

Introduction

Postmortem Studios

Postmortem Studios is the personal publishing imprint of James 'Grim' Desborough, Origins Award winning author of *The Munchkin's Guide to Powergaming*.

Postmortem Studios publishes primarily in PDF format through the usual PDF outlets such as www.rpgnow.com, but is also available in print either via the sites or through www.leisuregames.co.uk and other gaming stores.

Postmortem Studios is a full time enterprise and is always looking for assistance from freelance artists, editors and writers.

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However...

The role-playing game industry is not huge, not rich - with only a couple of exceptions - and can ill afford your piracy, unlike many software companies. I am a one man show, not a large company by any stretch of the imagination and I am attempting to build a business from the ground up. I need every penny.

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That's all I ask.

100 Conspiracies

This book contains one hundred possible conspiracy theories for you to use in your games. These can be uncovered secrets; ongoing schemes by villainous powers or the players can even be part of the conspiracy themselves, working to protect it against its rivals and to prevent its discovery.

The conspiracies are of primary use in modern occult and spy oriented games as well as *Postmortem Studios'* own *@ctiv8*. The models of the conspiracies could also be used in some historical games, covering the birth of the conspiracy itself, or as models for general types of conspiracy that could appear in any game from fantasy to science fiction.

Mystical elements have been kept to a minimum in this book, as with the real world magic, gods, angels, demons and similar are all presumed not to exist, regardless of what people believe. If you want to re-insert such elements that should be simple enough but should probably be presented as secret knowledge of the conspiracy cabal, increasing their effectiveness and power appropriately.

Conspiracy Vs Paranoid Conspiracy Theory

It's important, I think, to distinguish between conspiracies and the kinds of paranoid conspiracy theories that make up the majority of this book. Conspiracies are real and do happen. Criminals do conspire to pervert the course of justice or to undertake heists. Spy rings conspire to destabilise governments, smuggle contraband and supply terrorists/freedom fighters and so on.

Many genuine conspiracies have gone on, revealed in due course in historical documents or uncovered by the media. Watergate would be one very famous example. That these have occurred lends some plausibility to the possibility of others but, for the most part, the conspiracy theories that spark the public imagination have little to no grounds and are based on nothing but speculation and paranoia.

These are the paranoid conspiracy theories, the likes of 9/11 Truth, JFK, Chemtrails, Fluoridation and Invisible Space Lizards. Spun out of fraud, imagination, ignorance, lack of understanding and some key psychological flaws that exist across humanity these fire people up and many become obsessives, devoting their whole lives to exposing a conspiracy that in all likelihood never existed in the first place. For game purposes, however, these are the conspiracies that are far and away the more interesting ones.

The Conspiracies

Each conspiracy presented in this book will follow a common format for easy reference and comparison. Each conspiracy will take up one page and will contain the following information:

Number

Each conspiracy has a number so that it can be easily found and referenced for when you want to create adventures based around that conspiracy or simply to find it again.

Title

Each conspiracy has a title, this may be direct or it may be humorous. The intent is to help you remember the conspiracy and to give you a one-line reference when flicking through to find conspiracies that interest you without having to read the whole page.

Description

The description covers the form and nature of the conspiracy. What it is, what it involves, what really happened, the big secret that everyone is trying to hide. The description may also give some idea of the scope and extent of the conspiracy and possibly what sort of resources it might have at its disposal.

How is it done?

This section describes how the conspiracy did whatever it is supposed to have done and how it keeps it a secret. This may give more detail on their resources and capabilities as well as their methodology and the scale of ruthlessness they might be willing to engage in.

Cui Bono?

Who benefits from this conspiracy? This section tells you what is being gotten out of maintaining the façade and who is reaping the rewards, the people who have something to lose. This is asserted from within the context of the conspiracy theory and may not entirely marry up with those who would genuinely benefit in the real world.

