



# Unknown Armies

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**Unknown Armies** Greg Stolze , J. Tynes

What will you risk to change the world?

The acclaimed RPG of modern occult intrigue returns in a stunning new hardcover edition. Completely reorganized, largely rewritten, and jam-packed with new art, the second edition of Unknown Armies isn't just better. It kicks metaphysical ass!

We've remixed the book based on the level of campaign you want to play: Street, Global, or Cosmic. At street level, you're outsiders to the secret world of magick, ordinary people entering a land of mystery and peril. At global level, you're mojo-wielding cabalists in the occult underground, pursuing your arcane agendas and plotting against your rivals. At cosmic level, you're in tune with the cosmos itself, fighting to shape the next incarnation of reality. Background material is divided up as well, so new players in a street-level campaign only read what the

GM wants them to know.

But the beats don't stop there:

Much more information for new players, to get them into the mindset of the game and help them make better characters and stronger campaigns.

\* New character-creation options, including Trigger Events, Paradigm Skills, and power levels scaled to match the level of campaign you're playing.

\* Numerous rules tweaks, including a new initiative system, Fuzzy Logic skill checks, player-directed combat modifiers, amped-up martial arts rules, a new experience system, and more, all dedicated to upgrading UA's innovative percentile system into a lean and precise tool for fast play and player empowerment.

\* More magick for non-adepts: Authentic Thaumaturgy, new rituals and artifacts, and revised versions of Proxy Magick and Tilts allow the freewheeling use of symbolic, sympathetic magick by anyone with the will to make it happen.

\* Twelve schools of magick (up from seven in UA1) for obsessed adepts, including revised versions of published schools (Bibliomancy, Personamancy, and Urbanomancy) and two new schools (Videomancy and Narcotic Alchemy).

\* Fourteen avatars (up from eight in UA1) for archetypalists, including revised versions of published avatars (The Messenger, The Mother, The Mystic Hermaphrodite, and the True King) and two new avatars (The MVP and The Warrior).

\* More resources for the GM, including specific guidance on combat, wounds, skill checks, campaign building, and other critical issues.

\* New cover art and design, new interior art and design, and a hardcover binding to keep this game in line.

## Unknown Armies Details

Date : Published June 1st 2002 by Atlas Games,US (first published January 1st 1999)

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Author : Greg Stolze , J. Tynes

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# From Reader Review Unknown Armies for online ebook

## Latro says

My favorite RPG book of all time. It is simply the best written rulebook ever (and the rest of the line is top notch too), I love the system, I love the setting, and I love the authors style in portraying all of it.

UA is a game of "urban fantasy/terror" where magic is real, yes, and things move in the background of our normal world. Aha, you say, another one. Not, not really. This is a game where the biggest magical battles of the world are fought by bums, addicts, and total freaks, because being a mage is, fundamentally, being a loser, an obsessed waste of a person that cant just get out of the realization that reality can bend to your will - if you will is insane enough.

It is a game where cosmic relevance may be at your fingertips. By faithfully following an Archetype in the minds of humanity - and those change with the times, and not all archetypes are glamorous. That guy that you think is the very best example of the worst of, say, bureaucracy? That guy can be just a step from achieving transcendence and become one of the ruling forces of the universe... and ensure it has a place for petty meaningless boring soul-crushing paperwork forever.

It is a game where monsters prey on humanity. Only the monsters are human, too. In the end, everything in the setting is our own fault, individual or collective. The whole universe is a reflection of humanity - if it sucks, is because we do.

The system is a simple BRP derivate with some twists and a wonderful extension of the "sanity" mechanics of Call of Cthulhu to encompass more axis for your mental health to go from normal to fucked-up. And even at the system level the satiric, ironic, and streetwise atmosphere of the game keeps up instead of being diluted in crunch; this is a system where you name your own skills with whatever name you want, for example.

All in all, again, for me this is the very, very best RPG in terms of writing, setting, and sheer fun of play I've ever played.

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## Kalin says

I'd never thought I'd rate so high a 1) horror; 2) RPG manual--as a piece of literature. However, *Unknown Armies* has impressed (and surprised) me in both departments.

