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More Genre Templates
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Introduction

This issue of Modern Dispatch, we present more Genre Templates for use in your D20 Modern campaigns.

As a quick reminder, here's a run-down on what Genre Templates are and how they work:

Genre Templates are plug-and-play add-ons that give each player access to the skills and abilities typically possessed by significant characters within in a given genre.

They are not "balanced." Within a particular genre, adding a Genre Template to all significant characters will not change them in regards to one another, however, when dealing with insignificant characters, Significant Characters will be at an advantage. Significant Characters are not harder to hit, they not have additional hit points... They are simply able to do the cool stuff that characters in that genre do with regularity.

When a campaign starts, simply add the Genre Template to each player and other significant characters.

Reading a Genre Template

Genre Templates are comprised of the following sections:

Skills: These are the skills that all significant characters always have access to as class skills.

Feats and abilities: These are the feats and special abilities that all significant characters automatically have. However, just because a significant character has a particular feat or ability does not ensure or require that they have all the pre-requisites. When they want to pick up a feat or ability that requires pre-requisites that they do not have, they will have to acquire them.

For instance: a character in a Modern d20 campaign might get Point Blank Shot from their particular Genre Template, but unless he has a Dexterity of 13 he cannot get Double Tap (even though a 13 Dex is required for Point Blank Shot).

Tweaks: These are simple rules add-ons that are designed to be seamlessly integrated into a campaign.

Optional: Some Templates have optional rules provided, which allow for more drastic changes in the rules to emulate a particular genre. These are a bit more radical than the Tweaks, and so are presented as options, usable at the discretion of the Game Master.

Die and Die Again: Spies on Impossible Missions

Skills:
Bluff, Diplomacy, Hide, Investigate, Listen, Move Silently, Search, Sense Motive, Spot, in addition each Significant Character may also choose 5 skills not listed and take them as permanent class skills.

Feats:
Combat Martial Arts, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot.

Tweaks:
- Intimidation can be used with either Strength or Charisma.

- Significant Characters get a Genre Bonus to all saves equal to their Charisma bonus (if positive.)

- SCs may use any skill untrained.

Optional:
Fatale- many spies do their best work between the sheets. Signficant

Characters (PC and NPC) are initially more likely to "befriend" someone of their preferred orientation rather than attack them.

Significant Characters who are able to develop a physical relationship with an "enemy" or "potential enemy" may very well find it to their advantage later. When the characters knowingly meet again, under less-than-friendly circumstances, they must make opposed Charisma checks. The winner of this check gets a +2 bonus to all rolls made against that character (attack, damage, skill, initiative, etc...) whenever they are in hostile conflict. However, the winner of this check will also be unable to pull the trigger, perhaps believing that the other is

redeemable in someway. Not only will they not allow them to be killed, they will make sure that they stay alive.

"Let me tell you my plan"- Villains in many espionage films have massive egos, and often cannot resist sharing their plan. What point is an intricate plan that has taken 8 years to come to fruition if no one appreciates your work?

The spy and the villain each make opposed Diplomacy checks. The spy's check is at -10 unless he is in immediate danger (death-trap, anyone?). The result of this check is made secret.

If the spy wins, the villain may tell the spy her plan. However, this level of trust is a two-edged sword for the spy: he will indeed learn the plan, but once the plan is revealed the villain gains a Villain Token. This token can be used for an unlikely escape from a Very Bad Situation (death, imprisonment, etc...).

If the spy wins and the villain chooses not to reveal the plan, the spy gains a Hero Token which can be used for a temporary reprieve (perhaps the villain's #1 henchman sides with the spy for part of a combat, perhaps that Fatale is redeemable, maybe the rope on this death trap wasn't tied as tightly as it might have been...). The spy

should be as creative as possible when using their Hero Token (as should the GM when using a Villain Token). If the spy loses the check, the villain might very well give the misinformation, or perhaps the villain realizes death traps are stupid and takes out a gun and....

Well- rounded- Any time a Significant Character encounters something interesting and foreign, they may make a Well-rounded roll. This is a Charisma check with a DC of 17. Success means the Significant Character knows enough about the subject matter to sound knowledgeable...

