

Simming it Up!

... everything you knew, and more!

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Volume 1, Issue 2

From the Editor

It's difficult to believe that it has been almost a month since the first issue of "Simming It Up" was published. We received such wonderful responses from our readers and wish to expand those possibilities even further. In order for you to voice your opinions, ask questions, or even submit a guest article, SIU has launched our very own website. Check it out here: (www.sb254.com/siu). The purpose of this publication is to enhance the simming experience for everyone. We are here to advise as well as learn, so critiques of our articles are always wel-



come. Post your questions, confusions, or rants, and we will make every attempt to address them. If you feel inspired, by all means please submit a complete article. You may enjoy the

status of being a one-time guest writer or want to become permanent staff. When planning the launch of SIU our main goal was to link simmers from all experience levels together using information as a common thread. We hope that with the introduction of our new website we can move beyond the reader/editor relationship and become a strong interactive source enjoyed by all.

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A Rock and a Hard place...

Upon departure from their to short R&R the Stennis received a distress call that came from a planet on the Romulan / Federation border. It reported an outbreak of the virus that was decimating the population. The Stennis responded hoping to deliver the vaccine in time. However, upon arrival they realized their mistake. The planet showed no signs of life. It actually showed no signs of ever being inhabited. The trap was sprung. The experimental Federation fighters streaking out from their hiding spot and launching their attack. The Stennis

taken by surprise took some damage before being able to respond. Once they got moving and into Multi-Vector Assault Mode the Stennis began turning the tables. That was, of course, before the jaws they had been led into snapped shut. Three Romulan Ships de-cloaked and joined the attack. The situation quickly getting out of hand. The USS John C. Stennis was

now caught between a rock and a hard place, the battle slowly turning against them. If that wasn't bad enough sensors have just picked up a squadron of ships coming in from the Neutral Zone.....Do you have the stamina to see this mission to its end? If so, hang on.... its going to be a bumpy ride!



Tuesday, 9:00pm ET, AIM/AOL <http://www.sb254.com/sims/stennis>

Behind the title 'Host'

By: Joe Ferguson, CO-Editor

So it's 7:00 on a Wednesday afternoon and you are sitting at your computer, waiting in a chat room for your sim host to arrive and for your wonderful sim to get started; or you are waiting for the next email post from your host so you know what new shift in the story line to take advantage of... let's go behind the title of 'Host' or 'GM' and show you, in all its glory, what really happens before your host shows up at your live chat sim or sends that ever important s i m p o s t .

Anyone can lead a sim... not everyone can avoid leading it into the ground. So if you are a member of a stable and productive sim, be sure to thank your host(s) next time you see them, because whether you see it or not, they have put a lot of time into making the sim what it is.

As a simmer, very seldom do you get to observe any of the behind the scenes work that a

host does. Generally, in a months time, a host will (unless the sim is independent and not affiliated with a sim group) turn in a sim report, post sim ads around the net, assign incoming members, help new members adjust to the story of the sim, be active in their respective sim group (outside of their sim) all while maintaining the story and plot of your sim.

Many of you may have aspirations of being a sim host and many of you, at some point, will host a sim of your own. Before you get to the hot seat... please... please don't think that hosting is easy. As I said before, anyone can lead a sim, as well anyone can host a sim, but not everyone can meet ALL the demands that a host must accomplish .

I often hear simmers complain about their sim hosts. Maybe because they are demanding, or maybe they are not always around to field questions, or

maybe they do not respond to e-mails in a timely manner... no matter your displeasure with your sim host... always remember, they are where they are... to better the sim you participate in .

Hosts work hours on sims, before the first simmer ever shows up to a live chat sim, or before the first email or MB post is written. Hosts work hours on sims, before anyone ever knows the sim exists. Sims would not be anything without her members, but the members would have no sim to call their own if it weren't for t h e h o s t s .

As always, there are hosts who wish to obtain the status of host as a way to have 'power' or 'control'. I know, because that is what I wanted when I first became a host... many MANY years ago. But ya know what? A host on an ego trip... seldom has followers. If you are a sim-

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A host on an ego trip... seldom has followers.

