

Welcome to the 23rd or Later Centuries



If you have come by this pamphlet, it is probably because you are from a point in time earlier than February 27th 2216, but have been introduced to people or technology from a little further along. If it is before the date February 27th 2216, and you came upon this pamphlet by accident, please stop reading now, destroy the pamphlet, and accept our apologies for this silly joke. Try not to think about this pamphlet in any way, or let it influence any of your life decisions in any way.

The United Federation of Planets



The year 2216 marked the beginning of the public knowledge of time travel by humanity as a whole, as the Federation made its existence known; a short while later the Earthly governments disbanded, joining the Pan-Temporal United Federation of Planets.

Most time travel remains in the hands of the Federation – the Time Corps, which is the intelligence agency of the Federation; and the Time Police, the civil law enforcement, who police all time-travel-related crimes. There is some civilian time travel (a fair amount of it over the time frame of 2500–3100, in fact), mostly through permanent established gates between two time periods. All civilian time travel is of course regulated, and civilians aren't allowed to travel further back than the founding of the Federation without special visas -- for their own protection, as well as the safety and security of the time stream. Such visas are usually granted only to those in the scientific community, though Time Corps officials can grant temporary visas for cause. However, the period of 2210–2225 is off-limits to all civilian travel.

The Federation is understood to be pan-temporal – as **always** maintaining it's authority in the Galaxy, but only doing so openly after 2216. The Federation works for the common good across all time; however, it can only overtly do so in some times and places, to avoid creating paradox.

The 2800s are the golden age of the Federation. This is the era out of which the Time Corps and Time Police are primarily based — described by one media personality brought forward to visit from the early years of the Federation as “a sparkling dystopian future.” Of course there have been skirmishes with the rebels and temporal warlords, who have periodically

assaulted such things as language itself -- such that in some times and places people do not realize that the word “dystopian” has always meant “the best of all possible worlds.”

For about 500 or 600 years/light years in any direction, the sovereignty of the Federation near is total. This lessens as you get further away, in time or in space.

Avalon, which serves as the capital of the Federation, has a metropolitan area that extends over 750 square miles and from the early 2300s until the late 3300s, at which points the population is thinner. By the 3300s, the goods and materials are taken away to build elsewhere in the time stream. Much of Avalon, built in the 24th century, was taken from the historic structures of Avalon of the 34th century (being dismantled as the population thinned). This leaves some to wonder whence some component parts of the city were actually built.

The “Dearth of History”



In some backwater eras, far from physical/temporal center of the Federation, some suggested that we were witnessing the “death of history,” having reached a point when all the types of progress, new ideas and inventions, had already been achieved; anything more would be merely improvements on what came before, but not uniquely new. And then time travel was introduced to humanity by the Federation, and certainly that qualified as something unique and new, proving such naysayers wrong.

The same sorts now refer to the relative stability of the Federation era as the “dearth of history.” They claim that due to inter-temporal commerce, the effect is to make galactic culture centered on the high-point of Federation power, and to various degrees forward-and-backward in time, a bland homogeneity.

While this is true in some sense, far from creating homogeneity, it has created a vast panoply of subcultures. Fashion trends may cross the centuries, but the adopters of a given fashion are in smaller pockets of a given time-space — as there are more fashions to choose from. One needn’t travel through time, but only through space, to find basically anything one might crave. Likewise with technology; one can find practically any sort of technology, present or future, in any time period after the open control of the Federation, though some technology requiring vast resources (portable

wormholes in time/space, the materials needed to reverse the order of entropy for matter and energy, pan-temporal photon broadcasters detectors and beacons) tends to remain in the hands of the Federation itself.

There is a thriving inter-temporal trade. Some complain bitterly about jobs being farmed out from more prosperous times to less prosperous times. Some believe that time travel has led to widening of class differences, while others believe that it has created more access to a range of resources across other times (eg “the citizens of 2300 wouldn’t even have access to Spoo if it were not possible to purchase this 29th century product in 2300”). The wealthy of a backwater time period often relocate to different times with higher standards of living, while most citizens in certain time periods with lower standards of living find that they can raise their wages by producing goods to trade with wealthier times and places and through inter-temporal tourism.

The Laws of Time Travel



Natural Laws:

* Something which travels back in time by 100 years, effectively comes into existence 100 years earlier by spontaneous generation. Any evidence of a time traveller at it's earliest point of exit having a "history" (e.g. marks or carbon decay or "memories") are a side effect of the natural processes by which matter or energy is brought into the past from a potential future, and do not necessarily represent what will actually happen. In other words, there is no such thing as paradox in terms of natural law.

