

Fallen Future: Cyberthulhu Gaming

by Sandy Antunes (sandy@clark.net)

additional material as attributed in each file

Welcome to a set of Cyberthulhu rules and world. The purpose is to provide a viable future (cyberpunk) setting, with a module set in Baltimore in the post-2000 era. It includes new rules and a viable campaign setting, and provides a more humanistic view of the future than the convention cyber game systems available. Further, this book does not conflict with the Pagan Publishing future timeline in their licensed "End Time" system (set in 2094).

The rules are an expansion based on Chaosium's "Call of Cthulhu" system. The timeline sets up a possible world for Cyberpunk/Cthulhu adventuring. The Character Sheet is useful, again, for using "Call of Cthulhu" in this genre. The adventure is a little scattered in writing (more a distillation of notes than a formal scenario) but is complete as far as plot, setting, significant events, and handouts. My take on this genre focus more on the Cyber and less on the Punk, simply because the role of Investigators is more a force for order than chaos.

Everything has consequences

Everything is negotiable

Nothing is too extreme

All Rumors are true

- [Call of Cyberthulhu](#) rules
- [Timeline](#) of the future
- [Character Sheet](#) for cyberfuture characters
- ["GuideStar"](#), a Cyberthulhu Adventure
- [Newsblurps](#) for use with the [GuideStar](#) adventure
- [Rocker excerpt](#) (background atmosphere) by Keith C. Estanol
- [The Fractal Realm](#) (Mythos Netspace) by Jon Preedy
- New Tales of Terror!
 - ["BURN"](#) by Peter Devlin
 - ["Word From on High"](#) by Matt Cowger
 - ["WHEL"](#) by Matt Cowger
 - ["The Paper Man"](#) by Arthur Boff
- [Great Corporate Ones](#) (cyberthulhu corps) by Arthur Boff
- [bibliography](#)

- ~~[Everything](#) as one big zipped file~~

Still to do

- Edit to make this less colloquial, more readable; improve organization.
- Add details, modifications based on some of my not-yet-typed-in notes.
- Add costs in cash plus medical time for cybernetics, so Investigators can improve after initial character creation.
- Type in netrunning Task system.
- Write up Magic/Mythos in Cyber setting, including: "Magic on the Net", a brief suggestion on how to interface spells with netrunning; "Cultist Upgrades", some ideas on the changes in Cults brought on by technology; "CyberMythos", discussing the change in Mythos attributes (i.e. none) as well as their expansion/corruption of technological forces (i.e. lots).

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Last modified February 3, 1997 by sandy@clark.net

"Call of Cyberthulhu"

an unofficial CoC modification for cyberpunk genre gaming

by Sandy Antunes (sandy@clark.net)

Chaosium's Call of Cthulhu has solid mechanics for interacting with both the mundane and the bizarre. Extrapolating this to the Cyberpunk genre is very straightforward. The main alterations are: addition of new skills and gear (including cybernetics), slight modification of the combat system to intensify the experience, and provision of a "future history" to provide a preliminary setting.

Setting

The cyberpunk setting assumes a near-future setting, most appropriate with the Cthulhu Now rules. It is entirely optional whether this setting includes the Cthulhu Mythos at all, as the system is strong enough to work without it. Without Cthulhu, Sanity is still a relevant statistic, as described later.

Augmentation to the human form is available in two formats-- standard Cybernetics, which are machine parts designed to be grafted onto the human body, and Biotech, which are organic devices created to be incorporated into the human body.

Statistics

The standard CoC statistics all apply. "Education" can be relabeled "Training", to indicate both college learning and learning on the streets. "Sanity", especially for a non-Cthulhu game, may be renamed "Humanity", as it will serve as a measure of how much cybernetics a person may incorporate into themselves.

Adding cybernetic and biotech brings benefits, but also costs in Sanity(/Humanity), indicating that the person has lost a little of their touch with human reality by assimilating technology so much. In a non-Cthulhu setting, this merely indicates one's empathy with human concerns. In a Cthulhu setting, a lowered sanity can be quite significant-- people loaded up with tech tend to fall to pieces quicker when faced with non-technological menaces which defy reason. Sanity(/Humanity) also defines how much hardware a person can add on and still remain "human".

Skills

The following skills are useful for a cyberpunk setting:

- Computer Use (from 'Cthulhu Now') (25%): required for using any computer, as computers are an integral part of society.
- Computer Tech (0%): This includes both software and hardware creation and modification, for computers and cyberwear.
- Cooking/Bartending (10%): Bartending is added to the idea of a Cooking skill to reflect the general lifestyle in cyberpunk-- a lot hanging out at bars.
- Interrogation (0%): Always a useful skill, includes detecting lies.

- **Mechanical/Robotics (20%):** This combined skill reflects both general mechanical aptitude and ability to repair or work with the mechanical parts of cybernetics (but not the human part).
- **Pharmacology (0%):** Important subdivision of Medical, for the cyberpunk world. Default is 0%.
- **Battlesuit (0%):** The ability to use powered armor, exoskeletons, etc.
- **Netrunning (0%):** Required for people who will directly link into the information Net (i.e. "Netrunners"). More on this later.
- **BioEngineering (0%):** The equivalent of mechanical aptitude for the field of biotech, bioengineering, or genetics.
- **Cybernetics (0%):** A mix of mechanical skill and medicine, is required for doctors who actually install or repair cybernetics.
- **Drive CyberRig (10%):** A Drive skill, for 'riggers' who cybernetically link to the equipment they operate (often trucks, gun turrets).
- **Heavy Machine Ops (10%):** A catch-all for operating non-cybernetic heavy equipment.
- **Tracking (10%):** The ability to find or follow someone.

Brief Technology Skills example

Jerry the Rigger had his truck lit on fire, his cybernetic arm crushed and torn off, and his biotech eye burned out. Someone with Mech/Robotics could easily fix his truck, and could fix the damage to the arm, but couldn't really reattach it. Someone with Cybernetics could both fix the arm and reattach it, but would have a hard time fixing the truck. Someone with Medical would be able to reattach the arm, but not fix the arm or the truck. None of them could fix the eye, but Medical or Cybernetics could try to reattach it. Biotech could fix the eye and reattach it, but not really do anything for the arm or truck. Simple, yes?

New Weapons Skills

Not much is needed in the way of new weapons. "Staff/Stick" (10%) includes most ideas like stunning billy clubs and such. "Blackjack" (25%) refers to use of a blackjack or cosh (for rending people unconscious). "Bite" (20%) becomes useful for people who augment themselves, as does "Claw" (25%). Long range weapons may be added as desired, three to add are: "Tasp" (20%), a weapon which gives a jolt to the pleasure (or, if designed, pain) center of the brain from a distance, "Laser", for any beam weapons, and "Launchers", a catch-all for the rocket/grenade-launcher class of weapons.

Implanted Options and Cybernetics

Abilities and gear can be added directly to the character's body by spending skill points, just as with buying skills. More things can be added than I can list, here is a start. Two types are available-- Cybernetics (your standard technology, metal and plastic), and Biotech (more advanced and user-friendly). Biotech costs 50% more than Cybernetics, but is less prone to disruption and outside disturbances. For example, a really big magnet can play havok with a metal/plastic arm, but a biotech arm is safe. Biotech is also more subtle, and less likely to be noticed or detected by equipment. Adding tech reduces one's Sanity(/Humanity), to calculate just divide the number of skill points spend on gear (base cost, not including the 50% addition for Biotech) by 5, then subtract (Biotech costs more to "buy",

but doesn't cost more for sanity.) Thus Jerry the Rigger can buy a cyber arm for 20 skill points (costs 4 sanity), or a biotech arm for 30 skills points (still only costs 4 sanity).

Options below give the cost (for standard Cybernetics) and advantages. Items that give 'special stuff' give obvious benefits which are impossible without them, for example, telescopic eyes would allow one to see very far. Bonuses to "notice" are to the "Spot Hidden" skill.

