

BUREAU 13

STALKING THE NIGHT FANTASTIC



BASED ON RICHARD TUCHOLKA'S SUPERNATURAL RPG
BUREAU 13 – STALKING THE NIGHT FANTASTIC

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STALKING THE NIGHT FANTASTIC



BY WILLIAM LITTLEFIELD

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The Savage Worlds rulebook is required to utilize this setting.

From the Author

You are a government agent charged with the duty of disposing of the greatest unnatural threats to the people and economy of the United States. You work under the knowledge that you are funded by an agency so secret, even the highest government officials do not know of your existence. Welcome to that elite band of people who wander the dark streets of the night, ever searching for the horrors that should not exist in this modern age. You are a special agent, stalking the night fantastic ...

Welcome to Bureau 13 – Stalking the Night Fantastic. I remember playing this game way back in 1983. I loved the setting, after all, who doesn't love hunting down evil supernatural entities and destroying them! I hated the rules. Now, with the release of Savage Worlds, we have the perfect RPG system in which to explore the awesome Bureau 13 background. As they stand, the Savage Worlds rules fit the setting almost perfectly – any "tweaks" are mentioned in the text and the Rules of the Game section that follow. This supplement provides enough information with which to start a Bureau 13 campaign – expanding and adapting it beyond this is left to the creativity of the individual GM.

Introduction

The premise of the game is simple enough – your character is an agent of Bureau 13, a secret government agency devoted to rooting out and destroying any supernatural entity that threatens the economy or security of the United States of America. The usually small (no more than 8 agents) Bureau teams travel the country, investigating, watching, and if necessary, eliminating the supernatural. The main concerns of Bureau agents are the disposal of high-level evil and the maintenance of the organization's secrecy.

The world of Bureau 13 looks just like the world you know. It's the modern world – the one we live in – the United States of America in 2004. There is one difference though. In this world the monsters under the bed, in the closet, and hiding in the dark pools of blackness between the widely spaced streetlamps are real. Vampires and werewolves? They're out there, preying on humanity with monstrous ferocity. Ghosts and goblins? They exist, haunting the shadows behind fast-food restaurants, convenience stores, and other places full of life and light. The truth remains hidden from the world-at-large, though. Most people can't fathom the Things of Darkness, and so they either can't or won't see them for what they really are. This veil of self-deception and delusion keeps the majority of the world functioning despite the surrounding horrors. Those who can see through the shadows, find ridicule, scorn, and often madness or death on the other side. There's danger as well in knowing the true nature of the world, for being able to see the monsters usually means that the monsters can see you ...

A Bureau 13 Primer

Bureau 13, often referred to simply as the "Bureau", was secretly established in 1861 to combat the destructive supernatural forces then active in the United States. The Bureau saw a huge rise in activity during the period 1870-1920 as millions of European immigrants – along with their Old World "companions" – came to our shores in search of the "American Dream" (or nightmare, depending on your point of view). Since then, the Bureau's mission has grown to include the identification, isolation, and destruction of any and all supernatural entities or forces that threaten the economy or security of the United States of America. Starting in 1960, the Bureau established foreign branches on every continent in an effort to head off potential threats before they were able to penetrate our borders. The Bureau is on the front lines of the war against the Shadow. While the memory of the Things of Darkness has faded from the collective consciousness of our modern day society, those involved in the struggle know the truth – the Shadow is still here and the evil is growing ...

Technically, Bureau 13 falls under the auspices of the Department of Justice. Realistically, only a few top government officials – and no, the President isn't one of them - even know of its existence. Agents are highly trained professionals that must be competent and creative. There are no published guidelines or standard operating procedures. Rules for the teams are simple and direct. All agents know and live by the "Bureau's 5 Guiding Principles":

1. Don't get caught
2. Don't leave evidence of the Bureau's existence
3. Don't leave evidence of the existence of the Things of Darkness
4. Use violence only if absolutely necessary
5. Rationalize the supernatural to all outsiders

Agents who are caught or exposed are usually left to their own devices. The Bureau will not aid them in any way that will jeopardize their mission. Following the Massacre of '94 the officers of Bureau 13 went "underground". Only those individuals that work there know the actual location of the Bureau 13 Headquarters – rumors abound that it's located within a vast underground complex in the Washington, DC area – but those rumors can neither be confirmed nor denied.

HOW DO I JOIN THE BUREAU? You don't find the Bureau and join - the Bureau finds you. Consider the story of Bureau agent Robert Harrison. His involvement with the Bureau came about by a simple quirk of fate – one extraordinary event in an otherwise ordinary existence:

At 38 years of age, Robert Harrison is a well-known science fiction writer, recognized for his "Pookon of Mars" novels and a gross of other short stories. With just a Bachelor's degree in English Literature from Brown University in Rhode Island, Harrison is a full time writer who tinkers with old cars, drinks beer, and travels to science fiction conventions for fun, profit, and a free dinner.

