

NIGHT OF THE DEAD

A Very Traditional Deadworld for the *All Flesh Must Be Eaten* RPG
(And a tribute to some favorite movies, novels and short stories)

Part 1 of 2 By Mr. and Mrs. [TexasZombie](#)

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original (non-Eden, non-Romero, non-Russo, non-Savini, non-anyone else's)
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WARNING: Some language and ideas herein may be offensive to some.
Exercise personal responsibility and read at your own risk.

THE BEGINNING...

“...ERGENCY RADIO NETWORK. NORMAL BROADCAST FACILITIES HAVE BEEN TEMPORARILY DISCONTINUED. STAY TUNED TO THIS NETWORK FOR EMERGENCY INFORMATION. YOUR LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES URGE YOU TO REMAIN IN YOUR HOMES. KEEP ALL DOORS AND WINDOWS LOCKED OR BOARDED SHUT. USE ALL FOOD, WATER, AND MEDICAL SUPPLIES SPARINGLY. CIVIL DEFENSE FORCES ARE ATTEMPTING TO GAIN CONTROL OF THE SITUATION. STAY NEAR YOUR RADIO, AND REMAIN TUNED TO THIS FREQUENCY. DO NOT USE YOUR AUTOMOBILE. REMAIN IN YOUR HOMES. KEEP ALL DOORS AND WINDOWS LOCKED...”

Night of the Living Dead, John Russo, 1974, Pocket Books

The first reports began filtering in to law enforcement and emergency personnel on a bright autumn afternoon. Unidentified assailants. Murder. Cannibalism. The first reports came from large sections of the eastern United States, followed rapidly by reports from across the Midwest. And the nation looked on in horror.

The initial belief was that this was a small scale event, doubtless the result of biological warfare or a new disease or drug. So people stayed in their homes and prepared to wait things out. Terrifying? Yes. Survivable? Everyone thought so. At first.

After all, the nation had weathered terrorism before. The United States had even survived foreign invasion and civil war. But nothing that had come before could prepare anyone for what was coming next.

The end was nigh.

And no one noticed.

It wasn't even a given that anyone cared.

“OUR LIVE BROADCASTERS WILL CONVEY INFORMATION AS RECEIVED FROM CIVIL DEFENSE HEADQUARTERS. THIS IS YOUR CIVIL DEFENSE EMERGENCY RADIO NETWORK. NORMAL BROADCAST FACILITIES HAVE BEEN TEMPORARILY DISCONTINUED. STAY TUNED TO THIS WAVELENGTH...”

Night of the Living Dead, John Russo, 1974, Pocket Books

THE DOWNWARD SPIRAL

By evening the same reports were coming in from the Gulf Coast and the southwestern United States. There was no indication that the epidemic of chaos and murder would not continue to spread westward.

Then the panic set in. Looting. Murder. Anarchy.

“...UP TO THE MINUTE REPORTS INFORM US THAT THE ... SIEGE ... FIRST DOCUMENTED IN THE MIDWESTERN SECTION OF THE COUNTRY IN INDEED SPREAD ACROSS THE COUNTRY, AND IS IN FACT WORLDWIDE...”

Night of the Living Dead, John Russo, 1974, Pocket Books

This Deadworld takes place in the first weeks of the Rise. Many people will still refuse to accept the situation. Others will be better informed than the “experts” with which the networks are clogging the airwaves in between emergency broadcasts and service interruptions. Everyone will be a potential victim, however, except for the very few who have accepted the situation and begun to make preparations to survive.

“The advice of the experts, was, at best, difficult to fathom:

- Stay where you are. Secure it. It is unsafe to venture out.
- Seek a federally sanctioned shelter. Emergency personnel will be on hand to aid you. Stay tuned for a complete listing of government-run emergency shelters in your area.
- Stay clear of all federal and state-run shelters. Communications with many are down. Many have been overrun.
- Call this HOTLINE for expert advice and up-to-the-minute details of the situation in your area...”

“Choices”, Glen Vasey, Book of the Dead, 1989, Skipp and Spector, eds., Bantam Books

The keywords for this Deadworld are: **Chaos, Confusion, and Misinformation.** Cast Members with access to television, radio, and the internet should be barraged with contradictory and outright incorrect information. Cast Members without access to news media should receive even more distorted information

and wild rumor from helpful Extras. Everything from radiation to chemicals to invasion by aliens is being blamed for the current situation.

THE DEAD WALK!

By the end of the first day or three, however, let the Cast Members get access to a radio, television, or working internet connection to find out what they have already discovered...

“...THE LATEST REPORT FROM THE PRESIDENT’S RESEARCH TEAM AT WALTER REED HOSPITAL CONFIRMS WHAT MANY OF US HAVE ACCEPTED AS FACT WITHOUT BOTHERING TO WAIT FOR OFFICIAL CONFIRMATION. THE ARMY OF AGGRESSORS WHICH HAS BESIEGED MANY OF THE EASTERN AND MIDWESTERN SECTIONS OF OUR COUNTRY IS MADE UP OF DEAD HUMAN BEINGS...

“ DEAD PEOPLE FROM MORGUES, HOSPITALS, FUNERAL PARLORS...AS WELL AS MANY OF THOSE KILLED DURING OR AS A RESULT OF THE CHAOS CREATED DURING THIS EMERGENCY...HAVE BEEN RETURNED TO LIFE IN A DEPRAVED, INCOMPLETE FORM... WITH AN URGE TO KILL OTHER HUMANS AND DEVOUR THEIR FLESH...”

Night of the Living Dead, John Russo, 1974, Pocket Books

THE END OF THE LINE

The world unraveled faster than people thought possible. Fed by a false sense of security promoted by government and media propoganda, the public did little to stem the rising tide of undead until, one evening, it was too late.

“...These are not ghosts. Nor are these humans! These are dead corpses. Any unburied human corpse with its brain intact will in fact reactivate. And it’s precisely because of incitement by irresponsible public figures like yourself that this situation is being dealt with irresponsibly by the public at large! ... You have not listened. You have not listened...for the last three weeks...What does it take...what does it take to make people see?”

Dawn of the Dead, Romero and Sparrow, 1978, St. Martin’s Press

Most people waited for the government to tell them the crisis was over, even as more and more reanimated corpses were roaming the streets and countryside of world. They ignored the situation until there was nothing that could be done.

“By command of the federal government, the president of the United States,... citizens may no longer occupy private residences. No matter how safely protected or well stocked...Citizens will be moved into central areas of the city...” **Dawn of the Dead, Romero and Sparrow, 1978, St. Martin’s Press**

Funny how much things can change in less than a month...

ADVENTURE SEEDS

Cast Members can be placed into a variety of starting and continuing situations based on the desires of the Zombie Master. Some are very tried and true (i.e. Defend the farmhouse from the zombies!). Others have been explored less often in the zombie genre (i.e. militia/vigilante rescue operations, criminal activities that might go unnoticed during the increasing number of zombie attacks, etc.).

A few suggestions are presented here:

1. **Survive** zombie attack on (pick one) isolated farm house, convenience store, barn dance, Amish enclave, diner, etc. Good variant: campground - tents aren't quite as sturdy as houses; Battle of Gettysburg reenactment attacked by the living dead.

"...THE MOST... OVERWHELMING FACT...IS THAT THESE...BEINGS ARE INFILTRATING THROUGH URBAN AND RURAL AREAS THROUGHOUT THE NATION, IN FORCES OF VARYING NUMBER, AND IF THEY HAVE NOT AS YET EVIDENCED THEMSELVES IN YOUR AREA, PLEASE...TAKE EVERY PRECAUTION. ATTACK MAY COME AT ANY TIME, IN ANY PLACE, WITHOUT WARNING..."

