



THE ORDO VERITATIS RECRUITMENT HANDBOOK

CHARACTER BACKGROUNDS AND CAREERS FOR THE ESOTERRORIST
ROLEPLAYING GAME

Greetings Mr Verity,

This document has been produced to assist you in identifying potential recruits into the ORDO VERITATIS.

As you well know, OV operatives come from all walks of life, and it is your assigned responsibility to locate those individuals who would benefit our order in its ongoing struggle against the Esoterrorist threat. While many raw recruits may seem to have the attitude, skills or resources that would make them an asset to OV, only those few that demonstrate all of these qualities combined are capable of being field operatives.

It is entrusted in you to ensure that all ORDO VERITATIS Operatives are:

1. Resilient - The threat posed by the Esoterrorists is more terrifying than anyone can truly comprehend. It is vital that OV operatives are capable of withstanding the physical and mental rigours of investigating Creatures of Unremitting Horror.
2. Proficient - Truth and understanding is only gained through knowledge. OV operatives must not only experts in their chosen field, but possess a wide range of skills and abilities.
3. Resourceful - We cannot act alone. There is a reason that OV operatives work in cells; each individual is just part of the whole. They must be able to think outside and utilise all of the resources at their disposal.
4. Inquisitive - What we discover is often more hearsay than truth. OV Operatives must not only be able to distinguish fact from fiction, but be willing to ask the right questions.

These four points will impress on you the importance of the task you've been assigned. Not all those you meet are able or even willing to attempt such lofty ideas, and only a strong and resourceful few will even be passed on for further analysis. But remember this - Only with the best operatives can we succeed against those who place their own agendas above the good of man.

May the truth light your way,

Mr Verity, Snr.

INTRODUCTION

ABOUT THE HANDBOOK

The Ordo Veritatis Handbook has been written to provide players the opportunity to further detail the backgrounds and abilities of their OV operatives in *The Esoterrorists* roleplaying game.

The majority of this document presents a selection of professions and careers from which an OV operative could have been recruited from. These rules allow players to examine their characters background prior to their involvement in the Ordo Veritatis. This in turn enables for specialised Investigative abilities, and acquisition of expert resources available only to those with certain training and knowledge. In addition, this book also introduces various other benefits a character might receive from being recruited into one or more of the OV operations branches. All of the above represent the specialised training and experienced gained from operating with the Order's structure prior to commencing field work.

Much of the mechanical structure of this document is based on the *Trail of Cthulhu* system of Occupations and Special Bonuses. It is highly recommended that, if the options presented herein are used, that all characters gain access to them - to ensure balance and fairness amongst the group.

NEW INVESTIGATIVE ABILITIES

As some careers and backgrounds for characters can be quite specialised, the following new Investigative abilities have been made available.

OUTDOORSMAN (TECHNICAL)

You are familiar with working and living outdoors and in the wild. You might work for the Park Service or perhaps you were merely a Boy Scout, growing up in the back of nowhere. You can:

- tell when an animal is behaving strangely
- tell whether an animal or plant is natural to a given area
- find edible plants, hunt, and fish
- make fire and survive outdoors at night or in bad weather
- navigate overland, albeit more easily with a compass and a map
- track people, animals, or vehicles across all types of terrain
- hunt with dogs, including tracking with bloodhounds, etc.

APPLIED PHYSICS (TECHNICAL)

You understand the intricacies of nature's laws, including the practical application of theories of time, mass, and energy. Physics has many individual fields of research, and you may be versed in one or more of these as well.

You can:

- tell when an object or entity or event conforms with the laws of physics
- apply physics law and mathematical equations to problems
- make suggestions and observations based on principals of applied physics.
- understand and use technology devoted to practical physics.

BIOLOGY (TECHNICAL)

You have skills and experience in the workings of man and other living organisms, including how they interact with each other and their environment. As with physics, biology is made of many specialised disciplines, including cell, evolution, and energy theory.

You can:

- Identify living organisms and determine whether they are native to a region or not.
- Determine pathogens in an organic system.
- Undertake experiments or tests to determine the gene or evolutionary history of a sample.
- Test for diseases, virus and other harmful substances.

Author's Note

The author would like to thank the following Gumshoe fans (and their gaming groups) for proofing and giving feedback on this document - *Dale Elvy, Neil Ford, Darrin Griechen, Belinda Kelly and Rafael Torrubia.*

ORDO VERITATIS CAREERS & BACKGROUNDS

Before joining the Ordo Veritatis, your operative was employed elsewhere; an occupation that enabled you to receive specialised training and skills that made you a prime recruit for the order. This is your Career, which helps determine the abilities you will use during your investigations into various Esoterrorist plots.

