The ABYSS

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cinerairi tabularium

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The Abyss

CENOTAPHIUM
Issue 0 ~ cinerairi tabularium

Cinerairi Tabularium is the first Cenotaphium in an ongoing, monthly journal from The Abyss, whose content is derived completely on submission. Unlike the sourcebooks, Cenotaphium is a collective of player and gamemaster ideas presented in magazine form for your personal use.

This Issue would not be possible without Erik Growen's valuable help in allowing us use the collected archives from the old Target Kult Forum board and other sources. His compiling and presentation to us of these collected works allowed us to present these past thoughts and ideas on Kult in one book. Its place as Issue 0 is to reflect this. Many writers are featured in issue 0 and all have been acknowledged as was possible, however some ideas are without authors and if you are the author and wish to be acknowledged, please contact The Abyss and we will ammend it promptly. The Abyss would also like to thank those writers featured in this Cenotaphium, for giving Kult a worldwide diversity unmatched. The Abyss does not endorse or support the statements made by the authors in regard to Target or other companies.

All future issues of Cenotaphium are on submission basis through The Abyss site in e-mail to the co-ordinators. Art, poetry, and literature will be featured in coming issues.

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A Publication from The Abyss
Made for the Kult Roleplaying Game
For Mature Readers

A Briefer History of Time or History isn't like it used to be

Introduction

The illusion is breaking, gradually we are seeing past the mundane world and into the darkness of Metropolis. There is, however, no time in Metropolis (or indeed Metropolis time certainly works differently to our time) so what is causing the illusion to break down as time progresses through our world? This is an attempted explanation of the contradiction and some ideas about the new nature of time.

A New Angle

It is possible to consider that the illusion isn't only now breaking down, rather it is breaking down at a constant rate throughout all periods of history, we no longer have the old past which was thoroughly enshrouded by illusion, all our pasts are infected. We have proof of this, which can be readily accepted by society: history has changed, and we all know it. If you allow your mind to think, you will realise that in the past history was always more sentimental. In the past, we remember the middle ages being knights in shining armour atop a white stallion, now days we call this fantasy and recognise instead the squaller in which people lived. Possibly we simply know more and do not romanticise, more probably we are allowing ourself to see the changing world and time in its full glory - we meerly rationalise the changes thus preserving a portion of our personal illusion. It is possibly better to consider that while takes place in our world, the illusion has broken just that bit further, making shadows just that bit darker.

Time in Metropolis

There is no time, as we know it, within Metropolis. That said, there is still cause and effect. One thing still follows another, hands on clocks still move, sand still falls through an hourglass. The problem is that time is no longer consistant in the same way that the dimentions of space seem somewhat wrong. Just as you could pass due north for several yards and move several miles to the south, it is just as possible for time to do the same sort of flips, just because a watch starts moving backwards doesn't mean cause will follow effect, sand will still fall under the weight of whatever Metropolis's equivalent of gravity is although there is no reason to think the size of the pile of sand will increase - we have to think in non-euclidean terms here folks.

The Cross Over

Something my games have already had to handle is the problem of someone in an area where the illusion is breaking comparing times with someone outside the area. This is easily solved by use of the illusion as a means of control.

"*I had seen the watch moving backwards with my own eyes. There was no reason why, as a jeweler I could tell that the mechanism was working, the laws of physics were blatently being defied, although I could not figure which laws, things were just plain odd. I had to solve this enigma before my mind totally fell into the mists of insanity - I reached for my portable phone and called my mother.*

"*Naturally my mother was somewhat bemused by her son phoning her and asking the time, but she was more than happy to humour me - then again she has noticed my gradual descent into oblivion and may well be following the advice of the shrink she sent me to, no matter. I set my watch to 6:32 as she instructed and waited, how long for it seems somewhat impossible to tell*

"*When my watch reached 6:15 I telephoned my mother again, she seemed somewhat suprised to hear from me again so quickly. I asked here, relieved that I had found the problem surrounded only me, the time. I only begam to scream as she told me in that matter of fact voice it was 17 minutes since I last phoned her, exactly 6:15 pm*"

In this situation the illusion is breaking for the author while his mother remains firmly within it. Time will move the same way at a break in the illusion as it does within the illusion, the difference is that there is no illusion to make us rationalise or obscure impossibilities from our minds. The mother correctly reports the time within the illusion both times,

however her clouded mind fails to notice that it is now earlier than it was several minutes ago. We enter the world of non-euclidean chronology. Had the author managed to explain to his mother what was going on, he would possibly bring about the breakdown of her illusion. My suggestion for such a situation would be to make an ego roll. If the roll is failed, the character in the illusion is unable to comprehend what the hell the person within the crack is talking about - things seem perfectly normal within the illusion. If the roll is successful, but the effect is less than 10 the character will notice the weirdness of the situation - a rationalist will rationalise it and a new age pagan will call it weird. An effect of greater than 10 will cause a rip in the illusion for the character, your players won't mind being responsible for the phone going dead and their mothers body found stuffed as if by a professional taxidermist
and covered in arcane runes next time they visit her. Honest.

The Magic of Time
We now have to consider how this new view of time affects magic related to it. We must now forget about previous definitions of time and consider that spells relate directly to time as we perceive it now. See through Time & Space will only allow you to see time and space as it was in our chronology, not as it was before the illusion split (thus we see plague ridden villages not camelot). There is no way to contact 'previous' realities without manipulating reality directly.

A question about death.

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If you are visiting Metropolis as a normal, unawakened human, and you get killed (99.9% chance of that, if you believe the sourcebook), what happens? Death is an illusion, but you are not in the Illusion anymore!

Our group came to Metropolis and one of our group-members (Peter) was killed by another group-member (Alex). That happened, because he was possessed and we therefor saw a traitor in him. When he was killed whatever possessed him went to Alex and possessed him. Finally Alex became control over it, because he was given an amulet. He was able to give Peters wounds to the other players or creatures around and Peter was alive again. Peter has some secret knowledge now (specified by the GM). So there is still an illusion. (But all the characters are new characters. Perhaps it is different, if you play with an old one).

Death in Metropolis

1. The nice way. The player wakes up in the illusion, maybe in his own bed, remembering horrible nightmares, but nothing from metropolis. (he maybe gets a new disadvantage, nightmare or something else.)

2. The person becomes a ghost, either returned to the illusion or in metropolis. Maybe when he is quite mad and unable to remember or when his ghost is destroyed in some other way he can return to the cycle.

3. The persons death could be handled the same way as if he had died in the illusion, maybe some lictors arrange some false evidence of a suicide or something like that?

When my players go to Metropolis and "die" there, I just let them wake up "hours" later, with all wounds open, losing blood and wandering in pain, trapped inside their bodies until madness really fuck them up.

As for Inferno, my guess would be the same, including two bits of cruelty that I have introduced to instill a little "fun":

1) The only thing that us makes withstand pain is our ability to "get used" to it. The first step then would be to suppress this ability, in order to make the smallest pain become a torture.

2) Once that is done, all you need to do to have a perfect hell is to suppress the possibility/ability to obtain pleasure from any source.

Terrible, is it not?

I personally think you're still subject to the same rules as everybody else, so you just go to the afterlife. Of course, there are many other things that could happen to you depending on the whim of various supernatural powers -- you could travel back in time, you could become a living corpse, etc. -- but these would seem to be exceptional cases.

And if you die during a visit to inferno? Now this is a good question. I think that if you have a Positive Mental Balance, you just drop dead (and meanwhile, your soul goes to Heaven). If you have a Negative Mental Balance, though, you just stick around as if nothing had happened, despite whatever gaping wounds or third-degree burns you've received, and essentially become one of the other damned souls of Inferno. However, you are henceforth unable to leave Inferno by normal means, and are trapped along with all the others, doomed to suffer... This is how it happened to a few of my players. They thought they were fine -- until they tried to leave and were trapped in a JACOB'S LADDER-type illusion leading back to the realization that they were still in Hell! Mwa haha ha ha! (This is using the 1st Edition rules on death.)

Once you're "dead" in Metropolis, you loose you link with reality. That is, you cannot get back to it (at least until you're powerful enough with respect to magic).

Being hurt in Metropolis, you suffer (like in reality), but once your body die, you can't heal (eh, you're dead, no?).

You end up as a (possibly rotting) body wandering in Metropolis, too weak to protect itself from the Evil Things that lurk around. Hopefully you've got eternity to learn

I say just kill 'em. Send 'em back to Hell, Heaven or wherever. Or possibly the Cemetery of Metropolis. Actually, I once ran part of an adventure where one of the characters died in Metropolis (knifed by Oberons in the Memory Banks), and I did the "BRAZIL/ ERASERHEAD/ AN OCCURRENCE ON OWL CREEK BRIDE" scenario where I roleplayed out their trip to the Afterlife, not letting them know that they had died. (The other players showed up as phantoms; they were in on the joke.) In his mind, he subjectively escaped the Oberon's knives, then made his way to a skyscraper where he'd been told there was an escape from Metropolis. Once he got there, he fought his greatest foe (one of those symbolic 'overcome his greatest fear' sorts of things) and then, since he had a Positive Mental Balance, ended up climbing a ladder through the top of the clouds into Heaven. Then I cut back to "The Oberon's knife impales you in the back between your shoulder blade and your spine, and you fall lifelessly to the heap of bloodstained bodies surrounding the Memory Banks." Later on, the other players, who had no in-character awareness of being in the dead character's death sequence (since it was all just an illusion created by his mind), ran into some of the places and objects which the dead character had encountered in his death-illusion. They were definitely disturbed, out-of-character at least...

Adventure Ideas

Mityok Viktor: tasty@AUGUSTA.INF.ELTE.HU

Idea: A story like Enemy Within. One of my players is possessed by a demon. First he would kill and rape his one true

hopeless love - but all my players would think that someone else is the enemy

Nicolas Stampf: stampf@NETSURF.ORG

A few notes (in case someone has some ideas I could add to it). The action take place in north England (or Scotland). This is just for the scenery. The PCs meet a group of beautiful people in a nightclub. One of them falls in love with a girl/ man (I impose bisexuality to the PCs, without loss in MB). The lovers may be of the same sex or not. There's a fight in the nighclub, the lovers are separated. The group of PCs often have some good times together: one of them owns a book on the way of dream (voyeurism). The beautiful people are some sort of lorelei (they can create other Lorelei). There will be a murder, in which the PCs will be involved through the way of dream.

I plan to use some middle-ages church music for the sad scenes (one of them take place in a church, for the funeral.

What I would like to achieve with this scenario is to lift a really small part of the illusion, just to let the plyers know there is something to know behind reality. I also want the player to feel guilty and get involved with their PC. We're playing Kult, here, not a childish game. Did I told you there will be some Archons involved, too ? Archons hate Lorelei, PC felt in love with Lorelei... well, you get the point.

The Brood
Bjoern & Hiwi Weckesser: giesler@IRA.UKA.DE

The setup is as follows:

[history]
Alexander Godfrey Wicklow follows his late grandfather's tracks to the catacombs of Paris; the old man was looking for an immortality spell. There, Wicklow meets the Great Old One Eihort, who gives him the spell as a reward for injecting him with his parasitic Brood. For the immortality ritual, a focus is needed, i.e. a person with strong paranormal abilities. Back in his hometown in MA, Wicklow finds such a focus in the person of Zeke Bartlett, a young Amish with the tendency for paranoid schizophrenia often found in the parapsychologically gifted. Wicklow kidnaps Zeke and uses him to channel the forces that are to make him immortal.

But Eihort has cheated Wicklow, and the Brood hatches too soon for him to complete the ritual. He builds up a psychic bridge to Zeke's mind, to be able to return from the grave (think Asenath Waite in HPL's Thing on the Doorstep), just in time before the grub-like brood devours his body before Zeke's eyes. This drives the young man over the edge, and he seals the experiences connected with Wicklow in a separate identity. He returns from his kidnaping totally without conscious memories of what happened.

[present]
Everything looks peaceful for a few years, until Zeke starts to feel Wicklow burrowing his way into his mind. This re-awakens the sealed-off personality, and he desperately tries to find a way to fend off the intrusion. From things Wicklow uttered ("I have something in me that tells me what to do") and the sight of the sorcerer's death, he concludes that it was the Brood that gave Wicklow his powers. Only Zeke knows nothing about Eihort and his Brood, and mistakes the creatures for common maggots. In his madness, he tries to re-create the setup by abducting first pets, then humans, that he ties down, cuts open in several places and plants fly's eggs in them. As they writhe in agony while the parasites feed on their intestines, the madman tortures them asking over and over again, "What do they tell you? What forces do they give you?" Of course, his attempts are futile, and he grows more and more terrified as he feels the grip of the dead sorcerer tighten on his mind...

The players enter the game when a corpse is found that is almost totally eaten by maggots, but the date of death is set to only three days ago. (Flies do not lay their eggs in anything that isn't already rotting or festering.) There are some red herrings: Crazies theorizing about new kinds of power grubs, and the like.

This is the scenario as far as I've got it. My problems with it are: Firstly, it's obviously fairly grub-centered, at least until the players dig deeper in the plot. Graphical descriptions of feeding grubs can be horrific, of course, but as a central element they soon get old. How can I avoid let the scenario decaying (ha ha) into a maggot-fest? Secondly, what do I do to make the players realize there's more to it than just a fly-breeding madman? And, of course killing Zeke is not the (whole) goal of the scenario; it's breaking Wicklow's hold on the poor chap, and digging deeper into Wicklow's past (there's more to come there). So what do I do if the players just shoot the madman, declare their job done and walk away?

Dan Williamson

Let them. They have left the real evil behind, the Brood - whatever they are. Have some time pass peacefully then have the Brood start doing the evil things that they do. Perhaps one of the Brood manages to get into one of the characters while they are in the process of killing Zeke?

FuzzyLogic: fuzzylogic@LEGO.MCIT.MED.UMICH.EDU

I think your plot line is keen. Maggots are good. I find common symbols to be nifty in a game, because if the characters start out from different points, its nice to have a theme that draws them all together. In an experimental game I run, centipedes kept showing up. I decided to run with it, and made a tribal religion around them.

Putting your players through dead, maggot-ridden bodies over and over could get repetitive. Is there the possibility of one being alive? If Zeke is interrogating people, the last thing he'd want the maggots to be eating is the voice box and tongue. Eventually, the maggots will get there, and Zeke might even employ means to try and dissuade the maggots from reaching those spots (I'm not sure what can be done to dissuade maggots -- gasoline? Is there a maggot expert in the house?)

Then, you have a partially alive person. Zeke might be getting so desperate that he wasn't thorough. The people would be hopelessly mad, and would be repeating all sorts of interesting things, such as repeating the questions Zeke asks them over and over. Room for much fly-infested fun.

In my interpretation of Kult, where the illusion is made up of bits of reality, the maggots could be related to the brood. One of Zeke's victims could be slightly psychic. So maybe the maggots can talk to the person who is being devoured (given the right circumstances) What do maggots say? "Mmm yummy. Rotten meat." Maybe the brood can communicate through the maggots. Do they have anything to say? Maybe they give the half-devoured victim visions of Wicklow, Eihort and the Brood (Is that a band name in the making?)

WickedWalt

I'd concentrate on the other horrific elements inherent to the characters and plot. NPC's are what make a story great in any event, and here the central character is Zeke. Concentrate on the horrific elements of Zeke's wounded/disturbed/damaged psyche. This works best if the player characters already have a personal connection and/or care about the central character (Zeke), which would, incidentally, take care of your "what if they just blow him away" question. The PCs aren't likely to (immediately) blow away a friend in need (well, in SLA they might, but not in KULT).

Make Zeke's madness a central element, and have the characters help Zeke seek (or have them provide) treatment. In the course of such treatment, they can discover the deeper elements of the plot.

Construct some pre-existing tie between Zeke an the Pcs. You might want to run a few adventures prior to the one you've described in which you introduce Zeke, and in which, despite displaying a few personality quirks which can foreshadow future development of his madness, Zeke seems like a bright, perceptive, and personable (or at least endearing) guy.

DL: dreamlord@CRYOGEN.COM

1) Well, maybe Zeke soon will discover that maggot eggs will not work, and could even try a religion or mystical explanation (in the ritual, Godfrey has draw magical symbols, like pentagrams, or something like that?). And, that follows to the second point...

2) If he drops the maggot thing, maybe Godfrey find a way to get hold of the boy's mind, and, they probably, will step out from this scene (area, etc), but, what if, Zeke (before Godfrey controls the situation), in his dreams, get glimpses and memories from Godfrey? What if, sleeping...he writes some "interesting" stuff in some kind of journal?

3) If Godfrey, takes hold of the boy, and escapes, but is still letting out clues of his nature, they can be close enough the mystery to simple shot him, and, Godfrey could even be a major antagonist in a long campaign.

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I'm an entomologist (though not specialized in maggots or flies, my field is mainly parasitic wasps, which can also give you many KULTish ideas). As far as I know, maggots in dead bodies (the larvae of carrion flies) only eat dead tissue. Actually, up to the first world war maggots were used in medicine. Sterile maggots were placed in serious wounds and would eat the body tissue that had died off, thus preventing gangrene, if in a pretty grisly way. Thus, just making a wound in somebodies body and infecting it with fly eggs will not work. The way to do it would probably be to make body parts die off (for example by blocking the blood flow to one of the limbs) and then infecting them. In this case, gangrene may still kill the victim.

The easiest way to dissuade maggots from entering a certain body part would be to kill all those who got close by hand (this takes a certain burrowing around in the victims body). Chemical repellents might also work. Actually, I think it would be very difficult to cause somebody to be eaten alive by maggots. There are some fly species in the tropics of which the maggots eat living flesh, and this is also true for screwworms, which only attack livestock. These will only cause local wounds though. However, these observations may be due to the illusion, while REAL maggots are much worse.

Jason Thompson: jason@SONIC.NET

I think this is a very good idea for an adventure (maggots -- always fun), but I think it'd be a pretty tough job to make Zeke sympathetic. I mean, possessed or not, this guy's been feeding people to maggots! I could barely stop my players from shooting Elizabeth Seymor in FALLEN ANGELS! Perhaps Zeke has some information the players need, so they can't kill him outright, or perhaps they're hired to bring Zeke back alive for some reason. Alternately, he could always be presented as an insanity-riddled shell of a once-friendly and decent person. Still, I find it hard to keep RPGers from shooting first and asking questions later, especially in a horror game.

Jason Morton: m0rpheus@OZEMAIL.COM.AU

There was a place in wales where they company manager was being mind-controlled by a computer and was dumping toxic waste in mineshafts causing maggots to mutate and grow big.

This story was the green death which was a Jon Pertwee Dr. Who story....Hmmh Dr Who in a kult universe, how is the

tardis powered.....and where do the old companions REALLY GO???

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(an interview with Zeke's neighbor)"Zeke was such a good boy. a little trouble but..." (drawing flamethrower) "Commie mutant scum sympathizer! Prepare to die!" I guess one way to combat this is something like: Commander/Boss/Person in charge: "Jameson and his men went in armed to the teeth." Player: "What happened to them." C/B/PiC: "Well, they killed all the reliable witnesses, and were still captured by an unknown assailant, tortured, forced to eat each other's entrails, and killed. That's why were sending you in."

A Fuzzy Christmas

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In the states, the holiday season is a nightmare. This got me thinking about a KULT Christmas special (why not, it seems everyone in the states does one, yak)

The elements are right, because if high concentrations of humanity cause ripples in the illusion, than a yuletide shopping trip might very well be a ticket to Metropolis wrapped in human skin. I like to start small, and make little things wrong, and build up until things are just a terrible mess.

Am I suggesting sending the characters holiday shopping? Why sure! Its a great way to get characters together, and everyone has to brave the shopping throng once (those characters that insist they do all their shopping by mail should receive a letter bomb from your favorite Luddite)

Characters could also win a shopping spree too. Stores also have ways of making sure they pack in the most people in the least amount of time. Malls would be great for this, since window shopping could give tiny hints that something is amiss...

"Oh look, its that statuette of those Greek wrestlers! It looks different though...my God, they're not wrestling..."

And of course, lets not forget the shoppers that wind up fighting over a present or just being too close to each other. They bang their carts together, start swearing, throwing things -- the children are crying -- people are getting pressed together in a throng. One of them pulls out a gun...bam, you've got a panicked throng of people, and the characters can either be squashed together and pushed by the tide of people or pulled apart, depending on what they do and what the GM wants.

I like using mob panic as a cross to Metropolis, because characters can either be swept into Metropolis, or, if they are not, they have the mystery of these people disappearing to contend with, which is fun because at first, many people might realize a group has disappeared. Slowly, this number diminishes as Razides and such do damage control. It lets the players do this in many different ways.

But there are just opportunities for wonderful imagery, and not just from a gore standpoint. All those clothing shops with those huge windows, that could display normal clothing, then sexy lingerie, then the master slave outfits, leather masks with zippers, piercing accessories. If you have more bulk shopping images, please let me know.

How many people do you think have wanted to beat the snot out of the Salvation Army people outside the store (the bells! The BELLS!). When two or three people come up, pin the guy down and start clubbing the ringer with their own bell, might be a sign you're not shopping at Elysium any more.

I could go on and on (and HAVE). Crowds are a great thing. Not just for Christmas shopping, but rock concerts, traffic jams, sporting events, and orgies. The important thing is for a LOT of people, and the inability to get from point A to point B quickly. People see dead loved ones, dead hated ones, dead people in general -- which is really wacked. People they're hunting, people hunting them, lots of opportunities, and the player is confined in the crowd.

So, don't forget the gift of Metropolis this Christmas. Its the gift they're never forget

Jerker Eriksson: dr_avalanche@HOTMAIL.COM

I have recently been thinking about this scenario of mine, where the players play orphanage children which have been the victims of Astaroth's experiments, have been deeply disturbed and thus can walk freely between Elysium and a purgatory in Inferno. They have never been outside the home long enough to learn any other world than the orphanage, and the teachers, nurses and psychologists all partake in the experiments. Now the PCs finds themselves in dreams of a children's hospital in Rwanda, where the remnants of the war dwells, undernourished and deeply disturbed.

Another Story Idea

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Well, it's finally crept into my head.. After, gee, how long? probably over two years of being a lurker on this list.. (Yeah, I'll add in my two cents every now and then, but sometimes it isn't even worth that much *grin*) I finally have caught the bug and think I am ready to run something.. I even have an idea for a story and wanted to send it to you guys, since no one I know (thankfully) knows anything about Kult.

Okay.. Here's the story so far.. It's not completed.. and I want to get any and all responses from you guys (preferably via email rather than this list..) Right now, I have a bunch of the background.. or rather, I have the story that will explain why he is like he is, or whatever.. well, bear with me..

The PC will be in his early or mid twenties.. pretty much keeps to himself, though he does have friends, and possibly even a love interest, he just doesn't let anyone get too close. Lately he's been feeling like something is missing, or very very wrong.. Very guilty.. but he can't put a finger on what or why. His work is suffering, his relationship (if any) is suffering.. He needs to find out
why..

WHY:
The PC, we'll call him Jimmy, Once had a younger brother (by three years) who he used to have to play with (you know.. Mom tells you to bring your younger brother with you etc..). They used to play in the forest behind their house. There was a small stream which led into a grate which led further down into a river or pond of some sort.. Anyhow, they used to play Pirates (or whatever) down there, with 'John' (The younger brother) always 'locked' up (in the drain behind the grate) as a prisoner or some such thing like that. As Jimmy was returning from searching for buried treasure (mind you at this point he is 9 or ten years old) He could hear John yelling for him.. Not just yelling.. but screaming out of fear and terror. As Jimmy rounded the bend to where their 'ship' was, He could see John reaching through the grate trying to get through to freedom, but to no avail.. The last thing he saw was John's arm being pulled back through the grate, and then darkness. He crept closer to the grate.. trying to get a handle on what was going on, he opened the grate.. slowly.. and leaned in closer.. there was nothing there but emptiness.. emptiness and a rotten smell.

After this event, Jimmy runs home, tells his parents what happened the police are called, etc.. The disappearance is ruled a kidnaping and they spend a few years searching but nothing is ever found. The case and the kid is forgotten.. buried beneath uncaring, unfeeling parents and a brother who feels it is his fault.

So this is how I see it... All this guilt and fear is pushed deep deep down and forgotten.. well, at least until the present day. And Maybe the Guilt has created a place where his brother still 'lives' (or exists) and also blames Jimmy for what happened to him and is trying to get him back for that.. I'm not sure what will trigger the return of this guilt. Maybe the smell of whatever it was in the grate, or I dunno.. I need some ideas here kids.. I also need to know what would have been in the grate.. I've got books and all here.. but I want your input as well. Alright.. that's it for now.. I hope to get a lot of advice and ideas from you guys to help me unfold the story..

I think it would be rather good if the PC was actually the one who killed his younger brother. Or maybe he didn't kill him, but has kept him in a hole or a cave somewhere near all these years. The thing is, he doesn't know it himself. First of all, the reason why he killed/kidnaped his brother was pure jealousy. He wanted to be the one his parents loved, and no one else. So he tricked his brother to some unknown place, and there he killed/trapped him. Then he went home to the house and said the things as written above. But he says that they happened in a totally opposite direction than they really did. So the police search in the wrong place, and the PC gets all the attention. But the guilt of what he's done creates another personality, one who actually believes the things he told the police and the parents. So this, new and innocent personality start to take over, leaving his dark, evil self far away. But unknown, even to himself, he sneaks away occasionally to see to his brother (or, to get rid of the body). And this continues throughout the teenage years and into his twenties. But now, with nightly journeys to either tend to his brother (who, by this time, has become a gibbering insane wreck of a human) or to find other children in his brothers age to kill, starting to take their toll, his world is starting to collapse.

So he needs to find out why he's so feeling so guilty. Maybe he's starting to find dirty, bloody clothes at home, without knowing where they came from (whenever these things happened before, he would deny it and put it in a dark corner of his mind, where it will never be remembered). Maybe he's starting to have horrible nightmares (which are actually real memories from the nightly visits to his brother or the murders he commits) and start to recognize surrounding areas. Maybe someone finds his brother and he's in the papers. Since he's completely lost his mind, and cannot talk, no one knows who he is. Maybe the PC starts to recognize the descriptions of the brutal murders of children as he reads about them in the newspaper. How will he handle the truth about his own horrifying past? What will he do? Well, that's about it. Sorry that I might have raised more questions than I have answered, but at least I've given something to thing about.

The example that you give sounds like the point where the mental balance is about 250 ? Where the 2 parts of your soul/mind/body split and become equal opposites If your not afraid to do it and you don't feel that it would ruin the game, perhaps you could do a sort of reawakening of what has happened to him before (this follows on from the post by Jonas with the killing of his brother). The human mind can forget things so well it makes me ... um .. er ... drat what was I doing at that time ....

Astaroth vs Demiurge ?

Imhotep-Ato

The Demiurge disappeared without anybody knowing where went. Astaroth should be happy about that. Now he can conjure the apocalypse without anybody being able to stop him. Why is he searching his brother? Maybe they both are one being with two different souls? If that's true Astaroth will get weaker and weaker, won't he. So what will happen if Astaroth disappears?

A very interesting question! I think the main point is that Astaroth, as well as the Demiurge, wants to uphold the Illusion.

Now that the Demiurge is gone, that is not feasible, so only one alternative exists, the Apocalypse. Why is that? Simply because humankind is awakening at an ever increasing rate as the Illusion unravels. The Apocalypse will imprison the humans again, this time in Inferno. This is a sub-optimal solution of course, but will suffice until the Demiurge is found. The downside of the plan is that the Archons are pretty upset (no place for them in Inferno) and so try to resist. On this resistance, the power hunger of the Archons, rests the hope for the final Awakening. Why is Astaroth searching for his light brother? Because Astaroth is a shadow of the Demiurge (the reverse might also be true...), and thus cannot exist without him. Furthermore, Man cannot be contained within Inferno forever. It was never meant to be a prison, merely a "mind-wipe-ward" for the dead souls. Now that Astaroth is alone, he is indeed getting weaker all the time, and his angels of death are becoming ever more rebellious. He is now under pressure to complete the Apocalypse quickly. If he waits, he will not have the strength to bring it about alone. What happens if

Astaroth disappears too? Very hard to say. I would guess that there would be an all out war between different factions of the angels of death, with the Archons interfering heavily. The outcome of THAT conflict might be the awakening of Man.

Astaroth

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I think Astaroth is desperate! If the Demiurge doesn't return soon the balance of universe calls for him to take over the role of keeping the illusion, giving him a double role, which is something he doesn't want. Even Astaroth can be scared, you see.

I like this idea and I would have to agree with it. I can just imagine Astaroth hatching some complicated plot to do good. The PCs could trace the long line of beneficial actions and contributors just to find....... Astaroth!?

Just when you thought you knew who the bad guys were...

I don't think Astaroth wants to walk the earth! If (for discussion) Astaroth is evil, who is good? Our missing jailor? Would you know that God is good (assuming Christian) if there were no Devil? Would you know you were happy if you've never been sad?

Awakened

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I heard something about so called "Dark" Awakened. Now, not that I'm an expert in theses things or anything, but aren't that a bit contradictory to what an Awakened really is? I seem to remember something that an Awakened is, in essence, his dark sides and his light sides combined. Therefore there is no difference between an Awakened that has woken up by the dark or the light path, or is there? Of course, the Awakened only knows of "their" path to waken. Awakened are, in my opinion, so far from "normal" mankind that it is useless to label them "good" or "evil". However, an Awakened who has awakened by the dark path and who wishes to awaken the rest of mankind would use pretty brutal methods, but such an entity is described in Legions of Darkness (dunno her name, but she was described in the third book in the Swedish version).

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I use and converted Dark figures from fiction to Kult. Why? Seems that in a lot of books and movies, there are plenty of humans, very powerful and evil, and if they are in Kult, they should be something like an Awakened being. But, instead of follow a neutral behavior (they became awakened because they have a extremely high mental balance, and his shadow part of soul, blends with his light side) they are pure evil, they want to destroy and consume the world, each one in his way, and, differently from the normal awakened being, they came to awaken with a extremely low mental balance, where the light and shadow parts of his soul still fight, but the shadow part, really overcame, and obliterated the light. Until now, in my opinion, I identify some of these figures, and actually, converted them to Kult. Tthey are: Mamouliam, from Clive Barker, The Damnation Game; Nix, from Clive Barker, Lord of Illusions; Bryan Drackman, from Dean R. Koontz, Dragon Tears; Lucas Buck (will be in my home page, until the end of week), from the tv series, American Gothic; And finally, Kissoon, from both Clive Barker books, The Great and Secret Show, and Everville. They are just few you can find in literature, or cinema, and they fill a gap in
Kult.

P.S.: The name of the entity you are referring, is Apollyon, but she is a true awakened, she WANT'S TO FREE MANKIND, and most Dark Awakened, would just destroy the world to do that, or plan to take the place of God (Drakman and Nix are probably the best examples).

Beyond the Pain

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So now I'm finally working on a new scenario. Well, actually I started on this back in 94, but has been lying in my bookshelf for some time. I don't know why, but suddenly I got this urge to finish it. But then I came to the end of what I had written previously, and I understood why I had ended it. I don't know how to make a decent ending to this scenario. So now I thought I might ask some help of those on this list who have a creative imagination and wants to help a pitiful soul like me. Anyway, here is the basic premise of the scenario so far...

Background
A friend of the PC's is studying medicine, and while on duty at the local hospital, he notices that the death rates for one particular surgeon is extremely high. He notifies the chief of surgeons who promise to look into it, providing the friend doesn't tell anyone about the discovery until the check-up is completed. The friend agrees, and soon after returns to his hometown for summer vacation. Unfortunately, the whole staff of surgeons are members of the sect Ordo Fratis Mortis (for more info about them, please check your copy of Legions of Darkness or whatever it's called in English), and they plan to kill the friend with voodoo magic (described in one of the rule books).

The Play
The friend arrives at the home of one of the PC's, while everyone is gathered there. It's a warm summer evening and everyone is glad to be having a vacation. The friend starts to scream as his eyes are squeezed out of their sockets, his legs are twisted a full 180 degree, and big holes appear in his chest. Then he starts to burn and dies with a whimper.
The players will hopefully be wanting to find out what happened to their friend and who might be responsible. They learn that the friend arrived back from the city where he studies just the day before, and with this in mind, they might be inclined to think that whatever happened was because something that happened in that city. Also, the autopsy report is misleading, claiming the case to be one of the rare instances of spontaneous self-combustion. The players might think that somebody has been tampering with the body, because there are no mentions of the holes in the body. Actually, the autopsy is done by a coroner who is a member of OFM, and he is used to hiding things in his reports that might lead to a discover of what OFM actually does.

When the PC's are in the other city, they can talk to class-mates of the friend and find out that he had been troubled by something he discovered while on his latest course at the hospital. At the friends dorm, they can talk to even more people, all indicating that he was worried about something, possibly something that happened at the hospital. In his room, they can find notes pointing to a surgeon who seems to be having a frightfully high death-rate on his operations (both on the operating table and in post-op). The friend also seemed to have talked to the chief of surgeons. The players might go and talk to the surgeons, all of whom deny knowledge about anything criminal or otherwise mysterious. After their talk with the surgeons, the players are marked for death by the surgeons who starts to summon inferno-creatures (Nepharites and such) to kill the players.

The players can do some research about OFM, Marbas and other things related to this case. The players will eventually realize that all of the surgeons are involved, and soon find themselves in a deadly battle for their life, and what are they to do? This is where I have come to a dead-end. I don't have any real ending, or final for my scenario. I don't want the OFM to have any kind of master plan, but I would like the players to find out that this is only a section of a lodge of OFM, and that there are more insane surgeons out there. Does anyone have any ideas of how to make the ending some sort of climax or something, but still leaving things open for the players to continue to find out the truth? If so, please mail me or the list and let me know your suggestions.

What if the local OFM, after unsuccessfully having tried to kill the PCs decides just to 'dissolve' and the surgeons leave town to join other groups of OFM? The PCs could then stumble over articles about murders similar to those committed by the local OFM, or discover secret medical journals suggesting identical 'accidents' at other hospitals. The PCs could then make it a personal aim to search and destroy the order, with tracks that could easily lead higher and higher in the hierarchy.

The Birth of an Archon

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I'm working on a scenario, and I have a lot of ideas for it, but it's at a standstill anyway.

A lictor is seeking to become an Archon, and replace the missing Chesed. Of course, Gamichicoth is opposed, and will do anything to stop this from happening. I'm thinking that the lictor will go through some sort of ritual, hanging by one foot for nine days, and at the end of this time he'll penetrate reality to a degree that he understands its basic principles, its Logos, the Word. The lictor will gain hold of Reality Magic, in the form of runes, the True Language, and this will make him an Archon.

How will Chesed's citadel reappear in Metropolis? Will this lictor now simply be Chesed, or would he have a different name, different allegiances, different responsibilities?

The player characters have to enter the world of dreams, where an anacalypse used to dream of the African country (I forget its name) that was once the center of Chesed's power and the Pan-African movement. Since the lictors had the country destroyed and all memory of it abolished, the anacalypse who used to dream it has spun off into its own private dreamings. What do these look like? Any ideas? (I see vast emptiness, mirrors that reflect things only dimly, trees that flicker for a moment and then vanish, hails of artillery fired from midair and disappearing in midair.) In the anacalypse's dream, the player characters need to remind it of its purpose somehow, make it dream the lost country back into reality. How would they do this?

How would the lictor recruit them in the first place? Would there be a way to do it without revealing too much of the Kult cosmology? How would the lictor's transformation into an Archon appear to the characters?

I think you really need to read the last two series of The Sandman (Kindly Ones and The Wake). At first I will not tell you what takes place in these stories in order not to kill the surprise. If, though, you do not manage to read them, mail me and I can brief you some points that could, I believe, prove vital to your story.

I am not sure if all of the members are aware of it, but the Death Angels are, indeed, the qabalistic demons known as The Qliphot. It happens that I have some stuff about them in hands and it is very interesting as a kult supplement.

I love "The Sandman." I consider it one of my most important creative sources, along with Jonathan Carroll, Clive Barker, H.R. Giger, Alfred Hitchcock, David Cronenberg, and a few others. I'd be curious to learn why you think those two books in particular would apply (let's not forget to preface such conversation with a spoiler warning).

I like the idea of a lictor striving for more power, it really seems like what they're up to. And he'll probably try to achieve it through a ritual also, but I don't think you can become a god by going through a ritual!

I'll try to explain my thoughts. A human can achieve extraordinary powers, as seeing through the illusion, walking through time and use magic, and they can even become gods, but they haven't transformed into something they weren't before, they've only reclaimed their godly rights, right?
By the same reason, I don't think a lictor can become anything else, as they are already at their full potential. Someone/something might have led him to believe so, maybe another lictor who want's him out of the way, or even another Archon who uses him to stir up things, or use him
as a distraction. The Archon of order (Gamichicoth?) will of course try to stop him because it isn't right and not ok'd from the Demiurge. So, what will happen? Well, I think there are two possibilities (if he succeeds).