Night of the Living Dead, John Russo, 1974, Pocket Books

2. **Join** a posse to hunt down the dead and save the living. A night attack on a rural vigilante camp would be fun (for the ZM at least).

"...SECURITY MEASURES INSTITUTED IN METROPOLITAN AREAS INCLUDE ENFORCED CURFEWS AND SAFETY PATROLS BY ARMED PERSONNEL. CITIZENS ARE URGED TO REMAIN IN THEIR HOMES. THOSE WHO IGNORE THIS WARNING EXPOSE THEMSELVES TO INTENSE DANGER—FROM THE AGGRESSORS THEMSELVES, AND FROM ARMED CITIZENRY WHOSE IMPULSE MAY BE TO SHOOT FIRST AND ASK QUESTIONS LATER..."

Night of the Living Dead, John Russo, 1974, Pocket Books

3. **Take** advantage of the chaos to get ahead in life (i.e. loot a store, knock over a bank, settle old scores, etc.).

"...Wormboy's previous hideout had been a National Guard armory. Too much traffic in walking dead weekend warriors, there...After seven Land-Rover-loads of military rock and roll, Wormboy's redecoration of Valley View was complete..."

"Jerry's Kids Meet Wormboy", David Schow, Book of the Dead, 1989, Skipp and Spector, eds., Bantam Books.

4. **Make** "pick up" runs to rescue stations. The NOTLD novelization by John Russo mentions rescue stations as places to go to be picked up by rescue personnel and moved to a safer location.

"...MANNED DEFENSE OUTPOSTS HAVE BEEN ESTABLISHED ON MAJOR ARTERIES LEADING INTO ALL COMMUNITIES. THESE OUTPOSTS ARE EQUIPPED TO DEFEND REFUGEES AND TO OFFER MEDICAL AND SURGICAL ASSISTANCE..."

Night of the Living Dead, John Russo, 1974, Pocket Books

5. **Survive** a "pick up" run to a rescue station that has been overrun by the living dead.

"...PERIODIC REPORTS, AS INFORMATION REACHES THIS NEWSROOM, AS WELL AS SURVIVAL INFORMATION AND A LISTING OF RED CROSS RESCUE POINTS, WHERE PICK-UPS WILL BE MADE AS OFTEN AS POSSIBLE WITH THE EQUIPMENT AND STAFF PRESENTLY AVAILABLE..."

Night of the Living Dead, John Russo, 1974, Pocket Books

6. **Work** with scientists, military, and law enforcement personnel to collect specimens of the living dead for study.

"...CIVIL DEFENSE EFFORTS ARE UNDERWAY, AND INVESTIGATIONS AS TO THE ORIGIN AND PURPOSE OF THE AGGRESSORS ARE BEING CONDUCTED..."

Night of the Living Dead, John Russo, 1974, Pocket Books

7. **Join** a posse to protect the living from the living and restore order (opposite of #3, above).

"...POLICE AND VIGILANTE PATROLS ARE IN THE PROCESS OF COMBING REMOTE AREAS IN SEARCH AND DESTROY MISSIONS AGAINST ALL AGGRESSORS. THESE PATROLS ARE ATTEMPTING TO EVACUATE ISOLATED FAMILIES. BUT RESCUE EFFORTS ARE PROCEEDING SLOWLY, DUE TO THE INCREASED DANGER OF NIGHT AND THE SHEER ENORMITY OF THE TASK. RESCUE, FOR THOSE IN ISOLATED CIRCUMSTANCES, IS HIGHLY UNDEPENDABLE. YOU SHOULD NOT WAIT FOR A RESCUE PARTY UNLESS THERE IS NO POSSIBILITY OF ESCAPE..."

Night of the Living Dead, John Russo, 1974, Pocket Books

8. **Try** to keep the electrical and phone lines up and running. Maybe the only electrician for miles around is stuck up in a cherry picker at the top of a

telephone pole surrounded by the living dead. Bad if a Cast Member(s) is the electrician.

“...suddenly there was a crash from outside and the lights went out. The screen went blank. The house was submerged in darkness...”

Night of the Living Dead, John Russo, 1974, Pocket Books

9. **Search** for family and friends to rescue them.

“...I’m just...I...I got kids...And I’ll guess they’ll do alright. They can take care of themselves, but they’re still only kids...and I’m being away and all...and...I’m just gonna do what I can. I’m going to do what I can, and I’m gonna get back...and I’m gonna see my people. And things are gonna be all right... and... I’m gonna get back.”

Night of the Living Dead, John Russo, 1974, Pocket Books

10. **Search** for dead family and friends to put them down.

“...IT IS...MANDATORY FOR CIVILIANS TO BURN OR DECAPITATE ANYONE WHO DIES DURING THIS EMERGENCY. IT IS A DIFFICULT THING TO DO, BUT THE AUTHORITIES ADVISE THAT YOU MUST DO IT. IF YOU CANNOT BRING YOURSELF TO DO IT, YOU MUST CONTACT YOUR LOCAL POLICE OR PROTECTION AGENCY, AND THEY WILL DO IT FOR YOU...”

Night of the Living Dead, John Russo, 1974, Pocket Books

11. **Stand** watch at the local cemetery (i.e. folks wouldn't necessarily know that not ~all~ corpses were subject to reanimation). Variant - zombie attack from outside the cemetery, trapping the Cast Members inside the walls among the tombstones.

“...We got one boneyard here on the island...and nothin’ ain’t happened yet, but that don’t mean nothin’ *will*. Nothin’ ain’t happened yet lots of places...but it seems like once it starts, nothin’ turns to somethin’ pretty goddamn quick...We want twelve men to a watch...If you got a rifle, bring it...”

“Home Delivery”, Steven King, Book of the Dead, 1989, Skipp and Spector, eds., Bantam Books.

12. **Try** to control the spread of the zombie hordes and assist desperate refugees seeking safety in uninfested areas.

“...They drove south, almost to the New Mexico line, stopping short and turning around when they saw the police flashers and the leaping flames from something burning on the road...”

“A Sad Last Love at the Diner of the Damned”, Edward Bryant, Book of the Dead, 1989, Skipp and Spector, eds., Bantam Books.

13. **Track** down escaped criminals and fight off looters and other evil-doers!

“...After a month’s chase, Wayne caught up with Calhoun one night at a little honky-tonk called Rosalita’s. It wasn’t that Calhoun had finally gotten careless, it was just that he wasn’t worried. He’d killed four bounty hunters so far, and Wayne knew a fifth didn’t concern him...”

“On the Far Side of the Cadillac Desert with Dead Folks”, Joe Lansdale, Book of the Dead, 1989, Skipp and Spector, eds., Bantam Books.

14. **Help** the Helpless (whether they want to be helped or not). More on this topic in Part 2 of this Deadworld Series.

“By command of the federal government, the president of the United States,... citizens may no longer occupy private residences. No matter how safely protected or well stocked...Citizens will be moved into central areas of the city...”

Dawn of the Dead, Romero and Sparrow, 1978, St. Martin’s Press

CAST MEMBERS

Pretty much any type of Cast Member could be created for use in this Deadworld. Keep in mind, however, that things haven’t progressed very far. Military Cast Members will be on active duty. Police officers will be conducting their civil duties. Non-military, non-police Cast Members will have the most freedom of movement and action. Military and police Cast Members who do not report to work may find themselves labeled as criminals. If they have just quit their jobs, they may find themselves without access to weapons and other equipment.

ZOMBIES

“...This is KHIP...stay indoors. Lock your houses... All of a sudden, there’s dead folks walking everywhere. This is no joke, no test of the emergency broadcast system...this is the real thing...We’ve already got so many reports...we can tell you it isn’t safe to be anywhere outdoors...”

