These are all different ideas that needed further exploration in a narrative format for me to think about them. Not all of them are compatible, etc.

Characters: Attribute Points or the Lack Thereof

What results from utilizing an attribute point based character system? The numbers you assign or are assigned are directly tied to abilities (both combat and non-combat) and character information (HP, carry weight, etc) that ultimately inform character customization. This can be something that results in more immersion as well as slows down the pace of gameplay as players “consult” themselves and their characters on what types of actions or decisions make sense in the context of their abilities. When used overly this results in distracting, but simple, arithmetic that can detract from pace, immersion and fun. Striking a healthy balance where ones self-consultation is closer to subconscious (by virtue of simplicity) than conscious removes the negative effects.

*Random example. Two characters, one STR 10 and one STR 18 are faced with a task that benefit from having ample strength. How strong is STR 10 vs STR 18? STR 17 vs STR 18? Would a simple character trait, “Strong”, “Normal” or “Weak”, each with a clear and simple (+5/+0/-5) be simpler or would it open up a new class of information that characters must keep track of? If a list of potential traits were provided, including a mechanism for trading in extra positive for negative traits (+Smart/-Weak) past a set number that are “free” upon creation, would this simplify or increase complexity if used to supplant the typical (STR/DEX/CON/INT/WIS/CHA) point based attribute list? Ultimately, this may help with reducing over-attachment to a character as there is less time invested in tuning them to ones liking.* A new thought occurs to me now… this could potentially “help” with increasing the personality of different classes (unless a classless system is desirable, that has fun benefits too) by tying certain traits to classes. Only Berserkers can take “Blood Thirsty” and only Wizards can take “Arcane Scholar”, etc. Alternatively, choosing traits could be the process that defines your class… a “Blood Thirsty” + “Arcane Scholar” character could be a blood mage sorcerer type, etc. This sounds fun… Going further, there could be classes of traits that are incompatible for balancing control. Also, some could be **initial** traits that are selected upon creation and others could be **learned** traits that are part of character development. The terminology may become wiggly as this idea progresses, at some point separating traits from “feat” like attributes may necessitate a differentiation. I’m actually going to go create a doc on potential traits to play around with the idea a little bit...

Combat: Delivery Rolls and Powers

To use a roll-reward system (apart from hit/miss) where your “excess” score opens up delivery options there is a problem with target manipulation that needs to be addressed. If delivery rewards are based on excess “hit” value (Target has AC12, Character rolls 15 so excess is 3) any attack with an area effect would benefit by attacking the lowest AC target in range of the desired effect to maximize the delivery.

*Mage rolls for ranged elemental basic on a target of AC10 between two AC20 targets and gets a natural 20. If they had attacked the AC20 targets they would have +0 delivery to use, since they attacked the AC10 target instead they have +10 to use to deliver a massive AoE that hits all 3. This doesn’t really add up.*

Alternate ideas? - **My take: When you use up successes to create an AoE effect you automatically rechoose the target with the highest AC. If after you’ve spent the points you don’t have enough points left to do anything to that target, then the target successfully protects everyone in the area of effect from the attack. -RH 2013/12/07**

If, instead, targets had flat “to hit” AC with a separate metric for armor reduction (damage, etc) then targeting could rely more on a cover based system. Broadly…

*Mage has three potential targets in a line. The two on the sides are behind cover, and are at AC15, while the one in the middle is in the open and at AC10. The mage wishes to hit all three, and since the one in the middle is the most open they attack that target. If they roll high enough and can use delivery points to make an area attack they can expand the radius to encompass both the side targets; this makes more sense to me as the cover is directional and if a blast originates near/behind the blocking object it should not provide a cover bonus.*

This makes sense for AoE attacks but does not work for “multi-arrow” type effects.

*Archer has three targets spread in front of them at equal spacing in a line, the outer two behind cover and the middle one in the open. They attack the middle target, AC10, and roll a 13 receiving a +3 delivery bonus which they use to deliver “multi-arrow” (refracting the arrow into multiple arrows) hitting the targets on the side where they would normally be AC15 and not hit.*

I’m not sure this attack makes any more sense in a classic AC based system, so it may not be an issue. Multiple simultaneous targets for a single attack that is not AoE based (or close range AoE, e.g. Cleave) might simply be disallowed/not built in. This system, as it stands, is emphasizing cover… which isn’t bad.