



An Inclusive Introduction to

Agitators

— AGITATOR —

DESCRIPTION

For the most part, the people of the Empire have little say in politics. The Emperor and the Elector Counts make and enforce the laws, with the support of the various churches (Sigmar and Ulric most conspicuously). Nonetheless, ardent political activists are a common sight in the cities of the Empire. These Agitators organize on behalf of various causes, handing out leaflets, giving rousing speeches, and stirring up the populace. The lunatic fringe is simply ignored, but successful Agitators—those who can tap into the wellspring of Peasant and Burgher resentment—are usually viewed as a threat to the state. They are hounded by local watchmen, accused of heresy by church officials, or forced to submit to the tender mercies of the Witch Hunters. Agitators continue on despite the risks. Some truly believe in their cause, but others are cynical power seekers as corrupt as those they rail against.



— Agitator Advance Scheme —

Main Profile

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
+5%	+5%	—	—	+5%	+10%	—	+10%

Secondary Profile

A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
—	+2	—	—	—	—	—	—

Skills: Academic Knowledge (History) or Gossip, Academic Knowledge (Law) or Common Knowledge (the Empire), Concealment, Charm, Perception, Read/Write, Speak Language (Breton or Tilean), Speak Language (Reikspiel)

Talents: Coolheaded or Street Fighting, Flee!, Public Speaking

Trappings: Light Armour (Leather Jack), One set of Good Craftsmanship Clothes, adto leaflets for various causes

Career Entries: Burgher, Captain, Herald, Highwayman, Scribe, Servant, Student, Zealot

Career Exits: Charlatan, Demagogue, Outlaw, Politician, Rogue, Zealot

Credits and Further Reading

Article compiled by Dave Allen. Sources include Middenheim: City of Chaos, Beasts in Velvet (which gives further details of Yevgeny Yefimovich and other political dissidents in the Empire and is highly recommended as a source), Genevieve Undead, Spires of Altdorf, Forges of Nuln and White Dwarf magazine.

Much of this article was written by Dan White. Thanks for his optional rules for prior convictions and his thoughts on causes and the Agitator's Armoury. Thanks also to Wim van Gruisen for his ideas about how Agitators might make money and Steve Darlington for his ideas on pamphlet titles.

Example pamphlets include text from Bar Room Brawl by Matt Connell and Jim Bambra, and from Otto's Printworks by Jim Bambra, both articles originally printed in WD 96.

Garett Leper has written an article for players of Agitators that can be found on the Strike to Stun website at <http://www.strike-to-stun.com/WFRP/AtoZ/Agitator1.htm> including some advice on what may motivate a character to take up Agitating, and why an Agitator might consider moving on to one of his Career Exits, as well as plenty of other ideas and Agitator-driven adventure seeds. The article was written for the career as it was presented in the first edition of WFRP, but is still highly relevant and useful.

Kurt Groffnung - Agitator

Kurt is an Altdorfer, the son of a burgher who was generous enough to see that he received a fine inheritance and education. A highly motivated student in his youth, Kurt acquired an enviable level of literacy and decided to study law. He lacked much passion for the subject though and, to his father’s chagrin, dropped out in short order.

With his straw-like hair and moustache, small beady eyes and pudding face Kurt is not a very attractive man. However, he is well spoken and charismatic, with a ready wit that allows him to make remarks that might see less eloquent raconteurs cause offence.

Stories of the skaven fascinated Kurt as a student. He and his classmates would often gossip about the ratmen and swap stories of them alongside tales of green men of the woods and one-eyed bog daemons. The difference between these accounts was that plenty of evidence could be found to prove the existence of the skaven to those who bothered to look. A fellow student spoke with conviction about how the ratmen had caused widespread destruction in his home city of Nuln, and the university library held a treatise on the anatomy of the skaven for the benefit of the Professor of Bestiaria.

Kurt became angry about the situation in the Empire, where intelligent discourse about the Skaven threat is quashed. He spent his remaining money to purchase a black market copy of Wilhelm Lieber’s *The Loathsome Ratmen and all their Vile Kin*, and to buy the trust of a printer known to be sympathetic to radical causes. He learned Tilean to better research Skaven by reading about a society who acknowledge their existence.

For a while Kurt’s well written and illustrated posters caused a stir in Altdorf but, one late Vorhexen evening, he was caught by the city Watch in the act of pasting a bill up on a statue of Mandred Ratslayer. He was branded a Yefimovite and flung in jail.

Kurt looked forward to a grim punishment for his crimes, but before the case was brought to court his freedom was bought by a visitor from Delberz. Direktor Liebrecht Schleicher of the Delberz guild for health and safety has studied accounts of the histories of Tobaró and Miragliano. He is planning to finance an expedition in order to hire the services of Tilea’s experienced skaven hunters. He thinks Kurt’s knowledge and background would make him a highly useful person to have on board.

Main Profile							
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
32	36	32	31	29	38*	30	34
Secondary Profile							
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
1	11	3	3	4	0	0	3

* An advance has been taken in this characteristic.

Skills: Academic Knowledge (Law), Common Knowledge (The Empire), Concealment, Charm, Gossip +10, Perception, Read/Write, Speak Language (Tilean), Speak Language (Reikspeil) +10.

Talents: Flee!, Public Speaking, Street Fighting, Suave (added to profile above).

Agitators are active supporters of causes. Almost any cause will do, from the rights of common Humans (or Elves, Dwarfs or Halflings) to the state of the drains.

They campaign tirelessly to enlist support, addressing meetings, distributing leaflets and bending the ear of anyone who will listen. To an Agitator, the greatest satisfaction is to see the establishment forced to act by the weight of public opinion. Some Agitators are motivated by genuine public concern, but many more have their own interests at heart - the winning side in a dispute will often reward its most loyal servants handsomely. Often, the cause of civilisation has been seriously damaged by meddling Agitators, although they can often be the cause of much good. The fact that there can be professional busybodies of this sort shows how complicated the Old World is.

In the cities of the Old World Agitators will often be found at the centre of a small crowd of citizens, making a speech about the level of taxes, the attitude of the watch, the state of the drains, the incursions of Chaos, some new religious zealotry, how some unpopular felon ought to be turned over to the mob for swift justice, the corruption indulged in by the overprivileged classes, or anything else they can find to complain about. In a society where levels of literacy are rock bottom a vocal and entertaining Agitator can be a valued source of entertainment and gossip amongst the poor and uneducated.

Agitators are known by a variety of different names, rabble rousers, fire-breathers, busybodies, street preachers and so on. However, most commonly such an individual is known as an Aufklärer in Reikspeil, Agitateur in Bretonnian, Agitatore in Tilean and Alborotador in Estalian.

Day to Day Agitating

Like many of the careers one can take up in the Old World agitating can take a variety of forms. Agitators are rarely motivated by the prospect of becoming wealthy; instead they crave the attention of a rapt audience, or the desire to see their cause gain recognition and become a force for change. In societies as reactionary and conservative as those of the Old World these motivations are naïve at best, and suicidal at worst (not least because, in the minds of some, change is synonymous with Chaos), yet rabble-rousing loud mouths can be found in the town squares and high streets of many Old World towns and cities.

There are a great many causes with which to grab attention and draw a crowd, from socially conscious Agitators who wish to see things improve for the common citizens of the Old World, to those who wish to enlighten people to the truth of threats such as Chaos or Skaven, to advocates of a religion or tradition, to bitter personal attacks on a person as the result of a grudge.

Agitators are not jurists, they don’t need evidence to back up their claims. Of course it helps their cause a great deal if they can provide some proof to back up their arguments, but in most cases a charismatic and eloquent public speaker will win a crowd over sooner than an Agitator who takes a dry academic approach.

