G JU R P S



Science Runs Amok in B-Movie Adventures!



STEVE JACKSON GAMES

## WATCH THE SKIES!

Alien invaders! Giant lizards from another age! Flesh-eating zombies! Colossal insects! Mad scientists! Blobs! Only you can defend humanity, civilization, and the American Way from these terrible horrors.

GURPS Atomic Horror contains everything you need to roleplay the science-fiction and horror movies of the 1950s. The campaign can be as scary as The Thing, as dramatic as The Day the Earth Stood Still, as strange as Little Shop of Horrors or as goofy as Plan 9 From Outer Space – the choice is yours. Characters can be square-jawed scientists and military men, heroic explorers, misunderstood teenagers, cold-war spies, G-men, gangsters . . . or just ordinary folks caught up in unearthly weirdness.

#### **GURPS Atomic Horror** contains:

- A comprehensive guide to '50s politics, society, and attitudes suitable for any campaign not just science fiction/horror.
- Five new alien races, completely described and ready to invade the Earth. In fact, some of them are already here!
- Guidelines for creating more than a dozen different kinds of movie monsters, from gill-men to carnivorous plants to living human brains in jars.
- Alternate world campaign ideas, like a '50s where the Nazis won World War II, or a futuristic '50s where our own flying saucers conquer space.
- A detailed filmography listing dozens of '50s science horror films, from the classics to the turkeys.



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GURPS Basic Set, Third Edition, Revised and Compendium I:
Character Creation are required to use this supplement in a GURPS campaign. GURPS
Atomic Horror can also be used as a sourcebook for any roleplaying system.

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## INTRODUCTION



Keep watching the skies!

- The Thing (From Another World!). 1951

Horror descends from the stars. It crawls from atomic test sites and slithers from black ocean depths. In the 1950s, the Earth came dangerously close to being overrun by alien entities. *GURPS Atomic Horror* recreates the science-horror movies of the Fifties and puts the PCs in the unenviable position of protecting the Earth from alien invasion. Besides the fear of invasion from space, the people of '50s Earth are threatened by out-of-control experiments, primeval monsters, and astronomical disasters. Not to mention fears of Communist subversion and atomic annihilation.

This campaign setting includes alien races, monstrous menaces, and a plethora of adventure seeds and ideas. The players can be a heroic team of scientists and soldiers, a ring of steely-eyed cold-war espionage agents, or even a gang of happy-go-lucky teens caught up in events beyond their understanding. *GURPS Atomic Horror* is fixed firmly in the USA, but other parts of the world are not ignored.

An expanded filmography maps out the important movies of the decade, and others that are still part of the genre although they were released prior to, or following, the '50s proper – both remakes of classic Fifties movies and new pictures in the same spirit. On whatever level they're appreciated, the films of the '50s are just gloriously *fun. GURPS Atomic Horror* seeks to capture this spirit and turn it into a playable, exciting game.

Remember, "the price of freedom is eternal vigilance." *They're* out there, and it's up to freedom-loving humans like you to keep our planet safe for democracy. Good luck, and God bless.

- Paul Elliott & Chris McCubbin

#### ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Paul Elliott is an amateur game designer, with plenty of works in progress and at least one roleplaying game published on the Internet. After reading *GURPS Illuminati* he started doing some major research and combined his fascination with cults and secret societies with his B.A. in ancient history. Now he writes books on fringe religions, cults, and terror groups for a living. He moved to the east coast of Yorkshire, England, a few years ago where he lives in satisfied seclusion with his wife, Christine, son Bradley, and four carpet-hopping house rabbits.

Chris McCubbin is a Nebraska native and a non-graduate of the University of Nebraska – Lincoln, in English. His other books for SJ Games include *GURPS Callahan's Crosstime Saloon*, based on the award-winning science fiction classics by Spider Robinson, and *GURPS Fantasy Folk*, winner of the 1991 Gamer's Choice Award for best roleplaying supplement. He's into good movies, fun books, decent restaurants, alternative rock music, and BBSing. He lives in Austin with his wife, Lynette Alcorn, and the two stereotypical cats, Polychrome and Clipper.

