Alternative History

Alternative What?

Playing an 'Alternative History' game doesn't require a history degree. Pick a time period from your favorite books or movies and use it as your setting. For example, a wild west campaign could be based entirely on John Wayne movies and the *Wild, Wild, West* TV show. More depth could be brought to the setting with a little research on the internet or the local library to flesh out the details, but it isn't necessary. Do as much (or as little) research as needed to satisfy the needs and interests of the group.

Once a time period is selected, pick an event to twist for the 'alternative' aspect. To stay with the wild west example, perhaps the west coast was settled by the Chinese instead of the Spanish, or the steam engine was not invented, making trains non-existent. The GM may decide either to allow magic in the game, or keep it mundane; it is possible to run a traditional historic campaign with the *Shades of Earth* rules.

Now take the alternative twist and determine what repercussions occur because of the change. A lack of a steam engine creates a number of possible effects. First, the lack of trains would slow expansion to the west and exports from it. The local governments would be much more independent, and self reliance of communities would be vital for survival. Settlers would become much more vulnerable to attacks by Native Americans. A lack of steamboats in the world would also slow the crossing of the Atlantic, creating slower immigration and exchange of goods. The lack of steam engines would slow industrial progress as well, maintaining the demand for physical labor instead of machines.

So what does all this mean? It is a basis for GMs to apply their imaginations. Within this framework several paths could be set up. Along one alternate path, a group of characters are in a South which has never been freed from slavery. They are members of the underground railroad doing their best to get as many slaves to freedom in Canada. Another path could be a group of settlers making their way west to their claim. Once there they must deal with local threats including another group of settlers: a pack of European goblins. The Native American population may help, hinder, or be another option for characters to play.

Setting in This Book

The setting included in this book is centered on 1938, although anything from 1928 - 1948 is fair game. Placing the setting outside of that range is allowed, but the information contained in the rules will be out-of-date.

The alternative history twist is that magic exists in the world, although the majority of people are unaware of it. They believe magic to be the stuff of myth or, in more rural locations, the stuff for witches. Any magical beasts pass as unexplained phenomena or as folk legends. Much of this is reinforced by a number of secret agencies that recruit those who can cast spells and discredit those who move to expose the existence of magic. Why do they do this? To maintain their power. Much of these organizations' advantage comes from the general public not knowing of their existence. In addition, although none would admit it, there is some fear about the reaction of the public. It is a time when lynching is not uncommon.

Into all of this comes the politics, intrigue and high adventure of the time. Fans of such movies as the *Indiana Jones* trilogy, *The Phantom*, *The Shadow*, and *The Rocketeer* (to name only a few) will find this setting a fun and intriguing venue. The political forces of the time struggled to reshape the world in their image, and this inevitably led to strife.

Socio-Political Statements

This book is not meant as a manifesto, outline to power, or a textbook in history. It is simply a game. If a person walks away from *Shades of Earth* and believes that Nazis are cool, then they have missed the point. *Shades of Earth*, if anything, is an exploration into history. This game builds on what was happening in Earth history and what happens today. A person does not need a fantasy world to find evil. Evil is alive and well within the hearts of all humans on this planet, and it is at constant battle with good. If a player wishes to examine the side of evil and try to understand the madness that allows one race to perform genocide on another, *Shades of Earth* is open to that. If players wish to fight that evil, again this is an option. *Shades of Earth* is the vehicle; where you drive it is your choice.

Within *Shades of Earth* some readers may find passages which are alarming or distasteful. These are people who should not read this book, or history for that matter. In the past, discrimination was rampant. This discrimination grew to hatred. Hatred bonded people into a political force. That political force was applied against those the group hated. This was not only in Nazi Germany or Japanese-occupied China but throughout

the world, and nowhere more so than the United States of America.

There are numerous examples of American political hate groups. The Ku Klux Klan were more than a million strong in the 1920s and 30s and manipulated the political system to get their candidates elected. Black Americans were allowed to die in U.S. conflicts but not allowed to eat in "white" restaurants. Women had only recently won the vote but were still treated as second class citizens. Discrimination did not halt with preferential treatment; many people were lynched due to ethnic background, religion or skin color. These forces can be used to create villains for the players to fight against, raise ethical questions for them to explore and create story conflicts on which campaigns can be built.

In summary, the tone of *Shades of Earth* is determined by the GM and players. It can be as happy and light as a Saturday serial or as cynical and dark as a World War II journal. It can reflect the high adventure of a pulp novel or the dark realism of the film noir genre. In the end, the choice is yours.

Secrecy

Maintaining an organization's secrets is one goal for characters. Often, the secrets which must be guarded will be on a grand scale involving governments and their allies. Recovering plans or ensuring that only the right people know the answers can be a full time, and often fatal, job.

Mundane organizations have their secrets, too. The Catholic Church, while they have magical branches, maintains a large number of secular secrets and clandestine operations. These secrets range from items as petty as rigging a local election to operations involving assassinations of world leaders. Players may choose to keep, reveal, or ignore the secrets of their organizations.

Conflict

Conflict in the Iridium System, used by *Shades of Earth*, can be resolved in many ways. It is inadvisable to use combat to resolve a situation. As in real life, combat often results in the death of someone, quite possibly a player character. Guns, knives and even fists are deadly weapons and will cause the death of those they are applied against. *Shades of Earth* is not a heroic combat game.

Shades of Earth is meant to allow dynamic interaction between characters and setting characters (played by the GM) to create a rich story. The best stories of mov-

ies and literature have conflicts that are character driven. Lancelot had to struggle between loyalty to King Arthur and temptation with Guinevere. Frodo was constantly at battle with himself over his desire for the One Ring. Luke Skywalker had to choose between his Jedi training and saving his friends on Tatooine. The choices of the characters, right or wrong, bring drama to the story. These internal conflicts are often the spice of an adventure.

