The Tesseract

The Tesseract is a four dimensional hypercube, such that the cube has a cube on all six of its faces with all of the faces joined and the whole fitting into a cube no larger that the central cube.

![Figure 1](image)

Remember: All of those six-sided figures are cubes of the same dimensions.

Really, it is mathematically possible for such an object to exist, but don’t rely on me for proof. I produce them with magic in my world!

In figures 2 - 5, you see the room complex unfolded and labeled. You will notice two things right off. First, the floor the adventurers are using at any one time may be someone else’s wall or ceiling. Second, there are many more doors in each room than the four that our adventurers saw. Why didn’t they see the other doors?

The doors are always there. However, they lead in directions the eye cannot follow and the mind cannot accept. Therefore, the natural censor in our brains blocks them out. It works just like a blind spot. If you want to figure out where the doors are, you could allow a Dwarf Magician or Mathematician with alertness or the Thief’s talent and with Mage Sight to see most or all of the doors if he was looking for them. However, I don’t allow it in my universe. If they could see the doors, they might want to try them. That could get complicated.

There are only four entrances to the Tesseract as seen here. Two more entrances are possible by stairway from the top (down into III-A - Figure 4) and from the bottom (up into I-A - Figure 3). The main four ground floor entrances are shown on Figure 2. The numbers you see are the numbers of the internal doors. Door No. 1 in Room IV-A is Door No. 1 in Room VII-A, just as if the two walls and the two doors were the same. There is no space there. You can go through those five rooms and in or out of the four exits with no problem. You remain upright and walking on the floor all the way. However, if you take the stairs, things get complicated.

In the story, Erbion was found resting on surface III-F. If Lilair had taken the up stairs from II-A. She and Neremeli would have had the problem of trying to convince Erbion that he was on the ceiling in order to get him to join them. But he could feel the gravity holding him to the “floor”, so it would be obvious to him that they were on the ceiling. You can also add furnishings to the rooms to further confuse things, and then decide whether a person standing on V-E, for instance, could see a chair or table standing on V-A or V-C or V-F. I hope you all have fun getting your friends lost in this one.
Tesseract in Flat

A = Floor
B = North Wall
C = East Wall
D = South Wall
E = West Wall
F = Ceiling
I = Ground Floor Room (Lower Room)
II = Inner Room
III = Upper Room
IV = North Room
V = East Room
VI = South Room
VII = West Room
● = Up Stairs
○ = Down Stairs

If you take the down stairs from II A, you come to IA.
If you take the Up Stairs from IIA, you come to III A.

If you take the Up Stairs from IIIF or the Down Stairs from IF, you come to IIIF.

Up from IIIF is IF.

Down from IIIF is IIIF.
The Helm of Door Opening
by Clayton J. Miner

What appears to be little more than a battered Great Helm that somebody lost on a rainy night is in reality the dreaded Helm of Door Opening (see page 337 in Bardwell’s Guide to Various Magical Devices, 5th Edition). Until such time as the powers of the Helm are invoked a person may wear and remove this device with no difficulties, but once the effects of the Helm are known, it cannot again be removed until a successful Remove Curse has been cast upon it by a Thaumaturgist or better (Level 5+ Magic User). The powers of the Helm are not activated until the person who is wearing it is called upon to help in opening a door. At this time, the Helm will glint and glimmer as if just purchased while the owner backs away from the door. After opening as much space as is possible between themselves and the door, they will lower their head and charge with all available strength. If they are able to hit the door, which is unlikely because they are not watching where they are going (player must roll to hit door as if fighting a creature three levels higher, and with a -2 on the hit), their chance of opening the door are increased by 2. However, anyone who does not get out of the way in time will be bowled over and will take damage as if struck by a Mace. This sequence will be repeated until the door has been forced open, which could take a long time if the door has been locked.

A side effect of the use of this item is that it ruins any chances of surprising the occupants of a room. After the door is open, the player must make a saving throw against spells. If the saving throw is successful, the person is stunned for two melee phases, but if the roll is missed the person has inflicted a concussion upon themselves and will be out cold for as many turns as they missed the throw by. This roll must be made for each attempt to open the door. In the case of a combination of results, for example, two successful rolls and one missed roll, the stun will come after the character regains consciousness. As this device appears to be only a used and discarded Helm, it will not fetch much of a price on the open market, if you are able to sell it at all.

The Heroes' Gauntlets
by Clayton J. Miner

Similar to The Boots of Surefootedness, these highly prized gauntlets now only appear in the old legends of the great Mandragora Empire. Usually found in connection with the boots, the same scholars who now seek the boots, have come to realize that these gauntlets must also have belonged to the great Heroes. In fact, the same texts suggest that these devices worked in much the same manner as the boots, but were designed to insure that a Warrior or Cleric need never fear of dropping or losing control of their weapon during melee. From what little that can be determined in the faded and wormeaten texts, these gauntlets would work with any weapon, regardless of type, material, or who constructed it. The only apparent restrictions on the use of these items were that the owner had to have complete faith in their effectiveness, and that the weapon being fought with was one that the wielder derived pride from using. If it came to pass that the owner of the gauntlets ever fought with a weapon they distained to use, the weapon would fall from their grasp, and the gauntlets would slip from their hands and fall to the ground beside the weapon.

