

TWILIGHT SECTOR

SPACE PERA¹⁰

SETTING UPDATE #1



CONTAINS SETTING
MATERIAL FOR **PLAYERS**
AND **REFEREES** FOUND
IN THE ADVENTURE
**BEYOND THE OPEN
DOOR**

Matthew Hope & John Lees

TRAVELLER

Compatible Product

TERRA/SOL GAMES

Because the Campaign's the Thing

The following material is suitable not only for the **Twilight Sector Setting**, but also for any **Traveller** game involving high-density cities, clone technology, secret organizations and the other common sci-fi themes.

Terra/Sol Games wanted to present ***Beyond the Open Door*** not only as a thrilling adventure tale, but also as a further glimpse into the setting of Twilight Sector. But not every game consumer is interested in scenarios. Thus, the setting and background material has been reformatted and presented here, stripped of the adventure-specific information.

To be clear: There is nothing “new” here for the purchaser of ***Beyond the Open Door***, although this format does represent an easier way to provide players with the handouts and other information from that book and still may be considered useful in that context.

If you bought ***Beyond the Open Door*** and want to have an easier way to provide the setting details to your players; or are a Referee who just isn't interested in scenarios but would like the setting information that book contained; or a Player/Referee who just wants to get some ideas for their own game, or would like to know more about the Twilight Sector, this is definitely the product for you.

John Lees
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TWILIGHT SECTOR

Setting Update #1

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PLACES

*Two cities are covered in some detail in **Beyond the Open Door**, one of these is **Kansas City**, the Capital of the Republic of the Plains, the other is **London**, the capitol of the Planet, where the Orion Government is located. These two cities are vital places, and they both exhibit some of the interesting potentials of the setting in the way that they have handled their massive populations.*

Some of the following information does not come from player inserts but from the Referee's sections of the book (particualtly the "slice of x" material). Still, these are useful for players (and Referees not interested in that adventure) to help set the tone of these cities and other similar megacities in the 30th century for Twilight Sector or Traveller games alike.

REPUBLIC OF THE PLAINS

The Republic of the Plains is the agricultural hub of Terra/Sol with a large percentage of the planet's food coming from this nation. As such, the nation has enjoyed continued financial success and has seen a marked population growth as Orions flock to the ROP to share in the country's wealth. Adding to this economic success are a number of mega-corporations such as SubAtomic that have helped expand the ROP's exports far beyond simple agriculture and the ROP is now also known for its production of large-scale industrial equipment and technology.

Life in the Republic of the Plains can often be described as idyllic and most citizens of the ROP find life an easy one. ROP citizens are hard workers with a strong work ethic but who also embrace the finer things in life, enjoying their time away from their careers. The ROP sports a number of well-known entertainment attractions throughout the country and Orions from all over often travel to the ROP to experience this more relaxed side of the country.

In addition to a strong economy and rich work life, nearly every citizen of the ROP is touched by religion. More than any other nation on Terra/Sol, the ROP has a deep connection to spiritual groups, primarily with their ties to the Mennonite Agricultural Cooperative. In addition to the MAC, the Republic is a center of activity for the Catholic Church under the auspices of the Knights Templar who were exiled from the Terran Union. Finally, a large number of Orions who adhere to the traditions of the American Indians of Earth have immigrated to the ROP and settled throughout the nation. This Indian presence has brought with it the spiritual trappings of this culture and, as such, one can find all manner of medicine lodges and other religious organizations dedicated to spirit worship. This propensity for religious service in the ROP means that religion, in one form or another can be found all across the country and has influenced the lives of nearly every member of the country. Religious holidays of all kinds are observed in the ROP and religious tolerance

is paramount. Likewise, the religious beliefs of others are nearly always respected by members of the ROP, be it the pacifism of the Mennonites or the animism of the Indians.

Religious tolerance goes hand-in-hand with an acceptance of mutants within the ROP. In 2856, following the 'Transformation', the Mennonite Agricultural Combine extended an invitation to mutants of all kinds to travel to the ROP and settle there. The ROP government backed this invitation with promises of jobs, support and equal rights for all. The result was an influx of mutants to the ROP seeking refuge from persecution from all over the galaxy. Mutants that had fled to the Orion Confederation sought out Terra/Sol as word spread of the ROP's generosity. As a result, the ROP boasts a larger population of mutants than any other nation on Terra/Sol. Nowhere on Terra/Sol are mutants as accepted as they are in the Republic of the Plains.

Politics in the ROP function surprisingly smoothly for a nation with as much diversity as the Republic. The various political parties are skilled at keeping the focus of their energy on the good of the people and, though political differences and bickering often take place, such squabbles are handled quickly and quietly so the business of governance can continue uninhibited. The people of the ROP trust their government and believe their voice will be heard during elections. To that end, the ROP welcomes the opinion of all of its citizens and is known for its high voter participation. Despite this smooth political system, the ROP has been struggling to balance the influence of corporations on the political process. As the mega-corporations grow within the ROP, their influence over politicians and the general populace has begun to intrude on national policy. The ROP government is working hard to make sure that the corporations do not disrupt politics within the country but must also ensure that the corporations do not leave the ROP for a more amicable nation.

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For more information on the Republic of the Plains, see the *Twilight Sector Campaign Setting Sourcebook*, pages 85-91.

