FORGOTTEN FUTURES

GAME RULES

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Converted to pdf by
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2004

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Introduction

I like the dreams of the future better than the history of the past.
– Thomas Jefferson

Draw the blinds on yesterday and it's all so much scarier. . .
– David Bowie

What will the future be like? Every generation has its own set of ideas and predictions. At the turn of this century most pundits thought that the mighty power of steam and electricity would usher in a new age of peace and prosperity. In the fifties the future was mostly seen as doom, gloom, and nuclear destruction. In the nineties we are obsessed with computers, and convinced that the future will revolve around information technology. Each of the earlier views was valid for its era; each was at least partially wrong. By looking at earlier guesses we may be able to discover what is wrong with our own vision of the future - and make even worse mistakes when we try to correct it!

Forgotten Futures is a role playing game based on these discarded possibilities; the futures that could never have been, and the pasts that might have led to them. Other files in this collection contain stories and a world book (which contains more information on scientific romances in general, and on a particular setting for the game) this file contains the rules for the game.

Role playing games (usually shortened to RPGs) are story-telling games. One player is the referee who runs the game, and has an idea of what is to happen in the story, while the other players run characters in the story. Characters are defined by a name, a description, and a list of characteristics (such as 'Strength') and skills (such as 'Marksman'). Players describe the actions of their characters, while the referee describes everyone and everything they encounter. This may sound like an impossible job, but it's easy if players are prepared to co-operate.

The Forgotten Futures rules work well when dealing with the activities of normal people, but won't easily stretch to deal with magic, superhuman powers, and the like. While Forgotten Futures 4 does have some simple magic rules, detailed in the worldbook, they are only appropriate to a narrow genre of supernatural fiction. If you want to incorporate these topics more widely you might be better off with another game system, such as one of those mentioned in Appendix B. Most of the source and adventure material in this collection can easily be converted to other games. You are still asked to register as a user if you find the collection useful, even if you don't like these rules.

One aspect of the Forgotten Futures rules may annoy players who prefer high levels of violence; it is easy to get hurt or killed in all forms of weapon-based combat, it takes a long time to recover if you are wounded, and most wounds require medical treatment. This seems more realistic than the systems offered by some other RPGs, in which a character can be shot three or four times and still come back for more. If you dislike this approach please feel free to amend the injury system, but please *do not* distribute modified rules.

0.1   Example of Play

The easiest way to understand an RPG is to see it played. In this example Bert is the referee; he's using these rules and a game background which assumes that the American Civil War ended in the formation of separate Confederate and Union nations. Eric is playing Captain Kirk T. James of the Confederate Zeppelin Squadron, Judy is Ella Mae Hickey, apparently a resourceful Southern belle but actually a Yankee spy,

and Aaron is reporter Horace Mandeville of the Times (that's the London Times for American readers). They are heading towards a mysterious South American plateau, on the trail of the missing British explorer Professor Challenger, but there have been problems:

Bert: *The airship is starting to rock from side to side, and pitching up and down in the cross winds from the hurricane.*

Eric: *I'll try to steer towards the eye of the storm. We'll drift with it until it ends.*

Bert: *How do you know where the eye is?*

Eric: *In this hemisphere storms spin anticlockwise. If I veer to the left, sorry, I mean port, while moving with the wind, I should go towards the eye. (Eric isn't sure, but it sounds plausible and is the sort of thing a real pilot would know. Bert isn't sure either, but knows that 'Kirk' should understand these things.)*

Bert: *Make your 'Pilot' roll, difficulty six.*

Eric: *(Rolls dice and consults table) No problemo. Gritting my teeth, I wrestle with the wheel and force the dirigible to its new heading.*

Aaron: *I pick up my pocket phono-recorder, slip in a new wax cylinder, and describe the captain's desperate duel with the elements.*

Bert: *Good idea, except you're still feeling airsick in the aft cabin and don't know what he's doing.*

Aaron: *I'll dictate a mood piece about airsickness instead. Let's see, how many different synonyms for the word "vomit" can I use. . . (starts to write list)*

Judy: *Ugh. Don't read it out loud.*

Bert: *Definitely not.*

Judy: *Once we're moving with the wind there should be less turbulence.*

Bert: *Yes, after a few minutes things seem to be getting quieter.*

Judy: *Kirk cut his head when the windscreen broke, didn't he?*

Bert: *You weren't in the control room, but yes he did.*

Judy: *Then I'll go forward and bandage Kirk's wounds.*

Bert: *I suppose he calls for your help through the speaking tube? Otherwise you wouldn't know. (Bert suggests this to keep the game moving. Players usually do better if their characters are together.)*

Eric: *Yes, as soon as things calm down enough to let go of the wheel for a few seconds.*

Aaron: *In that case I should feel better, so I'll tag along.*

Bert: *Roll for luck, to be there at the right time ..um... difficulty three. (Aaron rolls a 2, a success) OK, you get up and stagger forward in time to meet her.*

Judy: *I bat my eyelashes and ask him to carry my first aid kit.*

Aaron: *(speaking as Horace) Delighted to help, Miss Hickey.*

Bert: *You reach the bridge. Kirk is still at the wheel, and his forehead and arm are obviously badly gashed.*

Judy: *(as Ella Mae) Mah hero, you've saved us all!*

Eric: *(as Kirk) Shucks, it was nothing ma'am.*

Aaron: *(mimes speaking to recorder) Headline, Heroic But Modest Captain Defies Wounds In Hurricane Drama. Subhead, Southern Belle Angel Of Mercy. First paragraph: Captain Kirk T. James of the Confederate Zeppelin squadron today denied.. blah, blah, for a few paragraphs.*

Judy: *While he dictates I'll bandage the wounds.*

Bert: *Make a First Aid roll, difficulty four as he's lost a lot of blood.*

Eric: *Hey, I thought you said it was just cuts and bruises.*

Bert: *You didn't get her help straight away, and you've been bleeding for quite a while. It's now a flesh wound. (In this game prompt First Aid stops wounds getting worse, untreated wounds sometimes lead to additional damage. Some recovery time (and optionally the help of a doctor) is needed to restore health.)*

Judy: *Oh mah hero, let me tend to these awful cuts. (Rolls dice successfully)*

Eric: *Shucks, Ma'am, it's only a flesh wound. Ah feel better already.*

Bert: *Apart from bandages around your head and your left arm in a sling. You'll be walking wounded for at least a week.*

Eric: *Ouch.*

Judy: *When I pack my first aid kit afterwards I'll use my spy camera to take a picture of the maps on the bridge.*

Bert: *The camera concealed in your hat? It's the first chance you've had to use it, isn't it?*

Judy: *Uh-oh. Yes, it is. I have a bad feeling about this...*

Bert: *There's a loud whirring click, and the artificial flower at the front flaps out of the way, like the door of a cuckoo clock. The lens pops out on a concertina bellows and clicks, then retracts again. It takes two seconds.*

Eric: *Wow, really subtle. Do I notice this? (Eric (the player) knows that Judy's character is a spy, but Kirk (his character) is unaware of Ella Mae's real identity. A little schizophrenia is sometimes needed in an RPG)*

Bert: *Roll to notice. You too, Aaron. Difficulty six, I think, since her back is turned.*

Eric: *(rolls dice) Rats - missed it.*

Bert: *Drowned out by the noise of the wind, perhaps.*

Aaron: *(rolls dice) Using my Detective skill I spot it, I think. (Horace is a reporter, so this skill (improved observational abilities) is naturally very useful)*

Bert: *Yes. What are you going to do about it?*

Aaron: *Nothing for now. It confirms what I thought when I saw her near the Marconi transmitter yesterday. I'll wait until we land, then try to get her to talk. An interview with a beautiful Yankee spy should sell a lot of papers!*

Bert: *Good thinking. Now, you seem to be in fairly clear air, and something big has just flown past the windscreen.*

Judy: *Another Zeppelin?*

Bert: *You're not too sure, but it looked like a pterodactyl. . .*

In this example male players took male roles, and the female player took a female role. This is advisable if they feel uncomfortable playing a character of the opposite sex, but there is no other reason why players shouldn't run characters of different sexes, races, nationalities, or even species. The referee needs to take on a wide variety of roles, which will probably take in all of the above as a campaign progresses. At a few points in these rules it has been convenient to use the term "him" or "her" when describing something that is equally applicable to either sex. This is not meant to imply that either sex should be excluded from any activity.

0.2   Game Requirements

To use this system you'll need two six-sided dice (preferably two per player), copies of the character record form and a few tables, and some pens and paper. A calculator is occasionally useful. Lead or plastic figures can be used to represent characters, but they are not essential. Players may want their own copies of this file, on disk or as a printout, but everything they really need to know is in the Rules Summary.

0.3   Game Terms

Most role playing games incorporate specialised terms. Forgotten Future uses some, as well as a few abbreviations and contractions, as follows:

1D6 Roll one dice (one die if you feel pedantic).

2D6 Roll two dice and add the numbers.

BODY A characteristic, often abbreviated as B.

MIND A characteristic, often abbreviated as M.

SOUL A characteristic, often abbreviated as S.

Effect Numerical rating used to calculate the damage caused by wea-pons and other forms of attack.

Average of. . . Add two numbers (eg characteristics) and divide by two. Round UP if the result is a fraction. Usually abbreviated as Av, eg AvB&S.

Half of. . . Divide a number (usually a characteristic) by two and round up. Usually shown as /2, eg B/2

Half average. . . Some skills are based on half the average of two characteristics. Add the characteristics, then divide by 4, then round up. Eg AvB&S/2.

+1 Add 1 to a dice roll or other number.

+2 Add 2 to a dice roll or other number.

-1 Subtract 1 from a dice roll or other number.

-2 Subtract 2 from a dice roll or other number.

2+, 3+, etc. 2 or more, 3 or more, etc.

Round A flexible period of time during which all PCs and NPCs can perform actions. In combat a round is a few seconds, in other situations it might be a few minutes or hours.

Optional Rule This means exactly what it sounds like; something that can be tacked onto the game if you want to use it, but isn't essential for play. The referee will explain if any of these rules are in use.

FF Forgotten Futures (what else?)

FF1, 2, etc. Forgotten Futures 1 etc.

0.4   Acknowledgements

Chapter 1

Characters And Rules

Each player will need at least one character, whose details should be recorded on one of the record forms that follow:

NAME: _____ PLAYER: _____

PROFESSION: _____ AGE: _____ GENDER: _____

DESCRIPTION: _____
_____
_____

BODY ○   MIND ○   SOUL ○

SKILLS: _____
_____
_____

BONUS POINTS: _____

EQUIPMENT: _____
_____
_____

WOUNDS: B ○   F (-1) ○   I (-2) ○   I (-4) ○   C ○

WEAPON	MULT?	EFFECT	DAMAGE			NOTES
			A	B	C	

A larger version of this record is provided as a separate page.

Players should record their names and the name (including any title or rank), sex, and age of the character. They may wish to give their characters aristocratic or military names and rank, academic honours, and the like; the referee must decide if this will cause problems.

Sex (Male or Female, and [optionally] sexual orientation) may be important in some game settings. Most scientific romances are based on ideas current in the early 20th century, and there are very few prominent female characters, apart from swooning maidens and an occasional competent scientist's daughter. It is rare to see a woman attain any influential business or academic status. In this setting a male adventurer is probably most useful. In a civilisation derived from a successful suffragette revolt women might have all the power, with men down-trodden or enslaved. In most scientific romance settings homosexual characters will encounter severe social problems.

Age is usually unimportant; exceptionally young or old characters may be at a social disadvantage, otherwise there is no effect in game terms.

For "profession", write in something appropriate to the game setting; the referee should tell players if they have made an unsuitable choice. Since this collection is based on a very broad background almost anything might be useful.

Try to avoid professional ranks that will give players too much po-wer, or restrict them too badly. A member of the Royal family is an example of both; someone accompanied by three or four detectives and a small army of servants can't personally be very adventurous. Wealthy characters are perfectly acceptable, but should not be able to buy their way out of every problem. Avoid occupations that restrict character freedom and mobility; an obvious example is a slave or a serf, but a clerk with no money, a businessman with a full work schedule, or a mother tied down by young children aren't much better off.

> *Example: Lady Janet Smedley-Smythe-Smythe*
> *In a world whose science is based on H.G. Wells' "The First Men In The Moon", Lady Janet is an eccentric explorer who defies the normal limits of her sex. She has participated in a series of daring interplanetary expeditions, using the latest model of Cavorite sphere-ship. She is single, 25 years old, and extremely rich. Her profession is recorded as "Immensely Wealthy Eccentric". The referee has no problem with this, because he wants the campaign to move between worlds, and sphere-ships are very expensive. Lady Janet and her adventures are used to illustrate these rules.*

The next sections of the form are completed using character points.

1.1   Character Points

Give each player 21 points (17 if you don't feel generous) which must be shared between the following options:

1: Purchase characteristics at the following costs

Value	1	2	3	4	5	6	7*
Cost	Free	2	3	5	7	10	14*

* At the discretion of the referee *only*.

Average human characteristics are 3 or 4. 5 is above average, 6 is very good (for example, BODY [6] is an Olympic athlete), 7 is extraordinarily unusual and is available only at the referee's discretion.

BODY (B) covers physical strength, toughness, speed, and dexterity.

MIND (M) covers all intellectual capabilities, reasoning, and observation.

SOUL (S) covers emotions, charisma, and psychic ability.

See section 1.2, below, for full details of the effect of characteristics.

2: Purchase skills

This game uses very general skills; for example, Scientist covers everything from Archaeology to Zoology, Pilot covers everything from Autogyros to Zeppelins. Players may spend up to three points per skill during character generation.

Example: Lady Janet Smedley-Smythe-Smythe (2)
The player running Lady Janet buys
BODY *[3] = 3 points*
MIND *[4] = 5 points*
SOUL *[4] = 5 points*
Total 13 points. 8 points are left.

Skills are based on one or more characteristics, to which at least one point must be added. For instance, Actor is based on the average of Mind and Soul, plus at least one point. A character with MIND [3] and SOUL [3] would get Actor [4] for one point, Actor [5] for 2 points, or Actor [6] for 3 points.

Brawling and Stealth are available at the values shown without spen-ding points on them. Naturally they can be improved if points are spent.

Skill	Value	Notes
Actor	AvM&S	Any form of stage performance.
Artist	AvM&S	Any artistic endeavour.
Athlete	B	Swimming, running, etc.
Babbage Engine	M	Use also for computers, golems, etc.
Brawling	B *	Boxing, wrestling, & improvised weapons.
Business	M	Any financial or organisational work.
Detective	AvM&S	Good at noticing small details.
Doctor	M/2	Knowledge and licence to practice.
Driving	AvB&M	Any ground vehicle.
First Aid	M	Emergency treatment to stop bleeding.
Linguist	M #	Covers reading, writing, speaking, etc.
Marksman	M	Use of directly aimed projectile weapons.
Martial Arts	AvB&S/2	Any martial art. Allows multiple attacks.
Mechanic	M	Any form of engineering etc.
Medium	S/2	A genuine medium, not a fake.
Melee Weapon	AvB&M	All close range non-projectile weapons.
Military Arms	M	Use of field guns, explosives, etc.
Morse Code	M	Knowledge of Morse and telegraphy.
Pilot	AvB&M/2	Use for aircraft, submersibles, etc.
Psychology	AvM&S	Use to spot lies, calm people, etc.
Riding	AvB&S	Riding all animals, and training them.
Scholar	M $	Detailed knowledge of specialised topics.
Scientist	M	Use of any science.
Stealth	B/2 *	Hiding, camouflage, sneaking, etc.
Thief	AvB&M/2	Pick pockets, locksmith, forgery, etc.

* = Free at base value

\# = Characters with the Linguist skill initially know Linguist/2 languages (round up). For example, Linguist [5] begins with 3 languages known.

\$ = Scholars have knowledge of Scholar/2 related fields (round up); eg., Scholar (Archaeologist, Antiques, Ancient Egypt) [5]

See section 1.3, below, for full details of the purchasing system and use of skills, and 1.3.7 for a detailed explanation of each skill.

Example: Lady Janet Smedley-Smythe-Smythe (3)
Lady Janet doesn't bother to learn to fly her sphere-ship; that's what servants are for. Her hired pilot will be another player-character. She owns factories and other businesses which will need occasional attention, but her main interest is "collecting" (shooting) any alien animals she encounters. Obviously useful skills for this include Scientist and Marksman; she spends two points on each. For awkward situations First Aid, Athlete, Brawling and Stealth are useful; she has Brawling [3] and Stealth [2] for nothing, and spends a point each on First Aid and Athlete. Finally, any lady must be able to ride; how else does one fit into society? Ten

points buy the following skills:
Athlete [4] - 1 point
Brawling [3] - 0 points
Business [5] - 1 point
First Aid [5] - 1 point
Marksman [6] - 2 points
Riding [5] - 1 point
Scientist [6] - 2 points
Stealth [2] - 0 points
No points are left.

3: Saved for use in play

Points can be used to improve skills at a later date, or optionally to improve the odds in emergencies. If points are saved for this purpose, double them and record them as bonus points.

> ***Example: Lady Janet Smedley-Smythe-Smythe (4)***
> *Lady Janet has no points left, so gains no bonus points.*

At the end of an adventure the referee should give players bonus points for successes, for unusually good ideas, for unusually good role playing, and anything else that seems appropriate. Try to give each player 3-6 points per successful adventure, less if they blow things completely. Bonus points should be noted in the Bonus box on the character sheet, and deleted as they are used.

For example, here is a genuine sample of dialogue that earned a player a bonus point:

> *1st player "I say, isn't breaking and entering illegal?"*
> *2nd player "Don't be silly, we're gentlemen!"*

Special thanks to Nathan Gribble for this gem.

Optional Rule: Buying Advantages

Optionally, charge players points to buy unusual backgrounds and e-quipment, such as incredible wealth or a personal airship. For example:

Advantage	Point Cost
Immensely Rich, Own Spaceship, Royalty	3 points each
Rich, Own Airship, Aristocrat	2 points each
Well off, Own car, Minor Title	1 point each

Under this system Lady Janet would need to spend eight points to get her special advantages. Use it if players seem to want to take unfair advantage of the referee. Referees who can take care of themselves are advised to omit it!

1.1.1 Equipment And Notes, Weapons, etc.

These sections should be completed when the character's characteristics, skills, and history have been decided. Players should simply say what they'd like to own, and describe any special status or background details; the referee should decide if this is reasonable, and if it would be useful (or much too useful!) in the game setting. It's reasonable to assume that characters in most campaigns own a home and have enough money to live comfortably and pay normal expenses; at the referee's discretion characters may be rich if it will help to develop the campaign. All characters should note how much money they normally carry, remembering that it has roughly fifty times the purchasing power of modern money in most Victorian-derived and Edwardian-derived campaigns (prices are discussed in the world book).

> ***Example: Lady Janet Smedley-Smythe-Smythe (5)***
> *In addition to the sphere-ship, Lady Janet owns factories (the source of her wealth), an ocean-*
> *going yacht, a stately home, jewels, furs, several houses and apartments, and numerous cars*
> *and horses. Most of this stuff stays in the background, or is mentioned as it is needed. For*

example, the referee doesn't bother to mention a villa in Rome until she wants to go there. The referee does ask for a list of items she regularly carries on her person; these include a Derringer pistol, gold and jewellery (enough to make her a high priority target for any thief, although the referee doesn't mention that), and flasks of laudanum (a powerful anaesthetic) and smelling salts. She wants to add a powerful rifle and shotgun; the referee rules that they might be kept in her sphere-ship, or carried when she's in the wild, but aren't routinely carried in London. He also accepts that she has her own laboratories (mainly used for dissection) aboard the sphere-ship and in her mansion.

The weapons section is used to record weapons that the character routinely carries. The columns list the weapon's name, whether it is capable of multiple attacks, the Effect number which determines how much damage it can cause, and the results of any damage caused. For now it isn't necessary to worry about the use of this system; it's explained in the section on combat below. Weapons are listed in section 1.5.4.

Example: Lady Janet Smedley-Smythe-Smythe (6)
Lady Janet has several weapons; her hands and feet, and the guns she owns. These need to be recorded on the character sheet. The only hard part of this process is calculation of the Effect number for some weapons, which may be dependent on BODY *or one or another skill. Lady Janet uses the Brawling skill to fight with her hands and feet. For these attacks the Effect number is equivalent to her* BODY*, 3. She has several firearms; all of them have fixed effect numbers determined by the size and speed of the bullet.*

The section marked "Wounds" is left blank for use during play. Note that this is the wound chart for humans and animals of roughly human size and toughness; some animals use different charts.

