GURPS

Fourth Edition

Adaptations™

By William H. Stoddard

STEVE JACKSON GAMES

Your Favorite Worlds . . . GURPSified!

GURPS is a fun, flexible system, useful in every kind of genre. Now, *GURPS Adaptations* takes that toolkit and shows you how to build your favorite fictional settings. With six examples ranging from the *Odyssey* to *Dracula*, *GURPS Adaptations* will guide you and your players as you tell new stories in worlds you already know.

GURPS Adaptations requires the **GURPS Basic Set**, *Fourth Edition*.

By **William H. Stoddard**

Additional Material by **John M. Ford, Kenneth Hite,** and **Steve Jackson**

Illustrated by **Paul Daly, Jean Elizabeth Martin, Dan Smith,** and **Nikola Vrtis**

STEVE JACKSON GAMES
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CONTENTS

> *. . . a probable
> impossibility is to be
> preferred to a thing
> improbable and yet
> possible.*
>
> *– Aristotle,*
> ***Poetics***

INTRODUCTION

One of the big attractions of roleplaying games is exploring the worlds of our favorite books or movies. The Cthulhu Mythos, *The Lord of the Rings, Star Trek,* and many other published works have licensed game rules – sometimes multiple sets. But maybe you'd rather use **GURPS** than another system. Or maybe you like a fictional world no one has thought of making into a game, or one whose author or publisher won't license it. One of the major uses of **GURPS** is running campaigns in such worlds. And one of the big topics for **GURPS** questions is how to do it right!

GURPS writers have addressed this topic in the **Basic Set** (especially pp. B486-522) and in supplements, especially genre-focused supplements such as **GURPS Fantasy, GURPS Horror, GURPS Space,** and **GURPS Zombies.** This material is helpful and is highly recommended. But many questions about adapting fictional sources are broader than a single genre. It's time for a systematic, full-length discussion – **GURPS Adaptations.**

In gaming, "adaptation" doesn't mean quite the same thing as in literary, graphic, or cinematic media. Rather than a retelling of the original story, *new stories* emerge from campaigns: sequels, prequels, alternative versions, or more radical transformations (see *Reinventions,* p. 7). This supplement's focus is on translating the original setting and characters, but if you want to reenvision a favorite work, you'll find suggestions on how to do so.

When you're planning a campaign based on a work of fiction or drama, **GURPS Adaptations** is your "how to" guide.

Pick your favorite novel, graphic novel, movie, television series, or other inspiration – and get started!

RECOMMENDED BOOKS

The only books that are required for use with **GURPS Adaptations** are the **GURPS Basic Set.** For adaptations of works in specific genres, the GM may find appropriate sourcebooks useful, such as **GURPS Fantasy, GURPS Horror, GURPS Mysteries, GURPS Psionic Campaigns, GURPS Space,** or **GURPS Supers.** Any book with game mechanics can be useful for the right source material – **GURPS Power-Ups 2: Perks** and **GURPS Power-Ups 6: Quirks** in particular are good with almost any source.

> *Of all fictions, the marvelous journey is the one formula that is never exhausted.*
> *– Northrop Frye,* **Anatomy of Criticism**

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

William H. Stoddard and his wife life in San Diego, California, with two cats and more books than they have time to count. He has been running **GURPS** campaigns for over 20 years, starting with **GURPS Uplift.** He has run many campaigns based on fictional or dramatic sources, about half of them using his own adaptations of the source material.

ABOUT *GURPS*

Another style of reinvention is *parody,* imitation of a source with changes that make it funny or absurd. The key to such reworking is often *incongruity,* a mismatch between the borrowed material and the newly introduced characters or setting. (Though incongruity doesn't always produce parody: *The Hobbit* starts out with a clash between the respectable Bilbo Baggins and the Viking-like dwarves, but Tolkien makes their adventures a serious and exciting story – and by the end, neither is ridiculous to the other.)

If a proposed campaign reinvents its source, the players needed to know this before they agree to participate!

Players who were anticipating heroic Chinese outlawry, for example, may not accept a remote galactic empire as a setting, however similar the themes and incidents.

Example (20KL): Instead of a professor of oceanography, his valet, and a harpooner, the *Nautilus* picks up a band of British schoolchildren (and their dog!).

Example (WM): In a future Galactic Empire, an official's injudicious instructions to a computer lead to the creation of 108 enhanced posthumans, who band together as heroic space pirates.