- Cybernetic Eyes: cost = 25 pts, adds no bonuses but you can add options
 - Options once you have cybernetic eyes (bonuses are cumulative):
 - IR (Infrared) option, 20 pts: adds +15% to notice
 - Telescopic option, 14 points: adds +5% to notice plus 'special stuff'
 - UV (Ultraviolet) option, 15 pts: adds +10% to notice
 - X-ray option, 20 pts: adds +10% to notice plus 'special stuff'
 - Microscopic option, 15 pts: adds +5% to notice plus 'special stuff'
 - Night Vision option, 20 pts: allows full night vision
- Hearing enhancement: cost = 25 pts, +15% to Listen skill, each additional +10pts = +15% to Listen skill.
- Smell enhancement: cost = 20 pts, +10% to Notice, +10% to Tracking, some poison detection.
- Enhanced reflexes: cost = 20 pts for each +1 added to Dexterity.
- Netrunning rig: cost = 30 pts for the basic rig (required to netrun) or 70 pts for the enhanced rig (see Netrunning rules)
- Socket jack: cost = 10 pts, allows use of 'skill chips' as well as the ability to be linked into machinery.
- Embedded weapon: cost = 20 pts if you have a cybernetic/biotech limb, or 40 pts otherwise.
- Cybernetic limbs: arms and hands add to Str or Dex, legs to Con or Dex
 - cost = 20 pts/limb (includes hand or foot), with no bonuses, 10 pts/hand (or foot), with no bonuses.
 - Each +1 of Str or Con or Dex the limb provides costs 10 pts.
 - Limits: one hand = max +3 in bonuses, both hands = max +6 in bonuses
one arm/leg = max +4 bonus, + one hand = max +7 bonus
one pair = max +10 bonus, + one hand = max +13 bonus
one arm + one leg = max +8 + one hand = max +11
one pair + one arm/leg = max +14 + one hand = max + 17
2 pair = no limits
- Netrunning: Only people with "Netrunning" skill and a Netrunning rig can Netrun. To make a Run, they must first connect with the Net. This requires two things-- a place to connect to, and a successful netrunning roll. If they have the basic netrunning rig (above), they must remain at the location where they connected for the Run. The enhanced rig allows encoded remote connecting so they can be mobile (and remain with the party) while doing a run, and it is HIGHLY recommend because 1) it is easier for the player, 2) it is easier for the gamemaster, 3) other NPC netrunners will laugh at anyone too amateur not to have the enhanced rig, hurting your reputation. Netrunning is a whole story in and of itself. To prevent a simplified version of the system I used, there were two types of runs.
 - Information. Player rolls under their netrunning skill to make the connection. This gives them a certain number of queries, or 'cycles', before their connection is traced by security-- they could ask

that many 'basic information' questions (ex, "I look up the name 'Jerry'".) They are then given a basic line of information (ex, "Jerry "Bob" Hills, licensed rigger, available for Hire") and a password to crack (a bit like hangman). Each cracking attempt costs 1 'cycle' (remember, when they run out of cycles they may be detected), and success yields more information-- at the very least, an address, arrest record, and credit account. Depending on their other skills, they can attempt a Task against that person...

- Tasks. Player wants to do an action-- penetrate security, destroy an account that they have the credit number for, etc. (TBD)

The rest, like all good cyberpunk games, is Atmosphere and Attitude. One of the best advantages of using the CoC system for CP is that you always have the option of expanding the game into the Mythos, anytime the players start to get too set in their ways... Any questions, feel free to email me at sandy@clark.net.

Combat

Combat is essentially "hit them better than they defend". your "to hit" roll by more than they make their "dodge" roll (if they are able to dodge). For Cyberpunk, this gives a big edge to the faster player, as is appropriate. Also, for combative netrunning, this "do it by more" system applies for the PC netrunner going up against the NPC netrunner.

Each player is allowed two "actions" per combat round. This is generally assumed to be one attack and one defense (typically "Dodge"). You are allowed to Dodge as many attacks as come at you. Dodging while occupied with another task (driving, wiring up a robot, etc) is at 1/2 your normal Dodge skill. If you wish, you can do a double attack (but not be able to defend), or do a double defense (not attacking, but able to use another weapon to parry or to seek cover-- note that you can't "double Dodge", the extra defense must be something other than Dodge). You can also choose to aim and fire, giving up any defense. Aimed shots, if they hit, hit where you decided.

You must make your attack roll by better than they make their defense roll for the attack to hit. If it hits, there is a chance it will miss due to cover (see below) or reduced by armor (see section in CoC manual on armor).

Cover

Cover is often a factor in combat. The Keeper will decide the relative value of cover and adjust "hits" accordingly. For non-aimed shots, cover is just a percentage chance of hitting the person (instead of the cover) if the shot hits. Aimed shots never hit cover. People using cover are allowed their normal Dodge (which represents them ducking out of the line of sight), even for aimed shots. Typical values of cover are:

- Inside a normal apartment, shooter outside across street = 50%
- Standing behind a corner shooting at someone down an alley = 20%
- Standing on a roof, shooting down = 40%
- Standing behind a car = 50%
- Hiding = generally reduces the chance of being hit by 1/2, for example, 40% cover implies 60%

chance of being hit, so hiding increases the cover to 70% (40 + 60/2). This assume you are not fighting but still trying to keep track of the situation. If you want to totally Cower behind cover, you a 1/3 reduced chance of being hit, but will be totally clueless as to the situation (who is there, where they are, what is happening) Most vehicles provide at least some cover in combat. The following are guidelines for dealing with this, when someone is trying to shoot the person (it is easy to hit the vehicles!):

- Car: 50% chance a non-aimed shot will hit the car, not the person targeted
- Motorcycle: 15% chance a non-aimed shot will hit the bike, not the person
- Truck: 60% chance a non-aimed shot will hit the truck, not the person

Rigging

A Rigger is a person who hooks themselves directly into a machine to use it. Through a standard Rigger's interface, the person becomes almost one with the machine, increasing their ability and speeding their response time. This mix of person and technology gives the Rigger an edge over the manual operator. The most common use of rigging is Driving-- truck, motorcycle, or pursuit cars in particular benefit from the options and speed of rigging.

The basic rules of rigging are thus:

- Rigger items confer extra abilities, for example, radar or early warning,
- Quality rigger items add to the Rigging skill (typically +5 to +25%),
- Rigging allows you two attempts to succeed at any task-- first, you roll against natural skill; if this fails, you roll against Rigging to see if the machine/person interlink is able to force a success. For example, a driver with a 75% Drive and 50% Rigging in a rigged vehicle trying to jump Snake River Canyon has to fail a roll of 75% AND a roll of 50% before there are any problems-- so the odds are 80% in her favor. If her bike is quality and adds 25% to her Rigging skill, this means the odds are 85% in her favor,
- In addition, riggers may use another (single) skill of theirs, while at No Penalty (as long as the skill is physically possible.) This is because the item handles most of the minor details, leaving the rigger free to spend their attention elsewhere. So shooting, first aid, computer library use, photography, and many other skills are possible while rigging. The only universal exception is Netrunning-- due to the brain's bandwidth limitations, you cannot effectively use a Netrunning rig and a Rigger's rig simultaneously without penalty.

Extended Example

Jason the Rigger has a Drive skill of 55%, a Rigging skill of 55%, and a dodge skill of 105%. Jason is driving his Rigged motorcycle, a Harley-Davidson 1200 with direct-input controls, CoolLock autosteer, ProxyRite proximity alarms, passive AI control support, submillimeter wave detectors for guidance, UnSeen stealth design, heat signature minimization, AI-controlled weapons support, an autoturret, and armor. The Keeper has rated the bike as follows:

Bonuses:

- adds 10% to Driving (CoolLock autosteer, very well designed bike)
- adds 25% to Rigging (excellent interface and AI driving control support)

- no visibility penalty for Driving or using the autoturret at night or in rain (due to Submm) Abilities:
- Stealth mode: Has an intrinsic 70% chance of not being heard (Sneak) by anyone further than short range away when in Stealth mode, however, in Stealth mode top speed is 50KPH.
- Submm detectors: automatic detection/location (Spot Hidden) for any living being or moving object, dog-sized or larger, within medium range. 80% chance of detecting any road obstructions before they present a hazard.
- Proximity alarms: Adds 20% to "Dodge" if attacked (note that "Dodge" while on a vehical is normally halved).
- Autoturret and AI support: The autoturret is a rapid-fire weapon equivalent to an SMG, which works at an effective skill of 70% or the Rigger's SMG skill, whichever is higher. Ammunition is 9mm, fire rate is effectively 3 bursts/round, each burst able to do 2d10 of damage, range of fire extends nearly 360 degrees but does not cover the area directly behind the bike.
- Armor: Armor provides partial cover as well as protection for the bike-- assume 30% cover, i.e. if target is fired at (not aimed shots), there is a 30% chance the bike armor protects the target (no damage)

On this bike, Jason's effective Driving skill is 65%, his Rigging skill is 80%, and his Dodge skill is $(105/2)+20$, or 72%, not to mention he has a 30% chance that the bike armor absorbs any hits to him. In general, his chance of succeeding in driving/rigging is better than 85%. He has a 70% chance of hitting and gets 3 shots per round using the autoturret. While driving, dodging, and firing the autoturret, he is still allowed one more reasonable action (such as Navigate or Photography or using his shotgun) at normal skill.