The attitude of most authority figures in the Old World towards agitation is one of antipathy. However, they are careful not to come down on popular Agitators too harshly or publicly, after all allowing a show of dissent gives a populace the illusion of freedom.

Agitators in Middenheim

In the City of the White Wolf some priests of Ulric have been known to hire Agitators to stir up anti-Sigmarite feelings. This is a risky business in a society where both religious feelings and divides run deep; and whilst followers of Sigmar are heavily outnumbered by Ulricans in the city it is far from unknown for an Agitator expounding on some detail of the Sigmaran heresy to suddenly find himself surrounded by a wall of very angry men and women bearing icons of hammers or twin-tailed comets.

The attitude of the Watch towards anti-Sigmarite Agitators can seem odd to outsiders – the authorities here can be surprisingly lenient towards Agitators who are critical of followers of Sigmar, and even those who rant about such Sigmarite institutions as the Imperial Court are treated with levity. They are asked to move on, or given a verbal warning rather than being taken into custody and charged for disturbing the peace. If an Agitator in the streets of Middenheim were to say similar things about Ulricans, or the Graf's family and retainers, he would almost certainly find himself beaten, arrested or worse.

Printers in Middenheim

The craft of printing is still a fairly recent invention in the Old World, and has yet to become widespread and accepted. Cities the size of Middenheim have a few presses operating in them, but reproduction of the printed word is still done mainly by scribes in the city's scriptoria (offices where professional scribes perform their work, reactionary institutions that would certainly refuse the custom of most Agitators).

Rudolf Drucker maintains a small printshop in the Neumarkt district. The printshop is a one-storey building, with the press in a back room behind the living quarters. Drucker's apprentice, Thomas Buchstab, makes up the printing press from the carved wooden and lead letter-blocks which stand in racks along the walls, and Drucker checks the plates and operates the cast iron press with its lever operated roller. Meanwhile Buchstab keeps the letter blocks freshly inked. The press can take any size of paper up to three feet by two, and the paper quality ranges from coarse grade to fine quality high grade parchment.

Drucker's prices are:

- 1 shilling per line per 50 copies, rounding up (on low grade paper).
- 1 shilling per 50 copies for parchment.
- 1 shilling extra per 100 copies for paper larger than 2 feet by 2 feet.

Drucker knows all the other printers in the city, and will talk openly about the resistance they face from the scriptoria, and the resulting bureaucracy that has prevented printers in Middenheim from forming a guild. The scriptoria have a lot of influence and exercise their power to resist the competition arising from the development of printing.

Drucker, careful of his reputation as an upright businessman, tends not to welcome the custom of Agitators, though Buchstab, something of an armchair Agitator himself since he has been influenced by the fervour of an ex-apprentice, might suggest any that anyone wishing to print material Drucker would be unwilling to handle approach one of the other printers in the city, Old Otto.

Pen of the Purple Hand Lukas Farber is a hunted man. Just a few weeks back he responded to an advert posted on the Deutz Elm offering light, though poorly paid work. He met with a man in one of Nuln's inns, who provided him with a stack of bills to distribute. The pamphlets contained articles calling for changes in the way Nuln was run. Nothing too major or controversial, a slight increase in window tax compensated for by a decrease on chimney tax, the opening hours of a city park to be extended until the evening, demands that Watchmen from a certain district of the city wear slightly different uniforms to better distinguish between them and Watchmen from a different district, reclassification of what the city regards as an ocean worthy vessel, and so on.

The pamphlets are written with skill, the issues are persuasively argued with deft language and poetic metre. Witty use of rhymes and jest mean that the points raised therein remain in the reader's minds longer than they otherwise might. The pamphlets are of high quality, some kind of vellum, and the ink shines iridescently in a certain light.

The Nuln authorities are having to deal with an unprecedented number of calls for these changes to be made. It seems to the staff of government institutions that no more than five minutes pass without some concerned citizen arriving to say something like: "I wouldn't normally bother about this sort of thing, but have you considered how the knock on effects of a reengineering of the city sewer system might improve our relationships with Dwarfs and therefore further benefit our gunnery industry?" City authorities are therefore very keen to track the pamphlets to their source.

The culprits are a cell of Purple Hand cultists, calling on their god for inspiration for the arguments they write and casting spellbinding rituals on the ink they use. Even going so far as to print a batch on vellum made from camoleech skin, hoping that its captivating properties will add to the effect. They hope the constant call for change, and the pressure it puts on the Nuln authorities, will please Tzeentch.

The cult of the Red Crown find such tactics deplorable, however, as they feel Tzeentch's followers should exercise patience until armies of mutants and beastmen can be rallied to the cause. They feel that the Purple Hand's habit of causing change for change's sake jeopardizes their grand plan. As a result they are very keen to find the distributor of the pamphlets and have a little talk to him.

A Personality Clash Prince Kloszowski had made his triumphant return to the Empire, the writer's block that has plagued him since the aftermath of the Great Fog Riots has long since departed and he has a head full of ideas for grand new revolutionary tracts and magnificent gestures.

He has made his way to Middenheim, having long heard about the New Millennialists from his various underground contacts, and has hooked up with Old Otto in the hope of publishing a veritable plethora of incendiary revolutionary poetry.

However, within a short time the two men are at each others throats. To Otto Kloszowski is an embarrassing, attention-seeking liability (and a nobleman to boot), whilst to the Prince the old publisher is an over-cautious, dried up fuddy-duddy.

This clash of personalities has been noticed by many of the New Millennialist Agitators, and is causing something of a split within the group. Those who would like to see more action siding with the revolutionary poet, the more level-headed amongst them remaining firmly loyal to Old Otto and his less flashy methods.

Adventure Seeds for Agitators

A Stack of Pamphlets The vine growers and wine makers of the Stirhügel have long resented the imposition placed on them by the Vintner's Guild of Wurtbad, the ruling that all the wine produced by the region must be sold solely through them. In Flensburg a group of disgruntled wine makers and merchants have formed a forum called, somewhat ironically, Thick Skins. They secretly discuss how they can protect their interests by wresting control of the distribution of their products back from the provincial capital and the Vintner's Guild.

They have a sympathiser in Wurtbad (who they also pay quite handsomely) who makes pamphlets giving details of corrupt actions, dirty secrets and bad habits of Vintner's Guild members, or those who work alongside them or in their employ. He leaves the pamphlets scattered about on inn tables and street corners. The articles in the leaflets are told in lurid detail, rude satire and not a little exaggeration. The pamphlets do not tell outright lies though, and some of the stories have been investigated and have turned out true. This has had the result that the Vintner's Guild is becoming discredited in the eyes of many Stirlanders.

There are only a handful of printers officially working within the town, and the speed with which the leaflets appear, as well as the contemporaneous nature of the stories they tell, has Wurtbad authorities convinced that the Agitator is using one of them to produce his gossip. As a result they are under some heavy surveillance. Recently a stack of these pamphlets (which claim that a Rat Catcher who works for the Vintners often performs paid work without informing his own Guild), was found in the front office of one of the town's printers Endal Zahnlos and Son.

Endal claims he is the victim of a frame, after all the Vintner's Guild are one of his best customers. Others claim they have encountered Endal, somewhat in his cups, stumbling out of one of the inns on the Stahlstrasse, complaining loudly about the exacting standards and meagre commissions he receives from the very guild he claims to so happily work for.

