

POPULAR

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SCRIBLES FROM THE SCRIBE

EGYPTIAN HUMANIDS? A topic for discussion, by Nick Parenti.

I have maintained an interest in ancient Egypt since I was a child. Although there is sufficient information available to create a historical roleplaying background, a fantasy campaign is much harder to find support for. I know it is possible to run a fantasy campaign with humans as the only PC and/or sentient race, but to me a variety of intelligent races, whether or not humans are included, is preferable.

When I saw ICE's Mythic Egypt I took it home with me at the first opportunity (when I had the money, I didn't steal it!). I am not very satisfied with the PC races in Mythic Egypt, which included: humans, djinn (elf types with an affinity for fire magics), sphinx (felinoid shape changers capable of multiple human cat mixes) and Were-cats (the "hobbit" equivalent of sphinx above). Additional PC possibilities from Asia are provided: Kerubim and Scorpion Folk (shape changers capable of multiple man-bull and man-scorpion mixes). I find the shape changers' abilities too empowering and I don't really see the historical reference to the djinn. Why not just do cultural make-overs of the Feline (FH PC race) or minotaur?

My hope is that someone out there will enlighten me in the folklore of ancient Egypt. In the mean time, based on my limited (self taught) knowledge of ancient Egypt and its myths, I present my

list of PC/NPC races (and cultures). Since I am most familiar with AD&D, all references will be from that game (my apologies to the TSR-phobic and radical anti-TSRists).

Humans - of course, different colors and flavors apply for different backgrounds.

Tabaxi - cat-men, children of Bast, originally jungle hunters, making their living in the civilized world as thieves, tomb robbers, merchants, mercenaries and rangers.

Gnolls & Flinds - canines, followers of Anubis (good) or Set (evil), formerly desert and plains nomads, making their living as mercenaries, warriors and ruffians.

Pseudo Undead, called Ghuls - carion eating humans with a genetic mutation that causes all or some of their tissues to become transparent or translucent, use their undead appearance to their advantage in this highly superstitious society, mostly involved in criminal dealings, inhabit tombs and ruins, may be highly regarded among/within some cults, likely to be involved in the arcane arts.

Aaracocra - bird-men, children of Atum, found in all walks of life. Excel as merchants, thieves, druids and illusionists.

PC/NPC possibilities from outside Egypt include:

From Asia Minor - Centaur, Minotaur

From African Jungles - Dakon (intelligent gorilla), Lizard Men (saurians, pseudo warm-blooded reptilians akin to dinosaurs),

Wemic (lion-aur), Quagga (zebra centaurs and Hyblis (antelope centaurs)).

If things Tolkien are your pleasure, Desert Elves are an option if you must have them. They would exist in nomadic tribes making contact only to trade or adventure. Their faith requires that they bring the desert back to life and create a sylvan paradise. To achieve that end they establish, tend and expand oasis.

Dwarves are a possibility too. The Egyptian god Bes (stocky build, full beard and all) was the patron of childbirth, and protector against snakes and "other terrors". Egyptian dwarves, superb stone cutters and smiths, would add healing to their skills of racial renown. They would be the only race capable or knowledgeable of iron or steel smithing.

Maybe we could even sneak in bedouin halflings and raiding bands of turbin wearing hobgoblins(?!).

So there you have it, some quick ideas on race options loosely based on mythology and ecology. What do you think? Any additions, deletions and/or expansions would be greatly appreciated. Do not feel restricted to the AD&D game system, RuneQuest Broo would make sense as children of Amon in appearance anyway.

TRANSPLANTING HEROES

by Jeff J. Craigmile

Marvel Superheroes is a great game based on some excellent comics, but sometimes the PC's powers can't be contained within the power scale given. DC Heroes has the same inherent trouble with lower scale and human (non-powered) characters.

One solution is to transplant the character from one system to the next. For instance, although The Punisher is a great Marvel character, his weapons and non-mutant powers just don't cut it with the ability system made more for guys like Colossus. All firearms are basically the same damage, PR-EX at best. But take a

Punisher type character and put him in the Heroes Unlimited setting and back him up with guns from Edge of the Sword Vol.1 (Guide to Modern Firearms). Now he comes alive with an entire armory and martial arts talent more suited to eliminating crime in the streets! Of course it's easy to overlook his mutant ability to resist poison, but how often does he need it anyway?

Some Marvel heroes are better suited to DC rules due to their mid to low level abilities. Characters like: Wolverine, Dare Devil, Ghost Rider and Iron Man do very well as DC characters. Of course, these are big names in Marvel comics and have every right to stay that way.

The hook into transplanting a character is not to do so verbatim but in essence. It makes character generation very easy. Just research how many tons lifted, how smart, how powerful, etc. and translate it to the other systems measurement. Roll for anything you can't guess and fill in a new background of your choosing. This makes the PC playable because you aren't stuck with the old comic background.

DC has roughly the same problem. Low level and human characters all look alike. Sgt. Rock, Batman, Robin and Blue Beetle all fall through the cracks at about 2-7 APs max and would be more fun in the context of a game that gives them a wider range of abilities (although I dare anyone to try this with Batman).

This usually doesn't work with all characters, although it's great for the little guys. Note - It is very dangerous to generate the more powerful characters as a translation. The presence of even one titanic character like Marvel's Annihilus, with his cosmic rod, can through off the balance of any campaign.

On a lighter note, character translation can lead to some really exciting battles as seen in Darkhorse Comics. Imagine your own version of epic clashes like Batman vs. Predator or Robocop vs.

Terminator.