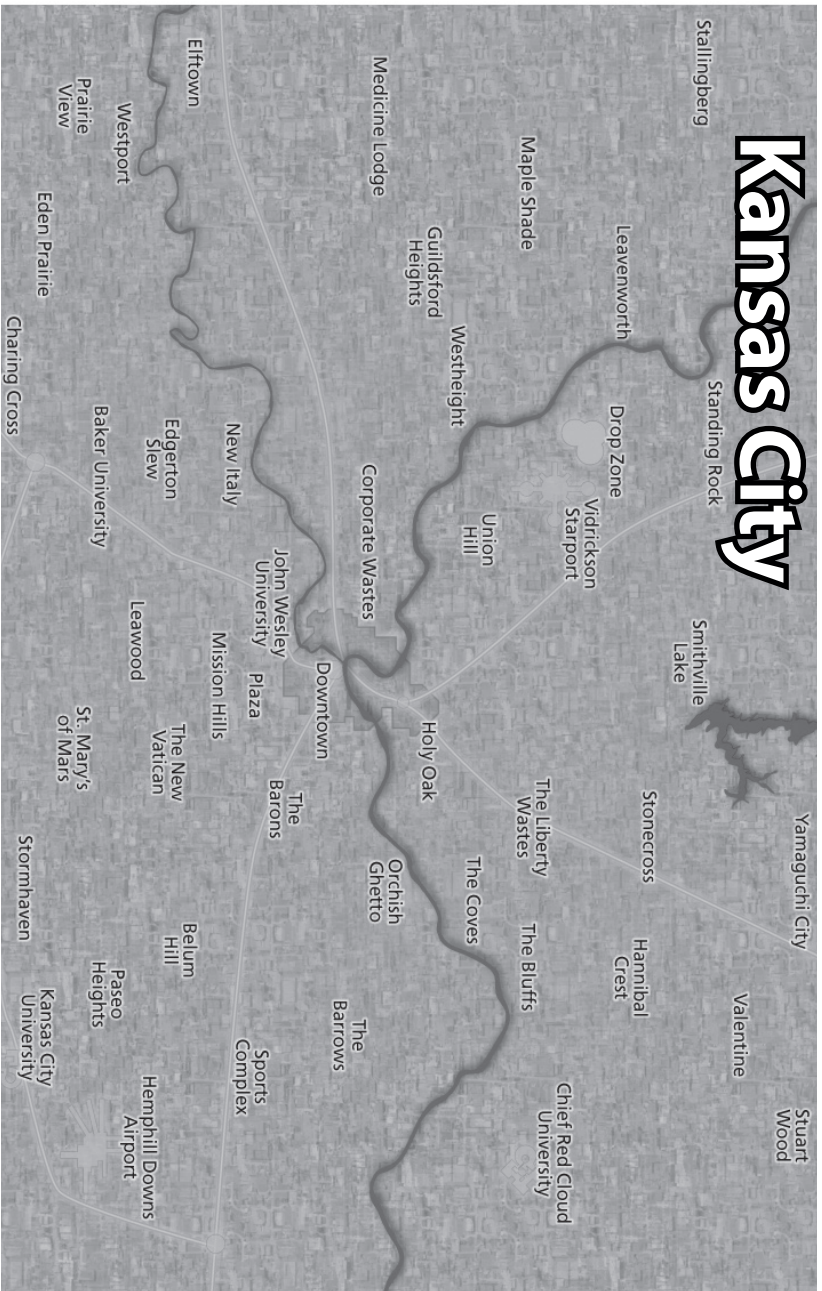
KANSAS CITY

Kansas City epitomizes the Republic of the Plains and is the capital of the nation. Visitors to the ROP can look at Kansas City as a perfect snapshot of the country as a whole and Kansas City is the political, economic and religious center of the ROP. The city boasts the largest population anywhere within the ROP and is a bustling center of activity. Within Kansas City one can find just about anything from grand cathedrals to massive arcologies.

Life in Kansas City is fast-paced and visitors often find the locals overworked, busy and sometimes rude. Rather than being impolite, the people of Kansas City and its surrounding neighborhoods are focused on the business of everyday life, almost to the exclusion of everything else. It's only after the workday ends that they lighten up and allow themselves time to relax and enjoy the fruits of their labor. As a result, the city is a hive of work and business during the day but then quickly transitions into a hub of excitement, fun and energy. The people of Kansas City, Kancitians, work hard but play hard and the nightlife of the city is renowned throughout the ROP.

As a major population center, Kansas City has a well-established infrastructure for those living there as well as visitors. Public transportation is reliable and cheap, and the city can be reached via two major airports, a starport and a number of highways and rivers. The city boasts some of the richest neighborhoods as well as a number of slums. Major attractions include the national capitol building, the SubAtomic and Roark arcologies, the New Vatican and the Orcish Ghetto among others. In addition to a number of industrial centers throughout the city, three major universities as well as a number of smaller colleges make the city a center of higher education and learning.

Crime in Kansas City is always present, but is most often relegated to the more dangerous neighborhoods or to the corporations. Corporate crime has been on the rise and instances of embezzlement, corporate espionage and other 'white collar' crimes have grown in the past two decades. The Kansas City Police Department and the Kansas Bureau of Investigations (KBI) ensures that criminals are quickly found and prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law. Criminals are often incarcerated or exiled to any number of penal colonies found throughout the Orion Confederation; Kansas City has no death penalty.



LONDON

The city of London was founded during the first colonization of Terra/Sol. The location quickly became a seat for a great deal of the original colonists and, as with its counterpart on Earth, the city quickly grew into a major metropolitan area and was planned from the early stages to house hundreds of millions of inhabitants someday. While the city's present population is nowhere near this, the foundations were laid early on and the infrastructure exists (at least in theory). In 2839, the Orion Confederation declared the British Isles of Terra/Sol to be a Confederal Enclave and the seat of the Orion government on Terra/Sol. The result has been the continued growth and success of London and

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the rest of the Enclave as funds are sent directly from the Orion Confederation government to this ever-important megapolis.

London is a dense urban sprawl and boasts the highest population density of any city on Terra/Sol. Some of the largest buildings on the planet are found in London. As the planetary capital, London also boasts many Orion military installations, the corporate headquarters for a large number of mega-corporations, world-class universities and hospitals and much more.

Over half of the population of the city is employed in the Orion government, and the city houses a large population of Orion citizens born outside of Terra/Sol. One is never alone in London and visitors often feel overwhelmed by the sheer size of the city.

Being a Confederal Enclave, visitors and residents of London are subject to harsher restrictions on personal freedoms here than elsewhere on Terra/Sol. Criminal justice is handled by the Orion Confederal Police who are far less lenient than many of the smaller nations on Terra/Sol. The city is home to the Orion Security Service and the Confederate Justice Department as well as housing a contingent of the Orion Armed Forces. These organizations work hard to keep the city free from crime, but being home to a large number of people traveling to and from the city criminal elements have established themselves in London. Despite the harsh restrictions on things like weapons and drugs, a black market thrives in the city and all manner of illicit activity can be found if one digs deep enough.

Many visitors to Terra/Sol reach the planet through London's famed Victoria Central Transport Hub, bringing a large number of foreigners to the city. People from all over the Known Galaxy can be found in London and most Stellar Nations (as well as the old nations of Earth that still cling to the minds of so many) have their own neighborhoods within the city for people 'from their country.' Of course, a more official presence is also present: Embassies from most of the various stellar nations can be found within the city, making it a den of intrigue and espionage. Such is the wonder of Terra/Sol that many nations do whatever they can to uncover the secrets the Orion government is hiding regarding the planet.

As with elsewhere within the Orion Confederation, a vast array of cultures, religions and communities can be found in London. Cultural tolerance is as prevalent in the city as it is within the Orion Confederation and people belonging to any number of different cultures can find others of their kind in the city. Tolerance of mutants is common as well and mutants of all kinds as well as AI's, uplifted animals and others can occasionally be encountered within the city.

Overall, life in the London Confederal Enclave is full of wonder and excitement but not without its challenges.



POLITICAL MAP OF NORTH AMERICA



A SLICE OF KANSAS CITY, TERRA

One of the most important NPCs in Act One of **Beyond the Open Door** isn't a human, an AI, or an Uplifted goat, but the megaplex of Kansas City. Like any NPC, the city has a distinctive description, internal motivations and external behaviors, as well as a "dialogue" all its own. Referees may want to ensure that this sense of place is injected into their adventures, both as a way of giving the players a sense of place and to distinguish Kansas City from other locations.

Physicality:

This is a city of extremes, juxtapositions of the old and the new, the immense and the humble. There is always a skyline off in the distance in Kansas City. For a place built on a plain, it has over the years created its own hills and valleys.

Portions of Kansas City look like they could be from any major metropolis on Old Earth in the early 21st century: crisscrossed surface streets packed with vehicles, sidewalks jammed with people, tall skyscrapers and low-rise buildings in a testament to man's harnessing of his environment. This is however not reflective of all of the city. Indeed, this only stands true of the most conservative components of the city, such as the Downtown area, which fights to retain its distinctive flavor and "old world charm" despite the press of humanity all around.