Rats! The Rat Catchers of Middenheim are seeking to drum up more trade by making pest control into a social issue. Middenheim's Kommission for Health, Education and Welfare should employ a body of Rat Catchers but the chancellor is reluctant to fund them, so the Catchers of the city operate on a freelance basis. This has led to some disgruntlement and in order to force the chancellor's hand the Rat Catchers have contacted the New Millennialists, and have commissioned them to produce a set of posters (see the centre pages for an example) and paste them up around town.

The initial public response to this has been enthusiastic, and a number of rats have been 'posted' through the Grafsmund gates, but the city authorities have yet to take any action to deal directly with the rat problem. Instead they have just increased the guard around the Grafsmund, giving them orders to stop and search anyone they suspect of carrying a rat.

This has also had the consequence that city authorities, previously relatively ambivalent towards the activities of Agitators, are now determined to crack down on the New Millennialists, and rabble rousers and printers are undergoing high levels of scrutiny and disproportionate punishments for any misdemeanours they commit.

In one of the many side streets that make up Middenheim's Wynd district lies an old, dilapidated warehouse. A sign reads 'Otto's printworks – leaflets and books printed to order'. The front door opens into a small dusty office, where the proprietor can be found. Otto sits behind an ink-spattered desk, strewn with pieces of paper. From behind a closed door can be heard the rattle and clatter of printing presses.

Otto looks in his late sixties, with thick pebble glasses, wild grey hair and a goatee beard. He is friendly and appears to all intents as an honest artisan wishing to provide his customers with fine service. However, Otto is one of the leading members of the New Millennialists – a radical group dedicated to change in society. Far from fanatical, all Otto's arguments are based in reason. He can see that a rationally ordered society would benefit far more people than it does at present. However, he does wish to keep his activities secret, after all the authorities would put him out of business if they caught him printing seditious literature. For someone to convince him to do so they would have to gain the trust of a contact, who might then arrange a meeting with Otto.

Otto's prices are:

- A crown per 100 sheets, with discounts for 500 sheets or more (500 sheets for 4 crowns, 1000 sheets for 8 crowns and so on...)
- 30 crowns for ever 100 pages of a book (100 of these books would therefore cost 2000 crowns), for each additional book ordered the rate is reduced by a crown to a minimum of 10 crowns per 100 pages. It takes around 3 days to prepare a press to print a 100 page book, and then about 10 days to run off 100 copies.
- These are for standard works, special layouts and woodcut illustrations might cost up to 200% extra.

Printers and Agitators

When deciding on an Agitator's background it may be good to consider how they came to be in possession of the leaflets they carry. As Agitator characters begin play with the Read/Write skill it is possible that they could have produced their leaflets by hand, but someone who is serious about spreading the word in a community of any size will need access to a printing press in order to produce the quantity of material they require.

With this in mind most Agitators will have a relationship with a printer, and this can provide the opportunity to add depth to a character. Some causes are not controversial enough to arouse much suspicion, but if the Agitator is concerned with a matter that is seen as seditious (and most are) then they will have had to gain the confidence of a printer who is willing to risk their livelihood to produce the leaflets. The character may have previously earned a printer's enmity, either by approaching them with a job they found offensive, or by bringing heat onto them by being indiscrete about where they got their leaflets made. A particularly controversial Agitator might well be interrogated at length by the authorities about where they had their literature printed, and the printer might be subject to fines, closure, wrecked presses or worse.

Bear in mind that almost all printers within a city wish to be seen as reputable, and even sympathetic ones are unlikely to take on seditious materials lightly. On the other hand the profession is somewhat radical in itself, and so finding a sympathetic printer is often far from impossible.

Middenheim provides a model for most of the major cities in the Old World, businessmen like Drucker are unlikely to want the custom of any characters who might threaten their livelihood, though an impressionable and somewhat irresponsible apprentice, like Buchstab, might be convinced to do a quick run of leaflets behind his master's back. Characters like Old Otto also exist, but have to be very careful that their activities are not traced by the authorities, so their trust is hard won.

The door from the office leads to the print room, where two presses are tended by three apprentices. These are simple but effective screw presses (slower but less expensive than the roller press Rudolf Drucker operates), and they work by winding the galleys of type down onto a sheet of paper. If asked about the door leading from the back of the print room Otto will claim that it leads to a storeroom.

In fact the room contains a third screw press, used for producing material of a seditious nature. Any cause that might embarrass authority figures or that calls for improvements in the lot of the common folk is given access to these facilities, once Otto is confident that the source of such material is both trustworthy and firmly opposed to Chaos. The press specialises in leaflets proclaiming the imminent arrival of the New Millennium, in which the common people will have greater control over their own destiny. This illicit printworks is manned by night, two trained Agitators work the press and hand over leaflets to other agents for distribution.

The New Millennialist Movement

Many of the Agitators throughout the city of Middenheim espouse the beliefs of the New Millennialists. This revolutionary group believe that society is unjust, benefiting the rich and powerful at the expense of the common people. They wish to see a change in the running of the Empire, and Middenheim in particular.

Members of the New Millennialists are, on the whole, honest hard-working folk, who dislike the efforts of their labours going to feed the rich and powerful. Members point to the poverty and decay visible in the poorer sectors of the city as evidence of the rulers disregard for the common people.

Many members of the New Millennialists are worshippers of Verena, the goddess of learning and justice, who would like to see an Empire run by reason and not by the whims and personal interests of the rich. They view the schism between the followers of Ulric and Sigmar as nothing more than a sham to divert the common people from the real issues of the day – namely their lack of money and the constant threat of Chaos.

Although adventurers coming into contact with the activities of the New Millennialists may suspect them of being Chaos Cultists they are actually totally opposed to Chaos, for Chaos would mean an end of all order and reason. Anyone they suspected of being a Chaos worshipper would find their lives dogged by Agitators seeking to expose them in public places and organising demonstrations outside their own dwellings.

For all their agitating, the New Millennialists are not as influential as they would like to be. Although their Agitators are active, most of the city’s folk are usually deaf to their pleas. Occasionally they will catch the common folk in a volatile mood, but the ‘mob’ is easily distracted by a hurriedly prepared festival or parade put on by the City Council. Attacks on public figures tend to be more effective – it is difficult to ignore agitators who harangue you from public corners, particularly if there is a whiff of Chaos involved.

If a large demonstration does occur Chaos Cultists often attempt to make trouble by starting fights and heckling from the sidelines. Imperial loyalists and followers of Sigmar are also known to heckle the crowd and a small counter demonstration might be organised. It is rare that the situation will erupt into a riot, the watch will attempt to contain any violence that occurs.

Random Agitations

Need a quick cause for an Agitator to shout in the streets as your PCs pass by, or the title of a random pamphlet handed to them in a market square? You can generate one by rolling on the following tables and compiling the resulting statement.