Translating characters from one system to the next is fun and challenging. Good luck bringing your own favorite character to his full potential in another system.

SPELLIN' IT OUT

This issue, and possibly for the next 2, we present spells from the Ysgarth FRPG by Ragnarok Enterprises, downloaded from their Necropolis of Dreams BBS 512/472-6905.

Beastform

CST:8 MPC:8 APC:550
FPC:11 SAV:NA RAN:S
DUR:10M DAM:0 CLS:CPE GRP:BM

This allows the caster to take the form of any animal with which he has an affinity of some sort, with all the abilities and characteristics of that type of animal, though retaining human intelligence, but no other human capabilities.

Beastspeech

CST:3 MPC:6 APC:1100
FPC:22 SAV:WIL RAN:10
DUR:1M DAM:0 CLS:AAC GRP:BM

This allows the caster to speak with any number of animals of any one type with which he has an affinity, though it need not be the same type of creature every time it is case, if the character has multiple affinities.

Binding Earth

CST:2 MPC:7 APC:400
FPC:8 SAV:AGI RAN:10
DUR:10M DAM:0 CLS:DNC GRP:GE

This causes the earth around the feet of the character to rise up around his legs and hold him immobile if he fails to make a dodge save. It can be broken if a STR roll is made, and such a roll can be made once per minute. The STR roll is modified for the type of earth available. Sand/Dirt has a roll of STRx4 to break free. Sandstone or other sedimentary stone has a roll of STRx3 to break free. Granite or other igneous rock has a STRx2 roll to break free. Marble, obsidian or other metamorphic rock has a STRx1 roll

to break free.

Bladesharp

CST:2 MPC:6 APC:900
FPC:18 SAV:NA RAN:T
DUR:1M DAM:2 CLS:DEC GRP:EN

This accentuates the natural qualities of a bladed weapon, making it sharper than it would normally be and increasing the Maximum Damage by the indicated amount for the duration of the spell.

Body Awareness/Internal Analysis

CST:2 MPC:2 APC:80
FPC:2 SAV:NA RAN:S
DEL:10M DAM:0 CLS:BEE GRP:MY

This increases a character's awareness of the status of his own body and internal systems. It will inform him of any diseases, disorders, imbalances or any other variations from normal health. While it will note the effects and presence of different disorders it will not identify causes or cures.

Bolt of Steel

CST:3 MPC:8 APC:240
FPC:5 SAV:MIS RAN:30
DUR:I DAM:6 CLS:DMG GRP:GE

This creates a sharpened bolt of steel and projects it at a target, hopefully skewering him and doing located damage.

Burial

CST:9 MPC:20 APC:3000
FPC:60 SAV:AGI RAN:10
DUR:10M DAM:S CLS:DOC GRP:GE

This causes the ground to open up and swallow a single target, burying him 10ft beneath the surface for the duration of the spell. This may be a fatal effect, as the spell does damage from crushing and suffocation based on the type of earth present. For loose dirt/sand damage is 1 Point/CR. For sedimentary rock it is 2 Points/CR. For igneous rock it is 3 Points/CR. For metamorphic rock it is 4 Points/CR. Digging out is based on a STR roll made once per minute as described in the spell Binding Earth.

Binding Light

CST:5 MPC:10 APC:240
FPC:5 SAV:MIS RAN:10
DUR:10M DAM:0 CLS:GNC GRP:LI

Creates a ball of glowing energy which is fired at the target. If it hits it expands into glowing bands which engulf and immobilize the area hit and three adjacent areas in all directions. Constriction does no damage, but the bonds can only be broken on a STR% roll on 1D100.

Beam of Light

CST:5 MPC:8 APC:100
FPC:2 SAV:MIS RAN:30M
DUR:I DAM:6 CLS:GMG GRP:LI

Fires a beam of light at a single target doing located point type damage if it hits. Works with the Hand Targetting, Staff Targetting or Eye Targetting skills.

Bonds of Darkness

CST:6 MPC:10 APC:480
FPC:10 SAV:MIS RAN:10
DUR:10M DAM:0 CLS:HNC GRP:DA

Creates a ball of darkness which is fired at the target. If it hits it expands into black bands which engulf and immobilize the area hit and three adjacent areas in all directions. Constriction does no damage, but the bonds can only be broken on a STR% roll on 1D100.

Beam of Blackness

CST:5 MPC:8 APC:170
FPC:4 SAV:MIS RAN:30M
DUR:I DAM:6 CLS:HMG GRP:DA

Fires a beam of dark energy at a single target doing located club type damage if it hits. Works with the Hand Targetting, Staff Targetting or Gaze Targetting skills.

Basilisk Gaze

CST:12 MPC:11 APC:450
FPC:9 SAV:MIS RAN:10
DUR:1H/I DAM:0 CLS:APG GRP:ENGE

This is a Gaze Targetting based missile attack. If it hits the target must make a 3xTAL% roll or be turned to fairly hard stone for

the duration of the spell, returning to normal, still alive at the end of that duration.

Bonds of Power

CST:9 MPC:10 APC:80
FPC:2 SAV:MIS RAN:10
DUR:10 DAM:0 CLS:HNG GRP:WI

Creates a field of pure energy which is fired at the target. If it hits it expands into invisible bands which engulf and immobilize the area hit and three adjacent areas in all directions.

Constriction does no damage, but the bonds can only be broken on a STR% roll on 1D100.