His involvement with a Bureau 13 team at the 2004 World Science Fiction Convention in Detroit saved a number of lives as he crushed the skull of a werewolf with his silver-plated Hugo Award for best short story. While the fans thought it was a great costume skit, Harrison knew otherwise and found himself shadowed by a covert organization. To his amazement, he discovered that the supernatural was real and that a federal government agency – Bureau 13 – was out to liquidate its more malignant aspects. For more than a century this secret group had been funded as a necessary arm of the Department of Justice.

Due to a disastrous confrontation a decade earlier, the agency had lost nearly all of its working agents. Now it was desperate for competent and imaginative personnel who could accept the supernatural and effectively deal with it. Harrison was given the choice of joining the agency or facing the wrath of an IRS audit. Realizing he would never survive the horrors of a tax audit, he joined without a moment's hesitation. In the months that followed his life was forever changed as he learned more about the organization and the Things of Darkness that quietly hid in the shadows on the fringes of society.

All players should construct a similar story to explain how their characters came to be in the employ of the Bureau. Doing so not only aids in the character creation process but also gives the GM a solid background from which to develop plot elements and design individual adventures, scenarios, and challenges.

WHAT DOES AN AGENT DO? Your primary mission is to identify, locate, segregate, and eradicate (if necessary) any and all supernatural threats to the economy or security of the United States of America. As an agent of a top-secret government organization, you have access to the latest technology and weaponry – some of it unknown outside the doors of the Bureau's R&D Laboratory (known colloquially as "The Chop Shop"). You are "on call" 24 hours a day seven days a week, always ready to respond to a threat at a moment's notice. Often you are "on mission" for long periods of time - operating without any outside assistance and only your own skills and intuition to guide you.

WHAT DOES THE BUREAU PAY? Payments to agents are handled through direct deposits to the bank account of their choice. In order to preserve their anonymity most agents utilize offshore banking under an assumed name. Their payments may then be distributed to various other accounts (all under assumed names, of course) in strategic locations throughout the world.

For the most part, agents live unassuming lives. Most have "no-show" cover jobs that provide an additional layer of protection. Some continue to work in whatever field they were involved in before becoming an agent. As a rule, they are not overly extravagant, although there are a few high profile agents...

Agents start the game with 2D6 x \$1000 in their bank accounts. The Bureau pays \$1000 per Rank per week (payday is 12pm every Friday). The individual agent pays all mission expenses beyond \$5000 (per mission) from their personal accounts. The Bureau spends its budget providing resources, information, and high tech gadgetry to the agents and has no excess funds to allocate to individual missions. When assigned a mission an agent is given a credit card and a line of credit with a series of banks equal to \$5000. They are good only for the duration of the mission.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS LIKE? All agents are fully insured and the Bureau provides full medical and dental at approved providers. If an agent is killed in the line of duty their beneficiaries receive a "death benefit" payment (usually tied to the former agent's cover job) for the rest of their lives – the Bureau takes care of its own. Anyone who survives until the age of 65 will reap the benefits of a pension plan that hasn't been tapped in over 100 years – a certain Mr. Holmes is the only agent who has ever reached retirement age...

HOW DO I CONTACT THE BUREAU – OR HOW DO THEY CONTACT ME, FOR THAT MATTER? In most cases it starts with a quick phone call, a beeper page, a prearranged signal, or an encrypted e-mail. This initial contact usually contains instructions for a more personal meeting at which the details of the mission, as well as the intended outcome, are covered. Sometimes contact by the Bureau isn't as obvious. Perhaps a planted headline in a local paper is an activation code for a specific Bureau team. Maybe that out of print book contains a secret mission plan. Ever wonder why some music videos seem so disconnected...

WHAT ABOUT EQUIPMENT AND SPECIALIZED GEAR? Upon joining the Bureau, all agents are given a set of standard issue gear:

- MS67g attaché case
 - Cell phone with integral digital audio recording device and extra memory chips
 - Digital cameras (both normal and miniature) with extra memory chips
 - Laptop PC and PDA
 - Multipurpose tool (includes lockpicking tools as well)
 - Advanced Kirilian Detector (works like a Geiger counter but detects traces of the Shadow instead)
 - A trauma medical pack
 - Standard and paranormal evidence collection kits
 - Demolitions pack (five “rounds” of C4 and detonation devices)
 - All-weather lighter, flashlight and 10 glowsticks
 - Two tactical radios with covert earpieces
 - Global Positioning System (GPS) – receiver, transmitting beacon, and tracking devices
 - Standard bugs and listening devices (wireless)
 - Collection of topographical and street maps, passports, and false identity papers
- Clothes carrier and large storage bag
 - 1 set each: average clothes, trendy clothes, designer clothes (including accessories and shoes)
 - 3 pairs of black fatigues (including steel-toe combat boots, face mask, Kevlar body armor, and gloves)
- 9mm service pistol with silencer, laser sight, and 100 rounds of ammunition (choice of shoulder or ankle holster)
- Bureau Access Card (disguised as an ordinary credit card)

The above issue is a one-time deal – the agent is responsible for the maintenance and replacement of this gear. In addition to their standard issue gear, agents may be given access to more specialized or technologically advanced equipment on a mission-by-mission basis. Such gear remains the property of the Bureau (specifically the Chop Shop) and must be returned upon completion of the mission. During character creation, the player will have to purchase any additional equipment he desires by using his starting funds.

