

THE ROLE-PLAYING GAME OF THE

# PLANET OF THE APES



**PLANET PRIMER**

FIRST LOOK AT THE OFFICIAL RPG

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# PLANET OF THE APES

PLANET PRIMER

The logo for West End Games, featuring a stylized 'W' and 'E' intertwined with a star shape, with the words 'WEST END GAMES' in a bold, sans-serif font below it.



***“That’s what I’m worried about—later.  
Later we’ll do something about pollution.  
Later we’ll do something about the  
population explosion. Later we’ll do  
something about the nuclear war!***

***We think we’ve got all the time in the world,  
but how much time has the world got?”***

***—Dr. Otto Victor Hasslein  
ANSA Scientist***

# A PLANET WHERE APES EVOLVED FROM MEN





### PREPARE TO ENTER THE UNKNOWN

**Ready yourself to be catapulted into a world turned upside down—a world where humans sit at the bottom of the evolutionary ladder and apes rule supreme.**

Welcome to an untamed wasteland brought to the edge of extinction and transformed into a planet of apes.

This role-playing game (RPG) is set in the expanded worlds of 20th Century Studios' classic *Planet of the Apes* franchise. It combines the rich history of the classic universe with a gloom-filled and brooding aesthetic to form a living, breathing setting for gamers and storytellers alike. The signature styles, symbols, and architecture of the *Planet of the Apes* are showcased in dark shadows and diffused sunlight to immerse you in this ominous post-apocalyptic world.



**“What could be more dangerous than famine, doctor?”**

**“The unknown.”**

**—General Ursus & Dr. Zaius**



# WHAT WILL YOU FIND OUT THERE?

**Your Destiny.** *The Role-Playing Game of the Planet of the Apes* allows you to portray any one of the classic and distinct quota types within the hierarchy of ape society. Play intellectual chimpanzees garbed in green and brown who seek to better apekind through science and exploration. Become orangutan statesapes robed in tan and orange vestments whose weapons are philosophical debate, political savvy, and the power of the Sacred Scrolls themselves. Portray purple-panted and leather-studded gorilla soldiers honor bound to protect Ape City and lead aggressive expansions into new territories. Or, maybe you're an ape who defies the old conventions. Be a gorilla academician, an orangutan adventurer, or even a grizzled chimpanzee war veteran—the choices and combinations are yours to make!

These options and more await you amongst the remains of a dead world whose human masters pushed too far, too fast and paid the price for their arrogance. Will its ape masters do the same?

## WHAT ELSE, IF NOT APE?

In addition to apes, you can assume the roles of time-lost astronauts—or as the apes call them, “astro-nauts”—struggling to grasp a world gone mad. You can play a mute tribal human that scavenges for resources as murderous gorillas hunt you on horseback. Rules even allow you to play a mutant survivor and use the power of your mind to turn your enemies against each other.

## YOUR CHARACTER, YOUR ADVENTURE

Be ye ape or beast, here you make the choices. Stand tall against the oppression of dogmatic tradition. Revolt against fascist regimes that put the state before its people—and its apes.

Defend yourself from strange creatures that lurk in the desert wilderness, transformed by millennia of post-atomic evolution.

Resist psionic beings that create illusions both deadly and sublime. Unearth the remnants of advanced technologies that still survive in the ruins of humankind's hubris—gleaming metal machines, incredible spacecraft, and of course, world-shattering weapons. Explore the foreboding Forbidden Zone and sail the vast seas beyond in hopes of finding a paradise untouched by death and destruction.

