

## HCIU PROCEDURE

The material in the following chapter is excerpted from your local police department's Heightened Crime Investigation Unit operations manual. To balance its official perspective with the between-the-lines realities of the job, we also present, as a series of sidebars, blog entries written by the anonymous HCIU officer who goes by the handle UpCopper.

### MISSION STATEMENT

Your duty as members of the Heightened Crimes Investigation Unit are the same as any police officer's—to serve and protect.

You do this by investigating serious crimes where a preliminary survey of the scene suggests the potential involvement of one or more members of the mutant community. In the course of your duties you will identify persons of interest, gather evidence against suspects, and where warranted and in consultation with prosecutors, lay charges. To do so effectively, you must gather sufficient evidence to gain arrests warrants and, finally, to secure convictions against the guilty.

Under high scrutiny from the media, you will conduct yourselves at all times with dignity, rectitude, and respect. Your actions, on and off duty, will bring honor and positive repute to the force.

### RECRUITMENT

Assignment to the HCIU is a coveted honor. The squad currently consists of only twenty-four investigating officers, plus commanders and support staff. You won assignment to this squad by demonstrating excellence, first as a cadet, then as a patrol officer, then finally as a detective. As detectives, you accumulated years of positive performance

evaluations while serving in other detachments, such as robbery-homicide, special victims, gang units, organized crime control, vice, or narcotics. Some of you, particularly those with disguise-oriented powers such as Impersonation, Illusion, Form Alteration, and Nondescript, may have distinguished yourselves in undercover operations. Others from technical backgrounds may have transferred out from our various forensics departments, from crime scene analysis to the coroner's branch.

The leadership of this detachment does not believe in leadership by micromanagement. You will be granted wide latitude to pursue avenues of investigation and to employ unconventional tactics afforded you by your extraordinary capabilities. When we say that you occupy a position of extreme visibility, and that your work will be carefully monitored to ensure that it meets the justifiably high expectations of the department and its civilian overseers, it is not to induce in you an attitude of excessive caution. It is merely to point out that, as rare as heightened police officers might be, there is no shortage of candidates hoping to take your place, should you stumble and fall.

### ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

As HCIU investigators, you will be detached to one of six squads, each typically comprising three to six officers. Officers may rotate in and out of cases as their other responsibilities, such as court appearances, paperwork and case follow-up, demand.

Each squad is overseen by one of two watch commanders, each occupying the rank of lieutenant. You will report directly to your lieutenant for duty assignments. Your lieutenant's performance evaluations depend on his case clearance rate, as

do yours. When he deems it fruitful to give you a long leash, he will do so. When your case founders, he will prod you for updates. If you can't explain it to your lieutenant, you don't have enough facts. It is your lieutenant's responsibility to ensure that your investigation proceeds according to operational guidelines, and that the officers under his command

perform efficiently and ethically. Should a question arise within a squad as to the operational correctness of a proposed course of action, take it immediately to your lieutenant. If he suspects you of wrongdoing, he will immediately alert internal affairs, triggering a formal investigation.



## THE BLUE WALL

Everybody knows there are the book rules, and there are the real rules. You got to know the book rules, because the brass can use them to jam you up when politics requires. But if you want to put away the bad guys and do the right thing, the real rules are what you got to follow. If you don't know them like the blood in your veins, you ain't a real cop. You're just wearing a uniform.

*Real rule #1:* Have your partners' backs. You're loyal first to the people you work cases with. If they can't trust you, you can't trust them to come to your aid when some perp throws a fireball at your back.

*Real rule #2:* Your second loyalty is to your watch commander—provided he's demonstrated he's a stand-up guy and not a prick. If he's a stand-up guy, he'll have your back. That bit in the ops manual about him calling the rat squad the second he gets a bad smell coming off you? That's the prick move. A stand-up commander gives you every benefit of the doubt—provided you've proven you're good, and deserve his trust. He'll go to the wall for you, while you exonerate yourself against whatever bullshit charges they want to pin on you. This assumes you're worthy of the badge, and aren't dirty or a seat-warmer. If you flip out and waste a crowd of citizens with your bone claws, there ain't jack he can—or should—do for your sorry ass.

*Real rule #3:* Your third loyalty is to any other cop. If you've been around for long enough to earn a detective's badge, you've already learned to divide your colleagues into categories. First, there's the good cops. That's what you strive to be, and what you pray to God your partners are.