1. Be the rituals and the worship of Chesed, Chesed will gain power (as a gods power is based on the number of followers it has), and when the ritual is completed, the lictor will not have become a Archon, but have made Chesed to rise again!

2. If the Lictor really embrace the ideas of Chesed, maybe it can transform into Chesed, but if it want's to be an Archon because it's cool and it's more powerful it will awaken Chesed, if anything.

Since time is different in Metropolis, once Chesed has risen, the citadel will suddenly stand where it's always stood. The memory (for those in Metropolis) would also be that it's always has been there, although some might have a vague feeling that it hasn't always been there, or dream about the empty place in Metropolis. If the Lictor would transform, it would be Chesed, since Chesed is more of an aspect than a creature, and the only way to become Chesed would be through self-sacrifice and total embrace of his aspect. (also meaning that it's double as hard for power hungry and selfish Lictors to perform)

Wouldn't that be a good irony, if the Lictor, instead of becoming a Archon awaken Chesed and gets punished?

I think you have a great adventure at hand, and I don't think my ideas will change the session very much (if you like them), they're not all that different.

The lictor in question is Maoro Nakemi, formerly Chesed's envoy, who went missing in the 1950s. The PCs have found him and brought him back, as in the scenario ART OF HUNGER in the DREAMWORLDS virtual sourcebook. I'm playing him as completely, fanatically loyal to Chesed and to the Pan-African movement, so I think, as you say, Nakemi will disappear, completely submerged in the over-identity of the newly generated Archon.

That's very close to what I'm doing with him. Nakemi, the lictor, ruled an African country and was the envoy of an Archon; now both country and Archon are gone, and he's not too happy about it. He has no followers, and he's going to try to coerce the PCs to help him with a "do the right thing" argument; if it fails, he has other ways.

About the resurrection of Chesed, I think it would be interesting if you could role-play the Lictor in question as being a very benevolent, very 'good', helper-kind-of-guy, as would seem appropriate to Chesed, while still managing to make him ruthless in some way. But not the usual "Bwa ha ha! -- I'm a sadist" KULT NPC. Presumably Chesed's followers are about as close to Good as KULT power-groups come.

Campaign Idea/Time

Justin

So I've been rereading posts about time after reading the latest issue of the Invisibles(comic book) and thinking about time in three dimensions and a whole host of other influences, and have been working on getting a new campaign up and running and have come up with the following (horrible grammar, I Know). The name of the campaign would be 'Memories of a life of Crime?'. Setting the game in the 1940's with the PC's being Gangsters, in a kind of hard-boiled/noir kind of atmosphere. The way I figure it, the Demiurge disappeared at the moment that they detonated the first Atomic Bomb in the Nevada Desert, causing a massive ripple in space-time. This Ripple would extend both Forward in time and Backward, Changing both the future and the past (I think this was hinted at in the Metropolis book?). I think they had an example of how our perception of history changes only its not just our perception, it's history ITSELF that is changing.

In such a localized area of time as right when the Demiurge disappeared, this could have very noticeable effects on the PCs. So I am Forcing all my players to keep Diaries (which goes hand in hand with my Alternate rules system, hopefully being posted to the list server soon and possibly cross-posted). The campaign would start in 1941-2 and would just consist of a few random adventures per year, mostly just standard Gangster stuff, but with each adventure give a slightly more supernatural element, slowly lowering the PC's Mental Balances until the actual disappearance of the Demiurge, when the true weirdness begins. After this point history itself begins to change, in the form of people 'disremembering'(at least according to the players, who have been keeping Diaries, remember) progressively
larger things until the major changes take place, like people the PCs killed having returned to life, with full memories of their public life for the last several years, and the only people who remember the way things"really" happened are of course the PCs.

Thus their illusion slowly begins to break down and eventually they end up in metropolis during some sort of massive riot/carnage that breaks up reality. So, you ask, Why odes all this happen only to the PCs? Well one possible solution is that they are all close, personal associates of Don Michael Cimmaro (a lictor or razide who is the mafia Don of the West Coast), and that all of the assignments they 'misremember' all had to do with powerful supernatural forces, that wont be affected by the Demiurges's disappearance and the subsequent ripple for many years. Just my first idea, any more would be helpful. OK so all of this was just posted to get Ideas moving in people's heads.

Campaign Idea

Ato

The campaign is centered around a some childhood friends (i.e the characters must be specially designed for the campaign, with a 10p mental block) that are tied together by a horrible experience in the past. One all of them have suppressed.

Background

Once upon a time, one of the friends had an uncle who happened to be very interested in the occult. In fact, he was a Magician, and not the parlour variant either. The child went unminded into his uncle's library one day, and came out... affected. He found a book in there that, despite the fact that he could not yet read, explained to him a ritual that would save him and his friends from something worse than death.

The toddler stole the book, and showed it to his friends, who were also contaminated with the belief that this ritual was the only thing that could save them. On one fateful night the friends convened to perform the ritual in a park not far from where they lived. With them, they brought an infant, whom they had taken from a day-care home in the neighbourhood. In the ritual the infant was butchered and selected parts eaten by the children, so binding the sacrifice's soul to theirs. Realizing, in a child's way, that they had done something really terrible, they all fled home, crying their respective eyes out. Everyone thought that the children had witnessed the abominable murder in the park, but none of them could remember anything...

Now, twenty-five years later, the friends are harvesting the "rewards" of their crime so long ago. Strange, unlikely things start to happen. They seem to attract crime and violence like magnets. They see things that cannot possibly be true.

They are, of course, one of Malkuth's experiments in forced awakening. The ritual they preformed bound the soul of the infant to theirs and gave it one mission; bring them to awakening. The soul has no real intellect, but it has some awakened powers. It can effect chance and influence peoples minds through a possession-like capacity. What it is now beginning to do is to awaken the souls of the characters the easy way...the dark way.

Campaign Outline

In the first part of the campaign, the players and characters are totally unaware of what is happening. Weird things happen. Raving religious zealots visit them. Insane bag-ladies attack them for no reason, that kind of thing.

In the second part, really nasty things start happening. Psycho killers. Unexplainable car-crashes. Drive-by shootings in their vicinity. Covert dental torture. If your players can handle it, but only then, rape and sexual abuse. About here their mental balance should start to slide. The characters should also be gaining glimpses of the past and realize that something is very wrong. Eventually they might figure out what is going on.

The third part is (most likely) finding a cure for the "curse". While the Soul is harassing them all it can. Exactly what the cure is is up to YOU, mr/miss GM. At this stage, the characters should all be classifiable as nutters. Paranoia should only begin to describe what they feel. If they are slow here, the campaign ends when the characters hits unplayable mental balances (below 75-100, depending on how good the players are). If they find the cure we move into the fourth part, the...

Endgame

In which the characters, armed with knowledge goes into the borderlands and their own fears to do battle with their own past and the Soul that is harrowing them. In one way or another they must sever the tie to the Soul, or die and be reborn to another life of terror as the Soul carries out it's mission. Or, perhaps, Salvation.

Children of the Night

sEitz-Aaron-Sunbane

When I was creating a Children of the Night character, I thought about a fear of religion symbols. What might is standing behind
these religious symbols that they can hurt a Child of the Night. The German rules say that the fear of a religious symbol is dependent on the culture of the character. But if I wanna play an American native, what religion symbol can hurt me and

what might is standing behind this.

I think that it would be the power of the bearer that is focused through the symbol. A star of David (aka The Seal of Solomon) could be held up to a vampire by a Catholic priest and nothing would happen. Conversely the same priest could hold a crucifix and if his faith was lacking, he would be dinner. The faith of the user could be seen as a focus for the Devine spark in all of us. It is not some god's power, but our own faith in our creator.

That's a difficult question. Waka-tanka (the great spirit) maybe, but I know too little of native American culture to venture into this. The symbols of native American shamanism are probably well kept secrets (if not eternally lost). Do a raid to some nearby library and see what you can find. On the other hand, I do think that the Waka-tanka usually is associated with eagles?

Call of Cthulu

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I think CoC and Kult would be a poor crossover. I'm an avid GM of both (I hardly get to play...), and I think there's a huge difference: CoC's entities are terrifying because they are so uncaring. The human race is so insignificant, that knowledge of their insignificance can drive investigators mad.

Kult is the other polarity - everything is personal. Everyone is out to get you, and you personally, not as an abstract. The purgatories are tailored to your fears and your nightmares; your disadvantages can actually shape the world.

In short, CoC is horrifying because what you do hardly matters, while Kult is terrifying because everything you do counts - usually, against you. The two are incompatible.

The one entity who could be close to the apathy of the Great Old Ones is Malkuth. In her quest to free the human race, it hardly matters if a city is wiped out, if a few people get closer to awakening. Death is, after all, an illusion. At least it's the way I play Malkuth.

True, they're extremely different. Polar opposites, even. I'm trying to create a campaign setting which combines the most depressing aspects of both worlds.

For my part, I play KULT a little more like CALL OF CTHULHU is usually played. The player-characters all have dark secrets in their pasts and plenty of personal problems, but the focuses of my campaigns are usually thwarting world-spanning conspiracies by the various evil
entities, Death Angels & Archons, discovering the true way the world works (KULT Mythos, say) and choosing a side in the Big Battle. The idea of great forces manipulating human history is more interesting to me than the personal-crisis part (not that I don't like it too).

All I have to say about my KULT/CTHULHU crossover at the moment, though, is: "Great Old Ones = Awakened."

Cosmology

Christopher Klofft

Hi! I'm new to this forum and attempting a return to Kult. So far our group has only played three sessions: the first 2 parts of a 6-part series and then a single one-shot for a bachelor party(!) In each case, the game was too much for them. So I'm

trying to revitalize the idea by starting at a much lower intensity level: there's plenty of monsters among humanity before I have to resort to icky monsters. Also, as I am a doctoral student in Roman Catholic theology with a strong background in mysticism and angelology, I may modify the cosmology somewhat to place a distant but real God into the mix (much as the Christian Gnostics did; however, though I find Gnosticism intellectually interesting, I don't buy it in my own life). Any thoughts? Has anyone else out there flirted with the idea of making God or the Demiurge more present, involved, or generically "good"? Or does that detract too much from the cosmology as offered?

Erik Growen

I don't think a benevolent Demiurge/God quite fits into the Kult cosmology all that well at all. The cosmology as it is presented attempts to avoid such easy black/white, good/evil dichotomies by using such elements as less then helpful Archons (our jailers) and 'evil' Death Angels who are tearing the Illusion, thus in a way helping us. Astaroth/Satan is presented almost sympathetically due to the loss of his 'brother' the Demiurge. There are numerous other examples in the game. The point is that there is no clear cut good or a clear cut evil. To introduce such would require a massive re-writing of the cosmological background presented in the game and would change the flavour of it as well. I do agree with starting characters at a lower intensity level and slowly build it up as they learn more of what is Really going on around them. This allows the later introduction of a higher intensity level without scaring off players right at the start.

Christopher

Thanks for your insightful answer. It helped me and my players a lot. Prior to you portrayal of the Truth, it seemed to me to be a world of black and, well, gray. A little bleak for any long-term play value. However, you have demonstrated that it is basically all gray. This makes for more interesting moral dilemmas. It's still tough for me to get used to a world view that is so utterly foreign to the way me and my players actually view the world, but because of you we have decided to play the game straight without modification.

I'm still interested in just subtly modifying the Kult cosmology to bring it a little more in line with a Judeo-Christian cosmology. This is my latest attempt. I'd welcome some helpful feedback on it. BTW, Erik, welcome back. Did grad school eat you up for awhile? (Of course, I can relate...)

A New Cosmological Synthesis
In the beginning, there was God and He established all of creation. The angels were the first spiritual beings He made and he endowed them with great power and understanding. Some of them, but only some, chose to exercise their free will apart from the Creator's plan and became angels of death, led by Astaroth. God created humans, another spiritual being like the angels, but different in their physicality. The beauty of creation in its physical form led many more of them, in fact almost all of them, to become trapped and pursue lesser goals within physical creation and forget the mysteries revealed by God. The Illusion was fabricated from this turning away.

God understood that humanity would never again after the Illusion's establishment be able to comprehend Him, so He formed the Tree of Life and manifested as the 10 Sephiroth or, as they eventually came to be called, Archons. Each represented some aspect of the full mystery of God and each was indispensable from the others. Humanity began to recognize these manifestations. From these misunderstood recognitions came the history of the many gods and goddesses throughout human history. Of course, Astaroth soon thought he understood the Creator's plan, chose 10 angels to match the 10 Sephiroth, and began to deceive humanity. Astaroth was mistaken in thinking that God had elevated angels; he couldn't understand that God and cast emanations from His very Self to guide humanity. It can be seen then that throughout all of this, God insisted on the absolute freedom of His created creatures. As humans understood one of the Archons and accepted what it stood for, it grew in power. As others were not recognized, they shrank in power. Thus, contrary to both humanity's understanding and the Archons own self-understanding, the Archons did not control or

influence humanity; they merely represented the principles of God and were made stronger or weaker by the beliefs of humanity. God, in his love for His creation, allowed Himself, manifested in the Sephiroth, to be manipulated by humanity in the hopes that they would recognize and follow their True Creator.

In the fullness of time, Messiah, the True God in yet another form, came into physical creation to help humanity back toward integrating the mystery of the Sephiroth into an understanding of the One True God. Very few recognized Him, as He expected, but He remained hidden among humanity to guide them subtly along the way. An extensive religion formed around Messiah, but this was guided by the Archons who, as explained above, were guided by what humanity wanted to believe, not necessarily the Truth of who God was.

By the time of the Enlightenment, belief in God (or gods of any imagining) waned so significantly that God in His fullness, now consistently referred to as the Demiurge by some more-informed human scholars and the Archons in their warped misunderstanding of themselves, was exiled by humanity's lack of belief. Once again, God willingly endured this exile imposed by His own creatures out of absolute love for them. With His departure, the Archon Malkuth lost her understanding of herself as the Shekinah, the Divine Presence among humanity. She lost sight of herself, but not of her mission. She turned away from manifesting among people as a religious and loving presence and turned toward the psychological and the technological, accidentally pushing God further away from humanity. With the Demiurge's disappearance, the Archons came to understand themselves as the minor gods humanity had made them. Humanity, now more lost than ever without God, starting becoming more and more entrenched in the Illusion. Certain aspects of God were so lost among humanity's belief systems that some of the Archons themselves seemed to ceased to be, casualties in what some believed was a "war" among them. Astaroth tried to follow where the Demiurge had went, but as Astaroth was merely a creature and not the Creator, his attempt to follow God into exile threatened to destroy him. Astaroth returned with no understanding of what had occurred, and now presumes God is really dead and that humanity is his for the taking, heedless of the inherent illogic of a creation without a Creator.

Humanity's only hope for ultimate salvation, for themselves as individuals and as a race, is to re-learn what they had forgotten in the formation of the Illusion. They must transcend the purely physical world and re-connect the aspects of God. They must begin with belief again, to transform Malkuth back into the Shekinah, recognize the loss of the four Archons which have vanished to bring them back into being again, and finally bring the Sephiroth back into the One God by understanding them merely as intimately interrelated aspects of God. This eventual unity of belief will far surpass in strength the deceptions of Astaroth, who will not cease to be, but will hold no more power over the world. Messiah will then be able to fully manifest Himself as God among humanity and bring about the spiritual union that was intended by God from the beginning.

JtB

I have also recently been thinking of modifying the cosmology off my Campaign world. I rather think that a strictly Kabbalistic view would suit me best. Perhaps even replacing the Archons with the Angels and Death Angels with similar. But since the ten enmanments in the Sephiroth are represented by an Archon, i don't know how to proceed.

You havn't thought of how to incorporate the Angels and Archangels of the Kabbalah? I would be interested in hearing about that.

Erik Growen

Yep, I'm back. Got a little hung up with research and what not. You have obviously put a fair amount of time into coming up with this alternative cosmology and it seems internally consistent enough. My only personal problem with it is that it is too dichotomous for my taste. I kind of prefer the grey and slightly confused cosmology presented in Kult (you know,

what would initially appear to be the 'good guys' and the 'bad guys' are not necessarily that way). By the way, have you had a chance to see the Steve Jackson game 'In Nomine'? I think you might enjoy it. It brings up a number of interesting theological points, which, if run correctly, could truly have players thinking and not just surviving. The version of cosmology you have outlined could easily be used as a framework for that game. A friend of mine has been running it and has been using parts of the Old Testament as a

guide. (i.e. a more vengeful than forgiving God, Jesus as Messiah but not a part of God et cetera) The game has provoked a number of theological debates among the players which have been quite entertaining and thought-provoking. As a group we number amongst us Catholics, Protestants, Presbyterians, Atheists and New Age/ Neo-Pagan types. It is a good thing that we are all friends! Anyway, you might want to give it a whirl.

Crossovers

Andreas Bosse Hedstrom

Hummm...... Im thinking about cross overs with adventures to Call of Cthulhu 1990s to be played with the Kult world. Just take all the numbers in % and divide them with 5. 85 will then be 17 in the Kult rules. How ' bout that? Is it a good system.

Adventures that I think will work out fine with Kult are the ones in the CoC book Secrets and some from the book The Stars Are Right!

How about Steve Jackson games In Nomine? Will adventures to that game go with Kult? Is In Nomine any god, I never played it...?

Anders

Could be interesting...especially is the players are really expecting to play vanilla CoC :)

If you feel evil, that is...

Can't say that i have tried, but once upon a time that conversion worked just fine from the third edition "Drakar och Demoner" to "Expert". So I guess it could be OK for you too.

Haven't played In Nomine, but it would be interesting to see a review somewhere...

Erik Growen

I can't say I have tried using CoC but I have mixed Kult in with Corps (an X-Filish style game) and Conspiracy X (also in the X-File style but the Corps rule system is better).

In Nomine is a game where the players take the role of either angels or demons (fallen angels) fighting to control humanity. The system itself is not that great but the game can be quite amusing. As an angel you belong to a Choir (demons belong to Bands) and serve an Archangel (or Demon Prince). God has not been heard from for quite some time so the angels have more or less been left to their own devices and interpretations of God's wishes. The Archangels do not all agree however just what those wishes are. For example some of them want to storm the gates of Hell and end Lucifer's rebellion immediately while others are more cautious and feel that an attack now would lead to defeat for the forces of Heaven. If you wish to know more you can check out the official site at: http://www.sjgames.com/in-nomine/

There is potential for use in Kult through the Seraphim I suppose, if nothing else those creatures could be made more complex by presenting them using the In Nomine definitions of the separate Choirs and the Archangels they serve. (the Archangels could be the Archons and God is the Demiurge, Lucifer is Astaroth etc...)

Dark Minions

Fireflight

I'm new to this forum and have only read some of the articles so far. All the brilliant ideas have inspired me to do some creative thinking myself, and so I stumbled on the question about the lesser entities (who are still more powerful than the players); namely Lictors, Nephariths, Razids and Despariths - I'm not sure about the spelling: I have the Swedish rules -. These together with the walking powers (Baal Reshef) and various demons, can add an interesting dimension to the playing. Unless the PCs are extremely powerful, they will invariably feel themselves being under severe pressure and, hopefully, might develop a fine sense of paranoia. When dealing with these creatures there must always be a reason for them not to kill the PCs. Some of the best adventures involve the struggle and network of alliances between the powers where the PCs are investigating one small cause of the struggle. This is where the great might be hinted at. Do not forget either that the resources at the powers disposal are immense. Cover-ups really demonstrate motions in the above levels. The aftermaths of such displays generally lead to a heavily reinforced hunt on the PCs, in which case they will need to seek protection with some other being. Knowledge of these creatures may easily be handed out via kults. Remember that a kult can be any form of society with possibly no more than, say, five members. It can all be initiated by an investigation of a power in human guise. The nature of the investigation has to depend on the kind of PCs involved.

Dr. Who in Kult

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Jason Morton: m0rpheus@OZEMAIL.COM.AU

I'm not a Dr Who fan enough to do this one up well, but it seems that one could pull some interesting fun out of it. The the good doctor is a Lictor of Geburah, and works to preserve the illusion. I'm sure there's some fun stuff there.

Jason Thompson: jason@SONIC.NET

Aww, come one... the Doctor is obviously an Awakened Entity.

FuzzyLogic: fuzzylogic@LEGO.MCIT.MED.UMICH.ED

The idea of an awakened entity is very possible, I must admit. I went for the pessimistic answer because of a couple reasons, which, while valid to me, do not eliminate the possibility of the Dr being awakened in the slightest.

1) In my tiny, dust-infested mind, awakened entities don't really concern themselves with normal humanity. They do notice when awareness are in Nirvana, and may give them a push, but in my game, being awakened means you're playing on a totally different game board than humankind (not that I've ever had a player become awakened, or played an awakened person.)

2) While going over some of the finer points of the Judas Grail, it seems common for those things we hold dear to be servants of the illusion, while the "bad guys" are trying to break the illusion. I got used to the topsy-turvy nature of things, and so automatically thought -- hmmm Dr Who? Portrayed as generally helpful and an all around good chap? Must be helping us remain imprisoned.

Ok, lets try something really strange. Again, this isn't "right" but just another warped idea of mine. Dr Who is a Lictor of Chesed, one of the lost (destroyed, absorbed, what have you) Archons. I pick Chesed because the picture depicts Chesed helping the prisoner, but never freeing him. The prison is for our own good. He may even be the last Lictor still loyal to Chesed, which might make him hunted by other Lictors through space and time.

I don't think there's anything wrong with using Dr. Who as an awakened being, or even as one of the "good guys".

Effective Combat

Thor Jarle

Is there anybody out there who can tell me how I can prepare and run a combat effectively?

JtB

You could give up dice rolling, since if you control the fight you could make it more "epic" or something. But this tends to bore the players since they feel they got nothing to come with.

Let the players roll their own dice and simply roll the other parts (enemy) dice behind your GM-screen or something (totally ignoring the results, haha!) . This keeps the illusion of randomness into the game. A fight should be fast and brutal, it tends to be a little boring if you look at each rule every time. Besides, if you're running a campaign and have your players massacred by some low-level cannon fodder, it's not a very good ending for an epic campaign. Manipulate the fights to make them interesting, but keep the illusion that it's an open ended fight.

Hope this helps a bit... Ja mata ne!

sluper

JtB's right, give up the dice...I roll all dice behind the screen when I'm GM...but I don't really care 'bout them. If I want a character to get hit, he will, no matter what the dice are telling me. And I only roll if it's necessary... The game tends to run smoother that way.

Erik Growen

To start with let me say that I agree with what the other replies have said so far. I found the combat system presented in Kult was too slow and cumbersome to keep up the pace of the action. I have switched to using the BTRC game system 'Corps' which runs much faster (in fact rolls are not even required half the time). My advice is 1) If you want to use the Kult combat system, then prior to running make out a sheet with all of the relevant bad guy statistics on it for quicker reference. You could also record a number of die rolls ahead of time and just go through them (check them off) when the action begins. 2) Find another, more fluid, combat system and convert everything over to it. It may be a pile of work to begin with, but the results may be worth it. 3) Do as the others have said and just make it up as you go, rolling behind a screen to give your players the illusion of randomness. 4) Use a mix of the methods. For example set up the sheets as in 1) but at critical times, for maximum effect, make up the results. Hope this helps.

Elohim

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I thought this meant gods, as in more than one. The correct Hebrew translation of Genesis's opening verse goes something like "In the beginning, the gods created the earth and the objects in the sky." Later Yaweh, a mischievous god, goes on to try to force all worship to him, and is punished by Isthar in the supposed ancient Sumerian account.

This is psuedo-correct. From my recollection, 'Elo' is a masculine word meaning 'god' while 'im' is a feminine ending denoting plural. From the best of my knowledge this is a special case word and is indeed singular in the same sense that human royals (and other pretentious people) use the pronoun "we" for a first person singular pronoun.

The Israelites see Yaweh as the god who was willing to care about them, and while they believed in the existence of others, they worshiped only him. Elohim might also have something to do with El Shaddai, a Babylonian war god. Unfortunately, old religions are taken apart and destroyed by the ones that succeed them, so any definite answer is lost. I, however, will go out on a limb and say that every religion today, save for perhaps the tribal ones, are distortions of previous ones. Hinduism shouldn't have a caste system, Christianity isn't about televangelism, Islam shouldn't be about bombing and killing, etc.

"My command is to love one another."-God

"What? Use your name for domination of other humans"-human

"What!? Are you even paying attention"-God

I suspect this was the typical conversation between us and divinity, which is why the heavens speak to us no more.

Endurance

Blair Lafferty

Greetings. I'm new to the RPG (played the CCG for a couple of years), and I have a question regarding endurance. How is it spent??? The 2nd ed rules are so vague as to be meaningless, unless I'm missing something. Please wake me up!

Archinquisitor Bernardo Guidoni

I only use endurance for the use of magic. For me,it's the best use of this stat, otherwise it's useless, and it slows the game. The cost for spells is detailed in the two conjurer's guides.

May you hear Da Vinci's call!

Erik Growen

I agree with you as to the vagueness of the Endurance system. It almost looks in the 1st Edition rule book to have been added as an afterthought and not really part of the system. I find that keeping constant track of Endurance just slows down the game and rarely has any effect. Personally I have chosen to ignore the Endurance stat altogether and that is what I would recommend.

Sunbane

The players lose endurance when they're doing some straining activity (like running while carrying heavy equipment) and if they get injured. I only have the original rules, and those are also very vague in nature. I had hoped that the rules

would have improved with the 2nd edition, but apparently this doesn't seem to be the case... it's another shame on Target's behalf. The first edition of KULT made me become a freeform game leader (I'm pretty much disregarding the rules), and now I actually find that I have a hard time going back to using rules in any RPG!

Extreme Mental Balances

FuzzyLogic: fuzzylogic@LEGO.MCIT.MED.UMICH.ED

It seems there is a certain point in a players mental balance that when they slide too far up or down the player becomes unplayable. I can't remember what level the book suggests. I was wondering if anyone has gone farther, and if they have taken any special measures to either portray or play someone with a really extreme mental balance?

From the News...

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The following story is drawn from the front page of the Daily Telegraph, England. I don't know about you, but I think it has certain Kultish overtones...

Floods in a city branch of NatWest bank have led to the discovery of the ancient body of a pigmy in a safety deposit box, according to staff. They say that the flood water has started to reverse the mummifying process. They were alerted to the problem when an unpleasant smell began wafting from the safety deposit box in the banks vault. Investigations led to reports that it contained a preserved ancient pygmy.

-snip-
The mummified pygmy is said to have been stored in the vaults of the NatWest on
princes street, just opposite the bank of England. A burst water main flooded its basement in
May and the branch is closed for the "foreseeable future"

-snip-
A bank spokesman refused to confirm that a preserved pygmy had been found on NatWest's premises. "We have been unable to contact the owner to open the box" he said "nobody really knows what is in it. This is all pure speculation" But he admitted that the box in question was a "large wooden one"

(The Telegraph is as respectable a newspaper as you get, and this story has been repeated on national news... do you ever get the feeling that the illusion is breaking down around you?)

An Egyptian teenager who complained of stomach pains was found to have his underdeveloped twin fetus lodged above his abdomen where it had been slowly feeding off him for the past 16 years. Doctors found an 18-cm long fetus weighing two kg with a head, an arm, a tongue and fully-formed teeth when they operated on Hisham Ragab, 16. An X-ray had shown a swollen sac had been pressing against his kidneys. Medical examination of the teeth found in the fetal mouth cavity revealed that they were those of a 16-year old, indicating that the fetus had been feeding off Ragab's cells for 16 years.

Sounds a lot like the X-Files where the agents were investigating the freak show. Things like that might explain where some of the extra human souls are going when they are reborn in the illusion and there is no room for them.

Gaia and Malkuth

Matthew R Norwood: norwoodm@MIT.EDU

I've got a question about the Illusion: in whatever supplement refers to the Gaia realm, do they clarify Malkuth's role in the creation of the Earth as we know it? The 2nd Ed rulebook states that the Illusion is actually composed of the body of Malkuth, and that she is often worshiped as the "Earth Goddess". Since she is the Sephiroth of Matter/Earth, this makes sense. What, then, is Gaia supposed to be? Does Malkuth simply mediate the relations among Elysium, Gaia and Metropolis, or does she actually provide the material for the Illusion from her own body?

Another dilemma: the Gnostic framework of Kult is pretty consistent with Gnostic mythology, but it leaves out one of the key figures: Sophia. Because she is more aware of the true structure of existence than the Demiurge, it might be argued that she would never appear in a Kult game (the "hierarchy of being" seeming to stop at the Demiurge, anything more original being beyond the game's scope). Nonetheless, it sometimes seems to me that Malkuth shares many of Sophia's qualities, lending credence to the theory that the Archons exist independent of the Demiurge and existed "before" him ("before" being a temporal descriptor and therefore irrelevant to Reality: let's say "closer to the godhead"-- well, closer in a figurative sense, "closer" being a spatial property... oy!). The "Malkuth as Sophia" theory fits in nicely with her attempts to Awaken mankind, as Sophia does in the gnostic version of the "Fall from Eden" myth when she appears to Eve as the Serpent.

Colin Neilson cneilson@GPU.SRV.UALBERTA.CA

According to the first edition of Kult, Malktuh created the illusion herself (possibly from her own body, but with creatures as ephemeral as the Archons that could mean just about anything). Gaia was introduced in Legions of Darkness (a fabulous sourcebook if you can get your hands on it). Gaia is part of the true reality. It is almost an antithesis to Metropolis, as it is the Living Earth. It is a realm where all forms of wilderness exist in all directions. It also seems to be a (or the) major source of power for passion magic (crossbreeding taps into Gaia, where anything can breed with anything else all the time for example). Not only are there the dangers of wild animals, but parts of the land itself are alive, and will consume other living things (in Fallen Angels, a patch of this living earth is said to have invaded central park). In the Second Edition, Gaia is used as raw material for the illusion, and is pretty much ignored after that. I like the idea of Gaia too much to let it be thrown away, so I don't use that version of the creation. Someone on the list said (s)he wrote a Gaia sourcebook, but I have never seen anything like that on the net.

Jason Thompson: jason@SONIC.NET

That was me! It's currently not available on the Net because it's being serialized in the fine KULT/horror RPG 'zine THE AWAKENING. I'm not exactly sure when the next issue is coming out, but I think Darrell Hardy, the Awakened One, reads this list, so... Darrell?

ALEXANDER OURTH: xandy777@USA.NET

It's a real pity that they ignored Gaia that much (as I heard it). I hope that they will find another way in the German rule books concerning this. For me Gaia is very important. Not that it just is the opposite of Metropolis, it also is important for witches—therefore I like the idea of linking it with the lore of passion - which frequently meet the characters in my games... and what would a witch be without nature. I sometimes also like to run a few games outside the city, just to get a little of this classic horror feeling (ghost haunted castles, werewolves and all those old-fashioned things), where Gaia is important, too.

Some of the characters in my game are from New Orleans, and so I decided to work out some background for this region. I came to the conclusion that it would be best to have a big presence of Gaia there. I really would miss Gaia.

Gatling Guns

Thor Jarle

How does a Gatling gun work. You cant shoot just one bullet with it? Or you cant throw damage for every single bullet. The darn sucker is firing 100 bullets per second

JtB

Are you sure that the damage value given isn't for a whole round of fire. It really does sound crazy to roll a few hundred damage rolls. Besides, a mere hit with a Gatling is probably enough to wipe out anything, or anybody from the face of the earth (or was it face of the illusion...?).

By the way, what sort of campaign are you running? I'm curious to know which purposes a minigun could serve in a horror setting.

Thor Jarle

I play a campaign where one of the PC is a cyborg, the "MIB" are watching him closely, because he is an inside spy on the rest of the PC's. One time, the PC's messed things up, and the MIB had to clean it up. And they used miniguns... They got pretty scared when their weapon that they thought was great, sucked!

Heaven?

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This is along the lines of my last big post about Heaven. I still haven't come up with a good system to handle dead people with +MB. Where do they go? What do they do? Their relative detachment from the Illusion would make them unlikely candidates for instant reincarnation (as 0MB souls might do), but I don't think they should end up in the Inferno. I like the idea that the soul's guilt is what keeps it in Hell, and +MB implies freedom from such guilt. I kind of like the idea of an empty Heaven (the Demiurge's citadel) with rotten fruit and depressed angels, which bores the newcomers so much that they decide to have another crack at the Illusion. Still, it doesn't quite seem to work. I heard some mention of the Memory Banks a while back… what are they? Do they wipe the memories of the deceased, rendering them A-Okay for recycling the same way that the tortures of the Inferno induce a voluntary discard of painful memories? If so, (in the famous words of Eric Idle)...British accent what's it like British accent?

The Memory Banks are found in the Metropolis source book. This is where souls who are about to be reborn go. They pass into the Centrifuge halls where their bodies are pulverized, and their now memory-less souls pass into the primordial sea to enter one of the foetuses found there. Due to problems with the machinery due to lack of maintenance, some memories are escaping and become free floating "Memory ghosts" (sorry, my term). Anybody who makes contact with one experiences the memory as if it were their own.

My current take on it is this: guilty souls (-MB) have embraced their animal natures, and their light Shadows call out to them to repent. Driven by this guilty conscience (the little angel on their shoulder), the soul finds its way to the Inferno (or a Purgatory contained therein) to relive its sins over and over in a cycle of useless self-incrimination. This wears thin after a few (years, decades, or millennia, depending on the person), and the sinner finally loses all sense of self in an attempt to dissociate himself from his horrible crimes (which are often exaggerated in his own psyche). Poof, instant memory/identity wipe, brought about by the soul itself and therefore taking advantage of its own latent divinity to imprison it. That pesky Astaroth!

Sounds pretty accurate to me. I think the years, decades, centuries of torment from the razides and nepharites also plays a part in the loss of memory. After enough torture, the mind just shuts down and reboots (so to speak)

Now, how about the saints and philosophers among us? Where do they get to go? They have divorced themselves somewhat from their animal needs by the time they die, so they have the opposite problem of their dark shadow calling to them to come back down to earth. Of course, if they're dead, the dark shadow may just be telling them that they missed their chances for Earthly pleasure. I think there should be some kind of symmetry to the process, so maybe these souls get pulled in the opposite direction as the sinners: they are forced to dwell on their disconnection from humanity, to get lost in abstract thoughts and ideas, eventually forgetting the concept of "self" in their attempt to become one with the universe.

Again, this sounds good to me. Sort of a Nirvana type existence. This would again wipe memory and push MB down to zero.

Okay, so according to that system death seems to push people away from MB0 one way or the other, and they get reincarnated when their MB reaches Chaos or Nirvana. This seems kind of screwy, since it means that really enlightened people are the quickest to get reincarnated with clean minds. Of course, maybe this is how it works. But it also means that no dead souls can exist in Nirvana, which is how Leghba is described in the Conjurer's guide to Death. so maybe +MB works another way:

I think the point of after death experiences is that they cause the soul to forget who they were and all events of the former life. With no memory, MB is set back at zero.

The actual MB of the wraith (let's use that term for dead souls of all varieties) doesn't get pushed away from MB0 by his environment. Instead, that environment reminds him of the disadvantages of having MB<>0. In the Inferno, the wraith is reminded of the guilt of his sins, and he is punished for them with bodily torture. He begins to long for a less sensual existence (since his senses are overloaded with pain), and he just wants a "normal life" again. Poof, his MB shoots up to 0. In Heaven, the wraith is deprived of all sensation whatsoever and is instructed to sit around and praise God all day (or something similar). The wraith begins to crave stimulation of any kind to break the monotony (to quote the Talking Heads, "Heaven... Heaven is a place... a place where nothing... nothing ever happens..."), and he wants to return to a "normal life". Poof, MB drops to 0.

A wraith who has a really strong reason to return to the Illusion right now can resist being pulled to either of these locations by ignoring his Shadow and remaining for a while as a Spectre, Spirit or Walking Dead. The light shadow works against this by trying to overwhelm the wraith with images of guilt, while the dark shadow tempts the spirit with visions of Heaven, which the wraith will see as the peaceful domicile he's been searching for for so long.

I won't quote your entire explanation. I will just comment that the idea that the after death experience returns MB to 0 through excessive stimulation according to the MB level at death makes sense to me.

Err... Isn't there a description where all the souls go in the 2nd edition? According to the Swedish 2nd edition (which

mostly sucks, in my humble opinion) there are Hell, Heaven(s) and Shadow Worlds (where souls just goes around being bored). A person with negative MB or zero MB goes to Hell or a Shadow World, a person with positive MB *can* go to a Heaven or to a Shadow World. The only clear mention as to "where" these places is is Hell, which is Inferno. However, some of those who die make contact with Nefarites/Razides and create a Purgatorium, which isn't positioned in Inferno (since it is mentioned that "Inferno is being emptied since more and more souls choose Purgatoriums instead"). This is just my opinion, based on what the 2nd Ed says.

As to how the "Memory Cleansing Process (tm)" works, your guesses is as likely to be "correct" as mine, however the main goal of Heaven/Hell/Whatever is to make.

