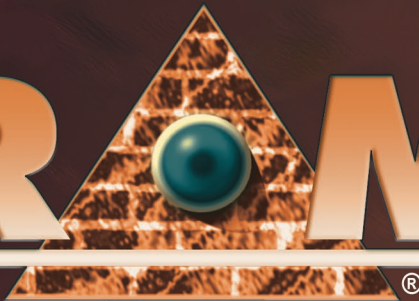


PYRAMID[®]



Issue 3/109 November '17

THAUMATOLOGY V



THE MAGE-HUNTER

by Sean Punch

THE TERAMANCERS

by David L. Pulver

THE GLORIOUS BOOK OF VALADIR

by J. Edward Tremlett

MAGNUM OPUS

by James Amaral

STEVE JACKSON GAMES

Stock #37-2709

CONTENTS

IN THIS ISSUE

FROM THE EDITOR 3

MAGNUM OPUS 4
by James Amaral

THE MAGE-HUNTER 11
by Sean Punch

EIDETIC MEMORY:
THE TERAMANCERS 17
by David L. Pulver

THE GLORIOUS BOOK OF VALADIR 24
by J. Edward Tremlett

DESIGNERS' NOTES:
INCANTATION MAGIC 30
*by Christopher R. Rice
and Antoni Ten Monrós*

THE ALL-SCROLL 34
by Alice Turow

RANDOM THOUGHT TABLE:
**TOO POWERFUL FOR
YOUR OWN GOOD** 36
by Steven Marsh, Pyramid Editor

ABOUT GURPS 38

Magic is in the air, in the form of possibilities, potions, and peril. This month's *Pyramid* is an assortment of arcane articles suitable for a wide swath of campaigns.

Alchemists are always looking for an edge while creating their *Magnum Opus*. Learn how to turn the standard **GURPS Magic** alchemical system into something where every potion involves ingenuity, and the right set of ingredients lets an alchemist (or herbalist!) brew amazing concoctions. Also included are details for using formularies and labs, tips for making money from brewing, and sample stats for a selection of popular reagents and elixirs.

When practitioners of the mystical arts get out of hand, call on *The Mage-Hunter*. This new profession for the **Dungeon Fantasy Roleplaying Game** – designed by that set's author, Sean Punch – can go toe-to-toe with magic-using foes yet benefit from the aid of magic-wielding friends. You'll get a ready-to-use character, plus find tips for challenging this delver in adventures and for translating the template for use in **GURPS Dungeon Fantasy**.

Don't fight monsters! Study them – and manipulate them – with *The Teramancers*. The secrets of this mystical order are revealed to you by **GURPS Banestorm: Abydos** author David L. Pulver in this month's Eidetic Memory. Learn about their origins, beliefs, structure, and how others view them. Unlock **GURPS** details for their magical style, then discover adventure suggestions and ideas for using them in fantasy or modern campaigns.

Not all hidden tomes are inherently evil; some are brilliant, uplifting, and morally encouraging. Become acquainted with one such "good book," *The Glorious Book of Valadir*. This systemless adventure frame discusses the ancient volume's physical details, useful contents, and terrifying secrets.

Christopher R. Rice and Antoni Ten Monrós take you on a tour of their supernatural creation in the Designers' Notes for **Dungeon Fantasy 19: Incantation Magic**. Uncover the history of this supplement, plus get new Paths, power-ups, advantages, and a lens they didn't have room to cram into that popular supplement.

If a scroll can be a boon in a bad situation, consider what's possible with the *All-Scroll*. This unusual artifact allows heroes to access strange and interesting corners of the **GURPS** magical possibilities, and presents a dilemma for anyone who discovers exactly the magic they want.

This month's Random Thought Table considers what happens when you start with all the power . . . and steep consequences for using it.

There's nothing up our sleeve with this month's *Pyramid*, except an amazing assortment of magic. Join us to discover all of our secrets!