Equipment or items that cannot be purchased on the open market or obtained via the Black Market, may be requisitioned from the Bureau. Such requisitions will arrive within 48 hours via a predetermined shipment method and delivered to a specific location. The cost of such equipment is generally deducted from the agent’s paycheck unless the agent elects to transfer ownership to the Bureau following the completion of the mission.

The Bureau also maintains a network of supply dumps in various locations across the globe. Each agent has a list of these locations. Access is gained by using the Bureau Access Card. Consider the following concerning Berkley’s Auto Repair shop in Detroit:

From the outside it looks like Berkley’s Auto Repair – just another small garage on Detroit’s South Side. Crumbling and dirty, few give it more than a passing glance. From the inside it still looks like a rundown and cluttered auto repair shop. Many of the local neighborhood people wonder how old Tom and his wife Rose can support themselves with so few customers. In actuality, Tom and Rose work for Bureau 13. The dead light switch on the back wall opens for access to a Bureau Access Card Identity Machine. Once activated, a section of the wall slides away to reveal a small elevator. The elevator descends 50’ beneath the garage to a well-stocked supply dump.

This particular dump is unusual in that it has Bureau personnel who watch over it. As a result, it is well stocked with the latest equipment. Most dumps are automated for entry and need no caretakers; however, they may not always contain the latest or best maintained equipment...

ARE THERE DIFFERENT TYPES OF JOBS AND TEAMS WITHIN THE BUREAU? Although a Bureau team is generally composed of a group of 3-8 well-rounded individuals that have talents and abilities complementing one another (known simply as Operative Teams or OTs), there are a few teams that have been organized as “specialty teams”. It is generally recommended that characters form an Operative Team and that the following be reserved only for use by the GM; however, it’s your game, and there’s nothing stopping you from allowing a character membership in these specialized teams.

Clean-Up Teams, or “Scrubbers”, are those teams that specialize in getting rid of otherwise difficult to dispose evidence left behind by the Things of Darkness. They are also good at disposing of collateral damage if the need should arise. Think Harvey Keitel in Pulp Fiction or the guys in the black utility truck from Men in Black.

Rapid Response Teams, or “The Cavalry”, are never given mission of their own. They are on permanent call in order to assist any Bureau teams that may have stumbled into something they cannot handle. These teams are rarely seen in any but the most significant and dangerous of situations. Think of a spy movie in which James Bond is called out of retirement to aid in an especially sensitive mission.

Research Teams, also known as “Bookworms”, exist to assist teams on a mission with locating specific information that relates to their mission. Such teams are usually located in universities, libraries, and rare bookstores as a cover. Research teams can usually find the information required by the active team within 24 hours. Giles and Willow from Buffy the Vampire Slayer often fulfilled this role as do all the lab geeks on TV shows like Law and Order and CSI.

Tactical Response Squads, or “187s”, deal harshly with malignant supernatural entities or occult groups. They are the rarest of all the specialty teams and are only activated when firepower is the only way to handle a situation. Their activation often involves a suitably delayed call to the nearest Scrubber team. In several instances, they have had to deal with renegade and corrupt Bureau personnel – this has earned them the nickname of “X-Squads”. A 187 squad can be onsite, anywhere in the world. Within 24 hours. Think of Section 13 (interesting) from the Jackie Chan Adventures cartoon. For a realistic comparison, consider Delta Force...

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN GOOD BUREAU AGENTS “GO BAD”? The most difficult problem facing Bureau 13 agents is the question of ‘Good’ and ‘Evil’ in society. While your team may be working for the forces of good, they may actually aid evil if they are not careful and conscientious in their actions. The indiscriminate slaughter of the supernatural can be far worse than any imagined evil if the supernatural is a beneficial part of a balanced and healthy paranormal ecology. Bureau 13 always frowns upon situations that cost innocent lives. Remaining secret means minimizing collateral damage. When agents lose sight of the destruction they cause, they receive three warnings. After that they are dealt with in one of three ways:

1. If they are a threat to the Bureau or society in general, a call is placed to the nearest 187 squad.
2. If they have an otherwise good record, they’re allowed to retire and live out the rest of their life in peace.
3. If they are too valuable or dangerous to remain in normal society, they are forcibly “retired” to an ocean resort on an island somewhere in the South Atlantic.

Friends of Bureau 13

The Bureau has many technical and human resources that can be tapped in order to further their stated mission. These people know of the Bureau, although their knowledge may be imperfect and/or incomplete, and give of their services and abilities in order to help in the ongoing fight against evil. All understand and abide by the “5 Guiding Principles”. Some require payment (monetary or otherwise) in return for their services, while others provide their services out of a sense of altruism. GMs should remember that the following individuals and organizations are always introduced in the game as NPCs and that their existence or availability is entirely at their whim. You should take care that your players do not come to depend on their assistance in every difficult situation. You can do this by making them difficult to find or deal with. The GM should feel free to add/delete from this list as he sees fit – its main purpose is to get those creative juices flowing! A brief paragraph on each follows – the GM should fill in the details to suit his own campaign.