While being worn, the player does not have to contend with the problem of dropping their weapons. In a situation where the player fumbles (in a world where a fumble system is in use), the player ignores any fumble which calls for a dropped weapon or a loss of control, and re-rolls on what ever fumble table is being used. These gauntlets appear to be old and tarnished Chain Mail gloves with dark leather gloves sewn inside. Along the backs of the hand are small steel plates riveted to the links. Also similar to the boots, these are items of inestimable value, and only a madman would try to sell them.
The Coffer of Endless Food Supply
by Clayton J. Miner

What appears to be a small box measuring 12” in width, 18” in length, and only 5” deep, with many highly detailed illustrations and mystic lettering painted on its surfaces, is an item of great use to those who travel through the wilderness and delve into the forgotten ruins. Containing nothing when opened, the smell of a well cooked meal fills the air each time the top is raised. To make this magic device function, it is necessary to recite the following magical incantation: “We are hungry from our labours, and we respectfully request that your bounty be shared among us”. Just proclaiming that “We’re hungry!”, or “Soup’s on!” will not get the box to function. After the incantation has been spoken, the box will open four times and each time that it opens a well cooked meal will appear in front of the one holding the box. There is a delay of about a minute between each time it is opened, allowing the box to be passed to the next person. This device will function only four times in a 24 hour period, and will offer a meal appropriate to the time of day. Its value, if one is willing to part with such a treasure, is anywhere between 1500 and 2000 Gold coins.

The Boots of Halfling Stomping
by Clayton J. Miner

A rather sneaky little item, these Boots have gained quite a reputation among the Wizards who appreciate a good jest at the expense of those who are unable to use magic. First enchanted many years back by the Wizard, Theodoras of the Nine Hills, these items have become a standard by which a Magic User’s development is measured. A Mage is considered to have mastered the basic element of enchantment of inanimate material when he or she has completed their first pair of the boots. A trap of the unwary, any one who puts these on will become overwhelmed with the urge to go out and stomp some Halfling, innocent or otherwise, into the dust. The cry of “Help! It’s the Boots!” has become a signal for all Halflings to find business indoors where they cannot be spotted. A relatively minor magical item, it is possible for a person to wrestle these boots off of their feet before running across, and over a Halfling. Once off, these Boots will revert to an inactive status, just lying there, looking for all the world like a pair of cast-offs.

Recently, however, someone has improved on the design of the Boots of Halfling Stomping, and it has become more common a sight to see some poor Halfling going down the street trying to kick himself to death. No one has yet discovered who it is that is producing these little terrors in a size wearable by the Halfling population. It has been noted that it is not a rule that a Halfling wearing these will try to do themselves in, several cases have occurred where the Halflings have stomped their companions. Another variation surfaced along with the smaller versions of these boots, that being if a Halfling is able to wrestle the boots off, they will proceed to chase the poor fellow down the street in an attempt to put themselves back on.

When a player first puts these on, they will notice only that they are quite comfortable, and it is not until they spot a Halfling that the boots go into action. To remove them persuading a Halfling requires a roll on a 20-sided die equal to or less than the character’s Strength, for each foot. Also a similar roll must be made on Dexterity to see if the person falls down giving the object of persuit a chance to hide. When not after a Halfling, the boots can be removed normally. Actually somewhat popular among those who have been victimized by the Halfling Thieves, these Boots command a good price, somewhere between 600 and 1000 Gold coins.

Dagger of Enrichment
by Ron Lagerstrom

This Dagger appears to be worth around 80 some GP as it is made out of solid Gold. If this Dagger is ever thrown at a victim, it will instead change direction and fly towards the nearest person who has the most amount of Gold objects on his person. If there is no one with any Gold objects, the Dagger has a 30% chance of flying back and striking the thrower. If it doesn’t attack the thrower, it will simply return to the same person who cast it into the air.
RUNEMASTERS

by

CHAOSIUM

Reviewed by

CLAYTON MINER

Released at the same time as *Plunder*, *Runemasters* follows in the same vein, that of an idea for another game system transformed into terms useful to *Runequest* Judges. Whereas the idea for *Plunder* came from *Eldritch Wizardry*, the idea behind *Runemasters* is that of *Gods, Demi-Gods, and Heroes*. Unfortunately this product is not as successful as *Plunder*, which was an improvement over the original. *Runemasters* shows alot of effort going into it, but the Judge who wants to make use of that work must do quite a bit of preparing before hand. For example, there are new character charts in the back of the book, and the Judge using this must make a copy of this chart first, then transcribing all of the information listed under the personality they wish to use. To even start to use this book, the Judge must wade through several pages of somewhat complex guidelines to find out how *Runemasters* was intended for use. Part of these pages are sections on Group Tactics, Melee Tactics, Spell Tactics, Battle Commands, and Strategy Tactics. It seems as if this product evolved out of a series of rules to miniatures battles using the *Runequest* systems.