Historical Figures in Kult

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Jason Thompson: jason@SONIC.NET

A little while back someone mention Rasputin and historical figures and their relationship to the Kult cosmology. I've used a few historical figures in the past who reemerge with new names and new identities...it seems like every lictor & awakened human my players run into have some historical identity...

One of these was a lictor, who was based on Li Ssu, a Chinese legalist philosopher who was one of the assistants to the first Emperor of China. This Emperor ruled with an iron hand, burning books, burying scholars, imposing order on all of China (sounds a bit like an Archon of Kether!). The moral basis for this power came from the Legalist philosophy that the Emperor had absolute power and Li Ssu was one of the creators of this philosophy...Li Ssu was a nefarious sort...he and a eunuch plotted to keep the Emperor's death a secret, forged the Emperor's will so that his named heir would have to commit suicide, and then ruled secretly from behind the throne until the Legalist and the Eunuch had a falling out and civil war broke out...

Well, Li Ssu (the lictor in my game) lost a book known as the "Book of a Thousand Names" known in occult circles as the "Book of a Thousand Fiends" (of course, I didn't inform the players of the latter title until later...bwahahahahaha!) which essentially was a list of all the names of Azghouls. Yeah, I know that's a headache if the characters were able to keep the book, but it was written in ancient Chinese script (two thousand years ago!) so I wasn't too worried. I do feel that giving all these bad guys a history makes their opponents a lot more interesting and a sense that the PCs are mere nobody's compared to their foes...

Someone had mentioned historical figures in Kult as antagonists and the like...and I had mentioned Li Ssu, a Legalist Philosopher ('ard as nails) and his Book of a Thousand Names...This book had recently been owned by a Japanese gentlemen. The characters were shocked to find out that this gentlemen was one General Katsuhide, a Japanese General who (fictionally) played a role in the "Rape of Nanjing" during the Second World War, and that was how he had captured Li SSu's Book of a Thousand Fiends, so that the players, when they recovered the book, had a lictor (Li Ssu), an evil awakened human (General Katsuhide) with his katana (ouch), azghouls, and human cultists all pursuing them...to make a long story short...they lost the book and their detective agency building burned down...but the point is that by adding historical events such as the Rape of Nanjing it creates a depth to the game, and really makes the characters feel as if their operating out of their depth.

I totally agree; great lictor story about Li Siu! It's a bit difficult to make lictors at the same time bloated, hissing monsters and all the Great Historical Figures of the past, but it's fun in the way that movies like THEY LIVE and SOCIETY are fun, and I think it gives some satirical bite to the game if it doesn't get too silly. In THE GAIA SOURCEBOOK, a KULT supplement written by myself and being serialized in Darrell Hardy's blood-drenched and tempting RPG mag THE

AWAKENING (plug! plug!.. ;)), I have a description of an Environmentalist lictor who for most of the 19th century was John Muir, the famous Environmentalist. Some day I'd love to do a campaign involving the 18th century in some way and having the Marquis de Sade be either a razide or an Incarnate of Gamaliel, as he appears to be in LEGIONS OF DARKNESS.

Inspiration

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Anyone out there seen a fairly cheap movie "the prophecy"? I watched last pm and it had a few cool ideas. It was about the resolution of the millenia long war between the angels, some of whom (especially Gabriel)are a bit miffed cos god gave humans souls which means he doesn't love his angels so much anymore. The only drawback was that the angels (including lucifer) looked a bit like tragically hip characters from a white wolf game. Still, I suppose if monsters are what we make them, then that is the contemporary paradigm... If any have seen it be interested to know what you think. If not, check it out.

I also saw Prophecy in the cinema, but I felt the movie should've moved slower, and the plot could have been more detailed. The idea, however, was ingenious, and I had hoped for a possible sequel. I loved how the supernatural was more dependent on acting than on special effects. The movie was a lot like recent developments in Millennium.

One of the most amazing angels ever is of course Gabriel. Our holy executioner, the Angel of Death. Just like in Prophecy, I wonder if an eternity of slaughtering has left the angel a bit touched in the head. What if a player was Muslim, and found the angel Gabriel, only to learn that the angel suffers from schizophrenia, thinks he's relaying God's word when all he's doing is listening to imaginary voices? Perhaps the other players will worry more about Gabriel's mercenary activities, if all those "condemned" by God are in fact just victims of the angel's insanity. Imagine the angel as a seraphim with blades for wings, a pair of extra hands sticking out of his cloak, a death mask nailed over his pale skin. A Nepharite/ Seraphim by all accounts. Upon approaching certain victims, the hands pull up the cloak, and Gabriel screeches out in ancient Hebrew "LOOK UPON YOUR SIN!" to which the victim looks in horror and fascination, perhaps even nostalgia, all at once. Each victim is then slain, their soul taken to a place in Inferno, a field of crosses where each crucified victim has their sin written on the crosses. "Sodomite" decks many. Perhaps another has a crucified woman with the sin

"Whore", and under her, a baby is nailed in, with the title "Original sin". The child is barely moving, but it's tongue licks its face, feeding off the mother's blood that falls. In the center of it all, there is a cross higher than the others, and it is burning. It is Jesus, and his sin is written in blazing words: "Heretic"

Millennium episodes "Lamentation parts 1 & 2" are very well done. I hope that those who have not seen these two episodes somehow manage to find them in their local area, or eventually they air in your area. If people want, I can spoil the plot and post the summaries of the episodes here.

Back to Sandman, I just took a look at Sandman the Awakening(I think that's the title), which follows the lives of the Endless, eternal beings personifying ceratin forces, after...well, after something that I don't want to spoil. Anyway, the art

is excellent, and one Endless in particular has always been fascinating. Desire, a very mischievous, dangerous, Endless, who appears as a beautiful woman or man. In the Wake or Awakening, the drawing is an excellent picture of a person who seems neither man nor woman, but would clearly be exceptionally beautiful either way. If Desire is from the realm of Passion, then Dream is from his realm, Death from her realm, Destiny from Time, Delirium from Madness, and Despair and Destruction from places not before known, then you have very interesting characters.

Just thought I'd recommend, in case you haven't kept up with releases for other games, Pagan publishing's "delta green" modern day sourcebook/setting for Call .of .Cthulhu. Not so much because it offers anything wildly different from the usual cthulhu badguys (although they are straying into non-mythos territory which might upset Lovecraft purists) rather because it is a mine of ideas and information for anyone wanting to run a game that is heavily into government conspiracies and intelligence organizations. I think I would adopt this approach when I actually get around to running Kult, professional investigators discovering that things are not as they seemed, rather than the ordinary folk have bad things happen to them in style so beloved in the movies. I think the former lends itself better to campaign play, the latter is more suited to a one-off. Anyhow, if you like worldly conspiracy, check it out.

With regard to sources of inspiration, Vertigo comics' "Hellblazer" is jam-packed full of juicy story lines, including, as its (anti)hero, the wonderfully cynical John Constantine: a magus with the ability to see beyond the illusion, and a wicked array of one-liners to cope with the Truth. Check it out: a must!

Has anyone seen the movie Event Horizon yet? If that isn't a Kult movie.. I don't know what is! (Okay, well, I really do.) anyhow.. It';s wonderful.. And very hard to describe. Please, If you can.. get out and see it.

I can second that. Definitely Kultish....

Has anyone seen the British film "Rasputin", with Alan Rickman in the title role? He seemed to portray an adept of the lores of Passion & Death, but with little idea as to the origin of his powers, a pawn in the Archon's Universal chess game. Definitely some good ideas for NPC magicians, and an example of how one man used by the Archon's can bring about the total restructuring of an entire world's ideas (through the rise of Communism after the Russian Revolution).

Did you know that Stalin had *many* doubles, who performed official party functions like receiving visiting dignitaries? Some have suggested that they were all golems. And on that note, let me close by recommending that Kult fans rent the classic 1930s French film *Golem*, about Rabbi Loew's creation. Damned if when non-animated the statue doesn't look just like a statue of Lenin. And as if that's not enough, the spell that animates the Golem is "The Oppressed Have the Right to REBEL!" No kidding! It's right there in the subtitles!

Has anyone actually ran a complete Kult story that didn't feature nasty monsters ? I'm just intrigued as to how i was done. I mean anyone can do X-Files, but capturing Kultyness without resorting to monsters or copying X-Files (or cloning the AWFUL Millenium) would really be something.

A friend of mine recently turned me on to the television series Twin Peaks. I somehow missed it when it was a first run, but a local video outlet rents the episodes. For the last week I have immersed myself in the weird wonderful world of David Lynch. Just a few extraneous thoughts, if you are looking for good mood music to Awaken by, you can do worse than picking up the soundtrack for the tv series. I also have the track for the movie, Fire Walk With Me, but I prefer the television soundtrack. Also good is the score to The Crow.

Kirlian Auras

Kalband-Clark Wallace-alastair mcwilliams-Hieronymus

Here the other day I started wondering about something........ What does the kirlian aura of a Lictor look like?? What about Archons and dark angels? And other creatures? Do such supernatural entities have any aura at all?

I had to do some research into Kirlian Auras for my game when my characters starting snapping Kirlian photos all over the place. What I found out was that a true Kirlian photo is a long-exposure process, where the object you're photoing is placed on a photo plate for minutes at a time. The Kirlian photography you find at fairs, which is point and click is a hoax. The chances of PC's getting a Lictor to sit on a photo plate for a time exposer are relatively rare, but I would image that the photo equipment is also a piece of the Illusion, and therefore could not reveal anything which would appear too unnatural or strange, unless it were an "enhanced" unit.

I'm sure that somewhere in the 1st ed there is mention of special camera equipment designed to pierce the illusion, some reference is made to kirlian photography, but I think it is seen as a dangerous experiment which draws the attention of the lictors

Cut the crap, there are some different versions you could chose, either (1) EVIL auras or (2) Neutral auras, so that they 'fit in' or (3) Lictors, EVIL auras Archons etc no Auras, they have auras, but you can't see them because of the same reason as: you can't see London if you are in Buckingham palace. It's simply to large and complex, and they might try to hide it.

Kult 2070

M. Holbrook and A. Spindler

Dedicated to the Seal Breakers

Andrew Pearce - Hitman
(Steve - "You're all mad!")

Blade - Paladins gang member and passion mage
(Theo - "Nameless has been around here, hasn't he?")

Daren Jacobson - Schoolkid and computer hacker
(James - "What's the matter, it's only my pet dog.")

Jon Mayers - Ex-army sergeant and security officer at Nakamura Trading
(Adam - "Just because I use an incinerator doesn't mean I'm a pyromaniac.")

Juan Fernando - Male escort, death dancer and twin of Nameless
(Matt - "I was only trying to be friendly.")

Nameless - Awakened human and former Paladins gang member
(Miles - "You may encounter some minor difficulties")

Simeon Wilson - Plain clothes policeman and seraphim
(Dougal - "No, of course the bullet missed me, I wouldn't be here otherwise.")

Timothy - Streetkid and Envoy of Nameless
(Nicola - "I just found it lying around, honest.")
Authors' Comments

This is intended as a further source of information for players and gamesmasters of Kult, and presumes access to and familiarity with both the role-playing game Kult and the sourcebook Legions of Darkness.

In a game with so much potential for time-travel, the authors found themselves staging adventures which passed through many different time frames. While adventures set in the past were easy as the rules covered appropriate weapons and skills, the false history of the illusion can be found in history books and the true history easily extrapolated, the future presented greater difficulty. What advances in technology have been made, what groups have risen to or fallen from power, what has happened to the illusion - all these questions and more needed to be answered.

Presented here is a brief timeline of the next 75 years including the shattering of three of the seven seals and the resulting effects, future weapons, armour, vehicles and character types as well as several new, powerful groups and organisations. These have been laid out to follow the order of the original rule book where possible to allow cross-referencing, and unless otherwise stated the rules are identical to those in the standard Kult rule book. This is intended as an easy guide for those wishing to run campaigns which may time-travel to the near future or even to run complete Kult campaigns in the near future. However, it is only a guide, so please feel free to alter whatever you wish.

The author's wish to point out that any similarity between characters and events here and real people and events in the future is entirely accidental - after all, there is no way we could really know what is going to happen, is there?

Timeline
"I am often asked when it all began. Many would say it was either with the disappearance of the Demiurge or the shattering of the first seal. For me it began in March 1996 when a young hispanic lad joined our gang. In reality, however, it began in 1978 with the birth of a pair of twins, one destined to become the envoy of a forgotten deity, the other fated to be awakened before he turned nineteen. If you have time I will tell you the tale, afterall, what is time but another facet of the illusion....."
Blade, Paladins gang member and passion mage

25th November 1978 - A pair of newborn twins were abandoned, one on the steps of a hospital, the other on the steps of a house belonging to a researcher at the Bergstrom Institute, run by Malkuth. This latter child was taken to the institute and was used for research into how to cause awakening.

29th March 1996 - The child, one of the Institutes best successes, was released onto the streets of New York after mind wiping to see if this new environment would cause further steps towards awakening. He ended up with a local gang called the Paladins who called him "Nameless".

10th December 1996 - ICP Corp performed the first human trials of prototype military cybernetics on unwilling victims.

2nd March 1997 - Nameless, already a formidable dream mage, was recruited as part of an FBI team to investigate a series of disappearances and was accompanied by a close gang friend "Blade". The trail led to ICP Corp and the Church of Eternal Hope and Fulfillment both of which were being controlled by a powerful vampire.

15th May 1997 - After a titanic struggle the vampire was driven off gaining the gratitude of the Corp and the Church which had a formidable military division. Tiphareth, impressed with the performance of Malkuth's servant sent a security officer from her company to assist and they were also joined by a lonely young computer hacker called Daren and a police officer named Simeon who was wanted by the mafia.

30th May 1997 - While in Argentina they met Juan Fernando, Nameless's identical twin who accompanied them as a helicopter pilot.

27th June 1997 - Nameless and company traced a missing friend to a tower block in central New York owned by a satanic cult who were trying to summon the true form of Gamaliel useing the power of one of the seven seals which was situated on the top floor. The building was seized by a combined force of FBI troops, Church soldiers and gang members and Nameless interupted and perverted the ritual shattering the first seal and destroying Gamaliel. The backlash from the seal awakened Nameless, while the final remnants of Gamaliel fused with Blade and turned him into a passion mage. The entire event was blotted out in the minds of most of the human race for several years, and the power of passion magic was weakened. Nameless left the group to work on ways to tear down the illusion.

18th October 1997 - While in London the group are joined by a hit-man hired by Nameless, and Nameless's envoy, a streetkid called Timothy. Simeon is killed by an assassin and becomes a seraphim trapped in an empty paradise as a result of his high mental balance, Nameless, however, summons him back to the illusion in this form.

13th December 1997 - Nameless arranges a martial arts tournament at the site of the second seal and gets Juan Martinez, the incarnate of Hareb-Serap to participate. Unknown to the incarnate, the power of the seal was such that all who die there, died the true death, so when he fell, defeated in unarmed combat by Timothy and Juan Fernando, by this point the envoy of Shiva Nataraja, Hareb-Serap was destroyed and the force of this cracked the second seal. The forces of the Death Angels and Archons united to try and destroy the forces of the awakened, Tiphareth and Malkuth, striking first against Nameless's old gang. However, the gang repulsed them using a combination of magic and superior weaponry courtesy of ICP Corp and as the battle intensified their numbers were swollen by the forces of the Church Army, many of whom gradually took to wearing gang colours, and their dead comrades in the form of seraphim.

27th January 1998 - Nameless's old friends struck once more under his guidance, this time at Togarini in the temple caves at Djeraba where the third seal was located. With difficulty they penetrated the caves and defeated Togarini's incarnate, limiting the power of death magic. His dying body fell against the third seal and rent it assunder. The forces of the awakened and their allies retreated to their enclaves, moving them into alternate realities connected to the illusion, and prepared for a long siege.

14th Febuary 1998 - The beginning of the so-called "Demon Wars". The shattering of the three seals had substantially weakened the illusion such that a greatly increased number of people could see through it and found themselves in a world largely controlled by non-human creatures. The first response was within the Catholic church where the lictors found that the procedures they had set up to excommunicate enemies could just as easily be used against them. With the power of passion and death magic curtailed and greatly outnumbered they were forced to give up control especially when the Catholic Church was lent aid in the form of soldiers called "Paladins" by an evangelical American church. Having put their own house in order and mistakenly labelling all these beings "demons" they turned their attention to other organisations where the control by lictors and razides was stronger.

1998 - 2007 - Wars raged around the world as the greatly more numerous human Catholic forces fought the better equipped forces of the Archons, Death Angels and Astaroth. The worlds population was halved in a period of 6 years. During this period, called the "Dark Years", the Catholic forces fared badly in spite of aid from angelic beings, actually seraphim summoned by Nameless. Due to its usage by the forces of the Archons and Death Angels, the internet is dismantled by Catholic forces.

27th August 2007 - ICP finished work on the first Catholic Church force with military grade cybernetics. The improved combat ability was obvious and , in spite of psychological problems in some recipients, more and more soldiers were cyberised. Work began on genetic manipulation and cloning technology.

2007 - 2025 - With the improvements in technology the forces became fairly evenly matched. The war turned into a never-ending series of small-scale conflicts in what has since been named the "Great Game", and the global population

fell to 1,100,000,000.

14th December 2025 - The first clone warrior troop is readied for action. These genetically engineered humans were vat grown to adult form over 15 months, intensively tutored over 5 years and cybernetically enhanced to form the ultimate warriors. In order to prevent development of a new species they were all made sterile and asexual, and as a by-product had no body hair.

2025 - 2032 - With a never-ending supply of clone warriors the war rapidly turned in the Church's favour and gradually each of their opponent's forces were destroyed in what were termed the "Clone Wars".

23rd March 2026 - Having finally found warriors strong enough to withstand the recoil, ICP released the first man-portable rail gun which used magnetic accelerator technology to achieve phenomenal muzzle velocity.

2nd April 2030 - ICP produced the first man-portable laser, initially these required a large power-pack but were miniaturised gradually over the following years.

14th September 2032 - The official end of the Demon Wars. The world, reduced to a population of 850,000,000, effectively became a theocracy under the Catholic Church. Although other forms of Christianity and established religions were allowed, including atheism, committees within the Catholic Church were responsible for the laws, economy and running of all countries. The only other group with a minority vote on these committees were the Paladins in recognition of their continual aid and bravery from the very beginning of the war. The struggle between the Archons, Awakened, Death Angels and Astaroth continued, at a slightly reduced pace, behind the scenes. However, the awakened and Malkuth who predominantly used human servants and had anticipated the events had been less affected by the war and consequently had gone from being underdogs to having a slight advantage. The creation of clone warriors slowed down to that required for bodyguards and elite forces.

26th November 2032 - The Vatican Edict is released outlawing abortion except that required to save the life of the mother. This extended to clone warriors such that mutant clones could not be terminated while being vat grown, although if found to be fertile they had to be rendered sterile surgically. The Edict sanctioned the termination of vampires, mages and all other "spawn of the devil" and specifically set up forces for this. The children of the night began to try and breed rapidly to prevent extermination. Rebuilding of the major cities was started.

2032 - 2055 - "The Cleansing" was achieved, the remaining mages and children of the night either were human enough and cunning enough to appear normal and avoid detection or learnt how to hide where no-one would bother them. The restoration of the cities was largely completed, but slum areas ruined by the wars remained.

30th November 2047 - So-called "thaumic-particles", given off by spirits and spells were discovered and new ways of detecting them and visualising them were researched.

24th June 2053 - The first hover-car was released, the technology subsequently being applied to lorries, bikes and even skate-boards.

2055 - 2070 - During this period called "The Restoration" further city improvements were made and the Church consolidated its position, in spite of attempts at destabilistion, such that its priests became both feared and respected everywhere.

2070 - The present day. The world population has risen to 1,500,000,000, most of whom live in large cities. The gap between the have's and have-not's, however is huge. The former live in high-rise appartments filled with technological

gadgetry, the latter in the slums, lucky if they have enough food for their next meal. In spite of technology which can, unreliably at least, detect magic and spirits, children of the night and mages still exist. In spite of the Catholic Church's armed forces, the streets of all but the best areas can be dangerous at night, and few would willingly choose to enter the slums, which the Church avoids and often break through into Metropolis. Even in the restored areas, men and women follow the paths of darkness, the only difference over 75 years previously is that they are no longer controlled by non-human powers. In truth, little but the technology and the names of the powers and people has changed.

The Abilities
Abilities work exactly the same as under standard rules apart for four differences as follows:

1) Due to either survival of the fittest in slum areas or genetic manipulation and improved early training of the well-to-do, all characters have 110 ability points to distribute.

2) Clone warrior and cyborg characters have different levels at which the cost for each step becomes three points. See the clone warrior and cyborg rules for details.

3) Abilities may be altered by cybernetic implants. See the cyvbernetics section for details.

4) All characters have an additional ability statistic called Cyberisation (Cyb) which starts at 0 and increases as the charcter gains implants. After a new implant is fitted except during character generation a d20 roll should be made and if equal to or less than the cyberisation ability, the character's mental balance drops by 5 points. If the cyberisation ability becomes greater than the characters ego they cease to function normally and either become catatonic and die or can only perform simple robot-like actions.

Advantages and Disadvantages
All advantages and disadvantages from the original rules apply, however, very few people have the disadvantage rationalist in the year 2070. A few new advantages and disadvantages are also appropriate.

Disadvantages
Cybernetic intolerance (-15)
Your immune system tends to try to reject any cybernetic implant and your psychological profile is such that they react badly to artificial enhancements. Each cybernetic implant gives an additional +0.5 to your cyberisation statistic. In addition if the roll against your cyberisation ability fails following an implant, your mental balance falls by -10 rather than -5.

Advantages
Cybernetic tolerance (+15)
Your psychological profile and immune system are such that they have only minimal problems accepting and adapting to cybernetic enhancements. Each cybernetic implant increases your cyberisation statistic by 0.5 less than is normal for that implant, but never less than 0.5 for any implant.

Machine empathy (+15)
You have a gift when it comes to using and mending hi-tech gadgets and expend only half the number of experience points to learn computers, electronics, motor mechanics and security systems skills. In addition, you also learn these skills twice as fast as normal individuals.

Skills

New Skills
We felt little need to add new skills as most things are already covered in existing skills. For interest, both cyberisation and genetic engineering should be treated as an academic medical specializations, and hoverboarding as a new agility based skill. If you feel new skills are required, then feel free to add them.

Skill Points
As already stated, education is better in 2070, and for those living on the streets, life is much tougher, so characters start with 180 skill points, unless they are clone warriors or cyborgs when they only have 150 or 165 respectively. All these figures are, of course further modified by starting mental balance as in the standard rules.

1995 to 2070 and back again
For campaigns with 2070AD characters set in the year 2070 all skills should innately be used as is (although it is notable that all vehicles except hoverboards now have autopilots of skill 10, so few bother to learn how to drive). However, for split time adventures charcters from the wrong time zone (whether from 1995 in the year 2070 or vice versa) will be at -5 effect with the following skills due to differences in technology :-

Bugging Burglary Computers
Drive vehicle Electronics Forensics
Information retrieval Motor mechanics Piloting
Radio communications Seamanship Security systems

A note on computer skills

As there no longer exists any worldwide computer network because of the risks this would pose to security, all hacking has to be done by physical entry onto the building site and either useing an on site computer or plugging in a portable computer into the system. Cybernetics has not yet progressed to the stage of total man-computer interfaces, and as such hacking is still done through computer keyboards rather than direct brain interface. It is also of note that most door locks cannot be opened through a buildings computerised security, although any alarms opening them may set off can be suppressed.

In order to prevent computer hacking becoming a long series of rolls which turns role-play into rule-play, we suggest the following system which will necessitate at maximum 3 rolls on the part of the player and a further 3 on the part of the GM. The player starts off by making a computer effect roll modified by infiltration software which is compared against the table below, the effect levels necessary for each level being determined by the GM beforehand. If an active alert is triggered then the computer will attempt a trace (trace effect versus PC computer effect modified by concealment softw are which if succesful will pinpoint the point of entry into the system), the computer if it succeeds in its trace may then virus the attacking computer (virus effect versus computer software anti-virus effect with no benefits from computer skill which if successful will virus and disable the computer being used to hack with) while standard security teams are sent to capture or kill the intruder.

Level Hacking effect
0 Sets off an active alarm immediately.
1 Sets off a passive alarm, if the hacker does not leave the system within d5 minutes (the hacker will know he has set off a passive alarm, but not how long he has), this will be upgraded to an acive alarm. In the interim the hacker has access to the most peripheral files only (e.g., basic wordprocessor and database programs, non-confidential telephone directories).
2 The hacker has access to the most peripheral files only (e.g., basic wordprocessor and database programs, non-confidential telephone directories). If they wish to access the next level up, they will set off a passive alarm (they will be aware that this will happen if they attempt it).

3 The hacker has access as level 2 but also basic security and semi-confidential information such as basic floorplans, outside security cameras, alarms on doors to cloakrooms, stores and low-level offices, low level personnel files and internal non-confidential memos. If they wish to access the next level up, they will set off a passive alarm (they will be aware that this will happen if they attempt it).

4 The hacker has access as level 3 but also to intermediate security and confidential information such as internal cameras, plans of building security, alarms on all doors apart from the most sensitive areas, basic financial information, policy documents and high level personnel files. Note, that many document files of this level and above will need to be decrypted before they can be read. If they wish to access the next level up, they will set off a passive alarm (they will be aware that this will happen if they attempt it).

5 The hacker has access as level 4 but can access all computerised security features and top secret files. The hacker will find no evidence of any higher levels.

6 Total access, including to files which are so secret they do not officially exist and security to parts of the building which are hidden and totally unlisted. For most buildings and organisations, there will not even be a level 6 to access.

Living Standard and Equipment
"What do you mean, you don't sell flamethrowers? Do you expect me to use some poxy little pistol or something?"
- Jon Mayers, ex-army sergeant and security officer at Nakamura Trading

Living Standard
The dollar is now used as the unit of global currency, and due to a recent revaluation, one dollar will buy roughly the equivalent of what one dollar would buy you in 1995 (Some may feel we say this just to prevent us from typing out whole new lists of costs. However, we feel it makes gamesmastering and playing easier and increases enjoyment of the game if both the players and the GM can actually easily equate with the value of currency that is being used.).

Therefore, the living standards are the same as given in the main rule book. However, few people have level 3, 4 or 5 due to the polarisation of society. Those in the slums will be level 1 or 2, while the better off will be level 6 or higher. It is also of note that relatively few of this second group of people live in houses in 2070, instead they use apartments and condos. Only the very rich who can afford adequate security on their own tend to live in houses, or the very poor who inhabit the remaining houses in the war-wrecked slum zones.

Equipment

Licenses
Licenses are required for all guns, but are available to any registered member of the population (i.e., those not living in the slums) for all pistols and rifles except automatic weapons and rail guns. Licenses for the latter are only available to armed forces, priests and licensed bodyguards. Licenses for military grade gel and ceramic armour are also required and are also only available to these groups.

Weapons
Modern versions of all the guns in the standard rules are available at the same price. 1995 versions in good condition will fetch about triple this amount due to the interest from collectors. Several new weapons technologies have, however, appeared.

Laser weapons use a high intensity light beam to cause damage, and will damage anything that is not invulnerable to both light and heat (although will be at -5 effect to anything invulnerable to one of these), armour also defends against lasers differently (the new LA value for armour gives effect reduction). Gamma-lasers use high energy radiation and anti-laser armour only works at half effectiveness (round down) against them and effect all who are not invulnerable to radiation, unfortunately they drain power cells at twice the rate of standard lasers and cost more.

Rail guns use magnetic acceleration technology to achieve phenomenal muzzle velocity (>1000m/s, roll a second effect for hydrostatic shock) and range, but also have massive recoil in spite of the best available recoil reduction and few apart from cyborgs and clone warriors can handle them. The pistols come in single or triple barrel versions, the latter being able to be set to fire from just one barrel or all three barrels simultaneously, while rifles only come in single barrel versions. All can be purchased as full automatics, and this function can also be toggled off if desired. As the strength and agility required is to counteract recoil rather than wield the gun, they are dependant on the firing mode used rather than the gun type. Triple barrel rail pistols are presumed to either hit or miss with all three barrels in the same body area, therefore three effect rolls are made for basic damage and a further three for hydrostatic shock, although the second two of each are at -3 effect as thay are slightly off-centre. If triple barrel pistols are used against small targets such as rats or ropes, only one bullet or one burst hits, but the user is at +3 to hit.

Advances in technology have also affected melee weapons, and for considerable expense monomolecularly edged bladed weapons and certain impact weapons weighted with depleted uranium can be purchased. The latter, of course, are quite difficult to wield.

Ammunition
Several advances in ammunition have also been made, mainly as a result of the attempts to try and eliminate the children of the night. Silver and copper tipped ammunition is commonly available, as are incendiary bullets, and, as a result of painstaking research into resins, even wood tips. Of course none of these special ammo types can incorporate the options teflon coating or full metal jacket. Also available are rounds with depleted uranium cores which give +1 effect and lowers armour absorption by two and are compatible in combination with all other ammunition types.

Sights
Smart gun technology has become available both through a direct cybernetic link or via a wearable eyepiece. This allows a direct view along the barrel with a heads up display of current ammunition type, ammunition remaining and crosshairs. This effectively doubles ranges and gives +2 to gun skill for the wearable type or +4 for a direct cybernetic link. Options can be purchased to give night sight, IR vision or thaumic radiation pickup. Standar thaumic sights to pick up spirits can also be purchased for rifles and pistols.

Armour
Several new types of armour have come into being since 1995. Kevlar 2 represents an improved form of Kevlar, while form-fitting gel armour is nearly undetectable under clothing and gives reasonable protection. Reflec armour is used to protect against laser fire and can be worn over other armour or laminated on to battle armour, but is very conspicuous. Military gel armour is a much improved form of standard gel armour but is not available to the general public, as is battle armour which consists of overlapping ceramic and hi-tech plastic plates over an environmental body suit with air filters and a reserve oxygen supply, as well as heads up displays and communication equipment in the helmet. The latter sort is rarely used as an agility and strength of 18 or more is needed to function properly in it (-1 to all skills for each point of each less), and the wearer looks barely human, however it is mechanically assisted so only half its weight actually counts towards load capacity.

While it is possible to wear multiple layers of armour if one can carry the weight, apart from reflec armour which acts fully in addition to other armour, there is a decreasing return. For each defense type, the wearer gains full benefit from the best armour type, only half the benefit of the second best of the armour types worn (round down), a third of the third best of the armour types (round down) and so on.

Another issue is that of armour integrity to combat radiation, bacterial or chemical attacks. If the wearer sustains (or would have sustained if had not been wearing other armour beneath the environmentally sealed armour) a scratch or light wound from a sharp weapon, bullet or explosion or a light or serious wound from a blunt weapon then the intrgrity is

compromised until a slap-patch is applied over the breach and the armour is at -4 for bacterial and chemical attacks and -2 for radiation attacks for each such breach. If a serious or fatal wound from a sharp weapon, bullet or explosion or a fatal wound from a blunt weapon is sustained (or would have been sustained if not for additional armour worn beneath the sealed armour) the armour integrity is compromised till formal repairs are made and the armour is at -4 against radiation and -8 against bacterial and chemical attacks for each such breach to a minimum of 0.

If the wearer of armour sustains a serious or fatal wound from an explosion or heavy weapon other than an incinerator in spite of armour (or would have sustained such a wound if they had not been wearing other armour beneath the layer of armour under consideration) then that armour is damaged and loses 1 point of armour from all armour defence values (other than ABC - see above for alterations to this) for a serious wound or 2 points for a fatal wound in the areas damaged until the armour is repaired. It is possible for multiple layers of armour to be damaged in this way by a single attack if the effect is high enough.

Vehicles
Virtually all "ground" vehicles in 2070 are hover-vehicles, even hover-boards have replaced skate boards.

Other equipment
Most other equipment is as listed in the main rules, although will be more powerful as will be the devices to detect and counteract them. Presume all ranges for bugs and communication equipment is increased by a factor of 10. Also note the alteration in cost and availability of laser cutters and active camouflage suits and the addition of thaumic detectors which can sometimes detect direction towards a spirit or active spell in a range of 500m (80% chance up to 100m decreasing by 5% every 50 metres, halve chance for small effects).

There have been many advances in computer equipment since 1995. Basic, advanced and portable computers are the 2070 equivalents of the 1995 ones but are about 100 times faster and more powerful. Hacker computers represent the ultimate in portable personal computers and are used by hackers on physical infiltration missions, they are highly expensive but hacking on anything less would give a -5 effect. Infiltration, concealment and antivirus software used for hacking is given as a cost per skill or skill bonus point as is virus and decrypter software (attempting decryption without a computer gives -10 to effect). The basic software package combines a wordprocessor, database, spreadsheet and graphics program, while the passive spy program is as listed in the main rules.

Equipment (Additions and alterations)

Guns
Weapon ava cal mag length wt cost
Laser pistol 4 - 10* 30cm 0.9kg 3800
Laser rifle 4 - 10* 120cm 3.0kg 12000
Gamma-laser pistol 6 - 5* 30cm 0.9kg 8000

Weapon ava cal mag length wt cost
Gamma-laser rifle 6 - 5* 120cm 3.0kg 25000
Rail pistol - single barrel 5 9mm 15 35cm 2.0kg 2500
Rail pistol - triple barrel 5 9mm 15 35cm 4.0kg 4000
Auto rail pistol - single barrel 5 9mm 15/30 40cm 2.6kg 4700
Auto rail pistol - triple barrel 6 9mm 15/30 40cm 5.2kg 6800
Rail rifle 5 9mm 15 100cm 7.8kg 7600
Auto rail rifle 6 9mm 30 110cm 9.2kg 9000
*Represents shots per power cell rather than ammunition

Other weapons
Weapon ava length wt cost
Depleted uranium chain 4 80 6.0 5000
Depleted uranium nunchaku 4 2x40 4.0 3500
Monomolecular ceramic knife 3 20 0.3 600
Monomolecular dagger 1 40 0.5 500
Monomolecular katana 2 100 1.2 1000
Monomolecular sabre 2 70 1.4 600
Monomolecular shuriken 1 5 0.1 500
Monomolecular throwing knife 1 15 0.2 500

Ammunition
Ammunition type Extra cost/100 rounds
Copper coated +100
Depleted uranium core +1000
Incendiary +50
Silver coated +400
Wood resin coated +600
Sights
Sight type ava wt cost
Smart gun adaptation - cyberlinked 3 0.2 1200
Smart gun adaptation - wearable with eyepiece 3 0.3 3000
IR vision for smart gun* 4 - +300
Night vision for smartgun* 4 - +600
Thaumic vision for smartgun* 5 - +1200
Thaumic sight 3 0.3 1200
* Must be bought as an option at time of smartgun adaptation, use highest ava only

Armour
Armour type ava wt cost
Battle armour 6 25.0 20000
Gel armour (form fitting - normal) 1 4.0 4000
Gel armour (form fitting - military) 6 6.0 12000
Kevlar 2 coverall 1 10.0 2250
Kevlar 2 helmet 1 0.5 150
Kevlar 2 vest 1 3.0 750
Reflec coverall 1 2.0 700
Reflec lamination for battle armour 3 +1.0 3000

Vehicles
Vehicle type (crew/passengers) cost
Hoverboard (1/0) 600
Hovercar - sedan (1/4) 10,000
Hovercar - sports (1/1) 50,000
Hovercycle (1/1) 8,500
Hovervan (1/7 or 1/2 +cargo) 17,000

Computer Equuipment
Equipment ava cost

Hacker portable computer 5 15000
Basic software package 0 200
Antivirus software 0* skill x skill x 3
Concealment software 1* skill x skill x 30
Infiltration software 3* skill x skill x 100
Virus software 2* skill x skill x 60
* plus skill divided by 5 (10 for antivirus) rounded down to a maximum of 6

Other Equipment
Equipment ava cost
Camouflage suit, active 3 6000
Laser cutter 2 1000
Thaumic detector 5 12000

Cybernetics
"No, I most definitely neither need nor want THAT cybernetically enhanced, thankyou!"
- Juan Fernando, male escort and death dancer

Cybernetics are mechanical physical enhancements which are actually implanted into the human body. This can be done either overtly, where the fact that a mechanical augmentation has been made is obvious to onlookers, or covertly, where the presence of the augmentation can only be detected by detailed medical scans. The former obviously affect the persons appearance, while the latter cost more. Both, however, can affect the person psychologically by increasing their cyberisation ability (c.f., abilities section) by the amount listed (cyb). Overt cybernetics also lower the users comeliness by the amount listed (com). Two prices are also given for overt and concealed cybernetics with seperate availabilities (ava).

Many characters may start with some cybernetic implants, the amount is not determined by their background or living standard, but the type of character played. The following table lists the maximum starting cyberisation statistic, the maximum starting value of cybernetic implants and any limitations on the type of implants.

