

DDTTRPG NEW ORLEANS PLAYTEST PACKET

A Goodwin Automotive Design Roleplaying Game

By

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Background and Setting Mood:

In this game, you will be playing as specialized police detectives who solve oneirocrimes. Oneirocrimes are a distinct zone of criminality that relates to the oneirospace AKA the dream world. A specialized oneiro-police, colloquially known as “Sleepers”, duties consist of regular detective work and going under into the dreamworld. Regular detective work is largely consistent with reality (of course with dramatized and fictitious elements), oneirospace investigations typically involve ruminating on crime scenes in dreams, entering a suspects mind, or exploring the local somnopolis, AKA a dream city.

For this specific setting, players will create and play as several plainclothes detectives for the New Orleans Police Department in May 2006, nine months after the events of Hurricane Katrina in August of 2005. This time period is the furthest setting in the future so far for DDTTRPG, players can obtain access to more complex computer equipment, cell phones, and more. The New Orleans Police Department (NOPD) is now severely understaffed after large numbers of officers abandoned New Orleans during Katrina. Many resources are spread thin and the entire department is extremely corrupt.

This police department is currently the most corrupt out of any setting and the weakest in terms of overall resources. Player detectives will typically be tasked with conducting their own field autopsies, bagging their own evidence, and usually left to rely on each other with little backup. Player created Sleepers should be danger worthy, probably corrupt, and ready to go at it alone without help from their department heads.

New Orleans, 2006, is distinct from the other DDTTRPG settings (San Francisco, 1991 and Toronto, 1995) for these reasons as well as many more.

To give a refresher and an idea of what the rest of the game is like, here is a quick background on the other settings. In San Francisco, 1991, it's rampant with oneirocultists. Charismatic cult leaders gather huge numbers of cultists and corrupt oneiro-research groups with wealthy backers lobby the government to essentially use the general public as a sample group for their research. The SFPD oneirocrimes unit is a result of this. After three decades of operations, they have become the most elite oneirodetectives in the world.

In Toronto, March 1995, it's been a few years since the extreme Oneiropague pandemic swept the provinces of Ontario, Quebec, and New England. Many people have died and the city is largely a ghost town. The overall police department is typically well funded and oneiro-detectives are usually hired on as specialists or promoted by merit. Campaigns set in Toronto typically deal with gang violence, complex political espionage, elaborate serial killing organizations, and a burgeoning oneirotourism market.

As stated previously, the New Orleans Police Department is extremely corrupt, understaffed, and spread *thin* by the aftermath of Katrina. They are responsible for policing their Orleans Parish jurisdiction. New Orleans itself is still flooded, traumatized, and can be (albeit deservedly) hostile to members of law enforcement. It also harbors much of America's failures and is likely cursed by the countless historical traumas that have befallen the city. Like all other places with capable oneirospaces, there are rumors of low level psionic energy present amongst the populace.

Game Inspiration and Setting Influences that can help:

Games - **Disco Elysium***, Left 4 Dead 2, Condemned: Criminal Origins, Resident Evil 7.

Movies and TV - Bad Lieutenant: Port of Call - New Orleans, Wild at Heart, Dirty Harry,

Easy Rider, Memories of Murder, Zodiac, **The Wire**, True Detective

Music - **Music Has the Right to Children by Boards of Canada.**

Books - A Confederacy of Dunces, Naked Lunch.

TTRPGS - Over the Edge, Dogs in the Vineyard, Hypermall, Call of Cthulhu.

Character Creation:

To start with character creation, a player should start thinking about what type of cop they want to play. You could make a pure numbers type guy who solves everything through receipts and wire transfers or make a meathead who just beats in heads with a nightstick. Also start thinking about their history, how they came to be an oneirocrimes detective. And last, think of some political history, folklore, and urban legends that would have influenced your character's childhood and ancestral upbringing. The last part seems a little weird, but this game is partly about exploring themes of the past, cultural trauma, and hauntology. (Read a bunch of Mark Fisher, listen to Boards of Canada, and watch Inland Empire 20 times then you'll understand the weird.)

After thinking a bit about your character concept we can start creating some traits for your character. The first trait we will create is your character's **Central Ideology**. This is essentially your character's political motivation and belief system. This can be broad or specific, depending on how detailed you want to make your cop's politics. Some people have put stuff about just wanting to better humanity through being nice, others (aka myself (S.S.)) write 5 paragraphs about an incoming apocalypse that my cop needs to delay through acts of gay terrorism.