PREMISE

Every story is founded on a *premise,* something the audience has to assume for its events to be possible. For example, the premise of *Water Margin* is that 108 spirits are born in human form and grow up to be heroic outlaws. This is the basis for their amazing fighting skills, for the superhuman powers many of them show, and for the affinity that draws them together.

Further stories in the same fictional world share its original premise, but they may have subsidiary premises, new assumptions they take off from. Usually these have less wide-ranging implications than the original story – they extend or modify its premise rather than adopting an entirely new premise, as when Baum's *The Marvelous Land of Oz* introduced Princess Ozma as Oz's long-lost rightful ruler. A game based on a fictional source usually needs this kind of subsidiary premise. Choosing a suitable premise helps to define the campaign's starting point.

and necessary for them to find husbands. No one's view of the world would be transformed by believing in this situation; it's of interest because it creates the possibility of drama or comedy.

Stories of this type are often called "realistic" – but **GURPS** contrasts *realistic* with *cinematic* (pp. B488-489), which isn't the same distinction. For clarity, this supplement calls them *mundane* (as in Mundane Background, p. B144).

Campaigns based on a mundane premise usually suggest mundane subsidiary premises – for example, about the career developments, later lives, or children of the protagonists. But it's not impossible to shift to a fantastic key.

Example (P&P): Lydia Wickham has not been welcome at Pemberley. But she arrives without warning and appeals to her sister, Elizabeth Darcy, for help: Her husband George is being pressured about his latest gambling debts, not to repay them, but to connive at some serious crime. Lydia is afraid he'll get caught; Elizabeth can see the danger of his being blackmailed into worse crimes. Can she and her husband thwart the scheme – and should they save Wickham, once again, in the process?

Example (P&P): Georgiana Darcy has more than musical gifts; for several years, she has been hearing the voices of ghosts. On a visit to her aunt, Lady Catherine de Bourgh, she realizes that her cousin Anne has fallen under supernatural influence. Can her brother and his new wife help her uncover the mystery?

ONE IMPOSSIBLE THING

H.G. Wells described his science-fiction stories as making one impossible assumption and working out what it implied. This is what **GURPS Space,** pp. 29-30, calls the "one miracle" approach to science fiction. In this book's terms, that "one miracle" is the *premise* of a fantastic story.

There's nothing wrong with a story, or a campaign, having more than one miracle. But it's a good idea to be cautious about adding an entirely new fantastic premise. The players were probably attracted by the premise of the original source, and want to explore it. A different premise may not appeal to them; and in any case, it's not what the campaign promised them, and it takes time and attention away from the original premise.

Philosophers talk of *Occam's razor,* the principle that the simplest explanation that actually works is the best. Storytellers and campaign designers can think in terms of *Wells' razor:* The fewer and simpler premises a story has, the more easily the audience will accept it.

FANTASTIC PREMISES

Campaigns set in fantastic worlds are founded on fantastic premises – that is, on assumptions that the world is different from what most people believe in some important way. The *Odyssey* assumes that its hero has the favor of the goddess Athena, and more broadly that the Greek pantheon is real. *Dracula, 20,000 Leagues Under the Sea, Water Margin,* and *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* make other fantastic assumptions.

MUNDANE PREMISES

Some premises don't change the nature of the fictional world. Rather, they add detail to it. *Pride and Prejudice,* for example, starts out with five sisters of divergent personalities and abilities, whose modest fortunes make it both difficult

HIGH CONCEPT

The bigger cities actually contain multiple smaller locations, sometimes in vast numbers. It makes sense, though, to treat them as single places if they can be traveled across in an hour or so, using transportation available at their TL, or if they can be the site of a battle or siege.

To describe a city from a story in game mechanical terms, use the system in *GURPS City Stats.* Most of its statistics are specifically intended to define features of a community that affect games set in it, from its appearance to the severity of its law enforcement. For an example of city stats, see *The Emerald City.*

A historical city's population can be researched; a fictional one's may be stated, or can be estimated from information on populations of real cities at a comparable TL. At TL1-4, a population of 50,000-99,999 would be a major city; the capitals of many kingdoms are in this size range. A few cities are larger, and at any one time, the *entire world* may have one or two cities with a million inhabitants. At TL5, populations increase, and many more people move to cities. By TL8, there are several hundred cities with a million or more, and 30 "megacities" with over 10 million. Science fiction portrays even more urbanized worlds, up to planet-covering cities with a trillion inhabitants!

Appearance and Defense Bonus can be judged from a city's description. For government type, Control Rating, Corruption, and Military Resources, the experiences of people who visit it or live in it are a guide.