#### ABOUT GURPS

Steve Jackson Games is committed to full support of the *GURPS* system. Our address is SJ Games, Box 18957, Austin, TX 78760. Please include a self-addressed, stamped envelope (SASE) any time you write us! Resources include:

Pyramid (www.sjgames.com/pyramid/). Our online magazine includes new GURPS rules and articles. It also covers Dungeons and Dragons, Traveller, World of Darkness, Call of Cthulhu, and many more top games – and other Steve Jackson Games releases like In Nomine, INWO, Car Wars, Toon, Ogre Miniatures, and more. Pyramid subscribers also have access to playtest files online!

New supplements and adventures. GURPS continues to grow, and we'll be happy to let you know what's new. A current catalog is available for an SASE. Or check out our website (below).

*Errata*. Everyone makes mistakes, including us – but we do our best to fix our errors. Up-to-date errata sheets for all *GURPS* releases, including this book, are available from SJ Games; be sure to include an SASE. Or download them from the Web – see below.

*Gamer input.* We value your comments, for new products as well as updated printings of existing titles!

*Internet.* Visit us on the World Wide Web at www.sjgames.com for an online catalog, errata, updates,

Q&A, and much more. *GURPS* has its own Usenet group, too: rec.games.frp.gurps.

*GURPSnet*. This e-mail list hosts much of the online discussion of *GURPS*. To join, e-mail majordomo@io.com with "subscribe GURPSnet-L" in the body, or point your web browser to **gurpsnet.sjgames.com**.

The *GURPS Atomic Horror* web page is at www.sjgames.com/gurps/books/atomichorror/.

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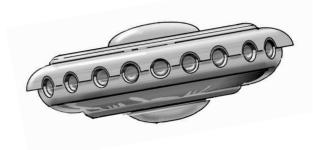
Rules and statistics in this book are specifically for the *GURPS Basic Set*, *Third Edition*. Any page reference that begins with a B refers to the *GURPS Basic Set* – e.g., p. B102 means p. 102 of the *GURPS Basic Set*, *Third Edition*. Page references that begin with CI indicate *GURPS Compendium I*. Other references are AE for *GURPS Alternate Earths*, CII for *Compendium II*, HT for *High-Tech*, PM for *Places of Mystery*, S for *Space*, UT for *Ultra-Tech*, WT for *Warehouse 23*, WWi for *Who's Who 1*, WWii for *Who's Who 2*, and Y for *Y2K*.

For a full list of abbreviations, see p. CI181 or the updated web list at www.sjgames.com/gurps/abbrevs.html.

#### Key to Flying Saucer Deck Plan

- 1 Gravity elevator
- 2 Control room
- 3 Map table
- 4 Weapons station
- 5 Engineering station
- 6 Captain's/pilot's/navigator's stations
- 7 View screens
- 8 Hibernation capsules
- 9 Double-occupancy cabin
- 10 Warp drive and antimatter pods
- 11 Medical room
- 12 Lounge with floor windows and tractorbeam generator
- 13 Communications room (with psi-helmet if Loi vessel)
- 14 Library/museum of home and other worlds
- 15 Engine maintenance
- 16 Tool shop and equipment bay
- 17 Extendable ramp
- 18 Main thruster

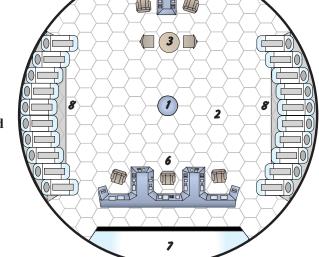
1 hex = 1 yard



Forward **L** 

Main Level

Upper Level



into the air and stay there was a direct result of Loi sabotage in retaliation for the White Sands incident.

The Loi use remote-control flying probes (which often appear as shining globes during the day or glowing fireballs at night). These allow audio and visual reconnaissance of places too sensitive to visit in person. During World War II the Loi used these "flying eyes" to monitor man's advances in rocket and aircraft technology without risking scout craft in war zones.