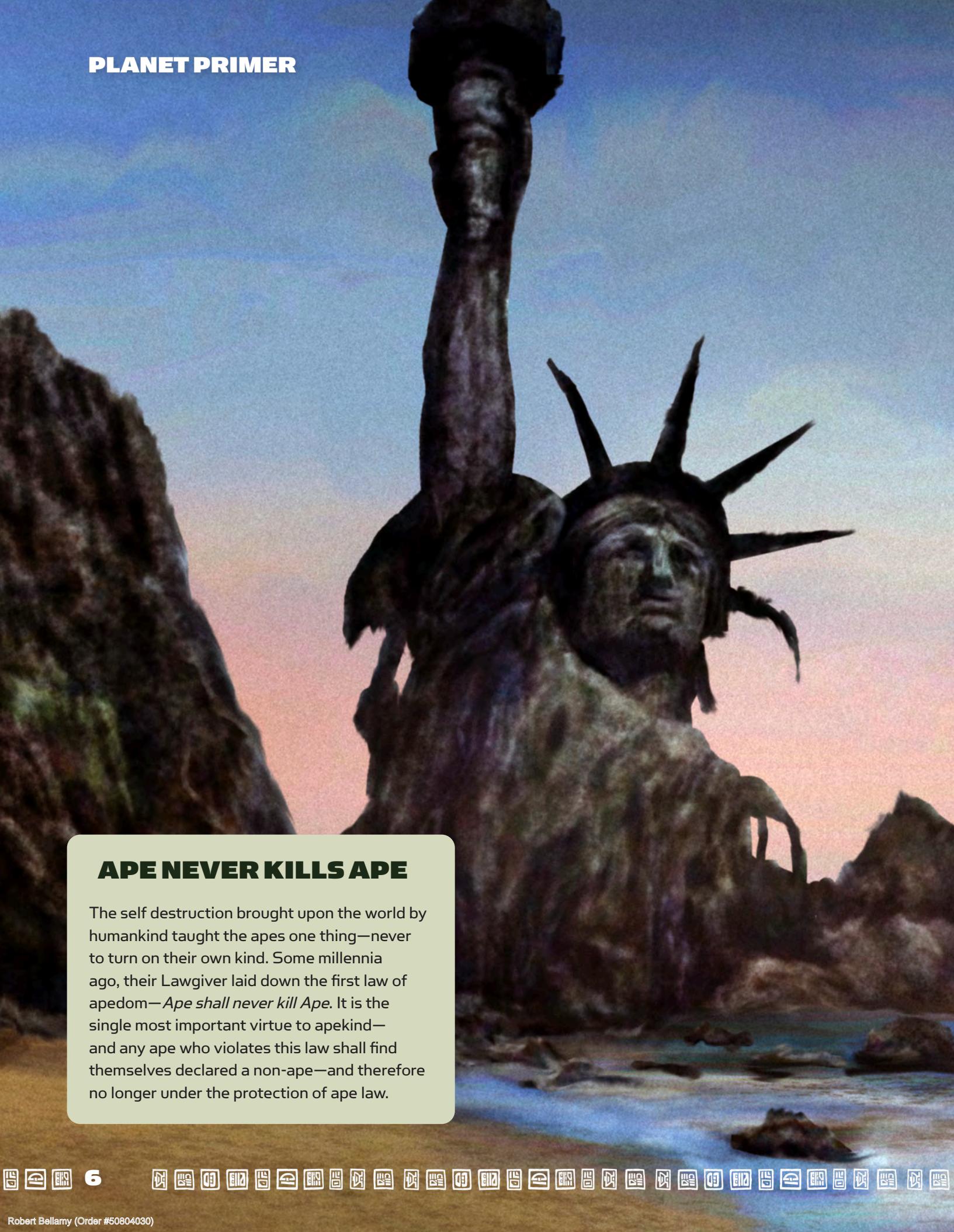
And of course, you can seek out the one thing that matters to you in this backwards future—your destiny.

## PRIMER ON THE PLANET OF THE APES

The sacred scroll you are reading is the Planet Primer for the official *Role-Playing Game of the Planet of the Apes*. This Primer is designed to give you a first look at the setting and lore of a planet where apes evolved from men as well as introduce you to the new game mechanics presented in the Magnetic Variant of the West End Games D6 System ruleset.

You can try out the game with a condensed version of the rules called a Quickstart. For the full ape-tastic experience, you'll need the the Core Rulebook available direct from Magnetic Press Play and at better book, game, and hobby stores everywhere.

Go to [www.planetoftheapesRPG.com](http://www.planetoftheapesRPG.com) for more info on how to start playing.



### APE NEVER KILLS APE

The self destruction brought upon the world by humankind taught the apes one thing—never to turn on their own kind. Some millennia ago, their Lawgiver laid down the first law of apedom—*Ape shall never kill Ape*. It is the single most important virtue to apekind—and any ape who violates this law shall find themselves declared a non-ape—and therefore no longer under the protection of ape law.

## A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE PLANET OF THE APES

Some time ago, the hubris of humankind took animal exploitation, genetic experimentation, environmental degradation, technological advancement, and nuclear proliferation past the point of no return. They annihilated themselves in a cacophony of self-inflicted fear and violence.

**A planet devastated.** The nuclear exchange between major powers kicked the Earth off its axis and transformed the entire environment. Tectonic plates shifted, producing new volcanoes and seas of lava. Mega-tsunamis changed the shorelines of continents overnight. Huge tracts of toxic wastelands dubbed Forbidden Zones covered more than half the globe as surviving vegetation struggled to transform the rest into densely-wooded temperate rainforests and choked tropical jungles. The overgrown ruins of cities became monuments to humankind's folly.

Most people who survived gathered in survival enclaves and small farming communities until those too fell apart. Humanity devolved in the irradiated wilderness, their intelligence fading until they eventually reverted to a nomadic stone age society. Some survived by taking refuge deep underground, their minds and bodies mutated and misshapen by generations of radiation exposure.