This appearance is more strongly reinforced by the addition of a *Runequest* Party Worksheet which is used for player character orders, and a Squad Sheet designed to accommodate 12 people. In addition to these two, there is a sheet for the Leader and Follower sheet, presumably to be used by the Judge for the Runemaster or Rune Priest, or whathave you during the game. It would seem that these sheets are intended to cut down on the amount of flipping back and forth through the book, but as a result the Judge must keep track of large numbers of sheets of paper. Another character sheet is the 'Allied and Bound Spirit' sheet, and again like the others it was probably designed to help the Judge keep better records, but instead contributes to the overflow of paperwork during a game.

One other disturbing thing about this book is the inclusion of cult politics. While the idea is laudable, the cults are so intertwined with each other that to rearrange them to suit an individual world would be extremely time consuming, if not impossible. This would in my view tend to promote carbon copy worlds, where only minimal differences exist. *Runemasters* is not all bad however, the amount of information provided on these 50 or 60 world shaking NPCs is outstanding in its completeness, and illustrates the amount of effort that went into the project. Anything that a Judge could need to know which would effect a game is given. But if it did not require so much work to extract for a game, it would be more worth while. The artwork in the book is of high quality, and is to me the best feature to be found. As to the cults, a brief description, as was given would have been sufficient, as it would have allowed people to align them as desired. As a whole, *Runemasters* is a good try to bring some life into powerful characters, but I felt that it suffers from too many flaws to make it of much use to all but the exceptional Judge.
RAID ON IRAN

by Steve Jackson Games

Reviewed by Ron Lagerstrom

The U. S. Marines burst into the west side entrance of the U. S. Embassy, spraying Automatic Rifle fire into the adjacent hallways and corridors. A pair of Militants stepped out into view, the shine off of their American made Automatic Rifles gleaming wickedly. However, the Marines were a shade faster, and the corpses of the Militants were sent flying down the hall. But, an Iranian voice, speaking English, shouted out from an adjacent closed room, “Surrender, or the Hostages we have in control will meet their infidel god!” The American Commander in charge pleaded with them to help the Marines end the bloodshed by throwing out their rifles. All of a sudden, a great scuffle broke out in the room, and five Militants (after firing a few shots into the room) broke out into the corridor. It was their last moment on earth. M-16 fire smashed into their Mid-Eastern frames, sending their bodies far from the doorway, but not before two Marines were hit by their sporadic fire. A man came out of the room, claiming to be one of the Hostages. He said, “We decided to attack them bare-handed, but we paid a high price for our stupidity, no matter how desperate we were.” Just before the Commander could question him more, he collapsed, revealing a large head wound, in the back of his head. Inside the room, there were the twelve bodies of some of the American Hostages.

Raid on Iran, by Steve Jackson Games, is a simulation of the American attempt of the Hostages on the Embassy ground that might have been. The game itself is a very fast playing and enjoyable (if I can use that word considering the subject matter). It’s rules and scenarios are purposely kept simple in order to portray a simulation, not political substance. In my opinion, it succeeds in this goal. However, this was not my first impression.

When I first took a look at this game, I thought that Steve Jackson Games had to be kidding. Not only did I consider the subject matter a little “off-color”, but I thought the price tag ($3.00) was indicative of the quality of the game, much like some of the past Micro-Games. However, I was wrong. Not only did the subject matter make an enjoyable “beer and pretzels” game, but for the price involved (it costs more to eat at McDonalds), it is an excellent simulation.

The mapboard itself, while not of the hardboard quality of Avalon Hill (after all folks, it’s a $3.00 game!), it is a colorful representation of the Embassy ground within it’s so-called “protective wall”. On the board are the several buildings surrounding the actual Embassy Building (the Library, the Ambassador’s Residency, and others), the Embassy’s Football Field, it’s Tennis Court, and the actual Embassy Building. Intermingled with these “areas” are the roads and streets necessary for Movement. Each area and building (some buildings are divided up into different height levels) are “dissected” for the purpose of the game area movement. Each Unit can move so many areas per turn. I must admit, though, that there are a few bugs in the Movement System in the game. For example, it takes the same amount of time to climb up a set of stairs as it does to race across a football field, but the Movement System is so abstractly handled, that it really doesn’t matter.

Other aspects of the Movement System in the game include such things as stealth, deceit, Iranian Sentry detection, and others. This system is really the key to the entire simulation. Sure, it’s a simple system, but for the game it works very well.

