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     I Don't "Get" Chaotic Good

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Thread: I Don't "Get" Chaotic Good

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03-28-2010, 10:56 AM   #1

Hexmage ⊘   Join Date: Jul 2009
Registered User   Posts: 652

I Don't "Get" Chaotic Good

Of all the alignments, the only one that really confuses me is Chaotic Good. What kind of character is Chaotic Good? What are a Chaotic Good character's goals?

I'm sure people will say that characters such as Robin Hood and V are Chaotic Good; they fight against corrupt governments (Lawful Evil). However, what if a Lawful Good government arose afterwards? Would V fight against a Lawful Good government?

I may be looking at alignment the wrong way, but from how I understand it a being's alignment reflects how they think all of existence should be. I don't think that V or Robin Hood would want a Chaotic world; they just use chaos to break down a Lawful Evil government.

I've recently begun reading Michael Moorcock's Elric stories, and I've noticed that the forces of Chaos are generally associated with evil. This makes sense to me; I don't understand how a complete lack of any sort of mediating authority could be conducive to a pleasant world.

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03-28-2010,   11:04 AM   #2

RadioKen ○
Fugitive Alien
RPGnet Member
Validated User

Join Date:	Apr 2006
Location:	Benicia, CA
Posts:	14,549

Re: I Don't "Get" Chaotic Good

What's to get? Chaotic Good is about liberty--exercising your own and respecting other people's. It's about the freedom to swing your fist as long as you don't swing it into an innocent bystander's face. Its First Commandment is "Do Thine Own Thing, So Long As Thou Hurtest No One Else," and its Second is "Let Others Do Their Own Thing, So Long As They Hurt No One Else."

I don't see the difficulty.

Ken MacLennan
Ziggurat Liaison and Debriefing Officer of the EberronPack
Currently Playing/Running: Too Damn Much RPGA 4e & 5e
I have a book; if California local history is your kind of thing, you may want to check it out.
Okay, folks. "Free rein" and "rein in" are metaphors drawn from horsemanship. "Reign" pertains to sovereignty and rulership. Please stop mixing the two before I do something regrettable.

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03-28-2010,   11:06 AM   #3

Peregrin ○
Bwahaha!
Validated User

Join Date:	Sep 2009
Location:	New Jersey
Posts:	1,395

Re: I Don't "Get" Chaotic Good

If a lawful good government arose, it would still conflict at times with a truly chaotic good character.

AFAIK, "lawful" in terms of D&D and how to play a character, usually allows for bringing about justice in the name of good, using the law.

A lawful good character would have no qualms about locking up a thief, even if that thief were stealing for survival or because they needed to support their family. The thief committed a crime, and must be brought to justice (albeit justice appropriate for the crime, or maybe a diminished sentence, whereas a neutral character wouldn't care either way or would give them whatever full sentence was deserved).

A chaotic-good character, however, would look at the situation and say "screw the law, this person needs help."

There might be other situations where being chaotic may not be evil, but may conflict with law. You might carry a concealed weapon even in areas where one is forbidden. You might shoot off fireworks in an inappropriate place and cause trouble, even if no one is

hurt and your intentions weren't evil. You just don't regard the "law" as an absolute.

Eye of newt, an ounce of Sprite, send to us a great big knight. It's maaagiic!

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03-28-2010,   11:09 AM   #4

Mr. Teapot ○	Join Date:	Apr 2003
Registered User	Location:	Pittsburgh
Validated User	Posts:	4,708

Re: I Don't "Get" Chaotic Good

There's a lot of incoherence in the alignment system. It changes across editions and never is clear if they mean that the character is inherently chaotic, or if they're opposed to authority figures outside themselves or what. Almost any behavior could be argued into almost any alignment. That's all just sort of something to keep in mind.

> 🔖 Originally Posted by **Hexmage** ▸▸
> Would V fight against a Lawful Good government?

Depends on how Chaotic they are versus how Good they are. More Chaotic than Good, and they would be opposed to an LG government. More Good than Chaotic, and they would chafe under the government but choose to leave rather than fight the power (assuming leaving is an option).

Lycugus of Sparta in Greek legend fought to create a (very Lawful and presumably Good) system of order but then had no place within that order. So he tricked (Chaotic) the leaders of Sparta into swearing an oath (them being lawful), where they would uphold the Lawful Good laws he set up until his return. Then he went and basically committed suicide. Some chaotic types might not want Chaos across the entire world; they're just unpredictable and chafe at being told what to do. Others want everyone to live together with no authority structures.
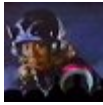
> I don't understand how a complete lack of any sort of mediating authority could be conducive to a pleasant world.

Plenty of real world anarchists and hippies feel that any authority structure is inherently immoral and will inevitably lead to corruption and abuse. Think about John Lennon singing "Imagine there's no countries / It isn't hard to do / Nothing to kill or die for / And no religion too / Imagine all the people / Living life in peace".

