

Why Defect? The Schism in Play in Delta Green

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The old guard derided those who'd joined Smith as sell-outs who'd traded personal accountability for a pension and a medical plan. They had no use for "the Program." For their part, those who joined up took to calling the unrealistic, old-guard holdouts "the Outlaws."... Those going to work for the Program could expect logistical and intelligence support; they'd no longer have to beg, borrow or steal what they needed to get the job done. But most importantly, joining the Program meant official recognition.

- *Delta Green: Handler's Guide* pp. 97, 101

The difference between Program and Outlaws is colour and plot in the Delta Green Handler's Guide, but makes no difference in the player-facing ruleset. This makes for ease-of-use, and helps conceal the Schism from new Agents, but may be unrealistic for a Handler who wants to use the Schism. Where are the 'pension, medical plan, logistical and intelligence support' the Program promises when the dice hit the table?

This article offers some suggested rules for operationalising the Schism. For the most part, these take the form of modifications to the rules for requisitioning equipment and services, plus some more detailed options for certain specific circumstances. All page references are to the *Delta Green Agents Handbook* unless otherwise specified.

A Spoiler-free Schism

Obviously, if the Schism is going to be part of your game, your Agents will need to pick a side - preferably, without knowing that they're doing so. One suggested solution is to run an introductory scenario, such as *Last Things Last* or *Sentinels of Twilight*, then ask your players if they want to play in 'regular mode' or 'hard mode'. If they pick 'regular mode', they're Program. If they pick 'hard mode', they're Outlaws. For some genre examples, tell them hard mode is Le Carre, Enemy of the State, Zero Dark Thirty; regular mode is Tom Clancy, Mission Impossible, Ministry of Ungentlemanly Warfare (obviously, substitute your preferred paranoia vs action thriller spy fiction here).

What The Program offers

Logistical and Intelligence Support

If the Agents or their Handler have successfully used Law or Bureaucracy (p. 165) to create an official, 'on-the-books' classified operation (e.g. a Joint Terrorism Task Force, p. 112) as a cover for their mission, the Program can leverage its NSA status to provide support. Treat all items under 'Research' (p.100), 'Communication and Computers' (p.100), 'Surveillance'

(p.101) and 'Intelligence (except for 'Holding a prisoner' and 'Call in support')' (p. 103) as one step less expensive for the initial requisition roll (p. 87 or 90), but not for the purposes of review, failure or fumble; the Program prioritises covering itself over covering the Agent.

Emergency Firepower & Evacuation (terms & conditions apply)

While the Program will certainly not advertise this, if and only if either a) the Agents have reported and recovered a significant extraterrestrial technology or b) the Agents have reported direct hostile contact with Deep Ones, treat 'call in support from a covert operative team/special operations team/SWAT team' (p.103) as a Major rather than an Extreme expense, as a Coral Nomad retrieval team (or some equivalent kinetic task-force) is sent to pull the Agents out of the frying pan and into the fire of the Director's personal cost-benefit evaluation.

Medical Plan

Agents seeking illegal medical care for unexplained injuries or blurting out their experiences to random therapists creates a huge potential headache for Program security, so the Program does its best to provide medical support. If the Agents are part of an 'official' task force, treat 'First Aid', 'minor surgery' and 'major surgery' (p. 102) as 'Standard' expenses which Agents can use Bureaucracy instead of Criminology to access. The Agent is treated by their home agency as having been wounded or acquired PTSD in an accident or in the line of duty. If the operation is off-the-books, the expense category is as-written but the Agent can use Bureaucracy or Military Science instead of Criminology, leveraging Delta Green's connections with the armed forces for treatment by military medics or hospitals and spinning it as a 'black op' gone wrong. However, if the Agent fumbles the roll, someone in the Program decides that the Agent is a security threat...

