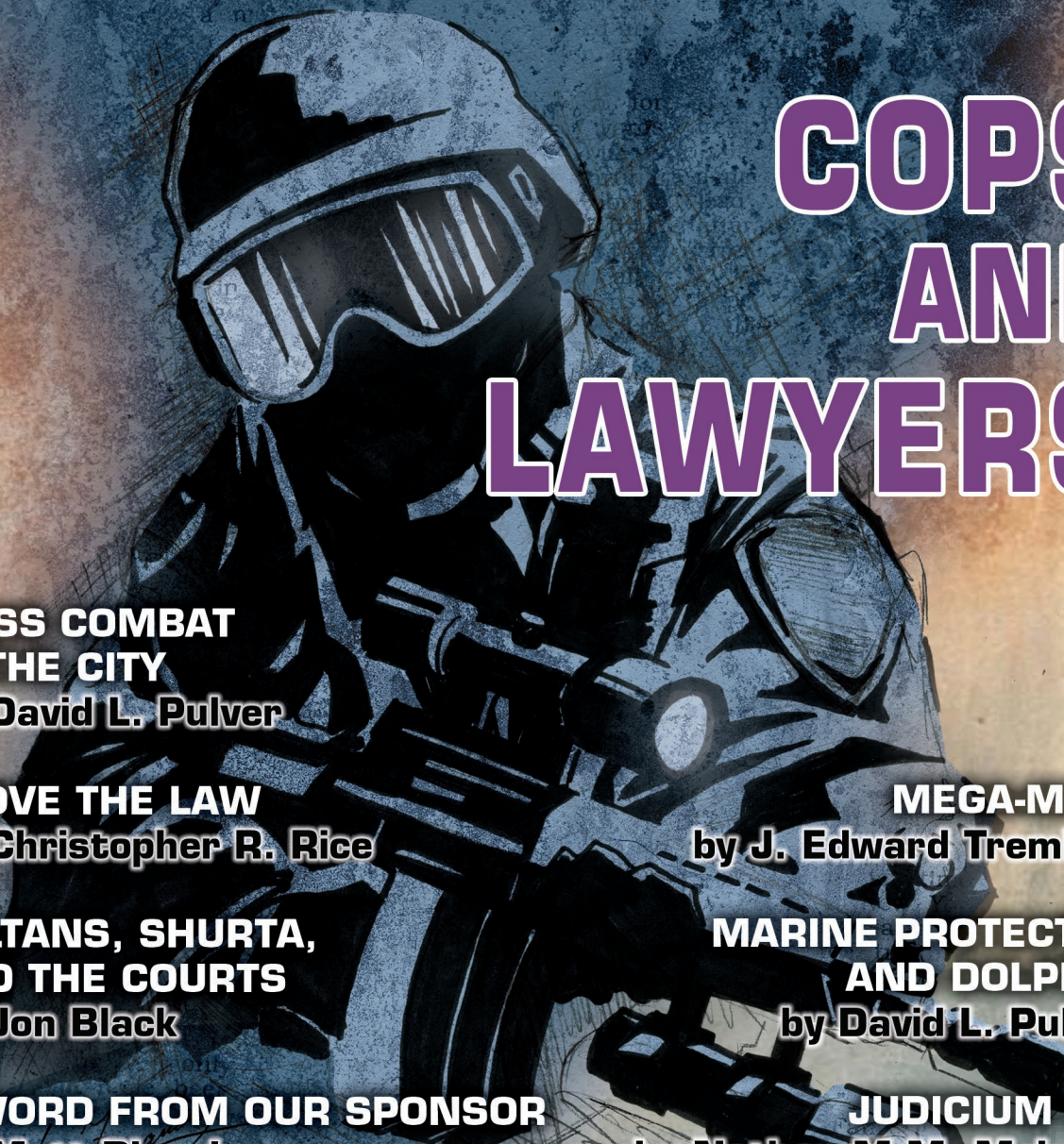


PYRAMID[®]



Issue 3/93 July '16

COPS AND LAWYERS



**MASS COMBAT
IN THE CITY**
by David L. Pulver

ABOVE THE LAW
by Christopher R. Rice

**SULTANS, SHURTA,
AND THE COURTS**
by Jon Black

A WORD FROM OUR SPONSOR
by Matt Riggsby

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ARTICLE COLORS

Each article is color-coded to help you find your favorite sections.

