

d20 Warhammer

WFRP d20 is a provocative and purely speculative endeavor, looking at WFRP from the perspective of a d20 gaming market, and maybe... just maybe... urging for a release of a d20 WFRP conversion book. Heresy I'm sure!

Introduction

D&D has always been a good way of stirring up an argument: both between the gaming community and the non-gaming community and within the community as well.

As the most publicly accessible game, and thus the one with broadest appeal, AD&D and D&D has always been disregarded as mainstream, and consequently conservative, traditional, and rather bland: all valid arguments to some degree.

The introduction of Dungeons and Dragons 3rd Edition has proven more volatile than all previous editions: especially with the open gaming license, the d20 system, and various comments that some at Wizards have reportedly said. Detractors of D&D and the d20 system view Wizards of the Coast as an evil company out to destroy all their competitors.

Its proponents say that Dnd3e offers many companies the opportunity to cater to the largest pool of gamers by using a familiar and widely accepted system. Consequently, many companies have produced their own original games as d20 games or provided conversions books.

Will WFRP go d20? I am by no means privy to what transpires within or between GW and Hogshead, but I find it unlikely. Games Workshop is understandably quite protective of its intellectual property, but that aside, does not mean that those of us unrelated to both companies cannot embark upon a discussion of such a project.

A Common Ground

Could a d20 WFRP capture the feel of the WFRP world? Some would say never ("The WFRP world is too gritty, too dark, too grim!" they say) while others would suggest that they could ("Background and mechanics are not irrevocably intertwined" they may argue). I would argue that both games are a bit closer than many WFRP fans would like to admit, and maybe they always have been in some ways. However with D&D3e the games are closer than ever before?

Where's the proof? The new D&D3e Class system looks considerably like the WFRP career system in some ways. Yes, all the original classes in D&D are still there, and yes they are still attached to levels. However in D&D3e the class systems are much more flexible, you can jump back and forth between classes, switching as one sees fit with relatively few limitations, closely resembling now the career system. One gains feats (special advantages), skill points, and additional hit points as well as attribute points in much the same way as the WFRP advance scheme and skill system works for each career.

Furthermore the Dnd3e system introduces a new concept (for Dnd3e that is...): Prestige Classes. After one has some experience in one or more classes and meets the requirements, they may enter into a prestige class which is not available for those not meeting the criteria - in this way many of the prestige classes act in a similar fashion to prestige classes.

These similarities may raise eyebrows here and there, but I feel that these similarities are the best point to start off at examining the two systems. Due principally to the career and class systems of WFRP and D&D3e respectively, I believe that this firmly suggests that the d20 system could reasonably simulate, replicate, or evoke the WFRP system. Yes, the D20 system can suitably translate the "Warhammer" experience! Future columns will look into greater detail and further advance this basic premise. Those disagreeing with opinions in this column are welcome to reply by email, through the forum, or are welcome to write their own articles for this column!

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