

1: Unknown Armies (3rd Edition) | RPG | RPGGeek

Unknown Armies (abbreviated UA), subtitled "A roleplaying game of power and consequences", is an occult-themed roleplaying game by John Scott Tynes and Greg Stolze and published by Atlas Games.

Maps There is an Occult Underground. Beneath the living mirror of heaven, beneath the world of our desires, there are streets with secret names. They connect the back alleys of civilization with the urine-stained vacant lots of the cosmos. They take you to the occult underground. There are no maps that show its borders. Yet you know it exists—or rather, you know it has to exist. You know it in your bones. A song that drives people to suicide. A man whose face melts with each dawn. A videotape that shows the birth of a goddess. There are lots of rumors. The people you hear them from are different, like the weird drunk in the bar who lit his cigarettes without matches, or the street performer whose juggling pins pirouetted in unison between his hands. But that feeling of truth remained. Finally you knew what it was: You want it now. You want to know what they know. You want to walk those secret streets and see where they go. Some seek the occult underground for power: The power to change their bodies, change their lives, change the world. Others seek the occult underground for knowledge: The knowledge of their hearts, of their dreams, of the cosmos itself. Everyone finds what they desire. But few know what their desire truly is until it is upon them. You know these things: Something big is going down. But you can feel it all around you. It is a secret you have yet to grasp, though you could swear there was a dream you had in which you heard it whispered. You need to know more. The world you know is not enough for you. You want to go deeper. At times you want to let go of reality and let yourself slip in to some kind of pure understanding. Anything would be better than daily life. You know there is a place, a place of ideas, and that it contains all of your desires. But there is danger there. People vanish, die horribly, become madmen, for the sake of whatever the secret is that lies at the heart of the unseen world. That world is the occult underground. Find it, before it finds you. Unknown Armies, 2nd ed.

2: How to Succeed in RPGs or Die Trying: Review: Unknown Armies, third edition (Gamma playtest)

Unknown Armies characters are broken, obsessed people, and you play one of them. The third edition of this cult classic roleplaying game. Confront your character's mental and emotional health with detailed rules for significant trauma and shock.

Unknown Armies presents magick as it might exist in a world co-created by Tim Powers and James Ellroy, as twisting wrinkles in reality created by greater and greater risk, sacrifice, and obsession. In Unknown Armies we ask, what would you risk to change the world? Magick finds a way to ask the very most from you, until you achieve what you want or you are left with nothing. Unknown Armies lets you play one of these characters. Try to accomplish a self-assigned objective or goal in order to get what you want. As part of a cabal, your character helps others to achieve their own goals, as well as a group objective that can " and will " have long-lasting consequences when it is met. Co-created by Greg Stolze and John Tynes, Unknown Armies presents an entirely original and yet disturbingly familiar approach to mystery, horror, and action in roleplaying games. This new edition, helmed by Stolze, also features the diverse talents of a cabal of contributors: Sometimes the occult underground is literally underground. Here at Atlas Games we love Unknown Armies. Fans love it, too. We want to bring it back. This Kickstarter campaign is all about taking that game " a game that has inspired, disturbed, and excited gamers for almost twenty years " and updating it for a new generation and a new era. We need your help to do this. This is Unknown Armies Third Edition. Unknown Armies consists of three books presented together as a complete set. Initially softcover, we expect to upgrade them to beautiful case bound volumes in a slipcase once certain stretch goals are met. Play "The book for players. All of the rules for resolving actions The central shock gauge mechanic Obsession and identity Avoiding fights and then dealing with them when you end up being dragged into them anyway The magick of adepts and avatars Book Two: Run "The book for the Game Moderator. Presenting the players and their characters with obstacles to their fevered dreams of changing the world Procedures for overseeing character creation and setting collaboration in the first session of play Plenty of background on the world of the occult underground Book Three: Reveal "The book of the weird. Fuel for the Game Moderator: Look for the link in the first backer update. With these documents also come access to the Gamma playtest of this edition, which means we want your feedback about the game before we seal the deal with the Invisible Clergy, AKA our talented production team. Publishing three full-color, beautifully illustrated, expertly crafted softcover books is certainly appealing, but we want more for this game, and we want you to help us get there. Here is what we plan to do with backer funds that exceed the initial target set for the campaign. We upgrade all three books to casebound volumes with soft-touch laminate covers. This is a free upgrade to anyone who gets the books in print. We add a Deluxe Set option, which is the three books in a full-color slipcase with magnetic clasp. The slipcase unfolds to serve as a full-function Game Moderator screen. Three books enclosed within a slipcase that unwraps to form a GM screen and reference. Concept image of unfolded screen. We add this dual-stat scenario by Rick Neal to Crazy Pack 2. Set in Prague, , it showcases the breadth of possible stories in the occult underground and features both Unknown Armies 2nd edition and d20 game stats. We add Book Four: Expose, a digital-only offering that begins as a page collection of new material and content by Greg Stolze. Automatically added to any backer tier that gets bonus ebook content. We expand Book Four: We unlock the final set of chains on Greg Stolze and lock his full talent upon Book Four: As we delve into the occult underground we uncover new and diverse rituals, organizations, archetypes, and magickal phenomena. This stretch goal unlocks Book Five: Mine, which includes expanded game content in PDF and EPUB for all those eligible to receive bonus ebook content at no additional cost. New Book Five Author: Mine, extending it to 48 pages. We take Ryan Macklin, UA writer from the Internet, and lock him in a chamber of small animals until he hands over an additional 16 pages of material for Book Five: Mine, bringing it to a total of 64 pages. Catching sight of UA writer Chad Underkoffler trying to escape, we strap him in and extract an additional 16 pages for Book Five: Mine, for your eventual enjoyment, bringing it to a total of 80 pages. We return to the orchestral forge of James Semple to commission an additional minute composition of Unknown

