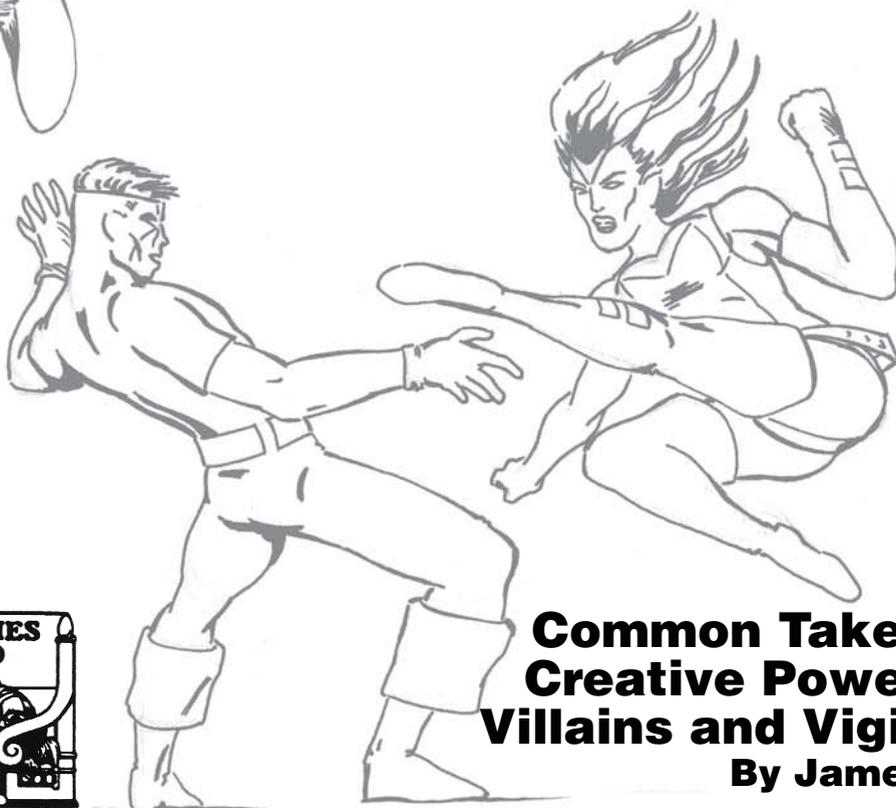


RULES OF THUMB



**Common Takes on
Creative Powers in
Villains and Vigilantes**
By James Satter

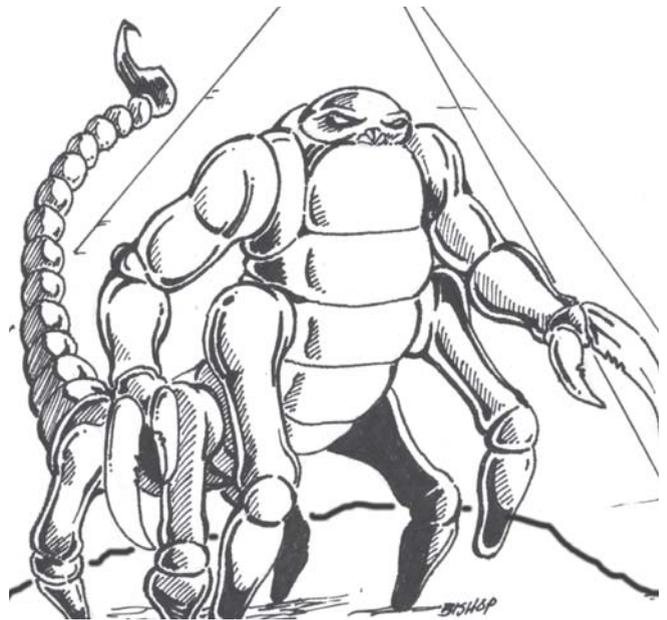
Satter

INTRODUCTION

One of the strengths of Villains and Vigilantes is the large number of open-ended powers in the rulebook. From Body Power to Willpower, just about anything is possible. The growing number of V&V adventures and sourcebooks left me wondering what common ground seemed to apply to these customizable powers. Were there any rules of thumb that a GM and players could use in their game?

The guidelines that follow note instances where at least two V&V writers offered similar game mechanics for a new power concept, including variant takes on powers already outlined in the rules. I placed each idea under a heading from the rulebook, realizing that many items fit equally well in other categories. I also added some number-crunching that I've found helpful in the past. Keep in mind that every rule of thumb can have an exception. Use whatever approach works best for your campaign.

James Satter



Animal/Plant Control:

When a character uses Insect Control, one Hit Point represents 50 lbs. of insects. Each Hit Point of insects gets one attack. Damage and Accuracy bonuses vary by species.

References: Army Ant, *Enemies at Large*. The Beekeeper, *Most Wanted Vol. 1*. Cockroach, *The Dawn of DNA*. SWARMaster, *Opponents Unlimited*.

Animal/Plant Powers:

As a Special Arachnid/Insect Power or with suction hands/feet as a Body Power, the character can climb walls/ceilings at ground

movement rate. PR = 0. (On the other hand, using an invention to climb can have a PR cost or slower movement rate.)

