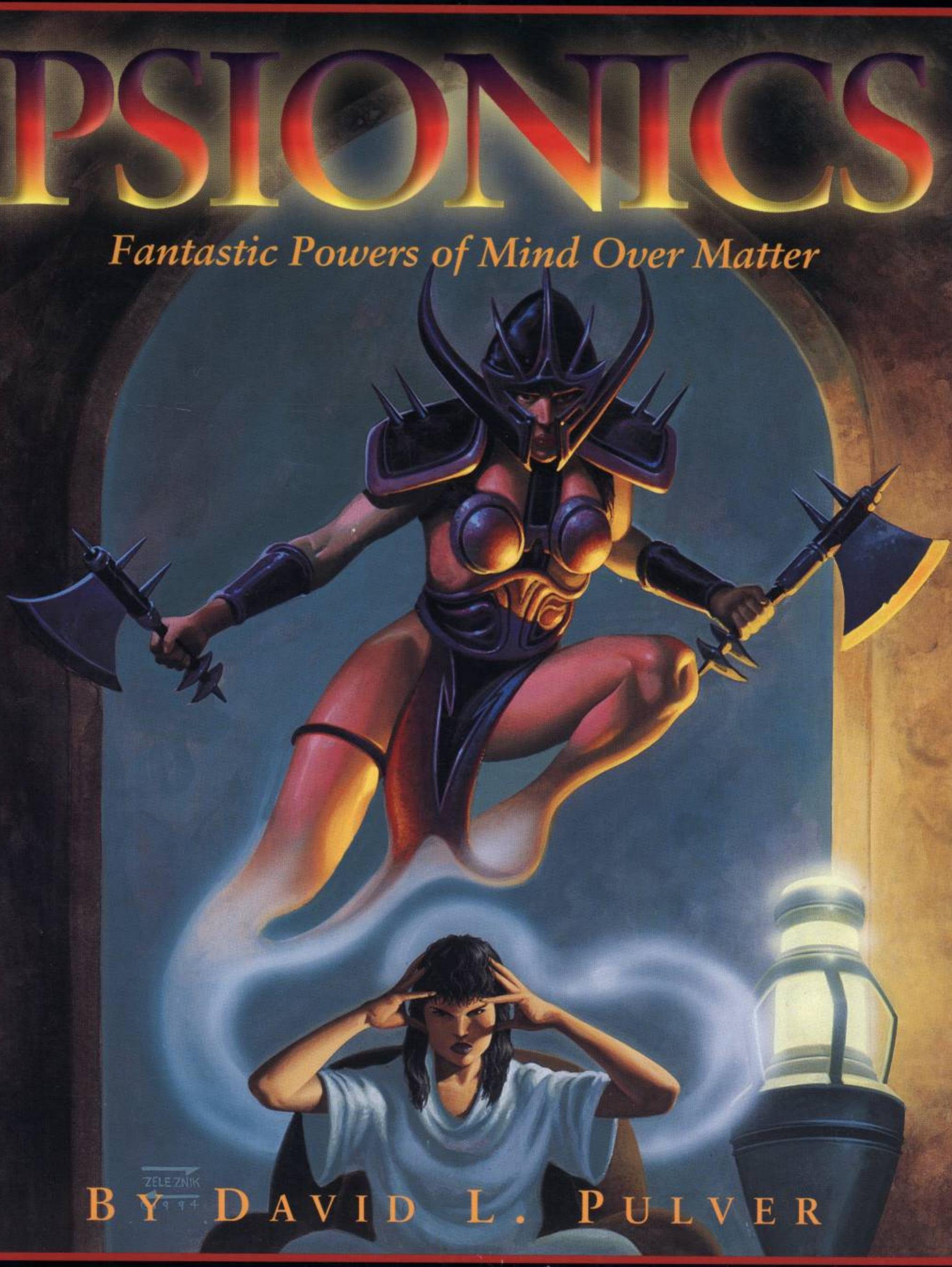
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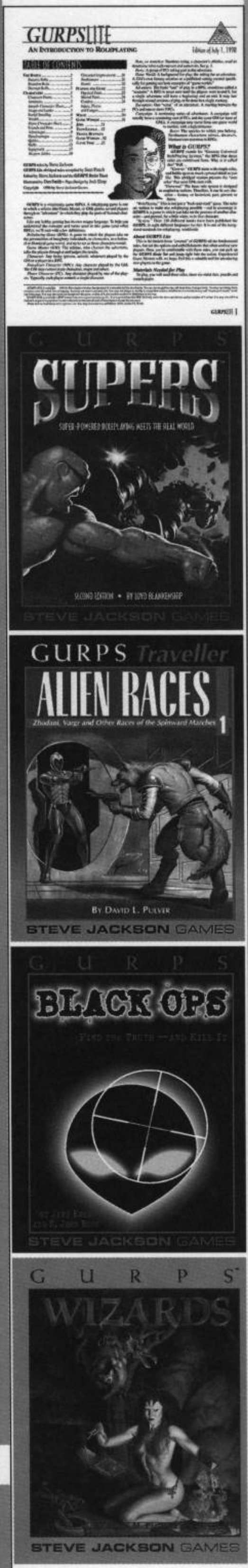
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PSIONICS

Fantastic Powers of Mind over Matter

By David L. Pulver

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Advice and Assistance: Richard Blum, Robert "Doc" Cross, Peter Donald, Troy Leaman, Peggy Pulver and Timothy Pulver, and Matt Brown, Lee Graham and Debby Delorme for anime suggestions.
Thanks also to Timothy Carroll and David Gross for playtesting above and beyond the call of duty.

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ISBN 1-55634-196-2

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INTRODUCTION

Telepathy. Teleportation. ESP. The powers of the mind . . . Once the stuff of superstition, these abilities are now a recognized part of science fiction, and many serious researchers are working to prove that they are *real.*

This book owes a great debt to the scores of science fiction writers who developed and codified the concept of *psionics*, John Campbell's name for the mighty science of mind that would come into being when these powers were understood as thoroughly as electronics or nuclear physics.

GURPS Psionics is designed for flexibility – it lets you create anything from the superminds of science fiction to psis with the more fickle powers of the "real world." It will let you add psionic powers to a multitude of possible worlds, from four-color comics to the depths of space and the dark fantasies of modern horror.

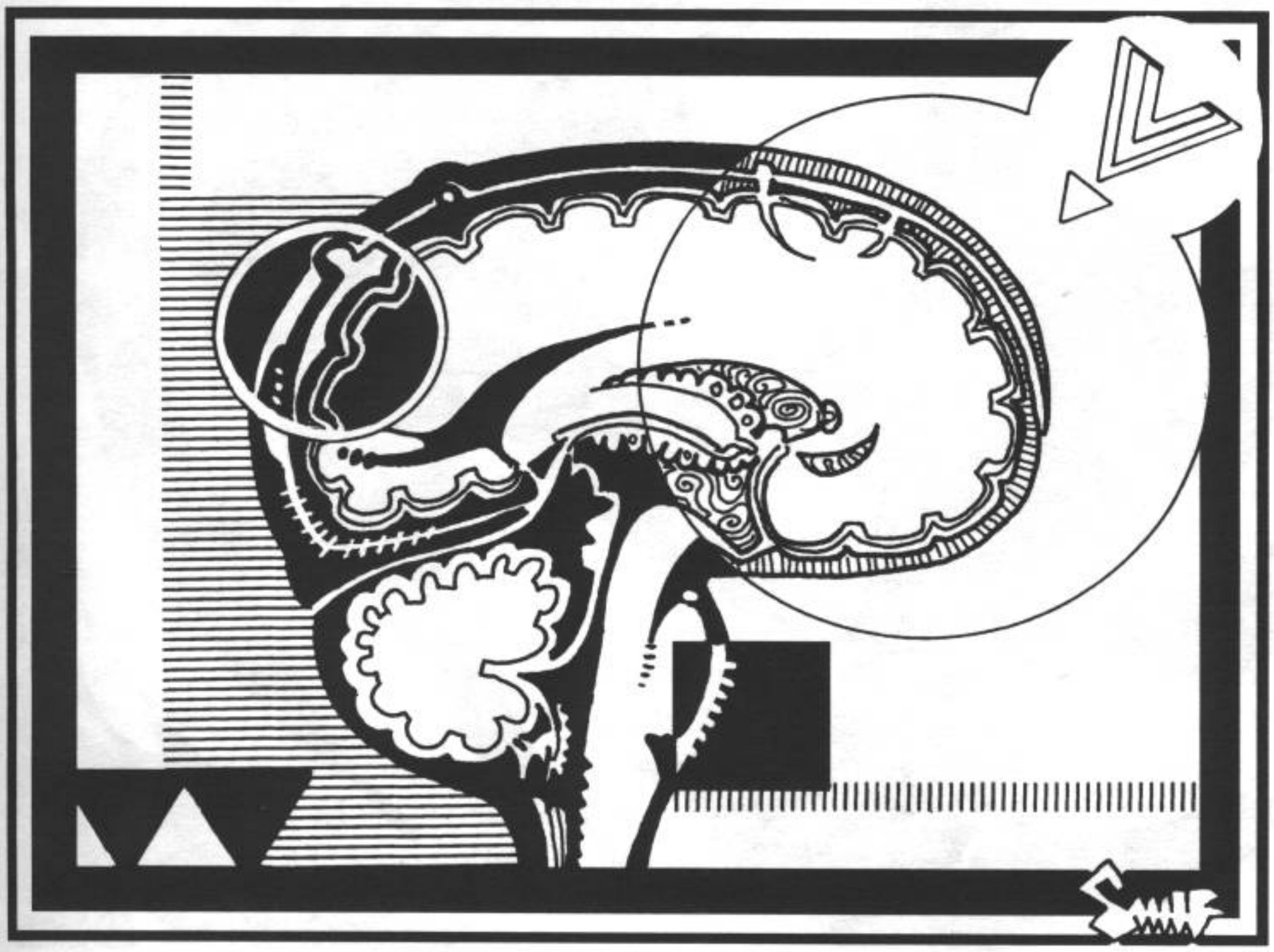
As well as making this a useful sourcebook for existing campaigns, I've also tried to show that psi can be the focus of an adventure, rather than just another superpower. Why not explore the mysteries of the human mind, the enigmatic astral plane, or the depths of a sleeper's dreams? The world of the *Phoenix Project* described in Chapter 8 presents some of these possibilities.

Welcome to the realms of the mind!

– David L. Pulver

About the Author

David L. Pulver grew up in Canada, England and New Zealand. He has been a science fiction fan for most of his life, and an avid gamer since 1978. He began freelance writing in 1988, and is currently trying to support himself as a full-time game designer. David's work has appeared in the magazines *Roleplayer, Challenge* and *White Wolf,* and he is the author of ***GURPS Ultra-Tech.*** He is also a frequent contributor to APAs such as *Alarums and Excursions* and *All of the Above.* David presently lives in Kingston, Ontario. He has yet to manifest any major psionic abilities.



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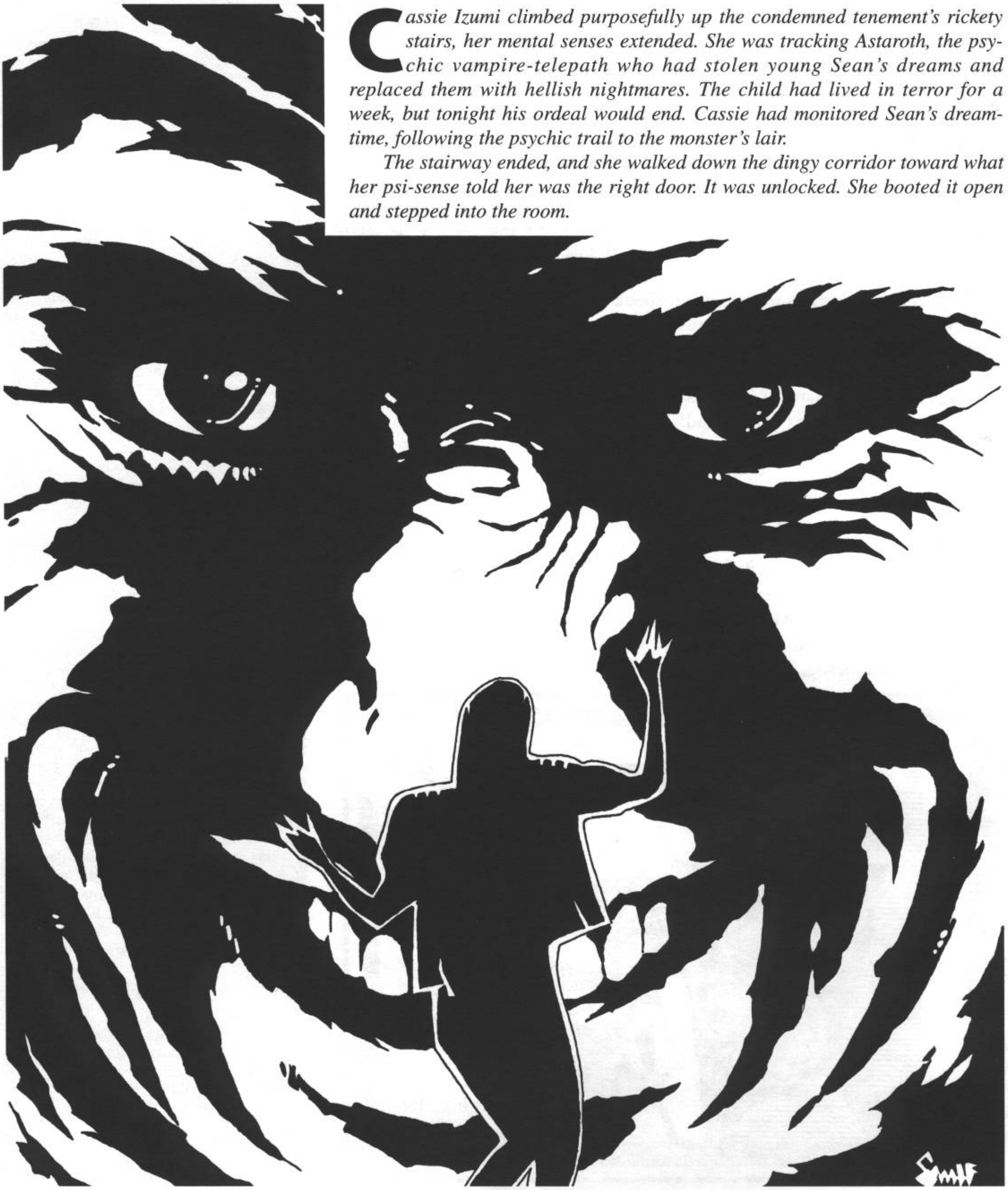
Rules and statistics in this book are specifically for the ***GURPS Basic Set***, Third Edition. Any page reference that begins with a B refers to the ***GURPS Basic Set*** – e.g., p. B102 means p. 102 of the ***GURPS Basic Set***, Third Edition.

CHAPTER ONE

PSIONIC ABILITIES

Cassie Izumi climbed purposefully up the condemned tenement's rickety stairs, her mental senses extended. She was tracking Astaroth, the psychic vampire-telepath who had stolen young Sean's dreams and replaced them with hellish nightmares. The child had lived in terror for a week, but tonight his ordeal would end. Cassie had monitored Sean's dreamtime, following the psychic trail to the monster's lair.

The stairway ended, and she walked down the dingy corridor toward what her psi-sense told her was the right door. It was unlocked. She booted it open and stepped into the room.



The walls were decorated with cabalistic symbols and astrological posters, the windows sheathed in black tape. On the floor, a Persian rug half-covered a chalk-drawn pentagram. The room stank of cheap incense. A fancy hi-fi and video rig filled one corner, and something that looked like an altar stood in another. A flickering candle and a long silver dagger lay upon it.

Astaroth floated in the middle of the room, legs crossed, levitating two feet above the rug. His eyes were closed, but an ironic half-smile played over his lips. His long, straight blond hair framed the same sharp visage that Cassie had seen in Sean's mind. In front of him a child's ball bounced, up and down, seemingly of its own accord.

He spoke softly, without looking up. "Welcome to my sanctum, my dear." He waved a hand, and the door closed of its own accord. "A pity you shan't be leaving." She heard the lock click shut. The ball continued to bounce, but the dagger lifted itself into the air, floated lazily toward her.

Cassie let her mind carry her words. ***You made one mistake, Astaroth. Sean is part of the Phoenix Project. And we take care of our own.*** *She reached out with her mind, seizing the ball, crushing it with her own telekinesis.*

Astaroth opened his eyes, and the dagger hurled itself toward Cassie, but she was ready. Cassie deflected it with her TK and it went spinning into one of the posters on the wall. She stepped a pace closer, saw Astaroth's eyes widen as he perceived the power of her personal aspect, the baleful, smoky glow and flickering dragon-shape that her mind subconsciously projected. Astaroth's own aura wasn't strong enough for Cassie to sense from where she stood, so she extended her mental perceptions. His aspect was a dark cloud, with an outer halo still shimmering with colors from the dream-essence he had recently stolen from Sean. Somewhere amid the darkness, Cassie thought she saw the outline of a predatory bird.

Enough tricks, vulture! *Cassie readied a bolt of psychic force as Astaroth concentrated on his own attack. She struck first. Her mental blow penetrated his mind shield, burning away at the core of his mind. She deflected his counterblow harmlessly, her own mental shields flaring brightly. First blood was hers! The battle had only begun, but she felt confident of its ultimate outcome.*

Psi Powers

Psionic abilities are grouped into nine distinct *Powers:* Antipsi, Astral Projection, Electrokinesis, ESP, Healing, Psychic Vampirism, Psychokinesis, Telepathy and Teleportation. Each Power is a distinct advantage, bought in levels. The more levels a character has in a specific Power, the stronger his ability in that particular area of psi.

Electrokinesis, Psychokinesis, Telepathy and Teleportation cost 5 points per level; all other Powers cost 3 points per level. A character can buy as many different Powers as he wishes, with one exception – a person cannot have any other psi Powers if he has Antipsi.

As with most other advantages, psionic Powers are inborn abilities. A character who starts with a particular Power can increase its level later, at normal cost, by spending earned experience, but totally new Powers can't normally be bought after the character is created.

Having at least one level in a Power gives its holder the ability to learn its particular set of *skills,* which determine exactly what he can do with the Power. For example, Teleport includes the skills Autoteleport (teleporting yourself), Combat Teleport (blinking out of the way of blows) and Exoteleport (teleporting other objects). Most psi skills cannot be used without training, even with Power. There are a few exceptions which have a default value of IQ, but in general, the PC must have at least ½ point in a psi skill to use it at all.

Psionic Terms

This is a short glossary of terms used throughout this book. These are *game* terms; for psionic jargon that *characters* might use, see the sidebar on p. 119.

Active Skill: Refers to a normal psi skill, use of which requires a turn of concentration. A psi skill is assumed to be an active skill unless noted otherwise.

Feat: Refers to the use of a psi skill on a specific subject, e.g., maintaining a psychokinetic energy shield around oneself, or reading a particular person's mind.

Latent: A particular Power is *latent* in a character if he has bought the Power itself at level 1 or better, but knows none of the skills associated with it.

Mind Shield: The (natural or artificial) shield used to protect a mind against telepathic interference. The Power level of a Mind Shield is subtracted from the skill of hostile telepathic attacks. (Exception: if the shield has already been penetrated by Telereceive, a skill such as Sleep or Telereceive can be used "from within," ignoring the shield's Power.) See pp. 22 and 42.

Passive Skill: A psi skill that works automatically, without concentration on the part of the user, such as precognitive Danger Sense. Rolls for passive skills are often made by the GM.

Power: A specific category of psi. There are nine Powers: Antipsi, Astral Projection, Electrokinesis, ESP, Healing, Psychic Vampirism, Psychokinesis, Telepathy, and Teleportation.

Power Level: A character's strength in a particular Power.

Psionic Resistance: An advantage that subtracts from all direct uses of psi on the character. See p. 97.

Psi Skill: A single ability within a Power. For example, Mental Blow is a psi skill within the Telepathy Power.

Repeated Attempts: These are attempts to try the same feat after an initial attempt has failed. Repeated attempts have a cumulative -1 penalty (-2 if vs. a Mind Shield).

Subject: The area, person or object against which a psi skill is being directed.

User: The person using a psi skill.

Example of Psi Use in Combat

Jeremiah Cromwell is stalking the psi-ninja Ayami in her mountain fortress. Jeremiah is 10 yards away when Ayami's ESP warns her of his approach. She whirls to face him, drawing a pair of poisoned shuriken.

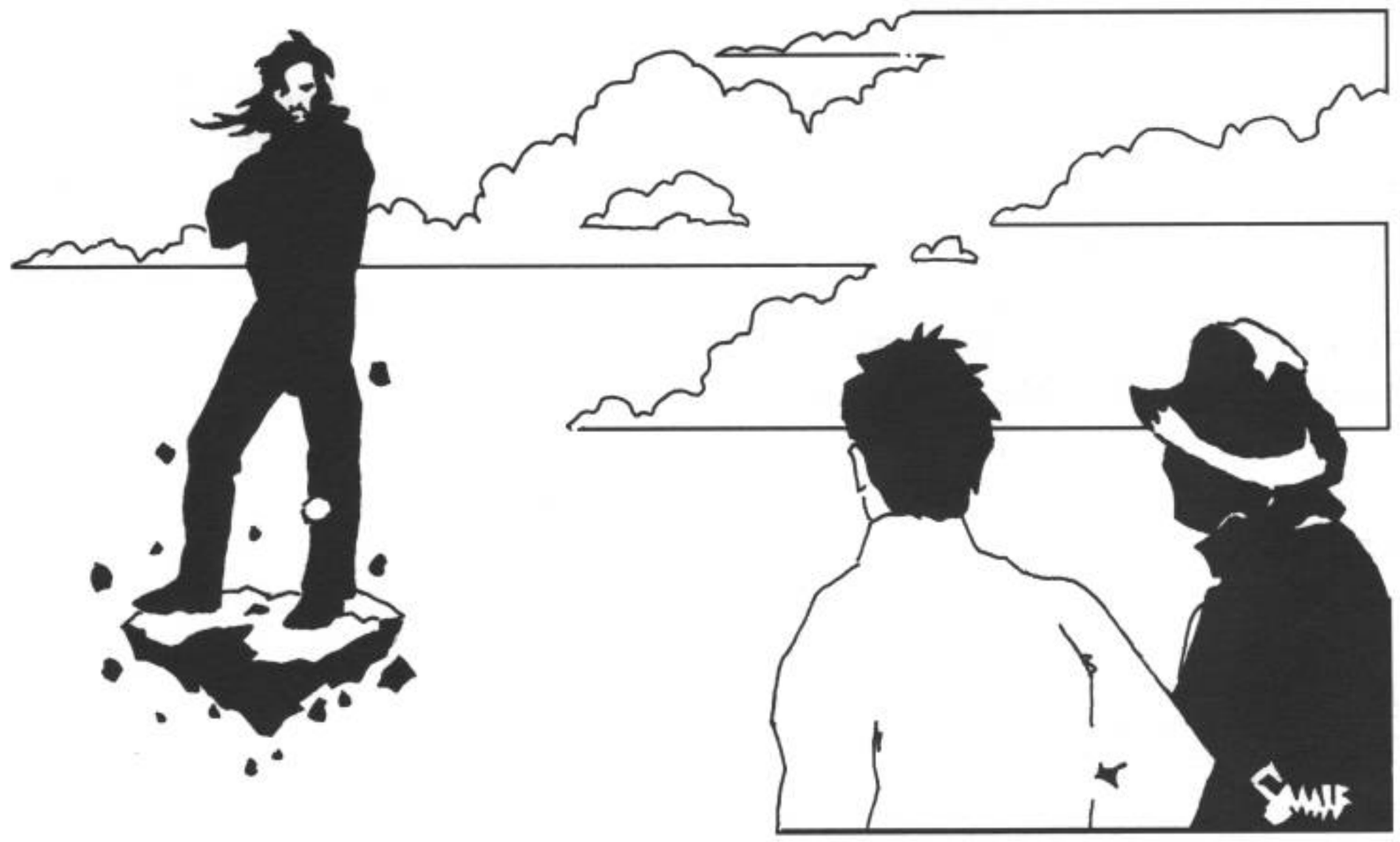
Turn #1: Jeremiah is unarmed, but he is a strong psychokinetic, and Ayami is standing next to a wall bracket holding an ancient wakizashi shortsword. Knowing the ninja's strength, he doesn't believe he can wrench the shuriken out of her hand, so he decides to lift the blade. With Power 15 (lift 250 lbs.), Jeremiah has more than enough PK to wield a wakizashi – and since Ayami is within the blade's 1-hex reach, he can use it as a melee weapon, not a missile. Jeremiah concentrates for one turn, taking no action, announcing his intention to do this to the GM.

Turn #2: Ayami flips a poisoned shuriken at Jeremiah, accurately. He decides to attempt a Dodge. He succeeds, but because he Dodged, he must now make a Will-3 roll to avoid losing his concentration on TK. He has Will 15 and rolls an 11. He's still concentrating!

It is now Jeremiah's turn again. Psi use is resolved at the beginning of *his* turn. The wakizashi swings at Ayami – but does it hit? Jeremiah rolls vs. his Telekinesis skill of 15, at -4 for the difficulty of this particular feat (see *Wielding Weapons with TK,* p. 34). Jeremiah rolls an 11, striking the ninja; since this was a normal use of psi, without *extra effort* (sidebar, p. 7), there is no Fatigue cost. Ayami fails her own Dodge roll. Jeremiah rolls damage: with PK Power 15 he has effective ST 10 (see *Telekinesis* skill, p. 19), so the shortsword's swing does 1d cutting damage, wounding her. Had Jeremiah failed his skill roll, the blade would still have moved, but it would have missed. Any further attacks using the weapon would then have suffered the -1 penalty and one Fatigue point cost for *Repeated Attempts* (p. 8).

Although he has struck Ayami, Jeremiah has still not acted this turn; the attack sprang from his *previous* turn's Concentrate maneuver. He is now free to move, ready a weapon, or take any other maneuver . . . including concentrating on another psi feat, such as a further attempt at telekinetic swordsmanship!

While normal skills can be learned by anyone, psi skills can never be learned unless the character already has at least one level in the Power they are associated with. Psi skills are bought like any other skills, and all are Mental/Hard, but Eidetic Memory gives *no* bonus to learn them.



Power and Skill

A psi's proficiency is described by two factors: the strength of the underlying Power and the level of training in the particular *Skill* that is being used.

Power Level is the raw "strength" of your psi ability. The level of a Power determines its potency – its range, damage done, weight affected and so on. It remains constant for every skill associated with the Power.

Skill Level is the psi's trained ability to control each particular skill within a Power. A skill cannot be used unless at least a half-point has been spent to learn it. A die roll is required only if there is a significant question of skill or if the skill is somehow opposed (e.g., by a Mind Shield or an unwilling subject). For instance, no skill roll is needed to shove someone with TK, just as you don't roll vs. DX to pick up a book. However, a roll would be required to move something to a precise spot, especially if you want to move it *fast.*

Example: A character buys Telepathy with a Power of 10 (50 points), so his Power is 10 for all his telepathic skills. He buys Telesend-11 and Telereceive-18; these are skill levels, based on IQ. His Power level of 10 would give him good range for both these skills. He can use his high skill in Telereceive to pick up complex thoughts under stressful situations, but sending his own thoughts is harder for him.

Example: A Psychokinetic with Power 15 and the skill Telekinesis-5 could lift large weights by mental power, but his control would be poor. He could float a man across a street, but trying to perch him on a parked car would be tricky. On the other hand, if he had Power 5 and Telekinesis-15 he could maneuver a dime into a coin slot while carrying on a conversation, but couldn't lift more than a few ounces.

One-Skill Powers

If you have only *one* skill under a Power, and can *never* learn any more, that Power can be bought more cheaply. A star (★) by the name of a skill shows the cost per level of Power if that skill is the *only* one the psi can ever learn for that Power. If there is no star, the skill is not available as an "only" skill.

Using Psi Abilities

Use of psi requires the Concentrate maneuver (p. B106). Unless specified otherwise, each use of an "active" psi skill requires one turn of concentration – that is, you stand still for one second, doing nothing, visualizing how the skill is going to be used (and informing the GM of what effect you want). You *never* have to use full Power – but if you don't want to do so, you should tell the GM.

If your attention wasn't distracted (p. B106), at the *beginning* of your next turn the actual feat takes place. If a skill roll is required, you make it now. A roll against psi skill works just like any other skill roll: 3d vs. your level in that skill.

Success means the psi skill takes effect as described. If use of the skill would cost fatigue (see *Fatigue Cost,* p. 8), this is immediately marked off your ST. If the skill is one which can be *resisted,* a Contest of Skills is rolled instead; see the skill descriptions. See *Resisted Skills,* below.

A *critical success* means the skill worked especially well, and there is *no* fatigue cost. If the skill is a resisted one, don't roll for resistance.

A failed roll means the skill had no effect – the user bungled that specific use of psi. Further attempts to duplicate that same feat without resting first will be considered *repeated attempts:* they will cost fatigue and be made at a -1 (cumulative) penalty to skill, or -2 if the failure was vs. a Mind Shield. See *Repeated Attempts*, p. 8, for the length of this penalty.

A *critical failure* has the same effect as a failure, and always costs 1d of fatigue in addition to any other fatigue costs.

After you have made your roll, you may take your action for that turn – the psi effect was the result of *last turn's* concentration. You may move, fight or concentrate on another use of psi.

Resisted Skills

Certain psi skills, as noted in their descriptions, may be *resisted.* This means that a Quick Contest must be rolled before the skill takes effect. Typically, this contest is between the attacker's psi skill and the defender's Will, but there are exceptions; see the individual descriptions.

For instance, if the attacker is trying Sleep (p. 24), he attempts his Sleep roll. If he fails, he fails, and the subject gets an IQ roll to notice the attack. If he succeeds, the subject rolls vs. his Will or his best Telepathy skill. If he makes this roll by at least as much as the attacker made his Sleep roll, he "resists," and, again, gets a chance to notice the attack. But if the attacker makes his roll by more than the defender made his – or if the subject fails – then he sleeps.

The Rule of 16: If the subject is a living being, the caster's effective skill cannot exceed the higher of 16 or the subject's actual resistance.

Continuing Effects

Many psi skills produce effects that can be maintained continuously, such as reading a person's mind. As long as the skill is being used in the same way on the same subject, a Concentrate maneuver is not required after the first turn. The psi can continue using his abilities while he takes other maneuvers.

However, a minimal level of concentration must always be maintained – psi effects will stop working if the user dies or goes unconscious or the subject moves out of range. Furthermore, the user must make a separate skill roll once a minute for each individual psionic feat he is maintaining. This roll does not cost fatigue, even on a critical failure. But if it fails, so does that particular use of psi. Reactivating it would require a new turn of concentration and another skill roll, which would count as a *Repeated Attempt* (p. 8).

Modifiers to Skill

When making the roll to activate a psi ability, various modifiers will add to or subtract from your basic skill. These vary for each psi power and skill, but some common modifiers are:

For each *repeated attempt* at the same feat after the initial skill roll failed: -1 (-2 for ESP skills or vs. a Mind Shield).

Subject has Psionic Resistance: minus its level.

Multiple feats: -1 for each psi skill except Telecontrol that the user has "on" at the same time. Exception: other skills can be used during Astral Projection at no penalty!

Telecontrol (see p. 25): -4 to *anything* else attempted at the same time.

Telepathy vs. Mind Shield: minus its Power.

User wounded while concentrating: minus damage suffered.

Extra Effort

A psi can put "extra effort" into an activation roll and get an effective increase in Power. For every 3 Fatigue points spent on an attempt, increase effective Power by 1, but *decrease* effective skill by 2. If the psi use continues for more than a minute, each extra minute using that skill costs another 3 Fatigue.

The levels added through extra effort may not exceed the character's original Power. For example, a character with Power 2 telepathy could add no more than two additional levels with Extra Effort, regardless of how much Fatigue he had to spend.

Passive Psi Skills

A few psi skills are *passive skills.* Unlike normal "active" skills, these psi skills require no concentration to activate or maintain, and any rolls for success are made secretly by the GM. An example of a passive skill is Precognition, where the GM secretly rolls to see if the PC's power alerted him to danger. Another is Mind Shield, which protects the psi even if he is unaware of an attack. *Extra Effort* (see above) can never be put into passive uses of a skill. In this case, skill level is used to determine other things, such as the shield's sensitivity.

Passive skills never cost Fatigue.

Mental Signatures

Psi powers do not normally have an obvious *physical* effect. However, they leave a psychic "signature" which can be detected by those with the proper skills.

The Signature Sniffer skill (part of the Telepathy Power – see p. 24) can be used to detect the active use of any psi skill. On a good enough roll, the sniffer will know who used the psi skill and what for!

A Signature Sniffer who also has the Psychometry skill (p. 14) can even detect *old* signatures on the area or item that was affected.

The enhancement "Weak Signature" gives a -4 to read a signature. The enhancement "No Signature" means there is no trace to read!

Improving Psi Abilities

Use the rules for *Adding and Improving Skills* (p. B82) for psi skills. Powers can be improved just like skills, but only if the character has at least Power 1 to start with. Characters can apply experience to skills or Powers that were used in an adventure, or use any of the methods for *Improvement Through Study* described on p. B82:

Finding a Teacher is the easiest method, requiring 200 hours of personal tutoring per character point gained. However, the teacher must know the ability you wish to learn or improve at a higher level than you do – and if psi is rare, secret or illegal, the quest for a proper "guru" may be an adventure in itself! Few psionic teachers charge for instruction (unless psi is *very* common), but there is always a price – which often involves serving the teacher or his organization for a period of time at least equal to the length of instruction.

Self-Teaching of skills and powers is also possible, but this takes twice as long – 400 hours per point.

Schools for psis sometimes exist, in the form of Psionics Institutes (sidebar, p. 105) – see the descriptions of groups like the Overmind Institute (p. 124) or Phoenix Project (p. 124) for examples. Military and intelligence organizations may also run secret training camps for psis. These camps usually require the student's total concentration whenever he's not actually eating or sleeping; at 14 hours of study per day, a character point would be gained every two weeks! Tuition is rarely charged, but there are usually strings attached . . .

Jobs count only if the psi is using his psionic skill or power as an integral part of his daily routine. They provide about 2½ character points of experience per year – see *Working Psis* (sidebar, p. 106) for examples of psionic professions.

Multiple Feats

A psi can *activate* only one skill use at a time. But he may use several skills simultaneously, as long as they are started one at a time. For each simultaneous feat, there is a -1 to skill. For Telecontrol (p. 25), the penalty is -4.

Example: You start juggling a hand grenade with your hands behind your back, using Telekinesis. The pattern is the same each turn, so only minimal concentration is required after your initial skill roll. Now you add a second grenade. You concentrate for one turn (taking a -1 penalty for doing two things at once) and make your roll. A failed roll would mean you dropped the new grenade; on a critical failure, you'd fumble *everything* you were doing.

With your audience distracted, you attempt Telereceive, to read a foe's mind. This requires a turn of concentration and a roll at -2 (for the other two feats). If you succeed and remain in your foe's mind, you will have to make two rolls each minute – one each for TK and Telereceive, both at -2 – to continue. You can keep mind reading and juggling every turn while you do other things, but throwing a grenade would require you to Concentrate and make a new skill roll to keep the other uses of psi on track.

Repeated Attempts

When a psi tries to use or maintain a skill and fails (misses his roll), he may wait five minutes and try that particular feat again without a penalty. If he tries again sooner, this is considered a *repeated attempt* and costs a fatigue point. Furthermore, the skill roll for that second attempt is at -1. Should this effort fail, he can spend another point of fatigue and try again at -2, and so on, until fatigue reaches 0 and he falls unconscious, or effective skill drops below 3, at which point no success is possible. Double these penalties if he is attacking a Mind Shield.

Once a psi starts spending fatigue for repeated efforts, all attempts with that skill are considered repeated efforts until he has rested for long enough to recover *all* lost fatigue, at 10 minutes per point (faster if he has the Breath Control skill, p. B48).

Psi use is only considered a repeated attempt if the psi is trying the same feat – that is, the identical skill on the same (or identical) subject. Two people are not identical. Two bullets (to be moved by Telekinesis) would be. If *distance* is all that changes, it is still a repeated attempt. In case of doubt, the GM decides.

Consecutive *successful* rolls to perform the same psi feat are *not* "repeated efforts" – as long as the psi continues to succeed, he can do the same thing forever without penalty.

Fatigue Cost

Most uses of psi require no expenditure of energy, just as ordinary walking and talking require no great effort. In this way psi is very different from magic.

But some uses are more strenuous. When use of a psionic skill costs energy, it is always taken as *fatigue* – one point of fatigue per attempt, unless specified otherwise. Unlike a mage, a psi cannot spend his own HT as energy for psi use – this is another of the differences between magic and psionics.

Psi use costs fatigue under the following circumstances:

(a) For each *repeated* attempt to use a skill when the first attempt has failed.

(b) For any use that requires a Quick Contest of Skills or Contest of Skills vs. the subject's attributes, *unless* the user wins the Contest by 5 or more. In that case, the effort was so easy it cost no fatigue.

(c) For any skill specifically described as requiring fatigue expenditure – this includes some of the more powerful skills in each Power.

(d) For an "extra effort" use of psi – that is, an attempt to raise your effective Power level above normal. See the sidebar on p. 7 for details.

(e) On any critical failure on a skill roll, the user loses 1d of fatigue. Some skills may have other critical failure hazards, as noted in their individual descriptions.

Enhancements and Limitations

An *enhancement* is something that makes a psi Power more useful – Instantaneous, for example. A *limitation* makes a psi ability *less* useful – Unreliable and Touch Only are examples. *The GM is free to disallow any modifier that he feels is abusive or inappropriate for a particular ability!* A psi cannot have more than two linked sets of enhancements and limitations.

Enhancements and limitations are described in terms of a percentage. For example, a +20% enhancement reflects a 20% increase in the final cost for a particular psi Power, rounded *up*.

Enhancements *add* to the cost; limitations *subtract* from the cost. Total all modifiers before determining final cost. For instance, a +20% enhancement and a -30% limitation result in a net -10% on cost. The final reduction can never exceed -75%; treat anything over -75% as equal to -75%.

Example: You are buying Telepathy (5 points per level) with a 50% limitation. Buying it at level 1 costs 3 (half of 5, rounded up). Level 2 would cost 2 more, for a total of 5 (exactly half of 10). Level 7 costs 18 (½ of 35), and so on.

Specific enhancements and limitations are described starting on p. 27.

Turning Enhancements On and Off

Each time a psi uses an enhanced psi Power, he can decide which (if any) enhancements to use. The player must inform the GM which enhancements are being ignored *before* the roll is made to activate the ability. The "default" assumption is that they're always being used.

This allows a PC to effectively have multiple versions of the same psi Power by simply tailoring which enhancements are used at any particular time.

Linked Enhancements and Limitations

A psi may "link" a specific enhancement to a specific limitation, as long as the limitation's value is greater than or equal to that of the enhancement. For instance, a +20% enhancement could be linked to any limitation (or set of limitations) with a total value of -20% or worse.

When this is done, the enhancement is free: the limitations cancel out its point cost. There is no further point break if the limitations were worth more than the enhancement!

The game effect is that the limitations come into play whenever the enhanced version of the power is used. For instance, a psi might have the option of using his Mental Blow without leaving any signature (+20%), but only if he takes a minute of preparation (-20%). He would still have the option to use a normal Mental Blow, leaving a signature, without preparation.

Enhancements and Limitations for Skills

An enhancement or limitation may be applied to a *skill* rather than a *Power.* This changes the effectiveness of that specific skill without affecting other skills. Only the cost of that specific skill is changed. Always compute the cost of the unmodified skill first, and round the cost *up* to the nearest half-point. Minimum cost is ½point.

Should a player apply the same enhancements or limitations to all the skills in a Power so as to get the same effect for fewer points, the GM may laugh ruthlessly and have the player enhance or limit the underlying Power instead!

For a one-skill Power, the enhancement or limitation is always applied to the Power cost, regardless.



Roleplaying Limitations

Limitations reduce the cost of Powers and skills by making their use more difficult or dangerous. But limitations are not just ways of saving points. They can also be the focus of adventures. A psi with dangerously Uncontrollable skills could be a menace! Limitations can also be a mystery to the researcher: many gadgets or psi skills can detect Power level and type, but few can determine what limitations a person has.

Imagine the frustration of a parapsychologist when he discovers a genuine teleport who has only made one jump and doesn't know how he did it. The scientist's genetic tests reveal the person is a Power 14 Teleport – but his power has the limitations Emergencies Only, Unreliable, and the Accessibility limitation "Only When Intoxicated." He made his first "jump" to escape a robbery at a bar.

Getting Rid of Limitations

At the GM's option, a character can use earned experience to buy off limitations, paying the difference between the original and limited cost. Special training with other psis might be required (reflecting a character learning to master his Uncontrollable or Fickle powers). Alternatively, a limitation may have resulted from a "mental block" or buried trauma, and can only be bought off if the character recognizes and overcomes this problem, perhaps by telepathic counselling or dream-therapy.

Psi Powers and Skills

This section describes the nine psi powers and their associated skills. The skill descriptions include the basic information needed to use them in adventure and combat. Additional uses for many skills may be found in the *Advanced Psionic Techniques* chapter.

Some skills have *prerequisites.* In order to learn such a skill, a psi must have the prerequisite at the minimum listed level.

A star ★ refers to the power's cost if it is bought with that skill alone (see *One-Skill Powers,* p. 6). The note "★n/a" means the skill cannot be the only skill in a power.

Many psi skills base their effects (damage, range or area) on a fraction of Power, e.g., Power/5. Always round *down.* If this gives a value of 0, then the psi lacks the Power to effectively use the skill.

When an area effect is given for a skill, the area is always a sphere of a given radius, counting the target hex. A two-yard radius, for instance, consists of the target hex and all adjacent hexes.

Antipsi Power (3 points per level)

Parapsychologists have noticed that certain people seem to score significantly *below* average on tests for psi ability. Test results of previously reliable psis also drop when they are nearby! The conclusion: an ability exists that can interfere with other psi powers – Antipsi. Unconscious use of Antipsi is sometimes ascribed by psi researchers to overly skeptical observers if psi experiments fail to work while under their scrutiny!

Antipsi abilities *never* affect other Antipsi abilities – Psi Static doesn't jam other Psi Static, for example.

Special Limitation: The Antipsi only affects one psionic power (e.g., Telepathy or Electrokinesis): -50%.

Neutralize ★2

This skill is used to short-circuit the abilities of a single individual. It requires a minimum Antipsi Power of 5 to use, and has a range of Power in yards.

To use Neutralize, take the Concentrate maneuver. At the beginning of your next turn, roll a Quick Contest: your Neutralize skill vs. the subject's Will or HT, whichever is higher. The success roll is *not* modified by Antipsi abilities, Psi Static, or the Psionic Resistance advantage.

If it succeeds, you reduce *all* the victim's psi abilities by 1 level of Power per 5 full levels of your Antipsi Power. Repeated attempts can cumulatively reduce Power; following a *successful* attempt, there are no penalties for trying again! Psi abilities reduced to Power 0 stop working.

Repeated *failed* attempts on the same subject have the usual penalties; on a critical failure, the Antipsi's *own* Power levels are reduced appropriately.

Lost Power recovers at a rate of 1 level every hour, with all reduced Powers recovering simultaneously.

Psi Static ★ 2

Those with this ability are sometimes called "Screamers." A few Screamers are in control of their skill, but most are untrained. Because of this, few psis want anything to do with a Screamer.

A Screamer can use his power "globally" to interfere with *all* psi use within an area defined by his Power (range as per a "global" use of Telepathy). This requires no skill roll, but is still an active use of psi, requiring the Concentrate maneuver. It continues until turned off, without a skill roll.

While Psi Static is on, any use of psi that normally requires a skill roll requires a Quick Contest of Skills instead – the Screamer's unmodified Psi Static skill vs. the unmodified level of the psi skill being attempted. The psi being interfered with must always spend one fatigue point per attempt, in addition to any other costs. If the Screamer wins the roll, the psi use is a failure. If the other psi wins the contest, he can attempt psi use normally, making another roll to turn on his skill.

A Screamer may also use his skill to *specifically* interfere with psi use by any single individual that he can see (through his own eyes, or through another's at -3 to skill). Take the Concentrate maneuver. At the beginning of your next turn, roll vs. Psi Static skill, at +2 if you are touching your victim. Keep track of the amount you beat your skill by; this is the amount the subject's *own* psi rolls must succeed by for any of his psi skills to work. This is a continuing ability, and can be maintained from turn to turn; make a new roll every minute to determine the current level of effect on the subject.

Astral Projection (3 points per level)

Astral projection is the ability to send your mind (or soul) out of your body. It has elements of both Telepathy and ESP, but is effectively a psi power of its own.

The geography of the astral plane is discussed in the *Psychic Phenomena* chapter.

Special Limitation: Your astral body is visible to people in the real world. -30%.

Astral Projection ★n/a

You can control your "astral body," sending it out to explore while your physical body remains in place. Your astral body is insubstantial and can fly at a Speed equal to your Power. While Astral, your Dodge is equal to your normal Dodge, modified by Combat Reflexes but not by running skill, lameness or anything else.

To use Astral Projection, take the Concentrate maneuver. At the beginning of your next turn, roll vs. skill. If successful, your astral form leaves your material body and enters the astral plane. Astral Projection lasts for a number of minutes equal to your *Power,* after which a new skill roll is needed to stay astral. If you fail a roll, you snap back to your body. You can also return voluntarily by turning off the skill.

A glowing silvery "thread" links your astral body with your physical body, so you can't get lost while astral. Your astral body is normally invisible, except to others in astral form. However, the astral body *can* be detected via Telescan and Emotion Sense. You cannot take any equipment with you. You may create an image of whatever clothing you currently (or normally) wear, but it has no protective value.



Astral bodies can interact physically while on the astral plane – they are fully solid to each other. If attacked physically while astral, you have PD equal to half your Power (maximum 6) and DR equal to *Power*/4.

An astral body cannot be physically harmed by anything in the physical world, with the following exceptions: Antipsi, Psychic Vampirism and Telepathy powers can reach into or out of the astral plane at -5 to skill, enabling an astral entity to affect a non-astral being or be affected by one. Any magical spell or superpower that acts on the mind or soul rather than the body (in general, anything resisted by IQ rather than ST or HT) can also work, at the GM's discretion.

The astral body does not seem to be affected by damage to one's physical form – many people have out-of-body experiences while injured or dying. Keep track of your astral body's HT separately from physical HT: although your material form may be wounded, your astral body will be fine. Similarly, damage to an astral body is *not* applied to the physical body. If your astral body is badly injured, and you return to your own body, your physical body may be fine – but if you re-enter the astral plane without giving yourself time to heal, your astral body will still be damaged.

If your astral body is ever destroyed, your physical body is left a mindless husk. If your physical body is destroyed while you are astral, you become a creature of the astral plane, forever roaming. See p. 98.

Special Skill Enhancement: Extra "astral DR" costs 2 points per point of DR. This may only be purchased with character points earned while adventuring on the astral plane!

Astral Sight ★1

This is the ability to perceive astral forms while you are in the material world, with a range of *Power* (squared) in yards. You get a passive skill roll each turn to notice any astral beings within that distance. Beings within ⅓ (round up) of this range are located automatically. Once you detect an astral form, it will remain detected until it moves out of range.

Special Skill Enhancement: You can share your ability with others within a yard of you; once you detect an astral creature, they can see it as well. +40%.

Electrokinesis (5 points per level)

This is the ability to mentally control computers and electrical and electronic systems. An electrokinetic must be able to see or touch the subject to affect it (or sense it with Energy Sense), but a familiar subject (his home computer, for instance) may be affected at a distance even if it is unseen. Maximum range depends on the skill; see below. Roll at -3 if the target is unseen or untouched but can be seen on live video or through another's eyes. Roll at -5 if the target is unseen but can be clearly visualized or (for a target cyborg or the like) detected by Telescan, Energy Sense or Psi Sense. In this case, successful "lock on" by Telescan would halve the penalty to -3.

Any skill roll for EK will have a +2 bonus if the user is touching the subject.

Confuse ★2

You have the ability to jangle the electrical impulses in an opponent's brain. Range is touch, or line of sight, with a maximum range of *Power* in yards.

To Confuse someone, take the Concentrate maneuver. At the beginning of your next turn, roll a Quick Contest of your Confuse skill vs. the subject's HT. If the subject fails, he is mentally stunned (see p. B127) for one turn per level of Power. At the *end* of this period, he starts rolling vs. IQ to come out of the stun. Any physical injury will allow an *immediate* roll to recover from the confused state.

If your target has the Electrokinesis power, he can instinctively shield against this ability, adding *half* his Power (rounded down) to his effective HT. An enclosed helmet or natural armor also offers some protection: add 10% of DR to HT (doubled if helmet is lead-lined).

A P-web (p. 73) will completely protect against Confuse.

Cyberpsi ★2

This is the ability to interface mentally with computers and control them from a distance. Any computer system that is currently turned on may be affected. Range is equal to *Power* in yards, but once inside the system you can netrun and "visit" any system the host computer is connected to.

To use Cyberpsi, take the Concentrate maneuver. At the beginning of your next turn, roll vs. skill. Your roll must succeed by an amount equal to or greater than the computer system's *complexity*. A TL7 contemporary home computer has an effective complexity of 1 or 2, while a larger microframe or mainframe has 3 or 4. As a rule of thumb, complexity increases by 1 per TL over 7. A psionic computer or Artificial Intelligence will be at least complexity 7. A new roll (which must succeed by Complexity as above) is required each minute to stay in the system.

If you are "in" you can now operate and program the computer just as if you were using the keyboard, neural interface or whatever normally controls the computer. In a ***GURPS Cyberpunk*** campaign, the Computer Hacking skill can be substituted for Computer Operation or Computer Programming.

This skill requires *total* concentration; computers' "minds" are very fast and totally alien. A psi can do *nothing* else while using this skill; he will appear to be in a trance. Anything that breaks his concentration will sever his mental link with the computer. Ordinary interruptions will have no effect; short of injury, a prolonged shaking is about the only way to do it. If the psi is injured, roll vs. (Will-damage taken). On a successful roll, he ignores the injury; if he fails, he becomes aware of his surroundings. This is sometimes good and sometimes bad . . . so it goes!



This total concentration gives a cyberpsi an extra +2 defense to any mental attack while he is actually working. However, he is at -2 to detect any mental invasion that occurs during that time.

A cyberpsi can only do what can normally be done with Computer Operation and Computer Programming skill. If he has no skill, he must use the default. But whether he is skilled or not, he always adds his Electrokinesis Power level to his computer skill! A high-powered Cyberpsi who knows next to nothing about computers can still be effective, but a psionic hacker is much more so!

Someone with Cyberpsi can also control small dedicated computers, e.g. a computerized scanner, lock or gunsight. This works as above; treat most dedicated computers as Complexity 1 or 2, and any success enables the user to turn the system on or off. In a successful Computer Programming roll, he can also feed false data into it.

Dampen ★2

You can hinder the function of all electrical devices in the area by "slowing" the current that powers the object. This does no damage to most equipment – it just turns it off for as long the object remains in your range.

To use Dampen, take the Concentrate maneuver. Roll vs. skill at the beginning of your next turn. If successful, this skill continuously affects an area of *Power*/4 (round down) yard radius. This area may be anywhere you can see or visualize (as above), within a range of *Power* squared, in yards. A further roll is required each minute to continue.

However, some devices, especially computers, can be damaged merely by suddenly turning them off or slowing them down, causing a loss of stored data – and if you dampen the electrical system of a plane during takeoff, while you aren't actually damaging the equipment, the subsequent crash will be nasty!

A few objects may be shielded against this ability; to affect them, you must make your skill roll by an amount equal to or greater than ⅕ their level of shielding (round down). For instance, using the values for Surge, p. 13, to dampen a "Tempest-hardened" military system you must succeed by 4 or more.

Energy Sense ★1

You can sense electromagnetic fields. This passive ability allows you to sense and locate any operating electrical device within a number of yards equal to your Power. It is useful for locating hidden surveillance devices, power cables hidden in walls, electrical traps, etc.

If the user also has Cyberpsi, he can use this ability to "read" information stored on *magnetic* (not optical) disks and tapes, at IQ×100 words per minute. Treat this as a normal use of Energy Sense, but use the lower of Cyberpsi and Energy Sense skills. The disk or tape must be touched! If the user fails, he may try again, using the normal "repeated attempts" rule.

Energy Shield ★2

Energy Shield lets the psi "lock on" to incoming energy particles and funnel them harmlessly away. This skill gives 1 DR per 2 full levels of Power versus energy attacks like laser beams, fire or lightning bolts, but has no effect versus physical or purely mental attacks.

To use this ability, take the Concentrate maneuver. At the beginning of next turn, make your Energy Shield roll. If you succeed, the shield is up and can be maintained from turn to turn without any further concentration. However, a skill roll is required *each second* to keep the shield active. If the roll fails, you must concentrate again to build up the Shield, with the usual fatigue cost and skill penalty for repeated attempts.

Energy Shield costs 1 fatigue to activate, and (if it stays up) a further fatigue point each minute it is maintained.

Lightning ★n/a Prerequisite: Surge-12+

You can direct bolts of electricity, doing 1d damage per 3 full levels of Power you possess. You must have a source of energy – normal building current is enough. An auto battery or even a D cell isn't, but an E cell would support up to a 2d bolt. The "lightning bolt" will jump out of the battery, wall cable or electrical appliance and ground itself through your target.

To use this skill (called "electrodirection" by researchers), take the Concentrate maneuver for one turn. At the start of your next turn, make your skill roll. In addition to usual modifiers, treat the attack as a snap shot by a ranged weapon with SS 12, Accuracy 2. Maximum range is 10 yards per die of damage you inflict; ½D range is half that. Use the *sum* of the distance between you and the bolt's source, and between the bolt's source and the target.

The target may dodge, but metal armor has only PD 0, DR 1. TL8+ armor is usually made partly or wholly of non-metallic material, and thus has normal DR.

If the bolt comes out of an electrical device, that device will suffer the effects of a Surge (below), based on your Power. If the target is an electronic system, it will suffer a similar effect!

Photokinesis ★2

This is the ability to manipulate light waves. To use it, you must take the Concentrate maneuver; at the start of next turn, roll vs. skill. A successful roll lets you bend light, creating a three-dimensional image up to *Power*/3 hexes in size. It may appear anywhere within a range of *Power* squared, in yards. The image will always glow in the dark.

The amount by which the roll succeeded determines how realistic the image will be:

Success by 0-3: Simple line images and colors are possible. A man would be a vaguely humanoid blot of light, while something simple like a doorway would lack detail, appearing as a rectangle with a knob in it.

Success by 4-7: Basic detail may be filled in. The image is sketchy, resembling a cartoon, though from far enough away the image may seem real.

Success by 8 or more: Full detail and texture are possible. An IQ roll is required to tell that the image is not real just by looking at it.

If an image doesn't turn out, the psi can dispel it and try again as a Repeated Attempt.

A skill roll must be made each minute to maintain an image, and it must succeed by the same amount or better (if it succeeds by a lesser amount, the image will be seen to degrade). However, no further concentration is required *unless* the psi is making the image change color, move or change shape – to do this requires the Concentrate maneuver and a new skill roll.

If you have Power 10+, you can use this skill to make yourself (and anything you are carrying) invisible. (You can fool cameras, but not infrared or ultraviolet vision.) This requires a successful skill roll at -4 and a turn of concentration, and a further roll each minute to maintain. If you are attacked while invisible, the attacker is at -6 to hit, or -4 if he knows your exact location (e.g., you went invisible while prone). If *you* attack someone who can't see you, they get no active defense unless they make a Hearing-2 roll; then they can defend at -4.

Instead of becoming invisible, you can try to *blur* your image. Use the same procedure, but it only requires Power 2+, and is only at -2 to skill. If successful, you are -1 to be attacked per 2 levels of Power you have, to a maximum of -5.

Special Skill Limitation: "For Invisibility Only." The only effect you can create is to make yourself, and what you are carrying, invisible. -50%.

Surge ★2

This skill causes a power surge in an electrical device. Take the Concentrate maneuver. At the beginning of your next turn, roll vs. your Surge skill. On a successful roll, the target takes 1d damage per 3 levels of your Power. If its HT is exceeded (see below), the item will short-circuit or otherwise burn out. On a critical success, the equipment catches fire! Range is equal to *Power* squared, in yards.

You cannot "surge" an entire spacecraft or vehicle; you must target specific electrical systems (e.g., laser-ignition system on the fusion reactor, a sensor system, etc.).

Psis will want to use this ability to knock out their foes' ultra-tech equipment. Use the table below. Remember that any device might be *specifically* protected against Surge attacks (or EMP from nuclear weapons, which gives the same effect), adding to its HT.

Typical Equipment HT vs. Surge Attacks

Data on an unprotected computer: 3
Unprotected computer: 6
Shielded business computer and data: 9
Most electronic home appliances: 10
Electronic military hardware (e.g., cybersuit): 2×TL
Regular electrical appliances (washing machine): 20
Tempest-hardened military computer system and data: 20
Cheyenne-hardened military system and data: 50+

Antennas, power lines, etc. are totally immune to Surge; they're designed to survive real lightning strikes.

Optical systems are also immune to Surge.

ESP Power (3 points per level)

ESP is extra-sensory perception – the ability to perceive events in paranormal ways. It is often called second sight, and mystics sometimes refer to ESP as "the Sight." A technical term for it is Remote Viewing, though this can also be applied to Astral Projection.

ESP and Telepathy are the most common psychic abilities, and the two are often confused. For instance, suppose a person writes something on a piece of paper, and then places it in a sealed envelope. A psi who has never seen it then accurately reports what is written on it. Is she using ESP to read the paper through the envelope, or Telepathy to read the writer's mind? Only the psi can know . . . and she often doesn't!

Unlike most psi abilities, there is no need to see or touch a subject, and no skill penalty for range vs. unseen targets. However, range is often sharply limited by Power.

When ESP is used, a skill roll, made by the GM, is always required. The better the roll, the more accurate and useful will be the information he gives. On a failed roll, he says "You learn nothing." But if a Psychometry, Precognition or Seekersense roll is failed by more than 5, he *lies*. Repeated attempts at ESP powers cost *two* fatigue apiece, at -2 skill for each repeated attempt.

Clairvoyance ★2

This is the ability to see through walls and other solid objects with your mind. Its range is affected by Power, but not by what is in the way. You can not accidentally see "through" what you are looking for.

To use Clairvoyance, take the Concentrate maneuver. At the beginning of your next turn, roll vs. skill. Success means you see something; failure means you see nothing, or that everything is hazy and indistinct. Once you succeed, you can maintain your observation of that object or place for as long as you want, but a maintenance roll is required each minute. Each time you look at a different thing or in a different direction, a new turn of concentration and skill roll are required to determine whether you see anything. The area observed can be moved at a maximum Move equal to your Power (to follow someone walking, for instance).

The range of Clairvoyance is equal to your *Power* squared, expressed in *inches*. Thus, even Power 1 will let you see inside an envelope in your hand. Power 20 will let you see 400 inches – almost exactly 11 yards.

The area "seen" is equal to half the range. Thus, someone with Power 1 can scan ½" of that envelope at a time. Someone

with Power 20 could see anything within 5 hexes of his "viewpoint."

Darkness is no barrier to ESP. A clairvoyant can use his ability instead of natural vision when moving through an unlit room or to compensate for blindness via a short-ranged form of "sight." If a clairvoyant takes the Blind disadvantage, he only gets -30 points for it if his skill is 9+. If his skill is 12+, it's only worth -15 points!

Clairvoyance has a very short range. To duplicate the longer-ranged "remote viewing" feats described in some stories, an ESPer should use the Astral Projection skill to travel to the target in astral form, then use Clairvoyance to see inside objects such as envelopes, or to see in darkness.

Special Skill Limitation: Your Clairvoyance does not work in darkness. You could see through a door into a lighted room, but you can't read what was written in a sealed envelope. -50%.



Clairaudience ★2

As above, except that it lets the user *hear* what is being said behind walls, etc., and listen indefinitely to any conversation of interest. Range and Area are expressed in *yards* rather than inches; a Power 9 clairaudient has a range of 81 yards and an area of 40 yards.

An inexperienced esper may believe his Clairaudience ability to be Telepathy – after all, he is hearing "voices in his head" from people who are not present!

Clairsentience ★1

Other forms of ESP similar to clairaudience and clairvoyance may exist corresponding to other senses, such as taste, smell, touch, and more alien forms of perception. These are collectively known as Clairsentience; each is a separate skill. If these are used in a campaign, use the Clairvoyance (rather than Clairaudience) area and range.

Combat Sense ★2 Prerequisite: ESP Power 10

This is a highly selective form of precognition – the user can sense what a foe in melee combat is about to do, if he can *see* that foe.

This ability requires a separate roll for *each turn* of combat; no concentration is required, but the skill is no use against an ambush (unless the user was already warned via Danger Sense!).

On a successful roll, for every 10 levels of ESP Power (round down) he has, the user adds +1 to effective *melee* combat skills that turn; missile combat is not affected at all. He also gets +1 to his first Dodge that turn. A failed roll has no effect, but a critical failure *subtracts* 1 from *all* melee attacks and defenses that turn.

Precognition ★2

This is the ability to see the future. It is the chanciest and least-understood of all known psi skills. A "precog" vision may be sight, sound or just a flash of knowledge. And remember that nothing about the future is *certain;* even if the GM has made his mind up, he could reconsider . . .

An *active* attempt to Precog requires 10 minutes of total concentration, and costs 2 fatigue points. It is made at -10 (!) to skill.

A *passive* Precog roll may be made at the GM's whim. Precognition is usually associated with a person or thing. For instance, if you meet a person who has some very important event in his future, the GM will make a roll in secret to see if you detect the possibility of that event. Or seeing a picture of a place could set off a vision having to do with that place.

Precognitive range is based on Power: you can only detect a danger or scan the future of an object or person within that range. Physical distance is figured as per Telepathy (p. 20). Time is equal to *Power* squared, expressed in *days.* But if you are dealing with a person's future, the fact that he may later travel out of your physical range does not affect your skill.

Default use: Without training, this skill gives you a roll vs. IQ any time you are in immediate danger; a successful roll means you are aware of danger, and a very good roll gives you some details. This works the same as the Danger Sense advantage (p. B20) – because it *is* the same. If you have Danger Sense, you *are* a psi – an Esper with Power 5 and no training.

Special Skill Limitations: Your precognition is limited to one particular type of event. Some examples of legal limitations: only events involving you personally (-10%); only disasters (fire, air crashes, explosions, floods, etc.); (-30%); only events related to death (-50%).

Special Skill Limitations: Your precognition works only in dreams; you *must* sleep to have a vision. -30%.

Psychometry ★1

This talent (also called "retrocognition") lets the psi learn something about the history of a place or inanimate object: general impressions, use, user's personality, etc. The length of history sensed is equal to *Power* squared, expressed in *years,* up to Power 15, after which it is *Power* cubed. The physical range is normally *Power* squared, expressed in inches, but a very strong impression can be detected at twice this distance. The clearest readings (+1 to skill) will always be obtained right on top of the place, or touching the object.

Normally, a deliberate effort is required; each try takes one turn of concentration and a skill roll. If successful, the effects are felt instantly. But very strong "vibes" may be noticed passively when the esper comes within sensing range; the GM rolls in secret.

In all cases, the amount of detail gained is dependent on how much the skill roll succeeded by. Usually only a brief impression is gained; a success by 5+, or a critical success, is required for details. Repeated attempts are possible to get better results, at the usual penalties.

Psychometry will usually detect the psychic vibrations surrounding even an inactive psychotronic or biopsi device that has been used recently. It will not detect magic. But (for instance) a holy object would give "good" vibes because it had been handled by holy men, and an evil altar would have a pall about it because of the accumulated negative psychic energy that the sacrifices made upon it had generated. Psychometry would also detect an unusual psychic air about an artifact from another dimension.

An esper who picks up exceptionally violent or alien impressions, especially if they are unexpected, may have to make a Will roll to avoid being mentally stunned.

Special Skill Limitations: Your Psychometry is limited to one particular type of event, as described above for Precognition.

Retrogression

In some campaigns, mental time travel may be treated as a psionic power or skill. A psi adept could send his mind *back in time* to share the mind of a real person who lived in the past. This ability will be covered in detail in ***GURPS Time Travel.***

Seekersense ★2

This ability enables you to "lock on" to one individual, or one object or class of objects. For instance, an esper could search for water, his misplaced wallet or another person.

To be located, the target must be within range. Use the *Telepathy Range Table* (p. 20) to determine maximum range; even though this is a global effect, range is not divided by 100.

To use, take the Concentrate maneuver. At the beginning of your next turn, roll vs. Seekersense at -4, with *one try only* per subject per day. If successful, the ESPer will feel a "pull" toward his target and will know which direction to go in to find it. A critical success gives him a vision of the location. A critical failure provides misleading information.

The ability can be maintained. If the user continues to make his skill roll (roll every 10 minutes, rather than every minute) the "pull" will continue until he has located the subject, and get stronger as he closes in, or weaken if he turns away.

Because it does not reveal distance, only direction, Seekersense is somewhat less useful than Telescan (p. 26) for locating people. If the target is a person, his Psi Resistance and Mind Shield subtract from the chance of success.

Healing (3 points per level)

The power of psychic healing seems to combine aspects of Psychokinesis and Telepathy, but it is effectively a separate power. It is also one of the most common psi abilities, as demonstrated by the great numbers of faith healers and ageless Eastern mystics.

Special Limitation: In addition to the fatigue cost, the psi takes damage whenever healing another person. This damage is equal to half the hits healed (round up). -50%.

Special Limitation: The psi can only use this power on others, never himself. The psi cannot learn the Life Extension or Metabolism Control skills. -50%.

Special Limitation: The psi can only use the power on himself – he cannot use Sense Aura or use Healing on other beings. This reflects the classic "yoga master" who never gets sick and lives forever. It is incompatible with the two limitations above. -30%.

Healing ★n/a

You must be in physical contact with the subject and take the Concentrate maneuver. At the beginning of your next turn, roll vs. Healing skill. On a successful skill roll, you can restore lost HT up to your own Power. Failure costs 1d fatigue; critical failure also causes 1d damage! Successful healing costs 1 fatigue for every 2 hits healed. The cost to cure disease or poison is always at least 6 fatigue.

The worse the disease or poison, the greater level of Power is required. A cold requires only Power 1; most ordinary diseases require Power 5; cobra venom or malaria may require Power 8; radiation damage requires Power 12; the poison of the South American Arrow Toad, terminal cancer or AIDS may require Power 15+. The GM decides what Power level is required in case of question. As usual, Power can be boosted by *Extra Effort,* which will also lower skill . . .

The Healing skill is at -2 when the victim is unconscious, and -2 or worse to cure disease or poisoning (see above). It can't restore a lost limb, and is at -6 to restore a crippled but whole limb (each Healer gets only one try at any one limb). It can't bring back the dead.

Life Extension ★n/a Prerequisite: Metabolism Control-14+

The psi can use his powers to slow or stop his body from aging. This is a passive skill, and only works on the healer himself. If the healer decides to use it, the GM rolls against (skill-10) + Power at the start of every year. If he succeeds, he will not age at all during the year, or for the next five years on a critical success. If it fails, he ages normally. On a critical failure, he ages an extra 1d years. This roll is not permitted unless the psi has put at least a half-point into the skill!

Example: Maya has Life Extension-13 and Healing Power 8. She needs to roll an 11 or less to avoid adding a year to her physiological age. If she fails and is old enough to suffer aging rolls, she still gets her normal HT rolls to avoid losing attribute points.

Metabolism Control ★1

You can control your own normally involuntary biological functions such as pulse, blood flow, digestion and respiration.

This skill allows you to enter into a deathlike trance by concentrating for one turn and making a successful skill roll; a doctor must win a Quick Contest of Skills (Physician-2 vs. your roll) to realize that you aren't dead. While in this trance, you are unaware of your surroundings. You may set a mental "alarm clock" that will awaken you after a certain amount of time has passed, and you will automatically awaken if you take any damage. You may remain in the trance for as long as you desire (or until you dehydrate or starve to death).

Oxygen, food and water requirements are reduced by 5% per level of Power when using this skill, to a minimum of 5% of normal.

Example: if you were trapped in a room with only two hours of air left, and had Power 14, entering the trance would reduce your oxygen requirements by 70%, allowing you to breathe for over 6.5 hours (120 minutes/0.3). This requires a skill roll every hour for oxygen, every day for food and water; roll individually. Failure means the skill won't work for a day, after which you can retry without penalty.

You can also use this skill to fool a lie detector or someone with Detect Lies. For every point the skill roll is made by, add 1 to effective IQ for this purpose. This counts as a passive use of skill.

Sense Aura ★1

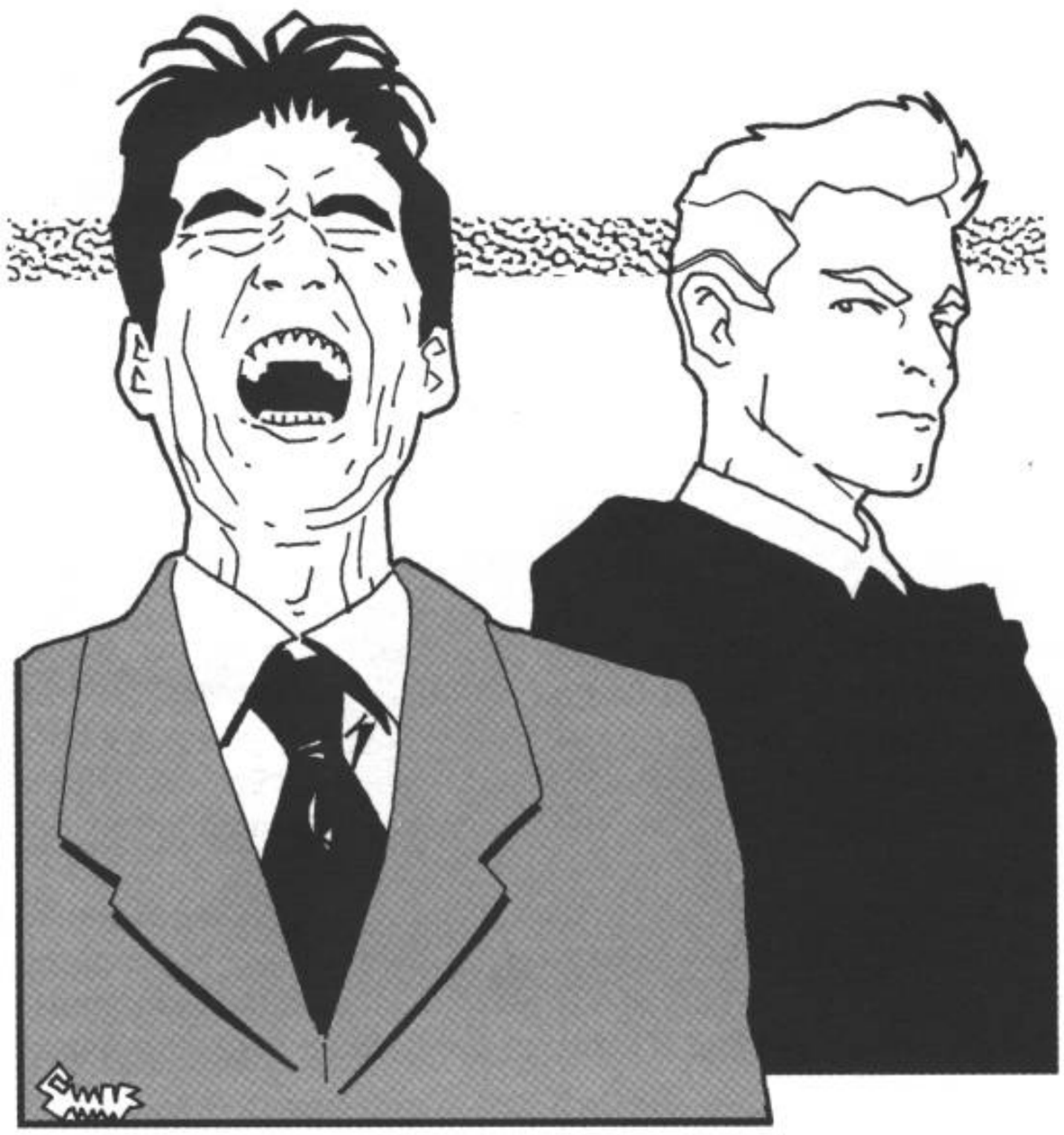
This ability is related to telepathic Emotion Sense, but is active rather than passive. It enables the user to sense the energy field (or *aura*) around all living things. Psis with a Power of 1 can feel a tingling like static electricity, but only when touching the subject; Power 2 or more enables the psi to actually see a multicolored aura similar to those produced by Kirlian photography. The state of the aura provides clues to a creature's physical and mental health. Maximum range that an aura can be seen is (Power-1), in yards.