Armiesâ€™ inspired music to collide with your willing senses. Dredged from the bottom of the lake and risen anew is Little Fears writer, Jason L. Blair, who adds another 16 pages to Book Five: Mine, making it pages! Mine, capping it at pages! Designed and developed by Cam Banks to accent, accommodate, and accessorize your Unknown Armies gaming experience, these PDF tools include cheat sheets, study guides, full-feature form-fillable character profiles, and bonus content bringing together material from all five UA3 books for easy reference. Our third and most potent minute soundtrack cycle from James Semple is unlocked at this level, ushering in a new era of tabletop accompaniment. Backer Count Stretch Goals! These backer count stretch goals start once we reach backers, wherein we reveal the first of our Campaign Starter Kits. These digital-only products contain everything you need to get an Unknown Armies campaign started: Five pregenerated characters, broken and damaged and ready to go One group objective for the cabal to pursue A first session scenario to get things moving quickly GM hooks, additional objective ideas, GMCs, and suggestions for your aggressive GM planner sessions Every backer who has pledged at a tier that provides bonus ebook content or bonus digital content gets these at no additional cost. Ponies who missed out on backing the Kickstarter can purchase these kits at a later date for a low cost. The first is the collaborative character creation method that appears in Book Two: We have other things you can add on to your pledge if you so desire. Some of these are built into the backer levels already, but you might want to add on more copies of them. Or customize your own rewards ad hoc. The set includes three dice each of two colors. You decide which is the tens and which is the ones. All 1st edition books: Unknown Armies core rulebook 1st edition Hush Hush.

3: Unknown Armies - The Full Wiki

Unknown Armies is an occult game about broken people conspiring to fix the world. It's about humanity, and how those among us who are the most obsessed have the power to alter reality until it aligns with their fevered desires.