AVAILABLE CAREERS

Ordo Veritatis recruitment is usually undertaken in three main spheres; policing organisations, the military or intelligence communities, and specialised civilian administrations. Each of these areas offers OV specific skills in dealing with the ever growing Esoterror threat and allows for a wide range of knowledge and talents to be acquired with a minimum amount of recruiting effort (as individuals in such organisations are already dedicated to ensure the safety of the general populace).

CAREER ABILITIES

Every Career description includes its Investigative abilities (see below) and any special abilities or rules that operatives with that Career can use. Investigative abilities listed in a careers description are purchased at half-price, allowing you to create a character that has focused skills and talents.

Every character gets two rating points for every point spent in Career abilities. For example, to purchase 12 rating points of any Career ability will cost you 6 Investigative Build build points. Note that left over halfpoints are lost.

INVESTIGATIVE BUILD POINTS

As this document presents a new way in which Investigative Abilities can be selected - emphasising specific abilities that are purchased at a lower cost - the total number of Investigative Build points available to characters created in this way need to be decreased (if only for consistency).

As such, the number of points each player can spend on Investigative abilities varies according to the number of players regularly attending the game sessions.

- 2 players - 24 Investigative Build points
- 3 players - 20 Investigative Build points
- 4+ players - 16 Investigative Build points

ORDO TRAINING

While most of the characters created will have been recruited directly into the field operations branch of the order, OV maintains a number of other separate and distinct units within its organisational structure. Often agents will receive training and experience in one of these branches prior to undertaking field work.

All characters created under the Careers rules will have the opportunity to trade in their understanding of the Unremitting Horrors for knowledge in other areas of the Ordo Veritatis operation.

CAREER LIST

Ordo Veritatis operatives come from all walks of life. Normally they are well trained and experienced individuals who are willing to put their occupation responsibilities ahead of any personal agenda or emotional requirements.

LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER

Although one might expect that local law enforcement would be below OV's radar, the order often recruits such officers to act as station (or permanently based) operators in large cities or near locations of suspected Esoterror targets. Such agents usually have an excellent knowledge of the locale and have access to numerous resources and contacts. Examples of Local Law Enforcement include Metropolitan or Regional Police Departments, Sheriff Departments, and State wide Policing units, etc.

- **Career Investigative Abilities** - Law, Bullshit Detector, Cop Talk, Trivia, Flattery, Streetwise, Intimidation, Reassurance, Scuffling
- **Special** - Local Law Enforcement units usually have a good understanding of criminal dealings that occur in their jurisdiction. As such, when investigating leads in their home locale, all uses of the Streetwise Investigative ability are made at a cost of 1 point less - (i.e. a 2 point spend costs only 1, and a single point spend is free, etc.)

INVESTIGATING AGENT/OFFICER

One of the primary sources of OV operatives is from in the world's various special policing or surveillance organizations, such as Interpol, the FBI or Serious Organised Crime Agency/Scotland Yard. These organisations specifically train their officers and agents to be independent and thorough in their investigations, the core requirements one needs when searching for Esoterrorists and evidence of their plots.

- **Career Investigative Abilities** - Law, Bullshit Detector, Cop Talk, Evidence Collection, Interrogation, Negotiation, Electronic Surveillance, Surveillance, Languages
- **Special** - With judicious use of Cop Talk, you can not only put the police at ease, but gain access to case files, evidence rooms, and prisoners, among other things not accessible by normal civilians. If you're far

outside your jurisdiction, you may need Cop Talk and a really good plan. Within your own jurisdiction (i.e. FBI agents in the USA, Scotland Yard in the UK, etc.) any points at all in Cop Talk will get you access to, and use of, police laboratories (for forensics and ballistics tests, or for more abstruse purposes) and even the morgue.

SCENE INVESTIGATORS

Most law enforcement organisations operate specialised crime scene investigation units. Such operatives are recruited by OV to examine the results of Esoterrorist activity and to ascertain their next steps. Specialising in scene examination, they are key to ensuring that any clues left behind by the enemy are found and analysed.

- **Career Investigative Abilities** - Cop Talk, Evidence Collection, Electronic Surveillance, Ballistics, Data Retrieval, Fingerprinting, Photography, Textural Analysis, Document Analysis.
- **Special** - As an expert in scene examination, you can call upon your knowledge and experience to yield clues in areas outside your specialisation. Once per game session you may spend one point from your Evidence Collection pool to gain one rating in any other Technical Investigative ability. This point is returned at the completion of the session.

