

USF PADD

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

- in Star Trek
- in the United Space Federation

"Making the Most of USF
Website Functions"

Stacey Cook

aka Commander "Bones"

a glimpse into the life of the simmer whose media
career keeps her moving at warp speed

From the Editor

Greetings!

It has been said that "intelligence is the art of good guesswork" and that "artificial intelligence is no match for natural stupidity". Whether or not you subscribe to either opinion is up to you, I found both quotes worth a chuckle.

In all seriousness now, artificial intelligence has been pondered on, written about, and even studied and tested for ages. Just think about the artificial beings that appear in Greek mythology, the boom of artificial characters in fiction in the 19th and 20th centuries, and finally the development of the field of AI research in the mid-1900s. Humans seem to be fascinated with creating intelligent beings - aside from using natural means of procreation that is. (Humans are fascinated with that process, too, just for much different reasons.)

In this month's *PADD* we are exploring artificial intelligence in Star Trek lore and USF history, since it seems hard to get around talking about Sci-Fi without considering supercomputers and androids of all sorts. We also have an interview with the player of Adam Android, a USF character, and one with M-5, the USF webchat bot. There's even a news item that touches on AI matters.

On top of that, we feature a close-up look at some USF website function that you might have not made use of yet or to the fullest extent, an interview with Commander "Bones" from the *USS Excelsior* on her real life work, and a new part of Mr. McMillian's Fan Fiction.

While we don't have a lot of different contributors this month, those that helped out did so on very short notice because I didn't make up my mind on what I would have in this issue until right at the beginning of the month. Many thanks to those that jumped in and wrote such excellent articles in a short time. You guys are awesome!

To the rest of you I say: "ENJOY!!"

Lorí

Wanted: Ads

Consider advertising for your Sim on the *USF PADD*

All USF hosts are warmly invited to submit
GRAPHIC or TEXT ADS
to be displayed in various sections of this magazine.

For more information email:
usfpadd@sector001.com

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On the cover: Silhouettes of Artificial Intelligence entities, by Captain Loriaarra

Briefings



Memorable Quotes

"Working with Kate Mulgrew and Tim Russ was good fun. I only regret not having had the opportunity to work with the other members of that talented cast."

- George Takei, reflecting on his appearance in *Voyager*: "Repression"

"Our neural pathways have become accustomed to your sensory input patterns."

- Will Riker to Data, reiterating the android's definition of friendship, *TNG*: "Time's Arrow"
-

Intelligence Report

by Lieutenant J.G. Knomik Brott and First Lieutenant Leyva Torosi

The Space Seed Grows

Ever wondered what happened to Khan Noonian Singh and his followers after they were marooned on Ceti Alpha V by Kirk? Well, if you missed the four individual issues of the comic, "*Star Trek Khan: Ruling in Hell*" you're in luck because IDW Publishing has taken all four of the issues -- which fill in the blanks after the episode *Space Seed* and before the events in *The Wrath of Khan* -- and combined them into a new graphic novel.

Visit your local comic book retailer, or get more information here:

- <http://startrek.com/article/khan-is-backundefined-as-a-graphic-novel>

Forge New Wars and New Victories

Gameforge's *Star Trek Infinite Space*, a browser based game set during DSN's Dominion War is due to debut this summer. In order to get the look and feel right, Gameforge went right to the source, you might say, with the hiring of Mike and Denise Okuda. TrekMovie.com interviews the couple and picks their brains regarding their work on the game and what can be expected from it.

Get the full story here:

- <http://trekmovie.com/2011/04/12/star-trek-infinite-space-qa-with-mike-denise-okuda/>

"I Want My Own Alcove"

StarTrek.com caught up with Jeri Ryan, the unforgettable Seven of Nine from Voyager. She talks about her time as Seven and her current projects.

Give this two-parter a look:

- <http://startrek.com/article/catching-up-with-voyagers-jeri-ryan-part-1>
- <http://startrek.com/article/catching-up-with-voyagers-jeri-ryan-part-2>

Netflix "Makes it So"

Starting in July for all except *DS9* in October, Netflix will let you stream *Star Trek* to your devices and televisions. They will have them available for two years with an option to extend for another two.

Stream the article to your browser now:

- <http://www.tekgoblin.com/2011/04/08/all-star-trek-coming-to-netflix-make-it-so/>

Year 3000 Series Pitch Thwarted by Year 2233

Bryan Singer, director of the *X-Men* film "Incarnations", along with two other friends asked the question of creating a new *Star Trek* series as *Star Trek: Enterprise* ended, but a new threat emerged, all but halting the idea.

Read more of the series that could have been:

- <http://trekmovie.com/2011/04/14/exclusive-the-true-story-behind-the-bryan-singer-pitch-of-star-trek-federation/>

Event Calendar

(upcoming Star Trek and Star Trek related conventions)

May 6-8, 2011 – Lepre-Con 37, Temple, Arizona, USA

June 10-12, 2011 – Official Star Trek Con, Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada

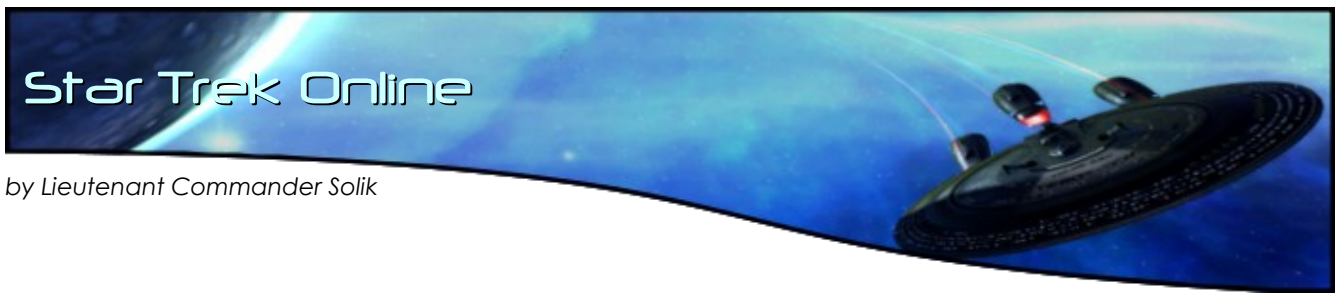
June 24-26, 2011 – Official Star Trek Con, Parsippany, New Jersey, USA

July 15-17, 2011 – Official Star Trek Con, Boston, Massachusetts, USA

July 29-31, 2011 – Official Star Trek Con, Nashville, Tennessee, USA

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by Lieutenant Commander Solik

Got a few big things this month, coming from Dan Stahl and the STO team over at Cryptic Studios! The most anticipated release since its inception on the Tribble test server in early November 2010... The user-generated content (UGC) tool, the Foundry! Stahl answers the community's questions in the April edition of "Ask Cryptic" and tells of upcoming projects in the April Engineering Report.

Meanwhile, your tailor can outfit you in a uniform belonging to your favorite Bajoran Colonel and her Changeling Security Chief, while the dock-master can get you a 150-year-old science vessel. Read on...



(image used from www.StarTrekOnline.com)

The single tool that allows STO players to create their own missions for their friends and fellow players, the Foundry is perhaps one of the most popular elements of the game. Released on March 30th, I imagine the game's servers were flooded with players wanting to recreate the missions they'd created on Tribble (test server). Cryptic announced that missions created on Tribble weren't able to be transferred because the test server uses a different code than the live server (Holodeck). Despite the disappointing setback, players haven't stopped creating missions. In fact, I believe they're even more determined to share their masterpieces.

From shuttles to star cruisers... Cardassians to Klingons... Almost everything is thrown into the library of items for you to create your own mission. Want to fight Klingons, Romulans, Cardassians and Borg all on one planet? Go for it! The Foundry is for whatever your creativity can conjure up.

The user interface can be a bit confusing, and not everything is fully explained in tooltips, so take your time with your mission. Learn more about the Foundry, and even watch a few featured tutorial videos from our very own Captain Havraha at <http://www.startrekonline.com/foundry>! Shoot me an email at Solik@sector001.com and let me know about your mission so everyone in USF can experience it!

Current Foundry Missions published by USF Members

Federation Missions

- “To Helna and Back”
 - **Description:** A missing officer ... a dead star system ... and a dire threat! Will saving one of your own be the only hope for saving the Federation? Ensign Helna, a valued crew member, has been abducted while on shore leave! How far will you go to rescue one of your own?
 - **Author:** Captain Havraha cha'AAnikh (in-game handle: @Havraha)
 - **Current Average Rating:** 4.1/5

Klingon Missions

- “Time the Enemy”
 - **Description:** On a routine mission to expand the Klingon Empire's influence, how will your crew perform when it stumbles upon a new threat?
 - **Author:** Captain Havraha cha'AAnikh (in-game handle: @Havraha)
 - **Current Average Rating:** 4/5

Your playing the mission can help raise those ratings! What are you waiting for?!

Ask and Ye Shall Receive

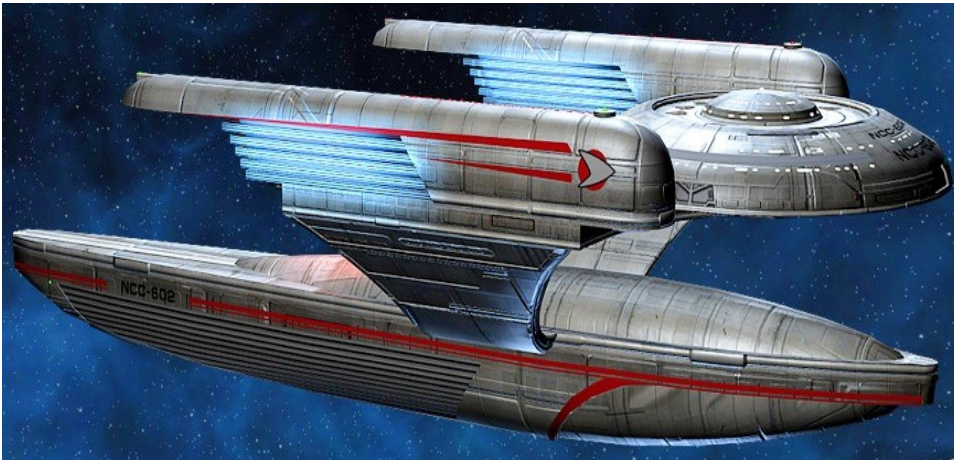
Dan Stahl, the Executive Producer of Star Trek Online, takes some time each month to sit down and respond to questions posted by the vast community of players. Obviously, he can't answer all the questions from over 500 posts, but he did manage to answer 41 questions. Stahl discusses new ships, new weapons and new explorable locations in the April edition of “[Ask Cryptic](#)”.

In addition to “Ask Cryptic”, Stahl took the time to publish an Engineering Report. “What's that?” Quite simply, it's a look into what Stahl and the STO team have planned for imminent release and future projects. (More detailed info about Engineering Reports [here](#).) In this most recent edition, he talks about the release of the Foundry, new products, reworking mission content, in-game voice chat in the works, the new Gorn look and more! See what Cryptic has up their sleeves [here](#)!

The Pride of German Rocketry

Seen across *Star Trek* as the “redshirt of starships,” the Oberth-class makes its appearance in Star Trek Online as a Tier 1 Science Vessel, optimized for Lieutenant-rank players. Purchasable for 800 Atari tokens (\$10 USD), this vessel named for famed German physicist Hermann Oberth comes with a unique starship console, Enhanced Plasma Manifold, which can be outfitted into any console slot on your starship. The EPM grants you a new space ability, which when clicked, increases auxiliary and shield power levels for 20 seconds and repairs disabled auxiliary and shield subsystems. Unlike the Multi-Vector Assault Module on the Prometheus-class, the EPM can be transferred to any starship commanded by your character. Also, like all other Science Vessels in STO, the Oberth-class is equipped with the passive ability “Sensor Analysis,” which provides a stacking buff to the player's weapons system as long as the player is targeting one enemy.

Whether you're surveying Genesis planets, or your crew is infected by polywater, I recommend this ship if you're just starting out with a Science character in STO.



More information:

- [STO C-store](#)
- [STO Wiki entry](#)

Defend Your Home from the Spoonheads!

Now, your Bajoran character can proudly show their heritage in the original Bajoran Militia uniform seen on *Deep Space 9*! For just 240 Atari tokens (\$3 USD), you can buy different variants of the jackets, pants and boots, along with the Bajoran combadge for calling in reinforcements when you're under heavy fire from the blasted Cardies.



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Watching the Universe

by Captain Loriaarra

Magnetic Allure

A strong geomagnetic storm that spilled a kaleidoscope of lights across the northern hemisphere beyond the article circle, has given watchers an opportunity to capture some breathtaking pictures.

Let yourself be awed:

- http://www.nasa.gov/mission_pages/sunearth/news/News041211-geostorm.html

Hydrofracking

...or "hydraulic fracturing" is a process used to tap into shale-gas resources. While drilling for this previously neglected energy source has boomed, controversies have risen along with it. Complaints range from air pollution and waste water contamination to gas spills. Where some praise it for bringing them wealth and blessing the economy, others lament the destruction of their property and the ruin of their lives. So, what's the deal? Could shale gas power the world? And if so, at what cost?

Read more:

- <http://www.time.com/time/health/article/0,8599,2062331,00.html>

Wising Up

Since December 2009, the W.I.S.E. satellite telescope has looked up to the universe and captured unique images using infrared light. This method required the cameras to be kept extremely cold with frozen hydrogen and would allow only a limited time of usefulness for the telescope. This month, its 13 month mission was completed.

See what view of the universe W.I.S.E. has provided:

- <http://www.ksl.com/?nid=148&sid=15149594>

Silent Boom

Do cosmic strings of gas really come from sonic booms? Surely there is no sound in the vacuum of space, but a study by the European Space Agency suggests that networks of dense filaments of gas in spacial clouds may result from such interstellar sonic booms.

For a speedy enlightenment read:

- http://www.nasa.gov/mission_pages/herschel/herschel20110413.html

The Singularity - 2045

Will humans achieve immortality by the year 2045 as Raymond Kurzweil believes? What exactly does he mean with "immortality"? What does this all have to do with ultra-intelligent machines? Are we approaching the time of true artificial intelligence?

Take a closer look at Kurzweil's thoughts:

- <http://www.time.com/time/health/article/0,8599,2048138,00.html>

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Looking for Dog Lovers to Help out at the Vegas Convention

Fellow simmer needs help.
We own the StarFleet Poodles and are looking for poodle wranglers for the con.

Requirements:

- You can work for us for one day.
- You must like to have your picture taken (we get that a lot!)

Assignment:

- You will be handed the keys (leash) for one poodle. It will be your job to potty and water that one child.
- We will have snacks for them. (Data, Tasha and Will Riker are good dogs.)

Perks:

- We will provide lunch for you!
- You will get to meet the kids' friends!
- Working for us will be fun!

For details, email: starfleetpoodles@aol.com



USF Features

"Making the Most of USF Website Functions"

Part I – The My Sims Page

and related functions

by Captain Loria

As the USF's webmaster, Vice Admiral Anders, said himself in an interview in the November 2010 issue of this magazine, among new Core pages added in recent years the "My Sims page is easily the biggest addition and probably the most important -- centralizing the information for each sim in one easy to access location." This page lists a variety of information from all over the Core for each individual sim under its name.

Have you ever taken a good look at what all can be gleaned from the My Sims page? Why not click [HERE](#) and follow along as I explain.

Crew Listing Section

At first glance this section might look very much like a roster, but there is a very important difference. The My Sims crew list only lists those characters that have been created on the USF Core and are linked to a sim, while a roster (usually sent out and posted by the hosts) may contain other characters, like NPCs, for which their players might not have created a Core character.