The Program can arrange for therapy in a mental health institution with experience with combat veteran PTSD and related conditions, for one month (two fortnights) by default. Treat this as a Major expense, which is reduced to Standard when the Agent is coming from an 'official' Program-aligned task force. Being in institutionalised mental care is a Home Scene similar to 'Go to Therapy', but with higher costs and, potentially, rewards. Being voluntarily admitted to an institution is a 0/1 Helplessness SAN check as the Agent must admit their loss of control over their own psyche. If commitment was involuntary, it's a 0/1d3 check. However, if they make a critical success on this SAN roll, they *gain* 1 SAN point as they acknowledge their problems. If an Agent projects this loss onto a Bond, reducing it by 1d4 as usual, they can increase the therapist's Psychotherapy skill (or the Luck roll) by the same amount, for the duration of their stay - this represents the Agent choosing to focus on their own mental self-care at the expense of responsibilities to others.

Being institutionalised also reduces a Bond by one point per fortnight (*including* Delta Green bonds) as the Agent is unavailable to interact with the Bond. If the institutionalisation was involuntary, the Agent must make a CHAx5 roll or a Bond is reduced by 1d4.

For each fortnight in an institution, the therapist makes one Psychotherapy roll (or the Agent makes a Luck roll) with the same results as Go to Therapy. Therapists have Psychotherapy 63% by default.

If the therapist or Agent fumbles the roll, the Program becomes convinced that the Agent's mentally unstable loose lips are a danger to OPSEC. Make a Luck roll. If they are 'lucky', this results in their voluntary institutionalisation becoming involuntary, for another month, and they can be treated again. If they are unlucky, something more drastic happens. Maybe they find a photo of a Bond with 'loose lips sink ships' written on it on their bedside table one morning (Helplessness 0/1d3 check). Maybe they are called before Security Director Oakes or the Director himself for a personal assessment and some 'physical encouragement' to keep their mouth shut (Violence and/or Helplessness 0/1d3 checks for being beaten up by your Delta Green superior officer).

The Program can even provide some support for otherwise untreatable Unnatural injuries by calling in a Cookbook specialist from Project Bustle. Treat this as a Major expense (as the Program now owes a favour to March Industries or some equivalent) - on a failure, the medical care still goes ahead, but the Program expects something unusual from the Agent in future. The specialist has a 80% skill in Medicine and Surgery and a specialised 'Unnatural Medicine' skill of 25%. If the Unnatural Medicine roll succeeds, the otherwise untreatable is treated, at least temporarily. On a critical success, the Agent even derives some unexpected (and probably unwanted) benefit from the process, e.g. extra sensory organs or unnaturally fast reaction times. If the Unnatural Medicine roll is a failure but not a fumble, the specialist cannot provide anything beyond regular medical healing. If the roll is a fumble, the specialist's application of some Unnatural experimental technique makes everything worse.

Pension

Not really a pension. Rather, if an Agent loses their job (p.80) but doesn't end up in prison, and has valuable skills, the Program can pull some strings to get them employment at March Technologies or Breckenridge (Handler's guide, p. 135, 237). See *The Complex* for guidelines for 'private sector' work. Of course, the Program will expect them to report on what March are up to. March, for its part, will pump the new recruit for any exploitable information about the Program. The Agent is out of the frying pan, into the shark tank.

Bells and Whistles

UHD satellite photographs. "Technical reports" in pseudoscientific gobbledygook (see Handler's Guide, p. 323). Devices which beep unexpectedly. Everything you'd find in a Tom Clancy novel, and little of real use (but see Handler's Guide, p. 274 for some possibilities).

What the Outlaws offer

So your Agents picked Hard mode? Good for them! Never let them say they weren't warned.

Do It Yourself

If Agents are Outlaws, don't handwave the scenario preliminaries. No "Your handler hands you your airline tickets, official Operation Easy Cruise lanyard, and cover identities as local law enforcement". Make the Agents roll Bureaucracy (or Accounting, Criminology, Law, etc) to create an Operation cover, for false IDs (but see ID Necromancy, below, for the IDs), for weapons and equipment (unless there's a Green Box), for background information, for transport and accommodation, all to be obtained within 24-48 hours (Accelerated demand). If they fail or fumble, the scenario still goes ahead - we all want to play the game! - but they pay the price, either in delays, complications, and lack of resources in the field, or in their home scenes. Maybe they have to repay the cost of the flight they 'accidentally' put on the corporate credit card out of their own pocket, with knock-on effects on a Bond. "Honey, what happened to the money for Timmy's orthodontic braces?". Make full use of the rules for Accelerated demand, Complications and Official Review (p. 87). Outlaw Agents should come to realise that Bureaucracy and Criminology can be life-or-death skills as much as Firearms.