“**[Table One] the [Table Two] of the [Table Three] Upon/Against [Table Four]!**”

<p>Table One</p> <p>1 Beware</p> <p>2 Destroy</p> <p>3 Discover</p> <p>4 End</p> <p>5 Expose</p> <p>6 Open Your Eyes To</p> <p>7 Protest</p> <p>8 Take Up Arms Against</p> <p>9 Tear Down</p> <p>10 Undermine</p>	<p>Table Two</p> <p>1 Corruption</p> <p>2 Conspiracy</p> <p>3 Depredations</p> <p>4 Domination</p> <p>5 Enslavement</p> <p>6 Evil</p> <p>7 Lies</p> <p>8 Machinations</p> <p>9 Oppression</p> <p>10 Tyranny</p>
<p>Table Three</p> <p>1 Criminals and Deviants</p> <p>2 Foreigners</p> <p>3 Military Complex</p> <p>4 Religious Sect (pick one)</p> <p>5 Nobles</p> <p>6 Other Races (or pick one)</p> <p>7 Rich</p> <p>8 Skaven (or other imaginary creature)</p> <p>9 Those In Power (or pick a specific person)</p> <p>10 Unjust Laws and Taxes</p>	<p>Table Four</p> <p>1 All Faithful Sons of Sigmar</p> <p>2 All True-Born Humans</p> <p>3 Anyone Who Dares Speak Against Them</p> <p>4 Men of the True Faith</p> <p>5 Numerous Innocent Victims</p> <p>6 Proud Servants of the Empire</p> <p>7 The Poor and Downtrodden</p> <p>8 The Working Classes</p> <p>9 Those Too Weak And Too Ignorant To Defend Themselves</p> <p>10 Us Morally Upstanding Citizens</p>

Example: The GM rolls 6, 7, 2 and 3, producing the inflammatory cry of **“Open Your Eyes to the Lies Spread By Foreigners Against Anyone Who Dares Speak Against Them!”** He decides this Agitator is against Tilean immigrants, and particularly dislikes that his old Tilean girlfriend has spread rumours about him having the Pox.

2-3 - You served one year of hard labour in your old Lord's mines for writing a pamphlet questioning his use of a 'Seer' in the running of his domain. At the brief trial, you can still see the look of surprise on the 'Seers' face as your pamphlet was admitted as evidence. He didn't see *that* coming!

4-6 - Your campaigning to keep the 'Scarlet Bordello' open after a puritanical Lord mooted plans to close it resulted in a spell in the stocks and a fine of 2d10 gold crowns. Your subsequent satire of the Lord, as a jealous impotent, forced you to leave town with all die haste.

7-8 - Found scrawling graffiti on the town walls, you spent 10 days scrubbing it all off again and making repairs to the damned thing. You can't stand the sight of plaster.

9-10 - Whilst impersonating the town mayor, you were arrested for being drunk & disorderly. The guard didn't seem to realise that you were putting it on and urging the crowd to press the mayor to spend the towns' money on better things than drink. This turned out to be lucky, as instead of a night in the cells, you would have faced a month or so felling timber at the mayor's pleasure.

Effects of Prior Convictions Dependant on the crowd that the Agitator is entertaining, or the readership of his Pamphlets, any prior convictions may have an effect on how he is received, especially if he is in an area where he has faced convictions before.

The skill difficulty test for any Public Speaking or Propaganda is increased by one step if the audience is hostile towards the Agitator as a result of his legal history, or decreases by one step if they are sympathetic.

Kloszowski's Great Escape

The duce had told him the only way out of the dungeons of Zeluco was in a corpse cart, and here he was proving the parasite right. Unless the ordeal were to end soon, Kloszowski would sadly not be alive to benefit from the irony. His mother, the Dowager Princess, wouldn't have approved of his current situation. But his mother hadn't approved of his situations since early infancy, so that was hardly a novelty. He needed to cough but the weight on his back was too much. He could only choke feebly, grinding thinly-fleshed ribs against the rough wooden planks of the cart.

Of all his daring escapes, this was the least enjoyable. Through the cracks between the planks, he sucked cold, clean air, and occasionally caught glimpses of reflected light from puddles in the road. The novice of Morr, comfortable on his padded driver's seat, was humming a gloomy melody to himself as he transported human waste to the marsh that served the dungeons as a markerless graveyard. There were things in the marsh the Zelucos liked to keep well-fed, in the hope of dissuading them from forsaking watery homes in search of live meat. Tileans were like that, keener to come to an accommodation with the creatures of chaos than on crusading against the filthy monstrosities.

Zeluco had too cosy a life extorting from the peasants to bother much with good works. He was a typical parasite, the fruit of ten generations of inbreeding, oppression and perfumed privilege.

Come the revolution, Kloszowski swore, things would be different...

- *The Cold Stark House* by Jack Yeovil

Agitators in Altdorf

Putative street preachers are currently somewhat out of favour in the capital due to the depredations of "The Beast". About a decade ago this pattern-killer stalked the Altdorf docks and committed a number of vicious and highly publicised murders there. The victims were all women, many of whom worked as prostitutes in the Street of a Hundred Taverns and the adjacent docklands area. These murders persisted for a lengthy period, becoming an embarrassment to both the city watch and the Imperial court.

At the same time an Agitator known as Yevgeny Yefimovich was highly active in the capital, holding regular rallies against the punishing Thumb Tax that had been recently introduced. He was from Kislev originally and had narrowly escaped death at the hands of the Tsar's lancers. Some said his family had been killed at the whim of a nobleman, others that he was aristocracy himself and had turned against his own kind. The Agitator proved popular, pamphlets such as *Sons of the Soil*, *Arise!*, *Casting Asunder the Chains*, *You and Your Betters* and *Come the Revolution* won the sympathies of many Altdorfers, and set their outrage at the new tax up against their outrage at the continued depredations of The Beast. So successful was he at stirring the passions of those who listened to him that he even led a mob of enraged citizens to the gates of the Imperial Palace itself, and an alarming number of Altdorfers began to proudly proclaim themselves as "Yefimovites".

Yefimovich's rallies drew increasing numbers of supporters, and a new pamphlet entitled *Beasts in Green Velvet* analysed the misdeeds of the nobility in well researched and exhaustive detail. Whipped up into a fury, Altdorfers took to the streets in an orgy of property destruction, looting and acts of murderous violence towards authority figures later called the Great Fog Riots.

In the wake of the riot stories began to circulate that The Beast and Yefimovich were one and the same, added to which were rumours that the Agitator had been publicly exposed as a mutant and devotee of the Chaos gods. Yevgeny had to flee the capital in fear of the very mobs he had once stood at the head of. The memories of how they had been hoodwinked by this rabble rouser still burn in the minds of many Altdorfers, and they are quick to round on Agitators with a caustic remark, or even violence - assuming that any kind of call for social progress amounts to "Yefimovism". The situation is such that even a well intentioned young man, who wishes for nothing more than to make the potential abuses of a fresh tax on firewood clear to his fellow Altdorfers, need only mention the matter in a dockside tavern to start a full-on bar room brawl.

Whilst his theories are still highly contentious, a somewhat more moderate figure is Professor Brustellin, formerly of the University of Altdorf. The professor had published a volume entitled *An Anatomy of Society*, and justified his beliefs in a series of well-attended lectures. He had likened the Empire to a human body and drawn parallels between the ruling classes and a debilitating ague of the bones.

Word reached the ears of those in high places and the Professor's works were banned on the order of the Emperor. Brustellin was publicly and viciously flogged, and was forced to resign in disgrace from the University. Many students and academics signed a petition against the professor's dismissal and he even drew support from surprising quarters, the nobleman Baron Johann von Mecklenberg added his name to the list of those protesting against the harshness of his treatment.

Unfortunately for the professor he fell in with a bad crowd, siding with the Yefimovites in the Great Fog Riots. He was killed during the violence and his body was buried outside the city. It is a sign of the respect his ideas received from some quarters that, despite his radical views and his association with Yefimovich, a small shrine was erected over his resting place. He remains a highly controversial figure, but an Agitator in Altdorf might be able to defuse a potentially dangerous encounter by claiming his ideas are based on “Brustellite theory”.

Another figure whose presence looms large in Altdorf’s political underground is Prince Aleksandr Kloszowski, the radical poet. A notorious revolutionist, condemned to death throughout the Old World. Prince Kloszowski was genuinely a member of the Kiselvian nobility, though he hated to be reminded of his noble origins. Despite this he was reluctant to drop the title from his name, for Kloszowski was a somewhat pretentious figure in comparison to Agitators who took a more rational approach, such as Brustellin. Kloszowski’s primary motive for arguing in favour of the revolution was because he thought it sounded romantic, and he even wore clothes that he had deliberately distressed to achieve an authentically proletarian look.