“A Sad Last Love at the Diner of the Damned”, Edward Bryant, Book of the Dead, 1989, Skipp and Spector, eds., Bantam Books.

Observant live folks will eventually notice that there seem to be three broad categories of zombies. Although there is no formal terminology, the following

slang will eventually be adopted in some areas: Biters, Bushwhackers, and Geniuses.

Biters make up the vast majority of the undead; slow, clumsy, and capable of very little noticeable mental activity. Biters do, however, seem to have an uncanny ability to attract more of their kind to a given location where prey is located.

Bushwhackers are those rarer dead folks that just seem to lunge out of nowhere and either grab or try to smack their victim with a rock or other simple weapon. Tool use also includes the ability to use heavy objects for more purposes than simple attack. For example, Bushwhackers can use clubs to smash lights and possess enough self-awareness to swat at flames when they are set on fire.

Genius zombies are those truly gifted dead folks who can remember more than just how to swing a club. In all other aspects they are the same as Bushwhackers. They just do it better. As with the other two types of zombies, they possess Teamwork and may actually serve as guides and scouts for less intelligent zombies. This would be more along the lines of ant colony scouts than military scouts – Genius zombies are smarter than other types of zombies but they still have very little actual intelligence.

“...RURAL OR OTHERWISE ISOLATED DWELLINGS HAVE MOST FREQUENTLY BEEN THE OBJECTIVE OF FRENZIED, CONCERTED ATTACK...”

Night of the Living Dead, John Russo, 1974, Pocket Books

Zombie Classes and Cinematic Suspense

In terms of simple demographics, at least 90% of all zombies encountered would be Biters. But that’s pretty boring.

In a straight-up fight with a mob of zombies, at least 1 in 10 will be Bushwhackers and/or Geniuses. But that’s pretty boring too.

Any time a Cast Member is alone or otherwise relatively isolated, an encounter with a single zombie will always be with a Bushwhacker. Any time Cast Members encounter a former member of their group who has been reanimated, that zombie will be a Genius. Unfair? Maybe. No, definitely. But a single zombie that just walks up to be set ablaze or whacked on the head is boring. And boring is bad.

Additional note to Evil Zombie Masters

Don’t be too quick to let your players know that there is more than one variety of zombie. Let them get complacent with Biters before turning the Bushwhackers and Geniuses loose on them. Focus instead on having the Cast Members contend with the living at least as often as the dead. Panicking refugees, depraved maniacs, renegade soldiers, looters, vigilantes, paranoid home owners...there is a lot of room for adventure during the collapse of civilization without even catching a glimpse of a walking corpse.

Undead Characteristics

Weak Spots

All three classes of zombies have two weaknesses: destruction of the brain and vulnerability to fire. But don't forget that other body parts of the zombies can be destroyed too – this may not “kill” the zombie, but it *is* hard for a legless zombie to catch a Cast Member.

“...FIRE IS AN EFFECTIVE WEAPON. THESE BEINGS ARE HIGHLY FLAMMABLE...”

“...If you have yourself a club, or a good torch, you could hold ‘em off or burn ‘em to death. They catch fire like nothin’ – go up like wax paper. But the best thing is to shoot for the brain. You don’t want to get too close, unless you have to...”

“...THE...AGGRESSORS... CAN BE KILLED BY A GUNSHOT OR A HEAVY BLOW TO THE HEAD. THEY ARE AFRAID OF FIRE, AND THEY BURN EASILY...”

Night of the Living Dead, John Russo, 1974, Pocket Books

Spreading the Love

All classes of zombies can be created in one of two manners: dying and spontaneously reanimating as one of the three classes of zombies; or being infected by a zombie bite, dying of a wasting disease (the “Zombie Sickness”) and subsequently reanimating as one of the undead. In AFMBE terms, Spreading the Love is a combination of Only the Dead and One Bite and You’re Hooked. It’s a no-win situation: you get bit, you become a zombie. You just die and become one too.

“...THEY HAVE ALL THE CHARACTERISTICS OF DEAD PEOPLE... EXCEPT THEY ARE NOT DEAD – FOR REASONS WE DO NOT AS YET UNDERSTAND, THEIR BRAINS HAVE BEEN ACTIVATED AND THEY ARE CANNIBALS.

“IN ADDITION, ANYONE WHO DIES FROM A WOUND INFLICTED BY THE FLESH-EATERS MAY HIMSELF COME BACK TO LIFE IN THE SAME FORM AS THE AGGRESSORS THEMSELVES. THE DISEASE THAT THESE THINGS CARRY IS COMMUNICABLE THROUGH OPEN FLESH WOUNDS OR SCRATCHES, AND TAKES EFFECT MINUTES AFTER THE APPARENT DEATH OF THE WOUNDED PERSON...”

Night of the Living Dead, John Russo, 1974, Pocket Books

Variable Characteristics

Since zombies already exhibit a degree of variability, it stands to reason that more variability is possible. The most obvious cinematic variable would be Strength and various Special Powers.

Therefore, whenever the Zombie Master deems it necessary, at least one zombie in a group can (or perhaps *should*) have one or more of the following additional abilities: Strength (Strong Like Bull), Strength (Iron Grip), Diseased Corpse, Noxious Odor, Blindness, Emotional Instability, Fear, Horrific Appearance, and/or Rage.

BITER

Power	Description
Weight	Life-like (0)
Weak Spot	Brain, Fire
Getting Around	Slow and Steady
Strength	Ninety-Pound Weakling
Senses	Like the Dead
Sustenance	Who Needs Food?, All Flesh Must Be Eaten
Intelligence	Teamwork
Spreading the Love	Only the Dead; One Bite and You're Hooked
Special Powers	Dr. Doolittle
Power	19
Attributes Dead Points 15 Str 1 Int -2 Dex 1 Per 1 Con 2 Wil 2 Spd 2 Essence 5 Skills: Brawling 2 Attack: Bite Damage D4X2 (4)	

Bushwhacker

Power	Description
Weight	Life-like (0)
Weak Spot	Brain, Fire
Getting Around	Life-Like, The Lunge
Strength	Dead Joe Average
Senses	Like the Dead
Sustenance	Who Needs Food?, All Flesh Must Be Eaten
Intelligence	Tool Use level 1, Animal Cunning, level 1, Teamwork, Long Term Memory
Spreading the Love	Only the Dead; One Bite and You're Hooked
Special Powers	Dr. Doolittle, Stealthy
Power	40
Attributes Dead Points 15 Str 2 Int -2/2 Dex 2 Per 1 Con 2 Wil 2 Spd 4 Essence 9 Skills: Brawling 2, Hand Weapon (Club) 2 Attack: Bite Damage D4X2 (4) or by club/rock	

Genius

Power	Description
Weight	Life-like (0)
Weak Spot	Brain, Fire
Getting Around	Life-Like, The Lunge
Strength	Dead Joe Average
Senses	Like the Dead
Sustenance	Who Needs Food?, All Flesh Must Be Eaten
Intelligence	Tool Use level 2, Animal Cunning, level 1, Teamwork, Long Term Memory
Spreading the Love	Only the Dead; One Bite and You're Hooked
Special Powers	Dr. Doolittle, Stealthy
Power	43
Attributes Dead Points 15 Str 2 Int -2/2 Dex 2 Per 1 Con 2 Wil 2 Spd 4 Essence 9 Skills: Brawling 2, Hand Weapon (Club) 2, other physical skills possible, including Gun (type) 1 and other Hand Weapon (type) skills Attack: Bite Damage D4X2 (4) or by club/rock	

Zombie Appearance

The undead seldom appear as normal as they did in life. In fact, most of them just look downright *wrong* in some way, even at a distance. Perhaps it's the staggering, shuffling walk. Perhaps it's the apparent confusion they exhibit when attempting to open a gate. And when they're closer, it's something else altogether. It will also be obvious to trained pathologists and other people with medical training that the process of decomposition has not only been slowed greatly in zombies – it has also been altered by whatever force or forces that cause reanimation.

