

ISSUE#1

Monday, 15 October, 1928

CLEAR GREDIT

The Dateline: Lovecraft, Issue #1 Newspaper Prop was created by Dean Engelhardt (inspired by many examples of real-world historical newspapers of the day)

The town of Arkham was created by H. P. Lovecraft, and has been elaborated upon by diverse hands in both published fiction and games

The Clipping Indices, Notes, and Scenario ("To Touch The Untouchable") which appear in this guidebook PDF were compiled and written by Dean Engelhardt

Original Interior Illustrations: Reuben Dodd, Dean Engelhardt

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Newspaper Copy Proofreaders: Maxwell Mahaffa, Jonathan Powell, Noah Lloyd

The Dateline: Lovecraft Logo was created by Dean Engelhardt.

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INTRODUCTION

Thank you for purchasing Dateline: Lovecraft, Issue #1 (which we'll refer to simply as Dateline: Lovecraft for the remainder of this guidebook). We realize that this isn't exactly your typical Lovecraft-inspired product — or even your typical Lovecraft-game-inspired product — so your willingness to hand over a little bit of your hard-earned cash means all that much more to us. Cthulhu Reborn are taking a bit of a chance with trying something a little bit "out there", and appreciate your willingness to come along for the ride. We are hoping that your support will allow us to create a range of free follow-on PDFs to augment the usefulness of Dateline: Lovecraft, making it a "self-perpetuating product line" (see the box nearby for our vision of what that means).

Chances are that by the time you're reading this you will already have a good idea about what Dateline: Lovecraft is all about. But just in case you've dived straight in to this guide without reading anything else, here's the capsule summary. Dateline: Lovecraft aims to give you something quite unique, a full front-to-back copy of an issue of the (fictional) Arkham Advertiser newspaper. The issue from Monday 15 October, 1928, to be precise. The broadsheet newspaper prop which forms the center of the product is made up of twelve rather massive pages, most of them densely filled with text. In those pages you'll find international news of the day, local news from the Miskatonic Valley, opinion pieces by the Advertiser's opinionated editor, letters from Arkham locals, display advertisements for local stores, a healthy collection of (sometimes notso-healthy) "Want Ads," and much more besides.

So, what's the point of creating such a large and complex prop newspaper from a fictional New England college town? Well, there's no one simple answer to that question. On one level, an authentic-looking 1920s newspaper from the fictional town where H.P. Lovecraft set some of his most evocative tales, is an intriguing curio in and of itself. It's a link between the fictional worlds of Charles Dexter Ward, The Thing

What's a "Self-Perpetuating Product Line?"

In addition to providing *Dateline: Lovecraft* as a (relatively-inexpensive) paid product, Cthulhu Reborn hopes ultimately to supplement it with a range of free-to-download PDFs. These will provide short scenarios, or scenario sketches, written by professional game writers and directly inspired by articles, advertisements, or columns in the *Dateline: Lovecraft* newspaper.

Paying writers and artists to create a product line like this will obviously cost Cthulhu Reborn money, even if the PDFs themselves are free-to-download. So, how can we possibly hope to keep these downloads free? By funding their creation by profits from the core *Dateline*: Lovecraft product. That's to say, once the sales of Dateline: Lovecraft have recouped the (modest) investment that Cthulhu Reborn has put into creating the core product, every dollar we make from selling Dateline: Lovecraft will go into a bucket of funds aimed at creating additional free supplements. When there's enough in the bucket we will approach our friendly community of writers and artists and commission another supplement. Conceivably we can keep this going as long as the core product continues selling enough new copies to pay for further PDFs.

We call this a "self-perpetuating product line" since sales of the core product keep adding free benefits for all. If you want to draw an analogy with Kickstarter funding (maybe a *loose* analogy), you can think of this a bit like unlocking "stretch goals". When sales of the core product have earned a threshold amount everyone gets something new for free.

There are a couple of implications of this model: the first is that you, as an owner can (if you wish) help in growing the body of free Dateline: Lovecraft support material ... just by spreading the word about the product among your gaming friends or Lovecraft fans. As Cthulhu Reborn sells more you, along with everyone else, receive the benefits. The flipside of this relates to piracy of the core PDF: illegal copies don't directly help us in funding new supplements, even if they might help spread the word. If you've obtained this PDF without paying for it, we aren't here to judge you ... but if you've looked at it and think it's neat maybe you'd like to help grow it into a flourishing line of supplements. Can we suggest that you either head over to an online store and buy your own copy, or alternatively drop by the Cthulhu Reborn website and leave a donation? Sharing our free supplement PDFs is, of course, fine by us. Encouraged even.

