

Generation Zeta

Our *DC Heroes* GM became burned out and wanted some time to actually play instead of GM. Among other factors, disagreements and game-time-sucking discussions of rules were getting to him. We took a break from DCH to play *Castle Falkenstein* (though I had the misfortune of only being able to attend one of the three sessions) and during the post-game dinner, we discussed our options. He had recently picked up *Truth & Justice* and was really jazzed by it, I think in large part because the rules lend themselves more to GM fiat than players arguing. But he did not know anyone else who would run...

I submitted three campaign proposals to the group along with three options for a system. I had (and still have) my doubts that T&J is a good fit for this group, so I offered up *Mutants & Masterminds* and *Tri-Stat dX* as alternatives. In the end, there was no consensus and no strong feelings one way or the other so I picked T&J. The campaign choices were teenage mutants ala X-Men (especially X-Men: Evolution), mystical heroes ala Elementals, and supernatural fighters ala Hellboy. Most players seemed to prefer one of the first two and when the deadline for a decision came, I ended up choosing the first one, which I all Generation Zeta.

Some of you may remember a short MnM campaign I ran in which the PCs went to an alternative reality, got superpower, stopped the aliens in invading their home reality while at the same time triggering the release of zeta radiation that would lead to the rise of superhumans the world over. Generation Zeta takes place 20 years after those events, when the first generation of kids born after the event are now in high school and having to deal with being teenagers and "zetans."

Originally pitched as a 3-game arc, we shall see if there is interest for a longer campaign. More details will come next month.

Comments on Issue #372

Myles Corcoran

Proper pacing in roleplaying is vital, and I would welcome an ignorable theme on the subject.

I have Knizia's LotR, but have not played it yet. I am, among other things, still waiting for Terri to clear off her sewing supplies off the dining room table so that we have somewhere to play games.

Robert A. Dushay

As a druid, could you not spontaneously use summon nature's ally to attack disoriented enemies?

I liked the TOTE spell rules, equating more dice with more spells. However, is it necessary to require casters to purchase multi-level spells multiple times? You could simply tie the level of the spell to the dice of the caster. Can a caster purchase a spell at a higher level without first buying the lower-level versions?

Before a product even starts development, a cost-benefit analysis should be done. Products, no matter

how good, that are not projected to have a good return on investment should never be allowed to get off the ground. This is in a marketing-driven company. Engineering-driven companies tend to skip the analysis and cut corners on the product development to achieve a good ROI. That has been my experience, anyway.

Lee Gold

I like *cinematographer*. I never liked *story teller*.

My character in the *DC Heroes* campaign can fly at ludicrous speeds because his molecules are dispersed (all of his powers require him to be dispersed). But this is not true of most other super-fast characters in superhero comics.

Joshua Kronengold

I think you overestimate by far the countering factor of "the Indy movement" on the d20 glut, given that they are only just now reaching brick-and-mortar stores and their market visibility remains very low.

Lisa Padol

Many, if not most, indie games have design goals that conflict with my roleplaying style. *Burning Wheel* played just like any other "fantasy heartbreaker." Both *Dogs in the Vineyard* and *Otherkind* had mechanics that actively disrupted (and even discouraged) roleplaying. Though they had some interesting ideas, I would have had more fun using *Fudge* or *Over the Edge* (to name two independent games from the early nineties) in the same settings.

Bear in mind that I am a very jaded roleplayer: it takes a lot to get me excited about a game. Since I am from the drama queen school of roleplaying and dislike narrative games, I will gladly give the indie games that corner of the sandbox. Otherwise, I have not seen anything in an indie game that is not simply a minor variation of something I already have in my toolkit of playing and GMing experience. Flags are a good example: I have yet to see a mechanic that trumps the questionnaire from *Amber* (or even simply a well written character description). I think it is great to include these kinds of things as advice to GMs and players, but I see no benefit (and several pitfalls) in formalizing them into game mechanics. For example, *Truth & Justice* simply states that GMs should "Build on what the players give them – weaving abilities, personalities, Backgrounds, Origins, actions taken in past sessions by characters, hints dropped by players in conversation - to create interesting sessions for them."

And yes, I find the hype indie games receive is far out of proportion to what minor innovation they might have.

Brian Rogers

Doug Henning was creepy in his own way.

In my 3rd Edition of *DC Heroes*, the rule about sonic booms is found on page 106 (Chapter Five: Combat, Section XII: Special Combat Situations, Sub-section J: High-Speed Movement).