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03-28-2010,   11:12 AM   #5

RadioKen ○
Fugitive Alien
RPGnet Member
Validated User

Join Date:	Apr 2006
Location:	Benicia, CA
Posts:	14,549

Re: I Don't "Get" Chaotic Good

I've always imagined that a Chaotic Good society would favor consensual, ad hoc decision-making, very limited power for formal authority, an ethic of charity and tolerance, and the expectation that people would sustain themselves AND help their neighbors to the best of their abilities without being told to by someone in a badge or a uniform.

Ken MacLennan
Ziggurat Liaison and Debriefing Officer of the EberronPack
Currently Playing/Running: Too Damn Much RPGA 4e & 5e
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03-28-2010,   11:13 AM   #6

Anglachel ○
10th level Vice President
Validated User

| Join Date: | Mar 2006 |
| Posts: | 8,694 |

Re: I Don't "Get" Chaotic Good

The "issue" with chaotic good is that it's not very different from just good old neutral good. Both shirk authority to do what is right when necessary.

That said I have seen chaotic good played in a way that was noticeably different from neutral good, but it mostly involves being random in thought patterns and behavior and having zero impulse control. A chaotic good character NEVER has evil impulses, or it is better to say that DnD tolerates evil impulses (such as killing a "bad guy" right off instead of giving him to the authorities)

The penguins alone could not have saved us, but in conjunction with with the mists they seemed to have done so.

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03-28-2010,   11:15 AM   #7

Lost Demiurge ○
4th level Cosmic Monarch
Validated User

| Join Date: | Nov 2004 |
| Posts: | 7,806 |

Re: I Don't "Get" Chaotic Good

Eh, the way I see it, CG types kinda know how things SHOULD be. They just don't have a plan to get there, so they fight evil when they find it, and try to take actions that work toward their picture of awesomeness on the whole. And if they have to take the occasional action that doesn't sit with their goals, then they might do it for the greater good.

Witty comment pending...

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03-28-2010,   11:20 AM   #8

RadioKen ◉
Fugitive Alien
RPGnet Member
Validated User

Join Date:	Apr 2006
Location:	Benicia, CA
Posts:	14,549

Re: I Don't "Get" Chaotic Good

> 🔖 Originally Posted by **Anglachel** ▶
>
> The "issue" with chaotic good is that it's not very different from just good old neutral good. Both shirk authority to do what is right when necessary.

The main difference is that a chaotic good character is much more likely to have a fundamental problem with authority, either by articulated principle or by gut instinct. To a CG character, telling other people what they can and can't do--unless you're specifically preventing them from oppressing others--just isn't *right*.

Ken MacLennan
Ziggurat Liaison and Debriefing Officer of the EberronPack
Currently Playing/Running: Too Damn Much RPGA 4e & 5e
I have a book; if California local history is your kind of thing, you may want to check it out.
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03-28-2010,   11:23 AM   #9

| Join Date: | Jan 2008 |
| Location: | The land of the |

Pandora Caitiff ○
Unprofessional Cosplayer
Validated User

Posts: Iceni
          10,095

Re: I Don't "Get" Chaotic Good

I always took Chaotic to mean the person *ignored* rules. Whether they *oppose* them or not depends on the person involved.

As well as Robin Hood, The Doctor (From Doctor Who) is also cited as an example of Chaotic Good.

Pandy_Caitiff in Minecraft - **pandypops** on Steam - **GanguroGal** in Overwatch (European server)
Half-orc Paladin of the Wushu Clan. Check out the Wushu Open Reloaded Rules. **(Noun)-Pirate** of the Generic Pack - **Lt Colonel** of the Tiny Spider Commandoes - **PerkyGoth** of the Super Gamer Pack

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03-28-2010,   11:26 AM   #10

Evan Waters ○
Talented Amateur
Validated User

Join Date: Jan 2002
Posts: 16,089

Re: I Don't "Get" Chaotic Good

> 📖 Originally Posted by **Pandora Caitiff** ▶▶
>
> I always took Chaotic to mean the person *ignored* rules. Whether they *oppose* them or not depends on the person involved.
>
> As well as Robin Hood, The Doctor (From Doctor Who) is also cited as an example of Chaotic Good.

The Doctor's a good example- even if an authority is basically good or good-intentioned, he'll bristle at them. The UNIT stories are usually good demonstrations of this.

Also, every 80s cop film. "It means he gets results, you stupid chief!"

STAR WARRIORS- Space opera, CARTOON ACTION HOUR-style.

Club Parnassus- My official blog.
DC Draft: New Gods Starts here.
Marvel Draft: The Avengers Stats here.
Hybrid Draft: The Forever People Starts here.

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