140 Base: 100 + + Powers: 100 Disad: 140 = = Totals: 240 240 * - Bought with Affects Real World (+2) and No END Cost (+½), OIF Armor (-½). † - Bought with Affects Real World (+2), OIF Armor (-½). ‡ - Bought as Armor; see Powers List for cost.
15	DEX	15	
—	CON	—	
10†	BODY	40	
10	INT	0	
11	EGO	2	
20	PRE	10	
10†	COM	10	
8‡	PD	—	
8‡	ED	—	
3	SPD	5	
—	REC	—	
—	END	—	
—	STUN	—	
Cost Powers			
48	Armor, +8 PD, +8 ED		
7	Normal Vision		
7	Normal Hearing		
24	Running 6"		
2	Familiarity with common melee weapons		
12	+4 with swords		
100+ Disadvantages			
100	8d6 Susceptibility to helmet removal or opening, per phase		
40	Vulnerability to magical attacks, 1.5x damage		

Note: All Powers are bought with +2 Affects Real World, -½ OIF.

Note: The STR, BODY, COM are all bought from a starting value of 0.

The spirit knight is an empty suit of armor that's nearly impossible to defeat in single combat. Well, of course that depends on how good the hero is, and how the GM chooses to alter this writeup. This particular spirit knight may not be as fast as some heroes, but it is stronger than most and skilled with a sword. The GM may want to give the spirit knight an enchanted blade, too, to make things even more difficult.

Spirit knights are created as a servant or guardian by a powerful necromancer, in most cases. They are terribly difficult to stop, since they have heavy plate armor and a fair amount of BODY. However, if you can somehow manage to remove its helmet or open its helmet, this will release the spirit and destroy the creature. (The GM is free to consider the Consume Spirit effect from the Susceptibility as meaning either of two things: the spirit was destroyed, or the spirit was freed and returned to where it belongs, wherever that may be.)

TROLL

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats
—	STR	—	OCV: 5; DCV: 5; ECV: 3 Phases: 4, 8, 12 Costs Char: 104 Base: 100 + + Powers: 371 Disad: 375 = = Totals: 475 475 † - Bought with Affects Real World (+2), OIF Body (-½). ‡ - Bought as Armor; see Powers List for cost.
14	DEX	12	
—	CON	—	
20†	BODY	80	
4	INT	-6	
8	EGO	-4	
25	PRE	15	
1†	COM	1	
2‡	PD	—	
2‡	ED	—	
3	SPD	6	
—	REC	—	
—	END	—	
—	STUN	—	
Cost Powers			
105	STR 30 Telekinesis, No END Cost, acts like STR (no bonus)		
43	1½d6 HKA claws/fangs, Reduced Penetration (2 x 1½d6 w/STR)		
120	Regeneration 6 BODY/Turn		
12	Armor, +2 PD, +2 ED		
7	Normal Vision		
7	Night Vision		
7	Normal Hearing		
7	Normal Taste/Smell		
20	Tracking Scent		
32	Running 8"		
5	Stealth 12-		
6	+3 OCV with claws		
100+ Disadvantages			
50	Vulnerability to fire, 2x damage		
120	10d6 Susceptibility to body destruction, per segment		
20	Psych Lim: Very stupid		
35	Berserk in combat 14-, Recover 8-		
150	Bonus		

Note: All Powers are bought with +2 Affects Real World, -½ OIF.

This really nasty troll is based on the one found in Poul Anderson's classic fantasy novel *Three Hearts And Three Lions*. This beast, while very stupid, nonetheless has a keen sense of smell and in combat is nearly unstoppable. The troll regenerates very rapidly, and since it doesn't bleed at all nor care if it is at a negative BODY total, it takes an incredible amount of hacking and hewing to cut it to pieces.

But the trouble doesn't stop even if you've succeeded in severing a limb or opening its belly, because all parts of the troll's body are independently animated. Cut off a hand or an arm, and it crawls toward you to clutch at you. Carve open its intestines and they'll wrap around you like snakes. Pieces that are cut off will either attack or attempt to rejoin the body (a half-phase maneuver to get into the right place, and a couple of segments to regenerate the 1 BODY necessary to heal the cut).

Even if the troll is cut into pieces, thought, it will only get three actions in a turn (as per its SPD rating); the GM must decide which body parts will choose to act. One minor exception: if a body part is clutching something, it may



continue to exert its STR every phase the troll has, regardless of other actions being performed. (This is somewhat like having an Extra Limb.)

There is a way to defeat the troll: fire will destroy its body parts and stop the regeneration. If you cast the body pieces into a fire, that will destroy them permanently. When all are destroyed, the troll is vanquished. But be assured that all the players will remember a battle with this sort of troll for a long, long time.

VAMPIRE

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats
—	STR	—	OCV: 7
21	DEX	33	DCV: 7
—	CON	—	ECV: 9
—	BODY	—	Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
18	INT	8	
26	EGO	32	Costs
40	PRE	30	
—	COM	—	Char: 112 Base: 100
—	PD	—	+ +
—	ED	—	Powers: 773 Disad: 785
4	SPD	9	= =
—	REC	—	Totals: 885 885
—	END	—	
—	STUN	—	

Cost Powers

84	6d6 Mind Control, Limited Range (-¼), No END Cost
50	10d6 Mental Illusions, Only To Create Self-Image (-2), Actions Limited By Image (-1), No Range (-½), Area Effect Radius 20' (+1), No END Cost (+½) Always On (-½), Persistent (+½)
72	Telekinesis STR 30, Area Effect 1 hex, Only As If A Body (-1), No Range (-½), No END Cost
315	2d6 Consume Spirit, Recovery per week (+1¼), No END Cost
70	2d6 BODY Drain, Linked to Consume Spirit, No END Cost, Recovery per week (+1¼)
60	2d6 Cumulative Transform, Spirit to Vampire, No END Cost
15	Normal Vision
15	Night Vision
15	Normal Hearing
10	Astral Vision

Cost Skills

24	+3 all combat
3	Conversation 17-
3	Persuasion 17-
3	Oratory 17-
3	Seduction 17-
3	High Society 17-
7	Shadowing 13-
3	Concealment 13-
3	Stealth 13-
3	Bribery 17-
3	Bureaucratics 17-
3	Deduction 13-
3	KS: Transylvania 13-
0	Rumanian (native)
3	English

100+ Disadvantages

50	Vulnerability to wood and other attacks, 2x damage
65	Susceptibility: wood and other attacks, 10d6 damage per phase
75	Susceptibility to sunlight, 5D6, per phase
55	Susceptibility to holy symbols, 3d6 per segment
10	Dependence: Must sleep in native earth, 2d6 per day
5	Dependence: must have blood to survive, 2d6 per day
40	Repelled by holy places, Physical Limitation 20 points, and Psychological Limitation 20 points
40	Repelled by holy symbols, Physical Limitation 20 points, and Psychological Limitation 20 points
15	Repelled by garlic and some other herbs (Physical Limitation)
50	Stays dormant during daylight, Physical Limitation 25 points, and Psychological Limitation 25 points
40	Repelled by dwellings unless invited, Physical Limitation 20 points, and Psychological Limitation 20 points
340	Bonus

Vampires have been the subject of hundreds of stories, and it seems as if each author has their own interpretation of vampire abilities. Certainly there is no one correct way to write up a vampire in game terms; each GM will have his own idea of what vampires should be like. This writeup is closer to the classical vampire, a highly powerful supernatural being that feeds off of the life force of living people. This version of a vampire has no true physical existence, but it's a malevolent spirit that presents itself as having a humanoid form.



Here's a key thing about this vampire; he's not based on raw power, but on cleverness and subtlety. The vampire's weaknesses are many, and to survive he must use his powers, skills, and cunning to the fullest extent possible. Especially when determined heroes, armed with knowledge and weapons, come hunting for him.

This vampire's Mind Control is limited to a fairly close range where good eye contact can be made, generally less than 6 meters or so, but it can be further if the circumstances are right. You'll notice that the vampire's Mind Control isn't that powerful; he relies on his cleverness in setting up situations where this power can be used, and on his overwhelming Presence and personal skills (like Persuasion and Seduction).

His Mental Illusions are merely to create the image of his body (or of his other forms, the bat, the wolf, the mist, and others the GM might wish to use). Because this is a Mental Illusion, the vampire's image will not appear in a mirror or on film. It's all in your mind, in an area around the vampire where he can be seen. You'll note that the vampire's actions are limited by his form, although he is a spirit and can technically do many "impossible" things. Still, if the vampire wants to go down a sheer wall, he does so by appearing to cling to the surface, or by taking bat form, rather than just showing his body levitating (or indeed, by disappearing and reappearing). The vampire cannot become invisible; he must always show himself in some form. The classical vampire is limited to human, bat, wolf, and mist; the GM may wish to define other forms that the vampire may assume.

The vampire's Telekinesis is used to further the illusion that there is an actual body there. The Telekinesis gives a real tactile impression to someone who might touch the vampire, and of course it also allows the vampire to exert tremendous Strength on the real world. This is the source of the vampire's main "attack," if he is ever forced into such crude methods. (Though the vampire works hard to avoid any such confrontation.)

So the vampire, while appearing to be a real form, is merely a mirage, yet with the ability to affect the real world when he so desires. In this fashion the vampire is immune to damage from almost all sources; bullets pass through him with no more effect than if they passed through smoke. However, the vampire is in some sense bound to this representation of a body, so that attacking with a wooden stake is attacking the spirit directly, too, because of the vampire's Disadvantages.

The vampire normally feeds by draining his victim's life force, defined as a Consume Spirit where the points are transferred to the vampire's EGO (often to restore the effects of EGO lost because of the vampire's Dependence on blood). Note that this really isn't EGO, in the sense that it doesn't add to the vampire's ability to use ECV-based attacks or to resist same. This EGO score is just a marker, as EGO is used in Shift Spirit. The BODY Drain that accompanies the Consume Spirit represents the total blood loss that the victim endures; this is part and parcel of the Consume Spirit, so the two are linked.

Usually a vampire feeds all at once, slaying the victim in a minute or so. The vampire will often approach the victim as a friend, using all his masterful skills to persuade the victim to give in willingly. Willingly, that is, until the fangs enter the victim's neck... by which point it's too late, usually. The vampire's attack takes a number of phases to complete, but

generally the victim can't do much, paralyzed by the vampire's immense STR. Help from others is usually the only answer.

The vampire may, if he chooses, convert a victim into a vampire. This is done in conjunction with the Consume Spirit described above. As the final part of this sequence, the vampire completes his Cumulative Transform upon the spirit of his victim, who then becomes a vampire (having died in the process, of course). Since the victim doubtless has far less points than the mature vampire, many abilities will have to be sacrificed or reduced in order to make the points balance, if that is important to the GM.

The vampire has numerous skills, many of them based on Presence, of course. The vampire will use his skills to deflect the curious and to arrange for a steady supply of easy victims, hopefully without endangering the vampire's secret in the slightest. That, of course, is where the heroes come in. The GM should play this vampire as the most cunning adversary the heroes can face.

ZOMBIE

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats
15	STR	15*	OCV: 4; DCV: 4; ECV: 3 Phases: 4, 8, 12 Costs Char: 58 Base: 100 + + Powers: 22 Disad: -20 = = Totals: 80 80 * - Bought with Affects Real World (+2) and No END Cost (+½), OIF Body (-½), Independent (-2). † - Bought with Affects Real World (+2), OIF Body (-½), Independent (-2).
11	DEX	3	
—	CON	—	
10†	BODY	17	
8	INT	-2	
10	EGO	0	
20	PRE	10	
2†	COM	1	
3†	PD	3	
2†	ED	2	
3	SPD	9	
—	REC	—	
—	END	—	
—	STUN	—	
Cost Powers			
9	½d6 HKA claws/teeth, Reduced Penetration (2 x½d6 w/STR)*		
4	Normal Vision†		
4	Night Vision†		
5	Running 3"†		
100+ Disadvantages			
30	Vulnerability to fire as Consume Spirit		
25	Bound to body, physical		
-75	Unused points		

Note: All Powers are bought with +2 Affects Real World, -½ OIF.

Note: The STR, BODY, COM are all bought from a starting value of 0.

Zombies are spirits animating recently dead bodies. Usually this occurs because of a necromancer creating servants for himself, but sometimes it's just because of an invading spirit. The zombie body is treated as an Independent Focus for the purposes of this writeup, though of course when zombification happens in the course of a game, you'll just use whatever Characteristics the dead body had when it was alive, and hang the point cost.



Zombies can be much more powerful than this; some zombies are extremely tough (normal weapons bounce off of them; treat as high Armor values). Usually, though, zombies are fairly slow and can't do all that much damage. Zombies usually do well against normal people, who are scared out of their wits by the sight of walking dead men. (As, indeed, are all sane people except for player-characters.) Zombies could also wear armor and use weapons, if the GM desires. This particular zombie isn't a very tough one, except for the fact that you have to do a lot of hacking to carve him up. When the body is destroyed, the spirit is also destroyed (or it leaves, which has the same effect in game terms).

A warrior with good physical Characteristics, wearing armor and bearing weapons, would be a much tougher zombie to have to fight.



Commentary by Storyteller: *I can use these examples right away. The Troll should be an interesting battle even against several player characters. The ghosts and barrow wights will be useful in my next haunted location. The Android could be interesting the next time I decide to run a science fiction scenario.*



Commentary by Game Mechanic: *Most of these monsters are annoying to fight. They don't go away when you kill them. And the Fairy Godmother and the Pookah are just silly. But, I would love to get my hands on one of those grossly powerful swords for my character.*



Commentary by Role-Man: *Brrrr. Most of these examples send a shiver up my spine. My characters would be terrified to meet most of the things listed here. I can't wait!*

SPIRIT ITEMS

These are items that work with or on spirits. You may notice some items here that are familiar to you from various fictional sources; any resemblance to items you may be familiar with is purely intentional.

SPIRIT CONTAINERS

While any living thing with an EGO can hold a spirit, nonliving objects cannot unless they have been specially prepared. Creating a container that can hold a spirit is done with a cosmetic Transform; the cost is dependent on the amount of BODY in the object, which is relatively cheap. It does provide an explanation for why spirits tend to be put into small objects as opposed to bigger ones (aside from the portability issue). A container can be "uncontainerized" by casting another cosmetic Transform on it (though this is a different Transform than the first one, and therefore must be bought separately or the Transform should be bought with a +1/4 Advantage).

Fortifying a container is another matter. Containing the spirit (preventing it from using Shift Spirit) and preventing it from using its powers are two different things. To prevent a spirit from entering or leaving a container, buy Power Defense with the +1/2 Advantage Affects Spirits; this will work to prevent the movement of a spirit in one direction only (either in or out of the container). If you want to restrict the movement of a spirit in both directions, then you must buy an additional +1/2 Advantage (Bidirectional) on the Power Defense. (This could be made cheaper by saying the Power Defense only applies to Shift Spirit, and not to Consume Spirit; this is a -1/2 Limitation.) Note that this is not an absolute prevention against the movement of a spirit; the Power Defense merely subtracts from the Shift Spirit that is performed. So a sufficiently large Shift Spirit power wouldn't be stopped by a Power Defense, merely slowed down.

Blocking the powers of the spirit in the container is a different matter, and that depends on the specific powers of the spirit. It's often not enough to put a malevolent spirit into a jar; you also want to keep it from using all those nasty powers it has that can affect the real world. To block mental powers, use Mental Defense. Note that this will reduce but not necessarily eliminate the effect of such powers (a very nice touch in keeping with many stories). To block other powers, use Suppress, adding the proper Advantage so that it can work against all spirit powers (+2 Advantage). Of course, you'll want to buy the Suppress as a Continuous power at no END cost, so it's working all the time. You may want to define the Suppress as having a nonrandom output of 3 points per 1d6, so that you're not concerned about power fluctuations that might allow something untoward to occur.

As you can see, a full-fledged spirit container with the ability to block the movement and powers of a spirit could be quite expensive, even if you buy it as an Independent Focus.

SPIRIT DETECTOR

This handheld unit registers spiritual psychokinetic energy (PK) in the immediate vicinity, it registers intensity as well.

SPIRIT TRAP

This container is designed to hold spirits and keep them from using their powers or escaping. What are the characteristics of a spirit trap or a spirit container? It should conform to the way spirits are kept in living beings; no limit on the number of spirits, and as long as the living being has an EGO, any size spirit can occupy it. Without some special powers in the container, a spirit is free to use any of its normal powers or to come and go as it wishes (using Shift Spirit). Why would a spirit enter a container? Because it thereby gains any abilities of the container to affect the real world (usually with living beings), or it may have powers that are bought with a Limitation Only Usable When in Container (-1). Generally, though, spirits are put into containers by a living being in order to keep them there; either to restrain their powers, or to keep them handy so the owner can find them when he needs them. How do you create a container? You should be able to either build one from scratch or to use an existing object as container. It would be nice to be able to bind spirits to a building or some object, and then be able to release them by nullifying that effect (destroying the object also works, of course, as does Shift Spirit or Shift Spirit).