1.1.2 Sample Character Record

NAME: *Lady Janet Smedley-Smythe-Smythe*	PLAYER: *Sample*

PROFESSION: *Incredibly rich eccentric explorer*	GENDER: *Female*

BODY ③   MIND ④   SOUL ④

SKILLS:

Business [5], Scientist [6], First Aid [5]Marksman [6],
Athlete [4], Brawling [3], Riding [5], Stealth [2]

BONUS POINTS: *0*

EQUIPMENT:

Owns numerous factories, houses, flats, cars, Cavorite
sphere-ship. Carries £50 gold, £1500 gems, Derringer,
laudanum, smelling salts. Keeps shotguns, rifles, and
other supplies aboard sphere-ship and in some of her homes.
Laboratories in mansion and sphere-ship.

WOUNDS: B ◯   F (-1) ◯   I (-2) ◯   I (-4) ◯   C ◯

WEAPON	MULT?	EFFECT	A	B	C	NOTES
			DAMAGE			
Fist	No	3	B	B	KO	
Kick	No	3	B	B	F	
Wrestle	No	3	B	KO	KO/I	
Derringer	Max 2	4	F	F	I/C	
Hunting rifle	No	7	F	I	C/K	
Large shotgun	Max 2	7	F	I	C/K	1 barrel
Large shotgun	No	14*/7	I	C	K	2 barrels
		*Short range only				

1.2   Characteristics

Characteristics are three numbers which are used to determine the general physical, mental, and spiritual nature of characters.

BODY represents general physique, well-being, stamina, and speed. If characters expect to spend a lot of time in combat, or performing manual labour, BODY should be high. Inanimate objects also have BODY. BODY is NOT necessarily indicative of size or weight; it's possible for something to be physically small or light and still have high BODY, or big and have low BODY.

MIND covers all mental skills and traits including intelligence, reasoning ability, common sense, and the like. Anyone in a skilled job needs high MIND. MIND is also important in the use of most weapons.

SOUL covers artistic abilities, empathy, luck, and spiritual well-being. If SOUL is low the character should be played as aloof, insensitive, and unlikeable (as in the phrase "This man has no soul"); if high, the character does well in these areas. It is also used for other forms of human interaction, such as fast-talking, acting ("A very soulful performance"), and other arts (including martial arts). If your SOUL is low better not try to con anyone, and forget about learning baritsu or karate.

Normal human characteristics are in the range 1-6, with 1 exceptionally poor, 3 or 4 average, and 6 very good, the top percentile of normal human performance. Player characters may have characteristics of 7 at the discretion of the referee *only*; this is freakishly good, far better than normal human performance.

Characteristics cannot normally be improved; under really exceptional circumstances changes might be allowed, but this is a once in a lifetime event. For example, someone discovering the fountain of eternal youth might gain extra BODY, but there should be a price to pay; reduced MIND or SOUL, hideous deformity, and the like. In the unlikely event of an increase in any characteristic, any skills already derived from it (see below) should be recalculated and (if necessary) improved.

Characteristics may sometimes be reduced. For instance, someone crippled after a fall might lose BODY, someone suffering a severe head injury might lose MIND. SOUL might be damaged by insanity or drug abuse. If any characteristic is reduced, recalculate the values of all skills derived from it.

1.2.1   Using Characteristics

Characteristics are used mostly as the foundation of skills, but it's occasionally necessary to use them directly. For example, someone trying to perform a feat of strength needs to use BODY. This is done by using the character's BODY (attacking) against the BODY of the target object (defending) using the "attack versus defence" table:

Attack versus Defence

This table is used for any attempts to achieve something by using a characteristic or skill. Roll 2D6; if the result is less than or equal to the number indicated on the table, the attempt succeeds.

A dash (-) indicates that there is *no* chance of success, otherwise 2 is *always* a success 12 is *always* a failure.

Attacking characteristic or skill	Defending characteristic, skill, or difficulty number												
	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**9**	**10**	**11**	**12**	**13**
1	7	6	5	4	3	2	2	2	-	-	-	-	-
2	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	2	2	-	-	-	-
3	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	2	2	-	-	-
4	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	2	2	-	-
5	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	2	2	-
6	11	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	2	2
7	11	11	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	2
8	11	11	11	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2
9	11	11	11	11	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3
10	11	11	11	11	11	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4

If the result is *exactly* the number needed to succeed, the attempt has come very close to failure; referees may want to dramatise this appropriately. If the number rolled is much lower than the number needed to succeed, the referee should emphasise the ease with which success was achieved. Similarly, a roll just one above the number needed for success should be dramatised as a very near thing that came within an ace of

succeeding, a very high roll as an abject failure. These dramatics aside, any success is a success, any failure a failure.

Example: Breaking down a door
Fred (BODY [4]) wants to break a household door (BODY [6]). The first attempt is a roll of 7, a failure. There's a little noise, and the door rattles but stays shut.
After a brief rest Fred kicks the door again. On a 2 the lock breaks. The referee dramatises this by describing the wood splintering and the knob flying across the room and shattering a priceless Ming vase.

Example: Arm Wrestling
Fred (BODY [4]) and Nigel (BODY [2]) are arm wrestling. In each round each should roll BODY as attacker with the other character's BODY as defender.
Round 1: Fred and Nigel both roll 10, too high to succeed. Nothing happens, apart from a slight quivering of opposed muscles.
Round 2: Fred and Nigel both roll 3, and succeed. Again, nothing happens apart from more quivering.
Round 3: Fred rolls 10 and fails, Nigel rolls 2 and succeeds. Nigel smashes Fred's arm to the table and wins the match.
All other feats of strength should use BODY to attack BODY. If several characters want to co-operate in a feat of strength, take the character with the highest BODY and add the BODY/2 of each additional person aiding.
This system isn't perfect. For example, a man with BODY [3] theoretically has a 1 in 36 chance of lifting a BODY [10] elephant; in practice the referee should make this task much harder. Referees should be firm if players want to do something that's physically impossible, or make them tackle the job in smaller chunks. "Pass the saw, I need to cut up this elephant..."

Depending on circumstances, characteristics may be used against other characteristics, against skills, or against an arbitrary "difficulty number". Skills give an edge in most of these situations, as explained in later sections.

Example: Excuse Me, Where Is The British Consul?
Lady Janet has been captured by Venusian savages who have decided that she is their long-awaited god (her gender isn't obvious to Venusians). They have no common language. The referee decides that her SOUL [4] must be used against the native chief's SOUL [5] to make her manner sufficiently forceful, and ensure her release. On a 2 the natives build a sedan chair to carry her back to the sphere-ship.

Example: It's Up His Sleeve!
On their way back to the ship the native witch doctor decides that Lady Janet's charismatic presence undermines his authority. He challenges her to a duel of magic (actually conjuring), using his skill Acting [6]. She must use her MIND [4] to spot his tricks. He begins by making a fruit "disappear"; on a 3 she notices that he's tucked it into a fold of his loincloth, and points out the bulge to the audience. This causes so much lewd merriment that the duel ends in his abject defeat.

Example: I Can Take It...
The wily witch doctor has persuaded the chief that Lady Janet must be tested again. This time it's a test of endurance; she must put her hand into a jar of stinging insects. Their stings are extremely painful but do no permanent damage. Lady Janet must use her MIND [4] to attack an arbitrary difficulty of 8.
This is a tough test; on a 6 she fails, pulling her hand out before the test ends. Fortunately she has the sense to grab a handful of insects and throw them at the witch doctor; he also fails, and starts to scream as they sting him. The chief decides that nothing has been proved.

Incidentally, the referee might instead have asked for a roll of AvB&M, rather than just MIND, to check if the character has the will-power and endurance to overcome the pain, or SOUL to check if the character has the courage to endure it.

***Big* Numbers**

If attacking and defending values are both too high to fit the table, the referee will divide both by a number which will just put them back onto the scale. For really large numbers (Godzilla versus New York, an H-Bomb versus the Rock of Gibraltar) division by 50 or 100 may be needed, but in most cases dividing by a smaller number (such as 2,3,4,5, or 10) should do the job. Round numbers up if the result is a fraction. In any campaign with ships, spacecraft, land ironclads, or dirigibles this system may become important in combat.

> ***Example: Tom Sloth And His Pneumatic Coveralls***
> *Tom Sloth, the brilliant but somewhat misguided engineer, has developed a mechanical ex-oskeleton which can be worn over normal clothing. It looks like a pair of silver coveralls, and will theoretically let him lift things as though his* BODY *is 30. He decides to test it by lifting an elephant at the zoo. The exoskeleton attacks with* BODY *[30], and the referee has decided that lifting an elephant will be difficulty 20. Neither number fits on the scale, so he divides both by 3 to make them fit. Now the attacking force is 10 and the defending* BODY *rounds up to 7.*
> *On a 3 Tom lifts the elephant; unfortunately its weight is now attacking his ankles and wrists, which aren't boosted by the power of the coveralls... Difficulty 20 is attacking Tom's* BODY*; since his* BODY *fits on the scale the numbers aren't modified, and the weight will cause him serious harm on an 11 or less!*

1.2.2 Improving The Odds

At the discretion of the referee *only* players may spend bonus points to temporarily modify an attacking or defending value as appropriate. Players must declare that they are doing this, and mark off the point(s) used, before the dice are rolled.

> ***Example: She's Buying A Stairway To Heaven...***
> *Lady Janet and the Venusians are being chased by a huge predator, and want to take to the trees to avoid it. The Venusians are natural climbers, and sprint up the trees without any trouble, leaving Lady Janet stranded four feet below the lowest branch. She tries to jump (Athlete [4] attacking difficulty 5) and fails on an 8. The predator roars and pads toward her. Before trying again she spends two bonus points to temporarily boost her Athlete skill to 6. Propelled by a sudden surge of adrenalin she zooms up the tree, passing the Venusians before they're half-way up.*

This rule does *not* mean that you can spend points to perform the physically impossible. No matter how many points are spent, a BODY [1] weakling will not lift an elephant single-handed.

1.2.3 Common Characteristic Rolls

Here are a few more examples of the use of characteristics. Use the table that follows to choose the difficulty number for the roll:

Situation	Difficulty
1-3	Something that will probably happen anyway
4-5	Something that will happen if things go well
6-9	Something moderately difficult
10	A "million to one shot"
20	Lifting an elephant

Characters may need to get lucky. Ask them to use SOUL against a difficulty number as above. If they need to notice things, such as a concealed movement or a faint smell, use MIND against a difficulty number (incidentally, the skill Detective can be used to improve this ability). To get a bright idea use a roll of MIND against a difficulty number.

All of the above situations have something in common; they should not occur frequently, and must not be an essential stage in an adventure. There must always be an alternative which does not rely on the luck of the dice. Sometimes players get unlucky in situations where their characters should succeed; in one play-test five characters failed to hear something at difficulty 3, and an extra clue was needed to put them back on the right track.

> ***Example: It's Behind You. . .***
> *A Venusian predator has chameleon-like camouflage abilities. One is about to pounce on the witch doctor's son, and Lady Janet is the only person with a chance to spot it. She must roll* MIND *against difficulty 6 to notice. On a 3 she succeeds and yells just in time to save his life, finally earning the witch-doctor's friendship. The referee might instead have had her roll against the creature's Stealth skill.*

1.3   Skills

Anything that you want to do will probably relate to a skill. Driving a car is use of the Driving skill. Splitting the atom is use of the Scientist skill. Skills in this game are *very* broadly defined; for example, Acting covers light comedy, tragedy, juggling, singing, and human cannonball acts!

Skills are initially calculated from one or more characteristics, with the number of points spent added to the result. For instance, Marksman (the use of all forms of hand-held firearm and other hand-held projectile weapons) is based on MIND. Acting is based on an average of MIND and SOUL. Skills may be raised to a maximum value of 10.

> ***Example: Buying Skills***
> *While generating Fred (*MIND *[4],* SOUL *[2]) a player adds two points each to the skills Acting and Marksman, and one to Linguist.*
> *Marksman will be rated at* MIND *+2.*
> *Acting will be rated at the average of* MIND *and* SOUL *+2.*
> *Linguist will be rated at* MIND *+1, with his native English and Linguist/2 other languages known.*
> *This is recorded on his character record as Marksman [6], Acting [5], Linguist (Modern Greek, German, French) [5]*

Characters automatically have two skills at their basic values without spending points: Brawling and Stealth. Naturally points can be spent to improve them. Optionally additional skills may be made available at their basic values; see Free Skills, section 1.3.6 below.

1.3.1   Using Skills

If characters have skills the referee should assume that they are reasonably competent. For example, someone who has learned a language should be able to use it under normal circumstances without bothering to roll dice. This applies even if the skill rating is low; someone with Linguist [2] and knowledge of Yugoslavian will still be able to read, speak, and understand it under all normal circumstances, but doesn't sound like a native. Referees should decide for themselves the skill level needed for total fluency; Linguist [7] or better sounds about right.

> ***Example: It's All Greek. . . (1)***
> *Fred has the skill Linguist [5] and knows Greek. He is buying a box of matches in a shop in Athens. No dice roll is required.*

> ***Example: . . . If Gills Are Green Go To Section 6b. . .***
> *Lady Janet wants to identify Venusian foods that are safe to eat. Her backpack contains a copy of the Oxford Guide To Extra-Terrestrial Vegetables, and she is using its key to identify a curious warty fungus. This is routine easy use of her Scientist [6] skill and no roll is needed.*

Dice rolls should be made if the character is working under unusual or difficult conditions, under stress, or in immediate danger. They are always used in combat. Usually a skill is used against one of the following:

1. An opponent's characteristics, eg MIND, BODY, SOUL

2. An opponent's skills, eg Business, Martial Arts, Acting

3. An arbitrary difficulty number set by the referee (usually when dealing with inanimate objects, puzzles, combination locks, and the like.

Example: Trouble At T'mill
On her return to Earth, Lady Janet finds that one of her factories is on the verge of bankruptcy. She travels to Lancashire to investigate, using a series of Business skill rolls to overcome the Business skill of a crooked manager who has been bleeding the company dry.
Once the villain is unmasked she should theoretically use her Business skill to unravel years of tortuously complicated accounts and restore the factory to prosperity. In practice, she uses the skill to weigh up the merits of several candidates and hires another manager.

Example: It's All Greek... (2)
Fred is still in Athens, and wants to buy a box of silver bullets, ten crucifixes, a certified genuine saint's relict, and a Mk 4 Carnacki Electric Pentacle. When the police arrest him as a suspected lunatic he will need to make several Linguist rolls against Difficulty 6 to explain his need for these items, and at least one Acting roll at Difficulty 8 to persuade them to let him go.

Bonus points can usually be spent to improve skill rolls, exactly as they are used to improve characteristic rolls.

1.3.2   Temporary Skills

Characters may occasionally want to use skills they don't possess. This is allowable, if it will keep characters alive or the game moving and there is some way to justify it. The character uses the skill at its lowest possible rating, but must roll for all actions including routine easy jobs, and the difficulty of all actions is doubled.

Example: What If I Press This Button?
Lady Janet's sphere-ship is hit by a meteor. Her pilot is knocked out, and the ship is veering wildly off-course. No-one else aboard has the pilot skill; the referee decides that Lady Janet has been in the control room often enough to have a sketchy idea of piloting techniques. She will use the skill at AvB&M/2, or Pilot [2]. Normally the roll to restore the ship to its correct course would be against difficulty 4; because she isn't properly trained, the referee changes that to difficulty 8. On a 2, she just succeeds.

Bonus points may not be used to help in this situation.

1.3.3   Projects

The skill rolls above are used to resolve short-term problems. Sometimes characters become involved in long projects, such as the creation of a work of art or development of a new invention, which should not be determined by a single roll of the dice.

Some projects simply require routine use of a skill for a prolonged period, with any failure extending the time. For example, the creation of a monolithic sculpture might need five difficulty 6 Artist rolls at intervals of a month; any failure leads to major revision of the work, extending the time needed by two months. The project is completed when the fifth successful skill roll is made.

Sometimes practice is all that is needed. This is especially true when learning languages.

Example: Que..?
Fred doesn't understand Spanish. During an adventure in Spain he tries to learn the language; since he already knows some related languages the referee rates this as difficulty 8 after a week, Difficulty 7 after two weeks, and so forth. A lucky roll of 2 allows Fred to learn the language in a week, and it's added to the list on his character record.

Note: This considerably underestimates the difficulty of learning a new language. Linguistic problems are not usually much fun to role-play, unless you particularly want to inflict an unreliable translator on characters, and most scientific romances either ignore them completely or assume that their heroes will easily teach the natives English! The Astronef stories, in FF2, are a little more honest; after weeks of contact with the cultures of Venus and Ganymede, the hero and heroine remain completely ignorant of the native languages. In The Lost World the heroes spend several days with an Indian tribe without learning much of their language.

Research projects, such as the development of a new invention, are resolved a little differently. The referee should decide how difficult the work will be, and how long it will take, then require a series of skill rolls of gradually increasing difficulty, repeated until the final difficulty level is reached.

Example: What Goes Up...
Lady Janet's colleague Professor Polkington wants to develop a new antigravity paint and smash the Cavorite monopoly. The referee decides that this project will start at Difficulty 5, but will eventually be Difficulty 10, and each stage of the project will take 1D6 months; initially 4 months.
At the end of 4 months the skill roll fails. Polkington has achieved nothing, apart from shutting off a few dead ends. The referee rolls 1D6 again, and determines that the project will stay at Difficulty 5 for another 3 months. This cycle is repeated until there is a success, then the difficulty is raised to 6 for the next round of attempts. Difficulty continues to escalate until Polkington eventually overcomes difficulty 10 to complete the synthesis. Most of this occurs off-stage between adventures, but occasionally it impinges on the game; for instance, the referee might tell players that Polkington must spend the next 48 hours in his laboratory to finish the current round of experiments, depriving them of his skills at a vital moment, or that he will need a rare chemical or manuscript for the next step. Finding the missing ingredient might be an adventure in itself.

The referee need not say that characters are attempting the impossible, but it's advisable to drop a few hints if serious amounts of time are being wasted on a completely fallacious idea.

1.3.4 Improving Skills

Bonus points can be spent to attempt to improve skill ratings (to a maximum of 10, representing near-perfection). These improvements are assumed to have been acquired by experience or by training. Each improvement costs as much as the new value of the skill.

To try to improve a skill use the relevant characteristic(s) to attack the current skill rating.

If the result is a success, the skill has been improved.

If the attempt is a failure, but the dice roll is not a 12, the character loses the points but does *not* improve the skill; more training is needed. After some more experience (another adventure) the player can try again. This can be repeated until the skill has been improved. A skill's rating may not be improved more than one point per adventure.

If the result is a 12 the character has "peaked" with this skill; she loses the points, does not improve the skill, and *cannot* improve it at a later date.

Example: You Must Read My Latest Monograph...
Lady Janet wants to upgrade her Scientist skill from 6 to 7, reflecting her detailed study of Venusian anthropology, Zoology, and Botany. This will cost 7 points, and she must roll her MIND *[4] against difficulty 7 to gain the improvement. On a 3 she succeeds.*
After another adventure she tries again, spending 8 points for the next improvement. Unfortunately the dice roll is 12; she is beginning to encounter concepts that she doesn't understand, and will never raise the skill past Scientist 7.

Characters with the Linguist skill may add extra languages by practice during the campaign, as described above, or by spending 1 bonus point per extra language for training between adventures. Only add one language per adventure. Improving the Linguist skill itself costs the new value of the skill, eg. 5 bonus points to raise Linguist [4] to Linguist [5], as above.

Characters with the Scholar skill add new areas of knowledge by improving the skill *only*.

1.3.5 Adding Skills

New skills can be purchased, using the roll described above, but costs are increased.

The referee should decide if a new skill is appropriate for the character; for example, a priest shouldn't normally be allowed to buy the Military Arms skill. The new skill is acquired at its lowest possible value.

An attempt to add a new skill costs *double* its rating; eg, an attempt to add a skill with rating 5 costs 10 bonus points. This represents the considerable investment in time and money needed to learn a completely new skill.

To try to acquire a new skill use the relevant characteristic(s) against the first rating the skill will have. If the result is a success, the skill has been acquired. If the attempt is a failure, the character loses the points but does *not* acquire the skill; more training is needed. After some more experience (another adventure) the player can try again. This can be repeated until the skill has been acquired, or until a 12 is rolled, indicating that the character is incapable of learning that skill.