Babel

CST:12 MPC:10 APC:1200
FPC:24 SAV:INT RAN:10R
DUR:10M DAM:0 CLS:BPA GRP:PR

This spell works against all targets in a set area, causing them to be unable to understand the speech of anyone else they encounter for the duration of the spell and making their speech unintelligible to anyone else for that same duration. The only person who can understand them and speak to them is the caster of the spell. They sound as if they are speaking unknown foreign tongues.

Bind Soul

CST:8 MPC:15 APC:1100
FPC:22 SAV:S RAN:10
DUR:1W DAM:NA CLS:ANC GRP:MYNE

This spell binds a soul or other naturally generated spirit to a particular object or locus of the caster's choosing. Both spirit and caster must be present at that locus. Note that the soul can only be bound if, at that time it is not bound to a body or any other place. If it is bound to something else it must be severed from that locus, even if willing. If it is unwilling and unbound it must be defeated in a Will Battle and forced into the new locus. If it is unwilling and bound, it must first be defeated in Will Battle, then Severed, then bound with this spell.

Breathe Water
CST:5 MPC:6 APC:350
FPC:7 SAV:NA RAN:S
DUR:10M DAM:0 CLS:EPE GRP:HY

This allows the caster to breathe water as if it were air, through his mouth, for the duration of the spell. While the spell is in force he will not be able to breathe normal air, capable only of breathing oxygen suspended in water. It can be cancelled at will by the caster.

Blight Plant
CST:5 MPC:10 APC:3000
FPC:60 SAV:NA RAN:T
DUR:I DAM:6 CLS:CQC GRP:HESH

This causes a plant touched by the caster to wither and die. It does the equivalent of 6 points of damage to the plant, about enough to kill a small bush of 1 Cubic Meter in size. Higher Casting Levels would be needed for larger plants. Plants blighted turn brown and wither, losing their leaves and eventually dying. Damage from successive blightings is cumulative unless healed.

Bonds of Flame
CST:6 MPC:12 APC:300
FPC:6 SAV:MIS RAN:10
DUR:1M DAM:6 CLS:GNC GRP:PY

This creates bonds of flaming matter which fly from the hands of the caster towards a target as a missile. On impact they spread apart, wrapping around that person, doing overall flame damage for the duration of the spell. The bonds can be broken if a 3xSTR% roll is made, but in each round a break is attempted, even if it succeeds, the victim will take double damage.

Call of the Wild
CST:13 MPC:11 APC:1850
FPC:39 SAV:WIL RAN:10
DUR:1H DAM:0 CLS:BPD GRP:BE

The target of this spell becomes convinced that he is an animal of a type specified by the caster. If the caster has affinity with that animal type the target will temporarily gain that affinity and the ability to communicate with

that species, as well as some of their mental attributes.

Circle of Thorns
CST:6 MPC:12 APC:1800
FPC:36 SAV:NA RAN:10
DUR:10M DAM:20S CLS:DMF GRP:HE

This creates a circular barrier of thorns in a 10 meter radius around the caster with a height of 10M. The barrier cannot be seen through clearly, but one may break through it, taking the stated damage either as overall damage or as the same total of damage broken down into any number of separate attacks as the caster chooses.

ENDORSEMENTS

Alarums & Excursions, the largest and predominant RPG Amateur Press Association (APA). Published by Lee Gold (ICE Vikings, GURPS Japan, Lands of Adventure, Land of the Rising Sun). Don't just read, participate! For more information send a SASE to, Lee Gold, 3965 Alla Road, Los Angeles, CA 90066.

Silver Griffin, a semi-pro, independent magazine on RPGs. For more information send a SASE to, Devlin Janax editor, Silver Griffin, P.O. Box 1751, St. Paul, MN 55101.

The Scroll, a bi-monthly RPG magazine by gamers, for gamers. For more information send a SASE to, Bob Anderson, The Scroll, Sage Lore Productions, Inc., P.O. Box 14616, Portland, OR 97214.

SHADIS Magazine, published bi-monthly. RPG and PBM subjects. Home of "Hook, line and sinker" plot hooks for adventures. For more information send a SASE to, SHADIS Magazine, Alderac Group, 755 Burcale Road #B2, Myrtle Beach, SC 29577.

Silver, Swords & Slaughter, a new FRPG fanzine looking for subscribers and contributors. For more information send a SASE, or \$1 for a sample issue, to: Silver, Swords & Slaughter, c/o Scott Mash,

11685 SR 691, Nelsonville, OH
45764.

The Gamer's Connection, a small press publication looking for subscribers and writers. For a free sample issue, and writers guidelines, write to: The Gamer's Connection, P.O. Box 278331, Sacramento, CA 95827.

ENTITY ENCOUNTERS

Once again we present an alien race for GURPS, downloaded from their Illuminati BBS 512/447-4449.

THE CLUTCH (point cost 0, 5, or 10, depending on age)

An Alien Race from "Agent of Change", by Steve Miller and Sharon Lee, adapted for GURPS by Lestat

The Clutch are a large, very long-lived reptilian race, who are often called 'turtles' by humans for their shells and deep green color. A clutch measures his age by the number of shells he has grown, starting with the first shell at fifty, shedding it and growing a new one every 75 years thereafter. Eighteen shells is an average Clutch lifespan.

Clutch tend to take the long view. Most don't understand the (to them) frantic haste with which other species act. Clutch tend to do things such as warning you eight hours beforehand of a dinner invitation, so that you have enough time to prepare, and making a 14-year trading survey before starting a new product line. Impulsiveness is a 10 point *advantage* for a Clutch character - it means he will often act without considering it for an hour beforehand.