Preparation	What skill to roll	Possible consequence of failure
Create a 'cover' operation with a budget to provide investigation pretext and funds.	Bureaucracy, or possibly Law. Military Science for an armed forces 'domestic training exercise'.	The Opera is off-the-books. Only resources from Delta Green (good luck), Criminology, or the Agents' own skill and money are available.
Create cover identities with investigative powers or relevance (see 'ID Necromancy').	Bureaucracy (Unusual+) if there's an operation. Art (Forgery) to DIY. Black market uses Criminology.	Agents have to use their own ID. Local LEO spots forgeries and attempts to arrest the Agents. Blackmail from criminal sources.
Obtain weapons and gear beyond standard-issue, or that is untraceable to you/lacks ID. Maybe there's a Green Box?	Bureaucracy or Military Science if there's a cover operation. Forensics, Craft (Gunsmith) or Firearms -40% to hide evidence of use. Criminology to steal or for black market (needs money). Use own money. Call in favours from Bonds.	Firing of a service weapon is audited and investigated. Gun shop alarm system or delayed background check. A black market weapon is stolen goods, in poor condition or previously used to commit a crime. A Bond is alarmed by the Agent's weapons purchase. BATFE check.
Assemble a dossier of relevant facts your Agency/the government already knows.	Bureaucracy, SIGINT or Military Science - Incidental for home agency records, Unusual for cross-agency.	Low level expense/performance review if a cover operation is in place. Official review or espionage investigation if off-the-books.
Plane tickets, hotel rooms, car rental - all separate expenses needing ID, unless	One Bureaucracy or Accounting (standard) roll, if there's a cover operation. Separate rolls for off-book.	Spend own money or arrive 12-24 hours late on an overnight bus. Sleeping bag in car or a Green Box. Exhaustion. ID recorded.

agency organises.	Criminology to use stolen cash or ID or to steal a car.	Criminal investigation launched. Spouse hires private detective.
Is there a Green Box, and does it have what we need?	If the Handler doesn't decide, Luck or Occult.	The Green Box is trapped, looted, haunted, compromised or under surveillance. <i>Metamorphosis</i> .

The Handler could make 'Prep for the next Opera' a Home Scene activity, as the Outlaw Agent spends more time in the office spinning up cover stories, misappropriating ID, weapons and cash from perps and evidence lockers, brownnosing supervisors, and filling out forms for when they're needed. To do this, roll Bureaucracy (or Criminology if they're just flat-out stealing stuff). On a success, they get +20% on all non-Extreme requisition rolls for the next Opera and don't need to make an extra test to get Standard or Unusual requisitions in an Accelerated timeframe. On a critical success, +40%. As they spend more time in the office, reduce one Bond (other than a Delta Green Bond) by one. A fumble triggers some kind of reprimand or investigation.

Those are (some of) the drawbacks. What are the perks?

Honesty

Poe's people learned to be more candid about the true nature of the conspiracy - Handler's Guide, p. 100

As outlined in the Handler's Guide (p. 307), once an Agent has shown their potential, the Outlaws will be honest about the lawless nature of the conspiracy, and the reason it has to be that way. They might not bring up the existence of the Program, but they won't deny it either. They've learned that Agents who've been deceived about Delta Green's legal status are more likely to jump ship to the Program.

Camaraderie

The Program is an exclusive, elite task force. But the Outlaws are blood brothers. They know that there's no one they can count on more than each other.

To operationalise this, when an Outlaw Agent gains or strengthens a Bond with a Delta Green teammate as a result of trauma (p. 37), add +1 to the Bond. So a new Bond is CHA/2 +1, and a strengthened Bond adds +1d4+1.