From that perspective, the My Sims page could be considered slightly "incomplete", though as a true crew members list (those assigned to the sim with a Core account), it is always as accurate as the host team keeps it.

USS Ares

Rating: 16.5k

Chief: Don Tait (R) (Former Member) 2k 1.6k

Website: [USS Ares](#) and [USS Ares II](#)

Commanding Officer: Scott Armstrong (R)

Executive Officer: Don Tait (R)

First Top: Scott Stevens

USS Ares Crew Listing

	Title, Name, Position	Screen Name	Email
●●	Commanding Officer, Captain Scott Armstrong Assistant Chief Engineer	A Armstrong	ibuchung@comcast.com
●●	Executive Officer, Lieutenant Commander James Tait Engineer	J Tait	don.tait@comcast.com
●●●	Chief Engineer, Scott Stevens Executive Officer	CS Stevens	csstevens@comcast.com
●	Chief Engineer, Scott Stevens Engineer	SC Stevens	quaint@gmx.liu.com
●	Chief Medical Officer, Harold Blackwell Medical Officer	Harold Blackwell	haroldblackwell@comcast.com
●	Chief Medical Officer, Harold Blackwell Engineer	Harold Blackwell	scmccord@comcast.com
●●	Chief Medical Officer, Harold Blackwell Assistant Chief of Security and Medical	Harold Blackwell	hblackwell@comcast.com
●	Chief Medical Officer, Harold Blackwell Chief of Operations & Safety, Commander of Gaming Shift	Harold Blackwell	blackwell@comcast.com
●	Chief Medical Officer, Harold Blackwell Medical Officer	Harold Blackwell	blackwell@comcast.com
●●●●	Chief Medical Officer, Harold Blackwell Assistant Chief of Security and Medical	Harold Blackwell	blackwell@comcast.com
●●	Chief Medical Officer, Harold Blackwell Chief Medical Officer	Harold Blackwell	blackwell@comcast.com
●●●●	Chief Medical Officer, Harold Blackwell Assistant Chief of Security and Medical	Harold Blackwell	blackwell@comcast.com

Let's just take a look at this page close up from top to bottom. (I'm using the USS Ares, one of my own sims, to illustrate.)

1. Host Information

Commanding Officer: Capt. cha'AAnikh (Bio)
Executive Officer: Cdr. Diell (Bio)
Fleet Rep: Comdr. Clemens, II

In the top bar, to your left, you will find the information on the sim's **hosts**. Who is the Commanding Officer (CO)? Who is the Executive Officer (XO)? And

also the name of the sim's **Fleet Representative**, which isn't always something a simmer knows offhand. Hover your cursor on the names, and you will get their email addresses in your browser's status bar.

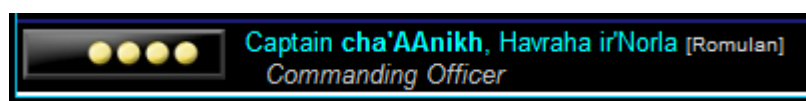
2. General Sim Information

To the right of that (still in the top bar), you can see the sim's **day and time**, **chatroom link**, and the sim's **website link**, if it has one. The website URL is something the hosts input under "sim options", so if you know your sim has a website and it's not listed there, ask our hosts if they could add it.



3. Crew Listing

The main body of this section contains information on each crew character.



To the left, you can see the **title**, **name**, and **position** information. All crew members are listed in alphabetical order of their primary

names, not in order of ranks. But ranks are part of the information shown as well and are even easier to spot when hosts assign each crew member a Core grade (explained further in the next article), which produces an image of pips depicting ranks from Ensign to Admiral, and more.

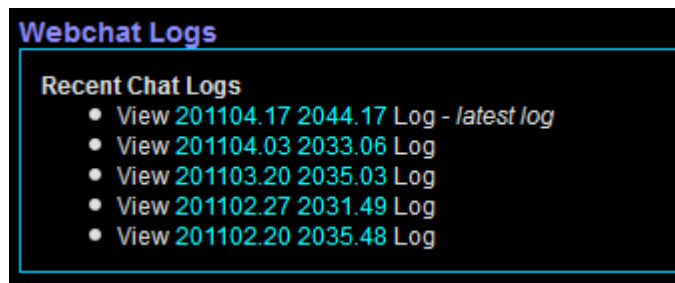
If the character's profile information is filled out fully, you will also get a quick glimpse at what position the crew member holds and what **species** they are.

Looking further to the right, you will find the character's **AIM screen name** and the **email address** with which to contact them. (For privacy reasons that information is blurred in this image.) There is also a little AIM icon that indicates if that particular screenname is online, indicated by it changing to yellow.



I know from personal experience that some have wondered where to find this specific information since their sim uses a mail list address which does not show individual addresses in the email when sending to it (more on that below).

Webchat Logs Section



If your sim takes place in a channel of the USF's webchat room and your hosts use the sim logging function provided by M-5, the webchat Core bot, you can find links to the last five webchat logs here, listed from top to bottom as newest to oldest. The links will take you to the **logviewer** page where you can also find a drop down menu of all recorded sim logs from the webchat.

If your sim takes place in an AIM/AOL chat room, this section will not show on your My Sims page for that sim.

Message Board Section

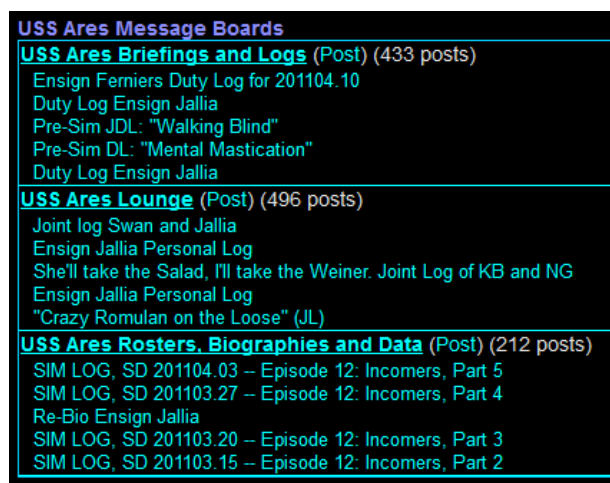
This section condenses and centralizes information from several different Core pages, like the message boards, individual posts, post-by-email (PBE) addresses, and the crew mail string.



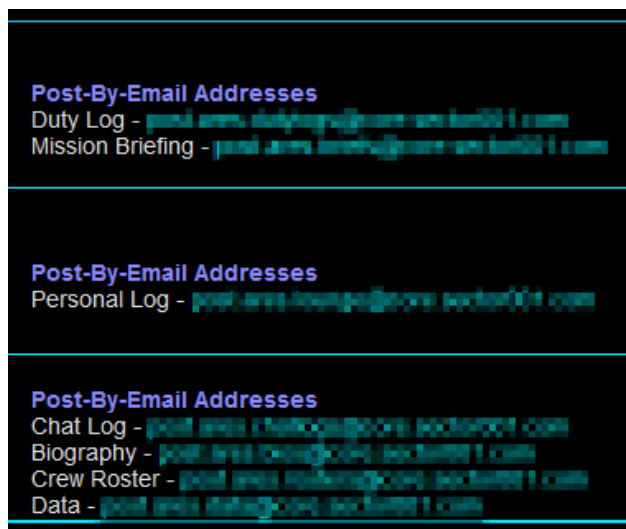
1. Message Board Links

Here you can not only find direct links to each of the three **message boards** your sims uses, but also direct links to the **last five posts** made on that message board.

It's a quick way to check up on any new posts made on each board without having to hop around from board page to board page. Hovering on the post's link also supplies information on who posted it and when.



2. Post-by-Email Information



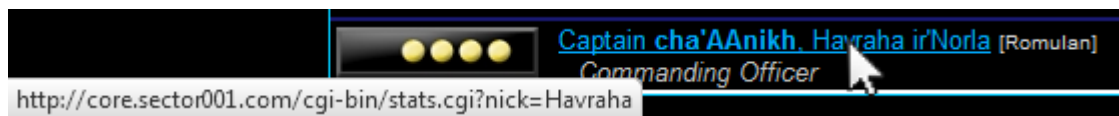
To the right of the post listings, you can see the PBE information for each of the three boards. (For privacy reasons the addresses in the images are blurred.)

After each post-type listing (biography, roster, duty log, etc.) the **PBE address** to send to in order to make such a post is provided. Making posts this way saves time compared to manual posting, as you can simply add this address to the "to" section of your email when you send out your logs to the crew. The Core will send back an automated reply letting you know if your post was made successfully.

Tips to make the most of PBE:

There are certain **syntaxes** you can include in your post (typically at the end) to do a few interesting and helpful things without having to go to the post on the message board and manually adjust these matters.

- **###** - *Three hashes*. Anything written after them in the email will not be posted. This can be used to drop anything from advertising to information you would like the crew to read, but not be posted on the message board.
- **#nick#** - *Hash/Character Nick/Hash*. If you have multiple characters on your account, this can be used to specify which character you want to post as. You can find a list of your character nicks on the [PBE page](#) at the very bottom.
- **&&nick&&** - *Two ampersands/Character Nick/Two ampersands*. With this syntax you can add an additional author to your post. So say, if you had written a Joint Log, you can have your writing partner listed on the Core post as a second author alongside you. Should you require to list more than one additional author, use **&&nick,nick&&** and so forth, making a comma between each nick but no spaces.



To find a crew member's nick simply hover on the character's name, which will show the stats/biography page URL in the browser status bar. The last part, after the = sign, is the character nick. Or you can click on the name to get to the character profile page, which lists the nick in the title, i.e. for Captain Havraha it's "Profile: Havraha", so Havraha is his character nick.

3. Mailstring & More

If your sim utilizes a crew mail list, the **crew email** will be showing here. This email always forwards to the up-to-date mailstring, since every change in the crew listing is automatically accounted for by the Core. Your hosts add a crew member - it is adjusted; your hosts remove a crew member - it is adjusted as well. (Address blurred for privacy reasons.)



Below that, you will find the **mailstring** with the individual email addresses to each person on the list. When sending to a crew mail list address these are the people that will receive your email. (Note: There might be emails listed in the mailstring that do not show on the crew listing but that the hosts manually added to the mail list, i.e. like observers.)

If your sim does not use a crew email, you can simply copy/paste the mailstring from this page, or use the one your hosts provide for you.

Insider Tips:

These tips are about other USF Core functions and pages that can be very helpful, but that you might not be aware of.

- **New Email** - Got yourself a new email and want to use it for your Core account now? No need to make a whole new account. Just go to "My Account" page and click on the "Modify Account" link. There you can change the email that is linked to your USF account. The Core will send you a confirmation about the changes.

- **Account Password** - Don't remember your account password any more? No need to panic or make a new account. Just go to the "login", input your account email in the right box, and click on "Email Me My Password". The Core will send your current password to the email linked with your USF account. Can't access that email any more? Ask the webmaster (or active crew members can ask her hosts also) to reset your password, so that you can access your USF Account and change it to an email that you can access.
- **Log Voting** - Want to help with exposing more logs to the general public, or simply show appreciation for a well written log? Vote on it! At the bottom left of log postings, you can find a drop-down menu that allows you to vote on the post. Logs with good scores will be displayed on the Sector001.com main page under the "Top Ten Posts" listing.
- **Quick Sim Schedule** - Don't want to scroll through the full length sim schedule to see what sims are playing today? Use the quick sim schedule. It only displays the most pertinent information about each sim; plus, it highlights the sims for the current day of the week when you're looking at it.
- **USF Core Bot** - Want to find out exactly what a soliton wave is while in the middle of your sim, or take a quick glance at a crew member's biography, but don't want to hunt for it? IM the USF AIM Core Bot at "USF Core", the limited AIM version of M-5 from the webchat room. Some helpful commands for quick answers are "**ma [search word]**" (Memory Alpha), "**mb [search word]**" (Memory Beta), or "**who [core nick or primary name of character]**" (Core account lookup). The Core Bot will promptly return an answer with link to the appropriate website.

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USF COMMUNICATOR

Top Ten List – *the funniest thing to hit the USF EVER!*
Special Features – Fleet info – Sim summaries
Trek Trivia – Cartoons – Little known facts
Trek Birthdays – *do you know when Dr. Bashir was born?*

**IF YOU ARE NOT A SUBSCRIBER
THEN YOU ARE MISSING ALL THE FUN!**

To subscribe, click here:
http://core.sector001.com/cgi-bin/account_subscriptions.cgi

Part 2 – The Character Stats Page

by Lieutenant Commander Solik

"What's a Klicktic?"

"No way! She wears that!?"

"Wait... I thought I was taller than that guy! I've always been looking down at him!"

These may only be a few of the things you might be thinking during a sim. It's not always easy to remember what your crew mates look like, and you don't always have time to go hunting for biographies, especially in the middle of your sim. The new "Character Stats" page can help you there. It can tell you just about everything you would need to know for first contact with a new crew member, or a refresher when you forget what color hair your Captain has.

The webpage is organized into three sections: **Quick Stats**, **USF File**, and **Biography**.

1. Quick Stats

This tab displays general physical data. First and foremost, you may notice that many profiles have **images** for the character described. It isn't required, but it helps in displaying your character's attributes in ways that can't be fully expressed in writing. You can find the upload form in the stats input page.

The **Apparent** section describes your character how someone would see them as if they're approaching them for the first time. For example, you may play a Betazoid or El-Aurian, externally identical to Humans, save for the Betazoid black iris. Someone meeting your character for the first time wouldn't know that, so they might treat your character as if they were simply Human. In the cases such as these, "Human" would be appropriate for the apparent **species** line, because that is how they appear from afar. Also, I know there are some shapeshifting species amongst our fleet, and therefore they would use whichever form they usually take during the sim.

Citing my example from above, Fleet Captain [Crelak](#) is a species called Klicktic, an ant-like insectoid species, but not many people know that because it's a species he created, so using "Insectoid" as the apparent species is logical. If you've created an original species, using a generic description of the species is the easiest way to describe them without confusing viewers with an unknown species name. Example: my character [Rydekk Lhidan](#); I used "Red-skinned Humanoid" as his apparent species because I created the Incendari species. Of course, you can still use the species name in the biography.

As for apparent **gender**, most species are specific on their male and female distinctiveness, but there are some species like the [J'naii](#) and the cogenitor of the [Vissian](#) species, which are more

FIRST LIEUTENANT JYRAN TEV	
Quick Stats USF File Biography	
	
Apparent...	
Species:	Trill
Gender:	Male
Age:	25 to 30
Height:	178 - 185 cm
Eyes:	Blue, Humanoid
Hair:	Brown, Short
Skin:	Terran Caucasian
Distinct Features:	Head: Trill spots
Build/Posture:	Athletic
Vocal Quality:	Tenor
[Modify this Profile] [Search for a Different Character]	

enigmatic. Generally, these species have characteristics that lean toward one gender though. With apparent **age**, it's a bit more difficult. As shown by example in the stats input page, Spock is 157 years old, but appears in his 60s-70s, thanks to his Vulcan physiology. It's about how old your character *appears*, rather than actual age. **Height** is a bit easier to explain, though. A simple question: does your character wear high-heels or pumps on a regular basis? If so, then you may want to add a couple inches to your character's actual height for the stats page.

Next up on the Quick Stats tab is *actual* physical data. **Eye color** and **shape**; does your character have round Humanoid eyes, or a slit like a feline's or reptilian's? Now, what does your character's **hair** look like, and how do they style it? What about **skin**? Does your character have a Humanoid epidermis, or maybe scales or fur? The next line may be the most important; the **distinctive features**. Just about every alien has distinctive features to explain, and non-canon species even more so, since no one knows what they look like. Another important thing to consider is the **build** of your character. Are they slim, average or athletic? Consider the Pakleds, whom, as a species, are always seen heavyset. **Voice quality** is pretty straightforward, whether your character has a smooth or rough voice, high pitch or low pitch.