Names are very important to the Clutch, and tend to be very long and descriptive. Twelfth Shell Fifth Hatched Knife Clan of Middle River's Spring Spawn of Farmer Greentrees of the Spearmakers Den, The Edger is a short form of a Clutch name for hasty things like visas. Other species often abbreviate these to one or two words in conversation,

which may either amuse or irritate the Clutch, depending on his personality.

Clutch society is organized into clans of several thousand. Clutch see other societies within this framework - they would call the Commonwealth the Clans of Human and Thranx. (Not Humanx - Clutch don't abbreviate.)

Ties within a clan are very strong, and no clan may pronounce judgement on or punish members of another clan. Doing so is a very serious offense, and may result in the entire clan declaring war on the offending parties.

However, clan honor is also very strong, so if a Clutch wrongs one outside the clan, his clan will often punish him severely and make generous restitution to the wronged being. Clutch will very occasionally adopt aliens into their clans, if the adoptee shows much merit.

The Clutch have a very odd sense of aesthetics - they will often take strange things to be works of art, such as a fire alarm or a vividly colored package. (Treat this as a Mild Delusion).

Clutch artifacts bring high prices, since everything they make is built to last for a very long time, by alien standards.

Advantages and Disadvantages:

Clutch are +2 ST, -1 DX, and have the Gigantism disadvantage. They also have the Honest and Truthful disadvantages, and a strong Sense of Duty to anyone in their clan. Clutch have full Eidetic Memory, but pay normal costs for mental skills, because they take things so slowly.

The shell is PD 2, DR 2. The first and second shells cover only the shoulders, but later shells cover the entire back.

Clutch get +4 to any skill involving building things in which durability is a factor, such as Architecture or Armoury. Clutch cannot learn Stealth or Fast-Talk.

Clutch roll for attribute losses due to age at 1000, and roll

every 20 years afterward. At 1400, they start rolling every 10 years, and at 1600, they roll every 5 years. A Clutch with the Age disadvantage gets 1 point for every 10 years over 1000. A young Clutch gains 1 point (maximum 6) for every two years under 50, and cannot spend more points on skills than half his age.

Many Clutch have Common Sense, Strong Will, Stubbornness, and Toughness. Absent Mindedness, Combat Reflexes, Fatness, Miserly, Skinnyness, Sadism, and Weak Will are rare; Clutch cannot be Double-Jointed, Kleptomaniac, or Lecherous.

It costs 0 points to be a unshelled Clutch, 5 to be in the first or second shell, and 10 to be older.

A sample Clutch character:

Edger, Twelfth Shell (about 950 years old) 150 Points

20 ST	14
20 DX	11
11	
10 IQ	11
Symbospeech	11
HT	10
Terranglo	9

50

Savior-Faire:

Spd 5.25

13

Move 5

10

Skills

16 Armoury/Knives	22	Clutch
16 Knife	15	2
		0.5
8 Merchant	14	
Administration	11	
Accounting	9	Clutch
8 Diplomacy	13	0.5 Humanx
4 Leadership	12	

Advantages Disadvantages

*Full EM	*Honesty
10 Older Clutch	*Truthful
10 Impulsive	*Gigantism
20 Wealthy	
10 T'carais	*See above

--- (status 3)

50

Totals:

Quirks

50 Attributes -1 Very fond of

music

50 Advantages	-1 Tolerant of strange customs
Disadvantages	-1 Likes humans
-5 Quirks	-1 Fond of strong beer
55 skills	-1 Very interested in art
---	---
150	-5

The Edger of the Knife Clan of the Middle River gets along with the 'hasty' races better than most of his kind - for example, he lets just about anyone call him simply 'Edger.' It pleases him greatly that his dealings with humans require several different forms of his name.

Edger is a very pleasant Turtle, apt to be expansive with his friends. He is currently winding down a trading trip - only 7 years left to go. Edger's clan makes the finest knives in Clutch society, which is the same as saying the finest knives available anywhere, each blade the product of twenty years of careful craftsmanship. Edger is always very careful to say that a Middle River blade *will* shatter, under certain conditions, such as the total destruction of the building or vehicle within which the knife resides.

Edger is suitable for a use as-is as a Patron. If you want to tone him down to the 100-point level, give him a few disadvantages and reduce either his wealth or his status.

PRECAMPAIGNING!, by Mike Eckrich

Having DMed for over 15 years there are some tips I would like to pass on to the neophyte Dungeon Master. There are many important ingredients for a successful campaign; the campaign world, the role playing, the adventures, etc. However, the most important aspect of any campaign is the players and their enjoyment of each session. If they are not having fun your campaign is doomed.

During college I was a member of a gaming club that played D&D

every Friday. My group of 6-7 players were having a good time but I had trouble keeping them "really" interested in my campaign. I had an idea that if I came up with a questionnaire that helped me gauge my players' thoughts, needs and game desires I would be one step closer to an excellent group. I came up with 8 questions and asked the players to rank them on a scale of 1-10 with 1 being low and 10 being high. The questions were:

1. How well do you like role playing and party interaction?
2. How well do you like really challenging adventures in which your character has a 25-33% chance to die?
3. How well do you like adventures where most of your time is spent figuring out combat, ie. Hack and Slash campaigns?
4. How well do you like high magic worlds where your characters have about 2 magic items per level?
5. How about 1 magic item per level?
6. How about 1 magic item every other level?
7. How well do you like alternate races, classes and rules not covered in the 2nd edition rules?
8. How well do you like adventures with many puzzles, mystery and intrigue?

The results were a little surprising. My players said they would prefer a low magic campaign; a high mortality rate would heighten excitement and mystery, and finally intrigue and puzzles outweighed hack and slash.

