

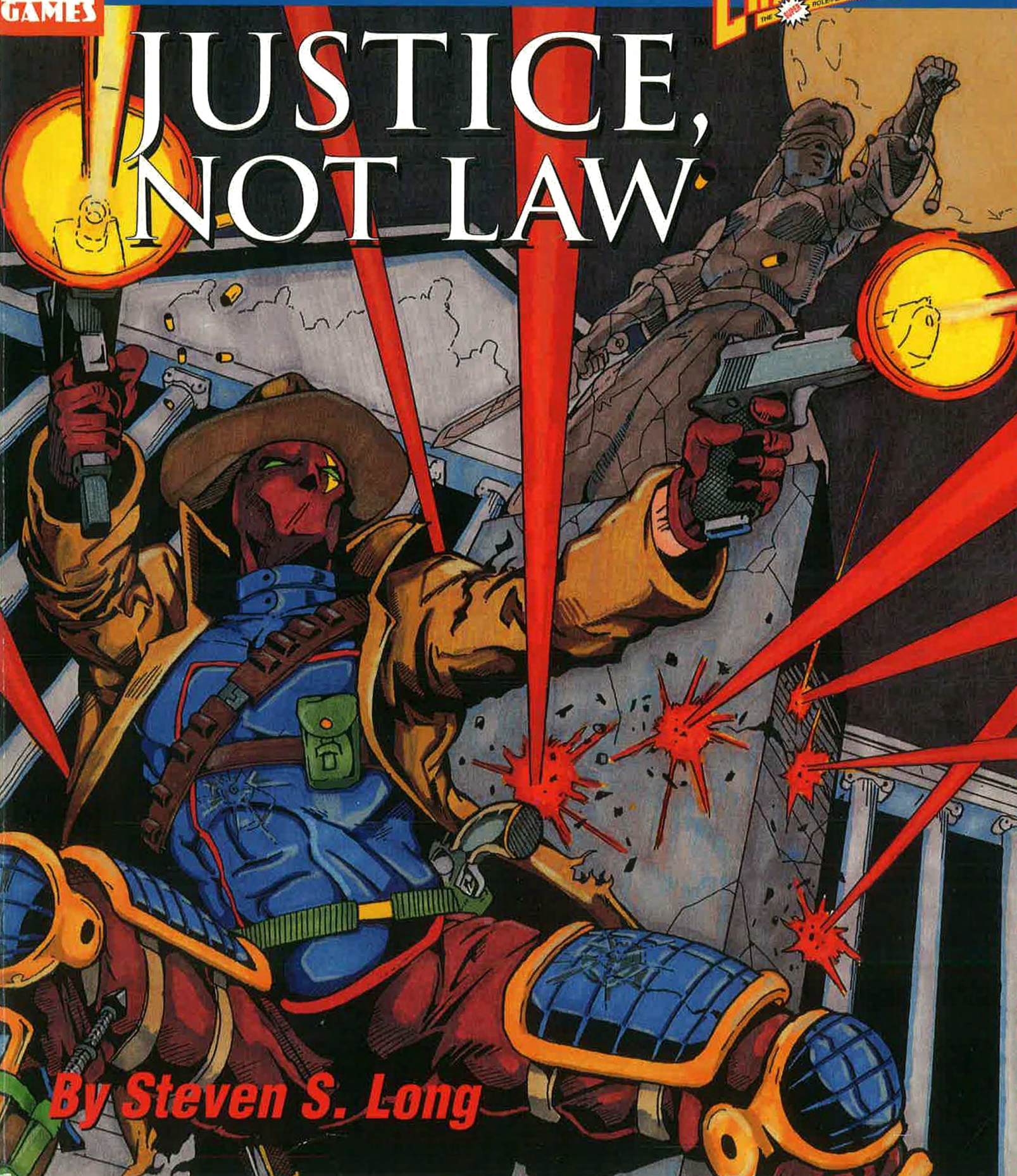


A Campaign
Sourcebook for

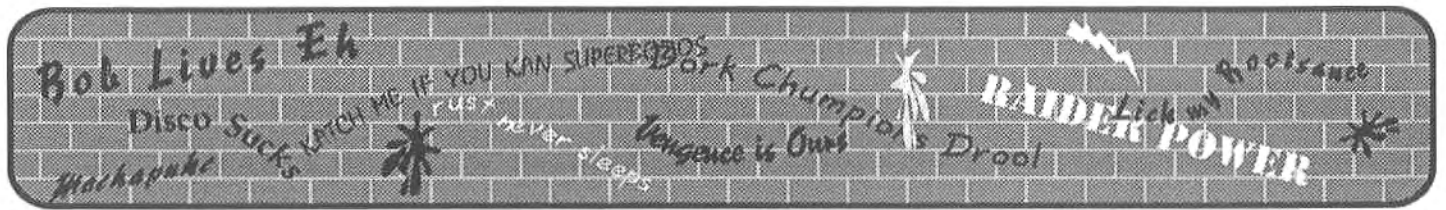
DARK CHAMPIONS™ #430
HEROES OF VENGEANCE

OR
CHAMPIONS®
THE ROLE-PLAYING GAME

JUSTICE, NOT LAW



By Steven S. Long



JUSTICE, NOT LAW™

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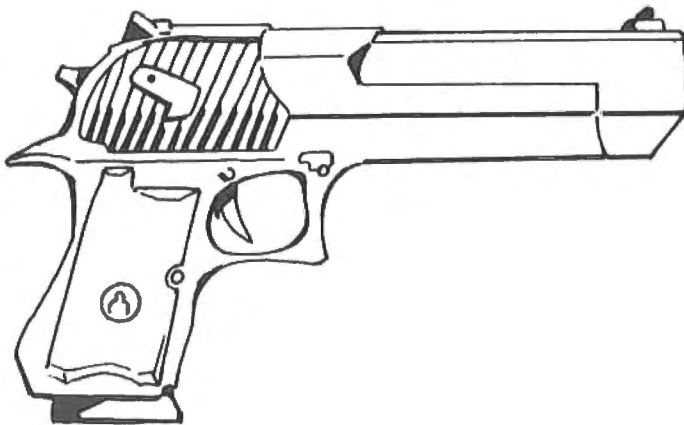
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Special Thanks To: My parents, Maryann and Claude, and my sister, Stacy, for putting up with this unusual hobby of mine for so many years; Greg Smith, for hours of long-distance discussion and advice; Greg Smith (again!) and Storn Cook, for their great artwork which makes my writing come to life; and all the other Hero creators and authors that I've had the privilege of getting to know over the past year.

Dedication: Although I'll be repeating myself, once again I have to dedicate this book to the good friends I have met in ten years of playing *Champions* and other role-playing games, who have been so generous with their affection, assistance, ideas, suggestions, and gentle tolerance: Andy "Ghost Eye" Mathews, Tom "Bogglemaster" Foster, Tim "PoorPatheticMissileWeapon" Binford, John "John is about to win" Losey, Eric "Gunslinger Mode" Livengood, John "The Mad GM" Grigni, Edward "Elf" Collins, Wendell "Fashion Sense" McCollom, Jennifer "Dramatis Personae" McCollom, Sheila "Salad Bar Slaughter" Anderson, Gary "Martial Panic" Mitchel, Kelly "Nice heat signatures!" Ledbetter, James "Move Through on Manhattan" Fulbright, Steve "Jack of All Trades" Stone, Anitra "Tatwoman" Stone, Jon "Why yes, I'm Dr. Midnight!" Ferrante, and Kelley "Because I can talk to God, that's why!" Ferrante. True heroes all.

Most of all, I would like to dedicate this book to my friend Chris Caldwell, who was killed in an automobile accident July 13, 1993, shortly before this book was completed. Chris was a kind, gentle man who loved poetry, and dogs, and laughter, and who seemed to enjoy life more than just about anyone I've ever met. Those of us who had the privilege of knowing him are much the poorer for his absence.

