

1/4/11

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am a long-time fan of the roleplaying game Shadowrun, but I've been unhappy with the quality of Shadowrun products released over the past year. I understand the current publisher, Catalyst Game Labs, has lost a number of key creative personnel and freelancers. This is disheartening and the decline in quality is clear. The Shadowrun 4th Edition Anniversary Core Rule Book is a work of art, and has won awards for its presentation and design. The supplement Seattle 2072 was similarly spectacular. Quality has since declined.

This December the War! e-book was released. It was meant to cover military operations in the setting of Shadowrun 4th Edition. When I read it, I was shocked. The book suffers from a startling number of typographical errors and inconsistencies. It is a book about specific wars, but contains no maps of the areas it describes. Layout is slipshod in parts and some art appears presented at too large a size for the DPI of the image. This has led to a product that appears at a glance to be of poor quality. However worse can be found in reading the material.

I was unhappy to find a lack of attention to detail. Inconsistencies and factual errors have been documented on a number of communities online, including the official forums. Some of the sections are also potentially offensive and insensitive.

A section called "WORK BRINGS FREEDOM" encourages game masters to build a story where their players must attack the ghosts of concentration camp victims in order to plunder Auschwitz and collect "necromantic artifacts"; including The Fleshfinder, a scalpel said to once have belonged to Nazi doctor Eduard Wirthz. The scalpel is listed with a price to be sold and mechanics that appear to be inconsistent with the setting, suggesting a lack of thoughtful design and understanding of source material. This section is offensive to many people, and could cause undue negative attention to fall on the Shadowrun line.

I am concerned, given my examination of War! and recent publications, that the quality of Shadowrun products is in decline. I do not know that Catalyst Game Labs is producing products of the quality and integrity the Shadowrun line is renowned for. As a fan and customer, I ask that something please be done to improve the quality of the work produced.

Thank you for your attention in this request, and taking the time to hear from me. I look forward to an announcement from Topps soon on the state of their property and measures being taken to protect it.

A concerned Shadowrun fan