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Last modified February 3, 1997 by sandy@clark.net

Cyberthulhu Timeline

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1990's-- many people roam the Internet

1998-- first corporate netrunner, i.e. a paid professional deliberately hired to explore real-time net systems (i.e. "wired in"). US still tops world market, Asian powers still separate but growing, Europe sinking

2010-- first generation of netrunners as real-time systems open worldwide. US leads tech but suffering economy dropouts, disillusionment, growing disparity of poor. Federal power weakens as States try and solve things. European alliance breaks, some individual countries begin to gain in strength at the cost of their neighbors. Asian countries still show no cohesion. Middle East experiences depressions as demand drops.

2020-- economy of scale drops the price of access, netrunners now can freelance, pseudonyms are declared legal identification. Economically, US goes bankrupt, Feds break down and go merc to survive, state powers bailed out by Corps. European scattered scene begins to separate into small power blocks. Intra-Asian rivalries begins to build to a peak. Middle East shifts economies amid much ruin.

2030-- new design and next wave of tech makes netrunning a potentially lethal operation. AIs appear as security. Netrunning becomes a lucrative field of exploration. First gen runners generally phased out, new gen is a mix of older hands and new punks, so-called 2nd gen. Corps now dominate US. Europe is a mixed bag, the successful countries being Corp, the less successful ones being examples of the poor but proud free. Asian bloc wars end, with China dominant but shaky, and a conglomerate of third-worlders holding place as equals. Japan re-isolates, franchising high tech to survive. Middle East is more robust, also militarizes.

2040-- third gen netrunners come out, more like wage slaves than anything else. As a reaction, underground third gen approach it as an art form. The rest of society stops paying attention to it. Europe continues to min/max, Third-world Asian bloc dominates, China becomes unofficial ally of stronger European powers for economic reasons. Japan goes merc. US stagnates, corps try and connect overseas. Middle East now dominates the international military scene.

2050-- US is now entirely corp, mostly with international connections for balance. Successful Europe doesn't bother conquering unsuccessful Europe. Asia mostly unified for business but sets strict borders-- US and Europe find travel easier than people from neighboring nations. Middle East now takes moral high ground as Arbitrator, sort of a tough UN plus extortion, as well as banking central. US economic rifts widen even more, as regions become smaller and harder to cross.

2056-- Now.

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LONG RANGE WEAPONS SKILLS

Attack/Weapon	Skill	Damage	Base Rnge	Shots/Rnd	Shots/Gun	HP
Bow	(25)	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Launchers	(10)	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Handgun	(20)	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Laser	(15)	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Machine Gun	(15)	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Rifle	(25)	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Shotgun	(30)	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Submachinegun	(15)	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Tasp	(20)	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____ () _____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____ () _____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____ () _____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____ () _____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

MISCELLANEOUS EQUIPMENT:

Possible Occupations:

- | | | |
|------------------|------------------|--------------------|
| Administrator | Doctor/Surgeon | Musician |
| Antiquarian | Electronics Tech | Netrunner (Hacker) |
| Artist | Engineer | Pharmacologist |
| Athlete | Entertainer | Policeman |
| Author | Journalist | Priest/Mystic |
| BioTech Engineer | Lawyer | Professor |
| Computer Tech | Mechanic | Psychologist |
| Cybernetecist | Mercenary | Revolutionary |
| Detective | Military Officer | Trader/Dealer |
| Dilettante | Missionary | Other |

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GuideStar

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Initial setup-- (see also *Newsblurps* file)

This Investigation assumes that the characters already work together, and that they have either an official or unofficial reputation for work in security, general do-gooding, lost causes, or strange situations.

A man comes to the Investigators, inquiring politely if they are available for hire, for an indefinite period, for security work. The job? To protect him, since someone suggested he might need it. Why them? The guy who delivered the most excellent pizza he had last night suggested they might be good to contact. He's not too used to the different outside (non-DuPont) firms, so he appreciated the advice.

He appears to be true-blue corp-- i.e., clueless about the outside. When asked, he replies how different things are on the street (reasonable enough). If tested, though, he is corporate-clueless also. His other excuse is "corporate mind wipe, part of contract" (see, he's clever!)

In actuality, he is Dick Mellit, former Vice President of DuPont, the corporation that owns Baltimore. The [news](#) has been abuzz about his sudden retirement. Just by being approached by Mellit, the Investigators are now involved. They can accept the case, or turn it down. If they accept, the economic rewards will be great, but many people have issues to take up with their client. If they turn the case down, they will have to deal with DuPont interrogators (polite, non-destructive ones) that would like to know the results of the meeting. If they handle this well, they might be hired by DuPont to find this man. Also, the competition will be interested in interrogating the Investigators (in impolite, destructive ways) to get an edge on finding and acquiring him. As this progresses, they will also find out about the various good deeds he is doing, thus pulling on their heartstrings.

If they took Mellit's case, this scenario involved following him to various destinations as he tries to "fix" everything that he feels was done wrong in his life (his wife, his daughter, being a blood-sucking corp exec), while various agencies and individuals try to either kill or capture him. If they turn down the case, they'll spend the first part of the adventure escaping from the agencies and individuals looking for information, and in the course of things find out about the many redeeming good deeds Mellit is doing. He hasn't approached anyone else about guarding him, so he'll not last long unless someone steps in.

It is entirely possible that the Investigators will decide not to get involved in this matter, despite the obvious personality change and other strange aspects of the case. This begs the question why they are investigators anyway, but it is their choice. In such a bleak event, Mellit will eventually be killed by the street merc RedRod, and this adventure concludes.

Info

Project Springboard-- a pure research project, overseen by Mellit, which follows up on some early research by Dr. Malthus suggesting that life force can be harnessed to provide interspace teleportation. The project is seeking a way to make space access cheaper. Involved industries include Perdue (providing chickens for the life force) and a few others.

Dick Mellit-- yep, it's "Human Is" time, as per the Phillip K. Dick short story of that title. This is the plot. While attending a demo of the preliminary results of Project Springboard, he was zapped. Now the alien wants to 1) get out of DuPont, since it knows nothing of what he does there, and 2) enjoy experiencing Earth life. It has tremendous credit and cash resources even after giving all obvious funds and stock back to DuPont-- on order of 2 mil. It has no spending sense but does have basic sensibility.

His wife: He was married, fancy that. The (messy) divorce was around seven years ago, his ex-wife got nothing and lives poorly but honestly running a small antique/bookshop near the Walter's Art Gallery (near the Washington Statue, in walking distance of Lexington market, actually... though not a quick walk.) Her name is Lenore Foele (actually, a cousin to the owner of the meat market, he loaned her the money to start over). She used to love Mellit because he was only a bastard 90% of the time, when he switched to 100% AND got a mistress, she left him. She is still alone, having forsaken love, *sigh*. They never had children.

The orphanage-- he'd entrusted illegitimate baby daughter to their care, seventeen years ago, and the kid ran away. Well, actually, the place was a popular way to dispose of illegitimate children, which he did (the mother was discretely killed, of course, shortly before the divorce trial). It's an unpopular place, even with DuPont (who tolerate Mellit 'cause he was profitable) and in fact DuPont funnelled them money to keep going, largely because Mellit wasn't the only one using their services. The place is legit, albeit sad. As for the daughter herself, she doesn't know who her father is-- in fact, only Mellit knows what's come of her. The Keeper should make her end up being any NPC that the players get along with, to add some angst to the matter, and have Mellit reveal this information at some appropriate point in the scenario.