The Combat System in the game is also an entry on the plus side for Mr. Jackson’s game. Again, a simple format is used. There are two types of Combat: Ranged Attacks and Close Attacks. Ranged Attacks are made from adjacent squares, with no ill affects coming from his troop’s fire. Close Attacks are made in the same square, with each side suffering under the fire from the other side. There are benefits for both types of attack. If a weapon (including the troops themselves) fire from a point higher in level than their target, the damage they inflict will be far superior to that of it’s target. This especially helps the U. S. Machine Guns and Mortars, which have unlimited range. Close Attacks will take their toll on both sides, as this combat occurs in the same square. However, if the U. S. player kills all Iranians in a square containing Hostages, they may take instant control of those same Hostages. Heaven help those Marines who are caught in an area along with Iranians, who are being attacked by other Marines!

The game overall is quite enjoyable. By making use of such rules as Helicopter landings, Iranian enraged mobs, “quiet” attacks, and others Mr. Jackson provides, the gamer with a “feel” of what is might be like to undertake such a monumental task as forcing the release of the Hostages. True, the subject matter might be objectionable to some (it was to me initially), but once you realise it is a simulation and not a political statement (as Mr. Jackson states in the beginning of the rules), you’ll find a most enjoyable game.
PLUNDER
by CHAOSIUM

Reviewed by
CLAYTON MINER

One of the newest items to be added to the Runefantasy line by Chaosium, Plunder may be best described as an Eldritch Wizardry for Runequest. However, Plunder covers more than just the great artifacts that dot the world (usually where some well aged and rather cranky Dragon dots the world), but offers lesser treasures as well. The book is divided into two major sections, the first governing the lesser treasures, with some special items mixed in to add interest to the discovery of a hoard. The second section is titled 'Treasures of Glorantha, and it is here that the book takes on the feel of good old Eldritch, for it is this section of the book that describes the major and not so major artifacts of the world of Runefantasy. With the Treasures of Glorantha section, the Judge is given not only the description of the item, but the cults which have a relationship with the item, knowledge (a guideline as to determining who knows what and why), the history of the item, procedure which describes how to either get or make the item, the powers of the item, and lastly the value of the item. Sometimes this last category will have two listings, if several groups are looking for it.

Some of these major treasures are items which aid in writing, such as the Fabulous Quills of the Wym's Friends, or that will temporarily raise your protection, such as Rhino Fat. The variety of the items, and the detailed information included with the great treasures is sure to make this book very useful to Judges. Of more use to a Runefantasy Judge is the first section of Plunder, which presents easy to use tables for determining that value of a lesser treasure, for example what a Wadingrook might be carrying. There are 10 charts set up in an 8 by 8 array, with treasure that reaches from nothing at all to a Monarch's allowance. In addition to these 640 treasures, listed in Clacks, Lunars, Wheels, Gems/Jewelry, and/or Special Items, there are two tables to add detail to the Gems and Jewelry that may be discovered, and to label the special items found in that hoard under that spreading chestnut tree. These speical items could be anything from a spoiled Potion to a Matrix Ironhand 4, or a Crystal of 10 POW storage. Further graced with good artwork throughout, this book would make a welcome addition to a Judge's stock of Runefantasy items. Plunder is definately a useful piece of work and shows a great deal of imagination, and the only question I had with the book as a whole is, why do none of the items listed under the Treasures of Glorantha have a negative side effect on the user.
Several years ago, when I was asked what D&D was I immediately responded that it was an exercise in improvisational theater. I have no illusions of being the first person to make that statement for the phrase is so widespread today that this idea must have occurred to many people simultaneously, to several people independently. If D&D is truly an improvisation theater then one of the keys to being a successful Judge most certainly lies in the Judge’s willingness and ability to act out or perform for his players key events or non-player characters in his world.

One school of acting, one which I believe to be particularly appropriate to D&D, claims that to act a part one must know as much about the subject as possible before attempting to act it out. In general, the most popular dungeons always seem to be those which have the most background detail; that is to say such things as a history, local politics (including names and characteristics of important individuals), local customs, and other such considerations. The best time to acquaint people with this background is at the start of the very first adventure. As an example compare the following two introductions to the first adventure in a new world, both of which are written as if the Judge is speaking to the players.

Example No. 1: OK. Here you are at the end of a causeway looking toward the ruins of an old castle. You are looking north. What do you want to do?

Example No. 2: OK. Your party has gathered together at the "Golden Cockatrice", a local pub in the town of Arula Zorusa. You are here trying to decide where you want to start your careers as adventurers. As you are sitting around a secluded table in one corner of the room a very old man comes up to your table and without an invitation, sits down. He eyes everyone at the table before he starts to speak.

"I suppose you youngsters are going to wander down to pay a visit to Seaspray Castle," he cackles. He pauses for a second to eye each of you for your reactions. But most of you do not notice this for his words have reached back into your memories. The stories that you have heard about that place indicate nothing but evil. The old man leans back and sips his beer.

"Seaspray Castle, it was once an outpost for the Empire. But that was many years ago. You know lads," the old man leans forward as if he were sharing a deep dark secret, "some of the people around here are still waiting for the Empire to come back to the Castle."