Example: I Want To Be An Engine Driver...
*Gordon (*MIND *[4],* BODY *[3]) has decided that he wants to be an engine driver. This skill (actually Driving) begins with a rating of 5, so it costs ten bonus points. To gain the skill he must use the average of* MIND *and* BODY *(4) against Difficulty 5. Unfortunately he rolls a 7, a failure. After his next adventure he pays another ten points, representing more training, succeeds on a 3, and adds Driving [5] to his skill list.*

The referee may make things easier for players if a new skill is a natural result of events in the game:

Example: Klatuu Barada Nichtu, My Dear Chap...
Lady Janet has spent several months on Venus, and the referee agrees that she has probably picked up some of the language, and thus earned the Linguist skill. She has MIND *4, so this skill will begin with a rating of 5. Normally an attempt to learn the skill would be a roll against difficulty 5, costing ten points; because of her experience the referee reduces the difficulty to 3 and the cost to six points. On a roll of 4 it's an easy success, and she adds Linguist [5] (Venusian aboriginal) to her skill list. Since this is a new skill, she initially knows no other languages, but this can be improved by experience.*

As with any training, things can go wrong when you try to learn a new skill. If the roll is a 12 the character is unbelievably bad, and can *never* learn that skill.

Example: If I Had The Wings Of An Angel...
Gordon, a glutton for punishment, has decided that he also wants to be a pilot. The referee warns him that he must spend several months of his spare time in training (see difficult skills, below). After several adventures the referee finally lets him roll the dice; on a 12 the instructor has a nervous breakdown after a few flights with Gordon, and he is permanently barred from the training course. The points he spent are wasted.

Difficult Skills

Some skills are based on half characteristics (Martial arts, Doctor, Me-dium, Pilot, Stealth, Thief) so that they are difficult to buy at a high level during character generation. Unfortunately this means that it is easy to acquire them at their lowest level at a later date. The remedy is simple; only let characters have them after intensive training and/or an incident which explains how they have suddenly acquired the skill. They cannot suddenly be acquired between adventures.

Doctor: Needs several years of training at a medical school.

Martial Arts: Needs years of training and a suitable instructor.

Medium: Cannot be acquired after character generation unless events in the game somehow trigger psychic sensitivity.

Pilot: Needs several months of training.

Stealth: This skill is automatically given to all characters.

Thief: Needs months of training and a suitable instructor; referees may optionally wish players to make luck rolls to avoid arrest while training.

Optional Rule: Adding Skills Below Base Values

Under the usual rule, additional skills based on high characteristics cost more than skills based on low characteristics.

Optionally, the referee may allow adventurers to add skills at less than base value with an appropriately reduced bonus point cost. By the time the skill reaches base value it will cost much more than the usual method, but this allows players to spread the cost over several adventures.

For instance, a character with MIND [5] might add Marksmanship at a low level; just enough to shoot for the pot, not to shoot for the British Olympic team. In this example the player might choose to take Marksmanship [3] for 6 points, not Marksmanship [6] for 12 points. Once acquired such skills can only be improved by the normal process, and one point at a time. Referees are also advised to limit the number of below-base skills acquired to MIND/2; once skills are up to the usual base value they don't count towards this limit. The "difficult skills" described above may not be acquired this way.

1.3.6 Free Skills

Referees may want to make some additional skills available to all characters without the normal points cost, on the assumption that they are so common that anyone can use them. For example, in a campaign set in real 1990s America it would be reasonable to assume that every adult can drive. If taken, these free skills are automatically received at the values shown below without spending any points.

> ***Example: Everyone's Jumping. . .***
> *In a world based on a revival of ancient Greek customs, it's customary for every citizen to participate in the Olympics or face ostracism. All characters should have the Athlete skill automatically at* BODY*; extra points push it to* BODY+*1 etc.*

1.3.7 Skill List

This list does not represent every possibility; it is just a selection of the most useful skills. Please feel free to add more, to change values and costs, or otherwise mess things up, but *don't* distribute modified versions of this file!

Skills are listed in the following format: Name, basic value (to which the points spent should be added), and explanation. The following abbreviations are used:

B = BODY, M = MIND, S = SOUL, Av = Average, / = Divided by

For example:

AvM&S = average of MIND and SOUL (round up¿ M/2 = MIND divided by 2 (round UP) AvB&S/2 = average of BODY and SOUL divided by 2 (round UP)

Skills marked with an asterisk are automatically acquired at their basic values.

Actor – Basic Value: AvM&S   Any form of stage performance. If more than one point is spent you are good enough to earn money from one specialised type of performance, such as Operatic Tenor, Conjuror, Ballerina. This skill is also useful for confidence tricks.

Artist – Basic Value: AvM&S   Any artistic endeavour, also useful for forgery. For more than one point add a specialisation, such as Sculptor, Chef, Tattoo Artist, at professional level.

Athlete – Basic Value: B   Swimming, running, etc. The advantage of training over brute strength. For more points mention a speciality such as Skiing, Surfing, Marathon, performed at championship level.

Babbage Engine – Basic Value: M   Use for control of any type of mechanical, pneumatic, hydraulic, or electric computer (including player pianos and card- or roll- controlled looms and organs), also for commanding androids, golems, zombies, etc.

Brawling – Basic Value: B *   Any form of unarmed combat, apart from martial arts. See the combat rules below.

Business – Basic Value: M   Any form of financial or organisational work, man-management, politics, etc. Also useful for preparing forged papers and the like.

Detective – Basic Value: AvM&S   Trained in the art of observation; good at spotting small details, noticing faint scents, little clues, unusual behaviour, etc. Can be used as an improvement over normal observation rolls, and sometimes in place of an Idea roll, or in place of the Psychology skill.

Doctor – Basic Value: M/2   A detailed knowledge of medicines, minor surgery, etc., and a licence to practice. If more than one point is spent, the character has knowledge of a speciality (such as surgery) and the appropriate qualifications. See the rules on injuries for use of this skill. This skill may *not* be acquired in the course of play, unless several years pass between adventures.

Driving – Basic Value: AvB&M   Any ground vehicle (car, land ironclad, railway engine, tractor, etc.). This skill does not apply to exotic vehicles (such as aircraft, Spacecraft, submersibles) whose operators require a high degree of training.

Car chases should be resolved by using the skills of chasing driver to attack the skill of the fleeing driver. Attempts to follow cars should be resolved by use of the the tailing driver's skill to attack the observational ability (or Detective skill) of the lead driver.

First Aid – Basic Value: M   Emergency treatment of wounds. See the rules on injuries.

Linguist – Basic Value: M   The ability to learn, read, speak, and write languages. Initially characters know Linguist/2 languages. More languages can be acquired very easily: see 1.3.3 and 1.3.4 above. Characters automatically know their own native language, and need never roll to use it, without buying this skill.

Marksman – Basic Value: M   Use of directly aimed projectile weapons (eg gun, crossbow, throwing knives, spears, etc.) but not field guns or other specialised militaria. See the combat rules below.

Martial Arts – Basic Value: AvB&S/2   Use for any Oriental martial art, also for Savate, quarterstaff combat, etc. See the combat rules below. Allows multiple hand-to-hand and melee weapon attacks in a single combat round, and can increase the Effect number of some attacks.

Note: This is by far the most powerful unarmed combat skill in this game, and is not necessarily appropriate to the scientific romance genre (although Sherlock Holmes was a master of Baritsu, an obscure Oriental martial art); players should only be allowed to take it at the referee's discretion, and only if they can devise a background to explain acquisition of this skill. Referees can make it a little less useful by adopting one or both of the following optional rules:

1. Martial artists may not use firearms at any time.

2. Martial artists must choose to specialise in unarmed or armed combat, but not both; to gain these advantages with both, the skill must be purchased twice.

Mechanic – Basic Value: M   All forms of mechanical and electrical work, engineering, building, plumbing, etc.; this covers work on existing machinery and the like, and the use of machine tools and other production equipment, but not innovative equipment design which is covered by the Scientist skill.

Medium – Basic Value: S/2   A genuine medium, not a fake. Fake mediums use the Acting skill instead. This skill may not work in all campaigns; if it does, it can be used for contact with the spirit world, seances, and premonitions of impending doom: "I have a bad feeling about this. . . "

Melee Weapon – Basic Value: AvB&M   Use of any non-projectile wea-pon, such as a dagger, sword, or axe. See the combat rules below.

Military Arms – Basic Value: M   Use of field guns, mortars, explosives, and other specialised military weapons, but not hand guns and other simple portable weapons.

Morse Code – Basic Value: M   This skill is simply knowledge of Morse code and basic telegraphic and signalling techniques, including simple equipment repairs and adjustments. It also covers semaphore and other common codes.

Note: This skill was not included in the FF1 rules, which had the comparable skill 'International' available free as part of the A.B.C. world background.

Pilot – Basic Value: AvB&M/2   Use for aircraft, spacecraft, submer-sibles, digging machines, and other vehicles which require a high degree of skill and concentration. Includes the use of parachutes and systems such as radios, sonar, navigation, and meteorology.

Psychology – Basic Value: AvM&S   Use to spot lies, calm hysteria, notice tension, and so forth. This skill may also be used for hypnosis; use the skill level against the MIND of the target - if the roll is made successfully for a number of rounds equivalent to the MIND of the target, the victim is hypnotised. This can only be done if the psychologist and target are talking face to face in a non-hostile situation.

Riding – Basic Value: AvB&S   Riding any animal, from a pony to a diplodocus. Also used for training animals including lion taming, dog handling, or running a flea circus.

Scholar – Basic Value: M   Expert knowledge of specific fields, such as archaeology, history, philosophy. Scholar/2 related areas of knowledge are known; for example, Scholar [5] might include knowledge of Archaeology, Antiques, and Ancient Egypt. The skill cannot be taken twice to give mastery of two unrelated areas of knowledge, but the term "related" can be interpreted as loosely as the referee permits. For example, expert knowledge of Cats (but not veterinary skills) might be added to the list above because the Egyptians worshipped cats.

Scientist – Basic Value: M   Use of all sciences. Most scientific romances make little or no distinction between sciences; for example Professor Challenger (in The Lost World) has knowledge of anthropology, biology, geology, and palaeontology, and in later stories displays profound knowledge of physics, chemistry, astronomy, and psychic research. Optionally mark one particular science (eg Paleontology) as a speciality if more than one point is spent on science.

Stealth – Basic Value: B/2 *   Hiding, camouflage, sneaking, etc.

Thief – Basic Value: AvB&M/2   Pick pockets, locksmith, forgery, etc.

1.4   Wounds

Each character and NPC has a Wounds record, which indicates the general severity of wounds taken. It is possible (and sometimes easy) to go from "uninjured" to "dead" as the result of a single wound.

For humans and human-sized animals, humanoid aliens, etc. the Wounds record has five boxes, indicating the extent of damage:

Wounds: B ◯, F ◯, I ◯, I ◯, C ◯

"B" means "Bruised"   If you are hurt to this extent you are stiff and a little slow, but otherwise unharmed, and recover in a day or two. It's possible to suffer multiple bruises without any additional effect, apart from spectacular flesh colours and superficial marks. "Bruised" includes all forms of minor cut and scald.

"F" means "Flesh Wound"   This is a deep cut, concussion, or sprain, a moderately serious burn, and so forth. You are slowed, and may become infected or suffer other long-term medical effects, but there is little risk of death. If a flesh wound isn't treated promptly it may deteriorate and become an Injury (below). Recovery takes at least a week. Additional flesh wounds must be treated separately but have no other effects.

"I" means "Injury"   This is nasty; a gaping wound, punctured lung, broken bone, skull fracture, serious poisoning, first degree burns, or the like. You need first aid and reasonably prompt medical attention; without it you will probably suffer serious medical effects. You can only move slowly. If you take two injuries (a tick in both boxes) you can barely crawl and cannot fight. Injuries need at least a month to heal, longer if there are medical complications. If all Injury boxes are ticked and you take another injury you are critically injured, as below. Small animals don't have an "Injury" box on their wounds record; any result of "Injury" is automatically "Critical". Really big animals have three or more "Injury" boxes.

"C" means "Critical"   The victim is unconscious and will die without medical aid. If First Aid or the Doctor skill is used successfully the victim reverts to severely injured status (all injury boxes ticked), otherwise death occurs in a matter of minutes, hours at best.

Note that some weapons, and some other forms of damage, have two additional results possible. "KO" means knockout; the victim is knocked unconscious for a few minutes, but isn't necessarily permanently harmed. There is no need to record this since it is a temporary effect. Record bruises instead if appropriate. "K" means "Kill". For obvious reasons there isn't any need to have a tick box for this!

The table shows the effects of wounds. Temporarily reduce the value of BODY or BODY-related skills by the value shown, but not below a minimum of 1.

Wound	Body	Recovery Period	Recovery Difficulty	Notes
Bruised	–	1 Day	2	Purple marks etc.
Flesh Wound	-1	1 Week	4	A nasty cut
Injury	-2	1 Month	6	Broken bones etc.
2+ Injuries	-4	1 Month	8*	Cannot fight or run
Critical	N/A	N/A	8	Unconscious, dying
Knocked out	–	6D6 min	4	

* per injury.

> ***Example: It's Only A Flesh Wound. . . (1)***
> *During a visit to a German Duke's estate, Lady Janet takes part in a boar hunt. During a sudden storm she is separated from the rest of the hunters, and loses her gun in a thicket.*
> *As she trudges home she disturbs a boar and is badly cut by one of its tusks. In the next round she tries to fend it off by beating it with a fallen branch. Normally she would use her Brawling [4] skill for the attack; because she has a flesh wound this is reduced to Brawling [3].*

1.4.1   Medical Skills, Recovery, and Death

First Aid stabilises wounds and prevent them getting worse. On a successful roll against the recovery difficulty of the wound, there is no possibility of deterioration. For example, this might involve splinting a broken leg, disinfecting and bandaging a wound, or putting cold tea (a common Victorian remedy) or ice onto a burn. Multiple wounds must be treated separately; for instance, someone with a Flesh Wound and an Injury, or with two Injuries, would need each treated separately.

Without first aid the wound may eventually deteriorate; roll the recovery Difficulty against the patient's BODY, if the result is a success the wound will get worse. Flesh wounds become Injuries and Injuries become Critical if they get worse.

The Doctor skill acts like First Aid, and also speeds healing. If a successful roll is made recovery time is halved. Since the Doctor skill usually begins at a lower level than First Aid, devoted healers may wish to take both skills.

To recover from wounds without medical help, roll BODY against the recovery difficulty - *after* the minimum recovery period. If the result is a success, the wound is healed. If the result is a failure, the illness drags on for another period before the roll can be made again.

> ***Example: It's Only A Flesh Wound. . . (2)***
> *Lady Janet has a flesh wound. She bandages it herself, using First Aid [5] against recovery Difficulty [4]. On a 9 she doesn't do a good enough job of cleaning the wound and applying pressure to prevent further bleeding.*
> *She rolls BODY [3] against Difficulty [4]. On a result of 10 the wound gets worse; by the time she reaches help Lady Janet is bleeding severely, and must spend some time in bed. Her doctor fails to help, so her first roll for natural recovery is made after a month. Fortunately she succeeds and finally heals.*

Death is death, and is usually permanent. In some settings there may be some rationale for reanimation or resurrection, but in most games there is no recovery. Your referee will explain if this applies.

Some examples of common forms of injury follow the combat rules below; they are clearer if you understand some details that are introduced in the combat rules.

1.5 Combat

The combat rules take up a large chunk of this file; this does *not* mean that they are the most important aspect of the game - it just means that they are a little more complicated than other sections. *Don't* make the mistake of thinking that every adventure must involve several firefights!

These rules borrow an idea that is found in some war games. All the events in a combat round occur simultaneously. If ten people are firing guns, all of them fire *before* the results are assessed. You can shoot a gun out of someone's hand, but he will have a chance to shoot you before he loses it. Attacks are usually a use of skill against a defence; if the attack penetrates the defence, the damage is determined by use of the attack's Effect against the BODY of the target. All of these concepts are explained in more detail below.

1.5.1 Combat Rounds

A combat round is a period of approximately five seconds in which combat occurs. In this time punches might be exchanged, shots fired, and so forth.

The following things can be done in a combat round

Movement
A normal human can walk about ten feet, or run twenty. On a difficulty 6 BODY or Athlete roll, or on expenditure of a bonus point, this can be pushed to thirty feet.
Or an action
such as ducking for cover or opening a door.
Referees may *optionally* allow two actions, or an action and a movement, in a round; for instance, opening a door and diving through.
Then, an attack
or several attacks with some weapons and skills.
Then wounds take effect.

If you don't want to move or perform any action apart from the attack itself there is a bonus on the attack, but you do *not* fire first.

Anyone taken completely by surprise *cannot* fight, move, or dodge in the first round of combat, but *can* perform a simple action. For example, intruders would have a round to attack someone who was standing a few feet from an alarm button; he would not have time to get to it first. They could not stop him pressing the button if he already had his hand on it. By definition, someone with a weapon in his hand pointed at an attacker is *not* taken by surprise!

1.5.2 Resolving Attacks

Attacks are resolved in the following stages:

1. All players should state who they intend to attack; the referee should explain who NPCs are attacking. This should be done before any attacks are made.

2. Each character and NPC attacks the chosen target. Roll the attacking skill or characteristic against a defending skill, or against a difficulty number of 6 if there is no better defence available. There are various modifiers for distance etc.

3. If the roll to hit succeeds, the Effect of the attack is used to attack the Body of the victim. Damage is calculated according to the success of this roll.

Rolling To Attack

The following bonuses and penalties are available, and should be added to or subtracted from the attacking skill if appropriate (to a maximum of 10 or a minimum of 1):

Situation	Modifier
Attacker hasn't moved	+1
Target is immobile/inanimate	+1
Target is twice man sized or more	+1
Target is very close	+1 (projectiles only)
Using a fully automatic weapon	+1 (machine guns)
Firing both barrels of a shotgun	+1
Target is *too* close	-1 (*not* brawling)
Target is running/moving fast	-1
Target is half man sized or less	-1
Target is distant	-1 (Projectiles only)*
Target partially hidden or camouflaged	-1
Attacking two or more targets	-2
Attacker is ducking or dodging	-1
Target is ducking or dodging	-2
Attacking for limited damage	-1 (See below)
Attacking for minimal damage	-2 (See below)

* Machine guns are a little less accurate than other firearms, but more than make up for it by firing *lots* of bullets, increasing the chance of a hit over that for a normal gun. This is the main reason why automatic weapons are used. The idea that machine guns rarely hit and do less damage than other firearms is a myth.

Example: Collecting A Specimen (1)
Lady Janet (Marksman [6]) wants to "collect" a Ganymedan lion. The lion isn't defending itself, so she must fire the shot against a basic difficulty of 6. The lion is immobile (+1) and large (+1), so her skill would normally be modified to 8; unfortunately it's a long way off (-1), and has skin coloration that makes it harder to see (-1), so the skill stays as Marksman [6]. On an 8 the shot misses; the lion is startled and runs away.
In the second round the lion is moving (-1), but Lady Janet didn't move (+1). The lion is still big (+1) and isn't trying to dodge or hide, and is no longer camouflaged, but it's still a long way off (-1), so Lady Janet uses an effective Marksman [5] for her next shot. On a 4 it's an easy hit.

Example: Take That You Cad! (1)
Bobby and George have decided to settle their differences in a boxing match. Both have BODY *[4] and the Brawling [5] skill.*
In the first combat round Bobby dodges and weaves (-1) then tries to punch the immobile (+1) George; George stays still (+1) and tries to hit the dodging (-2) Bobby when he gets close.
In this round Bobby has an effective skill of Brawling [5], George an effective skill of Brawling [4]. On a 3 Bobby easily breaks past George's guard, but on a 2 George also hits Bobby.

Some attacks can be used via two or more skills; for example, a longbow might be used via the Marksman or Martial Arts skill, a club via the Brawling or Melee Weapons skill. Use whichever skill is best. If all else fails weapons may be used via characteristic rolls; these are usually poorer than skills.

Defences may also be based on skills or characteristics; for example, someone might try to avoid an arrow by ducking (BODY versus the attacking skill), by hiding (Stealth skill), or by use of the Martial Arts skill to catch it! If no better skill is available, the basic defending value is 6.

If the result of any attack is a success, some damage occurs. Roll for damage as described below.

Damage

Roll to cause damage, using the Effect of the attack (see below) against the victim's BODY.

