

character roundabout

(jcreed, 2023)

PREMISE

A character creation exercise for **n** people.

A character has three kinds of information on their sheet: there are **Stats**, **Alternatives**, and **Collections**.

PLAY

Each player writes down 3 **Stat Names**, 2 **Alternative Names**, and 1 **Collection Name**, and passes this list to the player on their left. Then each player takes the lists they have received, and chooses values to go with each name.

STATS

Stat Names are things like: Strength, Dexterity, Constitution, Intelligence, Wisdom, Charisma, Cunning, Fortitude, Romanticness, Idealism, Religiosity, Extroversion, Agreeableness, Openness, Conscientiousness, Neuroticism, Grit, Height, Luck. They can be any sort of gradient attribute, quality, or trait of a person, be it mental, physical, spiritual, or otherwise.

Stat Values are numbers: maybe between 1 and 10, or 3 and 18, or -3 and +3.

ALTERNATIVES

Alternative Names are things like: Class, Background, Species, Occupation, Favorite Color, Alignment, Nationality, Native Language, Religion. They can be any sort of attribute where a person has one of some list of choices – and maybe, exceptionally, two or more in some sense. But having just one is common.

Alternative Values depend on the choices the world offers you, and how you perceive the world. For most Alternatives, it's not *really* true that there's a finite list of distinct choices with clear lines between them – but this is the fiction we participate in. For examples, the values of Class might be Fighter, Sorcerer, Rogue, etc. the values of Nationality could be Narnia, Middle-Earth, Pern, the values of Alignment might be Lawful, Neutral, Chaotic, etc.

COLLECTIONS

Collection Names are things like: Possessions, Skills, Disadvantages, Spells, Things in my Purse, Things in my Miscellaneous Things Drawer, Former Employers, Friends, Political Connections, Favorite Bird Facts. They can be any sort of thing that a person might have any number of.

Collection Values are lists of things in the collection. A person's possessions might include a sword, a gem, and a ration of food. Someone's former employers might be acme (2012-2015, led a multifunctional team to achieve objectives), parasol corp (2015-2019, independently synthesized analyses), and wonko industries (2019-2025, developed business-critical new buzzwords).

EXAMPLE OF PLAY

Alice thinks about what Stats she would like to choose. For Stats, she picks: Programming, Charm, Sneaky. For Alternatives, she writes: Home Planet (Glorbunx, Zote, Birmar-9), Cyber-enhancement (eyes, legs, heart, ears). For a Collection, she decides on: Deck Software

Independently, **Bob** makes similar choices. He writes down: Strength, Stubbornness, Star Power. For Alternatives, he writes: Medium (Television, Movies, Radio, Stage, Video Games), Morals (Selfish, Rule-Follower, Flexible, Favor-Trader) For a Collection, Bob decides on Roles.

They pass their sheets to one another. Alice finishes her character sheet as follows:

Name: Bront Crusher
Strength: 90/100
Stubbornness: 15/100
Star Power: 30/100
Medium: Movies
Morals: Favor-Trader (insecure, needy)
Roles:

- Herb Smith in "Critical Repulsion 5" (1983)
- Man Shouting at Waiter in "What's the Deal With You?" (1988)

Meanwhile, Bob's character is

Name: Celia McJet
Programming: +3
Charm: -1
Sneaky: +1
Home Planet: the island planet Glorbunx
Cyber-enhancement: legs
Deck Software:

- AnalyzeEdibleSubstance v2.0.1
- xxx39xxx's LockChucker
- blorianese_metaphor_translate
- encrypt*dzq+video