Project Underplow-- take toxic waste and dump it in the sewers where the homeless live, then periodically monitor them through blood samples to ensure the waste hasn't escaped its containers yet. This is primarily an open hook for other adventures.

Problems

There are several people out to kill Dick for nasty stuff he has done. On the other hand, he is doing a lot of goodwill stuff now.

Enemies (in increasing order of severity):

- The locals around the orphanage hate him, and would attack him on sight.
- any homeless in the sewers
- RedRod, a cybernetic mercenary, since not only did Mellit stiff him for a contract, but later he gave Maple (another merc) the Springboard job instead of RR.
- Chopper -- Mellit is the one who fired him from his cushy Corp job and forced him to become a rather poor street sam.
- Teleny labs thinks they can get past the memory wipe and get some good DuPont info on him, so they want him.

"Try to look unimportant. They may be low on ammo." - House -

Estimated life of Mellit on the street is... low.

Other details

- Midnight is a confidential high-tech company, Teleny is their lab division. They don't do retail, but are involved in corp and military contracts. In the context of this scenario, they are neutral-- while they greatly would like to acquire Dick Mellit's knowledge and insight into DuPont, they will only use legal means to acquire it. Further, if they receive any clues suggesting Mellit and their moon computer (see next item) are connected, they will actively get involved in finding out the situation.
- There is a computer that Teleny taps into-- via satellite. They found it serendipidously, and have kept its existence a secret. Ultimately, they want to get to the moon and check it out, but a manned space flight is not yet feasible, merely one of their ulterior long-range goals. In the meantime, they send netrunners in, without telling them much about it. In this way, they get advanced ideas and a little technology (maybe, if lucky, 1 or 2 pieces of intel they can comprehend and about a half dozen they don't yet understand) on a 2-week run (it takes a long time for runs because of the 3-second time delay, but due to the complexity and alienness of the system, the netrunner actually can use the time to sort out his/her perceptions. Besides, they multiplex several transmitters.) They use teams because the two can provide extra sensory feedback to each other so they don't get bored with the 3-second time delay. The machine isn't hostile, but it is strange, like a game-- you have to figure out puzzles and such while running, and ultimately they get harder and harder, until you fail and are booted off.

What Teleny doesn't know (but some suspect) is the moon "computer" is at the very least an AI. The "games" nature is because of why it was built-- it's a prison, and what they are encountering are the wards that try to keep the prisoners IN. In fact, everytime a runner gets far enough, a prisoner can often escape from the device. They travel back along the communications lines to the satellite and down. To date, none have succeeded making the final connection via Teleny because the netrunning rigs are not compatible with bio-organics. However, since DuPont has started "Project Springboard", an ultra-high-bandwidth transmitter/ receiver that could, in theory, allow teleportation of resources to the moon (though not people, yet), this alien was able to switch onto it and take over the nearest person (visiting VP, in this case). Note that this is possible since Project Springboard received a big boost when they got the almost-free extra military satellites due to a recent job.

"We don't want it good, we want it Tuesday"

Project Mercury

As another hook for future investigations... on the home front, the DuPont solution to the heavy metals pollution problem was to release a custom-tailored bio-organism which extracts the heavy metals, is at a low internal temperature so it freezes them out of any solution they are in, then keeps them embedded inside it. The organism moves in a random walk, and they were all released near the center of the city, so in random walk theory they should ultimately keep moving out and eventually take all the heavy metals out of the city. Oh, it exists by assimilating any trace organics that it encounters in the tunnels, since it's a nearly microscopic organism this should prove to be no problem. The DNA is modified human, since so much cybertech work has done a good job in mapping out human tissue parameters. (Does this sound familiar to Walker or Schreck? :)

How did they make the critters? The lab will, grudgingly, if forced, admit they cheated-- they used the

Marvel effect (named after Marc Marvel, a researcher now long since retired) where you just take a huge number of cells and expose them to radiation, cull out the useless or bad mutations, and eventually collect the survivors who have the properties you were looking for. (Gee, and the project failed near the two radio- active hotspots, they figured the organisms died due to radiation...) (Actually, now they LIKE radiation...) Oh, Mellit's toxic waste project was a cheap execu-ploy to continue in this tradition, but done with even less thought and an even nastier boss (him), and it was dismally unsuccessful. This project, at least, everyone feels was successful!

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Last modified February 3, 1997 by sandy@clark.net

GuideStar Newsblurps

by Sandy Antunes (sandy@clark.net)

The following are news items for use with "[Guidestar](#)", a [Cyberthulhu](#) adventure. Ideally, the Keeper should hand this out to players at the start of the session. As Baltimore is a DuPont-owned town in this given future, much of this daily news concerns them. Several of the items are irrelevant (or perhaps red-herrings), and some are crucial to the adventure.

Newsblurps

Noted workaholic and economic wizard Dick Mellit, the Vice President of DuPont, has surprised everyone with the announcement that he is retiring today. The rarely-seen Mellit quoted the "long hours spent isolated in an office" and "lack of time to explore, to enjoy life" as the reason. Company spokespeople were quick to point out that "Mr. Mellit has been under much stress lately, and DuPont working conditions are actually better than no work at all!"

A Famous local pizza joint has now changed their name, for legal reasons. "I an I" Pizza kicks off a gala new beginning with many promotional offers during this restructuring time. Good luck, mon!

In Sports news, the Orioles lost yet another game, largely due to a high number of errors. Orioles shortstop Miles "Smiles" Smith has been sent down to the hunt to "improve reflexes, speed, and morale", says Orioles manager Dave Edmunds.

In DuPont news, with the unexpected vacancy opening up in the DuPont hierarchy, analyst speculate that DuPont might bring in someone from the main office to fill the vacant post, rather than promoting someone internal. Union officials had this to say, "Well, heck, it's not like the upper administration is Union, so, like, there's not much we can complain about." Despite the hurried aspect of the situation, analysis expect the transition of power to have little effect on DuPont short-term profits. Said one liaison, "It is likely that some of Mellit's 'pet projects' might be affected, but overall this is a dynamic time for DuPont and should prove to be quite beneficial." All we can say is, "The more things change, the more things stay the same."

Project Underplow, the controversial toxic waste disposal project of DuPont, is the first reported "Mellit Project" to get the axe, causing many civilian groups to celebrate. Said paid activist Terry Lemure, "We've been fighting this thing for seven years, and no one listened. Thank god Mellit burned out, this thing was an abomination." The project, described by DuPont only as "a combined solution to toxic waste disposal and the heat problem for the homeless" has never been a crowd-pleaser, and insiders report the economic situation was always poor. A DuPont liaison had this to say, "Well, it really was one of Dick's projects, after he saw the success of Project Mercury. With him gone, it didn't seem fair to force another person to manage it."

Firefighters went on strike briefly today, protesting outrageous insurance rates and low company contract offers. Strikebreakers hired by a coalition of Baltimore companies made short work of the strike. Said Firechief Ed Marshall, "We'll just have to raise our rates for private individuals, I guess." Here's hoping fires don't break out for any of the hired mercs accompanying the strikebreakers!

Project Springboard, a high-tech (and high-cost) research program initiated by DuPont and involving seven local independent contractors, is rumored to be shutting down in the wake of the Mellit resignation. Said T.M. Maple, a computer wiz working with the group, "Well, Mellit paid the bills, with him out I am not surprised DuPont is reassessing the situation." Thank you for that incisive commentary, Maple. Several of the contractors involved are seeking a new contract to continue their work, although reports have it that no companies are interested as of yet. Perdue has stated they are interested in continuing with the project if another company provided funding.

Stock prices for Midnight! took a sharp rise upward in the wake of the annual Investor's Meeting/Ocean City Crab Feast. This festive event, always a crowd-pleaser, had investors and creditors alike in a cheerful mood as the Midnight/Teleny Labs merger announced its plans for the upcoming year. Sadly, our reporters were unable to attend.