Starbase Capricorn

Welcome to the Gamma Quadrant. Welcome to the future... 10 years into the future. Welcome to a time when the Federation's boundaries have now leapt into the Gamma Quadrant. The Federation foothold in the Gamma Quadrant, aided by the Bajorain wormhole, is that of Starbase Capricorn .



<http://www.sb254.com/sims/capricorn>

Starbase Capricorn has suffered heavy damage and casualties during a battle with an alien fleet. Now the crew must struggle to rebuild while upholding

Federation law in the surrounding territories. The Capricorn crew, aided by their Regellian allies, now know that trade lanes in the area are being threatened by those known to be slave traders. Therefore, the fight to rid the area of slavers has

begun. It will be a long, hard, dirty fight but somebody must do it, right? Why not Starbase Capricorn? Why not you? Are you up for the challenge?

... the crew must rebuild while upholding Federation Law... are you up for the challenge?

What are you Lurking at?

By: Zambia Fury, CO-Editor

...the Drive-by Lurker is only interested in a quick way to gather email addresses and potential recruits for their own sims.

There are about as many descriptions of “Lurkers” as there are GMs. If you run a game, no matter the genre or style, at some point you will have the opportunity to be introduced to the term “Lurker.” In order to define this idiom, let’s first propose the description of its counterpart, “The Simmer.” A simple characterization of a “Simmer” is someone who takes part in a sim on a regular basis, abides by the rules, and contributes to the storyline. A Lurker, on the other hand, just hangs out in a game, does not join in and does not add to the plot. Sometimes, Lurkers are welcomed by the GM in order to observe and make an educated decision if they wish to join. These are usually short-term lurkers and they soon make their preferences known by either interacting in character, or resigning. Most lurkers of this type are totally honest and only wish to find a game that interests them. Usually, these lurkers will respond to the GM’s emails regarding their status on the sim and are very forthcoming with questions and inquiries. There are e x c e p t i o n s

The Drive-By Lurker: This person answers all adds for sims of a particular genre and immediately joins. Usually exercising the “no mail” option if your group offers this. When directly sent a welcome letter or is pressed in any way....they resign. Later, all members on the sim are spammed with recruitment ads. Bummer....It seems that the Drive-by Lurker is only interested in a quick way to gather email addresses and

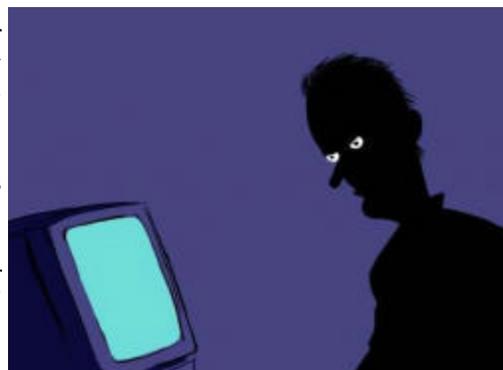
potential recruits for their own sims. They are on a hunting expedition, of sorts, and sometimes entice newbies with offers of prestige and power.

The Brain-Dead Lurker: The only reason for joining your group is to read or watch your storyline

unfold. They are burned out and need inspirations. This can be good; if they stay and play a while, but usually they only hang around long enough to regenerate their stores of plots and off they go taking your hard work with them. Sometimes, not even having the decency to resign, just incase they wish to return and steal some more. They also like to plagiarize character bios, graphics, and unique technology.

The “More the Merrier” Lurker: As above, this lurker joins your group and exercises the “no email” option. Not for any sinister plagiarism plans, but rather with good intentions to watch the game and see if they wish to join. They are completely oblivious as to how many sims they are actually supposed to be observing. They just keep signing up! At the time...it sounds like a good idea, however, soon, they totally forget where they were; and not being on any sort of email group, are not reminded of sim times or posts. If you contact them, they usually swear they have no clue who you are and block subsequent emails. Grrrrrrrr.

The “Gloom and Doom” Lurker: A lurker of a different color, these people actually do



read the posts or sit in on the live sim, however; they stay quiet, only to send out vicious complaints about how they were ignored. They nit-pick on details that have no bearing to the sim and make big deals out of nothing.