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
- Orange:* Special Features
- Purple:* Systemless Features

COVER ART
Abrar Ajmal

Editor-in-Chief ■ STEVE JACKSON
GURPS Line Editor ■ SEAN PUNCH
Assistant **GURPS** Line Editor ■
JASON "PK" LEVINE
GURPS Project Manager ■ STEVEN MARSH

Executive Editor ■ MIRANDA HORNER
Production Artist & Prepress Checker ■
NIKOLA VRTIS
Page Design ■ PHIL REED
& JUSTIN DE WITT

Chief Executive Officer ■ PHILIP REED
Chief Creative Officer ■ SAM MITSCHKE
Chief Operating Officer ■ SUSAN BUENO
Marketing Director ■ RHEA FRIESEN
Director of Sales ■ ROSS JEPSON

FROM THE EDITOR

BENDING THE UNIVERSE FOR FUN AND PROFIT

Our household has been playing a lot of *Harry Potter: Hogwarts Battle* lately. Although this cooperative deck-building game is generally enjoyable, we sometimes find ourselves wanting to tweak the base gameplay so that it's at a difficulty level we don't find frustrating. The rules offer insight for how to make things easier or harder, but the tweaks they offer are a bit off for our desires. For example, one suggestion for making it simpler involves removing an interesting subsystem in the game. But we *like* the subsystem; we just want the core game a bit easier!

That brings me to our latest installment of the Thaumatology series of *Pyramid* issues. Articles that tweak magic and arcane realms are common in the realm of *GURPS*. And I totally get *why*. Mark Twain famously said, "The difference between the almost right word and the right word is really a large matter – 'tis the difference between the lightning bug and the lightning." In the same way, the difference between the right magic system and almost the right magic system is the difference between a lightning spell and a light spell.

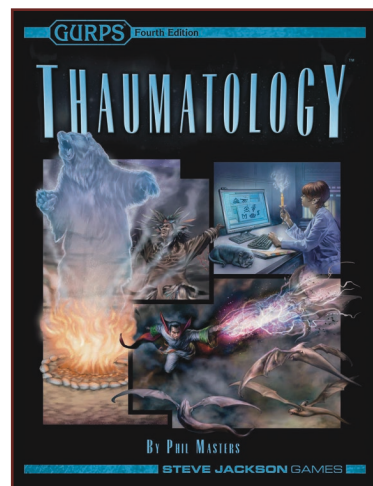
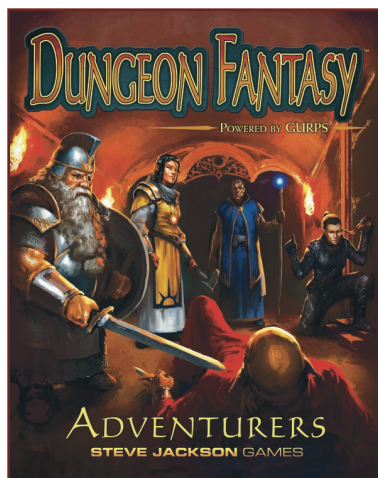
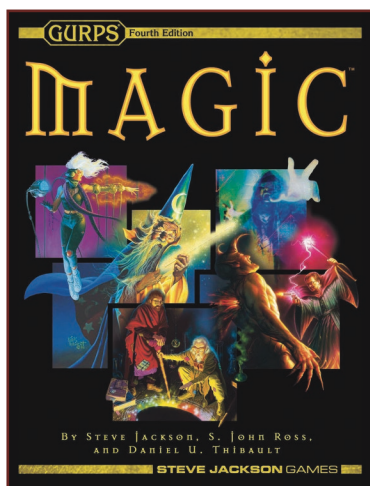
For those looking for something cool to define a campaign, encounter, or adversary, we hope there's "magic" to inspire

you in this issue. For those still trying to sort out what they're looking for, try to envision how the magic works for typical practitioners wielding it: What can they do with minimal effort (if anything)? What can they do in a heroic situation? What can they do if they need to pull out all the stops and unleash as big an effect as they can? Do any of those vary if a master is doing it versus a novice? Trying to scope out the min, median, and max effects can tell you what kind of magic you might be trying to strive for; see pp. 36-37 for an example of magic that shakes up assumptions of how much power a novice can tap. Of course, it's also possible to work from the other way, starting with a neat magical effect or system and seeing what kind of world it presents (like the new options opened by the alchemy system on pp. 4-11).

The magic is yours; use it awesomely!