Most of the city however cannot afford that luxury. While the plains stretch for hundreds of miles, the city designers for Kansas City consciously fought against sprawl as the population of the area began to mount with flood upon flood of humanity looking to live on this "other Earth". In some other population centers, the Sprawl is enormous, as is the ecological impact which has caused those cities a major environmental and health problem. Kansas City, using zoning laws and rather draconian environmental regulations

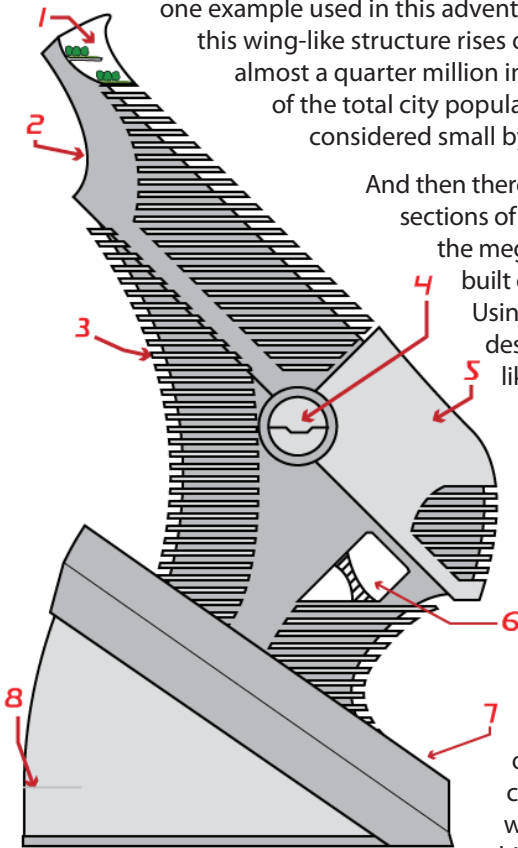
There is always a skyline off in the distance in Kansas City. For a place built on a plain, it has over the years created its own hills and valleys.

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"encouraged" the city to grow in a different direction. Although to be more accurate, this should be thought of as a number of different directions: namely the arcology and the Hive or Undercity/overcity.

There are several arcologies springing from the firmament of the metropolis. Some of these are half-arcology half-normal city, while others have become true arcologies – whole cities inside of single massive structures. What they share is the idea of conservation of space, innovation of design and integration of multiple uses to maximize efficiency and better distribute resources. Roark Tower is one example used in this adventure, almost a work of art this wing-like structure rises out of the city and houses almost a quarter million inhabitants alone (over 1% of the total city population). And Roark Tower is considered small by arcology standards.

And then there are the Hives or layered sections of the city. These portions of the megacity have literally been built one over the other in layers. Using high-tech materials designed for superstructures like Beanstalks, older industrial and residential sections of the city have become the base of a second layer of urbanized development, retaining both the upper (Overcity) and lower (Undercity) portions intact. In some cases, two and three layers have been constructed over top of one another in places, creating a hill-like areas which look like somewhat hives when viewed from in cross-section (thus the common name).



ROARK • TOWER

KANSAS CITY, REPUBLIC OF THE PLAINS, TERRA

- | | |
|------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 Observation Gardens | 5 Industroplex |
| 2 Aerocenter 2 | 6 Rand Plaza (Open) |
| 3 Residential Terraces | 7 The Bowl (Outer Shell) |
| 4 Aerocenter 1 | 8 Star of the Plains |

The inside of these Hives, specifically the undercity portions, have become strange hothouses or urban living. Make no mistake however, not all of these sections have been turned over to criminals and vagrants, several undercities boast upper-middle class neighborhoods along with Low and middle class areas. These are however places of perpetual night, or at best twilight, as the sun pokes around the edges of the artificial canyons of steel and carbon nanotubes. Nor are these places that indeed *can* be avoided. As the megacities grew and population pressures rose higher and higher while sprawls were consciously nipped off, these Hives (as well as the Arcologies) became the answer. Some 40-50% of the city are estimated to live in these areas. While some of them are terrible places of desperation and darkness, others are welcoming and homey. The neighborhoods of the undercities tend to reflect the collective personality of those who live and frequent them.

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Personality:

The residents of Kansas City call themselves *Kancitians* (CAN-city-ANZ) (similar to their 20th century forebears who considered themselves 'Kansas citians'). The Kancitians tend to be proud, hardworking and somewhat focused. While these are certainly both overgeneralizations if not stereotypes, the perception of Kancitians is rooted in fact.

Referees may want to play this up: Kancitians that the players encounter move fast, talk fast and get things done. The crowds here do not just loiter or mill about randomly. They surge, they act like great human streams that go someplace. There are to be sure some eddies and ripcurrents, but the mass of them have somewhere to be and the players either go along with them or have to fight against that tide.



Δ SLICE OF LONDON

London, the planetary capital, is a megapolis whose urban sprawl extends Kilometers in all directions outside the city proper. London's center is filled with towering skyscrapers and arcologies, and the constant hum of air and ground traffic. Home to millions of people, the city streets of London are choked with crowds at all times.

Players unfamiliar with such a big city will find themselves a bit overwhelmed, especially those from the small towns of the Republic of the Plains. Even players that have been to big cities will take some time to get used to the sheer size of the capital. Players can access basic information about the city such as maps, methods of transportation, etc using their computers and accessing public information sites across the internet.

By comparison, Kansas City was planned out as a city, not a megacity or megopolis. At the time of its construction, it had not even yet been decided whether the location would be the capital of the Republic of the Plains or not. Thus, a city of perhaps seven or eight million was envisioned, not the Forty-Three million that now inhabit it. This made Kansas City something of a patchwork, and contributed to the "organic" feel of the place in both good and bad ways.

London is different. This is a place that was planned not for a few million, but potentially for hundreds of millions. Right now it doesn't have that many people, not even by a third, but it has plans for them anyway. As a result, arcologies were built into the design of the city from the very start (rather than evolving later as they have in Kansas City). Underground networks and mass transit was sandwiched between functioning Industrial sub-layers so that the building materials for the labyrinth would be close at hand.

London today has 10 major arcologies, as well as a huge number of skyscrapers in the Valleys and those areas where the underground bedrock would not tolerate the construction of such massive structures. While they have major underground sections (in the sub-layers of the city), these are not the Undercities of Kansas City or New York. They are also not haphazardly designed out and planned.

When describing London, you need to think *vertical*.

ORGANIZATIONS:

***Beyond the Open Door** introduces a great many organizations and groups to add to the Twilight Sector Setting. While some of these groups may seem at first blush to be confined to specific areas of Terra/Sol, they can often be encountered far and wide in the System.*

The KBI is a law enforcement agency that plays a major role in The Republic of the Plains and has been involved in a great many liaison operations with other agencies. The OSS is a much larger, Confederation-wide agency which can be found in a great many adventure settings. Finally, the Joshua Colonies, which demonstrate one of the unique kinds of communities, driven by the new possibilities of cloning, that are found in the Twilight Sector Setting.

KANSAS BUREAU OF INVESTIGATIONS (KBI)

The Kansas Bureau of Investigations is a unique organization in that it finds itself at the crossroads of local and national law enforcement, as well as intelligence groups operating throughout the Republic of the Plains. The organization began as a local concern and transitioned in 1979 into a national agency. It has precariously balanced its role between different and often conflicting fellows since its inception in 1840. Though it often faces challenges in day-to-day operations, the KBI is surprisingly competent and organized.