All attacks have an Effect number. For hand-to-hand weapons, martial arts, and other unarmed combat skills it is either the skill level or the user's BODY plus a bonus; for example, a club gains most of its power from the user's strength, and has an Effect equal to the user's BODY +1. A fencing foil, like all swords and daggers, has an Effect equal to Melee Weapon skill. For firearms the Effect number is usually intrinsic to the weapon, and thus independent of the user's skill or BODY.

Damage is determined by using the Effect number to attack the target's body. The result of this roll will sometimes be a failure; this is interpreted as minimal damage for the weapon, from column A of the

weapons table. While this is always preferable (for the victim!), many weapons have a flesh wound or worse as their minimal damage.

If the result is a success, but more than half of the result needed for a success, check column B of the weapon table.

If the result is a success, and the dice roll is less than or equal to half the result needed for a success (round *down*) check column C of the weapon table. If in doubt, use this table to calculate which damage column is used:

Roll Needed	Column A if result	Column B if result	Column C if result
2	3-12	2	-
3	4-12	2-3	-
4	5-12	3-4	2
5	6-12	3-5	2
6	7-12	4-6	2-3
7	8-12	4-7	2-3
8	9-12	5-8	2-4
9	10-12	5-9	2-4
10	11-12	6-10	2-5
11	12	6-11	2-5

Example: Collecting A Specimen (2)
Lady Janet's hunting rifle is recorded as follows:

Weapon	Multiple Targets	Effect	Damage		
			A	B	C
Big Rifle	No	8	F	I	C/K

This means that it does the following damage:
A: Flesh wound
B: Injury
C: Roll the Effect against BODY *again; if the result is a failure the injury is critical, otherwise it's a kill.*
Effect [8] attacking BODY *[8] succeeds on a 7 or less.*
If the result is an 8 or more the lion suffers a flesh wound.
If the result is 5-7 the lion is injured.
If the result is 2-4 the lion is critically injured or killed.
On 4, then 6, the lion is killed.

Example: Take That You Cad! (2)
Both combatants are using fists, which are rated as follows:

Weapon	Multiple Targets	Effect	Damage		
			A	B	C
Fist	No	BODY	B	B	KO

There is no reason to modify these results, so both must use BODY *[4] against* BODY *[4]. On a 9, George just grazes Bobby. On a 2, Bobby catches George with a perfect right hook and knocks him out.*

Machine guns use a special rule. If they are used on more than one target, the Effect is reduced by 2. The attacker must roll separately to hit each target, and to damage the victim if the attack is successful. It's easy to abuse machine guns; players often say that they are trying to shoot at victims in two or three different areas, which should not be allowed. Shooting at several targets in one direction (such as a group of men running along a corridor) is acceptable, but the targets in front will conceal those behind, or at least reduce the Effect. They are powerful weapons, but not all-powerful.

Example: Budda Budda Budda... oops

Arnie, with Marksman [6] and a submachine gun, stumbles into a German trench during the First World War. Despite Arnie's cry of "Eat hot lead, you scummy krauts!", the referee accepts that they are surprised; Arnie will get one free attack before they can shoot back. There are five Germans, and he tries to shoot them all. His Marksman skill is raised to 7, because he is using a machine gun, but reduced to 5 because he is shooting at multiple targets, and the Effect is reduced from 9 to 7. Arnie succeeds in hitting and injuring three of the Germans, but there are no critical injuries or kills. All five will be able to shoot back in the next round!

Pulling Punches & Aiming To Wound

Sometimes players may want to do less than the maximum amount of damage with an attack. Say what you are trying to do *before* rolling to hit, and adjust the attacking skill as follows:

1. Attacking for limited damage; damage effects are limited to column A and B only, column C damage is taken as column B. Skill -1.

2. Attacking for minimal damage; damage effect is limited to column A only, column B and C damage are taken as column A. Skill -2.

In other words, there is an increased chance of missing if you are pulling your punches or aiming to wound, because the attack is trickier.

It isn't possible to limit damage with shotguns, machine guns, or area effect weapons such as explosives or flame throwers, or with *any* attack on multiple targets.

Optional Rule: Hit Locations

Players may sometimes wish to aim at a specific part of the body. To do so, modify the attacking skill and the damage Effect as follows:

Location	Skill modification	Effect	Random hit
Head	-2	+2	2
Arms	-1	-1	3 Right, 4 left
Torso	No modification	0	5-9
Legs	-1	-1	10-12

This rule makes it harder to hit if you are aiming at someone's limbs or head, but increases the likelihood of serious damage from a head injury.

If this rule is used, someone who rolls to hit a target without trying to hit a specific area should roll 2D6 for a random hit location as indicated above, and modify the Effect accordingly.

It is not possible to attack a specific hit location with machine guns or area effect weapons such as grenades, or while performing any form of multiple attack. Damage from these weapons should attack random hit locations.

1.5.3   Armour

Armour reduces the Effect of weapons. It does not affect the roll to hit; in fact, someone wearing heavy armour should theoretically be slower and easier to hit. The level of protection depends on the type of armour. Naturally only the area covered by the armour is protected; for example, motorbike leathers cover the torso, arms, and legs, but don't protect the head. Adding a full-face crash helmet extends this protection to the head. Similarly, body armour doesn't protect limbs or the head.

Clothing/Item	Protection
Bulletproof vest	-4 Effect on projectile and blade attacks
Kevlar body armour	-6 Effect on projectile and blade attacks
Bullet Proof glass	-4 Effect on all projectile attacks
Medieval Plate Mail	-4 Effect on all melee weapon attacks
Motorbike leathers	-2 Effect on all impact weapons (eg clubs)
WW1 Steel Helmet	-3 Effect on all attacks to head
Crash Helmet	-2 Effect on all impact damage to head

1.5.4   Weapons

Use the tables that follow to determine the capabilities and effects of combat skills and weapons. Where damage results are shown (eg C/K), roll the effect against BODY again; if this roll fails the first result is used, otherwise the second result is used.

Abbreviations   B = Bruise, F = Flesh wound, I = Injury, C = Critical, KO = Knockout, K = Kill, M.Arts = Martial Arts, I+KO = Injured *and* knocked out.

Some of the weapons shown have very high effect numbers, which go well off the "attack versus defence" table. This usually indicates an attack which will do maximum damage unless a 12 is rolled, or the effect number is somehow reduced; for example by distance (explosives), by the damage being spread to cover several targets (mini gun), or by armour.

Note that most unarmed attacks and some weapon attacks don't show death as a possible outcome; it simply isn't very likely in the course of a fast-moving fight. Referees should feel free to ignore the suggested result in unusual conditions; for example, if someone is attacked while unable to resist, or is completely outmatched by his attacker.

Melee Weapons

Effect is based on BODY or skill.

Weapon	Multiple Targets	Effect	Damage A	B	C	Notes
Fist	No*	BODY †	B	B	KO	
Kick	No*	BODY †	B	B	F	
Wrestling	No	BODY †	B	KO	KO/I	
Animal bite	No	BODY+2	F	I	C	
Animal claw	No	BODY+1	F	I	C	
Animal horns	No	BODY+2	F	I	C/K	

*   Using the Martial Arts skill it is possible to perform one fist and one kick attack in a single round against one target, or against two targets that are close together. Against two targets the attacks are at -2 Effect.

†   Users of the Martial Arts skill can use BODY or Martial Arts for Effect in these attacks, whichever is better.

Weapon	Multiple Targets	Effect	Damage A	B	C	Notes
Club	Max 2*	BODY+1	B	F	KO/K	Eg cricket bat
Spear	No	Melee	F	I	C/K	Any type
Axe	No	BODY+2	F	I	C/K	
Sword	Max 2*	Melee+1	F	I	C/K	
Dagger	No	Melee+1	F	I	I/K	Eg flick knife
Whip	No	Melee/2	B	B	F	
Chair	No	Brawl	B	F	I/KO	
Broken bottle	No	Brawl+1	F	F	I	
Nunchuks	Max 2*	M. Arts	B	F	KO/K	Martial Artist only
Staff	Max 3*	Melee+2	F	I	KO/C	

*   Targets must be within 5ft. Multiple attacks are at -2 Effect. Multiple attacks are available with the Martial Artist skill *only*.

Range   For all melee weapons, targets are *too close* if they block effective use of the weapon; within a couple of feet for swords and axes, within 6 ft for whips (a lousy weapon, despite Indiana Jones), and so forth.

Projectile Weapons

Effect is usually based on skill (for thrown weapons), on BODY (for longbows and thrown axes), or on the weapon rather than the user for firearms etc.

Weapon	Multiple Targets	Effect	Damage A	B	C	Notes
Spear	No	Melee	F	I	C/K	Thrown
Axe	No	BODY+1	F	I	C/K	Thrown
Dagger	No	Melee	F	I	I	Thrown
Shuriken	Max 3	M.Arts	B	F	F	Thrown
Boomerang	No	Marksman	B	F	KO/I	Thrown
Cricket ball	No	Marksman	B	F	KO/I	Thrown
Longbow	No*	BODY+1	F	I	C/K	A hunting bow
Crossbow	No	7	F	I	C/K	A military bow

* Maximum 2 targets if attacking with Martial Arts skill.

Weapon	Multiple Targets	Effect	Damage A	B	C	Notes
Small handgun	Max 2*	4	F	F	I/C	eg .22 revolver
Big handgun	Max 2*	6	F	I	C/K	eg .38 revolver
Huge handgun	Max 2*	8	I	I	C/K	eg .45 revolver
Small rifle	No	5	F	F	I/C	eg .22 rifle
Big rifle	No	7	F	I	C/K	eg Winchester
Huge rifle	No	9	I	C	K	eg Elephant gun
Small shotgun	Max 2*	4	F	I	I	1 barrel
Small shotgun	No	8 ‡/4	I	I	C	Both barrels
Large shotgun	Max 2*	7	F	I	C/K	1 barrel
Large shotgun	No	14 ‡/ 7	I	C	K	Both barrels
Machine pistol	Yes †	7	F	I	C/K	eg Schmeisser
Submachine gun	Yes †	9	F	I	C/K	eg Tommy Gun
Machine gun	Yes †	11	F	I	C/K	eg Gatling Gun
Harpoon	No	15	I	C	C/K	Non-explosive
Harpoon	No	25	C	C	K	Explosive

* Hand guns can be used to fire at two targets, or twice at one target. If firing at two separate targets each attack is at -2 to hit. If firing two shots at one target there is no modifier. Each attack is resolved separately. Shotguns can fire twice at one target (no modifier to hit, small effect), fire at two different targets (modifier -2 to hit, small effect), or fire both barrels at once (+1 modifier to hit, big effect at *short range only*). In all but the last case the two shots are resolved separately.

† Reduce Effect by 2 if fired at additional targets.

‡ At *short* range *only*

Ammunition: Players will undoubtedly have their own ideas about the number of rounds in their weapons, and usually keep track without prompting. If you don't want to bother with bookkeeping it's perfectly acceptable to ignore the matter. As a rule of thumb six shots for all rifles and handguns, and three bursts or twenty single shots for machine guns, should satisfy most players. Gatling guns (including chain guns, rotary cannon, and mini-guns) cannot fire single shots, but the referee may wish to allow many more bursts to be fired.

Range: Normal range for all hand-thrown weapons, handguns, machine pistols, and submachine guns is 10-20 ft; normal range for bows, rifles, machine guns, and mini guns is 50-100 ft. Anything closer is at short range, anything further away at long range. Targets are too close if they are closer than the end of the weapon.

Area Effect Weapons

All explosives damage everything at full effect inside the radius shown, at effect -1D6 to double that radius, at effect -2D6 to three times the radius, and so forth. The effect of these weapons is not reduced if there are multiple targets.

Weapon	Multiple Targets	Effect	Damage			Notes
			A	**B**	**C**	
Stun grenade	6ft	8	B	KO	I+KO	
Hand grenade	10ft	10	F	I	C/K	
Dynamite	10ft	10	F	I	C/K	+2 effect/stick
Mortar shell	10ft	12	I	C	K	
Howitzer shell	10ft	15	I	C	K	
Anti-tank mine	10ft	20	I	C	K	
Car bomb	20ft	15	I	C	K	
Truck bomb	20ft	20	I	C	K	
Flame thrower	10ft	10	I	I	C/K	No damage outside 20ft

Exotic Weapons

Things that might conceivably come into play in a campaign, in no specific order:

Weapon	Multiple Targets	Effect	Damage			Notes
			A	**B**	**C**	
Radium gun	No	8	F	I	C/K	Burroughs' Mars
Stun gun	Area 3ft	8	B	KO	KO	Most SF
Disintegrator	Yes*	15	I	C	K	Most SF
Heat Ray	Area 75ft	30	C	K	K	War Of The Worlds
Black smoke	Area 500yd	10	C	K	K	War of the Worlds
Hydrogen bomb	Area 1 ml	40	C	K	K	Not recommended!
Mini gun	Yes*	15	I	C	K	See Terminator 2

† Reduce Effect by 2 if fired at additional targets.

1.5.5   Non-Combat Injuries

Combat is the main cause of wounds, but characters occasionally run into other problems that can cause damage. For instance:

Falling: The damage hits automatically; the Effect number is 1 plus 1 per storey fallen, to a maximum of 20. For example, someone tripping and falling to the ground risks damage with Effect 2; someone falling 20,000ft takes damage with Effect 20. Note that falls of less than 10ft are a common cause of accidental death in the home. In campaigns with space travel the lesser or greater gravity of different planets may modify the Effect of falls; see the FF2 worldbook for details.

Car Crash: Effect 1 plus 1 per 10 MPH. Halve the Effect if wearing a seat belt or protected by an air bag.

Run Over: Effect 2 plus 2 per 10 MPH, to a maximum of 10.

Poison: Effects vary with type of poison as below. Some gases have an increasing effect with time as shown.

Electrocution: The effect varies with voltage as below.

Drowning, suffocation, etc: Characters can hold their breath without harm for BODY x 20 seconds; after that take damage with Effect 1, +1 per 20 seconds submerged. If the character survives, any damage (other than death) is cleared in a few hours, not the days required for other forms of damage.

Exposure to vacuum is faster and much more deadly. Brief exposure may result in skin lesions (F result), more than a few seconds in space will result in ruptures and decompression injuries (I result) or serious damage to the lungs etc. (C/K) Damage heals normally, not at the accelerated rate for drowning and suffocation.

Fire: Effect varies with severity of fire, starting at 1 (a match) and working up to 7 (a petrol bomb or flamethrower) and onwards. The effect increases for each round of exposure after the first.

Source	Effect Targets	Damage A	B	C	Notes
Falls	1+1/storey	B	I	C/K	
Car crash (passenger/driver)	1+1/10MPH	F	I	C/K	
Run over	2+2/10MPH	F	I	C/K	
"Micky Finn"	8	KO	KO	C/K	
A small amount of strychnine	6	I	C	K	
A lot of cyanide	10	C	K	K	
A tiny amount of arsenic	3*	-	I	C/K	
A lot of arsenic	6*	I	C	K	
Cobra venom	8 †	I	C	K	
Chloroform or ether	6+1/round	KO	KO	C/K	
Martian Gas	5+1/round	F	C	K	(Astronef)
Chlorine (WW1 poison gas)	7+1/minute	I	C	K	
Electric Cattle fence	4	-	B	F	
110 V (US mains)	6	F	I	C/K	
220/240 V (European mains)	8	F	I	C/K	
Electric fence (5000 Volts)	15	C	K	K	
Electric chair (execution)	. . . . Automatic kill				
Drowning / suffocation	1+1/30 sec	I	I	C/K ‡	
Exposure to Vacuum	6+1/5 sec	F	I	C/K	
Match	1+1/round	F	F	F	
Candle flame	2+1/round	F	F	F	
Bonfire	4+2/round	F	I	I	
Petrol bomb	7+3/round	I	C	C/K	
Blast furnace	10+10/round	C	K	K	
Volcano	20+10/round	C	K	K	

* It is possible to build up an immunity to some forms of arsenic with repeated small doses, reducing the Effect of large doses. It is also possible to kill yourself trying this stunt.

† The cobra must attack successfully first!

‡ See rules text above.

1.6   Animal, Vegetable, Mineral

What's the BODY of a door? Of a bottle? Of the Queen Elizabeth? How much damage can a rabbit take (or dish out); a rhino; a blue whale? This section contains data on a range of common and uncommon objects, plants, and animals, which characters may conceivably encounter in the course of play.

1.6.1   Animals

Rat   BODY [1], MIND [1], SOUL [1]
Brawling [1]; Bite, Effect 1, Damage A:B, B:B, C:F
Wounds: Any wound kills

Rabbit   BODY [1], MIND [1], SOUL [1]
Brawling [1]; Kick, Effect 1, Damage A:-, B:B, C:B
Wounds: B[ ] F[ ] C[ ] (Any Injury result is Critical)

Domestic Cat   BODY [1], MIND [1], SOUL [1]
Brawling [4]; Claw, Effect 2, Damage A:B, B:F, C:F
Wounds: B[ ] F[ ] C[ ] (any Injury result is Critical)

Small Dog   BODY [2], MIND [1], SOUL [1]
Brawling [3]; Bite, Effect 4, Damage A:B, B:F, C:F
Wounds: B[ ] F[ ] I[ ] C[ ]

Cobra   BODY [2], MIND [1], SOUL [1]
Brawling [6]; Poison, Effect 8, Damage A:I, B:C, C:K
Wounds: B[ ] F[ ] I[ ] C[ ]

Big Dog   BODY [3], MIND [1], SOUL [1]
Brawling [5]; Bite, Effect 5, Damage A:B, B:F, C:I
Wounds: B[ ] F[ ] I[ ] I[ ] C[ ]

Rottweiler   BODY [4], MIND [1], SOUL [1]
Brawling [7]; Bite, Effect 6, Damage A:F, B:I, C:C
Wounds: B[ ] F[ ] I[ ] I[ ] C[ ]

Anaconda   BODY [6], MIND [1], SOUL [1]
Brawling [7]; Wrestle, Effect 8, Damage A:I, B:I, C:C
Wounds: B[ ] F[ ] I[ ] I[ ] C[ ]

Lion   BODY [7], MIND [1], SOUL [1]
Brawling [9]; Bite, Effect 9, Damage A:F, B:I, C:C/K
Wounds: B[ ] F[ ] I[ ] I[ ] C[ ]

Horse   BODY [7], MIND [1], SOUL [1]
Brawling [4]; Kick, Effect 7, Damage A:B, B:F, C:I/C
Wounds: B[ ] F[ ] I[ ] I[ ] C[ ]

Bull   BODY [8], MIND [1], SOUL [1]
Brawling [10]; Horns, Effect 10, Damage A:F, B:I, C:C/K
Wounds: B[ ] F[ ] I[ ] I[ ] C[ ]

Alligator or Crocodile   BODY [8], MIND [1], SOUL [1]
Brawling [8]; Bite, effect 8, Damage A:F, B:I, C:C/K
Wounds: B[ ] F[ ] I[ ] I[ ] C[ ]
Armour thick skin, -3 Effect all attacks

Dolphin   BODY [8], MIND [3], SOUL [2] *
Brawling [8]; Butt, Effect [8], Damage A:B, B:I, C:C/K
Wounds: B[ ] F[ ] I[ ] I[ ] C[ ]

Rhino   BODY [9], MIND [1], SOUL [1]
Brawling [10]; Horn, Effect 10, Damage A:F, B:I, C:C/K
Wounds: B[ ] F[ ] I[ ] I[ ] I[ ] C[ ]
Armour thick skin, -2 Effect all attacks

Elephant   BODY [10], MIND [2], SOUL [2]
Brawling [6]; Tusks, Effect 10, Damage A:F, B:I, C:C/K
Wounds: B[ ] F[ ] I[ ] I[ ] I[ ] C[ ]
Armour thick skin, -2 Effect all attacks

Killer Whale   BODY [15], MIND [3], SOUL [2] *
Brawling [12]; Bite, Effect 15, Damage A:I, B:I, C:C/K
Wounds: B[ ] F[ ] I[ ] I[ ] I[ ] C[ ]
Armour thick blubber, -2 Effect all attacks

Tyrannosaurus   BODY [15], MIND [1], SOUL [1]
Brawling [15]; Bite, Effect 16, Damage A:I, B:C, C:K
Wounds: B[ ] F[ ] I[ ] I[ ] I[ ] C[ ]

Brontosaurus   BODY [20], MIND [1], SOUL [1]
Brawling [15]; Butt, Effect 16, Damage A:B, B:I, C:C/K
Wounds: B[ ] F[ ] I[ ] I[ ] I[ ] C[ ]

Blue Whale   BODY [25], MIND [3], SOUL [2] *
Brawling [10]; Butt, Effect 20, Damage A:I, B:C, C:K
Wounds: B[ ] F[ ] I[ ] I[ ] I[ ] I[ ] C[ ]
Armour thick blubber, -3 Effect all attacks

   * If dolphins and whales are intelligent in your campaign, you may wish to change MIND and SOUL ratings and add more skills, such as Linguist or Actor (singer).