WRITE HERE, WRITE NOW

Did this issue offer new insight into mystic mayhem, or is there another rabbit you wish we would've pulled out of our hats? We love to hear your thoughts! Contact us privately via email at pyramid@sjgames.com, or join the community of conjurers at forums.sjgames.com.



Pyramid, *GURPS*, Warehouse 23, the pyramid logo, and the names of all products published by Steve Jackson Games Incorporated are trademarks or registered trademarks of Steve Jackson Games Incorporated, or used under license. *Pyramid* is copyright © 2017 by Steve Jackson Games Incorporated. All rights reserved. Version 1.1 (January 2018).

Submission of your photos, letters, humor, captions, and marginalia constitutes permission to Steve Jackson Games Incorporated to use them in all media. All such submissions become the property of Steve Jackson Games Incorporated and will not be returned.

The scanning, uploading, and distribution of this material via the Internet or via any other means without the permission of the publisher is illegal, and punishable by law. Please purchase only authorized electronic editions, and do not participate in or encourage the electronic piracy of copyrighted materials. Your support of the authors' rights is appreciated.

NATURAL REAGENTS

Alchemists (especially the adventuring kind) will frequently want to find interesting uses for the many peculiar substances they encounter. Reagents that are *not* prima materia have a BRYW that includes at least two non-zero statistics, again ranging from -2 to +2, representing their association with various alchemical concepts (see *Alchemical Associations*, p. 4). See p. 9 for a list of example natural reagents and their statistics. The GM is encouraged to improvise the statistics of reagents in play to avoid excessive preparation.

In addition to its BRYW, each natural reagent should be given a listed weight, representing how much of the material is required to get a full measure's worth.

Example: Bertrand, having taken up with an adventuring crew in hopes of finding better reagents, has slain a basilisk with his comrades and ponders what might be alchemically useful. The GM rules that the basilisk's eyes and spleen are suitable alchemical reagents, and decides on their BRYWs (+1/+1/-1/+2 and +1/+0/-1/+2 respectively) after a moment's consideration. The GM makes a quick note regarding each reagent's BRYW and weight, and tells Bertrand how much he can hope to harvest.

Double, Double . . .

Alchemy is less about combining the chemical properties of reagents and more about combining their magical properties. As such, no reagent may be used more than once in any given elixir (excluding when an alchemist is making "essences" or multiple batches of the same elixir). Because alchemists are essentially intermingling the "souls" of the substances they use, adding additional measures of the same reagent to an elixir does nothing but waste the reagent in question, having no effect on the elixir at all.

SPECIFIC REAGENTS

Some elixirs are so powerful that they require more than an appropriate balance of reddening, whitening, blackening, and yellowing to create. Generally, any elixirs that have especially profound or permanent effects (or any elixir found in *GURPS: Magic* with an ingredient cost higher than \$400) should call

for a specific highly rare and/or valuable ingredient *in addition* to its BRYW. These specific reagents may be as "mundane" as a particular amount of gold shavings or diamond dust or as extraordinary as a strand of hair plucked from the God of Battle's own head. What each powerful elixir requires is up to the GM, though it should be thematically appropriate to the elixir in question. Specific reagents for less-powerful "super elixirs" (Invulnerability, Invisibility, Fertility, etc.) may be available for purchase, albeit at a steep cost. Reagents for the most powerful alchemical concoctions (Youth, Resurrection, Philosophers' Stone, etc.) frequently require entire adventures to secure.

THE PRICE OF GREATNESS

Reagents are not cheap. Even primitive alchemy can perform feats that modern medicine cannot, and the cost of materials necessary for creating those feats is appropriately high.

A measure of prima materia is worth 2.5% of campaign starting wealth (\$25 at TL3, \$500 at TL8) and weighs 0.1 lb. in a small glass vial. Concentrated prima materia (essence of rubedum, essence of leucos, etc.) is worth 12.5% of campaign starting wealth per measure (\$125 at TL3, \$2,500 at TL8) and also weighs 0.1 lb.

Pricing natural reagents is a little more complicated. Per measure, the value of a natural reagent is equal to the sum of each BRYW statistic *squared*, divided by the number of non-zero statistics, and *multiplied* by 2.5% of campaign starting wealth. Each natural reagent has its own specific weight, typically between 0.5 and 5 lbs. per measure.