There are also supernatural conflicts. Many of the battles fought in *Shades of Earth* are based around battling those forces from beyond that attempt to destroy humanity or crush its spirit. Some will choose to join these forces and others to oppose them. Battling evil because it is competition can be just as valid as battling it because a person believes she is on the side of right. Does it matter what the character's motivation is if the end result is good? Maybe, maybe not, but as always, the choice is yours to make.

The following story is an example of a traditional pulp style setting with an alternative twist.

A Night in Brazil

I woke up with that feeling that tells you that you were in a fight, a fight you hadn't won. Maybe it was the maracas rattling in my ear. Maybe the maracas were my loose teeth, but I knew I was in trouble. My first clue was my hands tied behind my back. My second clue was the smell of cheap cologne.

"Schmidt, that you?"

"Nein, mein freund, it is a beautiful fan dancer, and I have come to take you away." Schmidt always thought he was funny.

"So what is with the heavy stuff? I still hurt from the beating your goons gave me in that cantina." It would have been more true to say that my mother still hurt, but I didn't feel like getting into the details.

"I am sorry for that, Joe. You know I like you best, but my people here are so *enthusiastic* about their work." His people. Right. Most of us have friends or employees, Schmidt had people. "I do not want anything more to happen to you, Joe. But more to the point, I do not want anything to happen to me." That sounded like Schmidt. "The people I work for have had something stolen from them. They believe it was you who did this."

"I'm flattered. What did I steal? Was it expensive?" I didn't show that I was amused since I wasn't, and I don't think Schmidt ever had been.

"Oh, 'important' would be a better way to describe it. Important and rare, so that makes it expensive to the right people." Schmidt smiled. His smile was like a croc right before it eats you. Toothy and very sympathetic.

"I only ask because I'd like to buy myself something nice."

"Joe, we know you have it. Please, let us get to the negotiations. We are willing to pay you well for the artifact. As you must know, time is of the essence. We must have it by the dawn."

"Dawn . . . right, and I suppose you need some flowers for your sweet heart." That earned me a smack . . . and then another. Schmidt was nothing if not thorough.

As I spat out some blood I asked Schmidt, "O.K. Let's pretend I know where it is and then assume I know what it is. What's in it for me?" I saw the gleam in Schmidt's eyes. I was getting somewhere.

"Mein freund, you look at this situation in the wrong light. You must not ask yourself 'what is in it for me,' but 'will I get out of this alive?' I promise you, after I begin I am most thorough. You know my methods. You will soon begin to worry about living, not dying. You will wonder if you will be able to walk, if you will be able to see, or if you will be able to make love to a woman again." Schmidt had me there. "Yes, we know of the woman, Veronica. Did you trade it to her for a paltry night's passion?"

"You know me Schmidt. Nothing about me is paltry." I looked him up and down. "Then again, maybe you don't know me that well." I tried to smile from a broken face, but it came off as all blood and teeth. "She walked a week ago, and I haven't seen her since." That was a lie, but Schmidt was lousy at this game.

"You are lying." And then again, maybe I was a bad liar. "We saw you with her yesterday buying tickets for the clipper." Schmidt lit me a cigarette. "You see, Joe, we are well

informed, so it is best to dispense with these childish deceptions."

"Fine with me. How about untying my mitts?" Schmidt

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frowned and gave a feeble laugh.

"I think not. Your military record is well known also. Where is the girl?"

"Try Poughkeepsie." That was the wrong answer, and I paid the tax for it. He worked me pretty hard and for some time. It may have been the pain, but I swear one fist burned with fire and the other was cold as ice. Finally, I either passed out or Schmidt got tired.

"Where is she?! Joe, you will tell me now or I will kill you!" Somehow I didn't believe him. Something kept rattling around in my head, and for once it wasn't Schmidt working the controls. Suddenly I realized the light in my face was the sun, and Schmidt sounded pretty desperate. It was then I smelled her perfume and realized my hands were free. Schmidt hadn't been kidding when he talked about my time with the military. I had been middleweight boxing champion for my division.

"See ya around, Schmidt."

I'm not sure if Schmidt ever recovered enough to realize I was pounding on him, but when I left he was muttering for his mother. On my way to the port to catch the clipper, I saw two guys in trench coats go into the building I just left. Maybe I wouldn't see Schmidt again.

"Did you miss me?" Veronica came out of the shadows of a doorway. I hadn't seen her there, but she had a way of showing up when you least expected her. I realized now that somehow she had been in that room. She had been the one that had freed me. No one was that sloppy with knots, not even Schmidt. I had been down this alley before and I didn't like where it let out. I didn't have all the answers but I had plenty of questions. I heard the horn for the clipper and thought I would talk while we walked to the docks.

"Listen baby, I don't know what happened back there, and I don't want to. I need to know one thing. Did you take Schmidt's toy? I can't be looking over my shoulder all the time, and as nice as yours is I can't be looking over it either." That got me the look it usually did: she didn't want to tell me, and even if she did I wouldn't believe her.

"Joe, you like my money, right?" I liked her money, but even a mug like me knew better.

"I like you a lot more, kiddo."

"Then don't ask. You wouldn't like the answers, and the people I know wouldn't like you knowing."

"Ahh, those people again. They get around don't they?" She looked at me and despite all the damage,

she kissed me. Why, I don't know, but I knew better than to ask any more questions. Questions like how a woman like her is able to walk into a locked room and stand across a chair from a trained Nazi and not be seen. Yeah, but with a woman like Veronica in your arms you can forget a lot of things. It was enough that she had been there for me this time and I had a feeling I would have the opportunity to repay the favor.

"More than you know, Joe . . . more than you know."

Character Creation

Character creation in *Shades of Earth* is not so much a generation of statistics and equipment lists as it is the creation of a person. The most important thing to remember is the concept or feel of your character. More than the idea that he or she is an American or German, farmer or soldier, hero or villain, is that this person has a history and must have made friends (and enemies) while growing up. Think of the history of your character; he or she may be a Thuggee bandit, but consider why he or she is a Thuggee bandit. That said, let us begin.