**From the ashes.** From humankind's remains rose a new dominant species—the apes. Some say a mutating virus was the catalyst—others say genetic manipulation was responsible. The truth likely lay somewhere between the two. Forced to serve their human masters before their destruction, the apes learned how to adapt and grow, eventually standing up against their overlords and striking back.

They even learned how to articulate—led by an enigmatic ape who spoke a word that had been spoken to him time without number by humans. That ape said, 'No.'

**Wake for a world.** In the wake of the atomic fires, simians formed their own societies—developing systems that for the most part traded technologies and the trappings of humanity for a simplified life. Apes were free from the temptations of evil that had destroyed their masters. The new ape society was dominated by the three types of ape previously favored by their former masters—orangutans, chimpanzees, and gorillas. A Lawgiver rose and scribed a series of Sacred Scrolls to keep apes on the right track. A caste system was even put in place to keep every ape in their place.

As time wore on, simian origins of subservience to humans were covered up and forgotten, allowing apes to become the true masters of the new world. Now, humans are considered dumb, crude, and feral. They are hunted as animals, marked for target practice, and used for anatomical dissection and experimental surgery.

### LEGENDARY RUMORS

The canon of this RPG is based on the classic 1968 film, *Planet of the Apes*, and its four sequels, *Beneath*, *Escape*, *Conquest*, and *Battle for the Planet of the Apes*. It incorporates the television series (1974) and *Return to the Planet of the Apes* (1975), and draws upon their excellent tie-in novelizations. The original novels *Conspiracy* (2011) and *Death of the Planet of the Apes* (2018) are also included, along with many aspects of the original comic series (1974-1976)—as well as nods and homages to over five decades of classic POTA source materials.



# A CHARACTER OF YOUR OWN

The *Role-Playing Game of the Planet of the Apes* Core Rulebook walks you through crafting your own ape, human, or mutant character. Here's a quick rundown of what's in store for you.

You'll start with a specific archetype template and then tailor your character to your preferences and role within your party. You'll allocate points to your desired skills, and detail your **Character Persona** (see below).

As your character lives through more and more adventures, they gain **Adjudicating Rewards**. These are points that can be applied towards increasing skill level. Finally, everyone has some item that means more to them than anyone else could know. These **Mementos** give you a special edge above the rest (see the next page).

## CHARACTER PERSONA

Player Characters may be larger than life, but they are still only ape—or human, or mutant. Your character can have personality **Quirks** that help define them, **Motives** that affect the choices they make, and **Remarkable Abilities** that make them stand out in a crowd. **Character Personas** are teased here and covered in depth in the Core Rulebook.

*"I'm a seeker, too. But my dreams aren't like yours. I can't help thinking that somewhere in the universe there has to be something better than man. Has to be."*

—Col. George Taylor,  
ANSA Mission Commander

### MOTIVES

What drives you? Are you a seeker, looking for adventure and new beginnings? Would you walk into a live volcano to learn something no one else knew?

Or are you an ape after a quiet life of status quo, marriage, and a somewhat stimulating career? Your character's **Motives** help you define how to play them. Ambitions, money, and even love can be your motive. Often, you will have to reconcile your motives with those of the other PCs in your group—and that can lead to misunderstanding and conflict. Motives enhance your character's story. Sometimes they even offer benefits—and sometimes not so much. Engage in this goal-oriented behavior and you will be rewarded—ignore it and you'll find yourself lost.

### QUIRKS

Many apes have serious personality quirks that are balanced with enhanced physical or intellectual abilities, making them ripe for dramatic roleplay. These **Quirks** have been designed to add flavor to your gaming table, giving inexperienced or timid players and apes alike a guide for role-playing. While Quirks are optional, taking one lets you choose a **Remarkable Ability**, a specific way of bending the rules in your favor.

### REMARKABLE ABILITIES

**An ape who talks!** Every ape has got a gift for something—and the most gifted apes are often the most troubled. **Remarkable Abilities** are a counterbalance to your Quirk, allowing you to bend the rules to your advantage in the right circumstances. Play your character according to the Quirk you've picked and you'll get one of these bonuses to help you succeed in the world. See the Core Rulebook for more.

## PSYCHOMETRICS

At the end of the day, you're only simian. Characters on the planet of the apes often find themselves thrown into stress-inducing situations that can have a lasting effect on them. Sometimes it can feel like you are trapped in a madhouse. Imprisonment, torture, and strange revelations about just what planet you are on can take their toll. When things get to be too much for your PC, the **Fear & Madness** Tables in the Core Rulebook will chart what you are living with and what you can do to cope.