Then there's the seat-warmers, the guys who are just putting in time till retirement. Sometimes they're idiots who stand in the way of getting things done. You may have to bust their balls a bit to get them to do their jobs. But you never rat them out, because, whatever else they are, they're still cops. If a boss asks you about them, you maybe roll your eyes. But nothing goes down on paper to jack the poor schlub up.

The last category is the guys who've gone dirty. You won't find them in the HCIU. They avoid getting promoted too far from street level, where the money is. If you're unlucky enough to run across one of them, you've got to handle it right. They can't think you're a prick willing to turn them into the rat squad. But you don't want them entangling you in their crap and dragging you down with them, either. Keep your distance, and avoid seeing anything the bosses would want you to report. They may be scumbags, but they're cop scumbags.

That's assuming they're the kind of scumbags who help themselves to a little dirty money, or let their problems with substances or gambling lead them by the nose. If they shake down honest citizens, or commit rapes and murders, then they're beyond the pale. If they cross those lines, you've got to take them down, and there isn't another cop who won't understand that.

But if you break any of the real rules, they won't understand, and they shouldn't. Don't expect help the next time you go through a door in a bad neighborhood. Expect to be shunned. Hell, I'll be one of the guys giving you the cold shoulder in the locker room.



Organizational charts are readily available for most major jurisdictions. Links are provided on the Pelgrane website. <http://www.pelgranepress.com> Each department displays its own unique structural quirks.

## RANKS

Each police force has its own ranking system. HCU officers are usually out of uniform, that is they are detectives. In the UK, police detectives have the same rank structure as uniformed officers, except with the prefix "Detective" in front of the rank title. Two sample rank structures follow.

### LOS ANGELES POLICE DEPARTMENT RANK STRUCTURE

- Chief
- Assistant Chief - Deputy Chief II
- Deputy Chief - Deputy Chief I
- Commander
- Captain I/Captain II/Captain III
- Lieutenant I/Lieutenant II
- Detective III
- Sergeant II
- Detective II
- Sergeant I
- Detective I
- Police Officer III+1/Senior Lead Officer
- Police Officer III
- Police Officer II
- Police Officer I

### UK POLICE FORCE RANK STRUCTURE

- Chief Constable
- (Most Senior Police Officer)
- Deputy Chief Constable
- Assistant Chief Constable
- Chief Superintendent
- Superintendent
- Chief Inspector (equivalent of Captain)
- Inspector (equivalent of Lieutenant)
- Sergeant
- Constable

All investigating squad members are of equal rank. On any given case, a detective will be designated as the primary investigating officer, or primary for short. This detective takes responsibility for the direction of the case. Although he may not issue orders, or reprimand squad members who do not comply with his requests, other members of his squad are expected to follow his lead in order to preserve effective process flow. If the investigation

concludes in an arrest and trial, he is credited with the case clearance, or collar. This success is noted in his personnel file, as part of his case clearance percentage. Conversely, if the case is not conclusively resolved, the failure counts against him.

## DNAS OFFICERS IN THE HCU

Officers without evident mutant powers may occasionally be detailed to the HCU, for any of the following reasons:

- **Personnel shortages.** Otherwise qualified detectives with mutant powers may not be available for promotion into the unit.
- **Relevant skills.** A DNAS individual with, for example, a PhD in anamorphology may be better specialized on issues surrounding the heightened and criminology than a gene-expressive officer.
- **Community liaison.** Investigating officers sometimes find it advantageous to have a DNAS individual on hand to conduct certain interviews or deflect enhancement-related concerns of the general population.

*In other words, sometimes the norms don't like it when the chromes wear badges, and it's better to send in one of their own to play good cop.*

## ASSIGNMENTS

Squads are expected to rotate the duties of primary from case to case, so that the burden is shared between all members over time. Squads are permitted to use whatever system they see fit when distributing this responsibility, provided that the above goal is met. Many robbery-homicide squads employ a practice of assigning primary status to the officer who first picks up the phone when a call comes in. Others may use a roster system to ensure strict rotation. The watch commander must approve all assignments of primary status and may make changes for any reason. Watch commanders may deem that a particular detective's skill set, mutant abilities, or personal history either better enables

him to take the lead on a given case—or requires that he take a back seat.

