

# Mythos

# Madness

*Playing Call of Cthulhu<sup>®</sup> with  
Fate Core*

*DRAFT 0.3*

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# Foreword & Design Goal

The goal of this document is to add rules for (in)sanity to Fate Core.

One of the mechanics that defies real despair is the most basic of Fate: invocation of aspects with Fate Points, granting the players to much control and ‘a way out’. Don’t get me wrong, this is not a bad thing! But by being able to do so, the players have to ability to get around most harm, except when they are out of Fate.

Taking away that power is not the right thing to do, so these rules add a cost to the use of FP in certain scenes. This cost has no immediate effect, but it will get to the characters later, by allowing the GM to enhance his Sanity Attacks.

The rules are minted towards playing classic Call of Cthulhu<sup>®</sup>, but they should be usable for non-cthulhoid settings be changing bits and pieces.

# Mythos Lore (Skill)

*Mythos Lore* becomes its own skill in. It serves as a skill to identify and analyse Mythos occurrences, conduct rituals, and everything else default Lore would do, but only focused on the Cthulhu Mythos.

It also does another thing: it limits the grasp the character has on reality. The higher the *Mythos Lore* skill gets, the more prone the character becomes to insanity, as his or her grip on reality wanes. This is archived by *Mythos Lore* becoming the weapon rating of a mental attack the GM uses against the character. So be careful how much you want to find out about the madness behind the stars!

*Mythos Lore* starts at *Terrible* (-2) level. It is allowed to have a higher starting level, but this should be explained by an aspect (even the Trouble would work in this case). As this skill is very uncommon, it is always one step lower than the rung of the column it occupies. So when it is first taken, it will be on the *Average* (+1) rung, but will only have a *Mediocre* (+0) value.



**Overcome:** You can use Mythos Lore to overcome any obstacle that requires applying the Mythos knowledge that your character has to achieve a goal. For example, you might roll it to decipher some ancient symbols on a tomb wall (that then will certainly drive your character insane), under the presumption that your character might have researched it at some point or had some insight during a insanity episode.

It will also help your character to identify Mythos creatures or objects.



**Create an Advantage:** Like Investigation, Mythos Lore provides a way to create advantages. This may give you a story detail, some obscure bit of

information that you uncover or know already, but if that information gives you an edge in a future scene, it might take the form of an aspect.

Likewise, you can use Mythos Lore to create advantages based on any subject matter your character might have studied, which may give you a way to fight the horrors your character might encounter.



**Attack:** As Mythos Lore can be used to do magic, it is possible that certain rituals and spells the character (or a NPC) has learned allow the use of the skill in an attack action.



**Defend:** Mythos Lore is normally not used to defend against attacks. Most magic will require the use of Will or Athletics to defend against them.

**Special:** Mythos Lore defines the weapon rating a Sanity Attack against the character has. Average and Fair grant the GM Weapon:1, Good and Great give Weapon:2, Superb and Fantastic Weapon:3, and everything above is Weapon:4.



**Tunable:** the weapon rating the Mythos Lore gives the GM to his Sanity Attacks is a value you can tune to fit your campaign.

Make the value lower to reduce the impact of *Mythos Lore* has on Sanity Attacks, raise it to make them even harder.

## Stunts

The following stunts are examples and should be adapted to your campaign.

**Ritual Magic:** Allows the character to perform ritual magic with his *Mythos Lore* skill. Spells are strictly limited to

those found in Mythos books. There is no way for a human to perform magic effects on the fly.



***Tunable:*** Another possibility is to make each spell or ritual an actual stunt!

**Dreaming:** The character is able to enter the Dreamlands voluntarily.

**Creature Lore:** The character gets +2 for identifying creatures.

# Mythos Scene Aspects

The GM can add scene or creature aspects that have the *Mythos* build into them. They can be used like any other aspect (mainly by the GM).

If this scene has a *Mythos* aspect on it, all FP invocation by the players comes at a cost: each FP spend also gets the character one *Horror Point Level* (short HPL – yes, this is named that way so it becomes the initials of H. P. Lovecraft). These are best represented by some nice tokens (anyone got a Bag of Cthulhus?). The GM can use those tokens when he invokes aspects against the character in question, instead of having to use his limited pool of FP.

He can also use HPL to do a fear or madness related compel. That means the GM (or the player) proposes a compel and if the player accepts he does not get a FP, but may choose to loose an HPL.

*[Brainstorm] Different take would be to see the HPL's as boosts giving the +2 directly, without needing the GM to invoke an aspect. But I think that could be to harsh...  
[/Brainstorm]*

# Sanity

A Mythos encounter attacks the sanity of the characters. This is a mental attack and the GM can use FP and HPL to invoke scene, character or creature aspects, and character consequences (mostly mental) to improve this attack. Resulting consequences should always be madness related.



**Tunable:** If the power of HPL should be lower, only give +1 per HPL spend by the GM.

The GM can use the consequences free invoke to enforce an episode of insanity on the character. This forces the character to act according to the Madness acquired, for a time that should be one step lower then the normal recovery time of a consequence of that severity (**scene** length would become a bunch of **exchanges**). In this time the character is not able to perform any useful action. He might be able to provide cryptic clues if the GM allows it.

After the period of time has passed, the consequence automatically is renamed to show that it is recovering. The time to clear the recovering consequence is equal to the reduced time of madness in this case.

[add example consequences]

# Extras

*[Brainstorm]*

*Books are extras. Have aspects or skills? Ritual Book gives stunt with spell -> takes longer to perform but does not need to have the actual stunt? Would work... PC can also learn the spell -> expend actual stunt but no longer need book.*

*Books also give boosts to be used later? Something like 'Deep One History' or 'Symbols of Yig'.*

*Only through Mythos encounter or book reading player may advance Mythos Lore skill. First raise will bring the skill from Terrible to Mediocre! But it fills a Pyramid/Column slot one step higher (so the Mediocre skill goes on the same rung with the other Average skills).*

*Mythos Objects or enchanted stuff are also extras.*

## [More Brainstorm]

*There is the idea that the Mythos Lore is entirely outside the pyramid and is raised by rolls at the end of sessions / book breaks by a roll versus the HPL gained. But I removed this because character development should be in the hand of the player.*

*On the other hand the raise in Mythos Lore also represents the vulnerability of the character. So the first big Mythos encounter certainly should raise the Mythos Lore to Mediocre. On the other hand, even without Mythos Lore, consequences and Madness aspects always give the GM a way to make the impact of insanity greater...*



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