## ADJUDICATING REWARDS

Life in a post-apocalyptic world means there are always challenges to be had. Either you learn from your experiences or they are your last. Called Merits and Demerits in other D6MV games, in *Planet of the Apes* these enhancement tools are called Adjudicating Rewards.

Adjudicating Rewards help you to keep track of your progress in two ways: **Experience Points** and **Hero Points**.

**Experience Points (XP).** These are your reward for getting the job done and doing it well. Called Skill Points in the classic D6 system, **XP Points** allow you to improve your skill proficiencies and gain new Remarkable Abilities.

**Hero Points (HP).** The action in the POTA RPG is brutal. **Hero Points** give you the edge you might need in a losing battle, helping you beat the odds and survive even in the worst of circumstances. You start each adventure with six of these points to spend and can gain more as the gaming session goes on.

See the Core Rulebook for more.

## MEMENTOS

An ape can be just as nostalgic as a human. All sentimental creatures hold on to trinkets that represent somewhere or some when—some another time or place when they were happy, in love, or just damn lucky. Many own something that means a lot to them, such as a photograph of a loved one, military dog tags, or a lucky bullet. Just having that item in hand can make the day seem a little bit easier to get through. These are **Mementos**—unique pieces of equipment that resonate with your character.

Story-wise, a Memento serves to warn or remind you of an important event or even your status in life. Astro-nauts especially are beholden to their own past, and mutants can even use their mementos to focus their psionic skills. Rules-wise, a Memento gives you a minor skill boost or in-game benefit. Each Archetype Template in the Core Rulebook comes with its own suggested Memento.

## ARCHETYPE TEMPLATES

This planet of apes is run by several different ape, human, and mutant archetypes. You can assume many different roles, including the grizzled Gorilla Veteran, the shrewd Orangutan Investigator, the stoic Astronaut Mission Commander, the Tribal Human Healer, and the illusion-casting Mutant Exile. You even have the option to take the role of a Gorilloid—a cybernetic mutant ape who lives in the Forbidden Zone. There are 24 unique character archetypes offering a wide range of characteristics in the Core Rulebook.

But first things first—will you be human, mutant, or ape?

# A PLANET DIVIDED

History seems doomed to repeat itself, no matter which species is at the wheel. There are several factions at play in this dark future—factions bent on annihilating each other. If they can only work with each other, things might change...

## **GREAT APES**

The planet is governed by three types of great apes—the orangutans, chimpanzees, and gorillas. While every individual is of course unique, each of the great apes is known for different attitudes, viewpoints, and career paths that were previously defined by a now-abolished caste system.

The quota system imposed a hierarchical status and lifestyle on apes—one which included constraints on occupational opportunities and advancement, limits on both acceptable social interaction and exclusion, and even endogamy. Since the Abolishment, most apes have simply stayed in their traditional lanes—until now, of course. It's up to you as player characters to forge a new world for all of apedom.

### **A WORD ABOUT DISCRIMINATION**

The makers of *The Role-Playing Game of the Planet of the Apes* stand tall against bigotry in all its forms. The best science fiction points out flaws in our society and opens discussion on how to change. The views and actions of certain characters within the series are designed to draw attention to discrimination and other destructive behaviors. Apes hate mutants who hate apes and everyone hates humans.

Even within apekind itself, there is bigotry at play—gorillas are stereotyped as brutes while chimpanzees are dismissed as too liberal, etc, etc. Your character is better than all this, of course. The theme of a POTA game should always involve overcoming hatred, not succumbing to it. In this RPG, your character can stand against prejudice and disrespectful attitudes. They can work to defeat discrimination in all its forms and work towards living on a planet where everyone can exercise their human—and ape—rights.





***"It wasn't "our war", it was the gorillas' war. Chimpanzees are pacifists."***

***—Dr. Zira, Animal Psychologist***

## CHIMPANZEES

Seen as intellectuals, chimpanzees are often advocates for greater social reform and equality. Many occupy administrative assistant roles such as clerks and accountants, but many become merchants, nurses, and most notably, **ape scientists**. The post-abolishment period has seen an increasing number of young chimpanzees stirring up trouble as **ape journalists** and **activist apes**. Others become **adventurer apes**, deciding to hold off applying to the academy for a year so they can go on walkabout and "find themselves." Some have even joined the military! While they make up the bulk of ape society, preconceived notions of chimpanzee progressive views has left them with the least representation in government. Taken as a political party, chimpanzee-sponsored changes only comes about through the citizens' council—and only then if they can get the orangutans or gorillas to find value in their point of view.

Chimpanzees wear earthy green and brown leather and cloth tunics, pants, skirts, and smocks. Some chimpanzee cultures wear deep forest greens with black leather accents instead.