Character Type Max. starting Cyb Max implant value Limitations
Child of the night 0 0
Clone warrior 6 100,000* Concealed only
Cyborg 10 50,000* Overt only
Human 2 20,000*
Lost one 0 0
* May also be used for plastic surgery (c.f., ability enhancements below)

Weaponry Implants
A number of weaponry implants are available for the more combat orientated. Cyberlinks consist of electronics to directly link the brain with a smartgun via receivers in the palm which will even work through armour. The ammunition transport system is designed to transport ammunition at high speed from in body depots to a gun via a plug-in hand port which is otherwise concealed, and most environmentally sealable armour have special sealable ports to enable this without compromising environmental integrity. It is of note that while a single transport system can be linked to any number of depots, it will only go to one hand which must be the one holding the grip of the gun. Ammunition depots are the stores for this system, and normal individuals can have a single intra-abdominal store for 300 rounds. Larger individuals can have additional stores sited in the thighs which can contain 200 rounds each, however the cost is still the same as the procedure to implant them is more complex. All ammunition depots can be reloaded through concealed superficial ports in 8 actions per depot, and each contains four seperate ammo banks which can be loaded with different ammunition types

and swapped between by thought command.

Cyberknives, guns and lasers represent weaponry implanted into the forearm which are deployed through the palm of the hand with the hand uplifted, and can be concealed. A single arm can contain only one of these or an ammunition transport system, apart from the cybergun where the transport system connects to the gun rather than the palm. The cyberknife is a 30cm monomolecularly edged ceramic knife, while the cybergun is equivalent to a Llama Omni which must be connected to an ammunition depot via an ammunition transport system (modified to 2070 with 1.5x range) and the cyberlaser is a laserpistol with a single power cell which can be changed through a forearm slot in 3 actions. In concealed form all of these are entirely made of ceramic and plastics and the palm port is concealed when not in use.

Armour Implants
Two types of armour can be implanted beneath the skin, the first sort is an impact resistant polymer for combat protection (FA=6, MEL=6, LA=1) while the second is strongly heat resistant (FIR=6, LA=4). Both can, of course, be implanted simultaneously. If exterior armour is also worn, the armour types combine with deminishing returns as mentioned previously. It is of note, that implanted armour like implanted weapons and ammunition does not count towards load limits.

Sense Enhancements
Currently only two of the senses, namely vision and hearing can be cybernetically enhanced. Visual systems to give the user infra-red, ultra-violet, thaumic or night vision are commonly available, as are enhancements giving variable magnification up to x25 and glare protection which prevents blindness from bright lights whether sudden or continuous. Hearing can be enhanced up to tenfold when desired with an auditory amplifier, and radio received and directly transmitted to the brain as an auditory signal, with the frequency changeable by thought. A further auditory enhancement combined with a high frquency transmitter usually implanted in the forehead gives the user a radar like extra sense up to 100m such that they can operate normally in total darkness, although the transmission does tend to disturb animals and confuse bats. Of course, this last option, can only be used if both forehead and both ears are uncovered, and can be switched on and off at will.

Ability Enhancements
All physical statistics namely strength, agility, constitution and comeliness can be enhanced. Comeliness enhancement is the easiest and cheapest, as it is done by plastic surgery rather than cybernetics, and as such does not increase the cyberisation statistic, the first point costs $1000, the second $2000, the next $4000, then $8000 and so on, the maximum being a twenty point increase over the characters starting comeliness.

Strength can be enhanced by artificial tendons, artificial muscle implants and even hydraulic muscle assistors, while agility is increased by cybernetic joints, artificial nerve and reflex relays and artificial fast twitch muscle. Constitution, on the other hand is increased by bone strengthening, cardiac boosters, oxygen extractors and artificial slow twitch muscle. All three of these abilities can be enhanced seperately at three grade to +2, +4 and +6 respectively. If a total of +6 or more is added in overt enhancements to these abilities 2 limbs have been virtually replaced with artifical limbs (arms if mainly strength, legs if mainly agility and constitution), and at +10 or more all 4 limbs have been replaced. Damage to artificial limbs still gives the same negative modifiers, but only half the endurance loss and does not count towards increasing body damage towards fatal wounds, the limb also has an innate armour rating (FA=6, MEL=8, FIR=8, LA=4). However, such wounds do not heal naturally and have to be repaired by someone with appropriate tools and cybernetics skill (scratch takes 15 minutes and costs $20 in parts and $10 in labour, light wound takes 1 hour and costs $60 in parts and $40 in labour, serious wound takes 3 hours and costs $180 in parts and $120 in labour, fatal wound takes 10 hours and costs $600 in parts and $400 in labour).

Miscellaneous Cybernetic Systems

A number of other cybernetic systems exist. Toxin and disease neutralisers filter the blood system at several critical points and halve the roll for constitution loss by such attacks as well as giving a 5 point bonus to the prevention of or recovery from wound infections. Wound repairers consist of a control unit which secretes various antibiotics and cell growth stimulating factors in response to trauma, effectively halving recovery time and cleaning the wound. Recovery enhancers break down lactic acid and other metabolic poisons as well as increasing the rate of release of glucose into the circulation when required, halving the rate of endurance loss and doubling the rate of endurance recovery. Finally, boosters act by releasing amounts of adrenalin and other similar synthetic agents into the system in response to thought command, giving +5 initiative and +1 action/round for 3 rounds. Unfortunately, boosters cause immense strain on the cardiac system while active (10 point endurance loss per round, not modifiable by recovery enhancers), and studies have shown the dangers of repeated use such that all are programmed to operate a maximum of once per hour and three times within 24 hours.

CYBERNETICS TABLE
Enhancement Cyb Com Cost- overt (ava) Cost-conceal (ava)
WEAPONRY
Ammunition depot 1.0 2 2000 (2) 6000 (2)
Ammunition transport system 1.5 2 1500 (3) 8000 (3)
Cybergun 2.0 2 1500 (3) 8500 (3)
Cyberknife 1.0 1 1000 (3) 5000 (3)
Cyberlaser 2.0 2 5000 (4) 12000 (4)
Cybergamma-laser 2.0 2 9500 (6) 17000 (6)
Cyberlink for gun 1.0 1 2000 (2) 8000 (2)
Enhancement Cyb Com Cost- overt (ava) Cost-conceal (ava)
ARMOUR
Combat armour 4.0 3 5000 (3) 13000 (4)
Heat armour 3.0 3 5000 (4) 13000 (5)
SENSE - VISUAL
Anti-glare visual protection 0.5 1* 2000 (4) 8000 (4)
Infra-red vision 0.5 1* 2000 (4) 8000 (4)
Night vision 0.5 1* 2000 (4) 8000 (4)
Thaumic vision 0.5 1* 4000 (5) 12000 (5)
Ultra-violet vision 0.5 1* 2000 (4) 8000 (4)
Visual magnification 0.5 1* 1500 (3) 7000 (3)
* To maximum of 2 comeliness modification for all overt vision enhancements
SENSE - AUDITORY
Auditory amplification 0.5 1 1500 (3) 7000 (3)
Hypersonic radar 1.5 2 8000 (5) 20000 (5)
Radio pickup 0.5 1 1000 (3) 7000 (3)
ABILITY
Agility I (+2) 2.0 2 5000 (3) 16000 (4)
Agility II (+4) 4.0 3 10000 (4) 30000 (5)
Agility III (+6) 6.0 4 18000 (5) 47000 (6)
Constitution I (+2) 2.0 2 4000 (3) 14000 (4)
Constitution II (+4) 4.0 3 8000 (4) 25000 (5)
Constitution III (+6) 6.0 4 13000 (5) 40000 (6)
Strength I (+2) 2.0 2 3000 (3) 12000 (4)
Strength II (+4) 4.0 3 5000 (3) 20000 (4)

Enhancement Cyb Com Cost- overt (ava) Cost-conceal (ava)
ABILITY (continued)
Strength III (+6) 6.0 4 9000 (4) 32000 (5)
MISCELLANEOUS
Booster 2.5 1 8000 (4) 13000 (4)
Recovery enhancer 1.5 1 6000 (4) 10000 (4)
Toxin and disease neutraliser 1.0 1 6000 (4) 11000 (4)
Wound repairer 1.5 1 7500 (4) 12500 (4)
Beyond Humanity

Presented here are three additional character types to be used alongside those for children of the night, namely lost ones, clone warriors and cyborgs. GMs and players are encouraged to allow and use non-human player charcters in Kult 2070AD adventures, especially clone warriors and cyborgs. It should be noted though that children of the night who have survived the purge will tend not to have inhuman appearnaces as this makes them all too obvious to Church forces.

While a character obviously cannot be both a child of the night and a lost one, and a clone warrior is highly unlikely to choose to become a cyborg, there is technically no reason why, for instance a clone warrior cannot become a child of the night. However, it is strongly suggested that players should not be allowed to combine two or more of these character types for reasons of game balance (of course, evil-minded gamesmasters should feel free to combine these if they so desire to create interesting non-player characters).

Clone Warriors
"Considering the fact that the average clone warrior is 140Kg of combat trained genetic engineering kitted out with the latest in cybernetic implants and weaponry, I wish those that would hunt them good luck. I suspect they are going to need it."
- Andrew Pearce, Hitman

Clone warriors represent the ultimate result of genetic engineering to create warriors capable of winning the Demon Wars for the Catholic Church. While production has been scaled down, some are still made for elite forces and bodyguards both for the Church itself and commercially to help fund further genetic research. Most clone warriors are 200cm, 140Kg, totally hairless and asexual muscular humans. However, since the Vatican Edict prevented termination of mutant clones a few non-standard warriors exist and are usually sold commercially at a slightly reduced rate. It is always ensured that all clone warriors are rendered sterile, but other than this they are entitled to the same rights and obliged to follow the same laws as any other human.

These beings are grown to full adult size in vats over a period of fifteen months. For the next five years they undergo extremely intensive training and teaching before being either sold or going to work for the church. Unfortunately, the extreme muscle development tends to cause cardiac hypertrophy and the average life expectancy is only 25 years following removal from the vat. Their limited education also means they only start with 150 skill points. However, the level at which abilities cost three points per step is different to normal humans and is above 22 for agility, strength and constitution, above 18 for comeliness, ego and charisma, above 14 for perception and above 10 for education.

All clone warriors have certain set advantages and disadvantages, although additional ones may also be allocated in character creation. They all are asexual (curse, -10) and have a very short life span (curse, -10), they are designed to be aggressive (touchy, -5) mainly due to high testosterone levels (sexual neurosis - mild satyriasis, -5. Note, this can cause major psychological problems as they are asexual) and willing to follow orders even at considerable risks to their own lives (death wish, -10), many people also fear and despise them (persecuted -10). They are, however, designed to be at their physical peak (body awareness, +20), able to continue fighting even when badly injured (endure pain, +15) and be

heavily implanted with cybernetics (cybernetic tolerance, +15).

Before allocating ability and skill points all clone warriors should roll a d20. On a roll of 19 or 20 the clone is a mutant and a further roll should be made to see what type of mutation or mutations are present with further rolls for each mutation to determine its precise nature. When this has been determined and the standard clone warrior advantages and disadvantages allocated the character should then be developed as normal.

Mutation type
If the character is a mutant clone roll one d20 and consult the chart below to determine the general nature of the mutation.
1-7 Clone has an unusual build (roll two d20 on build mutation chart)
8-12 Clone has hair (roll d20 on hair mutation chart)
13-15 Clone possesses male genitalia (roll d20 on genitalia mutation chart)
16-17 Clone has different abilities (roll d20 on ability mutation chart)
18 Reroll twice ignoring duplicates and rolls of 18-20
19 Reroll three times ignoring duplicates and rolls of 18-20
20 Clone possesses all four mutation types (roll d20 on each chart)

Hair mutation chart (roll d20)
Head hair Body hair Facial hair
Standard None None None
1-7 Scanty None None
8-11 Normal None None
12-14 Normal Scanty None
15-16 Normal Scanty Scanty
17-18 Normal Normal Scanty
19 Normal Normal Normal
20 Hirsute Hirsute Hirsute

Genitalia mutation chart (roll d20)

When present, clone warriors' genitalia are male due to the high levels of testosterone in their bodies, but the affected clones are universally sterile, although only rarely impotent. The 10 point curse "asexual" is replaced with the 5 point curse "sterile" and the clone gains an extra 5 point sexual neurosis of the player's or GM's choice.

Genitalia
Standard No visible genitalia, asexual
1-10 Very small male external genitalia (as per a newborn baby)
11-15 Small male external genitalia
16-18 Average sized adult male genitalia
19 Well-endowed - larger than average adult male genitalia
20 Very well-endowed - noticably so, even in loose clothing
Abilities mutation chart (roll d20)

This chart gives the values above which each ability step costs three ability or experience points, body mass index (BMI) to enable calculation of weight and life expectancy (LE) in years from emergence from the vat.

Agl Str Con Com Ego Cha Per Edu BMI LE

Stand. 22 22 22 18 18 18 14 10 36 25
1-3 26 26 26 18 18 16 10 4 44 16
4-8 24 24 24 18 18 18 12 6 40 20
9-14 20 20 20 18 18 18 16 14 32 33
15-16 18 18 18 18 18 18 18 18 28 40
17-18 16 16 16 18 21 18 18 21 24 48
19 12 12 12 18 26 18 20 26 20 55
20* 21 21 21 21 18 21 13 8 34 30
* Roll d10+10 on the genitalia mutation chart. If the clone has already made a roll on that chart, take the higher of the two
results.

Build mutation chart (roll d20 twice once for height and once for BMI)
Height BMI
Standard 2. 00m +/- 0
1 2. 30m +6
2-4 2. 20m +4
5-10 2. 10m +2
11-16 1. 90m -2
17-19 1. 80m -4*
20 1. 70m -6*
*To a minimum of 18

To calculate weight in kilograms from the height in metres and the BMI use the following formula : Weight (kg) = Height (m) x Height (m) x BMI
Cyborgs

"I have hacked my way into too many supposedly impregnable computer systems to trust any piece of machinery sufficiently to have it hard-wired into my body. However, there are many who do and are even proud of the fact."
- Daren Jacobson, schoolkid and computer hacker

Cyborgs whose origins stem back to the first cybernetic warriors used during the Demon Wars, represent a subgroup of people who either because they were born with physical deformities or because they had a love of technological gadgetry have replaced much of their body with cybernetic implants. They prefer overt rather than concealed cybernetics, indeed, few would have the following fitted unless forced to do so on pain of death.

Cyborg characters, like clone warriors have different levels at which abilities cost three points per step to normal humans and is above 16 for agility, strength and constitution, above 18 for comeliness, perception, education and charism and above 24 for ego. They also may possess more starting cybernetics than initial characters (see the equipment section for details), but must have sufficient comeliness that the overt cybernetics do not reduce this below 3 when the character is created. A cyborg will only ever choose to have overt cybernetics. All cyborgs start with the advantage cybernetic tolerance (+15) but the shock their appearances cause means they have the disadvantages persecuted (-10) and animal enmity (-5) in addition to any other advantages or disadvantages. Due to the time spent having cybernetic surgery and their reliance on mechanical devices, they only start with 165 skill points. Otherwise, character generation is per normal.

The Lost Ones
"I lay there, my life blood seeping into the ground around me, everything getting darker, colder and more distant. I felt the light touch of a hand against my chest, surely a pickpocket releaving me of my money even before my life had fled this

body. Then the pain started to ease and my eyes opened to reveal the face of a concerned young man. I looked down to see the blood on my shirt, the cut fabric but my body unscarred, and looked back in time to see him unfurl two white feathered wings and fly off over the city."
- Jon Mayers, ex-army sergeant and security officer at Nakamura Trading

For every action there is an equal and opposite reaction, and just as there are those destined to answer the call of darkness, others still serve the cause of light. Only partially human these are those few angelic beings who became trapped in human form when the Demiurge disappeared or upon entering this world after years of wandering in empty paradises. Many have been captured and forced to serve various masters, but a few remain free often lost, bemused and mirroring only a fraction of their former glory, becoming like the humans they live among and often unaware of their true nature. A very few, however, are humans of high positive mental balance, who after their death have been summoned back by powerful allies to continue their work, and retain all memories of their previous life.

As with Children of the Night, these creatures use powers and limitations, and powers must be bought with points from limitations or disadvantages rather than skill points. Unlike Children of the Night, however, powers increase mental balance, and the final mental balance must be +25 or greater. The mental balance may never drop below +25 for any reason. Not all disadvantages are available to a Lost One, although they may have any advantage and all have magical intuition and enhanced awareness. This generally means that a Lost One will have few skills, instead relying on their powers. If they are to be used as player characters, the player and gamesmaster must come up with a suitable background for the character.

Although angelic rather than human, their fall and entrapment in many ways mirrored that of humanity, and other than their powers and limitations they behave and act as normal humans of a similar mental balance although they often have little idea about how to perform "sinful" actions. As they have fallen, they can develop a dark shadow as their mental balance rises and can eventually become awakened into their true form, which in some senses is more powerful than their original form as they will have gained their autonomy.

Disadvantages
Not all disadvantages are available to Lost Ones, below are listed those which are suitable, the details of which can be found in the main rule book. As with other characters these lower the mental balance by the amount listed. Virtually all of these beings have a mental constriction on their past existence.

Cybernetic intolerance (15)
Depression (15)
Fanaticism (10)
Forgotten (10)
Haunted (10)
Maimed (15)
Mania (15)
Manic-depressive (20)
Mental compulsion (5/10/15) - cleanliness, clothing, mantras, memorisation, numeromania, pettifogger
Mental constriction (10)
Mistaken identity (5/15)
Mortal enemy (15)
Paranoia (15)
Phobia (5/10/15) - claustrophobia, skotophobia, rupophobia, monophobia, technophobia, troglophobia
Sexual neurosis (5/10/15) - fear and avoidance
Sexually tantalizing (10)

Wanted (5/10/15) - cults, death angels, lictors etc.

Limitations

The following limitations are available and lower mental balance by the amount shown. Details can be found in the main rule book where not specified.

Needs compassion (10) - Needs love and compassion (not necessarily sexual) to survive. For each day the character does not come into contact with someone who genuinely cares for them for a period of one hour they lose 1 point of constitution. Lost constitution can be regained at 1 point per 6 hours spent in the company of someone suitable.

Scared of unholy symbols (10) - As scared of holy symbols but affected by satanic symbols and the like.

Sensitive to darkness (15) - Requires light to survive although it need not be natural, loses 10 points of endurance per minute in total darkness and 1 point per minute in dim light (e.g., moonlight or torchlight).

Sensitive to electricity (10)

Sensitive to fire (10)

Symbol bondage (10)

Unhuman appearance (10) - As per Children of the Night but the abnormal appearance may be feathered wings, a halo or that their body continually radiates light.

Powers

Powers must be bought with points from disadvantages and limitations rather than skills. Powers raise mental balance by the amount listed and details can be found in the main rule book where not listed.

Confront darkness (15) - Allows direct will battles with creatures of darkness including all creatures of death, death magicians, anyone who has a pact with the powers of darkness and anyone with a mental balance of -200 or less. Both opponents make 3 actions at the start of each combat phase whatever the normal number of actions and initiative. Each action consists of an ego throw which is compared with the opponents, the difference in effect being used to calculate damage to the loser(scratch=1-8, light wound=9-15, serious wound=16-19, fatal wound=20+). If one opponent wins all three attacks in a combat phase they may elect to end the combat, else both opponents are locked in till one dies, although they may both be affected by outside influences.

Controlled shape change (5) - May turn from a normal human form into that of one with white feathered wings at will. This is uually combined with the power flight, although flight is only available in the winged form.

Enhanced senses (10)

Eternal youth (10) - In certain cases this may be as a young child.

Fast reactions (15)

Flight (10) - Must have the limitation of unhuman appearance (wings) or controlled shape change. Enables flight at the rate of agilityx4m per round. Flying costs 2 endurance per minute while climbing, 1 per minute while actively flying and 1 per ten minutes while gliding. Gliding, however, halves flying speed and requires suitable thermals to ride.

Healing (15) - Touching an injured or ill person while willing them to heal acts as first aid with a skill of 40 and only takes 1 action. Wounds are automatically clean following this, and an ongoing infection behaves as if treated by a doctor with the correct antibiotics. It will also enable a second roll against poisons and diseases, the most favourable result being used. This cannot be used on the character performing the healing and if used on an opiate addict will precipitate them into a physical
withdrawl syndrome.

Increased ability (15)

Infinite endurance (10)

Invulnerable to electricity (10)

Invulnerable to fire (10)

Invulnerable to poisons and disease (15) - Total immunity to all poisons and diseases including those of magical origin.

Invulnerable to radioactivity (10)

Invunerable to weapons (10/15)

Neutralise fear (10) - On speaking words of reassurance and making physical contact can give someone a second ego throw to cancel fear. This can only be used once per person per episode of fear and may not be used on the person performing theneutralisation.

Persuasive voice (10) - As commanding voice but can only be used to persuade people to commit good acts or stop doing evil ones.

Protective skin (10)

Regeneration (10)

Resistance to influence (10) - Use double normal ego to resist commanding voices, seduction, interrogation, diplomacy and all other methods of psychological inflence. Influences which cannot normally be resisted can be resisted by rolling under normal ego/2.

Telekinesis (10)

Telepathy (15)

Advantages

Lost ones must have the advantages magical intuition (cost=20) and enhanced awareness (cost=10). All other advantages are possible and increase mental balance by the normal amount. Advantages must be bought with points which would otherwise be used for skills and the final mental balance must be greater than +25.

Skills

All skills other than death magic are possible for a Lost One character, however, combat skills, burglary and the like would be unusual.

Meeting with Terror

"Aaaaaaaaaarrrggghhhhhhh!!!!"

- Unknown

Terror in Kult 2070 is dealt with as in the main rules with one slight exception. Due to the breaking of three of the seven seals, reality is now much more tenuous and all characters have an additional 20% chance to see through the illusion when shocked in addition to modifiers for schizophrenia, enhanced awareness and mental balance.

Weapons and Armour

"I agree, the ICP X-200 rail rifle is a fantastic piece of technology, but personally I prefer a sniper rifle which doesn't shatter my wrist and dislocate my shoulder every time I use it."

- Andrew Pearce, Hitman

Presented below are tables detailing the statistics for all the new weapons and armour types previously mentioned in the same format as those in the origional rules. It should be noted that due to advances in technology 2070 equivalents of 1995 guns are at 1.5x range (round down to nearest 5m).

PROJECTILE WEAPONS

Weapon	MF	Scr	Lw	Sw	Fw	RN	Load	S/A
Laser pistol	4	1-5	6-10	11-16	17+	90m	2***	4/7
Laser rifle	4	1-4	5-8	9-14	15+	250m	2***	6/9
Gamma-laser pistol****	4	1-5	6-10	11-16	17+	90m	2***	4/7
Gamma-laser rifle****	4	1-4	5-8	9-14	15+	250m	2***	6/9
Rail pistol - 1 barrel*	3	1-2	3-6	7-11	12+	70m	2	18/17
Rail pistol - 3 barrel*	3	1-2**	3-6**	7-11**	12+**	70m	2	22/21

Auto rail pistol - 1 barrel* - 1-2 3-6 7-11 12+ 70m 2 20/19
Auto rail pistol - 3 barrel* - 1-2** 3-6** 7-11** 12+** 70m 2 24/23
Rail rifle* 2 1 2-4 5-8 9+ 200m 2 22/21
Auto rail rifle* - 1 2-4 5-8 9+ 200m 2 26/25
* Does additional hydrostatic shock damage (roll each effect twice).
**Roll 3 effects, the second and third at -3 (plus a second 3 for hydrostatic shock).
***Loading time is to change power cell.
****Halve (rounding down) effectiveness of anti-laser armour
MELEE WEAPONS
Weapon Scr Lw Sw Fw RN S/A
Depleted uranium chain 1-6 7-10 11-14 15+ - 16/16
Depleted uranium nunchaku 1-5 6-12 13-15 16+ - 16/15
Monomolecular ceramic knife 1-8 9-15 16-18 19+ - 8/7
Monomolecular dagger 1-8 9-14 15-17 18+ - 8/8
Monomolecular katana 1-3 4-7 8-12 13+ - 10/10
Monomolecular sabre 1-4 5-8 9-14 15+ - 10/9
Monomolecular shuriken 1-12 13-16 17-19 20 5m 5/12
Monomolecular throwing knife 1-11 12-15 16-19 20 5m 6/12
ARMOUR
Armour FA MEL FIR LA ABC Covers
Army helmet 10 10 5 3 0 Head
Battle armour (military) 15 15 12 7 15 All body
Bullet proof vest 8 8 8 3 0 Chest and abdomen
Combat suit 2 2 5 1 0 All body except head
Fabric (heavy) 2 1 2 0 0 Varies
Gel (form fitted - normal) 7 7 6 3 0 All body except head
Gel (form fitted - military) 11 10 8 4 0 All body except head
Kevlar 10 5 5 3 0 Varies
Kevlar 2 11 8 7 4 0 Varies
Leather 3 5 5 1 0 Varies
Protection suit 0 0 15 3 15 All body
Reflec 0 0 3(+3*) 8(+8*) 0 Varies*
Riot suit 8 8 8 3 0 All body except head
*May be worn over other armour or laminated onto battle armour

Wounds and Healing

Walk in treatment centre now offer rapid treatment of most injuries. With five minutes treatment per wound, any non-fatal wound can be downgraded one level in severity, and scratches totally cured. In terms of risk of infection, any wound so treated may be classified as having been cleaned, first aid and medicine applied and treated with antibiotics. Cost for this treatment is $50 per scratch, $200 per light wound and $1000 per serious wound. More basic treatment which only halves healing time and cleans and first aids the wound costs $20, $60 and $200 respectively. Unfortunately, in spite of medical advances, fatal wounds are still fatal.

Vehicles

"Don't worry, I'm sure I can work out how to fly this thing before we crash."
- Juan Fernando, male escort and death dancer

The following represent general statistics for 2070 vehicle types. The GM should feel free to alter these slightly for

different models if they so desire. Note, that other than hoverboards all these vehicles usually have autopilot with a skill rating of 10, although they can be manually overriden if desired.

Vehicle (crew/passengers) Top speed Acceleration Manoeuv. Armour
Hoverboard (1/0) 70 0 +6 0
Hoverbus (1/40) 200 -2 -2 7
Hovercar - sedan (1/4) 270 +2 +2 4
Hovercar - sports (1/1) 400 +6 +4 4
Hovercycle (1/1) 340 +6 +5 4
Hoverlorry (1/2 +cargo) 220 -1 -1 8
Hovervan (1/7*) 250 +1 +1 5
Jet hydrofoil (1/80) 100 +5 +3 10
VTOL shuttle (1/80) 5000 +8 +6 15
* or 1/2 plus carge

Magic
"Ooops!"
- Last words of an unknown death mage

Two major additional issues affect magic in Kult 2070. Firstly, due to the destruction of three of the death angels, all passion and death magic is at -5 effect. Secondly, there is the risk of thaumic detection. All mages while casting a spell can be detected by thaumic detectors as a major magical effect, and as a minor effect for a number of hours afterwards equal to the lore rating of the spell, reduced by one hour per point of effect over the minimum required to achieve the desired goal. People who are controlled or physically altered by a spell can be detected as a minor effect while the spell is active while spirits and people possessed by them show up as a major effect.

Kult and Changeling (WOD)

Raoul Duke: jchurch@BU.EDU

I actually don't have a copy of either edition yet, but I love the concepts, and plan to pick up a copy ASAP after the holidays (Christmas shopping takes a lot out of the wallet). One thing I have noted is that it may be easier to get the desired result from Kult if your players are unaware that this is what they're really playing; to wit, I'm probably going to be running a World of Darkness game soon, to gratify the people in my gaming group who like it, but I'm going to be setting it in the Illusion, without their knowledge. And yes, I have read Jail of Darkness, and while very cool, it's not exactly what I'm going for here.

The game will work from a Changeling base, as I think a lot could be done with the cosmology, and the background and social structure make a bit more sense when you look at it as inflicted by an outside force (frex, why would any modern character willingly revert to feudalism? A few well-placed Lictor lieges along with some well-meaning dupes makes a bit more sense, to me. Also, the Fae reaction to people in Bedlam is identical to the Banal reaction to people claiming to be changelings, which is an irony I'm amazed no one seems to see).

My base premise is that the Dreaming etc is essentially a secondary Illusion, set as a precautionary measure by the Demiurge to trap anyone on the verge of Awakening into complacency (since they feel they've broken into the 'true' reality, they'll quit looking, especially if 'true reality' is a happy land full of sugarplums and beauteous maidens and so forth). The game will likely run as standard for a few sessions, as they 'awaken' into their fae seemings etc, and then I'll drop some dark hints that All Is Not As It Seems.

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1) Try to get the Kult 1st ED, not the 2nd) Buy the Legions of Darkness, it's a great book.
3) Read "Weaveworld", from Clive Barker, it looks to me, like a perfect way to get Changeling and Kult together, and the book is great anyway.
4) I myself am running (and always creating something new) a Kult campaign where I take a lot from Clive Barker books, like his Tempest dimension where the Cenobites live, or the In Ovo in Imajica (something that is around every dimension, and magician/conjurers who don't perform the portal rituals adequately can be throw there and destroyed by In Ovo creatures), or the Dream-Sea in both The Art (The Great and Secret Show, Evervile) books. The first thing I noticed, is how easy it is to open a portal to anywhere, and I changed that, making the windows, easy to do, but the portals a very hard thing to create. Maybe you should do the same or the Dreaming could be infested by conjurer's and his minions.

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My WOD gaming group has recently decided that the published rules for Mage weren't dark enough for our tastes so we modified the Conjurers guides from Kult and added that into our game. It's worked wonderfully, especially for the players that don't know anything about the Kult cosmology. I'd definitely recommend adding the Kult magic system to your game.

As for the Dreaming... you can mess with your players heads by incorporating some of the Lore of Dreams from Kult into the happy faerie dreaming.

Kult in Space

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The Beyond

The Darkest Depths-Into the Void
The planets, the asteroids, the moons. Revolving our sun, these are jewels for the Archons and Angels of Death, artifacts of incredible power. These are the "Stones of Fire" mentioned in the Bible, built by the Demiurge as pillars, supporting the Illusion. Now, these pillars are what the Corporations and nations fight for. Skirmishes occur throughout our solar system, as rusty spaceships fight each other for scraps of metal on moons and planets . Every colony on every moon is beset by shadowy stalkers, watching, guiding, or hunting. Stations on Planets constantly disappear or are ravaged, for those who tread on these celestial spheres risk the wrath of the ancient gods who settled and ruled upon these zonei. The condition and importance of each zonei follows:

Sun: The Sun is the burning gaze of the Demiurge, the Eye of Ra as known to the Egyptians. The star is a focal point of the Demiurge's power, from where the golden rays flew like arrows to destroy Sodom and Gemorrah, from where the fire of the Ark of the Covenant was taken. The Sun is the powerful force used to control the Earth's oceans and weather. All life is bound to the sun, and thus to the illusion. It is our ball and its life giving rays our chain. That which gives us life steals it in a way as well. The Sun is also the power source to the other Keys in the Illusion, the planets.

Mercury: Mercury, to us, is the spirit of invention, or magic. When Mercury is in ascendance, we begin to develop new technology, and our inner tie to the Realms of magic grows stronger. It is the call to work miracles and make machines. It is also a call that blots out all voices of caution or morality. To invent, to work magic, that is all that matters. Suddenly, people are willing to go to extremes to ger results. Forbidden technology and damning magics suddenly seem acceptable

ways to solve problems.

Venus: The Goddess, the Desire, the Sphere of Passion. The monsters of unbridled Passion once walked the acid surface here alone, separated from us by some benevolent god by clouds of burning acid. It was not enough. When Venus is in ascendance, moral inhibitions and guidelines fall away. People lose control. Fulfillment of desire, from willing or unwilling participants, is all that matters now. The creatures of Passion walk the Earth, and do evil upon us. The Colony that was set up on Venus by the Gate's Corporation now has become devoted to Passion alone, and fight like rabid animals to keep the rest of the population away from them. William Gates the 3rd, who was destined for awakening since the day he was born, his letters and title adding up to 666 in some old computer language, now lives on in the Matrix of his corporations network. Even as he sends his forces against the Colony, he realizes the part of the network below is infected by creatures of passion, and that like a cancer, it is spreading.

Moon: Lunari, Diana, Phoebe, Chandra, our closest zonei. The moon is the binding force on our minds, but also the gate to mental freedom. When the moon is in ascendance, Madness is in power. The realm of Madness often crosses with the moonlight, and those who tread in moonlit streets can find themselves trapped in the Insanity.

Mars: The Warrior, The Conflict, attended by Terror and Rout. When Mars is in Ascendance, wars breakout, and suddenly victory is all that matters. Concentration camps, nuclear devices, throwing the enemy into Hell itself is justifiable. This becomes the faceless war, where soldiers fight without seeing people, only enemies, and millions are destroyed by explosions. Neztach wants to use war to bring about stability, and healthy change which solidifies the Illusion. The Raven wants war that leads to desperation and terror, and opens the gate to Inferno. The agents of opposing sides fight battles in space in the name of one of the Masters or the other.

Jupiter: The Ruler, the King. Jove and Zeus. Jupiter is the essence of rulership, the pride of the king. When Jupiter is in ascendance, those who are dominant become more so. Any threat to their power must be eliminated. Thaumiel and Kether vie for this world, seeking to use it to create powerful governments or ruthless dictators, to bring about peace and docility to the ruling party or to tear the illusion down by taking the very necessities for living away and leaving death and poverty in their place.

Saturn: Chronos. Saturn is the binding force of Time. It holds the Illusion together by forcing us to live in the walls of linear time, heading like pigs toward our eventual slaughter, but it is also the door to freedom. Any one reborn into the Illusion automatically falls into Saturn's grasp, unless somehow prepared. When Saturn is in Ascendance, Time is dominant. If one who wants to tear the Illusion holds sway, then the gates of Time open. If one of the loyal Archons holds it, then it makes Time stable, and travelers through time are unable to return until Saturn is in the correct hands, and in Ascendance both in their realm of Time and the one they wish travel to.

Uranus: Uranus is the Father Sky, the thin shell between us and the heavens above. Uranus inspires us to reach our hands to the stars, to climb the heights and light the fires to remind the zonei of their covenant with us before all else. Uranus can either lead us into Awakening, or keep us plodding along in life, forever trying to reach the proverbial top but always failing to do so. We are Sysiphus, or we are Olympians. When Uranus is in Ascendance, people will be willing to experiment, to live, for good or for ill.

Neptune: The shallow and the depth, Neptune knows it all. Neptune is the planet that sways our Shallow, or apparent, emotions, and it is the force that plunges into the Depths of our Dreams. Neptune can control the seas of our minds, our thoughts that float around in our mind. When Neptune is in Ascendance, Dreams and Waking come together, and one may find themselves floating away into the Dream Realms.

Pluto: Darkness, Death, Despair. Hell. Pluto is the eye of Astaroth, the force of Inferno. Upon our deaths, this planet's

"gravity" in the spiritual world can drag us into Inferno, not matter how close we were to seeing the Truth. Pluto is one of the Keys to Hell's power over us. When it is in Ascendance, the world is placed into Astaroth's hands, and be assured that he walks the earth.

The Void, Beyond our Solar System.
Even in the blackness of space, every strange occurrence is rationalized away by humanity like the good little slaves to the Illusion that we are. Even in space, we realize we are doomed to this eternity of pointless tasks, forever damned to search space for something, some key to our souls that can never be obtained. We try to hide from evil, from horror, but cannot, not even on some distant rocky moon. The blackness of space is nothing compared to the blackness in ourselves. The Void connects them both, and every night we sleep our souls tumble into the darkness. Being in Space makes the mind and body shift in perception. The Void opens up the physical world to the mental one, calls to our inner fears, and unleashes them upon us. We call these living nightmares "extraterrestrial abductors", or "evil aliens", but those few that see them know that they are truly a part of us. Those who travel into the Void will be haunted by the personification of their own thoughts, so it is no wonder many ships come tumbling back to our solar system, wreckage on the waves of gravity, crashing on the shores of moons.   The black depths of space are probably forever, the eternal night of the Void are better walls for our Jail than anything made from metal or fire. Beyond our solar system lies the galaxies, planets unknown, wormholes through time, and yet still we cannot escape our masters. Those who wander the stars will find themselves forever in the grips of our Archon Masters, that every world, no matter how alien in may seem, is actually a reflection of our own Illusion. All worlds are reflections of ours, just as ours is a reflection of their's. Since we are Unawakened, we cannot grasp the idea the these true aliens are actually us, but these pieces of us are separated by Space/Time. Every world is manipulated by Lictors and Razides. You shall find them no matter how far into space you go.

Escape?
In the farthest reaches lie the Quasars, what some believe to be the farthe st reaches of this universe. They may truly be the escape holes, the gates of salvation, but who knows the infinite enemies and technologies our Masters have put between them and us? Why should one not expect to see Inferno's hoards in the depths of space? Why should one not expect the Demiurge to have placed strange forces against us, if the very physics of the Illusion were at his command? In the empty Void, there is no need for subtlety. Entering the Void, one may find themselves suddenly in Inferno, Earth, Metropolis, Gaia, or any of the other supernatural planes, without warning. Imagine suddenly seeing red skies all around, and fields of fire below, like in Doom where the moons of Mars are drawn into Hell. Or endless seas of skyscrapers. Time travel may suddenly occur as well, as unexpected worm holes throw the unweary through time and space.

