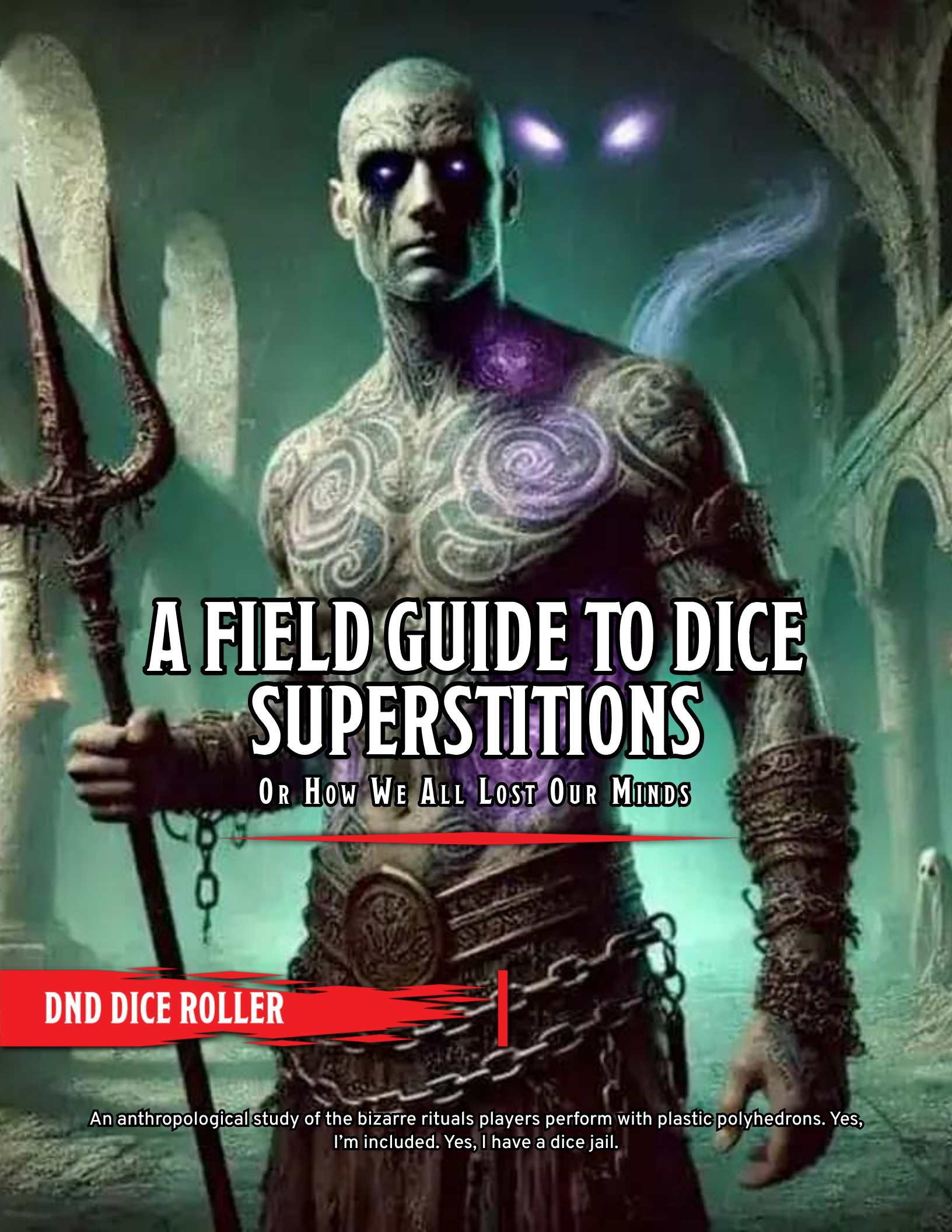




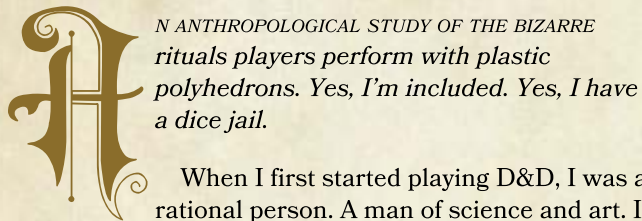
A FIELD GUIDE TO DICE SUPERSTITIONS

OR HOW WE ALL LOST OUR MINDS

DND DICE ROLLER

An anthropological study of the bizarre rituals players perform with plastic polyhedrons. Yes, I'm included. Yes, I have a dice jail.

A FIELD GUIDE TO DICE SUPERSTITIONS (OR: HOW WE ALL LOST OUR MINDS)



N ANTHROPOLOGICAL STUDY OF THE BIZARRE rituals players perform with plastic polyhedrons. Yes, I'm included. Yes, I have a dice jail.

When I first started playing D&D, I was a rational person. A man of science and art. I understood that dice were simply random number generators, small plastic objects governed by physics and probability theory.

That was before I met my d20.

Now I have seventeen sets of dice, three of which are in “dice jail” for rolling poorly, and I refuse to roll any d20 that’s showing a 1 face-up between sessions because obviously that’s asking for trouble.

I am, as the youth say, “cooked.”

THE TAXONOMY OF DICE RITUALS

TYPE A: THE PRE-ROLL RITUAL

Characteristics: Must perform specific action before every important roll.