Despite his pretensions no one can deny that he was a highly accomplished poet. *The Ashes of Shame*, a six stanza poem that claimed the Beast was finding shelter in the palace of the Emperor, was a key influence in inciting the Great Fog Riots.

Kloszowski was also an associate of Yefimovich, and took part in the rioting himself. After the Great Fog Riots abated he denounced his former ally, hurriedly producing poems excoriating the fiend in human shape who had perverted such an honourable cause. He left Altdorf before the watch could take him and continued to write. His epic poem, *The Blood of Innocents*, would become an underground classic, particularly after it was banned in every city and state of the Empire. Kloszowski disappeared from the Empire altogether, though his supporters say he travelled south to bring word of the revolution to the republics and principalities of Tilea.

He inspired his own set of followers, calling themselves Kloszowskists, who rail against the Yefimovites as vehemently as they do against the excesses of the nobility (though to the eyes of outsiders there really is very little to distinguish between the two rival revolutionary ideologies).

Despite the hostile reception that Agitators can receive from both the authorities and the citizens of Altdorf, there are plenty of opportunities for those who wish to expound upon a cause to find an alternative form of addressing the issue within the capital by writing an article for the *Altdorf Speiler*. The newsletter is very popular within the city and it’s editors seem to enjoy a degree of freedom to criticise the institutions of the Old World - provided such articles are couched in very careful language, use no small measure of euphemism and allegory, and uphold respect in a number of other institutions and values. The editors of the *Speiler* would therefore probably refuse an article ranting about how much of the Imperial coffers are spent on frivolities for the nobility, but they probably would accept an article focussed on the funds donated to Shallyan hospices, and opining about what a shame it is more money isn’t spent on them, rather than those frivolous nobles.

Thanks to this organ, Agitators can still make their voices heard in Altdorf despite the relatively rough reception they might meet on the capital’s streets.

Types of Sentence

Chaos Worship (roll 1D10)

1 - Found guilty after 1d10 days of torture. You escaped, fortunately, but may have Witch Hunters on your tail. You may have prominent scars as a result (optional –5% to Fellowship statistic).

2-3 - Held in a dark dungeon for 2d10 days before being put to the question. A corrupt guard, believing the charges against you and a chaos cultist himself, let you escape. Whether the charges are true or not, he may approach you at times for favours.

4-6 - Left to the tender mercies of the Witch Hunters for a month, you were released without charge, but the experience has left you with a hatred of authority figures.

7-8 - Fined 3d10 gold crowns for wasting a Witch Hunter’s time (even though it was an anonymous tip off that resulted in your capture). If you find out who tipped him off, you mean to get even.

9-10 - Held as a witness to a Chaos ritual (may be a true or trumped up charge), you supplied a statement and were released. However, you’ve noticed that the authorities seem to be keeping an eye on you.

Heresy/Religious (roll 1D10)

1 - You were marked as a heretic by members of a faith (pick one) but escaped the fire thanks to a faction within it that agreed with your reforms. Zealots may still be after you.

2-3 - Held for vandalism against a temple’s property (choose one) and sacrilege, you faced a fine of 1d100 gold crowns and imprisonment before you recanted and served 30 days as a penitent at the altar; scrubbing floors and wearing a hair shirt. The shame still burns and you may have a hatred of priests of that deity.

4-6 - Shouting down the ranking priest at a public ceremony is never a good idea. You served 10 days in the secret catacombs under the temple for your pains. Now if only you could expose their somewhat illegal practises, but those men in the purple robes are always watching...

7-8 - Releasing a pamphlet questioning the motives of a recent religious statement resulted in your being named apostate and banned from being present at that temple’s ceremonies and its worshippers being banned from giving you succour. Not that you mind, really. They had it coming.

9-10 - A satirical cartoon you drew of a local priest didn’t go down well and you found yourself fined d10 gold crowns to “teach you a lesson”. You think he probably spent it on the camp followers he was so fond of (as your cartoon depicted).

Secular (roll 1D10)

1 - A target of one of your campaigns ended up with a dagger in his ribs and the blame fell on you. Due to face a hanging, an attack by beastmen/outlaws/greenskins fell on the community, allowing you to escape. You’ve seen posters with your face on them a couple of times since though.

Other Races

Ogres are typically too simple and straightforward to allow the complex social issues of the Old World to irritate them. They can be gulled in by an enthusiastic fast talker though, and some Agitators have appeared in the company of a sympathising Ogre, whose physical presence lends the Agitator's arguments some considerable weight.

Life in the under-empire is dangerous for any who distinguish themselves by criticising the regime. Disgruntled skaven certainly exist, but such ingrates would have to work carefully and cleverly to gather a sympathetic forum about themselves. A skaven stood in the bazaar of Under-Delberz calling for breeding rights for the common clanrat would soon be found in the dirt with his throat torn out.

However, in communities of skaven were members of a particular clan are absent it can be known for skaven to preach from tunnel crannies about how the mephitic practices of Clan Pestilens are heretical, for example, or how Clan Moulder science-rats don't represent the true way of the Horned Rat. This criticism may even extend to open calls against particular members of the Council of Thirteen, and cries of "Nurglitch must be seen to touch the thirteen-sided pillar once more!" or "Impeach Lord Gnawdwell now!" can be heard where such individuals are never likely to hear of them.

The other races of the Old World are either too totalitarian to allow displays of dissent, or too anarchic for an Agitator is distinguish himself from the masses. A dark elf or chaos dwarf who saw fit to criticise his society would soon either be killed or enduring a life of slavery and a beastman or goblin who criticised his chief would probably be slain outright by an enraged sycophantic follower, or forced into a duel to the death with the object of his ire.

Optional Rules for Prior Convictions

If you choose the path of the Agitator for a career, then you're going to attract some unwanted attention along the way. Getting word to the people of the Baron's plan to give pardons to dangerous criminals and getting signatures on your petition is laudable, but is liable to attract not only his attention, but that of his thugs.

The Agitator continuously courts controversy and can expect to get into trouble with the authorities, whether Witch Hunter, town guard or religious official. The prior conviction charts are designed to determine the Agitators 'past record'.

Number of Convictions To find out the number of prior convictions for experienced Agitators, roll 1D10 and divide by two. For starting PC Agitators, either roll for one prior conviction or do not roll, as discussed with the GM.

Conviction Type (roll 1D10)

- 1 - Chaos Worship
- 2-4 - Heresy/Religious
- 5-10 - Secular

Agitators in Talabheim

In contrast, a city where Agitators can actually have a relatively easy time of it is, oddly enough, Talabheim. There are many archaic laws along the lines of "freedom of the serfdom to preach in the fruit market every third week, such Agitators must wear a badge of credence and failure to mark oneself in this manner will result in censure".

Whilst a case could be brought against an Agitator in Talabheim, the fact that so many of them have an academic knowledge of the law means that they can often quote so many odd legislations and loopholes, and waste so much of the authorities' time doing so, that they are only arrested if they are railing about a very incendiary matter.

Of course, those who are not familiar with Talabheim's labyrinthine legal systems are much easier targets, and should someone from out of town take up agitating they will often be picked up by the city authorities and subjected to a disproportionate and highly publicised punishment by way of example.

Agitators in Bretonnia

Agitators in the Kingdom of Bretonnia who have a political axe to grind are received with even greater degrees of hostility than they are in other areas of the Old World. They tend to face punishment (varying from pillory to execution) if discovered by the nobility, who have an almost preternatural dislike of the social changes wrought in other parts of the Old World that would threaten the feudal society of Bretonnia should they then go on to take place there.