The Stalker Lurker: This person has taken a shine to either one of the GM’s of a game or a certain simmer and follow them to each game or group. They sign up for EVERY sim where they think “the object of their affection” plays, will play, or might show up as a guest. They only interact in sim when they can get close to their special person and leave as soon as they are “shut-down.” This type of constant rejection makes them a retaliation risk and sometimes disrupts the sim completely.

The “Fear of Commitment” Lurker: No matter how long this person has been on the sim they do the minimum, chiming in just in time to redeem themselves. They do not take an active role in a live sim or post more than a few lines to an email or board sim. If other players choose to interact with this Lurker they soon realize that there will be no response

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(HOST from page 2)

mer looking to be a host for power or control, you will definitely be disappointed in what you find. Hosts... real hosts, have to be the backbone of every sim group in existence, they have to be the most unappreciated among all sim groups, and they have to be the most dedicated members among all the sims in existence today. Very seldom do hosts get congratulated for their hard work. Hosting is a thankless job, where their only reward in a job well done is the enjoyment of the simmers for the game they manage... for the game they host... for the game they call a sim.

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www.sb254.com/siu

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and leave them alone. Basically, this kind of lurker just takes up space. The "Fear of Commitment Lurkers" are not to be confused with your timid simmers. Newbies tend to stand back and watch for a while before they get the gist of how to insert their character into the plot. You can usually coax these players into the game and all is well. Not so with the "Commitment Lurkers" ...no matter how much cajoling you do.... they refuse to take part.

The reasons a GM allows a Lurker to remain on their sim are varied. Most games require everyone to enroll with their group in some form or another. Lurker numbers can greatly enhance a sims roster or members list and give an obscured impression that the game is flourishing, when in fact there may

be only a small number of active participants. GM's are people too, and can get lazy ignoring timely inspections of their roster. In addition, there can be a group of simmers that have retired from the active part of the sim, but wish to continue following the storyline. Whatever the reasons, a GM should have guidelines in place to help them identify potential problems. Here are a few suggestions:

1. State clearly in your posted rules if Lurkers are welcome or not and for how long.
2. Use your moderator tools and do not approve an applicant unless you have a confirmed email address.
3. When a new simmer is added to your roster, send out a Welcome email with explicit instructions regarding the sim, and a request to acknowledge the receipt of the rules. If the simmer does not show up on the sim or in posts,

you may want to contact him again. After an allotted amount of time (2-weeks for example) and the simmer is still quiet; he is deleted.

4. Pay attention to the circumstances that a Lurker uses to finally join into the sim. If they are particularly pushy towards one person, you might need to talk with them and find out if this was intentional on both their parts.

5. Choose a day of the month, perhaps the first, fifteenth or last, to take the time to go thru your member list and delete people you do not recognize as part of your sim.

6. Ultimately, there is no way to guard against plagiarisms, however, if by chance you do discover all or part of your unique work somewhere, report it!

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USS Endeavour

... join the crew of the Endeavour as they take a never before seen look into Romulan Space..

Take a journey with the FSF's oldest running sim, USS Endeavour. Join the USS Endeavour beyond the shadows of Star Trek Nemesis.



<http://www.sb254.com/sims/endeavour>

The Romulan Empire is near collapse. The Remans have declared complete and total war against the Romulans. This has caused a great deal of unease among many other

rares; likewise they are very upset with the treatment of the Romulans. The Endeavour has been re-assigned to exploration the now open Romulan space. Unfortunately, the Endeavour will be

called many times to help defend Romulan colonies and make first contact with races that were never permitted to enter into Federation Space. Come, join the crew of the Endeavour as they take a never before seen look into Romulan space and aide the long-time enemies of the Federation in what could be the most vicious civil war in all history.

Quick Humor; Sev Trek



"You're suffering from a Vulcan Mind Meld, Doctor."

-- Kirk

"That green-blooded Son of a Bitch. It's his revenge for all those arguments he lost to me."

