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The Laundry



Synopsis

CAPITAL LAUNDRY SERVICES - WHAT NEEDS TO BE CLEANED UP? There are things out there, in the weirder reaches of space-time where reality is an optional extra. Horrible things, usually with tentacles. Al-Hazred glimpsed them, John Dee summoned them, HP Lovecraft wrote about them, and Alan Turing mapped the paths from our universe to theirs. The right calculation can call up entities from other, older universes, or invoke their powers. Invisibility? Easy! Animating the dead? Trivial! Binding lesser demons to your will? Easily doable! Opening up the way for the Great Old Ones to come through and eat our brains? Unfortunately, much too easy. That's where the Laundry comes in - it's a branch of the British secret service, tasked to prevent hideous alien gods from wiping out all life on Earth (and more particularly, the UK). You work for the Laundry. The hours are long, the pay is sub-par, the co-workers are... interesting (in the Chinese curse sense of the word), and the bureaucracy is stifling - but you do get to wave basilisk guns and bullet wards around, and to go on challenging and exciting missions to exotic locations like quaint, legend-haunted Wigan, cursed Slough and Wolverhampton where the walls are thin. You may even get to save the world. Just make sure you get a receipt.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Awesome adaptation of The Laundry novels and Basic Roleplaying to create a modern techno-magic Cthulhu-ish RPG. Fun to read, fun to play, and lots of source material from the novels just waiting to torture your players. Also some good source books and pre-written adventures. Even if you choose not to run this particular setting, lots of good stuff to get the creative juices flowing.

Combine warehouse 23, x files, torchwood, the end of days, cthulhu mythos and Dilbert, and you can begin to grasp what the Laundry is. As the book says: it is the first ISO 9000 occult british agency. The Book is wonderfully and sarcastically written, well divided and full of wonderful ideas of how to launch a modern cthulhu investigation session, on budget. Good to read, good to have, useful to use

This review is for the hardback edition of The Laundry RPG. The book is a self-contained (well, nearly) RPG that places the players firmly and believably in the world of Charles Stross's Laundry - a UK government agency charged with keeping the Mythos Menace at bay. If you are thinking you already have Delta Green so why bother, you really need to read the Stross Laundry stories to understand the difference in approach. The underlying system is a slight revamping of the core Call of Cthulhu flavor of Basic Role Playing, with some welcome clarifications and tweaks in the combat department (yesyesyes "if you are in combat you are doing it wrong" - take a seat over there and read my review of the Call of Cthulhu 6th edition hardback where I get into that). The system seems to be well-thought out and 30 years of using the core mechanics tells me that it is robust enough for complex play yet easy enough to learn for beginners (though this take on BRP does try and make things a tad more complicated than they need to be in my opinion). BRP is just about the easiest system to learn I've encountered. You'll be using weapons in this setting, and some pretty strange ones at that. The conceit used here is that Mythos Magic is really "just" advanced mathematical operations that have fallout in reality, so instead of trying to run the calculations in a human head, why not run them in a laptop? The issue then is not the most aged text but the most teraflops. You'll also be getting rid of possessing entities with Banishment Rounds. Word to the wise: the possessed will usually not thank you for this. The operatives will be working for too little pay from an under-equipped office under threat of an audit if the paperwork doesn't get done just so and the bullet count is off or large amounts of infrastructure are damaged during your struggle to get Yog-Sothoh to go back where it came from. Sort of The Sandbaggers meets Delta Green. Sort of, if you throw in ISO 9000 procedural woes. The book itself is well made from robust materials and has a stitched binding that should last for years in normal play. The chapters inside break down the business of learning the game mechanics and getting to grips with the setting if you haven't read Stross' stories, and includes the usual stuff. The color artwork is limited to the cover. Inside, you'll find only black and white art as in other Call of Cthulhu publications. The dedicated Mythos Scholar is going to be puzzled at the paucity of Mythos Beasties in the Bestiary, but The Laundry is more akin to a generic horror setting C/W Zombies, Mummies etc with a cast of Mythos Critters added to

the mix than a full-blown Cthulhu Mythos immersion sim. The setting calls for some major players to be present and everything else to be...not. If this is a problem for you, add the excellent *Malleus Monstrorum: Creatures, Gods, & Forbidden Knowledge (Call of Cthulhu Horror Roleplaying) (Call of Cthulhu Roleplaying Game)* for a full menu. The game will play for most with the bestiary as is. The armory is, frankly, a puzzle. It lists all sorts of medieval weaponry that in the normal course of events will not be of the slightest relevance, while leaving out some fairly obvious modern-day choices that will trip off the players' tongues three seconds into a typical game. Like machine guns. Now you can cover your bets here with any of the published Call of Cthulhu or BRP materials that will fill the gaps nicely, but in my opinion you shouldn't *have* to do so. Far better that the GM should have to stretch a bit to locate a broadsword than a machine gun. I feel so strongly about this I dropped a star. That said, I went to some considerable trouble to get my copy - I eagerly anticipated the publication and bought one from the first batch to hit New York's retailers, and I strongly recommend *The Laundry RPG* (and Stross's stories set in that world) to everyone looking for something a little different. [EDIT] There is now a book of scenarios for this game that makes it an even more attractive option. Look for *Laundry: Black Bag Jobs*. Another useful but entirely non-essential reference: *Basic Roleplaying: The Chaosium d100 system (Basic Roleplaying)* which is the core system used in *The Laundry RPG*. I'm including it in case you want to take the game in other directions than *The Laundry RPG* core book caters for. Machine Guns can be found in here, in case you were wondering. [/EDIT]

This role playing game looked interesting so I ordered it to give it a read through. Turned out it was a little too strange. Not quite my cup of tea. Accountants and number crunchers fighting Cthulu?

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