1. Develop a Concept

Work with the GM and other players in the group to develop a character concept that fits the story and group concept. It is important that a character fit with a group to get a sense of unity and purpose. A troupe of soldiers for the Guard of Babur will not accept a Thuggee.

Code is very important for defining your character's persona. He/she will be a kind, law abiding citizen if you view law and kindness as most important, or a politician if you hold self and money as most important. There are many different codes that are defined by the player as a ranking system for what he/she holds most dear in life.

Josh, our example player, decides he wants to play a tough wise-guy who values money, loyalty and power.

2. Generate Vital Statistics

To generate statistics in *Shades of Earth* you roll three d20 and take the highest. In doing this you will usually bias the vital statistics to the higher side but this is all right. The reasoning behind this is that if someone is going to set out into this kind of life then that person is exceptional in a few areas. The following is an example of generating stats for Josh's character.

He scoops up his three d20 and rolls the following numbers:

Strength (STR): 16 **17** 12

Agility (AGL): 2 **12** 1

Constitution (CON): 12 **15** 14

Dexterity (DEX): 10 9 **20**

Intelligence (INT): 11 **12** 5

Wisdom (WIS): 2 4 **5**

Charisma (CHA): 10 **19** 18

Appearance (APP): 2 3 **18**

Piety (PIE): 11 **19** 10

Luck: 11 **17** 13

Will (WIL): 10 11 **14**

This means the scores are actually:

Strength: 17

Agility: 12

Constitution: 15

Dexterity: 20

Intelligence: 12

Wisdom: 5

Charisma: 19

Appearance: 20

Piety: 19

Luck: 17

Will: 14

Note: If the GM allows it, stats may be moved about to better reflect the character that the player wishes to build.

Movements rate should be calculated at this time. Please see Statistics for Characters on page 16 and Movement Rate on page 17 for more information.

3. Calculate Fortitude Points and Defense Stat

Take **(STR+CON+WILL)/3** + **1/2 CON** for your base fortitude points. For defense stat, take **(STR+CON+AGILITY)/3**.

Josh's character's Defense is (17 + 15 + 12)/3 = (44)/3 = 14.6, round up to 15

Josh's character's Base Fortitude is (17 + 15 + 14)/3 + 1/2(15) = (46)/3 + 7.5 = 15.3 + 7.5 = 22.8 round up to 23.

Please see Fortitude Points (FP) on page 22 and Defense Stat (DS) on page 22 for more information.

4. Choose a Class

The class you choose is a reflection of the profession that you desire your character to pursue. This will affect your character's history. All these are important factors, but on top of all of this your character will also receive free skills and possibly powers.

Josh decides to play a mobster because he likes the idea of a mafioso type. Since he is playing a mobster, he will receive the following skills and abilities as part of his class: two levels in Unarmed Combat, and one level each in Interrogation, Backstabbing, and Smuggling.

For more information on classes see Character Classes on page 25.

5. Choose Skills

The number of development (or skill) points a character receives initially is **(INT+WIS)/2.** Weapon proficiencies are determined by class and are detailed in the class descriptions (see Character Classes on page 25).

Josh determines that his character has 12 (INT) + 5(WIS) = 17 / 2 = 8.5. Round this up to 9 development points. He distributes them as follows (see percent success chart below):

    3 to Targeting - .45 pistol (70%)

    3 to Interrogation (total of four with his free proficiency for a total of 75%)

    1 in Armor Use - Leather to allow him to use any leather armor without penalty

    1 in Targeting - unarmed combat (40%)

    1 in Move Silently (40%).

Remember to add in adjustments, if any, from the character statistics.

He then spends his weapon proficiencies in Pistol Use

# of Skills	Chance of Success
1	40%
2	60%
3	70%
4	75%
5	80%
6	82%
7	84%

# of Skills	Chance of Success
8	86%
9	88%
10	90%

and Knife Use. Josh uses his remaining 4 weapon proficiencies (free from the mobster class) on a + 1 to hit with the .45 pistol and a + 1 to damage with the .45 pistol.

Proficiency	Development Point Cost	Initial Max
Skill Level	1	None
Plus to Hit	3 pts per plus	+3
Plus to Damage	1 pt per plus	+10
Additional Attack	6 pts per Attack	2
Additional Die of Damage	8 pts per additional die	2

For more information on weapon proficiencies, see WEAPON PROFICIENCIES on page 74. For more information on skills in general, see Character Skills on page 67.

6. Decide on Spell Use

Some GM's may decide to limit spell use; after all, Indiana Jones didn't need a magical edge! This would also be a good choice for a horrific campaign, where characters are supposed to feel at a disadvantage. In general, it is expected that characters will cast spells.

Spell casters roll on the Chance for Additional Spells table below to determine any additional spells received. Spell points are generated similarly to other stats, take the highest of three d20 *but also* add half your Piety stat.

Josh rolls a 3, 6, 14. His spirit points are 14 + 1/2(19) = 14 + 9.5 = 23.5 round up to 24.

See Piety (PIE), Pious Items and Spirit Points on page 21.

Any character may start with three spells plus any

Chance for Additional Spells

This chance represents the chance that you were exceptionally skilled with spells.

% Roll	Result
01-50	No additional powers.
51-90	One additional first level power.
91-97	Two additional first level powers.
98-99	Three additional first level powers.
100	Three additional first level powers and one additional second level power.

additional spells resulting from rolling on the Chance for Additional Spells table.

Only one spell realm may be chosen. Josh chooses to go with Vampiric since it is common in the mafia. He rolls a 62, allowing him one additional first level spell on the Chance for Additional Spells table. He chooses the following spells:

Glow/Darkness on page 138

Haste I on page 138

Haste I on page 138

Invisibility I on page 138

For more information on spells see Experience and Spells on page 109.

7. Equip the Character

Josh talks it over with the GM, and they decide his character would be just starting with the mafia, but is well equipped from his history. If Josh or the GM had wanted, Josh could have rolled on the starting money table under Money and Cost of Living 1938 on page 40.