There are some really good examples of obsessions in earlier versions of Unknown Armies. Even though in UA3 the obsession is tied to an identity, those are very succinct. In the original Unknown Armies, there are worked examples for two characters, which are also followed up when looking at passions. One is a character called Cage, played by Phil: Another character example is Jennifer Zaraya, played by Kim: Kim needs to pick an obsession. She defines it like this: To connect with people on a deep level, you use the sister languages of melody, harmony, and tempo. You see music as a bridge between our separate worlds. You diet, stretch out every morning and evening, lift weights three times a week, and try to run ten miles or swim sixty laps at least as often. Too much fun is never enough for you. Your dedication to Roman Catholicism or orthodox Judaism, or Zen Buddhism, or whatever you want guides your every action and thought. You strive completely to live a Christ-like life or to adhere to the laws of the Talmud, or to annihilate your ego, or. You dwell in the margins, in both literal and metaphysical shadow. You lurk and you plot and you slip through society like a ghost. You want to be the quintessential alpha, the leader of the pack. In every situation, you must be dominant. You are compelled to be the baddest mofo on the street. Adept Obsession Examples Bibliomancy Self-help books. The ocean is just the ocean; the highway is a metaphor. Your blood is your sixth sense. You must release it so it may share in your experiences and take its secret knowledge into your heart. You do not seek to be understoodâ€”only respected. Narco-Alchemy Following the Dead. Plutomancy The Price of Freedom. You suspect that every idealist is a capitalist with good spin. You believe that in orgasm, we mimic the true face of the Naked Goddess. You know them all.

4: Unknown Armies Book Two: Run - Atlas Games | www.enganchecubano.com

Unknown Armies presents magick as it might exist in a world informed by crime fiction and secret histories, as twisting wrinkles in reality created by greater and greater risk, sacrifice, and obsession.

A blog about roleplaying. Monday, May 9, Unknown Armies, third edition: Actual Play Before we get started, further information is available: Me, with all the nonsense that entails. She has also just played "Joy and Sorrow. It seriously took almost no time at all. Call it four or five hours, maybe. On the other hand, the character creation mini-game is its own thing, and at the end of it, you have a sweet prop like this: Pins on a corkboard. Other than taking a while, though, it worked really well to get everyone into the mindset of Unknown Armies. The character sheets, which look like badly scribbled psychiatric charts, also help. Although I probably went overboard. Still, it worked out nicely. Amid this growing situation is the fact that Los Angeles apparently has weird holes in its spacetime, such that an appropriately aware person can use them to hide or teleport. And an untrained person can fall into them and end up somewhere else. Like, say, Long Beach to Malibu. Into this situation, we have: Jones , played by S. An air traffic controller at LAX. No one else noticed. Kevin , played by M. A bike messenger on a weird trip. He likes to draw weird maps, trying to discern the Pattern he knows is just on the edge of his perception. Leah , played by Nicole. She learned that things were weird when she had a bad drug experience a few years back, and the guy who sold it to her described the exact trip she just had. There are a couple of snags in the rules, though. Objectives, too, were difficult; the player group is supposed to determine their group Objective first, even before characters are made, but we did it last because that seemed more natural. As for the rules, we only made a couple of rolls, but as with previous editions, the game system largely runs in the background. I only consulted the book once in play, and it was to determine how a supernatural ability the Versatility identity, for those of you keeping score at home worked. And will get easier with increased familiarity. This mini-campaign now has its own Obsidian Portal page.

5: Unknown Armies - 1d4chan

Unknown Armies (abbreviated UA) is an occult-themed Role-Playing Game by John Tynes and Greg Stolze and published by Atlas Games. Subtitled "A roleplaying game of power and consequences". The game is divided into three levels: street, global, and cosmic. At the street level, you know only this.