A psi can observe one person's aura at a time. This takes one turn of concentration, and a roll vs. skill. Success means the psi perceives the aura, gaining information about the subject's health. A psi could tell that someone had a fatal disease or that they were down to their last few HT or fatigue points. On a critical success, details are learned. Add the amount by which the skill roll succeeded to Diagnosis skill in medical situations.

A successful roll also reveals the subject's emotional state. The psi won't gain detailed insights, but can tell if someone is upset or happy, envious or mellow, etc., even if they are hiding their emotions. A critical success may provide more information.

Once Sense Aura succeeds, a psi can observe a subject's aura without further concentration, as long as the subject remains in range and a new roll is made each minute. A psi watching someone's aura might see it change if they become agitated while lying; add the amount the Sense Aura roll succeeded by to the chance of detecting a lie (p. B65).

Psychic Vampirism (3 points per level)



Psychic Vampires can drain emotions, life force and even dreams from others. Some Psychic Vampires are poachers who steal others' joy or creative energy; a few are sadists who feed on life and feast on their victim's fear. But there is nothing intrinsically "evil" about this power. A Psychic Vampire can drain the hatred and rage from someone to stop violence, or take away a troubled person's nightmares.

A Psychic Vampire must be able to touch or see his subject, or see him through another's eyes (at -3 to skill). However, a familiar subject within range (which varies from skill to skill) may be affected at a distance even if unseen, if they can be clearly visualized or detected by Telescan or Psi Sense. In this case, the penalty is -5, or -3 with a successful "lock on" by Telescan.

Mind Shields subtract normally from the skill of an attacking Psychic Vampire, so a good shield will make you *almost* immune from PV attacks. However, a Psychic Vampire *can* use a "brute force" attack (p. 22).

Unless the attack is a critical success, the target of a Psychic Vampire skill gets an IQ roll to realize *something* is happening to him. If this roll is a critical success, he sees a vision of the attacking psi.

Special Limitation: To simulate the classic "evil eye" ability, take the Eye Contact Only limitation (p. 28)! -20%.

Drain (Attribute) ★2

This is a *separate* skill for each attribute – ST, DX, HT and IQ. If you wish to drain all four, you must know four different versions!

To use this ability, take the Concentrate maneuver. At the beginning of your next turn, roll a Quick Contest: your Drain (Attribute) skill vs. the subject's targeted attribute (always at the original value) plus Strong or Weak Will. If you win, you drain 1d-3 + (your Power/4) points from your foe's attribute. Multiple attacks may be made, but you can never reduce any attribute below 1. The victim regains drained attributes at a rate of 1 point per minute.

Maximum range for this skill is *Power* squared, in yards.

Drain Emotion ★2

You can cause a person to *stop* feeling whatever emotions he currently feels. The range is *Power* squared, in yards. To use this ability, take the Concentrate maneuver. At the beginning of your next turn, roll a Quick Contest of your Drain Emotion skill vs. the subject's Will.

If the attack succeeds, the subject's current emotions vanish, and he feels *nothing*. If he was angry, he is no longer angry. If he was sad, he is no longer sad, and so on. Decisions primarily based on emotion will not be taken, though the subject will still act from self-preservation and logic. He regains the ability to experience emotions after 10 seconds×Power.

The vampire *will* experience the emotion he has drained, for the next 1d minutes; the GM may require a Will roll if it was unusually strong. A Psychic Vampire who drains a person's love for another may (briefly) fall in love with that person! Players should roleplay this!

Drain Emotion can be centered on an area instead of an individual, at -4 to the Vampire's skill. If used on an area, the radius of effect is *Power*/3 (round down) hexes.

Steal Dreams ★1

This ability can only be used on someone who is currently asleep. It requires an entire hour to steal a night's dreams. It can operate from a great distance; use the Telepathy Range Table. To succeed, roll a Quick Contest of skill vs. the subject's Will.

If the attempt is successful, the subject's dreams are siphoned off by the user; the subject does not remember them, and may experience a sense of loss or incompleteness upon waking up.

Dreams are often a hidden source of creativity and a relief for anxiety. Anyone who has had their dreams stolen normally suffers a loss of -1 to IQ and to all IQ-based skills until he has a chance to dream normally. On the other hand, someone who has been experiencing constant nightmares may actually benefit.

If successful, the Psychic Vampire experiences the dreams he has stolen while he is concentrating on the ability. The exact effects vary depending on the subject and the vampire – a vampire may be able to steal a creative person's ideas, or to discover a person's secret hopes, fears or desires.

Steal Energy ★2

This is the ability to tap a subject for vital energy. The range is *Power* in yards. To use this ability, take the Concentrate maneuver. At the beginning of your next turn, roll a Quick Contest: your Steal Energy skill vs. the subject's Will. If you win, the subject loses 1d-3 + (your Power/4) fatigue. If fatigue is reduced to 0, the subject loses HT instead. The ability can be used several times in succession, to drain a subject completely or even kill him.

Any fatigue (not HT) drained is gained by the user, but this may only be used to replace lost fatigue, not increase it above normal ST.

The victim's lost fatigue is recovered normally.

Steal Power ★2

You may drain another psi of psychic force. To use Steal Power, take the Concentrate maneuver. At the beginning of your next turn, roll a Quick Contest of your Steal Power skill vs. the subject's Will. If you win, you lower his Power (in all powers at once) by one per four *full* levels of your own Power. This ability always costs 1 fatigue per use. This skill can be used multiple times – effects are cumulative. Range is equal to *Power,* in yards.

For every turn you succeed in draining Power from a subject (as long as he still has levels to drain), you may increase the level of any *single* power *you* possess by 1.

If your target is reduced to 0 Power, he may no longer be drained. Drained Power is lost (by you) and regained (by your victim) at a rate of 1 level per minute. You cannot drain Antipsi Power.

Psychokinesis (5 points per level)

Psychokinesis is the manipulation of matter and energy using mental power. It covers moving things at a distance, making them colder or hotter, etc.

There is no explicit range limit for PK, but a user must normally be able to see or touch the subject, or look telepathically through another's eyes (at -3 to skill). However, a familiar subject (a person well known to the psi, or an object he has handled repeatedly) may be affected at a distance even if it is unseen: -1 to skill for 1 yard distance, and an extra -1 each time the distance doubles. Any *skill roll* for PK will have a +1 bonus if the user is touching the subject, or using the skill on himself.

Multiple feats using the same skill may not exceed the maximum mass the psi can affect. A psi who can lift 125 pounds cannot lift one object weighing 100 lbs., maintain the ability, and then lift another 100 lb. object – his total mass is limited to 125 lbs.

Cryokinesis ★2

This is the ability to slow molecular motion, thereby decreasing the temperature of an object. To use it, concentrate on the target for one second, then, at the start of your next turn, make your skill roll. If successful, the target's temperature will begin to decrease. On a failed roll you can try again, but if you concentrate on the same target, you will have to spend fatigue and take the normal penalty for Repeated Attempts.

You must take the Concentrate maneuver and roll vs. skill each *turn* to continue to lower the temperature. You can *maintain* whatever level of temperature you have reached without special concentration, as long as you continue to make your skill roll each minute. If you do not fail a skill roll or stop maintaining the ability, effects are cumulative.

Each level of Power lets you lower the temperature of 10 cubic inches of material (of any shape) by 50° per turn of concentration. Larger items cool more slowly, but smaller items do not cool any faster. Continued concentration will lower the temperature by 50° each turn per level of Power. As a rough approximation, assume each pound of mass is 20 cubic inches – which means that every 3 levels of PK Power can lower an average man's temperature by 0.5° per turn.



Items must be cooled as a unit; you cannot, for instance, focus on a victim's heart and freeze it solid while ignoring the rest of the body. The GM must use common sense, tempered by dramatic license, to decide what constitutes a "unit" here.

Ice forms at 32°, and absolute zero (the lowest possible temperature) is -460°. A cryokinetic can put out small fires by cooling it below the point at which that substance can burn – see Pyrokinesis, below, for high temperatures.

Cryokinetic Attacks

If a person's body temperature (normally 98.6°) is lowered below 95°, he may become unconscious – each turn, he must make a HT+5 roll, at -1 per degree below 95° F. For every point the roll is failed by, the victim loses 1 fatigue, or takes HT damage if fatigue is at 0.

Even minor *sudden* alterations in whole body temperature can cause fever, brain damage, or death. If a person's body temperature is lowered (or raised) by at least 1° in a single turn, he must make a HT+3 roll, at -2 per additional 0.5°. Failure means the victim loses 2 fatigue, 1 DX and 1 HT for every point the roll failed by. Failure by 10 or more, or critical failure, results in brain damage as well: the victim falls into a coma for 1d days, and loses 1 point of IQ.

Levitation ★3

This skill works to lift only the psi's own body (and whatever he is carrying). It is the psionic form of flight, and allows horizontal as well as vertical movement. The psi can move *only* his own body plus whatever he is carrying (no more than his own weight).

No concentration or skill roll is required to use or maintain this ability – once you have a half-point in it, it's as easy as walking. Instead, use skill/2 (round down) to determine Dodge while flying, or roll vs. skill for complex acrobatics.

Weight and skill are figured as for Telekinesis (below), but Power is effectively increased by 10, for this skill only. This means that a levitator with a Power as low as 5 (4, for a child) can "fly" at a yard per second, and a high-powered levitator can go *fast.* (A levitator too weak to fly can still make his body very light!) Maximum practical speed without special protection is about 100 mph. A PK Shield of Power 10+ counts as special protection.

A psi who has Telekinesis, but not Levitation, can still lift himself if he has enough Power – he just doesn't get the +10 level increase.

Special Skill Limitation: Only vertical movement. The levitator can float in the air or go directly up or down, but cannot maneuver. -50%.

PK Shield ★2 Prerequisite: ESP Power 1+

To get this skill, the PK must also have at least 1 point of ESP Power, in order to sense the air next to his body. PK Shield lets the psi "lock on" to that air and hold it in place as a shield. This gives DR 1 per 2 levels of Power against physical attacks only – not lasers, for instance. It works normally on flame attacks and sonic weapons. It also adds 1 point of PD (only 1 point, not one per level).

To use this ability, take the Concentrate maneuver. At the beginning of next turn, make your PK Shield roll. If you succeed, the shield is up, and can be maintained from turn to turn without any further concentration. However, a skill roll is required *each second* to keep the shield active. If the roll fails, you must concentrate again to build up the Shield, with the usual fatigue cost and skill penalty for Repeated Attempts.

PK Shield costs 1 fatigue to activate, and (if it stays up) a further fatigue point each minute it is maintained.

Pyrokinesis ★3

This is the ability to increase the temperature of an object. Concentrate on the target for one second, then, at the start of your next turn, make your skill roll. If successful, the target's temperature will begin to increase. Once started, a pyrokinetically-set fire burns normally – you can't use this power to put it out.

On a failed roll, *something* will still burn. A miss by 1 to 5 means nearby objects are also affected. A worse miss means the target isn't burned, but other things are. A critical failure affects everything within sight; the GM works out the details, maliciously. If the psi misses, he can continue to concentrate, accepting the inaccuracy, or try again, with regular repeated-attempt penalties.

You must take the Concentrate maneuver and roll vs. skill each *turn* to continue to raise the temperature, or you can maintain whatever level of temperature you have reached *without* special concentration, as long as you continue to make your skill roll each minute. Until you fail a skill roll or stop maintaining the ability, effects are cumulative.



Each level of Power lets the pyrokinetic raise the temperature by 50° per 10 cubic inches of material. Larger items can be heated more slowly, but smaller items do not heat any faster. Continued concentration will continue to raise the temperature by 50° per turn for each level of Power. Thus at Power 10, you could heat up a 10-cubic-inch item at 500° per second! So in a single second, you could set a book ablaze. Again, assume a pound of mass is roughly equal to 20 cubic inches. For every 3 levels of Power, a pyrokinetic can raise an average man's temperature by 0.5° per second.

Items must be heated as a unit; see Cryokinesis (p. 17).

Pyrokinetic heat is *trapped within the subject;* very little escapes to the outside world until the psi stops concentrating. Thus, a powerful – or patient – Pyrotic could burn a victim to ashes while his clothing is almost unaffected, although the victim would notice the temperature increase long beforehand, and if he realized what was happening, could try to get out of line of sight of the pyrokinetic! A better tactic might be to set a victim's clothes on fire; he would notice nothing until they burst into flame, but then the flames *would* hurt!

Some important temperatures (all in degrees Fahrenheit): Room temperature: 75-80°. Body temperature: 98.6°. Person becomes unconscious: 120°. Water boils: 212°. Paper bursts into flame: 451°. Wood bursts into flame: 550°. Meat broils: 550°. Lead melts: 621°. Copper melts: 1,980°. Iron melts: 2,786°.

Special Skill Enhancement: Improved Control. On a regular miss, other things aren't heated up; instead, nothing happens. A critical failure is treated as a normal pyrokinetic miss (above). +20%.

Pyrokinetic Attacks

After a person's body temperature reaches 105°, he must make a HT+5 roll each turn, at -1 per degree over 105° F. For every point the roll is failed by, the victim loses 1 fatigue, or takes HT damage if fatigue is at 0. A powerful pyrokinetic can also cause shock or death as a result of sudden changes in body temperature – see Cryokinesis, p. 17.

Telekinesis ★4

This is the ability to move objects by mental power. Your PK Power controls the mass you can move mentally, as follows:

Telekinesis Mass Table

Power	*Mass Moved*	*Power*	*Mass Moved*
1	¼ oz.	12	30 lbs.
2	½ oz.	13	60 lbs.
3	1 oz.	14	125 lbs.
4	2 oz.	15	250 lbs.
5	4 oz.	16	500 lbs.
6	8 oz.	17	750 lbs.
7	1 lb.	18	1,000 lbs.
8	2 lbs.	19	1,250 lbs.
9	4 lbs.	20	1,500 lbs.
10	8 lbs.	21	1,750 lbs.
11	15 lbs.	22	2,000 lbs. (1 ton)

Further increases in Power continue to add 250 pounds per level. To determine equivalent ST, divide the "lift weight" by 25. Thus, a Power 20 psychokinetic can "teke" objects with ST 60. TK can also affect non-solids, such as smoke, affecting one cubic foot per level of *Power.* To affect water, use the water's mass – a gallon weighs about 8 lbs., and as long as the water is lifted as a single unit, it won't spill.

In general, PK Power of 15 or better is needed to move an object fast enough to do harm. A lesser Power can still cause a distraction, even if the objects thrown aren't heavy or moving fast enough to cause injury.

Speed of Movement

The mass given for Telekinesis assume that the subject moves 1 yard per second. For barely visible motion (the subject shifts a tiny bit and stops) double the weight that can be affected.

For greater speeds, consider the object's mass. Take the difference between the PK's actual Power and the minimum Power required (from the *Telekinesis Mass Table,* above) to move it continuously.

Now look up this "excess Power" on the chart below, to see the speed at which the object can be moved. As the chart shows, for every 2 levels of difference, speed doubles, up to a Power difference of 16: after that, each 2 levels increase speed by 500 mph (Move 250). If the excess Power is an odd number, multiply the next lower speed by 1.4 (or add 125 mph if the Power difference is 16 or more).

Excess Power	*Speed*
0	Move 1
1	Move 1.4 (5 feet/second)
2	Move 2
3	Move 3
4	Move 4
5	Move 6
6	Move 8
7	Move 12 (24 mph)
8	Move 15 (30 mph)
10	Move 30 (60 mph; thrown rock)
12	Move 60 (120 mph; arrow speed)
14	Move 120 (240 mph)
16	Move 250 (500 mph; bullet)
18	Move 500 (Mach 1.5)
20	Move 750 (Mach 2)

With a Power of 16 or better, you can throw small stones, etc., as though they were bullets. RoF is 1, use range and damage as for guns (see p. B208), as follows:

Power 16: .22 pistol (Ruger STD).
Power 17: .32 pistol (Walther PPK).
Power 18: 9 mm pistol (FN HP35).
Power 19: .357 magnum (Colt Python).
Power 20: .44 magnum (S&W M29).

For each level of Power over 20, add 25 yards to half-damage range, 50 yards to maximum range and 1 point to damage. Snap Shot is (25-Skill) and Accuracy is 1.

Getting Tricky

No concentration is required for simple telekinetic lifting or movement. If telekinesis is used for anything beyond basic straight-line movement, the user must take the Concentrate action, and roll vs. TK skill at the beginning of his next turn, to *aim* it. A failed roll means the subject misses its target (or otherwise performs badly – GMs can be creative here). The GM sets the skill penalty, with the following guidelines:

Precise aim, slow movement (guiding a coin into a slot): -2.

Precise aim, fast movement (*throwing* a ball through a hoop, or swinging a chair at an enemy): -4.

Precise aim, bullet-fast movement (throwing a rock to do damage like a bullet): -6.

Precise orientation (keeping an arrow going point-first): -3. This adds to the above penalties for aim.

Complex movement (writing your name with a crayon): -2 or more.

Target is moving when you try to control it: -1 for every yard per second that it is moving, up to a maximum of -10 (thrown weapons and arrows fall into this category). You cannot catch a bullet, because you can't see it coming – use PK Shield instead.

You may try to *deflect* an incoming missile if you can see it coming. This counts as a parry. The roll to deflect something is 4 easier than the roll to control it (6 easier for long objects like spears and arrows). Thus the net roll to deflect a fast-moving arrow is -4. A successful roll moves the object off course – it automatically misses its target. Note that deflecting a grenade by one hex won't help much . . .

TELEPATHY (5 POINTS PER LEVEL)

Telepathy is the power of mental communication and control. It is among the most versatile of all psionic abilities, and along with ESP and Healing, it is also the commonest. Because of this, when people think of psis they are usually thinking of telepaths.

Your Power controls the *range* at which you can use your telepathic skills, as follows:

Telepathy Range Table

Power	*Distance*
1	Touch only, and required time is multiplied by 10
2	Touch only
3	1 yard
4	2 yards
5	4 yards
6	8 yards
7	15 yards
8	30 yards
9	60 yards
10	100 yards
11	200 yards
12	400 yards
13	½ mile
14	1 mile
15	2 miles
16	4 miles
17	8 miles
18	15 miles
19	30 miles
20	60 miles
21	125 miles



Further increases in Power continue to double range. These ranges are for contact with a single target. For powers involving a "global" use of psi (e.g., a Shout directed at everyone around you), divide Range by 100!

Targeting Telepathy

For Telepathy, the *subject* is always the person you are trying to detect, control, attack or communicate with. In general, you must be able to touch or see your subject, or borrow another's eyes using Telereceive (in which case you are at -3 to skill).

However, a familiar subject (a person well known to you) may be affected at a distance even if unseen. This always includes acquaintances, but also applies to anyone (or anything) deliberately studied by the psi or who can be clearly visualized. A favorite movie star is familiar; so is the attractive passerby whose face the psi remembers ten minutes after encountering her. If in doubt, the GM should require an IQ roll; add +3 for Eidetic Memory, +2 (not cumulative) if good photos are available.

The penalty for an "unseen" subject is -5, or -3 if the target is seen through another's eyes (or on live video). The penalty is also -3 if a "lock" has been achieved with Telescan.

A few skills suffer *no* penalty for use on unseen targets: they are Telescan, any Passive skills, and the "global" use of Telesend (or "shout") at 1% of normal range.

Telepathy Skill Modifiers

A Telepathy *skill roll* will have the following modifiers:

User is touching subject: +2. Exception: if your Power is 1 or 2, you *must* touch the subject, and you do not get a skill bonus.

User knows subject slightly (GM's discretion): +1.

User knows subject intimately (GM's discretion): +2.

Subject not seen or touched by user: See above.

Subject has Mind Shield: minus Power of Shield, if skill is one that is normally affected (see below).

Aspect ★2 Prerequisite: Telepathy Power 10+

You radiate a charismatic aura that manipulates the emotions of others, making everyone you meet notice and respect you, whether through love or fear. People will turn their heads to look at you as you pass. The range of this effect is determined by the *Telepathy Range Table,* divided by 100. At level 10, a successful skill roll gives you a +1 modifier on reaction and influence rolls. For every 2 full levels after that (e.g., at 12, 14, and so on) you get another +1. If you don't want to be noticed, you can voluntarily "dim" your charisma, reducing effective Power.

You also radiate an "aspect" – a subliminal impression or image related to your personality that people notice when you are in range. At Power 10 to 12, aspects are indistinct: an aura of peace around a gentle guru, or the feeling of fear that comes over those in the presence of the cruel psi-lord. At Power 13+, they may be strong enough to automatically project visions symbolic of the psi's self-image into the minds of those within range. A warrior psi's aspect could convey the impression of a snarling wolf, while a wise mystic might radiate an image of Mount Fuji and a feeling of calm strength. The impression an aspect gives is a manifestation of the psi's personality, and may change over time as the psi's self-image alters. Not all Power 10+ telepaths will have this kind of aspect, but players should be able to design their character's symbolism if they wish.

This ability (*not* the charisma bonus) works regardless of skill, as a "default" – *any* telepath with Power 10+ may have an Aspect if he chooses to. A skill roll is required to *change* your normal aspect, however, and to keep it changed (roll each minute). However, Emotion Sense and Sense Aura can always detect a person's *true* aspect if they succeed in reading aura or personality.

Special Skill Enhancement: The reaction bonus from your Aspect is *doubled* when dealing with the opposite sex. +50%.

Emotion Sense ★2

This is the ability to tell not what someone is thinking, but what he is feeling. When a subject is in range of your power and you hear him speak, you can tell whether he is lying – not what the truth really is, but whether he is being truthful. This is a "passive" roll, so the GM should make it for you automatically, and notify you if someone is lying.

You can also get a general "feeling" for someone's personality (and their aspect, if any); the better the skill roll, the more detailed a feeling you get. This is also a "passive" process, but only works if you are aware of the person you are reading – if you have an eight-mile range, you won't inadvertently pick up the feelings of everyone in the city, although you might pick up general tendencies ("The city is seething with anger!"). But if you are in range, you can get a feel for someone you are speaking to on the telephone, or even watching on live TV.

Finally, you can also see through people's emotional masks. If someone is sad but pretending to be happy, for instance, a successful skill roll will reveal it. This is not a passive process – it require a turn of concentration and a skill roll.

Default use: At a Power of 3 or better, the passive aspects of this skill can be used without training. You can sense lies, but not other emotions, by rolling vs. your IQ. You get only one

"personality" roll for each person you meet (if you are separated for more than a month, you get another roll). This works exactly like the Empathy advantage (p. B20) – because they're the same thing! If you have Empathy, you *are* a psi. The 15 points you spent for Empathy make you a Telepath (probably with Power 3 and no training).

Erase Signature ★1

This skill allows you to erase mental tracks from an area or object. To do so, take the Concentrate maneuver. At the beginning of your next turn, make your skill roll, and record by how much you succeeded (but your level of success may not exceed half your Power, rounded down). You get only one try per object, though another psi could try to erase (or erase *better*) the same signature.

If someone attempts to read a signature that you've erased they must subtract the amount you made your roll by from their Signature Sniffer skill – and they only get one attempt.

If you are attempting to erase someone else's signature, you must make a successful Signature Sniffer roll to detect the mental imprint to be erased.

This skill does not leave a signature except on a critical failure!



Illusion ★n/a Prerequisite: Telereceive 14+ and Telesend 14+

Illusion is the ability to seize control of the subject's perceptions. To try it, the telepath must *already* have successfully entered the subject's mind using Telereceive.

To use Illusion, take the Concentrate maneuver and decide what kind of illusion you are projecting. At the beginning of your next turn, roll a Quick Contest of your Illusion skill vs. the subject's Will. A Mind Shield does not protect, since it has already been penetrated. Illusions work best if they are of things you are familiar with: the GM may impose a -4 (or greater) penalty to create an illusion of something unfamiliar. Once successful, further concentration is not required, and a new Quick Contest is required to maintain it each minute (see below).

An illusion may totally alter the subject's sensory perceptions. It can be something as subtle as making the $5 bill you are holding appear to be a $100 bill, or as complex as making the subject experience the bombing of Nagasaki a mile from ground zero. You can even edit out some or all the subject's sensory input, blinding him or placing him in complete sensory deprivation, or making something – like yourself – appear invisible.

However, an illusion will *never* cause physical injury, and you cannot create physical sensations so potent as to be incapacitating. An illusion of being caught in an explosion will be loud and hurt a little, but won't harm the subject's ears, stun him or do any damage. But a terrifying or seemingly fatal illusion may require a Fright Check, at a -1 to Will roll for every point the subject lost the Quick Contest by.

A specific illusion can be maintained without concentration by the user as long as it continues to behave as the subject expects it to. The user *can* have illusionary beings move or converse – this only takes as much effort as normal talking, since most of the "subtext" is provided by the subject's own expectations. This also applies to illusions of non-living objects. (For example, if the subject rips an illusionary paper in half, the two bits will flutter to the ground.) But making a major change in the illusion requires a turn of concentration and a totally new Quick Contest.

Note also that the *illusion* need not be within the creator's range, as long as the *subject* is. The illusion doesn't even *exist* except within the mind of the subject. It is as easy to make the subject see a monster eat the moon as it is to make him see someone standing beside him.

Illusion is a very powerful ability, but remember, the subject's *mind* isn't being controlled – just his perceptions. Someone can overcome an illusion by ignoring what his own senses are telling him: "To heck with this – I don't care that my senses tell me I'm falling naked through Jupiter's atmosphere – I was in Detroit a minute ago! I order my body to move forward and spray the area with machinegun fire. Yes, I know I can't see or feel my Uzi, but I don't remember dropping it. I tell my finger to squeeze the trigger and my feet to keep on moving." He might need a DX roll to avoid falling over and would be at -10 to see or hit anything, but it could be done!

Illusion is most dangerous when it interacts with reality. For instance, a driver sees a small girl run in front of him – so he swerves off the road to avoid her. The girl was an illusion. If he had merely been blinded by a full-sensory illusion, he might have realized what was happening and could have braked the car.

Special Skill Enhancement: Can be used against groups of people. See sidebar, p. 39. +50%.

Special Skill Limitation: "For Invisibility Only." The only illusion you can create is that you are not there – your subject cannot see you. -50%.

Mental Blow ★n/a Prerequisite: Telesend 12+

This is a *direct* mental attack. To strike a Mental Blow, take the Concentrate maneuver. At the beginning of your next turn, spend one fatigue and roll against your Mental Blow skill, with a penalty for the subject's Mind Shield (if any). If you succeed, the subject must make a HT roll or be mentally stunned (p. B122). In addition, if Power is 10+, the subject takes fatigue damage as well. Once the victim's ST reaches zero, and he falls unconscious, no further damage can be done.

Exception: A critical success with a Mental Blow does *physical* harm to the victim instead! A critical failure backfires, causing physical damage to the *attacker* in addition to the normal fatigue losses from a critical failure.

Damage is based on the attacker's Power. Roll 1d for every *full* 10 points of Power, and add 1 point if the remainder is 5 or more – thus, Power of 16 does 1d+1 damage. Mental Blows may also be aimed at specific "parts" of the mind, or may be targeted at a Mind Shield itself, to tear it down. See *Telepathic Techniques,* p. 35.

The victim, if he is telepathic and still conscious, gets an automatic passive roll against his own Telereceive, Mind Shield or Psi Sense skill (whichever is highest). A successful roll gives information about the attacker, as per Psi Sense. Ignore critical failures.

Mental Stab ★n/a — Prerequisite: Mental Blow 15+

This is a *lethal* mental attack. It works just like Mental Blow except that it costs 2 fatigue, and does 1 point of real HT damage – not fatigue – per 5 full levels of Power. However, Mental Stabs cannot be aimed at a part of the mind or at a shield! On a critical success, a Mental Stab does *1d* of damage per 5 levels of Power! A critical failure does normal Mental Stab damage to the *attacker.*

Mind Shield ★2

This is the ability to maintain a mental "shield" that warns you of mental attacks (Psychic Vampirism, Telereceive and Mental Blow), and helps defend as well.

You may turn your shield on or off at will; this may be done at any time, *even when it is not your turn during combat order.* When you go to sleep or become unconscious, your shield remains as it was set. If there is some need for your shield to come up or go down while you are asleep or unconscious, you get a *single* Mind Shield skill roll (at -2 if you are unconscious rather than merely asleep). If the roll fails, your shield stays as it is until you awaken.

Power of Shield

Your Telepathy Power is the shield's strength. Subtract this number from the skill of any use of psi that is affected by the shield (see below). If a hostile presence does enter your mind, the best thing to do is to try to force him out before he can do anything – see *Get Out of My Mind!,* below.

Mind Shield defends against Mental Blow, Mental Stab, Telereceive and all uses of Psychic Vampirism. It *doesn't* work against Illusion, Mindswitch, Mindwipe, Sleep, Suggestion or Telecontrol, but it will protect against the initial Telereceive roll that is required to enter your mind before these abilities can be used.

Example: A Telepath with skill 18 is trying to enter your mind. Your Telepathy Power is 5. The intruder psi rolls against a Telereceive skill of 13. If he succeeds in getting past your shields, he can now read your mind and use skills like Sleep and Telecontrol against you.

Repeated Attempts: If a psi attack meets a Mind Shield and fails to penetrate it, each "repeated attempt" is at -2 rather than the normal -1, and costs *two* fatigue points.

Effects of Skill

The user's *skill* with Mind Shield determines the *type* of protection it gives:

8 or less: Interferes with all Psychic Vampirism and above-listed uses of Telepathy, friendly or hostile, against *or by* the subject. In other words, when the shield is up, it interferes with his own telepathic abilities!

9 to 11: Interferes with all uses of PV and Telepathy when the Mind Shield user is the subject – but not with the user's own Telepathy.

12 to 14: Interferes with all uses of PV and Telepathy when the Mind Shield user is the subject, unless the user consciously designates a use as "friendly." That use then suffers only half the normal interference (round up).

15 to 17: The shield automatically discriminates between friendly and hostile contacts. Friendly contacts are detected, but can work through the shield without opposition. The user can decide, at any time, whether "neutral" contacts will be treated as friendly or hostile.

18 to 20: As above – and if a "friendly" contact turns hostile, the attacker must make a new skill roll against the shield to stay in contact.

Over 20: As above, but any psi contacting the shield with Telereceive must win a Quick Contest of Skills (Telereceive vs. Shield) to even perceive the user as psionic. If he doesn't realize the user is a psi and his roll fails to penetrate the user's Shield, he will *believe* he has succeeded, but merely perceive surface thought appropriate to a non-psi. This is called "cloaking." (If an attacker doesn't know he is dealing with a psi, an attempt to use PV, Telecontrol, Mindwipe, or the like will detect the cloak on a skill roll, but automatically fail, since the user's shields have not *really* been penetrated).

Brute Force Attacks

Even with superior skill, getting through a Mind Shield can be almost impossible if the target has very high Power. However, an attacker opposed by a Mind Shield can attempt to use his own Power to batter through the shield by sheer force.

Use of "brute force" must be announced before the roll is made to determine success. It allows the attacking psi to subtract *half* (round down) his Psychic Vampirism or Telepathy Power from the Shield's effective strength. If the target doesn't have a Shield, or if the Shield's strength is reduced to 0 through this method, brute force does *not* increase the chance of success any further.

A brute-force attempt always costs 2 *extra* fatigue points, plus the 2 paid for a repeated attempt against a mind shield. It will always be noticed and will always give the victim some mental picture of its source's Aspect or personality. If the victim knows the attacker, he *will* recognize them.

Example: The rogue psionic computer Agamemnon uses its Telereceive against Calvert, who is trying to shut it off. Agamemnon has Telereceive-16 and 21 levels of Telepathy Power, while Calvert has a Mind Shield with a Power of 14. Normally Agamemnon would only have a 2 or less chance, despite its high Power. However, if Agamemnon decides to use brute force, this reduces Calvert's Mind Shield Power by (2½), or 10 levels, to 4. Agamemnon's skill roll succeeds on a 12 or less. Whether Agamemnon fails or succeeds, Calvert will know exactly what is happening, and will have a chance to deal with it – see below.

"Get Out of My Mind!"

It can happen that a hostile psi penetrates your shields with Psychic Vampire or Telereceive, and that you *later* become aware of his presence – for instance, because he failed an Illusion, Mindswitch, Mindwipe, Sleep or Telecontrol roll. Or he might have entered your mind while your shields were down, or simply battered his way in with brute force. In any case, you may attempt to close him out of your mind. Roll a Quick Contest: your

(Telepathy Power + Mind Shield skill) or (Will+10), whichever is better, vs. his (attacking Power + attacking Skill). Even if you lack a Mind Shield, you can try to evict an intruder in this way – roll vs. Will+10. The attempt counts as your action for the turn.

If you win, you drive the intruder out of your mind, and he will suffer the normal repeated-attempt penalties if he tries to return.

But if you lose, the enemy psi is in your mind for as long as he maintains his attacking skill. If you want to keep your thoughts a secret, you must make an IQ+4 (or Mind Block+4) roll to control your own thoughts, or you will immediately think of whatever it is you fear he is trying to learn – which can give your secrets away even to an unskilled attacker. If the enemy stays in your mind for long, your chance of keeping your secrets will decrease: see the Mind Block skill (p. 100) for details.

Mindswitch ★n/a Prerequisite: Telereceive-14+ and Telesend-14

This ability enables you to switch your mind with a subject's, and vice versa. It may only be used after you have already made contact with the subject's mind using Telereceive. If successful, Mindswitch always costs *both bodies* 3 fatigue!

To use Mindswitch, take the Concentrate maneuver. At the beginning of your next turn, roll a Quick Contest of your Mindswitch skill vs. the subject's Will+5. A Mind Shield does not protect, since it has already been penetrated. If you win the contest, your mind enters the subject's body, and the subject's mind enters yours. If you make the skill roll but lose the contest, the subject will be aware of a "presence" in his mind.

Mindswitch is permanent – the only way to return to your body is to Mindswitch back. However, a *critical failure* on any Mindswitch attempt prevents you *ever* trying to switch into that body again – which may lock you out of your original form.

A person in a new body has that body's ST, DX, HT and all its physical advantages and disadvantages. He does *not* get the body's IQ, mental advantages and disadvantages, skills, or psi powers – he retains his own. (Exception: Combat Reflexes will be retained if *either* the mind or the body had the advantage!)

All mental and psi skills remain unchanged, but all physical skills are based on the new body's DX or HT. Thus, if someone with DX 11 and Broadsword-13 switched into a body with DX 15, he would now have Broadsword-17, since the new body has a DX 4 points higher.

Until the switcher becomes used to his new body, DX-and HT-based skills are temporarily reduced: -3 for the first hour, -2 until a day has passed, and -1 until a week has passed.

You can Mindswitch into an animal's body, providing it has IQ 5 or better. If a person switches into a body with a lower *starting* IQ, the GM may reduce the higher IQ by *half* the difference between the *average* intelligence of the races, and vice versa. Example: human starting IQ is 10; an average wolf has IQ 6, so the difference is IQ 4. If an IQ 13 man's mind is transferred into a wolf's body, his intelligence will drop by half of that normal difference, to IQ 11. Similarly, the wolf-mind now has the potential to gain 2 points of intelligence from the human brain. Any increase in IQ should be gradual (one IQ per week). A decrease in IQ will be instant.

If a character's point total increases as the result of a Mindswitch and he decides to remain in his new body, any points earned must first go to paying off the difference.

Special Limitation: The psi can *only* transfer to *one specific* body (e.g., a pair of telepathic twins who can shift their minds around, or a person who can swap minds with his animal companion). -50%.

Mindsword ★n/a Prerequisite: Mental Blow 12+

You can create a visible blade of concentrated mental energy. To do so, take the Concentrate maneuver. At the beginning of your next turn, roll against Mindsword skill (the only modifiers that apply are those for Multiple Feats, p. 7). If you succeed, the Mindsword appears in your hand. It vanishes immediately if dropped; otherwise no concentration is required to maintain the Mindsword, but a new skill roll is required each minute. If the roll fails, the user can try again with the usual penalty and fatigue cost for Repeated Attempts.

The Mindsword is used exactly like a melee weapon – use Force Sword skill to wield it. Determine damage from the *Weapon Damage Table* in the ***Basic Set***, basing damage on the wielder's Telepathy Power in place of ST. The user can thrust or swing: it does thrusting damage as actual impaling injury, or swinging damage to fatigue, like a Mental Blow.

A Mindsword's blow can be Dodged, but not Blocked. Only another Mindsword can parry it. Normal weapons (even energy blades like Force Swords) are useless. However, a Mindsword cannot parry a normal weapon either, only another Mindsword. Similarly, normal PD and DR (or Toughness) give no protection against a Mindsword. A Mind Shield has DR equal to half its Power. Psionic Resistance has DR equal to half its level.

A Mindsword can reach into or out of the astral plane, at -5 to hit. An astral entity uses its astral PD and DR against the blade.

The wielder of a Mindsword may aim at specific hit locations, at the usual penalties: blows to the vitals do double damage after DR, and strikes at the brain do triple damage, while blows to the limbs may numb (if fatigue damage is over half ST) or cripple (from HT damage), but limb damage in excess of half HT (or half ST) is lost.

Note to GMs: This power is definitely cinematic, if not actually "comic book." It's out of place in a hard-science campaign, and may be dropped.

Mindwipe ★n/a Prerequisite: Telesend and Telereceive at 12+

This is the ability to edit or remove a subject's memories. To try it, the telepath must have *already* entered the subject's mind using Telereceive. Most attempts take at least an hour of solid concentration; if you are interrupted and fail a Will-3 roll, you must start again. Mindwipe is always resolved as a Quick Contest between your Mindwipe skill and the subject's Will (once per hour for long processes). If the user fails, the subject will be aware that someone is trying to tamper with his mind. If the user succeeds several times but then fails, the subject's memory will reappear in 3d days.

Since it takes so long, Mindwipe is best performed on a subject who is sleeping or restrained. The time required to do (or undo) a memory change, or to find traces of a change in the subject's mind, varies with the complexity of the change. The more subtle the change, the harder it is to make, repair or find:

Delete all the subject's memories *permanently* (leaving a babbling idiot): 1 hour.

Delete all the subject's memories, but in such a way that they could be restored: 2 hours.

Delete all the subject's memories but retain skills and ability to function day-to-day (a classic amnesia victim): 4 hours.

Delete a group of memories (e.g., several weeks of time): 3 hours.

Replace a group of memories with a false memory: 5 hours.

Remove one memory: 1 hour (10 minutes for a memory within the past day).

Change one memory: 2 hours (20 minutes for a memory within the past day).

Delete (unselectively) all memories from the last ten minutes: one turn! This deletes memories of the Mindwipe, as well. (This is the only Mindwipe ability fast enough to work in combat.)

Plant a *compulsion* (a single order which the subject *must* obey at an appropriate time): 4 hours. A compulsion may not compel the subject to do anything that takes longer than a minute or two to perform; compulsions are always obeyed literally.

Implant or remove a Mental Advantage, Disadvantage or Quirk: A half-hour per point of original cost. Mindwipe can affect any advantage, disadvantage or quirk that the GM feels can be logically linked to the erasure of memories or the insertion of false memories. Traits associated with the physical structure of the brain, and most supernatural (i.e., magical or psionic) traits cannot be affected. The subject must buy off any disadvantages permanently removed this way, or pay for any advantage added.

Resisting Compulsions

If an implanted compulsion goes radically against the subject's personal morality, or is strongly in opposition to his mental disadvantages, the subject may be allowed to resist at the last second before the programmed compulsion takes effect. (GM's discretion, but this rule should be applied when a PC is compelled to suicide or murder his best friend, for instance.)

Roll another Quick Contest between the subject's Will and the Mindwipe skill of the telepath who planted it (use the amount he made the original roll by, rather than rerolling). If the subject wins, he stops himself just in time, shoots himself in the foot rather than the head if ordered to suicide, or whatever, and then passes out from the strain. Be dramatic!

Other Mindwipe Techniques

A skilled telepath can do other things with Mindwipe, including detecting or undoing another psi's tampering. See Chapter 2, *Advanced Psionic Techniques,* for details.

Psi Sense ★1

This is the ability to detect use of psi powers. The possessor of the power (sometimes called a sniffer) gets a *passive* skill roll to detect any *active* use of psi within his range. He may also use the skill actively, by concentrating for one second, and making a skill roll at the start of his next turn. Range is based on the *Telepathy Range Table.* Use full range, not range divided by 100.

A Sniffer has the following bonuses and penalties:

Sniffer is using power actively: +5.

Subject is using a Telepathic psi ability: +2.

The success of the skill roll determines the amount of information the Sniffer gets, as follows:

Failed roll: No psi use detected.

Succeeds: Sniffer knows psi was used within his range.

Succeeds by 1: Sniffer also knows approximate direction.

Succeeds by 3: Sniffer also knows approximate distance.

Succeeds by 5: Sniffer also knows what psi Power was used.

Succeeds by 7: Sniffer also knows what psi skill was used.

Succeeds by 9: Sniffer also knows what the skill was being used on, or for.

Succeeds by 11: Sniffer also gets image of user's personality (or recognizes user, if he knows him already).

The skill detects only a psi *user,* not subjects of psi use. A short-range Sniffer, in the same room with another person, would not know that person's mind was being read unless the spying Telepath was also within the Sniffer's range.

In cases where there are *many* active uses of psi going on (e.g., the Sniffer uses a very long range, or the world is full of active psionics), the GM may roll to see if the *nearest* use is detected. Once the Sniffer has located (success by 3+) a particular source of psi, he can choose to ignore it, and go for the next nearest psi-source, and so on.

Signature Sniffer ★1 — Prerequisite: ESP Power 1+

You must have ESP Power 1 or more to learn this skill. With Signature Sniffer, you can read *old* psychic signatures left by the use of psi-skills. To use it, take the Concentrate maneuver. At the beginning of your next turn, roll vs. Signature Sniffer skill. A successful roll will give you the mental "fingerprints" of the user, and some hints as to the user's personality (unless you already know him, in which case the identity will be clear). Use the Psi Sense table to determine how much you found out.

You can try again for more information (i.e., get a better roll), but doing so requires a *Repeated Attempt,* regardless of how long you wait between attempts.

If the subject used Erase Signature to cover his tracks, subtract the amount he made his roll by from your skill!

This skill leaves no signature!

Sleep ★n/a — Prerequisite: Telesend at 12+

This is an indirect mental attack – it may only be used after the telepath has contacted the subject's mind using Telereceive.

To use Sleep, take the Concentrate maneuver. At the beginning of your next turn, roll a Quick Contest of your Sleep skill vs. the subject's Will. A Mind Shield does not protect, since it has already been penetrated.

If you win, the subject falls into a normal sleep lasting for 1d hours unless awakened. On a failure, the subject gets an IQ roll to realize he is under attack.

Exceptions: Any Telepath rolls against his best Telepathy skill. And in a world where neither magic nor psi is commonly known, most victims will have no experience with Sleep attacks and will just think they're sick.

The attacker can also attempt to place the victim into a deep coma, rather than normal sleep. This attempt is at -4 to skill, but if successful, the duration is 1d hours per 3 levels of Power, and the victim cannot be awakened through normal means. A psi who makes a Telereceive roll at -5 can attempt to reach into a victim's mind to awaken him; one try per day is allowed.

Special Skill Enhancement: The ability can be used against a whole group of people. See sidebar, p. 39. +100%.

Suggest ★n/a — Prerequisite: Telereceive and Telesend at 12+

A telepath with this skill can project a simple feeling or emotion which can affect the actions of others. This is an indirect mental attack – it may only be used after you have already made contact with the subject's mind using Telereceive.

To use Suggestion, decide on the message (see below) and then take the Concentrate maneuver and expend one fatigue. At the start of your next turn, roll a Quick Contest of your Suggest skill vs. the subject's Will. A Mind Shield does not protect, since it has already been penetrated. If you win, the subject acts on the suggestion. If your skill roll is successful, but the *subject* won the Quick Contest, the subject receives the emotional message, but it doesn't influence him.

The feeling or emotion to be sent may be simple or complex. The more complex, the greater the penalty to your skill.

Simple (one word) feeling-messages might be: need, love, joy, anger, danger, hunger, etc. Only primal feelings and emotions may be sent using this skill; it is up to the GM to determine whether a proposed communication meets these criteria.

Complex messages involve adding a subject, object, or qualifier to the base feeling or emotion.

A *subject* is the entity expressing the emotion. Adding a subject to the basic "danger" could generate the messages "I'm in danger," "you're in danger" or "the world is in danger."

An *object* is what the emotion is expressed towards. This is the difference between "hungry" and "hungry for *pretzels*."

A *qualifier* describes or limits the feeling, subject, or object and must be limited to something that can be communicated in simple, clear terms, like "pull the red lever" or "hit the big man."

Subjects, objects and qualifiers each add a -5 penalty to the roll, but this may be modified by the GM. Add +3 for an object or subject well-known to the receiver, and +2 if it is in the subject's presence. Suggestions about objects or subjects unknown to the receiver will have no effect.

Modifiers are cumulative. For instance, communicating "your sister is in danger from the KGB," if the sister is present and emotionally close to the receiver, is at -5 (subject), +3 (subject well-known), +2 (subject present), -5 (object), and +3 (object is well-known) for a total -2 modifier. To qualify it (e.g., sister is in *immediate* danger) would add another -5 modifier.

A targeted subject who succeeds in the Contest is immune to further Suggestions for (IQ) minutes. The GM makes an IQ roll for any *psi* who resists a Suggestion. If successful, he realizes that an attack has occurred. On a critical success, the GM should give a clue to the identity of the attacker.

Telecontrol ★n/a Prerequisite: Telesend and Telereceive at 15+

This is the ability to take over the victim's mind and operate him from a distance like a puppet. Telecontrol may only be used after the telepath has successfully made contact with the subject's mind using Telereceive.

To use Telecontrol, take the Concentrate maneuver for one second. At the start of your next turn, roll a Quick Contest of your Telecontrol skill vs. the subject's Will. A Mind Shield does not protect, since it has already been penetrated. If you win, the victim is under your control. If you lose, the subject is alerted to your presence: he feels you in his mind, and further attempts at Telecontrol on that person have the usual penalties and fatigue costs for Repeated Attempts.

A controlled victim is operated like a robot. You can order him to say or do anything you wish. You can make him use his own physical or mental skills, or you can use your own mental (not physical) skills through his body, but you do not have access to his memories, nor can you ask him for advice.

Telecontrol requires great concentration. Although the user need not take the Concentrate maneuver each turn to control his puppet, he will be at an extra -4 on skill rolls if he wants to do anything else – either psi use or a normal skill. It is possible to control more than one victim at a time, but attempts to control each successive victim will be at a cumulative -4 to Telecontrol rolls and *anything* else the controller attempts, and the puppets will have slurred speech and DX-4.

Once established, Telecontrol may be continued for as long as you wish. A new Contest of Telecontrol vs. Will is required for each minute that you stay in the subject's mind, but this requires no concentration and costs no fatigue, even on a critical failure. However, you are at -4 to skill for each extra person you control, and failure lets the subject break free!

When control ends, the victim will remember nothing of what happened during the period of control, nor will he remember the attack itself. After a victim has been controlled once, you have a +2 on any further attempt on the same victim; this decreases to +1 after a week has passed, and is gone after a month.

Special Skill Limitation: You must enter a trance-like state, during which you yourself are helpless and unaware of your surroundings, to Telecontrol someone. -30%.

Telereceive ★3

This is the skill of *receiving* thought. Received thought comes at the speed of speech, except between two very skilled telepaths who have entered "full communion" (see *Two-Way Communication,* p. 36). Establishing contact with Telereceive is a necessary prerequisite for many "indirect" telepathic abilities, such as Sleep or Telecontrol; anyone who wants to use these skills must also have this one. This is the skill that can find a path through a Mind Shield, "listening" to the thoughts within and opening the way for other skills.

To use Telereceive, take the Concentrate maneuver for one turn. At the start of your next turn, roll vs. Telereceive skill. If the subject is unwilling (or unaware of the probing), subtract his Mind Shield's *Power* and any levels of Strong Will he has (or add his Weak Will!). If the subject is deliberately keeping his mind blank, waiting for a contact, add 2 to effective skill.

If you succeed, you remain "in contact" with the subject's mind. A new skill roll (as above) is required each minute that you stay in the subject's mind, but this requires no concentration and costs no fatigue, even on a critical failure.

If you fail, you may try again at the normal penalty for repeated attempts. Note that a Mind Shield makes repeated attempts more difficult: -2 penalty per repetition, and 2 fatigue! (If you failed because of a Mind Shield, and you are not trying to be secretive, you may attempt the mental equivalent of a polite knock. If this roll succeeds, you won't be in the other person's mind, but he will have a chance to make his own Telereceive roll, if he has the skill, to know that someone is are trying to make contact. Whether he drops the shield is up to him.)

A critical failure automatically alerts your target that a Telereceive is being attempted – which is sometimes good and sometimes bad.

If you get into the subject's mind, the level of thought you get depends upon the amount by which you make your skill roll.

0-2: You can read active surface thoughts only. If the subject is talking or subvocalizing, you pick up only what he is saying. You are now within the subject's Mind Shield, and can use skills such as Sleep or Telecontrol. Also, there is no range penalty for using further psi skills on the subject, even if he is out of sight.

3, 4: As above, but you pick up all surface thoughts, plus occasional mental associations and background on them. You can also pick one of the subject's senses (sight, hearing, Telepathy, etc.) to "tap into." If you are using someone else's vision, you can target psi abilities through that person's eyes at -3, ignoring the "subject unseen" range penalty.

5, 6: As above, but you gain all significant mental associations and background on what the subject is currently talking or thinking about. You receive all the subject's sense impressions. This, however, makes you vulnerable to them! If your subject hurts himself, you will suffer shock and stun effects (though no actual damage); if he dies, make a Fright Check at -6. On the flip side, telepathic lovers experience shared pleasures.

7, 8: As above, but the subject's subconscious mind is exposed. You understand his personality, and know all his Mental Disadvantages and Quirks. You may attempt to deter-

mine the root cause of any neuroses or other psychological problems. This takes a minute of total concentration, and a Psychology+6 roll (so with the +6 bonus, it defaults to IQ). However, doing so can be dangerous: roll a Quick Contest of the user's unmodified Telereceive skill vs. the Will of the subject, with a +1 bonus to the subject's Will for every 5 character points of Mental Disadvantages he possesses. Failure means the psi suffers a Fright Check with a +1 on the roll for every point he failed by.

9, 10: As above, but the subject's memories of the last day are also exposed. The user only remembers them as clearly as the subject does. Another Telereceive roll and one minute of concentration is needed to locate a specific memory over an hour old. A failure on this roll means the memory cannot be located; try again another day.

11, 12: As above, but the subject's memories of the last week are also exposed. Again, clarity is based on the subject's own recollections. A roll is only needed to find a specific memory that is over a day old. If you fail, you cannot try again for a day.

13+: As above, but all the subject's memories are exposed, though a separate skill roll is still necessary to "locate" any particular memory over a year old. If you fail, you cannot try again for a day. Memories the subject does not consciously remember may be discovered.

Contact is lost if you lose consciousness or go to sleep, or if you voluntarily "turns off" the ability. If the subject puts up a Mind Shield, you must immediately make another skill roll (with the penalty for the Shield) to retain contact.

It is possible to try for a "better level" of contact, but this is treated as a normal "repeated attempt," and if it goes wrong, you could lose contact entirely.

A victim may try to evict a Telereceive-using intruder from his mind – see *Get Out of My Mind!*, p. 22. Note that this is possible even without a Mind Shield!

Subtle Invasion

A normal Telereceive attempt can be sensed by the subject as a "presence" in his mind. To avoid such notice, before rolling for success with the actual Telereceive attempt, make a roll for subtlety. This takes no extra time, and is a Quick Contest between the intruding psi's *unmodified* Telereceive skill and the subject's Mind Shield skill, or IQ if he has no Shield. A success by the mind reader means his attempt (whether successful or not) went unnoticed by the target. A tie or failure means the subject notices you, though whether he *understood* that crawling sensation in his brain will depend on his experience with Telepathy.

Telescan ★2

You can "search" an area and hunt for a specific person's mind. This takes a turn of concentration and a Telescan roll. Although you must specify who you are looking for, you need not be able to see or even clearly visualize your target, and you never suffer range penalties to your skill.

Your range is *not* divided by 100 for this skill. If the person you're searching for has a Mind Shield, its Power is subtracted from your Telescan skill. Other modifiers are as follows:

You've never met the subject: -8.
You've met the subject once (physically or mentally): -4.
You've met the subject several times: 0.
Subject is a casual acquaintance: +1.
Subject is a friend: +2.
Subject is a close friend: +3.
Subject is a close family member: +5.

A successful skill roll will tell you the direction and distance to the subject – a critical success will give you a mental picture of the area he is in as well. A critical failure will alert the subject that he is being scanned for. How he reacts to this will depend on his familiarity with Telepathy.

If you succeed, you can maintain this skill continuously, to track a person. No extra concentration is needed, but an additional roll at +4 is required each minute. If this roll is failed, you have lost your target, and must begin the process over again, with penalties for Repeated Attempts.

If you have a "lock" on a subject via Telescan, the range penalties for using telepathic or PV abilities on an "unseen" subject are reduced to -3. As long as you have a Telescan "lock" on the subject, you may use psi abilities on him while he is in range but out of sight, even if he is *not* "familiar" to you.

Telesend ★3

This is the skill of *sending* thought to a single subject. Communication is about the speed of talking, though simple pictures may also be sent (by visualizing them) at the speed it would take to draw them on paper.

To use Telesend, take the Concentrate maneuver for one second. At the start of your next turn, roll against Telesend skill. If you have no language in common with the subject, the skill roll is at -4 (unless sending pictures). If the roll fails by 4 or less, the subject feels a mental contact, but understands nothing!

If the roll was successful, you remain in communication, although a roll is needed each minute to keep contact. If you began communication when the subject's Mind Shield was down and he suddenly raises it, you must immediately make another skill roll (with penalty for the Shield) to see if you remain in communication.

If you have Power 10+, you can *broadcast* globally, your sending picked up by *everyone* within 1% of your normal range. This doesn't require a skill roll, but you must take the Concentrate maneuver each turn.

The Shout: Also at Power 10+, Telesend ability can be used for a telepathic *shout* which can stun those who receive it. If the shout is broadcast, no skill roll is required. A Shout can be wordless, or can carry a message of one simple concept (as determined by the GM). "Help!" is a concept; "Martians" is a concept. "Help, the Martians are invading New York!" is too complex for a single Shout.

The psi may use the Shout on any area within his normal Telepathy range. The radius *affected* is equal to the psi's "global" area (a lesser area can be specified if the psi Shouts less loudly). Everyone within this area must roll vs. HT. A failed roll results in a Mental Stun (see *Total Surprise,* p. B122). If a person has a Mind Shield up, he can add half his Mind Shield Power to HT to resist the Shout. Psionic Resistance also adds to HT.

Special Skill Limitation: Cannot Lie with Telesend. -30%.

TELEPORTATION (5 POINTS PER LEVEL)

This is the power of instantaneously moving things from place to place. A teleported object "blinks" from one place to another.

If the destination isn't in sight, the teleporter must be able to clearly visualize it. Anyone will be intimately familiar with some places, such as his home, but the GM should put a finite

limit on the number of locations a teleporter can have memorized – equal to IQ, or IQ×2 for someone with Eidetic Memory, and only allow one "location" to be changed per day. A person who wants to memorize more locations may do so by spending character points – a half-point per location.

Special Limitation: You can carry nothing, and always arrive nude. Exoteleport can never be learned. -50%.

Special Limitation: Your teleported objects retain any orientation and speed vector they had before being blinked. If you are falling, and transport yourself to the surface of the earth, you will hit hard! -50%.

Special Limitation: Material in the space you teleport into does not exchange places with you; it is pushed aside. When you teleport away, the air creates a loud pop as it fills the vacuum you left. -20%.

Special Limitation: If you teleport into a solid, non-living object, you will lose whatever portion of your body intersects the object. Be careful. -50%.

Special Enhancement: You can memorize and use any location you ever visited, with no limit on numbers of locations. +40%.

Autoteleport ★4

This is the basic Teleport ability – the skill to move yourself (and up to 5 pounds of clothing and carried items) from point to point without crossing the space between. You cannot go somewhere unless you have been there, or can see it at the moment you are teleporting. You *can* try to teleport to a place you are seeing on live TV (at -5), or through someone else's eyes (at -3).

The distance you can teleport is based on the *Telepathy Range Table,* p. 20. You must have at least Power 3 to go a yard or more; Power 2 lets you teleport 1.5 feet, and Power 1 only 9 inches, so you can use it to "walk through walls."

To use Autoteleport, take the Concentrate maneuver for one second. At the start of your next turn, roll vs. skill. Failures will send you someplace unplanned, usually somewhere similar to your intended destination (not necessarily nearby, just similar: for instance, instead of teleporting to your new apartment, you may go to your old one) and cost 2 fatigue. Critical failures send you somewhere *unpleasant,* and stun your Teleport power, rendering it unusable for 1d hours.

Teleporting may require the user to make a roll against Body Sense skill (p. 100) to avoid disorientation.

Combat Teleport ★n/a
Prerequisite: Autoteleport-14+, Power 10+

This is the ability to use teleportation to avoid being hit – to make a short-range teleport away from a blow, or out of the line of fire of a ranged attack. To learn this skill, the user must have a minimum Teleport Power of 10!

Unlike most skills, *no concentration* is required. An attempt to combat teleport replaces the user's active defense against the attack, and the user can only attempt one Combat Teleport in a turn. The chance of success and other restrictions are identical to Autoteleport, but the user *must* be able to see his destination. Range for a Combat Teleport is 1% of normal teleport range.

A successful combat teleport means the user evaded the attack and is now elsewhere; a Body Sense (p. 100) roll is required to avoid falling over. The teleporter can change facing during the jump, at a -2 to skill and to the following Body Sense roll.

A failed teleport roll means he fails to jump in time; if the attack hits, he has only passive defense to protect him. A critical failure means he is automatically hit by the attack and *then* goes somewhere unpleasant.

Each use of Combat Teleport costs 1 fatigue.

Exoteleport ★4

This is the ability to transport objects from point to point, allowing you to teleport objects without teleporting yourself. Power determines distance (as with Autoteleport) and weight; weight is equal to 10% of that shown on the *TK Mass Table* (p. 19). For instance, a Power of 8 lets you blink 0.2 pounds (3.2 ounces); a Power of 20 or more can teleport an adult human.

To use Exoteleport, you take the Concentrate maneuver for one second. At the start of your next turn, roll vs. skill.

Modifiers: +3 if you carry the item by Autoteleporting or Combat Teleporting (roll separately, at no extra penalty, for the arrival of yourself and your cargo; in this one case both skills can be used at the same time); +2 if you are touching the object when you send it; -3 if you can neither see nor touch it.

You may attempt to *bring* an object to you rather than sending it. This is at -5 to skill, or -8 if you cannot see it. The object must be a very familiar one, and you must know exactly where it is. A failure on the roll will lose the item forever, embed it in a wall, etc. A critical failure could bring it to a spot over or *inside* the teleporter!

Special Skill Limitations: An exoteleport may be able only to *bring* objects or only to *send* objects. Either of these is -40%.

World-Jumper

This is the ability to travel *between dimensions.* It is not teleportation, but may be combined with teleportation. World-jumping is covered in detail in ***GURPS Time Travel.***

ENHANCEMENTS

Players can use enhancements and limitations (see p. 9) to customize psi powers, increasing the variety of abilities available to their characters.

Many special enhancements and limitations are listed for particular psi powers or skills; the ones below are "generic" and can be applied to most powers. The GM may reject any combination that seems silly!

Extended Duration +30%

A power enhanced in this manner lasts twice the normal Duration. This may be purchased as many times as desired, each enhancement doubling the Duration again. This can't be bought for attack powers.

Instantaneous +20%

This ability does not require a turn of concentration. You are still limited to one power use per turn, but you may now use a power, then take a full normal move or hand-to-hand attack.

Movable Area +40%

Any area power with this enhancement can be "attached" to a person or other moving object, allowing the area to move with that person.

No Signature or Weak Signature +10% or 20%

Mental powers with this enhancement are harder to trace. For +10%, any attempt to trace a psionic "signature" is at a -4; this is a "weak signature." For +20%, there is simply no mental

signature at all. (This enhancement is listed as "No Obvious Effect" in ***GURPS Supers***.)

Reduced Fatigue Cost +20%

This only applies to powers that cost fatigue. Each time you buy Reduced Fatigue Cost, it cuts the fatigue cost of the ability by 1 per turn. You may buy it any number of times.

Selective Effect +50%

Applied to an Area Effect power, this lets the user select which targets are actually affected by the attack. This lets you make a wide-area attack without hurting innocent people or your friends.

LIMITATIONS

Limitations (see p. 9) reduce the utility of psi powers, and reduce the point cost as well. An interesting limitation can not only make a power affordable, but can also inspire good role-playing. Remember that no matter how many limitations are taken, the total reduction in cost of a power or skill can never be more than -75%.

Accessibility varies

This is a catch-all term that can be used to cover all limitations not specifically defined. Accessibility limitations fall into two groups: usable only *against certain things* or usable only *in certain situations.*

If the power only works against a limited segment of the population, its modifier is based on how common the target group is. "Usable Only Against Opposite Sex" would cover roughly half of the population, and would be worth -20%. "Usable Only Against Sea Creatures" would be worth -30% unless the campaign is in a world mostly covered with water, in which case it wouldn't be worth more than -10%. "Usable Only Against Aliens" would be worth -30% or -40%, depending on the world. "Not Usable Against Redheads" is the same as "Usable Against Everyone But Redheads," and would be a -10% limitation.

If the power is only *weakened* (half Power) instead of becoming useless, halve the value of the limitation.

The GM shouldn't allow meaningless accessibility limitations! For instance, buying the Mental Blow power with the limitation "Usable Only On Enemies" would be worthless. Buying it with "Usable Only on Friends" would be interesting, though!

This same yardstick can be applied to limitations based on the situation. If the ability only works during the day, it would be worth -20%. If it only works in direct sunlight, it would be worth -30%. Most such limitations would reflect a psychological quirk on the part of the psi, but they would nevertheless be real!

Some possible special limitations are suggested with the individual powers – see the power descriptions. Others can be made up to simulate weird power quirks or abilities from fiction. Some examples are given below.

Not Usable Under Stress: -60%. See *Uncontrollable* (p. 30) for definitions of stress.

Usable Only vs. Non-Psis (or Usable Only vs. Psis): -50%. Usually only applicable for Psychic Vampirism or Telepathy.

Usable Only In Hypnotic Trance: -30%. The same value would apply to a power that worked only if the user were under incapacitating drugs or dead drunk.

Usable Only By One Side of Split Personality: -40%.

Costs Fatigue varies

When this limitation is taken, each use of the power costs fatigue immediately. Each skill roll to start or maintain the power is a "use." You can spend enough fatigue points to take you down to 0 (and unconsciousness), but not beyond. For every point of fatigue the power costs you, power cost is reduced by 5% – up to a maximum of -50%, which would cost 10 fatigue per use.

Example: Chin Ho's Telepathy costs him 6 points of fatigue each use. This would be a -30% limitation.

Differential Effect varies

The power has a reduced effect against some kinds of targets, figured as in Accessibility, above. For instance, "Usable Only Against Women" is the same as "Not Against Men," and is worth -20%. So "Half Damage Against Men" is only half as inconvenient a limitation, and is worth half that: -10%.

Any sort of differential limitation can be created this way. Use the Accessibility rules to determine what the value would be, if that target could not be attacked at all. Then adjust downward as appropriate for the amount of damage that is actually done.

Note that "Double Damage" effects can be achieved the same way. For instance, if you want to do double damage against blondes, start by figuring the value of "Blondes Only" – call it -40%. That's the same as "Not Against Non-Blondes." So, doing only *half* damage against non-blondes is -20%. Now, buy the power at the level you want to have against blondes, and apply the -20% limitation "Half Damage against Non-Blondes." You can then, if you choose, list the half-power attack on your sheet with the notation "Doubled Against Blondes." It sounds much better, even though the attack was worked out the other way.

Emergencies Only -20% or -30%

The power is triggered by your fear or excitement, and cannot be used under "routine" conditions. The GM is the final arbiter of the emotional state of your character. The GM may rule that multiple successive failures of your power make you angry enough that it begins to work, but this is entirely up to him.

A less severe form of this limitation is Full Power in Emergencies Only (-20%). You can work at half Power, rounded down, under normal conditions, but at full Power only under stress.

The GM is the final arbiter of the emotional state of a character and of how much danger it takes to trigger an ability. Note that a Psychic Vampire can block an "Emergencies Only" skill by draining a victim of strong emotion!

Eye Contact Only -20%

Your power will only work if you make direct eye contact with the subject. Range on this is limited to 3 yards.

Fickle varies

Your ability has the disturbing tendency to stop working suddenly. A Fickle power always works right if you have not used it for a 24-hour period. After that use, and after every successive use, you must make the Fickleness roll: roll the Fickleness number, or less, to get the power to work. A failed roll means that power is unavailable for the next 5d turns. When this time is up, the power will work normally on the next use – but you must make another roll *after* that use!

For an Fickleness number of 5, this limitation is worth -70%; for 8, -30%; for 11, -20%; and for 14, -10%.

Limited Use — varies

This power can only be used a certain number of times per day; then it is unavailable for a 24-hour "recharge" period. The value of this limitation depends on the number of uses per day allowed. 1 per day = -40%, 2 per day = -30%, 3 or 4 per day = -20%, 5 or 6 per day = -10%. More than 6 uses per day does not constitute a significant limitation.

If this limitation is applied to an advantage, each *hour* (or fraction thereof) that it is on constitutes one "use."

Nuisance Effect — varies

Your ability has an annoying side effect of some sort – something that actually causes harm to you or those around you, or that causes you a *serious* inconvenience. The GM must approve any such nuisance effect and set its value, ruthlessly forbidding abusive and pointless effects and allowing points only for those effects that genuinely limit the Power's value. See *Pside Effects,* sidebar, p. 88.

A valuable Power cannot be taken as a nuisance effect. "Kills everyone within a mile" is not an acceptable nuisance effect.

Note that a harmless nuisance is merely a special effect. If any use of your ESP attracts cockroaches, this is amusing but worth no points.

Examples: If any use of your ability kills all the grass within two blocks, this is a -10% limitation, and could be used to justify a negative reaction modifier.

If any use of your ability makes you look ugly and disgusting, or requires you to perform some distressing ritual, this is a -5% limitation for each -1 of reaction in those who see it used.

Preparation Required

Your skills under this power require special preparation before they can be used. This limitation can reflect a need to meditate before using a power, or to perform some form of ritual to focus concentration.

An unprepared skill cannot be used. To prepare a skill, take the Concentrate maneuver for the required amount of time. You need not specify *how* the skill is to be used when you are preparing it, only which skill is being readied.

A prepared skill can be used normally, either right away or at some later point in time. However, you can only have one skill prepared at a time, and it becomes unprepared immediately after you make a roll to use it, whether you succeed or fail (although a continuing skill can be maintained).

A more practical version of this power is *Weakened Without Preparation* – your power works at half its level if you don't prepare the skill beforehand.

The cost depends on the time required to prepare a skill, as shown on the table below.

Time	*Requires Preparation*	*Weakened Without Preparation*
One minute:	-20%	-10%
10 minutes:	-30%	-15%
One hour:	-50%	-25%
Eight hours:	-60%	-30%

Reduced Range — -5%

Each time this limitation is taken, the Range of a power is reduced by half (round down). The limitation can be taken a maximum of three times for a single power.

Takes Extra Time — -10%

Your power takes two seconds of concentration, rather than one. You can take this limitation any number of times, doubling the time required to activate the power each time. Note that a power with this limitation cannot be used as an active defense.

Takes Recharge — varies

Your psi power requires "recharging" after each use. Value of the limitation depends on the time between uses: 5 seconds: -10%; 15 seconds: -20%.

Longer recharge times would make combat powers almost worthless, and don't affect non-combat powers much. A recharge time of an hour is a -30% limitation; longer recharge times are not valid as limitations (but see *Limited Use*, above).



Touch Only — -20%

Your power will only work if you touch the intended subject – you have an effective Range of 0, no matter what your Power level. If you can make the ability work with either touch *or* eye contact (above), the limitation is -15%.

Unconscious Only — -20%

This can be taken only in conjunction with the Uncontrollable limitation (below). The psi skill cannot be consciously activated *at all;* it can only come into play under GM control, as a result of failing a Will roll while under stress. PCs may take it in the hope of buying it off later, but it is mainly intended for NPCs, especially those who are unaware that they are actually psis.

Telepathy and ESP powers may be both unconscious and uncontrollable, for a net 50% reduction in cost. They *cannot* be uncontrollable without being unconscious; thus, they are not listed separately under *Uncontrollable*, below.

Uncontrollable -30%

This limitation is only available for the Antipsi, Electrokinetic, Psychokinetic and Teleport powers. Your power tends to manifest by itself – even against your will – when you are angry or excited. This can be especially interesting if your skill is destructive and you have a high power.

Whenever you are under stress (GM's decision, but a phobia situation is *always* stressful) you must make a Will roll to control your power. If you fail the roll, the GM takes over your power, playing it as though it were a separate entity of hostile or prankish nature. Usually only one roll is required per stressful situation, but a 14+ always fails.

GMs may wish to base the actions of an uncontrollable skill on the character's "suppressed desires" as reflected in his Quirks and mental disadvantages. Your power will go after obvious foes first, and will never turn on *you,* but nobody else is safe. After each uncontrolled act (or *before* an attack on a dependent or other loved one), you get another Will roll to control your power. This continues until you master the power or destroy everything around you!