Zombies that have been dead for up to a week or so tend to exhibit the following physical traits:

- Dilated pupils in flattened milky-white eyes
- Rigor mortis (stiffening of muscles and joints)
- Livor mortis (bruising in lower limbs)
- Waxy skin that appears to be very pale or even slightly translucent

Zombies that have been dead between a week and a month or three tend to add the following features:

- Greenish-red mottled skin
- Open sores that seep a blackish fluid
- Unrecognizable facial features (i.e. they all start to look the same)
- Vague smell of decomposition

After a few months, zombies will stabilize with the following features:

- Strong smell of decomposition
- Cadaverous/skeletal facial features
- Loss of skin and hair in progressively large patches
- Constant seepage of blackish fluid from all openings and orifices

Note that these stages don't take into account additional damage that the zombie may suffer prior to death or during the course of its unlife. It also doesn't take into account other phenomena like extra bloating of zombies who died from drowning, dehydrated "mummy" zombies from desert areas, or freeze-dried zombies roaming the ruins of Antarctic weather outposts. Additional horrible features may be added by attacks on the zombie by scavenging and predatory animals such as wild dogs, vultures, and insects.

Zombie Behavior

Zombies only crave one thing: living flesh. They may stagger around and look at store windows or stare intently at the sun, but the moment their impaired senses pick up the presence of a living human, or any other living animal for that matter, everything else is forgotten by the zombie. They will literally batter themselves into broken shells in their attempt to get at living beings who are protecting themselves. They will attack mindlessly, remorselessly, and without interruption once they have detected the presence of living victims.

The longer their attacks are thwarted, the more frenzied the zombies become. And if, after several days of trying to get inside, a group of zombies break through a barricade to a victim, they will typically devour their prey down to the bare bone.

In other situations where catching prey is a less taxing endeavor (for example, attacking from ambush), zombies tend to lose interest more quickly and only partially devour their prey. If their prey was human, reanimation can occur in a matter of minutes to hours. If their prey was not human, reanimation does not occur. For reasons not likely to ever be known, only human corpses can be reanimated after death.

It is also worth noting that zombies do not attack each other, although they may "squabble" (i.e. snarl and snap) over a choice piece of flesh, trying to grab it away if another zombie has it, and keep it from other zombies who want to take it from them.

In general, zombie attacks follow a consistent pattern:

1. Attack.
2. Bite.
3. Eat.
4. Find new victim.
5. Goto 1.

The most important part of zombie behavior (i.e. eating or trying to eat) is the predator-prey stimulus as described below:

- Seeing living people doing living things gets zombies revved up.
- Seeing living people moving quickly really gets them excited too. It might be possible for a living person moving slowly and quietly to be ignored. This is entirely up to the Zombie Master.
- Seeing living people and not being able to bite them seems to drive zombies into a frenzy of activity, including trying to chew through brick walls and smash themselves through Plexiglas windows.
- Seeing other zombies with food also sets zombies off and causes squabbles.
- Zombies will throw “tantrums” if they can't get to obvious food, moaning loudly, striking out at nearby objects and other zombies, etc.

Exceptions can occur when zombies are faced with long periods without living victims. In these instances, zombies have been known to eat pretty much anything, organic or inorganic, including “dead” zombies and other non-living, non-moving corpses, human or otherwise. Items that resemble parts of living things may also be “attacked” and “eaten” by zombies, such as store mannequins, garden hoses, and leather clothing.

Possible Explanations for Zombie Behavior

Zombies don't breathe, so their cellular energy cycles could be hypothesized to be anaerobic or some kind of highly inefficient aerobic system. That means that most zombies are slow. Very slow. Given enough time and “food” a zombie might be able to store up some energy and move faster. This may mean that Bushwhackers and Geniuses are more efficient at using metabolic energy.

If this is true, Bushwhackers and Geniuses should slow down after a few minutes of sustained activity. Unfortunately for the living, this doesn't happen. This is also unfortunate for scientists studying the zombies as it indicates there must be some other factor involved in zombie function.

Zombies don't have to breathe, but they obviously do as evidenced by the constant low moans and groans they emit. Agitated zombies are louder and much more vocal, so this may indicate an increased rate of respiration. But since respiration isn't needed, this presents yet another quandary for scientists.

One idea that might be brought forth is that the dead want to devour living flesh for the oxygen (and maybe ATP) content of the tissues in order to continue to power their bodies. This is why zombies concentrate (in descending order) on 1) living humans; 2) living mammals and birds; 3) other animals; 4) carrion; 5) nonliving material.

Random Encounters

More extensive Random Encounter tables can be found elsewhere on this website (...afrandom.html). These tables are useful for the first few days to weeks of the zombie attack.

I. Basic Encounters: Roll 2d6. Subtract 2 if encounter is in rural area; add 2 if encounter is in urban area.

Roll - Encounter

0-3 Animals (Go to II)

4-6 People (Go to III)

7 Zombies (Go to IV)

8 None

9-10 Zombies (Go to IV)

11-13 People (Go to III)

14 Animals (Go to II)

II - Animals: Roll 2d6. Subtract 2 if encounter is in rural area; add 2 if encounter is in urban area.

2-7 Domestic (harmless) - example: sheep, cows, horses, chickens, tame pigs

8 Domestic (dangerous) - example: dogs, feral pigs

9-11 Feral (harmless) - example: deer, rabbits, quail, wild turkey, ducks

12 Feral (dangerous) - example: rattlesnakes, coyotes, bears, alligator, wild dogs

13 Exotic (harmless) - example: escaped zoo antelope, llamas, emus

14 Exotic (dangerous) - example: escaped zoo animals: lion pride, tiger, hyena mob, rhinoceros

III - People: Roll 2d6. Subtract 2 if encounter is in rural area; add 2 if encounter is in urban area. Go to Table V after determining type of encounter if a determination of motivation and aggressiveness/peacefulness is needed.

0-5 Civilians

Roll d6 - on a 1-4, the group is local; on a 5-6, the group is from somewhere else; Make a second 1D6 roll. On a roll of 5-6 the group is completely unaware of the zombie crisis; locals know more about the surrounding area, obviously, and may be a better source of information than out-of-towners.

6-7 Police

Roll d6 - on a 1-4, the unit is under command, also, a 1 indicates the unit is under direct military command as conscripts/draftees/levies; on a 5-6, the unit has deserted or is out of communication with higher command. Deserters are less likely to ask questions of heavily armed Cast Members openly displaying weapons. Police that are still on duty could try to press the Cast Members into service as conscripts. They are just as likely to instruct the Cast Members to move on to a "Safe" area. They will assist anyone under attack by zombies, criminals or dangerous animals. They will attempt to stop (using deadly force if necessary) anyone breaking curfew or otherwise engaging in criminal activity.

8-9 Civilian Militia

Roll d6 - on a 1-5, the militia consists of civilians with better arms and equipment who are acting in accordance with emergency instructions, usually conducting rescue missions to isolated homes or sweeping an area to destroy zombies; on a 6 the militia is a vigilante mob or extremist group who may not necessarily be interested in only shooting zombies and looters. Legitimate militia will respond to Cast Members and Extras as described above for Police.