In addition, when Agents attempt to access equipment and services by Calling in a Favor (p. 88), if the Bond is a Delta Green bond or has a history with Delta Green, get +20% on the CHAx5 roll.

ID Necromancy

Unfortunately, injury, insanity, or death are common outcomes of Outlaw operations - Handler's Guide p. 304

As any Greek or Latin scholar will tell you, 'necromancy' isn't raising the dead, or harvesting souls for their essence, or some such nonsense - it's getting information from the dead. And as any hacker kid from the 90s knows, information is power. Some information, like that on a Federal Agent's ID card, grants extreme power. The Outlaws, largely lacking the Program's access to US government databases, desperately need that kind of power. What they tend to have instead is dead agents. It took nihilistic ex-hacker-kid Chun-te Wu, Agent Anton, to put these two together.

Outlaw doctrine now states that Agents should conceal their personal identifying documents and effects in a Green Box before the mission. Whenever possible, deaths in the field, particularly agents' deaths or those of law enforcement officers, should be concealed. After Cells dispose of the bodies, they should send all identifying documents and personal effects to A-Cell. Wu then attempts to match these IDs with other agents who could plausibly pose as the dead agent or LEO. The matching Outlaw Agent gets a new, genuine LEO ID for use in Operas, and any investigation into the late agent's disappearance is muddled by their apparent activity in a different part of the country. Wu warns Agents that these IDs become progressively 'hotter' as time goes on, only being (relatively) safe to use for up to a month after the original Agent's disappearance, and should be incinerated within 3 months.

Wu encourages Agents to seize the identities (and assets) of any other concealable deaths or disappearances they cause or happen upon. Hikers dead of exposure found by Park Rangers. Isolated survivalists who drew on an ATF agent. Sketchy drug dealers from DEA shootouts. Deported illegal immigrants. They're all grist to Wu's necromantic identity mill. Although he won't mention this secondary purpose, Wu's black hat cybercriminals clean out the bank accounts of most IDs sent to them. Wu won't touch the money of Outlaw agents with surviving families, but the rest goes to replenishing the Outlaws' dwindling cash resources.

Wu's operation means that Outlaw Agents' difficulty of obtaining Covers and Legends (p 100) is reduced by one level, and the IDs are genuine (although the person is likely to be listed as AWOL or MIA at their home agency). If Agents have been dutifully sending dead and seized IDs to A-Cell, they get an additional +20% on the Bureaucracy or Criminology roll. Agents need to make a Disguise roll when showing their necro-ID to others for more than a few seconds for the first time - at +40% for clueless members of the public, and +20% with LEOs. If the Agent knew the dead agent, they can roll their CHAx5 instead - it's easier to impersonate someone you knew. However, if the person inspecting the ID had previously met the real dead agent, the roll is at -20% or worse. Wu tries to ensure that necro-IDs never get used in their home city, but coincidences happen. If the dead person has been missing for more than a month, using their ID in an official capacity requires a Luck roll - failure triggers an official investigation of some kind.

Using a necro-ID of a dead DG or LEO agent for the first time is a 0/1 Helplessness SAN check for an Agent (for each new ID), as they confront the grim realisation that at some time in the future, some other Agent will probably be pretending to be them. If they knew the dead agent/LEO, it's 0/1d3. If the dead person was a Bond, it's 1/1d4. If the Agent was involved in the violence or coverup of the impersonated person's death (whether or not they were a DG agent or LEO), they also need to make a 0/1 Violence SAN check, escalating to 0/1d3 if the person was a colleague, 1/1d4 if they were a Bond.

Hypergeometry

Surviving Outlaws are deep wells of institutional knowledge and practical expertise, including expertise with Things Man Was Not Meant To Know. Some of them, like Agent Aaron and James Derringer, are deeper than anyone realises. The trick is drawing it out of them and hoping you don't stir up something lurking in the depths. A-Cell used to be more cautious about sharing this stuff, but they increasingly think the writing's on the wall anyway...