Then the old man glances behind him, as if looking at an object through the walls of the tavern, an object far to the south. Then he speaks in a far away, musing tone, "Some say that the Castle was taken over by the Minions of Pwatok during the Days of Darkness." He pauses again and then off-handedly he continues, "I don't believe that myself, there is enough evil in the world without blaming him for everything. But there is no question that something in that Castle is very evil. You know, several months ago a fine bunch of youngsters like yourselves set off to explore the environs of the Castle. About two weeks later one of them returned. He was quite mad, of course, carrying that head with the Crown on it. Did you hear about the head?"

He pauses yet again. You notice that the whole pub has quieted down and that everybody was straining their ears to hear the old man talk. He continues, "There was a hole in the top of the head and all of the head's brains were missing. Clean as a whistle, I saw it myself. I recognized the head, it belonged to the leader of the party of adventurers. And the Crown, I believe that you could buy this island for a fraction of what that beauty was worth."

He takes another sip from his beer, "The madman slept just upstairs from where we sit. His body was found the next morning. There was a hole in the center of the head and the brains were sucked right out. The Crown was gone!"

The old man glances around at your party, down the rest of his beer and then leaves you to your thoughts. For the rest of the evening you are pointedly ignored by the clientele and left to yourselves.

You set out early the next morning toward the place your map indicates as having the coastal area reputed to belong to Seaspray Castle. You soon find yourselves on a well built but very ancient road that leads to the coast. Soon you hear the pounding surf in the distance. Upon crossing a rise, you see an old, perhaps ancient is the better word, run-down Castle situated about one hundred yards out in the ocean. You notice that the south shore of the mainland there is a causeway leading north to the Castle. At this point, you realize that there are no birds or animals around this area. It feels very dark and sinister despite the fact that the sun is brightly shining.
Although both of these descriptions contain all the basic information needed to start an adventure, the second description gives much more than the bare skeleton. For one thing, it also sets a tone for the adventure, it hints at a "reason to be" for the Castle being where it is (the Empire), it hints at a local, if not worldwide disaster (the Days of Darkness), and it gives a tone to the Castle itself, hopefully a very sinister tone. But perhaps even more importantly, it gives the Judge the chance to use his thesbian skills in order to draw the players even deeper into his world. For example, instead of just relating what the old man said, the Judge can act out the old man's part; he can actually lean forward as the old man did and lower his voice so as to completely emulate the actions of the old codger. To further this process, the Judge should carefully design his dungeon around the tone he is trying to establish. In SeaspRAY Castle, for example, there might be several rooms with various different kinds of Skeletons laying around, each Skeleton would have a hole in the top of the skull and the brains missing. There also might be a room with a Skeleton of a huge canine type animal whose bones naturally exude a Continual Darkness. Near this Skeleton would be a Skeleton with a Sword and several head scars, just as if something attempted to punch a hole in the skull. There could also be various noises around the dungeon that would enhance a somber and/or sinister tone in the dungeon.

When a dungeon party goes through the dungeon, it is best if the Judge try to physically reproduce the noises and sounds that the party might hear in the dungeon. At one section of the dungeon perhaps there is a Shield lying on the ground with a steady dripping of water hitting it. As a Judge, you could recreate this sound by tapping on a solid table with your finger in a regular pattern. All the while, you could also help the players by playing their parts, or at least act out what you think they should be doing (i.e. looking worried and straining their ears and/or looking around for the "source of the noise"). All of these sorts of stage cues can be written into your description of your dungeon in your dungeon books so that when your party travels through your dungeon, you will have a simple script to follow. Preparational tricks like this will go a long way toward improving any dungeon. Unfortunately these are not enough to insure a good, enjoyable dungeon game, the Judge needs other qualities as well.

One of the qualities of a good Judge is the ability to play roles, after all, D&D is a "role-playing" game. It is almost mandatory that a Judge show good role-playing abilities himself from time to time. Everytime the players try to negotiate with a non-player character, the Judge should endeavor to play the role of that NPC. For example, suppose that the players are trying to get some information out of a bartender. Many Judges will simply state, "Well, he'll tell you this if you give him so much..." It would be much more effective if the Judge would play the role of that bartender. Imagine if you will the following scenario:

The party wants to go into the Flowing Water Inn and ply some information from the bartender, a man whom is reputed to know all about most of the happenings around town. The Judge gives his consent and allows the party into the bar. The Judge says that as the party enters into the Inn, they see the bartender behind the bar cleaning a glass. As the Judges says this he starts to clean an imaginary glass. By doing this, the Judge is indicating to the party that they can directly interview the bartender by talking to the Judge. The Judge will play the part of the bartender and will directly answer the questions asked just as if he were the bartender. In this way the party will have to be careful what questions they ask or they might get bad information.

This method is by far the best way that a Judge can add "realism" to his campaign. The interaction between the players and the Judge will become more "real", that is to say the players will suddenly find themselves involved with "real people" in "real situations". Done properly, this will encourage the players to spend more time on developing their own character's personalities.