-- McCoy (Star Trek III)

Quick Humor; Sevylon 5



Canon vs. Non-Canon

By: Zambia Fury, CO-Editor



CANON: The dreaded “C” word! These five letters can strike fear into the hearts of happy-go-lucky role-players and be the cause of long hideous, never-ending debates. No, we are not talking about artillery, or jumping into the swimming pool with your arms wrapped around your knees yelling, “Bombs Away!” That’s C A N N O N ... t w o N ’ s . Canon is a rule or a special body of rules or principles generally established as valid and fundamental in a field or art or philosophy. So, if you are following this sequence of thought, NON-CANON should be the lack of rules, right? Unlikely! The debate on what is and what is not canon rages. Which sources should be acknowledged as canon? Officially sanctioned game guides and website resources are a dime a dozen, but who exactly deems these canon or non-canon? There have been a few plausible configurations of what is acceptable. The most logical way to determine whether or not something is “canonical” is generally determined by the medium in which it was released. If your sim genus originated from a TV show, then all episodes that have been shown are canon to your game. Movies, books, and magazines are usually honored in the same way. Mass marketed fantasy role-playing games depend on guides and rule-books for their canon stability. The problem is, when your genre is so popular that the franchise takes the liberty of licensing exaggerated, inaccurate legendary accounts, commentary or additional media interpretations of the author’s work. How do you divide a line between canon and non-canon when there are so many sources? Can it be possible to do so? Let’s see if we can sort t h i s o u t .

Canon refers to events, characters or technology, which is considered to have inarguable existence within your game genre. For example, the statement “*Superman’s powers are compromised by kryptonite.*” is universally acknowledged as true. Usually items that are considered canon come from the original source, while non-canon material comes from adaptations or unofficial resources. When a specific bunch of characters and the realm in which they exist, become licensed and mass marketed, it becomes difficult to recognize the original from which your sim was derived. That’s just the sanctioned media, and then there are all the unauthorized publications. An example of this would be Fan-Fiction. Fan-fic is never considered canon. However, just to confuse the issue, sometimes unofficial items or characterizations portrayed in Fan-fic or the like become so popular and influential that they are picked up and used by many different authors.....soon this detail surfaces in RPG arguments as being canon! Another huge source for RPG’s is secondary media, such as video games, LARP’s, and other mass media sponsored fantasy role-playing games. Oh boy, baffled yet? For sanity’s sake, lets stick to mainstream medium for our definitions, Movies, TV and literature .

If your RPG is based on a Television program, then all details and information derived from that show is canon. If a “big screen” rendition results from that TV show, then this too may be considered canonical. Usually, the only spin-off publications from this TV show that fall into the canon category are authorized technical manuals and timelines. Included occasionally,

are episode reviews if published by someone who was licensed by the studio to organize the main details for informational purposes only. Too many of these compendiums contain editorial type remarks and qualify as non-canon. The major consensus regarding novels is that everyone does not have access to each series of books or articles written, so in the essence of fairness these resources are also considered non-canon. Ahha! you say..... but my sim’s genre originated as a novel. RIGHT ON! As stated before, the rule of thumb is that the canonicity of a genre is directly related to its origin. In this case, a book or series of books is first consideration when debating the merits of information. All subsequent remarks of the original vehicle have to be considered on an individual basis in order to be deemed a s c a n o n .

If one wishes to get technical, you will probably find that the plot of your sim contains both canon and non-canon factors. The bulk of simming is based on a canon set of timelines, characters and technologies, however; thru inspirations and imaginations individual games flow into unfamiliar territories. After all, it would be nearly impossible, if not down right boring, to play a canon character in a canon game where the rules were explicitly canon. Might as well just read your lines and actions out of a book! There will always be headaches considering what canon or non-canon details can be allowed into your storyline. There are as many opinions on the matter as simmers and enviably someone will chime in to challenge your views. My suggestion is to politely smile at them and ask, Please, can’t we all just get along?” Then shoot them with your CANNON!