Example: It's been months, and Bertrand has not yet found a decent use for his basilisk spleen. He's decided to sell it to a fellow alchemist. Bertrand lives in a TL3 society, and the basilisk spleen has a BRYW of +1/+0/-1/+2. As a result, each measure of basilisk spleen is worth \$50: +1 squared (1), plus -1 squared (1), plus +2 squared (4), divided by the number of non-zero statistics (3), and multiplied by 2.5% of campaign starting wealth (\$25).

This is strictly the *alchemical* value of any given reagent. An eccentric nobleman may very well pay thousands for a dragon's horn to use as a paperweight. Many specific reagents other than precious stones or metals are likely priceless!

For the game mechanics of acquiring reagents while out adventuring, see *Dead Monster Bits*, *GURPS Dungeon Fantasy 2: Dungeons*, p. 13, and *Naturally Occurring Loot*, *GURPS Dungeon Fantasy 16: Wilderness Adventures*, p. 44.

For that matter, the elements found in a human being is all junk that you can buy in any market with a child's allowance. Humans are pretty cheaply made.

– Hiromu Arakawa, *Fullmetal Alchemist, Volume 1*

You may follow up success with an IQ roll to discern whether the magician you've sensed wields clerical, druidic, wizardly, or weirder magic. Critical success on this roll provides *details*; e.g., "A wizard with Magery 6 and numerous Necromantic spells."

Dead Stop

1 point

Maintainable spells normally run for the listed duration even if the caster perishes – but at the moment when you, personally, slay a spellcaster, you may pay the 1 FP to end such a spell early (*Canceling Spells*, **Dungeon Fantasy Spells**, p. 11) on your victim's behalf. You may also end a spell with effects that endure indefinitely in the absence of Remove Curse – e.g., Curse, Flesh to Stone, or Suspended Animation – if you pay 20 FP. For most mage-hunters, the latter means reaching negative FP and losing HP (**Dungeon Fantasy Exploits**, p. 63). In both cases, FP cost is *per spell*.

You can only end *spells you know about*, generally because you witnessed the casting or someone who's aware of it told you. You must actually slay (or otherwise destroy, in the case of demons, undead, etc.) your target to use this ability, and invoke it the instant you make the kill. You cannot, for instance, kill them and then wait for allies to cast Identify Spell – though a friend who cast it *before* the killing blow can share information with you.

Higher Purpose (Mage-Hunting)

5 points/level

You're not just a mage-hunter – you're a zealot! Once you've identified an opponent as a malicious spellcaster by witnessing black magic firsthand or by using Caster Sense (p. 12), you get +1 per level (maximum three) of this advantage on all *attack* and *damage* rolls you make in combat with that foe, and on all *defense* and *resistance* rolls when they go after you.

The catch is that once you witness your prey using magic to selfish, destructive, or evil ends, or you're attacked by the caster (any attempt to use magic on you against your will counts), you *must* defeat that opponent or go down trying! If you knowingly back down, make a deal, flee, etc., when facing a magic-wielding wrongdoer, your advantage bonus becomes a penalty against all magic-users you face for the next 1d days.

This ability involves a binding supernatural pact that a small-but-vocal mage-hunter faction feels is almost as worrisome as the magic they've sworn to fight. Thus, this trait is *optional* (though very common).

Mage-Hunter Gear

1 point

Membership in the Order of Mage-Hunters means you enjoy 10% off the final price of specialized gear for defeating spellcasters.

This includes meteoric weapons, shields, and armor (immune to spells); blinding powder (to prevent enemies from seeing to easily cast spells); visibility dust (to reveal invisible mages); alchemical antidote (to deal with baneful potions); magebane (for neutralizing wizards); and magic resistance potions and Moly amulets. The GM may add further, similar equipment. The Order *wants* these items out there – you're welcome to shop for friends, too!

Magical Toughening

5 points/level

Your personal aura provides Damage Resistance against damage caused *directly* by magical spells, curses, items, traps, etc. If the damaging effect is a spell, or a non-spell that Magic Resistance helps against, or is explicitly described as "magical" or channeling mana, sanctity, or Nature's strength, this ability protects. It has no effect on the claws, teeth, fire breath, etc. of magical creatures, however.