The KBI was initially formed as a branch of the Kansas City Police Department, taking over the investigative aspect of police duties in the new capital of the Republic of the Plains. At the time, the agency was referred to as the Kansas City Bureau of Investigations (KCBI). The KCBI enjoyed success in preventing any significant criminal organizations from taking root in the city and Kansas City remained one of the safest population centers of its size on Terra/Sol. As the galaxy descended into the chaos of the Mutant Uprising in

2881, the KCBI stayed hard at work ensuring the stability of the capital by rooting out criminal anti-mutant organizations and aiding the police department in maintaining order. For Kansas City, as with much of the Orion Confederation, the Mutant Uprising did little to disrupt daily life.



The Official Shield of the Kansas Bureau of Investigations, altered from the original following the shift from a local to national organization in 1979.

Though the KBI weathered the storm of the Mutant Uprising with ease, the Mutant War following the

initial outbreak of violence would result in significant changes on the organization. The KCBI was put to work coordinating with the Orion Security Service to ensure the enemies of the Orion Confederation would not be able to use Kansas City to spy on Terra/Sol. While this cooperation was not without its challenges, the KCBI was able to gain a great deal of experience and training working under the OSS. However, its work with the OSS distracted the KCBI from its everyday duties and, over the course of a few decades, a small number of criminal organizations began to gain influence in the city.

As the war began to wind down, the KCBI was hard at work cleaning up the city. It found that, along with a strong criminal presence in the city, internal corruption within the Kansas City Police Department had grown to alarming levels. In the decades since

its creation, the KCBI had rarely been called upon to deal with internal corruption but now it found itself at odds with its parent organization. It was at this time that the government separated the KCBI from the KCPD entirely, dropping the word "City" from the name. The new Kansas Bureau of Investigation (using the designation **KBI**) had autonomy to clean house across the whole ROP. The Bureau made plenty of enemies following this change, arresting dozens of corrupt police and city officials. By the end of 2981, the KBI was on its own and had established itself as a significant force of law and order within Kansas City and the rest of the ROP.

In the decade that followed, the newly minted KBI has been busy cleaning up after the war. Though most of the internal corruption within Kansas City has been dealt with, the time spent looking outward has allowed a criminal element to establish itself within the nation's capital. The KBI is hard at work rooting out these groups, focusing their efforts to remove the influence of the Yakuza and other such organizations. They still coordinate with the KCPD, the OSS and other law enforcement agencies, often acting as liaisons between groups that would otherwise have difficulties cooperating.

"Black Files"

Like any organization of this variety, the KBI has restricted files buried deep in their archives. The KBI Black Files have however captured the imagination of the public in the Republic of the Plains. There is even a Tri-vid police drama which uses the "Black Files" (also the name of the show) as an excuse for all sorts of nonsensical adventures.

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OSS (ORION STATE SECURITY)

The OSS grew out of the chaos of the War for Independence. Its founding in 2758 actually predates the independence of the Orion Confederation, making it the oldest governmental agency in the Confederation. The colonies that would later form the Orion Confederation suffered greatly at the hands of the UN Peacekeepers. The disjointed coordination between the various colonies made it easy for the UN to put out the brush fires that pretty much were the War for Independence. Those pushing for independence in Orion space saw the problem and knew that without the resources or unity to form a cohesive fighting force they needed to approach the problem from a different direction. So instead they opted for creating a top notch intelligence agency. With superior intelligence they would be able to move around the small military forces at their

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disposal and to decide which colonies should agitate and which should stand down because UN forces were on the way. In his way they could make the rebellion more effective.

The original name of this agency was **the Castle**, because when it was first formed it was housed in a large mansion on Koning that resembled a castle. Because Koning was occupied by the UN at different points during the War for Independence the Castle itself had to remain a secret.

It spent the better part of the war establishing itself as one of the premier caterers in Sirius, the capital city of Koning. Indeed, it was one of the few that would cater UN functions. Its original director was **Isabella ValkKristenbom**. She was a master chef who also possessed great interpersonal skills. A statue of her stands outside the Castle, which is still used by the agency (albeit no longer as its headquarters). Isabella, little known to most historians, was one of the greatest heroes of the revolution. She made great sacrifices for the cause and to this day, some of her exploits are still classified.

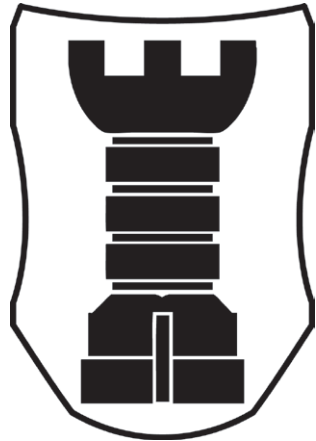
The Orion's are a fiercely independent lot and have an abiding mistrust of governments. Thus, they have always had a love hate relationship with the OSS. After independence was won, many in the Orion House of Equals sought to hamstring the agency, but every President of the Confederation – no matter what stance they had taken towards the OSS prior to coming to office – have always

become supporters and protectors of the **Castle** (no longer an official title, it is still used as a designation within government circles). Conspiracy theorists of course have had a field day with this fact. The most common claim is that the OSS has managed to get some dirt on every President, thus forcing each to support them. This hardly seems likely, but the urban legend is popular with the man on the street.

A more likely scenario is that once a President comes to office he realizes the immense task of presiding over the thousands upon thousands of “states” that makes up the Confederation. Quickly coming to terms with his or her need to have accurate intelligence about what is going on in each “state” they shift their stance. Thus, the reality is that the OSS allows the government to be able to keep a lid on the powder keg that is the Orion Confederation. The dirty little secret is that the OSS must spy on their own people to provide the President with any chance at all of keeping order within the Confederacy. Few inside the government like to talk about this, few outside are willing to do so openly.

The OSS has experienced a number of “institutional moments” during its existence. Things that have shaped the culture and outlook of the institution and been handed down from one generation of OSS agents to the next. From the time of their formation, they cultivated a sense of secrecy and *esprit de corps*; valuable tradecraft lessons from clashes with their counterparts; perhaps though none of these “moments” have had – and still has – the power of the 25 year campaign on Sologne during the Mutant War.

This was a war unlike any the Orion military had ever experienced. It was a war of attrition, with the APR forces seeking to bleed the Orion’s and sap their will. The APR used everything in their bag of dirty tricks on Sologne, and invented more in the process. Mutants transformed beyond recognition, psychic soldiers and whispered rumors of horrors “beyond the kin of mortal men”. These horrors have, like so much else, taken their place among the urban legends and now so far removed from the truth fact and fiction are hard to distinguish from each other.



The symbol used by the OSS in Public Relations Campaigns.

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The most popular legends are that the Archenars used precursor artifacts which killed a soldier or drove them to madness. Another

...the OSS came to a have a deep hatred for all things APR.

even more far fetched but still earnestly supported by some rumor is that the APR actually used aliens to bolster their defense of the planet. If the truth is known, it is buried deep in the vaults of the OSS.

A loathing above and beyond the normal sort of rivalries between Stellar Nations.