Observed Behaviors:

- Shaking dice in cupped hands while whispering encouragement
- Blowing on dice (despite no scientific evidence that breath affects plastic)
- Kissing dice (see above, but more concerning from a hygiene perspective)
- The “Dice Massage” – rolling the die gently to “warm it up”
- Ceremonial lifting and dropping from specific heights

I personally fall into this category. Before any crucial roll, I must tap the d20 on the table exactly three times. Why three? Because five felt excessive and two felt insufficient. This is what passes for logic in my brain now.

TYPE B: THE DICE COLLECTOR

Characteristics: Believes that different dice are suited for different purposes.

Observed Behaviors:

- “These are my attack dice, these are my damage dice, and these are for saving throws.”
- Maintaining separate sets for separate characters
- Having “lucky” dice for specific situations
- Refusing to let others touch their dice (reasonable, honestly)

My friend Gerald has forty-seven sets of dice. Forty-seven. He claims each set has a distinct “personality.” Gerald, if you’re reading this, please seek help. Also, can I borrow your sparkly purple set? It seems to roll well.

TYPE C: THE DICE DISCIPLINARIAN

Characteristics: Believes dice can and should be punished for poor performance.

Observed Behaviors:

- **Dice Jail** – Physical containment (usually a small container) where offending dice are imprisoned
- **Forced Observation** – Making bad dice watch good dice roll well
- **Threats** – Verbal warnings that continued poor performance will result in consequences
- **Exile** – Permanent banishment of consistently poor performers

I maintain a dice jail. It’s a small cardboard box labeled “SHAME” in red marker. Currently incarcerated:

- One d20 that rolled three natural 1s in a row during combat
- A full set that failed every single death save last month
- A metal d6 that I swear is cursed (it’s not weighted; I checked. Twice.)

TYPE D: THE DICE MYSTIC

Characteristics: Believes in cosmic dice karma and spiritual connections with polyhedrons.

Observed Behaviors:

- Only rolling dice on specific surfaces for “proper energy flow”
- Cleansing dice with sage smoke between sessions
- Arranging dice in specific patterns when not in use
- Consulting the dice for life decisions (don’t do this)
- Believing dice have souls (seriously, don’t)

My mate Patricia does a full dice cleansing ritual before every session involving incense and crystal arrangements. Does it work? Well, her character hasn’t died yet, so I’m not saying she’s wrong.

TYPE E: THE DICE ATHEIST

Characteristics: Claims to have no superstitions whatsoever. Is absolutely lying.

Observed Behaviors:

- “I don’t believe in luck; it’s just probability.”
- Uses the same dice every session “for consistency”
- Definitely has preferences but claims they’re “practical”
- Rolls dice between sessions to “test them” (this is a ritual, mate, you’ve got one)

These are the most dangerous type because they don’t realize they’ve fallen victim to the madness.

THE SCIENCE (SUCH AS IT IS)

Now, rationally, we all know:

1. Dice are random
2. Past rolls don’t influence future rolls
3. Plastic doesn’t have feelings
4. None of our rituals matter

However:

1. My blue d20 rolls better than my red one (demonstrably true)
2. Dice in timeout DO improve their behavior (statistically significant)
3. Blowing on dice clearly works (because I said so)
4. The dice gods are real and they’re watching

A PERSONAL CONFESSION

Last month, I used a friend’s d20 in an emergency when mine fell under the table. That borrowed d20 rolled a natural 20 on the most important check of the campaign.

I considered stealing it. I’m not proud of this. I’m just being honest.

Instead, I asked where he bought it. Then I traveled forty minutes to that specific shop and purchased five dice from the same brand, hoping they came from the same factory batch and would therefore share the same blessed properties.

This is who I am now.

THE META-RITUAL

Here’s the darkest secret: **We all know it’s nonsense.**

Every single person performing dice rituals knows, on some level, that we’re being ridiculous. But we do it anyway because:

1. **Routine is comforting** – In a game where anything can happen, rituals give us a sense of control
2. **Community bonding** – Shared superstitions create connection and table culture
3. **Entertainment value** – It’s fun to be a bit daft with your mates
4. **Plausible deniability** – “I’m just joking... unless it works”

Besides, what’s the harm? So what if I have a special dice-rolling technique? So what if I won’t use dice that are showing 1s? So what if I’ve named all my d20s and maintain a complex rotation system?

I’m not hurting anyone.

IN CONCLUSION

Are dice superstitions irrational? Absolutely.

Will I stop doing them? Absolutely not.

Will I judge you for yours? Only if they’re different from mine.

Do I genuinely believe that dice have moods and personalities? [*Glances at dice bag*] No comment.

May your d20s roll high and your d4s be easy to find when you inevitably drop them in the carpet.

—Arthur

P.S. – If anyone asks, I’m being satirical. I definitely don’t talk to my dice. That would be absurd.



DND DICE ROLLER

ROLL WITH US

dnddiceroller.com is the free roller that remembers your lists, follows you from laptop to phone, and never asks you to install anything. Six thousand of you a day can't be wrong. Well, you can, but the dice aren't.

UNCURSE YOUR DICE

Convinced your d20 hates you? **True Randomness** cuts every roll from a signed public pulse published by the US National Institute of Standards and Technology, and shows you which one. Blame physics, not the dice. Find it under **Unlock**.

FIND YOUR PEOPLE

The **Directory** at dnddiceroller.com/directory lists 59 dice makers, map artists, rules tools and table gear we'd actually use. Sell something for the table? Get listed.

TAKE IT TO THE PUB

Legend Roller puts the same roller in your pocket, iOS and Android, with profiles for every character you've ever loved and lost.