The Loi will make great use of their ability to project thought waves through probes. Since the effective range is perhaps 200 miles, the saucer can land a probe near a target without exposing itself to human eyes. Through the probe, the Loi can communicate telepathically

with a human using the Telesend skill. This allows them to communicate on equal terms with the human race, but can also be used to try to dupe it ("We come in peace to warn

you of an imminent nuclear war," etc.). No alien race yet discovered has the power to see into the future (not even the Vortun, who only look into the past) but the Loi may pretend that they *do* have this power, to scare mankind. Innocent "contactees" can relay Loi messages to interested witnesses.

Even more useful for Loi intelligence-gathering operations is the skill of Telereceive. Mindwipe will also come in handy when humans have been aboard a flying saucer or have been taken to the Loi homeworld!

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#### INTELLIGENCE AGENCIES

*BfV*: The West German counter-espionage agency. Infiltrated by Communist agents at an early date.

*BND:* The West German Federal intelligence agency. Its ex-Nazi chief, Gehlen, approached the CIA after the war with a mass of Soviet secrets. Gehlen was put in charge of the BND and worked closely with the CIA to infiltrate agents into East Germany and the Soviet Union. The BND had a bad record in foreign operations, and it was believed to be compromised early on. Many agents were ex-Nazi officers. Gehlen was distrusted by the BfV, but he was, nevertheless, the Americans' chief weapon in the Cold War.

CIA: America's Central Intelligence Agency is directed by Allen Dulles (who took over from General Walter Bedell Smith in 1953). The CIA is a civilian intelligence organization that advises the National Security Council and collects and evaluates intelligence relating to national security. It handles foreign operations only. CIA HQ is a complex of buildings at 2430 E Street in the Foggy Bottom section of Washington. There are West Coast offices in L.A., San Francisco, Denver, and Seattle. Besides scanning foreign papers, press releases, broadcasts, technological and scientific literature, and the reports of agents abroad, the CIA carries out extensive espionage operations overseas. Separate regional divisions concentrate on different parts of the globe.

KGB: The Ministry of State Security of the Soviet Union, in charge of espionage against the West. Its tasks are similar to those of the CIA, but the KGB places much more emphasis on spy networks. The First Directorate actually carries out these espionage operations. The Second Directorate coordinates with Communists abroad (and maintains Fifth Column operations), monitors the loyalty of Soviet citizens, and assassinates or kidnaps opponents at home and abroad. Assassination is the job of the Ninth Section for Terror and Diversion, known as SMERSH. Assassins are always monitored by other agents.

MfS: The East German espionage and intelligence agency. Obstructing the West German armed forces and government defense policy is a paramount goal, mainly accomplished through counterfeiting information and documents. Other operations include penetrating important ministries and public bodies in West Germany and Europe. The MfS has offices in East Berlin and is probably the main tool of Communism in that city.

*MI5:* Britain's counter-espionage organization, also known as the Security Service. It cannot arrest, and delegates that task to the police Special Branch.

MI6: The British Secret Intelligence Service (SIS) is the espionage agency of the government. Its head is called "C" (not "M"!). SIS was accused of being a tool of the Foreign Office, and also of having been infiltrated by the Soviets in the early '50s. Absolute secrecy is always maintained; MI6 is easily the most secret intelligence organization in the world. All electronic espionage is handled by GCHQ at Cheltenham in cooperation with the NSA. Most agents are ex-military; the "MI" stands for military intelligence.

Mossad: Set up in 1950, the small, overseas intelligence and espionage section of the Israeli intelligence service is perhaps the best known. Agents have been placed in all hostile Arab countries. Mossad was responsible for kidnapping the Nazi war criminal Adolf Eichmann, and for discovering the presence of Nazi rocket experts in Egypt after the Suez Crisis in 1956. Virtually all agents are Israeli nationals.

*NSA:* The U.S. National Security Agency, created in 1953 as a communications and electronic surveillance organization, is controlled by the Secretary of Defense and is the President's prime source of intelligence and foreign-policy advice.

SDECE: A French secret service that conducts espionage abroad.