It is suggested that players equip their characters from their history. This is to say, write a benefactor into your history. For more information see Weapons and Equipment on page 33.

8. Create a Character History and Name

Character history is direly important and must be made up before a character can come into play.

Josh decides his character will come from the toughest part of the Bronx. His is an old-time Italian family where you are expected to make your own way in life. When he was young, he fought anything that moved. Not much has changed. His father, Gino the Fixer, is under investigation by the FBI. His mother, Rosa, is worried that he is in danger, but he reassures her that he will be careful. It is difficult for him to see a future that does not include the mafia. He knows its faults, but it is his surest way to wealth and power. Nothing in this life is 100% guaranteed, but this at least gives him a shot.

Character name is important as well. For example, the mafioso named Herman does not compare to Vinnie the Knife. "Herman" may be amusing for a night but rapidly becomes boring.

Josh decides on the name Tony "Two-Fingers" Amatore.

Shades of Earth — Example Character Sheet — 1 OF 2

Strength	17
Max Wt Lift	180 lbs
Damage Mod	+2
Armor Mod	+1

Agility	12
Unarmed Com. Mod	0
Initiative Mod	0
Movement Skill Mod	0
Movement Rate	12

Constitution	15
Wt Encumbrance	54 lbs

Dexterity	20
Bonus To Hit	+5
Craft Skill Mod	+25

Intelligence	12
Use Magic	26%
Major/Minor Mod	0/0
Sage Skill Mod	0

Wisdom	5
Craftsmen Skill Mod	-30
Dir. Spell Bonus	-1

Charisma	19
Social Skill Adj	+15

Appearance	18
Reaction Adjustment	+35

Luck	17

Piety	19

Will	14

Name Tony "Two-Fingers" Amatore
Age 18
Sex Male
Nationality Italian American
Height 6' 9"
Eye Color Grey
Skin Color Olive
Weight 220 lbs
Hair Color Black

Fortitude Points

Location	FP	DAM
1 FP	12	
3 FP	46	
4 FP	12	
5 FP	46	
2 FP	46	
7 FP	23	
6 FP	46	
8 FP	23	
9 FP	46	
10 FP	46	

Armor Points

Location	FP	DAM
1 FP		
3 FP	15	
4 FP	15	
5 FP	15	
2 FP	15	
7 FP	15	
6 FP	15	
8 FP		
9 FP		
10 FP		

Armor
Leather Jacket

Money/Items

Item	Notes/Amount
Brass Knuckles	
30' Rope	In trunk of car
Cement	In trunk of car
$43.50	
Car	
Suit	

Actual Defense 15
Modified Defense 15
Base Fortitude Points 23

Level 1
Class Mobster
Reserve Experience 0
Total Experience 0

Weapon	ATT	DAM	+ TH	+ TD	Notes
.45 Pistol Semi-Auto	2	4d10	+6	+1	
Brass Knuckles	3/1	d6/d10	+1	+4	Add a d10 to punch damage. Punch/Kick

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Skill Lvl	Skill	Mod	Base	Final	Notes
3	Targeting (.45 Semi-Auto)	0	70	70	1 skill from class
2	Unarmed Combat	0	60	60	2 skills from class
1	Armor Use (Leather)	--	--	--	
1	Targeting (Unarmed)	0	40	40	
1	Smuggling	+15	40	55	1 skill from class, +15 from CHA
1	Backstabbing (.45 Semi-Auto)	0	40	40	
4	Interrogation	+15	75	90	1 skill from class, +15 from CHA
1	Move Silently	-5	40	35	-5 from AGL

	Max	Present		Max	Present
Greater Realm Spirit Points	24	24	Lesser Realm Spirit Points		

Level	Spell	Cost	Comp.	Range	Realm	Notes
1	Glow/Darkness	4	T,G	Touch	Vampiric	
1	Hypnosis	1pt/2 pts of victim INT	T	20'	Vampiric	
1	Haste I	1pt/2 rds	T	Personal	Vampiric	
1	Invisibility I	1 pt/5 rds	T	Personal	Vampiric	

Character Development

Tony comes from the toughest part of the Bronx. The Amatores are an old time Italian family where you are expected to make your own way in life. They expect great things from Tony. When he was young he fought anything that moved and this brought him a reputation for being hot tempered. Not much has changed. His father, Gino the Fixer, is under investigation by the FBI for his involvement in the early retirement of a rival Capi. Tony's mother, Rosa, is worried that he will be in danger from the Capi's family retaliation and the FBI both, but he reassures her that he will be careful. It is difficult for him to see a future that does not include the mafia. He knows its faults, but it is his surest way to wealth and power. Nothing in this life is 100% but this at least gives him a shot.

Statistics for Characters

Strength (STR)

The strength score is a measure of a character's ability to lift objects. It is also used to determine the defense stat and influences the amount of damage a person can inflict. This is part of the difference between a mafioso ruffian and a pencil pushing scholar.

Strength Bonus			
Strength	Damage Bonus	Armor Mod	Max Lifted Weight
1	-5	-2	10 lbs
2	-4	-2	15 lbs
3	-3	-1	25 lbs
4	-2	-1	35 lbs
5	-1	0	45 lbs
6	0	0	55lbs
7	0	0	65lbs
8	0	0	75lbs
9	0	0	85lbs
10	0	0	95lbs
11	0	0	105lbs
12	0	0	115lbs
13	0	0	125lbs
14	0	0	135lbs
15	0	0	145lbs
16	+1	0	160 lbs
17	+2	+1	180 lbs
18	+3	+1	200 lbs
19	+4	+2	350 lbs
20	+5	+2	500 lbs
21	+8	+3	1000 lbs
22	+11	+4	2500 lbs
23	+14	+5	3500 lbs
24	+17	+6	5000 lbs
25	+20	+7	8000 lbs

Armor modifiers are the adjustments to a character's defense stat when he or she is wearing armor. These modifiers will NEVER raise a player's defense stat above normal; they ONLY apply to the minuses resulting from the weight of the armor.