Settlements can be classed as *city-states* (politically independent, with control of the nearby countryside); *colonies* (founded by people from another city or country and partly under its control); *free cities* (included in a larger political unit, but with partial Legal Immunity inside its own boundaries); *municipalities* (included in a large political unit, and subject to its laws, but self-governing); or *subjugated* (conquered cities and other settlements without self-government or legal rights). This will usually be clear from the source.

For purposes of Area Knowledge rolls, most communities can be defined as either a Village, Town, or City; very small settlements, or smaller areas within a community, can be defined as a Neighborhood.

BUILDINGS

Smaller than settlements (usually) are buildings: artificial structures where people live and work. High-TL science-fiction settings may have arcologies, single edifices equivalent to a town or even a city. Rooms inside buildings provide settings for many scenes. In some campaigns, a structure can become something like another character, based on its appearance and atmosphere. In some worlds, a building may have spirits – guardians such as *lares* and *penates,* brownies who sneak in at night to help with housework, or ghosts of people who died in it.

A residential construction should be suited to the Status of its inhabitants. Works of fiction will often give some idea of how people of high and low Status live.

The GM can use some general rules for depicting structures. Such descriptions can be used in drawing floor plans of important places. (For *underground* construction, see *GURPS Underground Adventures,* pp. 13-14.)

THE EMERALD CITY

Population: 57,318 (Search +2)

Physical and Magical Environment
Terrain: Plains
Appearance: Beautiful (+3)   **Hygiene:** 0
Normal Mana (No Enchantment)

Culture and Economy
Language: English   **Literacy:** Native
TL: 4
Wealth: Wealthy (×5)   **Status:** -1 to 6

Political Environment
Government: Dictatorship, Thaumatocracy, City-State
CR: 3 (Corruption 0)
Military Resources: $1.1M   **Defense Bonus:** +8

Notes
These statistics represent the Emerald City under the Wizard's rule. Though it's classed as a thaumatocracy, the Wizard has no actual magical abilities, relying on trickery to keep his subjects happy and his enemies at a distance. For example, the city's appearance is only Beautiful, but having its inhabitants wear green spectacles makes it seem Very Beautiful (+4). The Wizard maintains a small army, but puts most of his revenues into entertainments and public works, including sanitation; if his reputation as a mighty sorcerer fails him, he counts on the city's high walls to deter attack. Treat it as having Reputation +3 (Protected by a mighty sorcerer; Land of Oz; All the time).

Later, under Ozma's rule, the city becomes genuinely magical and even wealthier and more beautiful – in fact, a virtual utopia.

Size

Building areas depend on the size of the building, using the following guidelines.

Floor Area (square feet)	Examples
10	Outhouse, shed, shrine, tent
50	Hut, pavilion
200	Cottage, market stall, office
1,000	Apartment, small house, tower keep
5,000	Commercial space, large house, meeting area, small industrial structure, square castle, warehouse
20,000	Enclosed commercial space (mall), fortified site, large industrial structure, lodgings, mansion, school
100,000	Hospital, huge industrial structure
Over 100,000	Major commercial structure

Organizations

Another option is to treat minor characters as members of organizations. Individual members of the organization's personnel will interact with the major characters, but they won't have character sheets at all – their capabilities and priorities are those of the organization. **GURPS Boardroom and Curia** can be used to write up organizational statistics. Tech level, number of members, organizational wealth, and other traits usually can be judged from the source. For combat forces, the definitions of elements in **GURPS Mass Combat** can be relied on instead.

Example (20KL): The *Nautilus* (pp. 42-43) has a crew of 20 with combat skills-12, Diving Suit-18, Mechanic (Submarine)-15, and Submariner-21, plus High TL +1 and Zeroed. As an organization, they're Filthy Rich (not Multimillionaire, despite Captain Nemo's huge fortune, because they don't use cash to acquire resources), giving a startup cost of $48 million (not including the value of the *Nautilus!*). They're worth 15 points as a Patron (with Special Abilities) and -20 points as Enemies. Organizational Types (**Boardroom and Curia,** pp. 11-13) include Aid (to revolutionary groups), Fraternal, Research, Secret, and Voluntary. Loyalty is Very Good.

DEFINING MAJOR CHARACTERS

When you've identified the major characters, you'll want to think about how to describe them in **GURPS** terms. This doesn't have to mean doing full character sheets; unless they're going to play an active role in the campaign, they don't need complete **GURPS** statistics. But working out a description can help you decide what sort of protagonists your campaign will have.

