



**KEY:**



**A regular look at really cool stuff to geek out about.**  
 We'll review anything, except prop comedy. We hate prop comedy. If you're a cool company and not a prop comic, send your stuff to: IT MUST BE MINE, Dork Storm Press, Box 45063, Madison, WI 53744

**Call of Cthulhu 20th Anniversary Limited Edition**

Chaosium • <http://www.chaosium.com> • Retail: \$80



Call of Cthulhu may be my favorite roleplaying game of all time. Traveller may have been my first love, and I definitely play more GURPS and D20 these days, but I keep coming back to the elegance of the Cthulhu system (and let's be frank -- I've gotten more than a cartoon or two out of the Elder Gods as well). In honor of its 20th Anniversary, Chaosium has produced a premium, bonded leather-bound edition of the core rulesbook. It features high-quality paper stock, a new interior layout, and a sewn leather binding. The book is designed, their PR says, "to evoke that 'ancient tome' look and feel." It succeeds magnificently. This is not cheap, but it may be the most beautiful roleplaying book ever created. My copy will be cherished for a long time.

**Electric Girl**

Mighty Gremlin • <http://www.electricgirl.com> • Retail: \$9

One of the very best comic books bar none is Electric Girl. The story of Virginia, a heroine with VERY limited super powers, her dog (Blammo) and her -- er -- invisible gremlin sidekick, it's disarmingly charming. The book's strengths lie in the stylized drawings, design skills (I love the simple yet effective covers) and clever writing of creator Mike Brennan. Virginia's power is the ability to store and discharge electricity, but the comic is more about her life as a young teen than as a superhero. The first collection compiles issues #1-4, and is a lovely introduction to the series. At \$9 it's a great was to get caught up with the comic book quickly, and a second collection will be out soon.



**The Royal Tenenbaums Original Soundtrack**

Hollywood Records • Retail: \$15

<http://hollywoodrecords.com/theroyaltenenbaums/index.html>

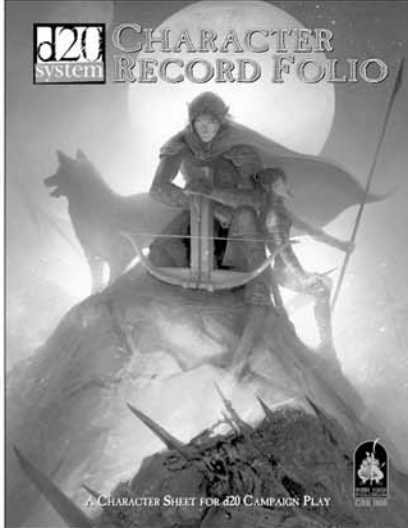


Director Wes Anderson's second movie, Rushmore, has been close to my heart since its release a few years ago. If anything, his third picture, The Royal Tenenbaums, is even better. Going from strength to strength, its soundtrack is likewise one of the most impressive I've ever heard. The CD combines Mark Mothersbaugh's original and subtle short compositions with a superb choice of songs by the likes of Nick Drake, The Velvet Underground and the Ramones. The effect is as mesmerizing as Nico's "These Days," one of its opening tracks. A perfect accompaniment to the melancholy comedy, the album also stands on its own brilliantly. Emitt Rhodes' "Lulabye" and Elliot Smith's "Needle In the Hay" are evocative highlights of a magnificently moody compilation.

## D20 System Character Record Folio

Green Ronin • <http://www.greenronin.com> • Retail: \$4.50

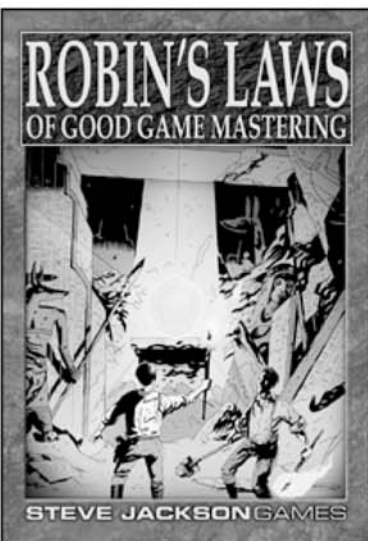
I may be one of the sloppiest bookkeepers in the known world, roleplaying-wise. My Player Characters' sheets are hastily scribbled things, with more crossings-out and corrections than actual legible attributes. The unreadability of Topdek the Dwarf's stats has become legendary in my gaming group. But all of that will soon change, thanks to the D20 Character Record Folio. This nifty, nicely-produced -page tome contains all you need to keep a single character's detailed stats, notes and adventuring history at hand. The sturdy, inexpensive booklet is well laid-out, with clarity and ease of use being guiding design principles. There are even a few handy reference tables thrown in for good measure. Stats, descriptions, skills, animal companions, equipment, grimoires, cohorts and followers...each gets plenty of space here. If you've got a character who deserves the best, then look no further.



## Robin's Laws of Good Game Mastering

Steve Jackson Games • <http://www.sjgames.com/robinslaws> • Retail: \$9.95

Robin D. Laws' collection of game mastering wisdom seems at first deceptively slim. But this should be required reading for anyone who has ever -- or who ever wishes to -- actually run a game for other thinking human beings. Campaign design, adventure design and plot hooks have certainly been discussed ad nauseam in many an article before, but I don't remember any advice being as basically sound nor as solid as Robin's. In Dragon Magazine, I have the pleasure of illustrating his "The Play's The Thing" column. I'm just glad I now get to enjoy his thought-provoking insight and erudition without having to stare down a deadline at the same time. If ever any university taught Game Mastering 101, this would be the textbook for the course, and Robin would be tenured many times over.



## The Strokes - Is This It

RCA • <http://www.thestrokes.com/> • Retail: \$15

Once upon a time, I was a music critic at the Wisconsin State Journal. I was able to keep up with all the cool new bands with relative ease. Receiving several dozen free CDs a week might have had something to do with that. These days, not having multiple record company review lists to rely upon, I find myself struggling a bit when it comes to tracking down fresh new sounds. My friends Reyne and Jenny pointed me in the direction of The Strokes, a power-pop quintet that's a little bit like a cross



Songs like "Hard to Explain," "Last Nite" and "Someday" are as addictive as they are driving, hook-laden in their walls of sound. It took a few listenings before this disc really grabbed hold of me, but it hasn't left my CD player since.