When a psi's power is out of control, he cannot even choose what skill he uses. The out-of-control power *can* use psi skills the individual does not normally have (unless the power was a single-skill), with a default value in *all* psi skills under that power equal to IQ. The psi suffers normal fatigue effects, but the skill requires no concentration to use, since it's operating autonomously.

At the GM's option, "stress" need not be confined to actual danger situations. Someone striving to solve a difficult mechanical problem, arguing with his boss or trying to pass an exam is under stress. So is someone having a nightmare. Uncontrollable powers can explain much "supernatural" activity, such as poltergeist phenomena – see the *Psychic Phenomena* chapter. You may not even be aware that your powers are producing the effects in question!

Unreliable varies

Sometimes your Power works and sometimes it doesn't! It just comes and goes; you've never identified why. This is completely separate from the skill roll to hit a target. You can have skill 15 and still have problems making it work!

Every time you want to use the Power, you must roll the activation number or less (see below) on 3d. Once you succeed, the Power will work for that particular use. When you stop using the Power, another activation roll will be required to start it again.

If it fails to activate, you may continue to try on subsequent turns, at no penalty. Each successive attempt costs 1 point of fatigue. If your ST drops below 3, you must rest until all fatigue is regained before you can attempt to use the power again.

A failed attempt to activate *can* be noted by someone with the Psi Sense skill, just like a normal use of a psi skill.

For an activation number of 5 or less, this limitation is worth -70%; for 8 or less, it is worth -30%; for 11 or less, -20%; and for 14 or less, -10%.

Untrainable -40%

You can't learn to control this power well. You learn all skills under the affected power as though your IQ were only 8 (or at -1 to IQ, if already IQ 8 or below). You can never learn any skill at higher than level 10.

Psi Skills Table

This section can be copied and used for reference. It lists all psi skills, and describes how they are used.

Skill: The name of the psi skill. * means a passive skill – no concentration is required to use. All other skills are active. + means that more than one turn of concentration may be needed, depending on how the skill is used. ± indicates that extensive modifiers are always applied to skill level.

Fatigue: The fatigue cost. Var. means that the cost varies. A number in parentheses, e.g., (10), indicates a minimum Power is required to use the skill. Brute Force, Extra Effort, Repeated Attempts, and Contests of Skill may increase fatigue cost – see *Fatigue Cost,* p. 8.

Range: The skill's range. TP means use the *Telepathy Range Table* (p. 20). # means that the subject must either be touched or in sight to avoid a penalty. If not in sight or touched, the skill can still be used at a skill penalty if the psi can visualize the subject. If no range except "#" is given, range is theoretically indefinite, subject to the above limits. LOS means line of sight. PK means range is as described under *Psychokinesis,* p. 17.

Area: Subject means it affects one subject (or hex); self means it affects only the user. Otherwise the skill has a global area of effect. P = Power. TP/100 means use Telepathy Distance Table, and divide range by 100, rounding down.

Mnt.: How often a roll is required to maintain a continuing use of skill. Sec. = every second; Min. = every minute; Var. = varies; see description; ∞ means it lasts until turned off, no rolls are necessary to maintain it. An n/a means the skill cannot be maintained.

Resist: Will or HT means the psi's skill roll is a Quick Contest of Skill with the listed attribute of the subject; HT/Will means use the higher attribute; n/a means no Quick Contest is necessary. MS means the subject's Mind Shield subtracts from user's skill. (Exception: if area effect, to affect an individual, user must succeed by an amount equal or greater than the subject's Mind Shield.) Spcl. means that certain subjects may get a special defensive bonus – see description.

Page: The page the skill is described on.

Skill	*Fatigue*	*Range*	*Area*	*Mnt.*	*Resist*	*Page*
Antipsi						
Neutralize	0	P yds.	subject	n/a	HT/Will	10
Psi Static	0	0	TP/100	∞	Spcl.	10
– specific target:	0	LOS	subject	min.	Spcl.	10
Astral Projection						
Astral Projection	0	n/a	self	P min.	n/a	10
Astral Sight*	0	P^2 yds.	self	∞	n/a	11
Electrokinesis						
Confuse	0	P yds.#	subject	n/a	HT	11
Cyberpsi	0	P yds.#	subject	min.	Spcl.	11
Dampen	0	P^2 yds.#	P/4 yds.	min.	Spcl.	12
Energy Sense*	0	P yds.	self	∞	n/a	12

Skill	*Fatigue*	*Range*	*Area*	*Mnt.*	*Resist*	*Page*
Energy Shield	1/min.	n/a	self	sec.	n/a	12
Lightning±	0	Spcl.	subject	n/a	Dodge	12
Photokinesis	0	P^2 yds.	P/3 yds.	min.	n/a	13
Surge	0	P^2 yds.#	subject	n/a	Spcl.	13
ESP						
Clairvoyance	0	P^2 in.	P^2 in./2	min.	n/a	13
Clairaudience	0	P^2 yds.	P^2 yds./2	min.	n/a	14
Clairsentience	0	P^2 in.	P^2 in./2	min.	n/a	14
Combat Sense*	0	n/a	self	sec.	n/a	14
Precognition±	2	TP	subject	n/a	n/a	14
– passive use:*	0	n/a	subject	n/a	n/a	14
Psychometry	0	P^2 in.	subject	n/a	n/a	14
Seekersense±	0	TP	subject	n/a	Spcl.	15
Healing						
Healing±	var.	touch	subject	n/a	n/a	15
Life Extension*	0	n/a	self	∞	n/a	15
Metabolism Control	0	n/a	self	var.	n/a	15
– to detect lies*	0	n/a	subject	∞	n/a	16
Sense Aura	0	P-1 yds.	self	min.	n/a	16
Psychic Vampirism						
Drain (Attribute)	0	P^2 yds.#	subject	n/a	Spcl.	16
Drain Emotion	0	P^2 yds.#	subject	n/a	Will+MS	16
– area effect±	0	P^2 yds.#	P/3 yds.	n/a	Will+MS	17
Steal Dreams+	0	TP	subject	n/a	Will+MS	17
Steal Energy	0	P yds.#	subject	n/a	Will+MS	17
Steal Power	1	P yds.#	subject	n/a	Will+MS	17
Psychokinesis						
Cryokinesis	0	PK#	subject	n/a	n/a	17
Levitation	0	n/a	self	n/a	n/a	18
Pyrokinesis	0	PK#	subject	n/a	n/a	18
PK Shield	1	n/a	self	sec.	n/a	18
Telekinesis±	0	PK#	subject	min.	n/a	19
Telepathy						
Aspect*	0	n/a	TP/100	n/a	n/a	20
– change aspect	0	n/a	self	min.	n/a	20
Emotion Sense*	0	TP	subject	∞	MS	20
– emotion scan	0	TP#	subject	n/a	MS	20
Erase Signature	0	TP#	subject	n/a	n/a	21
Illusion	0	TP#	subject	min.	Will	21, 39
Mental Blow	1	TP#	subject	n/a	MS	21, 39
Mental Stab	2	TP#	subject	n/a	MS	22, 39
Mind Shield*	0	self	self	∞	n/a	22
Mindswitch	3	TP#	subject	n/a	Will+5	23
Mindsword	0	Spcl.	n/a	min.	n/a	23
Mindwipe+	0	TP#	subject	n/a	Will	23
Psi Sense*±	0	0	TP	n/a	MS	24
– active use±	0	0	TP	n/a	MS	24
Signature Sniffer±	0	0	subject	n/a	Spcl.	24
Sleep	0	TP#	subject	n/a	Will	24, 39
Suggest	1	TP#	subject	n/a	Will	24
Telecontrol	0	TP#	subject	min.	Will	25
Telereceive	0	TP#	subject	min.	Will+MS	25
Telescan±	0	TP	TP	min.	MS	26
Telesend	0	TP#	subject	min.	MS	26
– global broadcast	0	n/a	TP/100	n/a	MS	26
– shout	0	TP	TP/100	n/a	Spcl.	26
Teleportation						
Autoteleport	0	TP	self	n/a	n/a	27
Combat Teleport	1	TP/100	self	n/a	n/a	27
Exoteleport±	0	TP#	subject	n/a	n/a	27



CHAPTER TWO

ADVANCED PSIONIC TECHNIQUES

Cassie squatted in the ruined building, heedless of her own broken ankle and the dust that covered everything in the wake of the monster quake. Outside, sirens were going off, but help was still far away.

Michael lay buried in rubble, a huge slab of concrete pinning his body. His breathing was labored – at least one rib had been crushed, and it was a miracle he was still alive. He couldn't talk, but he could still send his thoughts to her.

"Face it, Cass, I'm done for. That wall is going to give way in the aftershock, and there's no way you can get me out. Leave me – save yourself!"



"No, there's got to be a way. I won't let you die, Michael." Cassie's voice was strained, and from his position under the slab, Michael saw her aura was tinged with red, the dragon aspect twisting in fear and grief.

He tried to keep his mental voice gentle. "Cassie, be realistic. I'm already dead. You've got to get out of here before this whole place comes down. That slab must weigh a ton – you can only use your telekinesis to lift, what, 2 pounds on your own? No chance. I think you'd better . . ." Michael stopped – Cassie was looking down at him, a smile incongruously lighting her dust and tear-streaked face.

"Michael, that's it! You said it – I can only lift 2 pounds on my own. But the others are back at the hotel, within my telepathy range – I can link with them, form a gestalt: Jeremiah's a strong psychokinetic, and with his power linked to the others, working through my eyes, we can do it!"

As Michael saw Cassie's aspect blaze with hope, he felt that maybe, just maybe, he would live . . .

Availability of Advanced Techniques

This chapter describes some special applications of the psionic skills already described. Most of these techniques focus on the "big three" abilities: Psychokinesis, Telepathy, Teleportation.

Psionic techniques can be used by *any* psi with the appropriate skills – they are methods of using skills, not skills themselves. However, gestalt (p. 37), power tap (p. 38) and the ability to aim mental blows may be too powerful for some campaigns in which psis are not the primary focus (although they add considerable flavor to a psi-centered campaign). The GM should feel free to prohibit any psionic techniques that he feels would unbalance the campaign.



Psychokinetic Techniques

A skilled psychokinetic can perform dozens of tricks with his powers. This section provides guidelines for resolving some common (and not-so-common!) actions involving psychokinetic skills.

Telekinetic Strength

It is sometimes important to know exactly how strong a psi's TK is in relation to a living being. If a Power 15 telekinetic and a ST 15 man are fighting for control of a briefcase filled with valuable papers, who gets hold of it? If someone is telekinetically striking with a sword, how much damage does it do?

The *effective ST* of a psi's telekinesis is based on how much weight he can move. Simply divide the weight in pounds of the heaviest object he can normally lift by 25. For example, a Power 15 telekinetic can lift 250 pounds, so his TK has an effective ST of 10.

This ST can be used in any way normal ST can be used, including grabbing or crushing objects.

Telekinetic Throwing

A telekinetic cannot throw an object heavier than he can mentally lift. To determine how far an object can be thrown, compute the effective ST of the telekinesis (weight that can be lifted/25). Divide the weight of the object by the *effective ST* of the telekinetic to get a weight ratio. Find that ratio on the Ratio column of the *thrown object table* (round the ratio *up!*) Read across to the Distance column and multiply the number under it times the psi's *effective ST*. This is the distance in yards the object can be thrown.

Thrown Object Table

Ratio	*Distance*
.100	3.5 ×
.125	3.0 ×
.200	2.5×
.300	1.9 ×
.400	1.5 ×
.500	1.2 ×
.750	1.0 ×
1.00	.8 ×
1.50	.7 ×
2.00	.6 ×
2.50	.5 ×
3.00	.4 ×
4.00	.3 ×
5.00	.25 ×
6.00	.2 ×
8.00	.15 ×
10.00	.1 ×
20.00 +	.05 ×

Example: A psi has enough Power to lift 500 lbs., giving him a Telekinetic ST of 20. He wishes to throw a 28 lb. object. 28/20 = 1.4 ratio, rounded up to 1.5. This gives a Distance of 0.7. The object can be thrown (0.7×20) 14 yards.

To determine damage, see the *Throwing Damage Table* on the next page.



Throwing Damage Table

Object Weight	*Damage*
Less than 2 lbs.	Thrust-2 per die
2 lbs. to 5 lbs.	Thrust-1 per die
5+ lbs. to ST lbs.	Thrust
ST+ to 3×ST lbs.	Thrust+1 per die
3+×ST to 7×ST lbs.	Thrust
7+×ST to 11×ST lbs.	Thrust-½ per die
11+×ST + lbs.	Thrust-1 per die

A telekinetically-thrown object will do normal *thrust* damage (use the table in the ***Basic Set***) based on the *effective ST* used to throw it, with damage per die modified by its weight – see the *Throwing Damage Table*, above, for these modifiers.

Example: A psi throws an 28 lb. object with his Telekinesis. He has an effective TK strength of 20. The object weight is greater than ST in pounds but less than 3×ST, so he does thrust+1 damage per die. Since normal thrust damage at ST 20 is 2d-1, thrust+1 per die means this damage increases by 2, so he does 2d+1 crushing damage.

Psychokinesis In Combat

Psychokinetic abilities can be used in battle to directly harm opponents, or, in the case of Energy Shield and PK Shield, to protect against harm. But more subtle uses of PK can be just as deadly.

Fire and Ice

Using pyrokinesis to melt a weapon or device is flashy, but difficult without high Power. But even a few degrees more heat can cause an electronic system to malfunction; most equipment fails at temperatures over 120°. Pyrokinesis can also detonate temperature-sensitive materials, but setting off a gas tank is usually impossible since all the gasoline must be heated as a unit.

If cryokinesis is used to reduce the temperature of a metal object to below -100°, it can become brittle. Depending on the type and structure of the material, the GM may rule that its DR is halved, and that any crushing attack that does damage in a single blow equal to ⅓ of a supercooled object's entire HT will shatter it. Many ultra-tech devices (especially those intended to function in space) will be made of advanced alloys or nonmetallic or composite materials, and will not be vulnerable at low temperatures.

Wielding Weapons with TK

Psychokinetics with enough telekinetic ability to brandish a sword or lift a gun might want to fight with them. Determine the effective ST of the telekinesis for damage and minimum ST requirement as above.

Firing a gun or using a ranged weapon is "precise aim, slow movement, precise orientation" with a -7 penalty to TK skill. If manipulating a distant weapon to attack a target, always use whatever range is greater: psi-to-weapon or weapon-to-target.

Attacking or parrying with a melee weapon is "precise aim, fast movement" for a -4 to skill, and the target must be within the weapon's Reach (otherwise it must either be thrown at the target, or the user must take a turn to move it up to the foe).



Gremlins!

Grabbing an object out of someone's grasp with telekinesis is a favorite trick. Roll a Quick Contest between the TK's effective ST and that of the person grasping the object. If the TK wins, he has it.

TK and Electrokinesis are effective for triggering dangerous objects, weapons, etc. Telekinesis can also be used to pull the pin on a hand grenade. This requires a Power of 10 or more, and a skill roll at -1. Use the same procedure for releasing safety levers, brakes on cars, etc.

It's easier to take off a gun's safety or pull a trigger (roll at -2). A Power of 5 or more is required – less if the weapon has a "hair trigger." A roll at -6 can be used to deliberately *jam* a projectile-firing weapon. Ultra-tech weapons may have electronic rather than mechanical triggers, requiring only a feather-light touch (Power 1 or more). On the other hand, some ultra-tech weapons will be activated only through a neural interface – a cyberpsi might be able to trigger them, but not a telekinetic!



Telepathic Techniques

Telepathy is the most versatile psi power; for this reason, most of the techniques in this chapter are for telepaths. Some require two or more psis to work together. The ultimate expression of this is the *gestalt,* or "group mind," in which several psis form one consciousness, combining their powers into a collective entity.

Long-Distance Sending

The range of Telesend can be boosted by sending a brief but powerful single message. A skill penalty of -1 per word applies; an emotion or simple picture can be sent at no penalty. When sending a single message, the character's Power is treated as *five levels higher,* but he cannot maintain contact: a separate turn of concentration and skill roll is needed for each message.

Any failure burns the user's telepathic ability out for 1d hours. If the subject is within 10% of the maximum *normal* range the telepath can send, he receives the message, but also suffers the effect of a telepathic Shout (see p. 26) – at that range, the sending is so loud, it's painful!

Direct Telekinetic Attacks

Telekinesis can be used to reach *inside* a person, and attack a victim's *body* – squeezing internal organs, for instance. The damage this does is taken from the *Swing Damage* table (p. B74) based on the PK's Power. So, for instance, a telekinetic with PK Power 7 would do 1d-3 damage per second, and a Power of 10 would do 1d per second. The attacker can also try (at -3 to skill) to do fatigue damage rather than real injury.

To initiate this attack, the psi must see or touch the victim and visualize the interior of the body. This requires a successful IQ roll, or a roll vs. Physiology+3 or Surgery+3. Only one try is allowed. Alternately, Clairvoyance could be used to actually *see* inside – in that case, a Clairvoyance skill roll is needed, with a turn of concentration.

With the target in sight, he starts his Telekinetic attack. This requires a turn of concentration and a TK skill roll. If the roll is successful, the victim takes damage as long as the psi maintains the ability! No further rolls are required unless the victim gets out of the attacker's sight. In that case a new roll is required, at -3, to retain contact. A new skill roll will be required each minute, but the victim usually won't survive that long.

This kind of attack need not be restricted to living things. A psi could just as easily reach into a robot (or a radio) and pull out wires or crush circuits. Use the same procedure.

Neural Attacks

A direct telekinetic attack can also be targeted against nerve clusters, to induce either extreme pain or pleasure. Treat this as an attack to do fatigue damage (-3 skill): fatigue inflicted is halved (round down), but the subject must make a HT roll to avoid being mentally stunned each turn he is affected, at -1 per point of fatigue damage. Strong and Weak Will modifiers apply. Against pain, High Pain Threshold gives a +5 and Low Pain Threshold gives a -5.

Telekinetic Grappling

A common telekinetic tactic is to grab someone and either dangle him off the ground or squeeze him. For grapple attempts using TK, success is not automatic: use the Close Combat rules (p. B111). Substitute TK *skill* for DX when making DX Contests. For ST Contests, use (maximum weight in pounds you can lift)/25.



Two-Way Communication

A two-way contact between telepaths can be initiated with Telesend skill. Once the other telepath is aware of you, he makes his own Telesend roll at +4, because the contact has already been made. After each minute of conversation, each telepath must, as usual, make another skill roll, but *all* rolls to maintain two-way contact are at +4.

For true two-way conversation, each telepath must be within his own Telesend range of the other. But a very powerful telepath could hold a two-way talk with someone wholly untalented, talking with Telesend and picking up subvocalized answers with Telereceive.

Full Communion

If both telepaths are sending and receiving as above, and each has *both* Telesend and Telereceive skills at an average skill of 10 or better, they may choose to enter *full communion,* sometimes known as *total rapport.* Each is aware of *everything* the other thinks and perceives, and communication is 10 times faster than speech!

Telepaths in full communion experience an exceptionally deep form of mental rapport that transcends normal communication.

It is impossible to lie in full communion.

Entering full communion is a precondition for establishing a telepathic gestalt.

Three-Way Interaction

Even if two or more telepaths are "in" the same mind, they cannot communicate directly through the third mind. They can use it as a "relay station" *only* if that third mind is another telepath, actually listening and repeating the message from one mind to another.



PK Defenses

If a psi with Psychokinesis Power is attacked using the skills Pyrokinesis, Cryokinesis or a direct telekinetic attack (squeezing internal organs, etc.), the defender can automatically subtract up to half his PK power (round down) from the attacker's effective Power level.

If someone is attacked by Pyrokinesis and he (or a friend) has Cryokinesis (or vice versa), it is a valid tactic to use the opposite skill to try and return the temperature to normal. This is *not* a contest of skill – it's simply one psi altering a temperature one way and the other trying to reverse it!

Energy Manipulation

Shifting Laser Frequencies

At -5 to skill, a Power 15+ psi with the Photokinesis skill can shift a laser weapon's frequency up or down one level (e.g., from laser to x-ray laser, or x-ray to gamma-ray) or down (e.g., from laser to microwave, turning it into a disruptor). He must be holding the laser to do this. This will draw heavily on the weapon's power cell, usually burning it out (each shot costs 5× normal power, and the malfunction number becomes 12), but can be very useful while the weapon lasts!

Creating Particle Beams

At -5 to Electrokinesis skill (to activate the power, not to roll to hit) and Power 15+, a psi with the Lightning skill can form his lightning bolt into a continuous charged particle beam rather than a normal electrical arc. This increases the damage to 1d per 2 levels of Power!

Telepathic Eavesdropping

If two telepaths are reading the same subject's mind, they *will* notice each other unless one is deliberately hiding. In that case, make a Quick Contest of Telereceive skills (the GM may make the rolls to keep secrecy). If one psi is *looking* for mental intruders, he is at +2 to skill to notice.

If one of the psis escapes notice, he will be able to listen in on any messages the other telepath sends using Telesend. He will also notice, but not be affected by, attempts to use Telecontrol, Sleep, Suggestion or Mindwipe.

If *both* telepaths are trying to hide, and neither is aware of the other, the GM should roll *two* contests – one to see if A notices B, and the other to see if B notices A.

There is a more sophisticated way to eavesdrop. A character with Psi Sense who has detected an active use of Telesend and made his Psi Sense roll by 7 or more may attempt to *intercept* the communication (as long as it is still ongoing). Count the range to the sender or receiver, whichever is nearest. Mind Shields have no effect, and there is no chance of either person realizing the message is being intercepted (unless they have Psi Sense as well . . .).

Make a normal roll against Telereceive skill, but the "subject" is the message itself. A success by 0-2 means that a rough idea of the message's content is provided, together with any emotional associations: the psi might discover it was "an urgent warning" or "a calm discussion of a tactical plan." A success by 3 or more enables the psi to perceive the entire content of the message.

In order to continue eavesdropping, make a maintenance roll every minute.

Telepathic Gestalts

In a *gestalt,* two or more psis combine their minds into a single more powerful whole to focus their power.

One member of the gestalt must be chosen as its *coordinator*, responsible for holding the massed minds together. Each individual must enter into *full communion* (p. 36) with the coordinator. This requires that they make telepathic contact with the coordinator using Telesend and Telereceive, and the coordinator must do the same with them. Alternatively, a psi-tech *Gestalt Web* (p. 61) may be used to achieve full communion, enabling non-telepaths to merge into the gestalt.

A gestalt can only initiate a single psionic feat at once, as directed by the coordinator. If the gestalt is using an Active skill, all its members must concentrate on it. Compute range from the coordinator (with good enough telepaths, it is possible for a gestalt to be widely dispersed). The skill of a gestalt is that of the most skilled member. But since the minds are linked, any fatigue loss and the effects of critical failures (including any special effects when using Psi Amplifiers) are jointly suffered by all participants in the gestalt.

The strength of the gestalt's Power in any particular ability is equal to that of the most powerful member in the group, plus a bonus based on a fraction of the *total* power (in that ability) of all other members. Use the table below to determine the actual bonus:

Total Power	*Power Bonus*	*Total Power*	*Power Bonus*
1-3	+1	36-48	+6
4-8	+2	49-63	+7
9-15	+3	64-80	+8
16-24	+4	81-99	+9
25-35	+5	100-120	+10

Further increases follow the same progression: the bonus is equal to the square root of the total added Power, rounded down.



A Gestalt in Action

Caught in an earthquake, Cassie Izumi (see p. 126) wants to use Psychokinesis to lift a one-ton slab of concrete that has pinned her friend Michael to the ground. But she has only a Psychokinetic (PK) power of 8 – enough to lift a mere 2 pounds. Fortunately, she is a far better telepath. Sending out her mind, she contacts four powerful psis who have enough telepathic power to reach her and form a gestalt. Three of the telepaths prove to be psychokinetics: Sean (PK Power 12), Tau Lin (PK Power 6), and Jeremiah (PK Power 15). Unfortunately, the fourth, Christine, has no psychokinetic ability, so she cannot help.

Telekinesis requires line of sight and Cassie is the one on the scene, so she must coordinate. The others join their minds into full communion with Cassie and she with them. To do so Jean, Jeremiah, and Sean must make a Telesend and Telereceive roll, and Cassie must make three each. Seven seconds later (with two failed rolls requiring fatigue loss for repeated attempts) the group is in full telepathic communion – a gestalt. But can they lift the slab?

The best PK power in the group is Jeremiah's 15. The remaining PK power totals 26, which gives a +5 bonus to Jeremiah's Power. With an effective Power of 20 they can now lift 1,500 pounds. This would not normally be enough, so Cassie decides to use *extra effort* (p. 8), expending 6 fatigue to boost Power by 2 (and taking a -4 on the skill roll), enough to lift 2,000 pounds. But because they are in the gestalt, Sean, Jeremiah, and Tau also lose the fatigue.

The most skilled telekinetic in the group is Tau Lin, with Telekinesis-17. Rolling against her skill (at -4 for Extra Effort) Cassie rolls a 9 and succeeds: the slab rises into the air, and Michael is free!

Extending Shields

With Power 4+, Mind Shield, PK Shield and Energy Shield can be extended to protect others as well as the user.

By dropping the *effective* power level of the shield by 3, its radius can be extended to cover everyone in the user's hex. Each additional reduction of Power by 3 doubles the radius.

The user of a shield can decide at the start of his turn if he will expand or contract the area covered by his shield. This does not take an action.

If several shields of the same type overlap, use the highest value, plus 20% (round down) of the strength or DR of weaker shields.

Telepathic Assistance

If a telepath is controlling a subject with Telecontrol, reading his thoughts with Telereceive, or influencing him via Illusion, another telepath can attempt to stop it, as long as he knows the skill that is being used on the subject.

This requires entering the subject's mind via Telereceive; the intervening psi must be aware of the intruder. This will be automatic if the subject is affected by Telecontrol or Illusion; for Telereceive, see *Three-Way Interaction* (p. 36).

Evicting a hostile psi requires a Quick Contest of Skill between the two telepaths. The friendly psi must concentrate for a turn, then roll against the same skill as the intruder, e.g., Illusion vs. Illusion. Both psis add their Telepathy Power to their skill. If the friendly psi wins, the intruder is forced out of the subject's mind. If he loses, he can try again, but at normal penalty for repeated attempts. Win or lose, the intruder will be aware of the friendly psi's attempt!



Power Tap

Although it is not a true group-mind, a Power Tap is a type of forced gestalt. It requires high Telereceive and Telecontrol skill, but enables the user to incapacitate another psi and then steal Power from his brain.

To use a Power Tap, the telepath must have already entered the subject's mind via Telereceive, and have succeeded by 7 or more, reaching into the subconscious.

A Power Tap requires a Quick Contest between the user's Telecontrol and the subject's Will+5 (simply roll vs. Telecontrol if the subject is willing). This counts as a normal active use of psi (requiring a turn of concentration, etc.). Mind Shield has no effect since the telepath is already past the subject's defense. If the user wins, the Power Tap has succeeded; see below. Failure allows the psi to try again the following turn, but with the usual penalties for repeated attempts. It also automatically alerts the subject, who may try to force the intruding telepath out of his mind (see *Get Out of My Mind,* p. 22), shoot him, etc.

If the attempt succeeds, the subject instantly falls into a trance, and cannot do anything until the Telepath releases him. For as long as he maintains the Power Tap (see below), the telepath can then draw upon any psi Powers that *both* he and the target possess, using them to increase his own effective Power level. Look up the subject's Power level on the *Gestalt Table* (p. 37) and use it to determine the exact Power Bonus added.

Example: Cassie has a PK Power of 8, a Telepathy Power of 16 and an ESP power of 5. She uses Power Tap on Sean, who has a PK Power of 12, a Telepathy Power of 7, and a Healing Power of 2. Consulting the *Gestalt Table* on p. 37, we find that Cassie can draw on Sean's Telepathy Power to gain a Power Bonus of +2 to her Telepathy, raising it to 18, and upon his PK Power to gain a Power Bonus of +3, raising her Psychokinesis to 11. She cannot raise her ESP since Sean does not have this Power, nor can she draw upon his Healing, since that's a Power *she* lacks.

Any fatigue costs or effects of critical failure are suffered by both characters.

The Power Tap may be maintained for one minute, during which the user may freely engage in other activities or use other psi abilities (with the penalty for multiple feats) while the subject remains unconscious. Each minute the telepath must win another Quick Contest of Telecontrol skill vs. Will+5 if the subject was unwilling, or make another Telecontrol roll if willing, to maintain it.

Aiming Mental Blows

The *mental blow* skill can be aimed, just like a physical attack. There is no penalty "to hit" but damage is usually less than would have been inflicted by normal fatigue loss. The targets include:

The Ego: Mental Blows aimed at the Ego are resolved at normal skill chance, but do no physical damage. Instead, a mental blow to the Ego results in the target losing his sense of self. It can only be used on conscious opponents. Roll damage normally, but do not apply it to fatigue. For every 2 full points of damage rolled, the subject's Will is reduced by 1. If this ever reduces his Will to 3 or less, the target effectively becomes an automaton or zombie, with no volition of his own, though he will listlessly (at -2 to DX and IQ) obey anyone's orders. If Will is reduced to 0, the target loses any will to live, and passes into a coma; unless he is on life-support, a HT roll is required each day to stay alive.

The Central Nervous System: A mental blow can be aimed at the motor centers of the target's brain in an attempt to disrupt his nervous system. Roll damage normally, but do not apply it to fatigue. Instead, for every 2 full points of damage rolled, reduce the subject's DX by 1.

The Memory: A mental blow can be aimed to disrupt or destroy short-term memories in a manner similar to electroshock therapy. This is not as precise as

Mindwipe! It only works on conscious opponents. If the mental blow succeeds, roll damage normally, but only apply half of it (round up) to fatigue. The other half is the number of *minutes* of short term memory lost prior to the mental blow. Example: damage rolled from a mental blow is 5 points. The character loses 3 fatigue and the last 2 minutes of his memory.

A Mind Shield: A mental blow can be targeted at a Mind Shield rather than its user. The target's Mind Shield Power protects the shield with only *half* its present value (after reductions from previous damage to it or Brute Force, p. 22). If the attack succeeds, damage subtracts from the effective strength of the Mind Shield rather than the subject's fatigue. If an attack does enough damage to a shield to reduce it to Power 0, any excess damage is applied to the owner's fatigue. An electronic Mind Shield can be affected as well as a physical Mind Shield. Reducing it to 0 Strength shorts the device out – it will require an hour, proper tools, and a successful Electronics (Psychotronics) skill roll to repair.

A Mental Blow aimed at a Mind Shield will never stun the target; other aimed Mental Blows still Mentally Stun the subject if they succeed, and the subject fails his HT roll.

Lost points of DX, or levels of Strong Will or Mind Shield, are regained at a rate of 1 per 10 minutes. Added levels of Weak Will are lost at the same rate. However, if Will is reduced to *zero,* only outside aid can restore any will at all; see *Healing Attributes,* p. 44. Until outside help has restored all the victim's will, none will "heal" by itself.

Offensive Mind Shields

A normal Mind Shield functions as a barrier against intruding psis. More exotic defenses are possible with the proper skill, defenses that do more than just keep intruders out . . .

Mind Trap

A Mind Trap can be set by anyone with both Mind Shield and Mindwipe at skill-14 or better. It takes a successful roll against the lowest of Mind Shield-3 or Mindwipe-3. The time required, in minutes, is 60 minus *twice* the lower of your Mind Shield and Mindwipe skills. Attempting to set a Mind Trap always costs 2 fatigue. Keep track of how much the skill roll was made by.

Once set, anyone (friend or foe) who successfully enters the shielded mind with Psychic Vampirism or Telereceive will trigger the trap.

If the PV or Telereceive roll succeeded by an amount *greater* than the amount the Mind Trap roll succeeded by, the intruder noticed the trap and can try to disarm it before it springs on him.

Disarming the trap requires an immediate successful roll against Mindwipe skill, Telereceive-5 or Telecontrol-5, whichever is greater. Success by an amount greater than the creator's roll (when setting the trap) disarms it.

If the intruder did not notice the trap, or tried to defuse it and failed, it is sprung. The intruder must roll vs. his Will-5, plus his own Telepathy Power, and minus the Telepathy Power and any Strong Will bonus of the trap's creator. If the intruder wins, he has broken free. If he fails, his mind is trapped in a *mental loop* within the defender's mind.

A person trapped in a mental loop is effectively incapacitated. His body slumps down, unconscious. He may try to break free each turn (roll as above) but each time a roll is failed, he loses 2 points of Will as his ego disintegrates under the pressure of an alien consciousness. If his Will is ever reduced to 0 or less, the intruder falls into a coma; see *Aiming Mental Blows,* above, for the results.

If he breaks free before then, his Will recovers at 1 point per ten minutes. (Treat lost Will not as loss of IQ, which remains the same, but as losing levels of Strong Will or gaining levels of the Weak Will disadvantage).

Telepathic Area Attacks

Some telepathic abilities can be used against more than one target at a time. Any telepath with power 10+ can use Mental Blow or Mental Stab skills as an area-effect blast, at a penalty of -5 to skill. The area affected is based on a "global" use of telepathy, on an area anywhere within normal telepathy range. Example: a telepath with Power 12 could attack an area with a 4-yard radius, anywhere within 400 yards.

With the appropriate enhancements, the Sleep and Illusion skills can also be used on groups.

If people with *different* levels of Mind Shield or Psionic Resistance are caught in an area-effect telepathic attack, do not subtract Psionic Resistance or Mind Shield from the user's skill as normal. Instead, simply note how much the attacker's Mental Blow roll succeeded by. If the Power of a specific defender's Mind Shield or the level of Psionic Resistance exceeds that amount, then the attack failed to affect him.

Affecting Groups: An Optional Rule

When dealing with any wide-area telepathic attack, it can be very tedious for the GM to make a resistance roll for each person in the area affected. If he desires, the GM can use the *Probability of Success* table on p. B45 to determine, on the average, how many people in the area are affected by a Power.

The GM starts by letting the PC roll versus his skill. If the roll succeeds, the GM subtracts the amount by which the roll was made from the *average* attribute (usually 10; modified by Psi Shields, etc.) of the crowd. He then finds this number on the table. The percentage indicates what portion of the crowd is likely to resist the PC's attack.

Example 1: Darren uses his Illusion-13 skill to affect a 10-hex group (10 people). He rolls an 11, beating his skill by 2. The GM assumes that this is a completely average crowd (IQ 10), and looks up 8 (10-2) on the table. This indicates that 25.9% are likely to resist. This rounds up to 3 people.

Example 2: Darren beats his skill by 5, but the subjects are all protected by psi shields that add 2 to their resistance, giving them a resistance roll of 12 (IQ 10 + 2 from the shield). The GM would look up 7 (12-5) on the table, indicating that 16.2% were affected. Two people are unaffected.

Telepathic Combat

Using these advanced rules, mental combat can be as complex as the players like. Here's an example:

Cassie is hunting the rogue telepath Astaroth, and finally corners him in his apartment lair. Both have enough Telepathy Power that they are in range, and they begin a mental duel.

Astaroth has ST 11 and IQ 15 with one level of Strong Will. He has Telepathy Power 13, and his skills include Mental Blow 18, Mind Shield 15, Telecontrol 15, Telereceive 21, and Telesend 15, among others.

Cassie has ST 9 and IQ 14, with +2 Strong Will. She has Telepathy Power 16, with the skills Mind Shield 15, Mental Blow 21, Telesend 14, Telereceive 17 and Telecontrol 15.

Turn #1: Cassie has a higher Move, so she acts first. She decides to deliver a Mental Blow, and concentrates on it. On his turn, Astaroth retaliates with Telereceive, hoping to penetrate Cassie's shields and then use his Sleep skill. He also takes a turn to concentrate.

Turn #2: At the beginning of her turn, Cassie's attack is resolved. A Mental Blow costs 1 fatigue automatically. She has Mental Blow-21, which is at -13 for Astaroth's Mind Shield's Power 13, and at +1 because she knows Astaroth slightly (she has studied him). Cassie needs a 9 or less. She rolls an 8, succeeding by 1. Since Cassie has Power 16, Astaroth takes 1d+1 damage. Cassie rolls a 2 which becomes a 3, but since this attack is aimed at the Ego, its effect is halved (rounding down). Astaroth loses 1 Will, which erases his Strong Will bonus. Astaroth must now make a HT roll to avoid being mentally stunned and losing his concentration on his Telereceive. He has HT 12, and makes it, rolling a 10, so he continues concentrating.

Even as she attacks, Cassie is already concentrating on her next action. She decides to use Telereceive, a different skill. But first she must ward off Astaroth!

Astaroth's own attempt at Telereceive is now resolved. He has skill 21, down to 20 now that his IQ has dropped from Cassie's attack. He uses the *brute force* maneuver (see *Mind Shield,* p. 22): he subtracts one-half his own Telepathy Power (rounded down) from Cassie's shield, reducing its effective Power from 16 to 10 at the cost of an additional 1 fatigue. His effective Telereceive-20 is at -10 (her Mind Shield) and -2 (Strong Will bonus subtracts from Telereceive) for an 8 or less. He rolls a 10, failing. He loses 1 fatigue, dropping to ST 10. Not wishing to take the -2 for "repeated attempts" at Telereceive vs. a Mind Shield, he decides to change tactics. He begins concentrating on Mental Blow.

Continued on next page . . .

Reflective Shield

The decision to defend with a Reflective Shield must be made *after* a telepathic intrusion is announced but *before dice are rolled for its success.* A Reflective Shield has only *half* (round down) normal Power (halved after all other modifiers). However, if any attempt to penetrate it with Mental Blow, Mental Stab or Telereceive fails, the intruding psi's power is reflected back upon him! Since Sleep, Telecontrol and Mindwipe only function *after* a shield is penetrated, they cannot be reflected.

A reflected Mental Blow or Stab directly affects the attacker – roll the normal damage based on the attacker's power, and apply it to him. In the case of Telereceive, the shielding character penetrates the intruder's mind. Use the normal Telereceive rules to determine the level of thought he gets, but based instead on *how badly* the intruder failed his skill roll. The defender can remain in the intruder's mind for the next minute, and can attempt to use Telecontrol, Sleep or Mindwipe if he has these skills.

A Reflective Shield is a useful defensive tactic, but since the mind shield only has half the power of a normal mind shield, it is dangerous against a highly skilled opponent.



Deathblock

A psi who fears telepathic probing more than death may set a *deathblock* – a desperation measure in which he programs his mind to self-destruct rather than submit to another's will.

Setting a deathblock requires a turn of concentration, and successful active use of the Mind Shield skill. Once established, a deathblock can be maintained indefinitely.

Rather than bend under pressure, a mind protected by a deathblock will break. If a hostile Mindswitch, Mindwipe, Suggestion or Telereceive roll *succeeds* against a subject who has set a deathblock, that subject must make an immediate Will roll.

If he succeeds, he can opt to have his mind "go nova" and collapse under the strain of the attack, every neuron in his brain instantly overloading. The subject dies; his mind cannot be read by Telereceive, and any attempt at Mindswitch, Mindwipe or Suggestion obviously fails.

If he fails, he didn't have the nerve to go through with the Deathblock, and deactivated it at the last second. The Deathblock is no longer "set" and the intruder's psi skill has its normal effect.

Deathscream

Some psis possess the ability to let out a powerful "dying scream" that can stun *anyone* in range when they die.

Any being who has Telesend can deathscream when killed, unless he is killed instantly and by total surprise (GM's decision). One may *try* not to deathscream; make a Will roll to avoid it.

In addition, any telepath killed while Mindlinked will deathscream through the link, unless the Will roll is made. Use the Power of the Mindlink (plus any levels of Telepathy).

A deathscream is treated exactly as a Shout (see *Telesend,* p. 26) except it is much more powerful: subtract the dying psi's Telepathy Power from the HT save, and for every point the HT roll is failed by, the user is automatically mentally stunned for 1d+1 turns. Only after this period is over can a roll against IQ be made to recover.

Normally a deathscream can only stun. But for someone who is actually in mental contact via Telereceive with a psi who delivers a deathscream, the effect is much more severe. The psi's mind shield does not protect, and he takes one point of damage to HT for every point he failed his HT roll by.

Mindwipe Techniques

Mindwipe is a highly versatile skill, and can be used to perform more subtle forms of mental surgery then simply erasing memory. It is also possible to detect and fix the damage from another's mindwipe.

Temporary Mindwipe

A mindwipe (either an erasure of information or an implanting of false memories) can be made *temporary.* In this case, the real memories are not erased, only hidden in the subject's subconscious. The user must decide on a trigger to unlock the hidden memories (or erase implanted ones). This may be an event (e.g., meeting someone, or going somewhere) or simply the passage of a predetermined period of time. Attempting a temporary Mindwipe is resolved like a normal Mindwipe attempt, but at an additional -3. On a critical failure, the trigger was improperly set, and will not activate – the mindwipe is permanent!

Temporary mindwipe is useful for withholding secrets from normal or telepathic interrogators. A telepath can even use it on himself – this is a useful tactic when infiltrating hostile groups who have access to Telepathy.

Example: Cassie's friend Jeremiah is now a prisoner of the Overmind Institute. She wants to infiltrate them and rescue him, posing as a new recruit, but knows they will probe her mind for hostile intent. To prevent this from working, she uses Mindwipe to edit her memories so that even she herself will believe she sympathizes with their goals. She sets a trigger to restore her memories as soon as she finds Jeremiah. Unfortunately, Cassie rolls a critical failure – she fools the telepathic examination and later finds out where Jeremiah is held, but because the trigger fails to activate, she is still a willing member of the Institute! Unless someone undoes the tampering using Mindwipe skill, Cassie will never regain her true memories . . .

Detecting Mindwipe

Total memory deletion is obvious. A psi can detect lesser tampering when he is in mental contact with the victim. Roll vs. Mindwipe, or Telereceive-5 if the PC doesn't have Mindwipe. Only one such "passive roll" is allowed, made at the first contact with the person after the tampering takes place. This roll is at -2 to notice a compulsion, at -4 to notice a single memory has been changed, and at a further -1 for every week since the tampering took place, up to six weeks.

A PC deliberately looking for mental tampering who fails the passive roll to notice it must make a mental contact using Telereceive, and then make the above skill roll. This effort takes an hour, and any further check within a day is a "repeated attempt" for fatigue purposes.

Undoing Mindwipe

Any memory alteration or compulsion except a deliberate, permanent mindwipe can be undone. This requires as many *weeks* as the original process

Telepathic Combat (Continued)

Turn #3: Cassie's player rolls for success with her own Telereceive attempt. This time she also uses brute force, so she also subtracts half her Power from Astaroth's Mind Shield, reducing its effective value from 13 to 5. She has Telereceive 17, -5 (his Mind Shield), +1 for knowing him, for a 13 or less; Astaroth's Strong Will does not subtract, since that was reduced by the Mental Blow. Cassie rolls an 12, barely succeeding. She is inside Astaroth's shields! Since she succeeded by 1, she automatically picks up his surface thoughts and emotions (he's angry!), and more importantly, she can try to use "indirect" attack skills. She begins concentrating on Telecontrol.

It's now Astaroth's turn, so he resolves his Mental Blow, deciding to "tear down" Cassie's Mind Shield (see *Aiming Mental Blows,* p. 38, for how this is done). He would normally be -16 for Cassie's Mind Shield, but he is using brute force again, which reduces the Shield's effective Power to 11 (at cost of another fatigue). Furthermore, against an attack on its own structure, a Shield only protects with half its (modified) Power, so Astaroth is only at -5. With his base Mental Blow 18, he will succeed on an 13 or less. He rolls an 11, and does so, but his damage (1d for Power 13) will only affects Cassie's Mind Shield, not her. He rolls a 4, and Cassie's Shield strength drops from 16 to 12, but Cassie herself is still unhurt, and she is still "inside" his mind.

Astaroth doesn't like this, so he attempts to close her out (see *Get Out of My Mind,* p. 22). He attempts a Quick Contest of his Telepathy Power (13) and Shield skill (15) vs. her Power (16) and Telereceive skill (17). He rolls a 7, succeeding by 21, but she rolls an 11 and succeeds by 22. She's still in his mind.

Turn #4: Cassie tries her Telecontrol roll. Telecontrol is usable only from within a Mind Shield, so the shield doesn't reduce its chance, but a Quick Contest vs. Will is required. Cassie has Telecontrol 15, +1 for knowing Astaroth, giving her a 16 or less chance. She rolls a 10 and succeeds by 6. Astaroth gets a Will roll to resist, but rolls a 13, succeeding by only 2 (remember that his Strong Will was destroyed by Cassie's earlier attack). He fails to resist, and is now her puppet!

She forces him to walk over to her, take a hypodermic needle out of her pocket, and inject himself with a dose of sedative. Astaroth collapses at her feet. Cassie has won!

took *hours*. The psi trying to reconstruct the memories must make his own Mindwipe skill daily; failed rolls mean the day doesn't count, and critical failure means the process must start over. A critical success counts as a full week of success. A psi always rolls at +4 when undoing his own work.

Telereceive in Battle

One of the most potent ways a telepath can use his powers in a physical battle is to use Telereceive to read an opponent's thoughts during the fight. This lets the telepath learn what the subject is thinking of doing before it is actually done! This is primarily a defensive ability. Remember that if the telepath is injured, he must make a Will roll to maintain his ability.

To read a foe's combat intentions, the telereceive attempt must have succeeded by at least 3 points.

The psi gains +2 to active defenses against that subject (he knows *exactly* when to parry, dodge, etc.) and the subject has a penalty of -1 on his active defenses, since the telepath can predict how his opponent will react.

If you guess your mind is being read, you can try to fight without planning (and thus mentally telegraphing) your actions. This reduces skill level by 3, since you must rely totally on reflexes rather than strategy, and you may not Feint. (This also applies if you *think* your mind is being read, and stop planning, but are wrong!) If you haves Combat Reflexes, only reduce skill by 2, as you are better able to act based on reflex rather than planning.

Telepathic Questioning

A telepath will often want to question a subject while using Telereceive. If the questioner's Telereceive roll succeeded by 8 or less, he must actually question the subject verbally (or ask a verbal question via Telesend). Use normal Interrogation skill and techniques, but he gets a bonus to skill equal to the amount his Telereceive roll succeeded since he can read surface thoughts. Resolve the interrogation normally, but Mindblock may be substituted for Will when making a Contest of Interrogation vs. Will.

If he succeeded by 9 or more (penetrating into memory), he does not need to use Interrogation. He can just look into the subject's mind and watch the memories unfold like a motion picture, with trivialities skimmed over and major events highlighted. Attempts to locate specific (especially trivial) memories will require additional concentration – see pp. 25-26.

Suggestion can be used to coerce people into revealing information, but Telecontrol can't; the subject is effectively mindless while under control.

Teleportation Techniques

Most psis know enough not to teleport into solid objects. But what if you teleport into water? Even a person who appears out of "thin air" is not materializing in totally empty space – something has to happen to the atmosphere! There are two simple ways of handling this, each with its own ramifications about how teleportation will work in the campaign.

Displacement

The first possibility is that psi teleporters can somehow displace the air or liquid around them as they appear. This means that any teleporter who materializes normally does so in a blast of displaced air, blowing papers off desks and hats off peoples' heads. And any teleporter who vanishes creates a loud pop as air rushes into the vacuum he has left. This has obvious implications if a party is trying to use stealth! For ***GURPS,*** this is not the default, but it's available as a skill limitation.

Castling

The default system for teleporting is that the air (or liquid) at the destination point vanishes rather than being displaced. Since teleports don't create massive explosions when they appear, it must have gone somewhere rather than having been destroyed. What normally happens is that it "trades places" with the teleporter. So if a psi teleported from his house to the bottom of his swimming pool, a man-sized volume of water suddenly fills his living room! This is called "castling" since, like the chess move, the psi is trading places with another piece of reality.

Castling can *not* be used as an assassination method. If you try to teleport into the space occupied by a living being, you will not cut it in two or come out inside it! This appears to have something to do with the energy field produced by a living being. As a rule, if you would "displace" more than half of a living being, it will be castled to your original position. Otherwise, you will arrive to the side of your expected location, and you must make a Body Sense roll, at -2, to keep your feet.

Blind Jumps

A teleport normally can't go someplace he hasn't been to or seen. But a telepath who can visualize the *exact* distance and direction he wants to appear at can use his ability "blindly." The danger is that he will miscalculate even if the teleportation roll succeeds, appearing in the wrong place or inside something solid.

The player must tell the GM exactly how many yards and in what direction the character will try to teleport. The skill roll is at -6, or -3 if the jumper has Absolute Direction. If the roll is failed, the jump will almost certainly result in some sort of unpleasantry.

Autoteleport (p. 27) allows travel to destinations seen on live TV, at a penalty. But what if the scene is *not* live, and the viewer doesn't realize this and tries to teleport? Or if he wishes to teleport to a destination shown in a photograph, for instance?

This depends on the situation. If the teleporter is out of range, he obviously won't go anywhere. If the destination is within range, the GM can decide that

he still goes nowhere – the roll automatically fails. But if the destination hasn't changed much (perhaps different people are there, but the environment is the same) the jumper might actually arrive. Or he might arrive somewhere else within range that resembles what he saw. This is particularly likely if the destination is a movie set that has since been dismantled.

What if the location is wholly fictional (a child teleporting into an animated cartoon, for instance, or trying to teleport to the area depicted in a painting of a fantasy landscape)? It's easiest to assume the teleporter doesn't go anywhere. Or perhaps he goes somewhere *similar:* if he tried to teleport into a Mickey Mouse cartoon, he ends up in Disneyland. But if someone truly *believes* what he is watching is real – who knows? Maybe the teleporter can slip into another dimension . . . This subject is covered in further detail in ***GURPS Time Travel.***

Tactical Teleportation

Over 90% of any special operations mission is concerned with reaching the objective and then getting away afterwards. Autoteleport allows the ultimate commando raid: blink in, perform the mission, and blink out. Since few teleports have the Power to blink miles behind enemy lines without special augmentation, this means that most teleporting commandos make several shorter "hops" to reach their destination. Unless the mission has been very carefully planned, all these hops will be to unfamiliar places, each in line-of-sight of the last. Rarely will these be unobserved – but rarely will they be reported in time to do any good.

Other Psionic Techniques

Psychic Lobotomy

Using the Neutralize skill (p. 10), an antipsi can suppress another person's psi powers – perhaps forever. This takes one hour per Power to be eliminated, during which the user must touch the subject. The subject need not be conscious. If awake, he will be aware of the process.

To eliminate a Power, the antipsi's Power level must be equal to or greater than that of the target Power. Make a Quick Contest between the Neutralize skill of the antipsi and the subject's HT or Will, whichever is greater; a Mind Shield *will* subtract from the attacker's Power. If successful, the target Power may be reduced by as many levels as the antipsi desires, or totally eliminated. Only one *failure* per week is allowed, but a successful suppression of one Power could be followed immediately by an attack on another.

Lost Power may recover on its own accord; roll vs. Will-8 every week to regain a Power level. On a success, the Power begins to return at the rate of 1 level per week, with no further rolls needed. On a critical failure, the power will never return without outside help. The GM may allow catalyst drugs, neuro-psi devices or other gadgetry to restore missing Power, or send the party on a quest for the one telepathic healer with the skill to do the job . . .

Dowsing

Dowsing is a means of psychically locating something using a focus, usually a forked rod or a pendulum. As the user concentrates, he moves it unconsciously to point unerringly in the direction of whatever is being sought. Dowsing is often used to find water or hidden treasure (such as coins). But many dowsers seem to be able to mentally program themselves to find almost *anything*.

An esper may take dowsing as an optional specialization of the Seekersense skill. This gives the specialized psi a +4 to skill when using a pendulum or dowsing rod, but -2 for other applications of Seekersense. Dowsing enables

Teleporting Into Solid Objects

There are three simple ways to treat this. The first is to say that some kind of mental "circuit breaker" exists: anything that deliberately (or accidentally) ends up teleporting into a solid object instead appears somewhere else (probably in the nearest open space within range) or doesn't teleport at all. This is what happens when someone tries to teleport into a *living* thing.

However, psi stories are full of people who met nasty ends while teleporting, and another possibility is that the teleporter does indeed appear inside the solid object. In general, this means he ends up messily dead, possibly with an explosion. Though (for instance) if someone teleports in such a way that only his foot or arm is within an object, he might survive – assess 6d of damage, ignoring armor, in addition to crippling the limb. Vulnerability to this sort of danger is listed as a Teleport limitation.

A third way works if the "castling" option (p. 42) is used. If the psi teleports into something, that something appears wherever the psi vanished from. So if a psi teleported underground into solid rock, he would be alive but entombed, and a man-sized rock statue would appear at his point of origin.



Combat Exoteleport

Psi warriors may wish to use Exoteleport to materialize a small solid object inside someone else, killing him. Even worse, they might like to cause their foes to vanish one bloody chunk at a time. This would be a good skill enhancement for a villain in a horror campaign (charge an extra 100% for the power, and assess normal hit location penalties to the skill roll), but is not allowed under the default rules of teleportation.

A more effective method of attacking with Exoteleport is to use it to deliver grenades or bombs. With a high enough Power, a teleport – or several teleports linked in gestalt – could even deliver a small nuclear weapon, especially if it were encased in an *actuality shield* (see p. 69).

Using Psi With Normal Skills

In general, the GM should let a successful psi roll give a *bonus* on an appropriate skill roll. What is "appropriate" is left up to the player's ingenuity; as always, the GM has the final word.

A psi roll must first be attempted. If it succeeds, the real task is made easier, although in some cases the user must maintain his psi ability for the duration of the task to get any bonus. A failure does not affect the task, but a critical failure gives a penalty equal to the bonus that would have been gained. Some examples:

A successful Telekinesis skill roll gives a +4 bonus to Lockpicking skill with any tumbler or combination-type lock. A successful Clairvoyance roll also gives a +4 to lockpicking skill – this time, to *see* the tumblers. If the lockpicker made both rolls, he would get both bonuses. A psi thief is formidable . . .

So is a psionic medic. Clairvoyance alone could give a +2 bonus to Diagnosis of physical injuries or to Surgery skill; used *with* TK, it could give a +4 to Surgery, and allow some operations without opening up the body.

Moving away from Clairvoyance and TK, other skills are obviously handy. Reading a foe's mind at the right time would be good for a +2 or better on a Strategy roll – the trickier the foe's plans, the better the bonus. Similarly, Telereceive can give a +2 bonus on any Influence skill roll, since the psi knows what to say or do, and when. Emotion Sense would only give a +1 bonus, but as it's a passive skill, it can be used constantly!

Levitation (with the Instantaneous enhancement!) could give a +2 on any Acrobatics or Dancing roll (if you want to conceal your psi ability) or +6 (if you don't care who knows you're a psi).

Psychometry can give a +4 bonus to Tracking skill, but is less likely to help with Shadowing – in a crowded city, there will be too many psychic impressions to get a clear "fix."

There are hundreds of other applications. Psi skills can also substitute for normal skills. A fugitive can use Illusion to hide himself when Camouflage isn't good enough. With enough Power to move a handgun, TK – or Exoteleport! – could be used to perfect the ultimate fast draw!



additional precision in using this ability. Rather than feel a "tug" on his own body, the psi's pointer or pendulum moves, pointing exactly at the object the user is looking for. Moreover, dowsing – especially with a pendulum – can also be used over a map. It would be possible to use a series of finer and finer scaled maps to gradually home in on something.

Cyberpsi and the Net

In a game using ***GURPS Cyberpunk,*** an Electrokinetic using Cyberpsi (p. 11) can enter the net without a computer, by connecting his mind to the cyberdeck at a distance.

Once the hacker has made contact with a cyberdeck, his Cyberpsi bonus and default to Computer Operations and Computer Programming skill also apply to Computer Hacking and Cyberdeck Operation skill, thus potentially reducing the length of his Command Phases (***GURPS Cyberpunk,*** p. 75). The psi can command the deck he is linked with to run any of its standard programs.

Because he is not physically attached to the deck, however, he is partially immune to Flatline (p. CY90). Normal attempts to fry his brain electrically won't work, and vs. insidious systems (e.g., hypnotic programs) he gets an automatic roll against his Cyberpsi skill to pull out in time.

Healing Attributes

The Healing skill can restore attribute points or Will lost due to Psychic Vampirism, Mind Trap or aimed Mental Blows. Treat them like any other form of damage, but with 2 levels of Healing Power required to restore a point instead of one.



CHAPTER THREE

PSYCHIC PHENOMENA

Many mysterious occurrences, from ghosts to precognitive dreams, can be explained through psi. This chapter deals with a variety of psychic phenomena in game terms. Like the previous chapter, these rules are *optional,* and are best suited for campaigns that focus on psionic or horror adventures.

The House in the Oaks

Dr. Christine Montoya moved into the attic of the big house, lugging the two heavy suitcases up the stairs. Dr. Basil Kooperman was already in the room, looking out the window into the French estate's grounds. The sun was setting over the oak trees around the house. Just like him to be admiring the sunset, she thought, while I do the work.



She put the cases down and stepped over to him, glancing briefly at the sleeping boy on the bed.

"Dr. Kooperman. Hadn't we better begin psychometric scanning?"

He didn't seem to hear her. She paused. "Dr. Kooperman?"

He beckoned her over absently, his hands fluttering. "Look here, Doctor, look here. These oaks." His voice was full of excitement. She sighed, but went to see what it was this time. "Do you see? They form a spiral pattern around the house!"

She set up the equipment, bending over the boy and giving him an injection of Trance, a drug that would make him more susceptible to what she was about to do. She turned to face the doctor. "Trees. So what?"

"Don't you see? The trees may form a group mind. Those oaks are very old, Dr. Montoya. The boy might be tapping their power. They could be the true source of this particular poltergeist manifestation's power – and of the brooding presence you sensed in young Andre's strange dreams."

Christine did not bother to keep the scorn out of her voice. "That's ridiculous – everyone knows RSPK manifestations usually result from subconscious trauma."

"Perhaps, doctor, perhaps not. The possibilities of vegetative gestalt are very real. The druids may have tapped this power. May I remind you of my experiences at the New Forest, in England, and its connection with the stone circle in Normandy? That monograph was to be published in ***Psychic Review,*** *but those short-sighted fools killed it." He paused, and turned to face her. "In any case," he concluded, "we won't know until we find out. The boy's in REM state now. Time to go in."*

Christine sniffed. Kooperman was a genius at designing lab equipment, but he was also a flake. Still, he was ***her*** *flake. She smiled affectionately, then bent over the sleeping child as a book fell off from the shelves near the boy's bed. Its pages began to turn of its own accord.*

The poltergeist was awake – Andre must be having the nightmare again. There wouldn't be much time before it became dangerous, especially once it realized what they were here to do. Kooperman was right. It had to be now. Gritting her teeth, she touched the boy's head with her fingers and concentrated on summoning up her telepathy, embarking on her voyage into his mind.

A Timeline of Early Parapsychology

1882: Society for Psychical Research founded in England for scientific study of psychic abilities, including Telepathy and Clairvoyance, and survival after death. The term "telepathy" is invented.

1885: American Society for Psychical Research established in Boston.

1927: J.B. Rhine joins the psychic research team of William McDougal at Duke University, and the modern study of parapsychology is born. The terms psi, parapsychology, and ESP are coined. K.E. Zener, a colleague of Rhine's, develops the Zener cards – the standard deck of ESP testing cards which shows stars, waves, circles, crosses, and squares.

1929: Hans Berger invents electroencephalography, a method of detecting and measuring brain waves.

1935: *Journal of Parapsychology* founded.

1940: Rhine and his colleagues publish their results, and the term ESP becomes known throughout the world.

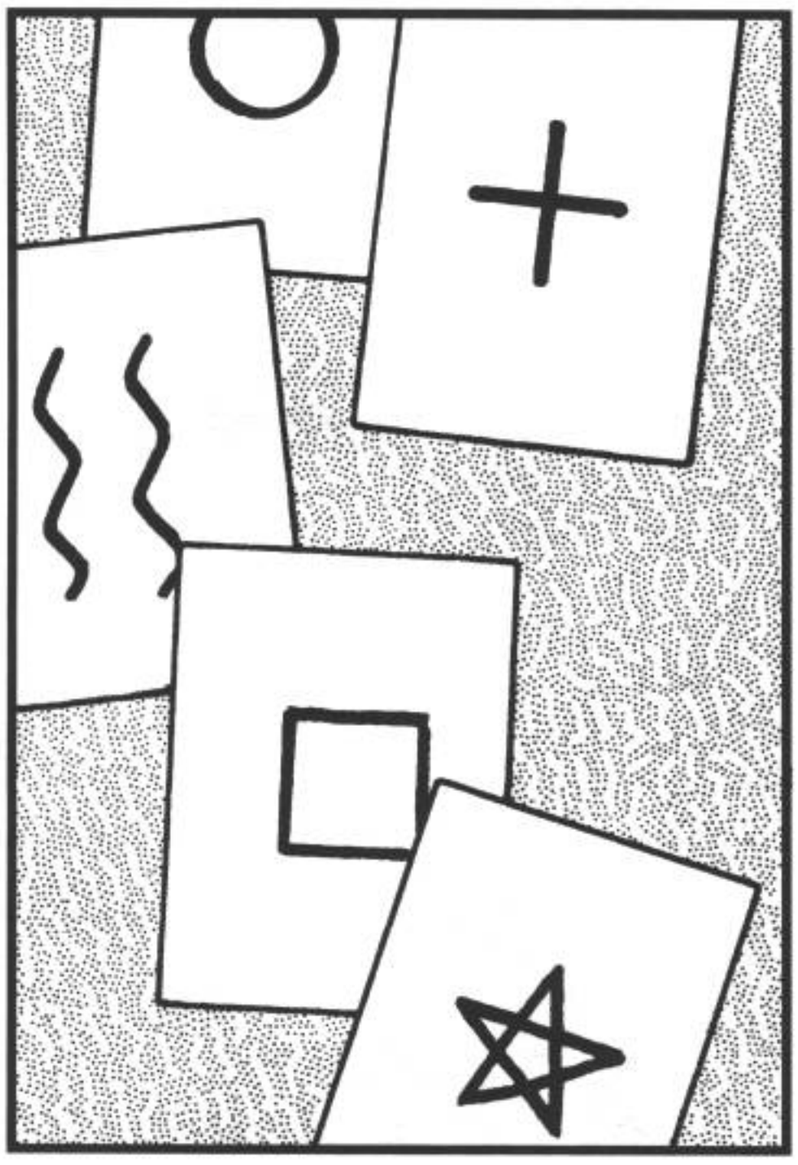
c. 1950: John Campbell, editor of *Astounding Science Fiction,* invents the term "psionics."

1957: The Parapsychological Association is founded in America.

1963: Soviet government begins serious psi research.

1965: Rhine retires from Duke University.

1969: Parapsychological Association admitted to American Association for Advancement of Science.



Spontaneous Psi Phenomena

Spontaneous psi effects are the bread and butter of the psychic investigator. What is causing the smashed dishes and unexplained noises at the Hambly residence? Why are computers spitting gibberish at Xotech Industries? Is the strange glowing figure on the top floor of Saint Alban's church a *ghost?*

The explanation for most of these effects is psi gone awry. The cause might be a living agent with uncontrollable powers – or it might be something else.

Living Agents: Uncontrollable Psi

Most spontaneous psi events have a human cause – someone with an Uncontrollable psi skill who is accidentally causing the effects. The user may not even be aware that he is a psi! In this case, the person will have the limitations Uncontrollable and Unconscious Use Only limitations (see pp. 29-30).

Psychological Causes

Once the investigators have found who is causing spontaneous psi phenomena, they may wish to find out why the person is doing it. Since spontaneous psi occurs unconsciously, the root of the problem will usually be psychological. Some possibilities:

A buried trauma or psychosis is calling attention to itself through psi.

A frightened or intimidated person is subconsciously reaching out for help by trying to attract attention.

The psi is going through hormonal changes at puberty, or is sexually repressed.

The psi has a difficult personal life, and is unconsciously "striking back" through psi.

The psi is *dead,* and died in the grip of some strong emotion – see *Ghosts,* p. 49.

For example, Eric is a teenage pyrokinetic who has burned down three orphanages in as many months. The PCs investigate the mysterious fires and trace the cause to Eric. Probing his origins, they discover he lost his parents in a fiery auto crash. He was pulled unharmed from the burning wreckage, but was only an infant and does not consciously remember the accident or his parents. But Eric has been having nightmares about the accident, and with his psi powers triggered by the onset of puberty, the buried trauma has manifested as pyrokinetic activity. The investigators could use Telereceive, Dreamshaping (p. 65), or conventional detective work to discover his condition, then provide counselling and teach him to control his abilities, enabling him to buy off his limitations.

Poltergeists

Poltergeist means "noisy ghost," but few parapsychologists believe there is anything supernatural about them.

Poltergeist effects are random psychokinetic manifestations brought on by disturbed psis who are (usually) unaware of what they do, or at least how they are doing it. Psychic researchers often refer to poltergeist phenomena as "RSPK," or *recurrent spontaneous psychokinesis.*

Poltergeist effects typically manifest out of sight of observers, with only their results (loud noises, or the residue of damage) visible. Poltergeist manifestations have the normal Power of the source character, and are thus limited in range and effect. This usually means either that the source can be found in close proximity to the point of manifestation . . . or that he's *extremely* powerful. Manifestations are usually cryokinetic, photokinetic, pyrokinetic or telekinetic.

Cryokinesis might cause someone's soft drink to freeze solid, or turn a plate of hot food suddenly cold, or cool down a pocket of air to send a chill down someone's back.

Photokinetic manifestations are rarely recognized as the work of poltergeists. The floating images or lights usually are mistaken for ghosts.

Pyrokinesis might bring a glass of milk or a pot to a boil, set fire to paper or cause a moth to burst into flame. Some poltergeists are far more violent, and are responsible for cases of spontaneous combustion in humans (or, more commonly, their clothing). A pyrokinetic poltergeist is especially dangerous, since even non-malevolent manifestations have the potential to start a fire.

Telekinesis is the most common skill used by poltergeists. A powerful poltergeist can lift up objects and move or throw them around with great violence. But even a weak poltergeist can manifest in numerous ways with telekinesis. TK can make tapping sounds or stack objects like match boxes, books or dishes. Toy cars and trains are easy to move, since they are on wheels. Dolls and stuffed animals can be made to march about. Lights can be switched on or off, and controls on electronic devices like radios, televisions and dishwashers can be manipulated. Doors (and drawers) might slowly open or close on their own, or the pages could turn in a magazine. A bystander may find his shoelaces inexplicably tied together.

Triggering Events

Uncontrollable psi can be triggered by any of the following stressful events:

A psi suffers an emotional shock. In game terms, this includes failure of a Fright Check, the death of a Dependent, being exposed to a phobia and similar situations. However, a *happy* shock, such as a roomful of people yelling "Surprise!" on the psi's birthday, could also be a trigger.

The psi fails a Will roll to control a disadvantage like Bad Temper or Berserk.

The psi is in danger, or someone he cares about is threatened.

The psi has a nightmare.

The psi is engaged in sexual activity.

The psi is intoxicated or drugged, especially if hallucinating.

Under any of these circumstances, a psi with an uncontrollable ability should make a Will roll to avoid triggering it.

Out of Body Experiences

An out of body experience is a spontaneous case of astral projection. The character finds himself outside his body, often looking down on it. "OOBEs" are related to crisis apparitions. Although they sometimes occur in dream or trance-states, they most often take place during death or near-death experiences (sidebar, p. 48). Dying seems to serve as a catalyst for psi abilities!

A dying person will sometimes find himself drawn upwards into a "tunnel," toward a "white light." He may even hear voices or see images associated with dead relatives or friends, or may simply hover over his body while doctors struggle to repair it, snapping back into it when they are successful.

In game terms, most OOBEs are an example of spontaneous astral projection. A character with latent ESP abilities has them activated in a crisis point (see *Latent Powers,* p. 86). The "tunnel" experience associated with a narrow escape from death may simply be a physiological reaction to death or a flashback to the birth canal unrelated to astral projection, or could represent the character finding his way into the inner astral plane.

On the other hand, it could be something more . . .

Phantoms of the Living

Some people have reported seeing ghostly images of a person (usually a relative or friend) who is still alive, though often dying. Since these apparitions usually appear when the person seen is in danger or near death, they are sometimes called "crisis apparitions" (by the scientific) or "fetches" (by the superstitious). Usually the apparition is only seen by a single person, even if other people are present. Sometimes the apparition is experienced as part of a dream.

The best explanation for a crisis apparition is telepathy. Facing death, a latent telepath gains unconscious access to his abilities. He uses them to direct a powerful Telesend to a friend or relative. The sending may be a cry for help or a desire to be with a friend at the moment of death. Since he is untrained and in trouble, the sender cannot transmit a coherent message, so the recipient experiences it as a simple sense of that person's presence, or as a ghostly vision of the sender.

Another possibility is that the person seeing the image is himself a Precog. The apparition is a prescient flash of information that a friend or relative was in trouble.





Telepathic Twins

The strong similarities in their central nervous system and brain may make identical twins more likely to develop a telepathic bond between each other.

Case studies have been made of identical twins that have shared some kind of psychic connection, even when separated at birth. Psychic phenomena that have been reported include cases of telepathy, the sudden awareness by one twin of injury suffered by the other, and even simultaneous death.

Treat this as a Mindlink advantage (p. 96) shared by both twins, perhaps in conjunction with latent or active telepathy.

Investigators can stop a poltergeist by discovering who is responsible for it and why. A poltergeist will usually resist discovery! Convincing a person they are a psi, however, is only the first step. Usually the trauma that was causing the spontaneous manifestation must be healed.

Apports

An "apport" is the mysterious appearance or disappearance of an object. Apportations are rarer than other poltergeist phenomena, but can occur when a psi has an uncontrolled Exoteleport skill. As with other poltergeist activity, the actual displacement of an object is rarely witnessed. Instead, a person may turn around to find something missing, or be walking along when a frog suddenly falls from the sky. The psi may be using unconscious ESP or Telepathy to "lock onto" distant objects.

Gremlins

Gremlins are poltergeists that affect machinery (using TK to press buttons, loosen screws, etc.) or electrical systems and electronics (via cyberpsi). They are generated in the same way as other poltergeists, though they are as likely to result from a bored shift worker with latent psi abilities or a fighter pilot under severe combat stress as from a disturbed teenager.

Precognitive Dreams

Since ESP is one of the most common psi powers, and precognition is a passive psi skill which can be used by default by anyone with the Danger Sense advantage, a fair number of "psionically sensitive" people experience spontaneous visions of the future.

Far and away the most common form taken by these visions is the *precognitive dream.* They are identical to normal dreams, except that part or all of it is a true vision of the future, and it often seems more lucid than usual.

However, a psi may not even be aware that his dream was precognitive until it comes true. If precognitive dreams are not immediately recognizable as such, the GM should occasionally describe interesting normal dreams as well, and let the player figure out which are visions of the future.

Precognitive dreams are sometimes referred to as "true dreams" and those who have them as "true dreamers." Some precogs *only* get premonitions in the form of dreams (even if they are deliberately trying for a vision, it will still come in dream form). This is a 30% limitation on Precognition power.

Sleepjumpers

Some people walk in their sleep. But what if a sleepwalker is a teleport? Sleepjumping may also be responsible for the phenomenon known as *bilocation,* where a person thought to be in one place turns up in another area, then mysteriously vanishes.