***"No, you can't kill them.  
I gave them my word."***

***—Commander Zaku, Deputy Security***



***"I'll tell you one thing every good soldier knows... the only thing that counts in the end is power. Naked, merciless force!"***

***—General Ursus,  
Supreme Commander  
of the Gorilla Army***

## GORILLAS

Famed for their aggressive behavior, gorillas are often stereotyped as witless brutes. While they tend to lead with their fists, many of them are as smart as any chimpanzee—their predetermined societal roles and schooling has simply ensured their focus on practical rather than intellectual pursuits.

Gorillas make up nearly half of ape society. A gorilla will often serve the community as an **ape soldier**, as a member of the **ape constabulary**, or as a **civil service ape**. Without a major war in decades, many gorillas have survived army life to retire and reach **veteran ape** status.

Many gorillas feel the need to expand their territory—whether that means doubling their seats in the Citizens' Council or taking over a neighbor's plot of land. Whichever role they take, these trained professionals throw their lives into their work, making it their identity.

Most gorillas are garbed in violet, wine, burgundy, or brown jumpsuits and dresses with black accessories. The military adds leather jerkins, vests, and gloves to this ensemble. Leather helms are common amongst constabulary and military command, along with studded metal armor. Some simian societies dress their gorilla army in olive drab leather and cloth. High ranking officers add azure-blue studded-leather collars with orange jerkins and helms similar in color to an orangutan's overcoat.



***“Keep digging... you’ll find evidence of the master of this house—an ape.”***

**—Dr. Zaius, Minister of Science**

## ORANGUTANS

Considered champions of long-established ape values, orangutans are renowned for their traditionalism and establishmentarianism. Many are proponents of maintaining the status quo, lest ape civilization take a turn for the worst. A common orangutan saying is, "If it's worked for so long, why even contemplate change?"

For centuries they have led the great ape civilization, striking a balance between what many consider the gorillas' lust for war and the chimpanzees' thirst for change. In the past, they have often assumed the roles of politicians, priests, doctors, administrators, and lawyers. Quintessential archetypes include the **statesape, ape philosopher, investigator ape, and ape lawgiver.**

Thought of as thinkers and not doers, many are known to wax and wane philosophically while partaking in elitist discourse.

Orangutans are typically adorned in overcoats (called “The Long Look by Zeeka”), tunics, pants, and dresses in oranges, yellows, and browns. When traveling, they wear tan riding pants and shadbelly jackets with burnt umber leather gloves and accents. The clergy don purple robes and vestments over their standard wear. In some ape cultures, orangutans wear sky-blue clothing with deep-blue leather accent—but these outfits are almost never seen in Ape City.



***“Accept my premise, and  
I will prove it to you logically.”***





### MUTANTS

While there are many mutations on this planet of the apes, the beings referred to specifically as the mutants are descendants of those survivors of the nuclear holocaust. Driven underground to protect themselves from surface radiation, they were left scarred, irradiated, and suffering from many mutations. While some were malignant, others granted them powers of the mind.

Telepathic illusion became their greatest asset.

Those most commonly encountered include the mutant **orators** and the forward protectors called **vanguards**. Occasionally a mutant will be cast out to the surface. These **exiles** are often eager to find a new community to belong to. The strangest mutants of all would be the **gorilloids**—apes artificially augmented with machine parts by enigmatic beings called the Makers.

Over the centuries since the nuclear holocaust, radiation exposure has all but destroyed the dermis of most mutants. They now appear as fascia, muscle, and sinew over bone—a fate they often use robes, artificial skin, or their illusionary powers to conceal. To the unobservant ape, mutants might be mistaken for strangely-dressed humans or astro-nauts.



***“Well suppose I am a mutant. How can the appearance of one mutant send you into a panic?”***

***—Colonel George Taylor, ANSA***





***“We are a peaceful people. We don’t kill our enemies, we get our enemies to kill each other.”***

***—Inquisitor Ongaro, Fellowship of the Holy Fallout***

## FELLOWSHIP OF THE HOLY FALLOUT

Led by the House of Mendez for more than twenty-five generations, the Fellowship have been both physically and spiritually transformed by nuclear fallout. They worship the doomsday bomb itself as a divine being that grants new life through death. The Fellowship is divided into six houses, each trained in a distinct psionic discipline that complements the others.

Dressed in mostly whites and grays with color sashes to denote House affiliation, the Fellowship uses facsimile flesh to protect their skinless anatomy. For centuries they have only revealed the true nature to their god, and even then only during prayer.