It might mean they speak a smattering of Latvian, that they can name the starting defense for the only Pittsburgh Steelers team to lose a Super Bowl, or maybe even that they personally know the vintner who crafted the wine served with dinner. It is a given that SCs know Shakespeare and World History and even pop music. This does not give them any ranks in a skill or a language, it is very temporary and designed to be used primarily in social situations.

Grunts:
Modern Military Exploits

Skills:
Hide, Knowledge (Tactics), Listen, Move Silently, Search, Spot, Survival.

Feats:
Combat Martial Arts, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Advanced Firearms Proficiency, Burst Fire, Strafe, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Shot on the Run, Toughness.

Tweaks:
• Spot Checks- instead of the standard distance penalties, apply the following: for every 20 feet, apply a -1 penalty.

• Silent Communication- Any communication between characters can be attempted as non-verbal and silent.

The communicating character makes an Intelligence check, and any ally attempting to get the message makes a Spot Check with the same DC. The more complicated the message, the higher the DC, with basic tactics and communication having a DC 10. Spot check penalties for distance do apply.

Optional:
Specialize-each character chooses 4 skills. These not only become permanent class skills, but the character gains a Genre Bonus on these skills depending on how many other people selected them: +4 bonus if no other character selected the skill, +3 if one other character selected the skill, and +2 if two or three other characters selected the skill.

Man Down!- Members of the military working together in platoon sized groups or smaller (platoon/ troop 30-40 soldiers, squad/ crew 8-12 soldiers, fireteam 4-5 soldiers) rely on one another at all costs. When they lose a soldier, they do lose their most valuable resource, but also the grim reality of their situation becomes quite apparent.

When a Significant Character member of a platoon or smaller unit dies, all members of that unit gain a +1 Genre Bonus to all rolls for 5 rounds. Genre Bonuses do stack with one another, and it is possible to have multiple Genre Bonuses in effect at any one time (though unfortunate in this genre!)

Immortal Steel: There Can Be Only One

Skills:
Concentration, Heal, Intimidate, Search, Spot.

Feats:
Combat Reflexes, Power Attack, Cleave, Great Cleave, Decapitating Slash (See Tweaks).

Tweaks:
• Significant Characters are Immortal. They do not age, and cannot die by natural means. In addition, they heal 1d10 points of damage per turn, even after the point of death.

• The only way to kill a Significant Character is to decapitate them. This is done using the Decapitating Slash feat:

Decapitating Slash
Prerequisites: Combat Reflexes, BAB 10+.
Benefit: If you score a critical hit against your opponent, he must make a Fortitude save (DC=5 + total damage dealt, +5 if the critical was an Attack of Opportunity) or be instantly killed, his head severed.

• When a Significant Character is killed in this fashion, his opponent takes some of his power: The victor can take one of the loser's Feats as his own, and can raise any three skills that were higher than his own up to the level possessed by the SC he has killed.

• All SCs get a +4 Genre Bonus to Dexterity where determining the results of Combat Reflexes.

- Intimidation can be used with either Strength or Charisma.

Optional:

Battlefield Stature- On the battlefield, the swath of destruction that a SC creates greatly influences how he performs. Every 10 full points of damage that a character delivers in a round gives a character 1 temporary hit point and a Battle Token. Battle Tokens can be spent at any point for a one round bonus to all dice rolls, each Battle Token gives a +1 bonus. Any round a character spends a Battle Token, they do not gain any additional Battle Tokens.

Optional Feat- SCs can choose to take this Feat if they meet the Prerequisites:

Web of Death
Prerequisites: Combat Reflexes, Weapon Focus, BAB 5+.
Benefit: You can choose to take a total defensive stance (taking a full action)... you may make no attack, but you spin your blade so skillfully that you may make an Attack of Opportunity on anyone who attacks you. This attack is resolved after your opponents.

Wisdom of the Ages- To represent the accumulated wisdom of an Immortal, all Skills are considered class skills for Significant Characters.