When the military struggled to deal with the situation on Sologne, the OSS was called in. They formed small units headed by combat experienced agents to deal with these irregular units fielded by the APR. It was a unique role for the agency to become involved with, and the horrors they found there shaped them significantly. The details about any specific

action may not be fully known to anyone outside of the highest echelons of the agency, but it is clear that it was during this campaign that the OSS came to a have a deep hatred for all things APR. A loathing above and beyond the normal sort of rivalries between Stellar Nations. A hatred whose depth is hard to plumb even to this day.

Public Relations:

Since the OSS first began operating "openly" (in as much as any kind of organization such as the OSS does this), they have been very savvy about using the media and public relations to their benefit.

This includes actively encouraging entertainment producers to utilize their name and image as long as the good wins out over the evil in the end and the agency itself is not tarnished by their depictions. The effects of this effort have, when combined with selective "leaks" of information, been very interesting to study from a sociological perspective.

Internal Operation:

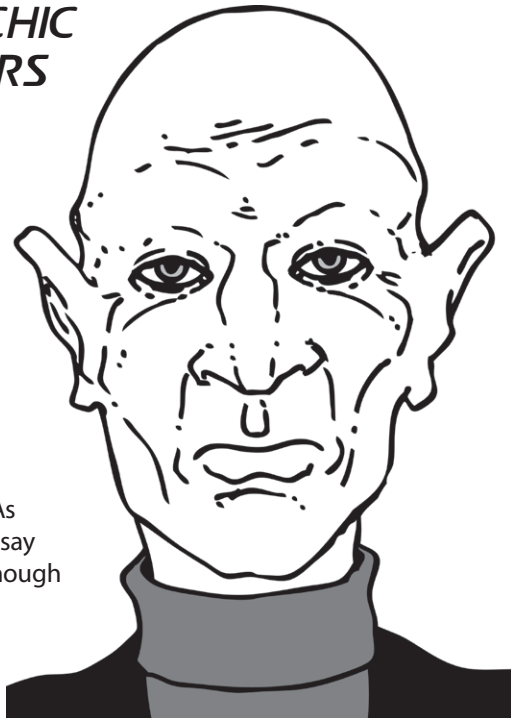
Beyond the material presented here, there is little or no information which the agency has released to the public regarding their internal makeup, their decision-making style or tables of organization. Often different depictions of the agency (see Public Relations above) have treated these issues in a completely different (and wildly contradictory) fashion.

PSYCHIC ADVISORS

In recent years there have been a number of sightings of strange operatives of the OSS working alongside other OSS agents in the field. Research into these mysterious individuals has uncovered little as to their origin or purpose, but it appears as though these individuals are universally powerful psychics with significant psionic abilities. As such, they are dangerous to say the least and it appears as though the OSS uses them as a new weapon in their operations.

Conspiracy theorists have a wide array of ideas as to the origins of these strange beings, ranging from engineered mutants to aliens working with the OSS. Whatever their true nature, these psychic advisors have reached a level of infamy along the lines of vampires and other mythical creatures.

Despite this 'popularity', encounters with these individuals are always unusual to say the least; though few remember ever meeting a psychic advisor very thoroughly and many cannot be sure that they were advisors at all. Instead, tales are told of strange run-ins with bald, pale humans bearing an intense stare through bizarre eyes and an air of the unknown. Most people dismiss these as fictional creations designed for drama. Few that actually encounter these mysterious individuals are ever the same afterwards.



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though few remember...***

THE JOSHUA COLONY

The Joshuas are a community of clones based upon the brother and sister pairing Oshi and Mikada Joshua (b. 2112 and 2114 respectively on Earth). They are concentrated in somewhat isolated communities scattered around the Known Galaxy: *Joshua Prime* orbits Earth's Moon; *Joshua Alpha* orbits a moon in the Washington system in the UUP; the third and final Joshua Colony orbits Athena in the Terra/Sol system and is known as *Joshua Beta*. Despite their seeming insularity, the Joshuas have had an impact far outside their tightly knit communities in both secular and religious contexts.

In the first rush to genetically modify humanity, the Joshuas stood out as a community that refused to alter their basic genetics. Perhaps vainly, Oshi and Mikada held themselves up as pristine examples of the human genetic code. This was part and parcel of their decision to create the first Joshua Colony using themselves as the sole templates. Their philosophical choice took on religious and scientific overtones as the Joshua community of cloned descendents began to take shape. The Joshuas described themselves as the last repository of the 'pure human genome'. The scientifically literate would hold this claim to be patently false, pointing to other well-documented examples of humanity that to this day have not undergone genetic modification. But the Joshua siblings' claims were, and remain today as, the loudest. As is so often the case, this admittedly spurious



Tri-vid image of Oshi and Mikada Joshua, approx 2140

assertion is held with absolute conviction by some, and perhaps more importantly as “common wisdom” by those who have only a passing interest in the subject. It is periodically reinforced by the Joshuas themselves through cunning public relation campaigns. For example: up through 2991, there have been no reported spontaneous mutations in any Joshua (not surprisingly considering they are all clones); the Joshuas hold up this fact to the public as a sign of their purity, and it is taken as gospel by the faithful.

Interestingly, many who carry other primary religious beliefs also support the Joshuas strongly. While the very existence of a community based repeatedly cloning two individuals has been viewed as eccentric if not downright extreme by a substantial portion of the population, it does lend itself a certain religious appeal for a certain segment of the public. Thus, there are Joshua adherents throughout much of the Known Galaxy who are not themselves Joshuas (and no Joshua ‘apostates’ have revealed themselves in the long history of this phenomenon). These adherents do not constitute a formal religion, but rather a certain mindset, or perhaps philosophy. They feel that preserving at least one repository of the pure human genome is important in the face of the ‘genetic catastrophe.’ For the Joshuas and their core believers, this catastrophe is an inevitability so long as man plays at being God and they rely upon that idea to continue being supported by the faithful.

In terms of their internal operation, the Joshuas have supported themselves rather handsomely from the beginning. The original Oshi and Mikada were both geniuses in the engineering field and were at the forefront of the robotic revolution. The enigmatic pair made billions off of their innovations in the design of industrial and domestic robots alike and invested wisely. To this day, Joshua Inc. is a leading robotic manufacturer whose designs are still considered both cutting edge and desirable. A Joshua Automaton (they consider ‘robots’ the creation of others) is highly a sought-after commodity in the marketplace, many are considered practically as works of art.

The Joshuas have not however limited themselves to robotic engineering in terms of their professional development. Like any savvy organization, diversification of interests is considered crucial to long-term viability. As just one noteworthy example, Individual Joshuas have traded on their good looks and sought out careers in various media positions such as like actors or journalists; Careers from which they might have a great deal of influence on public

Setting Update #1

opinion. In this capacity, a Joshua might be found in many parts of human space pursuing a career for decades before returning to a Joshua colony (which they all inevitably do). As a group, the

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Joshuas also support a wide variety of scientific expeditions throughout human space and their patronage is highly sought after in the scientific community because of the lavish endowments and significant autonomy that come with them.

A peculiarity of the Joshuas is their personal and private lives. In particular their sex lives. Or perhaps their stated lack thereof. As far as is known, Joshua clones never marry outsiders. Indeed, they do 'consort' with them 'after a fashion' either (despite lurid claims sometimes surfacing in tabloid vids). The Joshuas

insist that they only reproduce themselves through asexual reproduction: in other words, cloning. It is rumored that some governments and other organizations have placed a large bounty for the delivery of a Joshua/non-Joshua cross. A related urban legend says that Joshuas have sometimes gone missing, the victims of kidnapping by unknown persons or groups seeking a peek at their genetic code for nefarious purposes. Thus, many Joshuas wandering outside of their communities have learned to arm themselves and/or seek out heavy security to stay protected and maintain their purity. Most simply limit their exposure outside of their tight knit communities in the first place.

