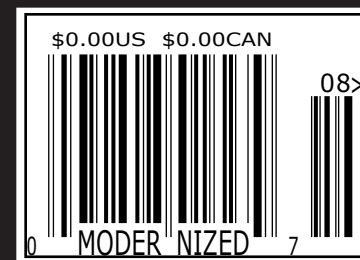


MODERNIZED

GAMING IN THE MODERN WORLD

fin.



First Impressions

First-time visitors to Morgan & Associates receive the immediate impression that this establishment has been around for a long time. The exterior is built from weather-worn red brick, and is almost entirely covered by creeping ivy. A sign out front of the shop, also showing its age, is printed with the name of the establishment and the image of a lit candle above a book. Although the shop could be located anywhere throughout the world, it seems more appropriate for it to be located amidst a maze of winding side streets or in a similarly out-of-the-way place.

The building's front door is made from thick and solid oak and is therefore quite stout (Hardness 6, 30 hit points). All of the interior doors are nearly as solid (Hardness 5, 20 hit points). While the windows are an obvious weak point, the ones on the ground floor are protected by iron bars (Hardness 10, 30 hit points each) and all of them are wired to an alarm (DC 25 Search or Spot to notice, DC 25 Disable Device check to deactivate). Lana is the only person who has the front door key and the code for the alarm.

The store's overt business is selling books; the shop specializes in the subjects of history, anthropology, religion, philosophy and language. Should a customer be looking for a text that the store does not have, Lana is also

willing to take on the assignment of finding a particular title.

The Grand Tour

Refer to the map of the bookstore for each of the following locations.

1. Front Room

The primary feature of this small room, just inside the front door to the building, is the counter cash register where business is conducted. There are also a couple of small bookstands with recently acquired texts, along with a bulletin covered with flyers and pamphlets. Should anyone be interested to find out, there is generally about \$1000 in the cash register.

The next few areas in the store are section devoted to particular topics. Outside of the table and chairs in the middle of Area 6, there is little more than bookshelves and books in these areas.

2. Philosophy

3. Anthropology

4. Religion

5. History

6. World Languages

7. Restrooms

These rooms provide the usual features. Area 7a is the men's room, while 7b is the ladies' room.

8. Storage

At first glance this area contains little of interest; shelves on the walls to the left and right of the door hold cleaning supplies, extra tape for the cash register, and similarly mundane items. However, the inside wall of the room has a secret door (DC 21 Search or Spot to notice) that provides entrance to the hidden staircase

on the other side.

9. Hidden Staircase

These stairs provide access to the upstairs level by way of Lana's private library, as well as to the lower level. Note that the door to the basement is the only one that is plainly visible.

10. Master Bedroom

Furnishings in this area include a queen-size bed, a chest of drawers and a dressing table. Hidden in the back left corner of the top dresser drawer is Lana's extra key to the basement door (DC 18 Search check to locate).

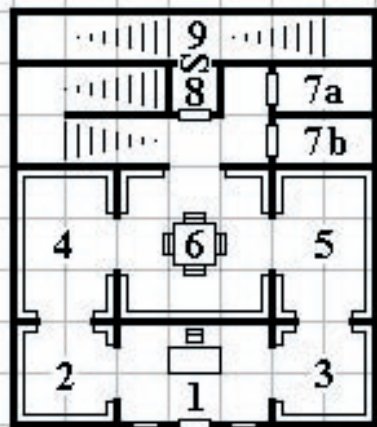
11. Private Library

In addition to the bookshelves that line the walls in here, the room also boasts a writing table with a personal computer and a filing cabinet. The computer is equipped with a scanner and a high-speed modem. Contained in the filing cabinet are all of the business records for the bookstore. Both of these items are protected from snooping; the computer requires a DC 21 Computer Use check to hack into it, while the filing cabinet requires Lana's key or a DC 21 Disable Device check.

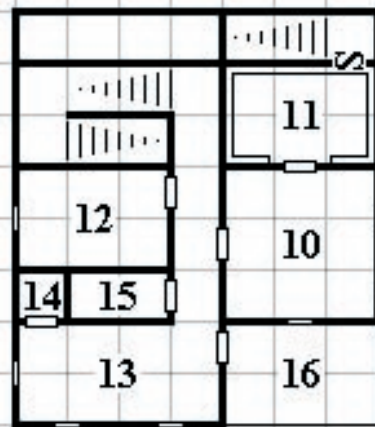
The books on the shelves here are mostly of a mundane nature; while there are a few that deal with the occult, most of Lana's private collection is kept in the basement.

12. Guest Bedroom

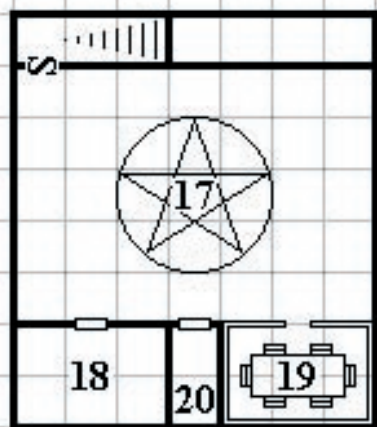
This room contains a bed and chest of drawers, both of which are kept clean but empty unless a guest is present.



Ground Level



Upper Level



Lower Level

Morgan & Associates, Booksellers

□ = 5 feet

13. Kitchen

Outside of normal trappings—a sink, gas stove, dishwasher, refrigerator, microwave, kitchen table and chairs—this area contains little of interest.

14. Pantry

Anyone entering this area who succeeds at a DC 5 Knowledge: connoisseur check immediately recognizes that Lana enjoys good food and good wine; it is well stocked with plenty of each.

15. Bathroom

Outside of the fact that it boasts an old-fashioned, deep, claw-footed bathtub, there is nothing unusual to be found here.

16. Balcony

A waist-high railing surrounds the outside edge of this area. The door to the kitchen has the same stats as the building's front door, described above.

17. Open Room

Lana does her teaching in this area, using it for lectures and demonstrations. It also serves for group meditation when

necessary. The surrounding walls are decorated with various types of mystical artworks including Indian mandalas, medieval alchemical diagrams and the like.

18. Meditation Room

When Lana or one of her students is looking for private meditation, this area serves the purpose. The room is fairly soundproofed, so Listen checks to hear things on the opposite side of the door are made at a –5 penalty. A small table in the room holds an incense burner, various types of incense and a box of matches.

19. Reading Area

For those who have an interest in the arcane, this area is probably the most interesting. Nearly the entire collection of books that Lana has assembled is kept here; it details an amazing variety of subjects related to magic and the occult. In game terms, anyone looking to research an arcane spell of first- through fourth-level can find the necessary information here.

20. Utility Room

The building's furnace and water heater are located here.

GM Characters

Unless she is away on business, Lana can usually be found on the ground level during business hours (9:00 am to 9:00 pm, seven days a week). At any given time she is likely to have one employee who is also present, although she'll bring in a second when she's away, during the holidays or for other special occasions.

Lana Morgan is an attractive woman in her early thirties. She has black hair and green eyes. Her normal dress is equal parts business casual and comfortable academic; she normally has a couple of pencils tucked

into her hair and a few books under one arm.