If a character's strength falls below zero, he or she will be feeble and helpless until their strength is recovered. This will occur at a rate of one point per two months without any magical healing unless impeded by some means (not allowed bed rest, magically inhibited from healing, etc).

After 25 strength, armor modifiers continue to increase by one but damage modifiers double. For example, a 26 strength is +40 to damage and +8 to armor. Firearms, explosives and crossbows do not receive strength damage modifiers.

Agility (AGL)

Agility reflects a character's overall body coordination, as well as his quickness in reacting to a situation.

Agility Bonus		
Agility	Initiative Bonus	Unarmed Combat Bonus To Hit
1	-3	-3
2	-2	-2
3	-1	-2
4	0	-1
5	0	-1
6	0	0
7	0	0
8	0	0
9	0	0
10	0	0
11	0	0
12	0	0
13	0	0
14	0	0
15	0	0
16	0	+1
17	0	+1
18	+1	+2
19	+2	+2
20	+3	+3
21	+4	+4
22	+5	+5
23	+5	+6
24	+6	+6
25	+7	+7

If a character's agility falls below zero, then he or she becomes totally uncoordinated. It will be impossible to use a weapon, avoid an attack, or even walk without tripping.

Agility Adjustments for Skills		
Agility	Move Silently	Move in Shadows	Bonus to Movement Skill
1	-60	-50	-40
2	-50	-45	-35
3	-50	-40	-30
4	-45	-35	-25

Agility Adjustments for Skills			
Agility	Move Silently	Move in Shadows	Bonus to Movement Skill
5	-40	-30	-20
6	-35	-25	-15
7	-30	-20	-10
8	-25	-15	-5
9	-20	-10	0
10	-15	-5	0
11	-10	0	0
12	-5	0	0
13	0	0	0
14	0	0	0
15	0	0	0
16	0	0	+5
17	+5	+5	+5
18	+10	+10	+10
19	+10	+10	+10
20	+15	+15	+15
21	+20	+20	+20
22	+25	+25	+25
23	+30	+30	+30
24	+35	+35	+35
25	+45	+40	+40

Bonus to movement skill applies to all movement skills as well as acrobatics, dancing and climbing.

Movement Rate

Movement Rate is a measure of how fast a character can move in a given round. This number is used to determine how far a character can travel in a day. The Base Movement Factor is 12, +1 per two points Agility above 16.

Note: Base Movement Factor multiplied by two gives miles travelled in one 10-hour traveling day (Walking) including stops for resting. Divide the Movement Rate Factor by two to get miles travelled per hour without rest. Characters can cover their movement rate x10 in feet in one round. For example, a soldier with a 20 AGL will have a movement of 14. In one round he can move 140 feet. If he performs an action, then he can only move 1/2 this distance. In the above example, he would be able to move 70 feet and fire his rifle.

Movement is adjusted by -1 per point of Agility below five.

Any attempts to increase movement will fall into the following categories:

Multiplier to Base Movement	
Multiplier to Base Movement	Description
x2 Jog	One can run a number of rounds equal to his Constitution. Thereafter, a check vs. Constitution is required each hour
x3 Run	This is a sustainable long distance run. A check vs. Constitution each turn is required with a -2 cumulative each round.
x4 Charge	This is the speed one uses when running into combat. A check vs. Constitution each round is required with a -4 cumulative penalty each round.
x5 Rout	This is the speed at which one travels in an all-out rout. A check vs. Constitution each round is required with a -6 cumulative penalty each round. In addition an Agility check must be made each round at a -2 cumulative.

Constitution (CON)

Constitution is a measure of a character's fitness, health, resistance and ability to carry weight for long distances. This score is used for saving throws, determining defense stat and calculating fortitude points.

Weight Allowance	
Constitution	Encumbrance
1	0
2	0
3	0
4	1lb
5	1lb
6	1lb
7	1lb
8	5lb
9	12lb
10	19lb
11	26lb
12	33lb
13	40lb
14	47lb
15	54lb
16	61lb
17	68lb

Weight Allowance	
Constitution	Encumbrance
18	75lb
19	82b
20	89lb
21	109lb
22	119lb
23	139lb
24	159lb
25	179lb

Two times the given weight may be carried at a penalty of one-quarter movement rate. Characters carrying their full encumbrance to double move at 1/2 movement. If the character is between 3/4 and full then they move at 3/4 movement. It is not possible to fight while heavily encumbered.

If a character's constitution falls to zero, then he or she will be incapacitated and unable to move. Lost points will return at a rate of one every two months if not otherwise inhibited; i.e. cursed or not allowed to have bed rest to properly heal. However, if constitution falls below zero, then the character will either die or become undead.

Dexterity (DEX)

Dexterity reflects a character's hand-eye coordination and accuracy with weapons.

Dexterity Bonus	
Dexterity	To Hit Bonus
1	-3
2	-2
3	-2
4	-1
5	-1
6	0
7	0
8	0
9	0
10	0
11	0
12	0
13	0
14	0
15	0
16	+1
17	+1
18	+2
19	+2
20	+3

Dexterity Bonus	
Dexterity	To Hit Bonus
21	+4
22	+5
23	+6
24	+6
25	+7

If a character's dexterity falls beneath zero, then he or she becomes helpless. It will be impossible to use a weapon or other equipment.