## THE UNDERDWELLERS

A mutant splinter group that has evolved into its own, the Underdwellers are led by the House of Krador. These mutants possess illusionary psionic powers like the Fellowship does, but they are also able to alter the physical in the form of psychokinetic energy bolts, psychic projection, and teleportation.

Like most mutants, the Underdwellers must protect their fascia from direct sunlight. As they do not possess the facsimile flesh the Fellowship does, they tend to wear UV resistant blue-gray robes with deep hoods that hide their features.



***“Where we come from, apes talk. Humans are dumb.”***

***—Dr. Cornelius, Archaeologist***



## HUMANS

As the Sacred Scrolls assure us, humans are nothing more than wild animals put on the planet for us apes to use as we see fit. But there are whispers that humankind was not always like this—some believe they used to have limited intelligence and served as indentured servants to the apes. Even the scriptures reveal that apes once kept humans as household pets—until the Lawgiver proved that man could not be tamed.

### JUST DUMB BEASTS

Most apes and mutants alike dismiss tribal humans as crude, dumb, and mute animals—but certain cynical simian scientists believe humans have a greater intellect than the apes give them credit for. This is, of course, pure nonsense. While these brutish creatures are indeed smart enough to mimic ape behavior by clothing themselves in animal hides, apekind has never found any evidence of them crafting nor using tools.

Of course, any scientist worth his salt will tell you an absence of evidence is not evidence of absence—and it is this reason why the human population is constantly under the surveillance of ape scouts and the gorilla army. If the Ape High Council ever deems these beasts a danger to apekind, they will order a mass extermination.



***“Man is a nuisance. He eats up his food supplies in the forest, then migrates to our green belts and ravages our crops. The sooner he is exterminated, the better.”***

***—Dr. Zaius, Minister of Science***

### TRIBAL HUMANS

Tribal humans live in nomadic hunter-gatherer groups. During the harvest season these mute creatures scour the countryside in search of fruit and vegetables, often raiding the apes' food stores before retreating back to the Forbidden Zone.

Tribal humans have a preliterate society that recognizes both matriarchal and patriarchal roles. A member of the tribe will contribute by becoming a **hunter, gatherer, or lookout**. Occasionally one of them will recognize herbs with medicinal applications and become a tribal **healer**. While some can be aggressive if cornered, most are docile and easily corralled.

Occasionally a rabid human will develop a taste for ape flesh, prompting a hunt to take down the creature for the good of the community.

**LAWGIVER'S LORE:** *Playing a mute tribal human has the unique challenge of having to communicate at the table without using open words. For more, see the Core Rulebook.*

These filthy unkempt beasts cover themselves with rags made out of old animal hide. While they may seem harmless enough foraging for food, you don't want to find yourself alone in a dark alley with one. Their wild eyes betray their crazed and murderous nature.



***“My tribe? They live on another planet  
in another solar system.”***

***—Colonel George Taylor, ANSA***

## THE “ASTRO-NAUTS”

Strange human invaders from outer space, these alien creatures are much more clever and threatening than the average tribal human. Their advanced knowledge of tactics, riding, and fighting techniques makes them formidable foes. Worse than that, they have somehow acquired the power of speech!

Claiming to come from other worlds, astro-nauts have roles in their community similar to apes sent on a long expedition. Humans claiming to be **mission commanders, security specialists**, and even **science officers** have been encountered. They also have **technical engineers** trained in the maintenance and repair of their alien flying machines.

Where there is one astro-naut, there is usually another--and another, and another. If you encounter one, take efforts to contain and quarantine them before they infect the wild humans with their insidious ideas.

**LAWGIVER’S LORE:** *Like all character-types, playing an astro-naut comes with unique benefits and challenges. These are covered in detail in the Core Rulebook.*

These astro-nauts look mostly the same as other humans, save for their shorter hair and their latchless white, blue, or red clothing. Give them time to grow their hair and steal animal hides from their dumber cousins and they can blend in with our normal human population with ease. Beware!



## EVIL HUMANS FROM THE STARS

For centuries, rumors have persisted that thinking humans sprang from the earth itself and that all humankind had the intelligence and anatomy needed to speak. Dismissed as fantasy by most, some believe that such humans are visitors from the stars who call themselves "astro-nauts", invading the planet of the apes with their insidious power of speech.

So-called "proof" of such origins comes in the form of a falling star heralding the appearance of these strangely garbed humans—although it is far more likely that they are either nature's deviants or ape-made abominations created in a lab by cynical chimpanzee scientists looking to discredit the Sacred Scrolls themselves.

Some apes claim that these astro-nauts come from our own past—from a dark time when humans supposedly ruled the earth and apes were kept in cages and zoos.