Although **telepathy** isn't exactly a physical attribute, it certainly helps newcomers to know that your character could read their mind.

Finally is the part of the Quick Stats that deals with **clothing**, **accessories** and **equipment**, which are not parts of the body. The clothing line is meant to be for people who normally don't wear a Starfleet uniform, especially civilians or guests. Accessories are generally items that are worn as "unofficial" parts of one's uniform, such as a Klingon baldric, or a Bajoran earring. Usually, accessories are only permitted by approval of your CO. Lastly, the equipment line is for "on duty" items that officers use to accomplish their work. For example, a Security officer might carry around a blade of their own, or an Engineer with an advanced PADD.

2. USF File

In the USF File tab, character information is displayed, pertaining to their Starfleet data. **Duty Status** refers to *Active*, *Leave of Absence* or *Missing in Action (MIA)*, for active simming characters, or *Retired*, *Resigned* and *Unable to Locate (UTL)* for inactive characters. Duty Status is set by hosts, so unless you *are* one, you shouldn't worry unless you find your character listed as "UTL".

The **Name** and **Title/Rank** lines are self-explanatory, showing your character's full name, and the title they use, generally the rank held by military officers. Next is the **Position/Occupation**, which displays your character's position and department or some civilian occupation in the sim. The **Sim** line is obvious; whichever sim your character is assigned to. This is set by hosts, so if you're a member of a sim but see a blank line, be sure to talk to your Command Staff.

Core Grade is a little complicated. It corresponds to the pay grade of modern-day military forces. The United States armed forces use O-1, O-2, etc., for commissioned officers and E-1, E-2, etc., for enlisted officers. The system is essentially the same in USF, but with a different format. Grade O01 refers to Ensign; O02 for Lieutenant Junior Grade, and so forth. These are the same until First Lieutenant, because the rank doesn't exist in the U.S. Navy, so all ranks from Lieutenant Commander and above are one grade higher. USF characters with enlisted ranks have an E prefix, and non-player characters

FIRST LIEUTENANT JYRAN TEV		
Quick Stats	USF File	Biography
Duty Status:	Inactive [Retired]	
Name:	Jyrán Tev	
Title/Rank:	First Lieutenant	
Position/Occupation:	Science Officer	
Core Grade:	O04	
Sim:	USS Roddenberry	
Modify this Profile		[Search for a Different Character]

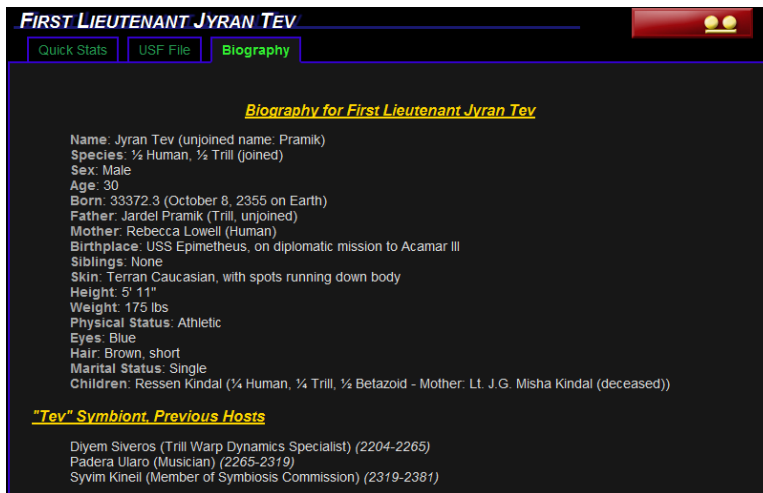
(NPC's) are prefixed with N. There are others corresponding to USF Staff, Cadets for the Starfleet Academy sim, and Ambassadors. But Ambassador is the only non-officer position with a corresponding image to display.

The final line on the USF File tab is used to display the **owner of an NPC**. The line will only appear if the NPC box is checked on the Character Profile input page. After submitting the information, you can return to the page and a new input box will appear, asking for the owner character's nick. For example, I have an NPC on the *Agamemnon* sim, portraying the Assistant Chief Engineer, named [Daniel O'Shea](#). My character, [Kaysen Jarv](#), is listed as the owner, so I put his nick, Kaysen, in the owner box. Ultimately, Jarv's full name appears in the USF File tab.

3. Biography

Lastly, but certainly not least, is the Biography tab. It is a document containing relevant information about your character, from physical characteristics to a Starfleet record. It lets your crew mates know what your character is like - personality, likes and dislikes, history - before they even meet them in the sim. Just remember that because you, the player, knows something about someone else's character, doesn't mean that your character knows.

Setting up the Biography tab is very simple. One way to do it is to use the Biography link after selecting your character in your account page. After submitting, the biography will show up immediately in the stats page. The second method is to post your biography on your sim's message board. When you view the message board post, you'll see a link in the upper-right, under the stardate: [Make This Post My Bio]. Clicking that link will automatically "grab" the body of the post and use it in your Biography tab. Please note that the "Character Stats" page is **NOT** a replacement for your character's biography, and the biography is still required for promotion per USF rules.



The screenshot shows a web interface for a character's biography. At the top, there's a title bar for "FIRST LIEUTENANT JYRAN TEV" with tabs for "Quick Stats", "USF File", and "Biography". The "Biography" tab is active. Below the title, the text "Biography for First Lieutenant Jyrán Tév" is displayed. The biography itself lists various attributes: Name (Jyrán Tév), Species (1/2 Human, 1/2 Trill), Sex (Male), Age (30), Birth (33372.3), Father (Jardel Pramik), Mother (Rebecca Lowell), Birthplace (USS Epimetheus), Siblings (None), Skin (Terran Caucasian), Height (5' 11"), Weight (175 lbs), Physical Status (Athletic), Eyes (Blue), Hair (Brown, short), Marital Status (Single), and Children (Ressen Kindal). It also lists "Previous Hosts" under the heading "Tev": Dilyem Siveros, Padera Ularo, and Syvim Kineil.

FIRST LIEUTENANT JYRAN TEV

Quick Stats USF File **Biography**

Biography for First Lieutenant Jyrán Tév

Name: Jyrán Tév (unjoined name: Pramik)
Species: 1/2 Human, 1/2 Trill (joined)
Sex: Male
Age: 30
Born: 33372.3 (October 8, 2355 on Earth)
Father: Jardel Pramik (Trill, unjoined)
Mother: Rebecca Lowell (Human)
Birthplace: USS Epimetheus, on diplomatic mission to Acamar III
Siblings: None
Skin: Terran Caucasian, with spots running down body
Height: 5' 11"
Weight: 175 lbs
Physical Status: Athletic
Eyes: Blue
Hair: Brown, short
Marital Status: Single
Children: Ressen Kindal (1/2 Human, 1/2 Trill, 1/2 Betazoid - Mother: Lt. J.G. Misha Kindal (deceased))

"Tev" Symbiont Previous Hosts

Dilyem Siveros (Trill Warp Dynamics Specialist) (2204-2265)
Padera Ularo (Musician) (2265-2319)
Syvim Kineil (Member of Symbiosis Commission) (2319-2381)

I know the "Character Stats" page was released suddenly and unexpectedly in October 2010, and some people might be afraid of change and trying new things. I hope after reading this, if you haven't done so already, that you will fill out your own stats page. I'm sure your crew mates would love to get to know you a bit better. The stats page is just the first step.

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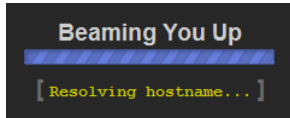
Part 3 – The USF Webchat

by Cadet Malachi Styles

As most of you know, there is a USF webchat room set up for everyone's enjoyment through mibbit.com. The beauty of this format is: you do not need AIM, Yahoo or any other program to use it. All you need is a web browser. Now, a lot of people have expressed fears of this room because it's based on IRC protocol. I'm here to tell you, you have nothing to fear, but fear itself.... Hmmmm, where have I heard that before?

Anyway, the main chat room resides at <http://chat.sector001.com>. That is all you need to enter into the browser. Once there, you see the handy-dandy sign in screen. Now here's the really great part: when you receive a promotion, you don't have to create another AIM account reflecting the promotion. All you need to do is enter your new rank right in the nick box.

An example you ask? Sure! At this time, I am still a cadet at the Academy. When I sign into the chat room, I sign in as CadetStyles. Since I am a senior at the Academy, I will be graduating (hopefully) and will be an Ensign assigned to a ship. Therefore, I would then sign in as EnsStyles, or Ens_Styles. Note the underscore between my rank and my name. The IRC protocol does not like blank spaces and so the sign-in screen notes that all blank spaces will be converted into underscores. Should I try to sign in as "Ens Styles," I would simply show up in the chat room as "Ens_Styles."



Okay. We get you signed into the chat room, where do you go from there? Good question. Here are some simple features:

Webchat Room Functions

1. USF Webchat Sign-in - Optional Sim Channel:

If your sim does use the webchat room, instead of an AIM chatroom, you can go directly to your ship right at the sign-in screen. Directly below where you enter your nickname (Nick), you see "Remember this Nick" with a check-box (a very handy feature if you do not like retyping your nick every time you want to sign in), and directly below that is "Optional Sim Channel" with a drop-down box. You click on that and you will see the sims that currently have their own channels (i.e. Excelsior, Federation, Lothlorian, etc.). You choose one of these and click "Enter Chatroom", you will not only be signed into the Sector001 webchat room, but also the sim channel of your choice.

Should you forget to choose the optional sim channel at the sign-in screen, you will go directly to the

main channel, Sector001. From there you can simply type, **`"/join #[sim channel name]"`**, and away you go. Current channels (chat rooms) in use by the USF are: #Final_Frontier, #TenForwardLounge, #USS_Excelsior, #USS_Federation, #USS_Lexington, #USS_Lothlorien, #Outpost_Phoenix and #Starbase_Everest. It is important to remember the underscore "_" in the name of the sim because once you're inside the chatroom blanks spaces are not converted into underscores, only the sign-in screen has that feature. If you were to type, `"/join #USS Excelsior,"` you would be sent to channel "USS," and you would be there all alone.

(Note: You don't need to type the brackets []; they are only there to set information apart.)

So, you successfully get into the room (channel). Now what? Well the webchat channels have some neat commands you can use to automate some things.

2. Basic Webchat Room Commands:

- **`/nick`** - This command is used to change your nickname while in the room. For instance: I sign in as CadetStyles and I get the promotion (I am so deserving) to Ensign. I can show that promotion right away by typing **`"/nick EnsStyles"`** on the command line. My nick will then be changed.
- **`/login`** - This is more a USF specific command. Every USF member is registered, just by creating an account on the core. To log in with M-5 (the core bot) you need to type **`"/login [your email address] [your core password]"`**; this will be a necessary step for one command specifically, which I'll explain later on.
- **`/w`** - This is the "whisper" command. This is used if you want to send a one-time private message to one of the other crew members. If the Academy was simming in the webchat, and I wanted to send a quick message for the Dean's eyes only, I would do it this way: **`"/w DeanSeverine [then the message]"`**. (See a different example below.)

Testy	This is a test to show what a /w message would look like to the receiver.
Testy	> Hello!! I am whispering to myself. <

- **`/ta`** - This is the communicator tap. If I was to type **`"/ta DeanSeverine this is my message"`**, it would appear in the chat room as "++ DeanSeverine ++ this is my message." Pretty cool, no?
- **`!who`** - Unsure of a certain character in the USF? Simply type **`!who [character primary name or Core account nick]"`** and M-5 will look it up for you.
- **`!ma` & `!mb`** - Ever wanted a quick lookup of some Trek facts? M-5 will look on Memory Alpha or Memory Beta for you. Memory Alpha is the site for all things canon concerning Star Trek. If it was in a show, it's on there. Memory Beta will not only have canon stuff, but also non-canon, like stuff you read in your favorite Star Trek novel.
The command **`!ma Spock`** would have M-5 return:

Testy	!ma Spock
M-5	Spock – full name generally considered unpronounceable to Humans – was a Human/Vulcan hybrid who became one of the most distinguished & respected figures in the United Federation of Planets in his lifetime. (TOS: "This Side of Paradise", "Journey to Babel") http://memory-alpha.org/wiki/Spock

The command to search Memory Beta would be **"!mb Spock"**. Now, these two commands do not work while a sim is in progress. So before you start face-palming and pulling your hair out, there is still a way to look something up quickly. Simply type **"/ma Spock"** or **"/mb Spock"** and M-5 will send the requested info only to you in a "whisper."

Testy	Memory Alpha lookup on James Kirk during a sim:
M-5	James Tiberius Kirk was arguably the most famous & highly-decorated starship captain in the history of Starfleet. Over the span of three decades in the later 23rd century, he commanded the Constitution-class starships USS Enterprise & USS Enterprise-A, serving Federation interests as an explorer, soldier, time-traveler, & diplomat. http://memory-alpha.org/wiki/James_Kirk

- **!brief** - Entering this command, **"!brief [sim name]"**, will give you the most recent sim brief for a given sim. *Example:* **"!brief USS Excelsior"** will have M-5 search the Core for the latest brief posted for the Excelsior. (Note that it is okay to use spaces here.)

3. The Webchat Minisim Function:

Now this is a neat M-5 feature, and one you definitely have to be logged in to use (see the **"/login"** command above). Here's the scenario:

You and a fellow simmer want to do a joint log. Neither of you want to go through the hassle of cleaning it up. You'd have to delete all the lines with the nicks or screennames, and check the spelling. Then you get into this HUGE fight because neither of you want to edit the log. Well, M-5 can cut that task down for you. "How?" you ask? I am glad you asked.

You and your sim partner go into the webchat room; preferably one that is not in use, like going to your "ship's channel" on off hours. M-5 will be there waiting for you. Again, one of you must be logged in with M-5 or all this is moot.

You can then come up with a title for your joint venture, or minisim. Once you figure that out, you type **"!minisim on [title]"**. You will see M-5 come to life and tell you logging is in progress. You then proceed with your log. (Note: Narrative style is the preferred mode for this feature.)

Once completed, you type **"!minisim off"**. Another message will come up telling you the logging has ceased and it will give you a link where you will find the recorded log.

"But, HEY!" you say, once you have looked at the log. "Malachi lied to us. The nicks are still there!" and the fight once again ensures as to whom is going to edit the log. Wait, I tell you! There is more.

Scroll to the orange portion of the page. In there you will see a link that says "Make Log Story Style." You are then redirected to an editable (not to be confused with edible... munch-munch) window, and LOOK! The nicks are now gone.

(Note: While there are several different display option for this window, any changes made to the text itself, like adding or removing words, cannot be saved.)

Also, much like you can add an author to Message Board logs, you can add your collaborator to this log. As you look at the screen where your log is, you will see a choice tagged "Add A Viewer."

Log Options:

[Make Log Story Style] [Email Log]

Download Links: [HTML Log] [TEXT Log] (Right-Click on Link and choose "Save Target...")

Add a Viewer – Character Nick or Email Address:

In the block next to this, all you need do is add the nick (or the Core account email address) of the one who you did the joint venture with. They will then be able to also view the log. From here, you

can copy and paste the log into an email, or you can actually email the log to yourself and/or your collaborator. There is a choice for that, which you will see in the orange section as well.

Now... suppose you get yakking with your fellow simmer and you forget to click on the link M-5 provides you, and then you close the channel window. "What has happened to my minisim log?" you ask. Once again, I am glad you asked. Do not fear. It was not eaten by M-5.