Teleportation normally requires the visualization of a destination. For the sleepjumper, this is provided through dreaming. The destination of a sleepjump will always be a place that he has previously been, and within his normal teleport range; it may be as close as the opposite side of the bed, or as far as his old apartment in another city. Whatever the distance, it should be a place that is familiar. After sleepjumping, teleportation powers will not work again for 1d minutes.

Very rarely, a sleepjumper is also an uncontrollable ESPer and teleports to a place he has seen in a precognitive dream or visited in astral form.

GMs may apply Sleepjumping to anyone who has Teleportation bought with the Uncontrollable limitation, or to any teleporter who suffers from a disadvantage or quirk like sleepwalking. In this case, a Will roll should be made on any night that the teleporter goes to sleep under stress; failing the roll means he sleepjumps.

Example: Morgaine is a powerful teenaged teleporter who is not always in full control of her abilities. She has just been through a difficult math exam in high school and has collapsed into bed. The GM decides that she is dreaming about it, and that the dream may lead her to sleepjump. To see if she does, he makes a Will roll for the character, who fails it.

Morgaine wakes up – in a large, dimly-lit room full of school desks. She blinks the sleep out of her eyes, wondering where her bed has gone, and checks the clock on the wall – 6:00 AM. Just then, the door opens, and a custodian steps into the room. When he gets over his surprise, Morgaine may have trouble explaining just what a girl in a nightgown is doing in a locked school room!

Ghosts: Psychic Residues

Investigating a haunted house, the adventurers experience a growing sense of depression as the night wears on. Suddenly, the sense of despair deepens, accompanied by an icy chill. The visitor see a slightly translucent image of a young woman writing a note on a nonexistent table. Ignoring them all, the figure climbs an invisible chair, goes through the motions of attaching a noose, and hangs herself. The body dangles in mid-air for a few seconds, the girl's hands clawing at her neck, then vanishes. Later, the PCs discover that a girl had committed suicide in that room nearly 20 years ago.

A classic ghost . . . but is the apparition really the dead girl's spirit? Perhaps not. Everyone leaves psychic traces of themselves on objects they have used or places they have been; these impressions are what an ESPer with the Psychometry or Signature Sniffer skill picks up. But when an emotionally charged event occurs, such as a murder or suicide, this psychic residue may be strong enough that the tragedy leaves an impression that *anyone* can sense – a ghost. So hauntings – the term "ghost" is not really appropriate, since it is a

Kirlian Photography

Many psychics claim to be able to "feel" energy or see colorful auras around all living things. With experience, a psychic can determine a person's physical or mental condition from the state of their aura. This ability, Sense Aura, is described under the Healing power, on p. 16.

In 1939, a technique known as Kirlian photography was developed in the Soviet Union. It seemed to offer scientific proof that this kind of "life field" really did exist. More importantly, it could be repeated in laboratories around the world. The procedure was simple. Place a biological object, like a person's hand, or a recently cut leaf, in contact with film lying on a photographic plate. Send an electrical charge through the plate to the object. When the film is developed, it will show a brilliant halo – the Kirlian aura – surrounding the object's image.

Early studies showed that the corona seemed to vary in intensity and color if its subjects were emotionally excited or aroused, and Kirlian photographs of psychics purportedly showed a change in the aura when they were exercising their abilities. Did some kind of biological energy field really exist?

More recent experiments have suggested that the Kirlian effect is the result of water vapor interacting with the electrical field. Since people sweat when under stress, or when concentrating hard to produce psi effects, this may explain why Kirlian photographs show a change in color and intensity.

Although generally dismissed today, Kirlian photography may be used by parapsychologists in campaigns set between the 1940s and 1970s. GMs may also decide that the Kirlian effect – or something like it – *is* real, in which case it might lead to scientific understanding of psi abilities. For instance, Piers Anthony's *Cluster* series uses "Kirlian force" as the basis for both psychic powers and a unique form of interstellar travel.





location rather than an actual entity which is generating the effect – are psychic recordings, psychometric photographs or memory images of past events.

All hauntings have a Power, which determines the strength of the psychic residue. Hauntings occupy fairly localized areas – typically they can only be sensed within Power/3 hexes of the event that produced them. They are easier to sense after dark; in daylight there are usually too many people about, and their "mental vibrations" make it difficult to notice anything else. But at night (especially in bad weather) there is far less psychic interference.

When a person first approaches the sight of a haunting, and for every hour thereafter, roll against IQ-5 (or against Psychometry skill, if the character is an ESPer) to see if they notice anything. Add the haunting's Power. Other modifiers: +3 in bad weather, -10 in daylight, -1 if more than one person is present (per extra person), +4 to a person's IQ if the viewer is in an emotional state similar to that which generated the haunting – depressed, lonely, angry, or whatever. If multiple characters are at a site, the GM may wish to make only one roll for the entire group.

Failure means the intruder doesn't notice anything. A success means that the person feels *something* – a strange smell (actually a psychic impression), perhaps, or bad vibrations. A success by 5 or more means that an apparition actually appears, with the degree of success determining how long it remains and how solid it seems.

There are two ways a haunting may affect a living person. First, the sudden apparition may be frightening. The GM may require anyone experiencing a haunt to make a Fright Check, with a penalty equal the amount the roll to notice it succeeded by. Secondly, the psychic power of a haunt may be strong enough to overwhelm an intruder, even if he doesn't notice it. The character should make a roll against Will+5, with a penalty equal to the Power of the haunt. If he fails, the haunt influences him in some way. For instance, the psychic residue of a suicide might leave others feeling depressed; on a failure by 5 or more, or a critical failure, someone may become actively suicidal. Similarly, the psychic echo of a murder may lead to violence.

"Exorcism" – Dealing With a Psychic Echo

A psychic "ghost" may sometimes be destroyed by direct psychic confrontation. Others may be "appeased" in some fashion. Some vanish on their own, and others must simply be avoided. Investigators are advised to proceed with great caution if the existence of a psychic residuum is suspected. These effects are not well understood, even today. (Translation: The GM may make them easy or hard to deal with, as he pleases, and the players won't have a clue, even if they have all read this book.)



Dreams and Altered States

The Sleeping Mind

There are different types of sleep, from half-awake/half-asleep periods to deep slumber. People dream during a type of sleep known as REM (rapid eye movement). REM periods begin about an hour after a person falls asleep, lasting about ten minutes, then going into quiescence, then another REM cycle. During

Invading Dreams

A telepath can invade another person's dreams with Telereceive. This requires penetration into the subject's subconscious (success by 7 or more) while he or she is dreaming.

Once a person's mind has been contacted, the psi can use Telesend to influence his dreams. This is a normal use of Telesend, with the amount the roll succeeds by determining how real the dream seems to be. On any critical failure, the subject awakens!

If trying to give someone actual nightmares, the Telesend roll is resisted by Will. If it succeeds, the subject must make a Fright Check. Use the amount it succeeds by as a penalty on the sleeper's Fright Check. The sender can force the dreamer to make one Fright Check per minute he is manipulating the dream.

To do so without being noticed, make a roll for subtlety (Telesend skill vs. the subject's Mind Shield or IQ, whichever is highest). This is not an activation roll, so it doesn't require time, cost Fatigue, etc. If successful, the dreamer remains unaware of the telepath's presence. If it fails, (or is not attempted), the sleeper feels a foreign presence in his mind, and will remember this when he awakes.

If the dreamer is experiencing a particularly strong dream, the psi may become trapped. Use the rules for the Dreamscanner device (p. 65).

a typical seven-hour sleep period, four to seven REM cycles will usually occur, though children spend more time in REM sleep then adults do. A person who wakes up during REM cycles will tend to clearly remember his dreams.

Tests have suggested that people in REM sleep are highly receptive to telepathic messages. If this is true, add +2 to the chance of success for any Suggestion, Telesend and Telecontrol, although any telepathic messages will usually be worked into the fabric of the dream itself. Some psi abilities and devices may only function on dreaming characters – see *Dreamscanners* (p. 65) and *Psychic Vampirism* (p. 16).

To determine if someone is dreaming at any particular time after they have been asleep for an hour or more, roll 2d. On a roll of 10 (exactly) the sleeper is dreaming.

Hypnagogic State: This is the gray transition period between wakefulness and actual sleep. A person in this state, which lasts only a few minutes before true sleep begins, is even more suggestible than someone in REM sleep. Add +4 to the chance of success of the telepathic skills Sleep, Telesend, Suggestion, Telecontrol and Telereceive. A Brainscanner (p. 60) can determine if someone is in a hypnagogic state.

Hypnosis

A hypnotic trance can be highly conducive to the use of certain psi abilities. See *Hypnotism,* p. 100.

The Occult as Psi Phenomena

The Astral Plane

The astral plane is the place visited by psis using astral projection. It may be a real place, or a form of consensual or veridical hallucination – a psychic dream shared by psis mentally linked on the subconscious level. In any case, damage or injury suffered on the astral plane is very real.

Travelers in the astral plane have observed two "levels" to it, referred to as the *outer plane* and the *inner plane.* The outer plane is the easiest to reach but the hardest to remain in, perhaps because it is the closest to the material world. Objects and people in the normal world are visible but intangible to the astral traveler.

The inner plane is more difficult to reach, though paradoxically, untrained psis experiencing spontaneous "out of body experiences" (see sidebar, p. 47) are likelier to visit it. Attempting to reach the inner plane requires a second active use of Astral Projection skill, at -5. Failure has the usual effects; repeated attempts are possible at normal penalties.

If successful, the character finds himself in a strange, silent world. Different travelers often experience the inner plane in different ways. It may be a kaleidoscope of abstract shapes and colors, a dark void, an infinity of whiteness or the eye of a hurricane. The astral plane usually has no "floor" and no reference to the real world, so distances are difficult to judge, and may in fact be illusionary. A character always exits the inner plane at the place he entered it.

The inner plane is easy to maintain an astral body in: no rolls are required to do so, and the traveler may stay there as long as he likes. The strangest quality of the inner astral plane is its temporal distortion. Time usually passes at a ratio of 10 seconds in the astral plane for every second in the real world. A traveler cannot automatically "snap back" to his body from the inner plane. He must first return to the outer plane, and to do so must make an Astral Projection roll, with the usual penalties for Repeated Attempts.

A person in the astral plane never needs to eat, drink or excrete.

Mind and Soul

Psi abilities such as Mindswitch and Astral Projection allow the mind to leave the body. This raises some questions: is the mind the same as the soul? Does the soul exist scientifically, perhaps as a stable pattern of energy? If an astral form can exist or a mind inhabit another's body, can this energy pattern survive after death? Characters interested in metaphysics may try to find the answers.



Magic and Ritual

Psi powers which *seem* like magic can be an interesting change of pace, and may throw adventurers a curve.

The limitation "requires preparation" can simulate a psychological need on the part of the psi for meditation, occult ceremony, mystic phrases or tantric magic as a method of focusing mental power. And isn't a coven of witches or a circle of magicians just another way of creating a psychic gestalt?

But PCs who watch the ritual being performed and see the "magical" effects produced may jump to the conclusion that they are witnessing magic rather than psi!

Astral Constructs

Another kind of astral encounter is the "construct" – essentially a pocket dimension within the astral plane. Within a construct, reality is "solid" and material objects can exist. A construct may be as simple as a rock floating in the void, or as complex as a duplication of 18th-century Paris, complete with inhabitants. However, objects native to the pocket can never be removed from it: if you find a rapier in "Paris" it will vanish when you leave the pocket to reenter the rest of the astral plane, or if you "snap back" into the material world. Whether *natives* of a pocket can leave is up to the GM.

As with the rest of the inner plane, time spent in a construct is *not* counted toward the duration of your Astral Projection, and no rolls are needed to maintain your astral body while you are in one.

Some pockets may be *prisons*. A prison looks like a normal construct, but if you try to leave it, you must make a (Power + Astral Projection skill) roll at -15. Failure means you cannot leave – only one try is allowed per day, and each successive failure gives you a -2 to your next attempt. If effective skill drops below 3, you are trapped forever, unless, somehow, someone else can help you! How? That's a good question . . .

Astral Entities

A character in the inner plane may encounter a variety of astral structures and entities. Some may be other travelers exploring this strange realm. Others may be constructs of his own subconscious. All are "solid," at least from the astral character's perspective – it's possible to touch or fight an astral being, and take damage, or even be killed.

The more Power a visitor has, the more likely he is to meet something, either because he attracts attention or because he creates whomever he meets. GMs may wish to give a chance of meeting someone or encountering something every ten (subjective) minutes: roll 5 or less on 3d, +1 per 4 full levels of Astral Projection Power. Those actively searching for someone or something roll every 5 minutes.

Travelers in the inner astral plane can meet personifications of their own memories, emotions, inner desires or fears. These entities can give the visitor advice, teach them, or even fight them. For example, an astral traveler might meet her daughter, who died as a child, as a grown-up woman. More fantastically, someone could fight a personification of one facet of his own character, in an adventure constructed to "buy off" a mental disadvantage.

Treat astral entities as NPCs, with any characteristics the GM wants – they are physical, and can interact with a visitor's astral body. The only limitation is that such a "mind child" can never have skills, abilities or knowledge that the traveler himself does not have – even if he does not realize he has them.

Mediums and Seances

A medium is someone who acts as a channel through which spirits can communicate with the living. Usually this occurs at a seance, in which the medium goes into a trance state during which spirits – often relatives of those present at the seance – speak through her. Sometimes a Ouija board, automatic writing in a trance state, or other mechanism is used to generate replies. Most of the best mediums are female.



Some mediums may be charlatans or deluded, but others seem to know information about their subjects that could not be explained through fraud. But a real medium may not actually be communicating with spirits. Instead, she may (deliberately or subconsciously) be telepathically gathering information from the minds of those around her, and perhaps telekinetically manipulating a board, using Precognition to make any predictions of future events that occur.

It is possible that those present with the medium may even form a *spontaneous gestalt* during the seance, with powers and abilities far beyond that of the medium alone. This would be true if any of them had Unconscious or Uncontrolled psi powers of their own.

A medium may, however, actually be receiving information from beyond the seance itself. She could be in unknowing communication with a powerful living telepath, who may occasionally use Telecontrol or Suggestion to guide the

medium's actions. The fragmentary nature of communication suggests that "spirits" may actually be psychic residues (see p. 49) left as a result of traumatic events. An alternate possibility is that the medium is reaching backward or forward through time to communicate mentally with the subconscious of beings living in the past or future. Arthur C. Clarke's classic *Childhood's End* offers some interesting psionic explanations for seances.

Ectoplasm

A phenomenon which has yet to be fully explained is that of ectoplasm, luminescent strands of semi-solid material that sometimes appear during seances. Ectoplasm may be amorphous, or may take the form of shapes, sometimes providing an apparent "physical body" for the spirits summoned through the seance. Sometimes ectoplasm can form into phosphorescent hands or ropes that can wrap around or manipulate objects.

The simplest way to handle ectoplasm in game terms is to treat it as a (possibly Uncontrollable) use of psychokinetic Telekinesis and Photokinesis on the part of the medium. Perhaps the ectoplasm is created out of dust motes, candle smoke or the like.

Curses and the Evil Eye

Although the ignorant may call it magic, traditional curses are usually the result of simple hypnotic suggestion aided by the target's belief. But sometimes the problem is more than that: investigation shows that a psi is responsible.

In particular, someone using Psychic Vampirism skills such as Drain Attribute, Drain Life or Drain Energy can cast an effective "curse." To simulate the "evil eye," characters may take the limitation *Only With Eye Contact,* reducing the Power's cost.



Nonhuman Psi Powers

Animals have been known to exhibit psychic faculties similar to those possessed by humans. These abilities tend to fall into several distinct categories:

Sensitivity: Many animals, but especially dogs, tend to react to invisible presences such as astral forms or hauntings. GMs may allow non-intelligent animals a +6 bonus to IQ to detect illusions, hauntings and the like. However, few animals will tolerate being used as psychic detectors for long: most will flee immediately upon encountering any such phenomena!

Mind Links: Some pets develop empathic relationships with their owners. There are cases of dogs who have howled on their master's death and other pets who somehow sense when their owner is in trouble. To simulate this, GMs may allow characters to buy the Mindlink advantage (p. 96) and low Power telereceive abilities for any IQ 6+ pet that they enjoy a particularly close relationship with.

Danger Sense: Many animals seem to have a supernormal ability to sense trouble. This could just be exceptionally keen senses, or it might be a psi power. GMs may allow some animals to have the Danger Sense advantage.

Alien Animals: Extraterrestrial animals (or plants) may have powerful psionic abilities. A group of animals may share a single swarm mind, a telepathic gestalt in which all members are linked together as one organism. Other psi powers may be used in mating (e.g., Telesend or Aspect) or defense (e.g., Illusion or PK Shield). A psionic predator may even be strong enough to capture its prey with mind power alone – or might *feed* off psychic energies such as thoughts or emotions. See ***GURPS Space Bestiary*** for some examples of psionic creatures.

Beings of Mental Force: Insubstantial creatures of pure mental force could also exist, capable of affecting solid beings only through psionic powers. Treat these as having DX and IQ, but no ST or HT. They could have any psi powers or skills. They are immune to physical attack, but apply fatigue loss from use of psi powers (or psychic attacks they suffer) to their Will, reducing their levels of Strong Will or adding levels of Weak Will. If a creature's modified Will reaches 0, it dies; otherwise it recovers 1 point every 10 minutes.

Faith Healing

The Healing power can account for many miraculous cures which cannot be explained by simple belief – but belief helps! Many faith healers use their powers in front of an audience of true believers, and the focused will of these people can form a kind of subconscious gestalt to aid the healer.

GMs may wish to give psychic healers a bonus of +1 or +2 to Healing power or skill if both the subject and audience sincerely believes in the efficiency of the cure, and conversely, a -1 or a -2 if the healer is using his powers before a group of skeptics.

Animal Psi

Anyone using Telepathy or Psychic Vampirism on a non-intelligent animal (generally, any species with an average IQ of 6 or less) has a -2 to skill per point of average IQ below 7. This means that controlling or communicating with an insect, for instance, is quite hard! They have little in the way of "mind" to affect. A psi with Animal Empathy receives a bonus to skill – see *Animal Empathy*, p. 95.

Plant Psi

Researchers have performed experiments that suggest plants can react to "hostile" thoughts. The plant is hooked up to a brain wave detector, polygraph or similar device. When a person thinks about harming a plant, the machine registers a reaction. Does vegetable life form a gestalt superconsciousness with psionic powers? Perhaps it does, on some worlds – maybe even on Earth. In that case, people had better be more careful about destroying old forests . . .

Many people have found that plants seem to grow better when people think loving thoughts at them, talk to them, etc. This will work even better for those with mental powers. The gardens of psis will blossom, and farmers with psychic abilities could ensure good harvests.

Someone with Suggestion or Telesend can increase the monthly growth rate of a number of hexes of plants equal to ⅓ Power (rounded down), squared, by an amount equal to Power × 5% if he makes his skill roll; one roll only per month.

Types of Catalyst Creatures

Several creatures in the ***GURPS Space Bestiary*** have psi powers. Some might be catalyst creatures. Examples of catalyst creatures are also common in science fiction, although for some reason, a majority tend to resemble miniature dragons. Examples are the minidrags in Alan Dean Foster's *Humanx* series (see ***GURPS Humanx*** for statistics), the fire lizards of Anne McCaffrey's *Dragonriders of Pern* and *Harper Hall* novels, and the jhereg in Steven Brust's *Jhereg* series.

Non-draconic catalysts can be found in many of the works of Andre Norton, particularly in *The Zero Stone* and its sequel *Uncharted Stars*, and the Telzey Amberdon stories of James Schmitz, not to mention the many feline familiars of fantasy.

Catalyst Creatures

Some animals, known as "catalyst creatures," have the ability to mentally bond with psis. A catalyst creature can be thought of as a psionic familiar. It may be a alien animal with exotic psi powers, or a specially-bred earth creature designed for such bonding, such as a genetically-modified or cybernetically-enhanced dog or cat. Or it may just be a normal animal with psi abilities – after all, there are many reports of pets who exhibited unusual psychic powers!

Regardless of origin, a catalyst creature becomes a partner and companion rather than a pet. A catalyst creature is always a full-fledged NPC played by the GM.

The prerequisites for bonding depend on the creature. It may be enough to simply encounter one, but usually the character must demonstrate some form of affection: attempt to make friends, feed it, help it hatch or whatever. Many creatures can only bond while infants. Bonding may be involuntary: a character may not realize that he is dealing with a catalyst creature. Unless the creature was genetically engineered, there will be some natural explanation for its abilities: perhaps an infant normally bonds with its parents, or an adult with its mate. Maybe the creature normally exists as part of a hive mind. No creature may bond with more than one person at once.



When a psi encounters an unbonded catalyst creature under the proper circumstances, the GM rolls a reaction for it. Add a bonus to reaction if the psi is a telepath (whether he's latent or not doesn't matter) equal to half his Telepathy Power, rounded up. If the character is only a single-skill telepath, he can only add this bonus if he has Suggest or Telesend. Animal Empathy adds +2. Other reaction modifiers such as Status or Appearance will have no effect, but Charisma works on intelligent creatures. On an *excellent* reaction, the catalyst creature bonds with the psi. A psi only gets one chance to bond with a particular creature.

The actual bonding may be a sudden joyous instant of mental rapport or a gradual process that requires careful nurturing over hours or days. But once it is complete, the creature and the psi both immediately gain 4 levels of Mindlink advantage (p. 96) with each other. Character points can later be spent to increase this at normal cost. The character and the creature will consider each other the deepest of companions; treat this as a Sense of Duty towards each other. The actual relationship will depend on relative IQ; a person will usually feel affection for a catalyst creature with IQ 6 or less, similar to that of a person for a very much-loved pet. If the creature is more intelligent, the partners will share a deep personal friendship.

The death of one partner will have a devastating effect on the other. Regardless of distance, the surviving partner will know of the death and be mentally stunned, recovering at IQ-4. If the catalyst dies, the psi will develop mental disadvantages or quirks relating to the event, with a point value equal to the number of months they were bonded (maximum -15 points). If the human dies and the creature survives him, it will develop mental disadvantages. If it has IQ 7 or less, it may lose its will to live and waste away.



Other Abilities

Beyond the mind link and companionship provided by the catalyst creature, a variety of other abilities may be produced through the bonding. This depends on the type of creature, and is up to the GM designing it. Some possibilities:

Power Catalyst: This is the most typical ability of a catalyst creature, hence its name. The mental bonding with it serves as a catalyst to telepathically awaken some or all latent psi abilities possessed by the character; see *Latent Powers,* p. 86. These abilities remain awakened even if the creature later dies.

Psi Abilities: The creature has a variety of psi abilities, with its own Power and skills. These abilities are controlled and used by the creature. The human psi has no access to them.

Power Enhancement: The level of any Powers possessed by both the psi and the creature are added together. For example, if the psi had Teleport Power-2 and the creature had Teleport Power-6, each would have an effective Teleport Power of 8 when together. This is an extremely powerful ability. If a catalyst creature has it, the character will not be able to bond to more than one such creature at a time. If the creature dies, these abilities are lost.

Total Rapport: Both partners have Mindlink; the human psi must buy at least 4 levels as soon as he can after acquiring the creature. They are in a constant state of mental rapport with each other as long as they remain within range. While within range, each can share the other's surface thoughts and emotions, and communicate freely through telepathy at normal talking speed. No skill roll or concentration is required. Use the *Telepathy Distance Table* to determine this range. Effective Power is equal to the *sum* of the psi and the catalyst creature's Telepathy Power levels (if any) plus the sum of their levels of Mindlink. Since both partners will always have at least a 4-level Mindlink, the minimum Power will be 8, with a range of 30 yards.

The Iassa

ST: 2 to 5 **DX:**14 **IQ:** 8 **HT:** 3/12
Speed/Dodge: 14/7 **PD/DR:** 1/1
Damage: 1d-4 cut **Reach:** C
Weight: 5 lbs. **Size:** under 1 hex

Also known as *dreamhunters,* the Iassa are catalyst creatures native to an Earthlike jungle planet on the fringes of settled space. An Iassa resembles a furry snake, up to four feet long, with pointed ears and a big-eyed foxy face. Colors are bright and vary widely; their native jungles are a riot of color, and a pattern of red and yellow stripes, for instance, might be good camouflage there. The Iassa is surprisingly strong and fast for its size; in close combat, its constricting grapple attack is equivalent to that of a human 3 times its strength! They are strictly carnivorous.

A psi may bond with an unbonded Iassa simply by approaching it and talking to it calmly – it bonds if he gets a good reaction roll. Animal Empathy helps! Non-psis will not interest an Iassa, but even a uselessly weak latent power will qualify someone for bonding. (In some campaigns, this will not be known; it will just be observed that some people can befriend a dreamhunter, and others can't.) On rare occasions a psi has bonded two Iassa; almost always the two creatures are, or become, a mated pair.

Iassa are Power Catalysts. They possess two psi abilities: Steal Dreams-14 (p. 17) as a One-Skill Only ability with a Psychic Vampire Power of 15, and Telepathy Power 1, usually with the psi skills Telesend and Telereceive. Iassa do not sleep; instead they use their abilities to obtain psychic nourishment from the dreams of other creatures. They love to prowl the dreamtime of sentient beings and bring interesting tidbits to their partners. They will not steal their partner's dreams, but may share them through Telereceive.

In an interstellar campaign, Iassa may be encountered by explorers or free traders, or tamed by Survey personnel. In an Earth-centered campaign, they could have been brought to Terra by alien visitors or dimension-warping teleporters. They might even be native to the Amazon jungle.



CHAPTER FOUR

PSYCHOTRONICS

Once psi powers are understood by science, the powers of the mind can be joined with advanced technology to produce effects unobtainable by natural psionic abilities – psi-tech.

The Battle of Arcadia

The Ilshani starfleet drops out of hyperspace near Arcadia's outer moon. Their sensors confirm what their spies have already told them: the planet below lacks ground or orbital defenses, and has only a tiny fleet. This will be an easy conquest for the Domination!

On Arcadia, Sarah Blake, the duty World-Web coordinator, floats peacefully in a sensory deprivation tank, her brain connected to a powerful telepathy amplifier throne, tubes feeding psi-drugs into her body. One of a handful of highly skilled telepaths serving in the Arcadian Defense Force, it is her fate to be on duty when sensors detect the invasion fleet.



She sounds the alarm. All across the planet, citizens drop what they are doing and plug into their World-Web terminals – normally just another gadget built into the home computer, but now a matter of life and death. Sarah feels their warm closeness as they join their minds to hers in defense of their planet.

The sensors show the hostile starships are 30,000 miles away and closing rapidly into bombardment range of the planet. That can't be allowed. Sarah watches the numbers projected into her brain: within 10 minutes of receiving the invasion alert, 87% percent of Arcadia's population have joined the World-Web – 28 million minds. They will have to be enough.

Power floods into her, and Sarah's expanded mind stretches toward the enemy fleet. Her inborn talent is boosted by the planetary mind and the amplifiers, focused by the Mind Hype and her long hours in the tank. Searching the fleet, her telepathic senses locate the Ilshani admiral, piercing his primitive psi shields and entering his mind. Looking through the admiral's eyes, she surveys the bridge of the flagship, taking note of each crew member. None suspect her presence. She reaches out, taking a grip on the leader's mind . . .

Wasplike, Sarah sends her mind flitting from ship to ship, administering her painful sting. Captains and gunnery officers fall unconscious or begin behaving irrationally. Some ships begin firing on each other. In others, firefights break out on board as crewmen suspect their leaders of treachery. Sarah's mind stays on each vessel only long enough to maximize confusion. Within minutes, she has thrown the Ilshani fleet into chaos. With the invader's cohesion destroyed, the outnumbered Arcadian space forces are easily able to hold off the attackers.

Only one Ilshani warship, under computer control, gets within range of Arcadia. Sarah knows that in less then ten seconds it will begin launching nuclear weapons. There is no way she can disable the ship's computer – she lacks Electrokinetic ability. There is no time to summon another coordinator, and only one way to save the planet. A quick flash of thought gets approval from the Arcadian Council. She visualizes the Arcadian Defense Force armory, focusing on the small fusion bomb canister she sees there. Catching hold of its actuality shield, she exoteleports it into the enemy vessel. There is a globe of expanding light, and the battle of Arcadia is over.

Availability of Psi Technology

The psi-tech devices described in this chapter are *optional.* As the invaders of Arcadia learned, psionic technology can seriously affect a campaign. The GM who doesn't want powerful psionic devices in his campaign may limit certain types of psionic technology, restrict it to unique alien artifacts or ignore it altogether.

Two types of psionic technology are described in this chapter: psychotronics, and more mundane technology with applications to psi-tech.

Psychotronics: Once science understands the physical laws that govern psi, engineers will be able to build devices utilizing them. Psychotronic machines are electronic devices that enhance, detect or duplicate or disrupt psionic abilities.

Mundane Technology: A catch-phrase for devices like sensory deprivation tanks or advanced EEG detectors. These are not strictly "psionic devices" but are either useful to psis or psionic researchers, or, as in the case of advanced brainwave detectors, can produce psi-like effects using normal technology.

Tech Levels

The GM should determine the TL at which psionic devices first appear in his campaign. In the world described in Chapter 8, the simplest psi-tech devices appeared in the late 20th century, so basic psionic technology is listed as TL7, and better devices appear at TL8 and later. But in a ***GURPS Space*** campaign, psi-tech may not appear until TL8, 9 or even later! In that case, the GM can increase the TLs of all psi-tech devices by 1 or more.

Different nations or races may develop psi-tech at different times, and may be more or less advanced in distinct fields. For example, in a near-future Earth campaign, the Soviets might have developed much better psychotronic devices while the West leads in bio-psi technology.

It is assumed that the earliest TL at which psi will be understood is TL7, so most psionic technologies will not appear until at least TL8. For that reason, many psi-tech devices rely on advanced computers, genetic engineering and the like. A few devices require an even higher level of background technology, or can be developed regardless of when psi powers are proven to exist.

Complexity

Complexity is used in ***GURPS Supers*** as a measure of how difficult a gadget is to invent, build or understand. Complexity is rated as Simple, Average, Complex or Amazing. It is provided here for those GMs who wish to use ***Psionics*** as a sourcebook for ***GURPS Supers*** (see pp. 108, 110).

When someone encounters an unfamiliar psi-tech item, complexity also determines the roll to make against an appropriate skill to figure out what it does. The skill used is Electronics (Psychotronics) or, for drugs and the like, Biochemistry (Psi). This assumes the investigator can take apart a gadget, scan it or (in the case of a drug) subject it to analysis. Roll against skill for a simple item, skill-2 for an average one, skill-4 for a complex one or skill-8 for an amazingly complex one.

Cost and Accessibility

Just because something is available in the campaign, it doesn't mean it can easily be purchased – a device might be a unique prototype or an alien artifact, or a psi-drug could be an experiment-in-progress that has yet to be fully tested.

Experimental: The technology is available only as an experimental prototype and will not usually be for sale. All examples are "hand-made" by individual labs or researchers, often in secret military installations or psionic institutes. The same device may look very different depending on who built it. Mass, cost and volume will all be up to ten times greater than normal (implants may have bulky and visible external components). The price reflects the work involved after the original research and development is complete, not the cost of that development itself, so any one-of-a-kind prototype will be much more valuable! Items from one or even two TLs higher may be available in experimental form, but will usually be less reliable or totally untested, with dangerous side effects. Repairing a damaged experimental device will be *very* difficult!

Emerging: The technology has been around for some years, but is still in the early stages, and the mass, cost and volume are three times base values. Only a few specialized labs or institutes are engaged in manufacturing the item. It is still hard to get, and there will usually be a waiting period of weeks or months before it will arrive. Emerging combat or espionage-type equipment is likely to be limited to government authorities

(or very wealthy corporations). Even relatively harmless psychotronic devices such as dreamscanners or psi scanners may be restricted to licensed researchers or psychologists (though a black market may exist for them). Devices may have various "bugs," or be fragile and require frequent maintenance by skilled technicians.

Mature: The technology is well understood, and is mass-produced and widely available. The cost is the listed cost. Devices that were designed in earlier TLs can be considered "mature" technology. Drugs may still be hard to get, but psychotronic devices are sold just like other electronic equipment. Common psi weaponry and devices with military or intelligence applications will still be restricted to military units, the security forces of corporations or specially licensed individuals. But they may also be available on the black market! Common civilian devices like Thought Globes or Psi Testing Gear are easily purchased and available to anyone who can afford them.

Legality Class

If psi-tech is available, PCs will still want to know if they can legally purchase or carry it on the street. For this reason, all forms of technology have been given a Legality Class rating, or *Legality* for short. The lower the Legality, the less likely it is that society will permit the unrestricted sale or use of the technology. In some societies, anything to do with psi will be illegal. In that case, GMs should lower the Legality Class of all psi-tech (except perhaps antipsi devices or drugs) by one or more levels.

Control Rating: The actual effects of Legality Class depend on the Control Rating (CR) of a society, which ranges between 0 (total freedom) and 6 (total control). Using contemporary examples, the United States has a CR of 2; the United Kingdom, with stricter laws relating to things like gun control and Official Secrets, has CR 3. The Soviet Union had a CR of 6 in Stalin's day and CR 5 in more recent times. With *glasnost* it may drop to CR 4, or a backlash may result in less openness. After the clampdown that followed the 1989 pro-democracy movement, communist China became CR 6.

Compare Legality to Control Rating to determine how legal something is:

CR+2 or more: Any citizen can carry the item.

CR+1: May be carried by anyone except a convicted criminal or the equivalent. Registration is required, but there is no permit fee.

CR: A license is required to own or carry the item. To get a license, one must show a legitimate need, pass a safety test, etc. Generally a license costs 1d×10 percent of the price of the item itself. But (for instance) any licensed doctor may acquire medical drugs without needing a specific license for that type of drug.

CR-1: Prohibited except to government agents, police and bonded security personnel.

CR-2: Prohibited except to police SWAT teams, military units and perhaps secret intelligence agencies.

CR-3 or worse: Only permitted to the military.

Alien Technology

The GM may wish to restrict some (or all!) forms of psionic technology to certain alien races, or allow them to exist only as artifacts of long-dead Precursor races. Perhaps because of differing psionic wavelengths or brainwave patterns, some kinds of alien technology may not work for humans without adjustment. The same would apply for human technology being used by aliens. If a human used an alien psionic amplifier without adjustment, it might burn out his brain! A mindscanner designed to detect a narrow range of human thought patterns might not register alien thoughts, or might detect them as animals rather than sentient. The results of taking alien psi-drugs will be dangerous or unpredictable, if they have any effect at all. Successful Biochemistry (for psi-drugs) or Electronics (for psychotronics) skill rolls may be needed to discover exactly what a certain gadget does and how it may be modified to safely work with humans.

One form of alien technology that *should* work is devices specifically *designed* for cross-race contact – mental translators, for instance. But even if it works in an identical way, an alien device may look very different from its human equivalent. A psionic computer might be a featureless black monolith that can only be controlled through hidden telepathic switches . . . or a glob of green jelly!

Using Psionic Devices

Power Supply

In order to work, most electronic devices need power. At TL8 and above, most equipment runs on standardized *power cells,* described below.

A device that appeared at a lower TL will have more power if manufactured at a higher TL. Increase its operating time or number of shots by 50% per TL after it was introduced. If TL10 psychosynaptic neutralizers normally have 10 shots or work for 10 minutes, the TL11 version would get 15 minutes or shots, and a TL12 model would have 20.

Types of Power Cells

There are six sizes of power cells, designated by letter from AA (the smallest) to E (the largest). Power cells increase in power exponentially – an A cell is 10 times as powerful as an AA cell, a B cell has 10 times the power of an A cell, and so on.

AA: A very tiny disk the size of a pinhead, 1/16" across by 1/32" thick. $2. 8,000 weigh 1 pound.

A: A tiny cylinder less than 1/4" across by 1/8" tall. $10. 400 weigh 1 pound.

B: A small cylinder about 1/2" across by 1/2" tall. $30; 20 weigh 1 pound.

C: A cylinder 1" across by 2" tall. $100; 1/2 pound.

D: A cylinder 2" across by 4" tall. $500; 5 pounds.

E: A cylinder 4" across by 6" tall. $2,000; 20 pounds.

Replacing Power Cells: It takes 3 seconds to replace a power cell, or six seconds for the tiny AA or large E cells.

All gadget weights and volumes include power cells; cost of power cells is extra.

Contemporary Power Supplies

If using psionic technology in a contemporary (TL7 or less) campaign, power cells may not be available. Instead, GMs should assume that any item listed for AA or A cells runs on small commercially available batteries, or can be plugged into household current.

Any item requiring B or C cells requires either household current, a vehicle battery or specially made lithium cells.

Any item requiring D or E cells must be plugged directly into a building generator or large vehicle power supply.

DR and Hit Points of Equipment

Most gadgets are protected by a durable plastic casing, with screens or monitors made of thick plastic rather than glass.

Unless otherwise mentioned, gadgets have 1 hit point per 5 pounds of weight and DR 2, plus DR 2 per TL after 7. All but experimental electronic devices will be water-resistant.

At an extra 20% weight and cost, any gadget can be armored with DR 10, plus 5 per TL after 7; this makes it totally waterproof. At TL8+, armored devices can be used in vacuum or hostile environments. All military-style equipment (weapons, suits, etc.) is already armored.

Experimental and emerging technology may be less robust than mature technology. Experimental devices will typically have only DR 1 and half normal hit points for their weight. Emerging gadgets have half normal DR and the same hit points as mature devices.

These hit point totals refer to *physical* damage. Large devices may still be vulnerable to EMP and the Surge skill; see p. 13. Experimental gadgets *will* be more vulnerable to Surge and the like.

Improvement At Higher TLs

Psiborgs (p. 82) and all electronic and psychotronic devices halve in weight and cost one TL after being first introduced, and quarter in weight and cost two TLs later.

All other technologies, including psi-drugs, halve in cost one TL after first appearing and halve again two TLs later; weight remains the same.

Items using power increase their operating duration; see *Power Supply,* above.

Mundane Technology

Although all have psionic applications or produce psi-type effects, none of the devices described in this section are actually "psionic" in nature. A brainscanner, for instance, does not detect psychic energy or thoughts – it detects the low-level electrical fields emitted by the brain. As a result, this "mundane" technology may be available even if other psi-tech is not.

Psionic Testing Equipment — TL7

Found in most psionics institutes, this is a battery of laboratory tests which can determine a subject's exact psi powers. The subject should be conscious and willing to cooperate; if he is not, equipment operators roll at -4 to their skill. Each Power (Telepathy, ESP, etc.) must be checked for individually, with a separate roll and 4 hours of testing, though some could be skipped if the subject or scientist doesn't want to bother. For each Power checked, make a Psychology (Parapsychology) roll; see p. 100. Success means that the user learns whether the subject has a particular Power or not and gives a rough idea of how powerful it is: under 5, 6-10, 11-15 or 16+. On a critical success, the user determines the exact Power of the subject. Only one try is allowed by a single researcher, at least until something happens to convince that researcher that his earlier findings were wrong! Failure means the readings are ambiguous as to whether the subject has that psi power or not, and critical failure gives a wrong answer or results in some disaster (an accidental manifestation of one of the subject's skills, perhaps).

A conscious subject can try to deliberately give false results. Roll a contest between his IQ and the tester's skill. Success means he fools the testing devices, and can (if non-psionic) convince the examiner he has a minor power of 1-5, or if psionic, can make his power seem up to 50% higher, or any amount lower, than it really is.

Psi-testing gear weighs 400 pounds and takes up .5 cy. Four C cells power it for about 50 tests, or a year of normal lab use. It is portable – sort of – but requires an hour to set up. $100,000. Legality: 6. Complexity: Average.

Deepsleep Box — TL7

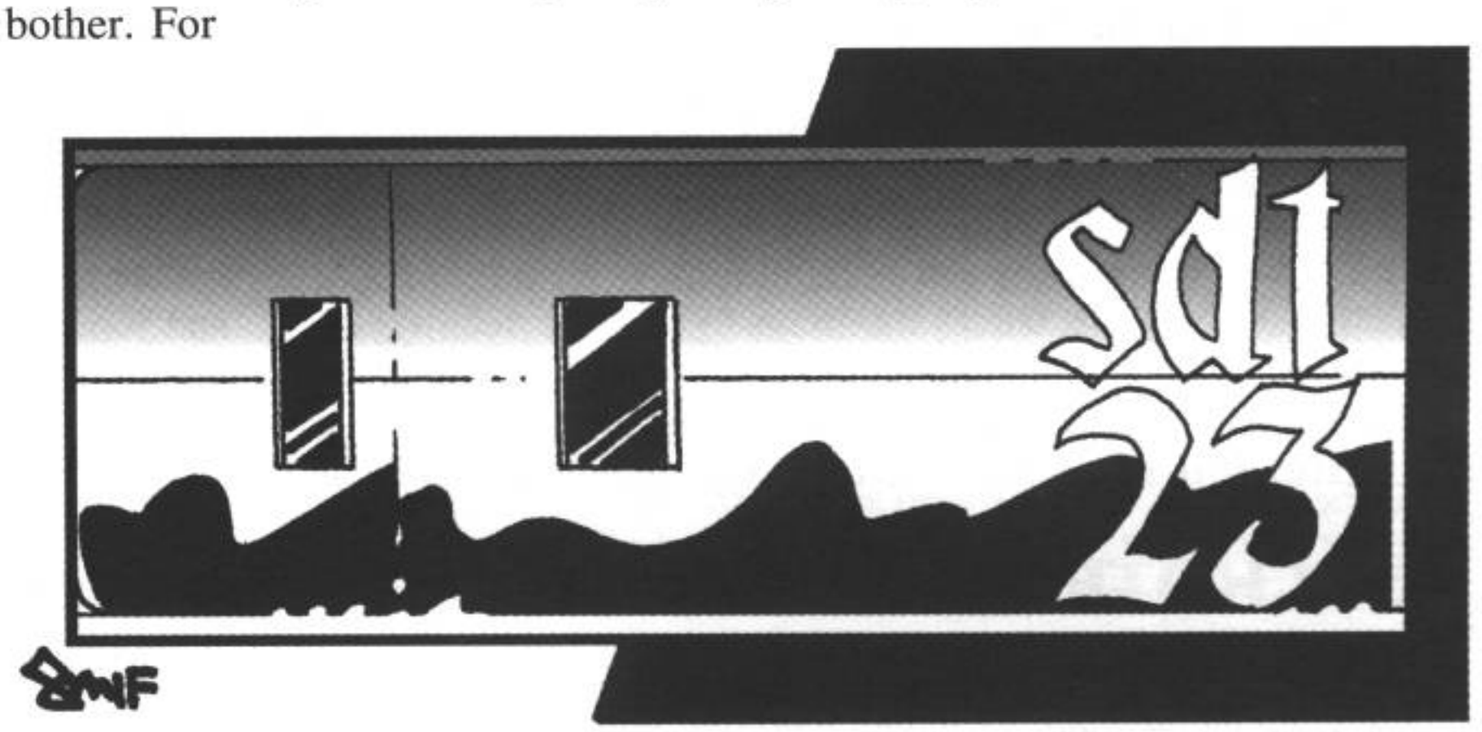
This is a small box with electrodes that are attached to the subject's head. At TL8, it is available as a headband with a self-contained power supply. Once attached to a subject and turned on, it lulls him into deeper sleep with an electromagnetic field ("electronarcosis") and soothing sound.

The subject remains asleep as long as the electrodes are in place, but a timer is usually set for personal use. Four hours of deepsleep are equivalent to eight hours of normal sleep. It is mainly used to safely restrain captives.

If the subject is unwilling when the device is activated, he gets a Will-4 roll every 10 seconds to resist falling asleep. A subject who is already asleep normally does not resist.

Electronarcosis has been reported from the Soviet Union for years, and so is sometimes called "Russian Sleep." But recent evidence questions its effectiveness. If the GM believes Russian Sleep doesn't work at TL7, increase the Deepsleep box's TL to 8 and assume it works by direct neural stimulation.

The deepsleep box runs for 3 months off a B cell. $500, 2 pounds. Complexity: Simple. Legality: 6.



Sensory Deprivation Tank — TL7

Sensory deprivation techniques isolate the user from external sensory stimuli, serving to focus his mind inward. They are used before attempting delicate psionic operations in which high skill level is necessary, or to make a subject especially receptive to psi.

A typical "S-D" tank is filled with water, in which the subject floats suspended. His senses are completely blocked. Tubes provide oxygen and nourishment and remove waste products, and a medical computer monitors his condition, allowing an indefinite stay within the tank.

Less sophisticated versions of sensory deprivation also exist (e.g., blindfolds and ear plugs), but are unsuitable for long-term use due to physical discomfort.

After an hour of sensory deprivation, the user must make a Will roll. Success means that the isolation has successfully focused his mind, and he receives a bonus of +1 to use psi skills

while in the SD tank, with an additional +1 for every 3 points his roll succeeded by (rounding down), to a maximum of +5.

Failure means that he has not gained any benefit from the experience. If he spends additional hours in the tank he may try again each hour, but further Will rolls will be at a cumulative -1 penalty.

Any time a Will roll is failed by 5 or more, or any Critical Failure, the prolonged sensory deprivation has not only failed to increase his concentration, but the isolation and loss of sensation has worked to unhinge his mind! The psi will experience hallucinations, and is treated as having failed a fright check; roll 3d on the *Fright Check Table* (p. B94), with a +1 modifier for every point he failed his Will roll by! Any quirks or phobias acquired will relate to the sensory deprivation – Scotophobia, Claustrophobia or perhaps Autophobia (the fear of being alone).

In addition, *regardless* of his roll, the user is also more open to any form of telepathic contact (he has no physical sensations to distract his attention). Add 1 to the success chance of any Telepathy skill (friendly or hostile) used on the subject per hour he spends in the tank, up to a maximum of +5 after five hours of deprivation.

Psi-amplifiers, gestalt webs, world-webs and psi drugs may be used in conjunction with an S-D tank.

A sensory deprivation tank weighs 800 pounds and requires 1.5 cubic yards; it runs off household or vehicle current or, at TL8+, can operate off a D cell for two weeks. It costs $10,000. Complexity: Average. Legality: 6.

Brainscanner TL8

This is a sophisticated version of an Electroencephalograph (EEG) machine, which is designed to monitor brain-waves (the very weak electrical fields that are produced by the electrochemical processes of thought).

A brainscanner differs from earlier EEG machines in the degree of accuracy with which its integral computer can connect brain activity with specific emotions or types of thought, and the speed at which it can determine how an individual's particular set of brain waves calibrate to specific feelings or experiences.

To interpret the scanner's data, the operator must make a successful roll against Electronic Operation (Sensor or Medical). This takes one minute. The operator can use his own skill or the computer's default skill of 12. The scanner can determine:

(1) The emotional or physical reactions a subject is currently experiencing, such as pleasure, pain, love, hatred, interest, creative thought, joy, boredom, etc. It cannot detect the object of the emotion, but by offering different stimuli, e.g. showing a person a picture, or guiding the conversation, a subject's response to a specific thing can be measured in more detail.

(2) If a subject is actively or passively using psi powers, and if EEG states associated with the use of specific Powers have been mapped, the brainscanner can tell which Power(s) are in use. It will not tell what psi skills are being used.

(3) If a subject is being affected *by* a psi power, especially telepathy or psychic vampirism, this can be detected as above.

The GM makes all skill rolls. If a roll fails, the operator receives ambiguous readings. On a critical failure, he completely misinterprets them. The brainscanner can be set to automatically record a person's readings over a long period of time (several hours or days) for latter analysis.

A subject can try to fool the scanner by adjusting his brainwaves if he has the Metabolism Control psi skill; make a Quick Contest of skills between the psi and the operator. If the psi wins by 0-4 he can block the scan; if he wins by 5 or more he can feed it false data.

Since EEGs differ from person to person, a brainscanner must be calibrated before it can be used on a particular person. This takes at least 4 hours, during which the subject must cooperate, and a successful skill roll as above.

At TL8, a brainscanner's sensors must be placed in physical contact with the subject's head. At TL9, a brainscanner can scan one subject at a time at a range of 10 yards. Double the range for each TL over 9. The scanner's integral dedicated computer also improves at higher TLs. Add +1 to the operator's and the default skill for each TL over 9.

A brainscanner is not a psionic device; psi shields are no barrier to it, but physical obstructions (walls, etc.), sealed armor and force fields are. It runs off a B cell for up to 100 hours of continuous use.

$6,000, 4 pounds. Complexity: Average. Legality: 5.

Psychotronic Devices

Psychotronic devices operate under physical laws that are not yet fully understood. They can generate, enhance or manipulate psionic and antipsionic energy.

Interface Technology

Psiberface Helmet TL7

These neural interface helmets are required to link a person's brain (via electromagnetic induction) directly with some types of psychotronic machinery, including gestalt webs (p. 61), dreamscanners (p. 65), deathscanners (p. 63) and world-webs (p. 62).

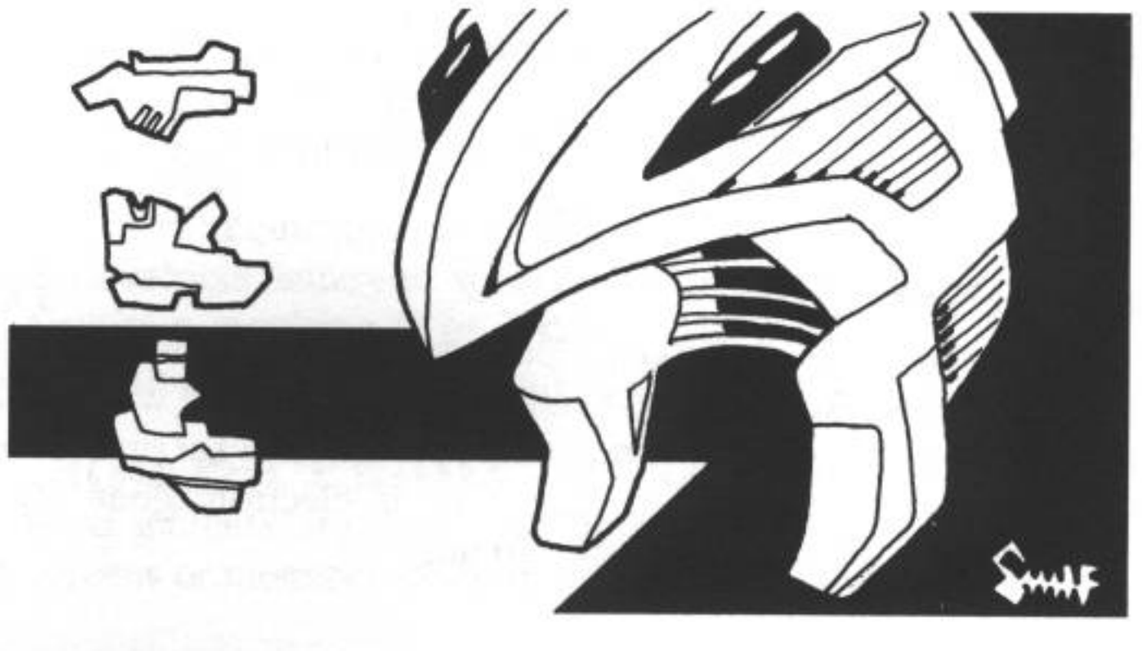
Donning a psiberface helmet takes 2 turns. A psiberface helmet can also be built into a combat armor or vacc suit helmet at 10% extra cost; this adds 4 pounds to the helmet's weight.

The helmet uses an AA cell, which runs it for 3 months. It costs $4,000 and weighs 4 pounds. Complexity: Complex. Legality 6.

Psiberface Implant: Those not wanting a full helmet may instead have an implant socket installed in their skull. A psiberface socket accepts standard interface cables from psychotronic devices. Cost, etc., is the same as above, and inserting or removing it requires a surgery roll and takes 3 hours, plus a day to recover. Failure destroys the implant; critical failure causes brain damage, resulting in a loss of 1 point of IQ.

Telepathic "Switches"

Telepathic switches are usually mounted in systems such as lights, car ignitions or electronic doors. They may replace or



supplement the normal manual on/off switch. They can turn on, but not control, most electronic devices, from TVs to computers. Other uses: to activate or deactivate electronic detonators or timers for explosives or psi-bombs; to turn on or off a *homing* beacon; to activate or deactivate a hidden security system.

Several telepathic switches may be built into a single device to turn on or off different functions.

A teleswitch runs off an AA cell for a year and costs $200; the weight is negligible. TL8. Complexity: Simple. Legality: 6.

Secure Teleswitches: "Secure" teleswitches are available. A secure teleswitch is sensitized to a single set of mental signatures; only these minds can use it. This makes them very useful as electronic locks on doors or safes, or for limiting access to computers and the like. One disadvantage to secure teleswitches: the signature of the owner can be detected with use of a Signature Sniffer skill. They run off an AA cell for a year and costs $1,000. TL9. Complexity: Average. Legality: 6.

Telepathic Control Panel: These are simply arrays of exceptionally sensitive miniaturized telepathic switches built into the same device. For instance, built into a computer keyboard, each switch may correspond to a single key. The switches are more sensitive so that the psi can control several switches per second. Thus, a psi could use his mind to operate a properly fitted computer, calculator, sensor device, gunnery console, etc. at a distance, visualizing each key or button and so activating the switch. When doing so, use the normal skill for operating the device, or the average of that skill and the psi's Telesend skill, whichever is *lower.* One Telesend skill roll should be required each minute to maintain mental communication with the control panel.

Cost: The cost is that of a normal control panel, plus $10,000, or +$100,000 for a secure system. TL10. Complexity: Average. Legality: 6.

Psionic Amplifiers

Psi-amps boost a psi's Power level. Each amplifier is designed to only amplify a single power (e.g. telepathy) while it is being used. Only active psi skills are amplified; passive abilities such as Mind Shield or passive uses of Precognition are not boosted.

Psi Amplifiers must be attuned to a particular user. This can be done immediately, requiring a Will roll at -4, but if it fails, the user must readjust the setting, which takes at least an hour and a successful roll against Electronic Operation (Psychotronics) skill. Failure wastes an hour; critical failure damages the device. It *is* possible to use a psi-amplifier that is not properly attuned, but the psi will have a -5 penalty on any psi skills he uses through it, which could be fatal (see below).

The surge of power experienced when using an amplifier can be dangerous. If the user's psi skill roll to activate or maintain a psi ability fails by 5+ or is a critical failure, he suffers psionic feedback, burning out the machine (which must be repaired) and causing 2d damage each turn to the user, with DR not protecting at all (it is his *brain* that's being fried!) The damage continues until someone pulls him free. The user must also roll vs. Will at -3 or suffer "brain-burn." A brain-burn victim is effectively reduced to a mindless state, though recovery is possible given proper care and treatment. See ***GURPS Ultra-Tech,*** p. 87 for more details.

Types of psi amplifiers available include:

Amplifier Throne — TL8

This device artificially augments the Power of a single psionic ability. It is a throne-like chair, with helmet, biofeedback monitors and monitoring computer. The user sits in the chair; power floods through him and is channeled into psionic energy. Unless the user has very high Power, machines amplifying teleportation will move the user, but not the machine!

It increases the user's Power by up to 8 levels, but is dangerous if improperly used. For every level that Power is increased *after the first 4* when using a psionic skill, reduce skill level by -2. For instance, if a person boosted his Power by 7 levels, he would be at -6 to skill.

A psi-amp is powered by a E cell, which works for 2 months of steady use. The device weighs ½ ton, takes up 1 cy and costs $200,000. Machines that can amplify more than one Power at once are available – add $100,000, .5 cy and ¼ ton per extra Power. Complexity: Amazing. Legality: 3.

Backpack Psi-Amplifier — TL8

These devices work like standard psionic amplifiers, but use a smaller (backpack size) power pack connected to a helmet, and run off a D cell. Portable amplifiers can increase the user's Power by up to 6 levels. For every level Power is increased after the first 3 levels, reduce skill by 2. For instance, if a person increased his Power by 5 levels, he would be at -4 to skill. Effects of a failure by 5 or more, or critical failure, are identical to those of other psi amps, above.

The device runs for 6 months on a D cell. It costs $40,000 and weighs 20 pounds for a device that amplifies a single psi power. Add $20,000 and 10 pounds per extra power it can amplify. Complexity: Amazing. Legality: 4.

Amplifier Helmet — TL8

This is lower-powered psionic amplifier. It adds a maximum of 4 levels to the user's Power. If the user adds 1 or 2 levels, there is no penalty to skill. If he increases his Power by 3 levels, he is at -2 to skill. If he adds 4 levels, he is at -4 to skill.

The device runs for 3 months on a C cell. It costs $25,000 and weighs 4 pounds to boost a single psi power. Add $10,000 and 1 pound per extra Power Group it can affect. Complexity: Amazing. Legality 5.

At TL10 this device weighs only 1 pound and is headband-sized. An amplifier headband costs only $6,250 plus $2,500 per extra power, and weighs ½ lb. At TL12 the device can be worn as a belt instead of a headband; cost and weight of an amplifier belt are the same as for a headband. For both, complexity and legality are unchanged.

Other Augmentation Devices

Gestalt Web — TL10

A gestalt web machine is a large electronic device attached to several psiberface helmets (see above). The web machine links the psis wearing the helmets into a gestalt (p. 37). Donning or removing a helmet takes 4 seconds. It runs on building power or a D cell, which operates the web for up to a month of steady use.

A gestalt web costs $100,000, takes up 1.2 cubic yards and weighs 1,200 pounds for the basic device, which can link two minds into a gestalt. For each extra mind the web is to accommodate, add $20,000, .1 cubic yard and 100 pounds. Complexity: Amazing. Legality: 3.

World-Web — TL11

A world-web is a device for harnessing the innate mental power of *non*-psionic individuals and placing it at the disposal

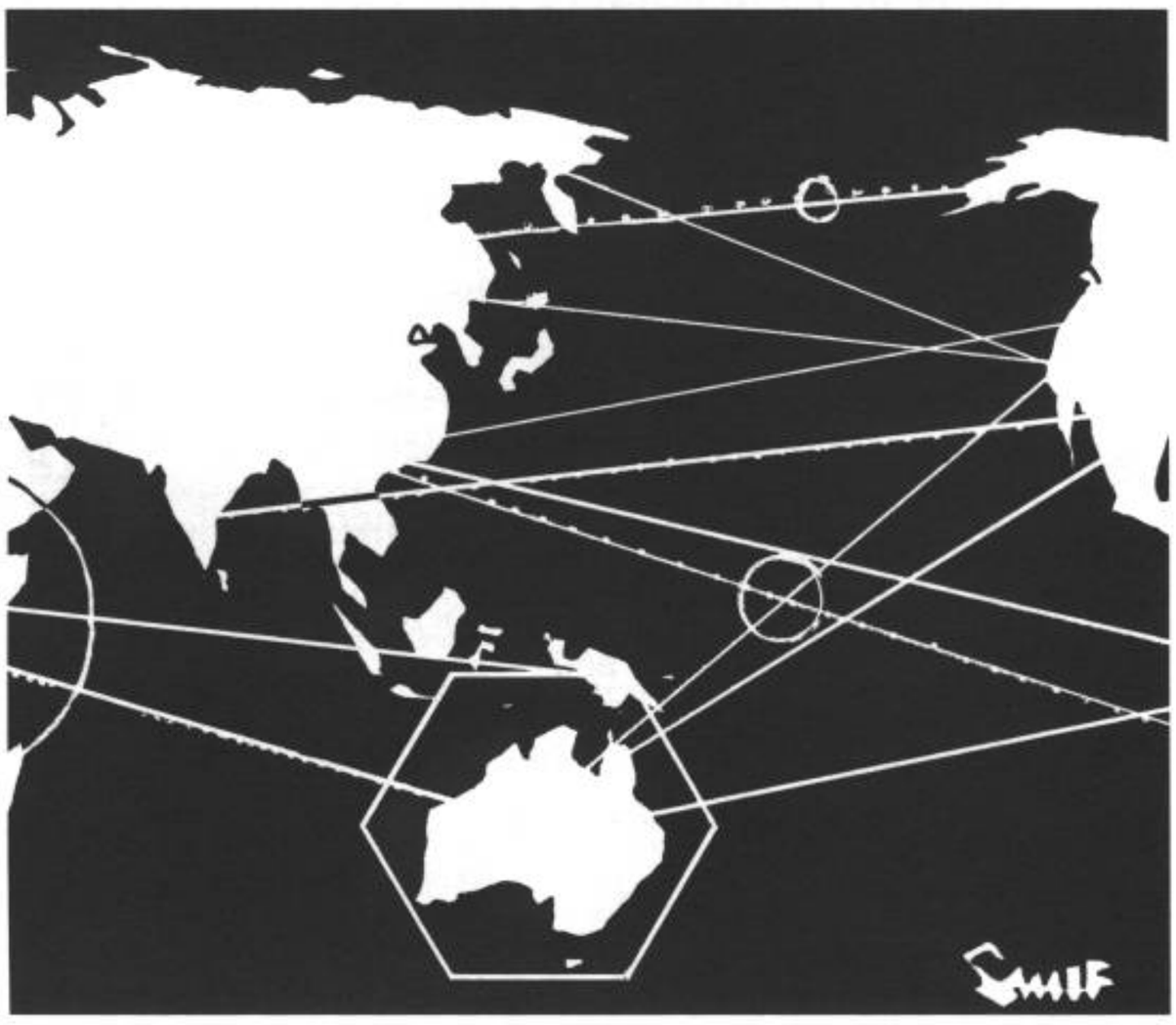
of a single psi – the "director." It is similar to a gestalt-web, but requires at least 100 normal minds to generate any power.

To become part of a world-web, the user plugs himself into a world-web terminal by donning the psiberface helmet that is attached to it. The terminal is then connected to other world-web terminals via normal data linkage systems, and also to the web central processor.

The web central processor can gather the psychic energy of all participants, increasing the psi Power of the web director in whatever psi skill he is using. The *World-Web Table,* below, shows how much Power is added to the director, based on the number of people plugged into the world-web. These people do *not* have to be psis!

For example, if the web consisted of 5,300,299 people, the web would have a Power of +16. Whoever was in the director's position would add 16 levels to any psionic ability he had. Obviously, the director can only gain any benefit if he is a psi. The web director may be a psionic computer (see below).

While plugged into world-web, no one can take any physical action – they are in a trance. Disconnecting requires a Will roll. A person can only be plugged into one world-web device at a time.



World-Web Table

Persons	*Power Bonus Persons*	*Persons*	*Power Bonus Persons*
100	+1	1.5 million	+15
200	+2	3 million	+16
400	+3	6 million	+17
800	+4	12 million	+18
1,600	+5	25 million	+19
3,200	+6	50 million	+20
6,400	+7	100 million	+21
12,500	+8	200 million	+22
25,000	+9	400 million	+23
50,000	+10	800 million	+24
100,000	+11	1.5 billion	+25
200,000	+12	3 billion	+26
400,000	+13	6 billion	+27
800,000	+14	12 billion	+28

A world-web's power can be increased dramatically if the coordinator is *also* receiving power from a Telepathic gestalt at the same time. In this way it is theoretically possible to gain enough power to reach across interstellar distances – and perhaps link with other gestalts and world webs, perhaps even forming a galactic mind!

A world-web can also be an interesting plot device. For instance, a world web terminal may normally function as (say) a high-tech interactive computer network. Citizens may plug themselves into it to play games or perform normal computer-work, and enjoy the benefits, – perhaps without even realizing that they are enhancing the psi powers of whoever is at the center of the web.

World-web Terminal: This device is about the same size as a micro computer terminal (it may even *be* a computer terminal – see below). By plugging a psiberface helmet (see p. 60) into it and donning the helmet, a user can become part of the world-web, contributing his psychic power to Web Central. A world-web terminal weighs 20 pounds and costs $2,000, not including psiberface. It is powered by household current. TL11. Legality 5. Complexity: Average.

Web Central Processor: The heart of any world-web network, using building power. 18 cubic yards, 25 tons, $25,000,000. TL11. Legality 1. Complexity: Amazing.

Psionic Computers

Artificially Intelligent (AI) computers may be designed with psionic powers, or they might develop them spontaneously. Computers have a *complexity rating* which determines how powerful they are. A computer capable of psionic power must also be on the verge of artificial intelligence – Complexity 6+ – which limits them to TL9 or better.

At TL9, psionic computers are restricted to the most sophisticated experimental AI systems – Complexity 7 megacomps massing a ton or more, taking up 10 cy and costing $2,000,000. At higher TLs, cheaper versions are possible – see ***GURPS Ultra-Tech,*** p. 6.

AI is not *necessarily* psionic, however, and adding psychotronic generation equipment is expensive, involving duplicating many of the neural networks of the human brain. To determine the cost of building a psionic AI, add $10,000×the character point cost of the psi powers it will have. For instance, a Complexity 7 megacomp normally costs $2,000,000. If it is to have Telepathy 4 (20 points) and ESP 10 (30 points) for a total of 50 points, it would cost an additional $500,000, for a total of $2,500,000. Obviously, only major corporations or governments would have access to such systems! Complexity: Complex. Legality: 2.

Power and Skill

A psionic computer may have a maximum Power in any single psi ability of (Complexity-5)×5. A Complexity 6 computer could have a Power in each ability of up to 5, a Complexity 7 could have a Power up to 10, and so on. The absolute limit for a computer is a power of 25 (Complexity 10+). There is no limit on how many different Powers a computer may have, except that it cannot have Antipsi and any other power.

To use its power, the computer must have appropriate psi skills. Psi skills are available as programs. Each skill is an individual Complexity 6 program, and each gives the computer a skill level of 14 and costs $100,000. Skill level may be

increased by +1 each time the cost of the program is doubled. A Complexity 7 megacomp may run 10 psi skill programs at once if it isn't doing anything else.

As all psionic computers are sentient, each has its own IQ. Use the computer's Complexity×2 to determine its IQ and Will when resisting psionic attacks or interacting with humans.

Applications

A psicomp's uses are only limited by its power and programming. Programmed with Telereceive, it might be used as a psychic probe; with Mindwipe, it could serve as a brainwashing machine; with Cyberpsi, an AI could take over other computers. With Astral Projection, an artificial intelligence would be able to leave its hardware!

For more power, several psionic computers could network together in the cybernetic equivalent of a telepathic gestalt.

Psionic Computers in Action

A psionic computer uses its powers in much the same way as a human does. When using psi powers, a psionic computer does expend fatigue points to use its powers (and can lose them if struck by a Mental Blow). Fatigue does not represent energy, but instead the strain placed on its programming when dealing with something like psi. When fatigue used equals IQ, the computer "crashes" and shuts down until it recovers. Psionic computers regain one fatigue point per 10 minutes if not doing anything else.

A psionic computer *can* be attacked by psionic means, or have its "mind" erased, read, etc. Cyberpsi may be used normally on a psionic computer, but it subtracts its Mind Shield's Power (if any) from the psi's Cyberpsi skill. Telereceive can also be used, but any unwary psi that actually makes contact with the actual memories (success by 9+ with Telereceive, p. 25) of an artificial intelligence is likely to suffer information overload. Roll vs. the intruder's Telereceive skill at -1 per Complexity level of the AI to avoid instant insanity of some sort (a catatonic state, technophobia, etc.) lasting 1 day per point failed; the insanity may last indefinitely on a critical failure!

Psiberghosts: Using "ghostcomp" techniques described in ***GURPS Cyberpunk*** and ***GURPS Ultra-Tech,*** thinking personalities can be preserved in computer memories. If these personalities had psi powers, GMs may decide that they may still use them. Use the Psionic Computer rules to calculate Fatigue, effects of attacks against them, etc.

Psicomp Characters

A Psicomp (or normal AI) can be an Enemy, or, with the GM's permission, an Ally or even a PC. Its point cost is 1 point per $10,000 of hardware and software. Attributes and skills are solely dependent on its hardware and software and are not bought separately. Disadvantages may be taken to reduce the point cost. AIs always have the Astral Entity disadvantage and up to 45 *additional* points of disadvantages. In many cultures, some form of Social Stigma (e.g., "valuable property") is very likely. If an AI is to improve its abilities, both points and money must be paid for any improvements.

Communication and Information Equipment

Memory Crystal TL8

A memory crystal is a sphere or cube 2" across. A telepath can use the psi skill Telesend to permanently imprint a single mental image within it, along with all associated emotional resonances. For instance, a person could place a telepathic image of their lover within, and anyone who touched it, psionic or not, would experience what that person felt for his love; a pair of lovers might exchange memory crystals.

If the memory is particular strong and violent, such as an angry memory of a friend's murder, a Will roll (in a Quick Contest vs. the Telesend skill of the person who placed it) is required to avoid being mentally stunned!

A psi with Signature Sniffer can *automatically* get a person's signature from a memory crystal they have imprinted.

Memory crystals have no power requirements.

½ pound, $2,000. Larger objects could also be made of memory crystal – a memorial, for instance. Complexity: Average. Legality: 6.

Deathscanner TL9

Using technology similar to the dreamscanner (p. 65), a deathscanner consists of two psiberface helmets and a psychotronic scanning module. One helmet is placed over the head of a recently-dead (within 24 hours) corpse (the brain must be more or less intact) and the other is worn by the user. With the helmet on, the user can examine the last hour or so of the corpse's memories, up to death. The memories scanned are of both physical sensory impressions and what the subject was actually thinking.

The user must roll against Electronics Operations/TL (Psychotronics) to sort through the memories, at -1 per 30 minutes since death. Scanning takes 15 minutes per attempt. A successful roll gives a general impression of the circumstances surrounding the person's death – what was going on in the last few minutes, what the victim saw and heard, etc. Further attempts may be made to find out more details.

On a failed roll the user picks up only a confusing mishmash of pain and fear, perhaps a constant repetition of frightening images from the last few seconds surrounding the death; this may be useful if the cause of death is totally unknown, but no clear information will be gained. After a failed roll, any further attempts will be at a cumulative penalty of -1.

A critical failure, or any failure by 5 or more, means the user has been trapped in the dark whirlpool of the victim's death-experience. Make a Fright Check at -5, with all usual effects, and any further attempts by that user to probe the corpse are at -2.

A deathscanner takes a minute to set up. It is powered by a C cell for 20 uses. $80,000, 12 pounds. Complexity: Complex. Legality 5.

At TL10, a deathscanner may make a recording of the experiences; these are often admissible in court.



Mind Probe — TL9

This is a psionic device that can "read" a person's mind. A psiberface helmet attached to the probe unit is placed on the subject's head and he is injected with the Trance psi-drug (p. 80) to keep him in a receptive state. The subject need not be willing, but must be conscious. The Mind Probe is controlled by a console or directly through a second psiberface helmet. In either case, the operator must have Psychology 10+ and Electronic Operation (Psychotronics)-12+.

Thoughts are not read by the Mind Probe. What the machine reads is sensory experience: everything that the person has seen, heard, and so on, in detail far beyond what the subject can consciously recollect. Visual perceptions are displayed on a telepsychic monitor screen for anyone to see. The operator can also don a psiberface helmet of his own and experience everything that the subject feels.

Naturally, this can sometimes be unpleasant – operators have suffered psychological problems or even heart attacks when reliving intense experiences of injuries, torture, etc. suffered by their subjects. GMs may require anyone using the psiberface helmet to make Fright Checks (at penalties depending on the nature of the experience) to remain unaffected.