References: (Special) Cockroach, *The Dawn of DNA*. Flea, *Enemies at Large*. Spyder and (Body Power) Psi-phon, *Most Wanted Vol. 1*.

Armor A:

The rulebook notes that characters with biological Armor (Type A) multiply their weight by 0.03 for each point of Armor Defense Rating (ADR). The chart below lists the Weight Factor for each point of ADR beginning with 30 (the minimum ADR for Crustacean Powers). Note that ADR 30-33 decreases a character's weight.

ADR	Wt. Factor						
30	0.90	56	1.68	82	2.46	108	3.24
31	0.93	57	1.71	83	2.49	109	3.27
32	0.96	58	1.74	84	2.52	110	3.30
33	0.99	59	1.77	85	2.55	111	3.33
34	1.02	60	1.80	86	2.58	112	3.36
35	1.05	61	1.83	87	2.61	113	3.39
36	1.08	62	1.86	88	2.64	114	3.42
37	1.11	63	1.89	89	2.67	115	3.45
38	1.14	64	1.92	90	2.70	116	3.48
39	1.17	65	1.95	91	2.73	117	3.51
40	1.20	66	1.98	92	2.76	118	3.54
41	1.23	67	2.01	93	2.79	119	3.57
42	1.26	68	2.04	94	2.82	120	3.60
43	1.29	69	2.07	95	2.85	121	3.63
44	1.32	70	2.10	96	2.88	122	3.66
45	1.35	71	2.13	97	2.91	123	3.69
46	1.38	72	2.16	98	2.94	124	3.72
47	1.41	73	2.19	99	2.97	125	3.75
48	1.44	74	2.22	100	3.00	126	3.78
49	1.47	75	2.25	101	3.03	127	3.81
50	1.50	76	2.28	102	3.06	128	3.84
51	1.53	77	2.31	103	3.09	129	3.87
52	1.56	78	2.34	104	3.12	130	3.90
53	1.59	79	2.37	105	3.15		
54	1.62	80	2.40	106	3.18		
55	1.65	81	2.43	107	3.21		

ADR beyond this point requires two powers.

Body Power:

A common option for Body Power is to multiply the character's weight by two or three, or even by four when a character's starting weight is only 100 lbs.

References: (Weight x 2) A.C.E., *Enemies at Large*. Diamond, *Into the Sub-Realm*. (Weight x 3) Bull, *Crisis at Crusader Citadel*. Ghengis Chi, *Search for the Sensei*. (Weight x 4) The Fat Lady, *Organized Crimes*. Mammoth, V&V rulebook.

Diminished Senses:

One option for this weakness is to cut in half all of a character's chances to Detect Hidden and Detect Danger.

References: Razorback, *Danger in the Depths #1*. Sequoya, *The Great Iridium Con*. Vulture, *Crisis at Crusader Citadel*.

Emotion Control:

As a rulebook clarification, the standard range in inches equals the character's Intelligence.

References: Blonde Berserker, *Pre-Emptive Strike*. Nightmare, *Most Wanted Vol. 1*. Pro-Life, *For the Greater Good*. Serena, *The Great Iridium Con*. The Purple Mask, *To Tackle the T.O.T.E.M.*

Flight:

As noted in the rulebook, characters with hyper-flight can travel faster than the speed of sound in the Earth's atmosphere. Although temperature and other environmental factors come into play, as a ballpark figure sound travels through the air at approximately 770 mph, or 3388" per turn.

Heightened Defense:

Characters with or without this power can train in Defense (also called Combat Evasion). Each level of training gives the character -1 to be hit while conscious and mobile. Characters cannot train in Combat Evasion more than four times.

References: Darc Warp, *Enemies at Large*. Felina, *The Sands of Time*. (Inferred) Brainwave, *Most Wanted Vol. 3*. Ward, *Assassin*.

Heightened Senses:

Increased detection scores (acting like a 'Sixth Sense') could derive from detective abilities or another profession that forces a character to stay alert.

References: Johnny Danger and the Mask of Midnight, *Vigilantes International*. Matador and Ranger 423rd, *Enemies at Large*.

Sonar provides 360-degree scanning (similar to Radar Ability). Other bonuses may apply.

References: Cancer, *Signs of the Zodiac*. Stigmata, *Most Wanted Vol. 1*. Tympanus, *Pre-Emptive Strike*.

A common baseline for Tracking Ability requires the character to save vs. Intelligence 1d20 every hour, -1 per hour old the trail is. Other modifiers may apply, and other types of tracking are possible.

References: Lightning-Fist, V&V rulebook. Street Wolf, *Vigilantes International*. Tomahawk, *To Tackle the T.O.T.E.M.*

Illusions B:

Rulebook guidelines for "solid energy" illusions apply with the power to animate creations out of earth/sand.

References: Earthquake, *Assassin*. Pharaoh, *The Sands of Time*.

Invisibility:

In place of permanent invisibility, this power could give a character a distinct appearance that acts as Invisibility only against matching surroundings (e.g. in shadows or against an earth background). PR = 0. (This power variation differs from the skill to hide in shadows described in some V&V materials.)