Most case calls to the HCIU come from central dispatch in response to requests from patrol officers. Uniformed officers respond to 911 calls or may come across crime scenes in the course of their patrol activities. When they determine that a case may involve a mutant perpetrator and/or victim, they call dispatch, who then contacts HCIU. A small handful of case calls come directly from the public directly dialing the HCIU number. When this occurs, you will alert dispatch, who will send patrol officers to the scene. If they verify that the tip is based on accurate information, dispatch will contact you, so you can join patrol officers at the scene.

When another detective squad works a case and discovers in mid-investigation that it involves mutant powers, their watch commander is required to notify the chief of detectives at police headquarters. The chief of detectives evaluates the circumstances and determines whether to keep the case under the aegis of its current investigators, or transfer it to HCIU. When making this decision, he considers the following factors:

- **Duration of case to date.** Cases which have undergone little development by current case officers may be readily transferred with little loss of case knowledge. Where non-heightened officers have instead been working an investigation for extended periods, it becomes challenging to convey all relevant information effectively to a new team.
- **Danger to non-enhanced officers.** Investigations likely to lead to hostile encounters between heightened suspects and police may be better handled by officers with the powers to defend against them.
- **Community and public relations requirements.** Cases threatening to inflame tensions between the heightened community and police may be deemed best handled by members of that community. In high profile cases, pressure from media and other non-police sources may prompt commanders to detail HCIU officers to a case. These decisions are taken out of a necessary concern for public relations and should

not be regarded as a cynical surrender to unpleasant political realities.

If the chief of detectives determines that a case be retained by its original investigating squad, an HCIU officer will be detailed to liaise with that team, providing contacts, expertise and operational assistance, as required.

If he transfers the case to the HCIU, the original primary is detailed to the HCIU as liaison officer, and a new primary is designated from within the HCIU squad chosen to spearhead the investigation. The liaison officer provides full details on the case to date, and continues to participate in the investigation under the lead of the new primary.

It sometimes transpires that a case assigned to the HCIU on the basis of apparent heightened involvement will, after some investigation, be revealed as having no connection to the mutant community. When such a determination is made, the watch commander may contact the chief of detectives to request that the case be transferred to the squad normally detailed to the type of crime in question, whether that be vice, robbery-homicide, fraud, or narcotics.

*A clearance is a clearance, so if his squad has been assigned a solvable case, a watch commander will hold on to it like a terrier with a rat in its jaws, even if it turns out to bear no relation to the squad's mandate. If the case smells like a dog, he'll do his best to unload it on another squad and get it off his year-to-year stats. Of course, all the other watch commanders know how this works, and will beg, wheedle and cajole the chief of detectives to avoid getting any loser cases palmed off on them.*





## PURE COPS, LIXER COPS

Cops are like anybody else, but more so. There's tension between the pure and the lixers out in the real world, and you get that reflected inside the squad room, too. Some norms have chips on their shoulders about us. If you got as far as detective, you learned to tolerate a lot of crap.

When other squads catch a case that turns out to be HC material, their reluctance or eagerness to part with it generally has squat to do with anti-lixer prejudice. Cops are territorial. We hold onto cases we think we can clear, and try to dump that which will screw up our performance evaluations. If we happen to like somebody for a crime, and we develop a healthy hate-on for him, we want to see the case through to the arrest. We want to be the ones to slap the cuffs on. That's as true of the pure cops as of the lixers.

So often another squad will hold onto a case that ought to be ours, holding back their knowledge of the facts that would earn it a swift transfer to our humble bailiwick. This means sometimes you inherit a case after some norm squad has already screwed the pooch on it.

Of course, when it comes to pressure from outside, we forget our squabbles and close ranks. We're cops before anything else.

## SHIFTS AND SCHEDULING

Each watch commander oversees three eight-hour shifts, assigning one squad to each: 6 AM to 2 PM, 2 PM to 10 PM, and 10 PM to 6 AM. Squads are rotated between shifts on a quarterly basis.

When you are not working a case or assigned to a specific support duty, such as appearing in court or engaging in a public relations exercise, your presence

is required in the squad room during your shift hours. While waiting to catch cases, you field inquiries, file paperwork and rework cold investigations. Officers are expected to maintain a professional, diligent demeanor. In accordance with memos #43907D, 324097A, and E39780-12, our crackdown on newspaper reading, Internet surfing, and Nerf basketball tournaments during office hours remains in place.