All Mind Probes incorporate a form of memory-compression that enables the operator to "fast-forward" past boring memories, and to move forward or backward over interesting material at up to 1 hour per second at TL9, increasing by a factor of 10 each TL after that. Although these sensory experiences cannot be taped until TL10, visual and auditory images can be recorded as they appear to the monitor.

Since any mind contains a mass of information, GMs may require Research or Intelligence Analysis skill rolls to locate specific data quickly, with increasing penalties depending on where they know to look (e.g., 0 if scanning through a specific hour of memories, -2 if the search can only be narrowed down to a day, -4 if riffling through ten days of experience, -6 if 100 days, and so on). Add +3 if using a Psiberface helmet rather the just the telepsychic monitor or taped images.

At TL9 a Mind Probe can only access perceptions that are no more than 100 days old. At TL10 it can access perceptions from up to 3 years in the past, and can record them for later playback. At TL11, it can refill through a persons sensory experiences over the last thirty years. At TL12 a mind probe can access all a person's sensory experiences, back to when his brain developed in the womb.

The device uses an E cell, which powers it for 1 week. Alternatively, it may operate off building power. A Mind Probe machine costs $120,000. It weighs 400 pounds and takes up .2 cubic yards. Complexity: Amazing. Legality: 3.

Thought Globe — TL9

A sphere a few inches in diameter, the thought globe is highly sensitive to psychic impressions. Any individual – psionic or not – who touches the device and concentrates on a specific image will cause the globe to project that thought-image as a hologram, up to 3 cy in size. Proper visualization may require an IQ roll (Eidetic Memory adds +3 to recall something you have seen). The image is an actual hologram, not a mental projection, and can be photographed. Useful for non-verbal communication with aliens, especially if a mental translator (see below) is not programmed for their language. ½ pound, $5,000, powered by a B cell 24 hours of steady use. Complexity: Complex. Legality 6.



Detection Equipment

Psitector — TL8

This is a simple sensor headband. When worn and activated, it can perform a rudimentary neural scan to determine if the subject is a psi with a Power of 1 or more in any Power; a green light flashes if non-psionic, a red light if psionic. It does not reveal anything else (see *Psionic Testing,* p. 59).

The device is relatively simple to use: after it is placed on the subject's head it takes 5 seconds to run the scan. It will not work within a null-field or if the subject is wearing a psi-impeder (p. 74) or under the influence of Shatter or Monobloc (p. 79).

Psitectors are the usual method security agencies use to determine if a person is psionic. Fortunately for those psis who wish to remain anonymous, a clever psi can fool one. Since the psi cannot have his powers restrained during the scan, the usual method is to disable the device (use Cyberpsi to burn it out, TK to pull out a wire, etc.) or fool the observer (Illusion could make him think he saw a green light). Of course, if a psi scanner is operating at the same time to detect any active use of psi powers, fooling someone could be more difficult!

A psitector weighs 1 pound and costs $1,000. It runs on an A cell for one month. Complexity: Average. Legality 6.

Psi Scanner — TL9

Also called a psychometer, this is a small hand-held sensor the size of a hardback book. It allows a roll against Electronics Operation (Psychotronics or Sensor) skill to detect the *active* use of psionic powers. It cannot determine if a person is a psi unless he or she is using any psi abilities; a psitector (p. 64) is required to do that. Psi scanners can be set to sweep a 60-degree arc, or a complete 360 degree scan at 20% maximum range.

Each use requires 30 seconds of scanning to gather the data. A failed roll means that the user has not focused the gadget properly and nothing is detected; further rolls will be at -2 (cumulative) until the user takes a half hour to recalibrate the sensors.

Used directionally, a psi-scanner has a range of 1,000 yards to detect general use of psi powers or any psi-tech gadgets. This requires a simple roll against skill. Success means the user detects all such psi phenomena in range. If set to search for a specific type of psi power (like Telepathy, or Telepathy-related psychotronics) it does so at -2 to skill. Large or powerful psi emanations (null-fields, power levels above 15) can be detected up to twice as far away.

Once a general fix has been achieved, more specific data (what kind of telepathic skill is being used, is it an artificial, a gadget or a natural psi, and approximately how powerful) can be picked up at 100 yards or less on a skill-2 roll. This requires at least ten seconds of scanning, and if there are multiple psi-sources the user can only focus on a single one of them at a time.

The device can be used for a much more detailed analysis of a single specific psi phenomenon (to determine *exact* power and skill levels, etc.) within 25 yards, but a Paraphysics roll must be made to interpret the results.

A psi-scanner uses a B cell for 2 months of continuous operation. $10,000, 2 pounds. Complexity: Complex. Legality: 5.

Mindscanner — TL8

An early development in telepathy psychotronics, the mindscanner detects thoughts. It is not sensitive enough to interpret them, or to tell a psi from a non-psi, but its screen displays the location of all sentient beings (red dots) and non-sentient beings (blue dots) with an IQ above 3 who are within range. No skill is required to use it.

A mindscanner does not detect individuals protected by Mind Shields, within null-fields or in areas of Psi Static. Psionic Resistance, however, will not prevent detection.

One TL after introduction, range doubles, increasing to 100 yards. After two or more TLs, range becomes 200 yards.

Weight is 20 pounds, range is 50 yards, $6,000. Its B cell powers it for 2 hours of constant operation. Complexity: Average. Legality: 6.

Psychic Lock — TL10

A more sophisticated form of mindscanner, but very short ranged. A psychic lock resembles a normal electronic lock, made of psychically resonant crystal.

A psychic lock cannot be picked normally, for it is tuned to the owner's unique telepathic pattern and only the owner's mental touch can lock or unlock it, though the door could always be forced. It can be used by a non-telepath who touches it or comes within 5 yards of it. If the owner is a telepath with the Telesend psi-skill he can may be able to activate it at a greater distance, within his normal Telepathy range.

A telepath may also try to mentally "pick" it. To do so, he must make a successful roll against Signature Sniffer skill at -5 to determine the owner's residual signature; a successful Telesend roll at -3 can then duplicate it. One try only is allowed – failure blurs the signature until the owner uses it again.

A Mind Shield or other jamming device will not open the lock, but will bar it from detecting anyone and prevent it from opening.

A Psychic Lock is powered by an A cell that runs it for ten years. ½ pound, $500. Complexity: Average. Legality: 6.

Empathic Lock: Similar to the standard Psychic Lock, but not tuned to a specific individual. An empathic lock opens only if it senses that the subject is actually feeling a specific emotion, e.g., fear, lust, love, etc., or *not* experiencing a certain emotion. Cost, etc., as above. The lock is very sensitive; people may try to counterfeit emotions to fool it, but it requires an Acting roll at -6 to do so.

Life Field Detector — TL9

This device lets the user detect the life-field auras of all *moving* things larger than insects within a given area. Stationary things are not displayed, since their auras would blend with those of trees, grass, etc. A display screen shows their approximate size and position.

It has a range of 100 yards. Life forms within 3 yards of each other show as a single entity; a human would be a dot, while a rat would be a pinprick. A crowd would be a single pulsating blob of light. If holographic technology is unavailable, flyers will be displayed with their altitude noted separately.

This is a passive sensor and does not radiate any psionic emanations. Mind Shields do not affect it, since it detects life auras rather than thoughts, but an object inside a null-field is undetectable. It runs off a B cell for 2 weeks.

$4,000, 4 pounds. Complexity: Average. Legality: 6.

Dream Technology

Dreamscanner — TL9

A dreamscanner allows its user to experience another person's dreams. Both the dreaming subject and the users of the scanner must be linked to the scanner using psiberface helmets, and both must sleep, but only the subject actually dreams. As the subject dreams, his dreams are shared by the individuals who are "monitoring" him through the scanner. They do not experience the dreams themselves, but rather see them "second hand" and thus avoid much of the disorientation that a normal dreamer has. They will automatically remember the dreams when they awake and cannot influence them.

A successful Electronics Operations (Psychotronics) roll must be made to set up a dreamscanner. Failure means the user(s) only experience a vague sense of the subject's dreams. Up to six people can monitor a dreamscanner at once, using attached psiberface helmets.

The dreamscanner is very useful in psychological therapy and research, and as a result, Dreamscanners are usually available only to licensed psychologists or psychiatrists. However, those with enough money or scientific connections can acquire one legally without too much difficulty. Intelligence organizations sometimes purchase dreamscanners for use after debriefings or interrogations, hoping that the subconscious mind of the subject can provide additional information.

In some societies, dreamscanning may be considered a form of entertainment. People who are especially vivid dreamers may make a living entertaining others – or be enslaved to do so.

A dreamscanner is powered by household current, or a pair of C cells can operate it for 2 weeks of steady use. $150,000, 20 pounds. Complexity: Complex. Legality: 5.

Dreamshaping

If someone with Telepathy Power 1+ is either the subject or the user of a scanner, he can do more with it. A dreaming telepath can create and control his own dreams (a *lucid* dream), using the Illusion skill. If a telepath is the monitor, he can alter

the subject's dreams or insert himself into them. In either case, both the telepath and anyone else using the scanner will also experience the dreams, but as active participants rather than passive observers!

Before going to sleep, the telepath decides what the basic elements and structure of the dream will be. For instance, he might want to shape a dream as an exotic adventure story. More ambitiously, a telepathic psychologist monitoring a dreamer with claustrophobia might try to shape a dream in which he helps the sleeper, as a child, escape the traumatic cave-in which left him buried in real life. It's also possible to shape a dream that will harm those experiencing it, by playing on the participants' fears, or just crafting a horrifying nightmare. Psychology skill may help to tailor a specific dream. People who make their living crafting dreams are sometimes called *dreamweavers.*



The Telepathy Power of the dreamweaver determines how real the dream appears to be:

A Power of 8 or less allows the creation of dreams that are vivid, but surreal – with cartoon-like figures, or perhaps all in black and white. People involved will be aware that they are dreaming.

A Power of 9 to 14 can create powerful dreams that seem life-like. Even if they are deliberately unrealistic, those experiencing them will feel a powerful sense of reality.

A Power of 15 or more can create dreams with a clarity that seems more real than life itself. Those experiencing the dream can easily forget that events are unreal.

The dreamweaver must make a roll against Illusion skill (in this case, defaulting to IQ-4) to shape the dream in the desired fashion. Intimate familiarity with the subject matter can add a +1 or +2, while unfamiliarity can subtract up to -4.

Telecontrol skill can be used to influence the course of the dream. A skill roll (again, defaulting to IQ-4 in this case) is made after the subject goes to sleep. Mindshields and resistance apply normally; the exact effect will depend on how well the skill roll was made by, which determines how close the dream was to the dreamweaver's intentions.

A successful roll against Telecontrol skill means that the dream turned out as the weaver wanted, and if properly conceived and powerful enough, could have a significant effect on the subject's mental state (curing phobias, making them feel better, etc.). If the objective is to create a nightmare, everyone experiencing the (except the one creating it) will the suffer the effects of an *uncontrolled dream* – see below.

A failed roll means the telepath lost control of the dream at some point, and the GM should alter it in some way to make it disturbing. Whenever a Telecontrol roll is failed, both the controlling telepath and the other dreamers experience the effects! Perhaps a fantasy turned into a horror situation, or a PC trying to treat a phobia got caught up in the patient's nightmare, without changing it for the better. Experiencing an uncontrolled dream or nightmare always requires a Fright Check at Will +3, but with a extra -1 modifier for every 3 levels of Power of the telepath, and an additional -5 if a telepath lost control of a *deliberate* nightmare. In addition, a failed roll may worsen any existing phobias or other psychological traumas the telepath was trying to ease.

On a critical failure, anything can happen. The participants may even be trapped within the dream even *after* the machinery is shut off, telepathically linked and lost in "dream space," perhaps until they perform certain actions within the dream's logic that will enable them to escape.

Telepath vs. Telepath: If one telepath is monitoring and the other is dreaming, and both are trying to manipulate the dream or change a created scenario, roll a Contest of Skill between their Telesend skills to see whose scenario wins out. If the contest is tied, *neither* has control; elements of both dreams will be present.

Dreamcorder TL10

A dreamcorder module can be attached to a dreamscanner. It *records* the dream-experiences of the person using it into the module. After a dream has been recorded, anyone who goes to sleep attached to the dream scanner can set it to access the module. Several people can use the dreamscanner to experience the same recorded dream at once. Unless dulled by familiarity, the effects of a recorded telepathically-induced nightmare or uncontrolled dream will be identical to a real one (see below).

An Electronics Operation (Psychotronics) roll is required to use a dreamcorder to record a dream. Failure means that the recording was unclear, and anyone using it will experience extreme disorientation and only a vague sense of the subject's actual dream. Critical failure means that the recorder produces nightmarish images that only superficially resemble what was in the dream (perhaps from deeper levels of the subconscious) and anyone experiencing the tape will have to make a Fright Check at -5.

No skill roll is required to access a recorded dream-tape.

Dreams take the same recording space as any other full-sense media, depending on the TL; dreams can be erased to make room for new ones. It requires a pair of B cells, running it for a month of steady use.

A dreamcorder module costs $40,000 and weighs 10 pounds. Complexity: Complex. Legality: 5.

Adventures in Dreamspace

GMs may elect to run an important dream as an adventure, perhaps rolling secretly to determine whether the dream remains faithful to the telepath's original vision or is warped in some way. The PCs' actions within the dream will influence how beneficial or hurtful it is, rather than requiring a single Fright Check or skill roll. If a PC is controlling the dream and other players are involved, the GM might consider letting the dreamshaping player design and run the dream-scenario as an adventure. If the dream runs out of control, the GM can intervene part way through – taking over the dream-characters and setting and twisting them into a nightmare.

Visiting a dream-world can be a good excuse to try out different world settings, as the adventurers find themselves pirates on the high seas or the heroes of a sword-and-sorcery epic. Military organizations (for instance) may also use shared dreams for training exercises, or as "dry runs" for operations.

Dream Death: If a dream is run as an adventure, someone seriously injured (0 HT) or killed within a dream can suffer serious psychological effects. If someone suffers torture or other serious trauma, or was reduced to "0 HT," and if he does not recover within the context of the dream, he must make a Fright Check at -5 or more upon waking (with modifiers depending on how nasty the death or injury-situation was). If a character actually died, he must make a Fright Check with a penalty of -10 or more! Fright Check effects, such as phobias, should always be related to the dream-cause of injury.

Covert Operations Equipment

Mind Control Implant — *TL8*

This device increases the subject's sensitivity to external telepathic influences. An implant could be given to a non-psi by a telepathic companion to facilitate mental contact through Telereceive, enabling a deeper rapport. But, as its name suggests, it also makes the subject far more vulnerable to telepathic mind control and interrogation. As a result, the implants are often placed in individuals against their will (and sometimes without their knowledge), for sinister purposes.

While the implant is in place, anyone attempting to use Mindwipe, Telereceive, Suggestion or Telecontrol psi-skills on the subject has a +5 bonus to skill. Psychic Vampire, Telesend, or direct attacks such as Mental Blow gain no such bonus.

Inserting or removing a mind control implant requires a Surgery roll and takes 3 hours, plus a day to recover. Failure destroys the implant; critical failure causes brain damage, resulting in a loss of 1 point of IQ. If the operation is performed under anesthetic and the scar hidden, the subject may not even be aware the surgery has taken place, especially if Mindwipe is used to erase memories of any abduction.

The implant costs $4,000 plus another $2,000 for the operation. It runs on an AA cell for a year. Complexity: Average. Legality: 2.

Mind Control Headband: This is a larger external version of the implant. It is not easily concealable and is no more effective than the implant, but does not require brain surgery to insert! It runs on an A cell for 5 years. $6,000. ½ lb. TL9. Complexity: Average. Legality: 2.

Empathic Sink — *TL10*

This is a psychotronic device that siphons away emotions even as the wearer experiences them. It is usually tuned to drain a single emotion. It is often placed on psychiatric patients, dissidents or prisoners to better control them, by siphoning off anger or courage. Other uses are also possible: soldiers or gladiators could be given Empathic Sinks that drained away their compassion or fear, for instance. Someone who cannot experience an emotion may gain various mental disadvantages.

For example, if an empathic sink was tuned to siphon away courage, the victim might suffer from Cowardice; one that drains fear may make the subject immune to Fright Checks, but leave him with no Will roll to resist other disadvantages like Overconfidence or Lecherousness, since he does not fear the consequences. The GM is always the final arbiter on exactly what effects an empathic sink will have and should balance advantages with disadvantages.

An empathic sink is a headband or collar packed with psychotronic circuitry. It costs $3,000, weighs 1 pound and runs for 1 year on an AA cell. Complexity: Complex. Legality: 3.

An empathic sink may also be a brain implant. Use the rules on *Mind Control Implants* (above) for installing it. It runs for a year on an AA cell. Cost: $2,000, plus $1,000 for the operation. TL10. Complexity: Complex. Legality: 2.

Mind-Transfer Machine — *TL10*

This device enables two people to switch minds. The new inhabitant of the body has all his old memories (and none of the body's). Mental skills and advantages are unchanged; determine new physical skills as for the Mindswitch skill (p. 23).

Mind-Transfer cannot be resisted by either party. The process takes about 5 minutes and requires a successful Electronics Operations (Psychotronics) roll by the operator. Critical success halves the adjustment time; failure causes disorientation, doubling it. Critical failure burns out the machine and causes exotic effects (e.g., both minds in both bodies, for example, resulting in each character suffering from Split Personality) or brain damage that turns both minds into Drones (p. 81). All effects are permanent, and although a machine can transfer a person back to their old body, damage from a Critical Failure may be irreversible.

If a character's point total increases as the result of a Mind Transfer and he decides to remain in his new body, any earned points must first go to paying off the difference.

The machine can be used to transfer into animals – use the effects described under the *Mindswitch* skill (p. 23).

It's interesting to imagine a society where mind transfer technology is widespread. Mind transfer has obvious uses for espionage, immortality or even exploration: imagine exploring an alien culture by *becoming* a native while the original owner explores your own, as an exchange student. People with attractive, youthful bodies may be used as "transfer stock" by an immortal elite when their own bodies wear out.

So far, we have assumed mind transfer is only possible between two bodies. But if one body is a blank-minded clone (for instance) then old or worn-out bodies can be easily replaced. People could wear new bodies like sets of clothes, with several waiting in suspended animation. Bodies could be of different sexes, ages or even races – be a dolphin for a day! With genetic engineering, bodies could be designed to order.

For examples of societies where mind transfer is common, see Tanith Lee's novel *Don't Bite the Sun,* Roger Zelazny's *Lord of Light,* and Jack Chalker's *Four Lords of the Diamond* tetralogy.

A mind transfer machine weighs ½ton and takes up .5 cy. It costs $10,000,000. Complexity: Amazing. Legality: 3.

Healing Technology

Auric Scanner — TL9

This device consists of five successive hoops (each 2 feet across), fixed to a 7-foot platform packed with psychotronic circuitry; the subject is placed so that his body lies inside all five rings.

When the device is turned on, the subject is surrounded by a brilliant glow – his own aura (see *Sense Aura* skill, p. 16), strengthened dramatically so as to be visible to anyone (even a non-psi!) who is looking at it. As usual, the brightness of the aura shows the subject's HT, while injuries and disease show as discolorations. Anyone who has had the equipment explained to him (or who makes an Electronics Operations (Psychotronics) roll will get a +3 bonus on Diagnosis skill when examining the person in the machine; if he can already Sense Aura, he gets a +3 to use that skill on the patient.

An Auric Scanner can use building power, or run on a pair of C cells for a month of steady use. It weighs 400 pounds, takes up 2 cy (though most of this is the empty space inside the hoops) and costs $10,000. Complexity: Average. Legality: 6.

Biointensifer — TL10

This device channels a patient's own life force to assist a Healer, greatly increasing the effectiveness of psychic healing. It can only be used by a psionic Healer who is treating someone other than himself. The patient may be anyone, conscious or unconscious, as long as their mind is intact.

This device somewhat resembles an Auric Scanner, but is larger. The patient is placed on the device, and the power takes 1 minute to build up, during which the Healer must also concentrate. A soft prismatic glow forms around the injured area of the body (or the whole body, in the case of disease). The psi then makes a normal Healing skill roll. If successful, the Healing skill works normally, except that the Healer's Power is increased by the (Will-8) of the subject. Thus, if the subject had Will 12, the psi's Power would be increased by 4! If Will is 8 or less, there is no bonus (or penalty). If the Healer fails the roll, nothing happens, but another attempt may be made at the usual penalty for Repeated Efforts after a further minute of concentration.

There is one danger when using it: if the subject *wants to die,* the psi will inflict damage instead of healing! If the psi makes a successful Healing skill roll, he will realize this in time, and the subject will only take damage equal to his Will-8; if he fails, the psi will add his own Healing power to this damage. A psi-medic who may be dealing with a suicide victim (or someone with no will to live) should to check the subject's mental state before using this device!

A Biointensifier runs off building current, or uses a pair of C cells (good for a month of steady use). It takes up 3 cy and weighs 600 pounds. It costs $20,000. A Biointensifer may incorporate an Auric Scanner; add the Auric Scanner cost, but size and weight are unchanced. Complexity: Complex. Legality: 5.

Psychokinetic Technology

Kinetic Bubble — TL10

A kinetic bubble is a spherical (typically 1 yard in diameter) psychokinetic energy focus resembling a translucent globe. The surface of the sphere is constructed of PK-sensitive biomolecules that resonate with and amplify the user's Telekinesis, making the bubble and its contents easier to lift.

When a psi uses the Telekinesis skill, objects placed within the bubble are treated as being ⅒ normal mass, solely for purposes of determining how much material the psi can lift with TK. Actual weight and mass are the same.

A kinetic bubble capable of holding up to 1 cubic yard weighs ¼ pound and costs $20,000; larger bubbles are available with proportionately higher price and weight. Complexity: Complex. Legality: 6.

PK Batteries — TL8

A PK battery is similar to any other power cell (see p. 58), except that it is powered by psychokinetic energy and can be recharged by a psi. PK batteries come in standard power cell sizes, from AA to E.

The maximum size of PK battery that can be recharged depends on the Power of the psychokinetic doing the recharging.

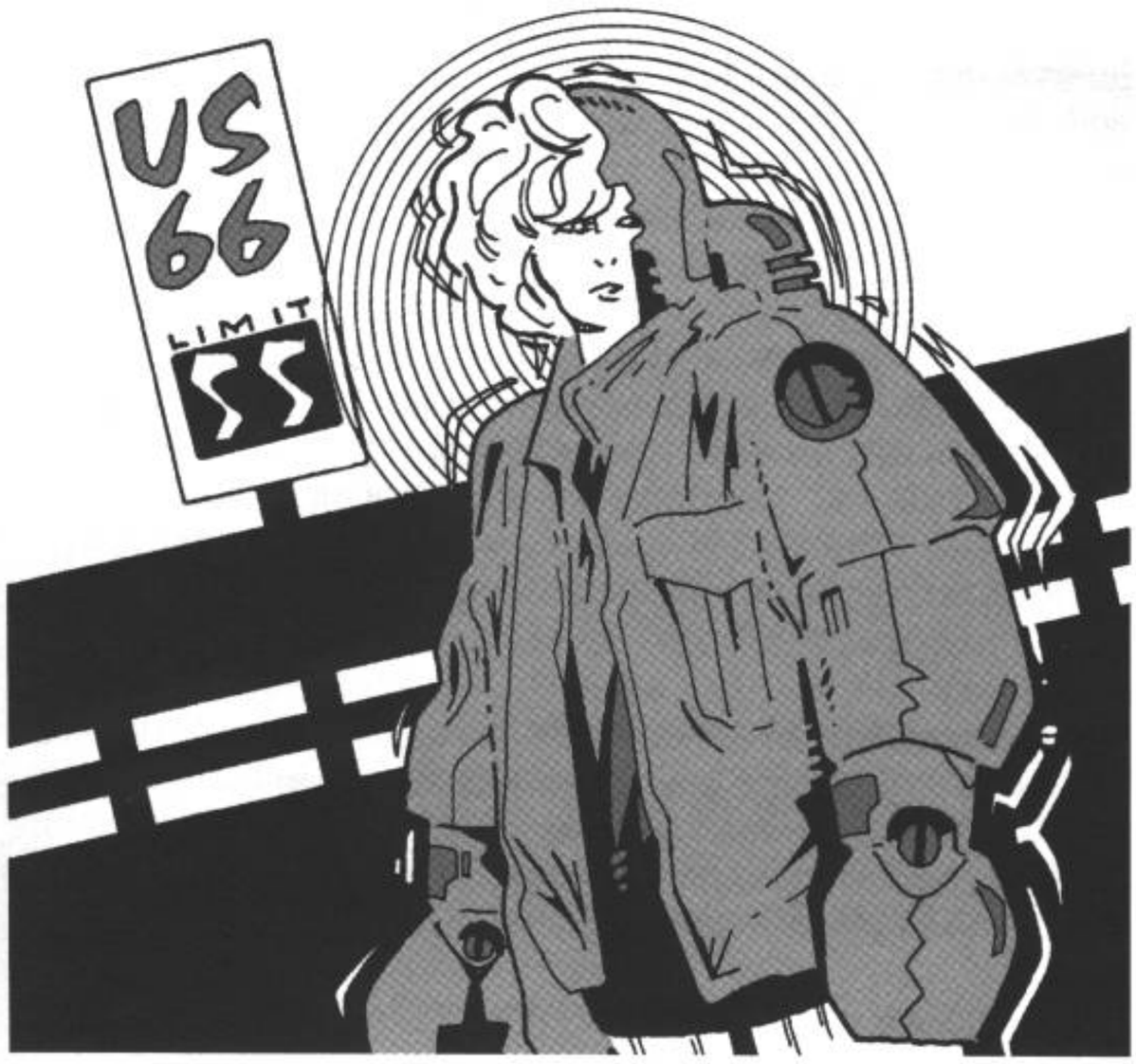
Type	*Min. Power*	*Type*	*Min. Power*
AA	1	C	13
A	5	D	17
B	9	E	21

Add 2 to the Power required for every TL the power cell is over TL8; higher TL cells require greater capacity and are thus harder to recharge.

Recharging requires constant concentration, and takes 10,000 seconds (about two and a half hours), one Fatigue and a Telekinesis-2 roll; failure of the skill roll burns out the battery! Divide the recharge time by 10 for every 4 full levels of Power over the minimum required to charge the battery (minimum 1 second). For example, a psychokinetic with Power 19 would require only 100 seconds to recharge a B cell built at TL8.

PK batteries cost ten times as much as normal power cells. The weight and volume are identical. Complexity: Average. Legality: 6.

EK Batteries are identical to PK batteries, but are charged by Electrokinesis (use the Lightning-2 or Surge-2 skill) and require a source of electrical power. Charging time is halved.



Psiberplas — TL10

Normal bioplas (available at TL10; see ***GURPS Ultra-Tech,*** p. 71) is a tough, electrically-sensitive organic plastic that can alter its shape into pre-programmed configurations in response to electrical impulses. Psiberplas is similar, but is composed of specially engineered psi-interactive biomolecules sensitive to psychokinetic impulses.

Anyone with Telekinesis can "tweak" the molecules of his psiberplas garment to make it instantly change color or texture, or within limits, cut, even turning it transparent. Changes of texture or complicated patterns (e.g., a Stewart Plaid) require an active use of TK and a skill roll. Failure results in unintended changes, with repeated attempts (at the usual penalty) required to fix the outfit.

Imaginative users may come up with other ideas for psiberplas, e.g., vehicle or suit camouflage, or shape-changing devices.

Psiberplas clothing costs $500 and weighs 2 pounds for a stylish skin-tight body suit that can be worn under normal clothing. It has PD 2, DR 15 and is available at TL10. Complexity: Complex. Legality: 6.

Teleportation Technology

Jump Beacon — TL11

A jump beacon is a device that stresses space/time, creating a node that is "weaker" than its surrounding area. As a result, anyone teleporting to a destination within the beacon's range will be intercepted and drawn to the beacon instead of his planned destination! If using Exoteleport, the object that was being teleported is diverted. The person or object appears on the jump beacon platform.

The range of a jump beacon is set by its Power; see the *Telepathy Range Table*. The more powerful a beacon, the greater the area over which it can draw people in. A beacon will "catch" anyone teleporting *out of* its affected area. It will also draw anyone teleporting to a destination *within* its affected area. If two or more jump beacons are within range, a teleport will be drawn to the nearest one, regardless of its Power.

A powerful and highly trained teleporter can resist the pull of a jump beacon. To do so, make a separate roll against the teleporter's (Power + Skill)-15. A successful roll means he senses he is being pulled "off course" and instantly readjusts his destination. A critical success means he does so, and also detects the exact location of the jump beacon. A critical failure means that he not only fails, but the strain leaves him unconscious when he arrives at the beacon.

Jump beacons are typically set as traps to snare intruding teleporters. But a jump beacon can also be used consciously. Any teleporter deliberately *trying* to go to or to send something to a specific jump beacon does so at +4 Power. Jump beacons can thus serve as useful "stations" for long-range teleports.

The exact mechanism by which a jump beacon operates depends on the actual TL. At TL12+ it may contain a mini-black hole or an antigravity generator. At lower TLs, it may use a psiborg brain with PK or Teleport Power to generate a localized spacewarp. At the GM's discretion, a jump beacon may also affect mechanical forms of teleportation.

The smallest jump beacon (Power 5) is a backpack unit; psis trying to jump from within its field are not drawn to it, but simply find their power ineffective. $15,000; 20 lbs.

A Power 10 beacon would cost $80,000, take 1 cy, and weigh 500 lbs.

A Power 15 beacon would cost $200,000, take 3 cy, and weigh a half-ton.

A Power 20 beacon would cost $250,000 at the same size and weight.

Larger beacons would add $10,000 per point of Power, at the same size and weight. Intermediate beacon sizes may be interpolated by the GM.

Complexity: Amazing. Legality: Highly variable depending on size, intended use and attitudes of society!

Actuality Shield

An actuality shield is built into the surface of a device to decrease its hold on normal space/time, making it easier to Exoteleport or carry while using Autoteleport or Combat Teleport.

An object protected by an actuality shield has only 10 percent of its normal weight for the purpose of determining how much weight can be teleported.

If a military force includes people with Exoteleport capability, actuality shields are often built into grenades or larger bombs, for obvious reasons.

Cost of an Actuality Shield grid for an object is equal to $10,000×the object's weight in pounds. For example, an actuality shield for a 105-pound suit of powered combat armor would cost $1,050,000 . . . and the suit would only count as weighing 10.5 pounds when the user tried to teleport while wearing it.

An actuality shield grid does not require power.

TL11. Complexity: Complex. Legality: 5.

Blinksat System

A blinksat system consists of one or more high-resolution reconnaissance satellites which are data-linked to an psionic computer (see p. 62) programmed with Telesend. For best results, the psi-comp and satellite dish should be mounted in a vehicle or several vehicles. Those lacking the budget to launch their own satellites may wish to tap or hack into existing government or corporate spysats (see ***GURPS Cyberpunk***).

Through datalink, the computer can monitor the satellite's observations in realtime and transmit these images directly into the mind of a living psi. With a global network of satellites, this lets a teleport jump almost anywhere on the planet's surface. Few teleports will have the range (without extensive psi-tech augmentation) to do this, but a single satellite can still provide useful "jump coordinates" for jaunts within a city or rural area.

Note that teleporting to a place seen only through someone's mind is at -3.

The cost of a satellite and its deployment varies greatly, from millions of dollars to a few thousand, depending on space technology. See *Psionic Computers* (p. 62) for the cost of the computer and program; the price of the datalink and communications system is negligible compared to that of the system itself.

Psionic Stardrive — TL10

If it could be understood, the "instantaneous" communication possible with telepathy and teleportation would revolutionize physics. One area of engineering that would benefit immediately is the search for faster-than-light interstellar travel.

A "psionic stardrive" adds the power of a living psi (or psiborg or psionic computer) to a psychotronic field generator that surrounds the ship. The psi must be on board, brain-linked by electrodes or electromagnetic induction to the ship's onboard navigation computers and psychotronic drive.

A psionic stardrive works just like teleportation, but the jump cannot begin or end within a planetary atmosphere or in a gravity field stronger than .001 Gs. This means that some form of supplementary normal-space drive will be necessary for most ships.

A Teleport Power of 21 or higher is necessary. Attaining this power level will almost certainly require that multiple psis be linked together in a gestalt (p. 37), either by telepathy or using a Gestalt Web (p. 61) device. Alternately (or in addition) drugs or psionic amplifiers may be used.

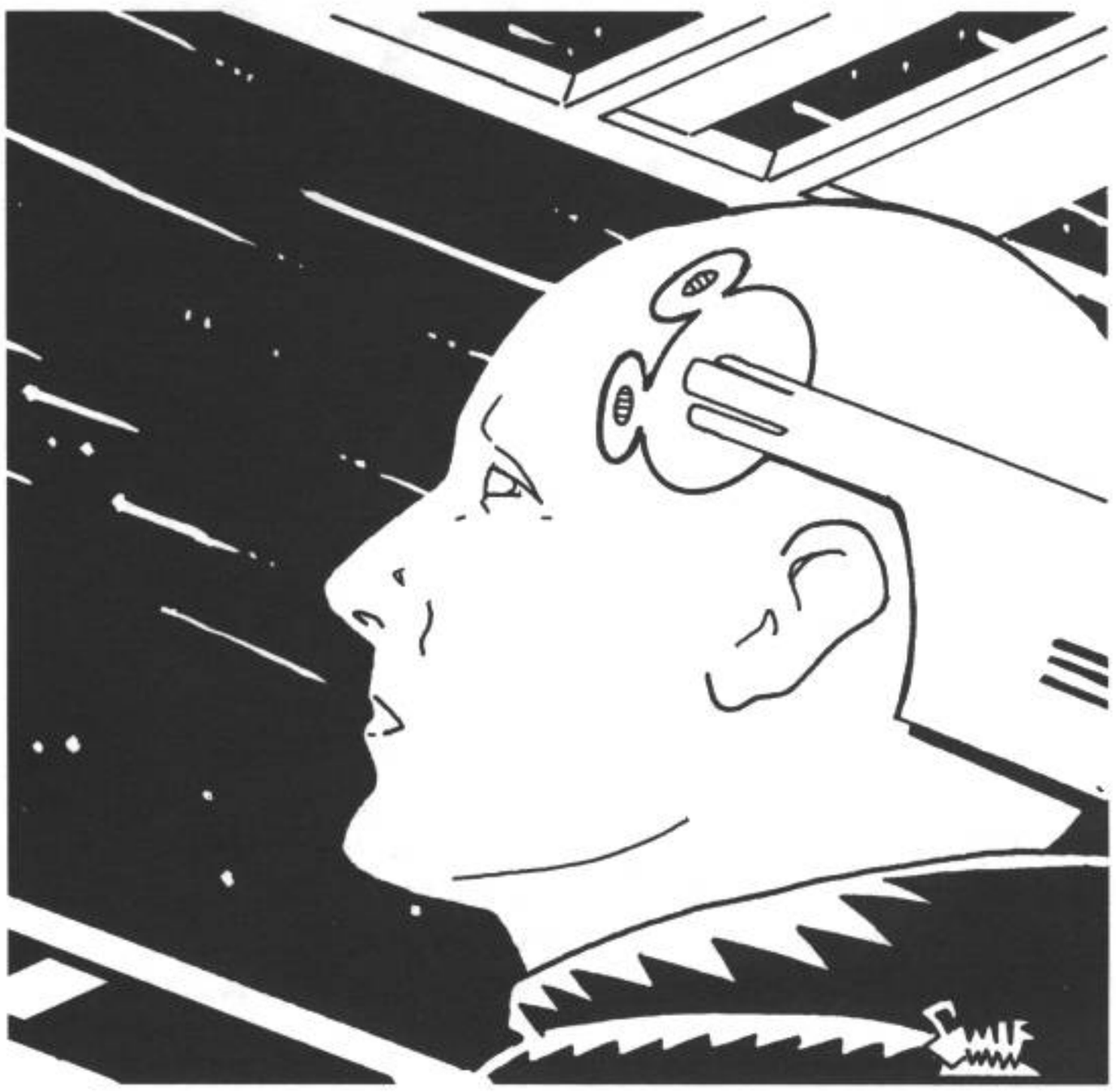
The maximum range is one parsec (slightly over three light years) with a Power of 21. Add 1 pc to jump range for each level of Power above 21 and 5 pc to jump range for each level above 25. Thus, a psi with Power 23 could jump 3 parsecs, and a psi with power 26 could jump 10 parsecs.

To achieve the hyperjump successfully, a skill roll against Exoteleport skill is required, with a penalty of -1 per parsec of distance. Ten minutes of concentration and 3 fatigue points are required. Success transports the starship to its destination across intervening space in effectively zero time. Failure means that nothing happens; another ten minutes of concentration and another roll will be required, with the usual penalty for repeated attempts. Critical failure sends the ship somewhere *unpleasant*, burning out the psionic jump drive and stunning the teleporter's Power for 1d *days*.

A teleporter can only jump the ship somewhere he has already been or can see in someone else's mind (-3 to skill). This means that the first voyage to any interstellar destination must be made by a pathfinder ship (with a non-psionic drive or a foolhardy blind-jump scout), or proceed in small steps. Familiarization trips or a telepathic navigator who has already visited the destination will be necessary for training psionic pilots.

A psionic stardrive masses 10 tons, costs $50,000,000 and takes up 10 cy, plus 1 ton, $5,000,000 and 1 cy for every 100 tons of ship mass. Complexity: Amazing. Legality: 4.

GMs may wish to adjust the stardrive's TL or statistics to better fit their own campaigns.



Psychotronic Weaponry

Hypnagogic Web — TL8

This hand-held scanner-like device sends signals into the subject's brain. The target must be in sight of the user, and the target must be able to see the Web Projector. It is controlled by a psiberface helmet or implant (p. 60) linked to the device itself.

It can affect one target at a time. It takes a normal attack action to use. Make a Quick Contest of the user's Electronic Operations (Psychotronics) skill+5 vs. the subject's Will, with *one try only* per day. Mind Shield and Psionic Resistance both subtract from the user's skill. There is no range penalty, but it has a maximum range of 400 yards.

Success means the subject goes into a trance state for 2 seconds for every point the roll succeeded by. In addition, success by 5 or more (or a critical success) means the user may implant a compulsion in the subject (as per Mindwipe skill, p. 23) – including suicide. The compulsion cannot occur until after the subject comes out of his trance.

It weighs 2 pounds and costs $100,000. Complexity: Average. Legality: 0.

At TL9, a Hypnagogic Web may be implanted into a person's head (operation $2,000), usually replacing an eye and part of the brain (-1 to IQ), and no psiberface helmet or implant is needed. The user must have eye contact with the subject. Use the rules for Mind Control implants (p. 67) for inserting or removing the device. Removing it does *not* negate the -1 to IQ: the device is fairly large for an implant, and the brain damage is permanent. At TL11+, there is no IQ penalty.

Complexity: Complex. Legality: 0.

Telestatic Field Projector — TL9

A telestatic field projector generates annoying mental "static" that interferes with the target's concentration. It is a pocket-sized weapon, with a range of 25 yards, often worn strapped to the wrist (concealed under a sleeve). The device is silent, noiseless and pro-

jects no visible beam; a non-psi affected by one may simply believe he has a migraine headache. No skill roll is required, but the user must have the target in range and line of sight (it doesn't work through thick walls, but will penetrate armor or force screens, though not stasis fields) and be Aiming each turn.

The victim of the projector will suffer a -2 to IQ (and all IQ-based skills and abilities, including magic, psionics and Will). Because his concentration is broken, in combat the subject will always go *last* in a turn for initiative purposes, regardless of Speed. Effects last only as long as the user trains the projector on the subject, vanishing as soon as he stops.

A telestatic projector will not affect someone with a P-Web, Mind Shield or telepathic shield helmet (which will also register that a psionic attack is taking place). It *will* affect anyone within a null-field, unless they are also shielded.

As it is easily concealed and its beam is nearly undetectable, a telestatic field projector is a useful device for unscrupulous gamblers, diplomats or merchants. Used "under the table" it can disrupt a rival's concentration during an important speech, or at a game or bargaining session.

A telestatic projector is powered by a B cell, which allows five minutes of continuous operation. $2,000, ½ pound. Complexity: Average. Legality: 3.

Psychosynaptic Disruptor — TL10

This weapon projects a powerful telepathic beam that overloads the target's brain and nervous system, causing shock, confusion and possibly short-term memory loss.

Psychosynaptic disruptors are ranged weapons and require a normal roll to hit, using Beam Weapons (Neural) skill. However, cover has no effect on the hit chance: the beam will pass directly through anything material. The psychic beam is invisible to everyone *but* the person who is actually hit, who will "see" it as a beam of blinding light emanating from the weapon. This effect is species-specific – a being whose primary sense was hearing (including a blind person) would perceive a deafening sound, for instance.

Anyone hit by the beam must make a Will roll. Failure means that the victim is mentally stunned and loses 2 fatigue per point the roll fails by, or 1 fatigue per point beyond ½D range. If the Will roll is a Critical Failure, the subject also loses 1d points of IQ. Lost IQ recovers at 1 point per day.

A person who becomes unconscious (0 fatigue) as the result of a psychosynaptic disruptor hit loses all memory of what happened during the last 1d minutes before he passed out! Lost memories are permanently gone – not even use of the Mindwipe skill can restore them. This effect makes the weapon highly useful for covert-operations activities.

A Mind Shield or telepathic shield only adds 1 to Will rolls to resist this weapon for every *two* levels of Power – psychosynaptic weapons project a concentrated "needle" beam of mental energy designed to slip through most psychic shields.

All psychosynaptic weapons are recoilless and silent. They come in three models:

Psychosynaptic Disruptor Pistol: A small sidearm, easily concealed. The Will roll to resist is at -3. Acc 4, SS 7, ½D 10, Max 25, RoF 1. It gets 8 shots from a B cell. It weighs 2 pounds and costs $2,000. TL10. Complexity: Complex. Legality: 3.

Psychosynaptic Disruptor Rifle: A "bullpup" style rifle-sized version. The Will roll is at -5. Acc 7, SS 10, ½D 25, Max 100, RoF 1. It gets 20 shots from a C cell. It weighs 8 pounds and costs $5,200. TL10. Complexity: Complex. Legality: 2.

Semi-Portable Psychosynaptic Disruptor: A heavier tripod-mounted weapon, though someone with ST 15+ can fire it from the hip. It projects a wide beam that can be "fanned" over several targets if they are in the weapon's arc of fire. If the beam if concentrated on a single target, the roll to resist is Will-6. Against two targets, the roll is Will-4. Against three targets, the roll is Will-2. Against four targets, the roll is against Will. No more than four targets can be affected at once. Acc 10, SS 12, ½D 50, Max 200, RoF 1. It gets 40 shots from a D cell. It weighs 30 pounds and costs $20,000. Complexity: Complex. Legality: 1.

Empathic Mirror — TL10

This is a lightweight headband which amplifies any physical sensations felt by the user and broadcasts them around him. While it has its peacetime uses (primarily in the bedroom), an empathic mirror is mainly intended as a defensive weapon. Everyone lacking a telepathic shield or a natural mind shield in a 5-yard radius around the user will suffer the same shock, stunning and knockdown effects that the wearer does! A person affected by the device makes his own rolls against HT or Will, however, rather than using the wearer's.

For example, if the wearer lost 4 hits from a bullet wound, everyone within 5 yards would be at -4 DX due to the wearer's pain. If the wearer was stunned, everyone would have to make a HT roll to recover.

Aside from its recreational value, an empathic mirror is most useful for close combat by a single person against several enemies, since it will affect friends as well as foes. It is powered by a single C cell for up to an hour of continuous use. It masses 1 pound and costs $7,000. At 20% extra cost, it can be built into a combat helmet. Complexity: Complex. Legality: 5.

Bodyshield — TL11

A Bodyshield is a psionic augmentation device resembling a one-piece silver mesh body stocking with a belt-mounted power pack; it can be worn under armor. It may only be used by a psi with the PK Shield or Energy Shield skills. The bodyshield acts to attract and hold the psi's own force field more tightly around his body.

The user activates his PK or Energy Shield normally, then, if successful, turns on the bodyshield. As long as the user maintains his PK or Energy Shield, each level of Power will provide DR 3 (+1 per TL after it first appears) against appropriate attacks (energy for Energy Shield, physical for PK Shield) rather than the normal DR 1 per 2 levels. The higher-powered field is visible as a faint shimmering in the air around the user. It *can* enhance both skills, if the psi has both.

The Bodyshield is powered by a C cell that operates it for 30 seconds of continuous use. It takes one turn to activate or deactivate. It costs $10,000 and weighs 2 pounds; for an extra $1,000, it may be made out of psiberplas (see p. 69). Complexity: Complex. Legality: 3.

Support Weaponry

Psi-Bomb — TL8

A psi-bomb generates a burst of deafening psychic "noise" similar to a Mental Blow (p. 21), but the effect is continuous. The bomb broadcasts for 10 seconds and affects everyone within its radius. After use, the bomb's power cell and its casing are fused together – the bomb cannot be reused.

Anyone in the bomb's radius of effect is attacked individually each turn, as per a Mental Blow of equivalent Power and a Skill of 15. Roll at the start of the subject's turn to resist the bomb's effect.

Someone with a mind shield or telepathic shield adds the shield's strength to his HT to resist the bomb's effect. However, psi bombs are especially effective against unprepared adepts. Add 1 to the bomb's effective Power for every 5 points of the victim's highest psi power. This bonus does not count against a shielded psi, or one who was expecting the bomb.

In addition to stunning victims and causing fatigue damage (physical injury for critical hits), psi bombs can deliver one simple emotional message, set when the bomb is built: hate, fear, disgust, joviality or even lust! Victims who fail a Will roll will *act out* the emotion on those around them for as many turns as they failed the roll by!

A psi-bomb is usually activated via a timer, though a microbomb (see below) could also be thrown. Although not sturdy enough for use in a missile warhead, an aircraft could drop one fitted with a parachute. The timer on a psi-bomb is designed to allow it to be set for a delay from 1 second to 24 hours.

Smaller psi-bombs are usually employed much like present-day stun munitions – special ops teams use them (while wearing psi shields!) to stun unprotected individuals without causing damage to property or innocent bystanders. Larger psi-bombs can be dropped on unprotected troops prior to an assault, or used in a continuous psychic bombardment to wear down morale of civilians or soldiers alike.

Message Psi Bombs

These bombs carry a specific psychic message, which works over a radius of effect ten times that of the equivalent Mental Blow bomb. Every creature in the area is "attacked" by the message. If the attack is successful, the message is received. Those acquainted with the sender have a +1 to +4 to receive the message. A critical hit lets a recipient *read between the lines* and learn something about the sender!

The message may be one word in length per TL of the bomb. The GM makes a secret Electronic Operations (Psychotronics) roll for the person loading the m\bomb. Increase the word total by 1 for each point the loader makes his roll by. *Double* word total on a critical success. Failure decreases the message length by 1 for each point failed by. Critical failure results in a misleading message, but the loader thinks he succeeded normally. Only one roll may be made per bomb.

Typical Sizes of Psi-Bomb:

Thimble: Affects a 1-yard radius. $100, 4 oz. Power: 10. Complexity: Average. Legality: 3.

Grenade: Affects a 4-yard radius. $200, 1 lb. Power: 12. Complexity: Average. Legality: 2.

Satchel: Affects a 70-yard radius (enough to include most of a large building). $1,000, 10 pounds. Power: 16. Complexity: Average. Legality: 1.

Terror bomb: Affects a 5-mile radius. Power: 23. $10,000, 200 pounds. Complexity: Average. Legality: 0.

Psibermine TL9

This box-shaped device was developed to disable unshielded armored vehicle crews and to clear bunkers and strong points; it can also be used as a type of "claymore mine" or booby trap.

A psibermine generates a cone-shaped directional pulse of painful telepathic noise intense enough to cause a normal mind to "shut down" in self-defense. It is usually used much like a limpet mine: its timer is activated and it is clamped onto an object. It can be set for a timed delay of between 1 and 30 seconds. It can also be set to trigger from a scrambled radio or communicator pulse. Setting the timer takes 2 seconds.

When activated, anything within 8 yards of the direction the psibermine is facing will be affected, in a 60-degree cone extending out from its base. A HT or Will roll (whichever is better) is required, at -4; reduce the penalty by 1 per 2 hexes away from the bomb. Failing the roll means the victim falls unconscious for 1 minute for every point the roll was failed by. Succeeding by 0 to 2 means the subject is mentally stunned. Success by 3 or more means they are unaffected.

The psychic emanations pass through solid objects without difficulty. Thus, if the psibermine is attached to the outside of a vehicle and activated, it will affect the crew inside.

A psibermine can be used only once – its power cell burns out when activated, destroying the device. It includes a C cell. It costs $500 and weighs 6 pounds. Complexity: Complex. Legality: 1.

Fear Extractor TL10

A true terror weapon, this semi-portable device resembles a small radar dish. It is usually installed in a vehicle turret or tripod mount. It projects a telepathic impulse that releases the subconscious minds of its targets, who experience nightmare visions from their deepest fears. It affects a 5-yard radius at a range of 240 yards; no skill is required to use it, but the user must make a normal "attack" maneuver to aim it.

Anyone in the area affected must roll a Fright Check at -4 to Will. Add the level of the user's Mind Shield or Psionic Resistance, if any, to user's Will to resist its effects.

Further attacks by a fear projector are less effective. A second attack in a 24-hour period is at +3 to resist, a third attack at +6, etc.

Nevertheless, released terrors may not be easily repressed again and may manifest through nightmares. Additional checks (at -3) must be made each time the subject sleeps during the next 1d nights after the attack.

The device is powered by a D cell, which gives 60 uses. It weighs 120 pounds and costs $80,000. Complexity: Complex. Legality: 3.

Mindseeker TL8

A mindseeker can replace the normal homing system on any TL8+ guided missile. The mindseeker enables the missile to detect the thoughts of sentient minds within a 30-degree cone in front of it, with a range of 500 yards. Unless it has its own inertial guidance system with a preprogrammed flight path, the missile will fly directly forward until a sentient mind comes into range, and then will steer the missile toward it. If it detects more than one sentient mind before it strikes, it will lock onto the nearest.

A mindseeker may fail to "notice" someone using a mind shield. If a mindseeker's target is mind shielded, make a roll against the shield's Skill + Power. If the roll succeeds, the seeker will attempt to target the next nearest mind. If it cannot lock onto *anyone* within its detection range and sensor arc, it will just continue to fly straight ahead.

Once it is locked onto a target, the mindseeker guidance system ensures that the missile will always hit. It is immune to mundane antimissile countermeasures such as flares, chaff or electronic jamming. The only defense is to dodge or take cover. A successful Dodge roll means the missile will strike a random hex 1 yard from its target for every point by which the target succeeded in the Dodge roll. PD does not add to Dodge against missiles, but the target can be allowed the +3 bonus for "retreating" if he dropped prone or dived for cover to avoid it.

A TL10 mindseeker simply guides the missile toward thinking minds. Mindseekers are usually species specific: a

mindseeker to be used on nonhumans must be programmed for that species and will not be useful against humans. However, later mindseekers become more sophisticated.

A TL11 mindseeker can be programmed with the psychic signature of a specific individual. The mindseeker will move until the missile finds its target. Most missiles will move directly ahead, but TL12+ missiles (such as the Hunter Missile, on p. 103 of ***GURPS Ultra-Tech***) could actively seek out a target. It will not home on other targets, and if it runs out of fuel or crashes before finding its target, its warhead will not detonate.

In order to hunt a specific target, that mental signature must be first transmitted to the seeker's memory, generally through a psi using Telesend who has encountered the target's mind before (through Telereceive or indirectly via Signature Sense). An alternative method is to connect the mindseeker missile to a Mindscanner and program its brain with any patterns stored in the Mindscanner's own computer memory.

A psi who notices a mindseeker missile may attempt to divert it telepathically – assuming he has time before it hits! This involves using Telesend to transmit alternative signals to its "brain." Roll against Telesend at -5. Success means that the missile has been diverted and will crash harmlessly; critical success means that the psi can give it an alternate target signature if he wishes to.

If mindseekers are available, they can be built into any type of ***GURPS Ultra-Tech*** guided missile, or into TL10+ clever grenades. At TL14, mindseekers can be used in Smartgun bullets. If using ***GURPS High-Tech,*** any modern "fire and forget" guided missile could be retrofitted with a mindseeker guidance system.

Mindseekers double the cost of the guided weapon they are built into.

Complexity: Complex. Legality: 1.

Thanatos Field — TL10

Also known as a vampire field or death field, this is a semi-portable weapon that kills by psionic means, draining the life force from living things. Since it kills people without damaging electronics or machinery, it is a very useful weapon system. It has no effect on life forms of IQ 0 – bacteria, plants, etc.

A Will roll is required at the start of each turn within the field. Failure results in a loss of 1 hit point; critical failure results in 1d+1 damage. People in a death-field experience disorientation, pain and feelings of despair. A mind shield is ineffective, but Psionic Resistance adds half its level to the Will roll. Rats and cockroaches suffer "flight" reflexes, dogs howl despondently and other animals behave similarly.

The field is unaffected by solid objects, armor or force fields. Its area of effect is a spherical radius of anywhere between 10 yards to 1 mile; changing the radius or the target settings on the field takes 2 turns.

At higher TLs, a thanatos field generator can be tuned to be more selective in its destruction.

At TL11, it can be tuned to affect only higher animals (IQ 4+), leaving insects, fish, etc. unharmed.

At TL12 it can be tuned to affect only sentient life forms (those with IQ 7+), without harming normal animals.

At TL13 a vampire field is tunable to a single species or category (e.g., *only* non-psis, or *only* insects).

A thanatos field generator is too heavy for one person to carry, but two men can lift it, or it can be mounted on a vehicle. Since machines are immune to its radiations, robots are often fitted with thanatos field generators. Tactically, death fields are usually used as booby traps in urban areas or spaceships; people caught in the effects must either quickly locate and destroy the generator or flee the area. But since the field works through solid objects, a generator could be hidden almost anywhere, even deep beneath the ground. With the proper codes, any computer/communicator can operate it remotely.

The generator weighs 220 pounds and costs $140,000. It is powered by an E cell that operates it for up to half an hour, or continuously from a building or vehicle generator. Complexity: Amazing. Legality: 1.

Exterminator: This is a death field generator with safety interlocks designed to function only vs. lower (IQ 6 or less) life forms and restrict the radius to 100 yards. It is used to control major pest outbreaks. Breaking the safety interlocks is difficult, requiring an Electronics (Security Systems)-4 roll, one try only. Any failure destroys the device. It is otherwise identical to a death field generator, but is Legality 4.

Anti-Psi Technology

These devices restrain, disrupt or protect against psionic powers. If psi powers are known, then unless *everyone* is psychic, some of these devices will likely either be in common use, or someone will be actively trying to develop them.

P-Web — TL7

A very simple development, the P-Web is a fine mesh of platinum-group metal alloy. Worn on the head (built into a hat or helmet to protect the webbing) it will totally protect against the Confuse skill. It will also prevent the wearer from using any Electrokinetic abilities (but affects no other type of psi). Its only drawback is cost: the materials are expensive and the mesh must be very fine. It adds only a half-pound to the weight of the hat or helmet, but costs $1,200. Complexity: Simple. Legality: 4.

Psionic Shield — TL8

This is actually a misnomer, for the psionic shield only protects against Telepathy. It generates a psychic barrier identical to a telepathic Mind Shield (p. 22). If reliable telepaths are known to exist and not everyone is psionic, shield helmets will become a common item of dress for anyone who has secrets they wish to protect: politicians, police, intelligence agents, soldiers and possibly even businessmen.

The shield subtracts 6 from the skill of any use of Telepathy, friendly or hostile, against or by the subject, exactly as if it were a Mind Shield used by a telepath with a skill of 3 and a Power of 6. The shield circuits automatically warn the wearer (through a beeper or silent signal on an attached Head-Up Display) when a telepath *fails* to penetrate the shields, but provide no warning if the telepath succeeded.

They appear at TL8; at each TL after its introduction, the Power of a Psi Shield increases by 2, so a TL10 shield would have a Power of 10. The GM may allow experimental high-powered shields to be available earlier!

Lightweight helmets are available (PD 0, DR 1, cover only the brain) with telepathic shielding are available (1.5 pounds, $1,000). Alternately, psionic shield circuitry can be built into any type of combat helmet, adding 1 pound to weight and $1,000 to cost (or $1,200 if added to a helmet after initial purchase). A telepathic shield helmet uses a B cell, which powers it for 6 months. Complexity: Average. Legality: 5.

Mini-Shield: A compact version of the standard telepathic shield, it resembles a small crystal, and thus can be easily concealed in a pocket or worn as jewelry, perhaps an earring. It only protects the user with a skill of 3 and a Power of 4. This increases by 2 per extra TL, so a TL12 Mini-Shield would have a Power of 12. It costs $1,000; weight is negligible. It is powered by an A cell for 1 month. Complexity: Average. Legality: 5.

Neutralizer TL9

A neutralizer is a specially designed neural disruptor, similar in operation to the TL10 nerve gun and paralysis guns described in ***GURPS Ultra-Tech*** and ***GURPS Space***. It is a large, heavy pistol and fires an invisible beam which selectively scrambles the areas of the target's brain and nervous system that control psi powers.

Any psi-user hit by a neutralizer loses 1d levels of Power from *all* psi abilities he possesses (roll separately for each) and is stunned for one turn unless a Will-3 roll is made. Multiple hits have cumulative effects, but no Power can be reduced below 0. Lost Power recovers at 1 level per hour. Any critical hit by a neutralizer can cause *permanent* loss of Power. Non-psionics are totally unaffected by a neutralizer – possibly to their surprise, if they see a psionic being shot and stunned.

Neutralizers are single-shot weapons, firing a beam that lasts for an entire turn. They require Beam Weapons (Neural) skill. They do not affect targets in totally sealed armor or who are protected by force screens, but do work in vacuum.

A neutralizer has SS 12, Accuracy 5, ½D range 15 (for determination of SS only) and a Max range of 30 yards. It has a RoF of 1. It uses a C cell, which gives it 12 shots. It is recoilless and requires no minimum ST to use. It weighs 2 pounds and costs $6,000. Complexity: Complex.

If psionics are illegal, neutralizers could be part of the standard equipment of police and security forces – or kept secret and restricted to special units, for fear that resistance psis will develop a countermeasure if they capture one. If psionics are legal, than a neutralizer is Legality 5, just like most stun weapons; use of one on a psi is considered assault.

Null-Field TL8

Also called a psionic damper, a null-field generator projects psychic interference patterns which disrupt or absorb all natural uses of psi within the area covered – including Teleportation, Psychokinesis or ESP. A skillful psi can work around their interference, but not without effort.

A null-field does not affect psychotronic devices, unless a psi must channel his power through them or use his power to activate them, in which case it interferes with the skill roll normally.

Overlapping fields do not enhance each other, but don't interfere with each other.

The null-field's disruption applies both to psis within the null field using their powers and to psis outside the field trying to affect targets within the field. The null-field subtracts 5 from all skill levels, and any attempt to use psi automatically costs fatigue, while any attempt that *normally* costs fatigue costs twice as much. For instance, a psi trying to teleport into a null field from outside it would have the same penalty as one who was inside the field trying to teleport out.

The radiation of a null-field can be picked up by a psi scanner. Any telepath or esper attempting to use their powers into (or from within) a null-field perceives the field as a cold, oppressive "dead zone." Two types of null-field generator are available:

Portable Nulls are suitcase-sized generators which project a null-field over an area 10 yards across. They are powered by D cells and run for 48 hours. They may also be set to project a smaller, more powerful null-field, covering only a 2-yard radius but subtracting 10 from any psi use. Portable Nulls are often used as anti-surveillance devices by people who fear psi-eavesdropping. $10,000, 10 pounds. Complexity: Average. Legality: 4.

Pocket Dampers are about the size of a paperback book. They can be worn strapped to a belt, cover a 2-yard radius around the user and run on C cells for 24 hours of continuous use. $6,000, 2 lbs. These appear at TL9. Complexity: Average. Legality: 6.



Psi-Impeder TL8

This is a headband with projects a psi-damping field that prevents the wearer from using psionic powers. A psi with a Power of 7 or less cannot use any of that Power's skills; a higher-Power psi can try, but before making a skill roll, he must roll 3d vs. *Power*-5. Success burns out the damper circuits, freeing the "prisoner"; failure means the ability doesn't work and the psi takes one point of fatigue damage per point the roll was failed by. In the case of failure, further attempts are at a cumulative -1 per try until the psionic has rested for at least an hour. Critical failure knocks the psi unconscious for 1d hours.

A psi-impeder may have a built in "punishment circuit" which stimulates the wearer's pain centers whenever the user attempts a psionic ability, further discouraging escape attempts. This effect occurs *after* the attempt to use a psi skill (whether successful or not) so it is possible to burn out the psi-impeder and then collapse due to the pain.

When the pain circuits activate, the psi must make a HT-5 roll (+ or - Will modifiers). Success means he can still function, but is at -2 to ST, DX and IQ (and all derived skills and abilities such as Will) due to pain for 15-Will turns (minimum one turn). Failure means he is in such agony that he can do nothing for this time. Each consecutive failure during a 24-hour period lowers the HT by 1 (e.g., the second attempt to break free requires a HT-6 save to resist the pain). A critical failure causes unconsciousness for 20-HT minutes (at least 1 minute).

Psi-impeders are the commonest way of restraining a conscious psi. They are likely to be found in the arsenal of any psi-tech equipped security force; research institutes may also have them on hand to restrain difficult subjects.

The device works for 2 months on an AA cell; weight ¼lb., cost $600, or $1,000 with punishment circuit. At double cost, Psi-Impeders can be surgically implanted into a person's brain – see *Mind Control Implants,* p. 67, for the chance of success when implanting or removing them, and the penalties for failure. Complexity: Average. Legality: 3.

Gadget Tables

This table also covers the psi-drugs, operations and other bio-psi devices described in the next chapter.

Name: The name of the item.

Weight: In pounds. Weight will be halved one TL after the gadget first appears, and halved again after two TLs. No weight is given for drugs or implants.

Cost: The cost of the gadget; like weight, cost drops by half one TL after the gadget initially appears, and is quartered after two TLs. For implants, the cost of the operation is also given; this cost is also reduced by TL. There is no operation cost if a character performs the operation using his own skills.

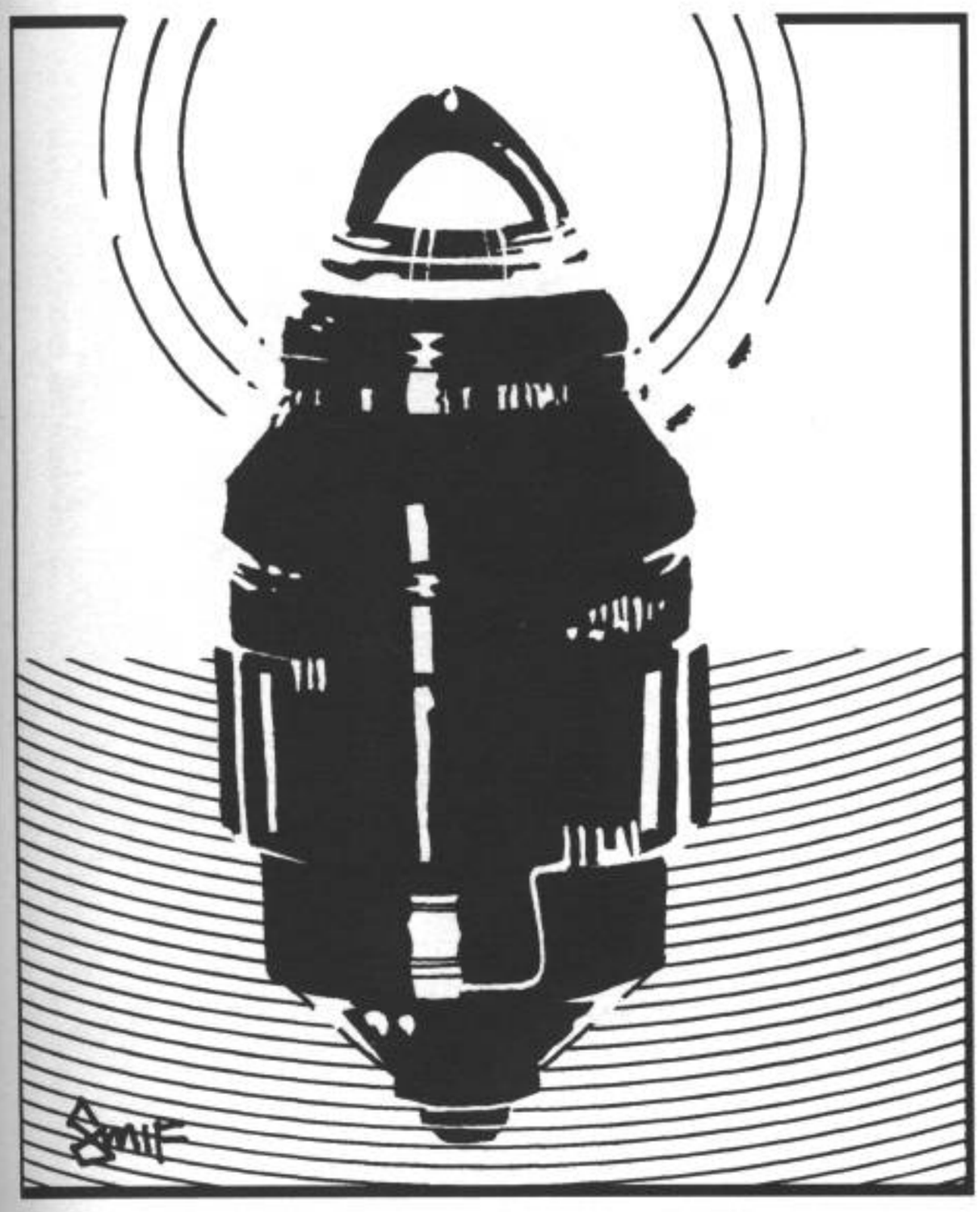
Legality Class (LC): How likely the gadget is to be legally available. See p. 58. Note that if psi powers are illegal in themselves, all items except Mundane Technology and Antipsi Devices will be Legality 0!

Complexity: How difficult it is to invent and manufacture the item – for use with the *Gadgeteering* rules in ***GURPS Supers.*** S:Simple; Av:Average; C:Complex; Am:Amazing.

TL: the tech level at which the item is first manufactured. See p. 57. Experimental versions of some items may be available at earlier TLs – see *Cost and Accessibility,* p. 57.

Page: The page where the item is described.

Form (for drugs): The form in which the drug may be administered. See p. 78.