Subtitled "A roleplaying game of power and consequences". The game is divided into three levels: At the street level, you know only this: Only at the global level do you learn the truth: The world you know is only the surface. The Occult Underground swarms beneath it like a nest of bugs. Adepts alter reality with the power of their own obsessions and madness. Avatars gain the favor of the cosmos by playing their part in the collective unconscious. Those without magick hunt down those with for their own purposesâ€”to control, to suppress, or to assimilate. Sounds pretty interesting, right? Further, magick power is bought at a steep price. You can alter human flesh only by scouring your own. You can gain the strength of the archetypal Warrior only by never relenting, even when tact or sanity say you should back down. Why risk so much of yourself for impressive but seemingly minor power? This is a fantastic and extremely gritty roleplaying game. The powers of magick are even more flavorful, bizarre, and amazing. The setting is imaginative, detailed, and engrossing. The game is often compared to *Over the Edge*, due to both games featuring an abundance of surface level weirdness and protagonist empowerment, along with a do-it-yourself skills list. This role-playing game provides examples of: Possibly more common than unnatural fear. This trope runs rampant in the Weep scenario "Garden Full of Weeds. Oh, and a Loogaroo running around murdering children under six months old. The shtick of avatars of the Mystic Hermaphrodite. At upper levels, this evolves into instant sex changes. The Laff Riot videomancer spell protects everyone in the area from gunshots, reduces other types of attacks to five damage, and can turn a fall from a skyscraper from street pizza into an embarrassing pantsing. Watching the Detectives can retroactively turn any major injury short of death into a single point of damage. Game Masters who enjoy the Rule of Funny can have quite an lot of fun here. The Otherspaces are like alternate realities where the rules of existence are fundamentally different. The sample NPC, Eustace Crane, is a walking fifty yard bubble of this that ironically wants to believe in magic. Each member of the Invisible Clergy is one of these, personifying an idea of what a human being can be. The very concepts of things like The Fool, The Mother and The Trickster among others are represented by ascended mortals in the Clergy. GNOMON, a strange governmental data miner program that somehow not only became sentient, but became the focus of an entire adept school focused around the concept of identity, knowledge, and espionage you dicker with it for charges, and you use the search bar for spells. Not malevolent, but definitely has its own agenda, uncaring of its makers, and is a bit of a Mad Scientist. GNOMON is always willing to offer charges in return for filling out one of its personality questionnaires A whole team of them: Ascend to a Higher Plane of Existence: A very popular goal in the game is to ascend as an Archetype, a fundamental principle of the universe. This is the ultimate goal of many cabals, since they can then shape the next universe under their own principles. A common Mechanomancer toy. Hell, being one is a prerequisite for being one of the true leaders of The New Inquisition. Their leader realizes that putting actual mages in charge of his group is a very, very bad idea. Bad Powers, Bad People: Thanatomancers, people who gain power over life and death through Human Sacrifice, are not recommended as player characters. The Rage passion for a character is whatever seriously pisses that character off. Big Brother Is Watching: It helps they can generate unnatural phenomenon purely based around raising paranoia. Uder Krazmersky from the One Shots scenario "Jailbreak" appears to be just a gentle, kindly old craftsman who merely wants to be left in peace with his improbably beautiful young wife and fix watches in his home, struggling against a bunch of escaped prisoners who have barged in and holed up. That wife of his? He killed her in a rage one day. What did he do? Why, he took her corpse and stuffed it full of gears, bringing it back to life as a clockwork automaton who will love him unconditionally without even knowing that. The memory he sacrificed to accomplish that feat? Why, that of murdering his own wife, of course! Mak Attax is in the aftermath of one in 3rd Edition: They pulled off the Ritual of Light, resulting in a global Decon-Recon Switch for the entire Occult Underground and making it so optimism is the