Curious and friendly are two words that aptly describe Lana, as befits someone in her line of work. She is equally comfortable hobnobbing at a social function or sitting down with a stack of texts for hours of research. Her interest in arcane matters began at a very young age, since both her mother and father were practicing

Lana Morgan (Female Smart Hero 3/Occultist 7):

CR 10; Medium human; HD 3d6+7d4; Hp 27; Mas 10; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; Defense 16, touch 16, flat-footed 15 (+5 class, +1 Dex); BAB +4; Grap +4; Atk +4 (1d3, unarmed), or +5 (ranged); FS 5 ft. by 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft.; SV Fort +3, Ref +4, Will +10; AP 10; Rep +2; Str 10, Dex 12, Con 10, Int 16, Wis 12, Cha 14.

Occupation: Academic (class skills: description).

Skills: Computer Use +13, Concentration +13, Craft: visual art +9, Craft: writing +9, Decipher Script +18, Diplomacy +8, Forgery +13, Knowledge: art +10, Knowledge: history +16, Knowledge: occult +19, Read Ancient Greek, Arabic, German and Latin, Research +18, Search +13, Speak Arabic and German.

Feats: Creative (Craft: art and writing), Educated (Knowledge: history and occult), Extend Spell, Iron Will, Occult Abjuration, Scribe Scroll, Silent Spell, Still Spell, Studious.

Talents: Savant (Knowledge: occult) and Exploit Weakness.

SQ: Order Membership, Rank.

Possessions: Palm pilot, keys to the bookstore, bookstore.

Spells: (6/7/7/5/2) All cantrips; *hypnotism*, *identify*, *mage armor*, *magic weapon*; *fox's cunning*, *locate object*, *misdirection*, *obscure object*; *dispel magic*, *haste*, *nondetection*, *suggestion*; *lesser globe of invulnerability*, *remove curse*.

occultists. Lana studied under their tutelage until she was twenty-two, when they were killed in a tragic accident. Since then she has taken over the family business and continues to study on her own, and has even begun to take on a few students.

Generally, when she is approached by someone with an interest in the occult who is looking for some training, puts that person through a short series of tests. These might include research assignments and similar tasks, intended to determine whether the individual in questions has the knowledge and commitment necessary to pursuing arcane study. (These assignments can be simulated by requiring two DC 16 Research checks and three DC 18 Knowledge: occult checks.) If the candidate meets with her approval, that person is given an invitation to come for an after-hours lesson along with her other students. Those students whom she finds to be particularly trustworthy are sometimes offered jobs and the bookstore.

While the student-employees vary greatly in description and background, they are all of a friendly if rather bookish personality.

Using Morgan & Associates in Adventures

A few ideas for including Lana Morgan and her bookstore and occult school in Modern adventures include the following.

- First of all, any occultist or other arcane spellcaster might study under Lana at lower levels.

- The heroes, as part of a search for an arcane relic, might head to the bookstore in search of a particularly obscure occult text. While Lana is hesitant at first to deal with them, she changes her mind when members

Typical Employee/Student (Smart Hero 3/Occultist 2):

CR 5; Medium human; HD 3d6+2d4; Hp 17; Mas 10; Init -1; Spd 30 ft.; Defense 11, touch 11, flat-footed 11 (+2 class, -1 Dex); BAB +2; Grap +3; Atk +3 (1d3+1, unarmed), or +1 (ranged); FS 5 ft. by 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft.; SV Fort +1, Ref +0, Will +6; AP X; Rep +1; Str 12, Dex 8, Con 10, Int 15, Wis 13, Cha 14.

Occupation: Student (class skills: description).

Skills: Computer Use +8, Concentration +8, Craft: writing +8, Decipher Script +10, Diplomacy +6, Forgery +8, Knowledge: art +8, Knowledge: history +8, Knowledge: occult +15, Knowledge: popular culture +10, Research +12, Search +8.

Feats: Educated (Knowledge: occult and popular culture), Silent Spell, Still Spell, Studious.

Talents: Savant (Knowledge: occult), Exploit Weakness.

SQ: Order Membership.

Possessions: Cell phone.

Spells: (6/5) All cantrips; *hypnotism*, *identify*.

of a dangerous secret society raid the store in an effort to steal the book for themselves.

- Alternately, Lana might start using her occult magic for an evil purpose; the heroes are called upon to infiltrate the school and expose her dark practices.

- Similarly, a rival occultist might frame Lana in a series of grisly murders; it is up to the heroes to find the evidence needed to clear her name.

- When new evidence is found concerning the deaths of her parents, Lana might call upon the heroes to help her uncover the truth of the matter.

- One of Lana's students, while experiment with a book of rituals that are too difficult for him, accidentally unleashes a powerful and evil creature into the city. Only by tracking the beast to its unwitting summoner and doing some research can the heroes discover how to defeat it.

New Advanced Class - The Occultist

Occultists practice a tradition of mystical arts that are known to the uninitiated as magic. Knowledge is the bread and butter of their craft; their quest is always to gain more information regarding the mystic properties of the world around them. Altruistic occultists use their powers to help themselves and others; those who are not so moral often try to gain power over those around them. Whereas priests are generally free to practice their faith openly in their cultures, occultists are usually forced to keep their practices a secret.

Requirements

Knowledge (occult): 6 ranks.

Special: The character must be initiated as a member of some occult organization.

Hit Die: 1d4

Action Points: Occultists gain a number of action points equal to 5 plus one half their character level, rounded down, every time they advance a level.

Class Skills

Alchemy (Int), Bluff (Cha), Decipher Script (Int), Knowledge: history (Int), Knowledge: occult (Int), Knowledge: theology and philosophy (Int), Listen

(Wis), Research (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), Spot (Wis), Treat Injury (Wis).

Skill Points per Level: 5 + Int modifier.

Class Abilities

Spellcasting

Occultists do not prepare their spells, but cast them spontaneously. They are limited in the number of spells that they know, however; each occultist begins play knowing all of the 0-level spells, and learns two more with each level gained. (This reflects the long hours of research and ritual practice undertaken by the Occultist while not adventuring.) Additionally, Occultists may learn spells from the notes of others on a successful Knowledge: occult check, with the DC equal to 10 + the spell's level. Should this check fail, it may be retried once the Occultist has gained a class level.

Occultists gain the usage of a certain number of spells per day according to the following table. Additionally, Occultists gain bonus spells according to

their Intelligence scores.

Order Membership

This ability functions in the same manner as that of the Holy Warrior. Because of the secrecy usually maintained by occult societies, Occultists are not generally encouraged to seek quarter for their comrades, although it is permitted.

Rank

Occultists also gain the Rank special ability, just as Holy Warriors do, except that it can be used to recruit smart heroes and other Occultists.

Bonus Feats

Occultists may select their bonus feats from the following list: Alertness, Craft Minor Item, Dodge, Educated, Empower Spell, Enlarge Spell, Extend Spell, Heighten Spell, Iron Will, Low Profile, Maximize Spell, Occult Abjuration, Quicken Spell, Silent Spell, Spell Penetration, Still Spell.