THE WHITE WITCH (Greenbriar, VT): The descendant of a family who fled from the Salem Witch Trials, Barbara Platt is a practicing expert in the occult and White Magic. Last of the Platt family, she is dedicated to the use of white magic for helping the needy. This fact has alienated her from contact with the darker users of arcane forces and their many minions. Communication with Platt, because of her lack of telephone service, is handled through the local school librarian, Joseph Bueller.

RAY ROBERTSON (San Jose, CA): One of the few members of Bureau 13 that is commonly known to other agents, Ray Robertson is a technical wizard with a wealth of knowledge and a well-funded staff. He can create virtually any device the field agent might require – from the Colorado RV to the latest Kirillian Detector; Robertson’s mark is there. Robertson currently heads up the Bureau 13 Chop Shop.

DR. JONATHAN WOLFE (Paw Paw, MI): Operating out of Wolfe Testing Labs, Dr. Wolfe is a medical expert on the occult. What few know is that his lab is actually a front for the Bureau-funded Were-creature Research Institute. His expertise in biochemistry has led to the creation of were-specific vaccines.

DR. JORDAN CLAMISON (Sandusky, OH): This fresh water aquatics expert has been associated with Bureau 13 for more than two decades. Operating independently, Clamison is the self-proclaimed Protector of the Great Lakes. When he’s not involved in research experiments on Lake Erie he can be found at his diving school or in his lab. His pet project is adapting dolphins for life in fresh water.

WEINSTEIN’S FORENSIC SWAT TEAM (Atlanta, GA): When specialized medical analysis or difficult identification of remains is required the Bureau calls on Professor Julius Weinstein and his aptly named Forensic SWAT Team. This brilliant but grim group of students and their foul-tempered leader can usually answer the nagging question, “How did this die?” within 48 hours; in fact, their motto is “48 Hours or Your Body Back”. They can often be found disgusting customers as they talk shop at Vincenzo’s Pizzeria. They have ties with the CDC (Center for Disease Control) and noted medical experts across the globe.

JOHN CRENSHAW, M.D. (Winslow, AZ): John Crenshaw is an old country doctor who amazes his colleagues by still making house calls. He is an expert in folk medicine and the medical needs of those dealing with the bizarre or supernatural. He is an unshakeable optimist, kind-hearted and caring, and possibly even possessing a latent psionic talent – although he'll never admit to it. He and his cat Clara travel the back roads of Arizona in an old green Jeep known as "The Green Thunder". In his many years of working with the locals he has acquired a wealth of lore and legends dating back more than 3000 years.

GEOFFREY GLADSTONE, M.D. (Raleigh, NC): Geoffrey is a doctor. While pleasant and witty he does have one slight problem – he is a vampire. Attacked and enslaved by a vampire lord while at a medical conference in San Diego, CA, he helped Bureau 13 agents locate and destroy his master. Under Bureau 13 supervision, he returned to his hometown where he readily adapted to his condition by taking a job in the local blood bank. He is now the foremost expert on vampirism in the world. He has never taken a human life, but the Bureau keeps a close eye on him anyway ...

GENERAL THOMAS MCADAMS (Washington, DC): General McAdams is an expert in weapons use and acquisition. Much of the Bureau's supply of heavy hardware comes from one of the General's supply units in Utah or Colorado. McAdams is a firm believer in the work of the Bureau – at least since they saved his daughter from a band of cultists a few years ago. As his way of saying thanks, he trained a handpicked unit of former SEALs, Rangers, Marine Recon, Special Ops, and Delta Force troops to back up the Bureau should the situation require. They are also trained to assist the Scrubbers if need be. "McAdam's Marauders" will arrive within 24 hours and they ask no questions.

BLOOMBERG, GRICE & BRYAN, ATTORNEYS-AT-LAW (Dallas, TX): Sooner or later the Bureau realized legal counsel for the supernatural had to become a reality. In the late 1980s the firm of Bloomberg & Grice gained a ghostly helper in the form of William Bryan, one of the foremost legal counsels of the 20th century. The three have become, at times, both friend and foe of The Bureau as they assist Bureau agents or defend the strange and supernatural that have found them. Their fees are high, but no case is considered too strange.

THE CABBY (New York City, NY): Somewhere winding in and out of traffic in New York City is a paranormal cabbie named Wypychowski. For the past four decades he has been the voice of the supernatural and the best bookie in the city. This quiet individual with a moldy cigar has the innate ability to identify paranormal objects and speak to disembodied spirits. While cheerful and friendly to the Bureau, he is often disturbed by the paranormal happenings that seem to seek him out. Wypychowski professes to be "in tune" with the elementals of the city – his 1949 checkered cab has been unscratched since 1960 and the last mugger to lay hands on him was struck by lightning (on an otherwise sunny and clear day) before he got ten steps from the cab. When not collecting fares, Wypychowski can be found at Mike's Bar and Grill (18W 40th Street). Tip him well.