Some spirit traps can be opened or closed by anyone. Others have the Power Defense (and other powers) always active unless it is broken. For instance, a demon bottle with a special seal on it; once the seal is broken, it can't be put back on (except by creating the whole thing again). Whereas a djinn bottle or a spirit trap can be opened or closed as often as you like. These are Independent items, which means they are normally controlled by the user. Is it an advantage to be able to turn it on or off, or is it a limitation that it can't be turned off (only destroyed)?

This can also be used to create a Spirit Trap; a box or a jar with one point of EGO (so it can accept a spirit), Shift Spirit the spirit into the jar, then activate the Force Field (Affects Spirits). Presto—the spirit is in the jar. Until someone opens it...

SHIFT SPIRIT PROJECTOR

This gun is powered by an unlicensed nuclear particle accelerator in a backpack unit. 2D6 Shift Spirit (2D6 EGO), 1d6 Energy Blast (Linked, -½), OAF (-1), Two-handed (-¼), END Reserve (200 END, REC 10).

DJINN BOTTLE

This is design to trap and hold a powerful djinni. Power Defense prevents Shift Spirit; Suppress prevents any other powers from working (except perhaps 10 points of Sound Images).

CAMPAIGN AND STORY IDEAS FOR SPIRITS

Here are some suggestions on how to use these spirit rules in your gaming.

Spirits are deadly. The heroes should have some chance to deal with them, even if it's just the chance to run away. Creative use of Disadvantages for spirits can give any hero (even those without powers that affect spirits) a chance to deal with the spirit.

The GM may want to outlaw spirit powers that can affect the physical plane unless they use a Focus (like skeletons).

SPIRITS IN CHAMPIONS

Astral Projection can be used by powerful wizards. Possession by an evil spirit can be an interesting situation for superheroes, especially when it's a superhero that's possessed! Some heroes can be built around spirit powers (Deadman in DC Comics, for instance). A powerful spirit like a djinni can give a group of superheroes a very rough time. See *Mystic Masters* for more uses for spirits in a *Champions* campaign.





SPIRITS IN DARK CHAMPIONS

Their use here tends to be grittier and more realistic. A house haunted by an evil spirit, a case of demonic possession. Or a wizard summoning evil spirits in a modern city. The heroes will have a devil of a time! In most cases, they'll need to find an NPC who can help them with information or possibly the odd spell or two. Or, if you prefer, a technological solution can be found to the spirit problem, if you allow a gadgeteer enough leeway.

SPIRITS IN FANTASY HERO

This is the natural genre for spirits. Spirits abound in fantasy stories. In *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy, Sauron and his Ringwraiths can all be written up using the spirit rules. Spirits are a great way to cut a group of players down to size; even a relatively weak spirit can play havoc with heroes that don't have the right powers. The spirit rules make undead much more fearsome and powerful, too. Necromancy. Shamans. Animism. Nature spirits (manitous); spirits of animals, totems. If you want to represent animist magic, all living things have an EGO (the minimum is 1; plants and insects and suchlike would have this EGO). In some traditions, even inanimate objects have a spirit of sorts, embodying the nature of the object. The spirit of a rock would have its durable qualities. Such crude elemental spirits would probably have very low INT scores. But they might have great power all the same.

Elementals can also be created using the spirit rules. So could dryads or naiads. Angels as well as demons. Spirits are a classic in many cultures and mythologies, so the applications are nearly endless.

Some wizards might use Shift Spirit as a means of communicating, by sending their spirit into the body of someone at the locale where they want to communicate. (It might be a good idea to keep an apprentice with a low EGO if your fellow wizards like to communicate with you this way.)

SPIRITS IN CYBER HERO/STAR HERO

In science fiction stories, spirits can be used as a supernatural element, or they can be an explanation for certain very hi-tech effects, such as mind transfer. Spirits can also be used to represent very unusual, very powerful aliens. Spirits can be used to represent robots and AIs as well, replacing the Automaton rules found in the *Hero System Rulesbook*.

Robots can be considered a Focus for a spirit with a number of severe Limitations. A robot would have a 0 EGO score and be completely unaffected by any ECV-based powers; of course, it also lacks free will (so robots cannot be player-characters). A normal Shift Spirit would not act on robot; this is a different set of special effects, after all. You would have to buy an entirely different Shift Spirit power to affect robots; this would be considered a way of copying the robot's programming and erasing it in the robot. Otherwise, robots would be bought much like Zombies. Robots would not be considered containers for normal spirits. However, an AI would be considered a living container (how about an AI possessed by a demon?).

A humanoid AI acts much like a zombie; it takes no STUN but it can take BODY damage. The BODY damage can be repaired over time, using appropriate Skills (like KS: Android Repair). The famous android lieutenant commander in the SF television series could be purchased under these AI rules. Of course, you can build an android that functions much like a human, in which case you could buy it just like a normal character and call it an AI.

The spirit rules can also represent characters that are "phase-shifted" with respect to reality. This has occurred more than once on science fiction TV shows; there's an unusual accident of some sort and a character "disappears," but the character can actually still see and hear things in the "real world."

THE GHOSTBREAKERS CAMPAIGN

Using the Spirit Projectors and the Spirit Traps, our intrepid band of adventurers seeks to rid the modern world of an infestation of evil spirits. Be careful not to get slimed! In fact, you might even be able to find some gaming materials on this sort of campaign. It's best run with a humorous tone, of course, though it can be deadly serious. A heroic level campaign is best, set in a modern era where ghosts are breaking out in vast numbers.

THE HAUNTING

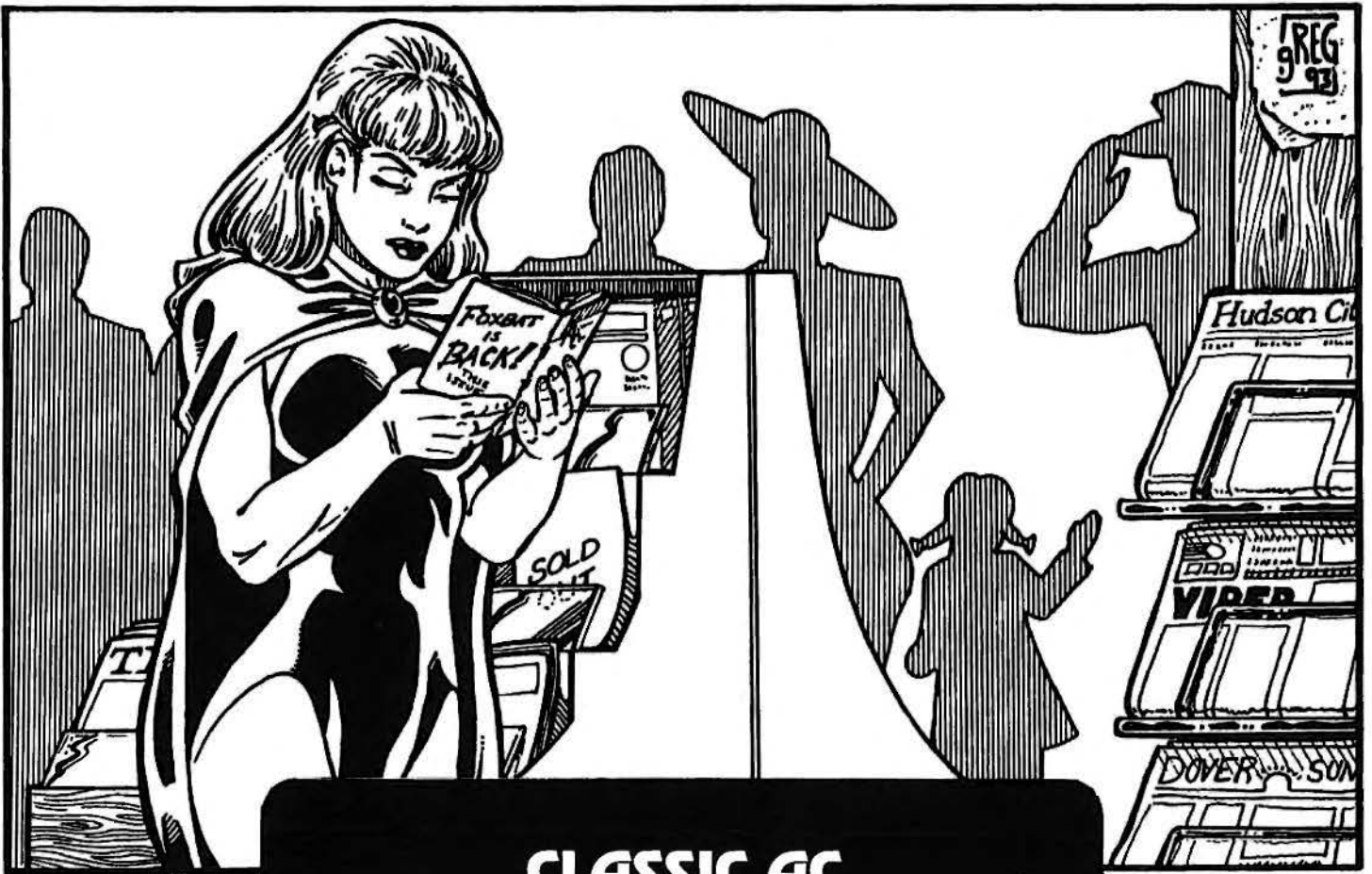
The haunted house, the beautiful young heiress who has just acquired it. The ghost who is killing people. The heroes must discover why, before they become the next victims. Possible solutions: find the ghost's remains and give them a proper burial; find the ghost's killer and bring it to justice; perform an exorcism. Or perhaps it's all a fake by a wizard out to scare people away so he can get the treasure.

THE EXORCISM

One of the DNPCs is possessed by a demon. The heroes must find the demon's true name in order for the exorcism to succeed. Why the demonic possession? One of the heroes' enemies is a wizard who is using this method to strike at them.

THE DJINNI

The heroes find a djinni in a bottle... will they let it go? It can talk to them, and promises wealth and great power if they free it. The djinn even leads them to a treasure to convince them of its bona fides; it also advises them how to defeat the monster guarding the treasure. When they let the djinn free, it promptly reneges on all promises and threatens to eat them. They must trick it back into the bottle (assuming they can't beat it up, which is a fairly safe assumption).



CLASSIC AC



SOUND THE ALARM!

By Greg Porter

It is often all too easy in *Danger International* to say "Make your Security Systems roll with a -3 and you're in." Getting through security systems is often not that easy or painless. It may take several hours of painstaking, exact work to get into a high security area, requiring the deactivation of several types of alarms.

It adds an extra dimension to the event if the GM can describe what the character sees, and knows what tools are needed to bypass the alarm or lock. The players will also sweat a little more if they have to figure out some of what is going on themselves, rather than letting the skills of the character automatically get them through.

A lot of alarm and security systems are not known to the average GM, so he may not really be aware of a proper security setup, and leave easily exploitable loopholes for the characters to drive tanks through. I'm not saying there shouldn't be loopholes—but they should be very hard to find, and the GM should know where they all are.

With these goals in mind, let's *now* look at alarms and security systems in general.

ALARMS IN GENERAL

Anything used to detect an intruder can be classified as an alarm. This includes guards, animals, and technical devices, though I shall deal only with the latter.

Most electronic alarms are arranged on what is known as a closed circuit. This means that normal condition is a closed loop of sensors, and any break in this system (like cutting the wires) will set off the alarm.

Lower-quality systems are easily neutralized—they are bypassed by shorting the output. Better systems are set to a certain resistance, that of the complete sensor net, and any change at all will trigger an alarm.

Small setups may have only one alarm, like a residential burglar alarm. Larger ones may have the sensors arranged in zones, to more accurately pinpoint trouble, like on a certain floor or a certain stretch of fence. This can be and is carried to extremes at high-security complexes, where an alarm can be pinpointed to the exact area of intrusion, such as a certain office, that door, or a small part of a perimeter.

The type of alarm can differ, depending on security needs. Naturally, you can have a bell, siren, flashing lights, etc., but in some cases it is more desirable to catch the intruders rather than frighten them off. Silent alarms are used in such cases. The silent alarm alerts the proper personnel, who go to the scene and hopefully catch the unsuspecting miscreants. This can be done through the phone lines or over the radio to the police, frequent methods used by banks and small companies, or the alarm can alert on-site security forces, as is usually the case for larger, corporations or government installations.

Most alarms have a central processor, which makes the alarm's decisions as to what to do. It is not intelligent in any sense of the word, but just does what it is programmed to, like call the police for burglaries, the fire department for fires, switch to battery backup if power fails, etc. If the central processor can be disabled, the entire alarm system is neutralized. For this reason, it is usually in a secure and secret location, with tamper guards (separate security measures, requiring their own Security Systems roll to bypass) to prevent unauthorized entry.

TOOLS OF THE TRADE

Usual tools for a high-tech burglar can include any of the following:

- Lockpick
- Cordless drill with selection of bits
- Cordless soldering iron
- Nail or stud finder (for finding nails in walls)
- Climbing gear
- Various electronic tools
- Wire
- Superglue
- Tape
- Multimeter (for measuring current, voltage, resistance)
- Portable oscillator with frequency generator
- Extendible dentist's mirror
- Small crossbow (for rope throwing)
- Several small but powerful magnets
- Portable electromagnet with 200 kg pull (weighs 1 kg)
- Plastic tongs
- Ultrasonic or microwave sniffer

Some of these are very useful, while others will see little or no use. This list is partial, and you should pad it out for specific assignments.

SECURITY SYSTEMS SKILL

Most of the time, a failed Security Systems roll means a tripped alarm. This depends on the situation and the alarm, and is at GM discretion. To give the characters the benefit of the doubt, it is reasonable to say that if the roll is failed by only 1, the alarm is neither tripped or deactivated.

TYPES OF SETUPS

There are three normal categories of security systems setups:

Perimeter Defense • Building Defense • Item Defense

The first is designed to detect intruders before they reach the installation being defended. The second is designed to warn of entry to the installation itself. The third is designed to protect a specific location in the installation. Let's look at each of them in detail.

PERIMETER DEFENSE

There are various ways to detect intruders on the edge of a protected area, each with its own advantages and disadvantages.

TV Camera

Description: Generally in a weatherproof box about the size of a residential mailbox, these are set up to view a certain area, and are monitored by a person in a central location. These use the Perception of the viewer with a -1 modifier because of resolution and field of view restrictions.

Low security setups may have fake cameras or fixed cameras, while higher security areas may have pivoting cameras, telephoto lenses, and image intensification capability. Pivoting cameras can cover a wider area, but have the disadvantage that they leave blind spots unless there are multiple cameras. Fake cameras are designed to be cheaper than real cameras, and are easy to spot (base Security Systems roll).

Most systems will have a video recorder hooked up to the cameras; the recorder takes pictures at one-second intervals, and can be switched to normal recording mode if an alarm is sounded.

Neutralizing: To get by one of these, several tactics can be used. One is to have a distraction, something to draw away the attention of the viewer for a few seconds so you can sneak past. Another is to be incredibly stealthy and hope you aren't spotted. This works best if the cameras are pivoting—you creep through the setup's "blind spots" as the cameras pivot. This requires that the character be able to accurately gauge the camera's field of vision (base Security Systems roll), and the character must make a separate Stealth roll to bypass each camera in this manner.

A very difficult to accomplish but effective method is to somehow splice into the video feed lines and send in a false image. This can be done by taping a small segment of what the camera sees and continually playing it back. This is almost always done as an inside job.

The last way to get by a camera is simply break it—but even if this does not cause an alarm or investigation of the area, it will still make the defenders more alert.

Fences

Description: Fences serve to keep people out, and can act as alarm platforms.

An electric fence may have provisions to sound an alarm if cut. Sophisticated fences can even send the alarm when spliced before the cut was made, because the cut will produce small voltage pulse. Fences may also mount motion alarms. Both of these are designed to pick up the motion caused by cutting, climbing, or pushing over of the fence.

Such systems are rather obvious, usually being small (cigarette-pack sized) boxes mounted from 3-10 meters apart. They will detect the circumstances mentioned above on a base roll of 19—when placed 3 meters apart, -1 to the roll per extra meter of distance between sensors.

The Soviets have similar devices on fences on the Iron Curtain, but in addition to sounding an alarm, they explode like a small grenade. They are usually mounted at head, waist, and foot height, to incapacitate a person however he's trying to cross. Most of these devices have tamper guards to prevent opening (-3 to Security Systems roll to open), but if a sample unit can be obtained beforehand, characters do not suffer the negative modifier.





Neutralization: The electric type fence can be neutralized with special cutting and splicing equipment, designed to slowly break the old circuit over a turn or so, giving no pulses to set off an alarm.