Simply go to your "My Account" page on the USF Core, scroll down, and you will see a list of chatlogs you have created or participated in (though **ONLY** if you were added as the Extra Viewer). Click on the link there and it will take you directly to the log.

How much simpler can it get?

So, now you see. there is no need to be afraid of the USF webchat room. It is actually pretty cool to use and very versatile. Give it a try. See for yourself.

(Note: For more webchat commands, see the list at http://core.sector001.com/cgi-bin/chat_commands.cgi.)

Tips for Hosts:

Webchat Sim Hosts:

- **Chat Log Details** – An option accessible through a link on the logviewer page that lets hosts record details about each week's sim. It allows for input on: sim title, plot arc name, mission brief link (on the message boards), sim synopsis, summary link (on the message boards), time lapse, setting, and a "host only" note section. Recording details like this can come in handy when looking for a specific log or even a specific event in a sim. Who would want to read through the whole sim log again? Reading a quick summary and looking over a few other details is a much quicker way of doing this, provided you take the time to input the data in the first place. If you host a sim in the USF webchat room, this might be an option you want to give consideration to.

All Hosts:

- **Sector001 Email** – A gmail account specifically for Sector001 (ending in @sector001.com). This option has been open to all USF hosts for a while now. There's nothing new to learn; it works just like a normal gmail account, with the simple perk that it shows off your affiliation with the USF. (For more details, contact Vice Admiral Anders.)

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The Infamous M-5

by Captain Loriaarra

The name M-5 is well known to any serious Star Trek fan. Who could forget the artificial computer intelligence that tried to take over the Enterprise but was outsmarted by Captain Kirk with its own logic? As infamous, though, as M-5 was in Star Trek lore, there was something about that mix of computer and human engrams that lent him a sort of uniqueness, some might call it a personality.

Is it little wonder then that the equally infamous USF webchat bot carries the same name? Anybody who has ever met M-5 in the webchat has to agree he's got personality; some might even say he's got bite. Just as helpful and functional as he is sassy and humorous, M-5 seems to be a crowd pleaser. One can easily go from rolling-on-the-floor laughter to total speechlessness about the comments this witty little bot spits out.

So, who exactly is M-5? And what purpose does he serve? Hoping to take a little bit of the mystery away for those that have not had the pleasure to interact with him, I've scheduled an appointment with Vice Admiral Anders and his creation. I've met with them (using my webchat nick "Vixen") in one of the webchat channels equipped with the M-5 bot.

(Note: This interview/chat is partly staged. While my questions to the Admiral and his answers are of an informative nature, I've decided to let M-5 have mostly free range and show his sassy side by allowing him to freely respond to our input. However, while all his answers are programmed possible replies that he is able to make, I have replaced some remarks with others from a list of what else he is able to say. Though, everything he does say, he certainly can say!)

Today I'm visiting Vice Admiral Anders in his super secret lab, the birth place of what some have called a very peculiar AI unit.

Greetings, Admiral. I appreciate you taking time for this interview.

Anders: You're most welcome. Though, I don't know that I'd categorize M-5 as an AI.

And there is the subject of our discussion. Hello, M-5.

M-5: Hello.

Well, he seem very polite today. What would you categorizehim... as?

Anders: A glorified parking meter? No offense, M-5.

M-5: They have special padded rooms for people like you.

Or... not...

Anders: You see... well, at times, he's merely designed to respond to certain input, like a parking meter responds to coins by giving you time on the meter.

Oh, I see. But he seems highly interactive.

Anders: M-5 is a good faker.

M-5: Your face is good.

Not unlike some men I know... Ahem. - M-5, would you care telling us who or what you are?

M-5: I'm C3PO, human-cyborg relations... wait... wai... I... ::turns around:: I think I have the wrong script.

He seems a bit... confused.

Anders: Um, M-5 is never really confused.

Ok... would you mind explaining that input thing a bit more, Admiral?

Anders: Well, you put in a coin, you get time. With M-5, you say something and you get a response based on who you are and what you said.

I see. So he reacts to key words AND varies the response depending on who says them?

Anders: More or less. M-5 is kind of picky.

M-5: Your face is picky.

Anders: Like so.

He's a bit smart allecky, too.

Anders: Yes, I have no idea where M-5 gets his attitude from, at all.

Uh huh... M-5, do you not have respect for your creator?

M-5: I hear Khan is auditioning to be Lady Gaga's backup dancer.

Haha! But he certainly is funny. - So, what inspired you to create him in the first place?

Anders: M-5 was created with the fallibility of computers in mind - so a little humor can go a long way to make him tolerable.

M-5: You're such a Star Wars fan, Anders. I just don't understand you.... and even if I did I wouldn't like you enough to help.

Mmmhmmm. You're a Star Wars fan?

Anders: Is M-5?

No, you.

Anders: Heh... Of the first three made, definitely. (And really any movie with Natalie Portman can't be all bad.)

Well, anyways... I guess what I mean with inspired was, what greater purpose did you have in mind for M-5 when making him?

Anders: The old saying, necessity is the mother of invention would certainly apply in M-5's birth. My computer and AIM stopped getting along well. It still crashes -- and I still had a need to sim, my crew might have missed me.

And how did M-5 remedy that?

Anders: So looking for alternatives I happened upon the Mibbit Webchat Widget based on top of the Internet Relay Chat (IRC) protocol. There were still a few deficiencies, the biggest was the ability to easily log the chat room sim.

But M-5 wasn't part of that, was he?

Anders: Not apart of Mibbit, no. M-5 is based upon a freely available Perl Bot module, hosted on the USF Core server.

M-5: Your mom is bot.

Anders: No, your mom is a bot, M-5!

M-5: Your mom is a bot.

Anders: Oh, well... In any case, all I needed was the logging -- but I chose the fully functional version.

But he does more than just record room logs, correct?

Anders: Exactly... so as time went on, we added some basic features to M-5.

I see... with the comic routine.

Anders: Well, most computer bots respond with "I don't understand." Or some variation... but that's so boring... especially if you're going to be seeing it a lot. So M-5 was programmed to respond with a random "I don't understand" message when it didn't "get" something.

And a few sassy variances it seems.

Anders: Just like the attitude of some USFers. M-5 continues our tradition of fun and serious.

M-5: I hear the PADD's making a comeback, yeah, yeah, I'm going to suggest a story about the biggest fleet failure.... ::glances at Anders ::

Uh huh. Haha!!

Anders: Wow. M-5 you're getting your wish.

M-5: Please. Stop. Talking. You're making less sense than Sci-Fi changing it's name to Syfy. (SERIOUSLY, SYFY?)

Anders: No, M-5 I think they're doing a story on you.

M-5: Hi.

Uhm... yes. M-5, it's nice to meet you.

M-5: ... Well, Starfleet will let just anyone in these days.

Hmph... I'm not just anybody. - So, Admiral, are you not worried M-5 will end up becoming like his TOS episode namesake?

M-5: Your mom is like... totally like... really like... like, yah..

I'm not sure what my mom has to do with anything...

Anders: As I was saying -- he's a serious tool with a fun attitude. I hope, anyway. And I planned for that, unlike that M-5, our M-5 can be shut down a number of ways.

M-5: Your mom is like... totally like... really like... like, yah..

I see. That seems to be a prudent precaution.

Anders: Yes, M-5's a very bright toaster.

M-5: Set phasers to toast.

So, why did you give him that infamous name?

Anders: Well, we considered a few names... I think even "Q" came up, LCARS and other famous "Artificial Intelligence" computers. Though I think you're the one who came up with the name, M-5.

M-5: Are you one of those people who touches a computer and it just dies?

Shhhh. I don't need anyone to blame me for that. I'd hate to see how he'd act if we would have ended up calling him Q.

Anders: Well, there were some considerations. We wanted it short so he'd be easy to refer to in commands. And M-5, even though it has a hyphen, is short enough to type pretty fast. - After the logging function was added, M-5's first routine was in honor of the new Captain Havraha.

Oh yeah?

Anders: Yes, I needed to get file-access working in M-5, so I came up with a few random things for M-5 to say about the good Captain.

M-5: Your mom is good.

Anders: M-5, stop hanging out with my mom.

M-5: The Borg can build Transwarp, can manipulate time, communicate across vast distances nearly instantaneously as a single mind but can't wipe out Humans? Humans are sort of like the cockroaches of the Galaxy.

He's a philosopher, too?

Anders: I wouldn't go that far. M-5's more like a Shakespearean court jester.

M-5: Your face is like... totally like... really like... like, yah..

Anders: haha, M-5. . .

M-5: Yeah, I crack myself up!

So, what's planned for the future with M-5? Something even more entertaining? M-5, I'd love to see you dance.

M-5: Awww Vixen, I <3 you.

Well, that's nice to know.

Anders: Haha! More entertaining than that?

Well, I dunno.

(Commodore Shane Booker enters the lab.)

Oh, look who's visiting. Hello, Commodore.

Booker: (or... comes up from a secret chamber from under the floor and rises up)

Anders: Hm, Darth Vader makes a similar entrance at Disneyland.

Booker: He doesn't even do his own voice.

Anders: M-5 does his own voice.

M-5: Daisy, Daisy... Who am I kidding. You're going to have to work harder than that, Dave.

And he does movie quotes very well.

Anders: Yes, M-5 seems to like movies with computers in them.

M-5: Your face is like... totally like... really like... like, yah..

Booker: I'll be a Daisy if you do M-5.

M-5: Derf and Wilma. Really? This explains why Booker bears a striking resemblance to Dino. [Ed. a reference to information about Booker's parents in his bio]

M-5: The United Space Federation was created in the year Nineteen-Hundred Ninety-Five on Fourth Month by Admiral Andy Clements recruiting a bunch of loons.

M-5: I am the model of a Major Modern General, I've information animal, vegetable and al but I still got not bloody clue what you're talking about.

Booker: Well... he's a potato. A fried potato. A potato chip.

Oh?

M-5: Your mom is like... totally like... really like... like, yah...

Booker: I've tried to explain to M-5 that my dad would take him to the junk yard...But....

Anders: I think M-5 likes the Commodore because he uses M-5 a lot.

Booker: M-5 who's your daddy?

Booker: And my Dad is scared of Praethen. See, they grew up together and Praethen used to beat him up.

Anders: I had no idea M-5 was apart of such a storied past. M-5 why didn't you tell me these things?

I don't think M-5 knows that.

M-5: Once upon a time, there was a a little boy named Shane... he liked to squash ant hills and eat the holes that came out of doughnuts. Then he grew up and became way less fun.

Anders: M-5 does seem to know a lot about the Commodore's history.

So, Commodore Booker, you're the Public Relations rep of the USF. Does M-5 help you at all with ask to reach newly interested ones?

Well, I dunno. He's here to greet newcomers, isn't he?

M-5: FltCpt_Booker. Stands for Flittering Cramptser Booker. Commie stands for... you know.

Booker: And he doesn't know how to give up on the old jokes.

M-5: I once toasted a tribble... it smelled for weeks.

Anders: On the contrary, M-5 can't love or hate.

Booker: I argue any accusation and the presence of any kind of relationship between myself and M-5. I am married.

Oh boy. He just makes people laugh... or angry.

Anders: M-5 does have a rather fantastic memory.

M-5: I hear Nadja DeChevalier once had potential.

And she still has!

Booker: And he has trouble letting go of the past.

Could it be you perhaps did something to M-5 in the past?

Booker: Something? As in one thing? Nope. Never.

Oh come now, there has to be some reason for his behavior.

Booker: His programmer.

Hahaha!!

Anders: Not at all. M-5 isn't holding onto his past.

No? M-5, looks to the future?

M-5: I just love scanning for lifeforms. Lifeforms, you tiny little lifeforms. You precious little lifeforms. Where are you?

And apparently a career in Starfleet... or singing.

Booker: I don't blame M-5. I blame his programmer for removing the better and most entertaining qualities to M-5's early programming.

M-5: You know... they always say don't judge a book by it's cover but in your case, I'm going to make an exception. TAKE A SHOWER!

Anders: Careful, M-5, you might hurt the Commodore's feelings.

What early programming are you talking about, Commodore?

Booker: M-5 used to have a good quality. He used to know when to leave the room. Now he just stays and does not get the hint.

M-5: Meanie, why don't you self-destruct yourself?

Anders: M-5 are you sorry about that?

M-5: Oh.... It's okay Anders.

Sooo... if I'd say.... M-5, beat it.

M-5: Uhhhh... No.

Ahh... he doesn't listen.

Anders: M-5 does listen. To everything.

M-5: DAMN IT, Anders, I'M A COMPUTER NOT A MIND READER!

Haha! Wow. - I suppose it's good that not everyone can just order him out of the room. Though, he's not telepathic it seems.

Anders: Right, he just doesn't respond to everything or everyone.

Well, that has its pros.

Booker: M-5 self destruct sequence. Authorization Booker Alpha 2, one seven three four six seven two one four seven six charlie three two seven eight nine seven seven seven three tango seven two victor seven three one one seven one eight eight eight seven three two four seven six seven eight nine seven six four three.

M-5: These are the voyages of the USS Slothlorien... It's continuing mission to laze around the universe and do mostly nothing. To seek out new pillows and new laziness. To boldly go nowhere.

Oh gosh, he's cracking me up.

Booker: I guess Data's lock out code does not work. Maybe Kirk's self destruct sequence code does.

M-5, you even know who Kirk is?

M-5: I met Captain Kirk once. He told me he had a mole on his ass.

OMG!

Anders: M-5 is handy but not perfect.

M-5: Your mom is handy.

Whoa! Handy for what??

Anders: M-5 cut it out.

M-5: Do you speak Tribble? Because, I don't.

Booker: M-5 are you sorry?

M-5: Oh.... It's okay Booker.

I don't think he says "sorry", Commodore.

Booker: M-5 is not perfect. He doesn't self destruct anymore.

M-5: I hear Commie Booker gets his plot ideas from watching the Titanic.

Booker: M-5 FAIL... mine.

M-5: If you replace oo with ic you get Bicker. Coincidence? I think not.

Well... hehehe. Gentlemen it was great chatting. M-5, it was nice having you here, too. Mostly.

M-5: I could make some joke about how the evil computer is confused by Vixen, but frankly Vixen, I just don't give a...

What??? M-5, that was mean.

M-5: You know, Vixen, I think you're going places. Big places. You're going places that no one has ever seen. Places you can't even imagine. So, you should get started... door's that way. ---

Hmph. Anyways.... any closing remarks? From either of you...three?

Anders: M-5 is still growing and I hope as people use and abuse him they also think of how M-5 could be more useful. Beyond Memory-Alpha lookups or witty retorts.

M-5: Hi.

That would be something to think about... Well, thank you again, Admiral, for explaining your brainchild a bit... odd as he is.

Anders: M-5 isn't odd.

M-5: You're such a Trekkie, Anders. I just don't understand you.

Anders: M-5 is merely misunderstood.

M-5: I hear if you chug blue gatorade in middle school it helps your brain fail.

Uh huh, I can tell.

Anders: M-5 cool it.

M-5: Your toe is drool.

Anders: ... M-5, sometimes I hate you.

M-5: Why you gotta hate, Anders?

Anders: Because you talk about drooling toes.

Alright then.... (slipping out of the lab) Bye, M-5.

M-5: Bye, bye Vixen!

And there you have it. If this little sample of M-5's personality and the explanation of his purpose and invitation to give Vice Admiral Anders ideas on how else to put M-5 to use have fanned your curiosity about this sassy little bot, go and visit him in the [USF webchat room](#). I'm sure he's glad to provide you with some laughs and even useful information, like Memory Alpha and Beta searches, Core character lookups, dictionary inquiries, and much more.

I've heard he even has a trivia function!