- Pale Blue:* In This Issue
- Brown:* In Every Issue
- Green:* Columnist
- Dark Blue:* GURPS Features
- Purple:* Systemless Features

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IN THIS ISSUE

The rise of codified laws and a way to keep social order marks one of the earliest achievements of civilization, and the existence of both continues to loom large to this day. In this *Pyramid*, we look at cops and lawyers, with an eye toward developments past and present.

When your modern-day action gets too big to handle, you may find yourself dealing with *Mass Combat in the City*. David L. Pulver – author of *GURPS Mass Combat* – provides *Mass Combat* stats for a complete police force as well as various groups they may face, from news teams to biker gangs to terrorists.

Augment your superhero campaign with realism by deciding which powers are *Above the Law*. Prolific *Pyramid* contributor Christopher R. Rice offers insight into tracking legal infractions and using the *GURPS* Legality Class framework to classify various powers.

Those amid *GURPS Banestorm* or *GURPS Infinite Worlds* parallels could benefit from knowing about the intersection of *Sultans, Shurta, and the Courts*. The judicial system of classical Islam can provide interesting challenges for medieval Middle Eastern heroes. Learn about the three types of courts, including roleplaying tips for using each one in adventures.

In this month's Eidetic Memory, David L. Pulver salutes the United States Coast Guard with a look at the *Marine Protector and Dolphin*. These two key vehicles – one a boat and the other a helicopter – come to life with *GURPS* vehicle stats and adventure ideas.

What do you with superpowered villains who could never be held in a normal prison? You send them to a *Mega-Max!* This private-industry super-prison has three locations around the globe . . . and even more secrets! Learn about the history, important leaders and prisoners, layouts, and more in this system-neutral jail system.

Mortal judges and juries aren't the only way to decide a case. Some societies offer *Judicium Dei*. Peruse this systemless overview of various trials by ordeal and by combat, including what they would be like realistically or with fantastic elements added and how to use them in different time periods.

Wrap up your time here with a Random Thought Table that considers how to make convicting a bad guy you've already caught a satisfying experience, then buckle in with Matt Riggsby for another peek into the forthcoming *Car Wars* future history with this month's installment of Short Bursts. With this month's *Pyramid*, the forces of law and order have never been so accessible!

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FROM THE EDITOR

GAMING WITH THE FORCES OF LAW AND ORDER

The heroes in many campaigns have an interesting intersection with the forces of “law and order” – the police officers entrusted to act as a first line in keeping peace and the legal system that needs to untangle situations (often a mess by the time the PCs get done with it) and put the bad guy behind bars permanently.

Although many gaming groups treat these concerns as tangential to what the heroes are interested in, there’s still plenty of good dramatic potential to be found by incorporating them into your campaign. Local police can be a powerful ally, with access to resources and information that can be beyond the reach of many adventurers . . . in addition to access and legal authority to use remarkable equipment within city boundaries. Legal maneuverings can serve as the coda for many adventures (see pp. 35-36), as well as a rich environment for stories or subplots.

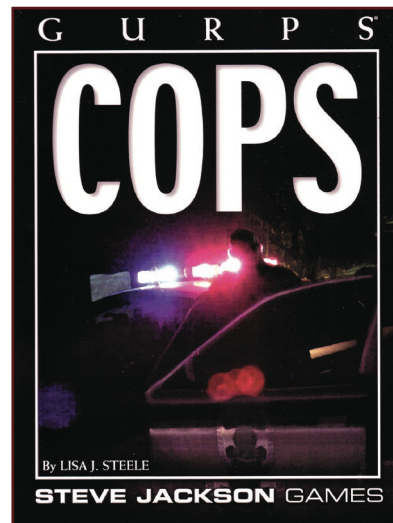
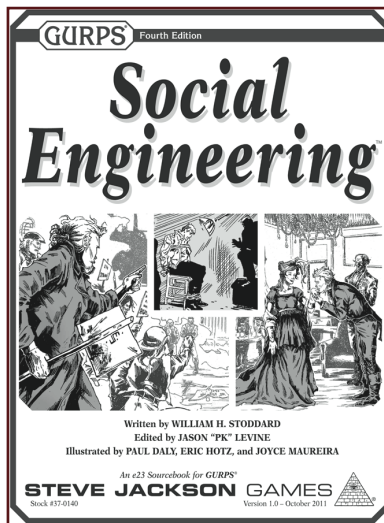
In addition, legal considerations can offer a powerful framework for stories themselves, providing boundaries for heroes to come up against or challenges to overcome (see pp. 9-13 for one good examination).