*The debate on
what is and what
is not canon
rages...*

Epsilon Station

*...try simming just
outside the
Federation's
jurisdiction...*

On every Federation Starship and Station there is always some type of communal lounge. A comfort zone, of sorts, that beckons everyone inside with the offer of companionship or solitude. No matter the inspiration, most find their way to this place at least once. Usually, it is located somewhere out of the way and decked out with huge transparent aluminum viewports so that each person can gaze wistfully out into the vastness of space, hoping to glimpse something familiar – something that would remind them of home. On Epsilon Station the large windows partitioned precariously between the huge structural bulkheads in the newly structural “Beyond the Moon Café” serve this purpose. It had been a grueling few months and all officers were encouraged to enjoy the festivities. Drinks were being offered at half the price, and the menu was loaded with delicacies from far away exotic worlds. Permanent relationships, as well as casual encounters were being sought out. Loaners had claimed their solitary tables in the shadows to sit stoically in observance. Elaborately outfitted officers and civilians shared stories with the more traditionally uniformed Command personnel. A few entertaining incidents passed between startled x-lovers who, to their dismay, had just found out



they were serving on the same Station. Something unsettling definitely happened when the Station's CO tossed a glass of Brandy in the direction of her XO. A few overindulging patrons would be spending the rest of their evening in the brig, sleeping it off so to speak! Just your average night on the promenade..... or was it?

Epsilon Station has successfully combined Starfleet Personnel and Civilians into an action packed simulation. Whether you are a career Starfleet officer or a bartender looking for temporary work, everyone shares in the fun! It is the year 2380, and Epsilon Station was dismantled, refitted and moved into orbit around an unexplored planet in the Beta Quadrant. This 50-year-old Goliath now serves as the

Federation's first strategic foothold in this sector. Tens of thousands of diverse species came to the Station seeking their fortunes. Immediately, enormous trade-goods and supply economies were established. Starfleet sent their brightest and best Officers to staff this station, along with a full compliment of Marines. Their mission: Command this isolated segment of space; assist, defend, control, and if necessary rescue all within their jurisdiction.

If you enjoy Star Trek, but would like to try simming just outside the Federation's jurisdiction, then Epsilon Station is where you need to set up shop. Of course, if you are a more traditional simmer just dust off your uniform and join the crew.

Either way, Epsilon Station welcomes you. Now is the time to join, our new plot has just begun!



Visit our website here: <http://www.sb254.com/sims/epsilonstation>

Character development; ways to expand your character

By: Joe Ferguson, CO-Editor

*... at all costs,
stay true to
your character...*

Character development is something a simmer comes across sometime between six months to a year after they first start simming. For younger simmers it might even take longer, to around 18 to 24 months. But when the time comes that developing your character crosses your mind, you have reached a point where you yourself would like to get to know the character you have been playing.

The first step in developing a character is to learn about your characters past. If you are creating a brand new character, then be detailed when writing your characters history; where he/she was born, where they grew up, family info, education, and anything else that will give you an idea of what makes your character tick. If you have been playing a character for a year or so, and have decided you want to really develop your character, then

think back to past sims or sim posts. Try to recall where your character might have said he or she was from, recall any family info, try to pull as many sources that you created from the sim itself. Write everything down, even if it is with pencil and paper, write it down. Then look it over and try to fill in the gaps with feasible information.

Once you have your characters history you will then have a better overall understanding of your character and can evaluate your character and learn how he or she actually thinks and how he or she will react to different situations. Now of course, we play our own characters, but in all respects, these characters become entities unto themselves.

Once you have an understanding of your character, the next step is to allow your fellow simmers to learn about your character. This is best done through writing personal logs

for your character, for non-trek sims you could have your character keep a diary of some sort... any way for you to write down your characters thoughts and history in a way that entertains your fellow simmers and still allows them to learn about your character.

Once you have a base for your character..., at all costs, stay true to your character and allow your character to evolve. New simmers sometimes jump into simming as if they were the real character, but really... you and your character go through simming side by side, without your character you have nothing to sim with and without you, your character is nothing.

Remember, get your characters history down, next evaluate your character and get to know your character, then allow your fellow simmers to learn about your character, and last... let your character evolve... most of all have fun SIMMING IT UP!

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PREVIEW our next issue:

October 2004

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