   Note that the stealth of animals (especially small animals) is often considerably higher than BODY/2.

   Dinosaurs are discussed in considerably more detail in the worldbook for FF3. Customised dogs and canine adventurers are discussed in the final appendix of these rules.

1.6.2   Plants

Plant	BODY
Cabbage	BODY [1]
Sapling	BODY [3] *
Young tree	BODY [8] *
Large tree	BODY [10-20] *
Giant redwood	BODY [30-50] *
Giant flytrap	BODY [8], Bite Effect 6, Damage A:B, B:F, C:I

   * Axes attack a portion of the BODY of a tree equivalent to the Effect of the weapon. For example, an axe with Effect 6 attacks 6 BODY of the tree, succeeding on a 7 or less. If successful, that much of the BODY of the tree is destroyed. Some trees have thick bark which may act as armour.

1.6.3 Everything Else

Item	BODY	Notes
Household Door	BODY [6]	Internal door; lock complexity [4]
Household Door	BODY [8]	Street door; lock complexity [5]
Household Safe	BODY [10]	Lock complexity [10]
Church Door	BODY [12]	Lock complexity [8]
Bank vault	BODY [20]	Lock complexity [15]
House	BODY [20]	
Warehouse	BODY [75]	
Skyscraper	BODY [200]	
Household Table	BODY [6]	A simple wood table
Household Chair	BODY [5]	A simple wood chair
Garden table	BODY [8]	Wrought iron table
Garden chair	BODY [8]	Wrought iron chair
Armchair	BODY [4]	
Bottle	BODY [1]	
Car	BODY [10]	See FF1 Worldbook for more examples
Truck	BODY [15]	See FF1 Worldbook for more examples
Bulldozer	BODY [20]	
Tank	BODY [25]	
Liner	BODY [100]	
Airship	BODY [50]	See FF1 Worldbook for more examples
Spaceship	BODY [100]	See FF2 Worldbook for more examples

FORGOTTEN FUTURES
CHARACTERSHEET

NAME: PLAYER:

AGE: GENDER:

OCCUPATION: DESCRIPTION:

BODY   MIND   SOUL

[   ]   [   ]   [   ]

ACTOR	AvM&S	...	MECHANIC	M	...
ARTIST	AvM&S	...	MEDIUM	S/2	...
ATHLETE	B	...	MELEE WEAPON	AvB&M	...
BABBAGE ENGINE	M	...	MILITARY ARMS	M	...
BRAWLING	B	...	MORSE CODE	M	...
BUSINESS	M	...	PILOT	AvB&M/2	...
DETECTIVE	AvM&S	...	PSYCHOLOGY	AvM&S	...
DOCTOR	M/2	...	RIDING	AvB&S	...
DRIVING	AvB&M	...	SCHOLAR	M	...
FIRST AID	M	...	SCIENTIST	M	...
LINGUIST	M	...	STEALTH	B/2	...
MARKSMAN	M	...	THIEF	AvB&M/2	...
MARTIAL ARTS	AvB&S/2	...	....	....	...

WOUNDS: B ◯ F ◯ I ◯ I ◯ C ◯   BONUS POINTS: ....

WEAPON	MULT?	EFFECT	A	B	C	NOTES

ATTACKING SKILL	DEFENDING CHARACTERISTIC, SKILL OR DIFFICULTY															
	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**9**	**10**	**11**	**12**	**13**	**14**	**15**	**16**
1	7	6	5	4	3	2	2	2	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
2	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	2	2	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
3	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	2	2	–	–	–	–	–	–
4	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	2	2	–	–	–	–	–
5	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	2	2	–	–	–	–
6	11	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	2	2	–	–	–
7	11	11	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	2	2	–	–
8	11	11	11	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	2	2	–
9	11	11	11	11	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	2	2
10	11	11	11	11	11	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	2

Chapter 2

Role Playing

So far these rules have said a lot about rolling dice, but little about the real meat of a role playing game; the opportunity to take on a completely different personality. Since most scientific romances were written by Victorians and Edwardians, characters have a tendency to fall into stereotyped behaviour which isn't necessarily changed if they are set in the future. Here are a few of the principal elements of this behaviour:

I Know My Place...

People in inferior positions accept that they are underlings. They are happy to be employed; the idea of bettering their position, over and above promotion within their workplace, is somehow abhorrent. This attitude is especially prevalent amongst servants and others in intimate contact with their social "superiors". For examples see the roles played by Eric Sykes in "Monte Carlo Or Bust", Peter Falk in "The Great Race", and Gordon Jackson in "Upstairs, Downstairs".

Get Up And Go...

In contradiction to the above, the Protestant Work Ethic is also very popular. This says that if you work hard, study, and save money you'll eventually reach the top. This is primarily an American ideal, but also very popular with the British middle classes and anyone else who wants to better himself. Unfortunately middle-class Britons know that however successful they may be, they will never be gentlemen...

You're A Toff, Guv...

Aristocrats are the cream of society; stern but caring, almost always wealthy and learned, always polite (especially to women and other inferiors), they are genuinely superior men, and even savages know them as such. Even if an aristocrat goes bad he remains a gentleman; if his crimes are discovered he will commit suicide rather than dishonour his family by standing trial.

A Woman's Place Is In The Home...

Women unfortunately tend to be treated as inferiors, second class citizens who must be protected from physical and moral danger. An adventurous woman is *very* unusual, a cause for sensation and scandal. A woman exerting real authority is almost unheard of, despite the example of Queen Victoria, and suffragettes and other campaigners for women's rights are treated with great suspicion.

I Say, He's A Bally Foreigner...

Chauvinism, in its original meaning, is rampant. People don't necessarily hate foreigners, but they do treat them as mental and moral inferiors. To quote a satirical treatment of this attitude, from H.M.S. Pinafore:

> *For he might have been a Roosian, A French, or Turk, or Proosian,*
> *Or perhaps Italian,*
> *But in spite of all temptations,*
> *To belong to other nations,*
> *He remains an Englishman!*
> *Hurrah!*
> *For the true born Englishman!*

This disrespect for foreigners was true of most nations, especially Bri-tain, while harsh treatment and exploitation of "savages" was typical wherever "civilised" nations were expanding into "primitive" lands; in India and Africa, the Middle East, North and South America, Australia, and the Pacific.

Under A Gooseberry Bush, My Dear...

Some things just aren't done. Chief amongst these is any detailed discussion of sex. Courtship is almost invariably chaperoned, any more intimate contact takes place as in this example:

> *. . . he brushed off the confetti, and swept her into his arms.*
> * * * * * * * * *
> *The next morning there were kippers for breakfast. . .*

The row of stars is the nearest these stories come to a lurid sex scene. All indelicacies, whatever their nature, should occur well off-stage.

Arr, We Talks Loike This....

Speech is usually fairly formal, and is of course always polite. Accents are stereotyped; in Britain members of the working classes always have lovable Cockney accents, or impenetrable country dialects, while the upper classes all have Oxford accents. Scotsmen say "Och aye", "The noo", and "Hoots mon", Welshmen "Look you" and "Boyo", Irish "Begorrah" and "Saints preserve us". America has its own stereotypes; Harvard accents for the upper classes, Brooklyn for the dregs. Only criminals and drunkards swear.

Finally, here are three examples of good and bad roleplaying in the context of these rules. Can you tell them apart?

> *"I say, old chap, can you direct me to the station?"*
> *"Yo dude, where do I catch the iron horse?"*
>
> *"Excuse me, my Lord, a gentleman from the police is at the door."*
> *"Hey boss, it's the pigs."*
>
> *"I'm afraid we're in a bit of a hurry. May we get by, please?"*
> *"Out of the way, you ***ing scumbags, we're on a mission from God!"*

Your referee may have more to say on these and other topics.

Chapter 3

Running Adventures

By now you should understand the rules. Take another look at the example of game play, in section 0.1, and try to imagine how you would handle things if you were a player or the referee.

This section is mainly intended for referees. It goes into more details on the running of games, backgrounds and NPCs, plotting, and the use of handouts and other aids. If you are already an experienced referee most of the concepts in this section will be old news; even so, you may find some new ideas.

3.1 Setting The Scene

Before play begins the referee needs to make a few decisions. The first is the choice of background. While each of the Forgotten Futures collections will include source material, there is no reason to feel compelled to use it. Maybe you have a better idea. For instance, several authors have set stories in worlds where the Confederacy won the American Civil War, or the war ended in a stalemate; the example of play in section 0.1 was set in such a world. Equally valid settings include the New York of the future, as described in 1920s pulp SF, London under the rule of Dracula and Queen Victoria (See Kim Newman's "Anno Dracula"), or Africa in a world conquered by H.G. Wells' Martians.

Players should understand the basic details of the game world: the nature of society (or at least how it appears to the characters), the way in which people are expected to behave, and important things that everyone would be aware of. How do people get to work? Do they *need* to work? If not, why not? Is money used? If not, what has replaced it? What gadgets do people use? What would they like to use? What do they like, hate, or fear?

While there's nothing to stop you giving players a long briefing, or copies of the source material, this can sometimes lead to information overload; players have too many facts to digest, and don't know where to begin. This type of briefing is reminiscent of the "balloon factory" sequence found in some of the less impressive scientific romances - if the world the book described revolved around balloon travel, there would be interminable descriptions of their construction, and of the nature of society as transformed by readily available balloons. Here's an example, set in a generic Communist Utopia:

> 'Ah, Comrade Reporter Langford, welcome to People's Synthetic Food Processing Plant 12B. Here we take sawdust and convert it to the finest synthetic protein...' (several pages of explanation omitted)
> 'This is wonderful, Comrade Food Synthesis Manager Bell. Now, how does the operation of this plant fit into Comrade Glorious Leader Illingworth's five year socio-economic plan?' (several more pages of explanation omitted)

It's more fun to establish these details in play. Tell the players about the world as they develop characters, then let characters loose in a non-threatening situation that shows them some more. Here Judy is the referee for a game set in Kipling's A.B.C. world (see FF1). The adventurers are on their way to stay at a country house:

Judy: *The lane ahead is blocked by a surfacer, melting the road and rolling it smooth. You can see the white glare of heat under its safety covers, and smell the usual ozone. A workman with a red flag signals for you to stop.*

Bert: *I say, old chap, going to be long?*

Judy: *The workman spits towards the surfacer; the saliva sizzles into steam as it hits the road, then he says (uses appalling rural accent) "Arr, that be what I would loike to know. The trouble with these danged cheap country roads is that your molten rock turns to glass, and glass cracks as it cools. If he doesn't take it slow we'll have the whole danged job to do again in six months." He spits again, and looks gloomy. "Thing is, if he doesn't speed up a bit I'll be late for my tea."*

Bert: *But I've an important appointment, old chap. Can't you let me by?*

Judy: *(in rural voice) Well, I could, but your tyres would melt afore ye got onto the cool part of the road...*

In this scene Judy wants to establish that the surfacer produces immense heat; it will be important later. She doesn't want to let the players know that the information is important. By presenting it in this way she gives the players the impression that this encounter has been used mainly to slow them. She's also mentioned the way that this setting feels to the characters; the noise and smell of the surfacer, and the light it produces, are more evidence of its vast controlled power.

If every scene appeals to two or three senses you'll find that players visualise events more clearly. This is usually good, but don't spend so long on scene setting that the players become impatient. Here's another example:

> *"A sombre plume of grey smoke rises sluggishly from the red brick chimney of the cottage, twisting and billowing over the slates as the breeze blows it towards you. The smoke has a strong aroma of firewood, probably cedar, but something else is added; the sickly miasma of burning flesh."*

As descriptions go this isn't bad, but it might be more appropriate in a Gothic novel. Paring it to its essential elements, we get something a little shorter:

> *"Grey smoke blows towards you from the cottage chimney; it smells of wood, but there's also the sweet aroma of burning meat."*

Victorians, and to a lesser extent Edwardians, lived in an era when gadgetry was everywhere. No home was complete without knife grin-ders, elaborate folding tongs, magic lantern projectors, and other useful(?) devices. Although many important inventions date from this era, attics and old patent archives are full of "labour-saving" devices that can't readily be called useful. Some were practical in their day, some virtually insane. Victorian gadgets are usually over-ornamented, bulky, and heavy. They are often designed with two or three extra functions over and above their main use. Power sources include compressed air (from bellows or pumps), hydraulic pressure, clockwork, coal gas, steam, electrostatic forces, batteries, and muscles. Components are usually made of brass, cast iron, leather, rubber, gutta-percha, whalebone, ivory, glass, or teak. This misplaced ingenuity sometimes found its way into scientific romances, and mentioning or describing these gadgets is often a good way to set the scene. For example:

> *"Grice-Charlesworth pumps the bellows, and the flywheel mounted above it begins to spin. A brass drive shaft with a couple of flexible joints runs up to an ivory handle which supports a rotating steel blade, a little like a miniature apple corer, mounted below a concave mirror. You can hear a thin hiss of air sucking back to the bellows through the blade. He squeezes the rubber bulb of the ether spray, and a thin jet of flame momentarily plays over the glittering surface of the steel. He smiles, and says 'At last, after all my work, the Little Wonder Nose Hair Cutter and Singer mark II (with razor grinder and anti-explosion device) is ready for testing! Which of you gentlemen would care to be the first to try it...?'"*

One last point; a picture is sometimes worth a thousand words - when it's relevant. If you're an artist, consider sketching some of the scenes the players are likely to encounter, or use newspaper and magazine photographs. Maps and other plans are also very helpful. A word of warning; if you only prepare pictures of vital scenes, players will soon start to assume that nothing important is happening if they don't see a picture. A few extra pictures, produced to set the scene at less vital moments, can keep them guessing.

You'll find more examples of scene-setting in the adventures that accompany these rules, and more on illustrations and handouts in section 3.4 below.

3.2 Plot

Most people get up in the morning with a fair idea of likely events during the day ahead, and very rarely run into invading Martians, marauding dinosaurs, or deranged serial killers. It is unlikely that anyone reading this has fought a gun battle on the wings of a biplane, or unravelled a sinister web of deceit to unmask the machinations of an ancient cult and a nameless evil from beyond the stars.

Life is different in a role playing game, and characters don't lead routine lives. They are adventurers, encountering excitement wherever they go. Sinister cultists kill victims on their doorsteps, or decide that an adventurer is the reincarnation of their god. Their airliner is the one that is hijacked, their spaceship the one that picks up a strange alien parasite. They suspect weirdness in the most mundane events, and are usually right. The snag is that the referee has to prepare all this for the players.

Sometimes plot elements are implicit in the game background. Let's take an example set in 1911, a decade after the War Of The Worlds was won by the wrong side. The Martians control the world, and are using their machines to exterminate humans, apart from a few survivors kept as food animals. There are still human enclaves, hiding places where a resistance organisation is gradually acquiring the tools needed to destroy the Martians. Think of a steam-powered version of the resistance organisation in the "Terminator" films. Here the staple plot will be commando-style raids on Martian bases, and attempts to destroy Martian war machines. The aliens aren't invulnerable; cunning booby traps might literally bring a machine to its knees. Long-term goals would be capture of Martian heat rays and other weapons, and discovery of a way to use them safely.

This is fine for one or two sessions, but it won't sustain a long campaign. You can only destroy so many tripods before the novelty wears off. Let's add another plot element; the Martians have implanted electrodes and transmitters in the brains of a few of their prisoners, and brainwashed them to wipe out knowledge of the implants. These spies have been allowed to "escape" to the resistance organisation, where they unconsciously report to the Martians. The Martians use the information to catch raiding parties; they prefer fresh-caught food, not the unhealthy blood of their ageing "cattle". The resistance base is allowed to exist, because the occupants are accomplishing little. The Martians know its exact location, but don't move in because it would cut off their most succulent food supply. Now raids will start to go wrong, and the adventurers may start to suspect a spy in their midst. Throw in more complications; a resistance commander who thinks that one of the adventurers is a spy - possibly correctly. An escapee who is behaving very strangely, but for a completely different reason. Sooner or later someone will realise that escapees knew something about every failed raid. Proving anything will be *very* difficult; the spies don't know that they are spies, and aren't doing anything unusual.

This simple example could be good for several evenings of play. By the time the spies have been dealt with another Martian ploy will be under way, or maybe the resistance leaders will have developed a new plan to destroy the invaders.

Campaigns without these implicit adventure backgrounds pose more difficulties. In an Utopia there is nothing obvious to drive the plot. This may mean that the setting is unsuitable, but a little twisted ingenuity will usually find some cause of conflict. No Utopia can possibly please everyone all the time, and there may be hidden serpents in the Garden of Eden. A good example here is the life of the Eloi in H.G.Wells' "The Time Machine"; apparently living a life of pastoral tranquillity, they were actually preyed on by the subterranean Morlocks. Look at the workers in the film "Metropolis", and contrast their life with that of the managers.

An interesting idea is the Utopia that goes wrong, where everyone is genuinely happy and contented until a flaw in the system starts to generate horrendous problems. The most common example is the revolt plot typified by R.U.R. (Rossum's Universal Robots, by Carel Capek) and the film "Westworld"; a civilisation where robots do all the work until they decide to run things for themselves. Capek's "War With The Newts" shows another example of the revolt of an artificially created servant race. An interesting variant is the world where everything is run by machines - trains, planes, ships and cars drive themselves, factories are entirely automated, and every home has cleaning machines and other labour saving devices. Naturally everything is designed so that nothing can go wrong.. go wrong.. go wrong.. - when it does, the adventurers will have to deal with road building machines which don't notice that they are squashing cars, factories that insist on spray-enamelling all intruders, and bed-making machines that fold the occupants as well as the sheets. This example comes from numerous sources; most notably E.M. Forster's "The Machine Stops", a gloomy account of the collapse of an over-mechanised civilisation.

For one-off adventures these relatively simple plots will probably satisfy your players. In long campaigns it's better to keep several plot threads on the boil, and bring one to the fore as another ends. These can be entirely separate, or different strands of a very complex design. Here's a breakdown of part of a

campaign:

- *Members of a sinister Indian cult believe that one of the adventurers is their god reincarnated, and have tricked him (and a few friends) into taking a cruise which will visit India; there they plan to kidnap him and take him to their temple.*

- *Members of a rival cult want to identify the god and make sure that he is never crowned; the easiest way to do this will be to kill him, using a sacred jewelled dagger which is the only weapon sacred enough to be used against a god.*

- *A Chinese steward steals the dagger. The theft is reported to the purser, although the significance of the dagger naturally isn't mentioned; the purser knows that one of the adventurers is a detective (there's usually at least one in every group) and asks him to track down the thief.*

- *The British Secret Service knows that the adventurers are on board the ship, and wants them to steal a code book from a German diplomat who is also aboard.*

- *Unknown to all, the German diplomat is secretly funding a sinister cult which happens to have tricked the adventurers into visiting India. . .*

Plots of this complexity need a lot of preparation, but breaking them down into their component streams helps to keep things on track. Some referees also like to run adventures to a timetable, where NPCs will act at a given time unless the adventurers counter their plans; this can be fun if the adventurers are fighting a deadline (such as a bomb that will explode if it isn't found first), but the bookkeeping needed to time journeys and other activities tends to be a little more trouble than it's worth. Timed activities work best over very short periods, where combat rounds can be used; for example, if the adventurers are trying to fight their way out of a burning house before the gas mains explode.

Some groups of players run multi-referee campaigns; they take turns to run the game, but continue to use the same characters throughout - the current referee's character is sent off to the sidelines, or run as an NPC, as best fits the needs of the plot. These games do need to run to strict timetables, so that schemes involving NPCs will come to fruition when the appropriate referee is running the campaign. A simple variant is the use of several separate plot lines, set against a common game background, but with a set of characters for each referee. This method is most often used for superhero games, with each referee essentially running a separate "comic" set in a common world.