driving force of most political agendas Various, but Epideromancy is the 1 source in the game. Its most common use? The Freak from the novelization Godwalker demonstrates this power via shapeshifting, gendershifting as well as healing of self and others. Dipsomancers, and most of the artifacts they make. Pity you have to be drunk to gain the benefits. Mak Attax is using a certain multinational corporation McDonalds to further its agenda. The corporation is almost never mentioned by name. Ostensibly, this is because of the power of True Names. The Alter language, and the book Das Garten. Cast from Hit Points: Epideromancy works this way, as do certain rituals. All magic schools, however, are fundamentally self-destructive in some manner, whether physiologically or psychologically. Nearly anything made by a Mechanomancer wanders into this trope, and will quite likely be self-motivated enough to rate as a Clockwork Creature. Chainsaws do a lot of damage, up there with katanas. See Katanas Are Just Better below. Unlike most examples of the trope, this behavior is played entirely for horror. As one reviewer put it, an Entropomancer with a single bullet and a revolver can gain, up to, five significant charges within seconds. Chunky Salsa Rule City of Spies: While not explicit, the Sleeping Tiger ie. The general public pretty much turns any game of Unknown Armies into spy central. With weird ass magic. The "ancient" conspiracy was less than a century old and just thrumming up its own reputation as mystical badasses, and even the ones with millions of dollars to throw around were simply too practical to bother with Hollywood bullshit like sending attack helicopters and squads of mercenaries after people where a hired thug with a silenced pistol tends to be enough to do the trick. The New Inquisition has gone underground and can no longer afford to throw money at every problem, the Sleepers have lost control of their ancient holdings and vaults full of artifacts, the Sect of the Naked Goddess split in three, and even Mak Attax has lost almost its whole leadership. All three are now rather more loosely organized, hodgepodge and gritty. This was likely done both in order to further focus the game thematically on the street-level, and to give more agency to player cabals. The former is the taboo of the Cinemancy school-they see a potential for a cliché, they must finish it. You are scared because they were humans like you, and are living metaphor of what being human means. Unknown Armies has a disproportionate number of hobos who are also powerful wizards. By the 3rd edition The New Inquisition has morphed into this, fueled by Alex Abel looking for perfect loyalty after having been betrayed by his bodyguard. The game plays with most of the tropes you see in modern fantasy games, but makes sense of them the most mundane ways possible. Because the very nature of their power makes them loony, and the price they pay to work their miracles makes them as useful as a carefully chosen tool, only weirder. Why is magic falling behind technology? Because technology is just better, and more reliable. Thanks to Mak Attax, 3rd Edition has elements of this; when it comes down to it, Adepts are still the kind of people who look reality in the eye and tell it to get with their program Hence, they may not have power, but having power and getting what you want are two vastly different things. One of the powers of the Masterless Man. You can face the very principles of reality one on one. You can even take their place. Some schizophrenics actively channel the backwash from any magic cast nearby, which can be a Very Bad thing. While the House of Renunciation is a Genius Loci , it also does not have thoughts or goals beyond seeking subjects of its dubious help. Mechanomancers exchange Easy Amnesia for magickal mojo. The more memories you give up, and the more personal and important they are, the more mojo you get. What happens when the number of Invisible Clergy hits Not necessarily a bad thing, if the right people are in charge.

6: How to Succeed in RPGs or Die Trying: Unknown Armies, third edition: Actual Play

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from any magic cast nearby, which can be a Very Bad Thing. Easter Egg - Page Not necessarily a bad thing, if the right people are in charge. To do magick, you have to pay the price. Eye of Newt - Ritual Magick. Sample ingredients in the GM section include "A lock of hair from a red-headed lover", "Those Groucho glasses with the fake nose and moustache", and "A copy of the Torah, translated directly from Hebrew into Klingon". One of the biggest events in 3rd edition was the Freak and the Comte Saint-Germain switching places and inverting morality. The Freak is now an idealistic androgine that calls himself the Human Eternal and is in charge of being the new First and Last Man the only constant between universes , and the Comte is a bitter, cranky old lady called Old Mother Apocalypse who wants to make the current universe eternal and stop new ones from being created, by killing all of humanity if necessary. The Fool - Another Avatar type. Known specifically for doing foolish things and somehow surviving. Functional Magic - Mostly rule magic, although ritual magic is popular and wild magic shows up. Genre Savvy - An avatar gains power by acting out a particular archetype. If they want revenge, they will chase you to the end of the earth. If they want to collect every last Pokemon card, you better not have a tight grip on that Charizard. Go Mad From the Revelation - "Sanity cannot exist for long under conditions of absolute reality. God Was My Co-Pilot - the Comte De Saint-Germain, immortal uberpowers , sadistic bastard , and appearing in at least half the stock campaigns as a bit part, sometimes in simultaneous roles halfway across a state. Guns Are Worthless - averted, at least for more skilled users. Someone with poor skill needs extreme luck to do much damage with a gun, though. Which is pretty realistic. Grey and Gray Morality - In spades. True examples of purely malignant or benign groups are very thin on the ground. Well, other than demons. Guttural Growler - The Freak, as a result of drinking acid. The Hecate Sisters - These are said to be "masks", or recognized spiritual icons that mirror the Archetypes. Humans Are Special - One definite given in any UA game, on account of how the cosmos pretty much revolves around the collective will of humanity and its chosen representatives. Immortality - One goal to aim for; apparently, if Dirk Allen could ever get this for the Freak, the Freak would stop hating him so much. Inverse Law of Utility and Lethality Katanas Are Just Better - semi-averted; katanas are good, but not better than any other sharp weapon of similar size. Knight Templar - literal example in the Order of St. Cecil, who may simultaneously begin to brainwash the party adept and take on quite a number of nasty critters for you. Other groups can serve, especially The New Inquisition and the Sleepers. Then they managed to get two dozen terrorists arrested in a single night and perform the single largest magical act in recent memory. And then they proceeded to do bugger all afterwards, until the events of the To Go campaign, the culmination of their Great Work. Depending on the outcome of the campaign, one of their higher-ups may ascend as the new True King. Linear Warriors, Quadratic Wizards - averted. Adepts require not only a decent skill level to cast any sort of spell successfully, but also must charge up by doing particular ritual acts. Attacking via magic is less efficient than just using a gun. Avatar magic is flat-out linear, providing particular effects at a particular level of skill.