While working on a case, squads may arrange hours as needed to contact witnesses, conduct stakeouts, and consult with technical personnel. The primary is responsible for keeping time records of all squad members' activities. Squad members must clock in for full work weeks. They may bank lieu time with approval of watch commanders. Watch commanders possess limited discretion to permit overtime hours on high-priority cases. Officers receive time-and-a-half for approved overtime, and double time for case work extending into statutory holidays.

## EVIDENCE COLLECTION

Although HCIU officers often possess the expertise and equipment (or mutant powers) to examine and process evidence, actual evidence collection is handled, as with any investigation, by civilian criminalists detailed to the Crime Scene Processing unit. Although you can expect them to exercise judgment and collect obvious pieces of evidence, a good detective always remains at the scene to request the bagging and tagging of all relevant materials.

You must perform all necessary paperwork when either accessing or removing materials from Evidence Storage, to thoroughly document the whereabouts of each piece of evidence that might be introduced in court at all times. This process flow is called the Chain Of Custody. Defense lawyers win acquittals by successfully calling into question the chain of custody. When the chain of custody is broken, police careers go along with it.

*The first thing I want to know when I hit a homicide scene as primary is: was the vic killed here, or dumped? If it's the former, telling physical evidence will be everywhere. If it's a dumper, I know I'm screwed.*





## CLEARING CASES

The detective's mantra is ABC: **always be clearing**. Most watch commanders keep a list of all active cases, with the primary's name emblazoned beside the name of each victim. (In a multiple homicide, each victim is treated as a separate case, so if you, as primary, haven't caught a killer of six, you will have six cases lodged against you, with your clearance rate taking a commensurate hit.) In days past, the list was maintained on a blackboard, whiteboard or bulletin board. Now it appears on a plasma screen display.

When your name is on the big board, it should gnaw at you night and day, as it does your watch commander. It threatens your clearance rate. You must get it off that board. Then it becomes a positive statistic. Then a new case goes up next to your name, and that haunts you, until you clear that. And so on. Welcome to the glamorous world of police work.

A case is considered cleared when an arrest is made, or when it is found to be something other than a crime. So if you find out that a supposedly stolen car was borrowed by the owner's son, or that an apparent murder victim in fact committed suicide, that's a clearance. Although it's your duty to help prosecutors put the scumbags in prison after you apprehend them, 95% of the time an arrest counts as a clearance. It's not your problem if the idiot jury fails to convict—unless the defendant is truly exonerated, and evidence appears that the real perp is still out there. Then the case goes back on the board, and if you're lucky, you have to investigate all over again. If you're unlucky, the watch commander docks you the original clearance and then puts a new primary in charge, so you have no hope of making good for the blot on your record.

Despite what the defense shysters say, the department doesn't like to arrest or convict the innocent. Do you have any idea how much paperwork that entails?



## INTERVIEWS AND INTERROGATIONS

Successful interviews and interrogations are the key to a high clearance rate. Scientific evidence may prove facts, but narratives win convictions. During the early stages of an investigation, you want to establish what might have happened, then narrow it down to what did happen. Interviews allow you to do this. When interviewing witnesses who are not suspects, be polite, firm, and professional. Witnesses are often reluctant to involve themselves in a police investigation. Without triggering complaints, be sure to inform persons holding vital information of the benefits of sharing it, and of the consequences of withholding it.

The official policy of the department as to a suspect's access to legal counsel is that we never discourage people from availing themselves of their legal rights.





## DETECTIVE AS CON MAN

Any good detective is a con artist. He convinces witnesses to talk, even when it's not in their interests to do so.

He persuades suspects that he's on their side, that he shares the same worries, and that he's there to help. He's selling a bill of goods—that a confession offers the best possible deal for the suspect. Now and then the odd undetectable slap upside the head will get your skel's attention, but it's an ability to fashion an appealing sales pitch that separates the detective with the high clearance rate from the hapless mug with red names all over his section of the big board.

The trick to an interrogation is to find what makes your suspect tick. Step one: get to know him well enough to figure out what he thinks he needs. Step two: find a way to convince him that the way to get it is a signed confession.