Additional Contributions: I would like to thank the following people for allowing me to use their ideas in this supplement: Tim Binford, Brannon Boren, Chris Caldwell, Cliff Christiansen, Sean Fannon, Tom Foster, Eric Livengood, John Losey, Andy "the Sandman" Mathews, Gary Mitchel, Scott Sigler, and Greg Smith.



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Printed in U.S.A., First Printing 1993

Produced & Distributed by Iron Crown Enterprises, Inc., the exclusive manufacturer of Hero Games.

STOCK #: 430

ISBN 1-55806-194-0

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome once again to the gritty world of the streets, a world where having the fastest gun is often the only guarantee of success, where justice takes on a colder, sharper edge, and where the crimefighters often have more in common with the criminals they fight than they would care to admit: the world of *Dark Champions*.

When the decision was made to develop the “Dark Champions Universe” as a somewhat distinct entity from the four-color Champions Universe, it became obvious that the Dark Champions “sub-universe” lacked two things: one, a sufficient number of published write-ups for criminals and other NPCs that the heroes can interact with (and sometimes fight); and two, a campaign setting. Hence *Justice, Not Law*, a book which fills those two gaps perfectly.

Justice, Not Law can be roughly divided into three parts. The first section of *Justice, Not Law* details a new campaign setting: the fictional metropolis of Hudson City. Additionally, the world outside of Hudson City is described, and a timeline of Dark Champions Universe events is provided. The second part, related to the first, is a large selection of villains to use in *Dark Champions* campaigns. Many of these criminals are much more “comic book-like” than the ones in *Dark Champions*—they have minor superpowers and/or unusual gadgets which serve to separate them from the average man on the street. Thus, they can be used in some straightforward *Champions* campaigns, but, on the other hand, might not be appropriate for an absolutely realistic *Dark Champions* campaign. GMs interested in this subject will find a discussion of campaign types elsewhere in this book.