Project Smoketire, a Mellit-run project, will be shutting down this week as the loss of Mr. Mellit takes effect. "Frankly," said one foreman, "I'd be just as happy not having to burn used tires 24 hours a day." Insiders at DuPont report that one of the executives has an "Exciting, cost-effective and nearly pollution free alternative to just burning the used tires." However, Lawson's Gas Masks and Pollution Filters is attempting to lobby DuPont to continue the project and is also looking for companies willing to adopt a similar scheme.

Local priest Irich Dane was cut down by automatic weapons while delivering a controversial sermon speaking out against post-marital sex, saying "With the Lord as My Witness, Sex is a Sin". Apparently the Lord did not bother to intervene.

In a corporate ruling, DuPont executives declared that Mellit has broken his contractual agreement as regards his termination of service, and they will not take action as long as he signs his holdings over to the company. A legal spokesman informed us "Mr. Mellit has agreed, and the deal really is quite amiable. I don't understand why the papers always try and portray this as something severe."

Local stock broker Andreas Hollifeld was found dead yesterday behind the MLK Blvd police precinct. Medical teams found him, naked, bound by handcuffs on top of a stack of unraveled electrified razor wire. Hollifeld was known to have given the investment advice which resulted in the bankruptcy and subsequent suicide of former Police Chief Clarence "Du" Lebeau. Investigators on the site have ruled the death "Clearly suicide."

The Dundalk Orphanage has cause to celebrate, now that Mellit has dropped his case against them. One administrator added "we actually have DuPont to thank-- they informed us Mellit's DuPont lawyers were no longer authorized to persue the matter and cancelled the case. This is a great day for us." When asked about the original matter of dispute, though, our contact became somber. "We really had no part in the the runaway incident with his daughter. We really try our best." His remarks were, of course, off the record, and delivered to you first by AcuNews!

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Last modified February 3, 1997 by sandy@clark.net

Rockers in the Cyberthulhu World

a Usenet excerpt by [Keith C. Estanol](#)

Hey, this would be pretty cool if it existed, seeing as I'm a few days from starting my Cthulhupunk game (world halfway made, stat conversions 3/4th done, etc etc). Hmm, wonder how it would go ..

"Johnny looked around him and felt the servos click in the Hand as he activated the smartgun link. Out of the darkness came three creatures, unbelievably quick for their bulk and size. From the corner of his eyes he could see two other fumbling clumsy forms holding FN-Ral Heavy Assault rifles. He smiled, he had them just where he wanted them. Johnny accessed the file 'Voorish Sign' in from one of his chip sockets and started to chant. Screams poured from the surprised and enraged creatures as they stumbled back from the seemingly helpless rocker."

Or something like that.

The Fractal Realm

by [Jon Preedy](#)

Originally presented in the **Chaosium Digest, V17, #12, Jan 12 1997**

Call of Cthulhu; the Fractal

The Dreamlands is a very popular and diverse setting for scenarios and even entire campaigns to evolve in (ala Dream-Quest of Unknown Kadath), but this setting has a decidedly festive, kind of "kick back, relax, and get some SAN points back" feel, no matter how adverse one tries to make the conditions. For the 1990s, without delving into the entirely bizzare use of "Space Mead" (as defined in the 5th edition rulesbook), an attractive, and wonderfully horrific alternative is the Fractal Realm.

The Fractal is an alternate realm populated by energy-based life forms (the "Fractal Creatures" described in Ye Booke of Monstres 2) who exist purely it seems, to serve an avatar of Yog-Sothoth. Players entering The Fractal should be given the impression of being thrust into a bad Virtual Reality nightmare with connotations of a Cyberpunk novel. Contrasting technicolour flares, bizarre data structures and swarms of the fractal creatures should be given a decadent, almost Gothic feel, and any Computer Programmers in a party should easily realise that from this realm, they can access any data stored on any computer in the world. And they get free internet time.

Keepers can convert any monster from Call of Cthulhu to The Fractal (within reason) but remember that the only real "servitor race" in The Fractal are the Fractal Creatures in YBOM2 and thus PCs won't encounter Fractal Shantaks or Nightgaunts, are unlikely to encounter Fractal Mi-Go or Moon Beasts (unless something gets broken) and will only rarely meet things like Fractal Dimesional Shamblers. Fractal Dholes may be encountered in the form of high-key polymorphic viruses and Fractal Elder/Outer/Other Gods about as frequently as anywhere else.

Having been unable to find any Mythos fiction on which to base suppositions, I developed this Keepers' guide to the Fractal with only the rules given for fractal creatures in Ye Booke of Monstres 2 and books like Neuromancer and The Diamond Age and the movie Blade Runner in mind.

Welcome to The Fractal. Please wipe your feet.

Very little has been said about how The Fractal Dimension works, very little has been said of the actual existence of the place, and this circumstance allows keepers to be as diverse and bizarre as they choose.

As The Fractal is a completely energy-based system (Fractal creatures, if they pass through a gate to earth depend upon consumption of Magic Points from living things in order to sustain themselves), the Earth's Fractal is only as large as our currently existing power grid. Picture something to the extent of the telephone grid which is occasionally superimposed over maps of the world, and you'll know the sort of map I'm thinking of.

Access to the Fractal is limited to a certain computer program which is capable of extremely radical

mathematical calculus, and as such can only be feasibly run on a high-end computer. This program generates a weird flash of technicolour light before shattering the computer screen (allow a Dodge roll for any standing near the screen when it shatters, otherwise 1D3 damage from flying glass), essentially opening the gate to The Fractal.

Entering the Fractal should be kept realistic. The gate under analysis, remember, is only as big as the monitor of the host computer (ie no one of SIZ 16 is going from Earth to the Fractal via a 12" monitor). This does not pertain to Fractal entities such as the avatar of Yog-Sothoth who rules the Fractal, or the Fractal avatars of other GOOs, Old Ones, Outer/Elder Gods, etc, who are capable of changing their shape/dimensions. For effect, a wall-sized bank of monitors is perfect; imagine the horror of the PC's still dusting themselves off when Fractal Cthulhu comes romping through the gate...

Traversing to The Fractal from Earth is a matter of "passing into" the monitor. At this point, the being undergoing "relocation" experiences intense needling of the skin as though they are being charged, and then an intense release of this charge akin to a static shock is experienced (3 magic points are lost) and the hapless investigator finds himself an amalgamation of polygons in a bad Virtual Reality nightmare (1/1D6 Sanity loss, and 0/1D4 for anyone watching from outside the gate).

Watching this transport from the outside of the gate, PCs are witness to the traveller reduced to a series of pixels on the screen. This image gradually dwindles in size (impress the image of vanishment into the distance here) until it blinks out. The entire process takes about twenty seconds (unless the traveller enters the gate at speed).

The reverse applies to those who manage to gate back out of The Fractal, and those watching the gate for "things" coming through (Thing gets bigger from distance until it reaches its maximum possible size, then "pop"). Three magic points and another 1/1D6 Sanity points are lost on this return trip as well.

Gates, unless heavily guarded should only be opened for short periods of time, lest the Fractal avatar of Yog-Sothoth attempt to pass through to the mortal world (1D10+5 minutes until it tries to break through). Gates may be closed by switching off or rebooting the host computer. Anything still "visible" on the "screen" is terminated at this point, but entities fully in one realm or another remain. Inside The Fractal, gates appear as "windows" with the room where the gate is located a low-resolution image on the window. Gates inside The Fractal are two-dimensional, like a picture hung on an invisible wall.

Anyone who safely gates to the Fractal finds themselves in an outpost of Fractal creatures (usually builder and inspector Fractals) the size of which depends on the city that the character was in prior to gating (ie, If a PC was in downtown nowheresville--population 46 including the dogs--then there would be relatively little activity going on due to the lack of usable energy superimposed from Earths' power grid, but if the PC activated the gate in New York then there would be a hive of intense, fervent activity with Fractals of all kinds. A city of this size on Earth may well in The Fractal be the "home" of Fractal Yog-Sothoth.)

First, I'm gonna crash some airplanes...

Computer Programmers entering the Fractal will experience joy when they figure out exactly what they are capable of when in this realm.

Firstly, any roll for Computer Use/Programming or Hacking skills receive a +20% chance of success.