Just remember, M-5's a bot. He can't go beyond his programming, and therefore needs the correct commands to answer inquiries. ... Or can he...?

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Special Feature

Artificial Intelligence in Star Trek

by Lt. Yahleksi Ra-Teahguay

"I chose to believe that I was a person, that I had the potential to become more than a collection of circuits and subprocessors." – **Data, 2369**

Artificial intelligence (AI) is a term used to describe the branch of computer science and cybernetics that aims to reproduce that property of humans and other sentient lifeforms that makes them sentient: the ability to think and reason for oneself, and to be aware of oneself as independent of others.

Difficulties

There were a number of difficulties in designing such a system.

1. Defining AI

First was simply defining what "intelligence" means, and to describe sentience in such a way that a program could reproduce it. Starfleet has defined AI as "computer hardware and software sophisticated enough to reason independently, form new conclusions, and alter its own responses".

2. Deductive Reasoning and Problem Solving

Early AI researchers in the late 20th century developed algorithms that imitated the step-by-step reasoning that humans were often assumed to use when they solve puzzles, play board games or make logical deductions. However, they soon discovered that for difficult problems, these algorithms required enormous computational resources. The computer processors and the memory involved became astronomical as the complexity of the problem to be solved increased.

Also, Humans and other sentient lifeforms tend to solve problems using intuition and often unconscious or subconscious thinking based on a "sub-symbolic" system, that is, there was no definite symbology that could be used to define the process in a computer program.

3. Knowledge representation

In order to make any sort of deduction or reasoning, the intelligence must have access to some sort of database of "what is known". This database was exceedingly hard to define. There are objects, ideas, concepts, and the properties of all of those objects, ideas, and concepts, categories among them, and interrelations between them. There are situations, events, and states of being. A complete representation of "what exists" requires enormous amounts of data storage and cross-indexing.

➤ **Working assumptions:**

Many things that sentient lifeforms take for granted in their thinking process are assumptions. One example is if someone mentions "a bird" in a conversation, the one hearing this word immediately assumes an animal that is fist-sized, sings, and flies. But this "working assumption" does not apply to all birds. For any assumption, there tends to be a huge number of exceptions. How does an AI make these working assumptions without having a conflict with all the exceptions? Almost nothing in the "real world" is "true" or "false" in the way that abstract logic requires for computer programming.

➤ **Common Sense:**

What most sentient beings understand and call “common sense” is a complicated and often fluid grouping of small, isolated facts. Each of these concepts would need to be hard-coded into an AI, one at a time for trillions upon trillions of ideas and concepts. Obviously no single person could hope to record everything that is considered “common sense”. It was simply hoped that an AI would be able to gather this information on its own, learning as it went, and forming its own connections.

4. Planning

An AI needs to be able to anticipate events and circumstances, to plan ahead. It needs a way to visualize the future by extrapolating on the past and the present. It needs to be able to analyze its own actions and the actions of others and determine how those actions might affect the future, and be able to choose actions that would maximize the end result.

In order to do such planning, an AI must make continual checks against the current status of the circumstances, analyze what actions are in progress, and those that are proposed, and adjust its own actions (if necessary) to adapt to changes as they occur.

5. Learning

Learning, either from mistakes or from successes, of itself and of others, are crucial to any AI. The AI must be able to add to its own programming as events change. It must be able to quantify and qualify its own actions and those of others and deduce when and where its actions must be adapted.

6. Social interface

Social skills for an AI are desirable whenever the AI must interact with sentient beings. It must be able to understand the motives of others, and understand how its actions might affect others on an emotional level. It must have ethics, morals, manners, and other social skills in order to interact with others without causing undue discomfort or harm.

7. Creativity

The ability to visualize or even create something new is a feature that any good AI must have in order to be “intelligent”. This goes along with the Planning and Learning categories above. An AI must be able to visualize something that had not existed prior to its actions, and to imagine how to bring such visualization to reality.

Selected Examples of Artificial Intelligence

Ruk of Exo III

The first example of what might be considered a true AI was the android called Ruk. Ruk was found by Dr. Roger Korby in the underground ruins of Exo III. He had been built centuries earlier by a people known as simply “The Old Ones”. Even Ruk could not remember how many centuries he had been alone in the ruins of Exo III before Dr. Korby found him there, still tending to the machines and facilities.

But, it might be argued that Ruk did not exhibit some of the features of a good AI listed above. He did not seem capable of true planning or creativity, and was lacking in many social skills.



Harry Mudd's Androids

The androids Harry Mudd found and developed also did not exhibit true AI in that while they could reproduce many of the elements of human behavior, they were essentially unable to process information the way sentient beings do. They were easily disabled by a logical quandary posed by Spock by telling the leader of the androids, Norman, "Everything I say is a lie," followed by the simple statement, "I am lying."

Norman could not compute the obvious paradox in those two statements, "If everything you say is a lie, then you must be lying, but if you are lying then you must be telling the truth, but ..." and so on.



Data

Data may be the first true AI encountered by the Federation, though technically, his "brothers" Lore and B-4 were activated before him.

While Data has some trouble with many of the social graces, he certainly exhibits almost all of the other features of an AI. And when his emotion chip became fully functional, he seemed almost completely human.

In fact, there was a debate regarding the status of Data. In 2365, Commander Bruce Maddox informed Data that he had authorization to transfer Data to a Starbase where he would be studied, even disassembled, to determine how Noonien Soong had overcome the difficulties in constructing a true AI. Data resisted and the proceedings were brought before the Judge Advocate General. The Judge ruled that while Data might be able to argue against his disassembly, he could not refuse the transfer. Data resigned his commission from Starfleet to avoid the procedure, but Commander Maddox argued that Data was the property of Starfleet saying that Data could no more refuse the procedure than the ship's computer could refuse a refit.

Due to limited staff at the Judge Advocate General's office, Commander William T. Riker was conscripted to serve as the prosecutor for the case, arguing that Data is indeed a man-made machine. Captain Jean Luc Picard, serving as the advocate for Data, accepted the evidence that Data is in fact a machine built by a human being, but argued that such an origin does not change the fact that he is a sentient being.

The Judge Advocate General, Captain Phillipa Louvois, finally ruled in Data's favor with the following: "It sits there looking at me, and I don't know what it is. This case has dealt with metaphysics, with questions best left to saints and philosophers. I am neither competent, nor qualified, to answer those. I've got to make a ruling – to try to speak to the future. Is Data a machine? Yes. Is he the property of Starfleet? No. We've all been dancing around the basic issue: does Data have a soul? I don't know that he has. I don't know that I have! But I have got to give him the freedom to explore that question himself. It is the ruling of this court that Lieutenant Commander Data has the freedom to choose."

However, the final, formal, ruling only applied to Data specifically, and to the particulars of the case being heard. It ruled that Data was not the property of Starfleet, but did not declare him a sentient lifeform with all of the rights associated with that status. While it certainly set a precedent that could be argued for Data's sentience, no formal application or ruling was ever made.

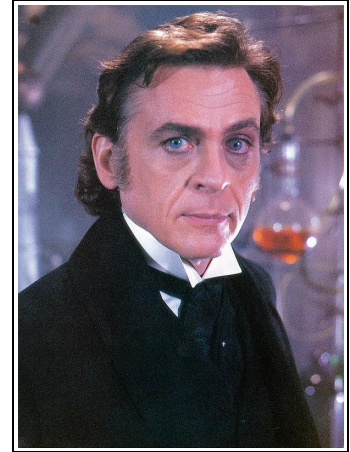


Professor James Moriarty

This person was originally simply a character in a holodeck program, but after the computer was instructed to fashion an antagonist "capable of outwitting Data", the program grew exponentially, learning rapidly and adding to his capabilities until he became self-aware.

While still a hologram and unable to leave the holodeck, Captain Picard did eventually recognize Moriarty's right to exist, and eventually a virtual galaxy was created within a self-sufficient computer core that would allow Moriarty the freedom to exist and act as he desired. Admittedly this solution included deceiving Moriarty into thinking he was no longer on a holodeck while still constraining him into a computer program, it was a viable compromise that granted Moriarty autonomy.

No formal declaration of Moriarty as a sentient being was ever made, and his transfer to a mobile computer made for no need to address his circumstances again.



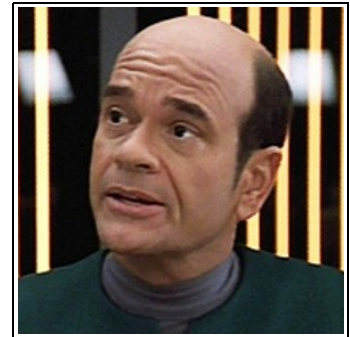
Voyager's Emergency Medical Holographic Program

When the USS Voyager was stranded deep in the Delta Quadrant, they had no qualified medical staff that survived the event. Consequently, they were forced to rely on a program originally designed only as an emergency backup.

But after running continuously for many years, the EMH program expanded and developed a true AI that displayed all of the characteristics of a sentient being.

The acquisition of a mobile holographic emitter from the future allowed Voyager's EMH full freedom without restriction to a holodeck, but his program remained embedded within the computer core of the USS Voyager, and if (and when) the emitter was taken offline or damaged, his projection would fade out, even while his consciousness remained within Voyager's computer.

Again, no formal recognition of the EMH being a sentient lifeform was ever made.



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Going at Warp Factor Eight



Stacey on set with LeVar Burton in 2008
(during their first production together, called "*Corrosion Comprehension: Combating the Pervasive Menace*")



The production crew with LeVar
(during their first production together, called "*Corrosion Comprehension: Combating the Pervasive Menace*")

Ever traveled to anywhere exotic and if so, describe please.

Yes, I have been lucky. My job takes me everywhere. Sometimes I get time for a little sightseeing, but only sometimes. In the past few years, I have been to every state except Alaska (I might have a job there this summer!) The rest of the list consists of Sweden, Italy, France, Greece, England, Switzerland, Scotland, Spain, the Caribbean, Malta, Tunisia, Mexico, Canada, the Philippines.... and just the other day I shot on the shuttle launch pad!

I know this sounds like a commercial for the best job in the world, but be prepared for the cons, too. I work crazy hours, sometimes up to 20 hours a day, often seven days a week! I neglect my friends and family and husband at times. I will not be able to have kids unless I change my career (which I will not do). I lose a lot of sleep. Sometimes I have to miss my sim! So it does have drawbacks....

Have any hobbies and what are they?

Other than the above? I think by going into TV Production, I could claim that my obsession with *Star Trek*, *Gilligan's Island*, *Get Smart*, *Batman* (and various other 60's TV shows) was a matter of work research, not a hobby. Does anyone buy that? My husband does not. Other than 60's TV and simming, I love SCUBA diving, reading, sci-fi in general, martial arts, and traveling.

How did you get into *Star Trek* and how long have you been simming?

Well, let's see.... I always remember watching TOS repeats growing up as my family watched it. Then I really got in to TNG in it's last year in 1994, then went out and bought all the VHS tapes and caught up with it. By the time I graduated high school in 1995, I went back and got all caught up with TOS. Then I started with *Voyager* when it started in 95, and same with *Enterprise*. (I never got into DS9.)

So, I guess I would say I moved from peripheral fan to hard-core Trekkie in 1994 at the age of 17. I started simming in August 1996 just as I started my sophomore year of college. I was a Medical Officer onboard the *Stealth*... and thus, a new hobby was born! Wow, 15 years, holy cow!





Stacey and her cousin Julie with William Shatner



LeVar, Stacey, and Bobby (a production assistant who simmed on the Excelsior for a while)

Ever been to any Trek conventions? Any interesting stories, if so?

Yes, I go to *Star Trek* conventions usually about twice a year. I almost always attend the big one in Vegas. I have a great story that relates directly to my work. In 2006, I was at the Vegas *Star Trek* convention in my assigned seat. The dude next to me kept talking and talking to me, for like the whole four days. Finally on the last day, he was rattling on about something and I turned to him and said, "Dude, you're obsessed with the Kriosians. They were only in like two episodes, now please shut up and let me watch Michael Dorn!"

He sat back and said, "Not Kriosian, CORROSION. I run the corrosion department in the Pentagon. I have been telling you about my work." I apologized and we started talking about corrosion of tanks, bridges, military equipment, infrastructure. This is the man who ended up hiring me to do videos for the Department of Defense, and now he is my biggest client. All because of *Star Trek*!!

Which Trek character do you relate to most and why?

Hmmmm, maybe Dr. Crusher. She is a professional woman who has to balance a very important career with family and other things.

Have you met anyone from online Trek simming?

Sure, let me see... I have met Dakor, Booker, Praethen, Valdore, Montoya, Tia Ryan, and I think a couple of others.

Have you ever met any of the Trek actors and other famous people? If so, give the names if possible.

Wow. This is a loaded question, because in my business I work with celebrities all the time, so I have met tons and could not name them all. I stopped counting famous people I have met after like two years when the list was into the hundreds. Since I do casting, it is part of my job.

I have met all the news folks like Katie Couric, the View gals, Regis and Kelly, Tom Brokaw, etc. I work with Disney Channel and ABC a lot, so pretty much everyone on those two channels. (With the exception of the V cast - whom I'd love to meet...but I am such a fan of that show, I would probably lose my objectivity.)

I have met all the Trek actors at one time or another with the exception of my favorite, DeForest Kelley. He died before I got into the business. One celebrity I really want to meet is Karl Urban!





LeVar and Stacey



LeVar and Stacey's Mom

I work with LeVar Burton pretty regularly. We have done four or five videos together, and have another one slated for August. We have become pretty good friends over the years from working together and we hang out socially whenever we get the chance. I will give you a few pictures of me, him, some mutual friends... even a cute one of him and my mom.

With all your involvement in the entertainment industry and basically having your life revolve around the things others only imagine doing in their fantasies, why do you still attend your sim?

LOL, that's funny. It's funny that you say it's a fantasy job... in a way it is, but it is also a *job* first and foremost. For example, when I work with LeVar we don't work on *Star Trek* stuff.... we very rarely even talk about *Star Trek* stuff... and I love *Star Trek*! So, until I get a job working on a *Star Trek* series or movie, this particular fantasy is still a fantasy for me. The sim helps me live out a *Star Trek* fantasy. Plus, I've been doing the sim long before I got fully into my career, so I was hooked way before I stood on my first TV sound stage.

Who do you look up to as a heroic figure?

My grandfather. Papa died two years ago but he was the most honorable man I know. He always said if you do what you love and have fun doing it, then you will never work a day in your life. I am very lucky and blessed.

How was your grandfather heroic? Did he fight in any wars?

Yes, he was in World War 2. He raised me, taught me everything I know, put me through school, sacrificed for me. I owe who I am to him.

Best advice you have received and any advice you want others to know from life experiences.

Well, that is a tough one. I guess I would have to say, go after what you want, no one is going to hand it to you. Also, do not be afraid to work hard and play hard. It is also a lot about who you know and being in the right place at the right time. Do not forget to dream because sometimes they just might come true. One final cliché I try to live by... you cannot take life too seriously because you are not going to get out if it alive anyway! Ahead, warp factor 8!



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Fan Fiction

Last time on Mc-A-Prise...

Skown woke up with the self destruct activated and found most of the crew missing. After he activated the EMH Mark 15, the holodoctor deactivated the self destruct and beamed all the wounded officers to sickbay. After Skown rescued a few officers from the Inferno, he returned to Earth. Despite being ordered to stand down by Admiral McMillian, Skown decided to head back to help both crews return. Despite the Federations best efforts to stop him, he ended up returning to the enemy space to help his crewmates. When the Enterprise arrived, they found that just as they had entered the wormhole warp drive Captain Artello sent a code over to deactivate the drive.