Dexterity Adjustments for Skill					
DEX	Pick Pocket	Open Locks	Locate Traps	Disarm Traps	Crafting Skill Mod.
1	-55	-50	-50	-50	-55
2	-50	-45	-45	-45	-50
3	-45	-40	-40	-40	-45
4	-40	-35	-35	-35	-40
5	-35	-30	-30	-30	-35
6	-30	-25	-25	-25	-30
7	-25	-20	-20	-20	-25
8	-20	-15	-15	-15	-20
9	-15	-10	-10	-10	-15
10	-10	-5	-10	-10	-10
11	-5	0	-5	-5	-5
12	0	0	0	0	0
13	0	0	0	0	0
14	0	0	0	0	0
15	0	0	0	0	0
16	0	+5	0	0	0
17	+5	+10	0	0	+5
18	+10	+15	+5	+5	+10
19	+10	+15	+5	+5	+10
20	+15	+20	+10	+10	+15
21	+20	+25	+15	+15	+20
22	+25	+30	+20	+20	+25
23	+30	+35	+25	+25	+30
24	+35	+40	+30	+30	+35
25	+45	+50	+40	+40	+45

Crafting bonuses apply not only to crafting skills but also to musical instruments, bone setting, surgery, juggling and stage magic.

Intelligence (INT)

Intelligence represents a character's ability to reason and to learn. This is important because it reflects a character's ability to use magic items.

Chance to use magic items				
INT	Fighters	Thieves	Performer	Intellectual
1	0	0	0	10%
2	0	0	0	14%
3	0	0	0	18%
4	0	0	0	22%
5	0	0	10%	26%
6	0	0	14%	30%
7	0	0	18%	34%
8	0	10%	22%	38%
9	0	14%	26%	42%
10	0	18%	30%	46%
11	0	22%	34%	50%
12	10%	26%	38%	54%
13	15%	30%	42%	58%
14	20%	34%	46%	62%
15	25%	38%	50%	66%
16	30%	42%	54%	70%
17	35%	46%	58%	74%
18	40%	50%	62%	78%
19	45%	54%	66%	82%
20	50%	58%	70%	86%
21	60%	68%	82%	100%
22	70%	78%	94%	114%
23	80%	88%	106%	128%
24	90%	99%	118%	142%
25	100%	109%	130%	156%

Bonus To Intellectuals	
INT	Bonus to Intellectual Skills for all characters
1	-24
2	-21
3	-18
4	-15
5	-12
6	-9
7	-6
8	-3
9	0
10	0
11	0
12	0
13	0
14	0
15	0

Bonus To Intellectuals	
INT	Bonus to Intellectual Skills for all characters
16	0
17	+3
18	+6
19	+9
20	+12
21	+15
22	+20
23	+25
24	+30
25	+35

Use magic item is used to activate a magical item. It is left to the GM whether it must be used every time or only once to decipher the method of operation. The more complex items may require an activation roll since they require a good deal of mental focus. Simple items may only require the one time to activate the item then the method has been discovered (secret code word, proper focus or mental image, etc). If Arcane Lore or the appropriate Lore skill for the item is used to identify its function, then the Use Magic Item check receive a +40.

Wisdom (WIS)

Wisdom is a measure of a character's judgement and intuitiveness; because of its close ties with mental discipline, it will affect spell direction and the number of skills a character has.

Spell Direction Adjustments		
WIS	Adjustment to Hit	Adjustment for Crafts
1	-3	-50
2	-2	-45
3	-2	-40
4	-1	-35
5	-1	-30
6	0	-25
7	0	-20
8	0	-15
9	0	-10
10	0	-5
11	0	0
12	0	0
13	0	0
14	0	0
15	0	0
16	+1	+5
17	+1	+10

Spell Direction Adjustments		
WIS	Adjustment to Hit	Adjustment for Crafts
18	+2	+10
19	+2	+15
20	+3	+20
21	+4	+30
22	+5	+40
23	+6	+50
24	+6	+60
25	+7	+70

If a character's Wisdom falls to 0 or below, then he or she will become a slave-like servant to whatever lowered the wisdom score.

Appearance (APP)

Appearance represents a character's physical beauty and sex appeal. Strangers tend to react more favorably towards beautiful people and distrust ugly ones. Reaction adjustment is applied to skills like seduction, pleasure dancing or acting.

Reaction Adjustment for Appearance	
Appearance	Reaction Adjustment
1	-35%
2	-30%
3	-25%
4	-20%
5	-15%
6	-10%
7	-5%
8	0
9	0
10	0
11	0
12	0
13	+5%
14	+10%
15	+15%
16	+25%
17	+30%
18	+35%
19	+40%
20	+45%
21	+50%
22	+55%
23	+60%
24	+65%
25	+70%

Reaction Adjustment for Appearance below 0	
Appearance	Reaction Adjustment
0	People are repulsed by appearance.
-1 to -4	Cause Fear in those viewing the person. Save vs wisdom + level of target.
-5 to -9	Cause Fear in those viewing this person. Save vs wisdom - level of the person. Will only affect targets of lower level than the person.
-10 to -14	Cause Fear in those viewing this person. Save vs wisdom - level of the person. Will affect targets of all levels.
-15 to -20	Cause Paralyzation in those viewing this person. Save vs wisdom - level of the person. Will affect targets of all levels.

Charisma (CHA)

The Charisma score represents a character's charm, persuasiveness, and personal magnetism; it has nothing to do with physical beauty. For example, Hitler was ugly yet he had a fanatical following. Charisma also represents a character's ability to lead.

Social Skill Adjustment	
Charisma	Social Skill Adjustment
1	-50
2	-45
3	-40
4	-35
5	-30
6	-25
7	-20
8	-15
9	-10
10	-5
11	0
12	0
13	0
14	0
15	0
16	+5
17	+10
18	+15
19	+15
20	+20
21	+25
22	+30
23	+35
24	+40
25	+50

The social skill adjustment is applied to smuggling, lying or trying to convince someone of something. Examples of skills that this would be used with are smuggling, story telling, and oratory.

Luck

Luck is just that, the character's luck. Luck will come into play when a desperate act which is utterly absurd is attempted, or possibly if a save vs. another stat is not successful. It is the chance of a wagon of hay being parked under your fall, or, when you are about to be overwhelmed by Nazis, a group of Dept. 12 agents happen upon your predicament. In short, it is an attempt to put randomness into a personal stat.