After asking your players what kind of game they would like to see you run, you can go on step further. Ask them what kind of campaign world they would like to play in. How many DMs do you know that work for weeks on a new world and have it flop because the DM wasn't in sync with what the players wanted nor expected? The players will probably give some great ideas to the DM. Once the game world is in its ruff stage ask the players to roll up their characters. They will have an idea

of what your world has to offer and can roll up characters based on your history. During this phase the DM will help mold the player character and flesh him/her out with added history and embellishments.

This phase of campaign development can really help the DM develop his world. I've had players draw up whole cities, with ideas for political and social climate. This not only makes use of the old adage that two heads are better than one, plus with the added benefit of saving time.

If one of your players wants to play an unusual player character like a centaur or a lizard man now would be the best time to find out because your world is still in its developmental stages and you can probably slip it in if you desire. As you can see with all this information the job the DM has of creating a fantastic game world has become much easier and chances are very good of having a great campaign. Good gaming!

MORE DUNGEON FOR YOUR \$

A Special Conan Installment, by Nick Parenti
AGAINST DARKNESS! (CB2) an AD&D Conan adventure by Ken Rolston for TSR

I picked this one up, used, at a flea market for \$1. I didn't buy it because it was AD&D, nor because it was about Conan, nor for the original creatures and magic items. For my buck, I was interested in the rules provided for Heroism/Luck and Fear. Although these rules are tailored for AD&D1, they are immediately useful with AD&D2/D&D or any other RPG for that matter.

Heroism/Luck is an attribute of each PC/NPC that is kept secret by the GM. Players chose when to use their "luck points" to increase their success, or minimize failure, whenever they please, but they never know how much they have. Examples of the effects that can be attained by spending luck points are provided as guides for the GM. This type of flexibility fuels epic

occurrences, high excitement adventuring and risk taking.

Fear Factor takes the newness of horrific and supernatural occurrences into account with consideration to a PCs "first meeting" reaction. The fear factor of the creature, or event, decides the number of dice a player can use to save against his Wisdom score. This check is reserved for the first time a character witnesses this event, or creature, only. Fear checks are not required after initial encounters nor for mundane events/creatures (eg. a wolf). This rule provides a realistic approach to a character's fearful reaction to the unknown, based on their experiences.

The new creatures are not bad, including a race of serpent folk. The adventure, though high level, is enjoyable. The Hyboria background and NPCs, including Conan, are useful. The magic items are interesting. If you see this module on sale, do not fear, take a heroic chance and purchasing it.

The Official Handbook of the CONAN Universe, by Marvel Comics

This comic book is one of a series describing various comic lines in the Marvel multiverse. Fortunately, at its \$1.25 cover price, it makes a cheap source book for a Hyborian campaign. Within its pages are descriptions of the: races, nations, cities, personalities, history, religion, warfare, and more of Conan's world. No gaming statistics are provided, but since Hyboria is basically a human-only world, none are needed.

If a Hyborian campaign is not to your liking, there is still plenty of cultures to adapt to any fantasy world. If for nothing but a source of cultural examples, this comic is a worth while supplement for any fantasy gamer.

CONAN THE BUCCANEER (CN1), by TSR for Conan RPG

Although it is no where near as useful as the previously reviewed (see A&E 195, this zine

for Conan Triumphant), Conan RPG adventure, it contains more than the \$1.50's worth I paid for it. It describes some rather unique encounters on a forgotten island which was home to a fallen empire. The value is in the ruins of this empire's capital city and the background material concerning it. The city is well mapped and, although in a state of ruin, each building receives adequate description and history to bring the city to life again. The history provided can be used as is, or as background to recreate this interesting empire at its height. The adventure itself is enjoyable and well worth converting to any fantasy system.

The highly creative may find this supplement boring, since they could do much better on their own. Commercial campaign users will find it too time consuming to use/convert. To us whose creativity is hampered by other priorities and enjoy short cuts, it is worth at least \$2 for saving us the trouble of mapping and describing a city.

(Special Note - Of the 3 Conan RPG adventures I have seen, Conan the Mercenary provides the least usable material outside a Conan RPG campaign, beware.)

Cooky Character Class for AD&D

Version 1.00

Designed By Scott Mash

Smasher Land RPG BBS

(614) 593-8359

Ever been on an adventure where your rations had become low and several members of your party have died or starvation? The cooky class might just save your live on extended wilderness, dungeon and ocean adventures.

A cooky has a 50% chance of extracting edible items from his/her surroundings to prepare into a tasty meal. The character gains 5% chance for each 2 levels to extracting the edible foods. At the 4th level he/she learns how to make "meals that heal", that is the character can heal a fellow

adventurer up to one hit die with a well cooked meal. For each level past the 4th the cooky can heal an additional hit die. At 7th level a cooky has a 50% chance to cook a meal that will neutralize poison, this chance increases by 3% with each level after the 7th.

Cookies fight as a thief until they reach the 3rd level then they fight as a fighter of 2 levels lower. A cooky may not specialize in any weapon and use swords (one-handed bastard or smaller) and will only use a thrown dagger as a distance weapon. As for armor cookies may only wear padded or leather and may not use a shield.

Cookies may choose 3 of the following non-weapon proficiencies: agricultural, brewing, etiquette, fire-building, fishing, gaming, herbalism, hunting and survival. Cookies use 1d6 for hit points and follow the advancement table below.