ARKHAM DOLL FAVORED BY FOR MAN WANTED South, the Democratic parts.
IN PROVIDENCE throating has pictured under his factor and the first open perdundant and the first open perdundan

On The Doorstep, and countless Miskatonic University professors, and the real historical world of the 1920s (now itself a kind of legendary place in our 21st century minds).

But if you happen to play one of the numerous tabletop roleplaying games that have been inspired by H.P. Lovecraft's horror tales, Dateline: Lovecraft has the potential to be something much more practically useful. Hidden within its 200+ articles, advertisements, and other weird pieces, you'll find no shortage of peculiar and unusual descriptions of places or events any of which could be part of some dark tale of horror and mystery. A dark tale of your own creation, inspired by whatever weirdness you see lurking behind the curious reference. By picking a handful of these odd but evocative hints of strangeness, a creative game designer might readily be able to weave an entire game scenario, or even a whole campaign. And the best part is that, because the source material is a weird old-fashioned newspaper prop ... your home-grown scenario already has its own supply of professional-quality handouts: just print or cut-out the relevant clippings and hand them to your players when the time comes.

How to Use Dateline: Lovecraft

There is, of course, no one "right" way to use a resource like Dateline: Lovecraft. Its use is constrained only by the limits of your own creativity (if such exist). The purpose of this guidebook PDF is to provide you with a few suggestions of ways you could use elements from the newspaper prop to enhance your game but really these are just some ideas to get you started. Gamers are an incredibly imaginative and creative breed, and no matter what we might dream up there will always be weird and wonderful other avenues somebody discovers for exploiting the material we've made. This is to be encouraged. If you have an idea that seems better to you than our suggestions, go with it. You're probably on to something we could never have anticipated!

As well as providing some general starting points to stimulate your own scenario-making schemes, this guide also includes some practical information that will make it easier to navigate the *Dateline: Lovecraft* newspaper prop, and create your own props from the electronic version of the newspaper.

The guide also includes a specific "scenario sketch" which ties in to two or three clipping spread throughout the newspaper. Our aim in presenting this mini-scenario is to give you a concrete example of one way to weave the weirdness lurking beneath the newspaper into a game narrative. Use it or warp it as you see fit.

THE NEWSPAPER PROPPDF

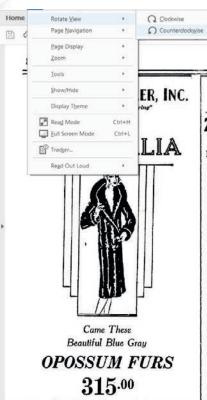
The twelve-page *Dateline: Lovecraft* newspaper prop is a normal PDF file, and can be navigated in the same way you read typical PDFs (we assume you're familiar with that, else how are you reading these words?). The newspaper's pages are, however, much larger than those of a normal PDF documents which introduces some subtleties when it comes to printing physical versions of clippings. Also, the newspaper PDF has a number of "hidden" features which can be used to achieve some alternative visual stylings. Finally, the prop includes a "searchable text" layer to make it easier to find specific words and phrases.

These features of the PDF newspaper prop, along with a few tips and tricks, are described below.

Printing Newspaper Props

Most PDF readers include the ability to print pages or parts of pages in a PDF. When using such features, you may need to take some care to ensure that the printout that is created shows the page section you want. This is because the size of the newspaper page is approximately the size of six normal pages of US Letter or A4.

ARKHAM ADVERTISER, MONDAY, OCTOBER 15, 1928.



ZOE GAMMELL'S CORNER

Exclusive to The Advertiser

INCONSTANTLY YOURS

Dear Zoe — He is a senior at MU; I sm a sophomore at same. When our paths cross on campus, he seems most disinter-ested and aloof, but most Seturcampus, he reems most camera-tested and aloot, but most Satur-days we attend the same dance, and at that he blossoms into a different person. Regularly he and I will dance several times in the one night, during which he gazes at me glassy-eyed and professes to admire me greatly. Until recently, this inconstancy was only a curtosity, but at the conclusion of the dance last Saturday he shocked me greatly proposing marriage. Uncer-tain and shocked, I deferred an answer, aiming to speak with

Shift+Ctrl+Plus

Shift+Ctrl+Minus

Apple Kuchen Easy Dessert



Every Arkham native apples ("Goody Rowlers", of knows that the fine apples course). Sift the dry ingredifrom our fair town's "Goody ents, cut in the butter, add frowler" freas are much sought the well-beaten egg mixed after for their superior with the milk. Stir enough to tartness and crispones, as well mix well and turn into an as their long life. "Goody oblong or square greased Rowler" apples grown in the baking pan. Spread evenly, orchards that surround Pare, quarter and core Arkham are exported all apples, and cut each piece in about New England and four. Arrange overlapping even as far a Ganda.