References: (Shadows) Shredder, *The Dawn of DNA*. (Earth Background) Terra-Rizer, *Super-Crooks & Criminals*.

Magical Spells:

The spell Thunderbolt attacks as Lightning Control, 2d8 damage, with a carrier Sonic attack, 1d12 damage. PR = 7. The range varies by individual.

References: Capricorn, *Signs of the Zodiac*. Devilspawn and Malastra, *The Great Iridium Con*.

Mutant Power

x2 Power Points. This option is possible with other powers as well.

References: (Mutant Power) Ward, *Assassin*. (Chemical Power) Gargan, *Enemies at Large*.

x2 Strength is another possibility. (When applicable, add Heightened Strength before doubling the score.)

References: (Mutant Power) Behemoth, *Death Duel with the Destroyers*. (Mammal/Body Power) Mole, *Into the Sub-Realm*.

Non-Corporeality:

As implied in the rulebook, ghosts of the deceased have Non-Corporeality (sometimes permanent).

References: Esprit, *Vigilantes International*. Indian Spirits, *The Secret in the Swamp*. The Shroud/Spectre, *Opponents Unlimited*.

Pet:

In place of an animal from the rulebook, a pet can be a unique type of creature.

References: Bluegill/Kraken, *Super-Crooks & Criminals*. Talas Baum/plants, *The Trick/Glurp*, *Enemies at Large*.

Physical Handicap:

A weakness to the character's legs impairs ground movement but does not affect a character's Agility score or other basic characteristics.

References: Glacia, *Pre-Emptive Strike*. The Meganaut, *Devil's Domain*. Mummy, *The Sands of Time*. Stargazer, *F.O.R.C.E.*

Poison/Venom:

This power commonly attacks as Chemical Power or HTH. Other attack types can apply.

References: Evergreen and Mace, *Crisis at Crusader Citadel*. Buzzard and Spyder, *Most Wanted Vol. 1*.

Psionics:

One form of Psionics makes a character unaffected by all mental attacks. Immunity to mental attacks also works as a permanent form of Willpower.

References: (Psionics) Phelgathon, *Enemies at Large*. (Willpower) Brainwave, *Most Wanted Vol. 3*.

Special Requirement:

Characters that rely on a 'secret formula' often require the substance

once per day to function normally. A less frequent dosage is also possible.

References: Dragonhand and Mirage, *Most Wanted Vol. 1*. Psi-Demon, *Opponents Unlimited*. Shrew and Temper, *Crisis at Crusader Citadel*.

Special Weapon:

Smoke bombs/pellets obscure vision as Darkness Control. The smoke dissipates after several turns. Windy conditions might speed up the process.

References: Crossfire, *Most Wanted Vol. 1*. Ben E. Jahmoka and Rocket Ma'am, *Opponents Unlimited*.

Teleportation

For reference, one mile = 5280 feet (or 1056" in game terms). One light year is approximately 5.878 trillion miles (6,207,168,000,000,000" in game terms).

Transformation:

A character who transforms into mist defends as Non-Corporeality.

References: Baron Victor Von Heinrich, *Terror by Night*. Nospherata, *Most Wanted Vol. 3*.

As a twist, Power Activation could give the character a new physical body (perhaps with a different sex, age, weight, and basic characteristics from the original self). The new body has the character's other powers and weaknesses.

References: Tetsuo/Hitomi, *The Great Bridge*. Louis Clemenceau/Esprit, *Vigilantes International*.

Vulnerability:

Following a classic interpretation of Achilles' Heel, this weakness could make part of the character's body vulnerable when hit. A special attack to that area doubles the damage and effects already outlined in Section 3.4 of the rulebook.

References: Blonde Berserker, *Pre-Emptive Strike*. Trillium, *Alone into the Night*.

Willpower B:

One option for a permanent power is the ability to overcome poisons. Immunity to poisons also works as a Special/Body Power.

References: Wilderbeast, *Enemies at Large*. (Plant Powers: Special) Sequoia, *The Great Iridium Con*.



FALLING DAMAGE

Section 8.2 of the V&V rulebook tells how normal falling damage equals the number of inches fallen that turn multiplied by the square root of the object's Basic Hits. For quick reference, here are the square roots to use for weights as high as 2000 lbs. (40 Basic Hits).

Basic Hits	Square Root						
1	1.000	11	3.317	21	4.583	31	5.568
2	1.414	12	3.464	22	4.690	32	5.657
3	1.732	13	3.606	23	4.796	33	5.745
4	2.000	14	3.742	24	4.899	34	5.831
5	2.236	15	3.873	25	5.000	35	5.916
6	2.449	16	4.000	26	5.099	36	6.000
7	2.646	17	4.123	27	5.196	37	6.083
8	2.828	18	4.243	28	5.292	38	6.164
9	3.000	19	4.359	29	5.385	39	6.245
10	3.162	20	4.472	30	5.477	40	6.325

Warning! Some flying foes try to drop their enemies from great heights.

References: Vulture, *Crisis at Crusader Citadel*. Malastra's Demon, *The Great Iridium Con*.