Finally, no discussion of plot would be complete without mentioning comedy. Humorous plots are occasionally fun, but a joke that falls flat is worse than no joke at all. Characters with peculiar names and behaviour aren't enough to sustain comedic interest, although the author is aware of one Mafia-based adventure that featured an NPC stool pigeon called Mr. Cream, inserted purely to allow the characters to "ice" Cream. . . It's usually better if the humour is an intrinsic part of the situation you're describing. Pratfalls should be avoidable if the characters take a little care. For example, if the referee sets up a situation which should result in three or four characters getting covered with mud, players who think things through should be able to get away unblemished.

Many scientific romances are set around the year 2000, which is now only a few years away, so one possible form of humour is satire of the real world and its public figures, transformed by the game setting. For example, a certain Herr Shwartzenegger appears in an unaccustomed role in the adventure accompanying the first Forgotten Futures sourcebook.

3.3   Non-Player Characters

NPCs are the backbone of every game; if they aren't played well, characters move through a landscape populated by formless blobs, faceless entities that are usually treated as cannon fodder. Despite the need to keep things simple, NPCs should be described and played as though they are characters. Here's a poor referee telling players that they've walked into trouble:

> *'Two men step out, with guns drawn, and tell you to throw down your weapons.'*

The players probably respond by shooting everything in sight. Now let's see the same scene with a better referee:

'Two men step out into the road ahead of you, holding revolvers. They're wearing oilskins - odd, on a hot day like this. The older one looks very scarred; the other one looks too young to be allowed out with a gun. He's got a nasty grin: "Kin I plug them, pa?". Dad shrugs; "Not yet, Leroy [raises voice] Maybe you boys oughta know that there are four shotguns covering you. Now drop them weapons, or Junior and ma friends will shoot your balls off."'

The situation is essentially unchanged (those friends and shotguns are a bluff), but players may think a little longer before going for their own guns.

Ignore points when preparing NPCs; if you need someone with all three characteristics at 6 and a dozen high-powered skills, just assume that the character is exceptional. If you want a wimp, set characteristics and skills low. It really doesn't matter, so long as the character makes sense in the context of the adventure, and gives the adventurers a fair chance of survival.

If player characters are the stars of an RPG, NPCs are the supporting cast and extras; some are crucial to the plot, others are cannon fodder. If all are acted to the best of the referee's ability, players shouldn't automatically know who's who - someone who seems unimportant might really be the villain of the piece, while "important" NPCs can be set up as victims or red herrings.

Important NPCs should be prepared as thoroughly as player characters; extras need much less attention, but it's advisable to keep a list of their names, and have an idea of the way that they talk and act. Experienced referees often have a small "repertory company" of prepared NPCs, who can be used as they are needed; here are some examples.

3.3.1 Extras

Mrs. Jenkins The Little Old Lady, is always useful as a witness to unusual events. She's unhelpful, inclined to call the police at the first sign of trouble, and always complaining.
Quote: "He's the one!" (points at a completely innocent character)
BODY [1], MIND [3], SOUL [2], Detective [8]
This character is also useful as a telephone operator, receptionist, or librarian.

Stross The Evil Retainer, knows at least three damning secrets about his master or mistress, and blackmails guests. An expert at oiliness, materialising just before he is called, skulking in shadows, eavesdropping, and general skulduggery.
Quote: "Will that be all..." [pauses and sneers] "...sir?"
BODY [3], MIND [5], SOUL [3], Detective [7], Stealth [9], Crime [8]
With minor modifications this character is easily run as a secret policeman, sinister ventriloquist, or telephone timeshare salesman. Female variants should be based on Mrs. Danvers, from "Rebecca", or Frau Blucher from "Young Frankenstein". A "nicer" alternative should be based on Jeeves.

Bruisers

Next a group of generic bruisers, suitable for brawls, for robbery with violence, and as bouncers at rock concerts. Easily used as secret policemen (add leather coats, handguns, strange accents, and Marksman [6]), or as rampaging mercenaries or soldiers (add uniforms, rifles, grenades, and Marksman [7]):

Curly is bald, 6ft 6in tall, and armed with a crowbar.
Quote: "I want a word with you, shorty"
BODY [6], MIND [2], SOUL [2], Brawling [8], Melee Weapons [8]

Eric is an ex-jockey with a switch-blade knife.
Quote: "I reckon it's time I taught you some manners..."
BODY [3], MIND [4], SOUL [1], Brawling [5], Melee Weapons [6], Riding [6]

Big Cecil is fat, bearded, and a former wrestler.
Quote: "When you get out of hospital pay your bills."
BODY [7], MIND [3], SOUL [4], Brawling [10], Martial Arts [8], Thief [5]

Lenny   has a deep scar across his throat, and can only talk in a rasping whisper. He uses a knife, and is a sadist.
Quote: "Oh, was that your kitten... naughty me."
BODY [4], MIND [3], SOUL [1], Brawling [7], Melee Weapons [7], Thief [4]

Dave   is an unlovable Cockney, heavily tattooed, with a shotgun.
Quote: "Puke on my shoes and I'll 'it you again."
BODY [2], MIND [2], SOUL [2], Marksman [6], Brawling [3], Thief [8]

The Police

Depending on the nature of your campaign, these may be corrupt Gesta-po-style thugs (as above), Scotland Yard bunglers, or skilled professionals.

Constable Dickinson   is fat, near to retirement, and has never solved a serious crime in his life. He loves beer, and is armed with a truncheon, bicycle pump, and the majesty of the law.
Quote: "'Ello, 'ello, wot's orl this then?"
BODY [4], MIND [3], SOUL [4], Brawling [5], Melee weapons [5], Acting [6] (comic songs)

Detective Sergeant Mondale   is in his mid-thirties, a ruthlessly efficient professional. He doesn't take bribes or frame anyone who doesn't really deserve it.
Quote: "They don't like me to hurt prisoners, it messes up the cells..."
BODY [5], MIND [4], SOUL [3], Detective [6], Brawling [8], Melee wea-pons [7], Marksman [6], Thief [8]

Inspector Cavendish   is in his early forties, fighting fit, and a connoisseur of the arts. He is scrupulously honest and fair.
Quote: "Hmmm... I'd say that this ash was originally Turkish tobacco mixed with a small amount of Peruvian cocaine."
BODY [5], MIND [6], SOUL [4], Artist [7], Detective [8], Scientist [7], Brawling [6], Melee weapons [6], Linguist (German, French, Italian, Welsh, Flemish) [7]

3.3.2   Stars

Most NPCs are secondary characters or cannon fodder. Adventures also need a few NPC stars; powerful characters who are the driving force behind the plot. These characters fall into three main groups:

Authorities

NPCs with rank and some degree of power over the characters. Usually they need not be prepared in immense detail, since they need not become involved in the action. For example, Queen Victoria appears in several of George MacDonald Fraser's "Flashman" novels, and sometimes motivates the plot, but she is never in danger, or in a situation that makes much use of her undoubted skills. Authorities are most common in adventurers with a service background.

Another type of authority is the information source; a scientist or scholar. They are usually erudite, but rarely get involved in the action. Q, in the James Bond novels, is a typical information source. Again, there is usually no need to develop characters far beyond a name and a brief description.

Here are examples of both types of authority:

H.R.H. Queen Victoria   (Hip, Hip, Hurrah!) is an important figure in any Victorian campaign. Characters might meet her at an official function, or save her from some dastardly plot. Always regal, she is the Empress of half the world and an inspiration to all normal men and women. She has a will of iron and is totally lacking in fear (she survived at least twenty assassination attempts, some at point-blank range), absolutely convinced that God protects the monarchy and Britain.
Quote: "We are most impressed"
BODY [2], MIND [4], SOUL [5], Business [7], Linguist [5] (French, German, Hindi)

X3 is a senior figure in the British Secret Service, once an active agent but now frail and confined to a wheelchair. Almost omniscient in his grasp of the "great game", he controls a vast network of spies and counter-spies. He is highly intuitive, often sensing trouble before there is evidence.
Quote: "I can't order you to accept this mission..."
Body [1], Mind [6], Soul [7], Artist (miniatures) [9], Business [9], Detective [8], Medium [4], Linguist (German, French, Russian, Hindi) [7], Thief [6]

Professor Finch is a leading expert on tropical diseases and toxins. He is preparing a definitive study of snake and insect venoms. There are usually a few jars with nasty-looking live specimens on his desk; sometimes the lids are a little loose.
Quote: "Stay quite still while I get a net, it's more frightened than you are."
Body [4], Mind [6], Soul [5], Scientist [9], Doctor [5], First Aid [9]

Heroes

PCs are the heroes of most adventures, but occasionally you'll want to confront them with an NPC hero or heroine. This can be surprisingly difficult; heroes are often resented by players, or treated as crutches to rescue them from their mistakes. For example, Sherlock Holmes sometimes appears as an NPC in Victorian campaigns, but players always expect him to do all the work, or at least to throw off his disguise and rescue them at the last minute. It's more fun to use a flawed hero; someone who has fortuitously acquired a formidable reputation but doesn't really live up to it, has fallen on hard times, or is living a lie can be a lot of fun. See the "Flashman" novels for a splendid example. None of this is to say that NPC heroes should always be avoided; sometimes they have their uses, but it's usually advisable to keep their appearances and effect minimal. More examples:

Sherlock Holmes should only appear in a Victorian or Edwardian campaign, and is more likely to be found on the track of adventurers (who often tend to leave a trail of corpses) than helping them.
Quote: "I see that your shoes were repaired in Aberystwyth..."
Body [6], Mind [7], Soul [5], Acting [10] (disguise), Detective [10], Marksman [8], Martial Arts [9], Scientist [8], Stealth [10], Melee Weapons [8], Thief [9]

Jack Robinson is an adventurer who subsidises his career by publishing lurid fiction based loosely on his exploits. He is *never* around when the adventurers need him - when danger rears its ugly head in Mexico, he's believed to be somewhere in China; if evil strikes at sea, he was last seen in the desert. He's a good drinking companion, a mesmerising raconteur, and an excellent listener; several of the team's adventures have somehow found their way into his pulp novels, without acknowledgement.
Quote: "There I was, with the anaconda coiled around my legs..."
Body [7], Mind [4], Soul [4], Actor [7] (disguise), Brawling [8], Detective [8], Marksman [7], Melee weapons [8], Scientist [6], Stealth [8], Thief [7]
If necessary use the thugs (above) as a team of assistants, substituting more socially acceptable behaviour and weapons.

Villains

Not all worlds need villains, and the enormity of their crimes may vary according to the nature of the world; in an Utopian setting unhappiness or ugliness may be the worst offence, in a survivalist environment the main enemies may be disease or famine. Victorian settings give villains their greatest scope; the widespread inequalities and crime of the era bred fictional criminals like Bill Sykes and Moriarty, while xenophobia led to the creation of foreign masterminds like Fu Manchu and Carl Peterson. Then there are misunderstood villains and monsters, and the looming spectre of Jack The Ripper.

One referee's lovable rogue is another's homicidal maniac. Usually players are reasonably relaxed about the threat of wholesale violence, such as a cunning plan to destroy London, but upset by more personal forms of assault. Here are two simple examples; you are *strongly* advised to put some work into developing characters of your own!

Professor Volkoff is a misguided genius of crime. He uses mechanical juggernauts to break into banks, then tries to loot them before the police arrive. He doesn't realise that he would earn far more by selling his inventions. He is always caught, but always escapes from captivity.

Quote: ”They all laughed at me at Heidelberg. . . ”
BODY [4], MIND [6], SOUL [2], Scientist [10], Linguist [10] (All European and Scandinavian languages, Russian, and Polish), Mechanic [9]
Volkoff will give up without a fight if he is personally confronted by the adventurers. As an interesting twist on this character, consider having him reform after his second or third brush with the adventurers, and start to ”help” with his strange inventions.

The Death Doctor is the Press's nickname for a homicidal maniac. Bodies have been found partially dissected, their adrenal glands removed with great skill. The attacks occurred in the disreputable neigh-bourhood of your choice. The doctor has found out how to extract adrenal fluid and transform it into a potion which imbues enormous strength, at the cost of all human feelings. The potion is addictive, effects lasting a few hours. Only glands from a certain race, sex, age group, or blood group will work; one of the adventurers falls into the affected group. These crimes should take place in the background for some time (mention them as newspaper stories appearing while the adventurers are involved in other matters), gradually getting closer and closer to home. Eventually incidents occur which make it certain that someone is stalking the affected character. Catching the doctor should be very difficult; although all human emotions and sympathy are gone when he is under the influence of the drug, his mind remains clear and he will make sure that there is always an escape route.
Quote: (On a note pinned to a corpse) ”Nice trap. Better luck next time.”
BODY [8/4], MIND [5], SOUL [0/1], Brawling [9/5], Doctor [7], Scientist [8], Melee weapons [7/5], Stealth [8]
Numbers before and after / signs are characteristics and skills with and without the potion. When SOUL is reduced to zero this character has no sympathy or human feelings, and is immune to all forms of emotional control. If one of the player characters is a doctor, frame her for the murders!

Don't use these stereotypes too frequently; if every group of thugs contains a fat former wrestler, and every crowd a little old lady, players will soon start to recognise them. Above all, remember that NPCs are expendable. There's nothing worse than a referee who stubbornly refuses to admit that the players have killed his favourite character. Nearly as bad is the referee who insists that the players *must* meet a particular NPC, even if they have no intention of going near him. Plots should always be flexible enough to give the adventurers some leeway, and there should always be a way to get a scenario back on course if something goes drastically wrong.

3.4 Props

Some referees love them, others hate them. Props, which can include everything from maps to inflatable models of Godzilla, are very much a matter of personal taste. While there are obviously endless possibilities, the most useful props tend to be maps and plans, newspaper cuttings and other written clues, pictures, and figures and other models.

Home made maps have the advantage of being cheap and showing exactly what you want them to show. This is also their disadvantage; if a map only shows a limited number of locations, players will expect at least one of them to be significant. A map that shows an area in a reasonable amount of (mostly irrelevant) detail is usually better. Wherever possible use real maps, modifying them for the history of your game world as needed. For example, if a campaign is set in London a few years after the War Of The Worlds (the one that mankind won), it's easy to obtain a copy of a real Victorian map and add the Martian excavations on Primrose Hill, the charred remains of Imperial College, and other details. Some commercially published RPGs have included maps of Victorian London; in general the scale is too small to be useful. See Aappendix D for suppliers of large-scale maps.

With a little research work it's possible to find maps and pictures of ”Future cities”, showing grandiose plans for architectural projects and city management that never came to pass. These are most often found in old magazines, but collections have been published.

Building plans are easily obtained; just look at a few architectural magazines or textbooks to find plenty of examples. Estate agents (realtors) also sometimes offer plans of the buildings they are selling. Plans are the most common type of handout in commercially published games - if you are involved in this hobby for any length of time, you'll soon accumulate dozens! Naturally some modification may be needed for the circumstances of your game. The adventures in this collection are accompanied by several plans.

News clippings and other written materials are always useful. Try to give players too much information, rather than too little. Referees often make the mistake of letting players find exactly the information they

need to solve a mystery, and nothing more. As an example, here's an extract from a "newspaper" produced for a late Victorian post-War of the Worlds campaign in which the Queen has been kidnapped by agents of a foreign power desperate for the results of Britain's research into the Martian heat ray:

THUNDER CHILD MEMORIAL UNWEILED - POSTHUMOUS VC FOR CAPTAIN
In a short ceremony at Plymouth this afternoon the Prince of Wales unveiled a magnificent bronze statue commemorating the loss of the torpedo ram Thunder Child and her crew. He also announced a posthumous Victoria Cross for Commander Jason Standish RN, the Captain of the late vessel. In a moving speech he said "Since there were no survivors of this attack, the award can only be a minor acknowledgement of the gallantry of the entire ship's company, and of the many lives saved by their heroic sacrifice."
The Thunder Child charitable trust has raised over a hundred thousand pounds for the families of her crew and of other service men killed by the Martians. After the ceremony the Admiralty announced that work will begin on a new Thunder Child later this year. The new ship will be larger and more modern in every respect.
Meanwhile military experts have suggested that construction shou-ld be delayed until the secrets of flight are mastered. Several nations are building flying machines based on Martian designs; Germany is believed to have launched a steam ornithopter, while the American Gun Club is building an interplanetary cannon, in a bid to place men on the Moon. Britain lags behind in this research, and the recent disaster in Kensington shows that our knowledge of Martian technology is woefully incomplete.

Advertisement
WILL THE MARTIANS RETURN? IS THERE HOPE FOR MANKIND?
Read
ASTROLOGY OF THE MARTIAN INVASION
by Professor Ignatius Blowitz
Astrolabe Press 5s 6d
AND LEARN THE FRIGHTENING TRUTH!

This cutting actually contains two important clues; the fact that the Prince Of Wales unveiled the statue suggests that the Queen might be busy elsewhere, and the last paragraph makes it clear that international rivalries have spurred intense study of Martian technology. The money raised by the Thunder Child trust isn't important in the current scenario, but might be prominent in a later adventure. The advertisement is a red herring. Some other possibilities for text handouts include extracts from books, pages from diaries, letters, business cards and other identity papers (most shopping centres now have useful card-making machines), and official reports.

As already said, pictures are an extremely useful adjunct to any adventure. One obvious source is SF illustrations of the twenties and thirties, when much of the tradition of the Scientific Romance still survived in pulp magazine SF. Work from this period can be found in numerous collections. Films of the era are also visually appealing, and stills are often available; "Metropolis", "Things To Come", and "Just Imagine" are particularly good in this respect, but there are many other excellent examples. Some referees like to show players photographs of NPCs; any pictorial magazine should contain all you need. Each of the Forgotten Futures collections is accompanied by numerous .GIF illustrations. Pictures of gadgets are also useful; the author has made good use of a collection of 19th century scientific illustrations and a 1920s scientific instrument catalogue. Material of this type is often surprisingly cheap, especially if you can find a public library selling off old books. The Forgotten Futures Library also contains some useful material.

Figures and other models are useful but aren't essential. For most purposes a few men and women in civilian clothing should be ample. Figures made for the games Space 1889 and Call Of Cthulhu tend to be particularly good for Victorian and Edwardian settings, SF figures may be more appropriate in games with futuristic settings. RPG shops mainly sell lead or alloy figures in 25mm scale, but there are plenty of alternatives; plastic figures made for model railways can be quite useful, as can larger scale plastic soldiers and animals, or the smaller figures sold for war games. Toys are almost always cheaper and less fragile than gaming miniatures. Dinosaurs and other large animals are best purchased as plastic models; in Britain the Natural History Museum sells an especially realistic range. Cars and other vehicles are best obtained as toys, not as gaming models, since toys are generally a *lot* cheaper. One word of warning; once you start buying these things, it's very hard to stop. The author has several hundred lead figures, dozens of vehicles, and a whole herd of dinosaurs, but generally uses less than a dozen figures for any game! If all of this

sounds hideously expensive, there's nothing to stop you using paper cutouts instead of figures; just glue a picture or photograph to a piece of card, and add a bit of wood or a coin as the base. Commercial cardboard figures are rare but do exist, usually supplied as part of game modules; the Cardboard Heroes range formerly manufactured by Steve Jackson Games is still occasionally available, and is highly recommended.

More exotic props can occasionally be useful, but they are often more trouble than they are worth. Full sized replica daggers and guns look good, but carrying them around most modern cities is asking for trouble. Model airships or spaceships tend to be too large for easy transportation, and you'll get some very strange looks from people who notice what you are carrying...

Some referees like to enhance the mood of a game by playing music that matches its theme. For instance, the music from Jeff Wayne's War Of The Worlds album might be quite effective in a post-invasion game. Ragtime might suit a campaign set in the twenties or thirties, with Gilbert and Sullivan or Souza more appropriate for Victorian adventures. Some players like this idea, others hate it; provided the music doesn't stop people hearing what's going on, it probably doesn't matter.

Finally, one last word of warning; if you need an eerie atmosphere, *don't* try to establish it by drawing the curtains and running the game by the light of a single candle. Extensive tests have revealed that three out of five referees can't read their own notes under these conditions, while one player in eight falls asleep in the dimness, and one in fifty sets fire to something...

Chapter 4

Game Worlds

These rules should be accompanied by a worldbook describing a fictional world in great detail. Usually these collections include history, the fiction it is based on, some adventures, etc. Current Forgotten Futures collections cover the following themes:

FF1: The A.B.C. Files

A complete role playing game set in Kipling's 21st century airship uto-pia. Contains the complete text of With The Night Mail and As Easy As A.B.C., rules, a worldbook, an adventure (with an operatic theme), a spreadsheet of data on historical airships, and 31 illustrations. FF1 contains ASCII text files, monochrome .GIF files, and a Lotus 123 spreadsheet template. Disk requirement was originally 1.2 Mb, but it is now supplied as an "extended edition" adding graphics from the original magazine publication of With The Night Mail, total size 1.9mb.