Today The Advertiser is dough, pressing them in leased to offer a new way in delightly. Sprinkle with a half use "Goody Fowlers" in your cap sugar mixed with every-day cooking.

Can't you taste this in a 400-degree oven for thirty delicious German dish made minutes or until the apples are

TO BECOME WI



Rotating the page view by 90 degrees



ARKHAM ADVERTISER, MONDAY, OCTOBER 15, 1928.

ning Sights Along the Aylesbury Pike near to Dean's Corners make it a rewarding destination for the motorist seeking a delightful tour into the bewitching primal land from which our state was forged.

♠ ⊕ ⊖ ⊕ 74.4% • ☐ ☑ ♥ ♥ Ø

ASKED TO BE FAIR

Slogan on Busy reets Request Them

SHIELD CLEANERS MUST BE ON CARS

BOWEN ROAD



Accessing the hidden PDF layers in Adobe Reader



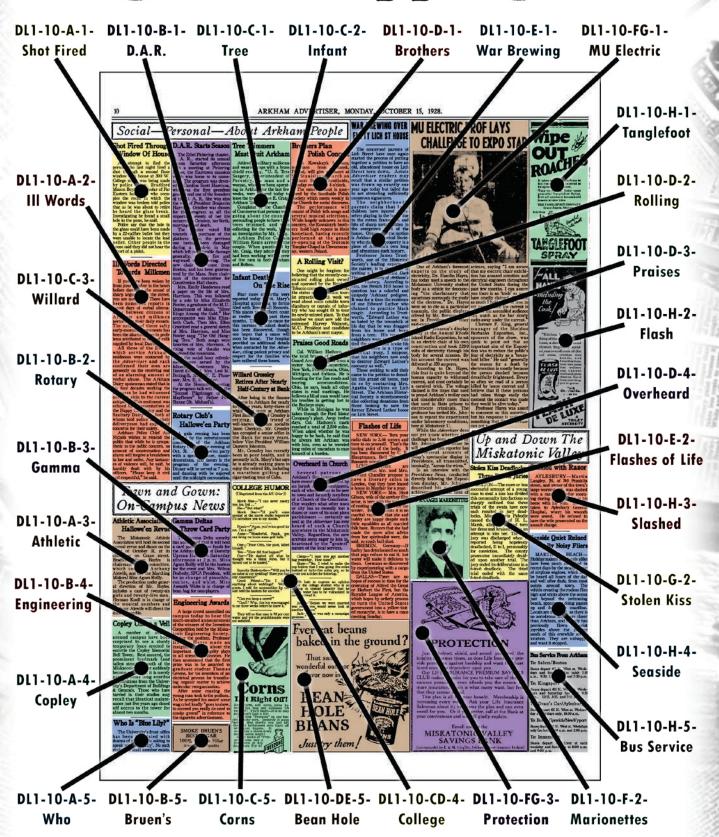
Plain (No Bleed-Through, No Paper Texture)

Paper Texture but No Bleed-Through,

Bleed-Through but No Paper Texture

Bleed-Through AND Paper Texture

Page 10 Clipping IDs



NINE WAYS TO USE (OR ABUSE) THE NEWS

The *Dateline: Lovecraft* newspaper prop is there for you to use (or abuse) however you'd like. If you're planning on using it to augment a tabletop roleplaying game set in and around Arkham, it could serve a number of different purposes based on how your gaming group likes to play, and the types of scenarios or campaigns you like to run. A few ideas are provided below.

Clippings as a Source of 'Local Color'

One of the best ways to paint Arkham as a vivid and living backdrop for your game is to provide players with "in-world" artefacts which give them a tiny piece of the "real Arkham" to interact with directly. Because Arkham is such a colorful place, even just the occasional glimpse of day-to-day life can lend a unique atmosphere to your game.