10 Military

Roll d6 - on a 1-5, the unit is under command; on a 6, the unit has deserted. Deserting units may or may not be predatory. Units still under command may try to conscript the Cast Members, but are just as likely to ignore them or simply direct them to a "Safe" area and move on. As with Police (above) military units that have not deserted (and many that have) will render assistance to others as needed.

11-13 Looters

Roll d6 - on a 1, the encounter is with "professionals" such as an outlaw gang or prison escapees; on a 2-6, the looters are just frightened civilians looking for desperately needed supplies. The former encounter is at least as dangerous as zombies. The latter may or may not be dangerous as dictated by circumstance. Well equipped but careless Cast Members may become a target by the former.

14 Hidden enclave

Roll d6 - on a 1-3, the enclave is civilian; on a 4-5 the enclave is civilian government; on a 6 the enclave is military; if the enclave is military or government, roll d6 again - on a 5-6, there are zombies present for some sort of nefarious research. This encounter may become an entire scenario if fully developed by the Zombie Master.

Table IV Zombies: Roll 2d6. Subtract 2 if encounter is in rural area; add 2 if encounter is in urban area.

2 Encounter 1d6 zombies

3-5 Encounter 1d6 X 1d6 zombies

6-9 Encounter 1d6 X 10 zombies

10-11 Encounter 1d100 zombies

12-13 Encounter 1d100 X 10 zombies

14 Encounter Zombie Hoard (1000+)

Table V. Attitude: Roll 2d6. Subtract 2 from rolls made in "good" situations (such as dealing with nonviolent people). Add 2 in "desperate" situations (such as dealing with violent people).

Roll – Attitude.

0-3 Helpful (will assist to one degree or another, even if it's simply by not attacking)

4-7 Neutral (probably won't help, but not likely to attack, would like to ignore Cast Members)

8-11 Hostile (might attack if situation is favorable, if opportunity presents itself, or if tensions rise)

12-14 Violent (will attack)

Alternative Version, or “Hey! Where’d All Those Zombies Come From?”

In formerly high-population urban areas, for every fifteen minutes the Cast Members are exposed and moving openly or engaged in noisy physical activity (boarding up windows, for example), there is an 80% chance that 1d6X10 zombies will be attracted to the movement and sounds. Once zombies are attracted, every fifteen minutes another 1d6X10 zombies will arrive on the scene.

In suburban areas, for every fifteen minutes the Cast Members are exposed and moving openly, there is a 70% chance that 1d3X5 zombies will be attracted to the movement and sounds. Once zombies are attracted, every fifteen minutes another 2d6 zombies will be attracted.

In populated rural areas, for every hour the Cast Members are exposed and moving openly, there is a 10% chance of attracting 1d6 zombies. After the first zombies are attracted, there is a 10% chance every fifteen minutes of attracting 1d3 more zombies.

In unpopulated rural areas, there aren't that many zombies around. There is a base 1% chance per day of attracting one or more zombies. In a national park, it is more possible there could be dead folks about than out in the desert fifty miles from the nearest road and sixty miles from the nearest town.

Obviously, it pays to be quiet and stay out of sight as much as possible. If the Cast Members are taking efforts to move silently, under available cover, use padded hammers, operating at night, etc. the chances above are cut by $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$.

In any event, there's also the possibility of human predators lurking behind the zombies waiting to move in to loot the area and take out any survivors, dead or otherwise. Predatory and scavenging animals could also be a factor. I like the idea of swarms of wild dogs and coyotes picking away at a zombie mob that has congregated outside a farm house full of tasty survivors.

Additional Random Tables

If needed, the following two tables are provided for structures and vehicles. The chances of rarer structures and vehicles is much greater than in the real world (for example, the number of private homes versus number of military bases, or number of private cars versus number of military vehicles). This is for two reasons: simplicity and variety/cinematography. Modify as desired and use common sense (i.e. subways are underground and not typically found in the middle of residential neighborhoods). Your mileage may vary.

Buildings

Roll 3d6 to determine the type of building. Then roll another d6. On a 1-4, the structure is not fortified or reinforced. On a 5-6, it is. To see if buildings are currently occupied, roll yet another d6. On a 1-4 it is, on a 5-6 it is not.

Roll Structure (examples)

3-8 Residence (private homes, apartments, condos, public housing, trailer parks, hotels, motels, high rise apartment buildings and condos, resorts, spas, gated communities, mansion, retirement home)

9 Barn or Warehouse (warehouse districts, impound yards, feedlots, small farm, ranch, docks)

10 Public works (i.e. electrical substation, water treatment plant, school, university, government building, parking lots, cemetery, storm drains and tunnels, utility/steam tunnels, garbage dump, landfill, vehicle/supply depots, bus station)

11 Ruins (burned, collapsed, bombed, exploded, looted and smashed and emptied, mass grave, firebreak, corpse incineration pit, killing/free-fire zone, toxic waste dump, scrap yard)

12-14 Office/Businesses (offices, strip malls, office parks, services, grocery stores, department stores, hospital, clinic, funeral home, veterinary hospital, kennel, high rise office buildings, pub/bar, military surplus/outdoor supply store, vehicle/equipment rental)

15 Mall (shopping mall, outdoor civic arena or indoor auditorium, sporting arena, amusement park, public park or greenbelt, museum, art gallery, golf course, country club, dance hall, zoo)

16 Relocation center (rescue station, FEMA installation, tent city, roll again to see what is serving as the relocation center)

17 Industrial or Scientific (factory, laboratory, gravel pit, mine, airport, shipyard, dockyard, rail yard)

18 Military staging area or Military base (airfield, depot, marshalling area, bivouac, convoy, field command, permanent installation, underground bunker, bomb shelter, naval fleet)

Vehicles

Roll 3d6 for type, then roll d6 for use (1-4 occupied/claimed/owned; 5-6 abandoned)

Roll Vehicle (examples)

3-12 Civilian/personal (car, pickup truck, SUV, motorcycle, bicycle, small airplane, minivan, recreational vehicle, four-wheeler ATV, ultralight aircraft, fishing/bass boat, skiff/john boat)

13-14 Business (moving truck, delivery van, news van, novelty monster truck, semi, tow truck, commercial plane including airliner, traffic helicopter, cargo barge, fishing trawler, freighter, train, subway, bus, limousine, lawn service truck)

15 Utility (cherry picker/electrical pole truck, bulldozer or other construction vehicle, dump truck, garbage truck, parking meter patrol vehicle, golf cart)

16 Police (police cruiser, prisoner transport van, animal control truck, prison bus, police helicopter, surveillance van, financial institution armored car/truck, armored government sedan, SWAT van)

17 Fire/EMS (fire truck, ambulance, hearse, Fire Marshall's (red) pickup truck)

18 Military (jeep, HMMWV/HumVee/Hummer, APC, Deuce-and-a-half truck, battle tank, attack helicopter, Coast Guard cutter, SSBN/ballistic missile submarine)

Set Encounters

Set Encounters: Set encounters are mini-adventures that are determined in advance by the Zombie Master and are more detailed than random encounters. This requires less improvisation on the part of the Zombie Master.

Examples of Set Encounters:

Rural Area: Deer stand (hard to spot in a tree above the Cast Members). Two redneck zombies are lurking overhead ready to drop on the Cast Members in their bloody safety orange vests (one redneck died of a heart attack, then killed his buddy as his buddy was giving him CPR - they've been stuck up in the deer stand since then). A search of the deer stand will yield 2 rifles, 1 handgun, roughly 30 rounds of ammo for each gun, and half a case of hot beer, enough junk food and sodas for two people for three days, 1 spotlight with 12 volt battery, two folding chairs, three mildewed porno magazines.