These blasphemous ideas can be traced back nearly a millennia ago to the now-banned childhood fairy tales written by chimpanzee author and convicted agitator, Jillia. Her incendiary tales were purposely contradictory to the Sacred Scrolls—a fact that eventually earned her a life sentence at the Reef seaboard prison facility.

Jillia's books still saw circulation for the next few centuries as a study of what constitutes heresy. It wasn't until some 100 years ago that social reform saw her books finally banned.

Unfortunately, the damage had already been done, as grandmothers passed the tales down to their grandchildren as word-of-mouth stories designed to frighten the young ones at the campfire.



*"I have always known about man. From the evidence, I believe his wisdom must walk hand and hand with his idiocy. His emotions must rule his brain. He must be a warlike creature who gives battle to everything around him—even himself."*

*—Dr. Zaius, Minister of Science*

# WHAT IS A ROLE-PLAYING GAME?

*“What I know of man was written long ago, set down by the greatest ape of all, our Lawgiver.”*

—Dr. Zaius, Minister of Science

## IS IT Lawgiver, LAWGIVER, OR Ape lawgiver?

Some clarification for gamers and fans alike.

**Lawgiver.** The Greatest Ape of All is the Lawgiver. Both prophet and deity, the Lawgiver is the divine force whose teachings became the foundation of the simian system of laws and traditions. This revered teacher is referred to by His proper name, the Lawgiver.

**LAWGIVER.** A Gamemaster makes rulings over humans, apekind, and the planet itself, just as the Lawgiver would. Abbreviated as LG, in a POTA game the term LAWGIVER in all caps replaces the traditional moniker of Gamemaster or GM.

**Ape lawgiver.** Finally, the lawgiver archetype is a priest or clergy ape who has dedicated themself to the word of the Lawgiver’s lessons, quotes, and parables. The ape lawgiver archetype can be found in the Core Rulebook.

## THEY CALL THEMSELVES “ASTRO-NAUTS”

*Apes have a distinct way of pronouncing the word astronaut. This is reflected in its spelling throughout the Core Rulebook. Astronauts are typically referred to as “astro-nauts”.*

Role-playing is a unique form of gaming—a cultural expression that combines tabletop gaming with cooperative storytelling. Role-playing games give you a set of rules to let you and your friends create your own story. One of you assumes the role of the LAWGIVER (LG), a guide to lead the others—the Player Characters (PCs)—on an adventure through a well-developed world. Called the Gamemaster in other games, the LAWGIVER also assumes the roles of supporting characters called NPCs as well as any creatures the PCs may encounter. A series of books and boxed adventures and campaigns gives the LAWGIVER the tools they need to make the experience a memorable one.

## NO BOARD—AND NO PATH BUT YOUR OWN

While characters’ actions and movements can be plotted on a map using detailed miniatures, there is no board for this game. How to proceed is completely up to you. If the adventure seems to be leading your character to Ape City, you can turn around and head into the Forbidden Zone. Not your smartest plan, bright eyes—but who is the LAWGIVER to stop you? There may be an alternative solution to your problem somewhere in the Zone—or, it might just get you dead. Either way, the choice is yours.

The free-will aspect of RPGs often means that no two gaming sessions of the same adventure will ever be alike. It is this freedom of choice that makes RPGs all the more fun.

## WEST END GAMES: RETRO RPG ROOTS

The D6 System is a tabletop role-playing game rule set created by humans calling themselves West End Games (WEG). Best known as the basis for movie-based tabletop games such as the original *Star Wars* and *Ghostbusters* RPGs, the D6 System has provided the tabletop foundation for many popular role-playing games since. Widely beloved for its ease of play, the D6 System is the perfect rule set for introducing new players to tabletop gaming. The system is named after the many 6-sided dice rolls used to determine success and failure in the game.



# THE MAGNETIC VARIANT

## CLASSIC GAMEPLAY RE-ENVISIONED FOR THE MODERN APE

Before humankind's downfall, various versions of the D6 System have been developed by West End Games and its affiliates for different types of gameplay. Now under ape management, *The Role-Playing Game of the Planet of the Apes* uses the "Magnetic Variant" of these classic tabletop role-playing game rules (D6MV). The Magnetic Variant rewinds the D6 system back to its classic roots—back to a time before humans blew up their own world. It then streamlines that system for a forward-thinking, modern ape audience. What follows are some of the rules variations unique to the Magnetic Variant of the system.

### GENRE-DEFINED ATTRIBUTES, STREAMLINED SKILLS

The original D6 System utilized six core attributes—**Dexterity, Knowledge, Mechanical, Perception, Strength, and Technical**. The Magnetic Variant embraces this rule of six but melds the Technical attribute into Knowledge and Mechanical to create room for **Willpower**—your strength of spirit and determination of mind. Willpower is important for sticking to your convictions and rejecting the mind games and illusions cast by whatever inhabits the Forbidden Zone. Additionally, skill lists have been reorganized and boiled down to just six signature Skills per Attribute, all for a civilized ape's ease of play. These **Attributes & Skills** are covered in Quickstart and Core Rulebook.