HARVEY BECKER (The Afterlife): Harvey Becker is the ghost of a Bureau 13 agent murdered in 1995. He has decided to stay on and assist his fellow agents in any way possible. His family still collects a regular paycheck from the Bureau (disguised as a death benefit from Becker's cover job as a Teamster). With a sharp mind and a talent for ferreting out the truth, Harvey is often a lifesaver if his advice is heeded. He often appears in mirrors or leaves cryptic signs to aid Bureau agents in deep trouble.

DR. OFFIDILE (Boston, MA): Dr. Offidile is a learned historian who was fired from Harvard University due to his interest in the darker aspects of magic and the paranormal. Now, affectionately known as "Doc Crock" by his friends, he manages a rare bookshop in Harvard Square. Offidile is a font of misplaced historical fact and narration and which he will gladly discuss for hours over a bottle of good scotch. He has a collection of brilliant and esoteric friends with resources in history, magic, philosophy, religion, and science. This paranormal think tank is renowned for ferreting out fact from legend. The good doctor enjoys helping the Bureau and it is rumored that the spirit of a Boston Police officer named Earl protects his bookstore.

IDET (Alternate dimensions): The Bureau's oddest ally is a group of extra dimensional travelers known simply as IDET. They are a group of scientists and explorers who are studying earth and its supernatural denizens. Bureau 13 has made contact with these "dimension hoppers" in the hope that they can give them needed help to accomplish their mission without raising the public's suspicions. In return, IDET has given the Bureau several items - primarily advanced computer technology and firepower – with which to continue their struggle. When left to their own devices, IDET is a benign, inquisitive group who respects life in its myriad of forms.

GULLIVER & JONES (Cleveland, OH): Sometimes the walls have ears. In this case they also have small beady eyes, whiskers, a tail, and an insatiable curiosity. This is the detective agency of Gulliver & Jones, a partnership between a human and a rat. Gulliver is what's known as an Alpha – the result of a gene mutation caused by a chemical spill. These mutants have near human intelligence and manipulative digits. Jones is just a human with a shabby detective agency that has seen better days. He works with The Bureau on occasions when he's not otherwise occupied trying to keep Gulliver out of trouble.

JOHN (Detroit, MI): A wizard of finance in American industry, John has the power to locate financial records and raise large amounts of capital in record time. While hard to contact, he is friendly and reassuring. He remembers the Bureau's help in saving one of the nation's leading automotive manufacturers and a banking conglomerate from, respectively, gremlins and demonic infestation. He has access to technology that rivals that of Bureau 13 and can open many industrial and financial doors for his friends. At times, he will request favors from The Bureau or teams that he has helped.

THE FELLOWSHIP (Scattered across the country – mainly in large cities): A group of unsanctioned (i.e., non-Bureau 13 personnel), known as "Shadow Chasers", who can see beyond the Shadow and have confronted the Things of Darkness on their own initiative. As long as they do not betray the Bureau's presence they are allowed to continue their work. Members of The Fellowship are often more radical than the typical Bureau agent. They usually have a personal interest in slaying the Things of Darkness. Because of this, the Bureau keeps a close eye on them (several Bureau sleeper agents are current members of The Fellowship) in order to ensure that they do not inadvertently tip the scales in favor of the Things of Darkness.

JP WITHERS (Wouldn't you like to know!): JP Withers is a Bureau 13 phenomena better left alone. His reputation is well respected across the globe. If a Bureau member ever gets into serious trouble and has no other recourse, a single call to a remote answering service has a chance of summoning help. JP is not always sane. As a survivor of the Massacre of '94 he has vowed to prevent such a thing from ever happening again. The safety of the Bureau and its agents is JP's reason for living. This should be considered a good thing; however, JP has a tendency to go overboard – where paperwork would solve a problem, JP prefers dynamite. Where one stick of dynamite would help, JP will use six. No matter what the obstacle, JP will surmount it with maximum force and extreme prejudice. He believes that saving one Bureau 13 agent is worth putting a dozen civilians in traction. JP wanders the country in a late model silver sports car. He hasn't had any assignments from The Bureau in years and many think the central office is afraid of him – they are. Survivors of "JP Encounters" have reported that he has a soft spot for children and dogs and that he smiles a lot ...

Enemies of Bureau 13

On the flip side of the coin are the sinister people and organizations that have learned of Bureau 13's activities and would like to see its demise. Many simple case of investigation have been turned into nightmare situations due to their crass interference. These agencies and individuals serve as a never-ending source of trouble for Bureau 13 as they attempt to get even for past intrusions by the Bureau. Many of these enemies are dedicated, smart, and resourceful, having easy access to large financial reserves and many loyal minions. These enemies are GM-controlled NPCs. Their demise is NOT a primary mission of the Bureau – unless they happen to be of a supernatural origin – remember, even evil people have legal rights and are entitled to protection under the US criminal justice system. Besides, they ALWAYS have outstanding lawyers! The GM should feel free to add/delete from this list as he sees fit – its main purpose is to get those creative juices flowing! A brief paragraph on each follows – the GM should fill in the details to suit his own campaign.