A General Arkham Orientation

One way to immerse your players in the atmosphere of Arkham is to simply provide them with the full newspaper as a piece of background detail, to be flipped through and glanced at whenever they'd like. Depending on how the Game Moderator presents this to the players, such a gesture might just be a general "orientation" received upon the characters' first visit to Arkham ... or it could be a cryptic source of player consternation, as they try to sift through the voluminous newspaper articles in search of some specific detail. In either case, the authentic appearance of the Dateline: Lovecraft newspaper prop can serve as a great reminder of some of the realities of life in 1920s America, as well as the quirky details of life in a small college town.

Background Chatter and Gossip

Articles in the newspaper are more than just words on a page – they can also be the conversation that is on the tongue of some of

the Non-Player Characters that are encountered during a scenario. If the whole of Arkham is abuzz talking about a front-page story, with different Non-Player Characters each wanting to each share their own specific views about the topic, the town of Arkham can seem far more "alive" and compelling. Using such a technique can also provide the Game Moderator with an excellent method of conveying some key aspect of a character's personality or world view that is helpful to portraying them. For example, rather than simply describing a character as someone who "seems callous," the Game Moderator might have them launch into a verbal tirade about something from the day's news which demonstrates their uncaring nature.

Accessorizing Investigator Backgrounds

As Player Characters live out their lives in Arkham there will naturally come times when minor details of their life and current circumstances need to be written into their backstory. Rather than simply inventing some generic detail, elements in the newspaper prop can be used to suggest something. Is the character looking for a place to live? Why not look at the accommodation vacancy listings in the "Want Ads"? If he or she decides to buy a car, don't just look up some random 1920s vehicle on Google ... have them pick something from the list of vehicles advertised for sale at the local car yard.

Clippings as a Scenario Springboard

One traditional (and much-used) way to kick-off an investigative game scenario is the reporting of some weird or horrific local event in the newspaper. This can be a handy way to quickly provide some information about odd goings-on, as well as potentially provide players with a reason to look further into the murky depths surrounding the occurrence.

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"TO TOUCH THE UNTOUCHABLE" — A DATELINE: LOVECRAFT SCENARIO

As an example of (one way of) using the *Dateline: Lovecraft* newspaper prop as the basis for an investigative scenario, a short scenario seed is described below. Using this material, an inventive Game Moderator should be able to build an enjoyable Arkham-based scenario that can entertain a group of beginner or veteran gamers for 1–2 sessions.

The scenario seed is described in a systemneutral format: it can be easily adapted to work with any tabletop roleplaying game of investigative horror.

The box below describes the sections of the newspaper prop that are referenced in this scenario seed. These clippings form the player handouts for the scenario (and should be printed or clipped ready to provide to players).

Primary Clipping IDs:

- DL1-5-B-2-Chess (Article describing Arkham child prodigy Hannibal Upham and his recent success as a competitive chess player)
- **DL1-8-C-1-Inconstantly** (Letter to an "Agony Aunt" column from a young Arkham girl, "Gertrude", describing oddly behavior of a fellow MU student beau; both frequented a regular Saturday-night dance)

Peripherally-Related Clipping ID:

 DL1-5-CD-1-Crystal (Photo caption which makes reference to a curious incident in which several members of varsity football team jumped into the Miskatonic with rocks tied to their legs, apparently as a dare)

Keeper's Introduction

Hannibal Upham is no ordinary seven-yearold boy. Or at least, he isn't any more.

Until about a year ago, Hannibal was a thoroughly unremarkable little boy – interested in little more than toys and playing tag with the neighborhood kids. This was much to the consternation of Hannibal's father, Miskatonic mathematics professor Hiram Upham, who had grand expectations for the lad.

In an effort to motivate the young boy to unlock his inner potential, Hiram sent his son away to stay for a week with a reclusive distant relative that everyone simply called "Uncle Timothy." The arthritic and ancient relative lived alone on a decaying farm in upstate New York. He was famously both a remarkable intellect and a master game player – he was especially skilled at chess. It was hoped that sending young Hannibal for a week with the abrasive elder might change him.

Nobody could have predicted how true that would be.

When Hannibal returned, it was as though a different personality lived within his skin. Suddenly he was possessed of a much more adult perspective on life, perhaps even slightly sardonic. And he was a driven and competitive individual, seemingly full of an appetite to succeed. And on top of all that, his skills at chess had improved to an impressive degree.

Professor Upham could not have been more pleased. But then he had no idea about what had really happened to his son on the farm in upstate New York; and even less idea about the true nature of the otherworldly thing that walks about in the guise of young Hannibal. The exact nature of the Mythos taint that has affected the younger Upham depends on which of the three optional Mythos Motivations the Keeper wishes to employ (see page 31).