Noble Knights: The Flower of Chivalry

Not every Template needs to be for a Modern genre.   A Template like this, for example, allows you to use the D20 Modern rules to emulate a decidedly non-modern genre:

Skills:
Diplomacy, Knowledge (History, Nobility and Royalty), Ride, Sense Motive.

Feats:
Armor Proficiency (Light, Medium, Heavy), Mounted Combat, Ride-By-Attack, Spirited Charge, Shield Proficiency.

Tweaks:
- Signficant Characters get a Genre Bonus to all saves equal to their Charisma bonus

(if positive) IF they remain honorable and faithful to their allegiances. Any deviation from their path causes them to lose this bonus until they redeem themselves.

Optional:

Dueling- Duels are an integral part of the chivalry genre. For sake of simplicity, there are two types of duels: jousts and melee. For a joust, both players will roll to hit and damage as normal. Any hit that deals more than 10 points of damage requires a Fort save by the person who was hit, with a DC equal to 10 plus 1 for every two points the damage is over 10. (For example, a hit dealing 21 points of damage would have a Fortitude save of 15.)

If the save fails, the character must make a Ride check with a DC equal to 20 plus 1 for every point the Fortitude save was failed by. If the Ride check fails, the character falls off their house. If the character fails the Fortitude but makes the Ride check they stay on the horse but are visibly shaken. If both players have the same result (stay up, shaken or fall off) the winner of that round is determined by comparing damage. If the results are different, the character with the better result wins. If both characters miss, they are both booed quite loudly!

For a tournament style melee duel, two victory conditions are First Blood and Falling to a Knee.

First Blood is dealt with a single blow that deals 10 or more points of damage, or multiple hits that deliver more than 15 cumulative points of damage.

Falling to a Knee occurs when one player delivers to another a single blow dealing 20 or more points of damage, or if a character loses more than half their maximum hit points in cumulative damage.

Once the damage is dealt, the player must make a Fortitude save with a DC equal to 10 plus the damage of the last blow dealt to them. (Note: there are those in tournament circles who might use tactics like tripping their foes, but this is not a noble victory).
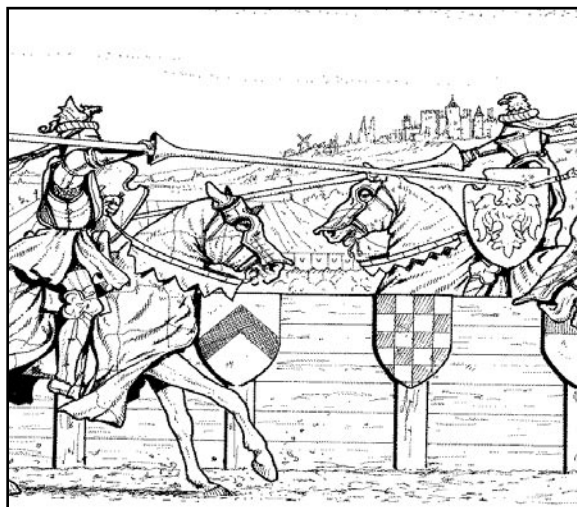
Knowledge (Heraldry)- This skill is used to gather information in-character about the strengths and weakness of a particular foe based on the foe's coat of arms. Game Masters should give out relevant information based on the check results, the initial DC is 10 and for every 5 points the result is above 10, the Significant Character gains a +1 bonus to Skill Checks and Combat Rolls against that opponent.

Optional Feat -- Significant Characters may choose the following Feat, assuming that they meet the Prerequisites:

Mobile Cleave

Prerequisites: Dex 15+, Str 15+, Great Cleave, Dodge, Mobility, Spring Attack, BAB+11.

Benefit: A character may make a 5 foot step after dropping an opponent in order to Cleave another. A character with Mobile Cleave may move a total of twice their base move, though only 5 feet at a time. A character passing through a threatened square still provokes an Attack of Opportunity.

As you can see, not every genre requires the detail of an entire supplement...sometimes it's just fun to go with the quick-and-easy method. Grab some characters, apply a template, and play!

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