The Occultist Advanced Class									Spells Per Day					
Level	BAB	Fort	Ref	Will	Special	Def	Rep	0	1	2	3	4	5	
1st	+0	+0	+0	+2	Order Membership, Bonus Feat	+1	+0	6	3	-	-	-	-	
2nd	+1	+0	+0	+3		+1	+0	6	6	-	-	-	-	
3rd	+1	+1	+1	+3	Bonus Feat	+2	+0	6	6	3	-	-	-	
4th	+2	+1	+1	+4		+2	+0	6	6	6	-	-	-	
5th	+2	+1	+1	+4	Rank, Bonus Feat	+3	+1	6	6	6	3	-	-	
6th	+3	+2	+2	+5		+3	+1	6	6	6	6	-	-	
7th	+3	+2	+2	+5	Bonus Feat	+4	+1	6	6	6	6	3	-	
8th	+4	+2	+2	+6		+4	+1	6	6	6	6	6	-	
9th	+4	+3	+3	+6	Bonus Feat	+5	+2	6	6	6	6	6	3	
10th	+5	+3	+3	+7		+5	+2	6	6	6	6	6	6	

New Skill - Knowledge: occult (Int)

This skill replaces both Spellcraft and Knowledge: arcane in the Treasure Hunter campaign.

Check: Use this skill to identify an occult artifact, recognize a spell cast by another occultist, learn a new spell or recall information regarding the history of a particular occult society.

Try again? No. Until the situation has changed significantly (usually either by gaining an additional clue, seeing a spell used again or gaining another rank in the skill), Knowledge: occult checks cannot be retried.

Time: Knowledge: occult checks are either a reaction or a full-round action.

What Are Action Maneuvers?

Action Maneuvers represent actions that characters don't require specific training to attempt. Just like an exotic weapon, a character can use an action maneuver without being proficient with it, incurring a -4 nonproficiency penalty to their rolls. Characters can also take a feat (Action Maneuver Proficiency) to negate this penalty for an individual maneuver.

Action Maneuver Format

What you need

This will list the conditions that need to be met for you to pull off the action maneuver.

Roll

The skill or save used to pull off the action maneuver, and the Difficulty Class of the roll. All rolls made to perform action maneuvers incur a -4 nonproficiency penalty unless the character has the Action Maneuver Proficiency feat.

Time

The length of time it takes to pull off the action maneuver (free action, move action, attack action, or full-round action)

Pulling it off

What happens when you succeed at your roll to pull off the maneuver.

Screwing it up

What happens when you don't succeed at your roll to pull off the maneuver. Usually results in humiliation.

Special

Any other special circumstances, modifiers, factors, or other things to note about the action maneuver.

When to use it

Some advice on using the action maneuver in-game.

prove to others that
gravity is your bitch

Wall-Running

A martial arts movie favourite, this maneuver is all about running along a vertical surface as though it were the ground itself. When you have no ledge to stand on, and you have to cross a gap, being able to use a wall as a runway is an invaluable skill. It is also a good way to prove to others that gravity is your bitch.

What you need

A vertical surface, with two horizontal surfaces as your starting and finishing points.

Roll

Balance check (DC 25). The GM can use his discretion to modify the DC based on the quality of the surfaces used for the wall-run. A GM of a more cinematic campaign might opt to keep the DC static, while the GM of a more gritty campaign might consult the Climb skill description for DC modifiers based on

the type of surface.

Time

Move action.

Pulling it off

Move a distance equal to your ground speed along a vertical surface.

Screwing it up

If you fail the Balance check by 5 or less, you fall Prone at the starting point of the wall-run. If you fail the Balance check by more than 5, you fall Prone somewhere between your starting point and your destination (this can have disastrous consequences depending on the situation). You may make a Climb check to catch yourself from falling from a failed wall-jump attempt (see the Climb skill for more).

Special

You may move to higher or lower ground by wall-running. If the destination is higher than the starting point, for every 5ft higher, increase the Balance DC by 2. You may wall-run straight up. If the destination is lower than the starting point, for every 5ft lower, decrease the Balance DC by 2. You may not wall-run straight down (this is called "falling")

When to use it

The applications of this maneuver are obvious. If your progress is ever impeded by having no surface to walk on, you might be able to use a wall or other vertical surface to overcome the obstacle. Wall-running can also make a fast alternative to climbing.

Wall-Jumping

A popular stunt from martial arts movies involves the actors scaling huge barriers simply by leaping between two surfaces. By moving fast enough and jumping back and forth between two walls, it is possible to climb incredible distances in a short period of time. Naturally, it is more dangerous than climbing, but it looks way cooler than wearing that groin-pinching climber's harness.

What you need

Two vertical surfaces that are no less than 2ft apart and no more than 20ft apart. It helps to not be afraid of heights or falling.

Roll

Jump check (DC 25). The GM can use her discretion to modify the DC based on the quality of the surfaces used for the wall-jump. A GM of a more cinematic campaign might opt to keep the DC static, while the GM of a more gritty campaign might consult the Climb skill description for DC modifiers based on the type of surface.

Time

Move action or full-round action (see below)

Pulling it off

You may move a vertical distance equal to your speed as a full-round action. You may move up to half that distance as a move action. If you fail the Jump check by 5 or less, you fall Prone. If you fail the Jump check by more than 5, you fall and take falling damage based on the height you were trying to reach (as well as becoming Prone). You may make a Climb check to catch yourself from falling from a failed wall-jump

attempt (see the Climb skill description for more).

Screwing it up

If you fail the Jump check by 5 or less, you fall Prone. If you fail the Jump check by more than 5, you fall and take falling damage based on the height you were trying to reach (as well as becoming Prone). You may make a Climb check to catch yourself from falling from a failed wall-jump attempt (see the Climb skill for more).

Special

You may attempt "accelerated wall-jumping" which allows you to move a vertical distance equal to twice your speed as a full-round action (or a distance equal to your speed as a move action). Attempting accelerated wall-jumping confers a -5 penalty to the Jump check (this stacks with the -4 nonproficiency penalty).

When to use it

If you fail the Jump check by 5 or less, you fall Prone. If you fail the Jump check by more than 5, you fall and take falling damage based on the height you were trying to reach (as well as becoming Prone). You may make a Climb check to catch yourself from falling from a failed wall-jump attempt (see the Climb skill for more).

Wall-Leap Attack

Surviving in melee combat requires any advantage you can muster. Why should you let a wall get in your way? By springing off the wall towards your opponent, you can add the strength of your leap to the damaged of the attack.

What you need

A vertical surface (typically a wall) and an opponent, both adjacent to you on opposite sides.

Roll

Jump check (DC 15). This is rolled concurrently with a melee attack roll. The attack roll receives a -4 penalty. The Action Maneuver Proficiency (wall-leap attack) feat does not negate the attack roll penalty.

Time

Attack action.

Pulling it off

If both rolls are successful, then you have made a successful melee attack against your opponent. Your attack deals additional damage based on your Jump check.

When the maneuver is resolved, you fall Prone unless you make a Tumble check (DC 10).

Jump check	Bonus damage
15-19	+2
20-24	+4
25-29	+6
30-34	+8
35+	+10

Screwing it up

If either the attack roll or the Jump check fails, you fall Prone.

When to use it

If you're surrounded by walls, why not use them to your advantage? This maneuver is ideal when fighting an opponent one-on-one.