"Stoop not Down, therefore,
Unto the Darkly-Splendid World,
Wherein continually Lieth a faithless Depth,
And Hades wrapped in Clouds,
Delighting in unintelligible images,
Precipitous, winding,
A black, ever-rolling Abyss,
Ever espousing a Body unluminous,
Formless,
And Void."
-The Chaldean Orcales of Zoroaster.

Kult LARP

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I was playing with the idea of managing a Kult LARP. If ye ask me the main problem is, that ye cannot use the breaking for the game, unless ye have a lot of money for special effects - and these are just like players: they don't work if ye need it! Ye will need somebody who is good with creating masks (in my concept this is not a big problem, I'm working in a theatre and I can use their know how). Another problem is the blood factor. Movie blood is very very expensive, and there is hardly a possibility to substitute it. In theatre we sometimes use thinned ketchup, but it is not easy to get that washed out again.

Practically any red liquid with a little flour in it looks a lot like blood. It's an another thing to find such a liquid that washes away easily.

So the concept will have to be totally different. For an outdoor game, there is the possibility to confront the characters with Gaia (hehe, I have a vision of a bunch of naked men covered with mud, playing some humans that now live in a symbiosis with plants). But except that, everything which is bringing the characters into reality, will be almost impossible to use in an outdoor game. So we can say, that scenes like metropolis or inferno, can only be done indoor (and this again is a matter of financial power, as it will not be easy to find suitable rooms for that). Now for the system. Hold it as easy as possible. Shock and insanity, as well as all the mental balance stuff will be the hardest chapter. I would use a good old point system. Let's say the first encounter with something supernatural just causes some confusion. The second one and the following ones will take away some kind of sanity points (as we have them in Call of Cthulhu), and when enough of these points are gone, the character is shocked. We can also use the less atmospheric version: Nepharite: '5 points terror' - Char: 'I still have 7' - Neph: 'okay, 10 points then'...

Sounds terribly whitewolfish... why not just let the players act it through? Just make sure that your players are "good" players and not munchkins.

Do I have to mention that acting out the growing insanity? I don't think so.

No, I just meant that, well, I haven't used any insanity and few mental balance rules from Kult RPG in any games and just told the players to act it all through. But again, this is just a matter of how do you want to play.

Unarmed Combat. I'd say every character can work out melee values... by comparing them, ye can say which character hit. And the difference between the values is the amount of hit pints lost. When their melee is the same, they may drag matches or something. Whatever, after they worked out combat, they should SLOWLY act it out, and avoid all dangers! Armed Combat. In close combat, we can say that a dagger causes 1,5 times the normal damage, a sword 2 times, a chainsaw 3... For guns and stuff like that, I have a nice rule that really wokes fine. Every player using fire weapons, has to get a little bag. Depending upon his talent to use a gun, he will find a certain amount of red and a certain amount of white balls. Red balls mean 'hit', white ones 'miss'. Now when he wants to shoot somebody, he just takes one of the balls out of his bag, and if it's a hit he shouts 'Nepharite Hit Magunum' or something like that. In my games a hit my a gun always is lethal, but ye can also work out damage points for the guns.

This [combat]could be possible even without comparing characteristics or such. How about colour codes - a red sash

around the arm means that the person is a really good fighter, white means that he's virtually unbeatable. Just let the players act through this too.

This actually is a good Idea, the problem I have with it, is that I wouldn't want everybody to know about my characters fighting abilities. This takes away all possibilities of bluffing: 'Oh a big bad monster with a low melee value, let's smash it'

No, I just meant that, well, I haven't used any insanity and few mental balance rules from Kult RPG in any games and just told the players to act it all through. But again, this is just a matter of how do you want to play.

Have you ever tried using BB (soft air) guns in a larp? They work pretty well, except for those really goofy looking goggles everybody has to wear.

We tried to, but the problem was that most of the players, SCs aswell as NSCs didn't even notice if they got hit or not. I am not a big fan of my red-white-ball system, but until now I haven't found anything better. I am open to all suggestions.

Hmm... that might be a problem... We have ran into that only in killer-games where there's really much action, usually in ordinary larps people have noticed the hits reasonably well. In the time before SA-guns I toyed with the idea of throwing small peabags or balls I was supposed to use it in a post-holocaust game where firearms are really lousy and inaccurate. The idea was that good shooters would be allowed to throw the thingies with their preferred hand in any way they wanted, the less accurate would have to throw them with their not-preferred hand and so on. But this wouldn't work in Kult, I suppose. More than slightly undramatic.

Magic. Tell the players who want to use magic, to work out rituals. The more detailed they are, the better. Of course it is not possible, to let the players do all the stuff described in the kult rule book (at least for my taste that would go too far). Anyway… while they are performing their ritual, the gamemaster should do a few dice rolls, and decide what will happen. I think I've covered everything now. Advantages and Disadvantages, Tributes and Powers, and stuff like that, should be worked out by the players. In my experience they tend to find out some nice rules.

Ok, I may be trying to force feed my concept of live-action rpgaming here. In my opinion rules - if there are any in the first place - should be virtually invisible. There shouldn't be any RPS-tests and neither much of comparing characteristic values or such, at least if I were designing a Kult-larp which is pretty much based on atmosphere.

As I said, the rules should be held as small as possible, and most of the game depends upon how the players act it out. It is true that it is hard to create a sinister atmosphere, when ye have to do stuff like picking balls or comparing values, but until now I found it quiet unavoidable. I used the system I introduced one issue ago in various horror roleplaying games (I have to confess that a lot of it is stolen), and the atmosphere never suffered, as there were not many occasions, where we had to do all that stuff. Nevertheless a KULT Larp will stay a book with at least 5 seals to me, until I found players with a lot of money.

One way that's way underappreciated in my opinion is to turn down the power-level so that many firefights, creatures and such are not needed, and concentrate almost exclusively on the psychological horror. Many horror-games turn out to be not very scary or atmospheric just because the characters and their adversaries are just too powerful and require a lot of game mechanics. How bout a game that's about a few ordinary people who get tangled into a some kind of extraordinary situation, that wouldn't be so big on common Kult standards, but very scary and strange in ordinary persons' standards? This would be reasonably easy to play in larp.

Firstly, for anyone looking at the special effects/make-up angle, I cannot recommend enough Chaosium's "Cthulhu Live" rules. The book offers detailed instructions on how to create make-up effects, tentacles and other nifty SFX on a budget.

Less useful is a complete, diceless (IIRC) system.

I can recommend everybody who needs to get information about SFX to go to a theatre or a film studio, and ask professionals. For example there are great effects that can easily be done with light. In a play I was recently participating, the director wanted that loads of blood slowly run down a white wall. It finally got managed by painting the blood-tears on a blue-filter and moving it down along the source of light. Theatres will also be likely to give ye requisites (if ye keep begging) and maybe even costumes, if they can make sure that they will get them back in the status they gave them away.

Now, if I were to run a Kult LARP, I would de-emphasize the supernatural aspect of the game, at least inasmuch as it would require SFX. Rather, I would focus on having a set of Kult-esque characters -- disturbed, passionate people with questionable motives and unmentionable histories. They all have dark secrets and some are working at cross-purposes with each other.

I agree, nevertheless I do not think its good to restrict yourself before knowing what is possible. In my last horror larp we had a number of astral projections done with a overhead projector and some fog machines. The motives we used were created with a computer. I had the luck that a friend is really good with digital imaging and video stuff, and they looked great. Then we also had the often used and hatred 'TV that works without electricity'. Again my friend made a cool 4 min movie with some melting heads and rotting faces, and lots of noise. Everything we needed to do is to put a sheet to the cable saying "it's not plugged in" and a NPC with the remote controller of the TV/VCR and we had a wonderful supernatural element that scared the players—hehehe, man that was fun!

Next, I would work to create a proper atmosphere -- dimly lit, oppressive, with strange noises or chaotic music. I'd probably play around with weird lighting angles and colors to give things an off-kilter look (but I'm no expert in such matters and don't know what would work). Alex mentioned indoors vs. outdoors. I would strongly recommend indoors, as it is much easier to control the environment inside your own home. (Yes, I'd run it in a home if at all possible. Again, more control than in some public rented hall or some such.)

I live in a wonderful city that has a lot of churches, gothic cemeteries, and baroque cathedrals. The atmosphere when walking over one of the hills that surround it, is more than kultish. We have dark corners and a lot of places that just fit in some industrial-kult mood. It would be a sin not to go outside. It is not easy to control the players, that's why a player group in my larps is not bigger than 10 people. The NPCs should be twice as many. I do have at least 2 co-gms that are equipped with handy's to contact me every time they find it necessary. A big part NPCs can choose player-npcs, to use when they are not busy, besides I plan some, just to play their character and run with the group(s). I myself mostly am around as shadow... the last games were too busy for me to play a role. Another thing I am going to use in me next game will be the 'I wanna'-box. It's a little box in the player's headquarter, where they shall deposit a few lines about what they are going to do the next day. This makes me much more flexible in planning. As I do many vampire the masquerade games, I take the day as time out, and so I have lots of time for planning my next steps. I also have an npc briefing after the bigger scenes, to get myself and them updated about what is going on. I have different starting places and times for the players, this is also helping a lot.

Haven't given much thought to SFX, but here's a random sampling of ideas: They should be sudden, shocking and vague -- frightening to the player, not just the character. Things like a sudden strobe light, or the sight of bloody... something, or a hideous thing with teeth, -- but never fully seen, merely glimpsed.

Well.. I have something I wanna share with ye. A character in a library full of occult books. I left him alone in there, to have a look at some of the books. He didn't know I deposed some boxes in there, and once I left him alone in there, I pressed the play button of the ghetto blaster in the other room. The tape was just running without any sound or noises for 15 minutes, and then he heard some strange scratching and knocking noises. Then came the voices. I told an npc to lock

the door, but to keep care in case of something dangerous would happen. Anyway.. then the voices started... those in his head... and they whispered horrible stuff. Then came the moaning I took from a porn tape played backwards and extra slowly. Then he heard something scratching at the door. He opened it and a dead man was lying there. He had no face, but he was bleeding out of his chest and his hands were terribly burned. The player ran away and called the other characters, but the man was gone, and there was nothing to prove that the character saw something real...

I notice that most of what people have discussed so far is the CTHULHU LIVE style of LARPing where you create a sort of 'interactive theater' experience for just a small group of players and try to scare them as authentically as possible. This is a fun-sounding way of doing it, but I am more experienced (and a fan of) the White Wolf-style LARPs based on the 'party' structure (which isn't necessarily as lighthearted as it sounds, honest).

In Finland almost all larps are free-form, just like those you described.

In this form of LARP, there are no real 'NPCs'; the idea is to get twenty to thirty people in a small space, all in character, and let the action begin with only mild DM prodding as the players attempt to accomplish their various in-character goals. It requires several weeks of planning, and a large group; basically, the DM(s) (the more the better, to handle such a mass of people) decide on the basic setting and 'plot', and then encourage people to submit KULT-style characters who would be appropriate for such an event. For example, a game might be set at 'The First Meeting of the Golden Dawn, hosted by Aleister Crowley, in the 1800s'. Or in 'A Crumbling Apartment Building In the Middle of a New Orleans Slum, On the Night of Mardi Gras.' The DMs would set up the basic premise, including a few power-factions and 'NPCs' who would need to be played by PCs (such as Aleister Crowley in the first game); but the majority of the characters are made up by the players, within the realms of what's appropriate for the scenario (i.e., no Cyborg Assassins in the 1800s... though this is KULT after all...). The DMs then work to tie together everyone's background story, so that all the characters have other people whom they know 'in character', their accomplices and enemies. Some groups might be trying to stop a cult, while others might be cultists.

Why let the players design their characters? In my opinion it will almost always make the plot much more coherent when GMs write all the characters and distribute them to the players.

True, it's often difficult tying together all the plot-threads, but usually the players will want to be involved in the 'main story' so they'll make characters which have a reasonably good motive & background story. The GM should always have the power to veto stupid character ideas, of course; when I played games like this I usually had to submit three or four characters and the GMs would pick the one they liked most. But I'd say it's definitely more fun in any RPG to play a character you've designed yourself, so if I ran a game like this I would probably let at least 75% of the players use characters of their own design. If you want to play a good guy and the character you're given at the door is a crack fiend/Heller/devil worshiper, you might not have a very fun evening, after all.

Usually the game has a 'grand conjunction' or 'big meeting' feel, and some excuse for why the different opposing groups do not immediately kill one another (i.e., they have to work together to solve some problems, they don't know what's going on, the most notorious and dangerous characters are in disguise or are protected by their flunkies, etc.) As the evening progresses (these games usually only last a few hours), 'timed' events occur, perhaps building up to some grand conclusion or apocalypse at the end of the night, and all the players in the game are forced to react to them, whether to act together for the common good (if such a thing exists) or just to take advantage of the chaos to stab Character X in the back. Most of the evening passes relatively peacefully with lots of conspiratorial talking, getting to know friends, allies and strangers, and infrequent combat, which we usually handled with some not-very-atmospheric, but nevertheless easy-to-use solution like small plastic disc guns or modified games of rock-paper-scissors. ("Okay, I'm a lictor, so in every combat I take place in I can use three 'Fiats', which beat rock, paper, _AND_ scissors unless you have 'Dodge'... oh, you say you only have three hit points?") We never stuck very close to any pen-and-paper rules system, but usually found it necessary

to use cards or something like that to keep track of attributes -- it's one thing for everyone to just role-play combat and insanity when they're with friends, but when there's a competitive element added, you have to have something more like objective rules and skills.

Depends on the maturity of the players...

Believe it or not, though this may sound somewhat dinky (Parties!... Rock-paper-scissors!...), it's incredibly fun and can be quite involving.

It's really funny fact that those "staged" games for small groups tend to be quite exotic around here, I have heard only about two or three of those being arranged. They might be much more effective in scaring the players than big free-form games, but it depends.

Players and DMs can make impressive costumes, people can do excellent acting and/or hamming it up, the setting can be well-decorated and full of music and sound effects, and the feeling of urgency, risk and power-struggling is enjoyable. It's a little difficult to do large-scale Haunted-House-type tricks like in a smaller LARP (since 20 or 30 people can't be monitored all the time without a half-dozen DMs, and the point is to create situations where the players can have fun by interacting with one another), but it's still possible to create good props and 'monsters', perhaps even to have the DMs' assistants play particularly large and threatening creatures who only show up at particular moments. For creatures which can take human form and mingle in society, as well as evil and insane people in general, this form of LARP is perfect – you never know if you're talking to a Lictor until they flash you their 'Commanding Voice' card and say 'Go shoot the private detective and don't talk to anyone on the way. Now.' To simulate the Illusion raising and lowering, people could suddenly whip out masks and props, or the DMs can simply enter the room and say "All right, Chris, Steve, you see that Bob is now a gigantic dinosaur-like creature with a metal exoskeleton and a vaguely human skull... your Mental Balances both drop 10 points." It requires plenty of imagination, so the illusion of the game experience is never perfect, but it's still got most of the good aspects of a tabletop RPG, plus the fun of getting to interact with tons of people. In the games we ran, it was often a pain to die early in the game, as you had to go off to some other room of the house and watch TV or something while you waited with the other corpses for the game to be over; but in a KULT game, you could easily have another room for the In-Character Afterlife, and PCs who had the power could walk in and out of Inferno to taunt or to fetch slaves back from beyond the grave! Of course, this sort of game is only as good as its players and DM, and it does tend to have its not-entirely-serious moments ("Aaargh!... Rock-paper-scissored to death by ASTAROTH HIMSELF! Damn!")

THE reason why I never play WW-style games.

But I wholeheartedly recommend 'em if you can get enough people together who'll take it seriously and who like KULT or other occult/horror RPGs. I've played science-fiction and space opera games using this method; other people I know have played superhero, historical drama, and horror games. I'd love to be in a KULT game like this, come to think of it. You don't get to individually tie up the players and pour maggots on them, but it has its own rewards.

I have played many LARP games based in the White Wolf World of Darkness using the mythos described in the above article. I have to agree that it is the best way I have found that doesn't require you having the budget of a small South American country. It requires the players to actually role-play *shock horror* and not just be lead by the nose through the entire LARP. Never actually tried with Kult yet but I cant see why not.... try it.. its worth it.

Kult Without Monsters

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Has anyone actually ran a complete Kult story that didnt feature nasty monsters ?

Depends what you mean by monsters really. The first scenario I ran was based on a Chill scenario published in the British RPG mag The Last Province (now sadly defunct), which was in turn based on the movie "The Hitcher". Only one monster, but a purely human one. I suppose a serial killer is probably too Millenium for you, but transposed from America to the all-too-familiar environs of the M1 motorway between London and Birmingham it worked quite well. The unfamiliar--and uncontrollable--intruding into our everyday lives is just one of many horrors that don't need to involve things with claws and fangs.

Another scenario was set largely in the nightmares of an abused child. Supernatural elements yes, but no monsters; just people and the things we do to each other. You don't have to use monsters in Kult if you don't want to. They're only metaphors after all. Figure out what the monsters in your scenario are a metaphor for, and substitute the reality instead.

I'm about to run a game for PC with positive mental balance (or not too low). I gave each PC the bisexuality (or homosexuality, player's choice) disadvantage, without any loss in mental balance (I consider that they (the PC:) fully live their condition. I'll tell you more on the game when it has been run. I can just tell you that it's a love story.

Oh, yes. Those has actually been the best ones. Both were one-timers and not part of a campaign.

In one we all were connected to a girl named Alice. We were all family or her boyfriend. Recently she had become strange (Astaroth tried to make her a new demiurge so he wouldn't have to take both roles, and thus she had BIG internal struggles when this started to arise in her conscience). She drugged herself with a strange drug just before we could get into her locked room. When we arrived she walked through the wall and we had to use the drugs also to be able to follow (after a long discussion and attempts to walk through the wall without the drug *ouch*). We tried to convince her that we loved her and that it didn't have to be this way. We succeeded. I think it was more of Twin Peaks-feeling over the game, and the same goes for the other one.

The gaming party was once again in the same family, and I was the father. The families dominating mother ('my wife') had decided that we should have this nice weekend with the caravan. While driving a deer ran up on the road and I hit it. Pieces of the deer hang from the wild-life fences we have in this country to prevent these things from happening. Some time later the police stopped and harassed us. After that we needed to fuel up and stopped at a restaurant. 'My son' (about 19 and body-building) had his first sexual experience with a waitress. After that it all repeated one or two degrees worse. We hit a pregnant Elk-cow and the kid flew through the wind-shield into the backseat of the car when the belly bursted. It lived for about 5-10 minutes looking at us, making different sounds. The police stopped us again and raped my daughter and ran a stick up my a**... Somehow I didn't fit behind the wheel and had to back my seat up. My son had become stronger and filled almost half of the back-seat. When we needed a new fuel refill it was this real disgusting gas station with a gross disgusting and fat person behind the counter who tried to get my daughter to the back room. She resisted and tried to give him a hard kick in the balls, but hit his fat hanging belly instead and he only laughed and shook it of. My son drew knife, and the other person drew a bigger one. The gross one were much better at using knife and stabbed my son

bad. We tried to help him out. I (who couldn't fight at all) shook and opened a Coke aimed at his face to distract him just after my daughter hit his head with a hard, well-placed kick, which made him sink to the floor. Unfortunately the Coke woke him up instead, and we ran for our lives to the car and drove of. The third lap around should be even worse, but we didn't have time to finish it of (it was during a convention). What we never understood was that it all were my wife's purgatory!!! The fact explains things afterwards, and didn't take anything from the feeling of the game, which definitely was Twin Peaks and MORE.

And all the monsters were human, yet unhuman.

This would be very interesting indeed, I much prefer monster-lite, and this will be the approach that I will use when I actually finally start my Kult game. I think that conspiracies are great fun for gaming, more so than schlock horror, controversially perhaps, I would argue that terror is better engendered by subtle atmosphere build-ups rather than gore and gross-out. Conspiracy is great for building paranoia and fear. Check out the wealth of ideas and devious suggestions in GURPS Illuminati source book.

Actually, My first Kult game revolved around being trapped in someone else's nightmares, and featured one monster that lasted all of about fifteen seconds. The real fear came from the fact that people had no clue what was going on, whether they were asleep or awake, and why odd things kept happening to them.

Malkuth

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Malkuth rebels against the Archons order. The methods she uses for this are, to say in the least, unpleasant. In my opinion, this bodes little good for the future. If she would succeed, she might become the new demiurge, having vanquished both Archons and Death Angels with the help of the newly awakened humans.

I do not believe Malkuth could become another Demiurge: Her goal is to destroy the Illusion and Awaken us all. Though, in my opinion, it doesn't make Her necessary "good", as we may not like any more the life we'd find in Metropolis (even if it would be easier to Awaken in such an environment)...

And in my opinion, Archons would not be the true powers in an universe where everyone is Awaken : they are more primal, more "essentials" than the Gods (i.e. us or the Demiurge): Archons are not actually Divine powers, but mere emanations of Divine energies coming from the Demiurge Himself, and for the power that He tapped from us (divine beings) to create the Illusion... Archons, to me, are mere impersonations of basics principles of the Illusion (and of the Universe to a lesser extent).

Any universe with her as a boss will not be a pleasant one to live in.

And an universe led by individual revolt, and constant innovation may be not so unpleasant, in my opinion...)

I do not agree that Malkuth is evil. I think this is exactly as an unawakened would think. What is a 100.000 deaths? They all will be born again, death is a joke in the kult universe. And more, if this increases their chances of release it is a small price to pay.

As I see it the archons and death angels are the losers in the game (in the long run, but of course that will most likely

never be covered in a campaign). Humanity is almost in the same situation as Lovecrafts old ones. Slumbering but destined to be awakened and bring their wrath on the poor losers. What does it matter if the forces of the illusion traps us for another 1000 years? That is no time at all to the immortal.

This I have to agree with, the only power out there that is helping us is Malkuth. She is my favorite Archon because of this, and because of the paradox that she represents. She is the only one that is trying to help humanity to awaken, but to awaken we have to endure situations that only a monster could put us through, insanity, monsters, murder, etc, etc. So to the unawakened she is our greatest monster, although she really isn't.

This paradox trait, which seems to run through out Kult, is one of the reasons I love the game so much. If they, whoever they might be, are helping you, its not a good thing, and if there seemingly trying to harm you in some way, its usually for the best.

But how can you tell that to someone who has just been kidnaped by some weird freaks and is about to be subjected to genetic experimentation against there will ?, you cant.

"Stone walls do not a prison make,
Nor iron bars a cage;
Minds innocent and quiet take
That for an hermitage;
If I have freedom in my love,
And in my soul am free,
Angels alone that soar above
Enjoy such liberty."
- Richard Lovelace
(Lucasta, To Althea: From Prison, st. 4)

Metaphysics

Christopher

I've been doing a bit of outside reading on the background material from which the Kult cosmology has been developed and just thought I'd share a couple book titles that might prove interesting for anyone wanting to get some deeper ideas.

Cioran, E.M. The New Gods. Translated by Richard Howard Quadrangle. New York: The New York Times Book Company, 1974. This author seems to believe some of the cosmology to be true. He belittles the Demiurge and offers some bizarre insights into death. The end of the book is a series of aphorisms. No introduction or index is included to help the reader find out just what the author is getting at, which makes the whole read that much more creepy. For French speakers here, the book was originally in French entitled "Le Mauvais Demiurge."

I was also re-reading Jeffrey Burton Russell's "Satan: The Early Christian Tradition" and his account of Christian Gnosticism (which is concise and very readable). As he presents it, the Demiurge should really be equated with the Devil (Astaroth) and the "true" God should exist, albeit in a very distant relationship to most humans. This becomes problematic in Kult if you take the Messiah, and Awakened human, to be the "real" equivalent of Jesus Christ. In Gnosticism, Jesus was sent from the true God in a form that only appeared human to impart the gnosis to humanity that they might free themselves from the Demiurge. There was no separate Devil-figure. However, in alignment with Kult, Marcion, one of the more prolific gnostic, did say the Devil and the Demiurge were two separate entities, thus confusing matters all the more. I offer this for the sake of discussion and our mutual further education.

Erik Growen

I will see if I can dig up the books here and give 'em a whirl. Another area which I find personally interesting is the Cathar beliefs that were wiped out by the Catholic church during the Albigensean Crusade (the only Crusade to take place within Europe -southern France). The Cathars held a much more dualistic view than the Catholics with the forces of Good and Evil evenly matched up and ruling separate realms. The 'Good God' held sway over the soul in heaven and the 'Bad God' held sway over our mortal bodies here on Earth (essentially Hell was right here and they were living in it). They also believed in a more personal form of worship that did not require churches or intermediaries (priests etc...) but instead every individual had an equal connection with God. Needless to say it was all very heretical to Rome and thus the bloody Crusade which wiped them out. There is an obvious possible link to Kult with the Hell on Earth analogy as well as the basic dualistic existence of the Demiurge and Astaroth.

As far as the Messiah goes, there is an interesting take on Jesus presented in the books 'Holy Blood, Holy Grail', 'The Messianic Legacy' and 'The Dead Sea Scroll Deception' the first two by Henry Lincoln, Micheal Baigent and Richard Leigh and the third written without Lincoln. In them Jesus is presented as a true Messiah ('the annointed one')in the ancient Jewish tradition of a warrior-priest, descended from the holy royal blood of Soloman and David and thus the King of Israel (This royal lineage is backed by the gospels of Matthew and Luke). If this is taken to be the truth then the Awakened human Messiah presented in Kult can be fit in quite easily. In fact an interesting story could be made around the return of the Messiah to Israel in modern times and the impact such a visit would have. (Netanyahu handing over the reins of power to the Messiah, the Arab world's reaction etc.. could be the centre of a scenario).

Christopher

I certainly don't want to offend anyone's sensibilities on this otherwise very polite forum, but as a Roman Catholic theologian, I thought I'd offer a couple of fine tunings to your exposition. Both are in regard to the Cathars. The medieval Cathars are just a very well-known revival of the persistent error of Gnosticism throughout history. It existed in many forms before them and after them and I experiencing a revival today. The Marcionites and the Valentinians are much closer to the origins of that belief system. It is not correct to say that a Crusade was launched against the Cathars. The Inquisition was. I'm not such a historical revisionist to suggest that no blood was shed in the rooting out of the Cathars, but the Inquisition should not be erroneously confused with that political machine of a few centuries later called the Spanish Inquisition. I am familiar with the titles of the texts on the Messiah, but I have not read them. I understand your explanation however. If one takes an "adoptionist" stance, that is, Jesus was a human who came to a realization of his Divine Mission and thus became the Messiah, than the Kult Messiah works just fine. However, if Jesus is the Incarnate Second Person of the Trinity , as all mainstream Christian Churches attest, than he would have to have been sent by a "good God" (now I'm speaking in gnostic terms) beyond the power of the Demiurge. It all gets very confusing very quickly...

Erik Growen

I too do not want any to take offense but I have to disagree with your assessment of the wiping out of Catharism as being part of an Inquisition. Historical fact does not support this. The Albigensian Crusade was called for by Pope Innocent III in 1208 and lasted until 1226, although the last large scale engagement took place in 1213. The call was answered primarily by troops from northern France and were led by the half-English Simon de Montfort. King Philip II took no personal part in the crusade but did urge his Barons to send men to answer the call (and capture the wealthy southern lands while they were at it - politics, as always quickly entering the field). The conflict began when a papal legate, Peter de Castelnau (a Cistercian) was murdered, probably at the hands of one of the Albigensian nobility. It was not until the blood-letting had been over for 7 years, in 1233, and Pope Gregory IX was in power that the Inquisition was called under the control of the Dominicans to root out what was left of the surviving Cathars.

Catharism was not an error in Gnosticism, but a fusing of Gnostic with Christian and Pagan beliefs by its founder Mani who styled himself an 'Apostle of Jesus Christ', the final interpreter of Zoroaster and of Bhudda.

All of this not withstanding, the basic belief system of the Cathars can be of use in Kult. It is a fairly straight forward dualistic system which believed in the coexistence of two principles, good and evil, represented by God and the Evil One, light and dark, the soul and the body, the next life and this life, peace and war, et cetera. This life was seen as inherently evil which led to the rather curious practice of suicide through starvation in order to hasten the end of this existence and bring about the next 'good' one. This was not done by all practicing Cathars needless to say.

I do not, by the way, actually believe in Catharism and I am not trying to defend it or any other faith. I do not pretend to be a theologian, but I am a historian and a political scientist who is trying to present the historical record of the event and the Cathar faith as accurately as possible.

By the way, I am quite enjoying the various lines of discussion that you have brought up. It makes the forum a much more interesting place to check out. It has been sorely lacking in the last few months.

Christopher

Thanks for the response. Pending checking some facts on my side, I concede to your presentation of the use of a Crusade and the Inquisition regarding the Cathars. I must still clarify a bit on the point of Catharist belief however. I think a certain misunderstanding crept in: I wasn't saying that Catharism was an error in Gnosticism (it's about as gnostic as you can get), but rather that it was an error in the Truth (understood from the medieval' point of view or, as for myself, the believers' point of view). I can only suspect that Mani borrowed his name from the 4th c. Mani, founder of the Manichaeans. Where did you get the idea that the medieval

Mani would have considered himself an interpreter of the Buddha? It seems strange that any word of that philosophy would have reached so far west. Bringing this back to Kult, straight Gnosticism seems to me to still be problematic. First, the Kult cosmology has fused Gnosticism and the kabbalah, which complicates matters. (Have you read "The Dark Arts," BTW?) But even from a solely gnostic view, the spiritual or good principle wants to help humanity. The Demiurge however fabricated the Illusion and then (possibly) left humanity to suffer under Astaroth. The Demiurge did not offer any "gnosis" to help humanity. Furthermore, I'm still bothered by this Messiah question...

Metropolis

Mike Tilly: tilly@algonet.se

This is a question for those of you who have the Metropolis book. Don't you think it's too violent? Sure violence belongs in Kult, but almost every episode in Metropolis involves enough blood and body parts for a whole group of splatter movie fans.

I've been writing some of my own episodes, where I try to give the city of cities a mystical feeling. Far from everyone is "my" Metropolis is a violent, mad enemy who wants to kill you in some sick and gory way. If the episode is involves violence, I try to involve something extraordinary.

Mikael: micke@NETG.SE

I can't but agree with you. The Metropolis book doesn't fit very well into my view on the Kult setting. Too much violence, too much gore... where's the beauty? My view on Metropolis is a place of stunning beauty, which also is extremely

dangerous, not because there are psychopathic maniacs hiding behind every corner waiting for someone to kill, but because it differs so much from the "normal" world (Elysium) that it might well drive people mad in no time. In general, I think that Kult should be more mysteries and less gore... but then, when there's violence, there should be lots of it, and no sparing the nasty bits.

Mood Music for Kult

blair lafferty: suckdaddy@ROCKETMAIL.COM

I'm just wondering what kind of music people listen to while playing KULT, and why. I know the kind of music usually depends on the individuals in the group, and that some groups don't use background music at all. With these considerations in mind please let me know what you like hearing when you play. Although I don't actually have a group of players right now, I think I would play these CDs if I did:

-The Shining soundtrack
-Eraserhead soundtrack
-The Residents; "Hell", "The Commercial Album"
-Lou Reed; "Metal Machine Music"
-SWANS; "Soundtracks For the Blind", "Body To Body, Job To Job"

Joaquim Gandara claw@LORDS.COM

Well, I often use background music for my group of players, and when I do, it's the following;
-- Anything with Nine Inch Nails, preferrably "The Downward Spiral", "Further Down the Spiral" and "Broken"
-- Some Marilyn Manson and Ministry
-- Type O Negative; "October Rust"
-- Lost Highway soundtrack
-- Maybe some heavy metal, like Megadeth, from time to time as well.

Mike Tilly tilly@algonet.se
The Reanimator soundtrack is nice too...

mikael.schonenberg@netg.se

Can't say I'm their biggest fan, but Frontline Assembly has some lyrics that's definitely in the spirit of Kult RPG, and as to the music... well I believe it's quite ok, at least in violent episodes.

Rlightning Rlightning@AOL.COM

Type O Negative. PERFECT MUSIC FOR Kult. Any gothic/industrial music will do for a great dark-hearted game... (and some SiX FEET UNDER)

Arni Skulason: skul@HEM1.PASSAGEN.SE

As for music in KULT, the RPG, I must say that I'm surprised to see that there is so many of you that like songs with lyrics in them. Don't you find lyrics distracting? I do. Mood music like the soundtrack to Seven, the track where the van is coming over the hills at the end of the movie, is great as a chilling background. Also Carpenters soundtracks for Halloween, Christine, Dark star and of course Prince of Darkness. The last one is my personal favourite. Then we have

some tracks from Mark Snows soundtrack Music from the X-files.

Matthias, Angel of Vengance: S.Westfield@UEA.AC.UK

I tended to play while the x-files was on in the background (or, if that's not possible I recommend the soundtrack) other good music is stuff like a looped tape with about ½ hour of storms sound on it. or failing that, any goth type music fits well.

blair lafferty: suckdaddy@ROCKETMAIL.COM

The Lost Highway soundtrack is a definite must!! I'd venture a guess that *any* David Lynch soundtrack is a must. Another idea: "City of Lost Children" soundtrack.

Bryan W. Janes: bjanes@BEOTHUK.SWGC.MUN.CA

Bauhaus. If a Kult session goes by and you hear no Bauhaus (particularly their earlier stuff), you are missing out.

Erik Growen: pag_yam@istar.ca

Figured I would throw in my own two cents worth. Generally I prefer soundtrack and instrumental music in the background such as the soundtrack for Heat (the track Armenia is the most psychotically bent Kult tune I have heard), The Mission, The X-Files, Passion (Peter Gabriel's Last Temptation of Christ soundtrack), Henryk Gorecki's Symphony No. 3 (some of the most haunting music I have listened to) or Samuel Barber (especially the Adagio for Strings, Op. 11). For the more cranking moments Soundgarden -Superunkown, The Tea Party - The Edges of Twilight, NIN - Pretty Hate Machine, Metallica - Black Album and the soundtracks to The Crow and Spawn fit in nicely to set the mood.

Movies as Inspiration

Steve A.
Matthew W Moorman: mattmoorman@JUNO.COM

Crash

Perhaps the speedsters are on their way to becoming techrones, or some other combination of flesh, glass and steel. Perhaps their founder achieved this state of 'Union with the Machine' in a car crash (Perhaps he was having sex in the car at the time?), and is trying to create others as well. And, you know that if you want to make an omelette, you have to break a few eggs.

Hmm, it is kind of funny, in many ways I had a completely different take on things as far as Crash ideas go. For me what I decided to try and do was to use the ideas behind Crash as a sort of focus for practitioners of passion magic instead of something with technodrones. Here is the general idea...

What I have envisioned is a campaign that revolves around the characters trying to unravel a plan set in motion by a couple of the Archons. The Archons are Malkuth and Tipareth. The basic plot is that Tipareth uses her influence in the entertainment industry to get a very limited directors cut of the movie Crash released. Now that is not exactly a problem, the problem comes in when a passion mage that is loyal to Malkuth goes about "spiking" several copies of the tape that are heading toward a specific city. The "spiked" tapes are created by having this passion mage cast a special emotion affecting ritual on them, as well as inscribing various symbols and runes on the tape itself in the beginning and the end of certain

scenes in the movie (particularly in and around the sex and car crash scenes). As someone begins to watch the tapes, if their mental balance is low enough, they become drawn to the movie (in particular the scenes with the symbols). They begin to obsess and compulsively watch the film. In essence they soon begin to focus all of their mental and sexual energies on the movie. They do nothing but think about and contemplate the movie and they find their sexuality beginning to skew towards Vaughn's sexuality. Effectively what begins to happen is they feel drawn to car crashes, and the sexuality and the violence inherent in these settings (to them). Soon these are not enough, they feel the urge to move on to the next level-- they have to get involved in a severe car crash themselves. When they finally get into this crash their entire physical, mental, and sexual being is focused on this one event. As soon as their car hits another their total focus on this state of mind brings them to the brink, they are suddenly aware of their own divinity for just an instant as they complete their first passion magic ritual. It is an empty ritual without effect, but for the first time they are aware that they are something more then their human shell, and sex (their own brand of it) is one way to tap into that. Kind of like jump starting a battery. They undergo the partial awakening, that all mages go through during a ritual, as they tap into their divinity at that instant. Of course this realization takes place while they are plowing into some poor shmuck at 70 miles an hour, but if they survive they will be new practitioners of passion magic, aware that they can tap into something special through the medium of their twisted sex. They are then gathered together as the acolytes and servants of the original passion mage. The entire plot by Malkuth and Tipareth is a recruiting scheme to get more humans on the path to awakening and hence the destruction of the illusion. The characters are brought into this plot by noticing the large number of car crashes lately in which the driver of the crashing vehicle is driving, shall we say, one handed. Of course if the characters realize it, then the Lictors will see this as strange as well. The characters are now part of a contest between the agents of Malkuth and enemy Lictors. Who knows what side they will be on in the end? The beauty is that while this series of adventures has its roots in the high up power structure, the characters are never going to be aware of who started the ball rolling. Lictors are going to be about as high up the Kult "power structure" as they can go. Keeps the mystery for beginning characters, and yet is a good solid introduction into the Kult world. I tried to make this a general outline so that the individual GM can easily integrate any ideas within their own setting. For my own campaign the big tip off for the characters, that all is not normal here, would be that all of these crashies have a copy of the Crash movie in the VCR. The beauty about using a real movie for the focus is that it allows me to show the real Crash movie within the context of the game for all of those players who have not seen it yet. As soon as they see the real movie, and begin to draw parallels, it suddenly becomes apparent what they are up against. A good roleplaying night and a movie night all in one, what more do you need?