Level	EXP	HP	Title
1	0	1d6	Soup Cook
2	1800	2d6	Campfire Cook
3	3600	3d6	Luncheon Cook
4	7200	4d6	Healer Cook
5	14400	5d6	Garden Gourmet
6	28800	6d6	Forest Fryer
7	57600	7d6	Royal Gourmet
8	115200	8d6	Kingdom Cooker
9	230400	9d6	Continental Cooker
10	460800	10d6	Master Cooker
11	691200	10d6+1	Master Fryer
12	921600	10d6+1	Master Gourmet

Cookies may advance infinitely.

BABYLON 5 - TV series preview, downloaded from the Silver Dragon Inn BBS 815/633-6455.

WHAT IS BABYLON 5? - History
 Babylon 5 is a new science fiction project for television that has been in top-secret development, first with Chris-Craft Television, and then in combination with its associate Warner Bros., for over three years. Selected early on as one of several flagship projects for a new fledgling network, the producers and creator of Babylon 5 used that time to fully flesh out

the universe in which our stories would be told.

First, a series treatment and bible was written by J. Michael Straczynski, creator and co-executive producer of Babylon 5. This was then followed by a 2-hour screenplay for a TV movie entitled "The Gathering." Also developed were storylines for a first full season of episodes, and artwork was commissioned that illustrated what, and where, Babylon 5 was. Finally, a video demo tape was produced. By the time this was completed, Warner Bros. was in place to make an important announcement.

On November 20, 1991, Warner Bros. held a press conference in Burbank, California, to announce the formation of a fledgling network, similar to the Fox network when it first went on the air. First-run programs would be produced, to air one night per week (as Fox began once per week) on a consortium of over two dozen TV stations around the country. At the heart of this was the Chris-Craft/United Television Network group of television stations. One of the projects announced as a Go was Babylon 5.

Not only would Babylon 5 approved as a Go project, it was announced at a major press conference held February 12th, 1992 in New York City that B5 would be the first Consortium project to air, making it the fledgling network's flagship production. The target airdate for "The Gathering" is Tuesday, November 17th, 1992.

WHAT IS BABYLON 5 -- The Concept
 The year is 2257. Mankind has gone to the stars, and we have found that we are not alone. There are other governments and empires that are far older than ours, and some that are younger. Some we met in peace, and began an exchange of technology and information that substantially increased the pace of Terran space exploration and colonization. Some contacts were hostile.

And some led to outright war. The Earth/Minbari war lasted for

almost a decade, and led to one of the great mysteries of the time in which our story is set. On the very edge of victory over the Earth Alliance, when everything Earth tried had failed and their destruction seemed imminent...the Minbari surrendered. It is now five years later, and the dark secret behind the Minbari surrender will finally begin slowly to emerge.

And over the course of the series, that secret will have a direct and substantial impact on Babylon 5.

As for Babylon 5 itself...it is a space station roughly three miles in length, with docking bays fore and aft. It is made up of sections that rotate at varying speeds to create alternate gravities to accommodate various lifeforms. Different atmospheres are also used in different sections. Babylon 5 is located at a key jump-point; to get from any one of the five major confederations (four alien, one human), you almost always have to pass through this sector of space. Thus, the area surrounding Babylon 5 has been designated Neutral Territory.

Babylon 5 itself, therefore, functions as a sort of futuristic free-port, a space-borne Casablanca open to travelers from anywhere, going anywhere; people fleeing from something or escaping to something, on missions of urgency...smugglers, diplomats, scientists, mappers, traders, soldiers, refugees ... sooner or later, they all come to Babylon 5.

The station boasts substantial facilities, including the docking bays, customs areas, nightclubs, casinos, meeting rooms, a Rent-A-Telepath service for use by businessmen, living quarters and other facilities. Because the station creates its gravity by rotation, like an O'Neill sphere, the very center of Babylon 5 is a null-gravity area. On the fringes of that round section, where gravity returns, hydroponic and

other forms of gardens and crops have been planted. In that respect, Babylon 5 is a self-enclosed planet turned inside-out. It is self-sustaining in most regards.

Though run under the nominal jurisdiction of the Earth Alliance, the station also has an advisory council consisting of one ambassador from each of the four major alien confederations, with the station commander forming the fifth, tie-breaking vote. In that sense, the station serves as a sort of min-U.N., the first time all five groups have ever gathered together before under one roof. As such, Babylon 5 represents the best chance for peace that's come along in a very long time.

But there are also those who profit by trying to sabotage that peace. And they, too, come to Babylon 5.

The station is called Babylon 5 because it is not the first such attempt. Babylons 1 through 3 were sabotaged and destroyed. Babylon 4 disappeared mysteriously, without a trace, 24 hours after becoming operational. Which makes life aboard Babylon 5 tenuous at best. They are very literally on the fringe, on their own. If something should happen, no one could reach there in time to help.

Babylon 5 is run by Commander Jeffrey Sinclair, a nominal war hero during the Earth/Minbari war (who is missing 24 hours of memory from the last day of that war), though he serves more as diplomat and figurehead most of the time. In general, the actual day-to-day operations of Babylon 5 are actually run by Laurel Takashima, one of the few command crew actually born on Earth, she is consistently on top of things and is Sinclair's buffer between his diplomatic responsibilities and the physical running of the station.

There are, in total, ten regular, recurring characters, in addition to whatever new characters may enter during any given episode. The intent is to create an ensemble

show with widely divergent characters, some good, some bad, but most a mix of the two.