The third and final part provides additional information on organized crime to supplement the material found in *Dark Champions* (hereafter referred to as “DC”). Not only are real-world groups described, but names and descriptions are provided for (Dark) Champions Universe gangs and groups.

Enjoy! Don’t forget to reload now, while you still have the chance...

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

How you use this book will depend upon the nature of the campaign you’re running. If your game is entirely non-superpowered, then you will want to trim out some of the “superhuman” elements that some of the characters have. If your *Dark Champions* campaign does involve some level of superpowers, then you can use the criminals as they are, perhaps with a few adjustments based on your campaign’s style or power level.

If you’re running a four-color *Champions* campaign there is still plenty of material in *Justice, Not Law* that you can use. The criminal groups can be carried over into the Champions Universe without any changes, though a few may get involved in the “superhero scene” (for example, by acquiring a

superpowered leader or being recruited as agents by a group like VIPER). The villains can also be used without too many changes, though a few may need to be increased in power and/or saved for a specific type of scenario.

How the GM uses Hudson City is also a matter of campaign style and taste. Although it is presented as a totally non-superpowered, relatively realistic campaign setting, the GM should feel free to introduce superhumans if he prefers. This may require some broad changes in the city itself, though (for example, how will the underworld react to the presence of superhumans?), so be prepared to deal with the consequences.

A CONTINUUM OF POWER LEVELS: ADDING SUPERHEROIC AND FANTASTIC ELEMENTS TO YOUR DARK CHAMPIONS CAMPAIGN

One problem that many GMs have when creating a *Dark Champions* campaign is deciding what level of power to allow PCs and NPCs to have. While it is possible to argue that a *Dark Champions* campaign should not involve superpowers at all, in fact there are a variety of power levels that can be “street-level” in nature. By keeping the limitations of these different “levels” in mind, the GM can use comic-book, science fiction, or mystic elements in his *Dark Champions* campaign without ruining the “flavor” of the street-level genre. The power levels in a *Dark Champions* campaign can be arranged along a five-step “continuum:” no superpowers, occasional superpowered enemies, minor superpowers, occasional superpowers and full-fledged superheroics.

NO SUPERPOWERS

At one end of the continuum is the entirely “heroic” campaign, where there are no superpowers at all. The setting is entirely “real-world,” with absolutely no abilities, devices or other game aspects which are not found in real life. Some examples include “pure” street-level campaigns, campaigns based around a unit of the police department, most international espionage campaigns and the like. Usually campaigns of this sort involve characters who are built on around 150 points with Normal Characteristic Maxima automatically imposed, who have CVs and Damage Classes in about the 6-8 range, and who buy most of their weapons and gadgets with money, not character points. Resistant defenses should be limited to no more than 6 in most cases; remember that the characters should be afraid of most firearms. Characters may have an equipment allowance to limit the amount of gear they can carry with them.

However, there are a few things to keep in mind about non-superpowered games. First of all, just because the cam-

JUSTICE, NOT LAW™

The world of *Dark Champions*™ lies before you, and it's more dark and dangerous than you imagined! *Justice, Not Law* is the complete sourcebook for the *Dark Champions* campaign universe; just pick it up and dive right into this dramatic street-level setting. For the Game Master, *JNL* has all the NPCs, organizations, and descriptions to create a compelling backdrop for a thousand tales of vigilante heroism. For the player, *JNL* offers complete background information about the gritty world (and underworld!) of the *Dark Champions* campaign universe. Best of all, this material comes to you from Steven Long, the talented author of *Dark Champions* itself!

Here's just some of the information you'll find inside:

- A complete campaign city for *Dark Champions*
- New vigilantes
- Over three dozen new villains and NPCs
- New criminal organizations

Justice, Not Law contains a complete description of Hudson City and information about important places around the world. You can run Hudson City as your campaign setting, or take pieces and use them in your own campaign city. This includes details about who's who in the city, along with summaries of business, politics, technology, and more!

And what heroic background would be complete without bad guys? *JNL* has descriptions of the Russian Mafia, street gangs, Jamaican posses, Colombian drug cartels, Mexican Mafia, motorcycle gangs, terrorist organizations, and more! More than three dozen new criminals and NPCs for *Dark Champions*! There are groups, loners, and several standard thugs, as well as extensive equipment lists. And a complete NPC listing for underworld figures in the *Dark Champions* campaign universe.

All of this material is designed to be fully usable with your existing *Champions* campaign. You can use the places, villains, and scenarios as gritty, street-level additions to your *Champions* campaign.

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Produced and distributed by
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1-55806-194-0 ICE1500