FF2: The Log Of The Astronef

The exploration of the Solar System in 1900 AD. Based on George Griffith's Stories Of Other Worlds (better known as Honeymoon in Space), it contains six complete stories, all the illustrations from their original publication, a worldbook taking the story forward to 1920, a spaceship design spreadsheet, five adventures, and much more. FF2 contains ASCII text files, grey scale .GIF files, and 5 Lotus 123 spreadsheet templates. Disk requirement is 2 mb.

The Astronef Collection

High-resolution .GIFs scanned from the illustrations accompanying Stories of Other Worlds; greatly enhanced from the graphics in FF2. The collection contains the stories and approximately two megabytes of 640 x 480, 16 or 256 grey scale files. Disk requirement now 2.8 mb, including the novelisation, A Honeymoon In Space, saved as ASCII with and without carriage returns.

FF3: George E. Challenger's Mysterious World   Adventures with Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's scientific hero, including the full text of The Lost World, The Poison Belt, When The World Screamed, The Land Of Mist, The Horror Of The Heights, and The Disintegration Machine, a worldbook, four adventures, a wargames scenario, full games rules and templates, 34 monochrome .GIF files, 4 Lotus 123 templates, etc. Disk requirement 2.5 mb.

FF4: The Carnacki Cylinders

All nine stories of Carnacki the Ghost Finder, with illustrations and game material, magic rules, three long adventures and two large adventure outlines, and a story-telling card game.

Forgotten Futures Clip-Art

A selection of Adobe Illustrator format .EPS vector graphics images of airships, bat-boats, electric pentacles, etc., which can be imported into Corel Draw, Micrografyx Draw, and most other drawing programs. These were generated by Zing, the 3D modelling program used for many of the FF illustrations. Some were

used in the FF collections, some have never appeared before. They will print out at the resolution of your printer, not the 640 x 480 resolution of the normal .GIF files, but please note: they omit some detailing which is usually added by a paint program. The collection also includes .WMF versions of some of these files, and relevant .GIFs

Forgotten Futures Charity Disk

This project has unfortunately had to be cancelled, due to the small number of contributions received from other authors. Many thanks to those who did participate or give other help, particularly Mike Cule, Phil Masters, Sheila Thomas and Matthew Hartley.

FF5: Goodbye Piccadilly

A collection of game worlds based on the destruction or transformation of London as described by various authors of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Includes maps, period fiction, articles, and illustrations, and all the usual game material. Disk requirement approximately 2.3mb

FF6: Victorian Villainy

A collection of stories and adventures showing various Victorian villains in action, with rules for melodramatic roleplaying, crime and punishment, fate, villainy, etc. Includes a novel, nine short stories, three plays, and three adventures plus several in outline form. Also includes cardboard cutout figures for the major characters in the adventures.

The Forgotten Futures CD-Rom

All of the Forgotten Futures role playing material (up to FF6) and Forgotten Futures Library on CD-Rom in HTML (web browser) format. Also includes The Astronef Collection, The FF Clip Art collection, and new library material; currently on Release 2.0, with 180mb of source material and games including a mini-RPG based on Edwin Abbott's Flatland.

Appendix A

Units, Currency, and Dates

A.1 Units

The source material for this game mostly originates in Britain and America in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Distances and other measurements are often given in Imperial units (feet, miles, pounds, and so forth), rather than the greatly preferable metric system. For readers unfamiliar with the older systems, here are a few of the principal units; most of the more obscure variants are omitted:

- 1 inch (in) is roughly 2.5 centimetres The most commonly used subdivisions of an inch were halves, quarters, eighths, sixteenths, thirty-seconds, and sixty-fourths.

- 1 foot (ft) is 12in is roughly 30 centimetres On plans feet and inches are often indicated by single and double quotes; for example, 5' 4" = 5ft 4in.

- 1 yard (yd) is 3ft is 36in is roughly 0.9 metre

- 1 mile (mi) is 1760yds is roughly 1.6 kilometres

- 1 fathom is 6ft or 1.8 metres, usually a nautical measurement

- 1 acre is 4840 square yards, roughly 0.4 hectares

- 1 horsepower is roughly 0.75 Kilowatt

- 1 ounce (oz) is roughly 28 grams

- 1 pound (lb) is 16 oz is roughly 450 grams

- 1 ton (English or "long" ton) is almost exactly 1 metric ton.

- 1 ton (American or "short" ton) is roughly 0.9 metric tons.

- 1 pint (pt) is roughly 0.45 litres

- 1 quart (qt) is roughly 0.9 litres

- 1 gallon (UK gallon) is roughly 4.5 litres

- 1 gallon (US gallon) is roughly 3.8 litres

- Zero degrees Fahrenheit is approximately -18 degrees Celsius

- 32 degrees Fahrenheit is zero Celsius

- 212 degrees Fahrenheit is one hundred degrees Celsius

- Body temperature is 98.6 degrees Fahrenheit

There are numerous conversion programs available for most computers.

A.2 Currency

Until 1972 British currency was based on the Pound Sterling, divided into shillings and pence. This form of currency is used in most British scientific romances.

- One pound = 20 shillings = 240 pence

- One shilling = 12 pence

Abbreviations for currency are

- £ for pound

- s for shilling

- d for pence (from the Latin "dinarius")

Copper coins:

- 1/4 d (farthing)

- 1/2 d (ha'penny)

- 1d (penny)

Silver coins:

- 3d (threepenny bit, "Joey"; a bronze coin after 1937)

- 6d (sixpence or [slang] "a tanner")

- 1s ("a bob")

- 2s ("two bob", "Florin")

- 2s 6d (Half crown)

- 5s (Crown - uncommon)

Gold coins:

- 10s (Half sovereign, "ten bob" - rare)

- £1 (Sovereign, "a quid". Purchasing power $5 in 1900)

Britain went off the gold standard in the 1920s, and gold coins ceased to be legal tender.
Bank notes:

- £5 ("a fiver") - very rare.

10s and £1 notes were introduced in the 1920s; larger notes were extremely rare, but did exist.
Another currency unit, the guinea, worth 21s, was used for legal and other professional fees, and by the most expensive shops. Although there were no coins or notes for this amount after 1813, prices were often given in guineas, and cheques can be written for guineas. The abbreviation gn is occasionally used.
There is very little standardisation of the way prices are written; here are a few examples:

- £2 6s 6 1/2d = Two pounds, six shillings and sixpence-ha'penny

- 2s 6d or 2/6 = Two shillings and sixpence = half a crown

- 19/11 = 19s 11d = Nineteen shillings and eleven pence

- 10'6 = 10s 6d

- Half a guinea = 10s 6d

- 25s = £1 5s

- 5gn = 5 guineas = £5 5s

A.3 Dates

American readers may sometimes need to be aware of the British convention on the writing of dates, and vice versa. The difference is simple: in Britain the day is put before the month, in America the month is put before the day. For example:

- British - 11/2/93 = 11th February 1993

- American - 3/4/55 = March 4th 1955

Appendix B

Some other game systems

Unusually paranoid legal note

Legal cases have made it clear that it is not advisable to include suggestions on conversion between these rules and other game systems without the express permission of their publishers. Nevertheless, it *is* possible to use the background material from this collection with *any* RPG, given enough ingenuity. The following are suggested as particularly suitable, but it should be made clear that this collection is not an approved playing aid for any of these games.

Role Playing Games

- Call of Cthulhu (Chaosium Inc.) is designed for horror campaigns, but is readily usable for any 19th or 20th century genre. It has all the skills needed for a scientific romance setting, and a huge body of published adventures and source material. It is relatively easy to learn and play.

- The Adventures of Luthor Arkwright (23rd Parallel Games) is based on a well-known comics series, and part of the original story was set in a world whose technology is very like that of Kipling's A.B.C. stories. The rules include psionics and travel between dimensions, as part of an ongoing struggle between rival groups who want to save or destroy all universes. At present no adventures or additional material are available for this game, or seem likely to appear.

- Space 1889 (GDW) was a scientific romance game. Set in an alternate universe where the "Luminiferous Ether" (their spelling) exists and Edison invented a space drive, it features forgotten civilisations on Mars, the Moon, and Venus, flying ships, and some useful rules on weird science and inventions. Several supplements and associated war games and board games were available, but the system went out of production in 1994, and GDW ceased trading in February 1996. A promised film never appeared. It is possible that it will be revived by another publisher, but at the time of writing the system appears to be dead.

- GURPS (Generic Universal Role Playing System: Steve Jackson Games) is a multi-genre game intended for use with any campaign setting. Regrettably the long-promised source pack set in the world of The Difference Engine (see appendix D) will not now appear. Existing supplements cover time travel and parallel worlds, and there are "high-tech" dirigible rules in a supplement based on Philip Jose Farmer's "Riverworld" novels. GURPS can be expensive, since it's sometimes necessary to buy three or four books to get everything needed for a campaign, but it is by far the most wide-ranging RPG in print, with a huge range of supplements and adventures.

- The Amazing Engine (TSR Inc) is a generic role playing system for SF and fantasy adventures, published with a series of world books for these genres. One of the first was "For Faery, Queen, And Country", a Victorian fantasy campaign. Rules are reasonably simple, and additional material (mostly in the form of more game worlds) has already appeared. Despite a few oddities, such as decimalised British currency in the mid-nineteenth century, this worldbook may be useful for variant campaigns.

- TSR has also published Masque Of The Red Death, a Victorian horror supplement for AD&D, which contains a lot of useful information on period characters and locations. While much is biased towards the concerns of the horror genre, the presentation is good, and it covers a generalised Victorian background in great detail.

- Castle Falkenstein (R. Talsorian Games) is another Victorian fantasy game, whose background has many similarities to "For Faery, Queen, and Country", but emphasises weird science, the "technology" of magic, and magic/science hybrids, with a swashbuckling approach to adventures. The system is exceptionally well designed and presented, using playing cards to resolve combat and the use of skills, and is well-supported by its publisher.

- Time Lord (Virgin) is based on the TV series Doctor Who, which has featured many stories with a Victorian setting. The rules are easy to learn, and the time travel background makes it easy to move characters to any game world. Unfortunately no support material has been published, or seems likely to appear in the future. An earlier Doctor Who game was published by FASA, but is no longer in production.

- Finally, TWERPS (The Worlds Easiest Role Playing System: Gamescience) may be useful for anyone who thinks that Forgotten Futures is much too complex; its rules fit on a small piece of paper!

These games are available from most specialist shops.

Historical note: With the exception of various cowboy RPGs, such as TSR's Boot Hill, the first commercial RPG to cover the 19th century in any detail was probably Victorian Adventure by Stephen Smith, published by SKS Distribution. It was intended as a purely historical game, and appeared in Britain around 1982-3, with at least two editions. It was not a success, possibly because readers were put off by unusual typography and layout, possibly because there wasn't much of a market for a purely historical game. Many thanks to Patrick Brady for these details. Other Game-Related Material

- Into The Dark Continent (The Magellanica Company) is not an RPG, but one of a range of storytelling card games. It allows the players to generate "Ripping Yarns" based on Victorian adventure fiction. The cards can also be useful as a source of adventure plots. Other games include Into The Domain of Capella (SF), Into The Dragons Cave (fantasy), Into The Dream Centre (surrealism), Into The Deserted Chapel (horror), Into The Dear Caress (romantic fiction, and originally suggested - jokingly - by the author of Forgotten Futures), and Into The Detectives Casebook (private eyes, written by me). Two more should appear shortly; Into the Djinn's Castle (Arabian nights) and Into the Dominion of Clockwork (steampunk). Some are now distributed by Chris Harvey Games, the others are available from:
Jo Walton, 5 Vivian Road, Sketty, Swansea, SA2 0UJ
Please note that this is a new address. Cheques should be made payable to Jo Walton.

- The Illustrated Martian Times is a newsletter published by the Victorian Studies Group of the Society of Fantasy and Science Fiction Wargamers. It includes ideas that might be useful in a Forgotten Futures campaign. Available free, but send a stamped addressed envelope for each issue you want to receive; foreign readers must presumably send envelopes and International Reply Coupons, but I haven't been able to confirm this. The SFSFW's magazine Ragnarok is also useful to anyone with an interest in this field. Membership at the rates quoted below includes a year's subscription, 6 issues.
The Illustrated Martian Times, C/o Simon Evans, 73 Avonleigh Road, Bedminster, Bristol, BS3 3JA, England
SFSFW memberships, C/o David Manley, Railway Cottage, Marden Walk, Trowbridge, Wiltshire BA14 OXR, UK
Membership 12.50 UK, BFPO/USFO 15, Rest of world 18

- More Full Thrust, a supplement for the Full Thrust space combat game, includes a very short section on using the rules for Victorian space combat. Published by:
Ground Zero Games, 'Fizno', Barking Tye, Needham Market, Suffolk, IP6 8JB, England

- Wessex games are publishing a series of Victorian wargames beginning with Aeronef, based in part on FF II:
Wessex Games, 4 Old Acre Road, Whitchurch, Bristol BS14 0HN, England

Appendix C

About the author

Marcus L. Rowland is a London-based technician. In his spare time he has been writing for games magazines and publishers since 1979. Notable works include the following game supplements and adventures:

- For Golden Heroes

    - Queen Victoria And The Holy Grail (Games Workshop)

- For Call of Cthulhu

    - Trail Of The Loathesome Slime (Games Workshop)
    - Nightmare In Norway (Games Workshop)
    - Bad Moon Rising (in The Great Old Ones, Chaosium) Joint winner Origins Award 1989, best role-playing adventure
    - Honeymoon In Hell (in Blood Brothers, Chaosium)
    - Fear Of Flying (in Fearful Passages, Chaosium)
    - El Tigre, y la Piramede de Destruccion (Blood Brothers 2, Chaosium)

- For Judge Dredd

    - Judgement Day (Games Workshop)
    - High Justice (Games Workshop, unpublished)

- For Space 1889

    - Canal Priests Of Mars (Game Designers Workshop) Publish-ed in a heavily abridged form not approved by the author

- Into the Detective's Casebook (card game, The Magellanica Co.)

- Software And User-Supported Publications

    - World Generator Shareware, later freeware; user registrations no longer accepted
    - Forgotten Futures I: The A.B.C. Files
    - Forgotten Futures II: The Log Of The Astronef
    - Forgotten Futures III: George E. Challenger's Mysterious World
    - Forgotten Futures IV: The Carnacki Cylinders
    - Forgotten Futures V: Goodbye Picadilly
    - Forgotten Futures Clip-Art Collection
    - Forgotten Futures VI - Victorian Villainy
    - The Forgotten Futures CD-Rom
    - (ed) The Astronef Collection (stories and high-resolution gra-phics) Material related to Forgotten Futures II

- Forthcoming

    - (possibly) Canal Priests of Mars - an uncut version possibly using FF rules.

Magazine credits include articles, adventures, and games in numerous issues of White Dwarf, Challenge, Different Worlds, Dagon, Concepts, Imagine, The Dragon, Dungeon Magazine, 2000 AD (board game, no author credited), Fantasy Chronicles, Red Giant, Space Gamer, Games Trade Monthly, Games Review Monthly, New Scientist (not game-re-lated), Strategy Plus, Role Player Independent, The Last Province, Journeys, Valkyrie, Ragnarok, Interactive Fantasy, numerous computer magazines, and various other magazines and fanzines. He has also written games articles in the Encyclopaedia of Science Fiction and the Encyclopaedia of Fantasy. He has a regular games column in the SF / Fantasy magazine Odyssey.

His short fiction has appeared in shared world collections edited by the Midnight Rose collective and published by Roc Books; Temps, Euro Temps, and The Weerde 2. These books have only appeared in the UK at the time of writing.

His hobbies include reading (especially fantasy and science fiction), writing, herpetology, SF fandom, gaming, computing, and trying to find time to sleep.

He doesn't usually talk about himself in the third person.

Appendix D

Sources

D.1 Recommended Reading (Non-Fiction)

- **Brian Aldiss & David Wingrove:** *Trillion Year Spree [1986]*
  An excellent history of SF, focused primarily on origins and early work in the genre. A previous version (Billion Year Spree [1976], by Aldiss only) contains most of the same material on early SF and scientific romances; the revisions were mostly concerned with improved coverage of modern SF.

- **Brian Aldiss (ed):** *Science Fiction Art [1975]*
  A good large-format collection of SF art from the late nineteenth and twentieth century, very useful for "futuristic" machines and cities.

- **Kingsley Amis:** *New Maps Of Hell [1960]*
  An excellent source on early science fiction. Currently out of print.

- **Reyner Banham:** *Megastructure - Urban Futures Of The Recent Past [1976]*
  Felix Barker & Ralph Hyde: *London As It Might Have Been [1982, 1995]*
  Two interesting books on architecture. The first discusses a dream of of the sixties and seventies; multi-function "super-buildings" used for work and leisure, which have some potential for expansion and incorporate transportation systems. The examples begin with medieval bridges and Victorian piers, leading on to complexes that would span most of North America. A must if you are thinking of designing a city of the future as it was once imagined. The second book focuses on London, and a range of proposed architectural and engineering projects that never came to fruition, featuring such wonders as monorails over Regent Street, mausoleum pyramids in North London, and dirigible mooring towers almost everywhere. Reprinted 1995.

- **I.F.Clarke:** *Voices Prophesying War [1966*
  ] Study of future war stories, from the eighteenth century to the present day.

- **John Clute & Peter Nicholls:** *The Enclopaedia of Science Fiction [1993]*
  John Clute & John Grant: *The Enclopaedia of Science Fiction [1997]*
  The Orbit second edition of the SF encyclopaedia (1400 pages, also available on Grolier CD-ROM) is expensive, but an excellent source for information on scientific romances. Its section on games was largely written by me; just don't believe anything said about me in the list of contributors! The first edition [1980] can occasionally be found second hand, but is not as useful. The Fantasy Encyclopaedia is also extremely useful, and again contains a games section by me.

- **Chris Morgan:** *The Shape Of Futures Past [1980]*
  A scholastic study of speculative fiction from 1800 to 1945.

- **David Pringle:** *Imaginary People [1987, revised 1989]*
  An interesting but occasionally infuriating study of the career of fictional characters in a wide variety of genres.

- **David Seed (ed):** *Anticipations: Essays On Early Science Fiction And Its Precursors [1994]*
  This collection is published by Liverpool University, and is probably most useful for readers with a serious academic interest in the roots of science fiction, and the convergence of several forms of fiction in the modern genre.

- **Brian M. Stableford:** *Scientific Romance In Britain 1890-1950 [1985]*
  A study of this genre and the features which distinguish it from Science Fiction, which may sometimes be somewhat blurred in the Forgotten Futures game.

- **Leonard De Vries:** *Victorian Inventions [1971]*
  A coffee-table book of ingenious Victorian gadgetry, from airships to theatrical illusions. Profusely illustrated, highly recommended.

D.2   Recommended Reading (Fiction)

This is a necessarily brief listing which can only cover a few personal favourites from hundreds of relevant stories and novels. It includes authentic scientific romances, and a good deal of modern SF and general fiction which relates to the field, or seems to derive style from it.

- **Stephen Baxter:** *Anti-Ice [1993]*
  A modern "steampunk" novel set in a world where Britain controls a strange form of power which can drive mighty machines or destroy a city. The story begins with the destruction of Sebastapol, during the Crimean war, and includes a trip to the moon, encounters with the forces of Anarchy, and nuclear terrorism.

- **Stephen Baxter:** *The Time Ships [1995]*
  The only authorised sequel to Wells' "The Time Machine", taking in several alternate universes and some extremely wide-ranging physics. Like any work derived from Wells, it is often gloomy but well worth reading.

- **John Brunner (ed):** *Kipling's Science Fiction [1992]*
  A useful collection, including the A.B.C. stories featured in the first Forgotten Futures compilation (but not the accompanying poetry or advertisements from With The Night Mail). A companion volume covers fantasy.

- **Karel Capek:** *R.U.R. (play) [1920, trans 1923]*
  Humanoid robots (literally "workers") are created, but eventually rebel and destroy the human race. One of the first depictions of robots (actually androids, chemically synthesised human replicants) and the consequences of their mass-production. Capek's novel "War With The Newts" [1937] tackles similar issues.

