

SSΩ: Super System Omega

Resistance Rolls

Nearly every power requires a comparison or roll between the strength of the offensive power and the target's resistance. There are exceptions this—the only way to resist being lifted by telekinesis is to be too heavy to lift or to grab hold of something, for example—but these are few.

In general, most powers that are considered "mystical" are actually physical or mental powers with magical trappings. However, the GM may determine that some powers, like a "soul wrack" or "spiritual possession" require mystical resistance instead of armor or mental shields.

If the resistance succeeds, there is no effect. But if the resistance fails, the GM looks at the difference between the attack and the resistance to determine the effect, which is categorized as Minor (or Marginal), Moderate, or Major. The power description needs to outline the effects at these different levels. For basic damaging attacks, it would look like this:¹ Minor = Bruised, Moderate = Stunned, Major = Unconscious.

For those unable to think of three distinct results, you can simply treat any success as a Moderate result and then increase the duration on a Major result and decrease it for a Minor result.

Normally, the target only gets one resistance roll and that occurs when the attack is first made. This applies not only to mental powers but can apply to physical powers with continuing effects like entangling vines or a blinding flash. If the effect was only Minor, another resistance roll could also be allowed if the victim takes an entire round to shake off the effects (such as the pull away from the vines or rub her eyes). Otherwise, another resistance roll would only be allowed if the victim spent a Hero Point, got assistance from an ally, or something else happens that changes the situation.

Mental Attacks

Mental attack powers (mental blasts, telepathy, mind control, et al) do not require an attack roll. So long as the mentalist can target the victim (typically, this is done by sight or ESP-type powers), skip the attack step and go directly to the resistance step, comparing the attack power's rank to the mental defense of the victim.

This makes mental powers much more powerful than in most games, but I think it better represents what actually happens in comics. Of course, the power could be defined such that it requires a physical attack roll, like a dart carrying a hallucinogen, or telepathy

that requires touch.

Mental powers that have a physical effect, like telekinesis or pyrokinesis, would probably be treated as physical attacks and require an attack roll. Even if the power affects targets within sight, generally the mentalist has to "lock on" the target and affecting someone who is dodging or moving about would be difficult. What you definitely want to avoid are powers that require neither an attack roll nor a resistance roll.

Animals, Androids, and Aliens

In general, mental powers apply to any human-like, sentient mind. The mind is not to be confused with the brain, but is rather a holistic definition of sentience, consciousness, self-awareness, language, art, and complex thought. This concept of mind applies to people, sentient or "uplifted" animals, most sentient alien species, and even artificial intelligences.

Non-sentient animals have a mind of their own, and while they have willpower, you probably have never seen a superhuman struggle to control the mind of a mundane animal in the comics. Rather, it just happens. To reflect this, mental powers that apply to non-sentient animals are treated as unopposed.

When it comes to inanimate, non-sentient objects, such as normal (even super) computers, machines, and electronics, mental powers do not really apply. Some characters can communicate and interact with these devices in a manner that mimics Telepathy or Mind Probe, but it is not really the same thing. In particular, such powers are never opposed by the will of the object. If the GM rules that artificial intelligences are immune to normal powers, they should then be vulnerable to these types of powers, though resistance rolls would apply.

Most aliens in comic books are very human-like in their emotions, thought process, and motivations. Because of this, there is rarely any difference between reading the mind of an alien and that of a human. However, the GM can make exceptions for minds that are truly alien to the human experience, such as sentient plants, hive-minds, or energy-based beings.

Language can be an effective way to limit mental powers. The GM can rule that some powers only apply when the mentalist and the target share a common language. While this may not limit Emotion Control, it could limit Mind Control, unless otherwise specified.

Based on the definition of a power, it often makes sense to restrict the use mental powers to a specific set of targets or exclude a set. For example, mental powers that work on a biological level, such as drugs and pheromones, may work only on humans or perhaps only males of any species and probably do not work at all on artificial intelligences.