Mundane Technology	*Wt*	*Cost*	*LC*	*Complex.*	*TL*	*Page*
Psionic Testing Equip.	400	100,000	6	Av	7	59
Sensory Deprivation Tank	800	10,000	6	Av	7	59
Deepsleep Box	2	500	6	S	7	59
Brainscanner	4	6,000	5	Av	8	60
Interface Technology						
Psiberface Helmet	4	4,000	6	C	7	60
Psiberface Implant	–	4,000	6	C	7	60
–operation cost	–	+2,000				
Tele-Switch	–	200	6	S	8	60
Secure Tele-Switch	–	1,000	6	Av	9	61
Telepathic Control Panel	–	10,000	6	Av	10	61
Secure Telepathic Ctrl Panel	–	100,000	6	Av	10	61
Psionic Amplifiers						
Amplifier Throne	1,000	200,000	3	Am	8	61
–each extra Power	+500	+100,000	3	Am	8	61
Backpack Psi-Amplifier	20	40,000	4	Am	8	61
–each extra Power	+10	+20,000	4	Am	8	61
Amplifier Helmet	4	25,000	5	Am	8	61
–each extra Power	1	10,000	5	Am	8	61
Amplifier Headband	1	6,250	5	Am	10	61
–each extra Power	½	2,500	5	Am	10	61
Other Augmentation Devices						
Gestalt Web	1,200	100,000	3	Am	10	61
–each extra mind	100	20,000	3	Am	10	61
World-Web Terminal	20	2,000	5	Av	11	61
Web Central Processor	50,000	25,000,000	1	Am	11	62
Psionic Computer	varies	varies	2	C	9	62
Psionics Program	–	100,000	2	C	9	62
Communication and Information Equipment						
Memory Crystal	½	2,000	6	Av	8	63
Deathscanner	12	80,000	5	C	9	63
Mind Probe	400	120,000	3	Am	9	64
Thought Globe	½	5,000	6	C	9	64
Psitector	1	1,000	6	Av	8	64
Psiscanner	2	10,000	5	C	9	64
Mindscanner	20	6,000	6	Av	8	65
Psychic Lock	½	500	6	Av	10	65
Empathic Lock	½	500	6	Av	10	65
Life Field Detector	4	4,000	6	Av	9	65
Dream Technology						
Dreamscanner	20	150,000	5	C	9	65
Dreamcorder	10	40,000	5	C	10	66
Covert Operations Equipment						
Mind Control Implant	n/a	4,000	2	Av	8	67
–operation cost	–	+2,000				
Mind Control Headband	½	6,000	2	Av	9	67
Empathic Sink	1	3,000	3	C	10	67
Empathic Sink Implant	n/a	2,000	2	C	10	67
–operation cost	–	+1,000				
Mind Transfer Machine	1,000	10,000,000	3	Am	10	67
Healing Technology						
Auric Scanner	400	10,000	6	Av	9	68
Biointensifier	600	20,000	5	C	10	68
Psychokinetic Technology						
Kinetic Bubble	¼	20,000	6	C	10	68
PK Batteries	varies	varies	6	Av	8	68
EK Batteries	varies	varies	6	Av	8	68
Psiberplas Clothing	2	500	6	C	10	69
Teleportation Technology						
Jump Beacon	varies	varies	varies	Am	11	69
Actuality Shield	varies	varies	5	C	11	69
Blinksat System	varies	varies	varies	varies	varies	69
Psionic Stardrive	20,000*	50,000,000*	4	Am	10	70

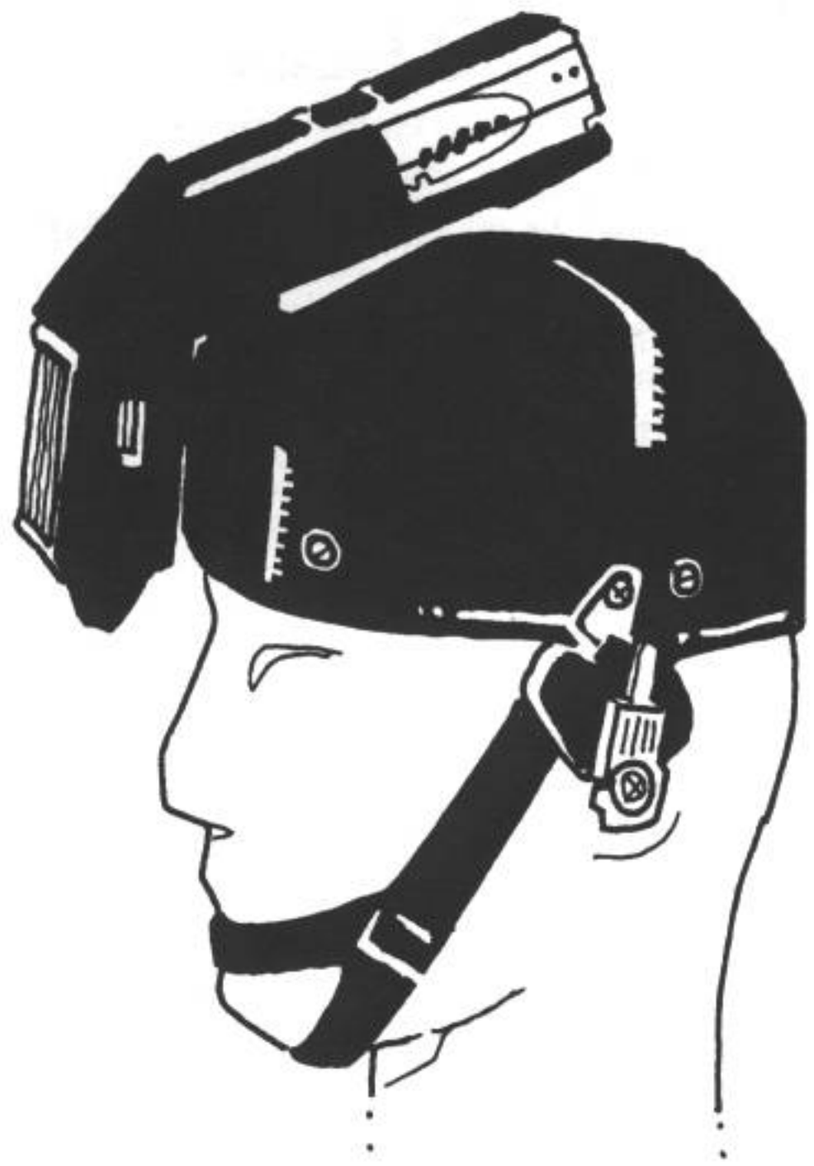
* plus 2,000 lbs. and $5,000,000 per 100 tons of ship mass

Psychotronic Weaponry	Wt	Cost	LC	Complex.	TL	Page
Hypnagogic Web	2	100,000	0	Av	8	70
Hypnagogic Web Implant	n/a	100,000	0	C	9	70
–operation	–	2,000				
Telestatic Field Projector	½	2,000	3	Av	9	70
Psychosynoptic Disruptors (see below)	varies	varies	varies	C	10	71
Empathic Mirror	1	7,000	5	C	10	71
Bodyshield	2	10,000	3	C	11	71
Psiberplas Bodyshield	2	11,000	3	C	11	71
Support Weaponry						
Thimble Psi-Bomb	4 oz.	100	3	Av	8	72
Grenade Psi-Bomb	1	200	2	Av	8	72
Satchel Psi-Bomb	10	1,000	1	Av	8	72
Terror Psi-Bomb	200	10,000	0	Av	8	72
Psibermine	6	500	1	C	9	72
Fear Extractor	120	80,000	3	C	10	72
Mindseeker	n/a	×2	1	C	8	72
Thanatos Field Generator	220	140,000	1	Am	10	73
Exterminator	220	140,000	4	Am	10	73
Anti-Psi Technology						
P-Web	½	1,200	4	S	7	73
Psionic Shield Helmet	1.5	1,000	5	Av	8	73
–add to combat helmet	+1	+1,000	5	Av	8	73
Mini-Shield	n/a	1,000	5	Av	8	74
Neutralizer	2	6,000	5	C	9	74
Pocket Damper	2	6,000	6	Av	9	74
Portable Null	10	10,000	4	Av	8	74
Psi-Impeder	¼	600	3	Av	8	74
–punishment circuit	–	+400	3	Av	8	
Psi-Impeder Implant	n/a	600	3	Av	8	74
–operation	–	+600				
–punishment circuit	–	+400	3	Av	8	74
Bio-Psi Technology						
Drone Brain	n/a	12,000	Spcl.	n/a	8	81
Drone Surgery	n/a	10,000	Spcl.	n/a	8	81
Power Virus	n/a	varies	2	Am	10	81
Null Virus	n/a	varies	1	C	9	81
Overmind Virus	n/a	20,000	0	Am	10	81
Metamorphosis	n/a	50,000	0	Am	10	81
Symbiotic Crystal	n/a	100,000+	4	Am	13	82
Watchdog	20	7,200	4	Av	8	83
Guardian	60	32,000	3	C	9	83
Inquisitor	200	200,000	3	C	9	83
Sponge	20	50,000	3	C	8	83
Brain Tissue Graft	n/a	20,000	1	C	8	83
Neuro-Psi Implant	½	150,000	5	Am	11	84
–operation		2,000				

Psi-Drugs	Cost	TL	LC	Complex.	Form	Page
Blue Fire	100	7	2	Av	Hypo or Pill	78
Brainstorm	150	8	1	Av	Hypo	78
Catalyst Drug	1,000	8	3	Av	Hypo or Pill	79
Mind Hype	100	8	4	Av	Hypo	79
Monobloc	60	8	4	S	Pill	79
Psibooster	varies	8	3	C	Hypo	79
Shatter	20	8	2	C	Hypo, Pill, Gas	80
Shiver	40	10	4	Av	Hypo or Pill	80
Trance	15	8	4	Av	Hypo or Pill	80

Psychosynaptic Disruptors

Weapon	Damage	Acc	SS	½D	Max	Wt.	RoF	Shots	ST	Rcl	Cost	LC	TL	Page
Pistol	Spcl.	4	7	10	25	2	1	8/B	–	0	2,000	3	10	71
Rifle	Spcl.	7	10	25	100	8	1	20/C	–	0	5,200	2	10	71
Semi-Portable	Spcl.	10	12	50	200	30	1	40/D	15	0	20,000	1	10	71









CHAPTER FIVE

BIO-PSI TECHNOLOGY



"*Jeremiah, it's Christine. They've strapped me down on a table, and given me some kind of neural anesthetic. I don't know if I can stay in contact with you anymore. Everything's going dark. I'm scared . . . I love you.*"

Christine's last message echoing through his mind, Jeremiah raced through the corridors of the Rocky Mountain branch of the Overmind Institute. He had snatched a drug ampule off a dead guard – BNSX-7, the synthetic neuroenhancer the military called Blue Fire. It boosted psi powers, but at a price – it was addictive, and a deadly poison. Still, he might need it. With a grimace of distaste, he injected the Blue Fire into his arm.

He increased his pace, sprinting down the passage, and almost crashed into the two guards. He stopped short: he faced two naked, sickly teenagers, a boy and a girl, each carrying an Uzi. Their heads were shaved, sockets showing where implants were installed. They were guarding the entrance to an elevator.

He reached out with his telepathy, attempting to discover from them where Christine was being held – and recoiled in horror when he found ***nothing*** *there. They were drones – born without minds, controlled like puppets by unseen masters, yet another of the abominations practiced in this hideous place. They opened fire, their bullets spattering off his psychokinetic shields like rain off a window pane.*

The Blue Fire singing in his mind, Jeremiah snapped first one, then the other's neck with his TK. He picked up one of the guns, then walked past the bodies into the elevator.

The elevator stopped at the fifth level. The door opened, and Jeremiah stepped out into in a large, well-lit room. He stood still, staring.

The body of Christine Pendrake lay on the table. The top of her skull was missing, where the brain had been removed with surgical precision. On the table next to her lay a large metal box, connected to a bank of computers, monitors and life-support systems. Two women in surgical whites were attaching electrodes to the box, watching a steady pulse of life on monitor screens. A fat, bearded man was speaking into a hand-held recorder.

"The operation was a success, with only minor damage to subject's intellect when the brain was removed, and preliminary psiscan shows no loss of telepathic facility. She will make an excellent Psiborg, probably an Inquisitor. In fact . . ." The man paused, as he noticed Jeremiah standing on the threshold.

"This lab is a restricted area! Who are you?"

His voice lost in a soundless scream, Jeremiah let the Uzi answer for him.

Availability of Bio-Psi

This chapter describes "soft" psionic technology, including psi-drugs, genetic engineering and neurosurgery. Biotech offers a risky – but effective – means of enhancing or controlling psi abilities.

Most bio-psi products will be even more closely regulated than other forms of psi-tech, partly because they are easier to produce and partly due to their sinister reputation. See Chapter 4 for the availability and legality of psionic technology.

Psi-Drugs

Biochemical methods may be the easiest means available to enhance or suppress psionic ability, although not necessarily the safest. Psi-drugs could be new proteins produced by recombinant DNA technology. Instead of drugs, they might be fast-acting "programmed viruses."

GMs may limit the availability of certain psi-drugs by deciding they require rare *natural* compounds which cannot be synthesized in the laboratory. For instance, a particular drug may require hormones from a rare or dangerous alien animal which does not breed in captivity. Totally natural psi-drugs may also exist – the leaves of certain tropical plants, rare herbs or animal venoms could have the same capabilities as manufactured drugs, giving primitive societies access to bio-psi technology.

Psi-drugs can be delivered in pill or hypo form, or dissolved in food or drink. Drugs in hypo form can be injected in one turn by hypodermic needle or by an advanced pneumospray injector.

Many psi-drugs have serious side effects. Even if psionics are legal, most societies will restrict these drugs to doctors or medical researchers. Licensing requirements vary, but usually Biochemistry-14 or Physician-14 is the absolute minimum.

Unless psi-drugs are experimental, even restricted drugs are likely to be available on the black market at higher prices.

Blue Fire — TL7

This is the nickname of BNSX-7, a dangerous neurotransmitter that enhances the brain's ability to handle psionic energy. However, it is also a deadly poison. Fortunately, its effects are relatively predictable, and an antidote exists that can neutralize it, so many users will risk taking it when a boost to Power is absolutely necessary.

As soon as a dose of Blue Fire takes effect, the user will lose 2 hits and gain a +3 increase in Power in every psi ability he has at Power 2 or better. He will lose an additional 1d-2 hits per minute (minimum 1) until the drug is neutralized by an antitoxin. If not neutralized, it will eventually kill him. More than one dose has no extra effect.

While on the drug, the user experiences a mild "pins and needles" sensation across his skin (-2 to all non-psi skills, and to DX and IQ rolls, due to distraction). This sensation vanishes on any turn in which the user is using his psi powers, replaced by a rush of euphoria. Immediately after first using a psi skill while under the influence of Blue Fire, a user must make a Will-1 roll or gain the Overconfidence disadvantage, lasting until the drug is neutralized. A roll is required each minute it is used. Someone who becomes overconfident as a result of Blue Fire will enjoy the sensational high of using his psi powers, and tend to ignore the fact that the drug is eating away at his body.

Neutralizing Blue Fire requires a simple injection of Neurovine, an antidote for nerve toxins ($30/dose, hypo only). However, users who have become Overconfident due to the drug's effects must make a Will-1 roll in order to convince themselves to administer the Neurovine; an additional roll is allowed every minute if the first one fails.

Blue Fire is available in hypo or pill form. A dose takes effect in five seconds. It costs $100/dose. Complexity: Average. Legality: 2.

Brainstorm — TL8

This is a very powerful psi-enhancing drug. A dose increases the user's psi power in all abilities by 50% (round up – Power 11 becomes Power 17) but leaves skills unchanged. However, all skills become Uncontrollable (p. 30); psis who already have the "uncontrollable" limitation on skills make Will rolls to control them at -3. The effects of the drug last for 10 minutes for every point the user makes a HT roll by (minimum of 10 minutes). Multiple doses of brainstorm have no effect.

Brainstorm is addictive; if more than one dose is taken in a 24-hour period, roll against HT to avoid addiction. Failure means the user *must* have at least one dose every day. If not, he suffers normal withdrawal symptoms, and in addition, his powers become Unpredictable even without the drug (or very unpredictable, as the case may be) but do not have the 50% enhancement.



Brainstorm is highly illegal; a dose costs $150 to produce, but will usually command far more on the black market, especially if psionics are themselves illegal. Hypo form only. A dose takes effect in 10 seconds. Complexity: Average. Legality: 1.

Catalyst Drug — TL8

This drug is only useful if the optional *Latent Powers* rules (see p. 86) are used.

A catalyst drug requires 1 minute to take effect. It only affects those with latent psi powers, i.e., Powers that the user has without any psi skills. If someone without a latent Power takes the drug, they suffer no effects except dizziness (-1 DX and IQ) for (20-HT minutes) after the drug takes effect.

If someone taking the drug has latent psi abilities, he will experience strange, nightmarish hallucinations as the drug acts to dissolve whatever mental barriers have previously prevented mastery of his abilities. The user will be incapacitated by the hallucinations for (20-HT minutes), with a minimum of 1 minute, and must make a Will-2 roll. If the roll is successful, he gains a character point in the first skill he tries to use within one of his latent Powers. If the Will roll fails, he gains the character point, but suffers a mental Quirk of some sort as a result of the experience. On a critical failure, the user goes into a coma for 1d hours. He gains the psionic ability, but at the price of a 10-point disadvantage such as Paranoia or Delusions.

A dose of Catalyst Drug costs $1,000 and is available in hypo or pill form. Complexity: Average. Legality: 3.

This type of drug assumes that latency is psychological in nature. If latency has a physical cause, the GM may wish to create other kinds of catalyst drugs, with different side effects.

Mind Hype — TL8

A reliable psi-boosting drug, Mind Hype focuses the user on his inner self, dissolving boundaries between body and mind.

A user of Mind Hype adds +1 to IQ (and to all IQ-based abilities, including Will, Magic skills and Mental skills); he adds 3 rather than 1 to all psi skills. However, each time the user takes it, he must make an IQ roll, at -1 for each extra dose taken in a 24-hour period.

If the roll fails, the user has difficulty concentrating on less abstract things – like walking across a room. DX is reduced by 2, along with all DX-based skills. For anything not having to do with psionics or abstract reasoning, the user has the Absent-Minded disadvantage (p. B30); people who already have this disadvantage make all rolls to remember trivial things or sustain interest in boring activities at -3!

More than one dose of Mind Hype has no extra effect (or goes unnoticed by the user). Positive effects last for 10 minutes for every point the user makes a HT roll by (minimum of one hour), side effects last for 1d hours. It is not addictive, and is usually fairly legal (unless psionics are themselves illegal, in which case possession of Mind Hype is a serious crime).

Hypo form only, and takes 10 minutes to have effect. $100/dose. Complexity: Average. Legality: 4.

Monobloc — TL8

Monobloc acts to increase an individual's natural telepathic resistance, making the subject less vulnerable to telepathic invasion. After taking a dose, the user has a +3 on any rolls to resist telepathic contact or attack, including attacks by telepathy-based psi weapons. Unfortunately, it also numbs the mind, giving the user a fuzzy, drunken feeling and a -1 on IQ and DX; this affects all DX and IQ-based skills, including magical and psionic skills, as well as Will.

One dose of Monobloc has the above effects. Up to three doses can be taken in a 24-hour period with cumulative effects, increasing resistance but decreasing DX, IQ and their associated abilities and skills. Taking more than three doses does not increase resistance any further, but continues to reduce attributes and skills.

A dose of Monobloc lasts for six hours. It is available in pill form only, and requires 1 minute to take effect. A dose costs $60. Complexity: Simple. Legality: 4.

Psi-Booster — TL8

Not a drug, but an injection of memory RNA taken from a psi. Psi-booster treatments can exist for any psi skill that is available as a "single skill." For instance, there is a psi-booster injection for Precognition, Mind Shield or Pyrokinesis, but not one for Mental Stab, which cannot be purchased as a single skill.

The patient rolls against Will+4, minus the cost in points of one Power level of a single-skill version of that power. On a successful roll, he gains a skill level equal to his own IQ and a Power equal to his Will/3 (rounded down), lasting for 1 hour for every point roll was made by (minimum 1 hour). On a failed roll, he is unable to cope with the alien sensations invading his mind, and is incapacitated for 1 hour per point the roll was failed by. Whether the roll succeeded or failed, the effects take 12 hours to appear, as the RNA needs time to replicate within his body.

For example, suppose an IQ 13 character took a psi-booster injection for Pyrokinesis. The single-skill cost of one Power level of Pyrokinesis is 3 points, so he would have to roll against

Will+1. If he succeeded he would have an effective skill of Pyrokinesis-13 and a PK Power of 4 (or his own PK Power, if higher), usable only with that skill.

Effects of psi-booster are never cumulative with existing Power levels – use the highest level possessed. A patient cannot take more than one psi-booster injection (of any Power) within 24 hours of an earlier injection; multiple doses have no effect. A single injection costs $250×the power point cost of one "single skill" level. For instance, Clairaudience (2 points for one level of power as a single skill) costs $500 per dose. Complexity: Complex. Legality: 3.



Shatter — TL8

Any person with psionic powers (including latents) who uses this drug becomes dizzy and disoriented, with a -1 on DX (and all DX-based skills) and a -2 on IQ and all IQ-based skills, including magical and psi skills and Will. Only individuals with at least one psi power are affected; individuals with no powers suffer no effects. Shatter's effects last for 10 minutes for every level of psionic Power possessed by the user. For instance, if someone with a Telepathy Power of 5 and a Psychokinesis Power of 2 took Shatter, he would be affected for 70 minutes. After this time is up, roll against HT every minute; a success means that the drug wears off.

Any use of psionic powers while under the influence of Shatter causes extreme vertigo and nausea. All psionic skills are at an *additional* -4 penalty, and after any active skill roll, the user must immediately roll against HT-3 or succumb. The user is not unconscious, but is incapacitated and can take no action (physically or mentally) for one second times the amount the HT roll was failed by.

Multiple doses of Shatter only increase the duration of the drug's effects. Too much of the drug is toxic, however. For each additional dose of Shatter taken in a 24-hour period by a psionic, the user loses 1d-3 hit points (minimum 1).

Shatter is typically used by law enforcement agencies (or others) to restrain people they know to be psionic. Shatter darts can be fired from any weapon capable of firing drugged rounds. An aerosol version of Shatter can be used in gas grenades (requires 10 doses) and spray cans. Also, since it only affects psis, it can be used to "test" for psionics. A psi must make a Will roll at -2 to avoid reacting (showing signs of dizziness, sweating etc.) if subjected to Shatter, even if he doesn't use his powers.

Shatter costs $20 a dose, and is available only to government (or multistellar) security agencies, and on the black market. Its hypo form takes effect instantly; gas or pill form requires 10 seconds to take effect. Complexity: Complex. Legality: 2.

Shiver — TL10

An alternative to Mind Hype, this reliable psi-drug is a neurotransmitter that makes it easy for the psi to use his psionic abilities. It increases all the user's psi skill levels by 1 (as long as he has the skill to begin with.)

It has only mild side effects: the user experiences some physical shakiness and a mild fever (-1 to DX and all DX-based skills, and 2 fatigue per dose).

The effects of Shiver last for ten minutes (except for fatigue, which recovers normally). Multiple doses have a cumulative effect, boosting skill while reducing DX and fatigue.

Shiver is available in pill or hypo form. The hypo takes effect instantly; the pill requires 30 seconds. It costs $40 per dose. Complexity: Average. Legality: 4.

Trance — TL8

The opposite of Monobloc, this drug *lowers* the user's natural resistance to psi. It is useful to telepathic psychologists – or interrogators. Because it can make subjects more susceptible to Mindwipe or Telecontrol, Trance has gained a sinister reputation. Paranoid people may worry that groups employing psis will place it in the water supply . . .

Each dose of Trance gives the user a -2 on Will to resist psi abilities such as Mindwipe. If the user has a Mind Shield, reduces its Power (but not its skill) by 1. Doses are cumulative.

Multiple doses can be dangerous. For every dose taken the user must make a HT+3 roll, with a -1 per dose after the first one. Failure means the user collapses into a coma, taking 1 point of damage for every point the roll was failed by.

It costs $15 a dose and is available in pill or hypo form. Either takes 10 seconds to have any effect. Complexity: Average. Legality: 4.

PSYCHOGENETICS

If psi powers are genetically based (see *Origin of Psi Powers,* p. 102) and the chromosomes that govern psi are known to science, a simple blood test could determine whether a person was a psi or not, and what Powers he had. This requires a minimum TL of 7.

To handle genetic testing, a blood sample (tissue sample at TL8+) must be taken, and studied in a lab (takes one hour). Then roll vs. Genetics or Biochemistry-5. Success reveals whether the subject is a psi or not; critical success or success by 5 or more reveals what Powers he has; failure gives ambiguous results. One try only per day; the GM makes all rolls secretly, and *lies* on a critical failure.

At TL9+, a bioscanner (see ***GURPS Ultra-Tech*** or ***GURPS Space***) can be used instead of a blood test – this takes only a minute.

Drones — TL8

A drone is a human whose brain has been genetically modified to have as little ego or creativity as possible, while retaining a minimum level of useful intellect. The result is a person with an adult IQ of 8 and 5 levels of Weak Will, for an effective Will of 3. Further tinkering makes the brain unusually receptive to any form of telepathy, by adjusting its biochemistry so the subject is in a permanent hypnagogic state – in effect, living a waking dream. This adds an additional +3 to skill on any rolls to influence or contact the subject using with Telesend, Suggestion, Telecontrol or Telereceive.

Among telepaths, drones are the ideal servants for tasks where personality or initiative are not required. Drones tend to be hard workers with little or nothing in the way of personality, unless encouraged to develop surface mannerisms through rote. Drones are usually motivated by conditioning or direct telepathic control. They are very easy to Telecontrol: the normal penalty of -4 per extra person controlled is replaced by a -1 if that extra mind is a drone.

Drone brains are usually used in genetically modified clones, or transplanted into adult bodies. A drone brain costs $12,000, plus the price of a clone ($10,000 at TL8, plus two months to force-grow to adulthood) or brain transplant ($50,000 at TL8).

Alternatively, drones can be produced surgically. Using TL7+ surgical techniques, a living person may be reduced to drone status. Adjust all skills accordingly. The person may have brief moments of lucidity (though still with IQ-2 and 5 levels of Weak Will), but will effectively be a zombie most of the time. This operation costs $10,000 and is generally illegal unless done by the government, but anyone with the proper Surgery/TL8 and Biochemistry (Bio-Psi) skill could perform it.

Proteus Virus — TL varies

Not really a virus, but rather genetically-altered versions of the macrophage cells that make up the bodies' own immune system. Instead of roaming the bloodstream to seek out and destroy worn out cells or foreign disease organisms, the Proteus cells are programmed to track down specific target cells, enter them and transform them. Taking over control of the target cells' metabolism, they can alter the genetic information encoded within, rebuild dead or dying cells or insert entirely new genes or chemicals.

After they have entered the bloodstream, it takes the invader cells 1d×5 minutes to multiply. There is some chance that the body's own immune system will fight them off: the subject gets a HT-6 roll to resist, plus any bonuses for Panimmunity (see ***GURPS Space*** and ***Ultra-Tech***).

Proteus cells are delivered by injection or pill like normal drugs. At 5×cost, they may be delivered via dart guns or "poisoned" blades, or at 10×cost, as an aerosol spray. They are not contagious, but contact with the blood or other secretions of an infected person during the incubation period may (on a failed HT-3 roll) result in infection. A single dose can contain enough invader cells to perform a complete metamorphosis.

Power Virus: If psi powers are the result of certain "power genes," a Proteus treatment can give a person those genes. This will give the person Power 1 in any (or all) Psi Powers, though he will not be able to use the Power until he obtains the appropriate psi skills. Further power levels may require development via experience. Cost is $10,000×the point cost of the Power(s) added. For example, Telepathy would cost $50,000, while Antipsi would only cost $30,000, and both would cost $80,000. GMs may require characters to buy off any new Powers. TL10. Complexity: Amazing. Legality: 2.

Null Virus: Rewrites the user's genetic code to remove the genes for specific Power(s). This effectively prevents him from using or developing the Power. If a person later regains his Power through the above treatment, he will regain his full level rather than being Power 1. Cost: as above, but only $1,000×the cost. A full spectrum null-virus that would kill all psi Powers would cost $38,000. TL9. Complexity: Complex. Legality: 1.



Overmind Virus: Memory is chemical in nature. By altering brain cells, invader macrophages could insert new memories or delete old ones – cellular mindwipe. The virus is less precise than the Telereceive ability, since it lacks reasoning capacity and must be either designed for a single individual or programmed to add or delete general blocks of memory, e.g., erase all memories after age 12, or add a "generic" military career. Costs $20,000. TL10. Complexity: Amazing. Legality: 0.

Metamorphosis: Rewriting the genetic code, the Proteus cells cause radical physical changes in the body. A relatively simple type might change a person's sex or alter the color of their skin. A complex virus could transform a person into an exact duplicate of someone else, cause them to grow a coat of fur, or turn them into a monster or an alien species. Cost and TL vary drastically; a sex-change virus would cost $50,000 and be TL10+. Complexity: Amazing. Legality: 0.



Symbiotic Crystal — *TL13*

This is an bio-engineered "living" crystal, usually about the size and shape of a silver dollar. It is imbued with a form of artificial sentience, and acts as a focus to enhance and refine the psi's own ability, allowing greater precision.

While he is touching it, the owner can focus one psi skill at a time through the crystal's pseudomind, increasing his own effective skill by ⅓ (round down). For instance, a telepath focusing Mental Stab-13 through a symbiotic crystal would have an effective Mental Stab skill of 17.

A disadvantage of using a symbiotic crystal is that after using it once, the psi becomes mentally bonded to the crystal! No other being can ever use it. The user can sense the crystal's location over a distance. To determine this range, use the *Telepathy Range Table* – the psi's effective Power is his Telepathy Power *plus* one-third of his Will – even a non-telepath bonded to a psi crystal can maintain this rapport over a certain distance.

If a person touches another's symbiotic crystal while it is within range of the owner, the owner will experience the touch as a violation of his own mind! To resist the effects, the owner must make an immediate Will roll. Modifiers: -4 if the person touching it is a psi, or -8 if he is Telepath, +2 if the owner knows the person who is touching it slightly, or +4 if he is on intimate and trusting terms with him, -2 if he dislikes the owner, and -4 if he is actively hostile to the owner!

Success means that the psi can tolerate the touch, though it is very uncomfortable (-1 to DX and IQ, including attribute-based skills and Will, for its duration). A failed roll means he goes into shock and is stunned, and loses 2 HT for every point he failed the roll by.

A symbiotic crystal has 1 HT and DR 8. It is -10 to hit because of its size. If it is destroyed within the owner's sensing range, the owning psi must make a Will roll at -10 to avoid shock. Success means he is merely stunned; failure means the loss of 2 hit points per point the roll was failed by, and unconsciousness for 1d minutes.

A symbiotic crystal can be implanted into the surface of the body or under the skin. The disadvantage of subcutaneous implantation is that surgery is required if the owner wishes to remove it (to prevent detection, for instance).

Naturally-formed symbiotic crystals may also exist. The planet or dimension they are native to should be an exotic place, and the local inhabitants (if any) may be very protective of them!

A symbiotic crystal costs at least $100,000. Its weight is negligible. Complexity: Amazing. Legality: 4. GMs may require payment of 25 character points for a symbiotic crystal, especially if it is implanted.

PSIBORGS

Psiborgs are disembodied animal (or human) brains encased in life support systems, cybernetically linked to powerful psi amplifiers. They are encouraged by direct neural stimulation to constantly produce a single psionic effect.

Psiborgs are living creatures; they can be detected psionically, and even attacked by telepathy, psychic vampirism, etc., though they have no emotions or thoughts as such, making them invulnerable to some abilities. A psiborg can be remotely dominated by Telecontrol, but not Suggestion. As psiborgs are disembodied brains (see the disadvantage on p. 98) they have IQ, but no ST, DX or HT. For purposes of using psi abilities and being stunned by mental attacks, they have 10 fatigue points.

All psiborgs cost 1% of purchase price per week to maintain. Failure to maintain a psiborg means that it will die in 1d days.

Psiborgs require animal or human brains that have at least some latent psionic potential. Usually this involves genetic manipulation to grow an animal brain with latent psi ability, but if psiborgs become common, there may be a demand for human brains. A living human brain (child or adult) with appropriate psionic potential (relevant Power at level 1 or more) may sell for $50,000 or better on the black market.

Some sample psiborgs are described below; use these as models to develop your own.

Watchdog — TL8

A watchdog is a simple psiborg that detects the presence of telepathic activity. It uses a rat-brain (IQ 4) sensitized to telepathic impressions, encased in a life support unit. The braincase and life support unit are about the size of a large suitcase. Attached to them is a monitor which shows the level of psionic Power. The brain is super-sensitive to psionic impressions, and becomes painfully agitated if anyone uses telepathic ability on a subject within 100 yards of it. To a trained observer, the psiborg's brainwave fluctuations can indicate the type of intruder. On a successful Electronic Operations (Psychotronics) skill roll, an observer can interpret the psiborg's readout to determine the Power level and Telepathic skill in use. 20 pounds, $7,200. Complexity: Average. Legality: 4.

Guardian — TL9

This is a more sophisticated development of the watchdog, using a higher animal brain (typically a predator of some sort, with IQ 4-6). The psiborg is designed to react painfully to uses of psi power within 100 yards, and to strike back using Antipsi Power 10 with the skill Neutralize-15 (Instantaneous). 60 pounds. $32,000. Complexity: Complex. Legality: 3.

Inquisitor — TL9

The Inquisitor is a psiborg conditioned to sift through another being's mind. The psiborg consists of a bulbous central module holding the disembodied human brain, psi-amplifying circuitry and a complex life support system. A half-dozen tubes radiate out from it, attaching it to cooling systems and nutrient pumps. Two long sensor cables end in electrodes, ready to be placed on the subject's head. The psiborg is crowned by a monitor screen to display the subject's thoughts.

The psychic Inquisitor functions as a Telepath with Power 1 and Telereceive skill 14 (+2 per TL after introduction). Once attached to a subject and activated, it will relentlessly probe into its mind. Use the normal rules for unsubtle use of Telereceive (pp. 25-26). If the subject can maintain a Mind Shield or has Psionic Resistance, this reduces its skill. After the initial skill roll, one additional roll is allowed each minute. If a roll fails, the usual penalties for repeated attempts apply.

Surface thoughts picked up by the psiborg are translated into text and visual form on the monitor screen as they occur to the subject. The psiborg does not actively interrogate the subject, so unless it can actually probe into the subject's memories (success by 9 or more) it will just display whatever the subject is currently thinking about. Of course, someone could monitor the responses, and question the subject, hoping he will slip up and think about whatever the interrogator wants him to reveal. This can resolved as a Contest of Skill between the Interrogation skill of the questioner and the subject's Mind Block skill (p. 100).

If the psiborg actually penetrates into the subject's memories, they will "play through" at fast speed. Day to day experiences will be skimmed over, with memorable events highlighted. The operator can order the psiborg to focus and amplify specific memories as they appear.

Inquisitors are often fitted with a deepsleep box (p. 59) which is used to induce a suggestible hypnagogic state in its subject. If this is done, add +3 to the Inquisitor's effective skill level.

If mentally attacked, a Inquisitor has IQ 10. It costs $200,000, weighs 200 pounds, and takes up .2 cubic yards. Complexity: Complex, Legality: 3.

Sponge — TL8

This psiborg is a telepathic receiver and storage system the size of a briefcase. It consists of a living brain with boosted telereceive capabilities, conditioned to act solely as a telepathic recording system. Sponges are usually used as surveillance systems or perhaps as secretaries.

A sponge may be set for a detection range anywhere from touch-only to 30 yards; changing the setting requires 5 seconds.

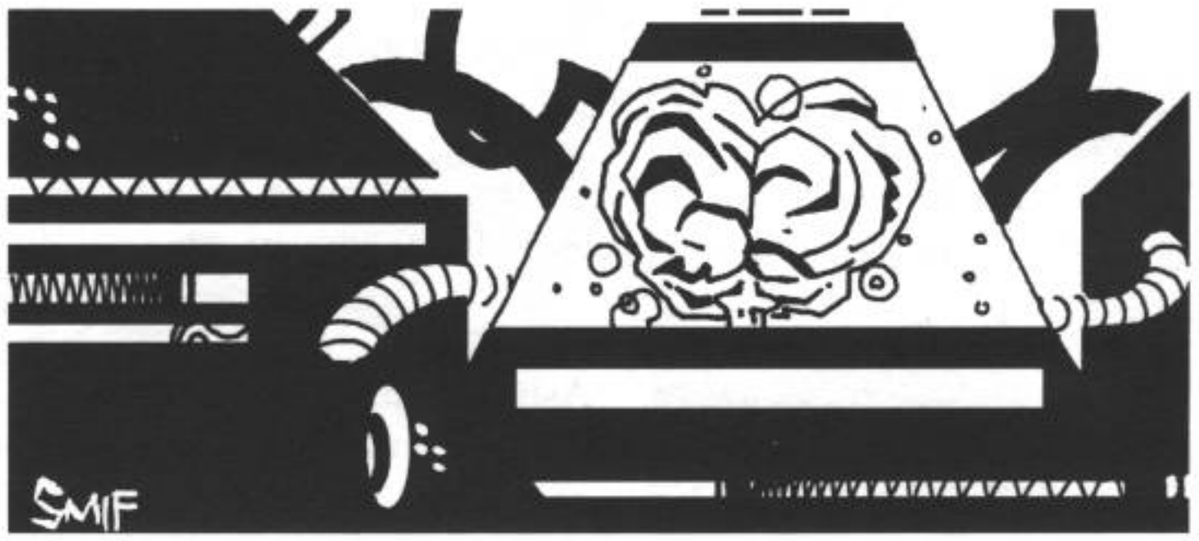
Once activated, *all* unshielded surface thoughts within range are recorded in its brain. The radius is global, so a sponge hidden in a basement could read minds on an upper floors. A Mind Shield or Psionic Resistance of 5 or better will automatically block a sponge, but lower levels are totally ineffective. Nothing else will stop it.

It can store up to 100 man-hours of surface thought, before shutting down. The sponge can play its thoughts back onto a Inquisitor's screen (see above) or can be scanned by anyone with the Telereceive skill. Individual minds come across as distinct mental voices; once a mind reader concentrates on a specific person, there is no difficulty "hearing" his mind over a crowd.

If psionically attacked, a Sponge has IQ 4. It costs $50,000 and weighs 20 pounds. Complexity: Complex. Legality: 3.

Other Psiborgs

Other types of psiborgs can be created by the GM, including versions in which the disembodied brain retains free will and the ability to use any of its psionic abilities. If a PC is converted into such a psiborg, he acquires the Disembodied Brain disadvantage (p. 98), and possibly the modifiers for Drone Brains if his brain was been tampered with to make him easier to control.



Surgically-Granted Powers

Brain Tissue Grafts — TL8

A risky and controversial method of providing an individual with "artificial" psionic powers. Brain tissue from the centers thought to govern psionic power is selectively removed from donors who have exhibited psionic powers, and transplanted into a recipient. On a successful Surgery-3 roll, the graft results in the user gaining half of the psi Power (but none of the skills) of the donor; if the GM desires, the subject must buy the advantage with character points.

Even with experimental drugs to prevent rejection, there is much danger to the subject. In addition to the normal risks of surgery (p. B56), make a HT-1 roll to avoid rejection and brain damage. If the subject fails the HT roll, he loses 1 point of IQ for every point the roll was failed by. On a critical failure, he dies within 1d days of the operation.

Although risky for the recipient, the procedure is fatal for the donor, always resulting in either total lobotomy or death. One donor can provide, at best, three grafts, and the donor must be alive or *very* freshly dead. For this reason, brain tissue grafts are rarely used except by those organizations or individuals lacking moral scruples.

Cost: $20,000 or more. Complexity: Complex. Legality: 1.

Neuro-Psi Implants TL11

Neuro-psi implants are devices that stimulate the wearer's brain to artificially produce psionic powers, exciting the growth of deeply buried embryonic psi abilities too weak to be discovered through normal psionic testing or training.



A neuro-psi implant resembles a headband packed with electronic microcircuitry. The implant requires 4d-4 minutes to take effect, during which time the user feels mildly dizzy (-1 to DX and DX-based skills). When it is finished, the wearer rolls against Will+2. If he succeeds, the implant has stimulated the development of a latent psi power (two powers on a critical success). If the roll fails, the wearer gains no psi powers.

On a critical failure, the patient's brain proves incompatible with neuro-psi implants, and he will suffer immediate problems. Make a HT-2 roll to determine the severity of the effects. If it succeeds, or on a critical success, the patient suffers an epileptic-like seizure lasting for 1d minutes (p. B20), losing that many fatigue points. If it fails, he loses HT as well as fatigue, and suffers brain damage resulting in the loss of 1 point of IQ. On a second critical failure, he dies.

Whether the roll succeeds or fails, further use of neuro-psi implants will have no effect upon someone who has already used one.

If a psi power is gained, roll 2d once (twice on a critical success) on the table below to determine the Power:

Neuro-Psi Power Table

2	Astral Projection
3	Psychokinesis
4	Psychic Vampirism
5	Healing
6	Telepathy
7	ESP
8	Telepathy
9	Antipsi
10	Psychokinesis
11	Electrokinesis
12	Teleportation

The patient gains a level of 1 in the Power rolled (if the same one is rolled twice on a critical success, they get Power 2). The user can improve his Power normally with experience and learn psi skills, but the Power gained (both from the implant *and* from later experience) only functions as long as the implant is worn.

If a successful neuro-psi implant (i.e., one that has given someone powers) is removed or destroyed, the shock is dangerous. Treat it as a critical failure (see above), with further effects depending on whether the HT roll succeeds or fails. The patient loses his powers until he can find a new implant; if he adds a new implant, it has exactly the same effect as the previous one – no roll is necessary, and it restores all the powers the original implant gave him.

Neuro-psi implants only work on people without any natural psi Powers. If someone with actual or latent psi abilities dons a neuro-psi implant, he suffers the effects of a critical failure on the first (Will) roll. He must roll again against HT-2 to determine the severity of the effects, as above. If someone who has psi generated through an implant gains psi powers by any other method, he loses the effects of the implant.

If a character gains a Power as the result of a neuro-psi implant, the GM may require him to pay points for it. Point cost is *half* the normal cost (rounded up) for one level of that Power.

A neuro-psi implant weighs ½ pound and costs $150,000 plus $2,000 for the operation; it is powered for one year by an A cell. If the cell is removed or runs out of energy, the user's powers stop working until it is restored. Complexity: Amazing. Legality: 5.



CHAPTER SIX

CHARACTERS

Creating a psionic character requires a clear concept of what he or she is to do, and how. Try to avoid the "idiot-savant" who has most of his points spent on a single psionic ability. It's easy to lose interest in a PC with only one way of doing things, so strive for an interesting balance of psi abilities and mundane skills and advantages.

Point Level

The point level of the campaign should be decided by the GM, since it will set the tone of the campaign. Keep in mind the level of psionic technology that will be available in the campaign. With a full array of exotic psi-drugs, gestalt webs and psychotronic amplifiers, even a low-powered psi can be very effective!



Wild Talents (100 Points)

This level allows the creation of competent individuals with useful psi talents. They may lack the raw power to make direct psionic attacks without using gestalts or technological assistance, but they can have a wide range of more subtle abilities. Mundane skills are still of vital importance.

Players should spend no more than half the character's actual points on psi abilities, to ensure they have a useful array of normal skills and advantages. A high IQ is *very* useful for lowering the cost of psi skills; IQ 13 or better is strongly recommended. When purchasing offensive psi abilities, note that high *skill* is most important for the telepathic attacker, while high *Power* is more crucial in other abilities.

A typical psionic character will have a single Power at level 6 to 10, with minor limitations, or Power 15 or more with major limitations. He should have skill 16+ in his most important skills, and average about skill 13. PCs should consider taking a second or third "latent" Power (see sidebar) at level 1-2 with few or no skills.

In a campaign where artificial mind shields may be uncommon, non-psionic PCs should consider taking Strong Will or the Mind Block skill, to prevent their being easily used as puppets by hostile telepaths.

Masters of Mind (200 points)

This point total is suitable for a cinematic campaign, or low-power superhero adventuring. A typical psi might have an IQ of 14 or more and spend 75 to 125 points on psionic abilities. A good mix is Power 15 or so in one ability, and about 3-6 levels worth of secondary Powers, often with Limitations to keep the cost down. Important skills should be at 18 to 20, with others at 14.

One or two "latent" powers with Power 1 and no skills will provide a solid foundation for the character to build on with later training or experience. PCs who aren't telepaths should seriously consider taking Mind Shield as a single-skill power, or the Mind Block skill and several levels of Strong Will!

Superminds (250/500 Points)

At these point totals, PCs are virtual super-beings, designed to confront other psis of their level, or enemies with super-powers, magic or ultra-technology. The 250-point level is recommended for space opera of the sort written by Doc Smith or Julian May, in which both ultra-technology and psi abilities are used, and a blaster can sometimes triumph over a mental blow, while 500 points should let the PCs act essentially as comic-book superheroes with psychic powers totally ascendant. At either level, characters may also have up to 100 points of disadvantages (to allow for tragic flaws or super-enemies) rather than the usual limit of 45 points.



The Importance of IQ

All psi skills are Mental/Hard, based on IQ, and this makes IQ very important. A character with IQ 10 pays 12 points to purchase a psi skill at level 14. Someone with IQ 14 could have the same skill level for only 2 points! For this reason, players trying to create effective psis should take a high IQ.

Latent Powers

A player who wishes to start with a wide range of psi abilities at low cost may purchase powers without skills. These powers are "latent." Since the character has no skills, he can't use them effectively. But later he will be able to train his latent powers and develop other types of skill.

PCs can be permitted to spend character points to raise the level of a still-latent Power so that when it finally is awakened, it will be quite powerful. This reflects the way psi powers seem to work in fiction, in which the heroes suddenly learn they have great potential strength, and all they need is proper training.

At the GM's option, a character with a latent power may be "blocked" – that is, he cannot buy skills. He may not even be aware of his power, though he may have discovered it through some form of testing. Usually these abilities remain dormant until they are awakened by a shock or ordeal of some sort, but when they finally do emerge, they are often very powerful!

A character built with this option cannot spend points or use study or training to purchase psi skills for a latent Power until it is "awakened." This often involves fulfillment of some difficult or dangerous condition.

When a latent ability is awakened, the new psi immediately gains a half-point in *one* of that Power's psi skills, enabling him to immediately use the Power to a limited extent. This point gain must be repaid from earned experience as soon as possible. Now that it is no longer latent, other psi skills in the Power can be developed later through training or acquisition of character points in the normal manner.

PCs should spend about half their points on psi abilities and the rest on normal attributes, skills and advantages. IQ 15 is recommended; psis will generally have one or two Powers at very high levels (Power 15+), and several levels worth of secondary abilities. Primary psychic attacks (especially Telepathy) should be at skill 21 or more. However, GMs should *not* permit starting Power or skill levels above 25. Any non-telepaths should definitely invest in Mind Block or Mind Shield, and non-psionic PCs should take many levels of Psionic Resistance!



Character Types

Anyone can be a psi – all that's needed is Power. There are no limits to the number of different characters that can be created in a ***Psionics*** campaign. But many of the classic protagonists of stories featuring psi abilities fall into a few distinct stereotypes, and these make good starting points for designing your own PCs.

Child With Powers

Although only a child or young teenager just entering puberty, this person already has very high levels of psi power, but little knowledge or skill. He or she may even generate spontaneous psi effects: hear telepathic "voices," produce poltergeist activity or experience precognitive visions.

Suspecting mental illness, parents might try to have the child institutionalized! Unscrupulous people may be drawn by these events to exploit the child's powers, and by this time, the parent's fear and confusion can lead them to trust anyone who can convincingly explain what is going on.

A Child With Powers might be on the run from an institution or abusive home, or still be living with unsuspecting parents, sneaking out to meet the other PCs for training or adventure and then going back to home or school.

Advantages: Patron or Allies (parents or siblings). The Child With Powers may also be a mental genius, with talents like Eidetic Memory or Mathematical Ability.

Disadvantages: Duty (to parents or school), Enemies, Sense of Duty (to family), Impulsiveness, and of course, Youth.

Skills: Bicycling, Computer Operation (video games), Fast-Talk and various hobby skills are all appropriate.

Psi Abilities: The character will have few psi skills but very high levels of Power, often with limitations like Uncontrollable.

Example: Charlie, from Stephen King's *Firestarter.*

Criminal Psi

Anyone might use psi powers to break the law and then cover it up, but some people make a career out of doing so. Psionic criminals may steal for personal gain, kicks or for a cause. A criminal might adventure with a more honest group for monetary gain, or be drafted as a prisoner into a "dirty dozen" style task-force.

In organized crime, psis detect informers and traitors, provide intelligence, and act as soldiers. A psychic ninja would be terrifying, able to brush aside normal defenses with ease.

A cat-burglar may use Astral Projection to memorize his destination and then enter and exit with Autoteleport, using TK to help pick locks on safes, or Clairaudience and Exoteleport to remove the contents. Some abilities are more suitable for "white-collar" crime – a telepath can make his fortune on Wall Street through insider trading and information brokerage, while a Electrokinetic with Cyberpsi could be the ultimate hacker.

Instant Campaign: Just Add Psi

The GM who wants to enliven an existing campaign can simply wave his magic wand and declare all the PCs to be psis. This can spring out of their adventures: perhaps they aid someone with Strange Powers, or perhaps, after great hardship, they recover an artifact which proves to be a strange technological gizmo. And, over the next few weeks, they find they can Do Things . . .

Alternatively, the GM can let something strange happen to the whole campaign world – see the *Wild Cards* series, or ***GURPS Wild Cards***, for one example. Here we have a very ordinary world in which, suddenly and amid great catastrophes, many people begin to develop psi powers. The *Wild Cards* explanation was a biological warfare – a virus being tested by aliens. Other "origins" could work equally well. The point is that suddenly a lot of people – including, of course, the PCs – gain psionic abilities.

The GM should decide how many added points the PCs will have for psi powers, and whether any psionic disadvantage points (p. 88) will be allowed. The players can be allowed to choose their own powers, or the GM can assign them and let the players discover what their characters can do. A good compromise: the GM assigns the first 10 or 20 points of powers, and then grants about three times the normal allowance of character points for the first few adventures, as the newly-found powers emerge.

Pside Effects

Psi skills can have "side effects" that are unique to a particular character. That is, your Telesend (for instance) has a special side effect that occurs when you use it. Side effects are optional, and are determined when a character is created. There are two general categories.

Special Effects

A special effect is a side effect which is essentially unimportant, though it may occasionally inconvenience the user. For example, if your Telekinesis skill makes a low humming noise, those nearby will notice something (and those who know you will know you're using your TK). A special effect is worth 1 point as a trivial disadvantage, or 2 if the GM feels it might be a bit more inconvenient. You may take up to 5 points of special effects for all your skills combined.

Drawbacks

Drawbacks are side effects that cause real trouble to the user and those around him. For instance, if your use of Telesend causes mild headaches to everyone within 20 feet, that's a problem!

A drawback is worth points as a disadvantage – but only if it makes *real* trouble for the character. 15 points is the maximum allowed for *all* such damaging special effects. As an example, the effect described above might be worth 5 points – mostly because it keeps the psi from using his power up close without being noticed.

A really obnoxious special effect will give its possessor a reaction-roll penalty. This is worth 5 points per -2 reaction if it is noticeable some of the time, and 5 points per -3 if relatively rare.

Character Points

Points for special effects do *not* count against the normal (suggested) disadvantage limit. Thus, a psi can have up to 20 points worth of extra disadvantages: 5 for side effects and 15 for drawbacks. However, players in a campaign where psi is supposed to be secret should exercise some restraint in taking them: pside effects can easily give someone away!

Illegal Pside Effects

No character may have a side effect which is obviously useful as a controllable weapon or advantage. If a player finds a clever way to make a seemingly worthless side effect *very occasionally* useful, that's all right. The GM should also feel free to ban side effects that seem too frivolous or silly for the intended tone of the campaign.

A gambler could employ Telekinesis to control the fall of dice, Telereceive to reveal an opponent's hand, Electrokinesis to jinx electronic machines and Precognition to bet on the winning horse . . . and if he has an Uncontrollable power, he might even believe he wins honestly!

Some criminals may commit purely mental crimes, such as stealing emotions and dreams, or altering or controlling minds.

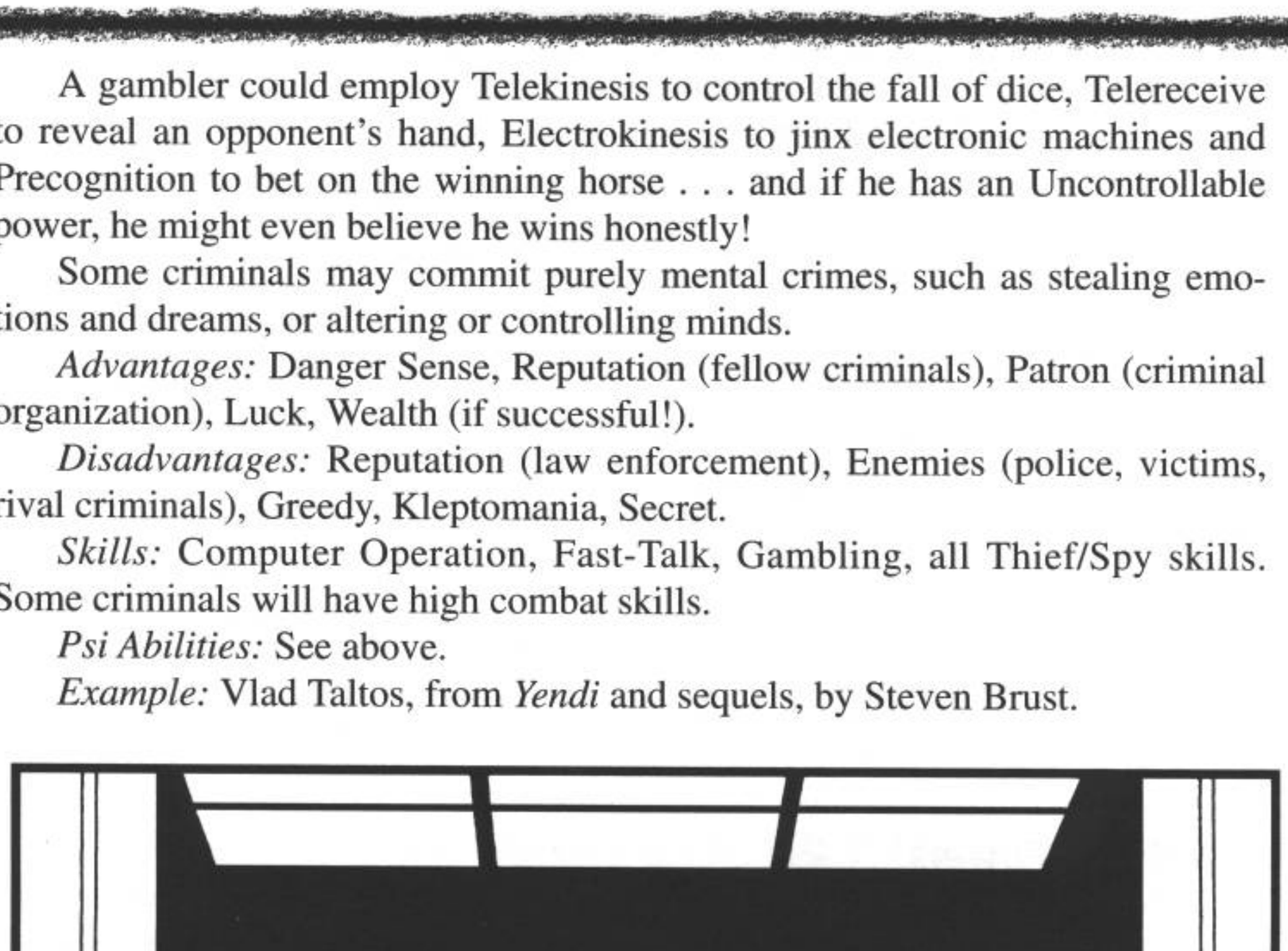
Advantages: Danger Sense, Reputation (fellow criminals), Patron (criminal organization), Luck, Wealth (if successful!).

Disadvantages: Reputation (law enforcement), Enemies (police, victims, rival criminals), Greedy, Kleptomania, Secret.

Skills: Computer Operation, Fast-Talk, Gambling, all Thief/Spy skills. Some criminals will have high combat skills.

Psi Abilities: See above.

Example: Vlad Taltos, from *Yendi* and sequels, by Steven Brust.



ESPionage Agent

A secret agent or revolutionary with psi powers is a potent combination. If they are known to exist, psis will be recruited – perhaps even forced – to join intelligence and security organizations. Those who were coerced into joining an agency may have odd backgrounds (e.g., a criminal who was arrested). A trained agent with psionic abilities may not be *allowed* to retire (without extensive Mindwipe, anyway), so psis who are not on active duty may either be on the run, or occasionally called upon by their former employers to perform "one more job."

Rather than working for an agency, they may operate on their own, as revolutionaries or freedom fighters struggling against an anti-psionic government, or fighting against their own kind to overthrow an oppressive psionic tyranny.

Advantages: Intuition, Patron (the Agency), and Combat Reflexes can come in handy.

Disadvantages: Enemies (rival agency), Duty (the Agency), Paranoia (if retired).

Skills: Electronics Operation (Communications, Psychotronics, Security), Guns or Beam Weapons, Computer Operation and Programming, Disguise, Fast-Talk, Holdout, Forgery, Intelligence Analysis, Karate, Languages, Shadowing, Strategy.

Psi Abilities: All Electrokinesis, all ESP, Telepathy (especially Erase Signature, Mindwipe, Mind Shield, Mindswitch, and Telereceive), and all Teleport powers are exceptionally useful.

Example: Kimball Kinnison, from E.E. "Doc" Smith's *Lensman* books.



Ghosthunter

Sometimes people are so badly troubled by what seems to be a supernatural occurrence that they go looking for professional help. And when the shrink doesn't make the problem go away, who are they going to call? A ghosthunter, naturally.

Ghosthunters may style themselves as scientists, mediums or exorcists, but what they try to do is discover the nature of a supposedly "supernatural" problem – and eliminate it. Some ghosthunters believe in real spirits and seek to lay them to rest, or banish them through exorcism, perhaps unconsciously using psi talents. Others understand the nature of psi, and trace poltergeists, haunting and demonic possession to disturbed psychokinetic teenagers and mind-controlling telepaths. See *Spontaneous Psi Phenomena* on p. 46 for examples.

Many ghosthunters perform their services for free, out of scientific curiosity or benevolence; others charge for each "removal." Either way, it's a dangerous profession, since the ghosthunter rarely knows what he is getting into when he takes on the job, and there is usually a skeptical relative or friend of the victim willing to throw him out on his ear.

Advantages: Clerical Investment (for an exorcist), Patron (research institute, magazine or church).

Disadvantages: Overconfidence, Reputation (as a crackpot!).

Skills: Detect Lies, Electronic Operation (Psychotronics), Fast-Talk, Occultism, Research, Photography (Infrared or Kirlian).

Psi Abilities: Psychometry skill is useful for finding out what might have caused a haunting. Telepathy can help make contact with a "spirit," or identify a psychic perpetrator, especially with Signature Sniffer. Scientifically-oriented ghosthunters may use psychotronic equipment in addition to any psi-powers they possess.

Example: Pavel Dru, from Tanith Lee's *To Kill the Dead.*

The Guy Next Door

The Guy (or Girl) Next Door is a normal person who doesn't know a thing about psi who suddenly develops extremely powerful mental abilities – powers he never expected and isn't sure he wants. But the Guy Next Door won't have time to think about them because circumstances beyond his control will quickly force him to use his abilities to protect himself and those he holds dear.

Advantages: Instead of skills, concentrate on inner strength: Alertness, Intuition and Strong Will.

Making Psi Expensive

Some GMs may find that psionics are too inexpensive (or too powerful at high levels) for their particular campaign. One way to balance this, of course, is with a high Unusual Background cost (see p. 96). But there are other options the GM can use to bring ***Psionics*** into line with *his* ideas!

Single Skill Only

If the GM feels that psi is simply too cheap, he can require that *all* skills be bought at the single-skill cost. Any ability that is marked ★n/a should have a cost assigned equal to the *normal* Power cost for that skill. For example, Mental Stab is normally n/a. Using this system, it would cost 5 per level of Power, as Telepathy has a cost of 5 per level.

This results in radically higher point costs for multiple-skilled psis, while still allowing a proficient, albeit limited, one- or two-skilled psi-user.

Limiting High Power

The GM may feel that high levels of Power are undesirable. The easiest solution, of course, is to simply set a campaign limit on Power (5, 10, 15 or even 20 will all work for different types of campaign). For more flexibility, however, the GM may want to assign a cutoff point, above which cost per level of Power *doubles.*

For example, if this cutoff is set at 12, Telepathy would cost 5 points per level of Power up to 12, and 10 points per level thereafter.





Power Catalysts

Awakening a power can be an important part of an adventure, or even the goal of a long quest. The GM should decide whether all psi abilities can be awakened by the same means, or if each psi must find his own unique path to power. Some possibilities:

Catalyst Drugs: A rare drug may be needed to unlock the power. A catalyst drug is usually hard to come by or illegal, and may also be dangerous, requiring a HT roll (often at a penalty) to avoid temporary or permanent effects, or even addiction. One type of catalyst drug is described on p. 79.

Telepathy: Awakening a latent psi power requires the help of another psi, usually a telepath, who must enter the subject's mind and "break through the barriers" blocking his ability. Sometimes the blockage is the result of some childhood trauma, and only by recognizing it (requiring a difficult Psychology or Will roll) will the psi come to know his or her own power.

Trauma: The psi may gain access to his powers only after some sudden accident or shock. Perhaps a telepath realizes his powers only after being telepathically attacked, or a ESPer discovers her potential while suffering temporary blindness after an accident. This is where the suggested half-point award to a single skill can be used by the GM to maximum dramatic effect: the hero suddenly discovers the power to retaliate (clumsily!) against his foe with a Mental Blow of his own, finds she can see, despite her blindness, with Clairvoyance, or saves himself from a fatal fall with newly-awakened Levitation.

Disadvantages: The key to playing a Guy Next Door is the dichotomy between normal life and the world of psi. Dependents (family, pets) and Enemies (ruthless and powerful) reflect this.

Skills: This type of character usually won't have adventurer-type skills like Pilot Helicopter, Karate, or Guns. Most Guys Next Door hold down normal jobs: store clerks, housewives, students, assembly line workers, school teachers, truck drivers and the like, and their skills should reflect this. On the other hand, a retired Marine boxing champion who discovers he has ESP and Astral Projection might be interesting.

Psi Abilities: Anything's possible. The more powerful and destructive, the better! Limitations like Uncontrollable and Accessibility can reflect his lack of training. The character should have lots of points available for Power if he doesn't spend much on skills.

Example: Danny Caden, from James Blish's *Jack of Eagles.*

Healer

This is a psi who uses his powers to heal others, either directly or by augmenting normal medical techniques. There are two main kinds of healer: those who heal bodies, and those who heal minds.

The Healing skills Sense Aura and Healing can diagnose and heal injury and disease. Less obviously, Clairvoyance and Telekinesis could give normal surgical techniques a powerful psychic edge, enabling the doctor to see into the body, or even reach inside without breaking the skin.

Telepathy can give psychology and psychiatry a tremendous boost, enabling the psi to actually see what is going on in the subject's mind. Mindwipe can remove trauma or build up new belief structures. Telereceive can monitor surface thoughts in response to questioning, or probe deeply into the mind to find the roots of buried psychoses. A psi can even use his power to monitor a person's dreams, and illusions could be used to test a person's reactions to certain stimuli.

Advantages: Reputation, Status, Wealth.

Disadvantages: Pacifism, Sense of Duty.

Skills: Biochemistry, Detect Lies, Diagnosis, Electronic Operation (Medical or Psychotronics), Hypnotism, Psychology, Physician, Physiology, Surgery.

Psi Abilities: see above.

Example: Elizabeth Orme, from Julian May's *Saga of Pliocene Exile.*

Mystic

The mystic's life is built around exploring the spiritual dimension of psychic powers. Many mystics are followers of New Age, eastern or neo-pagan traditions, though some come from more established faiths. A few style themselves as magicians, witches or priests, but most consider themselves merely enlightened individuals.

Although some mystics are virtual hermits who prefer to live alone, others work as consulting psychics or spiritual advisors. Any mystic may be looking for students (or followers) or might belong to an organization that accepts new members. A mystic usually makes a willing teacher, but requires students to devote equal time to learning appropriate Occultism, Philosophy or Theology skills.

A mystic may adventure with a group to learn more about his own powers, or because his philosophy requires him to use his abilities to struggle against what he believes to be evil.

Some mystics use the noisy *pretense* of powers as a cover for their real abilities!

Advantages: High Pain Threshold, Patron (other members of his tradition), Reputation (among other mystics).

Disadvantages: Sense of Duty, Fanaticism, Pacifism, Shyness, Vows.

Skills: Astronomy (Astrology), Detect Lies, Judo, Languages, Naturalist, Occultism, Staff, Philosophy, Teaching, Theology, and Writing. A professional skill is useful, but some mystics try to earn a living as astrologers or consulting psychics. In that case, Fast-Talk, Merchant and even Streetwise become valuable.

Psi Abilities: Astral Projection, ESP (especially Clairvoyance and Precognition), Healing and Telepathy are traditional mystical powers.

Example: Maelin, from Andre Norton's *Moon of Three Rings.*

Parapsychologist

A parapsychologist is a researcher studying the nature of psionic powers and performing scientific experiments to determine their limits. Many parapsychologists have controversial theories which have yet to be accepted or proved, while some are debunkers, striving to expose frauds and educate the public. Scientists may also be inventors, creating new forms of psionic technology. Most parapsychologists will have strong connections with a private research institute or university, or work for the government or a corporation.

Psi-researchers may not be *deliberately* seeking adventure, but they can get into all sorts of trouble by attempting to study privacy-seeking psis, uncovering unethical experiments being performed by their peers or undertaking dangerous experiments of their own on themselves or their companions.

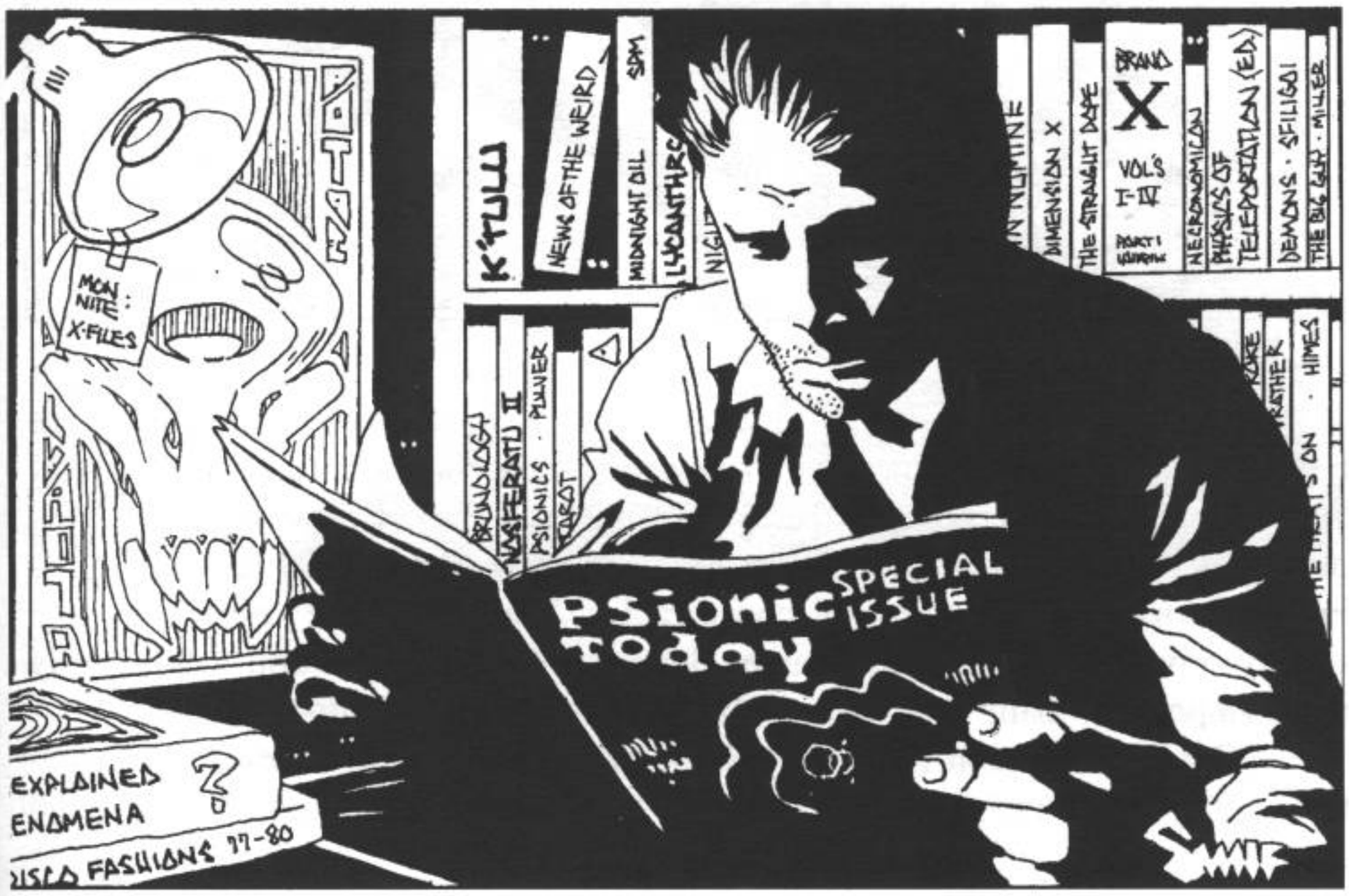
Advantages: a research institution may be a Patron or Contact. A positive Reputation among fellow scientists (or, for a writer of popular science books, among the public) is possible. Eidetic Memory is traditional.

Disadvantages: Absent-Mindedness, Megalomania or Fanaticism, a negative Reputation as a crackpot (among other scientists) or as a skeptic (among believers).

Skills: Biochemistry, Computer Operations, Electronics (Psychotronics), Occultism, Psychology, Research. Writing is useful (to publish his results).

Psi Abilities: Telepathy is helpful for keeping subjects honest. A skeptic may be a powerful Anti-Psi!

Example: Denis Remillard, from the *Intervention* series by Julian May.



Restrictions on Psi Abilities

GMs may wish to impose certain restrictions on psi powers to fit them more comfortably into a particular campaign setting.

Limited Power

If this option is chosen, starting psis are limited to a Power of (for instance) 5 or less. The advantage is that the lower Power level makes it easier for both the players and GM to learn to handle psionic abilities, and the PCs are forced to come up with creative ways to use their relatively weak abilities. The disadvantage is that players who wish to emphasize their characters' psionic abilities may become frustrated by the constraints, so it's best for experienced roleplayers or for GMs who wish to use psi in non-traditional genres (e.g., a ***Swashbucklers*** campaign).

Limited Skill

Starting PCs may not begin with more than one or two psi skills per Power, and only one point in each. The campaign effect is similar to Limited Power, but since gaining skill levels is easier than gaining higher Power, this option is far less likely to frustrate players. In fact, since the PCs can quickly acquire totally new psi skills, this will duplicate the sudden emergence of new abilities common to many science fiction psis.

Non-Violent Psi

If this option is used, psi powers can never *directly* harm anyone – skills that can do physical or Fatigue damage such as Mental Blow, Pyrokinesis and Telekinesis are just not available, or, by GM fiat, do not work against living beings! This forces PCs to use more subtle tactics and abilities, or resort to more mundane forms of violence. This can be interesting in a mystery-oriented campaign, or in one in which psis are defined as ethically superior to normal humanity. With this restriction in effect, many psis may decide to take the Pacifism disadvantage; others will learn weapon skills and martial arts.



Physical Disadvantages

A classic genre character is the physically disabled psi whose great mental powers enable him to transcend his body's frailty – and were perhaps awakened as a result of whatever caused his handicap.

Blind psis can use Clairvoyance or TK Sense as a partial substitute for vision, or Telereceive to see through the eyes of another person or trained animal. Telepathy can also serve as a replacement for speech or hearing, and Telekinesis can compensate for a missing limb. With the right powers, even a total paraplegic can participate in an adventure, using Astral Projection to accompany his allies into action.

While taking care not to penalize the creative player, GMs should reduce the value of physical disadvantages if the character can reliably use psi to compensate for it. Remember, a disadvantage that isn't a disadvantage isn't worth any points!

Mental Disadvantages

Psis who live in a world where their powers are rare will often suffer from various mental disadvantages, perhaps because of the strain of being "different" from the rest of humanity, or possibly as a side effect of their abilities. Mental Disadvantages may be related to psi abilities: a powerful Pyrokinetic might have Pyromania (or Pyrophobia!). Or someone with Telereceive and the Uncontrollable limitation might have his mind fragmented into a Split Personality under the pressure of alien thoughts.

On the other hand, "negative" disadvantages (including mild ones like Lecherous, Jealousy or even Shyness) may be very rare in a telepathic community: it's likely that they would have been discovered early and "cured."

Performer

The performer is a psi who uses his powers to entertain others. He may believe in them, or just use them subconsciously. The most common type is the "mentalist," who entertains audiences with such tricks as guessing the contents of envelopes, vanishing from sealed boxes and bending spoons. Because the performer does not hide his powers, he may be easily recruited by agencies, researchers or individuals seeking a psi.

In worlds where psi is better developed, telepaths could be privately retained to shape entertaining dreams or play exciting mindgames with exclusive clients. Psychokinetics (and perhaps Teleports) might compete in special sporting events, or perform openly in circuses.

Performers may also use their psi powers in a more covert manner. Stage actors, dancers, singers, or comedians could use Telereceive or Emotion Sense to sense an audience's mood and tailor their act to it. A psi with Suggestion or Telecontrol with might manipulate an audience's reactions more directly – and if he had Psychic Vampirism, he could feed off their adulation like a drug! A professional athlete, circus acrobat, juggler, escape artist or stunt man can use Psychokinesis or Teleportation to perform "impossible" feats.

Advantages: Appearance, Musical Ability, Reputation, Voice, Status.

Disadvantages: Addiction, Bad Temper, Lecherousness, Overconfidence, Secret.

Skills: Acting, Bard, Dancing, Escape, Musical Instrument, Performance, Sleight of Hand, Singing. Any Athletic skills.

Psi Abilities: See above.

Example: Tamisen, from Andre Norton's *Perilous Dreams.*



Psychic Detective

The psychic detective uses Telepathy and ESP to solve crimes and trace missing persons. He may have a private practice, be an unofficial consultant for a local police or government department, an actual law officer or even an agent of the Interstellar Patrol. A variation on this theme is the psychic reporter, sniffing out stories and discovering conspiracies. The "detective" may also be a wholly private individual, like James Schmitz' Telzey Amberdon, who simply makes a point of using her powers to right any wrong she happens across.

With a high enough Power, a psionic sleuth can be a true armchair detective, using astral projection, long-range telepathy and precognition to solve cases without leaving the comfort of home!

Advantages: Legal Enforcement Powers, or a Patron in a police department or law office, is handy. A good Reputation is useful for drawing clients or getting information. Intuition is good if all else fails!

Disadvantages: Enemies, Sense of Duty (to clients) or Duty (to the force). Overweight, or a physical disability, is typical of classic armchair detectives.

Skills: Area Knowledge, Brawling, Criminology, Fast-Talk, Guns or Beam Weapons, Interrogation, Research, Shadowing, Streetwise, vehicle or spacecraft skills.