Secondly, hackers are not restricted to a single network. They can access ANY data, regardless of its security restrictions, on ANY computer, wherever it is. The only catch will be familiar to anyone who has seen _Johnny Mnemonic_ or read anything by William Gibson. Security software (firewalls etc.) are conscious entities in this realm, and if a given hacker takes too long trying to wipe the criminal records of everyone in his party off the FBI's computer system, then they are gonna get it. The security (Ice) will manifest in a variety of ways (use your discretion, but be subtle until you can strike) and always pursue the hacker until one or the other is nothing but corrupt data. If the Keeper wishes, a budding hacker may run into a Firewall program. Literally.

Ice:

INT: 3D6 to 4D10

(depending on what computer system is being hacked into)

POW: 3D6 to 4D10

DEX: 2D6 to 3D10

Hit Points: 3DPOW

INT, POW and DEX are the only factors necessary to most fractal creatures. When various Ice programs attack, match POW with the victim on the resistance table instead of rolling to hit. The Ice then drains anything from 1D3 to 1D20 POW or CON points from the victim (agin, depending on the kind of data being hacked). POW and CON points lost in this manner can not be regained by normal means. When an Ice is destroyed, it shatters into a rather pretty display of 0's or 1's floating through the air until they dissolve. An investigator reduced to Zero CON or POW points is as effectively dead as though they had been reduced to Zero Hit Points.

BANG-BANG-BANG... Why isn't it dead yet?

Anything in The Fractal can be destroyed, including inanimate objects (ie, if, when blasting away at Fractal Whomever-it-is the PCs accidentally take out a weirdly shaped inverted Pyramidal structure, then when they get back to earth they might hear that the World Trade Center just lost all its electrical appliances in an unprecedented power surge.)

Normal weapons are generally useless against Fractal Beasties on Earth, the only really devastating weapon not being an AK-47, but a Stun Gun (or Stunner). The reverse applies INSIDE the fractal. As living things are effectively "bitmapped" when they enter the fractal, so is everything non-living that gets carried in too. So, a PC realises that stunners fairly Nuke these fractal bastards and takes one in with him, as well as his trusty .45. Next time he tries to stun a Fractal creature, it and many more will swarm around the stunner (and the PC) and begin a feeding frenzy. The .45 however, releases a "bullet" of negatively charged ions, and a hit counts as normal damage.

Point blank and extended range rules need not apply in the Fractal, but this is a two edged sword. PCs might not get a +10% to hit chance for a point-blank shot with a .22, but they get the full 4D6+2 damage for a successful hit with a ten-gauge shotgun, regardless of range.

The only thing is that there are no gun shops in the Fractal, and unless the PCs get a constant supply chain of bullets in, then they are quite likely to be swamped and consumed by the thousands of hungry

Fractals.

Melee weapons and close-combat remains unchanged, but the Keeper should describe things differently (eg, on a successful Fist/Punch roll, James Brown finds that his hands sprout claws which rake his opponent for the 1D3+DB damage for Fist/Punch skill). Martial Arts rolls do not affect damage, but a successful Computer Programming roll in a combat situation may (or may not) yield an additional damage bonus, at the Keepers' discretion.

Mmm, Incapacitated

Death in the Fractal is just that. Death. Maybe the luckless investigator sees a brief flash of "Game Over", but otherwise nothing is different. Death can occur from:

- a) 0 or less Hit Points
- b) 0 or less CON Points
- c) 0 or less POW Points

The latter two occurring if the PCs are sloppy in their hacking work.

Being stuck inside the Fractal Realm when a gate is shut on Earth is a tricky situation for a PC, but not necessarily a death sentence. Remember that PCs are capable of manipulating data on Earth's computers whilst within The Fractal, thus a PC "trapped" in this situation may send email to his companions back on Earth, he may tamper with Paging services or screw around with televisions in trying to convince other PCs to repair the original computer monitor, and re-open a gate so that their Fractalised companion might return to reality.

This may present a way to introduce players to the Fractal Realm (ie, players get "noticed" by a hacker stuck in the Fractal who hunts them down and "poltergeists" their electronic gear, ala Ghost in the Machine, until the PCs agree to open a gate and let him out... Then along comes Fractal Hunting Horror; munchety-crunchety...)

Remember that major beasties in the Fractal are only avatars, ie, the destruction of the Fractal Yog-Sothoth will only serve to piss off the REAL Yog-Sothoth. Moreso for a Great Old One like Cthulhu, who's Fractal avatar is really his only way of screwing people up (presenting a possible link to several of history's plane crashes, power failures...), and if IT gets waxed...

Running a Fractal scenario places a heavy burden on the Keeper to set the mood. It should be suitably fast-paced and convoluted of plot with a lot of wires and joints left un-soldered for room for PCs to return and hack again.

If anyone has ANY notes or quotes regarding the "real" Fractal realm, then please email 'em to me so that I can modify my playing conditions suitably.

BURN: A Modern Tale of Terror

by [Peter Devlin](#)

Originally presented in the Chaosium Digest Volume 18, Number 12

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A modern Tale of Terror inspired by recent events in the news. Enjoy.

BURN

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The growth in the use of information technology in the 1990s has made dissemination of information very easy. However, there is a price to pay for such easy access to information. On the Internet there are a growing number of computer users falling prey to a new computer virus called BURN. This virus is so new that most anti-virus software companies do not yet know of it. It is also unlikely that anyone will survive to tell the story of its most unusual effects. However, astute students of Fortean lore may note an increasing "unusual death" rate amongst Net surfers, and there are always going to be upset parents. Media types, always hungry for a new angle on the Internet, will also make much of the rising tide of bodies, linking them to Internet pornography etc.

Eventually the BURN virus can be traced (via assembly language code headers) to a compiler belonging to the Arkham Sanitarium. Howard Barker is a deranged hebephrenic psychology postgraduate from Miskatonic University who works as a ward assistant. Lately, he has been spending a lot of time with the computers in the building.

Possibilities:

- 1.) The two variants of the BURN virus target IBM-PC clones and Apple Mac clones which can handle high resolution graphics (i.e. 98% of all home computers sold since 1993). BURN infects PCs either via infected floppy disk or Internet downloads. It is a Trojan virus which hides itself inside other applications then attaches itself to video card drivers. The next time the computer is booted up the virus causes the VDU to pulse and strobe at a rate which hypnotises unfortunate onlookers or causes epileptic seizures. Embedded into the strobing is the subliminal text message "KILL - ENJOY". After 15 seconds the virus shuts down and is deleted the next time the computer is booted. Victims immediately become mindless killing machines and end up dead, either shot by police as they stroll through a shopping mall armed to the teeth, or having taken their own lives after cheerily slaughtering their family and friends.

Howard Barker is currently preparing his doctoral thesis on human psychological impulses and is testing a few of his assumptions before he submits his final paper.

- 2.) The two BURN virus variants target sound card drivers, not video drivers. They cause the computer to produce an odd agglutinous chanting from the attached speakers. If the timing is correct (i.e. it is night and Fomalhaut is visible) the user will suddenly feel cold and tired, and a glowing ball will appear from the smoking remains of his computer. The chant is a summoning spell for a Fire Vampire and the user has just lost the requisite magical energy to summon the

beast. There are a large number of recent cases of people burnt to a cinder alongside their melted computers, causing the major PC companies to suspect hardware faults; none have been found so far.

After killing their unfortunate victims, the Fire Vampires, being balls of plasma, then run around the electrical circuits in the building causing major fires. In big computer installations, the sprinklers/halon/CO2 extinguishers go off and the Fire Vampires usually get snuffed. Surviving security video footage from a nearby college campus may prove illuminating.

Howard Barker is a mad genius who got a number of such spells piecemeal from one of the inmates. Said inmate is John Doe #23 and has an unusual case history.

3.) The BURN virus is slow and insidious. It subliminally flashes unpronounceable text messages on screen, forming a Contact Nyarlathotep spell. It also adds a bookmark to Netscape and Explorer Web browsers for www.starry-wisdom/welcome.html. The address is for the home page of the Starry Wisdom Brotherhood, a quasi-religious group which holds all kinds of odd beliefs. Nyarlathotep contacts the unfortunate victim via dreams or e-mail messages from DARKHAUNTER@AOL.COM, an apparently non-existent mail address. The net result is that the victim is seduced by the Mythos and joins the Brotherhood. Eventually the sendings (dream or electronic) command the victim to ready himself for a journey to the throne of the Ruler of the Universe and to prepare "offerings".