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Tetsuo The Iron Man

Tetsuo The Iron Man is a 16mm B&W movie by Shinya Tsukamoto, The Plot involves a young metal fetishist and a businessman, the metal fetishist implants a metal bar into his leg, and while running away in shock after seeing maggots in the wound, is struck by the car carrying the businessman and his girlfriend, who we later discover, were having sex in the car. The next day, after dumping the "body", the businessman discovers a metal growth on his face while shaving. Later, after hiding the growth with a bandage, heads off to work, but while waiting for his train is attacked by a young woman with a fungal/mechanical claw, he stabs her in the neck with a pencil, yet she still chases after him, until jets rupture from his feet, and he flees to a garage, where he kills her.

Jason Thompson: jason@SONIC.NET

Various

The closest I came to this was the 'multimedia horror night' of the final adventure in my big ol' year-long KULT

campaign. New York was being attacked by Satanist gangs, physically transported into Inferno, and the citizens turned into zombies by marauding packs of Sumatran Rat Pigs. At three times during the evening, I trotted the players out to the main room with the big TV to show them some tapes on the VCR:

(1) The beginning of DIE HARD WITH A VENGEANCE, where they have a few New York scenes, and then suddenly a terrorist bomb goes off. This was at the beginning of the adventure.

(2) The later scenes of MIRACLE MILE, where the hero climbs on top of a car to see all of Los Angeles in a panic of screaming insanity, riots, and random violence, and newsmen are being shot on TV. This was in the middle of the adventure, when it was starting to sink in that New York was now part of Hell.

(3) The early 'apartment building' scenes of DAWN OF THE DEAD, where zombies are bursting out of nailed-shut doors and attacking mobs of armed riot control officers, and people are going on killing rampages. This was towards the end of the night, when the zombies were spreading.

All in all, it would have been much more successful if I'd just been able to wave my hand and had the scenes appear in the air before the players, rather than having to walk over to the TV and fumble with the VCR (we were playing in a separate room, for various reasons). But it was still a LOT of fun, particularly as most of them weren't familiar with the movies, and the scenes in MIRACLE MILE and DAWN OF THE DEAD were powerful punch-in-the-stomach horror even without any prior explanation or context.

Matthew W Moorman: mattmoorman@JUNO.COM

Have you seen Crash yet? If you have not then you are making a huge mistake by passing it up simply because it was made in Hollywood. The movie has gotten several awards and the book is highly regarded as well. Besides a more Kultish vision of sex and twisted minds can seldom be found. If you see the movie and read the book you tend to understand the whole story quite a bit better. As far as other movies that are begging to be made into Kult scenarios, Jacob's Ladder springs to mind, the hospital scene is straight from the pages of a Kult adventure itself. Very well done.

If you see the flick Extreme Measures they have a scene in which Hugh Grant's character goes through the underground of New York. It is a good 5 minute clip to show players the right idea of what their characters are seeing, should they find themselves in the endless maze under Metropolis or any other city.

New Rules ..Bugs

Thomas A

.ehh ? I'm having a bit o' trouble using the system ....what I'm thinking of is the way damage is added...The weapons are now with a single DEF number instead of each having the individual damage table and the second damage roll as in -> (KULT 1 edition).....it also has a..Hit Effect Modification Table...that will modify your DEF with -5, -2, 0, +2, +5....wich means that you can not actually "kill" a creature/NPC in Kult with a weapons of DEF 12 or less....without using...Special Bullets, Point blank range or a Perfect hit !...on a weapon that may be very lethal.... The way to determine damage was (in my opinon) better in KULT(1).. but I still haven't found a good way to convert the present DEF..to a Dam-table.... ideas ?? please reply !!

Also the armor section is a bit screwed up .....ex.: "he is walking down the corridor...etc. etc.....suddenly the mad-scientist leaps from the darkness...n' thrust's a knife in his back ...." auch !! - the attacked person is wearing a bullet proof vest, that serves some protection against the knife....but ...Tadaaaaa ..the person is also wearing a green army helmet ....and can add

another 3 to his armor factor...(I assume that the helmet goes on the head...or ?) ......maybe I should have brought some silk gloves and a jockstrap...I would have been invulnerable...) . If anyone has worked their way around these minor problems please reply..!

Erik Growen

Consistency seems to have eluded the writers of the second edition. Although they introduced the new DEF all of the creatures that they stat out use the old first edition individual damage tables. My solution to the problem is to ignore the whole DEF idea and use the first edition combat rules. If you really like the DEF concept it will require a lot of work on your part to convert all of the creatures. And just what would the DEF of a Razides claws be anyway?

As far as the armor problem goes, once again refer to the first edition which had a hit location table (it is on the GM Screen as well) and then that nasty overall protection from a helmet problem disappears.

After these solutions you may ask yourself why you picked up the second edition in the first place, but there are some good things in the book, and the DEF idea is not necessarily a bad one if they had just used it throughout the whole thing instead of leaving it to the GMs to come up with the DEFs for all the nasty critters.

Falken

Does anybody know witch way to determine the effect when using projectile weapons in Kult.

The beginning of 2nd edition stated that a separate throw for effect is used, but in the combat system section it says that you calculate the difference (the usual way) and then do some other things. (Which I do not have a problem with) Could somebody please help me with this?

Erik Growen

You are certainly not alone in being confused by whatever it was they were trying to do with the 2nd Edition. It appears that the writers had a new idea for the system at the last moment and just fired it in without making sure it meshed with the rest of the rule book. The simple solution is to ignore the new combat rules and just use the 1st Edition ones. In the 2nd Edition, all weapons are supposed to have a Damage Value, but none of the creatures have this DV and in fact are written up for the 1st Edition rules with their separate damage charts. Instead of trying to come up with the DVs for all the creatures I choose to ignore the 2nd Edition combat completely. If you do not have the 1st Edition then you will have to come up with the DVs or use another system for combat. (This is what I finally gave up and did, converting the whole mess to the Corps system by BTRC—the conversions are on my Kult web page if you are interested).

New to Kult?

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I like to play it like a X-files movie with less supernaturals. It can be played like any modern film, that's one of the strengths of the system. There is magic and dreamlore which allows for a Terror on Elm-street feeling if you're in that mood, and so on.

I rather try to play it like a succession of shock sequences, more and more strong and horrible, starting to use the supernatural only when the shocking power of "natural" things is exhausted in a scenario... This gives an extra boost to the horror, at a point where the players think you're at the climax, and I like to show them that we can go much farther...)

I play with the unstable reality, the time and the space often mess (near the climax of the scenario), and I play on the most paranoid of my players...

Unfortunately, I play only "stand alone" scenarios because I don't get the players for a campaign game (most of the players around me don't even want to hear of Kult). Maybe I'm using this kind of "shock scenarios" where players are mere survivors because of these "one night" basis games... I lack the experience of a Kult campaign, which would be interesting to follow the transformations of the characters and their progression on their path to Awakening...

The biggest difference from other games is that it's present day horror where you're the weak part. I think lots of horror games have been written with that intention, but players being what they are, the nature of the heroic idiom etc. tends to lead to games where players become larger than fiction. We've all seen it I'm sure...

Player- Whaddya mean you're the all powerful Cthulhu and you want our obedience? Give the virgins back, then Piss off, creep and take those hideously writhing tentacles with you!

Cthulhu (looking browbeaten and sheepish)-er, Oh sorry, er, ok then, sorry. (exit cavern left)

Player- Jeez, what a loser! Now where did that scum-sucking Nyarlathotep get to?...

Most of the time it's the humans that's the horrible monster and your struggle is both physical and mental since you have to fight your fears and darker sides as well as baddies.

Vampire has a couple of the same elements, but not to the same extent. A vampire is only scared of sunlight and his prince, more or less. A Kult person is scared of the same things as you, which could be anything.

I think that depends on how the ref and players gel, and what they want in the first place. Some folks like being monsters (sure, I do once in a while) while others really only like to fight against evil / the bad guys. I guess this might make Kult or any "monster within" game tricky for some peoples sensibilities.

An excellent place to get a feel for the true unpleasantness of the Kult world is the published scenario "Taroticum". With only moderate tweaking, this became one of our most talked about adventures: the general feelings of the players seemed to be "Wow1 That was great, what the fuck is going on?!"

I've found this, for our group, to be the essence of the game, a feeling of total helplessness- thrust into an accelerating spiral wherein only the tiniest threads of reason connect. This exacerbates the characters phobias and Dark Secrets, especially when played against their mundane lives within the illusion.

Gradually, as they gain experience, they may see some of the true reality and, should their sanity withstand the assault, they start to understand the total futility of existence, the first step to Awakening (but the hardest to overcome). A slowly unfolding psychodrama, with only the very occasional supernatural entity to start, with more introduced as the months go by.

Origins of the Mythology

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Clark Wallace: (cwallace@WRSYSTEMS.COM)

I was reading Jeffrey Burton Russell's book "Satan" or something like that (he has a whole series, "Devil", "Mephistopheles" etc...) and this book was describing the early Apologist Founders and the like, and it was in the section on early Christian Heretics that caught my attention, and I'm sure most of you on this list know that, but it seems that most of the mythology of the Kult background are based on early agnostic thought...I know the phrase Demiurge first appears from one of these groups (agnostics or doceists?). As was the division between good and evil (yeah, I know it first appeared in Zorastrianism), but the Kult brand appears to be from this agnositic tradition. Anyone wanting good ideas should really look into this...Christ or the Messiah from Legions of Darkness was mentioned in the game of being a member of the Qumran church (or something like that) and in the historical sense there was this church and they too believed in the divinity of man or ascendence or something like that (the details are a bit blurry).

Close. most of the mythology stems from Gnostic theology (not agnostic), where the belief in the divinity of man, as well as the duality of creation, is a cornerstone. Many Gnostic traditions say that humanity was cast from heaven to live within this world to relearn their divinity, and to struggle with the good and evil within themselves. (Agnostics, on the other hand, generally feel that there probably is a god, but we will never know, so to search for a god is to suffer in futility). There's a whole lot of interesting history revolving around the Gnostics and their persecution by the Catholic Church. I have led my players down the path to understanding using bits and pieces of this history, and creating my own as well (i.e. the players find information about a cult which was raided by the FBI, during which all members were killed in a gunfight, only to find out that the cult was a group of peacefully worshiping Gnostics, although no evidence will disprove the FBI's case against the cult). My players began to research the Gnostic traditions, and have slowly adopted the faith for themselves. Once they truly believe, and begin to try to worship and reach for their Godliness, hey, who knows. . .maybe they'll get a visit from the FBI, too (evil grin).

Pazuzu's daily work

Bart Gelens
Erik Growen

I've been thinking about integrating pazuzu (for details see Legions of darkness) into one of my scenarios. There's a lot of information about the power of the cult and it's members, but I can't seem to find what the cult's day to day business is. In other words: what the hell are the cultists doing on a regular day?

You have not missed anything. The description of the cult does little to illuminate their daily activities other than to mention that they were placed here by the Demiurge to enforce the Illusion but since the Demiurge's disappearance Pazuzu has developed its own plan. This plan consists of opening a door to Gaia. This would seem to work with the plans of the Guardians of the Earth who have been researching for 30 years to do exactly the same thing. On a day to day level this might mean that the members are involved in pseudo-scientific research like the Guardians or they might be trying to come up with a more mystical means of opening a gateway between Gaia and the Illusion possibly through magic. The linking of the Guardians and Pazuzu could make for an interesting alliance, and a deadly one for players to try to stop given the resources employed by the two groups.

Philosophy and Kult

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To get off the path of the Kabbalah proper, I'm rather fond of a belief of Plato's. He believed that the soul was a fallen, polluted deity incarcerated in the body as in a tomb and doomed to a perpetual cycle of rebirth. This came from Plato often feeling he was a man in his own world often out of his element. Pythagoras expounded on this, and taught that the soul could be liberated by ritual purification.

Sound familiar? Of course, Plato believed that the universe of a God was an unmoving, unchanging entity (Aristotle's "Unmoved Mover" later) and that the soul could be released through rituals of pure reason. Not really practical, that.

The Kabbalah comes from the Greek concept of "emanation", around the time of Christ, with the error bars being about 400 years in either direction. They believed that God could not directly influence Mankind, that a God who was born on the Earth and existed in human beings was a blasphemous concept. So they had God emanate the Logos, the divine Wisdom and Creativity of God, which was more accessible to human beings. The Logos eventually became a duel aspect, two emanations, with Wisdom being on one side and Creativity being on the other, and these two influence man.

It's an easy step to see how the Demiurge was first "Ein Sof", the Platonic unknowable, untouchable universe, which emanated into the real world as Kether, a form of God which did exist in the universe but was still unknowable by mankind. Kether, like the Greek God of the early philosophers, emanated the Logos -> Binah and Chokmah. These two are STILL unknowable and non understandable by mankind, so it emanated again in pairs until it became the Shekinah, which IS knowable by mankind as God existing as the world we live in, in all his aspects. Yadda yadda yadda, here's your copy of the Zohar, and your complementary cookie.

It's easy to see from here where later "magicians" got the concept that they could have power over the World, and hence the power over God, if they walked and understood each of the Sephira in turn. So how does this relate to KULT? Good question, except that I think Plato is an AwakenedBeing out there somewhere.

Jerker Eriksson: dr_avalanche@HOTMAIL.COM

I don't think the Demiurge is equal to Ein Sof. In that case, its (his?) disappearance would have been caused by the disappearance of Archons, which make out its consistence. The rests of the Demiurge would then be the remaining Archons. I guess that Astaroth then would be some kind of mirror-image of the tree of life, turned upside-down, with the Angels of Death replacing the Archons.

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I think Jerker is completely correct in the idea that if the Demiurge = Ein Sof, and the Demiurge goes poof that all the Archons would go poof as well. I don't remember how far I went on my rant of this particular topic, but in my Kultiverse (ich, what a term) Ein Sof is a role (heck of a job, being the nothingness from which all springs)

Job Title: Ein Sof
Responsibilities Include: Self-exile and emanation. Must be a self-starter.

Poor Astaroth. Guess who got suckered into being Ein Sof when the Demiurge ceased to Exist, and endures the tortures and the eventual destruction of it as it knows itself if the prison is completely sundered? Sucks to be Astaroth.

Mind you, this is only in *my* universe, and is by no means gospel or "right" in any way. Heck, I might be flat out lying in the service of some dark (or bright) master. In short, its my party and they'll die if I want to.

On another note, I don't like the idea of a "good" or an "evil". We're the good guys, just ask us! I think its more of poor humanity caught in ambitions and series of cause and effect. Good and Evil are just terms my NPCs use to make the PCs feel better or worse about themselves.

Matt Norwood: norwoodm@MIT.EDU

I'm working on a Kult campaign using the World of Darkness rules and background (albeit somewhat toned down from its current comic-book state). One of the reasons I'm curious about Heaven is that the Wraith rules for the Jail of Night (kudos to Paul Beakley for an excellent series of articles) present a version of the Shadow which I'm not sure I buy. I've never been completely happy with the Shadow rules in Wraith, and I'm not sure that the ones in Kult work completely either. I'd like to be able to find some way of blending the Gnostic idea of opposites and the Shadow of Jungian psychology effectively in a game, but neither of the two game systems does it perfectly. Of course, maybe Jung made some mistakes in his search for the Truth… all the same, though, I'd like to think that he had the basic symbolism down. I just read a book called "The Gnostic Jung", a collection of essays where he finds psychological parallels for Gnostic myths and cosmology. Great Kult material. It's a great way of tying mysticism into science and equating body and mind. Perhaps Jung was a budding Conjurer of Madness? He certainly found effective methods of raising mental balance above zero…

Andreas L. Gustafsson: ante@UPDATE.UU.SE

As for Jung being a conjurer of madness… After writing a paper on Jung and Nietzscheanism and the untergang des ubermenschen, am I ready to call the a guy one of the Great Masters in the Lore of Madness. Quite whacko (and that's a technical term), and full of insights. His material does fit nicely with KULT, it really does.

Philosophy

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I am running a very philosophical campaign for Kult. I am exploring ideas about the connection of Plato's world of Forms with Metropolis. I also work with the psychology of Alchemy. I don't know if my players understand what is going on. I suppose that is to be expected since part of the charm of Kult is the mystery. I am running out of ideas, however, and would be interested to see if anyone else out there has made any other unique correlations between the Kult cosmology and philosophy.

I envy you - my players's idea of philosophy is deciding what gun to use…
I don't know much about Plato, but for Kult I would recommend investigating the Jewish Kabbalah (or Quabalah), which the Archons are based on (or perhaps it's the other way around). I haven't actually studied it much yet but it is pretty interesting.

Yes, I have looked in to the Kabbalah. In fact one of the player characters is a Jewish historian, so I use the Kabalahistic names for the Archons (sepheroth [sp?]). If you have the chance I recommend checking out the book The Black Arts by Richard Cavendish. One of my major concerns with Kult is the lack of source material, but since the game deals so heavily

with true (?) occult, any book on the occult sciences works smashingly as a source book. The Black Arts is good because it gives a brief description of most of the western occult sciences, enough info for you to do some simple numerology or find the names of the Archons and their corresponding Greek gods or Major Arcanna.

777 by Aleister Crowley has some corresponding data on differing Emanations (though most of it sourced elsewhere). As for philosophy in a Kult setting, I have no idea, although I applaud your efforts - I run more theological distillations. Not being too familiar with philosophy could you give some examples of your ideas... psychology of Alchemy (smells piquant).

One of the main topics in my current chronicle is how Platonic dualism and Alchemy fit together in the Kult cosmology. Basically in Platonic thought there is a world of forms. All souls are exposed to this before they are born. This world of forms holds the "perfect" form of every conceivable object and emotion. The perfect rose, the perfect diamond, the perfect love, the perfect hate... Well, I believe that Metropolis is an extension of this world of forms. Unfortunately, since man's fall Eden (Metropolis) has fallen into disrepair. Perfection is not what it used to be. Alchemy fits into this because it is able to bring things from Metropolis that cannot normally exist in Elysium. In the Death Conjurer's Guide it speaks of bringing elements across and keeping them stable through the use of Alchemy. Now, in the Black Arts (by Richard Cavendish, not a "real" Kult supplement, but it could be) it details the process of turning lead into gold. Actually it is a process of transcendence from a lower state to a higher one. Unlike plain chemistry, Alchemy is both a physical and a psychological process. The material being transmuted is broken down to base elements, at the same time the Alchemist himself (herself) breaks down his own spirit. As the substance is elevated to gold (a perfect substance) so is the Alchemist elevated to a god. Granted, this is very basic. The process is actually made up of 12 steps, taking years to accomplish, but this should give you a general idea of what is going on. In your reply, you mentioned that you follow a more theological approach. I would be very interested to hear any ideas you might have. However, don't break the Illusion.

Yes. Try incorporating Sigmund Freud into your players next jaunt into the dream lands. The dream lands are one of my favorite areas of KULT exploration, and always seems to play second fiddle to the Almighty Metropolis. Why the dream lands is reduced to a mere 6 pages in the 2nd ed is, in my opinion, criminal neglect.

I also keep a dualistic approach in mind, but with duality in the sense of a trinity (hmm. doesn't make sense, let me explain). I am integrating the idea of duality, but in the sense that duality can only sustain itself by a third force. In my current campaign, though I use the Archons & Death Angels by name it is more of the force (the portfolio, so to speak, they represent)I am using them for. I am using the struggle between the unity of family and faith versus the disunity of both with the characters as the third force. Pretty basic, at first, but the idea of the third force that drives both dualities is the idea of pillars Mishpat (kingly) and Zedek (priestly), with Shalom at the apex supported by both. What I am trying to eventually drive the players, in a vague direction that gamemasters only can, is that they are the Godhead, this third force with the Archons and Death Angels as perpetual forces that are driven in duality by the characters presence. The Demiurge I have discarded with, I know, I know... but I have no need for him because the characters encompasses the idea of the Godhead determine the role of the Archons/Death Angels in Metropolis & Elysium. Unfortunately I have them at the moment as any pawn being used by the Archons/Death Angels. Hmm, this almost sounds like a long-winded explanation of Awakening... but what I am trying to say is metaphor. The Archons/Death Angels are metaphors for forces and the characters are metaphorical for the Godhead. Theology is so easy to throw into Kult (I admire the use of philosophy), any god can be assimilated, but the Theory of Godhead/Religion makes it a bit deeper. I use Moscow as the perfect metaphor for the struggle... upsurging capitalism in opposition to released spirituality (but neither is good or evil, because it is not a struggle against what is right) By the way I am very impressed with your conceptual designs on Kult - not just scraped from their rule books. I wish I could
offer some suggestions for you, but I don't know how much your players know of your 'cosmology' (mine are newly skinned pups). How do your players fit in with it?

Sorry I took so long to answer. I had a busy weekend. At any rate, I believe that my players are clueless. I feel like at the

end of every adventure I want to ask them if they understood what just happened. They keep showing up, so I can only assume that they are having a good time. I also suppose that their not knowing what is going on could be a good thing. I don't want to bash another system, but the White Wolf games start the player characters off with a little knowledge about the World of Darkness. Kult and CoC start off with a blank slate, and the discovery is the horror if the ordeal. I am trying to balance discovery, with emotional horror, with a little action (to keep the PCs sated). Last week I was impressed. One of the characters rolled a natural 20 on his Ego throw. His fear projected into a Nazi ritual taking place on Walpurgisnact. What impressed me was that the other PCs (none of whom have read the rules) sort of realized what was happening, and they helped him snap out of it. Maybe clueless is a tad harsh.

I know what you are saying, but I feel like when we get done playing they still haven't grasped what happened. My fear is that they don't even get that strange feeling you are supposed to get after a David Lynch movie. The kind of "What the hell just happened?... I don't know but is was cool!"

Best White Wolf game I ever ran was when I introduced the system to some new players who didn't have the books and had never played in WoD. I started them out as Childer Vampires, and they only knew what their Sires had told them! It was great not to have to keep telling players that their characters didn't know something.

The same thing (clueless players) happened when I ran Kult the first time back in '95. None of them had the book, so they knew only what I had told them, and it was great! Being good players, they picked up on things pretty quickly, but because they only picked up on what I revealed to them (vaguely, as if through a glass darkly), they had a great time with it. Everything was new, and that is a large part of the fun of horror - the unknown.

I agree, and it also gives the gamemaster the liberties to create his own cosmological stance. When I first played Vampire (urgh) the other players knew everything, read the books, knew the white wolf world and I was a novice without a clue. I had Kult and CoC by that stage - it was good until the books started affecting game play and player's tested the gamemaster, bad form...

As Mr. Lovecraft so immortalized... Remember characters' reality is going to be subjected to what they experience. Just think, when the characters experience the same thing but all with different twists... everyone sees differently.

Player Power Levels

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I was wondering how much power does everybody have in your own personal games? Our GM basically makes us into mushrooms.. ie we sit in the dark and he feeds us feces. None of our characters are particularly powerful and none of have any idea about the illusion or the denizens of the many realms. Basically we stagger along dealing with human and sometimes nonhuman antagonists. We have never met with anything really huge.. well if we did it didn't reveal itself but after a few games we are starting to understand that certain "people" aren't what they seem. The way our Gm managed to do this was by not letting us read the Kult Books. He has actually forbade is from doing so, and so we know nothing, absolutely squat. I have to admit that sometimes it is frustrating but mostly it makes for a fun and exciting game as we thrash around desperately trying to save our skins.

Well, I handle it this way: every character gets what she deserves. If the characters are powerful, they get tasks that need all their resources to solve. It all depends upon the group I am working with. I also disallow my players to read the KULT

background, because I know how hard it is to separate player knowledge and character knowledge. Regarding your question about the poerniveau I am mastering at: One group plays in the top league. They already have contacts to various Archons and Death Angels. An ex-character of the group also has awakened. If there are fights, I use tougher creatures for them to fight. The other group is playing the opposite. They do not have a strong position at all, and are having more existential problems. They players are very immature, and they prefer the 'hunt the artifact'-game style.

Its almost impossible for me to keep my players from knowing about the Kult Universe from the books -- I admire their tendencies to be sneaky bastards and to discretely inquire either from other Kult players or from hanging out on mailing lists like this one. "oh no, we never *read* the books" Well, screw it. I don't like every direction the source books have taken anyway. So, I come up with my own stuff, using the basic framework provided, mostly geared so if people use knowledge they *know* from the books, they are screwed. Not to mention severe penalties for not playing in character. Most of the time, I find my players are too easily distracted with little stuff to worry about them going after real knowledge. Every once in a while though, they surprise me, and I get to explain a little more about how my universe operates. Sometimes, I think it happens too rarely, but I don't like to goad players into on direction or another, but let them move as they will. Of course, there are those players who think they can just look for some scholar, or warlock or library and "find" such knowledge, but for the most part, they find misinterpretations and lies, or, worse yet, some piece of the guarded truth.

Anyway somebody asked about the power-level of different peoples' Kult-games. Personally I've ran one long campaign (took a year and a half to finish it) and currently I'm running another one, and in both of them all the specs I gave for the players when their created their characters were "16-25 years old unemployed, student, or worker". So in the first campaign the original cast included two ex-addicts and a schitzophrenic senior high school girl. After some time a fourth player joined the game, and her character was a religious senior high school girl. The best skill the whole bunch had was Football 15 on one of the addicts, he would've been a very good player if he had just continued his hobby. None of the players of the first campaign, which I held in another city, had ever even heard about Kult, and they didn't even want to hear anything their characters didn't know. In the current campaign there were additional specs for the characters, they had to have suffered from a mental or social problem for which they had been institutionalized. The game is centered to a social security project in which the characters are being rehabilitated to the society by giving them a collective house to live in. The idea is that they would support each other and so on. Currently we are playing the first year of their life in the house in sort of "fast-forward" fashion. There is an event or two in a month, I tell it to them and they react. Mostly the players just pick up the thread I give to them and start to weave a most complicated network of their social relations. It's fun just to lean back and let them play the everyday life of their characters. There's been some strange things since they moved to their house, but nothing very dramatic. The last session just before the Christmas was centered on the characters spending their first Christmas together. Almost all the session went by as they were buying Christmas presents and so forth, and the session ended in the Christmas eve when a present that was not bought by any of them and which they just found from under the Christmas tree caused them to have a "low on festive spirit -error".

One of these new players has read the Kult book and another one has played in a game where there was more supernatural effects than in this game (so far!). I just write up my scenarios in that way that it's absolutely of no use to know stuff about Kult background. Besides, I tend to choose my players carefully, and I must say that for example the group for which I'm currently running Kult is terrific.

Quick Idea

Saajan Patel: (FRA57@AOL.COM)

Quick idea -Schizophrenic who is influenced by Chadigiel and Chokmah's remaining essence. Loves his daughter, but at the same time molests her at night but forgets. The daughter is so confused and has been for years. Now that Chokmah is

gone, Chadigiel is gaining too much influence on the father......

Real Life Intrudes

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I've just gotten into the Kult rpg about 10 months ago (played the CCG since it came out), and call me crazy but I swear I see KULT ideas everywhere in the media. CD-ROMs, movies, advertisements, music videos, everywhere. EVERYWHERE! Basically, my wife and I can sit down in front of the TV and just say "Kult", whenever a Kult inspired idea hits the screen. We're starting to love watching TV (where we once hated it) because watching it has become a Kult-ish experience.

The Archons influence is everywhere! Beware!

Yeah I kind of had the same reaction when I played white wolf's Vampire the masquerade. I'm surprised nobody in this group mentioned Madonna, yeah she's a fake but it's still funny how a twisted story for Kult could come out of her abuse (?) of the media to sell her records. By the way, anyone know what type of tatoo she got that stays on for only a few weeks?

Reality and the PCs

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The Archons and Death Angels only seem to exist as abstract concepts unless they choose to manifest an incarnate, which can take on any guise the entity chooses. In the Players Companion, the Angels are quasi illusory in that they always appear to be human unless they want to manifest their true nature. Razides and Lictors also look human most of the time, and it is reasonable to assume that their human facade can change appearance, otherwise people might notice these immortal humans running around. Most of these supernatural beings have a "true form", its just that they are so adept at manipulating the Illusion that they can appear in other forms. Whether this talent would hold in Metropolis, Inferno, or some other realm is open to debate, however.

What I think I was hinting at is that with the illusion so easy to manipulate, how can PCs, trapped inside the illusion ever know what is reality and what is just another layer of illusion? In that sense illusion becomes the reality, the normal state of affairs, and the truth or awakening, is something else. Short of the GM telling them "ok you know this is really real..." But then I know my players would definitely not believe me. Such things as belief, and illusion can be hard to portray effectively in a game I think. Where the GM has control of the laws of reality in the game world (I know he always does, but I mean blatantly); can make walls melt and people turn to goo etc it is harder to let the players think that they have an impact, or any purpose, all to easy for them to be passengers, if you see what mean. So, how do players face up to their puny insignificance in your games?

I don't think the players need to ever have the impression that they have an impact on things, once they get the drift of what is really going on. The nature of the game lends to a feeling of hopelessness, where the characters slowly drift into insanity. That's sort of the problem, they can't stop it. The meat of the game is the characters themselves, and how they

deal with the fact that the reality they know and love is slowly shattering, tearing at their minds, and goo covered things are starting to come towards them through the cracks. That's where the fun is. The only ray of hope I provide to my characters comes from a hint of true enlightenment here and there. I get them into thinking that perhaps there is a way to overcome all of the suffering to come, through some other *means*. Unfortunately for them, it's only a nebulous impression, so they are struggling feebly to find a means of gaining knowledge of the truth as they watch their worst terrors appear and slowly approach them, getting closer and closer with each adventure.

So far I have only run two sessions, the first using a scenario out of a magazine where all the characters (who did not know each other) were brought together at a mutual friend's estate. He is dying of AIDS, but he is a strong dreamer. Unfortunately, his fear of death, and the medication he is on as well as the disease itself have summoned a nightmare creature. The players become trapped in his dreams, and slowly enter more and more surreal events, confronting their own fears taken physical form. Eventually, they face the creature and must either destroy it (nigh impossible) or save their friend. If they choose to save their friend, his fears of dying alone are banished and he is released, leaving them back in reality. The second session used the first part of Fallen Angels (the Vampire scenario), to introduce Elizibeth and to provide an interesting scenario where violence won't solve anything.

Their situations don't seem hopeless to them because they are accomplishing something in the illusion. Even if it is meaningless in the grand scheme of things, it is meaningful to the players. It will take some time before they know what is really going on, but when they do, they will be better prepared to handle it. They will get feelings of accomplishment from preventing certain more dastardly plans of Archons and Death Angels and their servants, and preventing humanity from being treated as pawns in the games of greater powers. I have no plans to allow the PCs to become awakened, although they may interact with awakened humans on occasion. They will have to make do with accomplishments within the Illusion that they believe is their reality.

The players of a Kult Game should never fully know all that is going on, and the more they learn, the less they know. Everything beyond our reality, the magic realms, inferno, etc., should all be giant blur. If they do figure certain things out, it should always come from an unreliable source and there should be counter evidence so the players are never on even footing. If the players realize they are in an illusion, then there is still a lot to do. I don't think its ever hopeless. Even if they know all about the trapping of humanity in its prison, they can still turn that prison into the so called paradise, by hardening the illusion so much that all Lictors, Razides, etc, cannot exist there. That may be better suited to a particular cult though.

Reunion

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Here is the first part of this little adventure. Let me know what you think. He looked around. The sweet smell of grass, the red hardware store that looked like a barn, the "waterfall" that was actually a tiny pouring of water from the forest to lake below. How cliché. Cliché, yes it was. It was Home. He had said that home was a time, but also a place. Somehow, though, after all these years, this place still captured a part of him, still made him feel safe, secure. Now he had returned, to his friends, his neighbors, hereabout no, he wouldn't think about that right now. He would set the wrong things right, love would triumph, it must triumph. Without love, what is there? Nothing. True, but for now, he would enjoy showing his companions the town. There is a worm, a worm inside her. There is pain, a pain inside her. It bubbles up, reaching up, caressing her mind. It whispers to her, calling her, mocking her. The pain makes her get up each day, dress herself, and go into the world. The pain keeps her from her falling into despair, from crawling into herself and lying in bed, crying, crying, waiting for death. The pain eats her mind, but pours out anger in return. Fires in her mind are sweet ambrosia, raising her up, putting her through the motions of life. The pain is her angel. An angel named Justiceà

The players are returning to one of the PCs, a male's, small town, for a high school reunion. However, a girl he raped is also returning, with Geburah as her advocate for vengeance. As time passes, events begin to wind down to the inevitable clash between the two.

Important Characters

Jane Sullivan: The victim of a rape at a high school party, as a result of a drug dosage slipped into her drink. She has now returned to claim revenge, guided by Geburah in her desire for Justice. Samael, however, has a stake in her as well, for her retaliation will consume her. For her, the two are one, an angel bearing the name of Justice. Central NPC.

Neilan Bejamin: The football star who went on to college football and worked to get a business degree and now works for a corporation. He was the one who put the drug into Jane's drink, and the one who convinced Tabler and Green to rape Jane. NPC

William Green: The fellow football player to Neilan, and a fellow rapist. He is now involved in a sports radio show in Illinois. NPC

Micheal Tabler: The PC who is the rapist. In his mind, it was his love for Jane that led him into temptation to rape her. In his mind, he feels that his love will make everything all right in the end, and that God is with him. He was once a great wrestler, who still retains his lean and powerful physique. Even though he is a young accountant, he still works out a lot. His past will unfold in the adventure.

Karen Yi: A PC, friend of Micheal accompanying him to his hometown. She is a minor occultist, dabbling in the Lore of Passion. She is also adequate in martial arts, taught to her by her father. Her vision sometimes slips into the Realm of Passion, letting her see people by their emotional reflections. She enjoys touching, drawing draughts of power from the physical contact. It was her "experimenting" that led Shelly to join the group. Although Shelly has been shocked so much she can no longer feel sexual, Karen still hugs her for comfort. Karen grew up in a very disciplined home, and she saw sex as a form of rebellion. She still sees sex as merely an enjoyment, and is probably a border nymphomaniac. After the disaster with Shelly, however, Karen has toned down her dangerous running around.

Chern-Wei: A PC, runner of a dojo, black belt in taekwondo. Worked to fight the Yakuza and Chinese Mafia in his community through political actions and rallying the people to stand up for their rights. In Chinatown he faced many threats to his home and life. However, with his encouragement, numerous witnesses came forward and locked away several top criminals. The night after the trial, he was shot and met Samael, whom he sees as an Angel of Death. The conversation in the ambulance still comes back to him in his dreams.

Emmit Park: A PC who is involved with Voudoo in New York. The other PCs don't know this at all, and instead believe Emmit to have the same limited understanding of Reality as they do. Emmit is for them a store owner in the suburbs who was just trying to survive. He works with the homeless, and is actually a good man. He rarely feels the need to use his Lore of Death expertise at all, and in fact despises the magic. Emmit was involved in a battle with a razide, or a powerful petro loa as he understood it. The creature left a deep scar on the left side of his face. In the battle, Emmit had to enter a Death Realm of his Catholic School teacher, who had created a small utopia in Death. Emmit convinced the woman that she was not in Heaven, that it was all false. The woman's soul then opened a gate to our world. Emmit rushed out, and with the help of fellow Voudooists, managed to drive the Razide into the Death Realm, with the soul of the nun still inside. The last thing Emmit saw was the little paradise village burning into ashes, a giant citadel where evil-eyed children were chained, waiting hungrily for the woman who had tormented them to "cleanse" their souls, who had lied about God and Satan and everything. The door closes with a scream of agony, and the fear that it will last forever. Emmit gives up his position in the Voudoo society, and now goes to church regularly.

Shelly Raphael: A PC, a young hooker who has been warped by forces beyond her comprehension when the PCs fought a Lord of City, as they knew it. The "Lord" was actually a manifestation of Tipareth, whose plan was never actually uncovered. Tipareth was doing something to the people on the streets, and the PCs finally faced her after months of searching. In an abandoned warehouse, Shelly confronted the beast that had taken her friends, fellow prostitutes, from her. The archon appeared as a jack-in-the-box from which numerous spiders appeared. Shelly was bitten numerous times when she grabbed the box and threw it into the City of Babylon, as the PCs believed Metropolis to be. Before she did, the clown managed to bite her arm. The effect of the spider bites were reduced by hospital treatment (actually by secret intervention by Emmit). The clown's bite disappears unless Shelly comes near a portal to Metropolis, upon which is returns and attempts to draw all the blood from Shelly's body.