On the other side, the police and judicial system can be challenging adversaries, either as the outcome of a misunderstanding, a result of isolated or systemic corruption, or because the heroes themselves are acting outside the law. Heist films often revolve around protagonists trying to stay one step ahead of police, while anyone in an appropriate era might find themselves engaging in trial by combat (pp. 32-34).

WRITE HERE, WRITE NOW

Last month’s *Pyramid* was an experiment with a highly specific topic. This month’s topic is more general, covering two broad yet related topics while also reaching a bit across genres and timeframes.

So, what did you think about this month’s wider net? Did you find two related topics interesting? If so, do you have any great ideas for a couple of topics we could run in the same issue? (Can we even *get* enough articles about peanut butter and jelly?!) Do you like the idea, but wish something had been done a bit differently here? Please tell us your thoughts! Our super-surveillance genies read everything sent privately to pyramid@sjgames.com, and there is a larger discussion about each *Pyramid* issue every month on the public at forums.sjgames.com.



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ON THE FORCE

These are some of typical elements that police forces might send out to deal with crisis situations. The cost to raise for vehicles and helicopters can be assumed to take into account subsidies and transferred surplus equipment.

Police Car (TL8)

Motor Recon

Most North American law enforcement are deployed in motor vehicle patrols. This represents a single police car, well-outfitted with communication gear and other patrol equipment. The car is driven by one or two officers armed with police-issue handguns, batons, and ballistic vests, plus shotguns, semi-automatic carbines, and/or assault rifles in the trunk. In tactical situations, the officers may dismount and use the car as partial cover.

TS: 40. WT: 1.

Classes: Cv, F, Rec. Mobility: Motor.

Quality: Basic equipment; Average troops.

Features: LEO.

Cost: \$50K to raise; \$5K to maintain.

Yes, police! There's a savage fox in the National History Museum! Officer Hopps is down! Please hurry!

– Bellwether, in *Zootopia*

Riot Police (TL8)

Heavy Infantry

This represents a squad of officers issued with riot helmets with plastic face shields, riot shields, and batons, plus specialized crowd-dispersal weapons such as pepper spray, tear gas, stun grenades, rubber bullets, and Long Range Acoustic Devices. Some countries use specialized units of riot police, but in the United States, these are ordinary dismounted officers issued riot-control gear. At present, U.S. riot police rarely use water cannons.

TS: 10. WT: 1.

Classes: -. Mobility: Foot.

Quality: Very Fine equipment; Average troops.

Features: LEO.

Cost: \$160K to raise; \$28K to maintain.

Dismounted Police Officers (TL8)

Riflemen

This represents a half dozen or so officers or sheriff's deputies, operating on foot. They are in ballistic vests, with shotguns or assault carbines removed from their cars or station. This can also represent a part-time SWAT team from a small police department.

TS: 160. WT: 1.

Classes: F, Rec. Mobility: Foot.

Quality: Basic equipment; Average troops.

Features: LEO.

Cost: \$120K to raise; \$24K to maintain.

Motorcycle Police (TL8)

Motor Recon

This is a highway patrol officer on a police motorcycle armed with a handgun.

TS: 30. WT: 1.

Classes: Cv, F, Rec. Mobility: Motor.

Quality: Poor equipment; Average troops.

Features: LEO.

Cost: \$43.75K to raise; \$4.375K to maintain.

Mounted Police (TL8)

Mounted Rifles

This is a half dozen or so police officers on horseback. A dwindling number of big city and some rural departments maintain equestrian units for ceremonial and crowd-control purposes and occasional patrol of parks or wilderness areas. In the United States, they're usually known as a mounted patrol or mounted enforcement unit. They are classed as "Poor" equipment as they're only armed with pistols (rather than rifles).

TS: 60. WT: 2.

Classes: Cv, F, Rec. Mobility: Mtd.

Quality: Poor equipment; Average troops.

Features: LEO.

Cost: \$75K to raise; \$15K to maintain.

Police Van (TL8)

Light Truck

This is an unarmored police van, SUV, or paddy wagon, along with one or two officers. It has police communication equipment and a few long guns for the crew. It is often used to transport a SWAT team element or police command post.

TS: 40. WT: 2.

Classes: Cv, T1. Mobility: Motor.

Quality: Basic equipment; Average troops.

Features: LEO.

Cost: \$50K to raise; \$5K to maintain.