When an Outlaw contacts A-Cell for information or assistance, have them make an Occult (or Unnatural, if that's higher) roll (as well as any Bureaucracy or other rolls). On a critical success, they get sent a hypergeometrical artefact or instructions for a ritual which A-Cell believes was helpful in a similar case - see *Joseph Camp's Grimoire* and Emil Furst (Hander's Guide p. 160, 313) for examples of rituals A-Cell has access to. This doesn't necessarily mean the ritual or artefact will actually help. For example, Agents request help with destroying Marlene from *Last Things Last*, and roll a critical success. Furst scrawls instructions for the Zombie-destroying ritual *Release Breath* and Fedexes it to them. Unfortunately, since Marlene isn't a Zombie, it has no effect.

On a critical failure on the Occult roll, Agents get sent a hypergeometrical artefact or ritual which is also helpful for something else's agenda, which may or may not include the Agents' survival...

Insanity

Dr Frederick Blumenthal, Clinical Director (Psychiatric) of the Veteran's Administration Psychiatric Hospital in Boulder, Colorado, is also Agent Brown of the Outlaws (*Targets of Opportunity*, p.102) and makes the facility available to Outlaw Agents in critical psychological states. The Director of the Program knows this, but his military ethos, not to mention his estimation of Alphonse's likely reaction, forbids him from using the hospital to exert any leverage over the Outlaws. For his part, Agent Brown is cautiously willing to welcome Agents from the Program, but the Director rarely sends them, fearing a security breach. Years of vicarious exposure to the consequences of the Unnatural have convinced Brown that the Outlaws' 'burn before reading' approach is correct.

As a rule, VA Hospitals would only be available to Agents in or formerly in the military, but expense sharing agreements orchestrated by Delta Green have seen the remit of the Boulder facility extended 'by arrangement' to cases of 'complex comorbid PTSD' from other 'Federal Government high risk active services' - essentially, agencies with armed agents likely to see combat, such as the FBI, DEA, ATF and Secret Service. The Boulder facility is *not* a Delta Green-only facility. The bulk of its clients are regular military veterans and Brown can only make a few beds and therapists available to non-Defence personnel, so only severe cases can be admitted.

In game terms, if an Outlaw Agent is military, a veteran, or from an armed agency ('Expected to carry a weapon'), has hit a breaking point at least twice and has developed two or more untreated disorders, and wants to 'Go to Therapy' as a Home Scene, have them make a Luck roll. On a success, their Handler contacts them to let them know that a bed is available for one month (two fortnights) of intensive therapy with "a Friendly therapist" at the VA

hospital who they can talk to about their experiences - “yes, all of it. But not about the Group”. Transport to the hospital and all other arrangements are at the Agent’s own expense, though they can still draw their salary as if on sick leave. On a critical success on the Luck roll, Agent Brown himself is available to help with their treatment. Agent Brown is also available if A-Cell suspects an Agent is possessed. In possession cases, admission to the facility is via involuntary commitment.

Being in institutionalised mental care is a Home Scene similar to ‘Go to Therapy’, but with higher costs and, potentially, rewards. Being voluntarily admitted to an institution is a 0/1 Helplessness SAN check as the Agent must admit their loss of control over their own psyche. If admission was involuntary, it’s a 0/1d3 check. However, if they make a critical success on this SAN roll, they *gain* 1 SAN point as they acknowledge their problems. If an Agent projects this loss onto a Bond, reducing it by 1d4 as usual, they can increase the therapist’s Psychotherapy skill (or the Luck roll) by the same amount, for the duration of their stay - this represents the Agent choosing to focus on their own mental self-care at the expense of responsibilities to others.

Being institutionalised also reduces a Bond by one point per fortnight (*including* Delta Green bonds) as the Agent is unavailable to interact with the Bond. If the institutionalisation was involuntary, the Agent must make a CHAx5 roll or a Bond is reduced by 1d4.

For each fortnight in an institution, the therapist makes one Psychotherapy roll (or the Agent makes a Luck roll) with the same results as ‘Go to Therapy’.