Courts have upheld your right to deceive suspects. Use it. Tell them you've got hard physical evidence, or that their accomplices have flipped on them, or that an eyewitness just picked them out of a photo array. Lying works more often than not, but if you've got a perp of above-average intelligence, do it carefully. Don't say anything the perp knows to be false. You never want to let a suspect take control of the interview, which is exactly what happens when you get caught in a lie.

As police investigators we are supposed to respect a suspect's right to legal counsel. In fact, we respect it so much that we say whatever is necessary to persuade him not to use it! When a suspect lawyers up, he shuts up. Convince him, *even though it is never true*, that he's better off speaking to you without a lawyer. You can't come out and say this in so many words; you have to hint around it. Suggest that bringing in a lawyer escalates matters, or takes them out of your hands, so that you and he are no longer able to work together to get the best deal for him.

Like most interrogation gambits, this won't fly with hardened criminals. They know the drill, won't talk anyway, and have their shysters on speed-dial.

A truism of police work is that the most likely suspect probably did it. Murders among the heightened are no different than any other. Most are committed among family members, then close friends, and then business associates (especially associates in criminal enterprises.) The chief motivations for murder are commonly listed as sex and money. Even more prevalent is the temporary alleviation of annoyance—the hotheaded murder committed out of momentary anger by a person with limited financial and emotional resources. These are the easy murders to clear. Be grateful when you get them. Suspects are easy to locate and easier to persuade in the interrogation room.

The hardest murders to clear arise from organized crime activities, especially the drug trade. Witnesses are savvy to interrogation tactics and aware that confession is never in their best interests. These cases are solved outside the interrogation room, by working informants and establishing communications surveillance.

It is in these cases, where suspects are connected to multiple murders, draw on considerable financial resources, and can effectively intimidate any witnesses against them, that mind-reading warrants may be applied for, and granted.

## HCIU INTERVIEW PRINCIPLES

- Find and exploit your angle.
- Never undercut your partner.
- If he's talking, you're winning.
- When in doubt, let the line go slack.

## EMAT PROTOCOL

Perpetrators otherwise lacking a viable defense often claim to have been acting under the influence of a mutant power. It is therefore incumbent on you as investigators to use the EMAT protocol (see *Influence Detection (Interpersonal)* on p. 22 early in any interrogation, to rule out this possibility.

The officer conducting the EMAT examination must to testify in court to its veracity, and should hone his communications skills accordingly.

## INTERROGATION TIPS FOR GMS AND PLAYERS

During playtest we found that some players who'd excelled in interviews as fake cops (*The Esoterrorists*), ordinary people (*Fear Itself*) and self-appointed inquirers into cosmic terror (*Trail Of Cthulhu*) became suddenly tentative when called upon to extract information from witnesses and suspects as the badge-wearing police officers of *Mutant City Blues*. The pressure of properly playing trained cops kept them dallying and fretting rather than diving into interpersonal scenes to get the information they needed to move forward.

The following tips should keep interviews on track.

### GAME MODERATORS

**Takebacks.** Players may be too worried about making mistakes in interviews, for fear that they're playing their cop characters incorrectly. Allow them to take back any obviously out-of-character remarks they happen to blurt out as they feel their way through a scene.

**Passive use of interpersonal abilities.** By default, GUMSHOE assumes that the use of interpersonal abilities is active; the players have to correctly choose an appropriate ability and describe how they're using it to open the witness up to questioning. When you see that players are hesitant, tell the player with the relevant ability that his experienced cop character can sense that it will work here:

- "You get the feeling that this guy will crack if you lean on him a little." (Intimidation)
- "He seems kind of smitten by you." (Flattery)
- "The squeal of a police scanner tells you you've got a wannabe cop on your hands." (Cop Talk)

**Kibitzing.** Permit players whose characters are absent from the interview to give advice to the players taking the lead in it. If feel the need to make this convention seem realistic, specify that the interviewing characters are wearing tiny ear-implant radio receivers.

### PLAYERS

When in doubt, remind yourself of the following:

**Find and exploit your angle.** It's rarely in anyone's interest to talk to the cops. You're a con artist, selling a bill of goods. As you begin an interview with a resistant subject, your first step is to figure out what he wants. That's your *angle*, usually exploitable through the use of an interpersonal ability. Work your angle to convince the subject that he can get what he wants by cooperating with you. When he buys in, you've got your *opening*. Take advantage of your opening to pry loose the information you seek.