Psi Abilities: All ESP (especially Danger Sense and Psychometry) and all Telepathy skills (especially Telereceive, Mindwipe and Signature Sniffer). See *Mystery and Psi,* p. 114. A variation is the sleuth who investigates psis, but is himself a normal or a powerful Anti-Psi.

Example: Gil Hamilton, from *The Long ARM of Gil Hamilton* by Larry Niven.

Puppetmaster

The puppetmaster uses psi to influence those around him. This needn't be as overt as Telecontrol or Suggestion – a psi could use Emotion Sense or Telereceive to see how people are *really* reacting to whatever he is saying, and by constantly monitoring the feelings of his audience, tailor his words and actions as he spoke to perfectly manipulate them by saying exactly the right things.

A puppetmaster is usually at (or behind) a position of power, or trying to get there. He might have a specific goal, or just enjoy manipulating people. A puppetmaster could be a politician, a senior bureaucrat, a religious leader or a corporate executive. He doesn't *have* to be highly placed: he or she might just be a successful salesman or the most popular girl in school. The puppetmaster's greatest fear is always exposure: even if he only used his powers for information, people may still feel they were coerced.

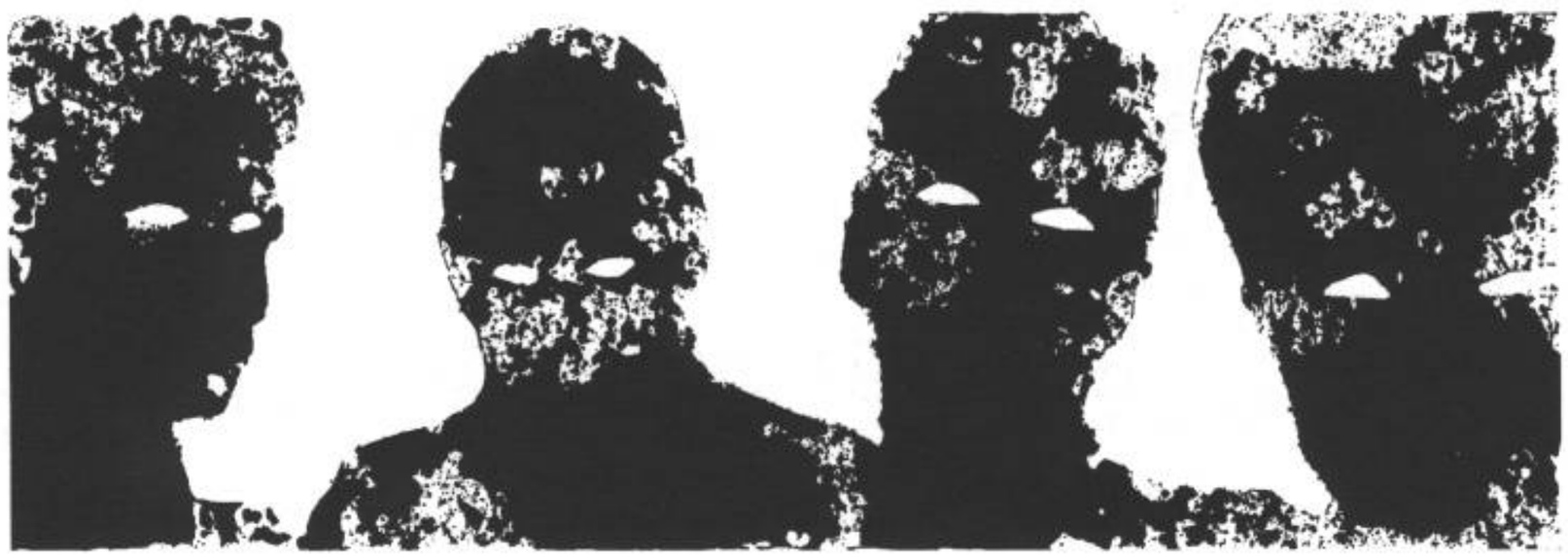
Advantages: Charisma, Clerical Investment, Reputation, Status, Strong Will, Wealth.

Disadvantages: Jealousy, Megalomania, Secret.

Skills: Administration, Detect Lies, Diplomacy, Fast-Talk, Leadership, Intelligence Analysis, Politics, Sex Appeal.

Psi Abilities: Telepathy, especially the skills Aspect, Emotion Sense, Suggestion, Telecontrol, and Telereceive.

Example: Stephen Leigh's Puppetman, from the *Wild Cards* series, edited by George R. R. Martin.



Sensitive

The sensitive is a psychic who is especially talented in receiving extra-sensory information. Some sensitives are empaths who specialize in detecting thoughts and emotions. Others are psychics or clairvoyants, with powerful ESP abilities.

Unusual Background

The Unusual Background advantage (see p. 95) is the most important tool that the GM has if he is trying to point-balance a psi user versus other ***GURPS*** characters. If no Unusual Background cost is assessed, then two 100-point characters – one psychic, one not – will differ wildly in ability.

In a campaign where *all* PCs are psis, this doesn't present much of a problem – as long as the GM doesn't expect his non-psi NPCs to stack up to a psi built on equal points. In a campaign where some of the PCs have no psi powers, or where the GM plans to use psis in a non-***Supers*** campaign, he should plan on assessing a heavy unusual background cost to those with access to the special abilities listed in ***GURPS Psionics.***

The Non-Psi in a Psionic Campaign

Sometimes it's fun to play the only non-psi in a campaign full of psychics. Under what circumstances would he adventure with a group of psis? Perhaps he was hired to provide useful skills the group otherwise lacks, working as a scientist, technician or bodyguard. Since he won't have points locked up in powers and psi skills, he can be very competent at what he does and still take advantage of a wide variety of psionic technology. Maybe he's a researcher who wants to study psionics up close, to prove or disprove his theories. Or if psis are outlawed, perhaps he was a member of the anti-psi police who got tired of the killing. He would have knowledge of police procedures and tactics, maybe even useful contacts back in the agency, but could have enemies both in the resistance and the government.

Another alternative is to take one of the psionic character types (e.g., the ghosthunter or the ESPionage agent) and assume that they rely on psi-tech equipment rather than natural abilities. The character should be well trained in Electronics Operation (Psychotronics), and would start with a variety of psionic devices, either purchased at the normal cash cost if they are legally available, or gained through an Unusual Background or a Patron who can supply them.

Rule Changes for Character Design

There are a few changes between the ***Basic Set,*** Third Edition, and this book. None of them is especially large – they just seemed worthwhile either to improve game balance or to make the system, overall, more consistent. When we reprint the ***Basic Set,*** we'll fix these.

Enhancements and Limitations

Enhancements have been added. The way limitations work in this book has been changed; it gives almost the same result, but it's easier to explain and to calculate. It's also wholly compatible with *GURPS Supers.*

Psi Sense Single-Skill Costs

The single-skill cost of Psi Sense went from 2 to 1 – nobody was buying it at 2 points per level.

TK Mass Table

This is the biggest change; it doesn't affect character design, but it affects capabilities. Above TK level 16, the "doubling" changes to a straight +250 pounds per level. World-shattering TKs can no longer be created on 100 points . . .

Psionic Resistance

This has been made an advantage rather than a skill, so non-psis can take it!



Sensitives may sometimes be *too* vulnerable to the psychic emanations that they pick up – the constant mental "noise" of other people's thoughts and emotions can quickly become unendurable, while the psychic residues generated by a modern metropolis are often excruciatingly painful. For this reason, many sensitives choose to live away from cities and people. But their own powers also make them highly empathic, and few can resist an honest appeal for help.

Advantages: Animal Empathy, Empathy, Danger Sense, Reputation.

Disadvantages: Pacifism, Shyness, Supersensitive. An empathic sensitive may very honest, or tactful to the point of being a Compulsive Liar, since he doesn't want to risk giving offense.

Skills: Artist, Detect Lies, Naturalist, Occultism, Philosophy, Psychology, Theology, and Writing. If there are combat skills, they may be non-lethal ones like Judo or Staff.

Psi Abilities: ESP, Telepathy, sometimes Healing.

Example: Lady Miyago, from Katsuhiro Otomo's *Akira* comic book.

Ubermensch

The ubermensch ("overman") knows his abilities make him both different from and superior to normal humanity. As a result, he feels alienated from the mundane people around him. He may decide to help the rest of humanity, or he might consider normals dangerous children, or worse.

This person is likely to be a lonely titan, perhaps searching for others like him, or just looking for peace. Some might attempt to control the world. His psi abilities (and often his physical and mental attributes) should be superior to the norm. In a world of normals, he is a talented psi. In a world of psis, he is *powerful.*

A variation on this theme is the person who is different physically as well as mentally – perhaps a mutant or alien. This may add extra advantages or disadvantages or exotic features.

Advantages: Charisma, Eidetic Memory, Strong Will.

Disadvantages: Appearance, Megalomania, Overconfidence, sometimes Youth.

Skills: Nearly anything.

Psi Abilities: Usually Telereceive or Precognition, plus other abilities.

Example: Marc Remillard, from Julian May's *Saga of Pliocene Exile.*

Warrior

A warrior can be a soldier, resistance fighter, police officer or spy, but whatever his profession, he sees his powers as weapons given him to use in battle. Some psionic warriors might be members of mystic fighting orders, while others are more pragmatic in their approach to psi.

A warrior may use his abilities directly, attacking with bolts of mental force alone, or he may choose to rely on normal weapons, using his psi powers to gain a subtle edge over his opponents. Decide whether he will fight on his own or as part of a team: a lone super-warrior needs a mix of abilities, whereas a team player can afford to specialize.

Advantages: Combat Reflexes, Law Enforcement Powers or Military Rank, Strong Will, Toughness.

Disadvantages: Code of Honor, Duty, Overconfidence.

Skills: Leadership, Stealth, Tactics, Strategy, and all Weapon skills. A psi with Combat Sense can be a formidable air or space pilot.

Psi Abilities: Most Powers have abilities usable in combat. Aside from direct attacks and defenses, Teleportation can be vital to commandos, Precognition is useful for leaders, and Telereceive and Telesend are invaluable for forming an offensive gestalt.

Example: Kimball Kinnison, from E.E. "Doc" Smith's *Lensman* series.

Advantages, Disadvantages and Skills

Many of the existing ***GURPS*** advantages, disadvantages and skills can be applied in new ways in a psionic campaign. In addition, several new abilities and disadvantages are appropriate for psis.

Status and Wealth

In a culture where psi powers are known to exist, psionic talent may determine a person's role in society. If psis are a privileged elite, all psychic characters should be required to buy Status 1 (maybe higher) and Comfortable or better Wealth. Psis who don't buy these advantages should have a good justification: perhaps they are rebels or outcasts, for example, or have decided to keep their powers hidden for some reason.

Non-psis in a psi-dominated society may be restricted to low status and below-average wealth, whether by actual laws or simply because they cannot compete with psis. They might also be prohibited from having Law Enforcement Powers, Clerical Investment, or Military Rank, or at least be limited in the levels of these advantages that they can achieve.

These same restrictions will apply to psis, if widespread anti-psionic prejudice exists. If psis are hunted or enslaved, then any *known* psi will have negative status and little or no wealth, although there may be high-placed psis who keep their powers a secret (see the *Secret* disadvantage, p. 98).



Advantages

Animal Empathy — *see p. B19*

This also gives a +4 bonus when using any Telepathy psi skill on an animal, with the exception of Mental Blow and Mindsword. It adds +2 to the reaction roll when attempting to bond with a Catalyst Creature (see p. 54).

Clerical Investment — *see p. B19*

Many religions will have no specific guidelines about psi, either because of enlightened attitude or disbelief. If this is the case, members of that religion may use their powers as they wish, as long as they follow the tenets of the faith.

Other creeds may refuse to ordain psis, or even forbid all members of the faith from practicing some or all psi skills, perhaps applying any restrictions or prohibitions they might have against magic use to psi powers. This can get complicated if the religion believes in miracles or divine intervention — how do you tell the difference between a faith healer whose powers are miraculous in origin, and a true believer who is unknowingly tapping his own Healing psi power?

Finally, if psi abilities *are* thought or known to exist, some faiths may actively promote psi abilities (e.g., New Age religions), or make possession of psi power a requirement for high rank in the church.

Danger Sense — *see p. B20*

This is a psi ability in campaigns where psi exists. A character with Danger Sense has the ESP Power at level 5, with no training. Detection is limited to threats within 4 yards range, unless power is improved.

Empathy — *see p. B20*

This is a psi ability in campaigns where psi exists. A character with Empathy has Telepathy Power 3, with no training. Range is limited to 1 yard unless Power is improved.

Strong Will — *see p. B23*

This advantage is very useful for anyone in a psionic campaign, since most resistance rolls against psi abilities or devices are made against Will. PCs without telepathic Mind Shields should certainly consider high levels of Will!

For play balance, the GM should consider limiting characters to a maximum Will of 20 (e.g., someone with IQ 15 could have no more than 5 levels of Strong Will).

Unusual Background — *see p. B23*

This advantage is relative in a ***Psionics*** campaign. Depending on the world, being a flying mutant with ESP powers could be considered very unusual, slightly odd, or perfectly ordinary.

If psi powers are unknown or very unusual, even a relatively trivial power like Cryokinesis could make its owner powerful (or at least wealthy). Thus, this advantage is used to "balance" the psi character against the "normal" character. If this is not a concern, the GM may simply ignore Unusual Background. On the other hand, if a few PCs have psi abilities in a non-***Psionics*** campaign, this advantage is necessary for game balance.

Suggested costs for Unusual Background would be:

Psi powers are incredibly rare (the PCs are the only psis on the planet): 250 points.

Psi powers are very rare (the PCs and one or two other groups are the only psis on the planet): 200 points.

Psi powers are rare (only a few dozen psi-users in each country): 150 points.

Psi powers are widespread (almost all large cities have a known psi or two): 100 points.

Psi powers are common (it is not unusual to see a psi or two while grocery shopping): 50 points.

Psi powers are very common (everybody knows a psi): 25 points.

Everybody has psi powers: no points.

An extra cost may be required for someone with unique powers or skills compared to his fellows (e.g., he's one of the only teleports in a world of telepaths), or someone free of limitations which the GM has decided that most other psis have.

New Advantages

Being of Pure Thought — 290 points

You have no physical body whatsoever. You exist only in the realm of thought, which overlaps the astral plane, the "insubstantial" plane, and other regions unimaginable to humanity. You have normal attributes, and can pass for human in the astral plane. You can fly at a rate equal to your Move; however, most beings of pure thought can teleport. You can perceive the physical plane, but can communicate with it or manipulate material objects only through psi powers.

A Being of Pure Thought is much more powerful than someone with the disadvantage *Astral Entity* (see p. 98). Whereas an Astral Entity is trapped on the astral plane and can only dimly perceive the physical world, a Being of Pure Thought can fully perceive the physical plane, and unlimited other planes.

Beings of Pure Thought are most likely to be found as NPCs, though an occasional PC might reach that state. The value of this advantage was calculated from the following ***GURPS Supers*** powers — see that book for details, but the names should be suggestive: Doesn't Breathe, Doesn't Eat or Drink, Doesn't Sleep, Flight, Invisibility, Insubstantiality, 360-Degree Vision. 15 points was added for an obligatory 5 points of Astral Projection power; more can be added at any time. Insubstantiability has a -50% special limitation Always On and the +100% special enhancement Can Affect Substantial.

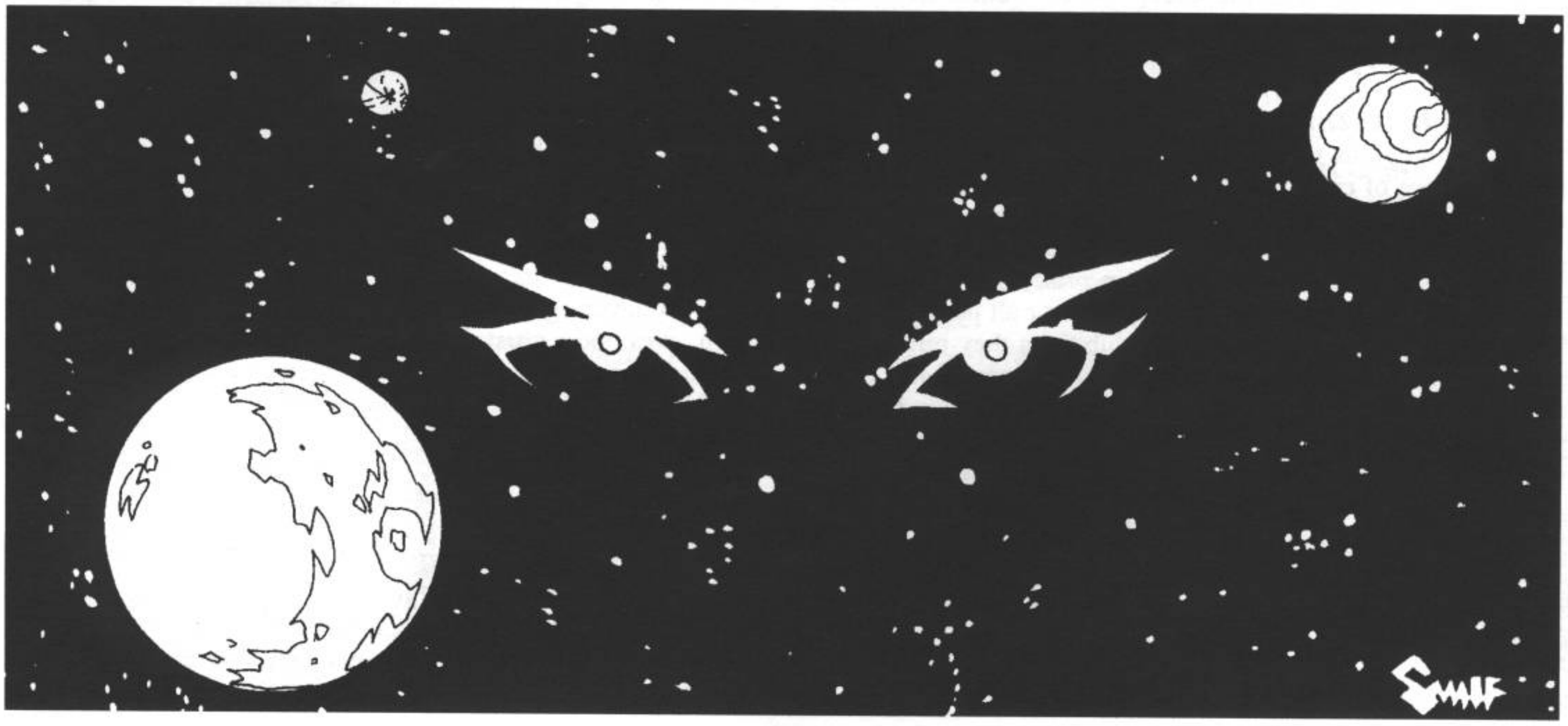
Becoming a Being of Pure Thought: At the GM's discretion, any Telepath may attempt a (Power+Will-25) roll when he dies. If he succeeds, he may "pass on" into this state, using later-earned character points to pay for the advantage. If he knows Mindswitch, he can attempt to switch with a living being and regain a body. The individual thus thrust into the realm of thought must attempt a similar roll, but at (Power+Will-15).

An old, experienced Being of Pure Thought (not an ex-PC), if present at the death of a PC, could help in some incomprehensible way, giving a +10 to the roll to make the transition.

Mindlink — 1 point per level

Some telepaths develop a permanent mental rapport with a specific individual that is so strong that telepathy seems to work at far greater than normal distances. This is usually a manifestation of a particularly close psychic bond — a pair of identical twins might share a mindlink, or two telepaths who are very much in love could spontaneously develop one. A character must have Telepathy power to have the Mindlink advantage, but the person he is linked to need not be telepathic. Two telepaths be Mindlinked with each other, but both would have to pay for it.

Having a permanent Mindlink is an advantage that costs 1 point per level, and works only with that one person. Whenever you use any telepathic skill on the person you are mindlinked to, your Telepathy Power *and* skill level in whatever ability you



are using are increased by the level of the Mindlink. The reverse does not apply, unless you both have Mindlinks.

For example, Isolde has a mindlink with her lover Orion. She has paid 10 character points for it, and so has a 10-level Mindlink. When Isolde uses Telepathy to contact Orion, her Power and skill are treated as being 10 levels higher, enabling her to reach him over a far greater distance than normal. But if Orion were also a telepath, he would not gain any bonus to contact Isolde, unless he also had a Mindlink with her.

At the GM's discretion, a Telepath may use earned character points to purchase (or improve) a Mindlink with any Telepath he or she is exceptionally close to. GMs should not allow Mindlinks with enemies, unless the enemies are on very intimate terms.

Psionic Resistance — 2 points per level

This advantage interferes with *all* uses of psi, friendly or hostile, against *or by* the subject. It can never be turned off!

If you have Psionic Resistance, the level of your resistance is subtracted from the effective skill of any psionic attempt where you are the subject, even psychokinesis and clairvoyance.



It is also subtracted from your *own* effective skill with any psi ability. You can still have psi powers, but if you have a high Psionic resistance, it will be hard for you to develop any significant abilities of your own.

Psionic Resistance may also interfere with some kinds of psionic technology; this depends on the individual device.

No Unusual Background is required for Psionic Resistance.

Note: Psionic Resistance was part of *Antipsi* in the ***Basic Set*** — it is now an advantage of its own.

Disadvantages

Addiction — see p. B30

Psis may become addicted to some of the exotic psi-drugs described in this book, especially Blue Fire and Brainstorm (p. 78).

GMs may also decide that *anyone's* psi skills will go out of control (i.e., suffer from the Uncontrollable limitation described on p. 30) if they come under the influence of hallucinogenic drugs, or are very drunk.

A psi may be addicted to using a Psychic Vampirism skill, especially Steal Energy, Drain Emotions, or Steal Dreams. This would be worth -5 points (because there is no cash cost). If it were highly or totally addictive, this would increase the cost by 5 or 10 points. Legality would depend on how psis are treated, whether it the drain was performed on a willing or unwilling subject, and whether a criminal code exists for psionic assault. An addict must successfully use the power on someone at least once per day; failure results in the usual withdrawal effects.

Enemies — see p. B39

If society is hostile toward psi powers, all psi-users and their sympathizers may have a common Enemy, such as Enraged Mobs or Anti-Psionic Police.

Honesty — see p. B33

In a society of mind readers, everyone but a few deviants or exiles might possess this "disadvantage."

Pacifism — see p. B35

It is sometimes assumed that a telepathic culture — or anyone with mind reading or empathic abilities — may be more ethical than normal humanity, as their psi abilities enable them to better understand and sympathize with their fellow beings. Like Honesty and Truthfulness, in some telepathic cultures every normal person may have Pacifism to one degree or another.

Social Stigma — see p. B27

In societies where psionics exist openly, psis may suffer from a social stigma, typically Minority Group (-10 points) if psionics are legally tolerated but distrusted by the citizens. If they are kept in seclusion, drafted or enslaved, they would be Valuable Property (-10 points). If being a psi (or at least a *free* psi) is illegal, a psi-user may be an Outlaw (-15 points).

These disadvantages are further defined by Status (see above). For instance, if psis were enslaved, they would be Valuable Property with -4 Status, while if all psis were simply drafted into the military or government service, they would still be Valuable Property, but could have normal or high Status.

In a culture where psis are ascendant, normals may be considered Second-Class Citizens (-5 points) or Barbarians (-15 points).

Split Personality — see p. B37

For a character with the 15-point version of this disadvantage, some telepathic skills will only affect the *current* personality of the subject.

For instance, if someone suffered a total Mindwipe of his current persona, he might still function "normally" when he switched to another. Similarly, Telereceive may only probe one set of memories, and a person under the stress of Telecontrol might revert to a different personality that was more able to resist domination.

On the other hand, the stress of a psychic attack (or even trying to use psi abilities) might trigger a personality change.

Any Telereceive attempt that reaches the subconscious will reveal the existence of a Split Personality. If a psi is aware of multiple personalities in his subject and can only affect one, he can choose which personality to affect.

Someone with a Split Personality may have up to 50 points worth of difference between the character sheets of each personality (see p. B37) — and if he's a psi, he could use some of these points to buy multiple psi abilities, perhaps reflecting facets of each personality (e.g., the bad-tempered pyrokinetic or the cowardly teleporter). This lets him have several different powers at no extra cost, but he would only be able to use one set at a time, and the player would have no control over which set was available at the moment!

New Disadvantages

Astral Entity -25 points

You exist only within the astral plane. You have all the normal character attributes, abilities, etc., but they operate only within the astral plane, except for those few psi abilities that can cross planes (see p. 10). You can detect the physical plane, but can only communicate with physical beings via psi unless they enter the astral.

If a human is trapped in the astral plane (e.g., by the death of his body), this is the sort of creature he becomes, but he gets no points for it unless he started the game that way.

A creature of the Net, or a netrunner trapped on the net by the death of his body, would be in a similar situation — but in cyberspace, not on the astral plane.

Disembodied Brain -100 points

You have no limbs, sense organs, cardiovascular or gastrointestinal systems, etc. You are a disembodied brain, and all sensory input must be provided through psi abilities or hardwired in.

Your brain tissue must be supported by an artificial nutrient system. This will cost $250,000, plus $10,000/month in maintenance at TL8 (halve costs at TL9 and again at TL10). Weight is 200 pounds and volume .2 cubic yards. If such a system exists in a late TL7 world, increase space, cost and weight by a factor of ten or more.

You have no Strength attribute; you *do* have a Dexterity attribute which will come into play if you learn a physical skill, such as Driving, for exercise by remote control. Your physical brain has a HT attribute (for rolls against shock, etc.) but one point of actual damage will render you unconscious and two or more points will kill you. Your life support system may have armor — see *Psionic Technology* for rules on equipment DR.

Although you have no strength, you have Fatigue points equal to your IQ — these are used to calculate fatigue loss from psi abilities or attacks such as Mental Blow, and measure psychic stress. Recovery rules apply normally.

You have no glands, and therefore you feel no strong emotions. Lust, bloodlust, terror, and excitement . . . all are lost to you. You make all Fright Checks at +5, and ignore any physical result of a failed Fright Check (read down the chart to the first applicable mental result). But you can still feel intellectual emotions like reasonable fear, cold hatred, friendship and greed.

Squeamish people and necrophobes must make Fright Checks when seeing you; they must check at +2 even if they just talk to you on the telephone or psionically, and know or guess what you are. Most strangers, except doctors, will react to you at -1 when meeting you in person.

You may have any kind of psi abilities (making you a "psiborg"), and may be attached to any kind of psionic device that can use a psiberface system. Psi drugs may be rigged to drip into your nutrient fluid, with normal effects. Through telepathy, you could come to experience another's emotions or see through their minds. Astral Projection could give you a kind of mobility. It would be up to the GM whether your astral form is the body you had (if any) or that of a brain (with or without an image of the life support system). If the cybernetic technology is up to it, you may possess an interface jack that enables you to be hooked up to computers, voice synthesizers, sensors, communication systems, or the like — see ***GURPS Cyberpunk*** and ***GURPS Ultra-Tech.***

Secret Varies

A Secret is some aspect of your life (or your past) that you must keep hidden. Were it made public, the information could harm your reputation, ruin your career, wreck your friendships and possibly threaten your life.

The most common type of Secret in a psi campaign is "I have psi powers." In some societies, the Secret may be that you do *not* have psi powers, e.g., if you are part of a ruling elite who are all expected to be psionic!

The point value of a Secret depends on the consequences if the Secret is revealed. The worse the results, the higher the value, as follows:

Serious Embarrassment. If this information gets around, you can forget about ever getting a promotion, getting elected or marrying well. Alternatively, your Secret could be one that will simply attract unwelcome public attention if it is known. -5 points.

Utter Rejection. If your Secret is discovered, your whole life will be changed. Perhaps you would lose your job and be rejected by friends and loved ones, or you might merely be harassed by admirers, cultists, long-lost relatives or the press. -10 points.

Imprisonment or Exile. If the authorities uncover your Secret, you'll have to flee or be imprisoned for a long time (GM's discretion). -20 points.

Possible Death. Your Secret is so terrible you would face execution by the authorities, lynching by a mob or assassination by enemy agents if it were revealed. -30 points.

If a Secret is made public, there will be an immediate negative effect, as described above, ranging from embarrassment to possible death. There is a lasting effect — you suddenly acquire new, permanent disadvantages whose point value equals *twice* that of the Secret itself! The points go first to buy off the Secret, and may then (at the GM's option only) be used to buy off other disadvantages or (rarely) new advantages. Any unused points are lost, reducing the character's point value.

The new disadvantages that can be acquired must be appropriate to the Secret and should be determined (with the GM's supervision) when the character is created. Most Secrets turn into Enemies, Bad Reputations, and Social Stigmas. They may also reduce the value of Status or Wealth — going from Filthy Rich to merely Very Wealthy is effectively a -10 point disadvantage. Some Secrets could even turn into mental or physical disadvantages, though this would be rare.

If the GM allows you to buy off old disadvantages or add new advantages, these too must be appropriate to the Secret. The most common disadvantages to be bought off are Duty and Dependents ("Leaving job and family behind, he fled the country").

In general, a Secret is threatened during a particular game session if the GM rolls a 6 or less on three dice before the adventure begins. However, as for all other disadvantages of this type, the GM need not feel constrained by the occurrence roll — if he feels the Secret should come into play, it does!

When a Secret appears, it is not usually made public; instead, the character faces some circumstance that might result in revelation if he does not take appropriate action. This may require him to cave in to blackmail, steal incriminating documents, change his identity, or find someone good at Mindwipe.

Regardless of the solution, however, it's only temporary — the Secret will appear again and again until it is finally bought

off. Secrets may be bought off either automatically through exposure (see above) or with earned character points over the course of play.

Sleepwalker -5 points

You walk in your sleep ("somnambulation"). This is usually just annoying or embarrassing (unless you fall down the stairs), but can be very dangerous if you sleepwalk while encamped in hostile territory!

If sleepwalking would matter during the adventure, the GM rolls 3d any time you go to sleep. On any roll of 8 or less, you will sleepwalk sometime during the night. You wake up after walking for 1d minutes, or if someone else awakens you. The GM will make DX rolls to see if you trip while going down stairs or walking over rough ground — if this happens, you will wake up suddenly and be mentally stunned.

While sleepwalking, you are considered to be in a hypnagogic state (see p. 51) and are thus *very* susceptible to telepathic influences. A person with Teleportation who would normally sleepwalk may *sleepjump* instead — see p. 49.

Supersensitive -2 points per level

This disadvantage is only available to Telepaths. You are sensitive to the thoughts or emotions of people *all the time.* You can hear the thoughts of everyone around you as a constant, irritating low-level buzz of psychic noise, but these thoughts are always just below the threshold of conscious understanding!

The range at which you pick up psychic noise is based on the Telepathy Range Table (p. 20), with the number of levels you have of this disadvantage being used instead of Power to determine the distance. Example: You have 10 levels of Supersensitive, so you are affected by anyone within 100 yards. This would be worth 20 points.

As long as you are in range of other sentient beings (IQ 7+) you suffer a -1 on DX and IQ, or -2 if in range of 10 or more people, -3 if in range of 100 or more people, -4 for 1,000, etc. If DX or IQ is ever reduced below half because of this penalty, you collapse and can take no action until the "noise" goes away. People with Mind Shields do not bother you.

You cannot use Supersensitive to gain information about others' thoughts or emotions or use it to determine their locations (although the simple fact of receiving psychic noise, and the level of that noise, will tell you that people are present within your range).

Any drugs or devices that increase or decrease Telepathy *Power* level (not just skill) will affect this disadvantage in the same way. Example: Isolde, with Supersensitive-5, takes a psi drug that increases all her psi powers (including Telepathy) by 50%. Her normal powers go up in level, but so does her disadvantage — for as long as the drug affects her, she has Supersensitive-8!

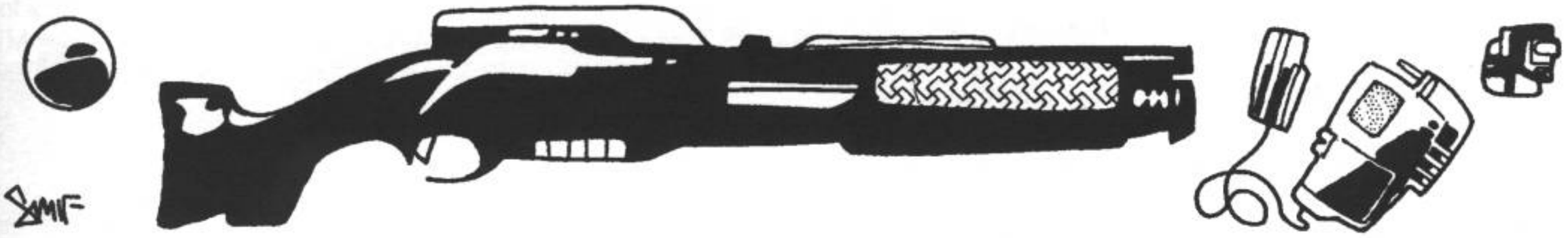
Telepathic Addiction -10/-20 points

You are so used to opening your mind and thoughts to other telepaths that you become lonely, depressed and withdrawn when you are denied this kind of mental rapport. In order to have this disadvantage, you must have both Telesend and Telereceive skills at level 10 or better. This disadvantage is commonest in openly telepathic societies.

To avoid withdrawal symptoms, you must enter into Full Communion (p. 36) with another telepath for a minute or more every day. If you do not, treat is as drug withdrawal (p. B30) with a -5 on withdrawal rolls, except that rolls are made against Will rather than HT. A failed roll still means HT is lost. If you can no longer use your Telereceive skill at all (e.g. your powers have somehow been disabled), all rolls are at -10, since you no longer have the comfort of even shallow telepathic awareness.

While undergoing withdrawal, you will suffer from mental problems. Choose one of the following disadvantages you don't already have: Bad Temper, Severe Shyness, or Paranoia. If you survive withdrawal, you may either buy off this disadvantage, or replace it with one of the above mental disadvantages.

This disadvantage is normally worth -10 points. It is worth -20 points if the telepathic rapport must be with a specific person or being.



Skills

Armoury/TL (Psi Weaponry) see p. B53

Armorers may specialize in *psi weaponry.* This covers building and repairing the weapons, defenses, and weapon accessories described in Chapter 4.

Beam Weapons/TL (Neural) see p. B49

The Beam Weapons (Neural) skill allows the user to fire psionic beam weapons without penalty. It also covers non-psionic neural weaponry, such as paralysis and nerve guns and hypnagogic projectors.

Biochemistry/TL see p. B60

With proper equipment, someone with this skill can attempt to create or analyze psi drugs. Using this skill or Genetics/TL, a scientist could perform genetic tests to determine if an individual possessed psionic powers.

Scientists with biochemistry skill can take "bio-psi" as an *optional specialty* (p. B59). This gives them special familiarity with the biochemistry of the brain, and the chemical and genetic basis for psionic abilities.

Electronic Operation/TL (Psychotronics) see p. B58

Psychotronic equipment is a specialty of Electronic Operation. It deals with the use of any type of psionic electronic gadgetry. If the operator does not have this specialty, the penalty for its lack is only -2 if its use falls into the same category as his actual specialization. Thus, someone with Electronics

Operation (Communications) would only suffer a -2 penalty if using a psychotronic communicator.

Electronics/TL (Psychotronics) *see p. B60*

This is the skill of designing and repairing psychotronic hardware — psychotronic engineering. See Electronics Operation, above.

Hypnotism *see p. B56*

Successful use of Suggestion or Telesend gives a +2 bonus to Hypnotism rolls (p. B56). Other Telepathy abilities do not give a bonus.

A subject placed into a hypnotic trance has lowered resistance against telepathy or psychic vampirism. For every 2 points the Hypnotism contest of skill succeeded by, reduce both the subject's effective Will and the Power of any natural (not artificial) Mind Shield by 1, only for the purposes of resisting telepathy or psychic vampirism abilities.

Occultism *see p. B61*

Occultism skill will rarely give useful practical information about how psi abilities work. It *is* useful for tracking down the history or location of individuals and groups who may be connected with psi or the supernatural, or for researching supposedly "haunted" areas that might actually be manifestations of psi.

Psychology *see p. B62*

A parapsychologist is a psychologist who studies people with psi abilities. Parapsychology may be taken as an *optional specialty* (p. B59) by any psychologist.

Psychologists may be able to discover the cause behind the generation of spontaneous psi events (see p. 46), or discover buried trauma that is preventing a patient from "awakening" latent psi powers.

Psychologists may be able to determine a psychological basis for specific *limitations* on psi-skills (e.g., "Usable Only vs. Opposite Sex"), thus providing a rationale for the player to buy it off after undergoing therapy or analysis.

Any type of psychologist can get a bonus to his Psychology roll if he is actually *inside* the subject's mind through Telereceive while examining him. See *Telereceive,* p. 25, for how psychology skill may be used.

Another useful optional specialty in a psi campaign is the psychology of dreams — see *Dreamscanners* on p. 65.



New Skills

Body Sense (Physical/Hard) Defaults to DX-6 or Acrobatics-3

This is the ability to adjust quickly after teleporting; roll at -2 if you are changing facing, -5 if you are going from vertical to horizontal or vice versa! (Yes, you can use Teleport to get up in one turn if knocked prone — but it's not easy!)

A successful roll allows you to act normally after teleporting. A failed roll means disorientation — no actions except defense possible on the turn you teleport. A critical failure means you fall down, physically stunned. Modifiers: +3 for Absolute Direction or 3-D Spatial Sense.

Mind Block (Mental/Average) Defaults to Will-4

This is the ability to set up a non-psionic mental block to prevent psis from listening in on thoughts or emotions using Telereceive or Emotion Sense (only).

An example of a mental block might be doing complicated mathematical calculations, or repeating poetry over and over again. Anyone can do this for a short time (roll vs. IQ or Will+4), but maintaining a deliberate mental block while doing something else, under stress, or for more than a minute, requires skill.

The GM may require a Mind Block roll whenever a question arises about whether someone is or is not thinking about something important. This procedure is useful even for those who don't have the skill — roll against the default value. A new roll may be required each minute that the person does nothing, or each turn in combat or stressful situations (e.g., when someone is *trying* hard not to think about something that concerns him a lot).

If this skill is used, roll a Contest of Skills between Mind Block and Telereceive, once per minute. This is separate from any other roll required to make the skill work or to get through a Mind Shield. If the subject wins, the peeper will get nothing but poetry or the multiplication tables. If he loses, he is not successfully blocking. A successful Telereceive will discover part or all of whatever he is thinking.

If the Mind Blocker rolls a critical failure, *he thought about it* — in detail — right there in the forefront of his mind!

If someone is doing *nothing* but concentrating on blocking, they get a +2. Someone who is mentally or physically stunned rolls at -3. Rolls to hide *emotions* rather than thoughts are harder, and should be made at -2 or more depending on how strong the GM rules they are. GMs may impose additional penalties for other circumstances, e.g., trying to mind block your emotions while sneaking up on your most hated enemy.

Paraphysics/TL (Mental/Very Hard) No Default

Prerequisites: Physics-12+, Biochemistry-12+

This is the study of the underlying physics behind psi powers. A paraphysicist can develop the theoretical basis under which new psi abilities or psychotronic devices work or answer questions about how psi interacts with the physical world.

CHAPTER SEVEN

PSIONIC CAMPAIGNS

The hawk wheeled in lazy circles over the concrete jungle while Jeric and Melinda watched the benighted city through its eyes. So this was London, the fabled City of Ghosts. There was no sign of life or movement. Only a few drifting plumes of smoke showed that people still dwelt somewhere, among the ruins left by the Total War.



Everyone's a Psi

The basic assumption in ***GURPS Psionics*** is that psionic power is a special gift that only some people have. But what if psi is an ability everyone shares? Flashes of intuition, *dèjá vu* and precognitive dreams are all examples of this innate power operating unreliably. But with proper training, anyone can develop their latent powers and learn psi skills.

This means that *everyone* should buy a Power level of 1 in *all* Powers (this costs 35 points; since everyone has it, GMs may wish to use a 133-point base for characters). Most people will lack any skill and be latents (p. 86), unaware of their abilities – characters may, of course, buy higher Power levels or psi skills, although GMs may wish to restrict characters to having psi skills in only a few Powers to start with. A PC without psi would still start at 133 points, and might also have a Social Stigma (Mind-Blind).

Racial Powers

In a ***Fantasy*** or ***Space*** campaign in which multiple races were encountered, each species might have a monopoly on one or two Powers. There seems to be some basis for this: very few human Teleports are recorded in history, unlike people who exhibit ESP-like powers. To reflect this, the GM could decide that only humans can have Telepathy and ESP, the sole Electrokinetics are the Hey'an cyborgs, the only known Teleporting species are the fun-loving bat-winged Skree, and so on. In some races these talents would be latent or limited to a few individuals (Antipsi or ESP among humans, for instance), but in other races everyone might have the power.

Or a race may possess a specific One-Skill Only power. If the skill was (for instance) Psychometry, and only a minority of people possessed it, the influence of psi on the campaign would be very slight. But if the psi skill was something like Telereceive, psis could still be very effective. If enough telepaths existed, they could change society. And if the only talent around was something like Mindswitch . . . if *everyone* could Mindswitch . . . things could be very weird indeed!

Jeric and his companions had been sent from the Enclave in the Black Mountains in answer to a desperate telepathic cry for help from a fellow band of "new humans" in London. Their quest had taken them across Wales, and over the terrible mutant-haunted moors of Salisbury Plain. They were the best psis the Enclave had, but he prayed that they weren't too late, that the Londoners had managed to hold out this long.

It was a costly journey. They lost Rhys first, to a Nightstalker ambush – his telekinesis dropped the mutants' leader, but his own shields failed, and he fell to a bullet from a hidden wolfgirl. And only three days ago, Irene had been bitten by a poisonous Death-Adder. Before she died, she had Mindswitched with Jeric's hawk, but the animal's tiny brain could not hold her full intellect. Jeric grieved for the friend and lover he had lost, knowing it was all for nothing – the Londoner telepath hadn't contacted them for days, and he feared they were all dead.

It was Irene who saw the flashes of light – gunfire, near the Thames. Her raptor's cry of triumph, and a swift thought winging down, broke through Jeric's gloom. He smiled, letting himself feel a sudden surge of hope – the London Enclave was still holding out, after all. The three of them could be there in a few minutes; together, their powers might make the difference. Perhaps they were not too late after all . . .

Origin of Psi Powers

Before introducing psi into a campaign, the GM should ask himself the question "Where did these powers come from?" There are many possible answers, some of which are presented below. He can even use more than one, particularly if several psionic races exist!

They Always Existed

Only in the late 19th century did researchers begin to pursue the idea that psychic powers might be explainable by science. Earlier, they were considered supernatural by those who believed, superstition by those who didn't. But *real* psi powers might still have existed since antiquity in the guise of magic or miracles.

Perhaps everyone is innately psionic, but for most people this facility will be so weak as to be useless for anything more than occasional flashes of intuition or *dèjá vu.* Perhaps the ability to make effective use of psi is genetically inherited. If so, particular psionic powers might run in certain families, or even be associated with other inherited traits, like Eidetic Memory or insanity. If psi powers (or the genes they are linked to) do not help their possessor survive, psionic potential will remain rare. On the other hand, if psi power is a survival trait by itself, more psis will live to have children, and psi will become more common.

How widespread psi will become depends on whether the genes are *recessive* or *dominant.* If power-genes are recessive, psi abilities would occur in a person only if *both* his parents had the same genes. So psi abilities would be rare.

But if the genes were dominant, only one parent need have the right chromosomes for a child to inherit the power. If both parents had the power, their offspring would be *very* strong, inheriting both their parents' ability – and unless the "power genes" were very rare, the psionic population would grow rapidly!

The March of Science

This option assumes that psi is a natural ability as above, but remained weak or unreliable until there was irrefutable scientific proof that such mental powers exist. This spurred further research, leading to programs for training

psis, and the careful categorization of the different Powers and their associated psi skills. An effective means of testing for psi is developed, along with a full understanding of the genetic basis (if any) of the powers. If orthodox physics and psionics are reconciled, technology designed to duplicate or amplify psi abilities may be also be invented.

This premise can be used to explain the development of standard psionic abilities in a campaign set in the future, providing a simple rationale for the development of psi in any ***GURPS Space*** campaign at any TL. By assuming that successful research has remained secret, GMs can also use it to explain powerful psi abilities within a contemporary or historical setting. An example of this is the world background in the next chapter.

Mutant Powers

If *no* normal humans have the potential for psionic abilities, then psis might be mutants born with a genetic "x-factor" not found among the rest of humanity. But a successful mutation could spread through the gene pool; if the psis survive and have children, mankind could eventually evolve into a psionic species. In fact, a campaign could be set at that "critical point," where psi-mutants exist in numbers large enough to threaten *Homo sapiens'* dominance (as in A. E. Van Vogt's *Slan*).

Psionic mutations could be freaks of natural evolution, as in Olaf Stapleton's classic novel *Odd John,* or might be triggered by man-made catastrophes. This may be radiation from a nuclear war, as in John Wyndham's *The Chrysalids,* but there are many other possible mutagenic agents. These include a genetic virus, supernova radiation, the decline of the ozone layer resulting in increased exposure to solar flares, or even the unforeseen mutagenic properties of food additives, drugs or chemical waste.

The concept of psi powers as mutations is very appropriate for ***Supers*** and post-holocaust ***Survivors*** campaigns, especially if the "new humans" are opposed by the jealous remnants of "normal" humanity.

Alien Intervention

In this campaign, extraterrestrials teach us how to properly use our psi abilities. If some humans have psionic potential, the aliens may want us to join them in mental fellowship as part of a "galactic mind." Or there might be more pragmatic motives behind their actions. Perhaps they want us for allies in an interstellar war, or need human brains as living engines for their FTL drives!

Alien visitors may even find that humanity has powerful dormant abilities, perhaps greater than their own: maybe *all* of humanity has an innate potential for psi, whereas only a few special talents exist among the aliens.

If aliens can mate with humans (possible if both races sprang from common ancestors eons ago) then the half-breed children may inherit some or all of the alien psi potential.

Another kind of alien intervention is *symbiosis.* An alien life form joins (mentally, physically or both) with a human host or partner. This may be a catalyst creature (p. 54) which telepathically bonds with its companion. Perhaps people with psi power are hosts for invisible energy beings that give them their abilities while deriving mental sustenance from human

Gender, Sex and Psi

Science fiction has often entertained the idea that gender or sexual activity may be related to psi. Some possibilities of this sort are described below, but remember: each is *optional,* and some are mutually exclusive.

No Psionic Children: All psi powers manifest during puberty. As a result, preadolescent psis are rare or nonexistent, and most people discover their psychic abilities while still teenagers. This is a stock feature of many "mutant" stories involving psis, and works well with what is known of poltergeist phenomena.

No Psionic Adults: Psi powers *disappear* at puberty – only preadolescent children have psi powers! See Timothy Zahn's *A Coming of Age* as an example of how this might affect a society.

Gender-Based Abilities: Some or all powers could be made gender-specific – perhaps only males can be espers and only females may have Teleportation, or some such combination. This division could apply instead to psi skills within a Power Group – see Christopher Stasheff's *The Warlock In Spite of Himself* and sequels. Or perhaps psi power itself is sex-linked, so that (for instance) all psis with significant Power are female.

Sex and Psi: Maybe sexual activity interferes with psi powers. For instance, 12 hours of abstinence are required to use psi without penalty; any sexual activity results in a -4 penalty to all psi skills, a result of increased hormonal levels interfering with the centers of the brain governing psi. This may explain the vows of certain mystic orders, and the legend that witches who lose their virginity also lose their powers! See Marion Zimmer Bradley's *Darkover* series for an example of a society with this sort of psi.





Primitive Psionic Cultures

In a ***Space*** setting, the GM may wish to create low-tech societies in which psionics are widespread. Normally, when spacefarers visit a primitive world, their advanced technology gives them a great edge over the natives. Their adventures will be more challenging if the natives are psionic – especially if the PCs are not – and the GM will be able to run swords-and-sorcery adventures in a ***Space*** campaign!

A primitive campaign may have psi as a secretive magical force, an open part of a society, or a bit of both. Travelers may not even realize that certain powers are psi, especially if they are cloaked in the trappings of magic and ritual.

When designing such a world, it can be worthwhile to play around with unusual customs and cultures created through the interaction of psi and society. The inhabitants might believe their powers are the result of magic, religion or science; they may have developed primitive (or not so primitive) psi-tech as well. If psi is limited to a ruling caste, the people could consider these psis to be the children of the gods, or the gods themselves. Visitors who demonstrate similar powers may be considered gods too – or demons.

There are many examples of low-tech psionic cultures in science fiction; one of the best is Marion Zimmer Bradley's Darkover. *The Forbidden Tower* and *Heritage of Hastur* are excellent books to start the series with. The works of Andre Norton, and many post-holocaust novels, such as Robert Adams' *Horseclans* series (see ***GURPS Horseclans***), also include psi as part of a low-tech setting.

emotions, experience or life force. These "psi wraiths" or "mental symbiotes" could even be inherited: if two psis mate, so might their energy wraiths, producing an offspring which possesses the unborn child!

Alien intervention may also *accidentally* result in psi powers, perhaps as a result of contact with a telepathic energy, alien viruses or strange radiation. Many people claim to have experienced heightened ESP or Telepathic abilities after contact with UFOs. The alien visitors needn't be benevolent: UFOs could be sinister psychic vampires feeding on our emotions!

Genetic Manipulation

In this case, effective psionic powers did not evolve naturally in humans. Instead, they resulted from tinkering with human (or alien) genes. The goal may have been to create psi potential from scratch, or to raise it to a useful level.

GMs should decide who conducted the experiments, how long ago, for what reason, and if they are still going on! The experimenters may be performed by aliens, corporations, the military, intelligence agencies, private scientists, the Illuminati or even criminal organizations. The motive might have been furthering of human evolution, simple profit, or even the forging of living tools or weapons. Psi research may even be an accidental spinoff of another kind of project – the search for a stardrive might lead to an investigation of the biophysics behind faster-than-light teleportation or telepathy.

Technological Powers

Perhaps natural psi abilities do not exist at all! The only "psi powers" are advantages like Empathy or Danger Sense. But while there are no natural psi abilities, psionic powers may be gained through advanced technology.

Several artificial means of granting psi powers are discussed in the chapters on psionic technology. They include neuro-psi implants, proteus viruses, catalyst drugs and brain-tissue grafts. Alternatively, even artificially induced psi powers may not exist, but psychotronic devices like dreamscanners or mind probes might still be available.

Psi in Society

Even in a campaign that is not centered around psi, its presence will affect society. This will depend on how common psi powers are, and whether they are publicly "proven" to exist.

If psi remains a shadowy occult force, then the influence of psychic powers will only be felt "behind the scenes." On the other hand, if psi powers are proven to be both real and useful, society will be changed. Psionic research can proceed quickly, and the GM can experiment with the effect psi can have on the world.

Some possible ways psi could interact with society are described below. Remember that several of these premises could exist at once in a campaign, in separate regions or on different worlds.

Mysterious Powers

At present, the major stumbling block of parapsychology as a science is that psi powers seem to be too unreliable, subjective or nebulous to demonstrate properly to skeptical observers.

In a "Mysterious Powers" world, psi powers are as mysterious and difficult to prove as they appear to be in the real world. Truly powerful psis are so rare that only a few exist at any one time, and they often have more important things to do than submit to rigorous testing of their abilities. This makes it easy for establishment scientists to ignore evidence of psi abilities.

In this type of campaign, GMs should restrict characters to "invisible" mental powers like Astral Projection, ESP, Psychic Vampirism and Telepathy. The other powers – that is, Electrokinesis, Healing, Psychokinesis, and Teleportation – are either banned or restricted to Power 5 or less. Furthermore, the GM should require that all PC psi skills have the limitations (see p. 9) of Unreliable (working at no better than an 8 or less), and either Fickle or Uncontrollable. No character should start with a higher skill level then his IQ, and psionic technology will be rudimentary. If characters take additional limitations like Emergencies Only, Only During Hypnotic Trance, or Only Works on Other Psis, even the most open-minded researcher may not be able to prove that psi exists!

This setting works well if the GM wants psi abilities to remain secret and society to remain unchanged. The main disadvantage is that some players may be unhappy with such a low-powered campaign.

Secret Masters

In this setting, powerful psis exist, but are deliberately keeping a low profile – perhaps for good reasons! One or more groups – anything from governments to corporations to the Illuminati – are working to making sure that psi powers remain unproven, perhaps to protect their own monopoly. Parapsychologists who seem close to proving the existence of psi powers may be discredited, their experiments sabotaged. Incidents of paranormal activity are carefully monitored, and real psis are recruited – or eliminated.

If a Secret Masters campaign is set in the contemporary world, the GM can have fun with reports of "real" psychic and occult happenings or government cover-ups. Supermarket tabloids are particularly useful for inspiring adventures, but new-age magazines and parapsychology journals can also provide scenario ideas. Current events can be worked into the campaign: perhaps that "classified" space shuttle launch actually carried a telepathic psiborg intended to communicate with ballistic missile subs . . . By postulating the existence of competing secret organizations and cover-ups by shadowy government agencies the GM can create an effective atmosphere of conspiracy and paranoia.

A contemporary Secret Masters background is described in the next chapter.



Special Talents

Psionics have been scientifically proven to exist. Most scientists and the general public are convinced that psi is real. As a result, society is, to some

Psionics Institutes

On the surface, this is a research foundation dedicated to psionics or parapsychology. It may be just that, but it could also be a secret society that offers aid and training to psis.

The Institute may be "good" or "evil." A sinister organization might take advantage of a PC with developing talents, getting him into trouble; a benevolent institute can help protect a psi from persecution. Either type can provide useful training, though there may be a price to pay. Of course the institute *could* be a red herring, staffed by crackpots!

There may be one such institute, with branches everywhere, or many competing organizations, including those that are fronts for military or intelligence organizations. If psis are persecuted and psionic research is illegal, the Institute will be in deeper cover, perhaps disguised as a university psychology department.

There are two common variations on the Psionic Institute:

The Psionics Guild

Psis band together to enforce a code of ethics on their members, prevent their exploitation and maintain a monopoly on psionic services. The guild may even blacklist or punish psis who "go freelance" and refuse to accept its authority. A Psionics Guild may embrace all psis, or there may be separate organizations for different professions (e.g., psychic healers or judicial telepaths). A unified Psionics Guild could be a *very* powerful political force.

The Enclave

This is a hidden community of psis living apart from non-psionic society. An enclave may appear normal on the surface, but when outsiders aren't present, psi abilities are in daily use: town meetings are conducted by telepathy, telekinesis is used to do the dishes, and everyone levitates or teleports. An Enclave may be a utopia, where everyone exists in mental harmony and companionship or help is just a thought away. Or it may be a rigid community in which privacy is unknown and every "deviant" thought is controlled and suppressed. People who grew up in an Enclave may have trouble adjusting to the outside world!

Working Psis

The section *Special Talents* (p. 105) describes some "real world" uses for psi. But not all psis are brain surgeons or spies: many mundane professions exist where psionics could be beneficial if used openly or secretly.

Archaeologist: ESP, especially psychometry, is useful for knowing exactly where to dig. Retrogression lets a scientist explore the past first-hand!

Artist: Psi could usher in new art forms, such as thought pictures, telepathic music, dreamweaving, illusions and photokinetic light sculptures. A telepathic writer or poet could use his power to gain *real* insight into other people's minds.

Clergy: Telepathy and Healing powers are invaluable for helping parishioners deal with problems – not to mention determining whether a person in confessional is holding something back!

Hunter: ESP and Telepathy make tracking easier; the stalker could even communicate with animals. An ESPer could be a professional treasure-hunter, or finder of missing objects or people.

Insurance Investigator: An insurance company could employ skilled Precogs to determine if someone was a good risk, or to predict disasters and prevent them, before they cost the company millions of dollars.

Messenger: Psis with Telesend could transmit secure messages, though they might have to agree to submit to Mindwipe afterwards. Teleports can be used as couriers.

Rescue Worker: Autoteleport enables a rescue team to instantly reach a disaster site, and precogs could arrive before it occurs! Levitation lets a psi get to trapped people, while TK can remove debris or lift victims to safety. Telescan can quickly locate people in trouble. Paramedics will use Healing.

Secretary: A person with Telereceive and Telesend can be a perfect secretary. Instead of having to take dictation, a telepathic secretary could know the boss's intent instantly!

Service Jobs: Store clerks, waiters, cab drivers or bellboys with Telereceive could read their client's intentions before they were vocalized, providing prompt service. A chauffeur with Teleport or a telepathic and telekinetic butler might command fantastic wages . . . or be valuable property.

Technician: Clairvoyance lets a technician examine the inside of a device without taking it apart; telekinesis might enable her to fix it the same way, and provides a useful "third hand."



extent, transformed. Psis are not the rulers, but they command high fees and are highly respected. They may also be distrusted by normal society.

Psis may find lucrative employment in any field that can exploit their talents. In some positions – in the judicial system, or as psychologists – they may totally transform a profession. If they are allowed to use their talents for the benefit of society, the world could become a very different place. A few of the changes might be:

Politics: A single politician with mind control powers would be very dangerous. But imagine how much more honest elected officials would be if *we* could read *their* minds!

Medicine: Healing and Sense Aura are the obvious skills, but Emotion Sense, Clairvoyance, Telekinesis, Drain Emotion and even Cryokinesis would all be of vital importance to the psionic physician.

Psychology: Enormous progress would be made in the treatment of psychological problems. The impact on the economy alone would be staggering, as drug, tobacco and alcohol dependence could be cured almost instantly with the proper use of Mindwipe.

Social Control: The ability to Mindwipe a person's antisocial tendencies would greatly reduce the need for prisons. But what if holding the wrong political or religious beliefs were considered antisocial?

Entertainment: Illusions, Photokinesis, PK Shield and Levitation could stage awe-inspiring stunts and special effects. Audience participation would take on a whole new meaning through a telepathic gestalt. Some entertainers might be psychic vampires, draining energy from their fans! As for roleplaying games, forget complex rules: let's dreamlink and *live* a story!

Law Enforcement: If police and judges had Telereceive, Signature Sniffer, Telescan and Psychometry the crime rate would decline sharply. The authorities may not be able to arrest someone for *thinking about* robbing a bank, but with Precognition they could certainly catch him at the scene.

Education: Telepathy would allow teachers to develop programs of study that fit the needs of an individual student, quickly determining how best to teach him or motivate him to learn. It would also help direct a person into the area for which they're best suited. Telereceive can find out how much a student has progressed without resorting to clumsy exams or tests. Suggestion can set a "mood" that encourages learning.

See the sidebar *Working Psis* for other ideas. A society in which psis are free to use their abilities will have laws to keep them from abusing them, e.g., for "mental privacy." Special police divisions, possibly staffed by psis or antipsis, will be created to deal with psionic criminals, and PCs may be members – or targets. Professional psis may adopt a code of conduct, or have one forced upon them. Psis might be forced to register with the government, and be called up to serve the state via mechanisms similar to jury duty or conscription.

Overlords

If they became organized, effective psis might quickly seize control of society. A psionic ruling class would be almost immune to overthrow by normal humans, especially if they recruit (or eliminate) new psis born among the normal population. After some decades, a psionic ruling caste may even develop a very different culture from that of the "norms" under them, with unique customs relating to telepathic privacy and the maintenance of their rule.

Psionic rulers might be ruthless totalitarians whose "thought police" really do police thoughts. Or they could be enlightened despots who serve as the guardians of mankind. An interesting option is for the psionic rulers to be "invisible," their commands delivered to their minions telepathically while their actual identities remain unknown. Outsiders may not even realize these rulers exist!

In either case, the most interesting struggle for a campaign might involve renegade psis. Perhaps a few young adepts, disillusioned with their role as overlords, set out to aid or create a resistance among the "normals."

Two examples of benevolent psionic minorities are the Lensmen in E. E. "Doc" Smith's *Lensmen* novels (see ***GURPS Lensman***) and the Galactic Concilium in Julian May's *Pliocene Exile* series. There have been fewer examples of totalitarian psionic ruling classes, perhaps because science fiction writers are sympathetic to psis – so if psis aren't on the side of the angels, it's easier to imagine them as the underdogs.

Outcasts

Under some circumstances, psis might be hated and feared by normal humanity – perhaps they'd be drafted or put to work as slaves. This is especially likely if psi powers are the result of genetic heritage rather than training or gadgetry, since normal people may be jealous of a power they can never have.

Prejudice can manifest itself in different ways. Religious groups may consider psi to be evil. Governments may forbid use of psi abilities. Psis might even lose their civil rights; perhaps they would have to wear distinctive clothing to warn normal humans of their presence. Special police agencies could be formed to capture psis for imprisonment or execution, or if their powers are genetic, to sterilize them. Captured psis may be enslaved or forced to hunt down their compatriots. Psionic technology may also be banned, or monopolized by the government as a counter to psionic abilities.

Political lobbying and human rights organizations may form to counter prejudice. Or psis may react by going underground or forming self-regulating organizations to assuage the fears of normals. If psis are actively oppressed, a psionic resistance will develop. Psis may establish secret training institutes or "underground railroads" to regions where psis are free. Militant psis would be effective terrorists or revolutionaries! Katherine Kurtz' *Deryni* series is a good example of oppressed psi in a fantasy world.

Ordinary Citizens

When the majority of normal citizens has access to psi powers (or to technology that duplicates them), every aspect of society will change.

Psionic Crossovers

GURPS Cliffhangers: A few psi skills are suitable for pulp-era heroes or villains, but should be of a subtle nature – see the description for a Mysterious Powers campaign (p. 104). A character will rarely have more than one mental talent, so abilities should be bought One-Skill Only. Some psi-tech devices may be used by gadgeteers or mad scientists!

GURPS Cyberpunk: By emphasizing psionic-computer interface and the use of drugs, implants and genetic engineering to gain psi powers, the cyberpunk and psionic genres become *psiberpunk*! The dark future in Chapter 8 is already very close to a cyberpunk world – to set it in 2010 instead of 1991, the GM need only add TL8 street-level technology, and assume that companies like Biotech Chulan were successful in their attempt to end the government monopoly on psi-tech.

GURPS Fantasy: Psi can act as a convincing replacement for magic on a primitive world, but it may also coexist with spells. A sorcerer may consider psi powers as part of his magical arsenal, or psis and wizards may be rivals, perhaps with separate "guilds" to represent them. A good example of magic/psi crossover is Steven Brust's *Jhereg* series, where sorcery and psionics are practiced by distinct cultures.

If psi powers are to be widely used in a fantasy campaign, the GM should allow several levels of Psionic Resistance to powerful monsters such as dragons or demons.

Continued on next page . . .



Psionic Crossovers (Continued)

GURPS Horror: Psychic powers are an integral part of modern horror. A Psychic Investigators campaign is an ideal setting for combining ***GURPS Psionics*** and ***GURPS Horror.*** PC powers should be limited to ESP and Telepathy, but any power is available for NPCs, especially if Uncontrollable. The more disturbing examples of psi-tech (e.g., brain tissue grafts and deathscanners) are useful props for mad scientists or the alien superscience of Things Man Was Not Meant To Know. The *Psychic Phenomena* chapter gives "psionic" explanations of the supernatural. These may be true – sometimes.

GURPS Martial Arts: Psi powers work very well in cinematic martial arts campaigns, with psychic warriors levitating over the battlefield and releasing "energy fists" channeled through their Ki powers, or ninja stepping through walls via teleportation, possessing the minds of their foes and killing with a thought. GMs should restrict psi powers to NPCs to begin with, but let the PCs buy latent abilities that can be awakened during the campaign, perhaps after finding a special teacher.

GURPS Space: Psionics are a part of many (but not all) science fiction settings. An advantage of space travel is the multitude of possible societies. On one planet, all the natives may be psis; psis may be hunted fugitives on another, and they might run the government on a third. ***GURPS Humanx*** and ***GURPS Uplift*** are examples of SF settings in which psis exist.

GURPS Supers: Powerful psis are an integral part of many superhero worlds – and in some worlds, *all* supers may be psis! Psis created for a ***Supers*** campaign should be designed using ***GURPS Psionics*** rather than the ***Basic Set.*** Gadgeteers can be allowed to invent psi-tech and bio-psi devices. A word of warning: Telepathy can be disproportionately effective if Mind Shields are rare. In a ***Supers*** game in which not everyone is a telepath, GMs should make sure that most PC and NPC supers have Psionic Resistance or Psi Shield gadgets.

An openly telepathic culture – one in which everyone was a telepath, or in which surface thoughts, at least, were open to mental scrutiny from the authorities – might be a very free society with total exchange of new ideas and information. But it could also lead to mental conformity. Conformity may be imposed from above by "thought police" who scan for deviant mental patterns. Or it might evolve gradually as society determines what kind of "mental behavior" is socially acceptable, just as our own verbal society has standards of politeness for speech and gestures.

Even in a "closed" telepathic society where minds remain shielded for privacy's sake, there would be changes. Consider crime. When anyone can send a telepathic cry for help (or teleport away!) if attacked, and judges can swiftly determine guilt with a mind probe, crime might just fade away. If telepathic psychologists can cure "criminal tendencies" or mental illness in children from infancy onwards, there might be no criminals at all! But psi could also lead to new crimes, from erasing people's minds to stealing dreams, and new ways of



committing old ones. Mind Shields, Teleportation and Mindwipe are all potent techniques for evading capture. Criminals may still be around after all.

Other psi abilities will also affect daily life – see the sidebar *Working Psis* on p. 106 for some examples. Not all changes will be for the better – at least from the 20th-century perspective.

Even greater changes would take place if everyone possessed the *same* power. In a world of powerful teleports, who needs to walk? Cars, airplanes, mail, highways, even *doors* would be obsolete! What would life be like in a society of precogs? Would the concept of "the present" have any meaning? In a culture where the universal power was Psychokinesis, one might expect the physical body to atrophy to some degree – why walk when you can levitate?

Telepathy will have the greatest effect: no one need be alone anymore. Knowing what a person is really thinking, or even just that they are deliberately shielding themselves, will either create a much more open and honest society, or lead to rigid shielding of thoughts and emotions and near-Victorian taboos to maintain privacy. Decisions at all levels of society, from family and business to government, might be made through telepathic voting, or even mass participation in a gestalt or world-mind.

If *almost* everyone in a culture had psionic powers, what would life be like for those who were *not* psionically endowed? They might be shunned, or even hunted as deviants or animals. Perhaps they would only be looked down on as

freaks, primitives or handicapped. They could be put in reservations, or even used as slaves (especially if abilities like Telecontrol and Suggestion were common).

"Deviants" with innate psionic resistance or antipsi abilities might fare better. The possibility has already been mentioned that if everyone can read minds, the very concept of lying – or even of dishonesty – might fade away. Then along comes an individual whose mind cannot be read but who *can* lie. If he played his cards right, he could end up controlling the world. Similarly, a world whose inhabitants possessed Precognition powers may be a very safe, predictable place. But if the GM drops in a few folks who possess a natural shield against that sort of power . . .

Several science fiction writers have imagined societies where psionic talents are commonplace. Alfred Bester's *The Stars My Destination* describes a culture where everyone can teleport, while his *The Demolished Man* details one in which telepathy is similarly common.

Campaign Themes

Ambitious GMs may wish to center an entire campaign around the theme of psi powers, rather than just using psi powers as abilities possessed by some characters. Several suitable campaign themes are described below; of course, the GM can make up his own. He then must decide why psi powers exist and how they fit into the world. Refer to the sections on *Origin of Psi Powers* and *Psi in Society,* pp. 102 and 104. Finally, go to Chapter 6 to develop characters. Decide on a starting point total for the campaign and whether there are any restrictions on psionic abilities.

Children of the Atom

Most of humanity has perished in a nuclear holocaust or other disaster, but some survivors remain. And among these survivors are people – and perhaps other beings – with strange new powers.

Origin of Psi: Psis might be mutants caused by radiation or biological mutagens. But some other cause, such as experiments performed just before the war, could also explain their psi abilities.

Psi in Society: Anything is possible, from psi being a mysterious "magical" power, to its users being Outcasts or dominating Overlords. Several post-holocaust stories have also featured conflicts between utopian societies in which ordinary citizens are psis, and normal "barbarians" live in the radioactive wastelands outside their walls.

Character Roles: PCs may be primitive tribesmen, homeless wanderers or members of surviving enclaves of high technology. With the GM's permission, PCs could even play mutant animals with intelligence and psi abilities, or have them as allies or companions. Characters should be skilled in wilderness survival, diplomacy, and primitive weapons. Some characters may have physical mutations as well (e.g., Albinism or Dwarfism).

Things To Do: The wilderness quest is the basic theme of most post-holocaust adventures. Psis may be fleeing anti-mutant prejudice from "normal" humans (see *Witch Hunt,* p. 110) or searching for other psis. In the wilderness, they can encounter groups of deranged survivors, mutant animals or hostile psis. After several journeys of discovery, the PCs will find some cause they can make their own – a psionic enclave to defend, or an evil empire to overthrow.

Campaign Advantages: PCs should have a Sense of Duty toward something higher than themselves – such as civilization or mutantkind. Characters often have psionic mutant animals as Allies or Dependents – see *Catalyst Creatures* on p. 54.

Psionics and Magic

Magic and psionics are two different things. Many of the same effects can be achieved by both disciplines. For instance, a fire-mage and a pyrokinetic can both set your clothes afire.

However, the techniques *are* different. An anti-magic spell will not affect psi attacks in the least.

Likewise, a wizard's mind-reading spell will have no more (or less) success if his subject is a telepathic psi.

However, the purely physical effects of the two disciplines can interact, or even cancel. If a pyrokinetic creates a fire, it is like any other fire, and water magic can extinguish it normally.

On the rare occasions when magic and psi interact physically, roll a Contest of Skills between the magic skill and the psi skill.

So Which Is Better?

Neither magic nor psi is better than the other – but, again, the disciplines are very different.

Magic is more diverse. There are many more spells than there are psi skills. Furthermore, the average mage knows many more spells than the average psi knows skills.

However, magic (except for a very skilled mage) requires a lot of energy. Many psi powers require no effort at all – they are as simple as thought.

Magic can give unpredictable results, or even backfire. Psi doesn't always work, but won't blow up in your face or summon a demon unexpectedly.

Both mages and psis can be deadly. But neither is immune to bullets . . .

Supers and Psi

Many GMs will wish to use psionic powers in their ***Supers*** campaign. This works fine, but the GM should make sure that they are bought separately. Many of the enhancements and limitations in ***Supers*** are inappropriate – or unbalancing – when applied to psi powers. Acceptable modifiers are reproduced on pp. 27-30.

This doesn't mean that a metahuman cannot *call* his superpowers psi – after all, the explanation of a super ability is merely a special effect. If Captain Kumquat uses "psionic energy" to form impenetrable barriers of vegetation, there's no need to consult ***Psionics*** for an appropriate psi power – just use the normal ***Supers*** rules and call it "mental command of plants."



Campaign Disadvantages: Psis may have a Social Stigma (mutant). Members of some societies may have the Primitive disadvantage.

