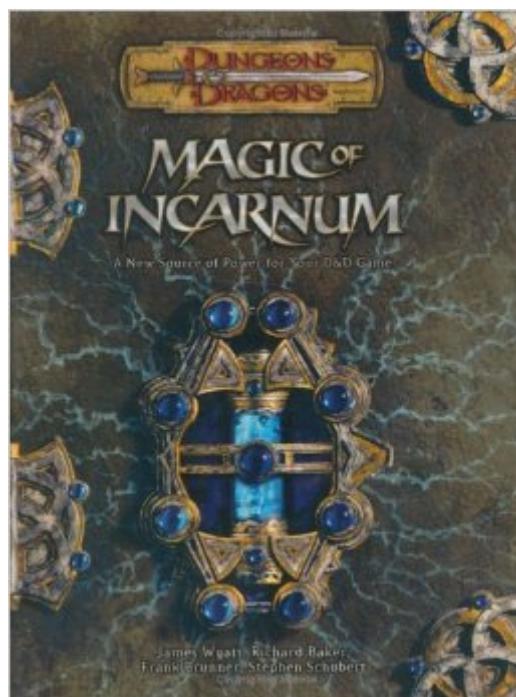


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Magic Of Incarnum (Dungeons & Dragons D20 3.5 Fantasy Roleplaying)



Synopsis

A new source of power for the Dungeons & Dragons® roleplaying game! This supplement introduces a magical substance called incarnum into the D&D game. With this book, the players' characters can meld incarnum—"the power of souls living, dead, and unborn"—into magical items and even their own bodies, granting them special attacks, defenses, and other abilities (much as magic items and spells do). Incarnum can be shaped and reshaped into new forms, giving characters tremendous versatility in the dungeon and on any battlefield. This book also features new classes, prestige classes, feats, and other options for characters wishing to explore the secrets of incarnum, as well as rules and advice for including incarnum in a D&D campaign.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

When it comes to supplement books to the Dungeon & Dragons game, players and Dungeon Masters alike must learn to pick and choose their battles. I say this because while many D&D books can prove to be quite viable in introducing new material into the game (e.g., new spells, character feats and options, monsters, and adventures), others can be a tad redundant and perhaps even useless to a given campaign. Luckily, *Magic of Incarnum*--released back in the September of 2005--is of the former eventually and not of the latter, as the idea it introduces into the core D&D game is one that neither TSR, Inc., nor Wizards of the Coast had ever tried before until this past year. See, Incarnum is the soul energy that manifests itself within living beings. Anyone and everyone who either lives in the present, has ever lived in the past, and will soon be born in the future has a touch of this substance within them, although certain beings are more blessed by and intuitive about it than others are. The human-born azurin, for instance--one of the four races

introduced in Magic of Incarnum--are especially aware of that which composes their very essence and utilize it in their careers as adventurers, aiming to either right the wrongs of the material world or subjugate the masses to their will to fulfill more malignant objectives. Similarly, there are the wild, gray-skinned dusklings, whose ties to incarnum blesses them with an innate knowledge about it and the knack for manipulating the energy of their spirits in an effort to mimic the powers of mystic beasts via the Totemist Character Class.

This book is fantastic! Incarnum can be dropped into any setting easily with no changes. In fact, WoTC layed the groundwork for this system way back in Bastion of Souls. Basically, incarnum is "creation-energy". You draw upon the essence of the universe that is responsible for life - and the power of souls past. You don't draw power from others like a leech, you know how to use the stuff of the universe to create enhancements on yourself. Incarnum is based around flexibility. Each day you get to decide upon your enhancments for the day, and moment to moment you decide how powerful any one enhancement is. This magic system ain't easy. Anyone expecting to pick a list of spells to throw will be disappointed. Anyone looking to use a techie class to help fill holes in a party with some fun variation will be rewarded. For example, my party was going into a heavy combat zone, so my character built himself up to handle front line fighting. He had a $xd6$ electricity touch attack, and a $xd6$ fire based shield. Every time he scrapped with an opponent, the opponent took touch damage and then fire damage if they hit back. He cleared his way through a group of goblin worg riders while the cleric kept him standing. The next session was more exploratory so he wore a get up that removed all conceleament benefits so the party couldn't be surprised by shadow dwellers. The third session he took up the range attacker spot. He was doing $4d6$ ranged touch attack damage with acidic spit, and a magically enhanced armor class. Final example: I played the totemist with shark pounce and a blink dog shirt. He would pounce for massive damage, next round he would strike and blink away 10', and then next round pounce, repeat ad infinitum.

I was excited when I first read Magic of Incarnum (hereafter Mol) and two months later I still am. Incarnum as a form of "magic" has some very interesting and inspiring ideas. In 20+ years of gaming I don't think that I have ever seen a product quite like this one. The basic concept of "soulmelds" powered by "Incarnum" seems very fresh to me and the execution of the idea is an inspirational one. The authors set out to create something new to DnD and I think that they succeeded admirably. Incarnum as defined by Mol is essentially the energy of souls born and yet to be born. Individual living beings can tap into this power and gain pools of "essentia" that they can

use to power feats or even solid incarnum creations called "Soulmelds." Soulmelds function like virtual magic items. They are "shaped" on a "chakra" point that is roughly analogous to an item slot. For a more potent effect the soulmeld can be "bound" to the chakra and actually prevents a real item from being used there. The base classes are all interesting and all have some degree of ability to shape Soulmelds. The Incarnate is the soulmeld specialist can easily fill the role of trapfinder or skill monkey and give it a totally different feel than a rogue would have. The Soulborn is a minor soulmeld user much like a Paladin or Ranger & can fill much the same roles in a party. The Totemist is a flavorful class that can be a natural weapon damage dealer (think wildshaped druid) or something of a blaster though most wizards will be better at the latter. The Totemist Soulmelds are some of the most powerful and interesting in the book.

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