Veils and Lines

This short write up is intend as a place to start the conversation and create a framework to deal with challenging content that may appear in game and not the final word. It is part of everyone's responsibilities to make sure all players are able to fully enjoy the games being played.

Purpose of talking about veils and lines:

Since role playing games feature significant improv, it is impossible to fully predict all the content that will come up during a session, but by starting each session with a talk about acceptable content and group limits hopefully people will be impowered to speak up when needed. We want to give players the tools to be able to define the boundaries that they are comfortable with and implement them in a way that does not disrupt the flow of a game if possible. While disrupting the game is undesired, the people playing the game are the priority over the game. Additionally, by clearly defining what topics are off limit, it is easier to be confident that whatever plot that is developed is enjoyed by all participants.

Lines and Veils:

Simply put veils and lines are the boundaries of what the group is comfortable role playing and experiencing. As this is a club through work, the aim is to keep it approximately PG-13 but even within that scope there may be content individual players find uncomfortable or want to avoid for whatever reason.

Lines refer to things that should be avoided completely aka and treated as out of bounds aka a line that you can't cross. Lines will not appear as back story or off screen plot. They will definitely not be a part of on screen action. Veils on the other hand are ok to be alluded to and happen to characters but when they happen they are not role played. There are only veiled references to it. For example, if torture is someone's veil as soon as a scene with torture starts you make a reference to it happening so all playing are aware of what is going on without actually playing out the scene.

Starting Each Session:

To encourage a clear system of determining content each table is comfortable with, the GM should start their session with a brief discussion on veils and lines. Allow people to submit them in writing anonymously or out loud if they feel comfortable sharing. If someone wants to submit anonymously, suggest that everyone does to help maintain privacy. In the case of written submissions encourage people to submit blank or empty suggestions to further increase privacy.

It is suggested that the GM offers up some initial ones to get the ball rolling if needed (see back). Remind people these are not up for debate although discussion for clarification if needed is allowable if lines and veils are submitted verbally. When in doubt play it safe. After initial discussion remind people that they can bring up things latter if they remember something to add. Also inform players that they have the option to pause the action whenever they want if they get uncomfortable with where a scene is going. During a pause, the group can determine if a rewind is warranted or perhaps fading to black is the best choice.

During Gameplay:

During a gameplay session the GM is responsible for keeping the group abiding by the veils and lines determined at the start. If a player brings up a new veil or line in the middle of gameplay, the GM should work quickly towards a resolution that helps all players be comfortable. The GMs should also keep an eye out for players who are becoming uncomfortable if a difficult topic that wasn't covered earlier starts to be relevant. In those situations perhaps suggest a 5 min break to give yourself a chance to check in with the person without making them the center of attention.

Each person has a veto for topic and content covered in game. Veils and lines are not up for debate.

Some Sample Veils and Lines to get the Conversation started:

(Feel Free to use this space to write down your group's veils and lines)
Alcoholism
Racism
Abusive Relationships
Child neglect
Sexual Assault
Sexism
Gendered Slurs