Referee's Background
Jane Sullivan, Neilan Bejamin, William Green, Micheal Tabler are involved in something that connects each of them. They were all members of the Milstone High school. Neilan was the famous football player, stereo typically handsome and popular, but also consumed by arrogance. He thought the world was made for him alone. William Green was his sidekick, a decent player in his own right, but subordinate to Neilan most of the time. William would basically do all the pot and drinking just because Neilan was doing it. Micheal hung out with the two sometimes, cause Neilan had taken him under his wing. Micheal was an average wrestler, but couldn't really compete with the top players in his area. He was also too shy and quiet to be very aggressive, and spent a lot of time with math, since his father was a small man, a poor. Jane was a beautiful girl, but never very popular. She was more into art and books to be noticed by most of the guys. But Micheal noticed her. Micheal noticed her since second grade, and he had carried this flame inside him for those long years. No one could compare to her, he loved her so much. But he didn't think he could ever be with her. He was too unworthy. Then it happened. Jane came to one of the parties Neilan held, with a friend of hers who was immensely popular. Micheal glanced at Jane a few times, but could not find the courage inside him to talk to her. She sat alone mostly, talking softly to a few of the kids. Today, everyone noticed she was beautiful. Her purple velvet dress, her curled hair, her skin so white in the lighting that it looked like snow. She was so magical. Neilan noticed this jewel as well, and he had to have her. She wouldn't talk to him for long though, she had no interest in his great football exploits. He was mad. How could she care so little about his wonderous touchdowns, his amazing passes?! He was a god! He would show her his might, his power. He would control her like he had controlled the others. He slipped something into her drink. While some of the others were guzzling beer, she only had a glass of red wine, which she sipped so delicately. He carefully snuck over, and sprinkled a little into the wine. He watched with interest as she drank the glass. Soon she felt sick, sicker. Micheal actually came over to her side now, and asked her what was wrong. She said her stomach was ill, that sh felt like she couldn't control it. She had lost CONTROL. Neilan would take the control now, she would be his dog on a leash. Micheal took her upstairs to lie down, and she smiled at him in thanks. She should have been smiling at Neilan. Micheal was just a worm on Neilan's side, an annoying sore. Without Neilan the kid would be nothing. Neilan gets William. The two go upstairs just as Micheal is coming down. Neilan grabs Micheal and drags him upstairs. Jane's eyes go wide as Neilan kicks open the locked door. She tries to get up, but can't. She's paralyzed, forced to watch as he lifts up her velvet dress, reveals his own ugly hardness. He pushes himself in, there is no kindness, no mercy. He finally finishes, leaving her bleeding, virginity lost. He looks at her in triumph, and spits on her face. A disgusting, bubbly, yellow glob that runs down her cheek, mingling with her tears. William is next. He hesitates at first, rubbing her dress. Then his hands go under, touching her skin. He's braver now, not the fat little boy she helped save from bullies in second grade. He's strong like Neilan, strong enough to take what he wants, and he wants her. She feels him inside, excited, breathing heavily. He takes only a few minutes. Finally, when she opens her eyes, she sees Michael above her. That's funny, she didn't remember him at being there. She watches as he looks down at her in pity, fear, and desire. She feels relieved, Micheal will save her. But then she realizes why he's here. No Michael don't Please Micheal I know You're better than the Others you Always were better than the other's I could have Loved you but not a word gets past her throat. There is a big lump there, and she is to paralyzed to speak. Micheal takes her, an almost hypnotic look in his eyes. He bends over, wiping away her tears, the spit, whispering about how much he loves her. She dies inside. The year is almost over. Jane never tells anyone. If anyone at the party knew, they don't say a word. Jane was always so unnoticeable she just withdraws some more that she becomes

invisible. She still draws, draws the cover of the yearbook, looks Neilam, William, and Micheal in the eye, staring into their souls. Live goes on. She's leaving for college, about to drive away. Her parents wave good bye, their so old, had her too late. He heard they were Holocaust survivors, but they never talk about it. Micheal watches. He steps out of the bushes just as she reaches the edge of town. He is panting, he can't believe the shortcut worked. She steps out of the car, and walks over to him. She stares him in the eye. His greens versus her black orbs. Her face is pale. A single tear runs down it. He tries to say something, but he just stumbles over the words. Her eyes harden. He wants to say "I'm sorry!" but he can't. She turns around, and walks back to the beat up old station wagon. She drives away. He stands there watching, clenching his fists. It is all over, for now. He promises himself he will make it up to her. He saw something in her eyes, some understanding. He loved her, that's why he did it. God, she must realize that. After leaving, Jane never returns. Her parents move and die in Israel. She goes there to attend the funeral. After all, she is their only child. She returns to her job, drawing artwork for various books. She is well off, in a nice house. But she is alone. And slowly Time takes its toll. She remembers what they did to her, over and over in her mind. They stole something from her that can never be regained. She can't believe that they did this to her. She screams and cries and holds her hands up to the heavens and asks why at night. In her basement, she hides her paintings not of flowers or fairies but of fire and ice. Hell. The word is so sweet to her. Her enemies will burn in Hell. It is the promise of God , the only comfort she has. They'll get their due, they'll get justice. She draws spines, chains, ice, melted flesh stuck to plastic. She sees creatures that look like men, but are master torturers, metal razors and chains, worms and such protruding from their flesh. She sees giants, made of black muscle and glass, walking across the flames, treading on ice where the heads of murderers are kept. She sees fields of crucifixes, gallows, and giant nails with bodies impaled upon them. She sees stakes set on fire. She sees maggots eating the flesh of the fallen. It is all so wonderful, a giant courthouse and prison for the judgement of the sinners. She laughs now, laughs as she paints the floor of her basement. Every face, every flame, every chain, every shard of ice, is part of a giant whole. A rose. A rose of Pain. It whirls together, weaves itself into the center. At the center is Micheal, trapped in Eternal torment, forever damned with that innocent, confused look on his face. For the first time since her rape the she feel ecstacy take over her. Justice is her passion, Retribution is her seed, Vengeance is her child. She will bear her son onto the Earth. Soon.

Scenario Idea

Jason Just: just.faction@clear.net.nz

Here's a vague idea I have for a campaign, long in the works and developed upon, but again, still vague...

Binah built her power in Russia with Communism, manipulating Stalin into erecting seven apartment towers (the stalin-gothic skyscraper - Vysotnie Zdaniya) for the elite in Moskow. With these she invested seven seals of her own influence in part to mirror the Demiurge and to further sway Russia by investing her power within the city of Moscow. Why would she create seven seals of her own?

Taking a cue from the Demiurge she made these seals to create the prison of Communism where she could bind humanity to her, embedding her power within the seals. This 'minor illusion' of Communism crumbled, though, but the seals remain, or maybe they one was destroyed (I go a bit vague here). Now the seals remain guarded by Servailants and Lictors as Binah has moved her power to St Petersberg and religion. Many of the Lictors have lost thier faith in Binah and have pulled their forces back and leave the city to Chagidiel.

Maybe this defeat was in part of Malkuth working through Chagidiel. Binah invested her power in these seals and so to destroy them herself would weaken her, and this is what Malkuth wants. Malkuth wants to destroy faith and knows that with Binah's 'seals' she can break the Illusion and create a place to await the Demiurge's return.

Short Scenario/Campaign links

Matt

Scott, the teenage son of a PC or friendly NPC, dies of autoerotic asphyxiation. The police determine that he had also taken Stairway, the new "hip" drug. The parent begins to be haunted--waking up from tormenting dreams to the sound of her dead son's footsteps, peripherally seeing him, etc. After a few days the parent disappears. If the PCs go looking, the house seems placid from the outside; but through the open door they can see the mother curled up and clutching her genitals, drooling; her eyes are red watery and preoccupied, burning from a faraway ecstasy. Depending on how many days have passed since she disappeared, there might be others in this same state--a mailman, other friends and relatives, etc. The effects of the passionstorm do not cross the threshold, but every step into the room leads deeper into one's own sexuality. A roll is required to take each subsequent step, and not fall forever into a killing bliss; the difficulty of the roll should increase with each step against this violet wind of resurrection and surrender. The first step in, a character vividly re-experiences his/her most recent sexual experience; with the next step the warmest, gentlest, most loving; another step to the most carnal, ruthless, raw & wanting loveless daylong nightlate shatterf---.

The Next step returns you to "the first time," with all its incumbent flailing amid failure & the fear of failure. Another step and you are locked in a beautiful 69, give-and-take ouroboros, two becoming one vanishing into hermaphrodeity and deity. Another step and it's as if you're at an orgy of touch and whisper in the dark. Flesh presses against flesh, someone is sucking each of your nipples, while your own hands grope wild between countless breasts and bellies, lips that kiss and nibble at your fingers & ears. The next step is tongue to tongue, a world of dark, wet, sweet kissing. At the next step you collapse into a fetal curl, entering the womb again, the embrace and nourishment of amniocentesis all around you....
If you manage to take another step, you find yourself in a frightening place of twisting mirrored shadows that lick and burn you. Scott is here, somehow, even though he was buried days ago. He is crouching naked and terrified, too weak to stand. If he has met the PC before, he will beg to be rescued; if the PC(s) question him, Scott will tell them where he bought the drug, etc.--possible campaign lead-ins.

No matter how much Scott begs and pleads, there is only one way out of this place, only one way to rescue Scott's mother: by killing him. He has nowhere to go; the drug brought him out of his body during his final orgasm, and then his body died, leaving behind this warped in-between passion-realm. Once Scott is dead, everything will die down, as dust settles back after wind.

Okay, here's how I made a campaign out of it:

--Scott's girlfriend, Amy Cusack, is part of the Inner Cabal at the Epiphany (a la Shelby "D.J." Babb).

--When Scott was a child, he was molested by a schoolteacher of his, Mr. Kenworth. Kenworth had had a good reputation before this event--in fact, he was an almost saintly man, who had been possessed by a Darthea. Kenworth is out of jail now, and homeless in this city.

--If the characters try to find the drug, they can meet Thomas Kristofferson ("His Last Hope," by Magnus Seter, published in one of the magazines). Kristofferson can tell the characters that Scott bought Stairway from a guy in his twenties named Jeremy Kael, who hangs out at a dive called Clancy's. Kael spends all his time at Clancy's, in the back room, sucking on the nipple of a Nonochtos (see Jason Thompson, "New Lore s").

--If the PCs just want to buy the drug--that is, if they're not concerned with who sold it to Scott--Kristofferson can lead them to the Bazaar section of Metropolis. If they piss off a drug lord there, his men will force the PC's to eat

Verrucktpflanze (Jason Thompson again, "New Lores"). Once addicted, they are drawn through a gauntlet of events similar to the ones that appeared on the Kult-l list under the title of "Draft of a Scenario," by, i believe, Jean-Loup Sabatier.

Sources

Mayec: Mayec.Rancel@PING.BE

There is a page where you can find some good short stories, and most (all) of them have a very KULTish taste: Short Stories

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Oh, yes! That's the web page of John Tynes, main guy of Pagan Publishing, who do horror fiction, CALL OF CTHULHU products, and THE UNSPEAKABLE OATH magazine. Although they concentrate on CALL OF CTHULHU, many of their adventures and articles are quite suitable for KULT, and are on the borderline of violence and madness where few other CALL OF CTHULHU projects go. The artwork of Blair Reynolds, Anson Maddocks, Toren Atkinson, Dennis Detwiller and their other artists is also pretty KULTish at times. Really good stuff.

Starting Kult

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Well speaking to you as a relatively new storyteller (been playing only 2 months), I find Kult to be one of the best horror rpg's out there so far. One thing I may suggest for your players is to hold off on the magic. I don't mean not to have any 'magic' take place during the game, but it might be a good idea to black list Magical Intuition and maybe even Intuition because it might cause an imbalance if your not very familiar with the Kult rules & also how to steer those players who just want power characters. MI isn't too bad and it is needed for learning magic later on but chances are high that the first group won't survive to many adventures - one, because they're still learning the system and attitude of the game, and -two, the combat system is deadly! (which is great because fighting soon becomes a last resort). As for how they might meet or know each other the book has a few examples on pg 147. I just made the players put Robert Bullis in their past as a contact (he's from the adventure in the back of book) cause we were in a rush to play. I suggest you have a game, possibly the one in the back of the book, with test characters so that the players get a feel for Kult. Let them learn about the world by playing. Then see what's next. There's also a one shot game from Shadis magazine that's also on the net that could be your first adventure. The reason I call it one shot is because at least one of the players is meant to die.

Frozen moments ended with the players somehow succeeding and recovering in the hospital - at different moments. After they're arrest they split up and one set had a car crash not because they were being chased but because both were compulsive gamblers and they crashed over a silly bet. The other two barely survived the fight at the bus station, in part because the security helped out. The beauty of the game is that Frozen moments may be over but the fact that they all end up in the hospital opened up an intro for a new adventure because it's so easy and so possible in the world of Kult.

The adventure they're on now is Fallen Angels, which on first read is a disappointment partly cause it's a first ed. game. But if you tailor it and make things more subtle things should be nice and eerie.

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Whenever I construct Kult adventures, I don't let the players go look for trouble like in most other RPGs. Instead trouble

comes looking for them.

In one of the first adventures I played we played normal people. Another characters girlfriend asked us to find some kind of occult artifact for her (she had recently become obsessed with black magic), and we had to track with the help of some really strange and scary people (actually children of the night, but we didn't know that then). We found it and the girlfriend used it in a magic ritual where she accidently summoned a demon of some kind which imprisoned her. The demon then came after us, and we had to find out what the artifact really was, how to use it to bind the demon (which couldn't be killed by normal weapons) and how to rescue the girlfriend, while the demon and the owners of the statue were hunting us. Well, it's just a simple idea, but you can easily add to it.

About the adventure in the Kult book... It remember it as one of the best adventures I've ever played, mostly because the GM delivered the right feeling which hid the otherwise striking linear feel of the adventure.

Abyssinian M: abyssinian@GEOCITIES.COM

I play the RPG - I have some of the cards, but since CCGs are inherently EVIL, I limit my KULT playing to the RPG. I've run one good campaign so far. I never stick to adventures (and this was run under the first edition rulebook). I started out with "Fallen Angels" but my players (and myself) quickly went into a skewed version of that adventure series, and never really returned to the plot line.

The Characters were (in no particular order):

-A wandering bartender who was a budding magician and was doomed to be the cause of death for those he loved. (And was the only character with a positive mental balance, even at start).

-A sexually neurotic Secret Agent who was sexually tantalizing, perpetually horny, and afraid of sex (the player picked 'em, folks!). He was also, unbeknownst to him, a werewolf (my choice *evil grin*).

-A white Crip gangsta from L.A. (played by a black player) who quickly developed a split personality: the gangsta, and an 8 year old alter-ego "who never did anything wrong." He also soon died from bloodloss and complications after being fed on by some nosferatu. So by the mid-game, he was a vampire.

-A fourth character who wasn't too colorful, and only played about two sessions.

I managed to "get" all of the players in some way (by which I mean literally scare/shock/etc. IRL). This was just before all of us were due to deploy to Bosnia back in 1995, and so we were in a very dark mood to begin with. Best "horror" campaign I've ever run.

Malcolm Edwards: malcolm@FEDU.UEC.AC.JP

I'll probably just not include magic at the beginning, I don't have the magic supplements anyway at the moment. I'm actually thinking about pre-making the characters as letting the players read even that part of the book will give away a lot.

The players I know are used to combat-oriented games, it might take them a few deaths to figure out they can't take on the forces of darkness head to head. One of the things I like about this game is that the characters aren't very powerful.

Frozen Moments finishes with a lot of loose ends, which is good. I'm starting to get some ideas for other stories too, I

really want to get my hands on some of the supplements.

Tension in Metropolis

Lucien
Matt
alasdair mcwilliams

How do I create variety, tension and so forth when I run adventures in Metropolis? I know the Metropolis sourcebook, but I haven't got the book, so help me out here, will you! Anyone!

First off: don't expect the Metropolis sourcebook to provide you with much. It's a terrible book; you'd think its authors decided Kult wasn't worthwhile unless it was more like D&D"A monster attacks from the shadows." "I shoot it."

Variety & tension? Well, first I'm not sure what you mean when you say that you run adventures in Metropolis. When I GM, there are at most brief excursions to the place; players spend weeks in intense but slow investigation, followed by a half-hour of reality cracking all around them; when they're safely back in the Illusion, they have to ask themselves, "What the hell just happened?"

GMing advice: make your players feel like someone just slipped them a tab of acid, keep it going for as long as you can without losing their interest, then deposit them back in their living rooms, dining rooms, kitchens. No explanations.

However, keep in mind that continuity is important. I ran Richard Fichera's "Yesterday's Memories, Tomorrow's Premonitions," as a one-shot adventure, and i made some minor adjustments to keep them symbolism continuous. So here's how the game turned out:

The character, a nurse, is watching TV at home. When she gets up it's morning--not the following morning, even; four days have passed! Whenever she sees a TV time shifts for her; she goes a few days back in time or a few days ahead. She tries all kind of things to avoid this, and finally confronts it, by turning on the TV and staring at it. Every time she does this, her knowledge of the Lore of Time and Space increases; until she finds herself drawn to a place in Metropolis called the Clockworks. She watches everything--herself included--speed up as the gears begin to operate too quickly; then the guards throw someone into the gears and time slows down. Exploring further, she sees that the building is manufacturing parasites that look like wristwatches and stuffing them in boxes marked "Timex," "Rolex," etc. She looks at her wrist and realizes that her own watch is one of these things; disgusted, she tears it off. A guard hears her stifle a shout from the pain and begins to pursue her; she begins running through labyrinthine alleys, always hearing the guard behind her, when suddenly she emerges onto a street near where she lives. She looks dazed and her hand is bleeding; a passerby stops to ask if she's all right. Whatever she tells people, they don't believe it.

Okay, got a little long-winded there. My point is this: the adventure's theme was time, the visit to Metropolis dealt with time. By keeping these aligned, you create a good story, if a bizarre and alienating one.

I agree completely. Brief glimpses of something too huge to be grasped by the unawakened psyche are best. In a recent adventure I had the room of one of the players turn into a padded cell. She freaked out after her character watched a home movie of BNP related activities, the rest of the group opened her bedroom door to let her crash out there and lo and behold its a padded cell with a door at the far side. Just try and get a group of paranoid banking clerks and computer programmers to look through an observation slot into a dark corridor, they just haven't got the nerve. Its not even necessary to have anything really dramatic happen. Like the man said, too many people think it has to be AD&D, its best just to screw with their heads a bit.

The Demiurge is Dead! Long Live the Demiurge!

Glen Clarkson: gclarkson@FS.COM

I think despite the blunder by Target, I still want the Metropolis source book. No one tells me where to stick my Demiurge! The GM comes to a point where they need to decided, or choose not to decide, what happened to the Demiurge. I say "whack 'em" But that's just me. But, I'm also of the idea that the Demiurge is SO BIG that if it was dead, it would either A) take eons to finally die, and can go through the phases of death, or B) is dead, but still has little "echoes" of itself, which still leave physical or metaphysical signs behind. In my games, I try to not to let players know my thoughts on these things, and keep the players not knowing. Then I can do the "Its dead its dead its dead its dead...hey, how did that happen? Its dead." trick over and over, kind of "in the background" of my stories. (please bear with me, I've only done about 4 kinda stories, and only 2 have made any significant gains in their plot)

The Lighter Side of...

Dan Williamson: (dtw@IDM.COM)

Hey, we cant all be tortured psychopaths all the time can we? Enjoy.

Two brothers, 8 and 10, were exceedingly mischievous. Whatever went wrong in the neighborhood, it turned out they had a hand in it. Their parents were at their wits' end trying to control them. Hearing about a priest nearby who worked with delinquent boys, the mother suggested they ask the priest to talk with the boys. The mother went to the priest and made her request; the priest agreed and the mother sent the younger boy first to the priest. The priest sat the boy down across a huge, impressive desk. For a long time they merely sat and stared at each other. Finally, the priest pointed his finger at the boy and asked, "Where is God?" Scared, the boy said nothing. Again the priest pointed at the boy and shouted, "Where is God?!" The boy panicked, bolted from the room and ran all the way home. Finding his older brother, he said shakily, "We are in BIIIIG trouble." The older brother asked, "What do you mean, big trouble?" Wide-eyed and trembling, the littler boy gulped and replied, "God is missing and they think we did it."

The Primal Sea?

Jack the Blipper
Ato

Could any kind hearted fellow please tell me what the "Primal Sea" is? I only have the old edition of Kult and I have encountered this big wet thing in some of the postings. Is the demiurges citadel intact, on an Island?

The primal sea is a gigantic sea covering a part of Metropolis.The last part of the mind wiping process of death is supposed to take place in it. First detailed in the Metropolis sourcebook, there are some hints that the Demiurge and the disappeared archons might be hiding in the sea (IMHO a stupid idea, but anyway).

The Temptress and the Demiurge

Erik Growen
Sunbane
Jack the Blipper
Colin Neilson

In the Metropolis Sourcebook (pg. 53) there is an intriguing line. According to a piece of 'Holy Scripture' etched into green marble on the streets of the City, the Demiurge was "marred in the web of the Temptress and lured to send Man into exile from Metropolis to Elysium, the prison that was created for him." If the engraving is to be taken as litural, who is the Temptress that tricked the Demiurge? I just cannot see any of the Archons or Death Angels being powerful, or clever, enough to fool the Supreme Being. Any thoughts on the matter would be appreciated.

Ok, who said Astaroth was a man? Hehehe...

kawaii, Sunbane kawaii!

The answer, I like. However, on a more serious note, it cannot be Astaroth as he spends all his time trying to find where the Demiurge took off to, including a short jaunt into the Abyss which apparently (according to the 2nd Edition Rules) the Demiurge's Citadel has re-emerged from. So who can this enigma be ... hmmmm?

Not meaning to spoil your hopes but it _can_ be that it's just something to annoy readers (observe "can"). Perhaps it's something "metaphoric". this thing could be something more "fuzzy"? perhaps? he got blinded by his might? Perhaps he fell in love with some cosmic off world goddess who wished to have a little "ZOO" and now she left him, and he is searching the void for his love and has forgotten about his human "pets"...? nah I dunno...crap! IMHO I liked the first edition more. A black abyss is more "mystic" than a sea and citadel. But that's only my opinion...

Actually, having read the sourcebook, I would assume it is the same Temptress who is listed in the Damned section. She has her own incarnates, and may be connected to Astaroth, but most believe she is another entity entirely. Personally, I like the theory that there may be other beings with power on the level of the Demiurge and Astaroth, but working for their own goals.

About "Echoes From the Past"

JtB

I just recently played "echoes from the past" by Gunilla Johnsson and Michael Petersen. it's the adventure form Sinkadus rpg-magazine nr: 33.

Any other of you played it?

I was just curious if your players choose the side of Jim/Messiah or if they chose to save the Illusion? My players chickened out in the last minute...

Erik Growen

My players have not yet reached that particular adventure which provides the climax for the campaign I am running. It is

an excellent scenario for forcing players to make a Real choice, with rather staggering consequences. You mentioned that your players 'chickened out' at the end. What choice did they make, if any. Did they just try to run away? If they did that is too bad as the moment of truth has the potential to be an excellent roleplaying opportunity as they try to convince themselves and each other of the 'right' choice to make.

Martin Landgren

Sad to say, I don't really like this adventure. It is not that it is boring to play, but the whole idea of an apocalypse; if they choose to kill the Pope, then what?

Another thing, the seven... hmm (sigill pÕ svenska) are described in the Kult Rule book as changing incarnations, almost impossible to find even for Kether o.co. But in this adventure they all are sacral Lictors and the Dark Messiah kills them all in a week. Ok, he has been prepared for 2000 years, and the Demiurge is on his side, but the Apocalypse is an all too huge accident (nah?) for such a small adventure. But, sure, it is not too difficult to change it to fit your campaign...

JtB

Chickening out was perhaps not the most suitable word. They just stood there, unable to decide. At last (after about a minute of silence) one of the players too the knife and attacked Jim, "to see if we could trust him" was his excuse... Rather a slave in heaven, than king in hell... Perhaps I didn't emphasize enough that they were drawn towards the purpose of their destiny, or I played the Lictor a bit to convincing... hmm... ah well... damn! They disappoint me...

Martin Landgren

So you wanted the world to be destroyed? Well, I hope you laid "Echoes From the Past" in the end of a loong and enjoyable campaign. In that case, I can understand your disappointment.

...And lictors ARE convincing. Don't blame yourself...

Thoughts on the Demiurge

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It seems to be the habit with games that are very genre specific to provide supplements which want to tell you where the Demiurge is, who is doing what, and so forth. In Nomine seems to be going through similar problems, and it really gets people in a bind when they read in said supplement that what they did to the Demiurge is just wrong.

That's because the gaming companies are taken over by Azghouls, and are spitting out more lies!

Actually, I think that while the supplements have given me good ideas, I don't use anything from them. I take a more Amber-style approach where "gee this supplement presents some things I didn't think about. I might even use some of this."

I'm curious what those of you who don't buy into the supplements did with the Demiurge. In one game, the Demiurge is dead, but the death throws of such a cosmic being have tremendous ramifications, and there are parts of the Demiurge that don't know they are dead yet, like a body twitching. However, even the neural spasms of a dying Demiurge has tremendous amounts of intelligence and power. It was fun to use that perspective, and to see what came out of it for the players (it was actually a huge mess)

So, I get the feeling that Kult went from being what I would call a very "Doom-Style" game -- lots of blood and guts -- to being something my based in psychological horror. The combat system in the 2nd edition is weak though, and I find myself having to make up things as I go along. It still seems to be a very brutal system, which I think fits well. I don't like systems that allow players to get shot 30-40 times and just walk home. But, I have found some holes.

For example: How does one handle someone using a shield? Is it cover? Is it armor? Has anyone thought about this before? If you have, please share your solution. I'm working on one myself.

Has anyone also worked on reconciling the Kult mythos with less Gnostic versions of Kabbalah? I've made some half-hearted attempts, gathering information from some Kabbalah web-sites, but it seems the Kult mythos is so far removed from any real Kabbalsist sources that a reconciliation is difficult. However, I can always attribute that to the illusion.

The reason I'd like to reconcile the Kult mythos is because it seems to fit in with this re-occurring theme that there is something beyond good and evil that even the Archons in Kult don't seem to recognize. The Demiurge -- if it still exists -- might see it, and divine humanity does, as one can awake through either a light or a dark path. Many times, I work things out in my Kult game to "Its Good! No, its Evil! No, that's all crap, and the truth lies beyond any veil of illusionary morality". Those of you that played AD&D, and thought alignment in AD&D was a joke are probably nodding here.

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I prefer to think the Demiurge just disappeared, and nobody knows where he is. Probably, I will never have to deal with the truth about why he vanished, and with his comeback. Actually, in my Kult game, I prefer that each Kult, organization, etc, has his own view about it, or, in most cases, they have no clue about what Demiurge is...

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No one in my universe, save possibly for Astaroth, knows the fate of the Demiurge. Myths and Rumors abound. However, I'm one of those horribly anal people who have to know. ("Hmmm now where did I put that Demiurge? Its not under the couch...") Its not something I share with my players.

Well, God is dead. It should be a little ripe. But what about these palaces of the Archons? I would hope most GMs would not have players who want to "run out and kick Kether's ass". That would be lame and sad, and those players should be destroyed. O.K. Assuming that my players learned that there was a Kether, and somehow they managed to cross over to Metropolis (I'll get to this cross over part in a second) Its not like Kether's Palace and Kether itself should be the big bad nasty at the end of Duke Nukem (insert your favorite hack 'n slash video game here). Well, okay, I guess it could be. But I think there's more interesting concepts of the Sefirot (Archons) floating around. Milton in 'Paradise Lost' alluded that Hell was more of a state of mind, rather than a physical place. I think its the same with the Archons. Kether is more symbolic, and to conquer Kether might be to conquer the characters adherence to rules and domination. However, defeating Kether might be impossible in this way, and each time, no matter how great the victory, when confronted again, the battle begins anew.

Time Travel

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And since there's so little banter on this wavelength, I might as well fill the silence. My campaign has been going on for a year, it's a detective campaign in LA. After a while, I gave one of the PCs access to Space Time Lore. This was after six months, after the character had gone through tons of role-playing opportunities, playing his character to the hilt, surviving all of the traps I had set related to his disadvantages (and there were a lot, around 60-70 points worth of disadvantages), and I started to reveal a little bit of info to him. The problem is this: My carefully set up plots are now open to blatant manipulation. Example: they get hired to recover a kidnap victim. Finding the time and place the person was last seen, they can now go back in time, follow the person, and lay in ambush for the kidnapper. Or if someone who has information is murdered moments before they can get there, they can go back a couple of hours before, warn them, and then get the info. Now my players haven't been able to do this yet, I keep them too busy dodging police, murderers, killers, and homicidal weeping fallen angels, but I see this as quite possibly happening. How do people deal with time manipulation? Do you allow the antagonists the same magic, so that if the players go back in time and rescue someone, than maybe the killer goes back in time to kill the PCs off one-by-one in a time before they go back in time? Do the authorities intervene when someone travels through time...such as lictors showing up at the front door of the temple? Or do people simply not allow player Space Time Lore? Something to think about...in fact...I dare you to respond!

Reality magic is the only TRUE magic. It's the magic that can change things in the world beyond the illusion. It says somewhere in my rulebook that when you become awakened you can use all normal magic instantly and instantaneous. But to be able to use Reality Magic you have to start studying again.

If the adventure takes place outside the home town it'll be hard to use the magic since you don't have a real temple. (besides the spell to walk through time to be able change these things is very high rated) If the players can see through time and see the killing/kidnap doesn't make them very reliable witnesses, or? I think you can let them solve a mission or two in this way (if they have the proper skills (about 20 in the school of T&S, and a successful spell of walk through T&S at least 5?)). If they try to use it as a standard the idea of lictors showing up at the door of the temple, or climbing out of the T&S portal is excellent!

About the use of Time & Space Lore in KULT games: I had a player-character in my campaign who learned some of this, and I recommend making the Lore, and all magic in KULT, very hazardous and hard to predict. For things like merely seeing into the past or future, or remote-viewing your opponents' hideouts, it's not too hard to make the campaign adjust (you'll just have to figure out other ways to hide events than having them take place in the past), and you can use it for all sorts of prophecies and disturbing visions. Any 'scrying' can be turned into a dream-hallucination, or may accidentally see the wrong time, or a 'possible future', or something like that. Also, you can always modify the rulebook's requirements for spell casting, so that the players need to find some rare gem or plant or incantation, or perform multiple human sacrifices, to get a particularly important spell done. And then there are the Incarnates and semi-Awakened people and other entities which can change the players' time perception..

For actually physically traveling in time, I would definitely make this very risky; there are rulebook monsters which exist just to chase down and kill people who break the Laws of Time, and I was ready to have 'em show up if the characters

tried to time-travel. However, I also freely used a lot of paradoxes and time warps, which were very fun and disturbing to the players -- effects caused by Mental Balance as much as Lore mastery. At one point the characters ran into a person with +250 Mental Balance who was working for Malkuth and opposing them (albeit gently, having a +250 MB). All the characters except the one with a really high Mental Balance, and another one who was possessed by a Nachtkind, simply froze in time and the other players' combat with the near-Awakened person passed instantly as far as they were concerned; they just blinked and the next thing they knew, this saintly-looking person was lying dead on the ground in a pool of blood and their two comrades were reloading their guns. In another case, a character had a vision of the past and future of New York taken out of H.P. Lovecraft's story HE. Of course, in Metropolis 'time does not exist', which may be interpreted in many ways. At one point the characters went to Metropolis, opening a gate there with the Lore of Madness; the gate led from their apartment to an empty lot somewhere in the city. After passing through, they noticed that their apartment building was visible on the horizon, so out of curiosity they walked over, entered their apartment (after some encounters), and arrived just in time to hear someone walking through the gate; they'd arrived just an instant after they left! Rashly, two of the players jumped through the gate, where they confronted their past selves in the empty lot. Their immediate reaction was defensive hostility, so I role-played their past selves (played as NPCs) to react the same way (each one thought it was the 'original'); then more and more reiterations of the unlucky PCs started pouring through the gate into the empty lot, as a wiser character who had some knowledge of Time & Space watched with concern from the apartment side of the gate. Soon a huge fight between the different 'selves' erupted (needless to say, these characters were combat twins), in which a grenade was thrown which exploded a gas station, and the surviving characters -- who rushed back through the gate into the 'apartment' -- got to see their other selves burn to death. One duplicate of one of the players also made it back to the apartment, and they wrestled and struggled to push one another back into the flames; finally the 'duplicate' failed its Ego check, went into a berserk rage, and kicked the hell out of the original before throwing him into the gas explosion. However, since the duplicate was in all ways exactly the same and just as real as the 'original' character, we immediately resumed play with the player controlling the time-warped version of his character, and he was left to struggle with thoughts about souls, time and free will.

With the character who had Time & Space Lore, things got even weirder. At one point, admittedly as a rather wimpy DM decision, I made him unconsciously teleport himself forward in time to escape being mutilated in his sleep. However, this resulted in him splitting into two equally real selves, the mutilated one and the unscarred one (with different Mental Balances), which I made him role-play simultaneously since he didn't have a clue what was going on. He had an incredible conversation with himself where he tried to figure out what had happened, and the two selves ended up hanging out for a week of role-playing time, before the paradox was resolved and he ended up as one person, heavily scarred but not maimed. At this point in the campaign things were getting so bad for the players that I was afraid he might try to time-travel back to before the campaign with his Lore and prevent all his various miseries from happening. However, I'd prepared for it -- months back, as soon as he'd first started learning the Lore, the other PCs in the party had encountered a person who appeared to be him (the magic-using PC), albeit with his throat and hands slashed, and crawling towards them, apparently pleading for help. The other PCs where caught off guard (this happened when they were expecting to have something dangerous crawl out of the shadows… instead, it was the dying PC), and in panic actually gunned down the already-dying PC instead of listening to his feeble attempts to communicate. They were shocked when they then went back to the usual meeting place and saw the magic-using PC (now playing himself… I hadn't told him about the previous incident) seemingly unharmed and having spent the entire day hundreds of miles away. Completely confused and feeling guilty, they never told the magic-using PC about 'killing' him. This inexplicable event was the set-up for the magic-using PC's attempt at 'time-traveling into the past'… if he tried such a thing, I was going to have him be immediately attacked by time-monsters (I forget their name) and, unless he rolled really well, have his throat and hands seriously injured, preventing him from being able to speak or write. Injured and unable to control the time-streams, he would be flung before the other PCs, where he'd attempt to communicate his warnings to them, but probably die before he could accomplish anything. That was the plan… but that the other PCs actually KILLED their friend was the ultimate irony! If the magic-using PC had done it, I would have retold it from his point of view, and his free-willed actions, most likely, would have led to the same grim result. Unfortunately, the magic-using PC never did try

to go back to the past, but if he did, I now had my escape-clause. It was just another impossible incident in KULT. That's the trickiest part of any kind of predestination/time-travel stuff: tricking the players into behaving so that the predestined event occurs. However, it's not impossible, and if you can manage it, the feeling of all the puzzle-pieces coming together into a shocking whole is very rewarding. (I do think, also, that you shouldn't force the players into doing something if they actually manage to sneak out of it by luck or guile.)

As far as your time travel issue, I'd suggest creating your own guardians of time -- some manifestation of collective belief to prevent paradoxes from ripping the fabric of reality. Also, it seems to me that neither the archons nor the death angels would take to kindly to anyone jaunting back and forth in time, as the illusion could easily be compromised that way. What would happen, for example, if someone, anyone, went back in time to before the illusion? Perhaps you could make time travel so inherently dangerous that no one would want to risk it.

First to respond to a thought that Garett had, I believe that magic should be an innately unstable enterprise. When a character begins to warp and twist the illusion itself there are bound to be repercussions. You had already mentioned a Lictor showing up at the characters door. What about the possibility of extensive warping of the illusion drawing the attention of something from beyond the illusion? Maybe a creature from Metropolis, another skilled mage, or an Awakened human. What if the constant use of space and time magic causes localized tears in the illusion around the character's temple? If the players feel there is the possibility of unknown danger they won't abuse the power. This is especially important given the power of magic in Kult.