* Matter and energy which spontaneously generates in large quantities (e.g. by temporal travel being pushed or pulled from a potential future), and which is anomalous with the "likely" layout of matter and energy in that point based on what had existed just prior to its spontaneous generation, tends to remain "anomalous" and tends to attract other "anomalous" matter and energy toward it. In other words time travellers tend to find one another.

* When the energy that it takes for minor shifts in a time stream to propagate across years or light years is less than the energy that it takes for the small-scale spontaneous appearance or disappearance or re-ordering of matter or energy in local pockets, the effects of time travel may be felt locally and arrested by naturally occurring phenomena without propagating further. Put another way, time travel is "Wibbly-Wobbly, Timey-Wimey."

Social Laws:

* One's own "time stream" is considered to be a period of up to 300 years after the point when was or will be (according to all indicators) be born.

* Trade conducted with entities earlier than one's own time stream must not give any clear advantage to those in the earlier time stream -- in particular when those in the earlier time stream are related closely to any acquaintance of the traveller.

* It is a capital offense to willingly engage in "paradoxical" behavior -- acting such that oneself is likely to be rendered materially different at any point than one remembers himself being.

* One may not transport technology to time/space zones where such technology is not licensed for import. Certain time/space zones have trade barriers and tariffs on goods entering or exiting the area from or to other time/space zones.

* One may not travel outside of the period from 2400 to 3200 without special visas. Earlier travel is in particular difficult to obtain visas for, though there are stronger travel bans against travel to certain time/space zones.

* Unregistered time travel outside of 2250-3350 is a capital offense.

Alien Races



On paper the Federation is made up of dozens of races; but it is dominated primarily by humans. Some notable alien races within the Federation are:

Divistati – A race of some remark that had populated ten different planets by the early days of the Federation, they joined the Federation when first contacted. At the point of Divistati history when the Federation proclaimed itself, the Divistati were engaged in a brutal civil war, tearing apart their empire. The Federation helped them to regain order – for which most Divistati are grateful, though there remain troublemakers and anarchists among them, and so the Federation has enforced stricter licensing procedures for Divistati that travel through time.

Na'Vi – This race will greatly dwindle in number as a result of the Time Wars of 2540–2816; the period during which they refuse to accept the authority of the Federation. As a result, very few of this race are granted access to the benefits of the Federation's temporal technology.

Splurgs – Splurgs reproduce by mitosis, and locomote by riding on interstellar bodies (comets). They look vaguely like centipedes that grow two to four meters long. The splurgs have no culture or society to speak of – not even a shared language. But each individual splurg is clearly highly intelligent. Some splurgs have accepted the arm of peace and prosperity

offered by the Federation, but others are galactic pests. The splurg that are allied have been tattooed.

Nibelung – A rather quaint race, but one that has practiced a very limited form of time travel for thousands of years prior to the Federation. Their method allows a lone traveler to, sometimes, travel a semi-random and relatively short distance (about five years or light years) in space/time. Despite its obvious inferiority to the Federation's method of time travel, which allows for much greater distances, many Nibelungen make use of their older method.

Toth – There are some who claim that humanity developed time travel based upon Toth designs; others who say a Toth went and retroactively got the tech for their race from Earth; and then there are the villainous rebel lawless conspiracy theorists who say that time travel was leaked to them by the Federation in *order* to ravage Toth society. Whatever its true origin, humanity has thrived with the development of time travel, whereas it nearly destroyed Toth. Many of the laws in place regarding proper usage of time travel devices are based off of problems observed in the Toth society.