#### 1954 to 1956

The atomic scientist Robert Oppenheimer is declared to be a security

The U.S. tests another H-bomb at Bikini atoll.

Sen. McCarthy carries his hunt for subversion into the U.S. Army.

The Senate eventually votes to "condemn" his activities.

Both the European Defense Community and the European Political Community collapse as cooperative organizations.

Khrushchev returns from talks with Mao Tse-tung and declares, "Conflict with China is inevitable."

James W. McLamore and David Edgerton create Burger King of Miami, later to go nationwide.



In the Soviet Union, Bulganin and Khrushchev succeed Malenkov.

Albert Einstein dies.

Eden succeeds Churchill in Britain.

A 14-year-old black boy is lynched in Mississippi.

Blacks begin a city bus boycott in Montgomery, Alabama.

A conference on the reunification of Germany begins in Geneva.

The European Parliament first meets in Strasbourg.

Juan Peron resigns as Argentina's president. Commercial TV begins in Britain.

The hanging of Ruth Ellis fuels the anti-capital punishment movement in Britain.

The Austrian Peace Treaty is signed and Russian troops leave the country.

George Grivas' EOKA begins terrorist activities in Cyprus.

Atomic power is first used at Schenectady, New York.

Ray Kroc opens the McDonald's restaurant in Des Plaines, Illinois, earning \$366.12 on the first day

Bill Haley and the Comets' "Rock Around the Clock" becomes the first rock 'n' roll hit.

Supermarkets account for 60% of American grocery sales. Seven companies join forces to create the Top Value Stamp Co.

#### 1956

Khrushchev begins the "de-Stalinization" of Russia and visits Britain with Bulganin.

Grace Kelly marries Prince Rainier of Monaco.

Trans-Atlantic telephone links are established.



### Big Bugs



The giant insect – mutated by mysterious chemicals or atomic radiation – is a staple of '50s science-fiction movies. They could be spiders, ants, scorpions – or whatever. With wings they could be giant moths, bees, or flying ants. For convenience they are divided into three categories: "big bugs" average about the size of a watermelon or cocker spaniel, "great big bugs" are approximately the size of a human, and "giant bugs" are the size of a Buick or bigger.

Besides biting or clawing for cutting damage, an insect might have a special attack. A big ant's formic acid *squirt* attack does 1d-3 points of damage for 1d turns. Squirt attacks have a range of about 3 hexes, depending on the size of the ant.

A spider's venom is injected after a successful bite. If the victim fails a HT roll, he suffers 2d-1 points of damage and is paralyzed for 2d hours. Even if he succeeds, he suffers 1d points of damage and partial paralysis (-3 DX). Scorpion venom can be deadly, but a sting causes 1d+2 points of impaling damage even *before* the venom takes effect! On a failed HT roll, the target takes 5d points of damage; even on a successful roll he still takes 3d points of damage. Most "giant" venoms take effect within 1d turns.

Strange and exotic variants are possible – for example, lightning bugs that emit hard radiation! Victims take 200 rads every minute spent within a 10-hex radius of one of the bugs. See pp. CII145-148 for the effects of radiation.

#### Big Bug

 ST: 2
 Move/Dodge: 5/9 (Fliers move 10)

 DX: 14
 PD/DR: 2/1
 Size: <1</th>

 IQ: 2
 Damage: 1d-5 cut\*
 Wt.: 5-25 lbs.

**HT:** 14/3 **Reach:** C \*See special damage above.

#### Great Big Bug

 ST: 13
 Move/Dodge: 10/9 (Fliers move 15)

 DX: 12
 PD/DR: 2/2
 Size: 1

 IQ: 2
 Damage: 1d+2 cut\*
 Wt.: 100+ lbs.

**HT:** 13 **Reach:** 1 \*See special damage above.

#### Giant Bug

**ST:** 60 **Move/Dodge:** 14/9 (Fliers move 20) **DX:** 13 **PD/DR:** 3/6 **Size:** 9+ **IO:** 2 **Damage:** 3d cut\* **Wt.:** 1,000+ lbs.

**HT:** 15/30 **Reach:** 3 \*See special damage above.





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