SPECIALISED POLICING OFFICER

The world is full of special police or quasi-law enforcement units. These are often experts in one legal or bureaucratic sector and include occupations such as customs officials, park or conservation rangers, and even officials from nuclear and chemical watchdogs. While in general terms they hold no legal law enforcement rights, under specific circumstance they are fully warranted to arrest and detain those who breach the law.

- **Career Investigative Abilities** - Law, Bureaucracy, Intimidation, History, Negotiation, Bullshit Detection, Evidence Collection, One specialised skill (i.e. EPA officer might select Chemistry, while a Park Ranger might select Outdoorsman, etc).
- **Special** - With your skill in Bureaucracy, you are able to cut through the red tape that surrounds the legal and bureaucratic requirements of area of specialisation. Within your own jurisdiction any points at all in Bureaucracy will get you access to, and use of, organisational facilities and records, as well as clear the way for any further investigation. Additionally, you will have access to experts related to your area of enforcement.

SPECIAL FORCES OPERATOR

Although Ordo Veritatis does recruit regular soldiers into its ranks, such personnel are generally assigned to the Order's Special Suppression Forces. Beyond this, some Special Forces operatives (especially covert and counter insurgency specialists i.e. Green Berets or SAS) are enlisted into regular OV investigative teams for their extensive knowledge on identifying, protecting or even eliminating a specific target. Furthermore, such recruits also offer much in the ways of intelligence gathering and unit protection skills of OV teams that are exposed to serious compromise.

- **Career Investigative Abilities** - Bullshit Detector, Interrogation, Intimidate, Streetwise, Electronic Surveillance, Data Retrieval, Explosive Devices, Negotiation
- **Special** - As experts with firearms, Special Forces Operators are able to assign points from Shooting pool to an attack after they have made their roll. For every 2 points you spend after rolling the die, you increase the die result by 1.

COVERT AGENT

Often OV operatives are recruited from highly specialised covert agencies, such as MI6 or CIA. Such groups are usually well versed in undercover operations and already require a high degree of mental and physical strength; an essential ingredient when dealing with Esoterrorists and Creatures of Unremitting Horror. Covert Agents are often the eyes and ears of an OV field team, and specialise in clandestine surveillance and human interaction.

- **Career Investigative Abilities** - Bullshit Detector, Impersonate, Reassurance, Flirting, Flattery, Negotiation, Streetwise, Languages
- **Special** - As masters of relationships and communication, Covert Agents are able to refresh one point in any of their Interpersonal Career Investigative Abilities during a lengthy downtime up to a maximum of four times per session. This represents their ability to change personas and tack to gain additional information that they might have missed first time around.

INTELLIGENCE ANALYST

Usually recruited from the Military or government intelligence services, OV uses Intelligence Analysts to determine when and where Esoterrorists might strike next. Although usually office based positions, it is not uncommon for the organisation to assign an Intelligence Analyst to a field team when required (i.e. the actual threat remains elusive, the target is constantly on the move, or they present a threat to other assets).

- **Career Investigative Abilities** - Forensic Accounting, Linguistics, Research, History, Cryptography, Data Retrieval, Electronic Surveillance, Bureaucracy
- **Special** - Relying on a network of intelligence organisations, leads and informants, a Intelligence Analyst's predictions are only as good as they information they have at hand. As such, by using your Bureaucracy

ability, an Analyst can gain access to secret or classified information as well as specialist networks and systems dedicated to the interception and analysis of such material.

FORENSIC SPECIALIST

Forensic Specialists specialise in Forensics analysis and are responsible for determining the cause and purpose of various events. More than simple Doctors or Pathologists, Forensic Specialists have the experience and authority to be well respected experts in their chosen field(s). Many policing organisations run their own Forensic labs, including the FBI's Forensic Science Research and Training Center (FSRTC) and its associated Anthropological Research Facility (or Body Farm) being the most famous.

About Forensic Investigation Abilities - A subset of the regular grouping of Investigative abilities, Forensic Investigation Abilities include Forensic Psychology, Forensic Anthropology, Forensic Entomology or. All Forensic Specialists may select one (1) of these Forensic Investigation Abilities as part of their Career Investigative Abilities.

- **Career Investigative Abilities** - Research, Bureaucracy, Fingerprinting, Law, Chemistry, Ballistics, Evidence Collection
- **Special** - As forensic work often overlaps, all Forensic Specialists may, once per game session, spend one point of their selected Forensic Investigation Ability pool to gain one rating in any other Forensic Investigation Ability. This point is returned at the completion of the session.