There is an additional advantage to the Judge when he plays the role of the various people in his world. By doing this bit of acting, he can more easily and effectively hide information from the players, facts that he feels the players should not in all fairness know. For example, suppose a party bursts into a room and kills a couple Hobgoblins and Charnis a couple others. After the fight, the players wish to interrogate the prisoner for all the information that he might know. It has been my experience that the Judge will usually state that the Hobgoblin knows nothing and is a veritable ignorant. This sometimes leads to an argument with the players on the reality of the situation. After all a party might argue, the Hobgoblin lives here and should have a very good idea of the environs. The Judge can usually avoid this sort of argument and have his own way by cleverly playing the part of the Hobgoblin. The following example is a reconstruction of a dialogue which occurred at GenCon XI where the AD&D Judge was able to forestall giving out crucial information and entertain himself and the players (as well as the handful of observers).

Caller: We are going to ask the Giant what he knows about the surrounding area.

Judge: Ask away.

Caller: O.K. I turn to him. I ask, "What are you doing in this room?"

Judge: (Judge looks all around himself, then he glances at his feet, a stupid grin comes across his face) Uh, standing.

Caller: (He eyes the ceiling and speaks half to himself) Why?

Judge: Because you're making me stand. Yup, that's why.

Caller: (Starts tapping his hands on the table) I mean before we captured you.

Judge: Uh, Ralph made me stay here.

Caller: (Getting ready to pounce on an important fact) And who is this "Ralph" being.
Judge: (Pointing at the floor indicating a "dead Giant") That’s Ralph. He doesn’t look at all well either.

Caller: This is getting us nowhere. O.K., do you know anything about the area around this room?

Judge: (Putting on his most helpful smile) Yup, sure do.

(A Long Pause)

Caller: (Trying to prompt the Judge) Well?

Judge: Uh, well what?

Caller: (Exasperated) Tell us about the area.

Judge: Well, there’s alot of corridors out there. And corners and deep and dark rooms and a horrible monster.

Caller: (Glancing at the rest of his group) What kind of monster?

Judge: The kind that ate George. Big and ugly monster with sharp pointy teeth. (Judge puts his hand to his mouth and makes it open and close like teeth.)

Caller: Oh, perfect. We have a mean and nasty George-eating monster out there. Wonderful.

Another Player: At least we know it can kill a Giant, it must be reasonably big. That’s something.

Caller: (Eyeing the Judge suspiciously) George is a Giant like you, isn’t he?

Judge: (As innocent as ever) Nope, George was my pet Squirrel.

Caller: You’re weird!

In the end, the party gained absolutely no information from this encounter, but none the less seemed to have enjoyed themselves and the humor of the situation. Certainly it was more enjoyable than simply being told flat out that the Giant had no information. A warning is in order here though; there are instances when the party should get some of the information that they want. Do not use these ploys to deprive players of information that they should reasonable expect to get. For example, the above Giant did know where his treasure was and knew that the treasure was trapped. Also, the more intelligent the monster, the more it should know. A Human in the same situation as above may know his environs a wee bit better, at least to some extent.

There are many other effective theatrical devices that a Judge could use to make an adventure more interesting. Sometimes a Judge could legitimately help a player play his own role, particularly when only the Judge has any idea of how the player should react to a developing situation (Important Caveat: Notice I said the Judge can help a player play his role, never should a Judge usurpe a person’s character). For example, say that the players come across some Orcs in the dungeon and the party has the surprise. In normal situations, a Judge usually tells the party that they have surprised a pack of Orcs or what not. In a sense this gives the party too much information and if the Judge were to play act one of the player’s roles and feed the party the important sensory information, then the players should be able to deduce what is actually happening. For example:

Judge: ("Cocking" his ear) Wait. The Ranger hears something and holds his hand up to signal the party to stop.

Ranger: We stop. What do I hear?

Judge: (As if concentrating) Hmmm. Sounds like something talking. Low guttural sounds.

Ranger: I’ll carefully peek around the corner. I try not to make any noise.

Judge: (As if peering around a corner) Hmmm. Definitely Humanoids. They don’t appear to be Humans or Elves. Seem a little small for that. They seem not to notice you.

In this way, the party has gotten the necessary information and they can make their choices accordingly. This simple method also has the advantage of giving the participants a "real-time" sense. That will encourage them to immediately take advantage of the situation rather than spending valuable time dithering. This speeding up of action adds a bit to the realism of the game.