In terms of themes, this must be the first role-playing world, where fighting or trying to kill someone is the most desperate, dangerous or plain *stupid* course of action you can take. Tellingly, the "Combat" section of the rules starts with "Six Ways to Stop a Fight." I'm hooked already there. (I'm tired, sick and--whaddya know--*skeptical* of violence: its power to resolve anything.) The game does splendid justice to its tagline, "power and consequences": go get the power if you must--but mind the consequences.

In terms of language, UA dazzles. I can't recall the last time when I had to sift through my slang dictionaries so many times per page. The writing, especially in the first three books, *especially* in the gossip sections ("What You Hear"), is superb. (In Book Four, aimed directly at Gamemasters, the authors state up front that

they're gonna drop "the three dollar words," for the sake of brevity. Fair enough.)

Highly recommended to anyone who's looking for a deeper, subtler game--or building their own.

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### **Alexis Hall says**

Brought to you by Reading Project 2015.

Again, this is H's, so I leave the commentary to him:

"Classic modern occult for the late 90s/early 2000s. The same hidden magic world schtick as about 40% of 1990s RPGs only significantly more, balls-the-wall insane."

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### **J. Allen says**

Unknown Armies is an RPG set in a world like ours, but which has an "occult underground," the weirdness of which was inspired by the novels of Tim Powers, David Lynch films, and Shea and Wilson's *Illuminatus!* trilogy. The setting is entirely humanistic, with every "magickal" presence being human, formerly human, or a product of humans. It's also very post-modern: the power of belief and perception overrules that of any objective reality. As one of the taglines of the game states, "You Did It." An excellent, and darkly humorous, source book for lovers of the genre of gritty, painful magic, regardless of their inclination or ability to game.

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### **Fernando Barrocal says**

It's an RPG System book, but its concepts, theology and reality world are part of a dark universe that can provide a lot of imaginative stories. I wonder if have been or will be romances on this universe. Looks like Stephen King twisting a John Lennon's fiction.

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### **Odhran says**

Awesome setting and system. Really excited to run it.

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### **Jack says**

I actually read the 1st Edition, authored mainly by John Tynes, but I'm too lazy to put it into the system.

So, the designers who came up with *\_Mage: The Ascension\_* should probably have hung their heads in shame if they ever read this book. It's the only good modern magic system I've ever encountered, in that it ascribes psychologically realistic motivations and consequences into learning and using magic. Just as a piece of writing, this book is gritty, weird, and freakishly imaginative.

Magicians in this world are all battling (wittingly or not) to ascend to the status of demiurge. This makes most of them extraordinarily unpleasant to deal with. They gain their powers because of deep and overriding obsessions. A pornomancer gets juice from sex acts, a cliomancer (history mage) from interaction with historical items or places, a flesh mage by hurting themselves, and so forth. Added to this is one of the more wacked-out ritual magic systems I've ever seen.

This game is a hidden gem. One of these days, maybe I'll even get some people to try it.

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### **Jason Pitre says**

This is an excellent RPG, with a simple system and versatile setting. The character creation can take almost no time at all with a good ability to customize your character. The learning curve is gentle and the process of learning is great fun.

The two most impressive portions of the book are the section on "killing other characters" and the sanity system. It is true to life, explaining that any balanced individual would be better off running away, giving in, calling the cops or generally doing anything other than violence. The sanity system is also very apt, the single best representation that I have ever seen.

Two thumbs up.

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### **Marcus Morrissey says**

A very interesting read. The prose style is generally excellent. It is both irreverent and perceptive, although repetitive at times. I rarely find the obligatory interspersed pieces of fiction to be worthwhile reading in game books but I made a point of reading each one here. The vision of the Occult Underground is a fascinating one. The system is complex enough to be useful and robust but simple enough not to take over the story.

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### **Andrés says**

¿Sabía usted que...

...las listas de "100 películas para ver antes de morir" realmente le otorgan la inmortalidad a quien logra verlas en su totalidad?

...todos los presidentes de Estados Unidos han tenido un ojo de vidrio? ¿El mismo ojo?

...al menos doce suicidios han sido atribuidos a la cancelación de "En Familia con Chabelo"?

...todos los perros van al cielo?

...la razón por la que el hombre no ha regresado a la luna es porque los gritos no dejan hablar?

Bueno, ya. Tráete 2d10 y tira a ver si ese vagabundo no terminó derripiéndote la cara.

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**Μιτς Γιωτ?ξ says**

A mgnificent game, easily my favorite one. I wonder if splatbooks are easy to find...

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