THE WIND WILLOW COVEN (Rural, USA): On the side of the darkest magic are the 169 families of the Wind Willow Coven. These diabolists have a deep-seated hatred of the Bureau that goes back a full century to the destruction of their original coven house in 1869. This group, originally centered in Vermont and then Pennsylvania, has since spread across North America and now infests many rural American towns. The Coven has no qualms regarding murder or terror, so long as such activities further their ultimate goal of unleashing the spawn of Hell on an unsuspecting earth.

SUN YEN-YEN (Los Angeles, CA): Sun Yen-Yen was a simple farmer in Mainland China before "seeing the light" and becoming the self-professed "Earthly Messiah". Now, with many "loyal" followers (all appropriately "programmed") and a hefty Swiss bank account, he hopes to take the western world by dint of public relations and advertising. Yen is a concern of the Bureau's because of his habit of calling on supernatural aid to advance his plans of world domination. After Bureau 13 sank his yacht off the coast of Miami in 1997, he swore revenge on the Bureau and has since been on the lookout for activities that will lead him to the Bureau's inner sanctum. Many of his vacant eyed followers can be seen on street corners in the larger American cities selling flowers, egg rolls, and "I Love Sun Yen-Yen" buttons.

SENATOR THURSTON WEBBER (Baltimore, MD): While collecting blackmail fodder to advance his own political career Thurston Webber stumbled on to the existence of Bureau 13. In the decades since he has been on a personal crusade to expose this "governmental waste of taxpayer's money". Fortunately, with no hard evidence to support his claims, his story is given little credence by mainstream America. He realizes that the Bureau has kept his political career on a tight leash and he holds a grudge. He recently assembled a crack team of ex-CIA operatives to act as both bodyguard and snatch team. These operatives travel the country in search of Bureau activity, operating like the Bureau, with little or no support or cover. They have access to military hardware and know how to use it. Recently, Webber's teams have begun kidnapping Bureau operatives – three at last count. Their whereabouts and fate remain a mystery.

MATTHIAS BOLT (San Francisco, CA): Secure in his wealth and following, Bolt is the leader of the Brotherhood of Darkness, an organization devoted to the study of Black Magic. As the absolute leader of more than 300 practitioners of the Dark Arts, he presents a major threat to the Bureau and its agents. He is rumored to be of genius intelligence and in possession of an unmatched personality and wit. In his spare time he dreams of world conquest and domination.

FUNDAMS (Atlanta, GA): The return of religion to America was well appreciated by the Bureau until it began to show its darker side. Now, with the advances in computer technology and the expansion of the Internet, these high-tech fundamentalists are attacking anything and everything that doesn't make a monthly contribution or conform to their rigid standards of belief. As they began to burn books, roleplaying games, and music CDs the Bureau began to wonder if there wasn't a darker force at work behind the immoral minority.

THE 6TH REICH (In every dark corner): Towards the end of the Second World War Nazi mysticism reached its peak when Hitler created a special unit of the Reich Central Security Department known as the Ideological Research Division. Their purpose was simple – preserve the Reich by identifying and locating any useable magic or arcane methods to bring the Allies to their knees. In their time they failed though their tradition has survived to influence a new generation of Nazi fanatics. Now, based in Argentina and the central United States, this "6th Reich" is beginning a push to organize their scattered followers and find a way to destroy Britain, Russia, and the United States once and for all.

VIRUS 9640 (A computer near you): Spawned by a lunatic with access to an experimental AI Medical Mainframe, Virus 9640 is an intelligent program that has turned homicidal. For unknown reasons, it has decided that the time has come for machines to take their place as the evolutionary successor to mankind. Norton Anti-Virus can't do a thing about Virus 9640!

REVEREND ROTWOOD (Rural USA): Walking the backwoods of America is the Right Reverend Artemus Rotwood, man of the cloth – or so he would have you think. His fatherly advice, gentle manner, and keen wit serve as a disguise for his true identity – necromancer and diabolist. He is collecting souls from the unwary in order to satiate his otherworldly masters.

Creating an Agent

Up until this point we've presented information that will assist the GM in creating the proper mood and setting for his campaign. Now it's time to address that question that's been nagging all the players out there – "How do I create a Bureau 13 agent?" Bureau 13 – Stalking the Night Fantastic is a pulp horror setting. The Savage Worlds roleplaying game has been described as a pulp RPG system – a perfect match if you inquire as to my eminently humble opinion! The few changes in the character generation procedure outlined in the Savage Worlds rulebook are addressed below.

RACE: All Bureau 13 agents are human unless your GM decides to allow other species.