As widespread as they are, mysteries concerning the Joshua's abound; What is known for certain is that they are a controversial and enigmatic group that is enormously wealthy. They actively promote themselves as the last examples of unsullied humanity and have become a lightening rod for outside groups with similar mindsets and goals in "preserving" humanity from its own scientific excesses. They currently number somewhere around 120,000 individuals concentrated into the three isolated communities (Joshua Prime, Joshua Alpha and Joshua Beta) as well as a "handful" of perhaps several hundred scattered throughout the Known Galaxy.

STUFF

*In addition to places and organizations covered herein, **Beyond the Open Door** also presents a few interesting items for Players and Referees to use in their own games, be they Twilight Sector or amore generic Scifi Setting.*

***Cloning technology** is explored here, as well as **Deep Brain Stimulation**, which has replaced many conventional drugs and is quickly becoming a scourage among returning veterans of the Mutant War. Also discussed is how **poverty and homelessness** can be added to a scifi setting of such plenty. Gearwise, we discuss one of the most feared weapons of the battlefield (although less scary in smaller scales) the **Cyber Swarm**. Finally, we present two high-tech disguise technologies: the **Holonet** and **Fauxmask**.*

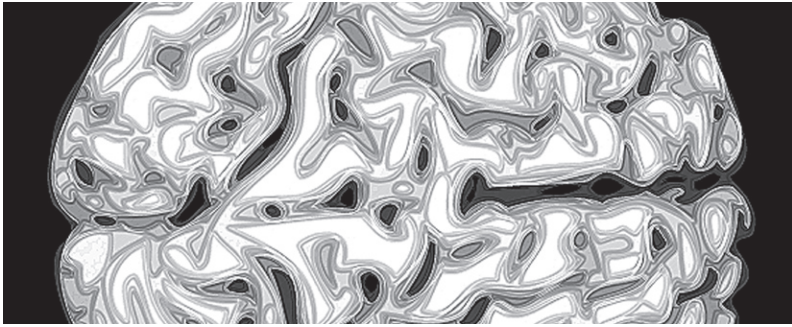


REAL CLONING VERSUS TRI-VID CLONING

***...they are definitely
not the armies of
exact duplicates of
the tri-vid.***

On the lower end of Tri-vid, Clones are all carbon copies of one another, but in reality that is not quite the case. While genetics plays a role in so much of who and what we are, there are certain developmental processes that take place as far back as the womb which have a dramatic effect as well.

The use of exo-wombs to carry the Clones does not ensure that the flow of hormones and other vital chemistry is steady, quite the contrary. Exo-Womb technology, while well-perfected on some levels is still considered more of an art than a science, and the delicate balance of chemistry in "the mix" is hardly uniform. Although a well-maintained exo-womb in the hands of an expert can be better than many a "natbirth" in terms of fetal development and health. Still, the Clones come out somewhere far closer in appearance and behavior than normal siblings, and yet they are definitely not the armies of exact duplicates of the tri-vid. Add to this the various paths which lives take when we leave the womb and the Joshuas are not cheap imitations of the original pair but a living and unique community which has merely taken a divergent road.



DEEP BRAIN STIMULATION

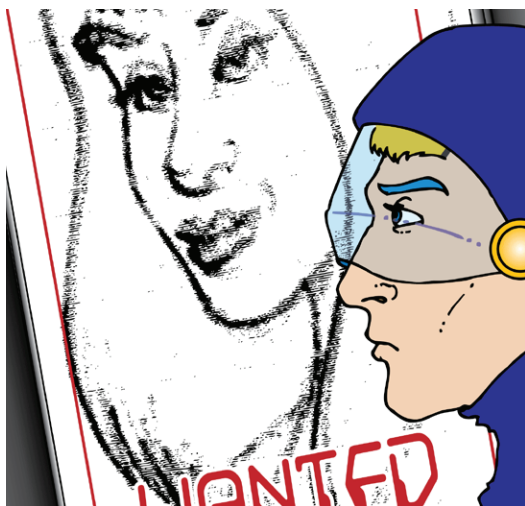
The practice of Deep Brain Stimulation involves two steps: First, place electrodes into the pleasure centers of the brain itself. Second, apply a steady flow of current to the electrodes. This creates an instant (and cheap, as well as highly addictive) high.

In the Twilight Sector Setting, addicts of Deep Brain Stimulation are referred to *Volt Junkies*. The practice is very commonplace, and has become the most popular means of suicide in the 30th Century. Cheap (once the electrodes are planted) and relatively easy (just plug in) as well as highly addictive generally adds up to problems for society.

Efforts by the stellar nations to ban or even limit this practice have proven fruitless. It is too easy to perform the simple procedure, and even when the actual electrodes are banned, it is too easy to simply make them with available materials. Most local governments have decided to take the other route: criminalizing addicts. This has not stemmed the tide. This is also why Rosen [an NPC in the Scenario] has a [criminal] record, not for violence, but his addiction.

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Thrill seekers are often easy targets because the similarity of the “high”. It is also a matter of some concern that so many returning Veterans of the Mutant War are turning into Volt Junkies. For some it was the horror of the conflict, for others the adrenaline rush. This has become one of the more disturbing statistics of the War, with thousands dying daily in a battle over the true hearts and minds of these shattered men and women.



BROTHER, CAN YOU SPARE A CREDSTICK?

The Clean Streets Initiative (see Insert) has been sweeping up the vagrant problem in Kansas City. The average Kancitian is torn over this issue however: there is a tension between the genuine desire for reform and the

severeness of this approach that makes many uneasy. The Tagging process alone is causing a groundswell of discontent among voters.

But where is this problem coming from in the first place?

Given that there is a significant Unemployment issue in the Setting (somewhere close to 30%) created by labor dislocation, where do vagrants and the need for shelters come from? With a dole that large, what's going on? There are two perfectly good answers to that:

- ▷ Metagame-wise, having a poor and downtrodden class of individuals is helpful to tell a story occasionally. Happy shiny futures have no need for crime and the sort of mayhem most adventures involve. Simply put: We Refs need 'em.
- ▷ There is a tension that is involved in the unemployment situation that cannot be resolved by more robotic labor and fancier tech. Actually, there is more than one, but they are related: the need for consumption to maintain an essentially capitalist model and the gap between the dole and what is needed to survive even in a hyperefficiency flat. The government provides just *below* what is needed. This forces people to look for work, even temporary work ("Oddjobbing"). It also means that sometimes they cannot make it and slip through the cracks.

Beyond this, there is also an issue with *eligibility*. Orions with criminal records are not eligible for full Dole benefits for a certain amount of time (based on the crime) and thus, they have nowhere else to turn.

City Ecology: Where to place the Undesirable...