New Advanced Class - The Stunt Specialist

This advanced class for modern d20 games focuses on perfecting action maneuvers and increasing their usefulness. Stunt Specialists are most common in the film industry, where their ability to pull impressive stunts often finds them gainful employment. There are always a few intrepid individuals who use these skills out in the real world.

Requirements

Skills: At least 6 ranks each in at least two of the following skills: Balance, Jump, Tumble.

Feats: At least one Action Maneuver Proficiency

Hit Die: d6

Action Points: 7 + one-half the character's level, rounded down, every time the character attains a new level in this class.

Class Skills

Balance (Dex), Climb (Str), Jump (Str), Knowledge (current events, physical sciences, popular culture) (Int), Perform (act, dance) (Cha), Profession (Wis), Spot (Wis), and Swim (Str).

Skill Points Per Level: 3 + Intelligence modifier

Class Features

Action Talent

At 1st, 3rd, 5th, 7th, and 9th level, you may select a talent from the following talent tree. No talent can be selected more than once unless expressly indicated.

Action Maneuver Proficiency: You gain the Action Maneuver Proficiency feat for an action maneuver of your choice. You may select this talent multiple times.

Action Maneuver Mastery: Choose an action maneuver with which you are proficient. You gain a +2 bonus to checks made to pull off that action maneuver.

You may take this talent multiple times. Each time, you may select another action maneuver or increase the bonus to an action maneuver by an additional +2.

Cool By Fate: Whenever you spend an action point to modify an action maneuver check, you may add an additional 1d6 to the dice rolled.

Prerequisite: Action Maneuver Proficiency in at least three different action maneuvers.

Special: If you have the Action Boost feat, you may add an addition 1d8 instead of 1d6.

Impossible Recovery: On a roll of 1 on an action maneuver check, you may spend an action point to reroll the check. You must take the second result.

New Feat - Action Maneuver Proficiency

You have learned how to properly pull off a certain action maneuver (congratulations!).

Benefit: Choose one action maneuver. You no longer take a -4 nonproficiency penalty to checks made to pull off this action maneuver.

Normal: You take a -4 nonproficiency penalty on checks made to pull off an action maneuver.

Incredible Recovery: On a failed action maneuver check, you may spend an action point to reroll the check. You must take the second result.

Prerequisite: Impossible Recovery.

Showboater: Whenever you roll a 20 on an action maneuver check (and succeed at pulling off the action maneuver), you gain a permanent +1 to your Reputation score. Whenever you roll a 1 on an action maneuver check, you gain a permanent -1 penalty to your Reputation. You only gain these bonuses or penalties when your efforts are witnessed by at least three others (your GM should use discretion in determining whether an "audience" is appropriate enough to affect your Reputation).

Professional Stuntperson: You gain a +1 bonus to Profession (stuntperson) checks for each action maneuver you are proficient with.

Prerequisite: At least one rank in Profession (stuntperson)

Bonus Feats

At 2nd, 4th, 6th, 8th, and 10th level, you gain a bonus feat. The feat must be selected from this list, and you must meet any prerequisites.

Acrobatic, Athletic, Action Boost, Action Maneuver Proficiency, Combat Reflexes, Combat Throw, Defensive Martial Arts, Dodge, Elusive Target, Focused, Lightning Reflexes, Mobility, Spring Attack, Unbalance Opponent.

The Stunt Specialist Advanced Class

Level	BAB	Fort	Ref	Will	Special	Def	Rep
1st	+0	+0	+2	+0	Action Talent	+1	+1
2nd	+1	+0	+3	+0	Bonus Feat	+2	+1
3rd	+1	+1	+3	+1	Action Talent	+2	+1
4th	+2	+1	+4	+1	Bonus Feat	+3	+2
5th	+2	+1	+4	+1	Action Talent	+3	+2
6th	+3	+2	+5	+2	Bonus Feat	+4	+2
7th	+3	+2	+5	+2	Action Talent	+4	+3
8th	+4	+2	+6	+2	Bonus Feat	+5	+3
9th	+4	+3	+6	+3	Action Talent	+5	+3
10th	+5	+3	+7	+3	Bonus Feat	+6	+4

Each new age of the future is defined by the technologies it introduces. Inevitably, almost every new technology is widely applied to the art of warfare. Advancements in fusion, gravity, and energy weapons create a need for greater defense. In response to this, new materials and techniques are discovered in order to make stronger and more protective armor... for vehicles.

Every era of the future introduces new forms of mechs and starships, each with a bewildering new array of armors and gadgets that can be used to increase their ability to protect their operators. But what about the people who operate without a

vehicle? If powerful substances such as neutronite or neovulcanium can be developed to protect a mecha or a starship, so why can't it be made into a suit of armor for an individual as well?

Now it can. This article takes the mecha and starship armors presented in the Future d20 rules and adapts them for personal use. Each of these is a suit of armor meant for a single person to wear, and follows all of the armor rules laid out in the Modern System Reference Document. Give yourself the same defensive options available to starships and mecha by using these future armors.

Progress Level 5

Duraplastic Breastplate

This single piece of hardened polymer represents

the cutting edge of lightweight body armor for the Information Age. Lighter than similar armors, it also provides less flexibility

Alumisteel Suit

Designed for greater comprehensive protection than the tactical vest, this armor comes with a large vest of alumisteel to protect the torso, along with separate pieces for the wearer's upper and lower arms and legs.

Alloy Armor

Made from the same material as space shuttles, this is nothing less than a modern version of plate mail. It is usually worn by soldiers who must blaze a trail into extremely hostile terrain.

Armor	PL	Size	Type	Equipment Bonus	Nonprof. Bonus	Max Dex Bonus	Armor Penalty	Speed (30ft)	Speed (20ft)	Weight	Purchase DC	Restriction
Duraplastic Breastplate	5	Light	Tactical	+3	+1	+5	-2	30	20	5 lbs.	15	Lic (+1)
Alumisteel Suit	5	Medium	Tactical	+6	+2	+2	-4	20	15	25 lbs.	17	Lic (+1)
Alloy Armor	5	Heavy	Tactical	+10	+3	+0	-10	15	10	60 lbs.	20	Res (+2)
Polymeric Shirt	6	Medium	Tactical	+4	+2	+4	-2	25	15	20 lbs.	15	Lic (+1)
Resilium Defensive Wear	6	Medium	Tactical	+5	+2	+3	-3	20	15	30 lbs.	16	Lic (+1)
Vanadium Covering	6	Heavy	Tactical	+7	+3	+2	-6	15	10	40 lbs.	18	Lic (+1)
Duralloy Plate	6	Heavy	Tactical	+9	+3	+0	-8	15	10	50 lbs.	20	Lic (+1)
Deflective Suit	7	Light	Tactical	+2*	+1	+4	-2	30	20	10 lbs.	19	Res (+2)
Cerametallic Armor	7	Light	Tactical	+4	+1	+4	-1	30	20	5 lbs.	17	Lic (+1)
Neovulcanium Gear	7	Powered	Tactical	+9	+3	+0	-9	15	10	55 lbs.	20	Lic (+1)
Crystal Carbon Covering	7	Heavy	Tactical	+9	+3	+0	-7	20	15	45 lbs.	21	Res (+2)
Neutronite Aegis	7	Powered	Tactical	+7	+3	+1	-6	20	15	55 lbs.	16	Lic (+1)
Ablative Vest	7	Light	Concealable	+5	+1	+5	-1	30	20	2 lbs.	18	Lic (+1)
Reactive Armor	8	Medium	Tactical	+6	+2	+2	-4	25	15	22 lbs.	17	Lic (+1)
Nanofluidic Suit	8	Heavy	Tactical	+8	+3	+2	-5	20	15	30 lbs.	21	Res (+2)
Megatanium Juggernaut	8	Powered	Tactical	+12	+4	+0	-12	20	15	85 lbs.	24	Mil (+3)

* +6 versus energy attacks

Progress Level 6

Resilium Defensive Wear

This armor is essentially a suit of light combat armor with resilium alloy replacing the interior armor. It does not, however, include a helmet.