Finally the role which should be played most often by the Judge in an adventure is that of the non-player characters which are in the temporary or permanent employ of the players. Their "NPCs" are probably the most abused people in fantasy role playing games. They also seem to be the most cardboard characters. When players take an NPC along, he tends to be treated as a non-entity unless his skills are needed at some instance in time, then he gets his flash of glory before his next sentence in oblivion. Some people may put up with such treatment, but I dare say that most would not sit still for it. It is up to the Judge to inform the party of chances in the temperament of the NPC. For example, at the end of an adventure, most players would dearly love to short-change many of their NPCs. On the other hand, the NPC would like to see that he gets his fair share. The Judge is usually the only person in the room who will really look after the NPC’s best interest. If the NPC is being short-changed, there are many options open to the NPC; he could complain loudly to the party, he could start a malicious rumor about the party, he could steal from the party what he feels to be his due (and maybe a little more), he could endeavor to rob the party blind, etc. Whatever he does, it is only fair that the party realises that he is unhappy with the divisions of spoils (via grumbling or the such). If the party does not heed the warnings, nail them to the wall.
The most difficult part of acting out parts is making sure that the players understand that that is what you are doing. A good showman is able to draw his audience painlessly into his "world". In FRP games, this can easily be done by certain key introductory phrase and voice change. Most introductory phrases are very simple and direct. One very simple example is the common phrase, "The blank says" (fill in the blank with the appropriate name or character description). But even this cue is wasted without a slight change in voice. The voice change is the key to changing "worlds". Once your players get used to your style of theatrical role playing, your campaign will be vastly improved. Good theatricals are the icing to the cake of a well thought out campaign. But theatricals cannot salvage a poorly thought out world. A good campaign takes much effort before the players are even introduced to the world. But once the world is being played, these little theatrical suggestions will add a great deal of flavor to any good campaign.
SOME WORDS on FUNNY CHEMICALS
by GEOFFREY O. DALE

In every adult culture in the world over the past few centuries, there has been at least one, and usually many, kinds of drugs which were openly accepted by society. For those whose fantasy games are set in the Medieval times, this is certainly true. However, our own games do not contain rules which cover this part of life, either from a moral resolve that this act is bad or simply from lack of thought. While I, as a person, may not approve of the unrestricted uses of some of these substances, the lack of any rules leaves me an incomplete model of a society, and so I developed the following guides (generally for NPCs). You can have a lot of fun with your characters by throwing an addictive drug in as part of some treasure and when they sample it to find out what that white powder is...

First, I have lumped all drugs/chemicals into six base categories by their primary effects, these are: Opiates, Hallucinogens, Stimulants, Depressants, Poisons and Antibiotics. Within each category are six Strength Classes, running from A (mildest) to F (narcotic and addictive). Drugs of Class A, B, and C are non-addictive physically, though C might be psychologically addictive; D is always psychologically addictive and both E and F are physically addictive. Exception: Class A Opiates are psychologically addicting and all others are physically addictive. With this system, some drugs are mistyped, but it does have the advantage of being simple and being correct most of the time.

For game purposes, "Addiction" is defined as being forced to have one or more doses per two game days.
Addiction

A person is psychologically addicted to a Class A drug if they roll (100 - (18 - ½ CON - ½ WIS))% or above.
A person is psychologically addicted to a Class B drug if they roll (100 - (22 - ½ CON - ½ WIS))% or above.
A person is psychologically addicted to a Class C drug if they roll (100 - (22 - ½ CON - ½ WIS))% or above.
A person is psychologically addicted to a Class D drug if they roll (100 - (20 - CON) - 3 (20 - WIS))% or above and a further check must be made for physical addiction; persons are physically addicted on a roll of (100 - 2 (20 - CON))% or above.
A person becomes addicted to a Class E drug on a roll of (100 - 4 (20 - CON))% or above and physically addicted on a (100 - 6 (20 - CON))% or above.
A person becomes addicted to a Class F drug on a roll of (100 - 6 (20 - CON))% or above and otherwise is psychologically addicted.

Addiction checks must be made whenever a person has taken more than four doses over a two week period (beginners don’t have much tolerance). Opiates check after two doses per two weeks.

In general, an addict Player Character will be able to function normally only after receiving a daily dose of his drug; otherwise being nervous, moody, rundown, suffering speech and movement impediments, suffering a loss of consciousness and coordination, having a terrible temper and not being able to concentrate or use their memory. Other, more severe, symptoms are headaches, violent cramps, shakings, sharp pains and nausea. Denial of an addict’s drug may lead to their death.

To break an addiction requires (3 - 18) x (drug class, 1 - 6) days.

For psychological addiction, the person must roll above (40 - CON - STR) on 2d20 every five days of treatment with the following modifiers, add: 5% if second or more attempt to cure, 1% to 10th day check—3% to the 15th day check and 2% to every check thereafter, 5% if under the care of a Physician. Failure of two consecutive rolls or three rolls total means that the addiction is not cured. Furthermore, if any doses are taken within three months of the cure there is a cumulative 12% per dose of reverting back to addict status; later situations where addiction is possible should be rolled for normally.

For physical addiction checks are made every three days, with rolls of over (100 - 3 x CON - STR)% required. Modifiers are, add 7% if under a Physician, a cumulative 1% per check successfully made, 3% if third or more attempt to cure. Failure of two consecutive rolls or any three rolls means that the addiction is not cured. In either case (cured/not cured) a System Shock roll must be made, and if it is failed, then 1 point of CON is forever lost.