In conjunction with all of these traits, players are going to create pieces of equipment and clothing to accompany the traits. Kind of like a bastardized version of signs in *Over the Edge*. For the Central Ideology, create a **service weapon** for your cop. It can be anything within reason, just double check with the game master. Give the service weapon some flavor as well, make it significant. Along with your Central Ideology, go ahead and create two **Supporting Beliefs** and two pieces of **miscellaneous equipment**. The Supporting Beliefs should be beliefs that work in conjunction with your cop's central ideology, and typically there should be one that relates to your style of police work. Basically ensure there is a praxis to your cop's theory. For example someone might come up with a Laissez-Faire Markets or Financial Investigation supporting belief to go with their Classical Liberalism ideology. The equipment can also be anything within reason, in the Toronto campaign, Dluds and Sean both put down flashlights as a piece of equipment.

Then, create a **Flaw** for your character. It can be anything, just a serious character flaw that will change how your character interacts with the world. My character has severe

insomnia so he has to balance this out by taking lots and lots of sleeping pills. There isn't a corresponding piece of equipment for your character's flaw, but rather your character's **Vice Dicepool**. The vice dicepool is the game representation of the nasty habit that keeps your character going throughout the investigation. My insomniac character self medicates with sleeping pills, so his vice dicepool would be called "Sleeping Pills". Along with the Vice Dicepool, go and create your cop's **Physical Dicepool**. This is the representation of your character's health and endurance. It is where their HP is sourced from, it could be something as simple as "Strength" or "Athletics".

Next, create two **Background Traits**, something like Has-Been Tennis Pro or MKUltra victim. Alongside these, describe some **skills** that go along with these traits. A Has-Been Tennis Pro would be good at running, have contacts within sports, and could potentially bluff their way out of sticky situations with their faded stardom. A Georges Bataille Scholar (he's a philosopher, and yes someone has actually made this trait) could quote obscure philosophy and mingle within academic circles. Make sure your character is equipped to handle the difficulties that could come with a police investigation, or not, whatever makes your character interesting.

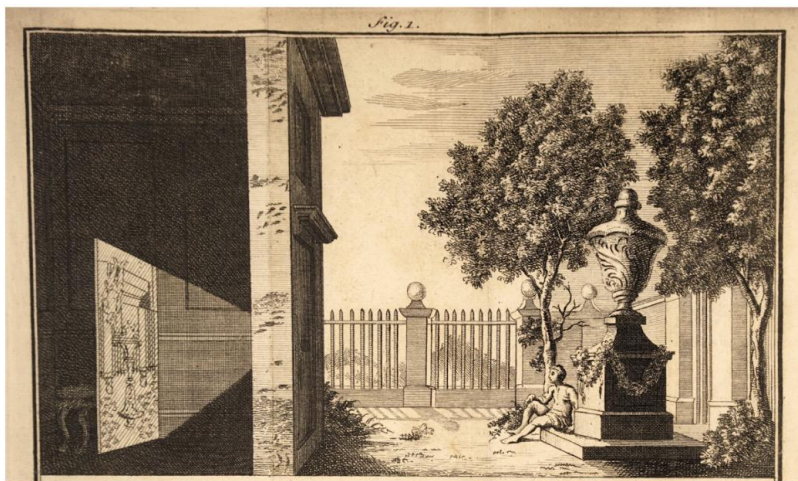
After your Background Traits and integrated skills, create your **Will Dicepool**. This is the gamified version of your character's intrinsic motivation, it's what keeps him going. Someone might make their Will a dead relative or a family heirloom, something they emotionally ruminate on that motivates them. Others might tie it to their ideology, a fascist motivated by authority. Give it a name corresponding to its source.

Next, create a **Fear**, **Desire**, **Memory**, and **Symbol**. These are mostly flavor for your character, but become especially important when going under into the oneirospace. They can each be a couple sentences describing your character's mind and emotional experiences. Along with these, you must create three nouns, three adjectives, and verbs (nine words in total) that correspond to your Fear, Desire, Memory, and Symbol (as well as who your character is). These nine words will be used for spellcasting in the oneirospace, which will be explained later. After creating these, also create a **Spirit Dicepool**. This is a dicepool that represents your character's psionic ability, both in the real world and the oneirospace, as well as their overall spirituality. Like the other dice pools, give it a name that gives it flavor and corresponds to its source within your character.