They are now stuck in enemy space with no wormhole warp drive and it will take them 250 years to get home. Will Skown and his new friends survive? Read on to find out...

Mc-A-Prise

by Lieutenant Peter McMillian

While Skown and the others were assessing their current situation, the aliens were still interrogating and torturing Captain Bradley. The black, oily-like creatures dragged Matthew Bradley into a chamber with the nearly dead Inferno captain, chaining Bradley to the wall just like the Inferno captain. The boss, Balaki, watched with glee as his men began the interrogation.

"Tell me, when will your Federation friends arrive?"

"Why would I tell you anything?"

Quickly getting infuriated with Bradley, Balaki grabbed something that most closely looked like a Klingon pain stick. He jabbed Bradley with it and delivered a massive shock to his body.

"That's why! You're beginning to aggravate me. If I don't like your answers, I will shock you. If you don't believe me, look at your fellow captain here."

"I understand." There wasn't much more Matthew could say. He knew he was in trouble and every fiber in his body wanted to retaliate, but he knew better, so he spoke.

"Who do you think you are, torturing a Starfleet captain? When the Federation finds you, you will be charged with assault, battery, kidnapping and the list goes on. You'll never again see the light of day!"

"You Federation types are cocky, aren't you? Well, I'm gonna fix that. I'm gonna kill you nice and slow. However, first I'm gonna tell you who you are dealing with... we are the Bankari. 300 years ago we encountered the first Federation ship trespassing in our territory and destroyed it. After stealing the ship's data we killed the captain and his crew. We are warriors, and we hate peace. When we found that Federation vessel we became disgusted. It was decided then that we would kill every member of your peaceful group that we came across. You disgusting people keep finding ways to get to us. We will not tolerate it! Now, tell us how to get to your home world!"

Bradley, knowing exactly what the Bankari meant, said, "Go to hell, I'll never help you!"

The Bankari laughed. "You peace keepers always say that, but you'll tell me what I need to know or die. Oh, and just so you know, your crew members that aren't dead are now our slaves to do with as we please. Ha ha ha ha." He began to electrocute Bradley again.

Bradley let out horrible screams, as he knew he could not stop what was happening to him and his crew. All he could do was hope that a rescue was on the way. While he was screaming, the Bankari let out a smirk of enjoyment. As he smiled, an oily liquid dripped from what most closely resembled a mouth to the floor.

"Ha Ha Ha, you amuse me human. Do not worry, I make sure you will have a slow and painful death, ha ha ha."

Back to the Enterprise.....

A few hours had passed and Skown still had no idea what to do, when his newly repaired tactical console started beeping. He looked at it and gasped in shock. "Guys, we have three Borg vessels and a Galaxy class Federation vessel approaching. God help us, we're in no condition to take on anybody right now."

The comm officer said, "Wait hold up! We are receiving a double hail from the Federation ship and the Borg ships, both using friendly codes. How did the Borg get friendly codes?"

Donald, the helm officer, asked, "Paul, are you serious? Borg friendly codes? Don't they just assimilate people?"

"Paul, Donald, relax, they are probably allies. About 100 years ago we made a treaty with a few select Borg. The treaty involves already assimilated Borg who broke away from the collective. Now, Paul, answer them in dual view mode."

Extremely confused, Paul and Donald both looked at each other and then looked at Skown like he was crazy.

"OK, Skown." Paul opened a hail with the two lead captains.

The first one to speak was a giant Monkey/Lion.

"Hello, Skown. You never could stay out of trouble, could you? I was in the area when Captain Artello hailed you. I thought you might try something stupid. I followed you through your warp wake but my ship got pushed out early. After that I scanned for there nearest Federation ship. So I'm here to offer help."

Then the Borg Captain spoke, "I am One of Twelve, Tertiary Adjunct of Unimatrix Zero. We picked up the distress signal sent by the Federation ship Inferno several hours ago. As per The Treaty of 2575 we have come to offer aid and assistance."

Skown suddenly put on the biggest and cheesiest smile he could. "Malino, long time no see. Of course we could use your assistance." Then, he looked at the Borg captain, "Yes, we would be grateful for any assistance you could give." Finally, looking at both at the same time, he replied, "For right now, the three of us are the only ones conscious here and our ship needs repairs. Can you help us? I am Skown McCalister, this is Paul Milton, and this is Donald Ramsey."

Malino replied, "I'm sending over 20 crew members to help man the main stations. However, we need to have a plan of attack."

"My friend, I'm working on one as we speak. However, until we can fully repair the ship, I suggest we run the ships in silent mode."

"Agreed."

"Very well, they'll be there in 5 minutes."

Both Captains closed their comm channels, leaving Skown and the others waiting for the help to arrive.

After the channel had closed, Paul and Donald both simultaneous spoke, "I ain't letting no Borg in here."

"Guys, they are our allies. Besides, we don't have much choice. When they arrive prepare to set the ship to silent mode." Quietly Skown mumbled to himself, "I hope this doesn't blow up in my face."

TBC.....

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Analysis of an Android

by Captain (ret.) Adam Android

(Full Disclosure: This article has been written by the creator of the character of Adam Android. As such, the writer is the owner of all of the intellectual rights to this character, and is uniquely and intimately aware of the background and history of Adam Android, whether such has been written or played out or not.)

Excerpt from the log "[*The Awakening - Part 3, Defining Life*](#)", Stardate 200207.23:

The Governor stood and walked around the table to stand in front of the android. With a glance at the Professor he addressed the android. "What are you?"

The android blinked and tilted its head. "I am the Android of the Tralerian Colony Cybernetics Research Facility."

The Governor nodded and then asked, "And do you know who I am?"

The android nodded and answered, "You are the Governor of the Tralerian Colony."

And then the Governor asked the question on everyone's mind but that hadn't actually been put into words. "Are you alive?"

The android paused only nanoseconds before answering simply, "Yes."

The Governor raised an eyebrow at the android and said, "So sure? How can you make that determination?"

The android stated simply, "I am programmed with the latest editions of several dictionaries and biological treatises. The composite definition of the term 'alive' is 'having life, being in a state in which the organs perform their functions.' When I accessed the database for definitions of the term 'life' I found the composite definition to be 'the property or quality that distinguishes animate matter from inanimate matter' and also 'that quality which is generally manifested in functions such as metabolism, growth, reproduction, and response to stimuli, or adaptation to the environment originating from within the organism.'" After stating the definitions, the android said simply, "Since I exhibit these qualities, I deduced that I am indeed alive."

The President of the Legislature muttered, "Remarkable."

The Commandant huffed. "Your definition says you'd have to exhibit metabolism, growth, and reproduction to be 'alive'. You don't do any of those."

The android answered, "On the contrary, sir. My internal structure has been designed to be able to process fuel supplements ingested from external sources, break those supplements down into required elements and distribute those elements to structures requiring extra materials. That would fit the definition of metabolism.

"As to growth, while it is true I do not 'grow' physically as biological organisms do, I grow mentally and emotionally daily. I have already catalogued and indexed thousands of new memory pathways that were not in my neural net when I was first activated. This is 'growth' is it not?

"As for reproduction, my circulatory system is infused with microscopic machines that can repair minor damage to tissues and even fabricate necessary supplies by use of microscopic replicator technology. In a strict sense of the word, that is 'reproduction' on a microscopic level. Also, I am reasonably capable of reproducing my entire structure and programming and creating a duplicate of myself should I be so moved and given the necessary time and materials. That is reproduction on the individual level.

"So, as you see, sir, I do meet those qualities of living beings."

Within the United Space Federation there have been several non-biological life forms created and played, but only one rose to command a starship: Captain Adam Android of the *ISS Reciprocity* and later the *USS Sojourner*, as well as *Europa Colony* (this colony/sim ultimately failed to develop).

Development of an Artificial Human

Adam Android was developed at the Tralerian Colony, an independent, self-contained, asteroid-based colony of Humans from Earth seeking to escape the "hustle-bustle" of everyday life in the United Federation of Planets. The colony has existed for over two hundred years and remained isolated and independent for the majority of that time. In fact, it has only been within the last decade or so that the Tralerian Colony emerged from its self-imposed isolation and rejoined the Federation.

The Tralerian Colony Cybernetics Institute was one of the most advanced developers of prosthetics and replacement organs and appendages in the Alpha Quadrant. But a theoretical question emerged as to whether they could develop a replacement for each and every organ and appendage in the human body, and then the question was asked whether such an artificial body could function as a whole. And so, they began construction of this experimental research project and eventually assembled a true "artificial human".

Adam's development was parallel to the research of the Human scientist, Dr. Noonian Soong, whose work was completely unknown to the Tralerian colonists. A team of cyberneticists led by Professor Geo T'g designed and built the various components used to construct the android, while Prof. T'g developed the positronic matrix and programming used to coordinate all the components and the routines and subroutines that defined his "interface".

Because he was constructed to exactly duplicate human physiology, Adam has a stomach and can digest food (though he doesn't require the nutrients), and he has lungs that can perform respiration (though he doesn't require air). He has even been known to excrete waste (when he has consumed food or drink). He sweats when it's hot, and he shivers when it's cold. He even has fully functional sexual organs (even though he was not designed to procreate sexually). Adam has had several relationships with females that extended into intimacy.

Adam's skin coloration is slightly paler than a biological Human, and is smoother to the touch, and has much smaller pores. And he has qualities and exhibits functions that seem to have no reasoning except to make him appear human. For instance, he has body hair, he is ticklish, and he gets goosebumps.

His mechanical body, though, is much stronger than a biological body and has a much wider range of tolerances to otherwise destructive forces and energies. He does have "pain receptors" which will signal when his body is being damaged, just as biological organisms do, but since his tolerances are so much higher than a biological organism's, he seems impervious to pain.

Adam also has a virtually limitless power source (Adam has stated his expected life-span is several thousand years). And although he does not tire, he mimics sleeping patterns and work shifts in an effort to "fit in". At regular feeding times, he will often consume a fluid which is primarily lubricant, but does contain fuel supplements and other 'nutrients' which his mechanical body uses for self-regeneration, or "healing" if you will. Adam's internal circulatory fluid (his "blood") contains thousands, perhaps millions, of tiny nanites which can repair damage to internal structures or attack invading particles much as would white blood cells.

After his construction and activation, the Tralerian authorities were surprised when Adam became self-aware and insisted he was a living being. His sentience was an unexpected side-effect of a positronic neural net that even surprised Prof. T'g.

Eventually, Adam petitioned the Colony leaders for citizenship. The issue of creating artificial life-forms developed moral overtures that the politicians would prefer not to delve into. So the entire process was classified Top Security and locked down. Adam soon afterward requested permission to leave the colony, and the politicians hastened the opportunity to "be rid of" the artificial life-form.

Emotion-Emulating Routines

Adam Android's personality includes fully integrated programs he refers to as "Emotion Emulating Routines". He describes these routines as automatic responses to certain stimuli, and while on occasion these routines have malfunctioned (either leaving him totally emotionless, like Data, or sending him into raving lunacy or despondency), they are as much a part of his programming as his vocabulary.

There has been much discussion over the years whether these are "real" emotions or simply "pre-programmed emotion-like responses". But this distinction is merely academic, his responses are so similar to expected human responses as to be indistinguishable (when the routines are functioning normally).

Forgetfulness Algorithm

Adam's positronic matrix stores perfectly everything he's ever been exposed to, but the man who designed Adam's "interface" decided that interacting with a machine that remembered everything exactly was intimidating to ordinary humans, so he introduced into Adam's matrix a routine he dubbed the "Forgetfulness Algorithm". This routine randomly blocks access to certain memory pathways until some other stimuli can jar the block loose. In this way, Adam's memory functions much like a human's in that he may forget details until some additional stimuli shakes loose the memory and the whole scene comes flooding back to him.

History

Adam was activated on Earth Date January 15, 2371 in the labs of the Tralerian Colony Cybernetics Institute. Two days later he was before several representatives of the Tralerian Colony Government where he presented his argument for being a sentient lifeform quoted at the opening of this article. It was only a few weeks after that when he left the Tralerian Colony with the intent of joining Starfleet.

A few years later, he was the Operations Officer aboard the ISS Reciprocity, a Romulan Warbird under the command of Captain Mendez. The unique Reciprocity Mission was a cooperative effort between the three major governments of the galaxy – the United Federation of Planets, the Klingon Empire, and the Romulan Star Empire – proposed after the successful alliance that defeated the Founders during the Dominion War.

However, Mendez had to suddenly leave due to a medical emergency and his predecessor, Captain St. Cloud, didn't stay in command very long either. Finding himself the senior bridge officer, then Lieutenant Adam Android assumed command. After being in command for several weeks in the Gamma Quadrant, he received a communiqué from Starfleet Command. This communiqué included special signals that effectively "upgraded" Adam's personality to give him a more advanced and mature outlook, and gave him a field promotion straight to full Commander. Finally, in March of 2376 he received his Captaincy. He was 5 years old!

For two years Adam explored the farthest reaches of the Gamma Quadrant and forged alliances with strange lifeforms and furthered the concepts of Sentient Rights far beyond the boundaries of the Federation.

Unfortunately, the Reciprocity Mission was cancelled by the Romulans and their Warbird was recalled. Most of the Klingon crew transferred back to Klingon space. But, the Federation decided to continue the exploration mission of the Reciprocity with a new ship, the USS Sojourner, and Captain Adam Android was assigned as its Commanding Officer.

In January 2380, after four more years of exploring the Gamma Quadrant on the Sojourner, Adam entered a period of "semi-retirement". He did some administrative duties on a Starbase, some research assignments in various locations, and some vacation time. He has remained more or less retired ever since.

The Archives

Many of Adam's exploits and adventures are preserved in the Sector 001 Archives and can be found at the following links:

- Old Reciprocity Boards – [Bios & Data](#), [Briefings & Logs](#), and [Lounge](#)
- Old Maverick/Sojourner Boards – [Bios & Data](#), [Briefings & Logs](#), and [Lounge](#)

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Simming as an Android

by Captain Lorianra

OOO Interview with the Player

Right off the bat, I'll have to ask, how do you create a believable Artificial Intelligence entity like an android as a sim character? I mean, there had to be some major thinking involved in coming up with Adam's background and even what he himself would be able to do and not do, right?

Well, to be honest, it began with watching Data on TNG. But when I decided to play an android, I wanted to do him differently. I didn't want to just do "another Data", which is why Adam is so much more human, and yet ... not.

That seems to pose its own problems then, though, doesn't it? How do you believably portray an android that is so human-like without simply acting human?

A lot of it came with mannerisms and speech patterns. For instance, Adam would refer to "my circulatory pump is functioning at a rapid pace" instead of "my heart's beating fast". He'd refer to his "visual receptors" instead of "eyes", and so on.

Back in the day when Adam first started simming, most folks were learning to use all those abbreviations (ROFL, LMAO, etc.) and the smileys (before the programs actually replaced them with little pictures). People stopped using punctuation and capitalization. Adam (and myself in most all of my characters) was very particular about spelling, grammar, punctuation, and orderly thought presented in writing. Somehow that came through into the character as well. People could tell it was really Adam Android even when my wife or one of my kids were using the screenname ... it "sounded" different.

And in spite of being a Captain in command of his own ship, and having great diplomatic skills, Adam was notoriously naive.

I see. Yes, I've been subject to your usage of sophisticated words that I had no clue what they meant. So, I can see how that trait of yours can easily play into portraying an android with vast knowledge and proper speech.

How much research and preparation did you actually put into the character before ever playing him?

I don't think I did any real research. I read a lot of sci-fi as a child and teenager, including most of the Robot series (by Asimov? or was it Heinlein?), and I watched TNG almost religiously. Honestly, I played Adam almost as simply an extension of myself for the most part. I've always felt like I was "something a little different" than an ordinary person. I'm sure those who've simmed with me any length of time can tell that, regardless of what character I'm portraying.