However, even the Bretonnian peasantry can become very hostile towards those who seek to inform them of a better life to be had if they would only rise up and take it. The effects of the thorough indoctrination that the Bretonnian peasantry undergo throughout their lives, perfectly embodied within the words of the Peasant's Vow, makes them an illustrative example of a lumpenproletariat who only too willingly kowtow to the whims of their social superiors.

However, an Agitator who travels round telling jingoistic tales or performing sycophantic rants in favour of the royal regime can find themselves warmly welcomed and rewarded. Such types are seen as a much appreciated source of entertainment by the peasantry, who value verbal story-telling in almost any form due to the even higher level of illiteracy in the kingdom in comparison to other Old World nations.

There is little to distinguish Agitators such as these from Performers really, one man shows who keep the impoverished inhabitants of isolated hamlets and farmsteads amused by telling them how lucky they are to be Bretonnian and the misfortunes and blunders that other nations invite by adopting a different way of life.

Some More Thoughts on Causes

The targets of an Agitator's ire can be as diverse as a new local tax, the state of the local roadways or the drinking habits of the town magistrate. Whatever the cause they latch onto, they throw themselves wholeheartedly into bringing about the desired change.

Popular Agitation

These are causes that strike a chord with local inhabitants and affect them on a daily basis. The Agitator can identify a hot topic by spending time in the community gathering information and gossip. These topics may be anything from local taxes, the state of public amenities, roadways, sewage systems, insufficient protection from raids or being unable to work the fields due to military training, to the inability of the watch to combat crime, abuse of power by local dignitaries, the dangers posed by living alongside wizards or the non-human races, damaging habits of the nobility, unscrupulous business practises or cruelty and famine due to apathy or vice.

An Agitator crusading for such a popular cause can often find himself at the centre of a willing army of helpers, whichever tool he uses from his armoury. As a consequence, however, he can expect things to get a little excitable if he is not careful. Unless he manages his cohorts carefully, angry locals might confront law enforcement agencies and Nobles may impose draconian clampdowns or widespread arrests.

Societal Agitation

Agitators who call for changes in the law or the habits of the population (normally starting at the top, naturally) are the real risk-takers of the career. Canvassing support for a new Dwarf beard tax, the banning of carriages on the empire's roadways, imposing trade tariffs on all Bretonnian cheese imports and the like is going to get you into hot water with authorities and parts of the population alike. Change is not popular in the Old World, especially with the ruling classes, and if you ask theologians about it, they will tell you that change risks opening the door to the Ruinous Powers.

Yet still there are Agitators who are not scared to demand changes to the articles of faith for Sigmarite temples, or a change to the hours of the Nuln Gunnery School's practise drills. Such individuals had best be well prepared and have an extensive network of allies and safe houses if he is to escape censure and arrest.

Apocryphal Agitation

Not content with complaining about nearly every other subject under the sun, some Agitators sail even closer to the wind and seek to warn people of dangers that are unseen or hidden. Such men and women are often greeted with ridicule if they accuse a businessman of consorting with daemons, or a leading priest of heresy. They warn of the dangers of the enemy within, mutants under every bed and the corruption of the overprivileged classes.

Sometimes they may even have evidence, but this is often the technique of the craven and petty-minded seeking the downfall of someone who has slighted the Agitator in the past. Still, many a time his speeches contain some truth, even though the population at large ignores him. Agitators tacking up these causes must be wary of spies, the temple authorities and Witch Hunters. Speaking out about such matters is normally an admission of more knowledge than one would care to admit and attracts all kinds of fanatics to the Agitator, both secular and religious. Many such Agitators end up in the cleansing fires. This doesn't seem to dissuade others taking up the challenge.

'What business is it of mine? This is a matter for men.'

It is almost unknown for an elf to take up agitating. Their own societies are more egalitarian and yet also more hidebound to tradition and respect than those of the other races. Hypothetically, elven rulers tend to take the needs of their followers into account much more seriously than greedy and corruptible humans, and this display of noblesse oblige means that a show of dissent is rarely needed in order to bring attention to social issues within elven communities of significant size.

Elves can view human society with a mix of uncomprehending wonder at its (albeit ugly) architectural and technological achievements and haughty disdain at its failure to harmonise with the natural world or to lift the majority of its populace out of a life of destitution and squalor.

Both of these, somewhat contradictory, attitudes leave most elves feeling that the social issues affecting the lives of other races are none of their concern. Even those who are affected by what they see around them tend to be intelligent enough to realise that lobbying for change is likely to bring them nothing but trouble, and alleviate their own discomfort by performing personal, practical acts of charity and vigilantism.

On very rare occasions an elf will take up agitating, but such individuals are very much aberrations to the trend.

'Longer Breaks for Elevenes!'

Gossip and other forms of sociable activity are lodestones of halfling life, and the gregarious folk spend disproportionate (to human eyes) time and energy on forming and reinforcing bonds with one another.

This does mean that any member of a halfling community who has an axe to grind tends to have an audience of some size ready and willing to listen to him. Halflings who feel marginalised, patronised or ignored tend to want to make their voices heard on the matter, and at some length too.

The vast majority of these halfling 'Agitators' are probably better described as scurrilous gossips, or bar room philosophers, but to some the thrill of standing on a soapbox and attempting to bring the world to rights can compensate a great deal for a lack of physical stature and being judged as little more than harmless in the prejudiced eyes of the other races.

Lovers of the good life, halfling Agitators can be easily bought, only to become vociferous opponents once more when the luxuries they earned through their silence have been used or consumed.

The issues that concern halflings are much the same as those that concern human Agitators, though halflings tend to feel a greater sense of alarm at social issues that impact their immediate vicinity or community, rural affairs and the rising cost of products and services.

Halflings tend not to be so concerned with matters of state or religious squabbling, and tend not to feel the same degree of ire that humans can display towards those who lead a life of privilege.

Agitation in Entertainment

There are other careers that can bring a seditious message to the public eye. Mainly in the form of entertainment; minstrels may well sing songs of protest, playwrights and directors may satirize policies or public figures within their work, storytellers, such as writers of books for the literate and raconteurs, poets like Prince Kloszowski, scholars like Professor Brustellin, and so on.

Many works of art or learning, in all forms of media, have been seen as seditious and have prompted reactions in their audiences, or in the authorities who have sought to bring such public shows of dissent to a close before they cause much furore. This often backfires, as banned works of art instantly gain a deal of underground credibility.

Non Human Agitators

The non-human races who live in the Old World have all thrown up examples of Agitators, and Halfling busy-bodies in particular can be regularly encountered wherever they gather in number.

Agitators can both benefit and suffer from the ability to draw attention. A human Agitator has a distinctive advantage in that he can, if push comes to shove, try and loose himself in the crowd when the local law enforcement turns up. An elven Agitator (almost unknown as they are) might have a much easier time drawing a crowd of curious onlookers, but would be unable to tell an arresting Watchman that he must be mistaken as to the rabble rouser's identity.

'Disgrace & insult, that's what I call it! See that tower? My father *built* that tower!'

Dwarven society is far more structured and tradition bound than that of the human nations (with the debateable exception of Bretonnia) and dwarfs tend to deal with their grievances in a more proactive and practical manner than humans, either by following the traditions associated with declaring and avenging grudges and blood feuds or, in extreme cases, taking on the Slayer Oath.

As such the concept of publicly moaning about a grievance in the hope that other dwarfs would heed your call for change would be met by bewilderment by most dwarfs. If an individual behaved in such a manner in the halls and corridors of a dwarf hold he would most certainly be met with ostracism and would shortly be subject to expulsion or some other form of punishment.