Piety (PIE), Pious Items and Spirit Points

The piety score reflects the character's faith in some greater power; this "power" may range from faith in some god to belief in oneself. A person may attempt to hold back undead by boldly presenting his or her pious item (explained below) and commanding the creatures to retreat. A roll equal to or lower than the piety score - the level of the undead will result in a successful attempt.

A character is allowed up to three pious items, which are symbols of something very dear to the character. These may be almost anything. Examples include: a holy symbol, a wedding ring, a weapon, a lucky charm, a rabbit's foot, a teddy bear, a gold chain, etc. However, if the pious item is destroyed, 1/2 of the character's spirit points go with it.

Spirit points are the source of all secular magical powers. Initial spirit points are calculated by rolling a die 20 and adding 1/2 the piety score. A person can hold up to three times their base spirit points in their body, but at that point they shimmer with an unearthly glow. If a person's spirit points reach zero, they will be weak and unable to fight. If their spirit points fall to -10, then the person dies permanently.

All non-casting humans have 10 spirit points. A caster of the Greater Realms may attempt to drain spirit points from another sentient creature. This target creature must possess spirit points and intelligence. For instance, a caster may not drain a rabbit. To drain a target, the caster must hit the target, then the target saves vs PIE. If the target fails, then the caster may drain up to the caster's maximum spirit points. If the target is willing, the save may be declined. If the target is dead, then saves are not applicable. The caster may stop draining at any point to avoid killing the target. If

the target is drained to -10 spirit points, they die. However, if the caster does not have the capacity to drain the target to this point the target may take actions as normal. The caster may not redirect the spirit points into objects, other casters or spells.

Will (WIL)

Will is the stat which involves a character's personal strengths or weaknesses. It is the willpower that a character has. Consciousness rolls must be made against this stat in the following manner: if the character falls below zero Fortitude in a vital area (1, 4, 7, 8), then a save vs Will must be made to remain conscious; if the FP fall below zero the save is WIL/2 . A failure at this roll will indicate that the character was overcome by pain or received a strong blow that knocked this character unconscious for 1d12 rounds. There are cases where the duration may be extended or shortened (i.e. poison gas, severe wound, etc.).

Fortitude Points (FP)

Head & Chest

Right Arm

Left Arm

Stomach & Groin

Legs
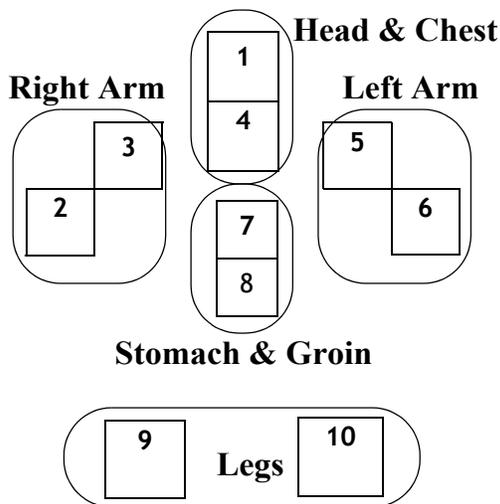
The body of a character is made up of 10 specific and 5 general areas, each of which are able to withstand a certain amount of damage. This damage is quantified by Fortitude Points. A character's base Fortitude Points are their **(STR + CON + WILL) /3 + 1/2 CON**. Arms and Legs are considered incapacitated if they reach zero Fortitude Points and severed if they reach negative the Fortitude Points for that area. If a character reaches zero in a critical area (Head & Chest), then they are incapacitated and they will lose one fortitude point in that area until First Aid is applied. If they reach negative their Fortitude Points in that area then they die. If a character reaches zero in a vital area (Stomach & Groin), then they are incapacitated and will die if a

save vs. will is not made. If the save is made, then the character will slowly die losing one Fortitude Point per round until they reach negative the Fortitude Points for that area. Once negative their fortitude points in a vital area, a character expires. For more information on bleeding see Blood Loss on page 55.

If a character has above a 20 CON, then the character receives 1d12 additional fortitude points for each point above 20. All characters receive half their CON in addition to their Fortitude Points. The number of Fortitude Points are determined as follows.

Head & Chest	0.5(base Fortitude Points)
Stomach & Groin	base Fortitude Points
Arms & Legs	2 x (base Fortitude Points)

For example, if Buffy has an 18 STR, 19 CON, and a 20 WILL, then her base Fortitude Points are 19;

$$18 + 19 + 20 = 57/3 = 19 + 9 = 28;$$

Thusly, Buffy will have the following breakdown of specific areas:

1,4	14 points
7,8	28 points
3,2,5,6,9,10	56 points

This can be quickly and easily kept track of by a little initial setup of the character. A simple chart like the one at left is all that is needed. Characters recover fortitude points at a rate of one fortitude point per 24 hours of bed rest + 1 for every point of CON above 16.

Defense Stat (DS)

Defense stat represents how difficult it is for a character to be hit. It is calculated by taking the average of the STR, AGL, and CON scores **(STR+AGL+CON)/3**. In this respect, strength represents the character's ability to move in armor, agility stands for the ability to dodge, and constitution represents how long a character can keep up the fighting pace. Note that in order to move and fight in armor, a skill must be taken in the desired armor. Also, heavy, bulky armors will affect defense stat. Remember to subtract the armor modifier given for the desired type of armor from the defense stat result. As well, add in strength modifiers as appropriate.

When attempting to hit an object, the same principles are employed. The defense of an object will rely on how difficult it is to hit while applying common sense. If someone is just trying to pick up a stationary object, then no to hit is required. If they are trying to snatch

the golden apple from the center of burning magma while on one foot with a frayed lasso, the defense of that object will be considerable. Size also is a consideration. For instance, an apple is more difficult to hit than a watermelon. The same situational modifiers can be applied from Suggested Combat Modifiers on page 52 apply to hitting objects. Examples of defense statistics for objects are apple = 10, watermelon = 5, bull's eye on a target = 18, this book = 9.