This sounds a bit like Paradox in MAGE, which I think is a good idea. Certainly the Archons have agents to crack down on mages and semi-Awakened people. As far as time travel -- ah, but is it possible to travel back in time before the Illusion? My impression has always been that, once the Illusion was 'created', by our meager sense of time it 'had always existed'; that no matter how far forward or back you go into the KULT future using conventional means, you'll just encounter Medieval people trapped in the Illusion, caveman trapped in the Illusion, far-future cyborgs trapped in the Illusion... and, if the Illusion is ever totally 'broken', these different time periods will have no meaning, and everything will be mixed together as it is in Metropolis. Someone else posted something similar about this a few months ago: the idea that we perceive the past as being 'nasty, dirty & brutal' being because of the current state of the Archons & Death Angels, and if we could travel back to the past, we'd see it that way, with leprosy and disease and ugliness and ignorance. Whereas, if the Archons & Death Angels had different levels of power, it'd look different; if, say, Chesed (the 'helper', right? I always mix them up) were still 'alive', both the past and future would be more comfortable, clean, attractive places, and our history and predictions in the present would reflect this. So in that way, the Archons and Death Angels and the other 'major players' are sort of outside time, and their actions have the power to change not only the way things Are and Will Be, but the way things Have Always Been. It's a definite time travel/paradox sort of thing, IMHO...

Thanks for sharing some interesting ideas about time travel. I have used Time travel a lot, but almost always as a plot device, since unfortunately my campaign is very plot driven as opposed to character driven. There's a revolving group of about 8 whom I play with, but since I never know who is going to show up, I have to always come up with a narrative to weave it all together. One use of time travel as a plot device was when the characters (Detectives) are called and told that there will be a client coming in tomorrow, and woke up the next day to discover that a day or two was missing from their lives. I had also placed a few clues to indicate that although the characters had skipped a day of their lives, they actually had receipts and the like for stores outside of California in their pockets, so that they had lived a week of their lives, were jettisoned back in time, but still bearing the proof of this lost week. They eventually had to retrace their path across a few states, and there were all sorts of interesting roleplay opportunities with waitresses that were angry at them for not tipping them last time...etc...

What happens to one's mind, when one gazes into Abyss? Does the Abyss look into one's soul? If so, what that strangest of entities, feels about someone who attempts to influence it? If the Abyss is alive and conscious albeit not in human sense,

ie. it is capable of reasoning and reacting to stimuli, then does it like someone molding it? Well, does it?

If you open gates of your mind to swirling possibilities, does that affect you? Who you are after the experience to know whether you're still the same person? Are you really sure, you have lived yesterday, that the memory of the pleasant bath wasn't just imprinted in your brain?

In my opinion, the Time Travel is a very intimate experience ... a Mage opens wide his consciousness to perceive four dimensional sculpture. But it means he becomes vulnerable, it is like an invitation for all the sharks, a flag that says "Take me!". Exploring the neighborhood of moments would be a caress, flowing with time - an immersion in a hot tub, forcing against time—an ecstasy difficult to bear, to control oneself. And making an alteration, transporting her/himself, - a new birth, a nerve shattering experience ... a long, long trip.

And you feel someone is watching you. You're exposed, you're alone, you've lost your head - you're vulnerable! And instead of sobering up, this heightens the exquisite feeling, the thing, the it! Finally ... you did ... what? This or that? What exactly? Don't you remember?

Ahh, would you want to try again?

Future is a cold place, but moving in time definitely not. I think that stressing vulnerability and lack of control together with a few memory lapses would make anyone sane reconsider. Future is a cold place, because when you find yourself there, you cannot alter yourself - you may change your past, but that would not take away your experiences. That's the point - you can help everyone but yourself.

Tiphareth

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Actually, if I had to support one of the powers, it would be Tiphareth. She is the only one who seems to embody some hope for humanity. Her aim is obscure, but her touch is light. Compare her chosen lictors (Tiphany Reeder and Yoshiko Nakamura) with those of the theIr Archons. I think a world ruled by Tiphareth would be little different from the present one, because she works by controlling and manipulating information, which has always been a major occupation of mankind.

I don't quite agree. The manipulation of information is a big occupation, but probably nothing compared to what it would be if she ruled. It would probably be more like in the novel 1984, where the lictors decide what you should know, the censorship is total and most definitely NO internet *shiver* (or a censored and controlled one). The history books would be rewritten depending on what we 'need' to know. There would never have existed any cold war, since the USA and the Russians are friends know. It would be edited away. If the US made a big deal with Germany the holocaust would be edited away since you 'cannot trade with a country like that one'. Political prisoners would be arrested on a daily basis, because they tried to find the real truth, and not the one that was served them. But that's only the effect of total control of information. What the world would look like in general depends on her aim, which I know nothing about.

I believe that the Illusion looks the way it looks because the angels are of equal power. As the aspects the represent, the world would be even more twisted if one gained to much power.

Torture

Thor Jarle

I have read the Kult book throughout, and I haven't found anything about a skill called Torture! Isn't that a skill who is relevant in a RPG like Kult. If it is in the book, please let me know what page, or if it isn't, how do you do "Torture"?

sluper

The skill "torture" isn't about how you torture, but how much info you gain by torturing...

If you roll a dice and the effect is 1 or 2, you might get his social security number. With an effect of, let's say 18, you get the whole story 'bout the Archons plan to infect La Vegas with radiation in order to stop Golab from...and so on.

sluper

Why do you need rules for that? These are the only rules you need
1, There are no rules
2, The GM is ALWAYS right
3, If the GM isn't right, see rule number 2

jason just

Imagination. Inspiration.

Erik Growen

There are no rules set out for the use of torture in any of the books. So no, you have not missed anything. As far as its use in the game goes this is very much up to the GM. If it is the players being tortured, then rolls against their CON or EGO might be appropriate. The description of what is happening to the character may suffice as well. No player wants to hear that the bad guy is slowly dissecting them. The same rolls could be made for NPCs but the story itself that you are running should be the main guide here. If you do not want the players to get any information from someone they have captured, then they cannot make him talk no matter what they try. If some piece of information should get to the players, then you can use the die rolls or, roleplay out the interrogation and torture before passing on the information. A note on Terror. Being tortured is a +5 Terror Roll. In following with the other listings that require players to make rolls if they are the instigators and not just the recipients, players should be made to make a Terror roll at at least +5 to actually torture someone.

Trip to Metropolis

Joaquim Gandara: claw@LORDS.COM

I only have one question so far... Have your players ever seen Metropolis? I mean, as a whole, not just parts of it. And I saw someone mention a map over Metropolis. How profound, the city of cities shouldn't stoop to that level. Anyway, my players have never reached Metropolis, and I think it'll take some time before they do. It's not like these things happen everyday; they would have to be gods, or at least extremely powerful. I want to keep my players on a low level, where they hardly understand what's happening. Like in my latest campaign (chronicle?), where I have only one player, which is very

nice, since it's a lot easier to customize everything, and see how the player reacts. His character works in a record-store, and some guy sells him a used CD. Of course, the CD is cursed, and of course, the player doesn't know that. The only way to get rid of it is to sell it. I keep giving the player some tiny clues here and there, some misleading, some a bit cryptic, but I think he's smart enough to get the picture. Now, get this; I improvise EVERYTHING. Nothing is prepared, 'cause I didn't have time to prepare anything. I thought we'd just fool around a bit, but it turned out great. I think Kult is the best rpg for GMs who like to improvise; at least it is for me. We've been using the Kult system for several, totally different styles, like action/horror or plain action or just horror, mystery blended with some action, etc. It's a great rpg, 'cause you can do anything with it. Sometimes, we just skip the whole

"the world is an illusion" bit, and use Kult for some great horror. A friend of mine really scared us when he was GM, he's a natural; I always enjoy his horrid sense of humour and his sickening imagination.

blair lafferty: suckdaddy@ROCKETMAIL.COM

I feel that Metropolis shouldn't be a place to explore, as if it were some sort of conquerable dungeon (ala AD&D). I use Metropolis as a sort of great, incomprehensible dream, with players awarded only occasional glimpses, hints, and visions. While well written, The METROPOLIS supplement should only be used with extreme caution. I use it as a book of myth. NEVER tell your player something as inane as "you fall through a hole in a telephone booth and realize you're now in Metropolis..." Really, I was insulted to read such passages. Idea for your next KULT session: Explore the Dream Worlds. My players have had much more fun in the unpredictable Dream Worlds than dealing with Metropolis... and have fun at the same time.

Joaquim Gandara: claw@LORDS.COM

The Metropolis supplement seems to be poorly written. If the rest of it is like that passage, it ruins the entire feeling of Metropolis. What I like about Kult is that the characters can't comprehend reality. It's just too much for a human being to grasp. Using/analyzing occultism and dreams is just a way to see parts of reality. Metropolis is too complex, too big, too disgusting, too beautiful; it's simply too much. Imagine a place that sums up the entire history and geography of ALL cities. You can't. Now add what lives beyond our illusions. You can't, because it's beyond our wildest imagination. Ok, now describe this as an organized place which is completely comprehensible for the players. That's what I call blasphemy.

Dream world, very good choice. It's unpredictable enough for the GM to do exactly what he wants. That's another thing I like about Kult; the GM is always right. I know this goes for every rpg, but in Kult, the players can't possibly disagree with the GM. Anything can happen in Kult. It's great.

Mike Tilly: tilly@algonet.se

I agree with many things said about Metropolis, but since it's a great place that can be anything the gamemaster wishes, I like to use it frequently in my campaigns. Just mentioning the place occasionally is a waste of a fantastic city...

Anyway, I never say things like "you fall through a hole in the telephone booth floor and you realize you're in Metropolis". That's just too blunt and unimaginative for me. Just don't spell it out loud. Metropolis can look like any city in Elysium except for some freaky detail, and in most cases the players don't know (but maybe suspect) they've left their own reality. I don't call Metropolis Metropolis all the time. Its inhabitants can be as ignorant as the players as to where they are. Don't waste its mysteries all at once like in the Metropolis book if there isn't a good reason for doing so, that's my tip. In my experience, details and smaller things added up are often far more scarier than one big flash of horror and gore.

Joaquim Gandara, you almost seem to be implying that Metropolis can be described. I know it's a difficult task, and that the Metropolis book doesn't succeed very well, but how else can the atmosphere and the underlying, basic structures be

conveyed? There has to be some structure in Metropolis. If there weren't any structure it would be impossible to describe or use in a RPG. In my opinion it's best if the players only get brief glimpses of it though.

By the way, a map of Metropolis would be impossible following KULT logics. Metropolis is a city beyond time and space. I believe it's said in some book that the different parts of Metropolis aren't actual geographical parts of the city, just ways of giving structure to something maybe only an awakened person could fully understand. At least you'd have to be able to view space and time differently than normal humans to start thinking of Metropolis in geographical terms.

About the dream world.... Just watch out so it doesn't get too spaced out. It can be fun to begin with but my players grew tired of it after a while. Another thing is that in the dream world the players have even less control over their surroundings than usual (unless they are skilled dreamers), which can be very frustrating.

Abyssinian: abyssinian@GEOCITIES.COM

Absolutely! "Show them, don't tell them." I have "rewarded" my players with glimpses of Metropolis. Of course, these glimpses only occurred during moments of great stress, when other "events" were more than occupying their attention. They obviously didn't have time to try to make any sense of it all.

Joaquim Gandara: claw@LORDS.COM

I assume that you mean " can't be described". And no, I'm not implying that. I am merely stating that the structure of Metropolis shouldn't be so obvious that the players could draw a map of it. As someone said earlier on this list; it's more like Metropolis visits the players, not the other way around. I agree with you completely, there is some structure, but it should be too overwhelming for the players to understand. Using the 'glimpses' approach, the GM doesn't have to give Metropolis any structure at all, since the player(s) only see a brief part of it. But what if the players have actually broken through the illusions? Is Metropolis something they can then comprehend? I think that would serve as an anti-climax. When the players are free at last, how can you describe Metropolis in a way that is comprehensible for the players, but still as fantastic and unbelievable as it should be?

It sounds like only part of Metropolis is visible, like in some of the really huge cities of Elysium. Of course, one way to describe Metropolis is by letting the players think that they're still in their own town and changing a few details (like using parts of the city's past and future). However, the city should then be just a tiny part of Metropolis; when/if the players see the horizon, it'll look like the city goes on forever, blending with other cities that shouldn't be there, meeting a sickening, red sky, as if the sun is rising in every direction. Well, something like that, anyway.

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My players, in the games I have run in the past (one for over a year and a half) never did see Metropolis until the bitter end… Then, in one mostly story-telling ending adventure I showed them what it was they were actually involved in and ended the chapter on one of those melodramatic "We-re in deep s#!t" notes.

When my players finally reached Metropolis they were not at all powerful. In fact they were pretty much ordinary people with a slight bit of extraordinary experience under their belt. They had seen things no others had seen (at least in their eyes) and were changed but not powerful. No real magic or superpowers. Nothing of the sort. It really made the final entrance just that much more extraordinary.

The game seems to be (by popular vote of the players I've had) more fun when you are struggling along in a rollercoaster you're not in control of then when you are aware and can make the thing turn or stop at any time. If that makes any sense.

UFOs in Kult

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Has anyone out there incorporated UFO fever / abductions / sightings into their Kult games? I'd be interested to hear. I bet such things are just fevered human minds trying to find a quasi-scientific explanation for the awful truth of the illusion and the madness that lies beyond... .

Possible explanations from the top of my head:

1. An explanation could be Lictors using the alien look to easier take control over persons and make a small purgatory in the craft (painful memories are well known).

2. Maybe they're awakened trying to manipulate us to awaken by pain or implants.

3. The could be Archons/Death Angels making a random check of their prisoners to see if they're trying to break free.

4. They could very well be Aliens, coming from another planet at the other side of the universe. Who ever said the illusion was small? If the Demiurge could create a whole illusionary planet, why wouldn't he be able to create some of it's surroundings? A couple of hundred years ago, you'd be called a heretic if you said the earth spun around the sun, because WE were the most important thing in the universe and everything must circle around us. Well, now we know better. If too many persons in one place (big cities) makes the illusion crumble, why even put all prisoners (us) on the same planet? By making them look different (the body is only a vessel, right?) the chance of us joining forces and breaking through the illusion is minimal. Wouldn't that make the intriguing plot of the illusion make it even better?

Malkuth is into breaking the illusion. UFO's are not your everyday cup of tea item. After all they abduct and conduct experiments...Andrea Bergstrom anyone????

This means that in the same context the men in black that cover up these events must work for one of the Archons other than Malkuth. For a truly twisted concept they could be controlled by Tipperath who is playing both sides for her own gain.

The idea I had was pc's in therapy with repressed memories. They try to find out what is going on and get recruited by MJ-12 who are fighting the aliens, but as they are military must be under Crowley's command. They then begin silencing people who have been exposed to UFOs because they now know that the UFOs can materialize more easily in this world if people knew. Also to quote the Gerry Anderson show U.F.O ,there would be world wide panic stock market crashes etc....

The players then discover that Malkuth is actually trying to help humanity and are then torn between stopping the abductions and spreading the word for Malkuth

I suppose UFO is simple magic enacted by the Lictors as a diversion for us to cover the problems with the Illusion. When there is a tear in the Illusion, some creatures from Metropolis come, and some people disappear. Lictors just have to create

some lights in the sky, and rumors are about abduction by ET...

If you create different effects each time, few people will believe that ETs are real, and the trick would fail : they think that people talking about that are credulous and dumb, and everyone tries to explain the tear in the Illusion as a "natural" thing : lighting stroke, strange meteorological conditions, or anything else.

I'm a bit uncertain how to deal with UFOs in KULT myself -- KULT is so humanocentric that any 'aliens' just seem like they'd have to be some 'creatures from beyond the Illusion' or agents of Archons/Death Angels rather than genuine alien beings from another planet. After all, only we humans are really lucky enough to have souls...

UFOs Revisited

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The War of the Worlds. Orson Welles as an unwitting servant of Tipareth. Radio was young, and Tipareth wanted to show just how powerful it could be. Therefore, the famous broadcast of an invasion of outer space. A hoax, which reinforced the illusion? A demonstration of power? A firecracker for the imagination to stretch the boundaries of the illusion? The answer depends on the asker, but is almost always yes.

So I was thinking of events on the illusion throughout history, and I came to that famous radio broadcast of "War of the Worlds". This is nifty because I'm tying together important historical events with the UFO stories that seem so odd in Kult. I'm working off the idea that UFOs had a mixed effect on the illusion, at least in my universe. UFOs and the whole extra terrestrial phenomena reinforce the illusion in a couple ways 1) We look out instead of in for divinity, *and* 2)a lot of UFO stuff a re-engineered hoaxes so that all unexplained events fall under the "engineered hoax" category. One could even envision a game where investigators go to a sleepy little town to investigate a UFO hoax, and reveal it as a hopeless sham, only to discover that the REASON such a hoax
occurred is rather interesting (and deadly)

However, that little piece of our divinity -- imagination -- can take such things and go wild with it. UFO cults range from the insane to the too sane. Hapless pawns and seekers of truth, the seekers are the most dangerous to the illusion. Why, these are advanced races out there!

They show us what we can BECOME! Beings of pure energy and thought! They show

us our future. All of a sudden, everyone is using UFOs for their agendas. Da Vinci shows some poor yokel pieces of the machine, and what most consider just another hoax now has diagrams which *weren't* supposed to get out. Wisdom and lies, all in one bundle.

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About the UFOs...I don't know. Sometimes I think Greys and Razides don't make a good mixture. There was, some time ago in this list (I saw in the archives), a discussion about UFOs in Kult, and, I think that one of the ideas, one about them being just a collective "illusion" provided by Demiurge or other super being.

Actually, I have plans for using them in my campaign, but as beings that came from other various dimensions that exist. IF, I don't use largely the universe concepts that I get in Clive Barker's books, like the Imajica thing, etc.

ALEXANDER OURTH: xandy777@USA.NET

The idea of Kult in space is nothing that really fascinates me. I read a very interesting essay about the planets being artifacts by the demiurge to keep up illusion. I do not remember who wrote that, but I think it has been posted in this list, and I'm certain that there are some copies of it around in the WWW. As I am not a science fiction fan at all, and not really interested in UFOlogy my Kult world does not contain elements of this kind at all. I do have some kind of humanoid robots, which I mostly explain by the idea of the Lore of Cybertechnology, which I like quite a lot, and which also can be found somewhere on the Web. The Kult world that we use in our games doesn't have place for aliens, mostly because they do not fit into our concept at all, and that they would drag away the attention for the gnostic background (to which I do not want to link them).

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There is a reference in the Conjurer's Guide "Beyond the Boundaries" which would seem to preclude the use of aliens and UFOs as anything other than a mere part of the Illusion. In the section on Astrology it says: "[Man] can read the fate of the world by studying the stars. This is possible because space itself, and the placement and the motion of the stars through the universe is a reflection of the Illusion. The macrocosm, the shape and movement of the universe, is a reflection of Malkuth, the Archon that created the entire world from her own essence. The zodiac is a schematic image of the plans of the Illusion of the Demiurge. It is possible to read about imprisoned man in the planets and far galaxies and stars that contain information of what is going to happen on Earth."

This, of course, does not mean that the GM is bound to dismiss the little Grey fellows. It could be argued that only the parts of the universe which we can see are parts of the Illusion and that aliens could conceivably live beyond the Illusion the Demiurge created. They might fit into an X-File style of campaign with them working with the jailors to keep mankind imprisoned.

Vampire and Kult Integrated

Karl: (lexus@CWNET.COM)

Hello all. My Name is Karl. Some friends and I have been running a live action vampire game based on the Kult universe for about a year now. We run every Saturday and have about 70 players per night. It's great throwing the Kult background at a bunch of jaded vampire players who think they know everything about the game. You should see their faces when they get torn into by a Razide or screwed by someone who has mastered the Lore of Death. One quick point, We changed Yesod to from "the founder" to "the Paramour" and made it much more on par with the lore of passion. It worked for us. Special thanks to Paul Beakley for his initial inspiration to run a Vampire/Kult game.
And so without further delay...

How the Clans are Controlled by the Secret Masters

Cain is not the progenitor of all vampires. Vampires do not carry the curse of Cain. Cain was not made a vampire by the Demiurge as punishment for the first murder. There never was a vampire named Cain. Neither did vampires fall from Metropolis with man. They were never the lords of the Primal City. In the beginning there were no vampires. Vampirism is an experiment gone terribly wrong. Thirteen times Malkuth attempted to alter the bodies of human beings hopping that immortality would grant them the experience necessary to break free of the Illusion. Thirteen times these beings were perverted by Malkuth's enemies each twisted in some way to serve the jailers. As each clan grew from its founder the secret masters found ways to better use them until they have become the most powerful tool in maintaining the illusion. Each

clan is influenced by different beings and each master has it's own method of domination.

Ironically, the greatest of the vampires' handicaps to enlightenment was wrought by Malkuth itself. Thinking to give its creations a spark of perseverance, a hyper survival instinct was added to the basic formula. Instead of giving the vampires will enough to face the truth this Beast turned lose in the jail! made them mad like caged animals. The Beast has become the vampires chief enemy, giving them cruel and petty egos hot and fierce when they are young only to burn slowly into cunning isolation and devastating malice as they age. Malkuth failed to see the flaw until all thirteen had been made and had never been able to remove the Beast from future blood lines, though it has tried. Before getting into the particulars of each clan, please not that time is not linear.

The time of certain actions taken by archons and death angels may seem incongruous with the reasons for performing them however to these powerful entities, who exist outside the illusion of time, they make perfect sense. Hareb-Sarap twisted the early Brujah, placing in their blood a fierce augmentation to the Beast which makes them lust for battle and long for the blood of innocents on their lips. Thaumiel the Unjust Ruler has found uses for this trait in the Brujah. Under Thaumiel the clan has diverted the energy of their beasts to fighting authority. They are directed into fight after fight for perceived oppressions and injustices. This may sound counter productive to the death angel's nature, however rebels are actually very necessary to perpetuate the cycle of oppression and they are never allowed to see the real oppressors. One quarter of the Brujah elders are actually razides directing the clan to the purposes of Thaumiel. It takes very little to keep the clan fighting other than a cause and the means.

Clan Gangrel were cursed by Nahemoth the Defiled World into an eternal restlessness. They may never find an answer to their longing Beast and are crippled into melancholy isolation that sap their will and blunts their perseverance. This curse keeps them from enlightenment at the same time it makes them hard for lictors to manipulate. Though Binah exerts a moderate influence on the Gangrel they remain the only clan free of most of the secret masters machinations.

Perhaps the cruelest trick upon vampires was worked by Gamichicoth the False Rescuer who gave the Malkavians a vision into the truth that could not be expressed and drove them all mad. Of all its creations, Malkuth maintains the purest guilt over the fate of the Malkavians. Malkuth has directed this clan, through her lictors, to enlighten others in the only way they can; acts that shock the psyche into a state of pure vision.

Hod the. Punisher gave to. the Nosferatu their visage in retribution for Malkuth's violation of the Demiurge's law. Forced into the underground the early Nosferatu met the agents of Tiphareth who have been using the clan since. The clan is given superior information by the Archon's lictors in exchange for their knowledge of vampire activities and their promise to protect the subterranean entrances to Metropolis Tiphareth knows the information she gives the Nosferatu will disperse and uses this to her advantage. All data given out is slanted and meant to spurn other parties into likely action. Some information is simply falsehood designed to test certain institutions or beings.

The Toreadar were perverted by Yesod the Paramour who gave them a sensuality and an aesthetic appreciation that keeps them bound to the illusion by their senses. Binah now uses the Toreador to control both mortal and vampire society. Her lictors teach them secret rituals to build social groups and bind each member to her duties to the others. In exchange they become very powerful in these groups.

The Mages of old House Tremere were under the influence of Kether the Ruler long before he convinced them to drink the blood of the Salubri founder. Discrete changes have been made over the centuries to the Tremere power structure and an effort has been made to move away from the old customs. Kether's lictors now make up the entire council of seven and most of the Pontifects. Kether's lictors use the Tremere to rule the prison and fight his dark twin Thaumiel. The Tremere, locked into their illuminanti power structure rarely think to question who really directs them or why, so greedy are they for the small magic that Kether allows them to learn.

Clan Ventrue received its special perversion from Thaumiel, who continues to control them. The blood of the clan calls them to subjugate other and bend their wills. It is an instinctive need that draws power from the Beast. The Ventrue subconscious. Sees everything in Darwinian terms of victim and victimizer though they like to believe otherwise. They are the black jewel in Thaumiel's crown of iron. The death angel's razides are firmly entrenched in the Ventrue power structure. In fact, it is these servants who guard Ventrue's sleep in body and translate his "wishes" to the clan.

Togarini the Protector of Death twisted the Capidocian's Beast, obsessing them with the illusion of death in order to make them pliable pawns. The clan was loyal to his cause, perpetuating the concept of death until a few of the elders began to awaken as a result of their morbid experiments. A group of Togarini's lictors, the Giovanni, were immediately dispatched to exterminate the entire Capidocian clan and replace them with a clan more directly under the death angel's control. This was accomplished very thoroughly.

Children of Osiris, now a motley band of freedom fighters, serve no archon or death angel. They learned the truth about reality from their founder shortly before he was destroyed by Thaumiel along with most of their clan. Those few who are of the true blood and not merely converts seek the destruction of Thaumiel's pawn, Set, and an end to the prison.

Set's blood was maligned by Gamaliel the essence of Perverted Sexuality. Since then, Thaumiel has found them almost as useful as the Ventrue in oppressing the mass. The Followers of Set are singularly masters of bringing entire armies of the disaffected into Thaumiel's influence through their use of secret cults and sex rituals. Thaumiel controls the Settites through their absolute loyalty to Set, whom he has replaced with a particularly vial and twisted lictor. Those who do not adore Set or obey the Typhonists, the lictor's agents, are sent to the death angel's inferno where they "learn gratitude".

Clan Giovanni came into being to serve Togarini. Humans of the Giovanni family were selected to serve Togarini's lictors in the place of the Cappadocians. The death angel gave the new clan a lesser discipline that will never lead them into the Truth and saw to it that the clan is firmly dominated by it's lictors/Dons. Their main function is to maintain the aspect of the illusion called death. As long as they perpetuate this lie by their belief in it, Togarini's lictors leave them in peace to follow their pursuits. Those that do not toe the line may serve the illusion as a wraith.

It was Kether who twisted the Lasombra, making their Beast crave power and subjects in a way similar to the Ventrue. It was Kether's intention to neutralize the Sabbat threat to the prison with the clan's leadership. When Astaroth returned from the Abyss, however, the Demiurge's dark twin set his sights on claiming the Sabbat as his warriors. Astaroth successfully seduced the Losombra with infernal magics and special powers granted from Inferno. The elders of the clan are fully aware of who they serve and all within the clan who opposes their infernal master are killed.

The already wild Ravnos succumbed to Samael, their beast altered into a thirst for total annihilation. Malkuth's, who the clan reveres and Deana the Mother, has been able to keep this primal desire focused on the destruction of the illusion, though her control is less than perfect. Samael's razides and Malkuth's lictors can both be found hidden in the Ravnos' ranks.

The founder of the Salubri, like Osiris, enlightened to the nature of reality. However, Kether's lictors goaded the Mages of House Tremere into slaying her before she could relate most of her knowledge. After that the Salubri were hunted one by one until all that remained were eight, all very skilled in hiding from Tremere and the shadowy lictors. The Salubri of today have a distorted view of the Truth. The clan teaches others to awaken to their own godhood. They believe each person is responsible for it's own personal reality. They do not personify the archons and death angels, leaving them as philosophical concepts. The Salubri do not have any concept of the jailers or their virtually total control Of man's destiny. The Salubri was easy pickings for lictors until the last eight became totally paranoid.

The Sabbat originally formed under the influence of Malkuth, however she quickly lost control to Kether when he

seduced the Lasombra. Kether used the sect to destroy all opposition to the Illusion. When Astaroth returned to Reality he wooed the Lasombra from Kether and uses the clan to direct Sabbat attack against his enemies in the Prison. The Sabbat, today, is very factious. Kether and Malkuth still have influence and some of the death angels have their own followers as well. The Black Hand went through a radical policy change when a Hand Nosferatu

Antitribu named Kaleb awoke to the nature of True Reality. He was able to write his insights down in an enigmatic book now referred to as the Book of Nod before the lictors of Kether silenced him. The Hand quickly distributed pieces of the work and now exists solely to protect the book. The Hand is still a part of the Sabbat and must constantly play a cloak and dagger game with their enemies within the sect.

Why Worship Demons?

Finnsson
Bart Gelens

Why worship demons?

You worship demons because you think they might give you something in exchange for your immortal soul, and almost always you get something; death

In my eyes, you worship demons because you can get a lot of power from them in the mortal world, in exchange for your immortal soul. This could be a good deal, if you make sure you don't die (that's why all those evil guys are so obsessed with eternal live). And of course it can only be a good deal if you outsmart the demon you make a pact with (a being that's not only ancient, but also very skilled in making those deals...). In other words, to even think of making such a deal, you would have to be arrogant enough to assume you can outsmart the demon you're making a pact with (which gets harder the more powerful the demon is you're dealing with). The pact itself is fairly easy to make however (once you've contact the demon)...

Wicca

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Witch is a generic term for someone affiliated with the dark forces which is what the priests of that time accused everyone not Christian for. The Wiccan religion is older than Christianity, although todays organization of course is younger than the word witch. When I read witch I started thinking about the witch-hunt and those (some 99.9%) innocently accused and felt the need to defend them. Still it feels like Satanist or something similar would be more appropriate (unless you call female believer 'witch')

This is untrue. Ever heard of a water witch?

Can't say I have. I was thinking of the use of the word 'witch'. When someone is called witch it's usually meant as a bad thing. At least with my knowledge of English I've never heard of any good meaning of the word. Wiccans are of course not evil (not more than any other religion) and it's too bad that they call themselves 'witches', as it easily leads to the belief that they are the same as the other meaning of the word (evil and so on) ...

Wicca claims a tradition that goes back 50,000+ years. Similarly Christianity (through Judaism) claims a tradition to before the universe existed. By claiming an older tradition does not make it so. Wicca was created somewhere in the late 19th century, Christianity started in the 1st Century. Wicca as it is known and loved today is 100 years old. It did not develop in a vacuum any more than any other religion, but it is still 100 years old.

I have been researching in the subject and Wicca is the same as the "mother-religion" or Animims. I can't tell you if Wicca was the only but it was one. It has only been "hunted" for some 1000 years. But you can see remnants of this religion in even the Greek mythology (Gaia).

A good friend of mine has a couple of books about Wicca. I have to look deeper into this. Since Wicca is a nature-believing religion they can claim tradition to all such religions (which would be quite pathetic). It's like if Christianity would claim traditions from all monotheistic religions (especially Judaism) and say they're some 4000 years.

By the way, aren't the Lictors great at making us quibble about some religion? Especially a Gaian one! (but sometimes it's fun) No wonder we're still imprisoned ...

I usually define a witch (in most RPG) as someone who made a (personal) pact with a supernatural being, thus doing this being some kind of service in exchange for some granted powers and supernatural abilities...

It's not a cult, not a collective worshiping. It's rather like an agreement, a contract; and it's more individual than collective. (so, it's not always an Evil power... But applying it to Kult, you'll have troubles to find a power which is not tainted in some respect...)

In my opinion, witches could be in service of a Nepharite, a Lictor, or even a Death Angel, and maybe sometimes working for an Awakened...

Often, I guess, witches are unaware of the True nature of their master, thinking of Him as Satan, or someone else, when they're in fact manipulated by 'something' they actually never heard of...

World Of Darkness and Kult

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I use the World of Darkness system (from White Wolf) and actually run a Werewolf campaign with a Kult cosmological background. I don't know if anyone's interested in cosmology breakdowns, so I won't go into that here, but I've kind of taken a cross-section of higher powers and drawn a chart of equivalencies. I use the Archons and the Death Angels not so much as sentient beings as powers or forces, conceptual gods which hold lesser, finite beings in their sway.

Werewolf, I think, lends itself to Kult play in that it maintains an apocalyptic theme. I try and keep the supernatural stuff to a minimum (despite the fact that the pcs themselves are supernaturals) so that when a strange critter does rear its ugly head, the shock value and impact of the situation are there.

I have always believed this to be effective, if demons are a dime-a-dozen and call in regularly for tea and scones, who is going to bat an eyelid or be too worried?

The last game I ran, I used the Chicago source books for Vampire (mostly for geography and culture) and wrote my own

npcs. This time around, I'm basing my game in Los Angeles (where I live), and creating the setting whole-cloth. There are a lot of good resources online, and I've made a couple of trips to Hollywood and downtown LA to scout out locations for use in the game (Asylum is a great setting).

But don't you have that feeling that all the WW WOD settings have their own apocalyptic themes? Each one is different but strangely the same...Only an illusion of course. Just as the core rules are strangely the same and yet different, creating the illusion that we must rush out and by them in case the next release actually explains how they are supposed to work...

There's a cash cow operating there, for sure. I took the cosmology out of the main rule book and I buy supplements that I think will benefit me and my game. I am fortunate in that I make enough money that I can buy books frivolously, but I still stay away from those I know I'm not going to use. Plus, I enjoy writing and making it up myself, so most of what I buy is inspirational, rather than actually useful. I can't remember the last time I ran a canned adventure straight out of the book. Half the joy of gaming, as a gamemaster, is creating the setting and the prominent npcs.

Using Werewolves as Kult Pcs: Using such powerful characters in an horror game reduces a lot the efficiency of dangerous situations, doesn't it ? When I played Werewolf, I found difficult to scare the PC in any case (two rage points, a little frenzy and they fight without fear, even if it's sometime "until death")... With human characters, I guess that human fears are easier to bring up...

I played a cross over White Wolf's Gypsies and Kult a couple of years ago, and it worked perfectly... (In fact it was the Kult world, with gypsies characters... unusual point of view, but I liked it...

I think there is a lot to be said for games where the pcs are part of some recognizable minority, it provides them with a common background which fosters the desire to stick together, and if they are an unpopular minority then that creates the necessity for them to support and protect each other. Easy to make them feel isolated and hunted, and that's only with the rest of the human population! Gypsies do form a good group of that type and have interesting myths and traditions all of their own.

One that sprung to my mind also from WW are ghoul families, inbred closed communities with minor supernatural powers/abilities. They were in one of the Vampire Sabbat books (storytellers guide I think).Check them out...Kind of like a cross between deliverance and the people under the stairs, although the family heads might well be evil genius types. They would make great villains/adversaries/cultists. Actually the stuff of which many a horror movie was made.

However, What if the players belonged to such an outcast community? (screen fades to sound of "dueling banjos")

I've read the series, and I used some of the ideas in there, but for the most part, I don't stay that close to the either setting. For example, I've done away with Vampiric Clans and some of the Werewolf Tribes. I use Mages as peripheral characters who seldom can be pigeon-holed into a Tradition, and I don't use Wraith or Changeling (yet, I'm thinking about adding my own version of the fey). As far as Kult goes, I use Metropolis, though it isn't the same Metropolis, and I conceive of the Archons and Death Angels more as conceptual forces than actual sentient beings.

WoD/ Kult Scenario

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Admit it, folks, this list has been pretty quiet as of late, so, to stir things up I am going to post some scenario ideas distantly Kult related. So here it is : The three of us here have been charged with responsibility for creating RPG World of

Darkness based tournament, and that's what we came up with.

THE SYSTEM used is heavily modified Castle Falkenstein. We use abilities ranging from Poor to Legendary for the purpose of determining chance of success with cards as Willpower/Hero Points to use in situations of tremendous importance.

THE SETTING is the mad carnival of Rio de Janeiro, AD 1999 (a year before the turn of the century), with lots of prophecies, cults, zealots, frenzied crowds as a background - if you've seen Katherine Bigelow's Strange Days, you've got a good idea what I am talking about.

THE IDEA is that there are three different power groups about to clash. They are represented by three different 4 men (could be women, we certainly are not going to discourage any girls from taking part) teams of vastly different backgrounds and possibly purposes. Their deadline is, yes, you guessed it, the midnight our of the last day.

THE STORY, take I. A group of FBI agents has been invited to help Rio police stop a killing spree of a certain serial killer of, apparently, US origins. What the agents do not know, is that there is not one, but three different organizations and no fewer than three madmen, and a very sane and sinister person behind the scheme.

THE STORY, take II. A routine check into kindred activities in Rio area performed by a group of Toreador Archons turns up secrets no one would like to know ... they start in a restaurant, where they are served some strange dish that causes them to have visions of chases, tortures and unbearable fear ... (they all have EAT FOOD merit). Their investigations will/could uncover clues leading to meat traffic and cannibal practices on staggering scale. What they do not know, is that this is only a tip of an iceberg, and that someone is using them to stop threat to his meat mongering monopoly.

THE STORY, take III. A renegade Guardian, an angelic creature, has shown mercy by intervening into a fate of a mortal thus acting against freewill of a sentient being of lesser status. She or he is to be thrown into Abyss for its sins. A group of Guardians has been awakened from the state of Waiting and sent after the criminal. Call it coming of an age and clashing morals against virtues. What they do not know, is that the renegade has tried to protect people from bizarre threat and failed. Tracking him, they'll have to decide whether monkeys deserve their help and what the word 'good' means.

THE STORY, an explanation of sorts. No one knows why or how human brain works. But, with all this modern science, would not be possible to translate oneself into chimerical being of silicon, fiber optics and magic? Someone has offered immortality for some material for necromantic practices ... wouldn't you kill time and time again for such an opportunity?

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