SWAT Team (TL8)

Riflemen

This represents five to 10 police officers with special weapons and tactics training, including assaulters, snipers, team leader, and negotiator. The assaulters are equipped with assault carbines or submachine guns, breaching gear, and stun grenades, and are protected by helmets and tactical body armor. The sniper team (also used for reconnaissance) have sniper rifles with telescopic or thermal imaging scopes.

TS: 240. WT: 1.

Classes: F, Rec. Mobility: Foot.

Quality: Good equipment; Average troops.

Features: Night.

Cost: \$102K to raise, \$20.4K to maintain.

ABOVE THE LAW

BY CHRISTOPHER R. RICE

A common theme in many modern comics and graphic novels is “If you have superhuman abilities, does that make you above the law?” In some ways, having inhuman abilities *does* make it difficult for the legal system to deal with such powered individuals. After all, if someone can lift a bus over his head or is immune to gunfire, how can he ever be arrested? Moreover, how can anyone ever force them to accept any

sentence that might be prescribed? This article seeks to offer solutions for the GM running contemporary superhero-themed games, which can also be used for campaigns with magic, cybernetics, or any other paranormal or superhuman capabilities. Also included are new rules for law enforcement on a campaign-wide scale.

THE LAW OF THE LAND

The *Basic Set* (pp. B506-B508) talks briefly about the law, criminality, and legal punishment, but doesn't give many specifics. *GURPS* uses two different scores to determine how the law is enforced. The *Control Rating* (pp. B506-507) measures the general regulation exercised by a government, while the *Legality Class* (p. B507) determines how illegal a given piece of gear is.

performing their duties. The GM could allow those with a certain level of Status or Social Regard to be treated as if they were functioning in a campaign with a lower austerity level. In such cases, every 10 points of Status or Social Regard make the austerity level one level more favorable for that character in his society.

GAMEMASTERING THE LAW

GURPS Horror, p. 106, introduces the concept of “austerity” for describing how “real” a setting will be. The GM may use this as a guideline for how the campaign world reacts to player characters performing illegal actions. For example, if Doug the Digger brains Merlin the Malefactor and kills him, then:

- In a *very austere* game, the law is clear that deaths must be investigated, and police have options like fiber matching, fingerprint databases, DNA typing, and any non-mundane investigatory powers that are legal in their district. If caught, Doug will enter the justice system, likely being indicted and tried. If convicted, execution or prison awaits.

- In a *moderately austere* game, he is merely “on the lam.” He'll be unable to cross the path of the law again, but he can go “underground” in the same city without the police finding him.

- In a *lenient* (low to no austerity) game, he's home free, provided there are no eyewitnesses. Police routinely side with vigilantes, covering up clues when the victim is a known criminal or supervillain.

This approach uses the GM's judgment to adjudicate how the law might react to a given player character's actions.

Remember that austerity interacts with the setting! For example, a samurai in the Sengoku period could murder peasants with little or no legal repercussions. Registered superheroes might have similar Legal Immunity (p. B65) for property damage (or even deaths!) that happens while they're

WITH GREAT POWER . . .

Just as people with medical training are expected to help those in need or those with military or police training are expected to help in dangerous circumstances, so might the super-powered be called to help others. If registration is required (p. 11), then those who are registered may be called upon to use their abilities for good. If such “community service” is *required*, it's a Duty (pp. B133-B134), possibly with Involuntary in authoritarian settings.

In the comics, this often goes a step further. Those with powers are deputized or work for government-sanctioned organizations (e.g., the Avengers). Game-mechanically, this can take the form of Legal Enforcement Powers and Legal Immunity of any level, possibly with “Informal, -50%” (*GURPS Supers*, p. 33). This may co-exist with even Involuntary Duties!

THE HEAT IS ON

Those looking for a more mechanical approach may use the following abstract system to determine what penalties their actions have attracted. Whenever a player character (or important NPC) performs an illegal act, he gains Misconduct Points (MP). Alternatively, points are accrued or lost on a *per-group* basis.

Sharia (and Other Religious Courts)

Religious courts are the earliest judicial bodies of the classical Islamic world. Each recognized religion (Muslims and dhimmis) has its own courts where believers are tried according to the tradition's religious laws. (To the classical Islamic mind, the idea of applying sharia to non-Muslims would be nonsensical.) The following information pertains to sharia but can model dhimmi courts as well.

Dates From: About 632 (strength is generally inverse to that of secular authority).

Typical Jurisdiction: Commercial disputes, divorce, family law, inheritance and probate, religious infractions, small claims, violent crime (uncommonly).