**Never undercut your partner.** Most interviews are tag-team affairs. Except when working an angle (like the classic good cop/bad cop stratagem), never block or negate a partner's gambit. Instead, build on what he's doing, even when you disagree with it, or sit back and let him make his play. If it blows up in his face, you can come back around to try a new angle. Otherwise you're giving the subject the leverage to play you off against each other.

**Don't sweat the occasional setback.** As long as the witness is talking, you're winning. In the typical interview, you don't have much to lose. At worst, the subject will clam up entirely. Even if you feel a sense of embarrassment or temporarily lose control of the exchange, you still have a chance of moving it back in your direction.

**When in doubt, let the line go slack.** If something goes wrong, turn it around and use it. You don't have to control the interview or dominate the subject at all times. Often you can close your con by letting the subject feel that he is on top. Then pull the rug out from under him with new information or a sudden switch to hardball tactics. Comfortable or confident subjects blab. The more someone talks, the more likely he is to give himself away.

The accompanying card serves as a reminder of these bedrock principles during play.



If you discover signs of mental influence, communicate this to prosecutors, as it constitutes exculpatory evidence which must be turned over to the defense, should an arrest result. If you believe that the suspect would not have committed the crime except for the mental influence, this transforms him into a witness against the true culprit—the mutant who influenced him. The case is not considered cleared until you find this individual and build a case against him.

Although you may naturally share your opinion of the case with prosecutors, the decision to forgo charges against an influenced suspect remains theirs.

However, the mere fact of mental influence does not guarantee that the suspect did not independently form the intent to commit a crime. This determination confronts the prosecutor with the difficulty of proving state of mind, but still results in a clearance for you.

As an HCU officer who may come into regular, perhaps unknowing, contact with mind-controlling individuals, you are subject to unannounced EMAT tests as often as once a month. If you do encounter a mind controller, you are required to submit a form 334 within eight hours. An Internal Affairs EMAT specialist will then arrange an emergency EMAT test within 24 hours of filing. (Warning: due to recent budget cuts, wait times for emergency EMAT testing may exceed this ideal time frame.) To refuse a department-administered EMAT results in immediate suspension from the force.

## TESTIMONY IN COURT

Every police officer could stand to improve his or her demeanor on the witness stand in court. Juries who we expect to decide cases based on evidence alone often in fact make emotional judgments about the parties on both sides, and then select the factual evidence that fits their chosen side. You must present yourself to the jury as personable, trustworthy, and professional.

Answer prosecutor's questions in a clear, direct manner. A skillful defense attorney will attempt to elicit misleading evidence by framing questions in an unfavorable way. Within the limitations imposed on you by the judge, do your best to respond in a way that makes your point, not the defense's.

Expect defense attorneys to attempt to bait you. Although judges will prevent them from openly appealing to anti-mutant prejudice, they may do so

## COURT SEQUENCES IN PLAY

Although the eventual disposition of their investigations in court must be uppermost in detectives' minds as they pursue the cases, they rarely take center stage in a *Mutant City Blues* game. Usually a scenario can conclude with a quick summary of the prosecution and sentencing of the guilty party, as part of a brief denouement.

As a change of pace, however, a case may include one or more court sequences.

A story may begin with the acquittal of a clearly guilty suspect. Perhaps supporting character detectives or forensic scientists have botched the case in some way. Maybe corruption played a part in the acquittal. The PCs now have to pursue the perp for a different crime entirely, this time making sure their case is ironclad. However, the doctrine of double jeopardy prevents the suspect from being retried on the same charges, and the detectives have to be careful to avoid accusations of harassment. (Double jeopardy may not be an issue in certain non-US jurisdictions. For example, in Canada, prosecutors as well as defense attorneys are allowed to appeal verdicts.)

Alternately, a court scene may lead a detective to a new crime. Perhaps he's on the witness stand when he spots a crucial piece of evidence suggesting that the defendant has been framed. Now he must convince prosecutors to abandon their case so he can find the real culprit.

If the PCs flagrantly violate police procedure or the civil rights of their clients, you may feel the need to preserve the believability of your series by continuing a case all the way to its horrifying implosion before a judge.

Sub-plots can also feature scenes that take place in court.