At the Boulder VA hospital (and only there), the Agent can tell the truth without worrying about the therapist disbelieving or reporting them, unless one of the rolls is a fumble. While only Agent Brown is a full DG agent, and one other therapist, Dr Simon Winder, is a fully fledged Friendly, Dr Blumenthal has convinced other resident therapists of the existence of “Comorbid PTSD Deleria Goetia Syndrome” (CPTSD DG Syndrome) which he explains as a unique manifestation of PTSD, causing those who already work for a ‘higher power’ - the government - in secret or hidden ways - that is, in ways which are *occult* - to manifest belief in evil magical forces under trauma. These accounts of supernatural events, Blumenthal explains, are actually unconscious metaphors, serving as the only way veterans of classified operations can deal with the strain of the many secrets they are obliged to keep, even from their therapists. Blumenthal instructs therapists to treat Agents ‘as if’ what they are saying is true ‘without judgement’, as their ‘ostensibly delusional’ accounts provide a ‘meaningful metaphorical outlet’ for their trauma. These discussions are carefully documented, supposedly for a future magnum opus publication on CPTSD DGS which Dr Blumenthal is, sadly, still waiting for security clearances from his patients’ home agencies to publish.

To see which therapist you get during your stay, roll 1d4. On a 1 (or a Critical success on the Luck roll, or a case of possession suspected): Agent Brown; 2, Dr Simon Winder, Friendly; 3 or 4, a different therapist. When treating Delta Green agents, Agent Brown has a Psychotherapy skill of 85%, Dr Winder has 75%, and the other therapists have a skill of 65%. Agent Brown also knows the Hypergeometric rituals Exorcism and Fascination, and has a CHA, POW and WP of 15. A Bond formed with Agent Brown or Dr Winder counts as a Delta Green bond.

The Handler may want to make Agent Brown more than he seems, with further access to hypergeometry. Perhaps he is a Herald of Hypnos or Nodens, serving the Gods of Earth's Dreamlands in their manoeuvres against the Crawling Chaos, and can open the Dreamlands to Agents (or vice versa) under his care. Perhaps he obsessively crossreferences his patients' dreams of Great Cthulhu with astrological calendars to predict the day when the stars come right. Perhaps he serves Tleche-Nacha by spinning webs of meaning in which to cocoon the chaos of the Unnatural. Perhaps he's the Phantom of Truth. Perhaps these are all hallucinations by insane Agents who he just wants to help.

Dr Frederick Blumenthal (Agent Brown)'s Comorbid PTSD Dementia Goetia Syndrome case notes. Study time months, Psychotherapy +4%, Unnatural +4%, SAN cost 1d6.

"Patient N: I need to be eaten properly. This hospital food will ruin my flavor. It's for worms! Don't you understand! I need more chili! I need more cumin!

Therapist B: [N], you broke into the kitchen again. If you don't stay in your room at night, I'll increase your medication. You said that would 'ruin your flavor' too. Do you want that?

N: Incoherent - 'I Morrigan'? [Arthurian imagery? Witch-queen? Consistent N self-image as knight-crusader. Reinforce?]

B: You know most people don't want to be eaten. You told me you protect people - you and your Group. Why don't you protect yourself? Don't you deserve safety too?

N: The Voodoo Queen showed me the truth! We're all food - you, me, the whole Group! You're all food for the worms, but I'm a better dish! I'm on the high table! But not by her! Never by her! Only by [Redacted]! I love her! We'll be together forever!"

Increase Chlorpromazine. 'Worms' sub-obsession xref Patient Y 'walking worm'. No record of N/Y contact. Orderly check covert com btw N&Y? Check w [Redacted] if shared ops? Shared lit culture Poe imagery? (Why is it always Poe?)

Under a thin layer of psychiatric terminology, Agent Brown's voluminous, cross-referenced notes document what he has learned of the Unnatural and its impact on the human psyche from the damaged Agents passing through his care. With careful study and an Occult or Psychotherapy roll, Agents can work out the details of Operation REDBONE and 1d4 other Operas. Optionally, instructions for a hypergeometric ritual are inadvertently documented as psychotic ravings.