Polymeric Shirt

This shirt is made of carbon-fiber polymers, covering the wearer's torso and arms. Specially-weakened polymers in the shoulders and elbows allow almost all of the wearer's upper body to be protected by a single piece of armor, allowing for decent mobility without requiring multiple parts.

Vanadium Covering

Interlocking plates of vanadium cover the wearer's torso, limbs, and head. Lighter polymeric materials are used for the joints, granting the wearer full-body protection.

Duralloy Plate

Much like alloy armor, this is a total-body covering of extremely thick armor, meant to offer extreme

Archaic Items and Pricing

All of the new armors listed here are either tactical or concealable. However, for characters from planets or times with more advanced technology, they're relics. For characters of a given Progress Level, any item 2 or more Progress Levels lower than their native PL should be considered archaic.

The Future d20 rules suggest that, for items from a lower PL than the current Progress Level, a cumulative -2 should be applied to the item's Purchase DC. However, that doesn't reflect the rarity of these older items. When new technologies are developed, obsolete ones are quickly abandoned, and such items become harder to find. If you wish to emphasize that finding items from a lower PL is difficult, you should instead add +2 to the Purchase DC of an item for each PL lower it is than the current Progress Level.

protection. It is slightly lighter than alumisteel, allowing for even greater freedom of movement and flexibility.

Progress Level 7

Cerametallic Armor

A simple torso and helmet combination, cerametal armor offers excellent protection against most attacks, while still being relatively light and cheap.

Deflective Suit

A deflective suit is composed of shiny polymers, formed into a hooded shirt and pants that are worn over clothes. The suit is tight but stretchy, so it always hugs the wearer's form. Deflective armor is highly resistant to energy, but offers relatively poor protection against physical damage.

Neovulcanium Gear

This suit of powered armor is made of neovulcanium, granting it extreme protection. The cost of this protection is the sacrifice of a high degree of mobility.

Crystal Carbon Covering

Crystal carbon is a substance that is as nearly as hard as diamond. It is as strong as neovulcanium while being lighter to carry. Because a suit of crystal carbon covering must be specially "grown" for the person wearing it, it is extremely expensive and hard to acquire. This armor has the ultralight composition gadget.

Neutronite Aegis

The Neutronite Aegis is the standard in tough armor for the Gravity Age. This powered suit offers considerable protection, at the cost of a moderate loss of speed, all at a reasonable price.

Strength of the Future

Looking over the new armors listed here, you may realize that, in terms of statistics, armors from one Progress Level are relatively the same as another. A Vanadium Covering, for example, doesn't seem that much different than a Neutronite Aegis. However, given that the latter armor was developed in the future from the former, shouldn't it clearly offer better protection?

In regards to weaponry from previous eras, it does. When weapons from a lower PL than a suit of armor are used against it, the wearer gains DR X/--, where X is the difference in their Progress Levels. For example, while wearing a Nanofluidic Suit (PL 8), you would have DR 2/-- against damage from a Laser Pistol (a PL 6 weapon). When a weapon from a certain PL is used against armor from a lower PL, the weapon gains a circumstance bonus to the attack roll equal to the difference between their Progress Levels. For example, someone using a Laser Pistol against a target wearing a Duraplastic Breastplate (PL 5), would have a +1 circumstance bonus to their attack roll.

If you're using FX in your game, then consider altering the above rules slightly. Magic (or psionics) transcend the limits of the physical universe, and make it possible for even a primitive weapon to penetrate a powerful armor (or for a weak armor to resist a futuristic weapon). When using FX, armors of a higher PL than an attacking weapon gain DR X/magic. Likewise, weapons of a higher PL than the armor they're attacking do not gain the circumstance bonus to the attack roll if the armor has an enhancement bonus. Fantasy d20 weapons and armor are all Progress Level 2. Natural weapons and unarmed strikes are PL 0.

Progress Level 8

Ablative Vest

An ablative vest is amazingly thin; it's little more than a silvery, stiff shirt, and is easily worn under clothing to conceal itself. It offers an incredible amount of

protection, particularly for covering such a small area.