Motion sensors are quite good enough to detect nearly any attempts to get by the fence, though you may wish to allow Stealth rolls to modify the alarm's chance for detection. If a character tries to deactivate the detector without knowledge of its circuitry, his base chance is a Security Systems roll at -3. If the character knows this particular device, the chance is only at a -1.

Tools needed for this are a small drill, small screwdriver, and needle-nose pliers. Lack of any of these tools gives the character a -3 to the roll *per tool*. Deactivating one of these will take at least a turn, so no bonus applies for extra time spent up to this amount.

Agents may also avoid the fence, by such classic means as the human pyramid or improvised pole-vault.

Seismic Detectors

Description: These are insidious, as they are effectively invisible. Small detectors buried in the ground pick up the low-frequency vibrations of footsteps or vehicles. These are sent to a processor which filters out ambient noise and recognizes the sounds of intrusion.

Each detector will cover an area several hexes in diameter. The base chance of detection is 19-in the hex where the sensor is buried, 17- one hex away, and -4 to the roll each hex past that. Vehicles add their Damage Bonus as a positive modifier to the sensor's chance for detection.

There are also magnetic sensors, which detect large metal objects only. These act in the same way as the seismic detectors, but are only set off by large metal masses.

Neutralization: *Difficult.* Stealth may be used to modify the chance of detection, but that's about all that will. Digging to them will set them off, and they cannot be jammed. A small portable bridge or anything that will keep the agents over (rather than on) the area will also prevent the alarm from going off—but this requires that the characters know exactly where the detector line is.

Beam Breakers

Description: These are the standard electric eye alarms. They can be on various frequencies (visible light, infrared, microwave) and are of differing quality. The simplest is a constant visible beam.

More complicated are invisible beams, pulsed beams, laser beams, and combinations of the above. Microwave-based beams are usually able to detect motion as well as beam interruption.

The transmitter and receiver are usually inside protective housings, and may be inside the area of another alarm, like just within a secure fence.

With beam breakers, the range usually goes up with the quality; low-budget systems may have a range of 15 meters, while a laser beam arrangement may have a range of 1000 meters. Light beams will cover a 1-hex wide line, while microwave beams will gain an extra meter of width to either side for each 150 meters of length.

Neutralization: Nearly any of these can be fooled by the proper application of technology, including frequency analyzers and generators, variable gradient optics, and other such gizmos. The whole mess of equipment would be about the size of a portable typewriter. A simpler way would be to analyze the system, then go home and have a special device made up particularly for that system.

The minus to a Security System roll will range from a base roll for the simpler alarms up to a -8 for something like an invisible pulsed laser. Most of these have tamper alarms to prevent from being deactivated, and the minus for the tamper alarms will be half that of the normal alarm -assuming you can get to it.

A more cinematic means of getting through such a sensor net is for the character to locate and squeeze through the sensor net in areas where the beams are too few or too far apart. This is easiest with visible-light beams; with other beams, the character must find a schematic plan of the security system. The GM decides how tight a "net" the beams make, and the character trying to slide through will have to rely on a DEX roll modified by circumstances.

Trip Wires

Description: Not too common, but still used, a trip wire is more of an improvised or temporary alarm. The simplest trip wire is one hooked up to some sort of noisy or pyrotechnic device, such as a pile of pots and pans, a blank cartridge, or a flare gun. When it's tripped, the resulting sounds and sights alert anyone within Perception range to the presence of the intruder.

Trip wires can also be electrical, setting off a switch when triggered, to turn on lights, sirens, etc.

A trip wire is usually going to blend in with its background, making it a Perception roll at -3 to spot. High-tech trip wires may be used to cover an entire area, the trip wire being made of fiber optic cable. If cut or broken, the optic circuit is broken, and the alarm sounds. Concertina wire is currently manufactured in this way, with a fiber optic strand in the middle to detect cutting.

Neutralization: The simplest way is to go around the trip wire. Cutting it is not always a good idea: A lot of trip wire alarms can be set to go off on increased *and* decreased tension. If it must be cut, make sure that it is not part of an alarm circuit (a portable micrometer will allow this on wire with an Electronics or Security Systems roll), and then fix it in place so the tension does not change when cut.

A fiber optic cable is a -6 to Security Systems rolls if a splice kit is available, and impossible otherwise.

BUILDING DEFENSE

Many places will have no perimeter defense, or will have rudimentary systems that are easily defeated. Buildings, however, are usually more secure.

Magnetic Switches

Description: Magnetic switches are comprised of two parts. One is a magnet; the other is a magnetically activated switch. The magnet is attached to something that will move when entry is attempted (like a door). The other is attached nearby on a stationary part (like a door frame) so that when the first item is moved, the magnet pulls away from the switch and it opens.

The average person has seen low-security magnetic switches. They are usually white plastic, and mounted on the doors of small businesses. The wires will come out of the part attached to the door frame, and continue onto window foil or other sensors. They may also be mounted on the end of the door with the hinges, so they are not visible from either side when the door is closed.

Higher security models are available, but they all work on the same principle.

Neutralization: Magnetic switches are usually detectable with a simple item like a compass or stud finder. Low security versions can be neutralized from the outside with a strong magnet and a Security Systems roll at a-1. If the location is accessible during the day, it may be neutralized by spraying a conductive spray on the exposed terminals or wedging a piece of aluminum foil across them, shorting the output so it appears closed to the system even if it is not. This may require a distraction to divert attention away from the area for several seconds. The act itself requires a base Security Systems roll to be successful.

High security magnetic switches have secondary magnets that act on the switch. Application of an external magnetic field will set off the alarm, and all contacts are usually not visible. Due to the nature of their placement, attempting to bypass these with external magnets is a-6 to Security Systems rolls. The best way to bypass them is to shod the output by drilling or cutting a hole to where terminals can be accessed. This will require at least a minute, and is a Security Systems roll with a -1.

Window Foil

Description: These are the silvery lines commonly seen on windows of protected businesses. If the window is broken, the foil usually breaks. As it is part of the alarm circuit, the alarm is then tripped. A more sophisticated version of this is to have many tiny wires embedded in the glass. When the glass is broken, the wires break also, setting off the alarm.

Neutralization: Normal window foil can usually be defeated with a glass cutter. A hole is cut that avoids the window foil; the glass is punched out; and entry is gained through the hole, or (if the hole is too small) access to the terminals is gained, allowing them to be shorted out. The first is a Security Systems roll with a-1, the second with a-2.

If the glass has the embedded 'wires, forget it. You aren't getting in that way without setting off the alarm. This is the sign of a very sophisticated setup, and nothing you can do from the outside is likely to get you in undetected.

Window Sensors

Description: These are switches that are tuned to the frequency of breaking glass. These quarter-sized sensors are usually mounted near the corner of a pane, and each one will protect up to two hexes of glass. They will activate on a 17 or less when the glass they are mounted on is broken. A relatively low-security sensor, their use is generally restricted to small businesses.

Neutralization: The best way to get around these is to have the owner remove them. A testing kit is available that will set one of these off without breaking the glass. If the alarm is set off repeatedly over a period of several days with this, the owner will probably get fed up with it and either remove the sensor or turn off the alarm system, either of which is to your benefit. If this cannot be done, the best way to get to the sensor is to drill a small hole in the glass and short out the leads. This is a Security Systems roll with a-2 modifier. After this is done, the glass may be cut out with a glass cutter and entry gained through the hole made.

Switch Mats

Description: These are trip switches like you see on a lot of automatic doors. You step on it, the door opens. In a security mode, you step on it, the alarm goes off. These are most commonly used inside doors or windows where entry might be expected. Pressure of more than a few kilos will set one off, though they can be tailored to go off on larger weights, ignoring such things as guard dogs. Switch mats may be concealed beneath carpet or other mats, and are a PER roll with a -3 to spot, or a base Security Systems roll.

Neutralization: The best way to avoid one of these is to go around it. They are not a high-security item, so they may be bypassed by shorting them out. This is a base Security Systems roll, requiring a wire cutter and piece of wire.

Strain Monitors

Description: These are tiny sensors placed in the flooring of an area, designed to detect the tiny flexing produced by a weight on the floor above. Invisible to normal inspection, they are also hard to get around. The GM should give a rating to an area, based on the density of the sensors, with an 17 or less roll to activate being about normal.

Neutralization: These are usually very small, and beneath the normal flooring, so there is little that can be done to detect or affect them. If a character stays near the maximum number of supports, like walls, the effect of their weight will be reduced, lowering the base chance by 3. Characters may also use the walls for movement, provided they have climbing equipment; this will negate them. If the opportunity arises, characters may try to neutralize them from below. This is reasonably hard, as any flexing of the sensor will set it off, and they are difficult to short out because they have a built-in resistance that must be matched. Without a multimeter and a set of variable resistors, this will be a Security Systems roll with a-6. With it, it is only a -4.



Vibration Sensors

Description: These are like the motion detectors found on fences, but usually mounted inside walls to detect forcible entry through them.

Neutralization: The sensors usually do not have tamper switches, so if they can be located, a Security Systems roll with a-2 will isolate it so that it doesn't go off. This usually requires a drill, perhaps with a hole cutting bit, and some foam padding or similar substance.

Ultrasonic Doppler Alarms

Description: These detectors fill an area with ultrasonic sound waves. Any object that moves in this area will alter the frequency of the sound picked up at the detector (usually in the same housing), setting off an alarm. They usually cover a diamond shaped area six hexes long and four wide, and have a rating for detecting objects. A normal alarm would detect an object moving 1 hex per phase on a 17 or less. Very slow-moving objects stand a better chance of getting through, the roll receiving a-1 for each two extra seconds spent per hex. A good tactic for use of these alarms is to make sure a door to the room is in the area, so that unsuspecting intruders set the alarm off before they realize it is there. Alarms of this type may also be based on microwaves rather than ultrasound.

Neutralization: These respond to frequency changes rather than intensity changes, so it is usually possible to overload the input with a strong signal on the frequency the detector expects. This may mask the different frequency caused by moving objects. A device of this type will subtract 6 from the sensitivity of the detector, along with however much a Security Systems roll is made by. Characters with Stealth may use it to reduce the sensitivity of the sensor, giving it a -1 per point their roll is made by, but any movement of more than one hex per phase automatically sets it off. If the receiver can be reached, it can usually be covered up with something like tape or paper, blocking out signals that would set it off. This requires a Security Systems roll with a -1.

Beam Breakers

Description: Similar to outdoor models, these have the advantage that they can be mounted flush with walls, making direct tampering nearly impossible. The smaller area to cover also allows a tighter grid of beams, making it more difficult (if not impossible) to squirm through.

Neutralization: As for outdoor models.

Passive IR

Description: These are also motion detectors, but designed to work off of temperature changes, and are more difficult to neutralize. The temperature is unimportant, just the magnitude of the change. These are easily disguised as things like air vents, so a PER roll with a -4, or a Security Systems roll with a-1 is required to recognize them. They can cover various types of areas, as illustrated below. The chance for detecting moving objects is as for Ultrasonic Doppler Alarms.

Neutralization: It is not possible to jam one of these, so the alarm must be deactivated directly. The IR signature of a person *might* be masked by an insulating suit that started at room temperature; this would give a-6 to the detection chance. As a medium security sensor, simple shorting out of the sensor may not work. The sensors will have tamper switches, which are a -3 to bypass if unfamiliar with the equipment, and a-1 to Security Systems rolls if the characters know what to expect.

ITEM DEFENSE

These are last-ditch alarms, designed to protect a certain item or specific area from intrusion.

Electronic Combination Locks

Description: These are generally a numeric keypad set into a hardened steel wall or door frame. A multi-digit combination must be entered within a set time, or the lock will not open. The higher the security, the more detailed such a setup will be. An improper combination may set off an alarm. Certain facilities have such locks linked into a computer, which prints out when the door was opened, and whose combination was used to open it. Such a printout may be in the main security area, so that authorized entry at unusual times will still draw suspicion. Card locks requiring a coded card (like a banking machine) in addition to the combination are possible, as are fingerprint and voiceprint locks.



Neutralization: This is up to the GM. If the characters have the information and/or special equipment to bypass such measures, they should succeed. If they don't have the information or equipment, they won't, at least not without explosives.

Capacitance Alarm

Description: This is usually hooked up to an ungrounded metal object of some sort, like a doorknob or small safe. When any conductor (people are conductors) moves near the object, the circuit is disturbed and the alarm triggered.

Neutralization: The best way to get by this type of sensor is to deactivate the circuitry powering it. If the character is not familiar with it, he will have a-3 to his Security systems roll, and if he is familiar, only a -1. Another way to get around this problem is to use non-conducting tongs to do whatever work is needed in the area of effect.

Pressure Switches

Description: This is a switch placed directly underneath an object, activating an alarm when the object which rests on it is removed. Higher security models use pressure transducers that measure any change of pressure, whether increased or decreased.

Neutralization: The simple pressure switch is easily neutralized by using something like a tongue depressor to hold the switch down while the object is removed. This is a base Security Systems roll. Pressure transducers are better left alone, and the alarm deactivated at another point in the system.

Other High Tech Sensors

Items can be sealed in a resonant cavity that has sound waves of a certain frequency oscillating inside. When the cavity is opened, the sound waves no longer resonate, and an alarm is tripped.

Very sensitive switches can be used in an enclosed area to measure barometric pressure. If a door is opened into the area, the pressure will change slightly, and the alarm is tripped.

A fiber optic strand can be looped through whatever is being protected. If broken, the optical connection is broken, and the alarm is tripped. The same can be done with wire.

It is left to your imagination to find or make up other systems for your characters to curse through.

SAMPLE ALARM SYSTEMS

A few alarm systems are given below to give you an idea of what to expect in certain situations. They are modeled on actual installations, and are of low to medium security.

NORMAL RESIDENCE

Low security magnetic switches on all doors and windows. There is a thirty-second delay on the alarm so that the owner can deactivate it from the control console, which is probably in the hall closet. It is deactivated with a key lock that requires a base Lockpicking roll to unlock. If an alarm is sounded, a loud bell inside the console will ring until the alarm is deactivated. It has a backup battery system that will run the system for ten hours without outside power. For purposes of destruction, this battery will have 2 DEF and 3 BODY.

SMALL BUSINESS

Low security magnetic switches on all doors, window foil or window sensors on all windows, one ultrasonic doppler alarm covering front door and main aisle. It is deactivated with an outside key lock near the front door, or by a key lock on the control console, which is in the main office. This lock requires a Lockpicking roll with a-3 to unlock. If an alarm is sounded, a loud bell mounted high on an outside wall will begin to ring, not stopping until the alarm is deactivated. Optionally, an automatic phone dialer may call the police and deliver a pre-recorded message to investigate a possible burglary at this address. This also has a battery backup system identical to that of the residence.

SMALL CORPORATION

Fence with motion sensors around entire area. One television camera mounted near gate to view incoming vehicles and personnel, with floodlight for night use. Television camera inside main entrance, with remotely controlled lock (from security station) to let in authorized nighttime visitors. Low security magnetic switches on all entrances, window foil or window sensors on all windows. The main control panel will show which door or window the alarm was sounded at. Any secure area will have an electronic combination lock requiring a six-digit combination and a coded card for entry. Wrong numbers will be ignored and no alarm sounded. If an alarm is sounded it will go first to the security station, where the night guard will decide whether to reset the alarm (unlikely unless an obvious accident caused the alarm, like wind rattling a door enough to set off its sensor) or notify the police and investigate. The controls for the alarm are in the security station, which is locked at all times. The security station may have a radio for local communication, and the alarm will have backup power for six hours. It will have 3 DEF and 6 BODY.

You can extrapolate from here to design your own installations, using whatever combinations of sensors you see fit to get the security you want.

One thing the characters should remember is the human factor. Only devices are covered here. Machines might not make mistakes, but the people running them do. Also, a more marginal setup may have human or animal backup, like patrolling guards or watchdogs. The more complex a setup, the more likely the characters can take advantage of the human element. Pure technical expertise may not be the key needed...so be prepared for anything.



REF'ING THE DISADVANTAGES

By L. Douglas Garrett

DNPC

The Dependent Non-Player Character (DNPC) is a special kind of GM controlled character (NPC). What makes the DNPC special is that a character (or characters) is emotionally tied to this NPC for any of a myriad of personal reasons. Love, loyalty, protectiveness or duty all may motivate the character. Whatever the reason, the character cares about his DNPC, cares so much that the DNPC may limit the character, or influence his judgment, or be used against him by the villains, should they discover the DNPC.

In game terms, there are three kinds of DNPCs: Incompetent, normal, and competent. These terms mean several things. For one, they set the character point total of the DNPC. Furthermore, the terms reflect the general capabilities of the DNPC. A good rule of thumb is that Incompetents are straight "8"s for Characteristics, and 3 pts. in Professional Skills or Skill Familiarities. Normals should start with straight "8"s, 15 pts in Characteristics and 8 pts in Professional Skills, Knowledges and Skills (usually just Familiarities). Competents are built just like characters with straight "10"s, about 30 pts in Characteristics and about 20 pts in Skills, Knowledges and Professional Skills. In no case should a DNPC have high Statistics (15+) outside of EGO or COM, nor have a Skill Roll of greater than 13. Incompetents or Normals rarely have a roll greater than 12. In case it's not clear to this point: you, the GM, have total approval of the DNPC write-up, and should do most of it yourself.