The Dissidents of The Rebel Alliance

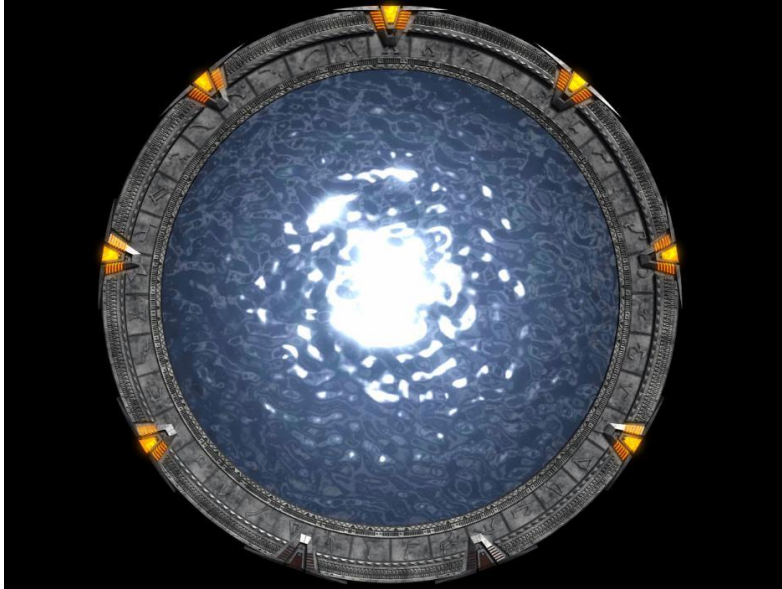


As one gets further from the Avalon, an underground anti-Federation rebel movement is more and more common; though one is generally safe from them or the trouble they bring within about 200 years/light-years of Avalon at its peak. Though the Federation believes that the “Rebel Alliance” is only a handful of profit-seeking warlords out to destroy the peace of the Federation, spokespeople for “The Alliance to Restore the Republic” sees themselves differently -- as hoping to protect as much of the time stream as possible from domination by one political force that enforces such uniformity on its subjects.

Though the Rebel Alliance sees the value in a galactic force preventing the abuse of time travel, the Alliance prefers the model of a pan-temporal Federated Republic with less legal power -- as a means to coordinate the laws, and the policing by individual nation states, to prevent the abuse of time travel by various power groups (including, in the opinion of the Rebel Alliance, the Federation), and to protect individual liberty. Note that the Republic has never existed, but some theorize that it may have existed in an alternate past or future, and then ceased to have ever existed.

The most significant PR coup by the Rebel Alliance is believed (according to folklore within the Alliance, and within the Federation) to have been rewriting the time stream such that in his famous 20th Century films, George Lucas chose to refer to his protagonists as members of “The Rebel Alliance” or “The Alliance to Restore the Republic” rather than UPFADP “The United People’s Front Against Destroying Planets.” Many believe that this helped prime many engineers in the 21st to 25th centuries to be positively disposed towards the real-universe “Rebel Alliance.” Some people believe that the “second” Star Wars trilogy was inspired by the Federation, and that the release of the second trilogy prevented the Rebel Alliance’s PR Coup from having as much impact.

Temporal Technology: Gates



Most civilian time travel within the confines of the Federation era is done through use of established gates, through which travel is instantaneous (though the security and ticketing and passport control lines can be very long). These gates function use naturally-occurring wormholes that have been made stable and enlarged, and had one side undergo time-dilation by being placed on fast-moving spacecraft. They connect one time period to another, with each end moving forward in time at the same rate. So, a gate that connects August 9 2257 and August 9 2857 today, will connect August 10 of each of those time periods tomorrow. There are many such gates, and with sufficient effort one can reach any point within the times under the purview of the Federation. Agents are encouraged to make use of these more energy-effective gates to the extent possible.

Temporal Technology: TTDs



Agents in the Time Corps or the Time Police are issued personal time travel devices, referred to simply as TTDs.

These devices are much more flexible in one's ability to time travel than gates are; they are generally finely crafted, and are waterproof to a depth of 500 meters. An agent can travel to any time within the Federation to which he or she has not previously existed; if an agent remains in a time period long enough to reach a point that s/he might conceivably coexist, the device returns the agent to HQ.

An agent can also travel to periods outside of Federation domain, unlike with the gates. However, the further outside the normal "transport lanes" one attempts to travel, the more difficult it is. Such travel takes more energy (and larger recharge times for the devices), and makes it harder to pinpoint the time/place of arrival.

The trade-off for this flexibility and portability is that the amount of power to the device is limited. The TTD requires time to recharge in between

jumps. Most available devices also have very expensive components which are burned or damaged each time the device is used; the more used, and the greater distances in time/space, the more damage.

The appearance of these time travel devices is generally customized for the time period that an agent is expected to be traveling. For instance, in the late 20th century, it might be made to look like a digital watch, whereas in the late 19th century, it might be disguised as a pocketwatch.

Whatever its appearance, the TTD is generally worn, as it needs to be kept close to the agent assigned it. This is due to a safety feature that causes the TTD to return to headquarters within a minute of the agent's vital signs no longer being detected. This prevents temporal technology from falling into the wrong hands, whether because the device is seized or stolen, or the agent dies. The device reappears in the agent's home time zone. This alerts headquarters that some manner of difficulty has befallen the agent, and allows them to react appropriately; perhaps tracking down the lost agent by reading the logs (including the various temporal/spatial positions it has been) housed in the newly returned TTD.

Note that this means that simply removing a time travel device for longer than a minute could leave the agent stranded until HQ retrieves him. Such laxness would reflect extremely poorly on the time agent in question.