- **G.K. Chesterton:** *The Napoleon Of Notting Hill [1904]*
  A future Britain split into tiny warring nations.

- **Sir Arthur Conan Doyle:** *The Lost World [1912]*
  The Poison Belt [1913]
  The Disintegration Machine [1928]
  When The World Screamed [1929]
  The Horror Of The Heights [1913]
  Four of the Professor Challenger stories, plus a notable story of monsters in the stratosphere. A fifth Challenger story, The Land Of Mist [1926], is possibly Doyle's worst novel and recommended only to fanatic completists. The five have been collected in one volume. Forgotten Futures III includes all six of these stories. Doyle's Sherlock Holmes stories are essential reading for background detail and characterisation.

- **E.M. Forster:** *The Machine Stops [1909]*
  The collapse of an over-mechanised Utopia.

- **George MacDonald Fraser:** *Flashman (& sequels, various dates)*
  The exploits of Flashman, the villain of the novel "Tom Brown's Schooldays", a coward who receives the Victoria Cross (V.C.) and becomes one of Britain's most respected soldiers. Although recently written, they are highly recommended for research into Victorian period detail and descriptions of the attitudes and notables of the era.

- **William Gibson & Bruce Sterling:** *The Difference Engine [1990]*
  A modern novel exploring an alternative 19th century in which there was a Radical revolution, information technology arrived early, and "our lady of the engines" (Ada Lovelace, a mathematical genius and associate of Babbage) is creating the first artificial intelligence.

- **Charlotte Perkins Gilman:** *Herland [1914]*
  A radical feminist Utopia based on parthenogenetic reproduction. Probably only available as an electronic text released by Project Gutenberg.

- **Colin Greenland:** *Harm's Way [1993]*
  An excellent modern recreation of a scientific romance in the style of Dickens and Jane Austen. Featuring clipper ships sailing to Mars and Venus, iron moons, angels, and mysterious assassins. Highly recommended.

- **George Griffith:** *A Honeymoon In Space [1901]*
  An interplanetary adventure, originally published as a series of short stories in 1900, which seems to have influenced a surprising amount of early SF. The hero, his bride, and dour engineer Murgatroyd set off for a honeymoon cruise in space, visiting various worlds and meeting hostile and friendly aliens. Echoes of these stories can be found in space operas and stories by many authors including E.E. "Doc" Smith, Ray Bradbury, John W. Campbell, and C.S. Lewis.
  The story cycle is the background for the second Forgotten Futures Collection, 'The Log Of The Astronef', which includes all six. The entire novel was recently added to its graphics supplement, 'The Astronef Collection.'

- **Harry Harrison:** *A Transatlantic Tunnel, Hurrah! [1972]*
  Can George Washington, descendant of the famous traitor, complete the tunnel that will link Britain to her American colonies? Who is trying to sabotage the work? Will Washington reach England in time to join the first train through the tunnel? These and many other questions are answered in a wonderful evocation of the Victorian adventure novel, set in a world where America lost the War of Independence. Also known as "Tunnel Through The Deeps".

- **William Hope Hodgson:** *Carnacki The Ghost-Finder [1913]*
  An excellent collection of period stories featuring a scientific psychic detective and his brushes with real and faked supernatural events. All stories are included in the fourth Forgotten Futures collection.

- **Aldous Huxley:** *Brave New World [1932]*
  The classic novel of genetic manipulation and thought control.

- **Rudyard Kipling:** *Actions And Reactions [1909]*
  A Diversity of Creatures [1917]
  Two excellent collections, which between them contain the A.B.C. stories and some of Kipling's best writing. See Forgotten Futures I for these stories and *much* more on Kipling.

- **C.S. Lewis:** *Out of the Silent Planet [1938]*
  Perelandra (aka "Voyage To Venus") [1943]
  That Hideous Strength [1945]
  This trilogy is probably best described as *Anti*-Scientific Roman-ce, but still includes some powerful writing and vivid descriptions of excellent aliens.

- **Peter Martin:** *Summer In 3000 [1946]*
  An interesting example of a socialist Utopia, whose science is ba-sed largely on bioengineered plastics and gene modification,
  drawn into conflict with a horrific religio-fascist USA. Long out of print and very difficult to find; a little too inclined to lecture its readers.

- **Michael Moorcock:** *The Warlord Of The Air [1971]*
  The Land Leviathan [1974]
  The Steel Tsar [1981]
  (Collected in one volume as The Nomad Of Time [1982])
  The "Oswald Bastable" stories; the narrator literally walks into alternate worlds, derived in part from the work of Wells and Kipling. Very highly recommended.

- **Kim Newman:** *Famous Monsters (story) [1990]*
  Modern homage to H.G. Wells, in which one of the tentacled survivors of the War of the Worlds takes up a career in B-movies. A collection with this title, published in 1994, is also recommended.

- **Kim Newman:** *Anno Dracula [1992]*
  The Bloody Red Baron [1996]
  Dracula infects Queen Victoria with vampirism, and becomes her consort and ruler of Britain... Suddenly vampirism is the height of fashion, but a desperate resistance organisation has a cunning plan. Modern, not really a scientific romance, but fun and useful for details of personalities (real and fictional) of the late nineteenth century.
  The Bloody Red Baron takes the story on to the first world war, with the deposed Dracula now working for the Kaiser; most of the flying aces on both sides are now vampires, and some don't need aircraft any more...

- **Christopher Priest:** *The Space Machine [1976]*
  The Prestige [1995]
  The first is a light-hearted romp based loosely on H.G. Wells' fiction, in the style of a scientific romance. The second is a serious novel about Victorian magicians, including some excellent weird science.

- **William Rushton:** *Dr. W.G. Grace's Last Case [1984]*
  Another (very) light-hearted Victorian romp. After the War of the Worlds, Dr. Watson and Dr. W.G. Grace (the World's Greatest Cricketer and all-England croquet champion) team up to solve a murder, and stumble across a diabolical plan to destroy the human race. With guest appearances by Dr. Jekyll, Moriarty, Queen Victoria, A.J. Raffles, Buffalo Bill, Picasso, and many others. Not recommended as a source, unless you want to get *very* silly, but *lots* of fun!

- **A. Kingsley Russell (ed):** *The Rivals of H.G. Wells [1979]*
  Anthology of late Victorian and early Edwardian short fiction by a variety of authors, reproduced (with illustrations) from British magazines of the period. Includes work by George Griffith, Jack London, Fred M. White, and others, and several examples of the ever-popular British catastrophe story, in which London is destroyed by gas explosion, flood, ice, fire, and volcano.

- **George Bernard Shaw:** *Back To Methuselah [1921]*
  Play studying the consequences of immortality.

- **Mary Shelley:** *Frankenstein [1818]*
  Despite its early date, this novel is a fascinating discussion of scientific responsibility and morality.

- **Olaf Stapledon:** *Last And First Men [1930]*
  A panoramic history of the future, extending from the 1930s to the death of the solar system.

- **Olaf Stapledon:** *Odd John [1935]*
  Sirius [1944]
  The first is based on the evolution of a mental superman, and the consequences of his attempts to found a new civilisation. The second deals with the creation of dogs with human intelligence.

- **Jules Verne:** *From The Earth To The Moon [1869]*
  Journey To The Centre Of The Earth [1872]
  Twenty Thousand Leagues Under The Sea [1872]
  Master Of The World [1914]
  Despite appallingly bad translations, and some occasional lapses in science which are primarily translation errors, all of these stories are scientific romances at their best. A recent discovery, Paris In The Twentieth Century, may also be useful.

- **Thea Von Harbou:** *Metropolis [1926]*
  The book of the film; Von Harbou was Fritz Lang's wife and co-author of the script. There are many other adaptations of this story and its setting, including an graphic novel; Superman's Me-tropolis [1996]

- **Edgar Wallace:** *The Four Just Men [1901]*
  Not a scientific romance, but an excellent turn of the century thril-ler with some interesting sidelights on British attitudes to foreigners. The later sequels are less useful.

- **H.G. Wells:** *When The Sleeper Wakes [1899]*
  The War Of The Worlds [1898]

The First Men In The Moon [1901]
The Time Machine [1895]
Mankind under the rule of immensely rich capitalists, the classic novel of alien invasion, and two definitive journeys, whose impact on science fiction can't be overestimated.

- **John Wyndham:** *The Day Of The Triffids [1951]*
The Kraken Wakes [1953]
Trouble With Lichen [1960]
Three rather late scientific romances; two catastrophe stories (always a popular theme with British authors) and a novel about the discovery of immortality.

- **Yevgeny Zamiatin:** *We [1924]*
Life in a world socialist state where personal names and the word "I" are forbidden.

D.3   Recommended Viewing

Another brief listing of a few personal favourites:

- **The First Men In The Moon [1964]**
Professor Cavor's antigravity ship flies to the Moon, where Selenites are preparing to invade Earth. Wells played somewhat for laughs, but still an interesting adaptation of an important work. Special effects are poor by today's standards.

- **Just Imagine [1930]**
A man from the thirties is transported to 1980s New York, and can't cope with the changes. A musical, notable for lavish sets but poor dialogue and acting.

- **The Lost World [1925]**
One of several adaptations of the Conan Doyle classic, featuring Ray Harryhausen's early stop-frame model animation and effects, including a Brontosaurus loose in London. Silent, but better than the subsequent remakes.

- **Jules Verne's Rocket To The Moon [1967]**
A dire comedy version of From The Earth To The Moon, from the same team as The First Men In The Moon, it nevertheless has some nice Victorian high-tech devices, but unfortunately never gets into space.

- **Metropolis [1926]**
Workers in a hellish underground complex provide luxuries for the rich bosses, who panic when they see signs of revolt. An important precursor of many later films including Bladerunner.

- **The Time Machine [1960]**
Reasonably faithful enactment of Wells' classic story, let down by wooden acting.

- **Things To Come [1936]**
World War 2 lasts from the thirties to the sixties, ending in the formation of a world government run by scientists. Biased heavily towards Wells' notions of politics and history.

D.4   Comics

- **Brian Augustyn:** *Gotham By Gaslight [1991]*
Master of the Future [1992]
Two 'graphic novels' starring Batman, set against a Victorian background. Some interesting characterisation can be found in both stories; the first pits a Victorian version of Batman against Jack The Ripper, the second against a villain straight from the pages of Jules Verne. Period detail is excellent. The 'Elseworlds' series from DC has included several other stories with Victorian or Edwardian settings; the above are particularly good examples. For a profoundly silly take on Victorian detectives see the L.E.G.I.O.N. 007 annual [1994], also part of this series.

- **Grant Morrison:** *Sebastian O [1993]*
  A 3-issue series in which the Victorian era acquired television and computers somewhat early, with unfortunate results. Extremely violent, not always faithful to the era, but good for imagery and costuming.

- **Bryan Talbot:** *The Adventures Of Luthor Arkwright [197?-89]*
  Published in several different formats over this period, this is (usually) a 9-part story of inter-dimensional warfare. Several sections are set in a world with quasi-Victorian technology. Highly recommended.

Numerous other comics have attempted an evocation of the style of the scientific romance, but most have failed dismally.

D.5 Old Maps

Replica and reprinted maps are wonderful props for any game, and a useful starting point for "future cities" as they were imagined around the turn of the century. It should be possible to obtain them for most areas; the examples that follow are useful for a British campaign.

- **Alan Godfrey Maps, 57-58 Spoor St., Dunston, Gateshead, NE11 9BD, Britain**
  The "Godfrey Edition" of 15"/mile (1/4224) scale Ordnance Survey maps are photographically reduced from late 19th and early 20th century 25"/mile originals. They give very clear coverage of London, and partial coverage of many other areas of Britain, adding a history of each area and other useful data on the back. Map details include individual houses, footpaths, tram lines, and so forth. London alone needs more than a hundred sheets, each showing an area of roughly 1.5 square miles, for full coverage, but most campaigns will only need a few key areas. 7 or 8 new maps are published every month. Particularly recommended:

  – 63(11) - Whitechapel 1893 - A must for any campaign with echoes of Jack the Ripper.
  – K710 - Crystal Palace 1871 - A marvel of Victorian engineering, including a history of what was once Britain's largest exhibition site plus plans and pictures of its interior.

  The range includes some 36"/Mile (1/1760) scale plans of especially important sites, such as the Tower of London and Dublin Castle. A catalogue is available by post.

- **David & Charles, Brunel House, Newton Abbot, Devon, Britain**
  This company reproduces 1"/1 mile scale maps (1/63360 scale) from 19th-century originals. They cover large areas, but this scale is too small to show much detail, and clarity is poorer than the Godfrey maps. London is mostly on sheet 72, with outlying areas on sheets 71, 79, and 80. No catalogue available. Current prices, mail order & foreign details not known.

- **Small-scale Victorian maps of London can also be found in:**

  – Cthulhu By Gaslight (Chaosium Inc.)
  – GURPS Horror (Steve Jackson Games)
  – Masque of the Red Death (TSR)

Chaosium also publish maps of 1920s America and the imaginary towns of Arkham and Innsmouth for the Call of Cthulhu game.

Appendix E

Children and Animals

Sometimes it's fun to take on a role outside the normal run of adult player characters. Forgotten Futures III included an adventure written especially for children; this was so popular that the rules it introduced are reproduced below, with some minor corrections.

E.1   Children As Adventurers

Children should be generated using a number of points equal to the character's age. Thus an eight year old gets 8 points, a child aged ten gets 10 points, and so forth. Points can be spent in the normal way, except that a maximum of 2 points can be spent on any skill, and some skills are not available. While some children may have higher BODY than some adults, you should normally assume that any adult is more than a match for any child; high BODY is offset by smaller stature and poorer co-ordination.

Since the physical size of these characters is small, the Stealth skill should usually begin at a higher value than BODY/2. For children, this is best related to age. For a child aged 8 or less, the base value of Stealth should be BODY. For a child aged 9-12 the base value of Stealth should be BODY -1, minimum 1. After this age assume that puberty cuts in, with a spurt in body size, and Stealth drops to normal levels.

The Doctor skill is not available, and referees are strongly advised to prohibit the Driving, Martial Arts, Military Arms, and Pilot skills, or at least demand an extremely good rationale for their acquisition (cadet corps training is one possibility for older children). Unusually destructive use of skills should be discouraged; while real children with (for example) an extensive knowledge of chemistry may occasionally dream of blowing up their schools, very few actually do it.

Personal possessions and wealth should be limited to what is plausible and realistic for a child in the era under consideration; for instance, in the 1920s a pair of roller skates or a cricket ball is a plausible possession, but a car or a Game-Boy is not. In Britain children should find it almost impossible to obtain firearms; farm children and the aristocracy might occasionally be allowed to use shotguns or small-calibre rifles, under strict supervision, but they certainly won't be permitted to carry them in public. Air rifles are more plausible, but still illegal near any public area; the nineteenth century saw several air-rifle killings, and they are regarded as a potentially lethal weapon. While there are a very few illicit handguns in circulation, guns of all types are much less common in reality than they are in detective fiction of the period, and it is extraordinarily rare for them to fall into the hands of children. Whatever arguments players may use, the referee should *always* refuse to allow access to firearms, explosives, alcohol, or anything else that isn't usually available to children.

The most useful piece of equipment that's readily available to most children is a bicycle; use BODY, or the Athlete or Riding skills, which-ever is best, to ride one. Other useful possessions might include pen-knives, camping equipment, watches, and electric torches. A maximum of two or three pounds of saved pocket money is a good starting point for personal wealth; even if a child is the heir to a fortune, sensible parents won't dole out vast amounts of money. Children may optionally be accompanied by dogs; see below.

Optional Rule: Staying Awake

Children need plenty of sleep. If the time (pm) exceeds a character's age, start to roll age versus time every hour; after midnight add 12 to the time (am) for this roll. If the roll is failed, the character falls asleep. If the roll is exactly what is needed for success, the character stays awake but starts to yawn frequently and

loudly, and makes all subsequent rolls at -1 to age; because yawning is infectious, everyone else trying to stay awake should also roll at -1!

Optional Rule: Attention Span

Children have short attention spans; if they are waiting for something to happen, they may lose interest. One way to simulate this is to ask for an occasional roll of the child's MIND versus the number of hours that pass. If this is combined with the Staying Awake roll, above, it can be almost impossible to accomplish anything at night; referees are advised to use one or the other, but not both.

E.2   Dogs As Adventurers

Usually dogs are run by the referee, but players may choose to run them as player characters. For either purpose they start out with 8 points, which can be used for characteristics or skills. No more than 2 points can be spent on any skill. The following skills are available; note that base values and descriptions are changed from human norms:

Skill	Base	Notes
Actor	AvM&S	Useful for playing dead, begging, etc.
Athlete	B *	Swimming, running, catching sticks, etc.
Brawling	B *	Biting, clawing, and tripping only.
Detective	AvM&S	Via scent, keen eyesight, etc.
Linguist	M/2 *	Understand human commands, bark to warn of danger, howl to attract help, etc. High skill levels do *not* add extra languages. Regardless of skill level, it is *not* possible to talk to humans!
Medium	S *	Uncanny ability to sense danger, ghosts, etc. All dogs have it to some extent.
Riding	AvB&S	Used to control other animals, eg. sheep, but not to ride them unless the dog is circus trained.
Stealth	**	Hiding, camouflage, sneaking, etc.
Thief	AvB&M/2	Steal bones, keys, sticks, etc.

* Available free at base values.
** The base value of Stealth is BODY for puppies, BODY-1 (minimum 1) for adults.

- Small dogs (BODY 1-2) take the following Wounds: B[ ] F[ ] I[ ] C[ ] and bite with Effect Brawling+1, Damage A:B, B:F, C:F

- Large dogs (BODY 3) use these wounds: B[ ] F[ ] I[ ] I[ ] C[ ] and bite with Effect Brawling+1, Damage A:B, B:F, C:I

- Huge dogs (BODY 4 or more) use these wounds: B[ ] F[ ] I[ ] I[ ] C[ ] and bite with Effect Brawling+1, Damage A:F, B:I, C:C

Example: Nippy the Yorkshire Terrier
BODY *[1]*, MIND *[3]*, SOUL *[2]*, Athlete *[1]*, Brawling *[1]*, Detective *[5]*, Linguist *[3]*, Medium *[2]*, Stealth *[1]*
Wounds: B[ ] F[ ] I[ ] C[ ]
Attack: Bite, Effect 2, Damage A:B, B:F, C:F
Quote: "Snuffle, snuffle, snuffle, yap, yap!"
Notes: Nippy has been designed as a very intelligent pet who can aid his owners by getting help, sniffing out clues, etc. He is useless in combat; his most effective attack is probably to yap excitedly, widdle on someone's foot, or entangle his lead around legs.

Example: Towser The Wonder-Dog
BODY *[3]*, MIND *[1]*, SOUL *[2]*, Actor *[3]*, Athlete *[3]*, Brawling *[3]*, Detective *[3]*, Linguist *[1]*, *Medium [3]*, *Stealth [2]*

Wounds: B[ ] F[ ] I[ ] I[ ] C[ ]
Attack: Bite, Effect 4, Damage A:B, B:F, C:I
Quote: "Arff, arff, arff, whine!"
Notes: Towser is a big strong mongrel, but a little lazy; no points have been spent to improve Athlete or Brawling over the norms for his BODY. *One point each has been spent on the Detective and Medium skills; he is a good tracker, often senses danger before his master, and is large enough to knock someone down if he perceives a threat to his owner.*

Example: Wolff (German shepherd)
BODY *[4],* MIND *[1],* SOUL *[1], Athlete [5], Brawling [6], Linguist [1], Medium [1], Stealth [2]*
Wounds: B[ ] F[ ] I[ ] I[ ] C[ ]
Attack: Bite, Effect 7, Damage A:F, B:I, C:C
Quote: "Grrrrrrrr....."
Notes: Wolff is an efficient killing machine. He is not a suitable pet for a child, unless the child's name happens to be Damien.

You are strongly advised *not* to allow players to take on the role of huge dogs, unless a particularly high body count is required.

Dogs don't automatically know everything that a human character might. For instance, a dog might recognise a person as "someone Master met recently", but not as "Mr. Jones, the barman at the pub". They certainly can't explain exactly what they have seen to humans. Without experience of weapons, they might mistake a gun for a stick, or a thrown hand grenade for a thrown ball.

These rules are easily extended to cover other animals, "intelligent" toys, talkative steam engines, etc.

See Free Nessie in FF3 for an example of an adventure for children and their pets.