Finally, you will create your cop's **Essence**. This is ultimately your cop's gut instincts, imagination, and perception. It is also the representation of who your cop really is deep down and their outlook on the world. Don't be afraid to get meta with it, we are essentially boiling down your cop's archetype into a thematic/evocative trait. Accompanying your Essence should be an art piece that you pick out. Often we've picked paintings, but it can be a book, a song, a building, a photograph. Just an art piece. Here's an example essence from my (S.S.I) and Robbers' characters:

Camera Obscura - My photos are how I make sense of everything. Trusting your memory means risking personal bias. Photos are the only thing I can rely on 100%. Never trust somebody who contradicts this. Personal bias causes error, error causes failure of understanding. If I cannot understand the world, I am nothing more than a subject. My camera is a lens of objectivity.

I am from a long line of writers, artists and poets. My ancestors used their art the same way I use my photos. There is an innate subconscious understanding of the universe that runs in my veins. I use this to aid in understanding the 'supernatural', if you can even call it that anymore.



Thee Luds^



"Lafayette Park"

That tennis pro; who found his kid missing with his hands chopped off swimming in an acid bath in South Tenderloin, dies another death each day.

Yes I still carry the headband in my left jacket pocket. Its old sweat speaks to me.

The average killer imports textiles, we don't care. I eat, breathe, and fuck this city. I feel every wind it sends me.

Mine^

After all of this, your cop's sheet should contain the following:

- **An Essence and its own art piece.**
- **A Central Ideology and a service weapon.**
- **Two Supporting Beliefs and two pieces of equipment.**
- **A Flaw**
- **Two Background Traits with some corresponding skills.**
- **A Fear, Memory, Desire, and Symbol.**
- **Four Dicepools (Physical, Vice, Will, and Spirit)**

Precinct System:

The precinct is your unit's home base. It is where you go under, plan investigations, and harbor suspects. Much of the inner workings and design of the precinct is entirely up for the players to decide as a group. Don't worry about every little detail, just try and create a cohesive whole together that satisfies a collective vision. As a player group, ask yourselves the following, then create your precinct:

a. Budget

Is the station well funded? Is it dingy and dated? Will you have adequate access to resources? Do not create a super rich golden powerhouse for no good reason. Why would your station have lots of money? What does that say about the area your unit operates in?

b. Neighborhood

What's the neighborhood like? Who lives there? Where's it located in the city? Is it in the heart of downtown? Or the industrial outskirts? Maybe the countryside, or a recently refurbished station near the airport?

c. Colleagues

Create a handful of colleagues your inspector knows in the precinct. A good amount is one to three per inspector. These are your core relationships. What is their rank? What's their job? Who are they? What do they look like?

d. Facilities

Does your precinct have lots of offices? A big holding cell in the middle? Is there a modern forensics lab or just a tiny evidence locker? Is there a morgue? What's the bathroom situation like? What's your precinct really about, how do these facilities represent that?

e. Look & Feel

What does your precinct look like? Is it art deco, brutalist, modern? Get creative, get weird, what's the furniture like? Is the precinct cozy and inviting? Cold and sterile? Dirty and creepy? Come up with paintings, memorials, statues, anything that gives your station some good character.

f. Unit

Your inspectors are members of the Oneirocrimes Unit. Figure out what your sleep room looks like. Where are your desks, how is the unit laid out? Have fun with it, this is your space, your second home. You've been given free reign to organize it as you please.

g. History and Reputation

Is there a history to your precinct? What's its reputation in the SFPD? Give your precinct a nickname, what do cops and the press call it?

h. Nearby Precinct

Aside from city hall and colleagues in your precinct, the nearest precinct is your closest vein of support, or source of sabotage. How close are they? Are you bitter rivals? Do your precincts cooperate frequently on investigations? Or do you hate each other's guts? Who works there? How do you know them? What are your relationships?

After creating all of that, the DDTTRPG campaign group should have a good idea of where their central cast of cops operate from and what they deal with on a day-to-day basis.

More on Dicepools:

With your custom Physical, Vice, Will, and Spirit dicepools; think about which flavor of cop you'd prefer to play. Do you want to doom spiral into drug addiction? Spend most of your time in mourning and losing yourself to systems? Or slowly go insane over the course of the investigation? Each player starts with 18d6 to spread across these pools. A completely neutral cop could end up having 4d6 in his Physical Dicepool, 6d6 in his Vice Dicepool, 4d6 in his Will Dicepool, and 4d6 in his Spirit Dicepool. A more messed up cop could throw 15d6 into her Vice Dicepool and leave the others with a d6 each. With these dice, you are assigning which areas your cop draws most of their skill from.