Drug Effects

Class A drugs generally effect a person for (100 - 4 x CON) rounds or minutes and someone under the influence has a -1 Attack/Defend/DEX during that period. Loss of Skills/Abilities varies with drug type.

Class B drugs effect a person for (100 - 2 x CON) rounds or minutes and someone under the influence has a -2 Attack/Defend/DEX during that period.

Class C drugs effect a person for (200 - 6 x CON) minutes but that time is divided into three periods: Pre-high, High, Post High. Both the Pre and Post High periods last for 25 rounds and during this time there is a -1 Attack/Defend/DEX. During the High period, there is a -3 Attack/Defend/DEX and it covers the remaining period as determined above.

Class D drugs effect a person for (200 - 2 x CON) minutes. The Pre and Post High periods are 35 minutes each; during Pre, there is -1 Attack/Defend; during Post, there is a -2 Attack/Defend/DEX. During the High period, there is a -4 Attack/Defend and -3 DEX.

Class E drugs effect a person for (300 - 6 x CON) minutes. The Pre and Post High periods are 40 minutes each; during Pre, there is -1 Attack/Defend; during Post, there is a -3 Attack/Defend/DEX. During the High period, there is a -5 Attack/Defend and -3 DEX.

Drugs of Class F effect a person for (400 - 6 x CON) minutes. The Pre period and Post High periods are 50 minutes long; during Pre, there is a -2 Attack/Defend; during Post, there is a -3 Attack/Defend/DEX. During the High period, there is a -7 Attack/6 Defend and -4 DEX.

Intelligence is not effected for Class A or B, is -1 for Class C and D, and -3 for E and F.

Wisdom is not effected for Class A, is at -1 for Class B and C, is -2 for Class D and E, and is -4 for F.

Strength is at -3 for Class E and F only.

Opiates are pain-killers and act as depressants as well, producing an inability to move/act and often sending occa-
sional users into a deep sleep which lasts 2 - 6 hours past the effect of the drug. Treat this class as partial muscle paralysers.

Hallucinogens produce false sensory data of a generally uncontrollable nature. Users not only see things but also hear things and believe that their skin is being touched by many things, creatures, etc. There is a chance that Class D, E, and F drugs of this class will produce temporary insanity (1/20) which will run for 3 - 60 rounds. Class E and F drugs have a chance (15%) of causing recurring attacks of mental illusions — 1 - 4 attacks at 4 - 80 days apart and each attack being 2 - 40 rounds long. Such attacks cannot be controlled or prevented.

Stimulants generally speed up the body’s metabolism, producing a higher level of chemicals in the blood. They function to extend the physical limits of the body, keeping one awake and rapidly moving about. Continued use can produce exhaustion. Addicts of this class will lose one point CON after six months of use, lose another every four months thereafter until the addiction is broken, and then four weeks rest is required to gain back the lost CON.

Depressants lower the ability of the body to react to any stimulus. Prolonged use (9 months or more) will lose one point of DEX and another is lost ever six months thereafter.

Antibiotics are not subject to Class restrictions/effect and they are usually disease-specific and cannot be gotten except specially from Alchemists who specialize as Druggists. This service is very expensive and rare. Poisons are also not subject to restrictions as per above.

Approximate listings between common drugs and classes are below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opiates</th>
<th>Hallucinogens</th>
<th>Stimulants</th>
<th>Depressants</th>
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<tr>
<td>A) Hashish</td>
<td>Cut Marijuana</td>
<td>Codeine</td>
<td>Aspirin</td>
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<tr>
<td>B) Opium</td>
<td>Marijuana</td>
<td>Snuff</td>
<td>Nicotine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C) Morphine</td>
<td>Mushrooms (rare)</td>
<td>Caffeine</td>
<td>Alcohol</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D) Cocaine</td>
<td>Refined Marijuana</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>E) Methadone</td>
<td>Peyote</td>
<td>Angel Dust</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>F) Heroin</td>
<td>LSD</td>
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Examples of Poisons are: Sleeping Agents/Relaxent, Muscle Paralysis, Breathing Inhibitors, Nerve Toxins, Blood Anti-cloting Agent, Blindness Causing Agent, Motor Control (DEX) loss, General Weakness, Amnesia Producing Agent, Truth Drugs, Aging Agent.

Some Special Drugs are: Memory Enhancing Agent, Psionic Booster/Suppressent, Vision-General Sensory Enhancing Agent, Mental Inhibition Weaker, Muscle Ointments.

The above drugs are certainly not intended to be a definitive list for they certainly do not come close to covering the variety of substances now available on the streets (I didn’t even try to differentiate the several ‘uppers’ and ‘downers’ now on the street from each other). A better way to use this guide than having Player Characters ask for Morphine, for example, would be for them to ask for an injected Opiate Class C. I would be interested to see extensions/additions of the above.
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