SCIENTIST/SPECIALIST (SOCIAL SCIENCE)

While most scientists are thought of as sitting meekly in their labs more interested in their test tubes and Bunsen burners, it is the social scientists that are out amongst the population really finding out what is going on. The Ordo Veritatis takes special note of experts in all social sciences such Anthropology, Archaeology and Languages, as it is amongst such fields that Esoterrorist plots take shape and the Membrane is first stretched.

- **Career Investigative Abilities** - Research, Negotiation, Reassurance, Photography, Languages, Trivia, any two (2) Academic Abilities
- **Special** - It is rare for a Social Scientist to work alone and they often have numerous contacts all around the world. By using your Academic abilities, you can get access to locations - labs, museums, sites or classrooms - where the study of the ability would be taking place. In addition, such scholars will often be allowed to handle artefacts as well as examine documentation and evidence supporting such a discovery.

SCIENTIST (HARD SCIENCE)

The only true 'scientist' is one who examines all the facts and makes logical and supported conclusions. The OV works closely with many scientific communities, especially those on the edge of technological advancement. As the order often deals with events that might readily been seen as being 'groundbreaking' it is a matter of course that representatives of such communities are regularly recruited.

- **Career Investigative Abilities** - Research, History, Bureaucracy, Physics, Biology, Chemistry, Trivia. (Note - if so required by a player, Astronomy may be added to this list).
- **Special** - Although many scientists like to keep their discoveries secret, the world of hard science is based on peer review and analysis. As such you have access to laboratories suitable for your researches, and can use the appropriate Investigative ability to get tests and experiments performed by your peers or colleagues, or to get specialised equipment or machinery built.

ORDO VERITATIS BACKGROUND

The Ordo Veritatis maintains a number of specialised units within its organisational structure. Often operatives will have spent time working in one or more of these units gaining experience in the surveillance and counter-intelligence duties most OV staff are required to perform.

As determined by the GM and players, each character can select one of the OV knowledge backgrounds (or more if so agreed upon). Note that these additional points replace the standard free point of Occult Investigative ability received when a character is normally created as an OV Operative. Note the units and departments listed in this section relate to those noted in the Esoterrorist Factbook.

- **Occult Training** - By default all OV operatives, regardless of their area of specialisation or background, receive 1 point in the Occult Studies Investigative ability.

FIELD TRAINING

New recruits to the Ordo Veritatis are not, if possible, sent directly out as field agents. Although there are no standard training programs for the organisation, all new recruits are given extensive training in both the mental and physical requirements of being an OV operative.

- **Bonus** - Agents assigned from this department receive an additional point of Occult Studies Investigative ability and 2 points in their Health, Stability and Preparedness General abilities.

MEDIA THREAT ANALYSIS (MTA)

The Media Threat Analysis (MTA) department is responsible for the detection of Esoterrorist activities in the media. With a brief that includes television,

print and electronic media world-wide, it is not surprising to know that the Order relies heavily of outside resources (in a clandestine manner of course) to identify potential Esoterror threats.

- **Bonus** - Agents assigned from this department receive 1 point in their *Cryptography* and *Linguistics Investigative* abilities.

ELECTRONIC TRAFFIC SIFTING (ETS)

The order monitors numerous public, private and secret channels of electronic communication around the world. The Electronic Traffic Sifting (ETS) team is the group assigned to analysing this data and determining any Esoterrorist 'chatter'.

- **Bonus** - Agents assigned from this department receive 1 point in their *Surveillance* and *Data Retrieval* Investigative abilities.

MEDIA OUTREACH TEAM (MOT)

The Media Outreach Team (MOT) is responsible for following up, and where necessary completing, a field team's Veil-out actions. In general, this task is achieved by manipulating public organisations and local media into spreading disinformation about the events that resulted in the field team's dispatch.

- **Bonus** - Agents assigned from this department receive 1 point in their *Negotiation* and *Bureaucracy* Investigative abilities.

SURVEILLANCE AND DEEP COVER (SDC)

This department is responsible for the surveillance and monitoring of suspected Esoterrorist activities. Mainly allocated to those potential cases that require further information and analysis prior to assigning a field team, agents from the Surveillance and Deep Cover department are skilled at operating undercover.

- **Bonus** - Agents assigned from this department receive 1 point in their *Evidence Collection* and *Impersonate* of Investigative abilities.

STATION DUTY

There are particular areas of the world that warrant the assignment of permanent operatives. Such locations are usually rife with Esoterrorist activities or hold assets that are vital to the on going battle against them. A dangerous and yet often laborious assignment, Station Officers are expected to liaise with field agents and Special Suppression Forces (SSF) when and if required.

- **Bonus** - Agents assigned from this department receive 1 point in their *Languages* and *Streetwise* Investigative ability