What advice would you give anyone that is thinking of playing an AI? Are there things you learned from experience, such as what works and what doesn't?

Well, this particular piece of advice isn't exclusive to AI's but applies especially to them: Don't be perfect! Nobody is perfect. There was an episode in Adam's life where he was overcome by what we on the Reciprocity lovingly called "The Green Energy Monster" ... it freaked out his emotion-emulating routines and he had a total breakdown. Even ended up wetting his pants!

Wow... embarrassing. But that's actually very good advice. Thinking about Data, there have been countless times when he was less than perfect, and he even said so. Though, I suppose that all depends on your standard for perfection.

Is there anything else you would like to pass on about AIs or androids in particular when it comes to simming?

Remember to have limitations. Androids are particularly vulnerable to energy surges, programming glitches, electromagnetic fields, all that sort of thing. Sure you can be "shielded" and so on, but you're never immune, especially when in direct contact. Adam got a medal created by one of the earlier Captains of the Reciprocity called "The Sparky Award for Creative Electrocution".

Also, remember that while some people feel being immune to telepathy is a good thing, it also means you're invisible to telepaths. And if you want to play an android without emotion, think twice, it's a lot harder than you think! The few times I played Adam where his emotion routines were malfunctioning I discovered it's very hard to avoid emotion.

Even Vulcans, who often remind us they've put emotions aside in favor of logic, aren't without emotion, they just suppress it. And you'd be surprised by just how much of their actions really are emotionally driven, they just make an excuse about it being logical.

Being truly without emotion means not even thinking twice about abandoning someone in a hostile environment if it means everyone else escapes. It means having absolutely no response when an old friend finds you after years. It means not even recognizing the beauty of a sunrise, because the recognition of beauty is taking pleasure, and pleasure is an emotion. If you have NO emotion, you must have NO emotion!

Those are certainly some very important aspects to think about. Thank you for sharing your thoughts.

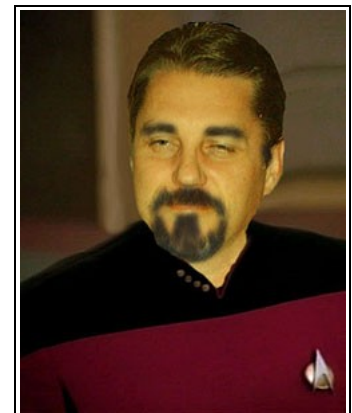
IC Interview with Captain Android

"Now establishing Datalink. Systems online." (tilts his head to one side)

Captain Android... Adam... (can't help but notice how stiff he sits) you've fought hard to be recognized as a living being. Would you call yourself an advocate of AI rights in this galaxy?

Perhaps "advocate" is not the correct word, since I have taken no overt action to stand up for others. Perhaps "proponent" would be the better word, since I do strongly insist that artificial intelligences should be given the opportunity to present their case for sentience.

Alright, proponent is a good word. What opportunities are you thinking of?



I am simply stating that should the question arise whether a specific AI is sentient that he, she, or it, as the case may be, should be allowed the chance to present an argument attempting to assert its rights as a sentient being. I did so myself before several members of the Tralerian Colony government. I have reviewed the case files for when Lt. Cmdr. Data was questioned by Cmdr. Maddox, and I seem to recall hearing that the Emergency Medical Hologram of the USS Voyager may have been given that opportunity as well, but ... I can't seem to recall details on that case. My Forgetfulness Algorithm must be blocking those memories, I apologize.

No problem. You remember more than I do. *(finds it strange that he doesn't move unless he's talking)* So, what benefits do you think can be gained by having an AI entity recognized as sentient?

What benefits do you have in being recognized as a sentient being?

Well... I've never considered comparing myself with someone or something not sentient, but I suppose the first thing that would come to mind is freedom of choice about my own body and mind and so forth.

Those are certainly admirable qualities, and rank highly on my own list of "benefits" of being sentient. But for one who has never doubted or had others doubt her sentience, you cannot imagine the feeling of having oneself recognized. And it is amusing to see the change in others. When someone begins referring to you as "it" and speaks about you as if you are not present, and then mere moments later is speaking directly to you and referring to you as "he" or "she", it is ... exhilarating.

I'd image that might be so. Heh. Would you consider yourself unique among androids?

Are you unique among your kind? We are all unique. Our personal experiences make us individuals. But I think your question begs a different answer. I am not a Soong-type android, nor am I like any other. I was created specifically to mimic a human male, down to the organs and internal anatomy of my body. Most androids are gears and circuitry inside a human-shaped shell. I am not.

Yes, that's sorta what I was referring to. I've noticed in your information that you even had intimate relationships? That seems a little over the top for an android, to be honest. I mean, we all know the folly of Data pursuing something like that before.

Data did not have any emotions for most of his lifespan. It was only much later he gained his emotion chip and could truly understand interpersonal relationships. My emotions are hard-coded directly into my personality subroutines, though they have at times malfunctioned. I have had only a few relationships that developed intimately, but I have had a few. The first was KDaana. She was a Tuatha de Danaan from Earth's Ireland, though she'd spent more than half a century living among Klingons and had their fiery spirit. Our relationship began I think simply as a science experiment - KDaana was the Chief of Science on the Reciprocity. I truly cared for her, but she transferred back to Qo'noS when the Reci decommissioned. I haven't seen her in over a decade.

Would you say you miss her?

(smiles broadly) Have you ever heard Data's description of friendship? It goes something like this: When I have become comfortable with someone, the neural pathways associated with them become well traveled, and when absent, the pathways go inactive. I'm paraphrasing, of course. But yes, I miss KDaana. I often replay some of our time together in the privacy of my quarters. As humans often say, you never forget your first love.

Heh. I still find that notion a bit strange to think about in your case, but ok. *(wonders, if Adam should blush, would his skin turn even more yellowish, then scratches that thought)*

(smiles and tilts his head to one side) I often find it strange to consider humans and other mammalian life forms giving birth. I try not to dwell on the idea.

Well, uhm... ok. *(slightly unnerved by his stare, waiting for him to blink, but he doesn't seem to do that very often)* So... has being recognized as a living being helped you any with commanding a ship? Meaning, did it affect how your crew treated you, the sort of respect they showed?

I would never have gotten a command if I had not been recognized as capable of executing independent judgment, so having been recognized was a prerequisite. As for those under my command, I don't think most of them ever gave it a second thought. *(tilts his head the other way)* Then again, on second thought, there were several who did give it a second thought, and some who gave it even a third! But they all came around eventually.

That certainly sounds like progress.

It did at least one time interfere with a First Contact situation. The representatives of the race being contacted could not accept that I was a living being. One of them even looked straight at me and said "Robot off" and then began to speak privately to his companion while I still sat there in my chair!

Oh, well... some people just carry strong prejudices. That even happens toward sentient beings that are recognized as such from birth.

Strong prejudices can sneak up on you, too. The Reci had a number of missions with a species in the Gamma Quadrant that resembled two-meter tall Earth cockroaches! You can imagine how difficult it was for some members of my crew!

***(shudders)* Though, I would think your creator must be proud of how far you've come.**

Yes, I'm sure Professor T'g is very proud of me. And I am proud of him as well. While much of my physical design and specifications and construction was performed by a team of cyberneticists at Tralerian Colony, Professor T'g designed my positronic matrix and wrote my personality and emotion emulating routines himself.

Ah yes, I suppose I have one last question in connection with that, a little bit of personal curiosity... how in the galaxy do you pronounce your creator's name again? Every time I try saying it, it sounds like I'm stifling a sneeze.

(actually laughs out loud) Stifling a sneeze? I like that!

It's very close to "Tehg" almost like "Tug". For some reason never explained to me, when the Tralerians separated from the Federation, they shortened their names, eliminating the vowels in the surnames and inserting apostrophes or other punctuation symbols. The spoken names kept the same sounds at first, but as generations passed, even the vocalizations had become truncated. My father's first name is spelled G-E-O (they kept vowels in their given names) and is generally pronounced like the nickname "Joe".

I see. Interesting. Well, Captain, thank you for your time and the Tralerian pronunciation lesson.

You are most welcome. It was a pleasant interview, and allowed me to revisit some old memories, some I haven't recalled in many years. Thank you.

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Comics & Humor

USF "Ad-lib"

Off-the-Cuff Excerpts from USF Sims

Metaphorically speaking:

FltCpt Crelak: En'voig> The devil? I am unfamiliar with this ... being. Is he evil? Is he against Torvig'la?

FstLtJMarkson: He represents all that is evil on our world. His main task was to collect the souls of people and take them to a place we call Hell.

FstLtSakakino: A place of eternal punishment after death. Retold in many forms by many different cultures.

FltCpt Crelak: (The devil takes people to Michigan? ;))

FstLtSakakino: ((lol I use What in the Hell, Michigan from time to time))

FstLtJMarkson: ((no...but the Devil went down to Georgia.....))

- *that explains it all! (during a USS Odyssey sim)*

About our sponsors:

knomikbrott: Tonight's episode brought to you by "Mr. Brott's Incredible Holographic Wiener."

knomikbrott: All the Weiner, none of the calories.

Sephrim Fernier: Mr. Brott, scarring people mentally since 1983.

- *pre-sim chatter before the USS Ares crew went on to pretending they were customers at that strange restaurant*

Cheese, it's good:

VAdm_Anders: Smooth sailing and good luck.

CaptainTAshal: Thank you. ::pops another grape into her mouth::

VAdm_Anders: ::with a smile and gratitude:: Oh, thank you... How'd you know? ::takes her plate from her as if she was offering it::

VAdm_Anders: ::moving off with the plate:: A good sign... A Captain who isn't afraid to share the bounty.

CaptainTAshal: ::glances back to Anders, wondering if the man is senile::

VAdm_Anders: ::eating some cheese, releases another little smell-present before meandering over to the window::

VAdm_Anders: ::looking outside as he eats:: A fine ship, indeed.

FstLt_Lobren: (ROFL, Anders)

CounselorNTazzia: ((eating some cheese AND cutting some cheese now that's talented!))

- *the reason why old fuddy-duddies like Admiral Anders get shipped off to Wisconsin after retirement, where they live out their lives grazing greener pastures (USS Excelsior sim, during Change of Command ceremony)*

Not your regular masseuse:

USFDiell: AXN> AS BROTT STEPS INTO THE ROOM A VOICE ASKS, "Would you prefer male or female?"

knomikbrott: "Uh.. for a massage? Female?"

knomikbrott: :: looks toward Narell :: "Hope that is the right answer."

Narell Graehy: ::doesn't know what to say::

knomikbrott: :: gets out his tricorder in one hand and the phaser in the other ::

USFDiell: AXN> THE LIGHTS DIM A BIT, SULTRY MUSIC COMES ON, AND THEN A NAKED FEMALE APPEARS IN THE ROOM, SHE BEGINS TO DANCE AND MOVE TOWARD BROTT AND NARELL.

knomikbrott: "Dinner and a show."

Narell Graehy: ::under her breath:: Holy cow.

- while investigating a restaurant/motel looking for Captain Havraha (during a USS Ares sim)

That typical Zaldan way:

CaptainLoriarra: ::TL halts on deck 2, she steps out:: I see you remember me.

CommanderBones: ::follows:: Of course I do, it wasn't that long ago... and I'm not that old... yet ::grins:: It's good to see you again.

CaptainLoriarra: ::raises brow:: Why?

CommanderBones: ::walking with her:: Getting promoted to Captain and getting your own ship so quickly is quite an accomplishment.

CaptainLoriarra: ::stops at the briefing room door:: There is no need to kiss up, Commander.

CommanderBones: ::splutters::

CaptainLoriarra: ::steps into the room::

FstLt Lobren: (Ooo! Same ole' Lori.)

CommanderBones: I'm sorry, Captain, you misunderstand. I'll not be kissing up. Not now, not ever.

- one highly effective way to throw the CMO off balance, insinuate that she's brown nosing (during a USS Excelsior sim)

(Note from the Editor: This next section contains excerpts that were all taken from Captain Kaysen Jarv's promotion to CO of the USS Agamemnon. Mister Jarv suggested these clips, apparently in an effort to show how much love everyone has for me and expose the "wild" side of this magazine's editor. I have no clue what he's talking about, and can neither deny nor confirm this so called recorded "evidence". (grins) --Lori)

Special equipment:

USFBooker: COMMANDER KAYSEN JARV. AS A REPRESENTATIVE OF HIGH COMMAND I OFFER YOU THE RANK OF CAPTAIN AND THE POSITION OF COMMANDING OFFICER OF THE USS AGAMEMNON. DO YOU ACCEPT?

USFKaysenJarv: Do I have to?

USFBooker: NOPE. I HEAR LORIARRA WANTS THE JOB.

USFBrianaSantori: ::glares at Kaysen:::

CmdrJanseen: Thatta boy!

USFKaysenJarv: Oh, ok. I accept!

USFBooker: THEN I HEARBY PROMOTE YOU TO THE RANK OF CAPTAIN. WITH ALL THE RIGHTS AND ANTI-LORIARRA EQUIPMENT AND TACTICS THUS GRANTED A COMMANDING OFFICER. MAY THE PADD HAVE MERCY ON YOUR SOUL.

CmdrJanseen: We all need the anti-Lorriara equipment.

USFLoriarra: ::didn't know they already had that equipment past the testing phase::

- *I'd like to know who in the R&D section couldn't keep his trap shut about this highly experimental equipment ::glances at Robb::*

Bubbling over:

USFLoriarra: ::puts her mouth over the bottle opening to keep the champagne from coming out, has to gulp some of it down quickly::

USFLoriarra: ::tries to applaud but champagne is coming out of her ears::

USFKaysenJarv: LORI!

- *slight beverage malfunction after Lieutenant Commander Trent was assigned as AXO of the USS Agamemnon; and a good reason to keep away from champagne*

The newest Star Trek dance craze:

USFBrianaSantori: ~~you guys are nuts~~

AirofDin: Macadamia? BRAZIL! I want some.

USFLoriarra: ::starts doing the Macadamia::

USFKaysenJarv: How does one do the macadamia?

USFBrianaSantori: It's like the Macarena but with Bat'leths, Kaysen.

- *you should try it; it's a workout! (during the after-party)*

Have any interesting lines from one of your sims? Send them our way! We'd love to share the fun and laughs. Use the [feedback](#) link (select "PADD Editor"). For verification purposes, the date of the sim from which the information is taken **must** be included.

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Redneck Engineers...



... have realized Duck Tape's
potential in the medical field.

Fred Fogarty

(Note from artist: I usually do the comics the last week of the month. Well, the day before I was gonna work on it I hurt my finger in Softball practice on a bad hop. The fingertip swelled to almost twice its size and turned purple. When I took this picture it had already gone down a lot. Also, the picture didn't really capture its color. However, now the fingernail's starting to turn purple. We're not sure if I broke the bone or what, but it's near impossible to wield my tablet pen to make an actual comic this month, so you get this. P.S. Oh, and I am totally giving you the bird. P.P.S. I will forever call the Material of the Gods by its original name: Duck Tape.)