The typical roll in the game is 2d6, with a success happening when you score two hits. A hit happens when you get a 5 or a 6 on a die. If you roll 2d6 and get a 5 and a 5, that is a success. If you roll a 3 and 2, that is a failure. To add more dice to a roll, players will source dice from one of their three dicepools. Seedy, violent, quick, criminal, stealthy, and cool actions draw from your cop's Vice Dicepool. Physical, strong, mighty, intimidating, and powerful actions draw from your Physical Dicepool. Bureaucratic, white-collar, political, methodical, logical, and professional actions draw dice from your Will Dicepool. Weird, heady, spiritual, psionic, theoretical, and esoteric actions draw from your Spirit Dicepool.

You can add as many dice as you'd like from the respective dicepool during a roll, just make sure to track how many you just used. When you run out of dice in a dicepool, you will have to recharge it. For example, if I made my Vice Dicepool "Alcohol", and had 0/12d6, I would have to drink a beer to recharge it. If I chose my dead husband for my Will Dicepool, I would have my character spend an afternoon at his grave to recharge it. If I chose "Orgone" as my Spirit Dicepool, I would have to spend a day in my cop's handmade "Orgone Accumulator" to recharge his dicepool. A Physical Dicepool is recharged simply through rest. Each action taken to recharge a dicepool will recharge it by 1d6, a good night's sleep will recharge all of a cop's dicepools by 1d6 respectively.

If a cop is skilled in a task, or has an applicable trait for it, then add one hit. If the cop has a relevant piece of equipment, you can also add another hit. If my cop wants to look for clues in the dark and has a flashlight, that would already give me one of the two

hits I need for success. If a character's flaw is applicable in a scene they will either roll one less dice or need one more hit to get a success (three instead of two.) There are critical successes as well. If you roll three 6's that's a critical success.

Portmanteaus and Spellcasting:

When in the oneirospace, aka "going under", detectives have the option to ruminate on a crime scene, enter the mind of another individual, or visit the local somnopolis. While in this oneirospace, players can create and cast **Portmanteaus**. Portmanteaus are two word combinations that create spells in the oneirospace. These spells are up to the interpretation of the group at the time of their casting. After the spell has been interpreted, have the player write down its name and effects, then lock it. A player only has six Portmanteau slots, after they are filled no more Portmanteaus can be created. These spells can offer insight into the case through elaborate dreams, or cause permanently harmful effects to their victims. For example, Ziffinon's character, Inspector Cadea Moreni, has a spell that can give people OCD.

Conflict and Wounds:

Conflict is still in an extremely unfinished state, so far during the initial conflict. Total up each party's stake in the conflict, what do they have to lose? Then they add however many dice they want to throw from their dicepools into the conflict. Each d6 represents an action, people can choose to backup each action with more dice from the initial stake.

When everyone runs out of dice the conflict is over, tally up consequences and what happens next. Players can escalate the conflict to add more dice to their side.

If a character is wounded or injured during a conflict, subtract the number of dice used in the action from their HP and add a related wound. **Just a refresher, your cop's HP correlates directly with the initial amount of dice in their Physical Dicepool. A character with 14d6 in "Athletics" has 14 HP.** A wound will have further consequences for your cop after the conflict has ended.

Checklist and Final Notes:

Remember, a cop should consist of atleast:

- An Essence and its own art piece.
- A Central Ideology and a service weapon.
- Two Supporting Beliefs and two pieces of equipment.
- A Flaw
- Two Background Traits with some corresponding skills.
- A Fear, Memory, Desire, and Symbol.
- Four Dicepools (Physical, Vice, Will, and Spirit)

They should also have a name, rank, and some background info. Think of their appearance and clothing, make them a character. Make sure to assign 18d6 to your character's dicepools and remember to get your cop's HP from the Physical dicepool.

Ensure that your character is run by the game master and makes sense for the world. Also make sure to create your group's Precinct together and run it by the game master as well.

Remember, this is an investigative-political-gonzo-surreal-lightscifi cop game.

You're playing as detectives who hunt suspects and solve cases through dreams and dooms spiralling to the worst of themselves. Good luck.