The Water Storage and Treatment facility on Spring Street is one of hundreds of such facilities designed to allow the teeming millions of Kansas City to live without stressing the resources of Terra any more than they already have. The place was designed to be as self-contained as possible. The city then later built these vagrant shelter facilities in an out-of-the-way (and frankly undesirable) location where they already owned the land. Like the water treatment facility. Unfortunately, this makes shelters even worse to actually *live* in, but the city doesn't really mind. Why should they? The decision-makers don't have to live here, and neither do the Tax-paying Kancitians.



Shelters such as this one, the Spiring Street Shelter, have grown up in the crowded megacities as a place of housing for the large (and growing) population of indigent and undesirable citizens. Even in the future, it sucks to be poor and downtrodden.

THE CLEAN STREETS INITIATIVE:

There is a major vagrancy problem in megapoli like Kansas City, which has led different governmental units to scramble over how to deal with the issue. The Clean Streets Initiative, being pioneered now in Kansas City, is a controversial program, but nevertheless is at least a tentatively legitimate way for the city to ensure that the streets are 'clean' (protestors are having a field-day with that) and the shelters they have constructed to house vagrants (well, now former vagrants) are filled.

They do so using randomized vagrancy roundups to 'collect' up people on the streets of Kansas City. According to their own statistics, one of these 'roundups' is occurring every hour or so somewhere in the city of 43 million. These roundups have turned into riots in places, as massive numbers of Kansas City Police in riot gear force vagrants off of the streets and into special cargo vehicles. The cargo vehicles bring the Vagrants to the nearest designated shelter. There, waiting them are specially-empowered judges who conduct quick and dirty "sentence hearings" for vagrancy. If someone caught in one of these roundups has a job or place of residence, they have the opportunity to speak up and are released. Otherwise, the individual is declared officially to be guilty of 'vagrancy'; they are "snagged and tagged" in the parlance of the underclass. This involves consignment to a shelter and fitting with "deterrence measures" to ensure that they stay there or get charged with criminal contempt.

The Deterrence Measure used in the Clean Streets Initiative is a subcutaneous transponder, literally injected under the skin of the vagrant at the neck. At the time of the sentencing, any children that have been picked up are either entered into the care of the state (orphanages) or their parents may bring them into the shelter with them. If the latter is the case, the children are "snagged and tagged" as well. A parent swept up in the raid without their children present must also decide whether to allow the state to take them into their care or to have them sent to the shelter (after being "snagged and tagged") to stay with them. This is a particularly heartwrenching situation that has become the focus of much of the protests, especially the more "emotionally loaded" attacks.

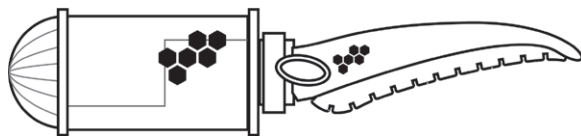
The transponders purpose is to determine when vagrants must be in their shelters, and when they are allowed to leave. It also issues a silent alarm to the authorities if they leave the premises during periods when they are not allowed to do so. For a half-hour before the designated time, the transponder lights to tell them their status (red

means they are restricted to the shelter, green they may move out of the shelter, yellow they are soon to be in the red). If vagrants are *not* on the premises of their shelter during their proscribed times (or “shift” as it is known among the residents) there are legal ramifications. The Sheltered individuals have the right to leave during off-shift hours, and are in fact encouraged to get jobs and become “valuable contributors to society” if possible. Businesses are even given a small tax advantage at the end of the year based on the number of such individuals they hire. The subcutaneous transponder isn’t particularly difficult to remove, but doing so renders the device inoperable and that causes its own problem (like a malicious destruction charge in addition to criminal contempt so that they are now felons).

The rationale is simple: If the vagrants were allowed to leave, many of them probably would, and the City would have the same problem it did before. By tagging them with subcutaneous transponders, the city is able to monitor them and ensure compliance. If the residents try to escape, the city knows about it and sends out a Truancy Division Squad (eventually, no rush really). While this system is generating a lot of controversy, especially in those Orion Confederation worlds without population pressures like Terra/Sol, the City government has received a provisional allowance from both the Confederal Governor and the Planetary Courts to allow this pilot program and see where it leads. They argue that the solution is in the hands of the vagrants and easy: As long as the individual gets a job and a place to live elsewhere, they are dropped from the rolls of the Shelter and the transponders come out. Thus it is not considered a ‘punishment’, but ‘deterrence’ for serial vagrants. The courts have been jammed with cases challenging the policy and the program is receiving a lot of political heat, but it has also led to a sharp decline in the number of crimes, at least in the areas where vagrants have been ‘swept up’ already. This has only made the controversy greater by adding fuel to the opposite side’s raging fire.

One of the problems with the program is that the Shelters have been constructed in out-of-the-way places that are not really where people would *want* to live in the first place. For example, the Spring Street Shelter is constructed underneath the Towers of one of the cities massive reservoir towers, where the water is treated and held for use in the city’s water distribution system. Its hot and wet beyond the problems that have been created by the residents themselves. This is not a “desirable” (or safe) location, but then the city owns the land and has the space and building, so it there was ultimately a significant cost savings (hey, efficiency in government right?).

CYBER SWARM



Shown, Above: a swarm canister mounted an APR "Spudmasher" used to heave the weighty tube a greater distance. It is not required for use. Also shown at extreme right is the universal warning symbol used for nanotech devices.

Walking down a London street you hear a distinctive clink, clink, clink sound behind you. Turning to look you hone in on the source of the sound: A metal tube approximately 6" long and a couple inches in diameter is maybe a yard away now rolling on the ferrocrete, a distinctive symbol is pulsing on the side of the tube. Just as you resister this, you hear a sharp pop as the "ball" end of the tube disintegrates. You run. Fast.

Nanotechnology was once touted as the next great technology in warfare. As with so many other fields, this was not really the case when it came to actual application of these devices. Humanity would be able to construct and program these tiny gnat sized or smaller robots to perform a host of functions, everything from cyber-fabrication to cellular surgery; so killing people would be a snap right? The reality however has so far failed to live up to the hype. Cyber swarms were first used during the Cyber War in 2582. Rushed into service, experts quickly realized that the projected gestalt "intelligence capabilities" of these devices had been grossly overestimated. Able to follow a few simple protocols (like correlate size with an attack function) they were unable to distinguish friend from foe. These early models self destruct commands either did not exist or often failed to initialize. The result was widespread destruction well beyond the intended targets. These were truly terror weapons and it took years for the last traces of the swarms from the Cyber War to be cleansed from Earth.

Today, cyber swarms perform many functions like fabrication of simple items like steel beams in space or clearing blocked arteries in a human patient. But the ability to think, or to adapt to unprogrammed situations, continues to elude engineers. It has been suggested that cyber swarms are a 'thousand year technology', meaning it may take a millennium or more to perfect their use. In the meantime though humanity uses these devices in a number of ways but most prominently through militarily applications. Many regard them as the "nuclear threat" of the 30th century and a spirit of *détente* pervades: don't use them lest you want them used on you.

Game mechanics: Cyber swarms are not treated like robots in game terms, although technically they are robots. They are given a number of endurance points based on swarm density, once these endurance points are reduced to zero the swarm is no longer effective and is ignored from a game play standpoint. They fly at a speed of 9m unless they are not attacking, at which time they move 18m until they envelop their target. The swarm damages everything it envelops automatically, and all damage is done first in the round *after* the swarm settles. That means that if a swarm settles on someone, they can start running at full speed (24+ effect of *Athletics*) and possibly get out of it. Of course, since it is not attacking, the swarm also moves at a faster rate.