Possible Conspirators

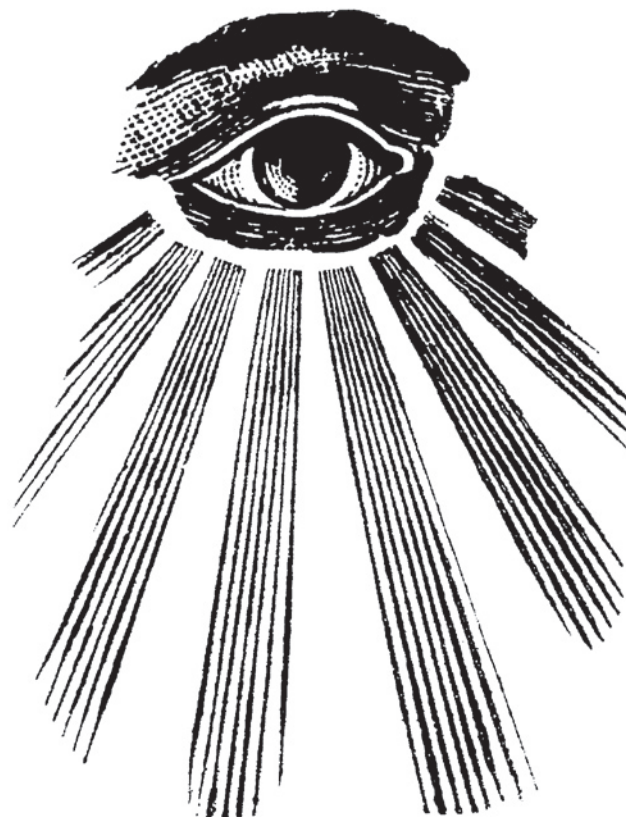
This section lists the most likely conspirators from within conspiracy theory lore who might be behind this particular secret scheme. A little more detail may be given. Most, if not all, of these conspirators will be found within the companion volume 100 Conspirators.

Adventure Seeds

Each conspiracy comes with a handful of possible adventure seeds relating to the conspiracy which a Games Master might use to introduce it into his games.

Tips

Here and there some tips for play may be included, either general tips on running and portraying conspiracy theories within a game or ones specific to the conspiracy on that page.



001 - Election Schmelection

Description

The 2000 and 2004 presidential elections in the United States were rather controversial. In both cases there was lots of suspicion over voting fraud and the 2000 election ended up being decided by the courts, not by The People. U.S. elections are world elections, arguably the E.U. and China are just as important for their impact on world politics but the U.S. election is an election of global interest and global impact. Could forces have been behind the outcome of both, very closely fought, elections and what was their interest in doing so? Controversy also stalked the 2008 elections, are these opposing forces a continuation of the interests of the same cabal?

How is it done?

Fixing an election isn't easy, there's no one, single thing you can do, it requires a large network of operations in order to do it and would involve everything from corrupting officials, falsely registering voters and fiddling with voting machines to voter intimidation and the exploitation of the mentally ill and infirm. With the shift to electronic voting the potential for a single point of fraud becomes much greater, especially with it all relating to a single company and group. Many of those involved in such vote fixing may be harmless dupes but a central cabal could be orchestrating the whole.

Cui Bono?

The most obvious beneficiary is whoever gets elected as a result of the shenanigans, but this individual is also beholden to whomever managed to get them into power in the first place. This person, or group, then, has the ultimate in blackmail material to bring down a president who refuses to play ball and further their agenda. Any shadowy cabal that does manage to get their candidate in may further wish to consolidate the power of a president, after all, it's much cheaper and easier to fix one election than to go after all the various elections in congress or the senate.

With a puppet president in power and that power consolidated and strengthened a controlling group could, then, act as a puppeteer over many of the important and world shaping policies of the nation.

In addition they could shape domestic policies that favour them and their interests. If that cabal has other world-wide aims the United States makes an excellent proxy for them, the U.S. is not liked, globally, and retains the most powerful and well funded military in the world. A corrupted United States makes a powerful agent for any number of other conspiracies.

Possible Conspirators

Anglo-American Alliance, Big Pharma, Bilderberg Group, Black Nobility, Bohemian Grove, CIA, Committee of 300, Culper Ring, Descendants of Jesus, Energy Companies, Eugenicists, IMF, Immortals, Industrialists, International Banks, Invisible Space Lizards, Patriarchy, Pilgrim's Society, Republican Inner Circle, Rothschilds, Shadow Government, Skull & Bones, Technocrats, The Great Commission, Illuminati, Masons, United Nations, Zionists.