Dwarfs who live within human lands, towns and cities are less likely to hold such an attitude. Not only can they suffer from being a marginalised minority but humans typically refuse to honour the codes of vendetta and oath-taking that dwarfs use to remedy their disputes.

Bigotry, either real or perceived, is the greatest motivator for a dwarf Agitator, seeking to 'enlighten' humans as to the benefits of organising their society along dwarven lines is another factor - though they can be motivated by almost any of the causes that human Agitators are wont to opine about, with a particular miserly eye on increases in living costs.

Brustellin and Kloszowski

Brustellin, disenchanted with words, sneered, 'More poems, just what the revolution needs!'

The poet was angered. 'Clothead academic! My poems do more for the cause than your dusty tracts. Poetry is for the people, not for ink-blotched scholars and dried-up prunes of clerics.'

'I was flogged, you know,' said Brustellin, loosening his cravat, preparing to bare his back to exhibit yet again the marks left by the punishment that had preceded his expulsion. 'Twenty years of teaching and that young dolt Scheydt had me flogged and thrown into the streets.'

He was down to his shirt and everyone was telling him not to go further. They had all seen a sight too much of Brustellin's ravaged back.

'You were flogged and Stieglitz here was mutilated and crippled,' spat Kloszowski. 'But only I have been hanged by the hated classes...'

Dramatically, with a practiced movement, the poet pulled his scarf away to reveal the burn. The rope had been rotten and snapped itself instead of Kloszowski's neck. He had written several poems about the experience. 'I was face to face with the gods,' he claimed, 'and they were working men like ourselves. Not a plutocrat or popinjay in the lot of them.'

- *Beasts in Velvet* by Jack Yeovil

Agitators and the Skaven Controversy

The controversy in the Empire as to the realities of the threat posed by the Skaven can be another motivation for Agitators to take up their pamphlets and hit the streets. These individuals may have encountered the Ratmen at some point in their lives, some may even have escaped a life of toil and misery as a slave in the Under-Empire, or know of a friend or loved one who suffers there still.

Once the extent of the Skaven threat is known to a denizen of the Empire they can become very anxious that the authorities don't seem keen to face up to the existence of the Ratmen, let alone acknowledge that they rules a vast subterranean society capable of mobilising large armies and crafting devious and sophisticated weapons of war.

Such Agitators often go on to visit Tilea, or learn the Tilean language, so that they can draw on the experiences and beliefs of the inhabitants of the country, who have long faced up to the realities of the Skaven and who have developed ways to better combat them. Thanks to events in Delberz, Nuln and Talabheim, where Skaven have acted overtly within living memory, Agitators who raise the issue there are treated with more leniency than in other parts of the Empire.

Agitators and Chaos Cultists

People who may have come across evidence of chaos worship can find the authorities lacking an appropriate degree of zeal in combating the threat, particularly if the accused are men or women of importance. Sometimes Imperial authorities can stamp down on the frank discussion of Chaos for the citizens' "own good". This attitude can lead to people agitating in order to promote greater awareness of the facts regarding Chaos, a cause that is going to attract negative attention from the authorities of the Old World as they see these calls for the truth as little more than proselytising for proscribed religions.

What's more the authorities are sometimes right in this assumption, Chaos cults do sometimes use Agitators calling for more investigation into the facts regarding the ruinous powers as a subtle way of making Chaos worship seem attractive, and something that the Imperial authorities are proscribing for their own selfish reasons.

Chaos cultists in a city where an Agitator is opining about the facts surrounding Chaos worship may seek to either aid or eliminate the Agitator. They could see him as a useful unwitting ally, and in the ensuing gossip overhear talk that could lead them to a new recruit, or an enemy. Just as likely they could become angry at the Agitator for bringing heat down on them, or ranting about things they see as secret, or even heretical.

Agitators and Religion

It has already been mentioned that Agitators in Middenheim are sometimes hired by priests to criticise Sigmarites and their beliefs, and that the authorities there can be relatively lax in getting them to shut up. Whilst the schism is the most polarised and visible of the religious divides in the Old World it is far from the only one, and Agitators may also wish to draw attention to disputes and differences between other members of the Old World pantheon and their followers.

Ranald is probably the subject of most religious contention after the schism between Ulricans and Sigmarites. Agitators may wish to fete him as a hero of the little man - becoming his Street Preachers in effect, or they may criticise him for being an icon of the criminal classes and call for his worship to be outlawed.

Verena is the inspiration behind the New Millennialists, and belief in her may inspire others to rant and rail about injustice in society. Belief in Shallya may have similar results, as Agitators sympathetic to the goddess of healing and mercy may become angry about how the needs of the rich and powerful so often receive precedence over the needs of the masses.

Agitators might expound on the wisdom of following a more scientific Myrmidian approach to warfare, opposed to the violent excesses of Ulric, or vice versa. They may seek to bring people's attention to a forgotten saint, or the practices of an old faith which has become regarded as heretical over the years. On the other hand they may want to bring people's attention to calls for the reformation of current practices, extolling the ideas of radical religious figures like Luthor Huss.

The Agitator's Armoury

Pamphlets The publishing of written material containing satirical content or pleas for reform can be a powerful tool. Normally only accessible to the wealthy and powerful, the written word carries great power in the Old World. Peasants seem to accord almost mystical properties to the written word and those who can read and write. Cunning Agitators can use this to bind peasants to him by 'expanding' upon what he has written (in other words, lying).

Unfortunately, this form of agitating is also very dangerous, as it leaves physical evidence linking the Agitator to it and wily officials can also create fake documents to achieve a conviction.

Rumour/Propaganda A more subtle method of agitating, spreading rumour and innuendo for propaganda purposes is sometimes the most effective. Rumour is rife amongst the peasant population the Old World over and so a devious word here or a sly comment there can often have a greater effect than a combusive rally or 300 signatures on a petition. Careful selection of the circles to spread the rumour within and knowing which buttons to press go a long way towards sowing unrest.

Of course, nothing is easy in the Agitator's life and local law enforcement will most likely be spreading their own propaganda, not to mention having to deal with the cunning wiles and traps of numerous power groups, chaos cults, Guilds and criminals.

Some Ideas About How Agitators Make Their Living

Many Agitators do what they do merely out of some sense of compulsion or sense of duty, but some do use the career as a way to make a living. Here are a few ideas on how Agitation might generate a bit of cash.

Perhaps the Agitator has a sponsor, a patron (open or secret). Someone who has the same political or social ideology and supports sources that bring it into the open. In many practical aspects this works in the same way as artists receiving patronage. There are some possible dangers, including that the Agitator's ideas become too radical for the patron, that the patron doesn't want to be associated with the Agitator anymore, and on the other hand that the Agitator may way lose credibility if he is seen as the puppet of a patron. The benefits of such an arrangement are that a powerful patron may offer some protection against the law or groups with opposing agendas to his own.

A freelance Agitator need not have a cause of his own, willing to agitate against whatever it is that his clients want him to. The problem here is that the credibility of the Agitator can be doubted if one week he agitates against a subject, and the next week he fanatically praises it. Other problems are that the source of income is uncertain, and that there is less political protection as with a patron.

The Agitator need not have an employer or patron, living by what the masses want to donate to him, in the same way as they donate to entertainers. He also makes money by selling his pamphlets. For an Agitator to make a living in this way, his message has to be one that many people agree with, as he depends on their donations for a living.

The Day Job

As few Agitators actually make any money from their rabble rousing alone a player who takes on an Agitator character might wish to consider how their character funds his activities.