Howard Barker maintains the Web site and there is much circumstantial evidence pointing to him as the leader of the Brotherhood. Actually, he is a front man and scapegoat for Dr. Eloise Whateley, a recent addition to the staff roster at the Sanitarium.

Cheers.

Peter Devlin

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Word From on High: A Tale of Terror

by [Matt Cowger](#)

from the **Chaosium Digest Volume 18, Number 12**

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Word from on High

The 21st Day Redemptionist Church is a large and popular religious organization. Led by the charismatic "Dr. James", the Church's radio ministry and large tent revivals have attracted national media attention. The revivals are especially popular, featuring the usual speaking in tongues, faith healing, and testimonials, as well as singing and prayer. Dr. James (who claims to have a doctorate in divinity) then concludes his tent revivals with what he calls his "Two Minutes of Meditation on the Word" where he and the flock share two minutes of silence to, ostensibly, meditate on the word of God.

Dr. James' sermons have taken a different tone of late and his followers have been becoming more insular. The Doctor's sermons have become more apocalyptic and full of fire and brimstone than they used to be and his revivals have become angry affairs, full of shouting about doomsday and disparaging of those who have not accepted The Word. Popular opinion has turned against the 21st Day'ers because of this, which has only added fuel to the already smoldering Redemptionist pyre.

Possibilities:

1.) Dr. James is actually a two-bit hustler with a criminal record. He is dodging the law and ripping off his followers. The doomsday bit is an attempt on his part to bolster flagging attendance and bring in some additional revenue. His whole goal is to accumulate enough money to leave the country for South America, a goal he is close to realizing. He has one small problem: his armageddon sermons have particularly inflamed Walter Simms, one of the good doctor's long-time followers. Simms suffers from occasional psychotic breaks and during his next episode he will decide to leave for heaven a little early, taking his beloved spiritual adviser with him.

2.) Dr. James has slipped off of the edge of sanity. He believes that the last days are coming and that he and his followers need to make a bold move to proclaim their devotion to God. During his next sermon at the 21st, the parishoners may notice some odd odors inside the tent. The whole structure will have a strong chemical smell. This is because the good Doctor and his right-hand man, Walter Simms, have doused the entire structure, as well as the ground underneath the plastic tarps on the floor, with a powerful chemical accelerant. People entering the tent may notice the ground feels a bit muddy, though it didn't rain the night before. Walter will stand at the back of the tent, closing and tying the flaps after the last attendee enters.

The sermon will be particularly inspired, espousing the congregation to exultations of love and devotion to God. Then, during the final two minute meditation, Dr. James will signal Simms. They will then push the candleholders near them into the highly flammable tent walls. the interior of the tent will become a riot of flames and flailing, panicked bodies. People caught inside will only have seconds to get out before being crushed in the press of bodies, overcome by fumes, or burned

alive.

3.) Dr. James has fallen under the influence of a diabolic avatar of Nyarlathotep masquerading as Walter Simms, an unemployed auto worker. The Outer God has been slowly turning the 21st Day Redemptionists to the worship of the Old Ones. Simms' sway over Dr. James isn't complete and if he can be removed from his position of influence for at least two weeks the doctor will regain his senses. Simms is pushing the Doctor toward more and more violent and angry sermons. His end goal is known only to him. Perhaps he wishes to start another cult, to push this church to a violent Waco-style end, or to lead the Doctor into performing abhorrent ceremonies that will summon an elder power? These possibilities are left to the creative keeper.

"If we make peaceful revolution impossible,
we make violent revolution inevitable"

-John F. Kennedy

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WHEL: A Tale of Terror

Matt Cowger

from the Chaosium Digest Volume 18, Number 12

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WHEL

A local radio station has just changed their format from country and western to hard rock. They have been wildly successful. Shirts bearing the WHEL logo have spread across town and investigators can hear the station blaring from cars city-wide. During this same period, acts of random violence have increased dramatically during the hours from 1am to 4am. Incidents of beatings, muggings and rape have taken an unbelievable upswing. The police force has been placed on city-wide alert and the media has been in an uproar.

Possibilities:

- 1.) The two phenomenon are unrelated. The radio station is just a radio station, the acts of violence are being committed by a gang operating out of the seedier side of town.
- 2.) The radio station is actually a front for a sinister experiment in mind control. A local psychologist and physicist got together to conduct a simple experiment in auditory stimulation and mood elevation. Their results were staggering and attracted government attention. Now under control of a government organization involved with black operations, these two men are being forced to conduct an experiment on a larger scale, the populace of a city. From 11pm to midnight, the station sends out a low modulated tone underneath their regular broadcast. This tone increases propensity for violent actions in individuals with violent tendencies. The government will continue this experiment for another two weeks before moving to a different station elsewhere to experiment with a different series of tones.
- 3.) The station has been acquired by the leader of a cult of Nyarlathotep. This large cult is scattered across the town, throughout the social strata. They have been waiting for a sign for years to begin a concentrated assault against the city, believing that if they can cause riots and mass panic, then their god will appear. Due to certain world-wide events, the cult leader believes the time is now. He is using the station to send coded messages to his followers between 11pm and midnight. The cultists then go out and sow the seeds of discord. The number and level of the atrocities will increase over time, culminating in daylight bombings of several public buildings and the assassinations of civic leaders all occurring on the same day.

"If we make peaceful revolution impossible,
we make violent revolution inevitable"

-John F. Kennedy

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The Paper Man

by [Arthur Boff](#)

from From the Chaosium Digest Volume 19, Number 1

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The Paper Man: A 1990s Tale of Terror

Mindful of modern concerns about the environment, the investigators' local authority has started a magazine recycling scheme. The residents each get a blue bag, which they leave outside, and wait for them to be collected on Tuesday. However, people start noticing a man going up to the bags whilst they are left in the street, rummaging through them, and taking some of the newspapers.

Possibilities:

- 1.) The man is (or at least was) an investigator, like the players. He used the money he got from his stock market deals to fund his investigating. However, he made a major error, with the result that he has now lost all his money and his possession. He is collecting newspapers to find cases he might investigate, so that he may start his career again.
- 2.) The man is a local fireman. In one blazing inferno, he and some of his colleagues were caught in a chemical explosion and were sent into comas. In the hospital, Cthugha came to them in their dreams and asked them to become his priests and start his first major Earth cult. Those that agreed soon got better, while those that refused never woke up. After a while, the people whose papers were stolen become involved in odd fires, and the fire brigade fails to turn up in time.
- 3.) There is an old belief that if a wizard gets ahold of one of your possessions, such as one of your hairs or something you've thrown away, that wizard can make a doll shaped like you, which can be used to hurt or control you. The truth behind the legend, of course, is entirely up to the Keeper.

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Somewhere near N'kai

GREAT CORPORATE ONES

A Few Corps for Cyberthulhu

by [Arthur Boff](#)

two from From the Chaosium Digest Volume 19, Number 1

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This is a short list of corps for use with the Call of Cyberthulhu setting, that appeared in V2.10 and V2.11 and was mentioned in V18.1. Two of them are future version of companies and cults mentioned in Mythos stories. One is my own invention. First, a brief explanation of the layout of the corp descriptions.

Public Face: This is the image the corp wants the public to believe.

Secret Agenda: What the corp is really doing. This is split into two sections, mythos and non-mythos.

Controlled Areas: Any areas that the corp controls.

THE EXCHANGE LIFE AND PENSIONS CORPORATION

Public Face: This corp deals with life insurance and pensions, selling cheap, affordable insurance packages.

Mythos Secret Agenda: Their name, "Exchange Life" is a clue to their true nature. The top executives are actually Yithian time-travellers who are experts in 21st century corporate practices. Using the corp's profits, they are funding a project to genetically engineer the insect species that will become the new Great Race. At the moment, a likely set of genes have been found, and a few Great Race members have entered their bodies for a "test run".

Non-Mythos Secret Agenda: The life insurance part is a protection racket, and the pensions part is bribing people to "forget" pieces of information.

Controlled Areas: The Australian deserts.

INNSMOUTH GROUP (INC.)