Where some shows might show a perfect world without conflict, where everything works as it should, where the regular characters have no character flaws or inner doubts, the residents of Babylon 5 are very different. They have all the flaws to which humans have always been prey. The mistake is in the belief that technology means perfection, somehow eradicating humanity, which has been shown not to be the case. In 1792, people worked, got married, had affairs, had children, grew angry, touched passion and hoped for a better future. In 1992, though technology has given us 200 years of progress, of flying machines and computers, humans still work, get married, separate, have children, have affairs, grow angry, touch passion and hope for a better future. In 2257, our humanity continues, full of all its flaws and latent nobility. Those aspects may be enhanced, for good or ill, by the new technologies, but we are still recognizeably human.

The primary goal behind Babylon 5 is to do a show that is both good science fiction and good television. An SF series without cute robots or kids. An SF series that is thoughtful, but which has action. An SF series for grownups, with the same level of characterization and storytelling found in such shows as Hill Street Blues or St. Elsewhere or L.A. Law.

In preparing Babylon 5 for production, a comprehensive five year arc has been created. Though stories will stand on their own in each episode, the series overall will gradually tell a story on a much grander scale, a tapestry of falling and rising empires in which one or two individuals may mean the difference between a new dark ages on one side and a future of hope on the other. In that respect, Babylon 5 will be treated as a five-year miniseries, with a

definite beginning, middle, and end, with each year equalling one "chapter" or book in the saga. In that respect, it has been likened by some to going for the broad tapestry of a Lensman or Foundation series of books.

BABYLON 5 - Behind The Scenes

The production team assembled for work on Babylon 5 consists of the best and the brightest, including EFX experts and others who have worked on such projects as TERMINATOR 2, HONEY I SHRUNK THE KIDS, THE ABYSS, TOTAL RECALL and other films. Heading up the effects and production elements are Ron Thornton (computer EFX) and John Iacovelli (production designer). Ron, one of the country's foremost experts in computer-generated graphics, will be working with NewTek -- creators of the Video Toaster, a company on the cutting edge of computer EFX technology -- to create images never before seen on television. John Iacovelli, from HONEY I SHRUNK THE KIDS, is bringing a range of innovative new techniques to give the everyday scenes of Babylon 5 in action a vastly different and futuristic look.

If you're interested at getting a sneak peek at Babylon 5 itself, there are two ways of doing it: 1) Find a copy of STARLOG SPECTACULAR #4, March 1992, and turn to page 54. The photo that fills the bottom half of the page is an early version of the B5 station. 2) Call NewTek at (800) 765-3406 and request a copy of their latest demo tape. This tape contains a moving Babylon 5 station, and a starship that is also used in the first part of the B5 demo itself, though the two are shown in reverse order.

Other EFX people working on Babylon 5 have been drawn from the ranks of Hollywood's finest, ranging from the Henson Creature Shop to those who've worked in James Cameron's Lightstorm Prods.

Most importantly, every person thus far associated with Babylon 5 is a fan of the SF genre, and wants

to join in the excitement of creating a brand new universe. Every effort will also be made to keep the SF as "real" and rigorous as possible.

In addition to good SF going into the production side, quality SF will also play a role in the creative vision of the project. When Babylon 5 goes into series in 1993, it will draw upon the talents of leading SF writers for its stories, much in the tradition of the original Trek series.

The creator of Babylon 5 has a long and healthy relationship with SF and related genres. He has previously been the story editor and primary writer for the syndicated Twilight Zone series, and his recent adaptation of The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde for Showtime earned him both Ace and Writers Guild Award nominations. He has story edited such other series as Captain Power, the animated Real Ghostbusters, and such mainstream network programs as Jake and the Fatman and, concurrent with Babylon 5's development, producer on the highly rated Murder, She Wrote. He has also written many published short stories, a published anthology, and two published dark fantasy/horror novels.

BABYLON 5 -- Where To Find It

A comprehensive list of TV stations slated to carry B5 will be added to supplement this release. But the preliminary list of stations guaranteed to carry Babylon 5 include WWOR Secaucus, KCOP Los Angeles, WPWR Chicago, KBHK San Francisco, WDCA Washington DC, KTXA Dallas, KTXH Houston, WUAB Cleveland, WTOG Tampa, KMSP Minneapolis, WDZL Miami, KPLR St. Louis, KRBK Sacramento, KUTP Phoenix, WNUV Baltimore, WTXH Hartford, KPTV Portland, WSTR Cincinnati, and KSMO Kansas City.

NEW PC/NPC RACES FOR AD&D

Downloaded from Smasher Land BBS 614/593-8359, by DRAKE 9-FEB-1992

This is some stuff some of you have seen before, and some of you

haven't. I thought maybe you might all be interested. Most of these deviant races are of my own creation while some are from "official" AD&D sources (Dragon magazine, etc). Pass these along to others. Give me responses, what do you think? Enjoy.

CENTAUR

Initial Requirements: 10/18 S, 3/15 D, 8/18 C, 3/15 I, 3/18 W, 3/18 Ch
Ability Modifiers: +1 S, -1 D, -1 I, +1 W

Special Abilities:

+1 to hit with long bows.

Can rear kick for 1d4/1d4 (directed at same opponent): however, kicking in the same round as making a forward attack reduces the forward attack's to hit roll by 1 and missile attacks are totally out that round, too unstable.

Are size L, take "larger than man size" damage--however, the human part of them is only man-sized so they must still use man-size weapons.