Small Town: A moving van is abandoned in front of a looted department store. Inside the van are 15 famished and lethargic zombies who were forced inside by a caring soul who thought they were just sick and could be cured. At some point the driver of the van bailed out or was killed and wandered off. If anyone opens the door they'll have only a few seconds to get out of the way before the dead folks inside get up and start trying to have lunch with their rescuer. If instead a Cast Member taps or knocks on the side of the van they'll be rewarded a few seconds later with a series of muffled thumps and scratches.

Small Town: A moving van is abandoned in front of looted department store. Inside the van is a small fortune in electronics, firearms, ammunition, liquor, and other supplies. At some point the driver of the van bailed out or was killed and wandered off. If anyone opens their door they'll be thrilled. If a Cast Member taps or knocks on the side of the van they'll hear a series of muffled thumps caused by unsecured cargo netting banging around in response. Let the Cast Members figure it out...

Rural Area or Small Town: Elephant stampede. Freed from a nearby zoo by a kind hearted zoo keeper, the elephants are on the move. I have no idea what elephant stats would be in AFMBE – probably something like the Zombie Tyrannosaurus in “Pulp Zombies”, but regardless, I would advise anyone in the way to move aside as quickly as possible. If the ZM is feeling particularly evil, the

elephants could be fleeing from a brown bear or something else big and nasty like a...Okay. A brown bear. I can't think of any living animals that would make adult elephants stampede. Except maybe an escaped 25 foot (8 meter) Komodo Dragon with a poisonous bite due to bacteria.

Anywhere: Military aircraft overflies and spots the Cast Members. Waggles wings in greeting, but does not return. This is a good encounter if the Cast Members are inclined to wait for someone to come and help. They'll still be waiting days later when the same plane flies back over again. Conversely, it could lead the Cast Members to an intact military base or staging area.

Rural Area: The Cast Members are wandering through the woods on foot and cross one too many fences. They've wandered into a game park or wildlife preserve. There may be predators or angry herbivores about. Some of the animals will be fairly tame and docile around humans and may wander into camp looking for food (not too bad if it's a Thompson's gazelle, but way bad if it's an elephant or rhinoceros in the middle of the night).

Anywhere: A graveyard. If the Cast Members listen carefully they'll hear the faint sounds of thumps and bumps coming from under the ground as the dead thrash about inside coffins and crypts.

Author's Note: Contrary to popular imagery, at least in the United States, the vast majority of legal burials will be in coffins interred in cement vaults followed by burial. Even if this is not the case, graves are covered by hundreds of pounds of packed dirt. Given the limited space for mobility inside a coffin, it's VERY unlikely that a mobile corpse could escape after burial. Granted, the dead rising literally from their graves is an enduring and creepy-cool image, but it's not likely to happen in the U.S. On the other hand, realism in a game about zombies is a relative thing, and this author would be hard pressed to say if a zombie trapped inside a grave was or wasn't more realistic than a zombie breaking out of said grave.

Adventure Seed: Cast Members may be conscripted, or feel morally obligated, to deliver supplies to a Crisis Relocation Camp or Red Cross shelter. Conversely, a campaign might begin with the Cast Members living in such a refugee camp. Key elements are sickness, hopelessness, and violence. There is a lot of incentive for Cast Members to try to escape, but the local rural population is likely to resist this violently. The danger in this game is greater from the living than from the dead. Alternatively, some Cast Members may have lived in such refugee camps during the initial evacuations.

Complications: The Cast Members living in a refugee camp will start the game weakened and sick unless the Qualities Resistant (Disease) and/or Hard to Kill is possessed. ZM's shouldn't feel obligated to tell anyone about this ahead of time. Gear will be minimal (very short of ammunition if guns are possessed at all, most valuables have already been bartered for food, vehicles are out of gas, or very low on gas, or broken down, etc.).

Tasteless special effect: Zombies from refugee camps are gaunt, emaciated, and covered in human waste. Such zombies raise the difficulty of Fear checks by Cast Members from + 1 to + 5 depending on the particular atrocity that resulted

in the deaths of the victim. Depending on the taste (or lack thereof) of your gaming group, this may be cinematic overkill. Your mileage may vary.

Rural, Small Town, or City: 6d6 zombies fighting to get inside a parked car. Cast Members can see someone moving around frantically inside the car, but cannot tell if the moving body in the car is alive or a zombie. There is a 50/50 chance of a living victim inside; otherwise the zombies are just confused by the movement of the dead occupant trying to get out. At any rate, on a 1-4 on a d6, there is some sort of useful loot inside the car (make rolls on one of the random equipment tables described elsewhere in this Deadworld).

- If a living person was in the car, they'll likely be very thankful and cooperative. This is a good way to introduce a new Cast Member or useful Extra into the group;
- or saddle a softhearted Cast Member with a **Dependent** (2-3 point Drawback, essentially helpless).
- If you're feeling really nasty as a ZM, the living person could be a homicidal maniac.
- If you're feeling truly evil, make the living person a weenie loaded down with at LEAST 10 points of **emotional Drawbacks** (**Emotional Dependency**, **Depression**, **Obsession** (current crush – one of the Cast Members) and **Reckless** are good starts for someone with a clinical personality disorder), and **no useful skills** (the closest thing would be Driving 1, which is why the car was stalled/out of gas in the first place). The rescued person can then become codependently obsessed with one of the Cast Members. There will be a lot of people out there like this that survive either through sheer luck or by hooking up with someone better suited to surviving.

City: The Cast Members turn the corner and are confronted by a crowd of thousands of the walking dead all moving towards them starting at a distance of two hundred yards. If the Cast Members are careful, they may manage to avoid the zombies. To stand and fight, however, is to die if the Cast Members aren't inside a tank.

- **Weird version of this encounter:** the zombies are staggering along dragging protest banners proclaiming that the zombie plague is a ploy of the government to gain totalitarian control of the country.
- **Weirder version:** the zombies are dragging banners demanding ethical treatment of zombies and proclaiming that the zombie "disease" can be cured and that more government funding is needed.
- **Or Weirder yet:** the zombies are related in some other way; perhaps they are all members of a historical re-enactment society; perhaps the zombies are all wearing colorful costumes from a Cultural Diversity Festival. Worse yet, the zombies could be from a science-fiction convention and be dressed in distinctive costumes from certain well-known movies and television series portraying brave humans trekking through interstellar space battling aliens with prosthetic foreheads...

City: The Cast Members encounter a group of “Zombies” who are actually living humans dressed in costumes; they survived a zombie massacre at a nearby science fiction/horror convention and are seeking safety.

Set Zombie Examples (Hospital, Red Cross Center, Rescue Station)

Set zombies are zombies that have been given a little more detail by the Zombie Master in order to make them more memorable to the Cast Members. The examples below are appropriate for a scenario set in a medical facility, rescue station, or Red Cross evacuation center, all of which are settings that feature prominently in the first two films of G. Romero’s trilogy.