MAGE-HUNTERS IN GURPS

This 250-point template is designed and formatted for the **DFRPG**. Familiar traits sometimes work differently there. Differences – and changes needed for **GURPS Dungeon Fantasy** – appear below. Alternatively, adopt the **DFRPG** versions!

Hazardous Materials: Means "Hazardous Materials (Magical)."

Languages: Spoken and written comprehension are available separately, but only at Native. Replace "[3 or 6/language]" with the customary "[2-6/language]." Ancient, Demontongue, and Elder Tongue are spoken by millennia-old undead, demons, and Elder Things, respectively.

Resistant to Disease/Poison: Give +1/level to resist. Replace with "Resistant to Disease (+3) or (+8) [3 or 5]" and "Resistant to Poison (+3) [5]."

Signature Gear: This doesn't buy gear; it "insures" a bought item of any value. Replace with the standard "Signature Gear [Varies]."

Stubbornness: Gains a self-control roll. Replace "[-5*]" with "[-5]."

There are also some new traits that merit a few notes in **GURPS**:

Caster Sense: Detect (Spellcasters) (p. B48), renamed.

Dead Stop: Perk roughly equal in power to the holy warrior's Shtick (**Dungeon Fantasy 1**, p. 8).

Dispel Magic: Spell repurposed as esoteric skill. The GM may insist on a perk like the innkeeper's Piecemeal Knowledge (**Dungeon Fantasy 11**, p. 28), but the many prerequisites make this unnecessary for game balance.

Mage-Hunter Gear: Perk similar to Dwarven Gear and Elven Gear (**Dungeon Fantasy 3**, p. 6).

Magical Toughening: DR (Force Field, +20%; Limited, Magic -20%), renamed.

Nondetection: Thief power-up from **Dungeon Fantasy 11**, p. 35.

Selective Magic Resistance: Magic Resistance (Cosmic, +100%), renamed. This degree of Cosmic is what **GURPS Power-Ups 4**, p. 8 calls "cheating."

Spellpiercer: Wizard-Hunter (Pyramid #3/61, p. 7), renamed.

Trademark Move: Perk suggested on p. 27 of **Dungeon Fantasy 2**.

THE BOOK WASN'T BIGGER ON THE INSIDE

Here are a few things that we really liked but had to cut, options that were too complicated, and ideas that would have worked better in hindsight.

TO ALLOW OR NOT TO ALLOW FIELD CASTER AND ADEPT

When we included the Field Caster and Adept power-ups, we had *no* idea they were going to be as contentious to **GURPS *Dungeon Fantasy*** GMs as feedback has indicated they are. Power-ups have always been implicitly allowed or disallowed by the Game Master, who decides what is available and what isn't. And in some campaigns, either or both power-ups can cause trouble or make incanters unbalancing.

For GMs with such issues, we emphasize, "Disallow both traits."

Alternatively, the GM can allow them but change the cost. Being able to teleport in ***Dungeon Fantasy*** is basically a 10-point Unusual Background with a costly advantage totaling 100 points. For GMs who want to make Adept and Field Caster available but rare, change the cost to 50 points each and bundle in a 40-point Unusual Background. If the group is starting with a higher point total, making even a 90-point advantage exploitable, consider making the Unusual Background a *percentage* of the character's total points – say, 15% to 20% – to keep the Adept or Field Caster from tromping all over everyone else's niche no matter how high-power the game is (or how flexible and good at Fast-Talk the *player* is!).

Incantation magic is a form of Ritual Path magic designed specifically for GURPS Dungeon Fantasy.

THE PATH OF NATURE AND THE PATH OF MIND

Originally, we had a box that allowed the GM to add new Paths to incantation magic, but were asked to remove it. While one notation made it in (Path of Mentalism; see *The Limits of Power*, ***Incantation Magic***, p. 13), here's one that didn't, along with an expanded Path of Mentalism description.

Path of Mentalism

Scope is as for Path of Arcanum (***Incantation Magic***, p. 11), allowing the caster to control, destroy, transform, etc. psionic effects and abilities. It can also be used to affect Elder Things; in such cases, the scope is as for Path of Mesmerism and Path of Transfiguration. The GM may also allow this Path to perform traditionally "psychic" feats.

For example, Control Mentalism could be used to telekinetically manipulate objects, while Sense Mentalism could allow the user to read a subject's mind or send thoughts to them.