### CHARACTER PERSONA

As discussed on page 8 of this Primer, Character Persona helps you define your RPG experience and jump right into your role! Persona is defined by your **Quirks, Remarkable Abilities, & Motives**. For more, see the Core Rulebook.

### MEMENTOS

**Mementos** Also covered earlier (see page 9), Mementos are trinkets or memorabilia help your character focus and add bonuses to Skill rolls.

### NEW COMBAT OPTIONS AND ATTACKS

Combat order can change every round through the application of new **Initiative** rules. **Auto-fire**, **Pulling Punches**, and **Armor Stacking** round out the rules for a grittier combat experience. See the Quickstart or Core Rulebook for details.

### COMBAT DEFENSES

You never know when some fool chimpanzee radical is going to let a human out of its cage without a leash. If you find yourself staring one down in a back alley or dank jungle, you'd better have a weapon handy and be ready to act fast.

To keep combat swift and action-oriented, the Magnetic Variant moves away from reaction skill rolls and boils defenses down to an easy **SRP—Surprised, Readied, and Psyche**.

Vehicles range from simple horse-pulled wagons to experimental space capsules and have similar defenses that are covered in the Core Rulebook.

### MENTAL DEFENSES

Between mind-bending mutants, stampeding humans, age-old weapons of mass destruction, and even gorilla brutality—the planet of the apes can be a scary place. Luckily, your character comes fortified. These mental defenses, called Psyche, will help protect you from pressure, torture, and illusion. Sometimes, however, the **Fear** and **Horror** can overpower your character and lead to **Madness**. These things are covered under **Psychometrics** in the Core Rulebook.

## SHAKE, RATTLE, & ROLL

The D6 system makes use of the same six-sided dice you'd find in a typical casino or board game. Magnetic Press Play makes two differently colored sets of Alpha/Omega dice. Every die in the set is numbered one to five, with the sixth side displaying an Omega symbol. Each set of five dice included in the set includes a special "irradiated" **Wild Die** as well.

The Wild Die adds an almost human element of chaos to the game—a single Wild Die roll can change the entire course of an encounter—for better or for worse. Of course, the Quickstart and Core Rulebook themselves don't come with dice. Fear not, however—any old six-sided dice will do—just use a different colored one to represent the Wild Die. Even with official dice in hand, you might want to raid the closet for extra six-siders. The more proficient in a skill your character gets, the more dice you get to rattle and roll.

## PSIONIC POWERS

Radioactive fallout from long-forgotten conflicts has given rise to centuries' worth of mutations. While physical malformations is the norm for those afflicted, some species have developed powers of the mind to counteract these disadvantages. Below is a brief look at how these abilities work.

### MANIPULATE, DIVINE, & TRANSMOGRIFY

The force of a mutant's mind is expressed via these classically-inspired powers. **Manipulate** your adversary's perceptions of pain and reality. **Divine** their thoughts, probing for secret truths and hidden weaknesses. **Transmogrify** your own thoughts into mind-melting psychokinetic bolts. Use the right combination to force your enemies to fight each other to the death, transfer people or objects great distances, or perform other psychic feats of intrepidity. Find out more about these PSI Skills in the Core Rulebook.

## NOT A GAMER? WE'VE GOT YOU COVERED

Reference materials are an essential part of an RPG, opening up a world to possibilities that exist beyond the core materials. This game compiles and expands upon decades of existing POTA lore to create a living breathing planet where danger, intrigue, and lost knowledge abounds. Additional releases are designed to enhance both your knowledge and your game with new histories, biographies, rules, settings, archetypes, and adventures—everything you need to expand the boundaries of your ineluctable power. Now, if you do decide to play...

## HERE'S WHAT YOU NEED

Supplements for the *Planet of the Apes* RPG include maps, encounter cards, terrain modifiers, character counters, miniatures, and custom dice—but you can play without all that.

**Tabletop.** Going old school? The Core Rulebook will allow you to do it all. To try things out, you'll need it or the Quickstart—a tabletop, a pencil, printed-out copies of the included adventure's pre-gen characters, a handful of everyday six-sided dice, and a group of like-minded apes to play with. A bunch of bananas for the table wouldn't hurt, though.

**Interwebs.** Living before the fall of humankind? You just might have Internet. A PDF of the Core Rulebook or at least the Quickstart, a wifi enabled device, a digital dice randomizer, a chat app, and apes from around the planet will do.