He may have a patron, a rich individual who has concerns about a particular cause and is willing to hire the PC, and maybe others, to spread the word. These patrons could extend from a conscientious noble to the agents of some proscribed cult.

The Agitator may have a day job, such as some sort of small-time tradesman or labourer. The Agitator skills and advance scheme can be justified by saying the character's heart isn't really in this day job, and he really lives to spread the word about his concerns.

The Agitator may present himself as some kind of charitable concern, asking his audiences to donate to "the cause" and using the proceeds to pay for food and shelter, as well as cover the costs of printing pamphlets. Only very popular Agitators would be able to do this for long though.

Public Disobedience This method urges other members of the community to disobey a certain law or proclamation. Normally initiated at a rally, planned in a forum or urged via a pamphlet, this is possibly the most explosive and potentially damaging of the Agitator's techniques. It is also more likely to blow up in his face than other techniques.

The disobedience may be as simple as not donating money to a certain cause, boycotting a certain business premises or not co-operating with a certain public body. This is known as 'Passive disobedience'.

'Aggressive disobedience' is much more proactive and risky. At the lower end of the scale is a mass demonstration (often with various placards and banners) and at the higher end of the scale, small-scale riots and/or vandalism. Aggressive disobedience is not tolerated by local authorities and dependant on the governing body involved, may result in curfews, baton charges, wholesale arrests or more serious measures.

Public disobedience is usually only achievable in response to a truly unpopular policy that is disliked by a majority of the population. Agitators trying to stir disobedience over the trifling matter of the cost of imported coffee are not likely to be successful.

Petitions Those Agitators of a less incendiary nature who still wish to fight for a cause normally start petitions calling for change. The Agitator sets up a booth in a town street and talks to passers-by about the subject at hand, hoping to get them to put their signature or mark down on paper to illustrate their objections.

This method, although peaceful, is still very visible and so local law enforcement may still trouble an Agitator pursuing this method. However, even if they do, the Agitator is less likely to face fines or trial for this type of agitating unless he is being particularly vocal or obnoxious.

Once he has collected his petition, the Agitator takes the article to the relevant authority and drops it off, making sure to note how unpopular the policy/subject is. These petitions normally end up on the fire, but some authorities may make use of the names on the list for intelligence purposes or infiltration.

Satire One thing that is common within the Old World is the fear of those in power of looking stupid. Looking foolish can lose them valuable respect and endanger alliances or business opportunities. Therefore satire is a powerful tool in the armoury of the Agitator. Carefully crafted and aimed, such methods can topple even the most powerful of leaders/groups. Satire may be delivered by many mediums. It may be in the form of a pamphlet containing derogatory comments or drawings, a play performed on the street or even graffiti scrawled on the face of a building.

Needless to say, authorities take a dim view of satire (with the possible exception of Bards/Skalds, as mentioned) and go to great lengths to disprove accusations or to clamp down on the perpetrators. As a result of this desire, those Agitators who pursue satire as a means to get their message across may face determined attempts to track them down and bring them to justice. This justice is normally of the dagger in a dark alley type, so Agitators must be careful of whom they lampoon in this manner and whether they can cope with the consequences.

Pamphlets that are produced via a printing press carry more clout, as this fledgling machinery gives it an air of prestige. However, this is an expensive and risky proposition. The inks and type setting time are costly and the silence of the printer must often be earned.

Beleaguered local authorities wishing to shut down a local Agitator often seek out illegal printing presses and subject the owners of legitimate presses to extensive enquiries as to who has been making use of them and for what purpose.

Forums Agitators wishing to spread the word without the risks of an open rally set up forums. They spend time finding like-minded souls and set up meetings in hired halls or the back room of the local bar. Here, anyone present may have the floor and campaigns can be planned in relative safety.

Again, this may hold risks, as local law enforcement has been known to infiltrate these groups. Forums discussing social reforms are also at risk of subversion by individuals with a different agenda, including Chaos worshippers. Many well-meaning forums have been turned to Chaos over the years.

Rallies A very visible form of Agitating, the rally seeks to draw a crowd that agrees with the Agitator's cause. These often start with the Agitator standing on his soapbox and regaling passers-by with the faults associated with current local policies.

As a crowd gathers, rallies invariably draw the local law enforcement agencies. Although they normally just observe proceedings, if the crowd grows too large or the subject of the rally is controversial or too emotive, they move to break up the crowd and arrest the ringleaders.

Rallies are often a last resort as they carry great risk for the Agitator. However, clever rabble-rousers often dress in disguise when addressing crowds in this manner or have a change of clothes nearby. It's very difficult for guards to target a single person out in a large crowd, so many Agitators taking this precaution may escape safely.

Personal Attack Rash Agitators, or those too desperate to attempt more subtle measures, may confront the target of their campaign publicly. Denouncing his or her policies or lifestyle to anyone close enough to hear.

This is quite possibly the most dangerous and risky route for an Agitator to take, but if he is denouncing a truly despised law/policy and a large number of people are present, then he may still get away with it (for the time being) as jostling or riots may break out. Even if he escapes from the scene, his description will surely be circulated amongst local law enforcement agencies.

A strange kind of personal attack agitating is sometimes tolerated in the more northern reaches of the Empire and is rumoured to be allowed in far off Norsca. The Agitator (or Bard/Skald) is employed to lampoon members of a court. This satire is often very biting but has been known to temper some excesses or unpopular policies. Needless to say, the Skald's wit is very much feared, but he is very rarely liked.

Examples of pamphlets and posters produced by Agitators in the Empire

The corrupt, so called aristocracy have perpetrated yet another crushing blow against you, the real citizens of Altdorf. This latest attack on your liberties takes the form of a barbaric tax on firewood, a cruel way of adding more to the already overflowing coffers of the Nobility. This tax will strike hardest at the poor and elderly!

We the Popular League Against Nobility and Taxation (PLANT), urge you to strike back. Come to the mass rally next week in Burgermeister Square and show the 'Noble' scum that we won't stand for this kind of tyranny.

Smash the Nobility!

RATS AND VERMIN EXPLODE FROM CITY SEWERS

Suffer no more. Force the rich nobles and wealthy priests to free us from the plague of rats daily erupting from our sewers.

While the rich and powerful are safe in their fancy houses, we the common people must suffer these foul creatures.

Catch as many rats as you can and let them loose in the Grafsmund.

Let our betters know what it is like for their children to live in terror of these beasts.

Direct action is our only hope.

ACT NOW

CATCH A RAT TODAY

Beware The Ratmen!

LOOK TO THE SEWERS!



People of the Empire, be not complacent. Do not close your eyes to the grave peril that threatens to engulf us. The Ratmen are here, and they seek to destroy us all. They crawl in the tunnels and they listen through walls. No one is safe from their malevolent fury. Fecund beasts! Their numbers rise by the day, and our extinction becomes ever more assured.

BE AFRAID! BE AFRAID AND FIGHT!



The Ratkin are twisted monstrosities, vile daemons who seek nothing but our destruction. They have the physical attributes of vermin: fur, tails, snouts and sharp teeth and claws, but they walk on their hind legs like men. They are possessed of a great intelligence, and can fashion complex tools, all of which are designed to bring misery and death to mankind. Their numbers are vast, and they breed in unseemly numbers. I believe that if the disparate Ratmen tribes should ever band together, they could rise up, pour from their filthy holes and overwhelm all the realms of the Old World. They are our greatest enemy, not just because of their intelligence, ruthlessness, hatred, strength, ingenuity, warlike tendencies, fecundity or adaptability, but because of our own inability to face up to their very existence. The biggest enemy we face is our own fear.