For any trait with multiple levels – attributes, skills, and many advantages and disadvantages – a good approach is to identify the major character who's at the high end; give his traits suitable values; and then fit other characters in between his values and average values. Major characters rarely have below-average traits, unless they're there to make a specific dramatic point.

> All the world's a stage,
> And all the men and women merely players;
> They have their exits and their entrances,
> And one man in his time plays many
> parts. . . .
>
> – William Shakespeare, **As You Like It**

ATTRIBUTES AND TALENTS

Attributes and secondary characteristics should be approached differently in epic or cinematic campaigns and in realistic campaigns (see *Modes,* p. 49). In a cinematic campaign, attributes (and Will and Per) can go as high as 20, and perhaps a point or two higher for a truly extraordinary hero. For real-world-style campaigns, an attribute of 17 would give most Average skills a default of 12, or "good enough to get a job" (see *Choosing Your Skill Levels,* p. B172); hardly any realistic human beings are so broadly competent. A good range in campaigns with realistic sources is 9-14. See p. 9 of **GURPS Template Toolkit 1: Characters** for detailed guidelines for both realistic and cinematic sources.

Exceptionally gifted people in realistic campaigns have narrower ranges of high ability – precisely the sort of thing that Talents are designed to represent (pp. B89-91 and **GURPS Power-Ups 3: Talents**). Characters in cinematic campaigns may have *both* Talent and high attributes – as can larger-than-life characters in realistic ones.

Examples: Georgiana Darcy (*P&P*) has Musical Ability. Ned Land (*20KL*) has Seafarer – note that it includes Thrown Weapon (Harpoon)! Odysseus (*Odys.*) has Smooth Operator (see p. 37). Oz the Great and Terrible (*WWOz*) has Clown – odd though the name sounds, the skill list is a close fit to the tricks he uses!

Strength

Strength is something of a special case. It doesn't affect skills, and it can be used in performing physical feats such as lifting heavy objects. It can have a value higher than 20. High ST scores can sometimes be estimated from stated multiples of human strength, comparisons with animals ("as strong as a horse"), or descriptions of physical feats. For people without superhuman attributes, **GURPS Template Toolkit 1: Characters** suggests a range from 8 to 18 for ST.

It's also possible to have limited aspects of high strength. A racial template can include Arm ST, Lifting ST, or Striking ST; the perk Special Training can allow a human character to acquire one of them. The cinematic skill Power Blow lets a martial artist double or even triple his ST by concentrating. The perk Strongbow allows a skilled archer to draw a heavier bow than his ST would normally permit.

Examples: Ned Land (*20KL*) is a skilled harpooner and is described as exceptionally large and strong; he could have ST 12-13. Odysseus (*Odys.*) uses a bow other Greek warriors can't even string; he has ST 15, with +2 from the Strongbow perk and his Bow skill. Wu Song ("Pilgrim," *WM*) at one point in the story lifts a stone weighing 400-500 catties (533-677 lbs.), throws it above his head, and catches it; ST 20 would give him BL 80 lbs., which would let him lift 640 lbs. and throw it 1.6 yards (see p. B355). Professor Van Helsing (*Drac.*) says that Dracula is as strong as 20 men; since an average man's BL is 20 lbs., Dracula's would be 400 lbs., which would give him ST 45 – but van Helsing may be overestimating, as there's a scene where Renfield, a normal human, physically restrains Dracula briefly.

In many settings, all major characters can be assumed to have a standard load of basic gear (*Presupposed Items,* p. 45). People in a TL5-8 campaign can be given *personal accessories* (**GURPS High-Tech,** pp. 31-32); similar lists can be worked out for lower and higher TLs. Characters can be assumed to have equipment for maintaining their primary gear – a whetstone for bladed tools or weapons, or a gun-cleaning kit for firearms, for example. Anyone with a skill can be expected to have tools, reference materials, supplies, and other things needed to practice it – in compact form to carry around, or in more elaborate form for use in a workplace (*Other Machines,* p. 43).

FURNISHINGS

Furnishings usually aren't acquired as separate items; they're treated as part of the standard of living for a given TL, culture, and Status. Their normal effect is to provide evidence of Status. In some cases, furnishings may count as good- or fine-quality equipment for a particular skill; for example, a wealthy person might have a superior kitchen stove or electronic sound system. The GM may need to give suggestions for how people of different classes live in a particular setting.