Adventure Seeds

1. The consequences of this conspiracy being uncovered could be huge. A great many politicians and party activists from every level, local to federal, could be implicated and held up on charges. This could disintegrate government leading to a protracted period of chaos. The groups covering up this conspiracy might, therefore, not only be limited to those responsible for it, but also to those who simply want to maintain order...
2. Someone has uncovered evidence linking a member of the cabal to the electoral fixed and the consolidation of power in the office of President as part of a longer reaching scheme. This witness and their evidence will need to be protected against all comers if the truth is ever going to come out. The players could be trying to protect, or to eliminate this person and their evidence.
3. What could be worse is that, in times of economic decline, people are attracted to strong leaders and big promises. Even if this conspiracy were uncovered the lack of democratic participation and the level of apathy in society might mean that nobody cares - then the cabal starts to move openly...

020 - High on Definition

Description

Analogue TV stations are being shut down across the Western world and are being replaced by digital signals with every home getting a new digital box to receive the signal. The provision of these digital boxes is, in some countries, being accomplished with government assistance either directly or via contract with particular companies. This is a sweeping change to people's homes which will place a brand-shiny-new computerised device in almost every home that there is and because of this, and luddite suspicion that there was nothing wrong with analogue TV, there's a great deal of paranoia about these new boxes, that they might monitor and report back on what you watch or even that they might contain cameras and recording devices so that people can be bugged, no matter who they are or where they are, anywhere that there's a television.

How is it done?

Within the boxes are hidden tiny camera and microphone devices as well as solid state recording devices that make note of what television shows are watched at which times. This allows people watching television to be both spied upon and profiled according to what shows they watch and their reactions to them. The signals are stored and can either be remotely read or use an existing cable or internet connection to report back when queried. The digital signal is also capable of transmitting subliminal information with much greater success than the old analogue signals allowing people to be literally tranquilised by the television sets or exposed to commercial or political suggestions.

Cui Bono?

The government and other shadowy, controlling conspiracies would obviously gain greatly from a near-total surveillance society for all the obvious reasons. Groups that want to control people benefit from the potential for pervasive and subtle mind-control technology while media and corporate interests gain huge advantage from either being able to monitor and manipulate the audience - for a price - or through the ability to use subliminal marketing techniques far more effectively than at any previous time in history, despite them being outlawed.

Possible Conspirators

Artificial Intelligence, Bilderberg Group, Entertainment Companies, Global Elite, Industrialists, Liberal Media, Phoebus Cartel, Rothschilds, Rupert Murdoch, Shadow Government, Technocrats, Tesla's Legacy, United Nations, U.S. Government, Whitey, Zionists.

Adventure Seeds

1. A team of police investigating a high profile serial killer who has targeted the rich the characters start to get tip offs that couldn't have come to them any other way than by pervasive spying and wiretapping. No such action has been approved and the suspect is killing the very people he claims to be spying on him in what seems like a paranoid delusion but there may well be some genuine truth to his claims. The police are being used to stop him but what happens after that depends very much whether they can learn to leave well enough alone.

2. Someone has managed to get into the spy network and has begun to post compromising videos culled from the system onto Youtube using various anonymising techniques. Not only must the leak be plugged but the cyberterrorist - for that's what he's being called - must be stopped before he exposes someone of genuine importance rather than two teenagers having sex on a sofa. That's where the characters come in as the enforcement arm of the conspiracy.

3. Some people are particularly susceptible to the subliminal suggestions that are being pumped into their homes via the secret extra components in the digital boxes. It isn't too long after the general roll-out that the deaths start to happen. The man who stuffed himself with a single brand of chocolate bar until his stomach ruptured. The woman in hospital with chronic constipation due to taking packet after packet of a diarrhoea cure she didn't need and any number of unsuitable people who have marched themselves down to their army recruitment office in line with a subliminal advertisement to join the military. These incidents all seem unrelated but a proper investigation will turn out their commonality.