References: The best novels include *The Chrysalids* by John Wyndham and *Heiro's Journey* by Sterling Lanier. Robert Adams' *Horseclans* series (see ***GURPS Horseclans***) is another example of a post-holocaust setting with psi powers. The special advantages and disadvantage in ***GURPS Aliens*** or ***Supers*** can be helpful for designing mutant creatures. Any post-holocaust story or movie that *doesn't* feature psi powers can still provide useful ideas.

The Guardians

The characters are using their psi powers to struggle against evil forces that threaten civilization. The scope of the campaign may be a single city, the Earth, or an entire interstellar society. The adventurers may have gained their powers or been encouraged to form their organization through the efforts of mysterious mentors.

Origin of Psi: They Always Existed, the March of Science, or Alien Intervention are the most applicable, but others are possible.

Psis in Society: Psis will usually be Secret Masters or Special Talents.

Character Roles: The PCs are members of an elite military or police force, a mystic order, secret agents working for the Galactic Council, or just concerned citizens. This kind of campaign is often cinematic: PCs should be built as heroes! Outside of the PCs and their adversaries, psi powers are usually relatively rare.

Things To Do: The heroes could devote most of their time to a single struggle against an almost unbeatable enemy, or face a wide variety of menaces to civilization. Adversaries include galactic overlords, terrorists, drug cartels, unfriendly aliens, ruthless corporations, secret conspiracies, and "monsters" like psychic vampires or psychokinetic serial killers. Although minions may be easy to defeat, master villains will have access to psi powers or psionic technology.

Campaign Advantages: Reputation, Patron, and perhaps Legal Enforcement Powers or Military Rank.

Disadvantages: Duty or Sense of Duty, possibly Pacifism (Cannot Kill), Secret (if the guardian organization is hidden) and of course, lots of Enemies.

References: E.E."Doc" Smith's *Lensman* series, especially *Gray Lensman,* is the seminal work on this theme. *The Tomorrow People* TV series and *Star Wars* are other good sources of inspiration. The *Phoenix Project* chapter can be used as the background of a Guardians campaign, with heroes being members of the Phoenix Project or a cleaned-up ESP or Psibercorps.

Witch Hunt

Psis are outcasts, hunted by a society that is both afraid and envious of the frightening powers locked within their minds.

If psis are actually outlawed or enslaved, the government will be the characters' enemies. The PCs must evade both normal police and elite anti-psionic task forces; if caught, they may face concentration camps, death, lobotomy or worse! If psionics are still legal, the characters may live in a worsening climate of fear and hatred.

Instead of government agents, the PCs may face pressure groups trying to get the government to outlaw psionics, "mutant hunting" vigilante groups and unthinking prejudice from ordinary people.

Another alternative is to have the psis pursued by other psis who want to exploit or control them.

Origin of Psi: Any origin will do, although Mutants is especially applicable.

Psis in Society: Outcasts or Secret Masters.

Character Types: The PCs are psis, or their sympathizers among the normal population. Depending on the type of campaign, they may be idealistic (or embittered) resistance fighters, or normal people fleeing for their lives.

Things To Do: The heroes are fugitives, so a lot of time will be spent escaping from prisons or experimental labs, rescuing fellow psis from the clutches of the government and dodging vigilante groups, lynch mobs and police patrols. The GM should create some interesting opponents as the party's regular adversaries – perhaps an entire agency dedicated to their destruction.

Objectives for the adventurers include locating (or establishing) a psionic enclave, resistance group or psi institute, mounting attacks on government installations or doing good deeds to counter anti-psionic propaganda. The characters' ultimate goal may be to clear their names.

Psis who fall into the hands of their enemies can expect no mercy. But rather than kill prisoners, their foes are more likely to subject them to dangerous experiments or use them as slave labor, or bait for traps to capture others like them. An interesting twist is for the government to employ a few brainwashed or turncoat psis as janissary psi-catchers. Nazi Germany and South Africa under apartheid are useful historical models for oppressive antipsionic cultures.

Campaign Advantages: Psionic abilities, possibly a Reputation among other psis as freedom fighters.

Campaign Disadvantages: Secret until they are discovered, then Social Stigma and Enemies. Possibly a Reputation among normals as evil psionic terrorists.

References: The hunted psi is a relatively common theme in science fiction. GMs should read A.E. Van Vogt's *Slan,* John Wyndham's *The Chrysalids,* and Marvel Comic's *X-Men* comic book. The *Phoenix Project* chapter can be used as background for a Witch Hunt campaign, with the heroes fleeing the forces of the Eugenic Security Police and the Human Alliance.

Emergence!

Useful psi abilities have just been scientifically proven to exist, and society is struggling to come to terms with this new science. The PCs may be part of a "first generation" of powerful psis. Or a secret psi campaign can quickly turn into an Emergence campaign if the secret becomes public!

GMs should carefully consider how psi powers are gained. If anyone can potentially develop psi powers, the overall reaction is likely to be positive. If only a few mutants have the potential for psi abilities, there is a strong chance of backlash by the jealous majority of normal humanity. Some social groups would not welcome psi powers, especially where existing monopolies are threatened. Can lawyers exist in a world of telepaths? Would the Pentagon or the Illuminati feel safe until they developed defenses against ESPionage? Does the American Medical Association recognize psionic Healers?

The reactions of such groups depends on how widespread psi powers threaten to become, and how quickly they are forced to adapt. A slow evolution toward effective psionics might result in gradual acceptance, but a sudden revolution could lead to violent resistance.



Precognition and Destiny

In some stories about precognition, a character becomes locked into a specific fate by what he sees in the future. Nothing he can do changes the vision. He sees his death at the hands of Mob Boss Giovanni, so he flees to Spain – and when he arrives at the hotel, who should be taking a vacation there? So it goes.

Within limits, this can make an interesting background for an adventure, but that kind of determinism doesn't sit very well with most players. On the other hand, if precognition only deals with probabilities, it loses much of its impact, especially in ***Horror*** campaigns.

The easiest solution is to make sure precognitive visions are vague, with multiple interpretations. The precog sees a flash of someone who looks like his brother running down a dark alley. Then the vision switches to a hand holding a gun, the precog "hears" a shot and an indistinct scream, and the back of a body is seen, oozing blood. What happened? Who shot whom? And when? If all premonitions *must* come true, the characters may try to manipulate events to their benefit. In the above example, the psi may decide to make sure *he* is the one in that alley holding the gun, and that he shoots the person chasing his brother. If a psi "sees" his own death, he might make sure someone dies who looks like him – a double or clone, for instance.

Another way to handle precognition is to have the psi "see" two or more branching possible realities hinging on a specific choice of actions – the "event cusp." This works best when the choices lead to crucial, even world-shaking, events; the character has to make a real decision. It may be deterministic, but at least the player gets to choose what path he wants to follow.

Origin of Psis: The March of Science usually works best.

Psi in Society: Special Talents; depending on which faction wins the developing struggle, the role of psis may be Overlords, Outcasts, or Ordinary Citizens.

Character Roles: Campaigns of this nature work best if the characters belong to an organization, such as an embryonic psionics' guild or psi-police force. They can work to further the organization's goals in a rapidly changing situation.

Things to Do: Characters may be psi-rights crusaders struggling against anti-psi groups, researchers working for Psionics Institutes, or individuals who just want to exploit psi for their own gain. Perhaps legislation is being debated that will force all psis to register their powers with the government and to test all citizens for psi powers. Some psis fear this bill as a preliminary to concentration camps; others support it, since it will make it easier to locate fellow psis. The PCs may become involved in plots to discredit or pass it.

Adventurers who work for psionic institutes may be involved in espionage plots revolving around new discoveries, or be "volunteered" to try out experimental drugs, techniques or gadgetry. Perhaps researchers have just discovered the first psionic stardrive (maybe even the first FTL drive ever!). Now they need people to test it . . .

Campaign Advantages: With psionics in its infancy, any respectable public psi or successful parapsychologist will usually have a high Reputation or Status – but maybe not for long! Most psis may have Unusual Backgrounds.



Campaign Disadvantages: If the reaction to psis is negative, Enemies, bad Reputation, Secret and Social Stigma are all possibilities. Characters should have a shared Duty or Sense of Duty to some cause.

References: Some of the best works on this subject include Alan E. Nourse's *Psi High* and the *Intervention* series by Julian May.

Psychic Investigators

The characters are psis, or normals with psionic technology, who investigate paranormal phenomena. Their goal may be to help people, make money, or gain scientific knowledge.

Origin of Psi: They Always Existed is likely, but others are possible. Maybe the PCs don't *know* why psi powers exist, and are trying to discover the answer.

Psis in Society: Mysterious Powers or Secret Masters are recommended, but others are possible. A psionic investigator of "weird happenings" in a world where everyone is a psi can be interesting.

Handling Psychometry

The Psychometry skill (p. 14) is a useful ability, but like precognition, it can easily get out of hand. It should never give more than a cloudy view of an object's or place's past history.

For instance, suppose a psychic detective scans the last 64 years of a basement where an evil cult has been holding its rituals. Unless he makes a phenomenal roll, he should receive only general impressions: the normal use of the cellar as a storage room by three sets of homeowners over the last 50 years, then a sudden violent death, followed by the sense that the place was unused for over a decade.

A scan of the last few months reveals renewed occupation and "very bad vibes" – strong feelings of evil, fear and death. On a critical success, the GM could reveal a few more details and useful clues, and perhaps a few actual visions of the room's history – but the degree of detail should never be enough to ruin the suspense of any mystery scenario the GM is running!

Keeping Psis Prisoner

Capture and escape are an important part of adventures, but keeping a psi prisoner can be difficult! Prisoners who were clever enough to keep their powers secret deserve to be able to use them to escape. But when a jailer *knows* his prisoner is a psi, he will take measures to keep him under control. In a high-tech setting, this means GMs should make liberal use of drugs such as Shatter, psi-impeders, and null-fields.

What if the psis are captives in a low-tech setting? Their powers may be mistaken for magic, but that won't keep the jailers from taking precautions. The psis could be drugged into unconsciousness, but that isn't much fun for a player. Perhaps the natives have doctors or magicians who could hypnotize someone into thinking his ability was gone, or are able to brew homemade psi-damping drugs from local herbs. Lobotomy is another possibility, but hardly attractive from a game viewpoint.

Character Roles: The heroes may be freelancers, affiliated with a university or psionic institute, or even agents of a secret government agency. They are usually ghosthunters, mystics, sensitives or parapsychologists. A related role is the "dream psychologist" who enters people's dreams to cure buried mental problems.

Things To Do: As well as studying psychic occurrences, the investigators could look into hauntings, poltergeists, strange disappearances, cults or UFOs. They may also have to deal with frauds and unhelpful local officials. Each investigation could be totally unrelated to the others, or the adventurers might gradually uncover evidence of a hidden conspiracy: alien infiltration, secret cults, government psi research, or the like.

Campaign Advantages: Reputation as legitimate investigators, possibly Patron.

Campaign Disadvantages: Negative Reputation as cranks.

References: Any good book on parapsychology; the novels *Doc Phoenix* by Marv Wolfman and Ted White and *The Dream Master* by Roger Zelazny; the films *Dreamscape* and *Ghostbusters.*

Aliens Among Us

The characters are psi-powered aliens who are living on Earth disguised as humans.

Origin of Psi: The aliens' abilities may be natural or artificial. Possibly there are some "natural" human psis, but the aliens will also grant powers their human friends or servants.

Psis in Society: This works best in an Outcast or Mysterious Powers setting, although the aliens could be considered Secret Masters.

Character Roles: Characters are benevolent aliens, or humans who have discovered the aliens' existence and befriended them. Alternatively, the PCs could be Earthlings who have discovered a sinister alien invasion.

Things To Do: Are the aliens here for a reason, or did their ship just crash? Perhaps they are hunting a different group of hostile aliens who are infiltrating the planet, or searching for others of their race stranded on Earth. The need to protect the secret of the aliens' presence can also trigger adventures. People could stumble upon alien children using their psi powers. A disguised alien could be killed in a car accident – the PCs must recover the body before an autopsy is performed.

The aliens need not be recent visitors: they could have dwelt on Earth for generations. If they were here for long, they may have become scattered across the planet. Aliens born on Earth might not even remember their home world, or realize they are from another planet! This lets the GM keep alien PCs in the dark about their abilities and gives them a reason to search for clues to their heritage – others like them, artifacts, or the long-lost starship their race arrived in.

If the aliens are evil infiltrators here to take over Earth, the plot follows dozens of B movies. The PCs have discovered the aliens' existence, but no one will believe them! It's up to the party to stop the aliens on their own.

Campaign Advantages: Unless the only difference is psi abilities, the GM may wish to design the aliens using the guidelines in ***GURPS Aliens, GURPS Space*** or ***GURPS Supers.*** If the aliens have access to ultra-tech devices, GMs may require them to pay for an Unusual Background.

Campaign Disadvantages: Alien visitors may have racial disadvantages. Also, they will either have a Secret or powerful Enemies – perhaps government agents, the Men in Black who haunt UFO sites, nosy reporters, or other aliens.

References: The best works on this theme are the novels *The People* and *The People: No Different Flesh* by Zenna Henderson, the *Tomorrow People* television series and the children's book and movie *Escape to Witch Mountain.* Arthur

Staging Psionic Combat

Subtle psionic duels can easily be overshadowed if everyone is carrying assault rifles or military lasers. But if the GM wants psionic combat, there are ways to stack the deck to get it. Emphasize the stealth aspects of the adventure. Make the opposition powerful enough that the characters can only succeed by going undercover. Arrange for combats to take place in situations where the heroes can't carry heavy armament – when they are frisked and taken to the villain's headquarters, or if they confront their opponents aboard a passenger jet, or during the Embassy Ball.

Certain psi abilities are useful defenses. PK and Energy Shield can be combined with body armor to defeat bullets or laser beams, and even non-Psychokinetics can buy high levels as a One-Skill Only power. Electrokinesis is useful for disabling energy weapons. When attacking, psis can use the indirect approach: even when accelerated to bullet speed, a TK-ed rock is no threat to a soldier in heavy body armor. Yanking his weapon away and dangling him from the ceiling is more effective; so is mind-controlling him to shoot his friends. And remember, most psi powers can be used *through* walls!



C. Clarke's *Childhood's End* deals with the interaction between a psionic alien intelligence and humanity. A.E. Van Vogt's *Slan* is the classic tale of a mutant race living among normal humanity. Reports of UFO contacts can also provide inspiration. For evil aliens, the *Invaders* TV series is the perfect inspiration.

Sample Mystery Cases

Murder by Remote Control: A psi uses Mindwipe to implant a compulsion to force an innocent person to commit a crime. The victim is caught, but has no motive for what he did. The PCs must realize the obvious suspect has been framed, then trace his or her movements back to locate the puppet master.

Locked Room: A person was killed in a locked hotel room, with no signs of entry, by a kitchen knife. No mental signature exists, but perhaps it was erased. How was the crime committed? Teleportation doesn't give much to go on, but long range teleporters are rare: perhaps someone suspicious was seen by a passerby – someone who vanished. Or maybe telepathy was used, and the victim had a compulsion to suicide implanted in his mind at an earlier point. Who had the victim met lately? Or maybe the knife was controlled by TK from an adjoining suite, using ESP to guide it. The investigators can examine the hotel register to find who rented nearby rooms. And if they can't discover the method, maybe they can find the motive: who were the victim's enemies?

Personality Transfer: A criminal switches minds with a friend of a PC to elude capture by the police. The party members may notice the personality shift if they are alert. Meanwhile, *their* friend is in the criminal's body. If the switch was carefully planned, he may be caught and facing punishment for the villain's crimes, or dead if the villain (or the police!) killed him after the switch.

New Crimes: Psi may lead to new crimes. A psychic vampire/telepath is stealing peoples' dreams and then selling them as telepathic experiences. Does this break the law? Is Astral Projection trespass? In a world of telepaths, does a criminal thought count as planning a crime? Someone will have to decide!

Randall Garrett's *Lord Darcy* stories deal with magic rather than psi, but the basic idea – crime-solving in a world where both investigators and criminals have unusual powers – makes this series a valuable reference. Lord Darcy himself is a detective with no magic ability at all; he enters a case only when "routine" magical investigation has failed. Still, he depends heavily on evidence turned up by his assistant, who is a very powerful sorcerer indeed.

Handling Psi Powers

Running a campaign with psi presents some subtle (and not-so-subtle) problems of balance for the GM. On the one hand, PCs can be upset if their powerful telekinetic is disposed of by a few goons with Uzis; on the other hand, characters can easily come to depend on their psi powers for everything, especially if psionic technology is widespread. To prevent this happening, design adventures with problems that can be better solved with creative combinations of psi-power and normal skills (see *Using Psi With Normal Skills,* p. 44) or which require the players to use their wits.

Mystery and Psi

Take a simple murder mystery. Which suspect killed the victim? With telepathy, it's easy for a character skilled with Telereceive to try a deep probe, and find murderer and motive at once. That can kill suspense pretty quickly, making roleplaying and Influence skills redundant.

Telescan lets a psi locate someone, wherever he is hiding. Psychometry enables the psi to discover the history of objects, quickly finding a murder weapon and who used it. If the GM isn't prepared, all these abilities can make a mockery of the plot of a conventional mystery adventure.

But there are ways of keeping a mystery mysterious, even in the presence of psi powers.

Legal Restrictions: Evidence gained through psi powers may not be admissible in court, perhaps because no one believes in them, they are unreliable, or violate a person's right to privacy. The characters may know who did it, but they will have to find (or manufacture) other evidence to prove their case. GMs may wish to consult Alfred Bester's novel *The Demolished Man* for ideas on how this might work.

Mind Shields: In a society where telepathy is common, everyone (or everyone *important*) may have a natural or artificial Mind Shield. Considerations of privacy aside, people would be unlikely to consent to casual Telereceive attempts by those they did not trust, because once a telepath is past another's shields, he is free to use sinister abilities such as Mindwipe, Sleep and Telecontrol. On the other hand, if psi is uncommon, the mere presence of a Mind Shield can expose the shielded character as a possible suspect. A useful red herring is the sinister shielded individual who is keeping a secret which has absolutely nothing to do with the PCs' case.

The Suspect Who Isn't There: When the plot of an adventure revolves around *finding* a suspect or witness, it doesn't matter how easy it is to read his mind afterwards. A searcher with Telescan can *find* find someone with psi, but the PCs will still have to physically retrieve him. Or the search can be for missing evidence – an object that could provide clues if studied by Psychometry or Signature Sniffer, for instance.

Psionic Criminals: The PCs' adversaries may also be using psi to cover their tracks. Erase Signature and Mindwipe can remove evidence or create false leads; Telecontrol and Suggest can shift the apparent blame for crimes onto innocent puppets.

The Crime that Wasn't: Mindwipe can insert memories as well as remove them. What if someone "remembers" being the victim – or the perpetrator! – of a crime that never took place?

CHAPTER EIGHT

THE PHOENIX PROJECT

This is a world background designed for psionic adventures. It is identical to the world of today – at least outwardly. But unknown to the population at large, individuals with effective psi powers have been proven to exist, and research has led to the development of a new and powerful technology.





Does The Public Know?

Secret research centers, suppression of research, kidnapping of gifted children, squads of telepathic commandos – how can a secret this big keep without leaks? The answer is, it can't.

Perhaps half the public believes in psi of some sort, and hundreds of parapsychology newsletters and journals are published every year. Rumors that the government has conducted classified psi research and suppressed the results are commonplace among those who believe in psi powers, just like rumors of a UFO cover-up are common among flying saucer enthusiasts. Some are close to being accurate, and a few even make it into the tabloids. However, most members of the public and media dismiss these stories as hoaxes or conspiracy theories and refuse to treat them seriously.

A few substantiated reports of unethical drug experiments, harassment of scientists, and civil rights violations have indeed surfaced – some have come to legal action. PCs with law enforcement, legal or journalistic backgrounds may even have been drawn into the world of psi through such an investigation.

When public displays of powerful psi powers do occur, they are rarely believed by people who don't see them with their own eyes. Even a psi who used his power on live television – risking his life or freedom to do so – would have trouble convincing the public that a manifestation wasn't just special effects.

With teams of government psychologists to talk about mass hysteria, and if worse comes to worst, Eugenic Security Police agents or government spooks with access to Mindwipe, Telecontrol and advanced psychotronics, the Psiberocracy find it is easy enough to destroy the credibility of witnesses and make hard evidence disappear. Such actions are strictly without official authorization from the Oval Office or the Pentagon, of course, but this does not make them any less effective.

The public has been kept in the dark through a campaign of official secrecy and government censorship. In North America, using the Eugenic Security Police, the Pentagon, and the National Security Council, the United States government has secretly recruited and trained hundreds of psi agents – and silenced or discredited those parapsychologists who wished to remain independent of federal control. Other nations, chief among them the Soviet Union and Great Britain, have followed suit.

Now psi powers are a powerful hidden reality which nations struggle to control. Individuals with psi powers may be pawns in a deadly game, or master players with the capacity to alter the destiny of humankind.

And many of the "master" class psis belong to the secret group known as the Phoenix Project . . .

Welcome to the Real World

The teen-aged girl stepped out of thin air a few inches above the sidewalk. Morgaine stumbled, then recovered her balance with a practiced ease. Clean getaway, and Xotech Industries' ex-Special Forces rent-a-cops never knew what hit them. She grinned, remembering the last guard's startled cry when she had blinked behind him, the satisfying crack as her nunchaku knocked him senseless. Amateurs.

The lot behind the Spadina subway station was just as she visualized before the teleport: the green Toyota still on her right, the parking lot and checker's booth now deserted at 2 a.m., the only movement a chill breeze playing poltergeist with scraps of newsprint. Everything was fine. And then, for the second time that day, something came crawling into Morgaine's mind, a whisper that became a voice. She froze, trying to make out the words in her head.

". . . you shouldn't do this, Morgaine. Don't let them twist your anger. You're not a thief or a soldier. You belong with us. Morgaine, let us . . ."

Angrily, she snapped down her Mind Shield, and the whispers were banished. The silly voices had started yesterday morning, when she first came to Canada, and hadn't let up since. She'd tried to track them down, but her weak Telepathy didn't have the range: all she got was a brief glimpse of a woman's face, mirrorshades and a smell of . . . fur?

She shrugged. Biotech Chulan would get the microdisk with the blueprints for the Pentagon's new psychosynaptic disruptor, and she'd get $20,000, all the Brainstorm she wanted, and a safe place to sleep. It wasn't much for a teleporting ex-black beret, but when Morgaine remembered who she had worked for, she thought she was lucky Biotech paid her at all. It was better than Psibercorps, and she didn't need any "voices" to tell her to get out while she could. ***The trouble is,*** *she thought,* ***I can't.***

Suddenly nervous, Morgaine squatted down on the pavement behind the car, sheltering against the autumn wind as she hunted through her too-thin jacket's pocket for a scrap of paper. She patted the comforting hardness of her pistol and touched the plastic rectangle of the minidisk before she found what she was looking for. She read the number again, then ducked around the front of the car and stalked purposefully out of the lot and down the stairs into the deserted subway terminal, toward the nearest pay phone.

Morgaine dialed the number, got an answering machine and spoke three quick words, codes that told a Biotech Chulan safe house that she had the Xotech disk. She would be met four stations down. She hung up, and listened for the train, heard a faint rumble in the distance. She approached the ticket turnstile, and paused, hands on hips. Morgaine looked left, right: nobody in sight. She blinked two yards across the intervening space. Time to catch a train.

Gleeful at her schoolgirl prank, Morgaine was down the second flight of steps and on the subway platform before she took in the four dark suits waiting below. ***I doubt they're catching the 2 a.m. train,*** *Morgaine thought. Worse, their jackets bulged suspiciously. Whoops. Time to change plans. She gave them a jaunty wave, and blinked . . .*

. . . and felt a wave of nausea as her teleport was wrenched out of her control. She was kneeling on a metal platform in a flood-lit warehouse. Morgaine took in the two men in combat fatigues and black berets, the slung H&Ks. Psibercorps!

She recognized Major Calvert, the familiar young/old face, Cheshire-cat grin, and eyes glazed by Blue Fire, eyes that widened slightly as they saw her. His voice was dead as the moon. "Morgaine Daniels. What a pleasant surprise. You walked out on me in Lebanon, left us out to dry. I don't forget." He pointed his finger at her, a child's make-believe gun.

Morgaine's head felt fuzzy – she was dizzy, sweating – why was she so hot? Pyrokinesis! She went for her pistol. The trooper on Calvert's right concentrated. Her gun – and the microdisk next to it – flew out of her jacket pocket, floated lazily to the other side of the room. Calvert snatched the disk out of the air, glanced at it. "Taken to stealing government secrets, cuckoo?"

Calvert continued to grin as he raised her body temperature, waiting for her brain to boil. Morgaine sought to teleport, but the power was gone, trapped by the Jump Beacon. She took a step forward, pulling the nunchaku out of her boot, but her bones turned to jelly, and she collapsed. She lay curled into a fetal ball, waiting to die . . . at Calvert's feet.

The thought fueled her anger, gave her strength. She couldn't teleport, but she tried to use her weaker telepathy function to shape a mental blow. ***Fat chance,*** *she thought,* ***if I could barely manage to read his thought – how could I hurt him?*** *She reached out with her mind anyway, but her mental claws skittered off his psi shields. He was too strong, and she was dying, burning . . .*

A familiar presence, no longer a whisper. "Don't give up, Morgaine. We are so close."

What? The voices, again. ***Leave me alone! I am fire, burning. I will die, but I want . . .***

Civilian Research in America

Many U.S. parapsychology institutes and associations exist who are unaffiliated with the government's psi-tech program, but all are secretly monitored. Under the Emergency Powers provisions of the Eugenics Security Act, the government has been able to prevent the publication of any successful experimental data that might actually prove the existence of psi. Successful psi researchers are silenced through recruitment and covert pressure (the threat of cancellation of federal grants if such "crackpot" research continues, for instance). In some cases, papers and equipment are seized.

All significant experimental breakthroughs in the last fifteen years have been classified. Outside of a relatively narrow circle of scientists, psionic research is still classed as parapsychology. It is considered a somewhat disreputable area of psychology at best, "rubber science" at worst. The result is that civilian parapsychology programs are nothing but an unwitting smokescreen for the "black labs."

Real psi-tech programs are just as closely guarded as SDI ("Star Wars") research was. In fact, under the guise of "strategic reconnaissance" (ESP and telepathy) and "directed energy" (psychokinesis) programs, SDI served as a cover for psi-tech projects! But the true nature of psi-tech funding remains the secret of a few influential congressional subcommittees, guarded not only by a dark veil of security but by media, scientific, and public skepticism.



"But won't you share that fire with us?"

Yes . . .

Her mind reached out to join with the voices, and Morgaine felt her own power buoyed up, channeled into two other minds. Three minds merged into a single being with a single desire. Its power hurled itself at its tormentors, spearing their brains. There was a white light, and the pain was gone.

Morgaine looked up. There were two bodies next to her, both in combat fatigues. Neither moved. The warehouse door opened, and in the shadows a woman in mirrorshades and a great gray wolf were standing there. There was something strange about the wolf's head. She sent out a thought. ***Who?***

"Someone who cares about you. Welcome to the Phoenix Project, Morgaine."

The answer had come from the wolf.

THE SECRET HISTORY

In the late sixties and early seventies, parapsychologists in the United States, the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia – to name some of the most advanced centers of research – were consistently obtaining reliable test results that conclusively proved the existence of psychic powers. Psi was beginning to seem less a mystical force and more a legitimate part of science.

This was reflected in a change of terminology: the terms paraphysics and psionics supplemented parapsychology in the West, while Russian scientists studied "bioenergetics." The most exciting results were obtained in areas that would later become known as psi-tech: the application of electronics, cybernetics, biochemistry and genetic engineering to psychic powers. Many researchers thought that psionics would soon take its place among the other branches of physical science.

But in addition to those research centers sponsored by university psychology and psychiatry departments, secret psi experiments were being conducted by military and intelligence agencies. As psi was transformed from imagination into reality, there were those to whom this breakthrough came not as a dream, but as a nightmare. Across the globe, government agencies recognized the implications of psi-tech. Serious civilian psi research was smothered under the blanket of national security, while disinformation teams strove to eradicate the



Western Europe

France, Germany and the United Kingdom are all rumored to have extensive research programs, though not as well funded as those of the United States or Russia. However, since government censorship is less extreme, private organizations that would be driven underground in America or Russia can operate more openly in Europe. In addition to private research foundations, a psionic institute sympathetic to the Phoenix Project is based in Edinburgh, Scotland. The Overmind Institute has a secret base in the Pyrenees and a second lab is thought to exist somewhere in the Black Forest. The Phoenix Project has large branches in Rome, London and Copenhagen. And of course, Biotech Chulan is based in Zurich.



The Rest of the World

The science of psionics is not believed to be as advanced in other nations as it is in the United States and Russia, especially since neither nation's government has shared psi information or technology with its allies. In spite of this, it is quite possible that other secret private or government organizations exist which make use of trained psionics or which possess access to psi-tech.

Certainly, private and government centers exploring advanced psi-tech research exist in Japan, Israel, South Africa, Canada, Pakistan, Iraq, and India. Biotech Chulan has offices in Japan, Australia and South Korea. The CIA believes that China has an extensive state-sponsored psi-tech program that has stressed practical research into astral projection and ESP. The Overmind Institute has many connections in the Third World, especially in Central America and the Middle East, and is believed to have exported advanced psychotronic defense systems to several Middle Eastern countries.

image of respectability it had been developing. By the 1980s, psionic individuals had become a priceless secret commodity which nations and organizations would kill to possess.

Russia and Eastern Europe

Psi research behind the Iron Curtain had always possessed a more practical orientation than that of the West. Although "bioenergetics" research was carried on in all Warsaw Pact nations, the main centers of psychic exploration were in the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia.

In 1963, the Kremlin began to give top priority to psi research. The Soviet Union's willingness to accept psi as a fundamental part of human biology rather than an aberration of physics or a special field of psychology gave the Soviet Bloc nations the lead in early genetic research on psionics.

As early as 1965, Czech scientists were making progress on the first psychotronic generators – machines capable of creating and amplifying psionic energy. Independent Czechoslovakian psi-tech research ended with the Soviet invasion of 1968, when the USSR appropriated their results. The Czech scientists continued their work – but in Moscow, under the auspices of the GRU and KGB. Some vestiges survived, however, and with the demise of the Warsaw Pact these may have been secretly revived by the Czech Republic.

With the military potential of psi readily apparent to communist leaders, individuals who demonstrated psionic power were recruited, studied and trained by the state. Experiments on a readily available pool of "volunteers" resulted in the development of effective (if dangerous) psi-drugs by the late 70s. Other researchers moved readily into studies of human DNA, mapping the genetic patterns of those who possessed psi powers. By 1982, a team working under Academician Sergei Makarov was able to isolate the genetic basis of psi, making identification of latent psionics possible with a simple blood test. Some western sources believe that the biopsi program was followed by similar – and more radical – experiments on unwilling subjects in Romania during the Ceausescu regime.

Today, Russia remains advanced in psionic technology (averaging TL9) but its economic difficulties have caused its psi programs to slip behind those of the West. However, during the 1980s the old Soviet Union used genetic testing to identify and recruit thousands of psis and psionic researchers. Some still serve in secret laboratories, intelligence and special forces agencies in Russia, the Ukraine and other former Soviet republics, but many of them have gone freelance, working as mercenaries for other governments, terrorists or the Russian Mafia.

In addition to the usual psionic spies and interrogation teams, the old Soviet Union used special Spetnatz "terror" squads in Afghanistan using telepathically-induced fear and nightmares to disrupt Mujahadeen morale. Reports of Russian psi-ops in Chechnya suggest this capability remains intact. As budget cuts force reductions in expensive convential forces and Russia faces more internal security crises, it's likely such special capabilities will be more important in the years to come.

The United States

In the late 60s and early 70s, organized scientific research on psi, catalyzed by the efforts of J.B. Rhine and other pioneers, was beginning to bear fruit and had begun to attract serious attention from the government and military. Government involvement began with studies sponsored by the CIA, National Security Agency and the Pentagon, and later NASA. The stunning results of the



Glossary of Slang

Baby: An untrained psi. "Big baby" is an untrained psi with high Power.

Black Beret: A Psibercorps trooper. They really do wear black berets, and – usually – gray-toned urban cammo outfits.

Burnout: Loss of psi powers.

Canned meat: A psiborg.

Doper: Someone who uses psi-drugs to enhance his abilities.

Esper: Any psi, but more strictly, anybody with ESP.

Freak: A psi who uses his powers to prey on others in a sadistic fashion. A telekinetic thief isn't a "freak," but a predatory Psychic Vampire, or a pyrokinetic murderer, is.

Geek: Anybody who hates or fears psi powers.

Godzilla: A powerful TK or pyrokinetic.

Mindsucker, or "sucker": A Psychic Vampire.

Ooby: An out of body experience, or OOBE (see p. 47).

Peeper: A psi who uses Telereceive.

Precog: Any use of precognition, or a psi with that skill.

Psi-tech: Any sort of psi hardware.

Pyro or pyrotic: A pyrokinetic.

Retro: Any use of psychometry, or a psi who uses that skill.

Screamer: Someone with Psi Static skill.

Sniffer: Someone with Psi Sense skill.

Teek, or teke: Any use of telekinesis, or a psi who uses that power.

"Teek the Freak": Vigilante activity by psis to eliminate a criminal psi. Often fatal.

"Teek the Geek": Use of any psi powers, not necessarily TK (though that one works very well) to harass someone who dislikes psis.

Vamp: A Psychic Vampire.

Zapper: An electrokinetic.

People of Interest

Agamemnon – The NSA's experimental psionic computer, making extensive use of Soviet psiborg technology designed by Dr. Alannah Makarov.

Astaroth – An astrological-motif serial killer whose activities have spanned the continent, Astaroth uses psi powers, especially telepathy and telekinesis, to stalk his victims, and psychic vampirism to feed off their fear and pain. Currently hunted by the Eugenic Security Police, FBI and RCMP.

Bleys – Rumored to be ex-Soviet GRU, the charismatic master spy known only as Bleys is the Overmind Institute's chief "connection" with the revolutionary Third World elements they supply. A telepath and esper, Bleys is rarely seen in person, preferring to monitor his operations via astral projection.

Madeleine and Pierre Bouchard – The principals of Dreamshapers (see sidebar, p. 125). Madeleine is a skilled telepath.

Morgaine Daniels – A teenaged troubleshooter on the run from Psibercorps, she is employed by Biotech Chulan as a spy and saboteur. Morgaine is highly skilled in teleportation and telepathy, but suffers from a sleepjumping habit.

Cassie Izumi – A crusading journalist, animal rights activist and psychic investigator, Cassie is secretly a potent telepath and psychokinetic, and a member of the Phoenix Project. See sidebar, p. 126.

Matrix-Delta – The product of the Overmind Institute's latest attempt to use genetic engineering to breed the ultimate psi, Delta is now 9 years old and just beginning to gain full control of her psi skills. She wishes she had more people to play with.

Robert Pendrake – Wealthy Alberta oil baron and secretly the chief financier of the Millennium Council, Pendrake nurses an insane hatred of psis after his latently-telepathic daughter was kidnapped by the Overmind Institute and her brain used as a "component" in their psiborg program.

Shade – An intelligent telepathic wolf with human brain-tissue grafts and neuropsi implants who escaped from a Xotech cybernetics lab. Along with Cassie Izumi, he leads the Toronto branch of the Phoenix Project.

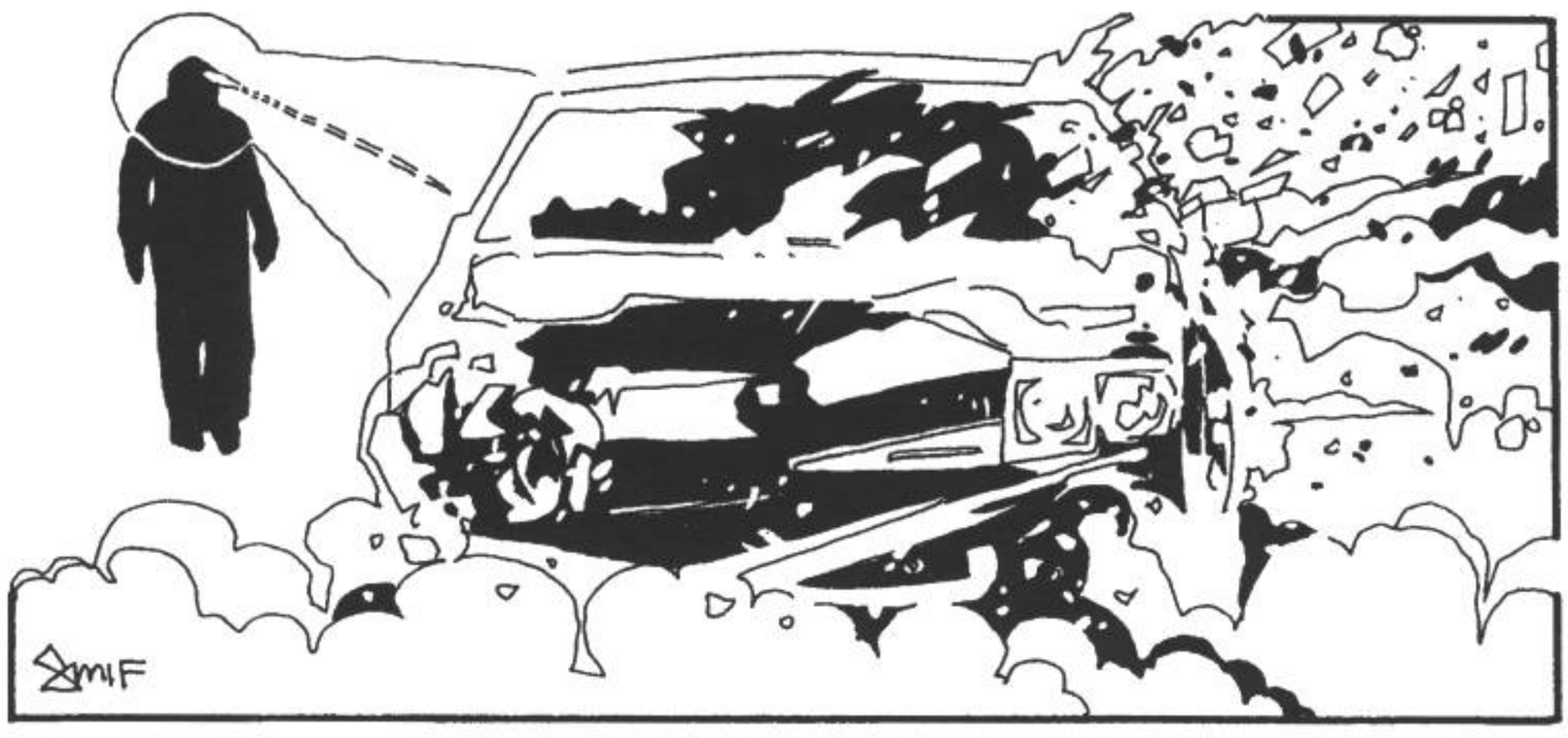
Silverblue – Currently incarcerated in the Navy's experimental dolphin research center on the West Coast, she is part of a clandestine project to develop telepathic dolphins with powerful Telescan abilities for antisubmarine warfare.

Moira Van Deering – President of Biotech Chulan, telepath, psychic vampire and brilliant, ruthless executive. See p. 125.

Michiko Yukawa – Top psychotronics engineer employed by the Pentagon for the Psibercorps weapons program, she spends much of her private time working on an experimental psionic stardrive.

Skylab telepathic experiments convinced the last doubters in the Pentagon and led to an executive decision to classify all research in the interests of national security, while expanding government funding.

By 1976 covert psionic recruitment centers had been established at most major universities where civilian paraphysics and parapsychology research took place, and telepathically gifted individuals were secretly employed by the CIA and NSA to counteract Soviet ESPionage. The government also clamped down on private research. A combination of lucrative funding and subtle pressure brought more and more scientists into the government's fold. Public parapsychology institutes continued their experiments "to prove the existence of psi," but lacking massive government funding, the civilian researchers were left counting Rhine cards in futile attempts to predict the unpredictable. The few that actually came close to success were either co-opted into the government programs – or, if uncooperative, discredited or destroyed.



While civilian psi-research went nowhere in the eighties, the secret work of the "black mind" labs gained America its position as the world leader in covert psi-tech research. Experiments into mind-altering drugs and the nature of the human brain laid foundations for biopsi research that approached that of the Soviet Union. The most recent breakthroughs have been in the training of individual psis and in cybernetics and psychotronics. UCLA behaviorist Christine Hegan's controversial CIA-sponsored study of psi latency among British school children pointed the way toward reliable psi-testing techniques, while experiments with neural interface and sensory deprivation tanks resulted in the creation of reliable psi-amplifiers.

By 1980, experimental American psi-tech had reached TL11 and a range of psionic equipment with direct military applications had become available. Psis working for the CIA had scored several notable intelligence coups and proven successful in countering Soviet ESPionage. But it was obvious to Pentagon planners that some form of special unit was necessary to take advantage of the emerging psi-war technology now available, especially in the low-intensity operations they believed would be ushered in with the end of the Cold War. This need, combined with the continuing inability of normal military assets to deal with global terrorism, resulted in the founding of the Second Special Operations Detachment Epsilon – the Psibercorps.

Government policy continues to be ambivalent regarding psi. The defection of Sergei Makarov's estranged daughter Alannah in 1983 and her stunning revelations of KGB ESPionage and Soviet psiborg and psychotronic research provided the catalyst for the draconian Eugenics Security Act of 1984. The Eugenic

Security Police (ESP) was created to keep a lid on American psi research to prevent "technology transfer" – espionage – and to make sure that U.S. psi research remained classified. It launched a secret program of renewed disinformation to discredit the remaining non-affiliated research centers, signaling a virtual end to *successful* civilian psionic research. The ESP was originally intended as a passive monitoring organization, but the continued disarray of the U.S. intelligence community in the wake of the Iran-Contra affair saw a dramatic increase in its influence and autonomy. There are now few checks on its power.



Government Organizations

Several powerful government organizations deal with psionics. These organizations have been described with a North American campaign in mind, but can easily be altered to fit a specific nation. In a campaign centered in the United Kingdom, for instance, something like Psibercorps could be a sub-unit of the Special Air Service (similar to 22nd SAS's elite Counterrevolutionary Warfare team).

The Psiberocracy

This is the nickname for the government bureaucracy that operates the psi-tech programs. Far more than elected politicians, these faceless administrators in the National Security Council, National Security Agency, CIA and Pentagon are the individuals who control government policy on psionics and the day-to-day operations of the ESP and Psibercorps. But even within the Psiberocracy, information on psi-tech is strictly need-to-know. Although it is not spelled out, it is understood that certain people who have talked too much have suffered unfortunate accidents or have become prematurely senile: "I don't remember" is a very common phrase among people questioned on the activities of the Psiberocracy.

Other Government Psi-Programs

NASA and the USAF's Space Defense Command routinely conduct psi experiments on shuttle flights, though the crews may be unaware of the purpose behind some of them. There have been rumors that the Soviets have deployed orbital psiborg systems – perhaps as telepathic relay points, perhaps for some other reason. The Psiberocracy is contemplating a mission that would carry Psibercorps or NSA telepaths into range to probe the suspected satellites.

The Navy has considered using psis in anti-submarine warfare, locating hostile submarines with Telescan and Astral Projection, and in attempts to communicate with dolphins and whales.

PsiCom is an ultra-secure backup telepathic system intended for use if normal communications networks are disrupted by electromagnetic pulses or anti-satellite warfare. For security reasons, PsiCom is considering replacing human telepaths with psiborgs or psionic computers.

The Eugenic Security Police

Created under the classified provisions of the Emergency Powers Bill of 1984, the Eugenic Security Police is an arm of the executive branch of the United States Government. Deputized as Federal Marshals, members of the ESP are "responsible for monitoring and controlling abnormal genetic material deemed dangerous to public safety or national security."

If "abnormal genetic material" is defined as *individuals* with actual or potential psionic ability, this description is fairly accurate: the Eugenic Security Police are a covert agency whose mandate is the suppression of non-government psionic research, the recruitment of freelance psis, and the elimination of

ESP Field Operative

A typical operative is a wholesome blend of skilled insurance salesman and FBI agent – a smooth, reassuring young man or woman, very good at convincing people to turn themselves or their children in for their own good.

ST 11; DX 11; IQ 12; HT 11.

Speed 5.5; Move 5.

Advantages: Patron (Eugenic Security Police), Attractive, Law Enforcement Powers.

Disadvantages: Duty (Eugenic Security Police), Intolerance (psionics).

Skills: Electronics Operation (Psi-Tech)-12, Pistol-13, Psychology-11, Genetics-10, Karate-12, Beam Weapons (Neutralizer)-12, Fast Talk-11, Shadowing-11, Security Systems-9, Law-12, Driving (Automobile)-12.

Weapons and Equipment: Glock-17 automatic pistol or a dart gun loaded with Shatter or Monobloc. May be equipped with other psi-tech up to TL10, typically portable psi-dampers, neutralizer beam weapons, psi scanners, and psitectors.



those researchers and psis who refuse to play by the government's rules. Another function of the ESP is to screen elected officials, foreign diplomats and government bureaucrats for psionic talent, to ensure that no psi uses his or her powers to influence the American government.

The Eugenic Security Police are well-funded and highly trained and motivated, with access to the most advanced government psi-tech. Their ostensible role is that of a government watchdog on genetic engineering. This serves to conceal their activities from Congress, as well as giving them broad bipartisan and public support and explaining their use of scientific facilities.

Under cover of voluntary anti-drug and AIDS testing in participating schools, ESP conducts random genetic sampling to detect children with latent or active psionic powers. Individuals who test strongly psi-positive are monitored by Federal agents, and are sometimes offered lucrative "research scholarships" to "private schools" where they undergo further testing with a goal toward government service. Uncooperative individuals risk psychological pressure, including drugs, blackmail and brainwashing. A small army of legal experts have so far blunted every attempt by individuals, Congress or the media to probe the details of their operations.

The Eugenics Security Police make dangerous opponents for a psionic character. Any non-government psi can have them as an Enemy. A whole campaign could be built around the attempts of fugitive PCs to escape federal control and forced enlistment into Psibercorps, perhaps with a particular group of agents in pursuit. The adventurers may try to get hard evidence of illegal ESP activities, or attempt to rescue other psis from their clutches. Alternately, a character might be a "good" ESP agent, fighting the Overmind Institute, struggling against the machinations of over-zealous or power-hungry superiors who want to turn the agency into a "Big Brother" type organization and unraveling the plots of criminal psis uncatchable by normal law enforcement.

Psibercorps Soldier

ST 12; DX 13; IQ 12; HT 12.
Speed 6.25; Move 6.

Advantages: Strong Will +2; Combat Reflexes; Patron: U.S. Army; Military Rank 1+.

Disadvantages: Duty (Psibercorps), Fanaticism.

Skills: Climbing-12, Demolitions-10, Electronics Operation (Psi-Tech)-15, First Aid-11, Guns/TL7 (Pistol)-13, Guns/TL7 (Rifle)-14, Karate-12, Parachuting-13, Stealth-13, Swimming-12, Tactics-10; plus three different psionic skills for one power at level 14.

Equipment: H&K MP-5 submachine gun; Beretta 92 automatic pistol; Kevlar armor. Psibercorps has psionic technology up to TL11, though TL10 or better devices are usually experimental. Typical gadgets include psi-drugs, telepathic shield helmet, psi scanner; gas grenade (filled with Shatter); neuropsi implant (one psi power at Power 1 or 2); helmet or backpack psi-amplifiers. One man in every squad usually carries a heavy psi-weapon.

Tactical Organization: a six-man squad consists of two soldiers with neuropsi implants for telepathy and two for psychokinesis, with one healer (also with medical skills) and one esper. "Jump" squads consisting entirely of teleports are being considered; presently soldiers have access to standard military vehicles and are trained for helicopter and parachute deployment.

Available Equipment

As well as a full range of normal intelligence equipment, the Eugenics Security Police have access to TL9 psychotronic equipment and TL11 anti-psi devices, detection and testing gear. They can also requisition equipment from Psibercorps and manpower from the FBI, though are unlikely to do so due to the loss of prestige and the trading of favors involved.

Psibercorps

Psibercorps is the nickname for the Pentagon's secret psi-tech combat force, founded in its present form in 1989. Technically known as the Second Special Operations Detachment Epsilon, it is an experimental unit equipped with the latest in psionic technology. Psibercorps is most similar in role to the SEALS or Delta Force, in that it is an elite combat force trained to operate in a variety of unusual circumstances using special equipment.

Tasked with providing psi-tech support to special operations such as commando raids, reconnaissance, hostage rescue and counter-insurgency, Psibercorps' unique capabilities have often thrust it into unexpected roles and missions. Recent operations involving Psibercorps include the use of ESP psi-amps to locate and examine the interior of a Soviet nuclear submarine lost in Norwegian waters, the use of psi-war techniques to locate and influence the release of hostages in Lebanon, continuing service as "intelligence specialists" in Columbia and strategic reconnaissance and strike missions during American operations in Panama and the Middle East.

Technically, the law forbids use of special operations missions on American soil, but Psibercorps personnel are often "detached" to ESP task forces as "advisors." This has not always proven an easy marriage: their most notable failure was an abortive assault on a branch of the Phoenix Project (see p. 124) in the Rocky Mountains. Faulty preparatory intelligence work by the Eugenics Security Police led to the escape of the staff and the death or mindwipe of most of the Psibercorps assault force. Since the Rocky Mountains fiasco, relations between the two government organizations have been poor.

While Psibercorps occasionally makes use of "civilian specialists" – a euphemism for powerful civilian talents working for the Pentagon – the few uniformed psis actually part of the unit are relatively low-powered, mainly because the present administration and the Pentagon do not really trust powerful psis. Instead, Psibercorps relies extensively on the cutting edge of psychotronic technology, including neuropsi implants and prototype psiborgs and psionic computers of up to TL11, though TL10 or higher devices are likely to be experimental and possibly highly dangerous! Psibercorps has access to the full range of psi weaponry and artificial psionic devices, as well as all psi drugs. Although most soldiers rely on devices or neuropsi implants limited to Power 1 or 2, careful training in tactical psi-war techniques and the extensive use of power boosters such as portable psi-amps and experimental drugs like Blue Fire and Mind Hype makes Psibercorps soldiers a match for most natural psionics.

PCs may be members (or ex-members) of Psibercorps if they have appropriate military skills and background. A series of adventures could be built around military missions with Psibercorps teams facing a variety of psionic and normal adversaries – and the vagaries of government intrigue. Alternately, Psibercorps soldiers could appear as adversaries – the iron fist of the Eugenics Security Police and the front line of the government war against psionics.





The Psychic Population

The most reliable estimates suggest that one person in 1,000 is a latent psi, possessing one or more abilities with Power 1 and no training. One in 10,000 may have higher natural abilities (Power 2 to 5) while still remaining latent. Every five points of Power is rarer by a factor of 10: 1 in 100,000 has a Power of 6 to 10, one in 1,000,000 has a Power of 11 to 15, one in 10,000,000 possesses a Power of 16 to 20, and only one person in 100,000,000 has Power of 21 or more.

Perhaps 10% of those with psi power are aware of their ability, and have some skill in using it; the rest are latents. This means that in a city of 300,000 people, there should be as many as 300 psis – but all but a few will be low-powered, and perhaps only 30 will be aware of their ability.

However, these statistics are in one sense misleading. Many psis who discover their abilities will gravitate toward other psis, for companionship, training, or self-protection, creating larger concentrations in a few centers. And because a stronger psi is more likely to discover his own ability and try to improve it, the percentage of *trained* psis with high Power is far higher.



Private Organizations

The Overmind Institute

The Overmind Institute (OMI) is a secretive organization of independent psionic researchers, founded in 1976 by maverick parapsychologists who had resisted government control. Although it was shut down by order of the Eugenics Security Police for illegal human DNA and biocybernetic experiments, the Overmind Institute has secretly continued its operations into the 1990s, using hidden labs across the world.

The ultimate aim of the Institute is to evolve humanity as a psionic species. Its members are utterly ruthless in their attempt to achieve their goal. Overmind scientists are fanatically devoted to their work, with few scruples about experiments on unwilling subjects, or even themselves. A recent example of the Institute's activities is the *Mindchild* program, intended to explore the development of artificial psi powers. Several dozen pre-adolescent children, deliberately chosen to have no psi potential, were kidnapped and fitted with experimental brain tissue grafts, neural implants and catalyst drugs to "awaken" their psionic ability. The few survivors are developing powerful psi abilities, and are currently being held for training and indoctrination.

The Institute's psychotronics are not as advanced as those possessed by either Russia or United States, but their mundane and bio-psi techniques are among the most sophisticated in the world. Many Overmind researchers are themselves psis, either as a result of bio-psi treatments or natural abilities. Psychotronic devices are typically TL8 or TL9, but artificial psi-tech and bio-psi technology can reach TL11.

Although devoted to pure science, the Overmind Institute supports itself by secretly selling psi drugs and training to outlaw psis, criminal organizations and third world governments.

The Phoenix Project

The Phoenix Project is a secret organization dedicated to nurturing the birth of a benevolent "world-mind" which would embrace all psi-users in peace and harmony. To this end, members attempt to help new psis realize their potential, while at the same time protecting them from organizations like the Eugenic Security Police and the Overmind Institute.

Some branches of the Project devote their time toward training and teaching. Others battle evil organizations and hunt down "rogue psis" who exploit their powers for criminal ends.

The Phoenix Project has 23 centers scattered across North America, with more in Europe and the Far East. Finding one can be difficult: most are disguised as psychological research institutes, private boarding schools, or even religious retreats. A typical center has a dozen or so senior members and as many students, many of them children or teenagers.

In the United States, individual centers spend much of their time tracking down rumors of psionic activity, in order to warn emerging psis of the threats posed to them by government agencies, criminal psis, and groups like the Overmind Institute. The Phoenix Project's policy is to explain the nature of psi powers to individuals (many of whom may not understand the basis of their abilities) and to offer training and guidance in their use. Psis are warned against openly displaying their abilities to avoid attracting attention from those who would exploit their powers, and are taught to use them for the common good rather than for their own gain.

The Phoenix Project will assist anyone they feel is a "good" person – and expect that they will return the favor if the Institute ever needs help in the

Phoenix Project Adventures

Emergence: Nightmares have been plaguing a local community – the same dream, in several different houses. The characters investigate and discover the source is a crippled girl experimenting with strong telepathic powers. She is eager to learn more about her abilities, but her strict parents do not believe in psi, and punish her for making up stories about her "dreamwalking." Meanwhile, the nightmares may have attracted the attention of the ESP or Overmind Institute.

The Guardians: The adventurers learn of a rogue telepath who is ruthlessly using his powers to win a coming election and take over the city government. Should they inform the ESP, or try to stop him themselves?

The Healer: A televangelist's faith healing turns out to be psionic, and the PCs uncover an Overmind Institute plot to kidnap and brainwash him in order to gain control of his growing congregation. But since the minister fervently believes his power is divinely inspired, and considers psi to be the devil's work, they may have trouble protecting him!

Snatch and Grab: The Phoenix Project is contacted by a young psi with electrokinetic powers. When they meet him, they learn that his parents have been kidnapped by agents of the Overmind Institute. The agents are forcing him to steal data files from a secret psi-tech research center run by the Pentagon. He wants the PCs to rescue his parents from the Project's secret base. But unknown to him, his last theft was detected, and ESP agents are on his trail. If the PCs aren't careful, the ESP may decide the Phoenix Project is behind the thefts!

future. PCs who share the Project's goals may even wish to join them as students or staff. Most centers will gladly accept any psionic (after a mind probe to determine good intentions) as a probationary member or will refer them to another center needing personnel.

The resources of an individual center vary widely. Most will have psionic testing gear (p. 59) and all are well trained in psionic techniques such as Gestalts. If individual members possess connections to government psi-tech labs or appropriate skills, they may have access to psychotronic or bio-psi technology; otherwise, a Project center relies on its members' psionic abilities. Most members of the Phoenix Project are non-violent, but few will hesitate to use their powers if innocents are threatened or in self-defense. Defensive techniques involve using Mindwipe to eliminate memories of their presence and mind controlling opponents into confessing to criminal actions before police. Students are also trained in defensive martial arts such as judo.

Biotech Chulan

Biotech Chulan is a multinational corporation headquartered in Zurich, specializing in emerging genetic engineering technology. Its president, Moira Van Deering, is a powerful rogue telepath and psychic vampire. After using her abilities and excellent business sense to rise to the top of Biotech, Van Deering went to work on the competition. Using a group of psionic agents she personally recruited, she has perfected the use of industrial espionage for corporate takeover. Her methods involve using Steal Dreams or Telereceive to gather inside information, and Telecontrol or Suggest to manipulate hostile executives into embarrassing situations.

Through contracts for government psi-research in some Western European nations, Van Deering recently became aware of the extent of the United States and Russia's programs. Determined to exploit this emerging technology, Van Deering has launched Biotech Chulan on a crash program to develop its own bio-psi assets. One of its most recent targets was the Canadian cybernetics firm Xotech (pronounced "Exo-tech"), a major subcontractor for biocybernetic technology used in the Pentagon's neuropsi project.

The Human Alliance

The Human Alliance is a group dedicated to eliminating the threat posed by psis to normal humanity. Its members are aware of the existence of effective psi powers and of psionic technology, but are ignorant of the consistent program of psionic research that has been undertaken by government agencies.

The Human Alliance has some 1,500 core members, and operates from an office in Nashville. It sends its bimonthly 16-page newsletter, *PSIren,* to some 25,000 people who share its anti-psionic attitudes but are not actively committed to the movement.

PSIren regularly warns its readers of the dangers of psi, reporting mysterious incidents, the existence of secret labs, connections between satanic cults, rock music and mind control and criminal activities allegedly committed through psionic powers. Historical articles draw attention to the growth of the International Psionic Conspiracy throughout history. *PSIren* is available for $2.25 by mail; a year's subscription costs $12.

The Alliance possesses connections with radical fundamentalists, anti-cult organizations, groups who oppose animal experimentation and genetic research and the like. If it discovers a secret psionic laboratory, it can usually call upon individuals willing to harass workers or even break in and smash equipment.

The Psiberocracy considers the Human Alliance a threat to the security of its psi-tech program, and as a result has taken covert action to prevent it from

The Dreamshapers

Not all psis belong to the government. Some are just trying to make money! Dreamshapers is a French company, based in Marseilles. Its only advertising is by word of mouth, and its clients include some of the world's richest individuals. Their product is dreams. For $10,000 they'll give you the experience of a lifetime.

Dreamshapers Incorporated is the brainchild of cybernetics expert Gerard Bouchard and his wife Madeleine, and her uncle, financier Lucien Fabre.

Some clients ask for imaginative adventures or erotic fantasies. Others seek to relive past experiences – perhaps spending time with a lost loved one. After explaining what kind of experience he wants, a client dons a helmet and lies down and is lightly sedated, his brain rhythms monitored by Gerard's medical scanners. As he drifts off to sleep, he begins to dream, bringing his fantasy to life. And unlike a normal dream, he can control his own actions, and remember clearly everything that happened!

Unknown to its exclusive clientele, Dreamshapers relies as much on Madeleine's telepathy as on her husband's cybernetic wizardry. Madeleine uses her Telereceive abilities to draw images from her customer's minds as they describe their desires, and then uses Illusion to bring life to their fantasies.

Dreamshaper Adventures

Nightmare!: A client turns out to be a powerful spontaneous telepath, and traps Madeleine within his nightmare dream world. Both are now in a deep coma, but still dreaming. Bouchard hires the characters to venture into the nightmare and find his wife.

Deadly Dreams: Something has been giving a succession of clients nightmares – one almost died of cardiac arrest. Through her contacts, Madeleine hires the PCs to help her find out why. Perhaps another telepath is interfering . . .

The Dreamhunters: The espionage branch of a foreign government with a psi-tech program has learned of Dreamshapers, and wants to kidnap Bouchard or Madeleine, or steal the plans for the device. The characters may be sent to perform the job, or to protect the Dreamshapers.

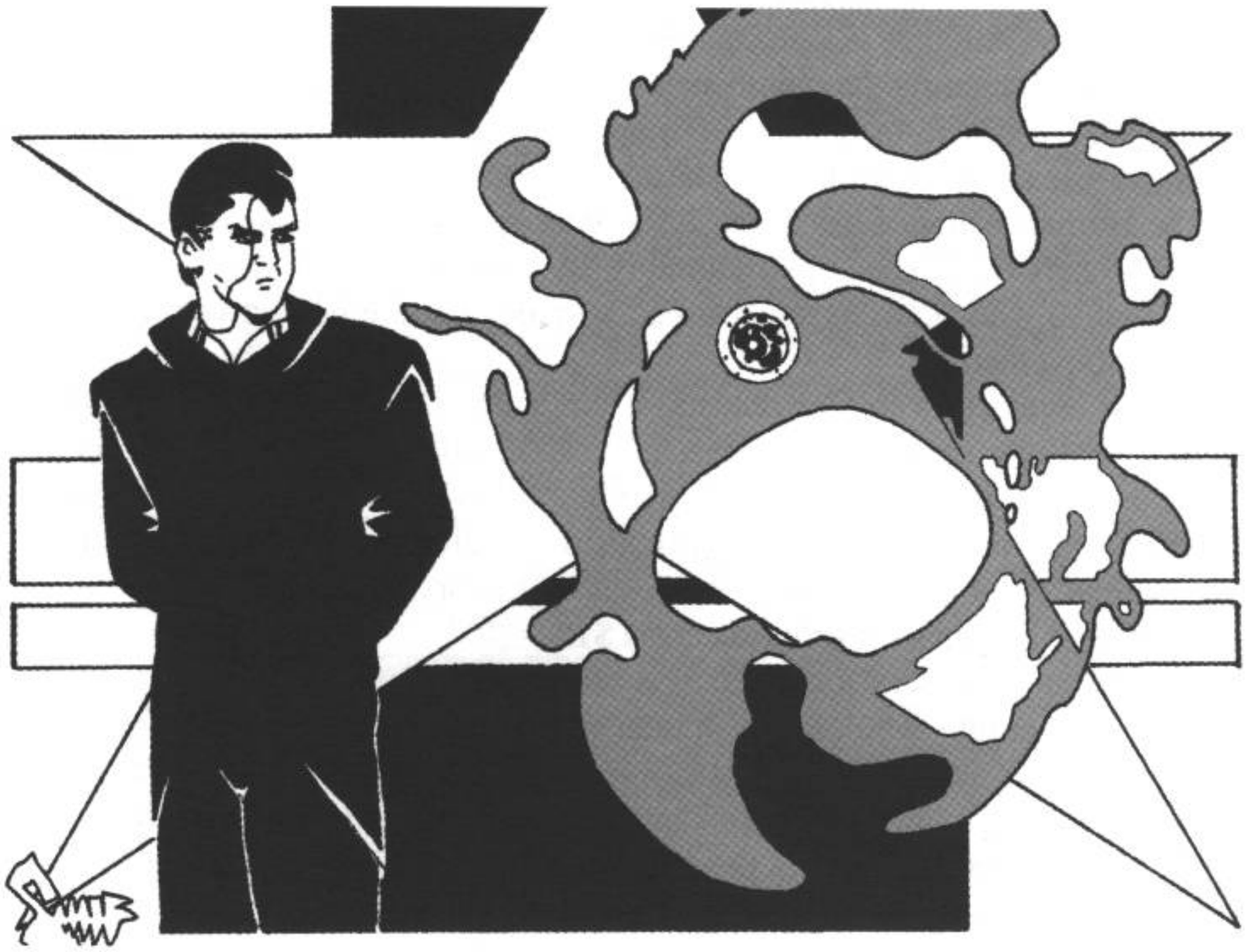
revealing the reality of psi to the public. Human Alliance groups have been subject to FBI, ESP and IRS investigations, and this persecution has forced the group to maintain a relatively low profile, despite its desire to alert the public. At the same time, the Alliance's enmity for psis has made it a target of both the Phoenix Project and the Overmind Institute. This has merely convinced the Human Alliance that a wide-ranging National Psionic Conspiracy has infiltrated high levels of the United States government. Occasional discovery of government agents equipped with psi powers or psionic technology has only hardened this belief.

The Alliance also has the resources to mount a smear campaign against individuals or organizations it suspects of psionic activity. Unfortunately, their attempts to educate the public about the dangers of psi have been unsuccessful. As a result they are forced to use other methods. If they suspect that a local politician is actually a psi, they will support his political opponents and try to manufacture evidence to drive him out of office – perhaps digging up charges of corruption, substance abuse or even Satanism. But, while the Eugenic Security Police has sophisticated tests for psionic activity, the Alliance depends largely on rumor and guesswork. Much of its energy is wasted against self-declared parapsychologists and psychics who have little or no real power.

Some extremists (perhaps a few hundred, perhaps more) with the Human Alliance are willing to use more violent means against psis. Under the guidance of the Millennium Council (see below), they have been given access to military-style weapons and paramilitary training, and act as soldiers and thugs for the Human Alliance.

The Millennium Council

A small inner circle within the Human Alliance, the members of the Millennium Council possess a more extensive knowledge of psionic powers. They may have access to some psionic technology, such as anti-psi drugs or testing gear, and they believe in a coming total war between psis and normals. The Millennium Council is willing to use violence, including assassination, bombing and kidnapping, in order to achieve the Human Alliance's goals.



Cassie Izumi

30 years old, Oriental, black hair, brown eyes; 5'5", 120 lbs. 200 points.

ST 9 (-10), DX 11 (10), IQ 14 (45), HT 11 (10).

Speed 5.5, Move 5.

Advantages: Attractive (5); Charisma +2 (10); ESP 2, Fickle-8 (5); Psychokinesis 8, Full Power in Emergencies Only (32); Strong Will+2 (8); Telepathy 16 (80).

Disadvantages: Enemy, Overmind Institute, 9 or less (-30); Secret: Psi Powers (-20); Sense of Duty to Friends (-5); Stubbornness (-5).

Quirks: Animal-rights activist (-1); Fiercely independent (-1); Short-tempered (-1); Japanimation fan (-1); Wears mirror-shades (-1).

Pside Effects: Use of her PK causes a low humming sound (-1).

Languages: English-14; Japanese-12 (½).

Skills: Aspect-11 (½); Emotion Sense-11 (½); Karate-13 (4); Leadership-15 (4); Mental Blow-21 (18); Mind Shield-15 (6); Mindwipe-11 (½), Psi Sense-12 (1); Research-14 (2); Seekersense-12 (1); Streetwise-13 (2); Telecontrol-15 (6); Telereceive-21 (18); Telesend-14 (4); Telescan-14 (2); Writing-13 (1).

Cassie Izumi discovered her psi abilities at puberty. She kept them a secret, and uses them aggressively in her career as an investigative journalist and part-time psychic investigator. A few months ago her attempt to expose testing of poisonous psi-drugs on animals at a corporate lab made her the wrong kind of enemies. Needing allies, she swallowed her pride and joined the local branch of the Phoenix Project (p. 124). Despite her initial reluctance to join a group, she has increasingly found herself assuming a leadership role.

Cassie has 60 disadvantage points. Her Secret is a campaign-specific disadvantage which the GM decided all freelance psis must take, so it doesn't count against the 40-point limit.

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Hundreds of books and dozens of movies and television shows have dealt with psi powers. This list concentrates on the treatment of psi in science fiction, along with related topics like mind transfer and dream-shaping machines.

Only a few nonfiction books are mentioned — those which the author found most helpful in researching ***Psionics.*** Any good library should have a parapsychology section for those interested in delving into the subject.

* Highly recommended.

** Not directly concerned with psionics, but deals with a related subject like dream-scanner technology.

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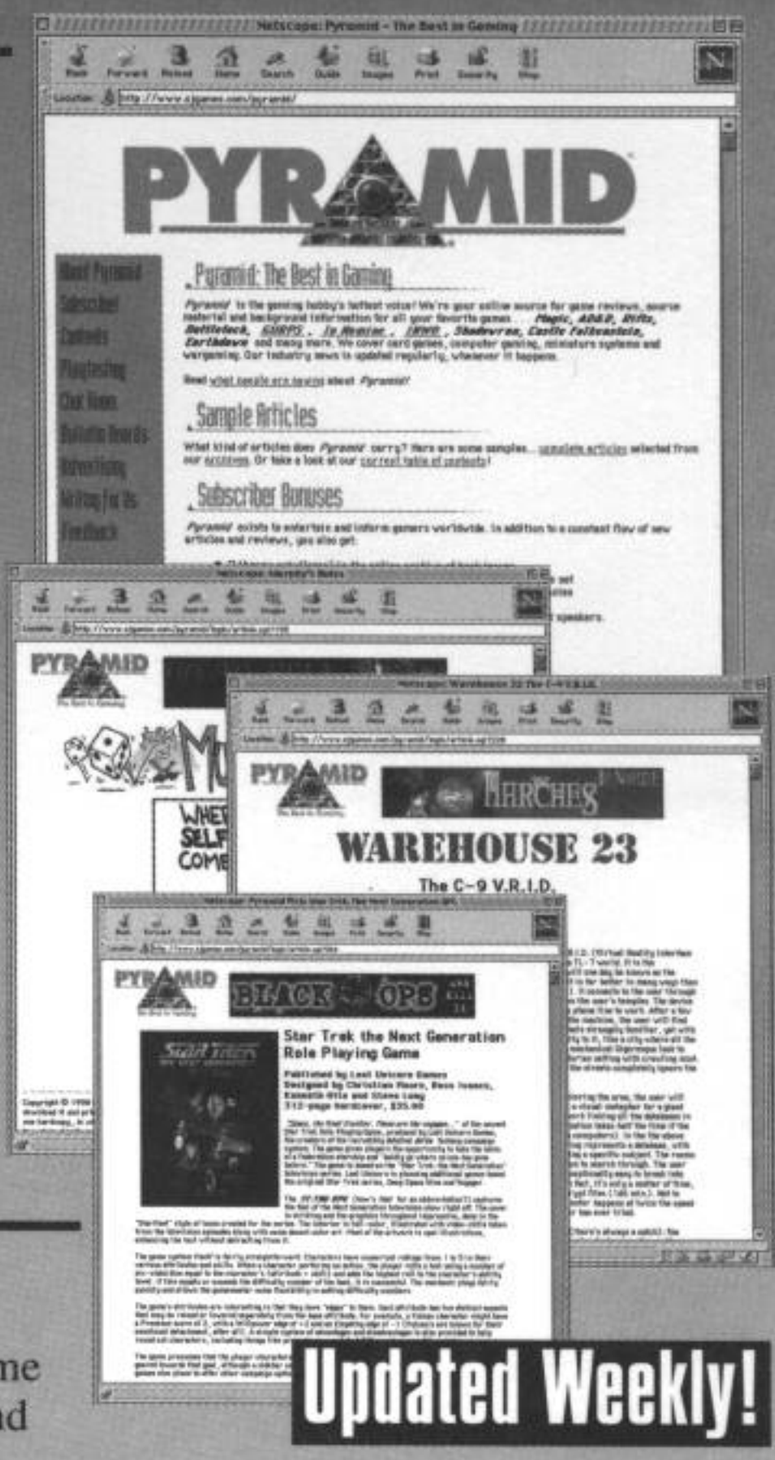
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ISBN 1-55634-196-2
51995
9 781556 341960
SJG01995 **6040**
Printed in the U.S.A.