Path of Nature

Scope is as for Path of Mesmerism (***Incantation Magic***, pp. 12-13) and Path of Transfiguration (***Incantation Magic***, p. 14), and allows the caster to affect plants and animals. It also allows that person to affect the weather. These spells usually bestow a broad-ranging bonus or penalty (***Incantation Magic***, p. 15); e.g., a rain spell that gives -2 on any roll which would logically be affected by the downpour. For weather-altering spells, don't worry about the weight of hail or water – instead just add Area of Effect. For such spells, Area of Effect gains a special SP cost: Figure out the radius of a spherical area of effect in yards on the *Size and Speed/Range Table* (p. B550), and add *twice* the "Size" value for that line to the energy cost (minimum +2). This replaces the normal cost of Area of Effect.

EXCISED POWER-UPS

Here are a few power-ups that didn't make the cut.

Alacritous Ritual

4 points for level 1, plus 3 points
for each additional level

Prerequisite: Ritual Mastery.

The ritual for this power-up must be the same one as for your Ritual Mastery perk. When casting this ritual, you may move the casting time for a spell down one step per level (e.g., from 10 minutes to five minutes) to a minimum of two minutes. If this is combined with Focused Aptitude, you can drop this to a minimum of one minute instead.

Perks: Unique Technique (Fast-Casting) [1].

Techniques: Fast-Casting (A) Path skill+3 [3]. Each additionally level negates another -3 worth of penalties, reducing the casting time a further step.

Grimoire Memorization

5 points/level

Prerequisite: IQ 17 or Eidetic Memory.

You've learned mental techniques that allow you to memorize the instructions from one grimoire. Instead of doubling the casting time for the spell, spend a minute consulting the grimoire to refresh your recollections. This results in a bonus to your rolls, just as if you had used the grimoire – without actually using it. You may memorize one grimoire's spell bonus per level of this power-up.

ABOUT *GURPS*

Steve Jackson Games is committed to full support of *GURPS* players. We can be reached by email: info@sjgames.com. Our address is SJ Games, P.O. Box 18957, Austin, TX 78760. Resources include:

New supplements and adventures. *GURPS* continues to grow – see what’s new at gurps.sjgames.com.

Warehouse 23. Our online store offers *GURPS* print items, plus PDFs of our books, supplements, adventures, play aids, and support . . . including exclusive material available only on Warehouse 23! Just head over to warehouse23.com.

Internet. To discuss *GURPS* with our staff and your fellow gamers, visit our forums at forums.sjgames.com. You can also join us at facebook.com/sjgames or twitter.com/sjgames. Share your campaign teaser in 140 characters or fewer with #GURPSHook on Twitter.

Or explore that hashtag for ideas to add to your own game! The *Pyramid* web page is pyramid.sjgames.com.

Gamer and Store Finder (gamerfinder.sjgames.com): Connect with other people and places playing our games. Add yourself to our database so they can find you as well!

Bibliographies. Bibliographies are a great resource for finding more of what you love! We’ve added them to many *GURPS* book web pages with links to help you find the next perfect element for your game.

Errata. Everyone makes mistakes, including us – but we do our best to fix our errors. Errata pages for *GURPS* releases are available at sjgames.com/errata/gurps.

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.

STUCK FOR AN ADVENTURE? NO PROBLEM.

**Warehouse 23 sells high-quality
game adventures and supplements
in print and PDF formats.**

- Free downloadable adventures for *GURPS* and *In Nomine*!
- Fun gaming accessories – shot glasses, shirts, specialty six-siders, and more!
- PDFs from Atlas Games, Amarillo Design Bureau, Goodman Games, and many others – plus gems from the up-and-comers.
- Original material for *Transhuman Space* and new *GURPS* supplements from Kenneth Hite, Phil Masters, David Pulver, Sean Punch, and William Stoddard!
- Fully searchable files of *GURPS Fourth Edition* supplements.
- Digital editions of out-of-print classics, from *Orcslayer* and the complete run of *ADQ* to *GURPS China* and *GURPS Ice Age*.
- Buy board games and roleplaying PDFs in the same order! Download digital purchases again whenever you need to.



STEVE JACKSON GAMES
warehouse23.com