Reactive Armor

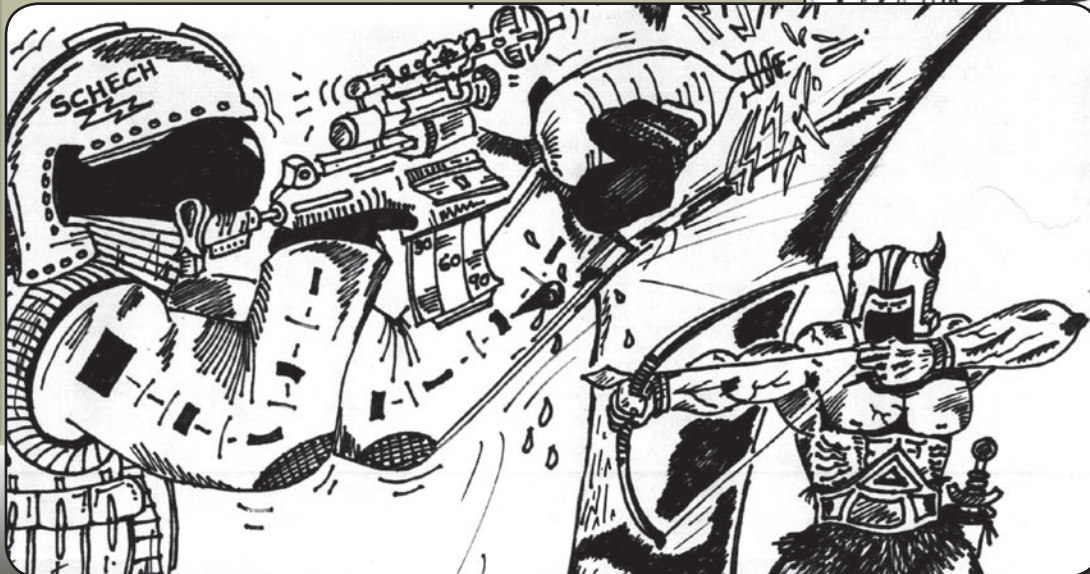
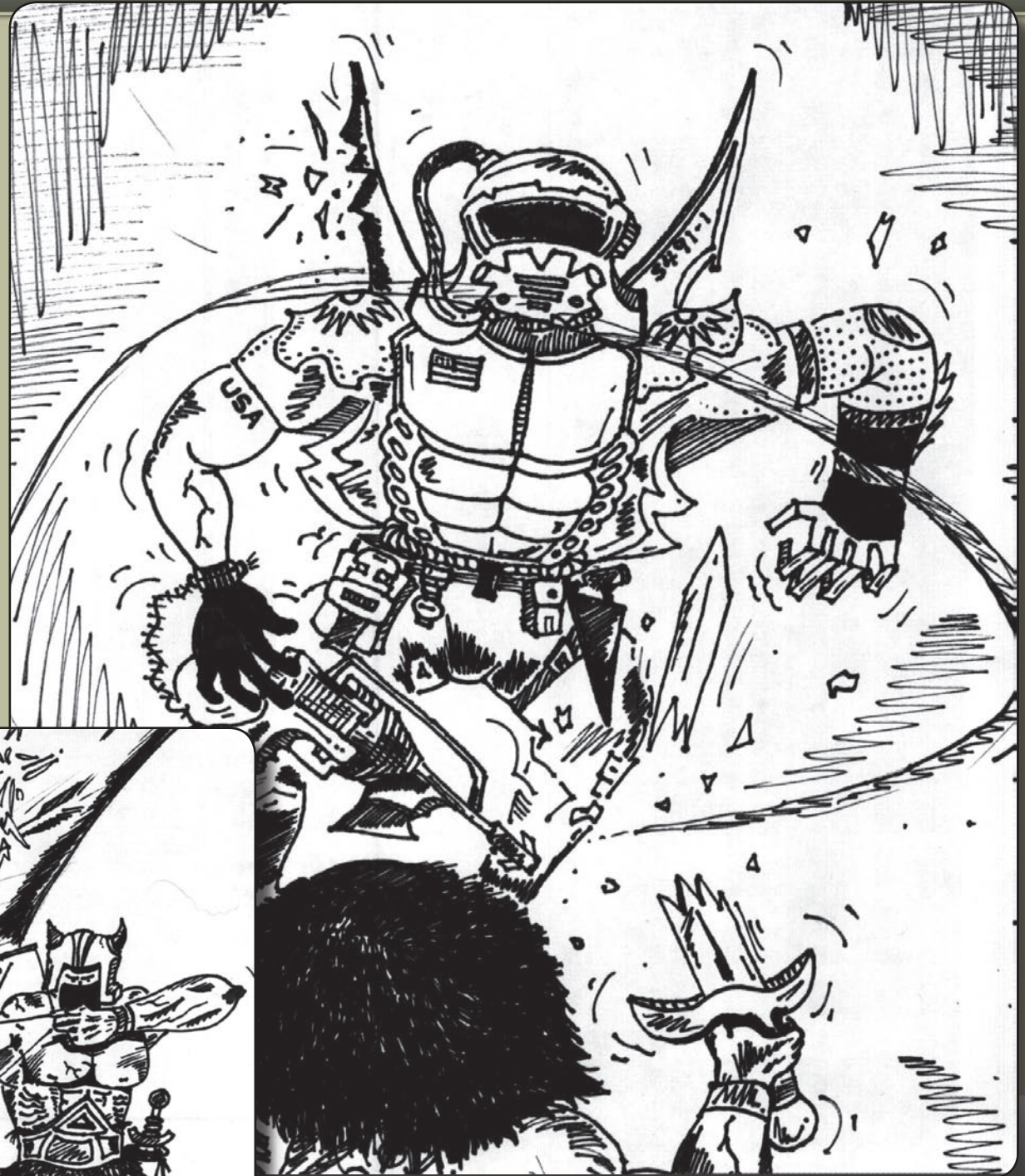
Reactive armor consists of a cerametal chest plate and helmet, along with arm and leg guards, that have a tightly-compressed gas injected into small gaps in the material.

Nanofluidic Suit

This full-body armor is composed much the same way reactive armor is; overlapping plates of neutronite have a gel (actually tens of trillions of nanites) inserted between them. The nanites cushion blows and move with the wearer, boosting flexibility.

Megatanium Juggernaut

The megatanium juggernaut is the final word in protection. Composed of two layers of neovulcanium with a ferromagnetized layer of crystal carbon between them allow for a level of defense that leaves the wearer all but invulnerable. Because the lightweight crystal carbon materials are magnetized, they work to offset the weight of the neovulcanium. This armor has the ultralight composition gadget.



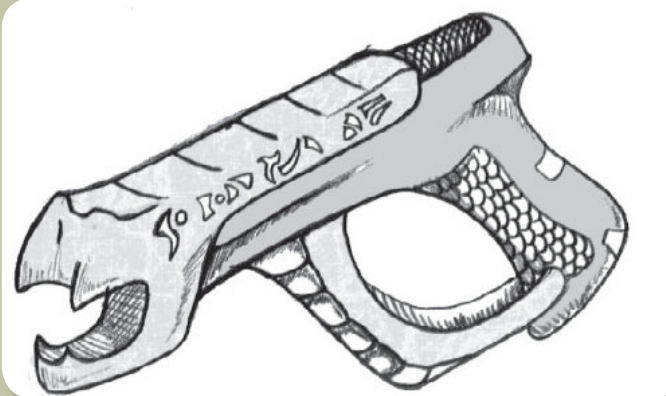
In modern games that have arcane matters as their subject, magic items are bound to happen. Sometimes it is a rare sword that one uses to dispatch undead, or a holy relic of some sort. d20 Modern has some interesting ideas on how to bring mystically-driven modern items into your games. Here is just an example of modern items with an eldritch appeal.

Spitting Vipers

The Spitting Vipers were a pair of handguns crafted in Romania, sometime around the turn of the twentieth century. Cornellius Araskova was an enterprising Romanian Baron who had two specific problems. The first was that he had a neighboring Baron who was ruthless in his acquisition of more land for his fief. The second was that within his borders, Araskova's people were being preyed upon by a vampire coven. Araskova began to tinker with an idea that would help him eliminate both enemies in one swift stroke. Using engineering and technical skills he had learned while attending some of the most prestigious schools in the West, as well as generations-old mystic techniques known by his people, Araskova produced a line of firearms beyond anything that currently existed. He named his creations the Araskova Vipers. Called the Spitting Vipers by those that saw them, the Vipers are pistols about the size of a sub-machine

gun. They are most often seen in pairs, though they may be encountered singularly on very rare occasions. They are composed of a dull gray metal, inscribed with arcane marks and bearing what looks like serpent scales near the barrel.

Shortly after their creation, Araskova gave several Vipers to the lord of the vampire coven in exchange for amnesty towards his people. As part of the bargain, the vampire lord promised to wipe out the enemy Baron



and his forces. Araskova never told the vampire that, while the Vipers were designed to give the unholy night creatures a tactical advantage over the superior forces of the Baron, they were also designed to destroy the vampires who used them in the process. In the end, both of Araskova's enemies obliterated each other in a bloody skirmish, leaving Araskova satisfied with his victory. He governed benignly for several years until he was assassinated. The last remaining pair of the Vipers was stolen around the same time.