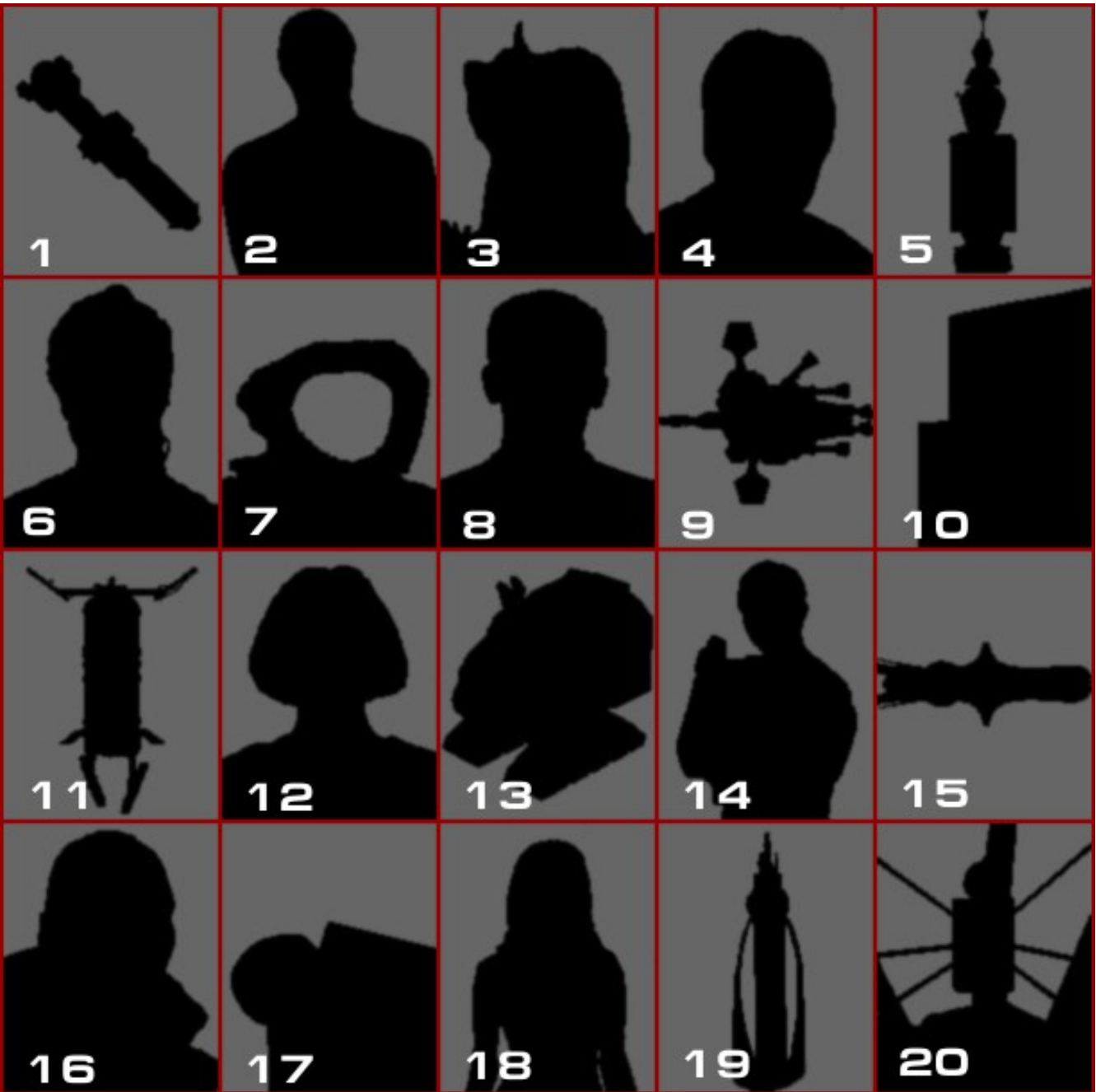
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Data Network

Guess Who?

AI Silhouettes - Can you guess what they are?

(Answers can be found at the bottom of the PADD.)



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Gossip & Advice



by Captain Rosanna Severine

Each issue of "The Tattler" depends on your submissions and what other news is out there wagging tongues and burning ears. Thank you to those anonymous and revealed submissions this month.

(NOTE: This issue contains a tribute to Alejandra Montoya, and it features rumored facts and/or fiction, promotions and retirements from the USS Ares, USS Federation, Starfleet Academy, USS Agamemnon, USS Excelsior, Outpost Phoenix, and USS Lothlorien. Don't see your sim's goodies listed below? We'd be happy for you to contact us. I'm trying to visit different sims each month, but that isn't always possible or I might not catch the good news on the week USFGossipGirl visits.)

In this month's edition we bid a fond farewell to long-time friend and former co-author of "The Tattler", Alejandra Montoya-Mancuso. I have known Alejandra since her very first character in the USF about 14 or 15 years ago, and I count her among one of the dearest women I have ever met. She was a very giving and kind person both in the sims and in her personal life.

The USF is losing a fine woman from its hosting ranks, and I hope that she will find her way back to us someday. She will be greatly missed by her friends and her crew. Thank you for your many years of laughs, love, guidance, and friendship. Farewell, my dear friend.

USS Ares - Submitted Anonymously

"Oh boy! I'm not sure what I missed out on by not being on the AT. I'll tell you, when they came back from that orbiting restaurant ... well ..." The voice on the recording turned to a whisper. "I can't tell you exactly how I know this, but Commander Diell materialized on the transporter pad without a top." The voice sounded very sure of itself, "Honest! She was just in her uniform pants and a bra!!"

"We still don't know where the Captain is. Apparently, they didn't find him in that place. Plus ..." The voice lowered itself again. "I heard that Lt. Brott and Ensign Graehy had some 'unclad' entertainment. Uh huh. Some female dancing without clothes in a motel room for them. I haven't found out yet if they ... you know ..."

"Anyways, it seems that away mission was quite an interesting one. Reliable sources tell me there's something going on between Doctor Swan and that new Engineer, Jallia. Yep, no kidding about it. I think she's old enough to be his mother. To each their own."

USS Federation - Nurse Nashota

"In the middle of this mess with the intruders and the cloak detector being stolen, SFC decides to promote Loriarra to Captain and now she's leaving!"

"I'm not sure how many more ways she's gonna be breaking the poor Doc's heart. I think he might be in need of some comforting."

Further News: As stated by Nurse Nashota above, Commander Loriarra was promoted to the

rank of Captain and was to report as the Commanding Officer of the *USS Excelsior*. Katy McGuire of the *USS Roddenberry* was then promoted to Commander and appointed as the *USS Federation's* new Executive Officer.

Starfleet Academy - Rosanna Severine

"Everything has been running fairly smoothly for the Academy. The cadets are picking up on their self-defense training and cultural classes. Several cadets even rubbed elbows with Ambassadors at the latest Cultural Center function."

"Romance has blossomed further along with the coming of Spring. Cadets Ailana Darz and Malachi Styles seem to have gotten over whatever rough patch they were going through. They have been seen many times quite close at events and on off class time. Cadets Thaddeus Other and Hermia Malfoi are still going strong into their second year of dating."

USS Agamemnon - Rosanna Severine

Retirement: Last month the *Agamemnon* was partying over the wedding of two of its own. This month they are mourning the loss of their Captain, Brianna Santori. Captain Santori has joined others in the illustrious USF Retirement Wing.

Promotion: Commander Kaysen Jarv was promoted to Captain and made the Commanding Officer of the *USS Agamemnon*. He has served the Aggie well, and now he will carry on its traditions with his own style and flair.

USS Excelsior - Rosanna Severine

Retirement: Rear Admiral Styre has resumed his place in the Retirement Wing of the USF. He leaves behind a fine ship and crew for the new Commander Officer. The crew gave Admiral Styre a very nice going away party with gifts as well from many of them.

Promotions: Captain T'Ashal (Captain Loria's replacement character) was promoted to the position of Commanding Officer of the *USS Excelsior*. She has also chosen her First Officer this month, a former Captain who has left the retirement wing behind. He will now be joining the *USS Excelsior* as Commander Joshua Trellis, the First Officer.

Outpost Phoenix - Rosanna Severine

Retirement: Captain Alejandra Montoya-Mancuso has officially signed in to the USF's Retirement Wing. She will be greatly missed, but we hope she enjoys her relaxation time there.

Promotion: Anika Troy-Bonali was promoted to Captain and, she was also given command of the *Outpost Phoenix*.

USS Lothlorien - Rosanna Severine

Retirement: Commander David Watts has retired as the XO of the *Lothlorien*.

Promotion: Nakaruru Dire has returned to First Officer duty, stationed on the *Lothlorien* as a Commander once again. Welcome back.

Have any gossip to pass along? Juice tidbits about your sim, or the lastest stunt a crew member performed? Please use the [feedback](#) link (select "The Tattler") or email rosanna.padd@gmail.com.

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"Ask Y"

by Commander James Yosay

Question: "I've heard a rumor that there is some smelly shirt going around when people get promoted to XO. Is that true? Isn't that bad hygiene and completely against Star Fleet regulations?"

Indeed. There is a tradition dating back to... well no one can really remember... where all newly promoted XO's get handed down a shirt that they must wear. This shirt has literally been through hell and back. I mean just think, some of the great ones of the USF have worn this thing, including everyone in HC and even at one time, our beloved Caitlin.

It's gone from a size small, and been super-stretched into a size XXL, with the sleeves having to be tailored to fit the huge muscles of Booker, and extended out in... other ways... to accommodate some of the women's chest sizes... which I still find a little hard to believe... *(clears throat)*

And then we had to add some material down below to allow Ray, Brent, and Marshall, and a few others to at least wear the thing without an exposed flesh warning being issued. Sadly, one or two XO's have found ways of getting around having to wear the shirt. *(glares at Watts and York)*

It is a true privilege to get the stinky, smelly shirt when promoted to First Officer on a sim. Wear it proudly!

Yosay

Need some advice? Use the [feedback](#) link (select "Ask Y") or e-mail your questions and/or comments to USFJamesYosay@gmail.com.

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Schnitzel-ology

by Nadja DeChevalier

It seems as a German residing in the US, the one word I get most often asked about in terms of food is "Schnitzel". And it also seems to be the most misunderstood word by Americans. For some reason, unknown to me until I heard of the hot dog food chain with that name, "Wienerschnitzel", Americans seem to think Wiener Schnitzel has something to do with hot dogs, or wieners, or sausages, or whatever you might call it in your neck-of-woods, when it in fact is nothing of that sort.

The term "Wiener" is an adjective derived from the word "Wien", or known in English as Vienna, a city in Austria. So, a "Wiener Schnitzel" is a Schnitzel from Vienna, or better, originating in Vienna. The reason it was named such becomes more clear when considering what Schnitzels are and what they are made of. Therefore, my idea of writing this little educational article for the food section of the PADD, which I call... "Schnitzel-ology".

The word "Schnitzel" basically means carving and is closely related to the word "Schnitte", which means cut. So, in other words, Schnitzel are cuts or carvings of something. In terms of food, that means Schnitzel are cutlets; breaded and fried, boneless cutlets to be exact. Something similar to what Americans know as "Chicken Fried Steak", only Schnitzel are never made of beef. There is just something inherently wrong with making Schnitzel from beef to Germans. Beef is used for steaks, in stews (like Gulasch), for soups to produce tasty stock, or ground up for hamburgers, but never ever breaded!

That being said, what are Schnitzel made from then? - A traditional, every-man's Schnitzel is usually made from pork. Now, in Germany the butchers cut certain portions of pork specifically to be used for Schnitzel, which at times can be more than plate-sized. Here in the US, however, I have found that boneless pork chops work the best for this purpose; pork steaks just have too much fat and sometimes even bones on them. Of course, pork chops are not very big, but the meat is lean and well suited. You can use the thin breakfast chop version or pound down others to about the thickness of a breakfast pork chop. In any case, Schnitzel should not be more than 1/4 inch thick.

For those that are more health conscious, sliced turkey breast is also an option, which my mother made many times and is called "Putenschnitzel". However, other fowl, as in sliced chicken breast, is not traditionally used for Schnitzel in Germany. And then of course, there is the Wiener Schnitzel. As I already mentioned, it got its name because it was a special version originating in Vienna. A Wiener Schnitzel is made from Veal - yes, baby cows - and prized for its tenderness. It is traditionally served simply breaded with a slice of lemon.

Aside from the different meats used in making a Schnitzel, there are also many versions named after their garnish, i.e. mainly what sort of gravy you put on it. A Schnitzel is usually served in Germany with some sort of potatoes on the side. The most commonly used ones are: boiled salt potatoes, mashed potatoes, french fries, or potato salad.

However, only the gravy on top of the Schnitzel is what might give it a special name. A plain, every-day Schnitzel is usually served with a brown gravy, especially when mashed potatoes are served with it, or just plain. A "Jaegerschnitzel", or Hunter's Schnitzel, comes with a brown gravy that has a dab of cream and sauteed, sliced mushrooms in it. A "Rahmschnitzel", or Cream Schnitzel, has a cream-based gravy that is beige in color, but not white. A "Zigeuner Schnitzel", or Gypsy Schnitzel, is served with a brown gravy that has sauteed, cubed onions and red and green bell peppers in it.

And of course, there are several other varieties, but these are the most common ones that I grew up with and any German would be able to relate to, if you'd ask them.

So, now that I've whet your appetite, I won't be so cruel as to just walk off and leave you drooling. Let me get to the crux of the matter: How to make Schnitzel!

I hope you will have a chance to try it out. They are indeed as delicious as their reputation claims. Enjoy!

Authentic German Schnitzel

INGREDIENTS:

- Pork cutlets/chops (boneless)
- Eggs (approx. 1 for every 4 cutlets)
- Salt and Pepper
- Breadcrumbs (plain)
- Vegetable Oil

PREPARING THE MEAT:

- (1) Beat thicker cutlets down to 1/4 inch thickness with a meat mallet. (This is time and energy consuming and the reason why I tend to use breakfast chops; they are already thin.)
- (2) Season each cutlet with salt and pepper on both sides. Set aside.
- (3) Scramble eggs in a deep dish plate.
- (4) Use a deep dish plate, or some other container with walls, and spread out the breadcrumbs in it to cover the bottom fully to about a 1/2 inch thick, give or take (you will need to have plenty of cushioning and perhaps even have to refill).
- (5) Drag one cutlet at a time through the scrambled eggs on both sides. Let excess egg run off.
- (6) Place the cutlet on top of the breadcrumbs and press it into the crumbs all over, coating one side. Then turn and repeat with the other side. Do so at least a couple of times, making sure the cutlet is covered with the breadcrumbs fully and no wet egg mass is visible any more. (This procedure is messy, since the egg-breadcrumb mixture will stick to your fingers. I have used plastic, disposable gloves before to keep that from happening. Though, with either method, you would have to wash the breading off your hands frequently.)
- (7) Deposit the breaded cutlets on a plate for later frying. (You can stack them without anything in between, if you made sure their outside is dry, as instructed. You can also cover them with plastic after you're done with all of them and keep them in the refrigerator for several hours, until you are ready to fry them.)

COOKING THE SCHNITZEL:

- (1) Pour enough vegetable oil into a pan to cover the bottom with it at least 3/8 inch deep, but no more than 1/2 inch. (The Schnitzel must be able to lightly float, but not freely swim in it; and they are at least 3/8 inch thick by now with the breading. You might also have to add oil during cooking, depending on how many Schnitzel you are frying, to keep them sufficiently at float.)
- (2) Turn burner on medium high; heat oil until wooden toothpick inserted produces lively bubbles.
- (3) Place Schnitzel into the hot oil, making sure they do not touch (they have to have room).
- (4) Fry them until they are golden brown on each side, turning them several times during frying to ensure even cooking.
- (5) Let the oil drip off for a moment, when removing them from the pan.

Note: You can eat them fresh from the pan, or keep them warm on a baking sheet in an oven, until you're ready to serve them. If you store them until you have fried them all, letting the oil drip off or even briefly setting them on a paper towel before putting them away for being kept warm will prevent them from becoming soggy.

Like to share a favorite recipe? Don't be shy. We love to hear about food. Use the [feedback](#) link (select "USF PADD") to submit recipes and food-related articles.

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