TRAITS: Traits (attributes and skills) are handled exactly as outlined in the Savage Worlds rulebook. Due to advanced Bureau training, all agents start the game with the Fighting and Shooting skills for free. They must be advanced normally beyond D4.

DERIVED STATISTICS: Derived statistics, such as Pace, Parry, Charisma, and Toughness are handled exactly as described in the Savage Worlds rulebook. The one new, and optional, derived statistic, Sanity, is detailed in the next section.

EDGES AND HINDRANCES: These are handled exactly as described in the Savage Worlds rulebook. A few new Edges and Hindrances are detailed in the next section.

GEAR: In addition to their standard issue agents must equip and provision themselves. The Savage Worlds rulebook contains most nearly every "standard" item an agent will need – competent GMs should have no problem whipping up items "on the fly". Starting funds and weekly compensation have already been addressed. For those GMs wanting a more detailed weaponry system (i.e., specific weapons – Glock 9mm - rather than just generic categories – 9mm service pistol), I highly recommend Modern Weapons in Savage Worlds by Erron 'Bo' Whitten. It's available as a free download from the [Savage Heroes website](#).

The Rules of the Game

There is very little difference between playing a game of Savage Worlds "straight out of the box" and playing Savage Worlds using the Bureau 13 – Stalking the Night Fantastic setting. Those few differences are detailed hereafter.

UNSKILLED ATTEMPTS are not made using the standard "D4-2" as given in the Savage Worlds rulebook. Instead, allow the character to make an attribute roll against the skill's linked attribute and apply a -2 modifier. When making an unskilled attempt, a Wild Card does not roll a Wild Die. Extras

INITIATIVE for allies is handled a bit differently than presented in the Savage Worlds rulebook. A group of Allies acts on their own Initiative card unless the controlling character possesses the Command Edge, in which case they may act on the better of the two cards.

WITHDRAWING FROM COMBAT is defined as moving more than ½ of your allowed movement after making a melee attack or being attacked. The Defend option is only available if your character's movement does not exceed his Pace.

BONUS DAMAGE is only granted if you achieve a raise on your Fighting or Shooting roll. The bonus is +D6 and multiple raises on the attack roll are ignored. This is an "official house rule" of Shane's and replaces the usual method described in the Savage Worlds rulebook (p.72).

ARCANE BACKGROUNDS are not generally available to agents. The Bureau doesn't look kindly on most open displays of paranormal powers. Known practitioners are usually not recruited (although the Bureau keeps a wary eye on them). However, that's not to say they never recruit practitioners – just that it's not a common occurrence. The use, or lack thereof, of Arcane Backgrounds (at least by agents) is entirely up to the individual GM. I highly suggest taking a look at *Beyond the Veil* by Butch Curry – an excellent variant psionic system that meshes perfectly with this setting. You can download this file as a free download from the [Savage Heroes website](#).

SANITY POINTS

The following Sanity Point rules should be considered optional. They allow the GM to run a campaign where the agents, in addition to physical damage, also run the risk of mental damage due to exposure to the Shadow. All agents starts the game with a Sanity Point total equal to their Spirit die type X8 (i.e., D8 = 64 Sanity Points). Characters with the *Doubting Thomas Hindrance* halve this amount. Sanity Points can be recovered (see below), but may never be raised above this initial total – even if the character later increases his Spirit die type. The GM should keep track of Sanity Points - the players should never be sure of how many points they have left. The GM should give them hints though ... like phobias, paranoia, "seeing or hearing things", etc.

Example: Agent Caruthers, a new member of Bureau 13, has a Spirit of D6 as well as the Doubting Thomas Hindrance. He starts with 48 Sanity Points and then deducts 24 points (half of 48) from this total. He starts the game with 24 Sanity Points.

Throughout the course of a Bureau 13 campaign, the agent will be continually exposed to the supernatural. Such exposure takes a toll. Each creature, object, location, etc... associated with the Shadow has a Sanity Point Cost associated with it. This cost is between 1 and 6 points – the worse the strain, the higher the point cost. The first time such is encountered the agent must make a Guts check. If they succeed they suffer the listed Sanity Point Cost. If they fail, the cost is doubled. If they fail with a result of snake eyes, it is tripled. Only by succeeding with a raise will they avoid the cost altogether. Characters can become jaded (Savage Worlds rulebook, p.93); however, it takes at least three separate exposures to an individual sanity threat to become so.

Example: Agent Caruthers, a new member of Bureau 13, has just encountered a demonspawn, a Thing of Darkness with a Sanity Point Cost (SPC) of 2 and Fear (-2). Caruthers makes a Guts (D6) check and fails the roll (he got a '5', but the creature's Fear ability reduced it to a '3'). Caruthers reduces his Sanity Point Total by 4 points. He's down to 20 now...

As mentioned before, an agent can recover lost Sanity Points. One week of inpatient therapy allows the agent to recover 2+D4 Sanity Points. Outpatient therapy allows the recovery of D4 points for each full week of therapy. If, for whatever reason, an agent's Sanity Points are ever reduced to 0 he is sent to a quiet asylum in the hills of western New York where he will be given the best care the Bureau can afford...