Many DNPCs are permanent, like a wife, husband, son, daughter, or relative; however, some are semi-permanent, like a lover or friend/partner. Others are temporary, called "random," and are to reflect someone met briefly before or during a mission (standard minute-romance stuff). Defining a "random" as the DNPC means the character becomes attached to people very quickly, as opposed to a permanent or semi-permanent, to whom the character became attached to over some length of time. To reflect the difference between permanent and semi-permanents, you, the GM, should be very hesitant to let the character buy off the Disadvantage entirely if the DNPC is of the permanent type. On the other hand, an Agency Character will tend to be distrusted by the Agency if he has too many or too often semi-permanent or random DNPCs, or any DNPC that shows up too often (11 or 14 or less). Things like that should be noted and applied as a secret Die Roll Modifier on the character's Agency Roll, and may affect whether or not the character is team leader.

This leads to the occurrence roll: how often the DNPC shows up. Most relatives, children, and friends only should show up on an 8 or less, and then probably on the homefront. A special case is if the character is on Area Assignment in the campaign. Then these same people fall into the same category as lovers, work mates, and some Randoms, i.e. less than or equal to 11. All such DNPCs are probably sidelines, only involved directly if a sort of soap-opera campaign is run where everybody is interwoven with every event. Constant companions like the character's partner, private secretary or valet (if rich), or a romantic interest that is intimately associated with the mission (usually a "random") should be allowed on a less than or equal to 14 roll, as this DNPC will be constantly underfoot.

Remember, a DNPC is a Disadvantage! While only Incompetent DNPCs should do asinine things, and Competents may be occasionally very useful, they all should be a weight on the character. They're all as attached to the character as he is to them. DNPCs shouldn't let the character do risky or suicidal acts no matter how vital to the mission, without argument or trying to go along. Arguments and recriminations are a vital part of many DNPCs. Sometimes they will screw things up trying to help or even blow a mission to "save" the character from harm. Taking a wounded agent to a hospital with a gunshot wound is great for saving his life, but really is hard to explain to the authorities, especially in a neutral or hostile country. Never, never, *never* let a competent DNPC be better than a character. If they were that skilled, clear thinking, and forthright, they'd be a Player Character, not a dependent. Remember that! Dependents are dependent for a reason, whatever it may be. Consider it a built-in psychological limit on the DNPC.

Consider this an optional rule; Clear thinking, bold, and forthright is a -2 pt. bonus on DNPCs (and should be used if a Player Character takes another Player Character as a DNPC). Likewise, self-serving or personally motivated DNPCs are worth +2 pts. bonus, as they can really screw things up.

In all cases, character conception is the critical thing in letting a player have this disadvantage. The character should act married if she says (by DNPC) that she is. Or act in love with his random female if he says he tends to fall in love easily (by having a random DNPC female). You as GM can penalize temporary lapses by awarding one less Exp. (for bad role playing) or in extreme cases refuse to allow that player to have a character with a DNPC. After all, it is your campaign.

AGE, DISTINCTIVE LOOKS, & PHYSICAL LIMITATIONS

These disadvantages are ones that require the most forethought in a character conception. They are also the disadvantages the players think of as “fillers” to scrape up points.

As the GM, you are the only one who can enforce character conception on your players. It is very simple to do. If your players create characters that don't pull disadvantages out of thin air, simply refuse to let them use those characters. It is always better for players to start with “trimmed” characters (example: Familiarity with a few skills, rather than all of those three pointers). That's what experience is for. In any case, let's discuss the above disadvantages.

AGE

Age should be taken to reflect just that—age. A character does not have to be 40 to take the first Age Disadvantage; on the other hand, a character can be older than 40 and not have the disadvantage. The character's age is not a hard and fast rule, but is a good guide.

In practice, a character should be defined as at least 35 years old before he takes the first age category. This is to reflect the limitations of middle age upon a character—it is more difficult to be in prime condition physically. In return, a boon is granted in the form of higher characteristic maximums on the emotional and disciplinary statistics.

It is perfectly legal to define a character as a 42-year-old playboy, and not take the disadvantage, as he would obviously be more inclined to the physical advantages of youthfulness than the maturity of age. A character can, of course, have both. It just costs more.

Age 60+ should be a rarity in most campaigns; however, it is reasonable that a character under the age of 60 could have such Characteristics Maximums if he were of the studious, intellectual, disciplined sort. Again, there is no rule against a STR 18 60-year-old; it just costs more.

DISTINCTIVE LOOKS

Distinctive Looks is a little more difficult to referee. First of all, the character should have a clear character conception, often with the Distinctive Looks related to other disadvantages. Obviously, if the character has a Physical Limitation “Bad Leg,” he may very well have a three-point “Distinctive Walk—Limp.” In practice, the secret agencies tend not to hire distinctive-looking people because of one basic fact: People remember other people by their distinctions in appearance and voice. Herein lies the disadvantage. It is recommended that whenever a player or non-player character is called upon to describe someone, the following modifiers be used:

INT Roll failed: Witness remembers race, sex, any extreme height.

INT Roll made: Witness remembers height, weight, hair & eye color and can ID a photograph.

INT Roll made by 3: Witness can describe well enough for artist to draw.

Modifiers: + to INT roll equal to points in Distinctive Looks.

Remember, especially when crimes occur, witnesses tend to abound in most situations. Even fairly “clandestine” activities will have a minimum of 1d6-3 witnesses to the movements to and from the scene. Character Unluck should add one per active die (or subtract, if the character wants witnesses), as will Luck on the part of the investigators. Streetwise will also dredge up witnesses in some situations.

PHYSICAL LIMITATIONS

Finally, there are Physical Limitations. You, as GM, will have to adjudicate very carefully any character write-up containing physical limitations. Consider these requirements; are the limits a part of the character conception (how did they happen)?? If the character is an agent, can he pass the rigorous physical examination required of all full-time agents? If the character is a part-time agent or an independent, are the limits so debilitating (even if worth the points) that the character stretches either your campaign structure or your credibility? Of course, are they really a disadvantage? Remember Peterson's Law: A disadvantage that doesn't disadvantage is not a disadvantage and is worth no points.

Be sure that the effect (in points) reflects the intent of the disadvantage. Example: Hay fever (a legitimate limit) may very well be “incapacitating in spring and fall months;” however, a useless character is a stupid idea. The worst hay fever should be worth Infrequent/Slightly Impairing (3 pts) and should only cause untimely sneezes while the character is attempting to be stealthy. The real disadvantage of such a limit is that, implicitly, the character should also have bought down his END stat by 30 to .50% from the value calculated, to reflect the hay fever.

Likewise, the physical *limit* “bad leg” probably has the character incapable of using his strength in that leg (no kicks, - 5 STR for dead lift) and is only worth Infrequent/Slightly Impairing (3 pts). The real disadvantage is that the character should sell off 2' of ground movement to reflect his slower pace and less efficient run.

It should be clear that all three of the disadvantages are fairly closely linked, and that they should have some impact on what statistics the character has bought. If the player did not think through all the ramifications of his disadvantages, send him pecking, at least until he comes up with a reasonable character conception. After all, it is your campaign.

HUNTED AND WATCHED

These disadvantages cover the situation where someone makes a full-time job of messing over the character. Here's the rub:

Even a “friendly” disadvantage (like Monitored by one's own agency) is a disadvantage.

Why? It's fairly simple. A Monitored will mess over a character who does something they wouldn't want him to do, if they find out about it (make the Monitored roll with appropriate modifiers for circumstances).

A Hunted will try to do in or capture the character every time circumstances allow (that is, whenever they make their roll, as a rule of thumb.)

And a character who is both Hunted and Monitored by the same group is constantly the target of both short-term (Hunted) and long-term (Monitored) plots to kill/maim/capture/harm him by the enemy organization.



DEFINING THE ORGANIZATION

When a character takes either of these disadvantages, it is important that you (the GM) approve the disadvantage. Of course, you should approve all characters; however, these disads require a little more thought. After all, every time a new organization is invented by some player, you have a lot of work to do. It is very important that you have some basic facts about every organization that directly affects your campaign.

You must certainly know who the group is, what they are trying to achieve, and why they hunt or monitor the character. An easy way out of the problem is to inform your players that you only accept "real-world" organizations or a list of pre-arranged "fictitious" organizations that you have had time to work up. My own campaign allows any organization, but then I enjoy the player participation in developing the campaign.

When the character takes one of these disadvantages, the first thing that must be decided is the size of the organization. The choice of size determines the overall resources of the organization, and helps define the tactics involved.

A single person or small-group hunted will tend to be rather sneaky if they believe the character they are after is surrounded by friends. Also, when these groups show up, the whole Hunted shows up. Yes, this does present the opportunity for the character to wipe out his Hunted. That's okay: Just make him buy off the disad, or give him another Hunted. But be magnanimous: If the character's Exp. for the adventure is just short of what it takes to buy off the hunted, give him the extra points for his success against his hunter.

Medium and large groups are harder to handle, for the whole organization never shows up. Instead, have teams of hunters show up to do their thing. Medium groups will usually send 6-10 guys in one or two teams; large groups will send 10-20 guys in three or more teams.

Do remember that only half of an average hunting team consists of killers. The rest are support (like drivers or techs or gumshoes).

These groups are almost never sneaky. These hunters are fairly direct fellows and will avoid subtlety unless absolutely necessary.

MAKING HUNTEDS AND MONITOREDSD WORTH THEIR POINTS

Under no circumstances should you allow frivolous Hunteds or Monitoredsd. I don't care who the hunter is; if the character gets points for him, he's dangerous. This is particularly true of "highly trained" hunters. Those three bonus points give you the license to write up the hunting team as NPCs with 50 points and limited disadvantages. (By "limited disadvantages" I mean that the character can take no more than one disadvantage from each of the following categories: Age, Distinctive Looks, Physical Limitation, Psychological Limitation, and Unluck.) Certain established organizations will even have their own Package Deals.

Even a "normal" Hunted can have NPCs with 0 points and limited disads; they will at least have weapons familiarities and professional skills appropriate to their backgrounds, which can make them capable enough that the character shouldn't ignore them.

Huntedsd and Monitoredsd need no explanation. If they make their roll, they show up (subject to how the GM feels about it).



If the character goes to such great lengths to dodge the pursuing group that there's no way the hunters can interfere at their supposed rate, you should reduce the chance that they show up—and the number of points the character receives. If the character stops dodging, up the appearance roll again and give him the points back.

Sometimes dodging won't help, because Hunteds and Monitoredsd don't play fair. If they can't get the PC, they will go after his dependents or friends. This is especially appropriate if both the DNPC and the Hunted roll to show up on the same run. Monitoredsd will try to use DNPCs against the characters by following the dependent around, waiting for him to make contact with the character. And remember: Hunteds and (especially) Monitoredsd love to mess around with bank accounts and personal assets.

LOCAL HUNTEDSD

And finally, a word about Local Hunteds: They don't work right.

Any fairly clever player with a mean streak can soak up 15 + points in disadvantages from such deadly foes as the Nepalese Secret Police with little chance of personal harm unless he's in Nepal—which he will tend to avoid whenever possible.

Anyone who thinks he can get away with this deserves to be tossed out of your game. Even if he has just one such local Hunted, make a point of sending the character there every fourth of fifth adventure.

Of course, this feels artificial, and there is a better way to handle the situation: Change the rule.

Local Hunted: A Local Hunted has the following modifiers to its appearance roll.

+3 to appear in the native city and surrounding counties.

+0 to appear in the native area (nation or region, as per Area Knowledge).

-3 to appear in the world at large.

A local hunted is worth just as many points as a normal hunted. However, local Hunteds are usually taken at a lower roll to avoid the "home town omnipresence" problem.

Example: *Hunted by the New York City Mafia, 8-, medium group, highly trained. This translates as an 11-roll to appear in New York City, 8- to appear in New York State and some surrounding states, and 5- to appear in the rest of the country. Value: 8 points.*

PSYCHOLOGICAL LIMITATIONS & UNLUCK

This is the last installment of the series on GMing the regular disads. Later Ref's Notes will cover Package Deals and what they really mean, and will discuss the special Package Disadvantages: Subject to Orders, Statistic Miniums, and Package Bonus.

However, right now we're here to deal with the most loved and feared of the character disadvantages: Psych Cocks and Unluck, respectively.

PSYCHOLOGICAL LIMITATIONS

When a player is learning to build characters, he goes through several stages. The first is the "Hunted" stage, where, seduced by the vast number of points available, the player gives the character three large, highly-trained Hunteds on 14 or less and spends the points on DEX and SPD. Fine. On the first run, that character gets blown away—on the second run at the latest. Too many baddies with too much firepower.

So, the next character is a nightmare if disadvantages, predominantly DNPCs, Distinctive Looks, and Physical Limitations, as well as everything else the player can think of. And the points go into SuperKiller skills to blow away those Hunteds. Or into *super-something* (PRE 38, for instance). OK, fine. This lumbering mass of disadvantages, if allowed into any reasonable campaign, will inevitably collapse under its own weight.

Finally, unless your character is clever enough to think this all through, the player will write up the classic character: Base plus 25 to 65 points in disads; one specialty, one secondary training, good starting stats for an eventual expert in his or her specialty. And the number one source of points for those 25 to 65 points in disads will be Psychological Limitations (called Psych Cocks around Hero Games). And this is OK. Psychological Limitations are intended to give the player points for roleplaying. They help prevent characters from being just a Combat Value appended to a couple of Skill Rolls.

If the character sheet says that David Carthieris is a full-time womanizer (very common, irrational actions—! 1 points), then the player had best not pass up any chance to succumb to his psych cock. He has to make an EGO roll to force

himself to ignore a good thing and get on with business in just about any circumstance less threatening than a fire fight or a race with death.

And you, the GM, thus have a handle on the personality of the character and can enforce a high quality of roleplaying in your campaign. If a player cannot stay in character, make him buy off the disadvantage. After all, if it's not a disadvantage, it's not a Disadvantage, and is thus worth no points.

On the subject of points, the game system gives varying points depending on the nature of the psych cock. An uncommon situation is one that tends not to occur in normal, day-to-day life, or is an extreme version of a normal situation. This does not mean that the situation will not come up in the game; in fact, it is your job as GM to make sure the situation *does* come up. But uncommon situations should be just that—uncommon.

A common situation is one that occurs often enough the players should not be surprised if it comes up every run or two. And a very common situation may come up several times a run.

In addition, the game system takes into account the intensity of the situation. Most psych cocks are just quirks, and are worth no extra points. If the situation comes up, the character need only make an EGO roll to function normally and ignore the cock.

Cocks that cause an irrational response—that is, any response that a clear-thinking and logical mind would not make—are worth +3 points. This is because anything that prevents the character from thinking through a situation is a disadvantage—especially when the enemy learns of it and uses it as a weapon against the character. (For instance, the above-mentioned Mr. Carthieris has been led into several traps by enemies using women to ensnare him. He'll never learn—until he buys down the disad.)

