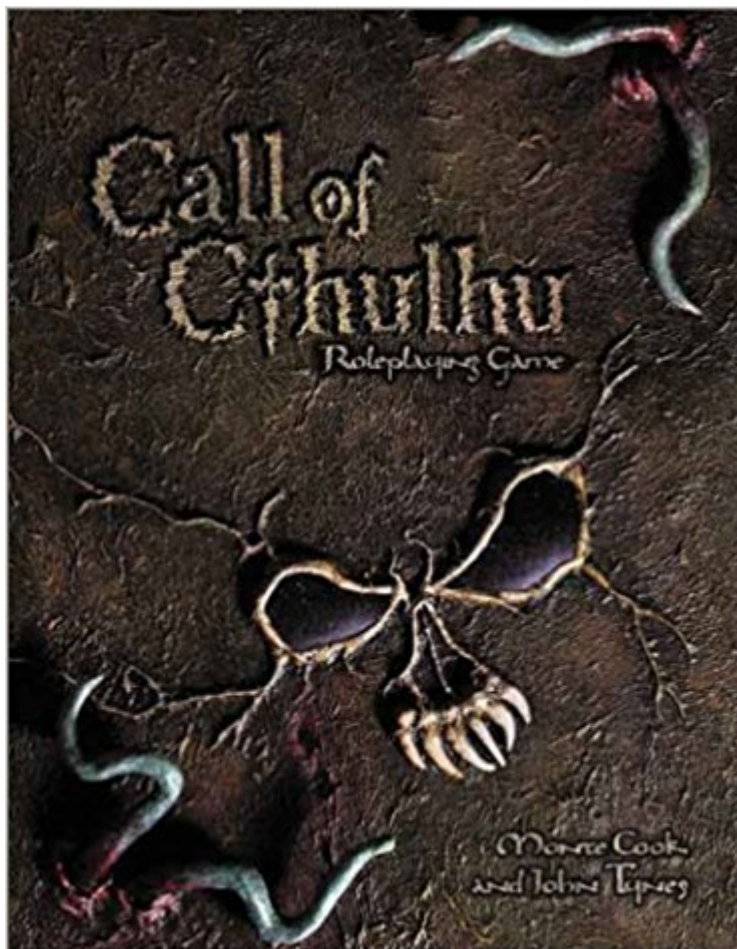


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Call Of Cthulhu (d20 Edition Horror Roleplaying, WotC)



Synopsis

The long-awaited d20 adaptation of Call of Cthulhu in one all inclusive rulebook. Since the early 1900's, H.P. Lovecraft has been considered one of the top writers in the entire horror genre. Elements of his work have appeared over the years in numerous horror arenas, but now roleplayers can delve into a campaign centered around the author's popular Cthulhu Mythos. The Call of Cthulhu Roleplaying Game contains everything needed to play or narrate a roleplaying campaign, including all core-game rules for the d20 game system.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Monte cook has worked in the game industry for 12 years. Recently, Monte has devoted himself to working on the D&D(r) rules (in particular, writing the Dungeon Master's Guide), taking time out only to work on the DarkMatter(tm) campaign setting for the Alternity(r) science fiction roleplaying game. He lives in Washington. John Tynes is the founder of Pagan Publishing, one of the most critically acclaimed roleplaying game companies around. His accomplishments include Delta Green, Unknown Armies, and Puppetland. He resides in Washington.

This is, in my entire (brief) history of purchasing RPG's, my favorite book to date. That should tell you enough to BUY THIS BOOK, but I'll elaborate for the folks who don't want to sift through the other, 2000 word reviews. Firstly, the book itself is solid, good quality, well-written, exceptionally well-presented, and designed to be easy and fun to use. Secondly, the game is, supposing you can find people interested in its style of gaming (semi-serious horror roleplay,) an extremely fun,

interesting and exciting game. Third, the book uses the most prolific RPG system around, Wizards of the Coast's D&D 3rd edition+ d20 system, which, while it has its flaws, is accessible and ubiquitous. Some folks have nits to pick with it, and their concerns may have grounds, but frankly, a game is a game, and this one plays well with the system they present. Finally, this book has everything you need to play. Everything. The included adventures (two!) are top-notch, and full of juicy details and tidbits, much like the rest of the book. It has rules to cover almost any imaginable situation, and ideas a-plenty, including a recommended reading section. I simply cannot recommend it highly enough for any fan of role-playing and the d20 system, the horror genre or Lovecraft's writing.