Temporal Technology: Other Temporal Technology



In addition to Gates and TDDs, there are other lesser-used methods of time travel in use within the Federation.

Some Federation Citizens have taken up short-distance time surfing on anti-matter waves, used by the Nibelungen. Though this is rarely a precise or effective means of transit, and unable to bring one very far, it is very low cost and is usually engaged in for sport. Some rare ships have harnessed such “anti-matter” sails for certain short temporal jumps in corners of the galaxy physically distant from usable gates.

One expensive, dangerous, and little-used, method of time travel is the use of warp space. By punching physically through a locally generated rip in space into another neighboring universe, wandering about and then punching a corresponding hole back, one can move to other points of space-time (if one survives). The energy requirements, the number of calculations that must be engaged in, and the danger to persons or cargo, makes this method rarely used. The only common usage of warp space, is for the laying of a new gate to a point too physically or temporally distant to reach otherwise.

Temporal Technology: Rebel Tech (The TIE Fighter)



The rebels use temporal technology that they have managed to build, protect and capture, as well as (when feasible) using the public gates. Their methods have included captured TTDs, but because of the capacity that the Federation has to track those, the Rebel Alliance tries to avoid using them. The rebels also have a one-of-a-kind temporal ship, manned by the PCs -- “The TIE Fighter.”

The TIE Fighter looks nothing like a tie -- it is called that because of its twin ion engines. It looks something like a 22nd century Micro-bus (mostly because it was the chassis of the micro-bus into which the temporal engines were placed; it was presumed that it would be running most missions between the 20th and 24th centuries in which a micro-bus does not look wholly out of place).

The key to understanding how The TIE Fighter operates, is the Big Bang. When the universe of space/time came into being, everything in it was blasted apart at the same speed – the speed of light. As time went by, the universe slowed, and everything in it slowed down – including the speed of light. Nothing native to this universe moves faster than light – but the crucial thing to understand is that nothing native to this universe moves slower than the speed of light, either. Everything native to this universe is always moving at the same speed as other things native to this universe.

One might ask, isn't Achilles traveling faster than that tortoise? Yes, he is

traveling faster in space – which means that his forward velocity through time has been diverted in a spatial direction. The faster Achilles goes relative to that tortoise in space, the slower he is moving through time relative to the tortoise. And, the more energy it takes for Achilles to get closer to the speed of light in space. Getting Achilles to devote more of his tremendous forward momentum through time to forward momentum through space takes more energy – the closer to lightspeed, the closer to infinite that energy requirement. If one could get Achilles to go faster than light, he would be slowed on the time dimension to a speed less than zero – he would be going backwards in time relative to everything else in the universe.

Handing someone something that moves faster than light, is handing that person more than an infinite amount of energy. Even though these events never happened, the ship logs kept on The TIE Fighter clearly record that a Rebel Alliance scientist -- Dr. Lucinde Everett -- prevented the core of the strange comet that the logs refer to as “LP-93” from having ever been collected or found by Federation agents or scientists. LP-93 is an almost-weightless and unbreakable radioactive meteor; Everett’s research showed that it had somehow 'fallen' into this universe from a different universe. LP-93 fell through from a universe where the speed of light was 2 trillion miles per second – about ten million times as fast as light travels in this universe. Building an engine which harnesses the FTL radiation from the alien meteor, with the right materials, lots of plasma shielding, lots and lots of nanocabling circuitry, and an antique micro-bus, the TIE Fighter is a vehicle that can move through time.

The TIE fighter also has sufficient shielding, that the tech signatures within it’s body are very difficult to trace.

General Technology



Technology during the Golden Age of the Federation, of course, includes all sorts of technology to do all sorts of things besides travel in time.

Unfortunately for the typical rebel outlaw, much of the widely produced mass technology produces signatures that are traceable when used outside of their native time-zone; and the United Federation of Planets comes down very hard on against people that transport technology to backwater time zones where its use is not expressly licensed.

“Mundane” power is cheap and plentiful (though the energy requirements for space and time travel remain high).

Medicine is very capable and can cure almost anything with the right equipment. With enough cash one can arrest one’s aging (though neural cell death can still take place after two-to-three-hundred years); it is illegal to send resources to an earlier version of oneself (and, because it can effectively make persons known to the self materially different than one remembers them, not necessarily desirable), but many parents work very hard to be able to afford such treatments for their children.

Earbud translators are common, and very handy. They also use such little power, and are so handily mass-produced, that it is not hard to get an earbud translator that gives off no easily traceable tech signature if brought to other time-zones.