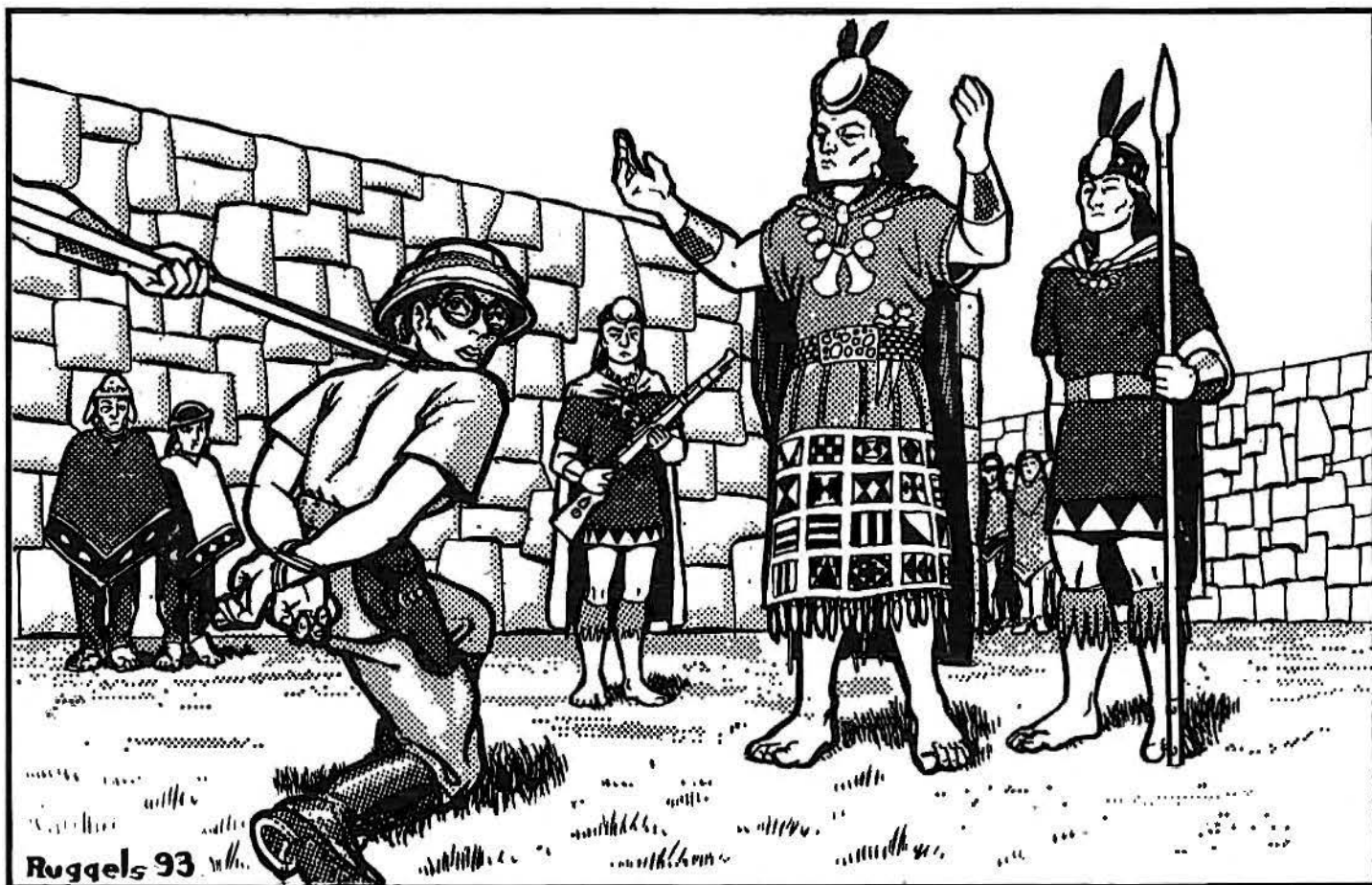
Really incapacitating reactions, called Total Collapse or Total Commitment psych cocks, are reserved for obsessions and manias. These cocks are worth +5 points, and are probably undervalued. Any character with this level of disad is unbalanced and may be as dangerous to his friends as to his enemies. Crusading mentalities often fall into this class and they are dangerous in their own way.

Any character built with this level of psych cock is in one of three categories:

- (1) Unemployable. No one intentionally hires real sickos.
- (2) Undetected. Especially if the cock is uncommon, no one may have noticed that the character acts that way. (This is one way an organization may employ such a character.)
- (3) Intentionally employed. So I lied. Mega-organizations, under uncommon circumstances, employ really demented individuals for some nefarious purposes. A ruthless secret service might have use for a sociopath.

And remember: Most Mega-villains will have Mega-Psych Cocks. Remember this when building your world-conquering heavies in the Blofeld mold.

Since the character is getting points for roleplaying, it is important that you, the GM, carefully approve all psych cocks. This disadvantage lends itself to frivolity; in such cases, you should be ready to veto the character. That's right, Fear of Cheese Blintzes (UC/IA, 6 points) is probably not a reasonable limitation. If such a cock must be rationalized, consider the fact that even "mundane" NPCs have psych cocks; but if the cock is frivolous, they get no points. It's still a part of their personality.



UNLUCK

On to the next topic: UNLUCK. Oops, Unluck.

Most of the time, Unluck is reflected by the dice rolls that govern a large part of this game system. If the character tends to roll 18s a lot, that's Unluck—the player's Unluck.

However, for reasons of character conception (or point desperation), some characters are even more unlucky than your average joe. For those unfortunates, the Hero System happily provides Unluck.

Taking dice of Unluck is a surefire way to define a character for whom life is not easy. When you, as GM, see a character built with Unluck, the thought should leap into your mind, "This guy is going to be fun!"

Now, be careful. This is not a license to destroy the character. However, you can have a little fun with stalled cars, traffic, phone disconnection, false clues, mistaken identity, and random occurrences even if the character has only one die of Unluck. Of course, three dice makes the character truly deserving.

In the course of combat or critical situations, you should keep track of the course of events. If our hero is actually winning, or the baddie needs a break just to get away intact, have the character roll his Unluck dice. Then consult the rules for the descriptions of the various levels of Unluck. Pick a comparable result, and *Presto!* the situation is changed by a bad break for our hero.

However, don't ever make the character check for Unluck when he is in a losing situation. This is a heroic game, and even the unluckiest hero is supposed to have a chance to come out even (or fight to a draw). In fact, the Hero System specifically includes a Luck rule to allow lucky breaks for our hero when the chips are down.

And don't ever use Unluck to swing a hard-fought win into a loss. While total catastrophe can and should result from two or three dice of Unluck rolled, this is not a fair or fun thing to do after your players have worked for hours and cleverly and tenaciously solved a situation. Unluck should do no more than tarnish otherwise perfect victories that were hard won, but it can destroy a plan that was too easy or depended upon the ignorance of the enemy. This makes the game more challenging, and thus more fun for all.

Try to keep the effects of Unluck limited to the character getting the disad points. It is hardly fair to mess up everyone because someone got greedy. (Of course, there is nothing like peer pressure to get someone to buy off his disads.)



CHARACTERS & CAMPAIGNING





TIMELINES & THEIR CREATION

By Collie Collier

"Okay, you go to the inn."

"Who's there? What do we see?"

"Uh, you can get some drinks and some entertainment."

"Entertainment? Not barmaids again!"

"Uh, it's a storyteller."

"What story is she telling?"

"Uh, the story of some hero or something,...you know, the beginning of the world stuff."

"Great! Tell the story!"

!%#@?!

Have you ever been caught flat-footed by your players expecting more background than you've prepared? Have you heard the complaint that your world is like a movie set for a western town—when they push on the building front it falls down because there's nothing behind it? Making a timeline can prevent this.

Timelines can be used to tell players something about the world their characters exist in. Preparing a timeline can help the GM flesh out the culture and give the players some idea of the world, and possible backgrounds for the PCs themselves. Timelines give a "feel" for the area and culture. They can also exist in multiple versions: the GM's version can include all the past, current, and future plots and intrigues, and the player's versions can be used to give cultural or regional points of view. Admittedly, if all the players are from one culture they will only receive one point of view. Even so, the timeline can be used to show cultural bias, accepted modes of behavior, the impact of religion or magic, and the importance of any other institutions the GM wish to accentuate. Finally, they are a nice story-telling touch to add breadth and verisimilitude to the world.

Making timelines can seem daunting at first, but they are easy enough to start. The beginning of history in any fantasy world is almost always shrouded in religious symbolism. To start a timeline for a specific culture, figure out the religion of the area and apply the appropriate cultural bias. For example, if a culture believes art is the greatest profession, it's a strong probability that their foremost deity will be some kind of artist. Perhaps this artist carved the known world out of the primal slime, or sang the defeat of the chaotic dragon that was preventing the orderly creation of the world. If the creator of the world is a healer deity, the fertility of the world may rest solely on the fact that this deity periodically heals it. Remember, most cultures model their deities on what they believe is a cultural ideal. Observe how the GM can have deities, a possible quest (to defeat the evil fighting your deity), and a cultural background already built in with a creation story.

Say the GM wants all the best warriors to come from the North. The culture should be very war-like. The GM wants the warriors there to be egalitarian, with most men tending to be berserkers, which favors the generally greater strength of men. Women will compensate by being the distance fighters: missile weapons, strategists, and clever leaders. Furthermore, expansionism should be seen as a bad thing.

Okay, the lead deities should be aspects of warriors. The lead god is a female tactician, and the secondary god will be a male berserker. This means She should do something using His strength to create the world. Let's say She shot the evil whatsis with her bow, wounding it enough that He can slice it up with His sword in a berserker rage. Then She planned what the world would look like and got Him to hew it out of the evil whatsis' corpse so people would have a place to live. The deities are not omnipotent, so some of the evil managed to stay in the world, and regularly comes to light in the North. She has made the North an unforgiving climate so harsh warriors would be bred to fight the evil when it rises. Since the evil only rises in the North, the warriors want to stay where their deities have told them to stay in order to fight it.

After the creation myth is established, more current legends and heroes can be filled into the timeline. These legends can also be used by the GM and player working together to flesh out the PC's background and motivations. This gives a new PC some context in her relationship with the world around her. If a legendary quest or cultural imperative exists already, many players like to work with the GM to place their PCs within this context. Alternatively, some people like their PCs to be the "odd man out". However, most cultures believe what they do is not only right, but the only correct way to do things. Depending on how fanatic a culture is, the "odd man out" can even be seen as wrong and dangerous.

In the South, there is an artistic, male-dominated society. Their monotheistic religion says that the world and man are the artistic masterpieces of the male Deity. Woman was a creation of evil which cajoled man into disobeying his god. Man's transgressions allowed woman, death, and decay to become a part of the heavenly cosmos. This has defiled the beauty of His creation. It is His command that man atone for his weakness by subjugating woman. Furthermore man must spread His religion to all by showing the splendor of His world, His greatest creation, in artistic formats. Thus the South's greatest heroes are painters, architects, sculptors, and other artistic types of people. Unfortunately, while the South has effectively subjugated women in their own culture, they are having some trouble convincing the North that the Northern religion is wrong. There have been three

great wars between the North and the South. Unsurprisingly, the North has won all three. The South is becoming bitter and turning isolationist economically. However, it feels it must accomplish its religiously mandated goals. Instead of fighting the next war with warriors, it will have to fight on another front.

Now the world has a mythical background, two strongly defined and opposing cultures, and several obvious inherent conflicts. It doesn't matter if there was really a Big Bang, or if the world is really held up by four elephants standing on a turtle. What matters to the players is how their PCs see the world. A creation story, whether mythical or otherwise, gives a PC a sense of knowing, understanding, and belonging in this world or culture. Also, players have a wide variety of social stations and motivations with which to begin character development. Will they play a Northerner or a Southerner? Will they play a grim, dedicated warrior priest, or a flippant youngster who doesn't really believe in "the evil"? Will they take up the quest of finding a way for the South to sneakily triumph over the Northern unbelievers, or will they play the person who believes the South should be able to defend itself physically, by training warriors instead of just artists?

One of the nice things about identifying and describing the heroes and legends that have gone before is they can be used as inspiration for both the players and the PCs. If one of the great "traitors" of the South was a woman who wished to change the South's religion and/or culture, perhaps one of the players will find this interesting and wish to include it in

her character. Making the PC related to this long-dead person will connect the character with both the background and other people within the game. Perhaps the Southern One True Church is quietly watching the members of this particular family for more dangerous ideas. Perhaps it is a public shame on the family escutcheon which the PC's father wishes to see erased. Maybe the PC secretly desires to emulate the ideals of this ancestor.

Plots, intrigues, and points of view can also be delineated by one or more different timelines. The GM may have the driving forces behind certain cultural trends written down in her timeline, whereas all the players see are the different cultural reactions to these trends. The progression of "off-screen" actions, such as a distant war or assassination, can also be traced this way. Cultural points of view can give different groups different interpretations of these actions. What one culture sees as heroic another group may see as blackest villainy. Simple changes in how the story is told can be used to show this. As an example, a specific event occurring before the PCs begin playing can be described in several ways:

***Pre-PC Date (Northern version)** Southerners basely murder Northern hero/queen, and invade Northern valley. Northerners righteously object. Justice is done.*

Dwarves (newly discovered race; friendly to North) teach Northerners to build sensible, square, stone, defensible buildings.





The same event is shown from the Southern point of view. Note how the emphasis on certain events and the descriptive style has changed:

Pre-PC Date (Southern version) *In a gesture of peace, the Southerners attempt to establish an embassy in some Northern valley. The obstreperous Northerners violently object; apparently they do not know how to trade or share. Some unimportant Northern chief is killed in some tedious provincial political troubles; of course, the Southerners are framed for the murder. The Northern barbarians will not listen to protestations of innocence. They also start building monstrously ugly stone buildings all around the country they've seized. These are hideously painful to the Artistry of the One True God. The Northern barbarians are too stupid to see the truth. Like children, they will have to be taught correct behavior.*

The writing for the North is shorter and choppy to signify the almost militant adherence to brevity and conciseness. The writing for the South is somewhat florid; it shows a slightly pretentious attention to the artistry of words. Obviously, both sides will depict themselves as right.

The GM, on the other hand, has a different version altogether—she knows the cause and effect:

Pre-PC Date (Secret GM version) *The dwarves (a race unknown to the Southerners) decide to support the North, as their culture is closer to dwarven ethical standards, and the South is xenophobic. For religious reasons, the Southerners enter a Northern valley. Northerners object. The dwarves conduct an experiment in manipulation of humans by killing a Northern hero/queen in the valley, and leaving evidence against Southerners at the murder site. The Northerners blame the Southerners for her murder, and violently repel all Southerners from the valley.*

The dwarves teach the Northerners how to build big, square, stone, defensible castles so the Northern domains can be defended from Southern depredations.

One thing to bear in mind while filling in details on past history is the cyclical nature of history. This can be roughly explained by pointing out that cultures tend to follow cycles of increasing and decreasing effects. For example, a militaristic society might wage war to the maximum capability of its homeland. At some point the supply lines get too long, or there is some huge setback, or there isn't enough raw material and people to throw into the military machine. At this time the culture will start to become disenchanting with its former goals. The cycle will start to swing to a less militant position. Some of these cycles can be conservatism vs liberalism, militarism vs pacifism, religious fanaticism vs magical fanaticism, or any other "-isms" you wish to include. Scholars are still arguing over whether this theory is true or not. However, someone trying to fill in up to several thousand years of history with interesting cultural trends and occurrences probably doesn't care. Use cycles to make logical chains of events. If one culture waged war on another, the loser probably had a bad time of it. In an agriculturally based economy, destroying the crop will probably cause hardship, starvation, riots, or even plague. If you lose a lot of your populace, eventually you will reach the carrying capacity of the land. At this time the loser may decide to redress old injuries and declare war on its former conqueror. And so the cycle starts another turn. This type of thing will cause change

in the culture. It doesn't matter if these changes take generations: people and news moved more slowly in the medieval time period. The GM can do the same in your fantasy game if you wish. Also, one of your greatest time-savers in creating a timeline is to use previously existing histories. One of the best is the history of our world. Reading medieval history is not only fascinating, it vividly illustrates the old adage about truth being stranger than fiction.

Now the GM have a beginning, and some of the intervening times. Set this aside for a while, and identify precisely the "feel" of the current cultures in the GMr game. Figure out what would cause these cultural generalizations, and put them in the timeline, working backward from the present. Eventually the GM will have your past and your present meet, and your timeline will be ready for play.

The desired current feel in the game is one of impending disaster that only drastic action can prevent. Okay, make sure the South has been caught at some unforgivably heinous deed, such as casting at the North immensely powerful, generations-long spells designed to kill women. Obviously the North is VERY angry with the South, and the South has never been good at defending itself militarily. The Northern religion of Him is certainly on the upswing, with more berserkers than ever before. Make sure the PCs have a good reason to not want the South to be obliterated, as it most assuredly will be unless something is done immediately. It doesn't matter if the PCs are Northern or Southern; the game's feeling will be one of impending disaster that hopefully only their quick thinking can prevent.

There are two basic times to make a timeline. Obviously, the first possibility is before the campaign begins. This has the advantage of giving your new and future players somewhere to start in their quest for an appropriate background for a PC. If a world and its cultures are delineated ahead of time, there is a framework existing on which to create your characters. How many times have you heard something along the lines of "she's kinda like a Viking"? This is a simple example of using a culture to give a character definition.

The second possibility is to make your timeline up after the game has begun. This isn't as difficult as it may sound. The one thing the GM must keep in mind is consistency. Pull together all your notes and organize the current, PC-affected history of the world. Obviously, the GM have a "feel" in mind for the game; you've been playing it for a while. Once you know where you wish to end up, backtrack and figure out what would cause the game's current set of attitudes. Fill in the current events the PCs know about, keeping consistency in mind. Then add a few current events they're ignorant of, and the GM've got a timeline with gaming suggestions already built in.

A final note on your timeline: you don't have to fill it in completely. Put in blank spaces: e.g., "*the time of the Great Plague was a decade of deep fear and unrest. Most of the records of that time were lost or destroyed.*" This means the GM can always have the beginning seeds of some useful game idea you've just thought of come from that time. Most huge cultural problems have been fermenting for a while. Leave yourself some slack to "ret-con" history. "Ret-con", or retroactive continuity, can be a very useful tool in explaining both things the GM originally forgot, and cool new ideas the GM wish to insert.