1. Body Cast zombie - just glares and snarls and wriggles. TThe Traction Cast zombie has more range of motion - it's hanging by one ankle with a dislocated hip. Neither version can attack effectively, but both can bite if a Cast Member gets careless.
2. Iron Lung zombie - might not be noticed until an unlucky Cast Member goes scrounging for spare parts. No attack unless a Cast Member puts hand in ILZ’s mouth.
3. Brain Surgery zombie - sure, the scalp is flayed and the brain exposed for easy access, but why not toss a glimmer of hope to the poor Cast Members now and again? -10 Dead Points.
4. Eye Surgery zombie - is smashing up the goodies the Cast Members would like to get their grubby lil' mits on... -4 on all attacks.
5. IV Drip zombie - dragging an IV bag rack by the rubber tubes still connected to its arms. -2 to first 1D6 attacks – after that time the IV tubes will have been ripped loose, freeing the zombie from the IV bag rack.
6. Heart/Lung Machine zombie - kinda like the Body Cast zombie, but with the gooey parts exposed. Maybe it can get up and drag the cart along with it. Maybe it looses the machine and heart/lungs and has a big ol' gapin' hole in its chest. No attack if restrained (see 2, above). -5 on attacks if mobile for first 1D3 attacks until heart and lungs rip away, freeing the zombie from the machine anchor. Gains Fear power but the zombie cannot choose which effect it wishes to cause.
7. Geezer Zombies - dragging their canes and walkers with 'em, Medic Alert bracelets paging long dead technicians ("Help! I've died and I'm getting up!"). Speed 1. Dex -2.
8. Burn Victim zombie - gooey all over. -4 on all attacks due to sensory impairment and physical damage. Gains Horrific Appearance power at level 1D4.
9. Car Crash zombie - maybe still has the steering column sticking out of its chest. Gains additional attack damage (raise to base 1D6) to reflect shards of glass, metal, and broken bones protruding from zombie’s skin.

10. Arrow-in-the-head zombie - it's not just for Steve Martin anymore. Maybe the arrow missed the brain or something. May have difficulty moving through doorways as the arrow is a "clothyard shaft" nearly 4' in length.
11. Light-bulb-up-butt Fetish zombie - kinda walks funny. No attack modifiers, and no overt signs of unusual trauma except for protractors protruding from, well...you figure it out.
12. Candidate-for-stomach-stapling zombie - might not be able to move under its own power. Morbidly obese zombie. Speed 1. Dex -2. -4 to attack rolls, but if the zombie succeeds, it is immensely strong (Like Bull) and can easily pin a Cast Member to a wall or floor beneath it's bulk.
13. Prosthetic limb zombie - has its own hook for snaring careless Cast Members. Zombie can gain a Piercing attack from its damaged mechanical forearm. If the zombie is missing a leg instead, it must crawl as it is unable to balance on its artificial leg. In this case, Speed 1, -4 to attack rolls from prone position.
14. Wheelchair zombie - just spins in a circle until it falls out and drags itself toward the Cast Members using only its arms. See above.
15. Morgue zombie - keeps tripping up on the toe tag. No effects unless autopsy scars are unduly disturbing to one or more Cast Members.
16. More Geezer zombies - lost their false teeth, so they have to gum the Cast Members to death. No effective attack, but can still get in the way as well as grab Cast Members.
17. Intern zombie - still carrying/towing a fully charged crash cart with those zapper pads for heart attacks... The paddles cause 4D6 damage to the first Cast Member struck in a grappling attack. More than 15 points of damage indicates that the Cast Member has been knocked unconscious for 1D6 minutes. If the Zombie Master is truly evil, the paddles could simply induce a heart attack in the first target successfully touched. Effects of said heart attack are up to the Zombie Master but should be disabling to the Cast Member for at least a couple of days.
18. Neck brace zombie - can't turn head to fully utilize bite attack. -2 to all attack rolls.
19. Gurney zombie - kinda like the Body Cast zombie, but strapped down instead of incased in plaster. Just snarls and snaps and struggles and glares and stuff.
20. Colostomy zombie - bag full of bits of half-chewed interns, maybe whole fingers and pieces of scalp are visible through the bag. Gains Noxious Odor power.
21. Endoscope zombie - has a tube either in the mouth or the other, ah, opening. First case can't bite. Second case can barely walk because it's dragging the camera along behind it.

22. Respirator zombie - can't bite because of the plastic tube still in its mouth and throat.
23. Face lift zombie - half finished. Looks like Phyllis Diller on a REALLY bad day.
24. Lipo-suction zombie - tube still embedded in stomach.
25. Augmentation zombie - inserts are starting to fall out of upper torso.
26. Medical isotope zombie - got into the barium and cesium and now it's glowing in the dark and emitting high levels of gamma radiation. Causes 1D6 damage per touch to Cast Members. Long-term effects are up to the Zombie Master.
27. C-section-gone-awry zombie - best left to the imagination. Horrific Appearance power gained at level 4.
28. Interrupted Surgery zombie - chest/abdomen still open with parts hanging out, hemostats and all. Horrific Appearance power gained at level 2.
29. Mercury zombie - died and kept chewing on the thermometer. Mouth full of ground glass and mercury. Potentially toxic bite. Bite attack causes normal damage, but Cast Member may suffer additional effects as time passes at the discretion of the Zombie Master to reflect mercury poisoning (i.e. Dex and Con loss).
30. Police Injury zombie - battered and bloodied and still in handcuffs. Maybe handcuffed to the gurney it's dragging along, or to the half-eaten decapitated officer it's dragging behind it. -4 to hit in either case due to the heavy weight to which the zombie is attached.

Set Zombie Encounter

... a hallway full of gurneys with zombie-bite victims strapped down. They have all died and reanimated, and are snapping and howling, thrashing about in an unlit (i.e. almost pitch black) hall way. The Cast Members need to get to the end of the hallways (perhaps to search for medical supplies, but better if they're fleeing a larger mob of unrestrained zombies that is closing in on them from several directions). No guarantee all the gurney zombies are still secured, and no way to listen for mobile zombies that might be heading towards the Cast Members from the dark room at the end of the hallway or lurking in the opened rooms along the hallway...

Who says slow zombies can't be fun?

Weapons and Combat and Cast Members

Some Zombie Masters have a tendency to want to torment unarmed Cast Members with hordes of zombies. While I personally don't like this, hey, it's a free world, right?

OTHERWISE...

Like it or not, there are a LOT of firearms in the US. As far as keeping weapons scarce, there are something like ~70 million registered gun owners in US (~1 in 4

people), most of whom own multiple guns. Short of a "deus ex machina" approach on the part of the ZM, there is really no legitimate way to keep Cast Members from acquiring firearms fairly quickly unless the setting is controlled and restricted (i.e. airport, zoo, hospital, etc.). Eventually, however, Cast Members may escape (should be able to escape if you want repeat players). Within two or three houses they should realistically be able to acquire firearms and ammunition (maybe not a lot of bullets, but most people keep on average one box per firearm caliber). Some areas of the country will have even more firearms and weapons per household (ex. rural/urban Texas, rural Midwest), or less (urban New Jersey, Massachusetts). Lots of good info on websites concerning firearms ownership laws (i.e. what could someone typically own) or types/numbers (ownership surveys, for example).

It is even harder to keep Cast Members from acquiring melee weapons even quicker. While nosing around a basement in Ohio last January and counted over a hundred potential melee weapons (steel bars, tools, axes, shovels, pipes, woodpile logs, furniture legs, baseball bat, board with nails in it, etc.). I asked about the items there – were they typical for rural Ohio? – and the owner assured me they were.

To the ZM who is truly disturbed by well armed Cast Members, there are a couple of legitimate things you could do without resorting to unreality.

- Limit weapon skill levels that starting Cast Members can have. Very few people would have more than level 1 or 2 in any sort of weapon skill, especially archaic stuff like Sword or bizarre stuff like No-Dachi and Kusari-Gama.
- Double the cost of combat-related skills to reflect general lack of training and practice, difficulty in finding time to get to the gun range or dojo, etc. This also reflects the lack of emphasis modern society places on weapons.

Civilian and Law Enforcement Firearms

The lists is arranged in order of damage, from lowest to highest.

This list doesn't nearly cover all the different calibers available to Cast Members in the United States, but it greatly expands the list in the core book. The abbreviations in the "Notes" column are described at the end of this table.