1-ton Cyber Swarm

Power Supply: Solar Cell

Type: Flying

Endurance: 30 (1 d-ton)

Movement: 9/18 meters

Damage: 2d6

Skills: Fly 1, Recon 1

Degradation: Cyber swarms have significant Endurance stats (the swarm shown here is a small canister version; 1 dton of H² in size, thus two 5x5 foot squares). The most effective means of avoiding damage is to evacuate the area or get behind a sealed barrier. Unsealed armor is useless, sealed armor is considered unsealed after d3 rounds of exposure. As the size of the swarm is reduced, the damage they cause is also reduced. Use one-half (15 remaining END in the above example) and one-quarter (6 remaining END) as benchmarks, reducing damage appropriately (2d6 to d6 to d3 using the above example).

Defense: The best way to combat a cyber swarm is to use an EMP (Electro Magnetic Pulse). This will completely disrupt the swarm (as well as everything else unshielded). Shielding swarms themselves is impossible because of their size and the manner in which they operate. Concussion grenades, flame and similar broad area-effect weapons will cause full damage to the swarm. The least effective means is to use projectile weapons (which do a single point of damage per four rounds expended). Laser weapons do slightly better, burning out the motors of swarm members and ionizing the air. They do 2 points of damage per (single) hit. Also particularly effective is the low-tech expedient of simply swatting them: using a club does 1d6 END damage to a full strength Swarm (30 Endurance), this is reduced to a d3 when the Swarm's Endurance drops below 15 due to the increased spread (degradation cuts both ways). Blunt objects work better obviously than swords or other sharp objects, turning the blade to mash the swarm with the flat surface never seems to work as well as it ought (d3 damage, -2 DM to the roll).

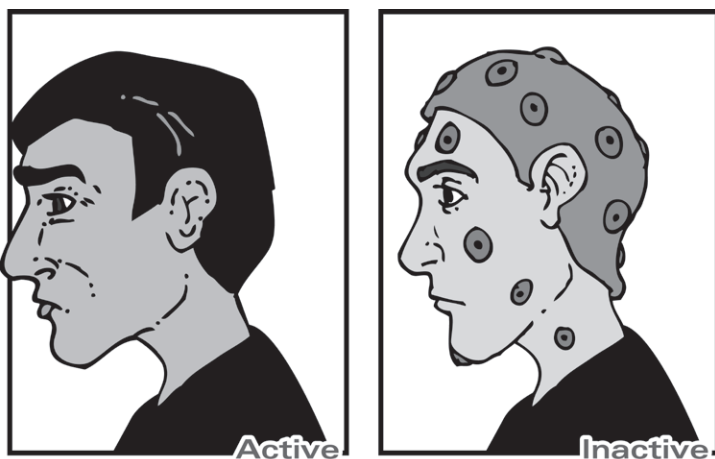
ADVANCED DISGUISE TECHNOLOGY

Disguise technology has expanded by leaps and bounds in the 30th Century, offering a wide variety of possibilities. Two of the most common and versatile elements of this technology are *Holonets* and *Fauxmasks*. Each has their own unique advantages and drawbacks.

Holonets

Holonets, which involve using holographic technology to build a face of light around their own but are relatively limited in use and subject to some problems with countermeasures .

This technology is highly illegal in most Stellar Nations (including the Orion Confederation), not because of any inherent danger, but because the only reason one might want to use the tech generally involves mayhem of some sort. Tiny sensors are placed in a “mist” solution that is applied to the face. These sensors, once they are covered over the area, capture changes in expression and movement. A “skullcap” is then placed over the hair and individual holoprojectors are fitted onto the face at key points to provide the image. The specialized computer that is built into the skullcap projects an image over the individual’s face that will easily fool any simple visual inspection. Beyond this however, for example a “pat down” or even deep densiometer scan, they are less useful. A similar form of technology can be used for voice adaptation, similar to the “squawk box” used by Uplifts for human speech.



A Holonet Demonstration

Game Mechanic: In terms of mechanics, this technology does not so much grant the disguise skill as it facilitates its use. It is also a good way to get past cursory exams without any checks at all. The emitter technology (which is shielded) goes through a continuous tug-of-war with detection technology, but emitters are usually on the losing side at the cutting edge. If confronted with efforts to jam, block or disrupt, compare the Tech Levels of the two, and use that as the DM. Treat this as a standard skill roll (i.e. looking for 8+ with the DM based on tech and any other situational modifiers the Referee feels is appropriate -- range, effectiveness etc.).

FauxMask

Fauxmask technology moulds pseudo-skin to the face and hands and can duplicate specific individuals. Fauxmasks first use compression technology to minimize the contours of the disguisers own face as much as possible. This is a key to their success, but also the drawbacks of this technique. A specialized device (approximately the size of a suitcase) builds layer upon layer of pseudo-skin based on a scan of the individual to be copied and requires a high resolution 3D scan or the individual to be copied to be present (although Fauxmasks are also useful for non-impersonation disguises which generally do not require compression). This technique achieves a more natural appearance, which can resist even limited tactile examination. Two drawbacks are a lack of comfort and a more limited range of disguises based on the basic contours of the face.

Game Mechanic: The discomfort due to the compression technology causes a -1 DM to all conscious actions after 10-60 minutes of use, -2 DM after 1-6 hours of use (maximum usage: 8 hours); these modifiers are based on a combination of pain and muscle tension in the face and hands cannot be controlled pharmaceutically because they have to remain flexible. The mask can be removed by the use of a special spray or by tearing it away in chunks (either of which eliminates the negative DM immediately, but the tearing does require an action). *Note: if the Fauxmask is not being used to duplicate a specific individual, the compression does not need to be a limiting factor; masks still dry out and crack over time and are only good for a maximum of 8 hours.* There is also a functional limitation: Some people simply cannot duplicate specific faces due to size or bone structure. The Referee should first determine if it is even feasible then, make a d6 check: On a 1-3; Yes, the face may be copied. On a 4: Sort of, close but not accurate, the mask can only fool people at a distance. On a 5-6: No, the face may not be copied.

COMING SOON!

THE STARFARER'S GAZETTE

Number 1, Twilight Volume

In this issue...

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TRICK OF THE LIGHT

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TWILIGHT SECTOR

SPACE PERA¹⁰

SETTING UPDATE #1

The following material is suitable not only for the **Twilight Sector Setting**, but also for any **Traveller** game involving high-density cities, clone technology, secret organizations and other common sci-fi themes.

Terra/Sol Games wanted to present ***Beyond the Open Door*** not only as a thrilling adventure tale, but also as a further glimpse into the setting of Twilight Sector. But not every game consumer is interested in scenarios. Thus, the setting and background material has been reformatted and presented here, stripped of the adventure-specific information.

To be clear: There is nothing “new” here for the purchaser of ***Beyond the Open Door***, although this format does represent an easier way to provide players with the handouts and other information from that book and still may be considered useful in that context.

If you bought ***Beyond the Open Door*** and want to have an easier way to provide the setting details to your players; or are a Referee who just isn’t interested in scenarios but would like the setting information that book contained; or a Player/Referee who just wants to get some ideas for their own game, or would like to know more about the Twilight Sector, this is definitely the product for you.



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