This article has been written with *Fantasy Hero* in mind, but it can be easily adapted to other genres. Remember, timelines tell your players about the world and about possible backgrounds for the PCs. For your beginning, use whatever the current culturally applicable myth is. Today there are people who believe in the Biblical story of Genesis, as well as people who believe in the Big Bang. Neither has received the "Deity Stamp of Approval". Both are systems of belief which help explain not only the creation of the world, but also our place in it. Both cause people to act in certain specific ways, and affect the culture of the people holding those beliefs. Blank spots in the timeline allow really weird things to be found from the "Imperial Millenium", or a work of "fiction" from pre-history. For intervening times, heroes and legends can still be used, they'll simply be more well known, culturally specific, and widely spread.

The lanky gray rabbit busily chewed on a carrot and leaned against the backside of the industriously digging fat man. His characteristic "What's up, doc?" was answered by the expected "Shhhh! Be vevy, vevy quiet! I'm hunting wabbits!" The crowd chuckled appreciatively. They knew exactly how the story would end, but they still loved to see the fat man get his comeuppance. They were watching a cultural ideal in action: never start the fight, but always finish on the winning side.

Finally, use the same techniques delineated before for current history. Leave blank spots, work backwards from the feel the GM want, use cycles of events, swipe from our past. Keep in mind, history is written by the winners. If the GM need to change some point in the timeline, have an adventure where it is discovered "the Truth" has been covered up, and the currently accepted version of events is a lie. Above all, have fun. If it isn't fun, why are you gaming?

Let's try the opening again:

"Okay, you go to the inn."

"Who's there? What do we see?"

"You can get some drinks and some entertainment."

"Entertainment? Barmaids?"

"No, you twit, it's a storyteller!"

"What story is she telling?"

"It's the story of the great goddess of wisdom and leadership, and Her consort, the god of emotion and war, and how they defeated the evil Chimaera of Chaos and created the blessed Northern environs for us all."

"Great! Tell the story!"



BEYOND POINTS

Average Combat Capabilities of Characters at Different Power Levels

By George MacDonald

Evaluating the capabilities of characters is an important part of a game master's job. The game master needs to know what to expect when characters engage in combat. A character's combat capabilities can be characterized by giving the character a power level. However, what level of capabilities represent each particular power level is often unclear.

To help the Game Master evaluate a character's power level, compare the character's capabilities to the following chart. The entries in the chart represents values of combat characteristics for characters of that power level.

Power Level: This name is used to help define the role of a character in the campaign. The values for the Superhero are based on the Average Superhero defined on page S22 of the *Champions* Source Book.

Attack Points (Effective Points in Attack): This value represents a character's average number of points of effective attack. This can include hand carried weapons and powers. An Incompetent normal could carry a 2d6 RKA rifle into combat. A hero might have a 3d6+1 RKA rocket launcher. When evaluating the effective points in an attack, include the full value of Advantages that directly effect the damage caused, like Armor Piercing and Autofire. Only include about half the value of Advantages that increase effectiveness but

not damage, like No Range Mod and Explosion. Generally ignore advantages that just make something easier to use, like Half END Cost or lots of charges.

Total Def (Total Defense): This value represents a character's average total non-resistant physical or energy defense. These defenses include the character's natural PD and ED plus any body armor and defensive powers normally used in combat.

Res Def (Resistant Defenses): This value represents a character's average total resistant physical or energy defense. These defenses include any body armor or defensive powers normally used in combat. At low power levels, Assume that about half of a combat effective character's defense should be resistant. At higher power levels, characters can have greater resistant defenses without unbalancing the campaign.

Stun: This value represents the average effective Stun Points a character can take before going unconscious. Increase the effective Stun Points of a character by x1/3 if they have a broad based 25% Damage Reduction Power. Increase the effective Stun Points of a character by x2 if they have a broad based 50% Damage Reduction Power. Increase the effective Stun Points of a character by x4 if they have a broad based 75% Damage Reduction Power.

DEX (Dexterity): This value represents the average Dexterity of characters of this power level. If a character has specific training or skills in a non-combat characteristic (Intelligence, Ego, or Presence) then assume that this is the effective maximum value of those characteristics.

AVERAGE COMBAT CAPABILITIES BY POWER LEVEL CHART

Power Level	Attack Points	Total Def	Res Def	Stun	DEX	SPD	CV Mods	Max CV	Base Skill
Incompetent Normal	30	4	2	20	8	2	0	3	11-
Normal	35	8	4	24	11	3	0	4	11-
Skilled Normal	40	12	6	28	14	3	1	6	12-
Competent Normal	45	16	8	32	17	4	2	8	12-
Hero	50	20	10	36	20	4	3	10	13-
Superhero	55	24	12	40	23	5	4	12	14-
Above Average Superhero	60	27	17	50	26	6	5	14	14-
High Powered Superhero	65	30	22	60	29	7	6	16	15-
Very High Powered Superhero	70	33	27	70	32	8	7	18	15-
Ultra Powerful Superhero	75	36	32	80	35	9	8	20	16-
Grossly Powerful Superhero	80	39	37	90	38	10	9	22	17-
Very Grossly Powerful Superhero	85	42	42	100	41	11	10	24	17-

SPD (Speed): This value represent the average Speed of characters at this power level.

Max CV Mods (Maximum Combat Value Modifiers): This value includes a character's maximum total of levels, martial arts combat maneuver CV modifiers, and weapon CV modifiers while attacking. Some characters should have lower Max CV Mod totals if they have a significantly higher Dexterity than other characters at the same power level. Remember that this value is the maximum suggested total of CV modifiers at a given power level, the average character's total of CV modifiers is closer to half the listed value.

Max CV (Maximum Combat Value): This value represents the maximum total combat value a character should be able to generate when attacking. The maximum CV of the average character will be several points less than this maximum value. Be especially careful of characters whose DCV is more than 3 points higher than the OCV of other characters of their power level. These characters will be especially hard to hit and can require special treatment by the game master and players to be used in combat.

Base Skill: This value represents a character's skill roll based on the average dexterity at this power level. If a character has increased Intelligence, Ego, or Presence, then this value can represent skill rolls based on those characteristics as well. Characters who specialize in a skill can have much higher skill rolls without unbalancing most campaigns.

The game master should look closely at a character's combat capabilities that are significantly outside the range of other characters at that power level. These capabilities may be an important part of defining a character's style by pointing up a specific strength or weakness.

However, if a combat capability is too far out of normal bounds, the character may unbalance combat. If most of a character's capabilities are generally about as powerful as a hero, but he only has a total PD or ED of 4, then that character is very vulnerable in combat. An average 10d6 attack would do 6 Body; these attacks would kill the character after just a few hits. On the other hand, if the same character had a total PD or ED of 40, then the character would be invulnerable to other heroes and even powerful super heroes.

Not all characters of a specific power level need to have the same combat characteristics. Some variation from the listed values is a good for a campaign. However, too much variation can cause unusual effects in combat or can require special handling by the game master.

The capabilities of characters in most games center around an average power level and span about two levels above and below that average. Thus in many games most characters will be speed 5, with some being 4 or 6, and especially fast or slow characters being 7 or 3. The average character may have an 11d6 attack, but some characters may range as high as 13d6 and others as low as 9d6. Once a character's capabilities strays too far from the average, they are often seen as extraordinarily powerful or ineffective.

The Average Capability Chart has a lot of uses for the game master. The GM can use it to evaluate new characters or villains as they are added to a campaign. The GM may find a published character and want to integrate it into his campaign. But, after evaluating the character according to the chart, its attacks are much too high for the power level of

the campaign. The GM simply reduces the attack by a few dice to make the character fit in with the campaign.

The GM can also use the chart as a baseline when he needs to create a new character swiftly. Say that the GM wants to create a powerful energy projecting villain in the middle of an adventure. He gives the character a name, uses the capabilities listed under the above average power level, and assumes that the character can throw his attack power as an energy blast. After the adventure, the GM can do a full write up of the villain based on the capabilities exhibited in the run.

The GM can also use the chart as a tool to help direct a character's growth through spent experience. Say a character is a martial artists with a high dexterity, special martial arts maneuvers, and some levels. The player may want to by additional levels to use on defense in combat. But, by checking the chart, the GM realizes that these additional CV Modifiers would make the character very difficult to hit in combat. The GM can then suggest other options for the character that will increase the defensive abilities without unbalancing the campaign.

This chart is based on the characters and play style shown in the published *Champions* supplements. Your campaign may be different. To evaluate your own campaign, make a chart of the important PCs and NPCs in your campaign. List the characteristics shown on the Average Capabilities Chart. Figure out your own average values. See which characters are more powerful and less powerful, and by how much. Knowing the power level of the characters are in your campaign is a great aid to game mastering them successfully.





CAPTAIN AUSTRALIA & ENTROPI

Champions Universe Update

By Scott Helne

DESIGNER NOTES

Champions Universe did a lot to tie together the many supplements published by Hero Games over the years to form the foundation for a typical comic book campaign setting. However, though it brought many elements together and tied up some loose ends, it also introduced new characters, places, and events that are not detailed in any published material to date.

Take the characters of Australia for example. We know that Captain Australia, a powerful mutant "brick," works out of Sydney. There are two superhero teams in Australia: Phase II (the government's second, and successful, attempt at an Aussie counterpart to PRIMUS and STOP, based in Melbourne), and the Outriders (a low-powered team operating primarily in the outback). There is a large team of mutant supervillains known as the "Dark Brotherhood." Apparently most of the members are low-powered, but there are at least a few very formidable foes in the Brotherhood. And there is a solo villain named Entropi—an aussie man transformed into an incredibly powerful maniac due to exposure to an alien artifact (the staff of a "Lord of Order" named Entropy, now dead). Entropi is seeking the Initial Prime (aka the Keystone of Reality) in hopes of using it to destroy the universe. Finally, somewhere in the outback is a 20' tall crystal shard, the "Cosmic Locus," that absorbs power on a universal scale and is responsible for the phenomenon known as the Dreamtime (aka the DreamZone; see *Champions in 3-D* for a full description, and Scott Bennie's excellent *VIPER* for a sample adventure). All of this material, as well as a few references to events in Australia and a couple of characters whose origins are down under but no longer operate there, can be found buried in the text of *Champions Universe*.

It sounds as if the creators of these elements had some sort of cohesive design in mind. Certainly a book "fleshing out" these characters, along with expansion on superheroing in Australia, would provide a terrific base for a sourcebook (*Champions Down Under?*). But, alas, I do not believe such a project is in the works.

Now, I've had the privilege of working in Australia for a brief time, and have quite an interest in that country. So it shouldn't come as a surprise that I'd want to see the Aussie material developed further. (Besides, according to the timeline, Doctor Destroyer once suckered the Protectors—the hero team from my own gaming campaign and central figures in the upcoming *Champions By the Bay*—to become allies of Captain Australia while he stole information from the Protectors' files in the Citadel (cf. *Universe*, page 22). I guess

there ought to be a Captain Australia to befriend.) On the following pages you will find my ideas for what some of these characters look like.

The Captains are considerably more powerful than your average hero. I figured that any hero NPC on the same level with your PCs might get lost in the shadows. Unless he had some unique ability or insight into the situation, the players might wonder if he's necessary. However, I do not intend for Cap to overshadow the PCs. Consider that the very powerful heroes operate in the comics. Sure, they're a heck of a lot more powerful than the folks around them, and yet they have personalities that yield the spotlight kindly to their companions. Caps 1 and 2 should be used in a similar fashion. They should be impressive—think of them as really tough heroes protecting a continent pretty much by themselves, and offering assistance for global matters. But the fact that they're based down under should keep them from dominating other storylines.

Entropi, on the other hand, is described in *Universe* as a universal threat. I figured this demands pretty intimidating abilities. The result is one of those disgustingly powerful villains with a few elusive "Achilles' heels." His primary interests are found in Australia, so it makes sense that the heroes would work with Captain Australia when confronting Entropi (they probably won't mind Cap's powers on their side, considering Entropi's threat).





CAPTAIN AUSTRALIA

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats
70	STR	60	OCV: 9+
27	DEX	51	DCV: 9+
33	CON	46	ECV: 6
16	BODY	12	Phases: 2, 4, 6, 7, 9, 11, 12
16	INT	6	
18	EGO	16	Costs
25	PRE	15	
18	COM	4	Char: 312 Base: 150
35	PD	21	+ +
31	ED	24	Powers: 322 Disad: 484
7	SPD	33	= =
21	REC	0	Totals: 634 634
100	END	17	
75	STUN	7	
Cost		Powers	END
66	Damage Resistance (35PD/31ED)		
7	Flash Defense (7 pts.)		
6	Knockback Resistance (-3")		
8	Lack of Weakness (-8 to roll)		
5	Power Defense (5 pts.)		
60	30" Flight		6
26	+13" Running (19" total)		4
10	+10" Swimming (12" total)		2
15	+5 Enhanced Perception (all senses)		
5	Infrared Vision		
5	Ultraviolet Vision		
9	Microscopic Vision (x1000)		
12	Telescopic Vision (+8 vs. range mod.)		
3	Radio Hearing		
3	Ultrasonic Hearing		
6	Life Support (immune to aging and disease)		
7	Life Support (does not need to breathe; holding breath), costsEND		1
2	Mind Link with brother, no conscious control		
7	Shape Change into any other humanoid form, no conscious control		
Skills			
3	Acrobatics 14-		
3	Breakfall 14-		
3	Bureaucratics 14-		
3	Deduction 12-		
3	KS: Australia 12-		
3, 3	KS: Dark Brotherhood 12-, KS: Entropi 12-		
3	KS: Paranormals (general global knowledge)		
20	+4 Levels with Hand-to-Hand Combat		
16	+8 Levels with Flight (vs. Turn Mode)		
150+ Disadvantages			
20	2x effect from Adjustment Powers		
15	Dislikes government (common, strong)		
20	Self-sacrificing (common, total)		
20	Honorable (common, total)		
15	Reputation: honorable Aussie hero, 14-		
5	DNPC: brother (as powerful), 11-		
10	DNPC: parents (normal), 8-		
15	DNPC: romantic interest (normal), 11-		
10	Watched by Lords of Order, 8-		
25	Hunted by Dark Brotherhood, 14-		
20	Hunted by Entropi, 11-		
10	Public ID		
299	Experience & NPC Bonus		

Background: Few people have ever heard of the "Lords of Order," though the effects of their existence are universal. The Lords are unimaginably powerful beings who exist outside the laws of time and space, yet are integrally linked to the events of the multiverse. They enforce the physical laws of existence, using their great power to keep a near infinite number of dimensions and alternate timelines from plunging into the clutches of Chaos.

The Lords of Order have established certain locations and objects as focus points for their interaction with our universe. The greatest of these is the Initial Prime, the sole object of a pocket dimension which serves as the keystone of all reality (in fact, it is even known as the Keystone by some; see *European Enemies*, page 53). Linked to the Initial Prime are seven objects of great power, each known as a Cosmic Locus. Each Locus absorbs the excess energies of the multiverse — both mystic and physical — to keep reality in balance. Without them time and space would become saturated with uncontrollable energies, and the balance of order would be hopelessly diminished.

One Cosmic Locus rests within the barren lands of the Australian outback on Earth in the 20th century. The Lords of Order directed one of their lot, a Lord known only as the Guardsman, to watch over the Locus on Earth and protect it from any harm. The Guardsman took on the guise of a human so as to blend in with humanity, and set up an identity among the people living nearest to the Locus—a nomadic, aborigine tribe drawn to the Dreamtime dimensional effect caused as a byproduct of the Locus' power (cf., "the DreamZone" in *Champions in 3-D*).

The Guardsman was something of a maverick among the Lords, prone to the temptations of mortal life, and it didn't take long for him to become intimately involved with a beautiful tribeswoman. Soon, the woman was pregnant with twins, the results of the complex union between the immortal Guardsman and the temporal earthwoman. The Guardsman truly loved his chosen mate and risked the wrath of the Lords of Order to bring her pleasure.

Perhaps it was his great love that blinded him to the coming threat. One of the Lords of Order, a renegade named Entropy, entered reality near the Guardsman's charge in an attempt to use the Locus as a weapon against the universe. Entropy struck the crystalline structure with his staff, using his incredible power to weaken the Locus until it began to fracture with every mighty blow. The Guardsman arrived at the Cosmic Locus just as the first chip broke free from the gleaming crystal and plummeted to the dust below.

An indescribable war ensued. The Guardsman and Entropy locked themselves in a battle that shook all of time and space. Their great conflict lasted four months in Earth time, and ended only when both combatants lay dead.

Not long after the battle, the aborigine mate of the Guardsman gave birth to their children. The infants were terrifying to behold, glowing as bright as the sun, with little discernable form. The tribal leader ordered the "monstrosities" killed, but their mother wrapped them in animal skins and fled to the wilderness, where she eventually died of starvation.

Several months later, a team of archaeological explorers journeyed through the outback, seeking the strange crystal rock jutting out in the wilderness. Their attention was caught by two gleaming lights in the high grass. When they arrived, they found the body of the aborigine woman laying near two healthy infants. Early reports described the children as black. However, within several weeks of their discovery, the



children had remarkably transformed to resemble the offspring of their caucasian finders.