Codes

Codes are really a very simple concept to embrace. They are the most important things, beliefs or people in your character's life. For a burglar they may be money, then family, then the Mafia. What this means is that the burglar would sell out her family for enough gold but would defy the Mafia to save her family. These are not meant to be shackles to bind play but more something to add to the definition of a character. The following are some example codes.

Respect of Family, Loyalty to the Mafia, Loyalty to Friends

This code would mean that in a conflict of interests the character would look first to the honor of their family then to the interests of the mafia and finally, if it would betray their friends.

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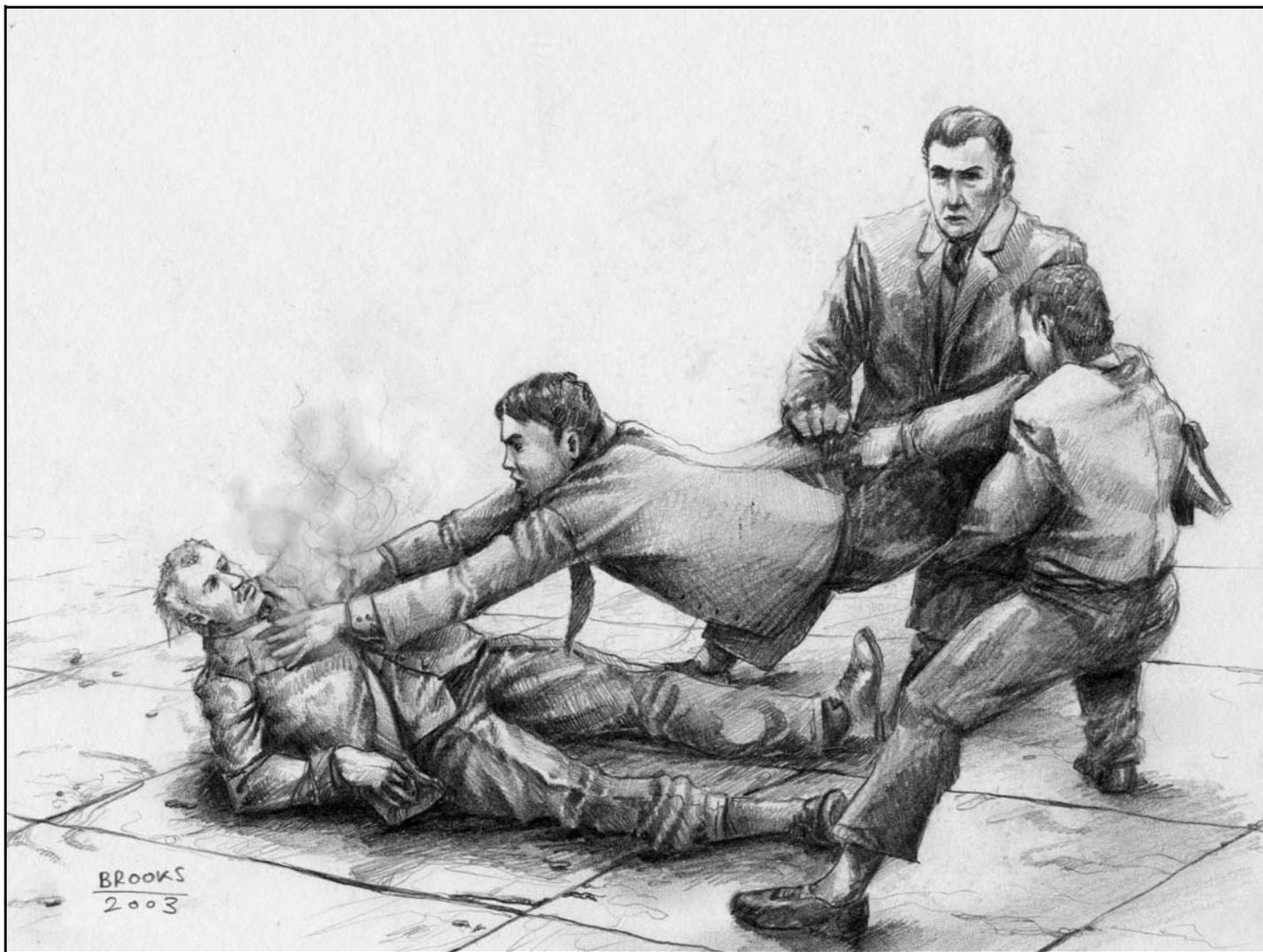
with the wealth, they will go with the saving their own skin.

Self, Wealth, Mafia, Safety, Revenge

This code would represent a self serving individual who wishes nothing so much as serving her own needs. She sees wealth as a way to accomplish this and it does not pay to cross the Mafia. Her own safety ranks higher than revenge but she would gamble it all for an extra dollar.

Science, Family, Gadgets

Engineers might embrace this code. In their pursuit of science, they will sometimes neglect their family. In their spare time, they make or buy gadgets.

Self, Power, Fascism

This code would be popular in many of the European countries of the 1930s. Fascism was one of the popular movements of the time. Many of its leaders, though, were less committed to the cause and more committed to their egos. Many of the worst decisions were made on the basis of ego. This code would mean that the individual was dedicated to himself, gaining power for his country or himself (often one and the same) and finally to the ideals of Fascism.

Faith in your god, Welfare of others, Hatred of injustice

This would be a typical code for a priest or possibly a policeman. For this person his duty is clear and he will serve his god even in the face of the welfare of others, since his god knows best. He cannot deny his hatred of evil injustices and will fight to right those wrongs.

Storytelling, Truth, and Lost causes

An actor would abide by these codes. To this actor nothing is so good as the telling of a story. The truth must be maintained even when fighting for a cause. Perhaps this is why he is always involved in lost causes.

Country, Self, Wealth

This code would be good for spies whose only attachment is themselves and the country they serve. If it is a choice between surviving the encounter or making off