

Edge of the Century

A 24 Hour RPG by Timothy Dedeaux

5 pm Wed, May 28 to 5 pm Thurs, May 29, 2008

Central Resolution Mechanic inspired by “dukereg” on the “Opportunity Pool” thread at <http://forum.rpg.net/archive/index.php/t-384462.html>

The edge of the century draws near, as does the life of the great Queen Victoria. In America, the Native tribes have been decimated, and the frontier declared closed. England is beginning to lose her Empire, though for the moment it is safe. In the cities, women shout for the right to vote, workers strike for a living wage, and anarchists gather in secret with *Das Capital* in one hand and a bomb in another.

In Europe, ethnic unrest and a complex web of alliances will soon burn the continent in a war many men think will be good. They say that Europe has gone soft and weak and needs a war to make it strong again.

And underneath the calm, stoic Victorian facade, madness coils and twists, waiting to erupt. Secret societies meet, calling on spirits of the dead and ancient gods. Curses lay upon families, waiting to drag them down into madness, or worse.

Okay, I'm out of time. Basically, I'm looking at turn of the 19th/20th century as it would have been seen through the eyes of Edgar Allan Poe. I

Fundamentals of the System:

Tests are rolled on 1d6. If your roll is equal to one of your Attribute's numbers, you succeed.

For Opposed Tests, both sides roll standard Tests.

If both fail, neither accomplishes anything.

If one fails and the other succeeds, the one who succeeds wins.

If both succeed, the higher roll wins. If their rolls are the same, BOTH actions have the intended effect

For example:

Frederick's Vigor is rated at 1, 4-6. He succeeds if he rolls a 1, 4, 5 or 6. He fails if he rolls a 2 or 3.

Josephine's Vigor is rated at 1-4. She succeeds if she rolls 1, 2, 3, or 4. She fails if she rolls a 5 or 6.

Both of them have a 4 in 6 chance of success, but Frederick has a chance at succeeding on a 5 or 6, which is very hard to beat. Frederick's spread is actually superior to Josephine's because his successes are more potent in Opposed Conflicts.

In other words, in a basic situation, they're roughly the same, but under the stress of going head to head with an opponent, Frederick has the edge.

Every Attribute defaults to 1. Things like brain surgery are impossible without training, though.

Succeeding on 1 is Free (Costs 0 Points)

Succeeding on 2 Costs 1 Point

Succeeding on 3 Costs 2 Points

Succeeding on 4 Costs 3 Points

Succeeding on 5 Costs 4 Points

Succeeding on 6 Costs 5 Points

So Josephine's Vigor costs 0 Points for the default "1," 1 Point for succeeding on 2, 2 points for succeeding on 3, and 3 points for succeeding on 4. This is a total of $0 + 1 + 2 + 3 = 6$ Points.

Frederick's Vigor costs 0 Points for the default "1," 3 Points for succeeding on 4, 4 Points for succeeding on 5, and 5 Points for succeeding on 6. This totals $0 + 3 + 4 + 5 = 12$ Points.

Though Josephine and Frederick both have the same 4 in 6 chance to succeed, Frederick has a definite edge in Opposed Tests, but has paid fully twice as many points as Josephine.

The Three Basic Attributes:

Vigor – covers athleticism, hand to hand combat, riding animals, etc.

Presence – covers force of will, charisma, and command

Wits – covers perception, stealth, deception, and so on

Additional Skills Include:

(Each of these is designed to be a mini-niche)

Archery – all primitive distance weapons, from slings to blowguns to bows

Demolitions – blowing things up and disarming bombs

Driving – cars, motorcycles, and so on

Medicine – first aid, long term care, etc.

Nautical – steamships, sailboats, canoes, etc.

Piloting – airplanes, gliders, airships, helicopters

Repair – fixing things

Shooting – handguns, shotguns, rifles, machineguns, etc.