Similar judgments can be made about the furnishings of a business or other organization, following guidelines in **GURPS Boardroom and Curia,** p. 5. Schools or other instructional organizations can provide facilities for learning; see **GURPS Social Engineering: Back to School,** pp. 28-29.

Wanderers who aren't required to assign 80% of starting wealth to furnishings and other fixed assets (p. B26) must include any furnishings they own in their list of personal gear – and account for their weight and cost! This doesn't apply to wanderers who have large vehicles as their residences (*Vehicles as Locations,* p. 22). They can have furnishings suited to their Wealth and Status, whose specific weight and cost need not be accounted for – though usually they'll be compact.

Example (20KL): Captain Nemo has a museum of oceanographic specimens, a library of 12,000 books in many languages (perhaps 1,000 shelf feet, a fine library giving +2 to Research; see **GURPS Low-Tech Companion 1: Philosophers and Kings,** pp. 33-34), some 30 paintings by artists from Raphael to Delacroix, a number of sculptures, and a pipe organ, but all fitted into about 1,000 square feet. To make room, his personal cabin is small and almost monastic.

VEHICLES

Vehicles are some of the most significant artifacts in stories. They provide a means of making journeys (*Travel,* p. 24). They can transport other possessions. Large ones can be lived in, and even act as mobile settings (*Vehicles as Locations,* p. 22). The cost of a vehicle, and its styling and furnishings, can make it evidence of the owner's Status. If he invented it, it can give proof of his genius.

Vehicles in realistic stories, and some vehicles in fantastic stories, can often be compared to vehicles included in the **Basic Set** (pp. B464-465) or various supplements. If there isn't a close enough match, it may be possible to find information on real-world vehicles that can be used in working out **GURPS** statistics. For purely imaginary vehicles, especially fantastic ones, the GM will need to make up statistics – unless the author has done so.

Example: The Nautilus

To illustrate how statistics can be worked out for a vehicle, here is the *Nautilus.* (Terms and notation are as defined in *Vehicle Statistics,* pp. B462-463.)

TL: The *Nautilus* was built around 1860 (TL5), but uses more advanced technology than really existed then: TL(5+1).

ST/HP: Captain Nemo tells Professor Arronax that the *Nautilus* weighs 1,356.48 tonnes, which is approximately 2,991,000 lbs. or 1,496 tons. As a powered vehicle, it counts as Unliving, giving it ST/HP 576.

Hnd/SR: The *Nautilus* is comparable in size to a TL6 tramp steamer (p. B464) and can be given the same statistics: -3/6.

HT: Most machines have HT 10, but the *Nautilus* was expensively built to high standards, and operates under conditions where failure could be catastrophic: HT 12.

STRUCTURES

Structures are normally treated as *locations.* Habitable dwellings, in particular, can usually be defined as buildings (pp. 21-22). (For *underground* construction, see **GURPS Underground Adventures,** pp. 13-14.) Some structures are potentially movable and gain their integrity entirely from internal construction, though they may have a point of attachment; aerostats (hollow structures held aloft by lighter-than-air gases), large rafts, mobile homes, and orbital stations are examples. These can be described as vehicles, with some modifications (see pp. B462-463):

● Not being able to move under their own power, they have ST 0, and usually Taboo Trait (Fixed ST). If writing them up as characters, give them Injury Tolerance (Homogenous) and base their Payload on HP rather than ST (a +0% modifier).

● Since they don't move, they have no Hnd. However, they're usually large enough to have a high SR: a mobile home could have SR 4 (similar to a bus); a small aerostat, SR 3 (similar to a blimp); and a small space station SR 5 (similar to a star freighter).

● Give them Acceleration (Move) of 0, and Top Speed of 0 (no Enhanced Move).

● Range doesn't apply, since they don't move under their own power.

● An aerostat by definition has Stall 0.

See **GURPS Spaceships 6: Mining and Industrial Spacecraft** and "Alternate Spaceships" in *Pyramid #3/34: Alternate **GURPS*** for tips on using the **GURPS Spaceships** rules to design detailed game stats for structures.

CONSEQUENCES OF ACTIONS

When the dice come out, it's the fact that actions have *consequences* that makes the roll dramatic. When players pick up the dice, they're saying that their characters care enough about the possible good consequences to be willing to risk the possible bad consequences. Combat is the prototype for this, which is why it's so central to most campaigns – but it's not the only example. Characters can take physical or emotional risks in many ways. Ideally, every roll of the dice should carry some real risk with it.