This list doesn't attempt to cover all the possible variations that a firearm may take (nor does the core book). Some research may be necessary if you desire complete accuracy. For example, a .30-06 rifle exists in bolt action rifle, single-shot rifle, single-shot pistol, semi-automatic clip-fed rifle, and semi-automatic stripper-fed rifle. However, the .30-06 isn't listed on this table as it is already covered in the AFMBE core book.

Note also that the caliber size of the bullet isn't the only determiner of relative damage. Muzzle energy, muzzle velocity, bullet mass and terminal ballistics all played a factor in determining damage for the bullets listed in this table.

Expanded Damage Ratings for Firearms in the UNISYSTEM Gaming System		
Caliber	Notes	Damage
.25 Automatic	SA (C)	D4X4 (8)
.22 Magnum	R, PR, SA (C)	D6X3 (9)
.32 S&W	R (U)	
.380 Automatic	SA (C)	
.30 Carbine	R, SR (U)	D6X4 (12)
32 Magnum	R, LA (R)	
9mm +P	SA (U)	
10mm	SA (U)	D6X5 (15)
.40 S&W	SA, SR (C)	
.38 Super	SA (R)	
.22-250	BA, SS (C)	D8X4 (16)
.221	BA, SS (U)	
.222	BA, SS (U)	
.17 Magnum Rimfire	R, SS, BA, SA, PA, SR (C)	
.44-40	R, LA (R)	
.41	R (U)	
.44 Special	R (C)	
.45 Long Colt	R, LA (R)	
5.7mm	BA (R)	D6X6 (18)
6mm	BA (R)	
6.5mm	BA (R)	
.243	BA (C)	D8X5 (20)
.25-06	BA, SS	
.270	BA (C)	
.30-30	LA (C)	

.454	R, SS (R)	D8X6 (24)
.458	R, BA, SS (R)	
.475	R, BA, SS (R)	
.480	R, SS (R)	
.50AE	R (R)	
.500 Magnum	R (R)	
.50 Desert Eagle	SA (R)	
.375 Magnum	BA, SS (R)	
.338	BA, SS (U)	
.45-70	SS, LA (R)	
.45-120	SS (R)	
7mm Magnum	BA (U)	
.300 Magnum	BA (U)	
.50 Beowulf	SA (R)	
.502	SA, AR (R)	
.499	SA, AR (R)	
.457 Magnum	LA (R)	
.577 Tyrannosaur	SS (R)	D10X6 (30)

Notes:

SA = Semi-Automatic Handgun

R = Revolver

SS = Single-Shot Rifle

C = Carbine (Rifle with barrel 16" or less)

PR = Pump Action Rifle

LA = Lever Action Rifle

BA = Bolt Action Rifle

SR = Semi-Automatic Rifle

AR = Automatic Rifle/Assault Rifle

(?) = indicates how common the caliber is likely to be on average; see the AFMBE core rulebook, page 126.

This table does not list all possible calibers that can be found in Single Shot rifles. At one time or another, single-shot rifles have been manufactured for almost all non-metric calibers.

Damage for weapons was determined based on the smallest and largest calibers listed in the AFMBE core rulebook, ranked by a number determined from muzzle velocity, muzzle energy, and average bullet mass.

Manufacturer designations (S&W, Tyrannosaur, etc.) are used without permission.

Tension and Horror

Tension and horror are staples of the zombie genre. Actually pulling off tension and horror in a game can be quite difficult, however. To assist with this, the following suggests are made.

Example of bad/boring scenario

Cast Members are trapped in an airport lounge with no weapons and hundreds of zombies beating on the door. No way out. Everyone dies. No one comes back for Scenario #2.

Example of lame scenario

Cast Members are trapped in a residence and acquire some weapons. They make a run for freedom and all/some make it through the zombie hordes outside. Not too bad. If you like bashing dead folks, this is an okay game.

Example of a tense (i.e. "good") scenario

Cast Members are holed up (see the difference? – "holed up" implies choices while "trapped" doesn't – it's the little things that count sometimes) in a residence and acquire some weapons.

While making a run for survival, they hear a little kid screaming in a tree just out of reach of a dozen zombies as another group begins killing the parent that shoved the kid up in the tree to save him/her. Maybe all that the Cast Members can see of the parent is a twitching spasming leg sticking out from under a pile of ravenous zombies sitting in an expanding pool of fresh blood. The kid's screams will attract a bazillion zombies...

This game might keep players interested (Ahah! I *can* survive! I ~can~ fight back! I ~can~ get stuck changing diapers on a traumatized three-year old!).

Use Essence Loss for Cast Members that ignore plight of the child (because most folks won't ignore a child in obvious visible danger). The ZM should drive the scenario to one of rescue kid from zombies before the other sixty (or more) arrive in attack range instead of just shooting zombies while driving away.

Gore?

Most people can't relate to what a chewed liver or a disemboweled human body looks like, as not that many people are unfortunate enough to see such things. The one description I always hated as a player was "You hear the sound of ripping flesh." Oh? And what, exactly, does ripping flesh sound like? I *happen* to know (being a biologist/toxicologist means being around a lot of dead stuff). It really doesn't make much of a sound, and since most folks don't know what it sounds like anyway, any visceral (no pun intended) effect is lost.

So, focus instead on describing things people can relate to. For example:

- Smells: road kill, spoiled meat, vomit, feces
- Visuals: big pool of spilled blood turning black as it congeals, gouges in floor where a victim tried to hold on to keep from being dragged away by zombies,

pools of dried blood and bloody footprints surrounded by piles of spent ammunition

- Sounds: the screams of a victim, pleas for help, splat/splatter of thick liquid on walls (blood, that is)
-

Stay tuned for Part 2 of this series.

The “sequel” Deadworld, “...From These Cold Dead Hands...”, is a (hopefully) logical extension of the events presented in this Deadworld (the events in this Deadworld being based on popular elements of the zombie genre).

However, the progress of events in the sequel have not been extensively explored in “mainstream” zombie fiction. I think you’ll find them interesting, if not outright disturbing. I hope so, ‘cause zombie stories *should* be scary...

Sincerely,

TexasZombie, a.k.a. Evil Overlord 668, the Neighbor of the Beast

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This Deadworld was directly based on the concepts presented in the following movies, novels, and short stories. No copyright or creative infringement is intended. This is intended as a tribute, not a rip-off.

- Night of the Living Dead, 1968 film, (Alpha Video made the CD I have, but I’m not sure if there is another production company that should be named – legal eagles, please have mercy on me); Romero, Russo, et. al.
- Night of the Living Dead, 1989 film, Columbia Pictures, Savini, Romero, Russo, et. al.
- Night of the Living Dead, 1974, John Russo, Pocket Books.
- Dawn of the Dead, 1978, George Romero and Susanna Sparrow, St. Martin’s Press.
- “A Sad Last Love at the Diner of the Damned”, Edward Bryant, Book of the Dead, 1989, Skipp and Spector, eds., Bantam Books.
- “Choices”, Glen Vasey, Book of the Dead, 1989, Skipp and Spector, eds., Bantam Books.
- “Home Delivery”, Steven King, Book of the Dead, 1989, Skipp and Spector, eds., Bantam Books.

- “Jerry’s Kids Meet Wormboy”, David Schow, Book of the Dead, 1989, Skipp and Spector, eds., Bantam Books.
- “On the Far Side of the Cadillac Desert with Dead Folks”, Joe Lansdale, Book of the Dead, 1989, Skipp and Spector, eds., Bantam Books.

In addition to the core rulebook, the following Eden Studios publications are recommended for this Deadworld: Atlas of the Walking Dead & Coffee Break of the Living Dead.