Thievery – picking locks, picking pockets, sleight of hand, etc

Wilderness Lore – tracking, trapping, navigation, anything involving the wilds

There are also additional Boons that can allow a reroll, including:

(Whenever you call on a Boon for a reroll, you risk losing it or having it damaged in some way)

Relationships with other characters: “Love for Lady Eleanor,”

Personal attributes: “Incredible faith in my own abilities”

Followers and Pets: “Loyal dog Fluffy,” “Right-Hand Man Raphael,” “Magician's Familiar Az-wisya”

Equipment: “Gun,” “Sword,” “Spear,” etc.

Special Equipment: “My Grandpa's Revolver,” “Excalibur,” “The Spear of Destiny,” “Wizard's Staff”

(Special Equipment can be called on twice, once for its “Special” ability, and then once for its “normal” ability. So “Excalibur” would be called on once for its “Magical Sword given by the Lady of the Lake” special ability, and once for its “Sword” ability. To get Special Equipment, buy *two* Boons and put them together in one item).

Boons cost 3 points if they can only be used with one Attribute or Skill

Boons cost 6 points if they can be used with 2-3 related Attributes or Skills

Boons cost 9 points if they can be used with ANY Attribute or Skill

Traits:

Every character should have at least 2 Traits. Traits are double-edged swords that can serve as Boons in Conflicts that directly involve them, but which also cause trouble for the character, restrict his actions, or otherwise define his character. Traits cost NO points, and a character can start with up to 5.

Examples include:

Protective of his little sister, Loyal to the Knights Templar, Sworn to help the helpless, Carmelite Nun, Follows the ways of St. Francis, Won't Back Down,

Character Creation Examples

(Most Characters are built on 30 points.)

Frederick Usher, brooding child of privilege

Frederick is pale, thin, and sarcastically charismatic. He's a dangerous man in many ways: the things he knows haunt him, he has the strength of a madman, and he's studied fencing extensively.

Attributes:

Vigor: 1, 4-6 (12 points) This is almost as good as it gets, concerning Vigor

Presence: 1-4 (6 points) This is good Presence, a high chance of success, but weaker in Conflicts

Wits: 1-3 (3 points) Decent Wits, about a 50-50 chance of success, and weak in Conflicts

Occult Knowledge: 1-4 (6 points) Again, a high chance of success, but weaker in Conflicts

Boons:

Ornate Fencing Saber (3, Vigor only)

Traits:

Protective of his little sister, Annabelle

Last Son and Heir

Has Seen What No Man Should See

Josephine Smith, Iron-Jawed Suffragette

Vigor: 1-4 (6 points)

Presence: 1-3, 6 (8 points)

Wits: 1-5 (10 points)

Driving: 1-3 (3 points)

Boons:

Lou Johnson, her reporter boyfriend (Wits) (3 points)

Traits:

"I am the equal of any man!"

"I won't back down unless someone's life's in danger."

"I'll vote before I die, just watch me!"

Central Mechanic

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Conflict Resolution: is done via a series of tests. The winner of each test gains one Effect Point.

Typically, the conflict continues until somebody has gained 3 EP's, enough to win. However, the side that's winning can call it quits at any time, and EP's will be applied. If the two sides are tied, either can call it quits.

In a Conflict, any Test in which both sides Succeed with the same roll gives an EP to both sides.

In a Conflict, any Test in which both sides Fail gives no EP to anyone.

EP can either be applied as effect, or spent to cancel the other side's EP. If a conflict ends with no Effect dealt out (a tie in which one or both sides use their EP to cancel out the other side's EP, either side can immediately restart the conflict. Otherwise, the end of a conflict decides it, and it cannot be restarted unless the situation changes.

Effects from Effect Points

(EP are always applied AFTER the Conflict is over)

1 EP = Wound, inconvenience, disarm, temporary problem

2 EP = Serious Wound, breaking weapon, serious problem

3 EP = Total Victory: the winner can do pretty much anything to the loser

You always narrate the Effect of EPs that you inflict.

Extra Boons used in a Conflict to gain rerolls are put at risk. If you use an Extra Boon to gain a reroll, and then lose that Test despite the reroll, the Extra Boon ends up facing the same number of EP that are coming at you when the Conflict is over. You can use your EP to defend yourself, your Extra Boons, or split them between both.