Use the directed scene method to keep all players engaged in court scenes. Give uninvolved players temporary roles as prosecutors, defense lawyers, witnesses, and spectators. You'll probably want to keep the judge as a character under your control, so that you can keep a lid on the pacing and outcome of court sequences.

in covert ways, attempting to portray you as strange or unreliable. This is why it is essential to maintain a spotless personnel file. If you lose your temper or cross a line in the course of one investigation, you are negatively impacting not only that case, but every other case you investigate in the future.

Officers with certain powers should expect the implication that they suffer the well-known defects connected or correlated with them, even when they do not. Because some mind readers are prone to erotomania, officers who can perform this highly useful feat must be prepared to defend themselves against the imputation that they do as well—even when there is no other evidence to support such claims.

## A BRIDGE BETWEEN COMMUNITIES

The HCIU exists not only to police the mutant community, but to act as a bridge between it and the department. Like any police force, we are often unfairly branded as an instrument of prejudice. Persuading your community of our good faith is part of your job.

In furtherance of this goal, you may sometimes be detailed to community outreach assignments. Do not think of these as distractions from real police duties. Creating a bond of trust between the department and the gene-expressive community lays essential groundwork for your later investigative work. When you knock on a mutant's door, you want him to happily welcome you into his home, and to open up to you when you ask him what he knows.

Dealing with mutant rights activists requires special diplomacy. Even if you personally dislike their strategies or agendas, we recommend that you express sympathy with them while in turn communicating to them the department's own priorities.



## CITIZENS AND SCROTES

During his rookie year, every cop learns that there are two kinds of people in the world: citizens and scrotes.

Citizens are the good people. The ones pay their taxes, follow the rules, and just want to raise their families in safety and peace. They're who you do this job for. When you talk to them, you treat them with deference and respect. Even if maybe they're not so fond of you, on account of your being a mutant. Sometimes you'll deal with a guy who's a bit of dick, but also a citizen. The citizen part trumps the dick part. Maybe you push back a little, but you hold back.

Scrotes are the wrongdoers, the criminals, the low-lives, the druggers and the muggers, the pimps and the pros. They're the societal refuse who give the citizens reason to live in fear. You never cut a scrote a break, because they need leaning on. Maybe one day they'll find God or L. Ron Hubbard or whatever and turn themselves into citizens. But when you're dealing with them, they're scrotes. They're the ones you do this job *to*.

Whether somebody is a norm or a lixer doesn't matter. It's the scrote/citizen divide that counts. A mutant citizen gets your deference and respect. A mutant scrote gets slammed up against the wall.

## MEDIA RELATIONS

Every police officer is a representative of the entire department, and should comport himself with dignity and circumspection when interacting with reporters. An HCIU officer must exercise special care and restraint, because he is a figure of great interest to the media. Members of the public are fascinated by the activities of the city's mutant police officers. Any controversy involving you will be magnified a hundredfold. In the past, certain former officers have fallen prey to the siren song of media attention, and have courted publicity, promoting themselves at the expense of the department. HCIU officers are expected to know the difference at all times between themselves and rock



stars. Those hoping to use the unit as a stepping stone to book deals or Hollywood consultancies will face swift, harsh reprimand.

Coordination with the press, especially when entreating the public to come forward with information, can be an invaluable technique in finding missing persons, locating fugitives, and gathering tips. Media strategy is the province of the watch commander. Unauthorized leaks to the press will not be tolerated.

### *If It Bleeds, It Leads*

Note the use of the word "unauthorized" in the phrase "unauthorized leaks." A strategic discharge of information to friendly reporters can be an investigating detective's best friend, especially when leads start drying up. Let's say, for example, you need to shake up an overconfident suspect, so that he makes a mistake you can capitalize on. The exposure can pay off—provided you cover your tracks. To be able to do this, you've got to cultivate relationships with reporters you can trust.

To figure out which reporters have your back, and which ones are out to jam you up, check out some of their articles. Look for ones whose copy divides the world into citizens and scrotes, like you do. Generally, the police beat reporters are stand-up guys, and the investigative reporters are scumbag-enabling weasels out to score points at your expense.

The one mistake you should never make is to take credit for anything, because that's the brass' job. They live for press conferences. Steal their thunder in public, and you'll be reassigned to guarding the auto yard before you know what hit you.