> *It matters not how strait the gate,*
> *How charged with punishments the scroll.*
> *I am the master of my fate,*
> *I am the captain of my soul.*
> – William Ernest Henley, "Invictus"

On one hand, the source material's "natural laws" define what these consequences are, and what risks the heroes are taking. On the other, the consequences of in-game actions can include departures from the source material: they can supply takeoff points for new storylines, permanently change or even kill major characters, or even transform the entire setting (for example, in a revelatory campaign; see p. 51). It's best for the GM to think through these possible outcomes ahead of time!

MODES

Mode is the way a campaign *presents* its content. This is a separate question from what the content *is*. In terms of content, the mundane contrasts with the fantastic (*Premises,* pp. 8-9); in terms of mode, the *realistic* contrasts with the *cinematic*.

Mode is one of the features of a source that make a big impression on its audience. Players who enjoyed a cinematic book or movie will expect to play their characters in a cinematic style, and to have the game world and play style let this work; being held back by realistic details will spoil their fun. Players who *enjoy* figuring out those details will feel cheated if handwaving works as well as careful preparation. Although it's possible to switch modes, players need to know about it before the campaign starts. So identifying a source's mode is vital.

CINEMATIC MODES

What *GURPS* calls "cinematic," earlier ages might have called *epic* or *theatrical*. Epics have large-scale narratives that carry the reader along, a focus on individual heroes, and broad characterization with straightforward motives. Theater provides visual spectacle and striking dialogue. Cinema adds visual storytelling devices such as montage, panorama, and crosscutting, and a sense of movement.

Cinematic works can be recognized in a number of ways. Their characters tend to be archetypes or stereotypes, with straightforward motives and without psychological complexity (though they can have inner conflicts); major characters are driven by ideals or passions. Dialogue is passionate, eloquent, or witty; characters whose players aren't so eloquent may get lots of rolls vs. Public Speaking or Influence skills! Battles are decided by outcomes of heroes fighting one on one; crowds of lesser foes are only temporary obstacles. The drive of the narrative to reach a climax carries the story along, usually to an unambiguous defeat or victory. Game rules such as wildcard skills, cinematic mechanics, and in particular *spending points to buy success* (p. B347) help to attain this.

The *Odyssey* is largely cinematic, with a larger-than-life hero undergoing a series of adventures – and, even more important, with the goddess Athena providing advice and help with minor obstacles, so that the story isn't slowed down. *Water Margin* is even more so, with even the largest battles being fought as one-on-one duels of opposing leaders. *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* is mainly cinematic, though the Wizard's reliance on technology and fast-talk is a touch of realism.

REALISTIC MODES

Realism in *GURPS* is largely a matter of *verisimilitude,* a flow of events that gives a convincing impression of reality. This approach became common with the emergence of *novels* as a literary form. An important part of realism is *austerity,* the degree to which actions have consequences in the campaign world and the difficulty of avoiding those consequences. The standard *GURPS* rules provide moderate realism; it's possible to go further to *gritty realism,* using rules that emphasize obstacles and consequences.

Realistic characters are shown as human, complex, and flawed; their motives reflect their social relationships or emotional conflicts. Dialogue tends to be down to earth, without elaborate speeches. Good tactics in a fight can take advantage of the combat environment, but battles may come down to numbers and endurance; the GM should consider adopting rules for things like bleeding or damage to weapons. Rather than slowing down the story, practical details and planning are a big part of what the story is about.

Pride and Prejudice is at the realistic end of the spectrum; its most theatrical touch is the articulate dialogue of its main characters. *Dracula* has a strong element of realism in its heroes' use of scientific inquiry, business organization, and technology; Dracula himself is the most cinematic figure in the novel – which doesn't work to his advantage! *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea* is on the borderline: Nemo himself is a larger-than-life figure, but the novel's heroes are not; and while Verne gives Nemo's inventions verisimilitude with exact engineering measurements, their capabilities are not extrapolated from real technology, but dictated by the needs of the story – in effect, they're a cinematic rendering of the *idea* of realism.

INDEX

The fighting Homer describes – duels between chieftains who ride up to the battle line in chariots, dismount, and exchange speeches, sometimes quite long ones, before engaging man-to-man with spear and shield – is clearly a creation of the epic muse rather than a representation of actual battle conditions.

– Robert Fagles, Introduction to the **Iliad**

Oh, I can't think about this now! I'll go crazy if I do! I'll think about it tomorrow . . . After all . . . tomorrow is another day!

– Scarlett O'Hara,
in **Gone with the Wind**