Call of Cthulhu takes a game that has existed under a different rules system for some time, and adapts it to the d20 system (like Dungeons and Dragons). The d20 system is okay for just about anything, but is probably not as well suited to the subject matter (the cosmic horror stories of HP Lovecraft) as various other systems out there. That said, there are some really compelling reasons to check it out. For one, the non-rules elements in the book, the storytelling advice and the explanation of the Cthulhu Mythos, are worth the price of admission. There's some really interesting and clearly rendered thoughts in here that can affect any game you want to play. For another, the d20 system is an easier buy-in for many people who are familiar with D&D. Asking them to learn a new system is a big ask, but this game is one book and it works the way they expect an rpg to work. The rules are stripped down of many of the D&D elements and offer only two options for advancing your character (offense and defense); the rest is choosing skills. Magic is handled separately, and psychic powers through a minimal selection of feats. Sanity is ported from the older CoC game and includes a lot of interesting actual psychiatric information. This very simple and modular approach allows you to use what you want and change or add other things. So the game, even through the limitations of d20's linear advancement and oversimplified combat, can work pretty well. There are guidelines for adapting characters from the other CoC game, and from mixing material between CoC and D&D (or Pathfinder, if you swing that way). The book has exceptionally high production values; the cover will creep you out, and so will the book itself, where instead of being rendered in columns, text is presented as slanted opposing triangular structures that manage to be readable while creating a Lovecraftian notion of forbidden geometry. The writing and artwork are strong throughout. This game is long out of print, but still worth picking up in the best condition you can (and at the best price you can); it works.

This book is amazing! The character creation system is very flexible. The magic system is very unique. It has an excellent combat system and some cool gear to equip your characters with. And add a heavy dose of creepy crawlies, undead, and Old Ones to keep things interesting. I also like the appendices on conversions from the Chaosium and Dungeons and Dragons systems. I would give it 10 stars if I could. The only thing that could make it better is if they made an updated version using the 5th edition version of the d20 system.

First, let me state that I've run Call of Cthulhu since 1981, always from the original so-called BRP ruleset, but unlike many of the Call of Cthulhu community I do not have an innate distrust of other systems for the game. I bought the D20 rulebook at the end of its print run (which I didn't know was the end of the print run) after I began playing D20 D&D, having been impressed by the relative straightforward way those games progressed (compared to the nightmare that was AD&D) but never with the intention of running a D20 game. I moderate a Call of Cthulhu forum and wanted to be able to discuss the game with the few D20 proponents is all. What a great value for money this book represented! Tynes and Cook did a great job. The material is very clear and straightforward, even though D20 character generation is oodles more complex than BRP and that the Call of Cthulhu D20 build is quite different to that used in D&D. I built a character in a very short time on one read-through of the chapter. The graphic design of the book is exceptional, with much marginalia that warrants a second and third look as one browses and check out that cover. Wonderful. The color artwork includes many of the monsters. How nice to be able to see a Color out of Space...in color. The details of some of the original game mechanics have been studied and given a polish, with very positive results that even a dyed-in-the-wool BRP Keeper would do well to read - the rules for reading Tomes are inspired and offer much that should have been in the game from day one. They alone justified for me the cost of the book. And it is possible to actually read a tome in a realistic timescale under these rules, making Mythos Books a more integral part of the game with respect to the player characters than they've been for a long time under BRP editions. I was so impressed with the production and execution of this book that I have begun running a D20 modern Call of Cthulhu campaign and it is *very* popular, even with the older BRP-soaked players. The tighter combat rules mean that running a more "pulp"-themed game is also an option, which is the way I chose to go with the D20 version (I also run a trad BRP 1920s campaign). If I had one (very small) niggle it would be that the book really suggests a modern setting in the way it discusses the game. The 1920s emphasis that was such a feature of the early editions of the BRP rulebooks isn't there in this one. Not that playing in the modern day is bad, just that the historical distance is good

for getting players to properly engage in the immersion and suspension of disbelief necessary for play. A new Keeper might experience problems by picking up on the subliminals and running in an era where players have instant access to incredibly powerful weapons and information flows from something the size of a large book like water does from a kitchen tap. Isolation of the players is a key element to building tension in the players, and it is just that much harder to achieve in the modern, web-ready cell-phone in every pocket era. One other point: Combine this version of Call of Cthulhu with the D20/BRP Delta Green campaign framework and you have a marriage made in, well, Hell to be honest. I recommend it to everyone, especially if the players are of the "backstabbing, treacherous swine" ilk. Such players are naturals in a Call of Cthulhu/Delta Green setting, and D20 is a great framework for the combination. It's a shame the license lapsed on this line. I guess the demand was small compared to other D20 lines.

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