Presiding Official: Qadi. Variants: *qazi* (Indian).

Governing Skill: Law (Islamic).

Useful Traits: Reputation (Pious), Theology (Islamic).

Legal Code

Sharia is the legal code derived from Islam's foundational sources but is *not* identical to the sources themselves. Theology (Islamic) is helpful but insufficient for navigating sharia courts; see *Law (Islamic)*, below. For greater detail on sharia as a body of law, see *The Five-Minute Qadi*, pp. 18-19.

Law (Islamic)

see p. B204

Default: IQ-6 or Theology (Islamic)-4.

Prerequisite: Theology (Islamic).

This represents understanding of how law and legal decisions derive from Islam's foundational sources. It conveys knowledge of major qadis and their rulings. It reflects the ability to debate interpretation of implementation of sharia and imparts familiarity with courtroom procedure and etiquette.

Training in either Sunni or Shia law must be specified, defaulting to each other at -4. Apply penalties of -1 to -3 for differing polities or religious traditions *within* Sunni or Shia.

This specialty can be used to model other religiously based legal codes.

Initiating Proceedings

Cases are brought by the plaintiff and accepted at the qadi's discretion. Qadis attempt mediation before disputes go to trial. (Settling out of court is considered in community interest and allows qadis greater flexibility than trials.)

Procedure

Mosques, palaces, and the qadi's house are common locations for sharia trials. Proceedings are supposed to be public. In cities, courts typically meet twice weekly. Rural courts are likely to convene as necessary.

Producing and questioning witnesses is the plaintiff's responsibility, but the qadi can choose to question them directly. There is no cross-examination, so defense strategy

focuses on discrediting witnesses by impugning their character, credibility, or observation of the alleged crime (or encouraging them not to testify).

Two situations bring dhimmi into sharia courts. First, dhimmis can be witnesses. Second, in some times and places, cases pitting a Muslim against a non-Muslim are tried in sharia courts (with obvious potential for bias).

Reaching Verdicts

Plaintiffs win by producing a certain number of witnesses of good character affirming the defendant's guilt. The number of required witnesses varies by crime. Specific numbers can be researched or set by GM fiat.

Traditionally, required numbers presume witnesses are Muslim males. Testimony from Muslim females or dhimmi males carry less weight. The GM can count such individuals as a half-witness toward the required total. Testimony from a female dhimmi, if allowed, counts as a quarter-witness. Gaming groups preferring a more equitable, contemporary flavor can, of course, ignore these ratios.

Witnesses are not required to swear to testimony (enabling false testimony is considered a lesser evil than profaning the Quran through perjury). When a witness volunteers to do so, it carries greater impact. The GM may give such sworn testimony double normal weight. Such oaths also positively impact perceptions of witness credibility and character.

This is an age when most people take faith seriously. If someone attempts to perjure under oath, the GM can require a Will roll to commit the damnable act. If successful, disadvantages like Guilt Complex and Manic-Depressive may apply (supernatural or magical campaigns may bring other consequences).

Compared to *mazālim* and *shurta* judges, qadis are skeptical of testimony gained through torture or coercion. Even if allowed, it carries less weight. The GM should halve the value of such testimony. (Coerced testimony is, obviously, incompatible with voluntarily sworn testimony.)

Material evidence can be introduced into sharia trials but has minimal impact. There are no standards for scrutinizing or weighting such evidence. A GM *might* allow evidence to count for a maximum of one witness.

<i>Witness</i>	<i>Value Toward Requirement</i>
Muslim Male	1
Dhimmi Male	1/2
Muslim Female	1/2
Dhimmi Female	1/4
Material Evidence	1 (Maximum)

<i>Testimony</i>	<i>Modifier to Value</i>
Volunteered Under Oath	x2
Coerced	x1/2

Verdict and Sentencing

The qadi issues verdicts. Rarely, multiple qadis adjudicate a case. Theoretically, decisions are final. Verdicts cannot be overturned by another qadi but can be superseded by a *mazālim* court.

The principles guiding sentencing are *diyya* (compensating victims) and *qisas* (punishing offenders with harm equal to what was inflicted). Sentences may utilize either or both.

ABOUT *GURPS*

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Errata. Everyone makes mistakes, including us – but we do our best to fix our errors. Up-to-date errata pages for all *GURPS* releases, including this book, are available on our website – see above.

Rules and statistics in this book are specifically for the *GURPS Basic Set, Fourth Edition*. Page references that begin with B refer to that book, not this one.

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