7: Unknown Armies | Obsidian Portal

Unknown Armies is an RPG set in a world like ours, but which has an "occult underground," the weirdness of which was inspired by the novels of Tim Powers, David Lynch films, and Shea and Wilson's Illuminatus! trilogy.

However, Unknown Armies has impressed and surprised me in both departments. In terms of themes, this must be the first role-playing world, where fighting or trying to kill someone is the most desperate, dangerous or plain stupid course of action you can take. The game does splendid justice to its tagline, "power and consequences": In terms of language, UA dazzles. The writing, especially in the first three books, especially in the gossip sections "What You Hear" , is superb. Just as a piece of writing, this book is gritty, weird, and freakishly imaginative. Magicians in this world are all battling wittingly or not to ascend to the status of demiurge. This makes most of them extraordinarily unpleasant to deal with. They gain their powers because of deep and overriding obsessions. A pornomancer gets juice from sex acts, a cliomancer history mage from interaction with historical items or places, a flesh mage by hurting themself, and so forth. This game is a hidden gem. The character creation can take almost no time at all with a good ability to customize your character. The learning curve is gentle and the process of learning is great fun. The two most impressive portions of the book are the section on "killing other characters" and the sanity system. It is true to life, explaining that any balanced individual would be better off running away, giving in, calling the cops or generally doing an This is an excellent RPG, with a simple system and versatile setting. It is true to life, explaining that any balanced individual would be better off running away, giving in, calling the cops or generally doing anything other than violence. The sanity system is also very apt, the single best representation that I have ever seen. The prose style is generally excellent. It is both irreverent and perceptive, although repetitive at times. I rarely find the obligatory interspersed pieces of fiction to be worthwhile reading in game books but I made a point of reading each one here. The vision of the Occult Underground is a fascinating one. The system is complex enough to be useful and robust but simple enough not to take over the story.

8: Unknown Armies (RPG) - Google+

Unknown Armies (UA) is a horror and occult roleplaying game written by Greg Stolze and John Tynes, published by Atlas Games. The setting is similar to the modern world, but a secret network of occultists work under the surface and seek to uncover the various mysteries of the universe.

Unknown Armies is divided into three sections of similar length. In it, Love encourages readers to "Go downtown, fuck shit up and get fucked up" in various ways for odd pages. Readers find this portion of the book especially confusing, because it offers little information on how to do so, other than ways to form groups of "fuckshituppers". It also warns the reader not to read the second section, for some reason. Smith rants about pop culture, counterculture and postmodernism, frequently using magic as some kind of metaphor, but never developing any clear message. He claims that magic comes from pretty much anything self-destructive and irresponsible and anyone who thinks otherwise is a "modernist cunt". Once again, he says not to read to the next section. It appears that they took turns, paragraph-by-paragraph and sometimes sentence-by-sentence. Other sections at least attempt some kind of central theme or thesis. This portion, on the other hand, is a milieu of bad jokes and philosophical misfires. Yet again, it warns the reader not to read the following section, but this time also advises the authors to follow their own advice and not write the next section. They refer to an incoherent jumble of pop culture references, conspiracy theories, ungrounded assumptions and smug allusions. What little data there is in the earlier sections is mostly in isolated, contradictory anecdotes. However, there are repeated references to three distinct figures: Ron Jeremy, who has a growing cult of sycophants who sit in hotel rooms watching his movies and masturbating. This gives them magical powers. Donald Trump, who has no magical powers because he likes to be contrary. T, and legions of henchmen with horrible aim. For some reason, all the factions are very worried about Marilyn Manson. Ronald McDonald and Donald Trump both claim that the other stole his name and changed it slightly. The irony of this is supposed to be very deep. Ron Jeremy is a wild card who both of the other contenders are very worried about because he has "that freaky tape from The Ring" which Unknown Armies always refers to as such. Offense to God Edit The book also discusses demons extensively. This is probably one of the main reasons why people misinterpret Unknown Armies as a roleplaying game, as all roleplaying games have satanic messages. These come mainly from a few passages in the first section. The generally accepted interpretation is as follows: Task Resolution Edit Fans also glean a resolution system from the rant. Whenever a player wants his or her character to do something, the GM may have that player hit him or herself in the head with the "core book" as hard as that player can. Since that player has a better vantage point and is not inhibited by self-preservation, this makes success more likely. Characters can only perform actions that have to do with their skills. Softened notches denote greater arm strength and pain tolerance, while Failed notches show a stronger skull and greater intelligence. This is another irony that players say is very deep, usually after they have several Softened notches under their belts.