The Vipers are ornate, large caliber pistols that have a hand guard and some incredible filigree along the surface. They always come in pairs. There does not appear to be any trigger to speak of near the handle, and holding them by the barrel reveals little in the

way of how they operate. The handles contain a coiled spike that springs from the handles into the wrist of the holder: anyone gripping the Vipers by the handle must make a Reflex save (DC 12) or suffer 1d4 points of piercing damage. Those that fail their Reflex save and get stung by the handle must then make a Will save (DC 12) to "cast down" the pistol and throw it away. If the person chooses not to let go (by voluntarily failing both saves), the weapon will keep the barb in the person's wrist long enough to establish a "relationship" with its new host. From this point on, the "host" can fire the Vipers by thought alone so long as he is holding them.

At this point, the true nature of the Vipers becomes apparent. The weapons can never be separated from their "host" for more than ten feet except by way of a *remove curse* spell. Any attempt to separate them further will cause them to instantly teleport to the master. The host must also carry them as a set, as leaving one behind will have the same effect. Once the host has held onto the weapons, he instantly and permanently loses 1d6 hit points; the price of ownership.

The weapons do not use standard ammunition to fire. Instead there is a large spike directly under the barrel. Loading the weapon requires the host to ram the pistols into the body of an enemy.

The host must make a successful grapple check against an opponent and then a successful melee touch attack (all of this requires a full-round action which provokes an attack of opportunity). Once both rolls are successful, the Vipers start draining blood and life force

Spitting Viper

Damage: 2d8

Critical: 20/x2

Damage Type: Ballistic

Range Increment: 40 ft

Rate of Fire: S, A, Scatter

Magazine: Special

Size: Medium

Weight: 4 lbs

Purchase DC: Not for Sale

Restriction: N/A

from the victim. The gun drains 1d4 hp from the victim this round and each following round where the wielder succeeds on a Grapple check. The Vipers store every point of hp they drain and use it to craft malevolent ammunition. The pair of Vipers have a joint pool of hit points (max. 30 hp); firing a Viper in any one of its three attack modes uses 1 hp.

Variable attacks: The Vipers have three attack modes: single shot, full auto, and scatter shot (20ft cone, Reflex save DC 15 for half damage). The weapon deals 2d8 damage. Switching attack modes is a free action.

Vampiric Ammo: The Vipers are cursed in a sense that they require blood to operate. If the reservoir run dry, they either have to be refilled or can run off of the host. If the Viper's hp pool is depleted, they may use the host's hp. If the Vipers drop the host to 0 hp, they continue to drain the host until he dies. At death the Vipers will mystically disconnect from the host and can be claimed by anyone.

The Vipers will remain "loaded" indefinitely so long as they are connected to a host or they have hp in their pool. Should the Vipers run dry, the host will have to make a Will save (DC 18) to avoid "plugging" an opportune target to refill the Viper's reservoir.

The Vipers can also heal their host. As an attack action, the host may expend up to 5 hp from the Viper's pool to heal the same amount.

Caster Charms

On tour in the late nineteen nineties, Erica Dane, Pop Star extraordinaire, was promoting her latest album. Famous for her wild rhythms and fusion of multiple musical styles, Dane composed the way some people breathe. A natural in the realm of her chosen profession,

her true skills lie in her deepest secret, kept long away from the eyes of the public. Erica was a sorceress.

While visiting some of the local shops in Italy, Erica came across a new type of charm bracelet. The bracelet appeared much like a modern men's watch: links of metal joined together by elasticized clips. Each link could be easily inserted or removed. They created an elegant looking bracelet with all the novelty of charm jewelry, while remaining sleek enough to be worn to any affair.

Erica had a clever idea and began to experiment with her new found jewelry. After several attempts, Erica managed to create a charm bracelet that stored spells much in the same manner as mystic scrolls or tattoos. Each charm link can be scribed by the mage to contain one spell per link.

Erica had a life in which the press hounded her every moves. It is difficult to escape their watchful eye. Erica has thus stacked her personal bracelets (she wears two) with mostly escape and evasion type spells in order to ensure her privacy.

The Caster Charm bracelets were initially crafted by Erica but she has secretly contracted several enterprising young mages to scribe them en masse. She sells normal un-magicked ones under the banner of a company that she owns by way of various dummy corporations. The world at large knows that the company that sells Caster Charm Bracelets is the trendiest seller of this type of jewelry in the United States. Those in the know who want to obtain bracelets that have been "charmed," must do so through back door channels.

Activating a link on a caster charm works in the same way one would operate a mystic tattoo. Once the spell is expended, the image on the link disappears.

Some sample links follow.

Link of Spiderclimb

The wearer can climb on vertical surfaces and ceilings for 30 minutes. The wearer gains a climb speed of 20 feet and need not make a climb check to scale a surface. The wearer cannot take run actions for the duration of the effect.

Type: Wondrous Item

Caster Level: 3rd

Phantom Watchdog Link

You can summon a spectral creature to guard an area where it was summoned. It is visible to only the caster. It will last for 2 hours or until discharged. If the animal attacks an intruder it will last for one round per caster level. It will cover an area of 40 feet and the wearer can move up to a hundred feet away from the area.

Type: Wondrous Item

Caster Level: 7th

Link of Invisibility

The wearer vanishes from sight, even from Dark Vision. The invisibility lasts for three minutes. All the usual caveats and disadvantages to the *invisibility* spell still apply.

Type: Wondrous Item

Caster Level: 3rd

REVIEW

“Mythic Heroes” is a 25 page rules supplement from BadAxe Games LLC, for use with games of the d20 System. At the outset, it centers around incorporating the “Hero’s Journey” of Joseph Campbell fame to d20 role playing; adding a new system by which the traditional heroic archetypes can be utilized and realized within the game system itself. At the core, however, “Mythic Heroes” is very much about the “Action Points” concept and its mechanical implementation into the game. Those familiar with BadAxe Games most likely know of them through one of their flagship products; “Grim Tales”, a pulp sword and sorcery campaign toolkit which also includes and introduces the “Action Point” mechanic. Likewise, Action Points are a part of the d20 Modern Role Playing game and the Eberron Campaign Setting for Dungeons and Dragons. Essentially, then, most of the market for Mythic Heroes will have at least heard of the Action Point concept before now.

Visually, Mythic Heroes is exemplary of the BadAxe Games usual PDF styling. Those who have read my reviews in the past know that my personal taste in aesthetics runs toward the austere, so Mythic Heroes is right up my alley. This is the type of product those who enjoy printing out their PDFs will appreciate, as by stripping the cover and the end advertisements from the print job will produce an ink-conscious package. The

cover and final advertisement are full color, while the interior of the product is entirely monochrome. Text is clean, standard two-column fare without borders or specific illumination. Section headings are off-set with horizontal rules and little else. Interior art is usually rather large, on average 1/3 or 1/4 page, but all pieces are evocative of a classic “Fantasy Novel” feel and add quite a bit to the tone of the product. The art, and even the product itself, seems to contain no attribution beyond artist’s marks on the works themselves.