NEW HINDRANCES

Dependents (Major): Your character has a family member or significant other, or perhaps an entire family to worry about in addition to the daily concerns of his chosen profession. This is only a Hindrance if your enemies are in a position to capitalize on exploiting your dependents.

Phobia (Minor or Major): A "phobia" is an irrational fear of a specific item, creature, or circumstance. Whenever a character is in the presence of the source of his phobia he suffers a -2 penalty to all trait tests. Minor phobias are directed at items, creatures, or circumstances that rarely occur or are easily avoided (e.g., flying, heights, magic, etc...). Major phobias are directed at items, creatures, or circumstances that are common and difficult to avoid (e.g., dirt, large crowds, open spaces, etc...).

NEW EDGES

Brave (Novice): Your character isn't easily rattled. Things that would send less hearty souls running in terror don't faze him. He may add +2 to all Spirit rolls made to resist the effects of Fright.

Brawler (Novice; Fighting D6): Brawlers make all unarmed Fighting rolls at +2. Damage from successful unarmed attacks is equal to STR+1. They also gain a +2 bonus on grappling rolls. *Pugilists (Brawler) never count as unarmed when facing an armed opponent and increase their unarmed damage to STR+2.*

Connoisseur (Novice; Smarts D8): These characters are adept at moving in the circles frequented by the upper classes. A bonus of +2 is applied to all Common Knowledge rolls dealing with such matters. In addition, apply a +2 Charisma modifier when dealing with "bluebloods".

Don Juan or Seductress (Novice; Charisma bonus of at least +2; Attractive Edge): These smooth operators make all Persuasion rolls against opponents of the opposite sex at +2.

Gift of Gab (Novice; Smarts D8): Characters with this Edge can figure out the basics of any language given a few minutes to listen to people speaking it. Given time, he can get basic messages across regardless of the language being spoken.

Street Smarts (Seasoned; Streetwise D8): Street Smart characters are in touch with the “rhythm of the streets” and gain a bonus of +2 to all their Streetwise rolls. In addition, when attempting to locate items under less than legitimate circumstances they can usually do so at 25% under the going rate.

THE SUPERNATURAL BADDIES

The individual GM should populate his world with creatures that mesh with his ideas of what “Things of Darkness” entails. Here’s a couple to get you started though!

DEMONSPAWN

Demonspawn are a common form of corporeal entity encountered by Bureau 13 agents. They are very strong and agile, but rather dimwitted. Their appearance always indicates the presence of a powerful demon in the area. Demonspawn are man-sized, covered in black scales, and smell of sulfur and things better-left-unmentioned. Their mouths are filled with razor-sharp teeth and their glowing red eyes, set into a monstrous head topped with coarse black hair, will unsettle even the most stoic agent. These Things of Darkness are the foot soldiers of the Shadow.

Attributes: Agility D8; Smarts D4; Spirit D6; Strength D10; Vigor D10

Skills: Fighting D8, Intimidation D8, Notice D6, Stealth D6, Taunt D4, Throwing D6, Tracking D6

Pace: 6”

Parry: 6

Toughness: 9 (7+2 Armor for scales)

Attacks: Claws x2 (STR+2) and Bite (STR+4) – Uses one or the other each round (exception: if both claw attacks hit the Demonspawn may also make an immediate bite attack as well)

Special Abilities:

- Armor +2 (scales)
- Fear (-2)
- Infravision
- Immunity (Fire)
- +2 when attempting to recover from Shaken

Weaknesses: Cold attacks do double damage

Sanity Point Cost (SPC): 2 points

ZOMBIE

Zombies are the reanimated bodies of the dead. They exist, not because their soul has been trapped within their mortal shell, but rather because some essence of the Shadow has taken up residence within their mortal shell. They are nearly mindless, but may be bent to the will of a more powerful Thing of Darkness. If there are zombies afoot then chances are there is a necromancer or powerful demon nearby. Zombies appear as rotten human corpses dressed as they were at the time of their death. They have an unnatural taste for any type of living flesh.

Attributes: Agility D6; Smarts D4; Spirit D4; Strength D8; Vigor D6

Skills: Fighting D6, Intimidation D6, Notice D4,

Pace: 4” (cannot run)

Parry: 5

Toughness: 7 (5+2 for being undead)

Attacks: Claws x2 (STR) and Bite (STR+1) – Uses one or the other each round (exception: if both claw attacks hit the zombie may also make an immediate bite attack as well)

Special Abilities:

- Fearless
- +2 when attempting to recover from Shaken

Weaknesses: Attacks that hit the zombie’s head do double damage.

Sanity Point Cost (SPC): 1 point

Yet throughout it all there are a few individuals who know the truth and yet stand strong and resolve to turn back the tide. Humanity may not be doomed so long as these heroes do not waver in their conviction. You, an agent of Bureau 13, are one of these heroes, and as long as you have something to say about it there aren’t going to be any demons moving into your neighborhood...