Public Face: Innsmouth Group (Inc.) is made up of the Marsh Refinery Company, the Marsh Shipping Company and the Innsmouth Fishing Company. It also owns a registered charity, the Esoteric Order of Dagon.

Mythos Secret Agenda: Guess. The Deep Ones have been fairly efficient in their attempts to make Deep One-human hybrids. Innsmouth Group (Inc.) serves as an employer of these hybrids and also helps keep them in touch.

Non-Mythos Secret Agenda: The Innsmouth Group has a large network of pipes under certain Pacific islands. These pipes are rented out by other corporations for waste disposal purposes. Due to the cost of connecting these pipes to their customer's pipes, the prices of rental are very large. It is worth it though, since the Innsmouth Group (Inc.) guard the pipes from environmental terrorists with... military efficiency.

Controlled Areas: Innsmouth, an unknown number of Pacific islands.

THE STARRY WISDOM CORPORATION

Public Face: The Starry Wisdom Corporation is the world's leading manufacturer of space exploration products.

Mythos Secret Agenda: The Starry Wisdom Cult has reformed and expanded since the events described in "The Haunter of the Dark", and now worships many Mythos deities. The originally went into space, to Yuggoth, for the purpose of getting a replacement for the Shining Trapezohedron, which was thrown into the sea at the end of "The Haunter of the Dark". They were able to do this by using the profits they reaped from being a corporation. They and the Mi-Go are researching ways to make Shining Trapezohedrons for all the Mythos deities. So far they have made one for Cthugha, which summons an avatar of him when the crystal is placed in fire, and one for Hastur, which summons the King in Yellow when lines from the play bearing his name are read to it.

Non-Mythos Secret Agenda: The "space exploration products" the Starry Wisdom Corp makes are dangerously defective. The odds are that any space shuttle the PCs get on is made from Starry Wisdom parts.

Controlled Areas: Providence, several asteroids.

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Written Beyond Ye Spheres

Cyberthulhu Bibliography

The following bibliography was extracted from a November 1996 Usenet post by the esteemed Brent Heustess, with his introductory comments left intact. We're reformatted it for HTML but did not alter the contents.

Here is a list of articles dealing with CyberCthulhu or CthulhuPunk. This is from my database of CoC magazine articles. I think I got them all, but I did not do a really intensive search. If anyone knows of any others or sees anything that needs correcting, please let me know.

Ta,
Brent

Brent Heustess

heustess@mail.utexas.edu

Chaosium Digest

Publisher: Shannon Appel; Type: Ezine; Published: Frequent, but Erratic; In Print: Yes; First Pub: Jan 1993; Notes: Ezine that covers all Chaosium games, distributed via email (contact Shannon Appel) and is archived at <ftp://ftp.csua.berkeley.edu/pub/chaosium/archives>

Issue: v2n10; Date: June 1993

- "Call of Cyberctulhu" by Sandy Antunes; Type: CyberCthulhu/CthulhuPunk; Notes: Minimalist rules for a cyberpunk setting for Cthulhu Now

Issue: v2n11; Date: June 1993

- "Ideas for Cyberctulhu" by Jason D. Corley; Type: CyberCthulhu/CthulhuPunk; Notes: Ideas for a Cyberctulhu campaign

Issue: v3n1; Date: July 1993

- "A CyberCthulhu Vignette" by Kaid Ramdani; Type: Scenario - CyberCthulhu/CthulhuPunk [Setting: cyberspace, Main Menace: virtual vampire]; Notes: Short scenario based on Alex Antunes' "Call of Cyberctulhu" rules in Chaosium Digest v2n10

Interface

Publisher: Prometheus Publishing, Inc.; In Print: No; Last Issue: v2n2 (6); Notes: Primarily a magazine for Cyberpunk 2020

Issue: v2n2 (6); Date: 1992; Price: \$4.50; 68 pgs.

- "The Darktime" by ???; pp. 2-3; Type: CyberCthulhu/CthulhuPunk; Notes: Introductory article on CyberCthulhu, a combination of Cyberpunk & Call of Cthulhu
- "Ecotech" by ???; pp. 4-5; Type: CyberCthulhu/CthulhuPunk; Notes: CyberCthulhu cyberware
- "Cults: Hopes and Horrors" by Peter Christian; pp. 6-12; Type: CyberCthulhu/CthulhuPunk; Notes: Information on cults and using cults in Cyberpunk 2020
- "From the Dark Future to Gothic Horror: A CYBERPUNK to CoC Crossover Rules Variation" by Peter Christian; pp. 13-19; Type: CyberCthulhu/CthulhuPunk; Notes: Conversion rules to/from Cyberpunk 2020 and Call of Cthulhu
- "Transference" by Chris Hockabout & John Tynes; pp. 20-24; Type: Scenario - CyberCthulhu/CthulhuPunk [Date: 2020, Main Menace: Mi-Go]; Notes: CyberCthulhu/Darktime scenario, second half of scenario "Convergence" from The Unspeakable Oath #7
- "City Church of Our Lord-Redeemer: A Cult Profile" by Peter Christian; pp. 25-30; Type: CyberCthulhu/CthulhuPunk; Notes: Snake-handling cult, Includes Call of Cthulhu horror options for cult & adventure hooks
- "The Institute for Paranormal Studies: A Cult Profile" by Barton Bolmen; pp. 31-40; Type: CyberCthulhu/CthulhuPunk; Notes: Psychic-debunkers, includes adventure hooks
- "Vignette: Deus Ex Machina" by ???; p. 40; Type: Scenario - CyberCthulhu/CthulhuPunk [Date: 2020, Setting: cyberspace, Main Menace: insane AI]; Notes: Mini-scenario idea for Darktime/CyberCthulhu
- "A Policy of Pain" by Chris Hockabout; pp. 41-57; Type: Scenario - CyberCthulhu/CthulhuPunk [Date: 2020, Setting: Death Valley Prison, Main Menace: cultists of Y'Golonac, Nbr PCs: 4-6]; Notes: Scenario for Darktime/CyberCthulhu
- "Vignette: I Want a New Drug" by Chris Hockabout; p. 57; Type: Scenario - CyberCthulhu/CthulhuPunk [Date: 2020, Main Menace: Deep Ones & Shoggoths]; Notes: Mini-scenario idea for Darktime/CyberCthulhu

PerChance (England)

Publisher: Jim Johnson; Type: Fanzine; In Print: Unknown

Issue: 3

- "CthulhuPunk" by Darren Graham; Type: CyberCthulhu/CthulhuPunk

Pyramid

Publisher: Steve Jackson Games; Published: Bi-Monthly; In Print: Yes; First Pub: May/June 1993

Issue: 12; Date: Mar/Apr 1995; Price: \$3.95; 88 pgs.

Issue Notes: Two special INWO cards included as inserts

- "GURPS CthulhuPunk Designer's Notes" by Chris W. McCubbin; pp. 70-71, 73-74; Type: CyberCthulhu/CthulhuPunk; Notes: Three NPCs for GURPS CthulhuPunk; Illus: Dan Smith

Role Player Independent (England)

Publisher: Symbiosis Publishing; In Print: No; First Pub: Dec 1992

Issue: v1n2 (2); Date: Dec 1992

- "Cthulhu Punk" by Darren Graham; pp. 13-17; Type: CyberCthulhu/CthulhuPunk; Notes: Using the Cthulhu Mythos in Cyberpunk games

The Unspeakable Oath

Publisher: Pagan Publishing; In Print: Yes; First Pub: Dec 1990; Notes: A digest of arcane lore for the Call of Cthulhu© role- playing game

Issue: 7 (v2n3); Date: Jan 1993; Price: \$4.00; 80 pgs.

- "CyberCthulhu" by John Tynes; p. 57; Type: CyberCthulhu/CthulhuPunk; Notes: Information on Cyberpunk 2020/Call of Cthulhu rules in this issue and in Interface #6
- "Convergence" by John Tynes; pp. 58-77; Type: Scenario - Cthulhu Now [Date: 1990s]; Notes: Cthulhu Now scenario with cyberpunk elements, "Transference" in Interface #6 is a sequel to this scenario, background on Delta Green, a secret military organization within the U.S. government; Illus: Jeff Barber

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Last modified February 3, 1997 by sandy@clark.net