One couple on the archaeological team offered to adopt the mysterious children as their own, and the rest of the team was sworn to secrecy. The couple, Joshua and Mary Kincaide, were kind and loving parents, raising the remarkable twins with wisdom. And when the twins began exhibiting powers beyond mortal men, Joshua and Mary taught them to use their unique abilities secretly for the betterment of mankind. The twins, Kent and Laura, each became successful in their chosen careers. Kent was a freelance photojournalist, and Laura was a teacher.

In 1983, the Australian government began its search for paranormal heroes to be a part of "Phase I," an official Aussie hero team. One of the twins, Kent, decided to create a costume and apply for a position on the team. Calling himself "Paragon," Kent donned a pale blue bodysuit and red cape and demonstrated his remarkable abilities for the government organizers. Kent was really the only candidate with promise, and officials quickly renamed him "Captain Australia."

For ten months, the paranormal members of Phase I trained alongside a team of forty paramilitary agents, following the models of PRIMUS and STOP. Eventually, their first real mission came: they were to stop the newly formed Dark Brotherhood who were engaged in a violent rampage in the King's Cross area of Sydney. Captain Australia realized that his team was grossly outpowered, and asked for military assistance. The government declined, confident that their new Phase I was up to the challenge. The Dark Brotherhood proceeded to slaughter nearly every member of Phase I; only Captain Australia and six of the agents escaped alive.

Captain Australia broke all ties with the government and began working independently. He soon became Australia's most popular celebrity—a national symbol of pride—much to the military's chagrin. Occasionally, Kent's twin sister Laura would assist on a mission, though Laura never assumed a costumed identity, preferring to leave the heroics to her brother.

Captain Australia, or "Cap" as the Aussies affectionately called him, gained the respect of heroes across the globe as he used his tremendous power on several occasions to protect Earth. However, his career came to a tragic end in the Summer of 1992.

Cap was called in to stop a simple jewelry burglary by two unknown paranormal villains downtown. However, the thieves were really new recruits to the Dark Brotherhood, and were sent to lure Cap into a trap. When Cap arrived on the scene, he was ambushed by the more powerful members of the Dark Brotherhood. During the battle, the Brotherhood's leader, Deathblow, struck Cap in the spine with his electrically-charged morningstar, paralyzing the hero from the shoulders

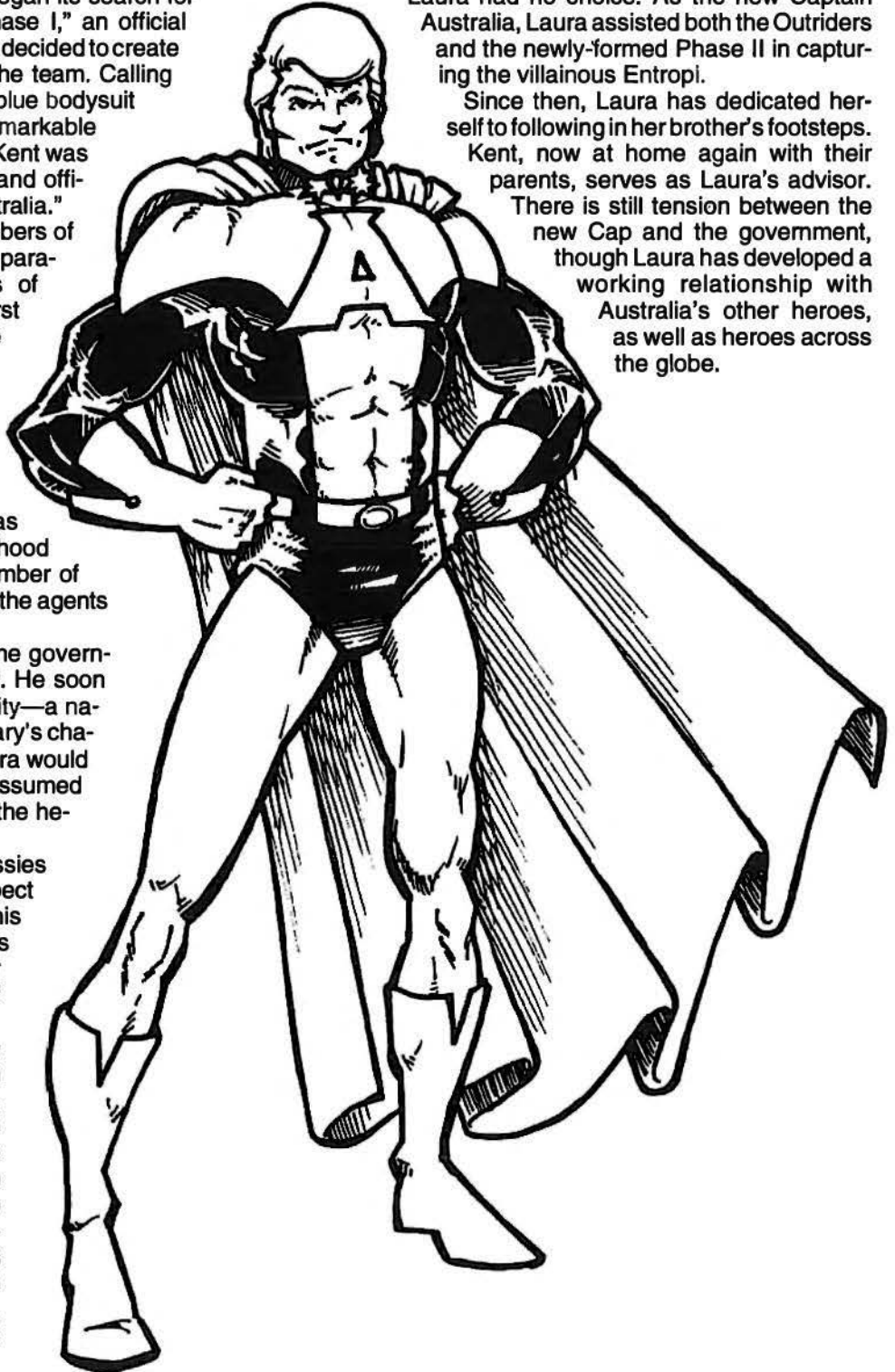
down. Deathblow would have finished Cap off had not Laura sensed her brother's danger and rushed to the scene. Laura fought with unmatched ferocity, and the Dark Brotherhood chose to retreat rather than face an unknown opponent. Laura rushed her brother to a hospital, but it was too late; the damage was done.

Reporters covering the scene were able to identify Laura, and the twins' secret was out. Their parents became instant celebrities, and the public began pressuring Laura to take over as their national hero. For months, Laura refused to leave her brother's side. But when a powerful, monstrous villain appeared in the outback near the Cosmic Locus, Laura had no choice. As the new Captain Australia, Laura assisted both the Outriders and the newly-formed Phase II in capturing the villainous Entropi.

Since then, Laura has dedicated herself to following in her brother's footsteps.

Kent, now at home again with their parents, serves as Laura's advisor.

There is still tension between the new Cap and the government, though Laura has developed a working relationship with Australia's other heroes, as well as heroes across the globe.



Personality: Kent has always been more idealistic and assertive than his sister. He has a "swashbuckling" mentality that earned him his enormous personality. Laura is somewhat more reserved and less impulsive. She has a gentleness when interacting with others, and is known for her genuine compassion to those in need. Kent enjoyed heading up parades and making public appearances on television. Laura prefers cheering up children in a hospital ward, or using her powers to assist in constructing low-cost housing for the poor. However, in battle, both of the twins developed an alien ferocity and determination—as if something powerful and zealous exploded within them, driving them toward success. Each of the twins has noble values and exemplary ethics; they are truly role-models of heroic courage and self-sacrifice.

Quote: "You take the one in purple, mate. The bloke with the attitude is mine!"

Powers/Tactics: The twins are half-breeds, with both human and immortal blood in their veins. This has given them tremendous powers to use in protecting the Cosmic Locus and serving mankind. They each have unbelievable strength and resistance to damage. Their senses are extraordinarily keen—far superior to even the best natural predators on earth. In addition to being able to run at incredible speeds, both were born natural fliers, defying gravity with ease. Prior to his injuries, Kent was the more experienced of the two, though Laura's turn as Captain Australia is allowing her to match the abilities of her brother.

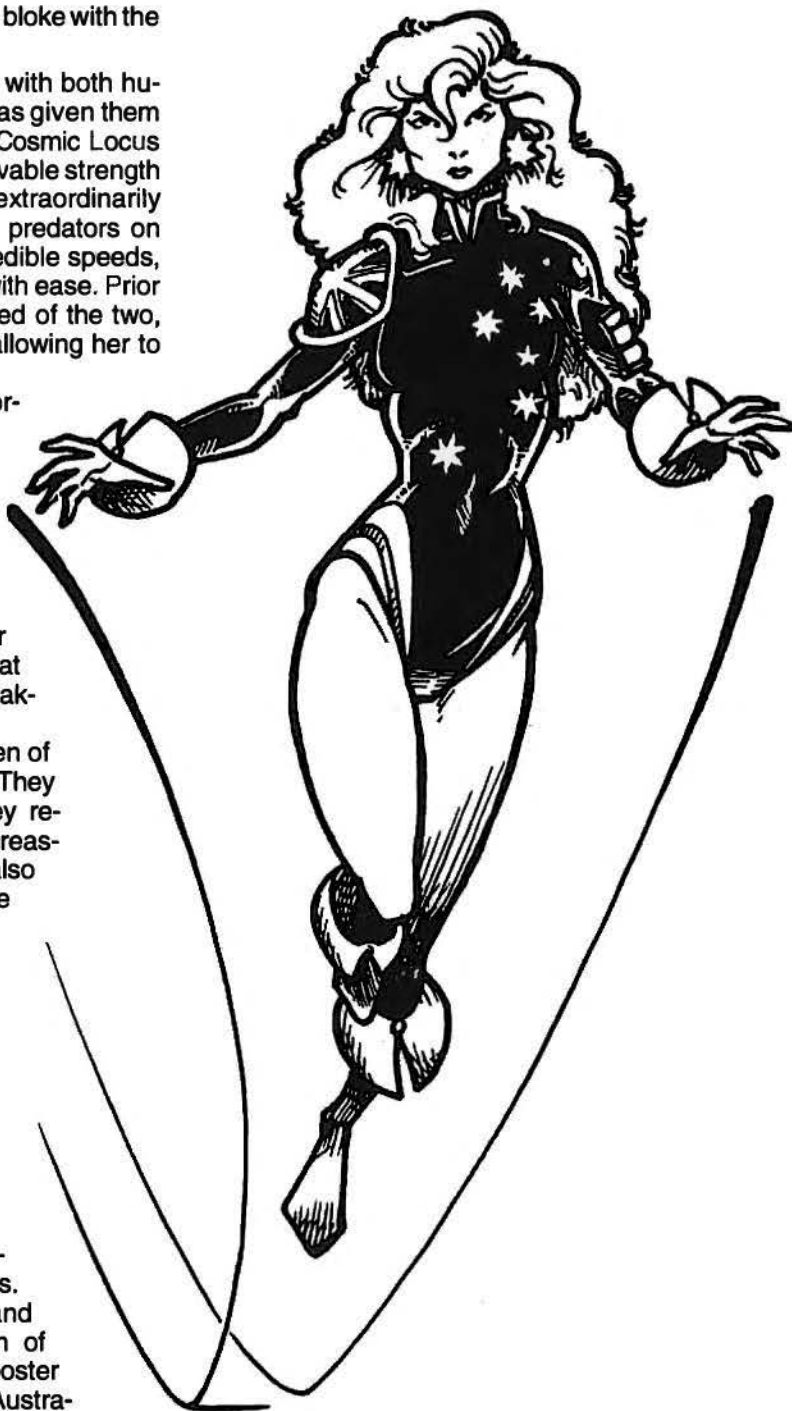
In combat, Cap is confident and straightforward, trusting her near invulnerability as she closes in for hand-to-hand tactics. However, before engaging an enemy, Cap will always consider the safety of innocent bystanders, moving them to safety or drawing the fight away from the crowd. She prefers to remain in the air as much as possible, using the tactical advantage and maneuverability her flight allows. And she is becoming a pro at identifying and exploiting her enemies' weaknesses.

The twins possess other abilities as children of a Lord of Order that they have yet to realize. They can alter their appearance; this is why they resembled aborigines as infants but became increasingly caucasian as toddlers. They have both also used this ability subconsciously to reinforce their secret identities in the past. Additionally, Kent and Laura share a subconscious telepathic link which warned Laura of Kent's ambush by the Dark Brotherhood, and allows Laura to intuitively benefit from Kent's experience. Finally, both of the twins are immune to disease and are aging more slowly as adults as a benefit of their immortal lineage.

Appearance: Even in his wheelchair, Kent has a powerful presence that draws the attention of everyone who meets him. He is extremely muscular, and has handsome features. His blonde hair, blue eyes, gleaming smile, and bronzed skin brought about the infatuation of thousands of teenage girls when a life-sized poster was released several years ago. As Captain Australia,

he wore navy blue trunks and shirt with a gold panel across his shoulders and down his chest. His leggings were also gold. His boots, gloves, and belt were crimson. A white "A" emblazoned on his chest matched the seven-pointed stars on his collar as well as his flowing white cape.

Laura is as beautiful as Kent is handsome. She has long blonde hair and blue eyes, and is also bronzed from soaking in the sun along the Gold Coast up north. She wears a navy blue bodysuit emblazoned with the white stars of the Southern Cross. The armor pad on her right shoulder is stylized with the British emblem, and the entire effect resembles the Australian flag. Her boots are crimson as is the piping on her collar, and her gloves are gold. White and red stripes create a sensual line at the base of her trunks.





ENTROPI

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats
90	STR	80	OCV: 5+
14	DEX	12	DCV: 5
45	CON	70	ECV: 10
30	BODY	40	Phases: 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12
26	INT	32	
30	EGO	40	Costs
40	PRE	30	
2	COM	-4	Char: 463 Base: 150
37	PD	20	+ +
37	ED	28	Powers: 651 Disad: 964
9	SPD	66	= =
30	REC	6	Totals: 1114 1114
174	END	42	
100	STUN	2	

Cost	Powers	END
135	9d6 Drain vs. STUN, Penetrating, Ranged, 1/2 END, Extra Time (Full Phase), plus...	9
30	2d6 Drain vs. BODY, Penetrating, Ranged, 1/2 END, Linked to STUN Drain	2
60	6d6 Drain vs. BODY, Ranged, 1/2 END, Only vs. non-living objects (-3/4)	4
52	6d6 Absorb vs. energy attacks, 1/2 points go to END and 1/2 go to STUN, maximum of 80 points absorbed	
37	Damage Resistance (37PD/37ED)	
18	PD and ED are Hardened	
19	Mental Defense (25 points total)	
20	Power Defense (20 points total)	
10	Lack of Weakness (-10 to roll)	
20	Knockback Resistance (-10")	
91	28" Flight (112" noncombat), 0 END	0
22	Faster-Than-Light Travel (1 LY/week)	
47	Spatial Awareness, 360°, Telescopic (+8 vs. range)	
30	Life Support (total)	

Skills & Perks	
21	+7 OCV with Adjustment Powers
3	KS: The Multiverse 14-
3	KS: Lords of Order 14-
3	KS: Australia 14-
3	KS: Earth Paranormals 14-
3	KS: Aborigine Society 14-
45	Danger Sense (universal) 16-

150+ Disadvantages	
25	Berserk in combat (very com.) 11-, 11-
25	Destructive (very com., total)
25	Overconfident (very com., total)
15	Obsessed with Earth (com., strong)
30	Susceptible: 3d6/Phase from Aid/Healing
20	Susceptible: 2d6/Phase from Telepathy
5	Dependence: 2d6/hour away from crystal
25	Distinct Features (not concealable, extreme)
10	Watched by Lords of Order, 8-
15	Hunted by Captain Australia, 14-
20	Hunted by other Earth heroes, 11-
10	Hunted by Doctor Destroyer, 8-
15	Hunted by Tyrannon the Conqueror, 8-
10	2d6 Unluck
714	Cosmic Villain Bonus

Background: When the Guardsman's mate fled to the outback wilderness to protect her children, a hunting party was formed to track her and the "monstrosities." The tribal leader convinced his people that they must destroy the creatures she birthed, and the hunters were frenzied.

Their search led toward the great finger of crystal jutting out from the earth toward the sky. The evidence that the Guardsman's mate would head toward the sacred rock simply confirmed the tribal leader's suspicion as to the horrific nature of the twins. The hunting party set camp in the shadow of the crystal, where they hoped to spend the night before continuing their search.