Odd shape makes armor extremely expensive, something between horse barding and normal armor but more costly than either
Level Cutoff: Can advance to level 11 fighter, level 12 ranger, level 4 druid (well, not exactly druid, but VERY close, priest of nature anyway, play as druid for simplification)

Movement Rate: 18

Initial Languages Learnable:

centaur and elf

GNOLL

Initial Requirements: 9/18 S, 3/18 D, 6/18 C, 3/14 I, 3/14 W, 3/14 Ch
Ability Modifiers: +1 S, -2 I

Thief Ability Modifiers: +5% HS, +5% DN, -5% PP, -5% RL

Special Abilities:

+1 to hit with any polearm, +1 to hit any of the normal PC races.
Level Cutoff: Can advance to level 13 fighter, level 6 thief.

Movement Rate: 9

Initial Languages Learnable:

Gnoll, flind, troll, orc, hobgoblin

GOBLIN

Initial Requirements: 3/18 S, 3/18

D, 9/18 C, 3/15 I, 3/15 W, 3/15 Ch
Ability Modifiers: -1 S, +2 C, -1
I, -1 Ch

Thief Ability Modifiers-- +5% OL,
+10% F/RT, -10% CW, -5% RL

Special Abilities:

60' infravision, -1 to hit in
sunlight or other bright light
until 5th level (by then they
should be accustomed to it).

Can detect new or unusual
construction 25% of the time.

+1 to hit gnomes and dwarves.

Cha is one higher to other
goblins.

+1 to hit with large
bludgeoning weapons (maces, clubs,
hammers, etc).

10% resistance to natural
diseases, in addition to any save
applicable.

Level Cutoff: Can advance to level
11 fighter, level 11 thief, level 7
cleric (with major access to
Divination, Protection, Sun, minor
access to Healing and one other of
DM/player agreement)

Movement Rate: 6

Initial Languages Learnable:

Goblin, kobold, orc, & hobgoblin.

KOBOLD

Initial Requirements: 3/18 S, 3/18
D, 6/18 C, 3/15 I, 3/15 W, 3/15 Ch
Ability Modifiers: -1 S, +1 D, +1
C, -2 Ch

Thief Ability Modifiers: -5% OL,
+5% MS, +10% HS, +5% DN, -15% CW,
-5% RL

Special Abilities:

60' infravision, -1 to hit in
sunlight and other bright light
until 5th level (by then they are
accustomed to it).

+1 to hit brownies, pixies,
sprites and gnomes.

Cha is 2 higher to other
kobolds.

Detect grade/slope in passage
1-5 on d6, detect unsafe walls,
ceiling, floors 1-7 on d10
determine approx depth underground
1-4 on d6 determine approx
direction underground 1-3 on d6.

+1 to hit with short swords.

-1 on first hit die

Size L or larger creatures
(ogres, trolls, giants, titans,

etc.) are -4 to hit kobolds.

+1 on saves vs. spells cast by
gnomes.

Level Cutoff: Can advance to level
10 fighter, level 12 thief, level 5
cleric.

Movement Rate: 6

Initial Languages Learnable:

Kobold, orc and goblin.

**** More of DRAKE's character
races will appear in future issues.

Gargoyle Character Race,

Copyright 01Mar92, by Scott Mash

Gargoyles are a very old
mystical race which prefer dark
places but are often found in
lighted areas for short periods of
time, covering their bodies
whenever possible. Thousands of
years of evolution have calmed this
breed of humanoids down enough to
interact slightly with other races
though they choose not to. Usually
gargoyles interact with other races
to further their own cause or to
help themselves out.

Due to gargoyles wings and
nature of battle they are
restricted in many areas but also
gain some nice pluses.

Restrictions:

1) Gargoyles are restricted to a
chaotic evil alignment, they love
to torture their prey to death.

2) Gargoyles may not wear any
armor due to their wings and may
not use a shield because it hampers
their flight.

3) Gargoyles may not use any
form of missile weapon, two handed
swords or polearms (using both
hands for weapons also hampers
flight).

4) -1 to intelligence.

5) Gargoyles may never have any
form of psionic ability.

6) Limited to Fighter Class.

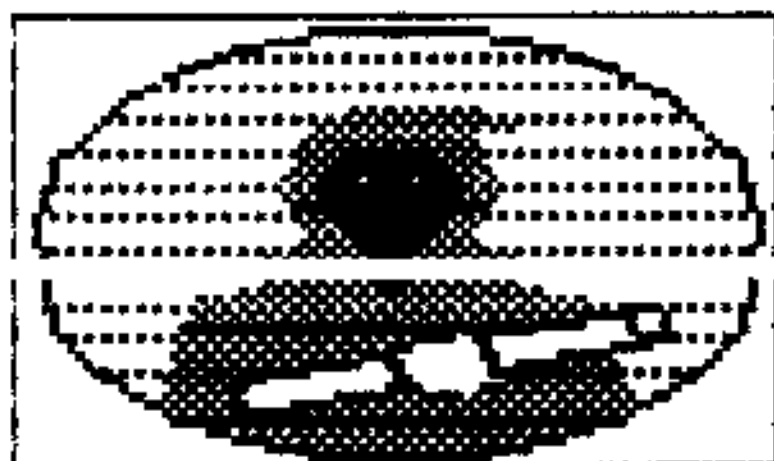
Pluses:

1) -3 to armor class due to the
thickness of the gargoyle's skin.

2) +2 to strength.

3) Claws do 1-3 hp damage and
may attack with both hands each
round when they are not using any
other weapon.

4) Gargoyles are immune to
petrification and sleep spells.



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PapyrusTM #8

In this issue (Fall '92):

More outside contributors
than ever before.

Egyptian Humanoids.

Transplanting Heroes.

More Spells.

More character races.

Precampaigning (advice).

Conan reviews.

Cooks in AD&D.

SciFi TV series preview.