9: On Armies Unknown | A New Inquisition

UNKNOWN ARMIES became, with no real forethought on the part of @JohnScottTynes or myself, a study in how damaging and confusing and destructive systems designed by humans, for humans, can be to humans.

A blog about roleplaying. Wednesday, April 20, Review: Unknown Armies, third edition Gamma playtest Note: Although I gave my initial thoughts about twenty days ago, I finally got through the whole thing and can actually report on it. This, by the way, is the Gamma playtest available to all backers of the Kickstarter, so it might change before final publication. The old ones seemed fast and innovative like Call of Cthulhu on speed, while the new ones look like someone remixed Unknown Armies, Fiasco, and Apocalypse World. Again, the dangers of coming back to something after a decade, and putting fans at the helm. No more minor, significant, and major checks "you just roll d against your ability, whatever it is. No more governing stats, either; instead, you just have ten abilities that fluctuate with your Madness Meter now called the Shock Gauge, which as much as I love the alliteration of the Madness Meter, is probably a more sensitive and accurate name. The idea is that mentally healthy people have a set of skills they cultivate like interpersonal interaction and holding down a steady job and noticing things in the environment, whereas traumatized people have a set of skills they cultivate like fighting and lying and hiding. Identities can level up they get rid of XP and replace it with skill checks like in Call of Cthulhu and Continuum, which I always prefer to the World of Darkness-style arbitrary XP system, and can do more than just replace abilities; they can let you use firearms, let you cast rituals, protect a specific Shock Meter, whatever. If you want to do something, you can probably come up with an identity to simulate it. Good so far, although I still dig the more traditional skill setup of previous editions. I like it, but it seems like some indie thing that was thrown in because statistics for relationships are the new hotness. Objectives are a new thing I rather like, as they keep the PCs focused. I think my games could have benefited from it, as they tended to flounder. Of course, other factions can oppose your objective, robbing points from it, and you can always decide to abandon it in favor of some newer, shinier objective. The last bit is character creation, which is probably the best change. To overcome the inertia of "What do we do with this system? They then build their characters and build their starting objective. What do you want to do in the occult underground? Or not; one of the example objectives is running a mayoral campaign. You set it up deliberately like the String Theory trope: This is brilliant, and really gets everyone invested in the game. Apart from my complaints about the writing tone and some of the mechanics, I really enjoy pretty much everything else. The new adept schools are really exciting, though: The changes to the old factions all make sense strangely, the Sleepers get the most radical makeover, from occult bogeymen and monopolists to an occult AA, and new factions are all imaginative and creepy and weird like one would expect like a network of sleeper agents run by an artificial intelligence that sends you invasive quizzes for magickal power, or a bootcamp for avatars comprising kidnapped children. They talk more about Otherspaces in this edition, which is a bonus, and give players rules to make them, which seems an appropriate if rather difficult goal. Still, making your own private Idaho is totally a thing you can do in the new edition. It just feels less like a breath of fresh air and more like any other horror RPG you could find over at IPR or the unstore. I feel like that about a lot of the concepts in this edition.

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