As the hunters built a fire, the tribal leader's attention was caught by a momentary gleam of light near the base of the Cosmic Locus. When he went to investigate, he found a small shard of crystal half buried in the dust. This was the chip broken free by the hammering of Entropi, though the tribal leader had no idea of its significance. He dug away the dirt around the crystal, and stared at the alien object. He thought he saw a face in the shifting reflections of its surface, and picked it up for a closer look.

In that dreadful moment, the tribal leader died. In his place stood a terrifying abomination of a human. Its skin was scorched and stretched taut over the limber muscles beneath. Its face became skeletal, and its hollow eyes began to glow menacingly. Its hair swirled wildly about, and a tingling sensation of strength and wonder rippled down its spine. The crystal shard drained all the life from the tribal leader, leaving an empty husk for the surviving life-force of Entropi to fill.

A cacophony of thoughts screamed in its mind—thoughts of hate, visions of other worlds, and a fear of the twin children born to the aborigine woman. But above all, the creature felt an overwhelming hunger. It turned toward the hunters establishing their camp, and stretched forth its bony hands. In the twinkling of an eye, the hunters withered and collapsed as their lives drained from them into the monstrous creature.

The vampiric corpse was tormented by his actions. Something of the tribal leader still remained, and the monster became insane from the combination of satisfied pleasure and grieving guilt at the deaths of the tribesmen. In its madness, the creature howled and laughed, rising into the sky and carried by its own raging power. The creature soared above the clouds and into the starry sky, where its tormented screams and crazed laughter became lost in the silence of space.

For twenty years, the creature roamed the solar system, feeding off the energy of the universe and struggling to understand its identity. It knew itself as Entropi, and sensed that it played an important part in the grand scheme of reality. It learned to travel across the dimensions and through time itself. It knew its purpose was to corrupt and destroy, though the mere devastation it could cause was singularly unsatisfying.

Eventually, Entropi came to the realization that it existed to bring an end to all of time and space. With this thought came an awareness of the Initial Prime and the Cosmic Loci which distribute its power. And suddenly the importance of the crystal shard which had created Entropi, and which Entropi now wore about its neck as jewelry, became clear. Entropi travelled back to 20th century Earth and the Locus which had given it birth.

It is Entropi's goal to destroy the Cosmic Locus of Earth, and then proceed to each successive Loci. When the Loci are all removed, Entropi will seek the power of the Initial Prime and attempt to plunge all of reality into Chaos. However, Entropi has not considered the forces that work against him, including the hated offspring of the Guardsman. The cataclysmic battles which will ensue between Entropi and the heroes of Earth threaten the safety of the entire planet. Entropi is truly an opponent to fear.

Personality: Entropi is mad with power. Its lethal insanity is impossible to fathom, and it will often stare malevolently at whatever humans it encounters, then suddenly attack without provocation. For seemingly no reason, the creature will break out in horrible cackling or deafening sorrowful moans. However, one thing is certain: Entropi desires to destroy whatever he encounters. The monster is hateful and dangerous, and takes great pleasure in the death and devastation its powers produce.

Perhaps the one element of Entropi's personality which has kept it from being successful in its deadly quest is the remaining character elements from its aboriginal host. In some way, Entropi sees Australia as its home, and is determined to destroy Earth first before continuing to the other Loci. This has localized the destruction of the creature in the universe, and Entropi takes his frustration out on mankind with fury and vengeance.

Should Entropi ever learn the location of the pocket-dimension holding the Initial Prime, it will abandon all other pursuits in an effort to destroy the keystone of reality.

Quote: (Though Entropi is always wailing or laughing, it has not made any intelligible communication to date.)

Powers/Tactics: The fragment of the Cosmic Locus, combined with the surviving life-force of the renegade Lord of Order, has made Entropi one of the most powerful creatures on Earth. The monster feeds off energy and matter, draining the life-essence of its foes and reducing objects to nothingness. It is capable of absorbing massive amounts of energy with little negative effect. Its inhuman body is seemingly indestructible, and its skeletal limbs possess surprising strength. The creature's senses

are linked with the universe, making it nearly impossible to surprise.

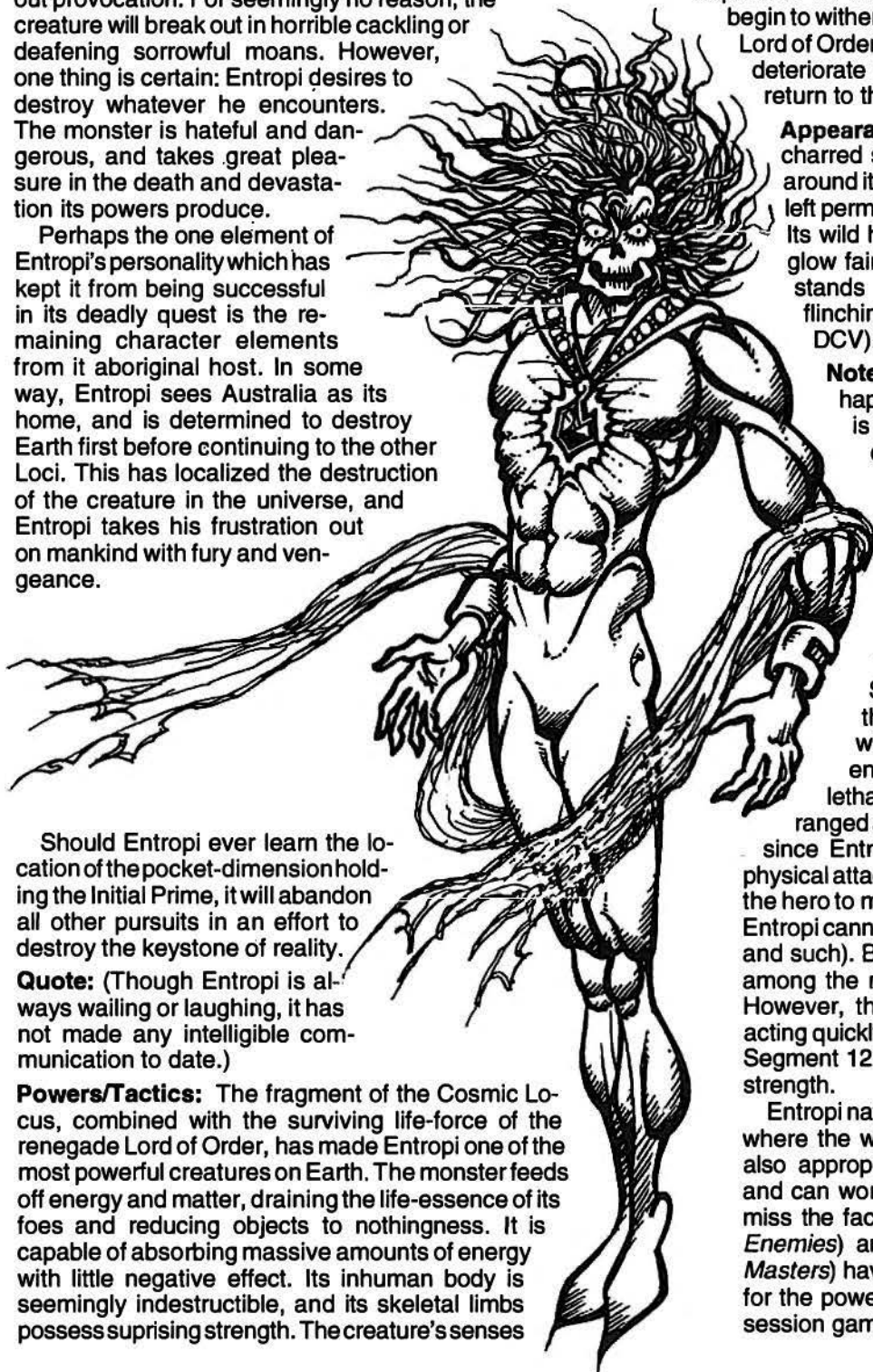
In combat, the creature uses no noticeable tactics. Instead, it chaotically reaks havoc and death to anything that gets in its way or catches its attention. Once engaged, Entropi will not cease until it is satiated with the life-essence of its foes, or until it grows bored with the conflict.

Many heroes have mistakenly assumed that the pulsing crystal around Entropi's neck is the source of its incredible power. In reality, Entropi's power is self-contained. However, the monster has grown dependent upon the crystal shard for its unlife. Should Entropi and the crystal ever be separated for an extended period of time, Entropi would begin to wither and die. It is unknown if the life-force of the Lord of Order contained in Entropi's body would actually deteriorate upon Entropi's death, or whether it would return to the crystal and await a new host.

Appearance: Entropi is truly a hideous creature. Its charred skin, smelling of decay, is wrapped tightly around its protruding muscles. The skeletal grimace left permanently on its face is twisted with madness. Its wild hair is shocking white, and its hollow eyes glow faintly in their sockets. The creature usually stands or flies with arrogant confidence, never flinching in fear or dodging an attack (thus its low DCV).

Note: Yes, Entropi is grossly powerful—perhaps too powerful for many campaigns. Entropi is extremely difficult for many hero teams to defeat. Aside from exploiting its Susceptibilities, the best way to put Entropi down is to hit it hard and fast. Once engaged, Entropi is sure to fight to the finish, so there is little danger of it retreating to "rest up." However, its high defenses, STUN and REC, as well as its Absorbion ability, will allow it to keep fighting turn after turn until all the heroes are destroyed. Since Entropi does not move and attack in the same Phase, and since it tends to attack whatever is closest to it (or whatever threatens it the most), weaker heroes can avoid its lethal power by keeping their distance and using ranged attacks. Physical attacks are obviously best since Entropi cannot absorb their power, but most physical attacks involve hand-to-hand combat, requiring the hero to move dangerously close. Weird powers that Entropi cannot defend against also work well (i.e., NNDs and such). Bricks hurling cars, cement blocks, etc. are among the most effective opponents against Entropi. However, the combined power of a team of heroes acting quickly is necessary lest Entropi reaches its Post-Segment 12 Recovery and gains back nearly 1/3 of its strength.

Entropi naturally lends itself to rather epic adventures, where the whole world is threatened. The monster is also appropriate for dimension-spanning campaigns, and can work effectively in outer space as well. Don't miss the fact that both Doctor Destroyer (see *Classic Enemies*) and Tyrannon the Conqueror (see *Mystic Masters*) have taken an interest in Entropi—their plans for the powerful creature could easily lead to multiple-session games for higher power heroes.



SUPER-TEAM NAME GENERATOR

An eclectic collection of super-powered individuals band together to fight for truth and justice. Then comes a monumental question... what will they call the new team? It's a tough choice, many of the good names have already been used! Team members argue over what the name will say about the team to the public at large. Proposals are put

forward and harshly rejected. Voices are raised! Tempers flare! After hours of wrangling, everybody give up. If just picking a name is this hard, then being a team just isn't worth it. As the heroes go their separate ways, villains all over the world exhibit a savage grin! Another unnamed team of heroes defeated before they ever began.

Don't let this happen to your teams. Every game master and player group needs to name their teams of super heroes or super villains. Use these handy tables to create possible super-team names. Or, the Game Master can use the charts to generate inspiration for new super-teams built around a name.

To use the charts, roll or pick one word from each chart. On each chart, roll 1d6 and refer the section indicated (i.e., First Roll 1-2, First Roll 3-4, or First Roll 5-6). Then roll a second 1d6 and a third 1d6—the word generated follows: "2nd Roll" – "3rd Roll."

Example: A roll of 3, then 4, and then 1 on the First Word Chart would choose the word: New (i.e., section "First Roll 3-4," word "4-1"). A roll of 1, then 2, and then 3 on the Second Word Chart would choose the word: Arsenal (i.e., section "First Roll 1-2," word "2-3").

Once you have both words, try saying them first word first, second word first, and then each word by itself. Try making the words singular or plural. Try adding 'The' at the front of each combination. Try putting 'of' between the words. Play with the various combinations, looking for a rhythm and meaning that you like. Given our example words, some choices might be: New Arsenal, The New Arsenal, or The Arsenal.

You may find that you like one of the words and not the other. Keep the word you like and generate a replacement for the one you don't like. Or try the word you do like with each of the words in the other chart. These charts are designed to provide name possibilities, not straight jacket anyone's thinking. Hopefully, you'll find these names useful and interesting the next time you need to form a super-team.

Nothing in these charts should be used in any way to infringe on the any established copyright or trademark. They are provided for your amusement and enjoyment only.





FIRST WORD CHART

First Roll 1-2

1-1	A-	4-1	Energy
1-2	Alpha-	4-2	Enigma
1-3	Amazing	4-3	Euro-
1-4	America-	4-4	Evil
1-5	American	4-5	Exceptional
1-6	Angry	4-6	Exotic
2-1	Astonishing	5-1	Freedom
2-2	Atomic	5-2	Gallant
2-3	Black	5-3	Genuine
2-4	Cool	5-4	Glory
2-5	Courageous	5-5	Grand
2-6	Crime	5-6	Green
3-1	Dawn	6-1	Gray
3-2	Destiny	6-2	Grim
3-3	Divine	6-3	High
3-4	Dread	6-4	Holy
3-5	Electric	6-5	Honor
3-6	Elemental	6-6	Honorable

First Roll 3-4

1-1	Hyper-	4-1	New
1-2	Intrepid	4-2	Noble
1-3	Iron	4-3	Notorious
1-4	Just	4-4	Oathbound
1-5	Justice	4-5	Omega-
1-6	Knights of	4-6	Omni-
2-1	Liberty	5-1	Opal
2-2	Lion	5-2	Original
2-3	Lucky	5-3	Over-
2-4	Master	5-4	Para-
2-5	Mega-	5-5	Peace
2-6	Megaton	5-6	Phoenix
3-1	Mighty	6-1	Polar
3-2	Miraculous	6-2	Power
3-3	Modern	6-3	Promethean
3-4	Mystic	6-4	Quick
3-5	Mythic	6-5	Radical
3-6	Nemesis	6-6	Real

First Roll 5-6

1-1	Red	4-1	Team
1-2	Relentless	4-2	Teen-
1-3	Righteous	4-3	Tiger
1-4	Royal	4-4	Titanic
1-5	Savage	4-5	Trans-
1-6	Secret	4-6	Trouble
2-1	Silver	5-1	True
2-2	Solar	5-2	Ultimate
2-3	Spirit	5-3	Ultra-
2-4	Spirit of	5-4	United
2-5	Star-	5-5	Valiant
2-6	Steel	5-6	Valor
3-1	Strike	6-1	Valorous
3-2	Super-	6-2	Virtuous
3-3	Supra-	6-3	Wolf
3-4	Supre-	6-4	X-
3-5	Supreme	6-5	Young
3-6	Swift	6-6	Z-

SECOND WORD CHART

First Roll 1-2

1-1	-Tech	4-1	Challengers
1-2	Adepts	4-2	Circle
1-3	Adventurers	4-3	Command
1-4	Agency	4-4	Compact
1-5	Agents	4-5	Company
1-6	Amazons	4-6	Complex
2-1	Armada	5-1	Conquerors
2-2	Army	5-2	Convoy
2-3	Arsenal	5-3	Core
2-4	Assembly	5-4	Corp
2-5	Authority	5-5	Corsairs
2-6	Avengers	5-6	Council
3-1	Breed	6-1	Covenant
3-2	Brigade	6-2	Crew
3-3	Brotherhood	6-3	Crusaders
3-4	Buccaneers	6-4	Defenders
3-5	Cavaliers	6-5	Domain
3-6	Centurions	6-6	Dominators

First Roll 3-4

1-1	Dreamers	4-1	Horde
1-2	Elite	4-2	Inc.
1-3	Enforcers	4-3	Judges
1-4	Enterprise	4-4	Justifiers
1-5	Federation	4-5	Kings
1-6	Fighters	4-6	Knights
2-1	Fleet	5-1	League
2-2	Fold	5-2	Legion
2-3	Force	5-3	Liberators
2-4	Foundation	5-4	Lords
2-5	Furies	5-5	Magicians
2-6	Fury	5-6	Masters
3-1	Gauntlet	6-1	Men
3-2	Gladiators	6-2	Militia
3-3	Gods	6-3	Mystique
3-4	Group	6-4	Odyssey
3-5	Guard	6-5	Officers
3-6	Guardians	6-6	Ones

First Roll 5-6

1-1	Outsiders	4-1	Sisterhood
1-2	Paladins	4-2	Society
1-3	Paragons	4-3	Spirits
1-4	Patriots	4-4	Squad
1-5	Patrol	4-5	Squadron
1-6	Privateers	4-6	Strike
2-1	Project	5-1	Super-Humans
2-2	Protectors	5-2	Team
2-3	Quest	5-3	Titans
2-4	Radicals	5-4	Trust
2-5	Raiders	5-5	Union
2-6	Rangers	5-6	Unit
3-1	Rebels	6-1	Vanguard
3-2	Regents	6-2	Vixens
3-3	Riders	6-3	Warriors
3-4	Rogues	6-4	Watch
3-5	Saga	6-5	Watchers
3-6	Shield	6-6	Wizards

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