The content of “Mythic Heroes” is split up into four sections. The introduction is about half a page and describes somewhat the shared myth, the Hero’s Journey, and what the product hopes to bring to the game table. The next section introduces the Action

a new system by which the
traditional heroic archetypes
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Point mechanic as it is used in Mythic Heroes. Mythic Heroes’ Action Points are largely the same as those found in Grim Tales, but for those without Grim Tales this section can be a great resource. If you are familiar with the mechanic from other sources, be sure to read this section carefully, as Mythic Heroes functions somewhat differently from, say, D20 Modern. Even for those who own Grim Tales, Mythic Heroes introduces a few new concepts to the mix, such as “Shadowed” Action Dice. What is especially nice in this section is a bit on “Behind the Numbers”, explaining exactly what the new dice concepts do to the averages. While not every GM may need or want to know these numbers, it can be useful and is interesting if nothing

else. Next is the “Mythic Campaign”, introducing the seven Archetypes and the various “Mythic Gifts” they receive as they advance in level. The final section is on “Challenges”, alternate options for skills and combat rolls that will allow characters to take advantage of the larger numeric results they can obtain through the use of Action Points, usually by taking a penalty to their attempt for some additional benefit should the attempt succeed.

Of the 25 pages in Mythic Heroes, 19 contain product text. The other pages contain the cover matter, OGL, and advertisements for other BadAxe Games products. The Action Points mechanics themselves take up only two and a half pages, with an additional half-page devoted to new Action Dice concepts. Nine pages are devoted to “The Mythic Campaign”, including explaining what the archetypes are, what the mythic gifts they gain are, the archetypes themselves, and tables showing the mythic progression of each archetype. This is the “meat” of the product, and probably why most people will purchase it (after all, if you just want to add Action Points to a D&D game you can look up the rules in the Modern SRD). As a resource, this section is very strong, and from the moment I read it I’ve been wanting to include it in my next game. (At the same time, this section is the area of the product I would have most liked to see improved.) The last section is on “Skill and Combat Challenges” and is six pages long. It includes rules for standard “Skill Challenges”, as well as introducing Critical Failures and Successes with skills (something found in Grim Tales). Specific skill challenges are included for many skills, as well as specific penalties for critical failure. The Combat Challenges section follows and takes up only one half of the last page on challenges.

If you’ve ever thought that an RPG “Adventuring

Party” was too far removed from the heroes of a story, then this is a product for you. Instead of “a well balanced party” including Tanks, Melee Damage, Arcane Magic, Rogue Skills, and Divine Magic you can create a give and play by introducing The Fated, The Hero, The Oracle, The Trickster, and The Maiden. Each archetype plays off of its traditional mythical roles, which will be most familiar to fans of fantasy literature (where these archetypes are quite visible). The archetypes, however, are really rather core to good storytelling, and as such they can fit into ANY genre (with just a touch of tweaking). Almost all of the Mythic Gifts have to do with special ways of using Action Points: The Hero, for instance, may use Heroic Immunity to become immune to some special attack of “The Enemy” for a few rounds by spending one of his Action Points. The Fated may use Reversal of Fortune to spend an Action Point when he rolls a Natural 1 to re-roll the die. These abilities play into the specific archetypes and create special party dynamics where characters gain or lose Action Points based on the actions of OTHER members of the party. The Trickster may place a bet on the success or failure of another character’s check, or the Mentor becomes stronger when attempting a skill with another character to “show them the ropes”. This will steer players toward enacting their archetypes in-game.

All is not roses and sunshine, however. I feel that the section on The Mythic Campaign is far too short. While taking up 9 of 19 pages, 7 of those pages are full-page tables detailing the progression and Mythic Gift abilities of each archetype. One page is devoted to mechanical considerations; “What is an archetype?”, “What is a Mythic Gift?”, “Can there be more than one of an archetype in a given party?”, etc etc. Only a single page is devoted to DESCRIBING the

archetypes themselves; and this is where I think the major oversight lays. The archetype descriptions read like notes passed down from cribbed lectures on Jung and Joseph Campbell. While technically accurate, and outlining somewhat how to play each archetype, the text is rather scanty and leaves quite a few questions. If I weren’t already familiar with the material from a misspent youth in graduate English I would probably have difficulty assimilating the various archetypes into my game. I’d have liked to see some more writing here on incorporating the archetypes into a game, on using them in different genres, and how the archetypes interact with one another. What’s really missing here is

the archetypes are really
rather core to good
storytelling

something on running a Mythic Campaign. There are no notes to the GM on how to prepare a campaign to give it a “Mythic” feel. The concept of “The Enemy” is raised several times in the Mythic Gifts of various archetypes, but the only real reference to it is contained within The Hero’s description. We all know that the enemy is what the characters are challenging and attempting to overcome ... just capitalizing it doesn’t exactly suggest how to make the bad-guy Mythic.

Each of the archetypes are very genre-inspecific, meaning that they could equally apply to any literary tradition, but for one. The author even felt it needful to point out that in a campaign without a focus on magical abilities, or not including magical abilities, The Oracle will be inappropriate. Of the twenty Mythic Gifts the Oracle receives, eight directly relate to The Oracle’s

ability to use magic. While almost half of the number of gifts, I think an alternate progression could have been created that focused on the Oracle’s ROLE but not the Oracle’s class-related abilities. As the “seer” or voice of prophecy, The Oracle could be embodied by a character with psychic abilities rather than magical, or even a character prone to reliable hunches. Additionally, while the text itself makes no mention to BadAxe Games’ “Grim Tales”, the magic-focused mechanics of The Oracle relate rather directly to how magic functions in that game, rather than “general” d20. This leaves one archetype that may not fit into quite a few campaigns, for one reason or another, and made the product feel a little lopsided. I can come up with an alternate progression myself (and already have for a game), but it seemed to me a glaring difference between that archetype and the others.

Action Points, as a mechanic, are one of my favorite d20 mechanics, and the incarnation found in Mythic Heroes is probably my favorite to date. Mythic Heroes suggests a real give-and-take relationship between the Game Master and the Players, using Action Points as a form of currency. Normally, bad things “just happen” to characters, but Mythic Heroes Action Points form an underlying control surface for the GM to increase the pressure a little ... for instance, a critical skill failure isn’t just a random occurrence of a 1 on the d20, but “activated” by the GM by giving the player an Action Point. Thus the GM increases the character’s danger and their challenges, while giving them the added ‘umph’ to overcome those challenges. Mythic Heroes takes that idea even a step further by introducing ways for the players themselves to move, trade, and steal Action Points from one another during the game through their chosen archetypes. It makes for a very different, yet very entertaining table experience. While perhaps focused

slightly on the “fantasy” genre, Mythic Heroes seems to be equally suited to others. The Space Opera genre, for instance, often showcases very obvious archetypal characters (Campbell even used Luke Skywalker, of Star Wars fame, to illustrate many of his points of The Hero’s Journey). Crime Dramas often include Heroes, their Shadows, Tricksters, Mentors, and Maidens. The author even included “The Unfolding Myth”, allowing characters to advance into other archetypes during play, which can create the doggedly luckless anti-hero of Noir fame (Hero/Fated) or the conflicted ronin of chambara (Shadow/Hero).

While not perfect, I think Mythic Heroes is one of those products with an extremely strong core that could become a central resource for some gamers, used in many different games spanning many different genres. The mechanics are clean and easily strapped onto new games or even existing games, and the added sense of drama should appeal to many role players. I give Mythic Heroes a 15 on the d20.

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