1 Blatantly borrowing from Mutants & Masterminds.

Warning: My comments are more contentious than normal. I am traveling on business and I am in a really bad mood. As recent events have demonstrated, people suck and I am even more pissed off and misanthropic than usual.

Paul Cardwell

In an interview on *Fresh Air*, Jimmy Carter said that the United States fails to meet a number of basic criteria his international election oversight organization requires before they will monitor an election. He cited the lack of an independent elections body, the lack of consistent method of voting, and the lack of hand-countable paper receipts for electronic voting. You can listen to the interview on NPR's website. The show aired on October 21, 2004.

Myles Corcoran

I would not want to gain the dodging abilities of a skateboarder who was killed in traffic! I want to emulate someone who successfully dodged traffic! :)

I could not get through your HeroQuest examples. I kept thinking how much more transparent and simple it would be to use a roll-and-add system. Despite your fear, I think only minor subtraction is required.

Step 1: Get rid of that awful M notation. Instead of 1M1, you have 11; instead of 3M4, you have 34.

Step 2: Roll 1d12 and add the ability rank. Now, you have a number of options regarding open-ended rolls. Personally, I think that if you are using opposed rolls and they are both open-ended on the high end, then you really do not have to worry about being open-ended on the low end. But for consistency with your system, we'll do both. If you roll an 11, add 10 to your ability and re-roll the die. If you roll a 12, subtract 10 from your ability and re-roll the die. To keep things even simpler, you might want to say that no ability can be reduced below 0.

Step 3: Compare totals. If you beat the target number (TN), you succeed. If you beat it by 10 or more, you have a critical. If you are under the target number, you fail. If you fail by 10 or more, you fumble. You can even have multiple degrees of criticals/fumbles for succeeding/failing by 20, 30, etc. Because you are comparing by factors of 10, it should be fairly easy (certainly easier than the standard method, in my mind).

Spike Y Jones

If internal roleplaying is its own reward, why isn't external roleplaying? In my experience, awards for roleplaying really mean awards for scene hogging.

Jonathan Nichols

"Playing (in general)" is not roleplaying. GNS is an overly bloated, convoluted way of saying "people want different things out of a roleplaying game." But they never mention that some people just want to roleplay (not game, not narrate, and not simulate).

Except for the compulsive gambler, a wager is a means to the end, that is, more money. The point of wagering more is to win more.

If thievery and corruption "always feeds on large, sudden military expenditures," no wonder our executives wanted to start one! Thieving, corrupt bastards that they are. And we want to trust they had "good reason" for no-bid contracts? Is profit for themselves and their cronies reason enough?

Lisa Padol

Practically nothing about Devon's history applied to the intro campaign. The city was mostly demolished and abandoned.

Simon Reeve

Since casting a Cure _____ Wounds on undead does damage to them, it makes sense that a Paladin could have a similar effect by Laying On Hands.

Why are catpeople bad swimmers? Cats are not bad swimmers—though they may not like to (which cannot be said of tigers and jaguars). Quadrupeds tend to be much more natural swimmers than primates.

How is ale "more obviously plant-derived" than wine? Rarely have I heard of ale being called "fruity."

Brian Rogers

Letting players define their background cities? I can't *force* them! Most of the players I have encountered have no desire to do that much work.

Jim Vassilakos

You seem to be focused on the cultural differences of aliens rather than the biological. Besides, couldn't aliens have a diversity of culture that we have here on Earth? And because of our own diversity, do we really *need* aliens to add more?

I have never been one to say "my country, right or wrong" or "he's the President, so I must support him." If the country (or its president) is doing something immoral, illegal, and plain stupid, it is our patriotic duty to point it out. It is treasonous not to! For example, I cannot support an administration which tries to find loopholes in the Geneva Convention to justify torture (and does not promptly sack those responsible when it comes to light). And we are bringing democracy to the world? Bull. Shit.