

http://www.ideabout.com/fan_design/in_progress/current_work.html

http://www.ideabout.com/fan_design/in_progress/discussions/20111228_fb_talk_menu.html

Peter Olotka commented on [Cosmic Encounter](#)'s status.

April 2

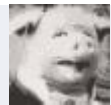
Blue Sky Brainstorming

Some thoughts on starting points for creating new Cosmic Encounter content. To break away from features which give players cards, ships, points, look for new starting points. Here are a few thoughts:

1. Odd characteristics of sub atomic particles
2. Newly revealed deep space mysteries found by Hubble and other space exploration instruments
3. Psychological personality traits
4. Symbiotic relationships in life forms
5. Extremeophile life forms
6. Acoustic effects
7. Musical forms
8. Obscure words
9. Overlooked lifeforms (creatures not represented in Cosmic)
10. Common everyday items that no one would consider as a life form
11. Dreams
12. Forms of personal social interaction, like arguing, loving, laughing

Please add to this list. Then see if you can stick to the rule that the new power (or other content) idea is a game manifestation that does not involve getting / losing cards ships or points. And see if you can imagine artwork that has no Earth-centric lifeform manifestations, limbs, eyes :)

Discussion



Michael Damrath How about a mechanic that causes players to trade hands/planets, or for everyone to give their hand to the player on the left, or something like that? I could imagine some pretty wacky scenarios. Quantum entanglement? Twisters! I dunno.. just throwing science at the wall, here.

That sort of counts as getting cards/points, though, so I'm not sure it qualifies?

March 20 at 11:02am · Like



Bill Martinson Regarding #8, obscure words, I have an affinity for the word "aristarch", which means "a severe critic" (especially of grammar). Being one who constantly comments on everyone else's homebrews, I wanted to make an alien that poked a little fun at myself for being so aristarchish. What I had developed so far was kind of bland ... but your challenge to avoid manipulating cards/ships/points forced me to get creative and come up with something more interesting (thanks!).

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I like this alien's History because it explains the tragic backstory of how all the aliens in the Cosmos came to be able to communicate with one other.

ARISTARCH - CRITICIZES FAILURES

You have the power to Criticize. Once per encounter, if another player (as the offense) loses two or more ships to the warp during his or her first encounter, at the end of that encounter you */*may use*/* this power to tell that player what he or she did wrong. Then, to show how things are done properly, you become the offense and take his or her second encounter for yourself (if you have an encounter card). Afterwards, play passes normally to the next player after the original offense.
(Not Offense) (Optional) (Resolution)

History: In the early centuries of Cosmic commingling, the Aristarchs were essential to interspecies communication. Their talent and affinity for grasping alien languages reduced misunderstandings and ultimately ensured the accuracy of the now-ubiquitous adaptive translation software. This success unfortunately made their interpretation skills obsolete, and the Aristarchs now spend their days in bitter judgment of those they had formerly served so well.

Image concept: I imagine a tiny, grumpy alien whispering into another alien's ear (or what passes for an ear). The Aristarchs were so tiny you could "wear" them on your shoulder or hanging off your head like a kind of organic bluetooth universal-translator headset.

March 20 at 12:28pm · Like · [1](#)



[Bill Martinson](#) Obviously that should be "during the first encounter of his or her TURN", not his first of the game. ;-)

March 20 at 1:20pm · Like



[Peter Olotka](#) Well spake, especially for an aristarch

March 20 at 2:13pm · Like



[Peter Olotka](#) Power to poke fun?

March 20 at 2:13pm · Like

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Bob Constans The Neutrino - has the power to be in 2 places at the same time - Travels faster than light

March 20 at 3:46pm · Like · [1](#)



Bob Constans The Quark - I dunno powers, but isn't that an awesome name!?

March 20 at 3:47pm · Like



Peter Olotka Dig up what Quarks do and make it a power

March 20 at 4:52pm · Like



Sarah Ryan Quark's? Your makin me a think about Star Trek Deep Space 9 and the Ferengis lol. Hey sorry been quiet Peter bit happening my end and been away a bit tooooooo.....no internet.....

March 20 at 5:04pm · Like



Gerald Katz There already exists Silencer which prevents a player from speaking. There's my Clown power that has the destiny pile determine the offensive player who attacks the player whose turn it is, becoming the defense instead.

March 20 at 8:56pm · Like



Ales Smrdel With our games we use a home-brew that requires a little musical interaction. We call it "Strophe" but maybe better name for it would be Whistler. Could be related to #7 from your list ...

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Strophe - Whistles In Duplicate Encounter Card

You have the power to Whistle. In Alliance phase after alliances are formed you /* may use */ this power to whistle a verse.

Once per encounter after encounter cards are revealed you may whistle the same verse to play the same encounter card from your hand that was already played by your side. If played encounter card is an attack card it is added to your sides total score.

(Main Player or Ally Only)(Optional)(Alliance)

Need to work on the History, ... yes you guessed it. It does not have one.

And the artwork ... maybe a creature of pure energy - cloud in the form of a musical note that is posed as whistling a tune.

March 22 at 6:01pm · Like



Peter Olotka Symphony ..power to?

March 25 at 11:01am · Like



Bill Martinson Here's another non-ship/card/point-yielding idea, but it needs a better name. The concept is pretty simple: as the defense, you fast-talk the offense into combining your resources to go invade somebody else instead.

INSTIGATOR - Diverts Invaders to Other Systems

You have the power of Diversion. As the defense, after the offense aims the hyperspace gate at a planet in your system and launches ships, you /*may use*/ this power. Re-aim the gate at any non-main player's home planet, making that player the defense instead. During the alliance phase, the offense must invite you to ally and you must accept with at least as many ships as the offense sent, although you are not required to abandon any colonies to do so.

(Defense Only) (Optional) (Launch)

HISTORY: Citing the well-known proverb, "The enemy of my enemy is my friend," the smooth-talking Instigators possess an almost supernatural ability to convince would-be invaders that other pastures – lusher, easier, or more deserving pastures, depending on the mark's emotional needs – await just on the other side of hyperspace. Promising substantial support, and delivering it, the Instigators rarely miss an opportunity to make new friends and take new fields.

WILD: When another player is about to take cards from your hand (e.g., for compensation), you may

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name a third player. The first player must take either the full amount from that third player, or only half the amount (round down) from you.

(As Any Player) (Any Phase)

SUPER: If you use your power and the offense wins the encounter, you may force any or all players on the winning side (including yourself) to return their ships to other colonies and receive rewards instead of gaining a colony.

(Not Main Player) (Resolution)

COMMENTARY: Powers that avoid being encountered as the defense are notoriously disliked, but hopefully the extra foreign colonies (and player interaction possibilities) should save this one from the dustbin. I guess it's sort of the opposite of Siren. Do you send the offense someplace you hope he can win and get you both a colony? Or someplace you hope he will lose, sacrificing your four ships to end the turn of a too-strong player? Do you send him to a planet where he already has a colony, knowing that he will probably try his best to lose and send your ships to the warp? Can you set him up in a situation like that where you think he **can't** lose?

As for your opponents, when destiny sends them to you, what will they guess you will do? How many ships will they launch in the gate? Can you build rapport to make the others confident enough to launch four ships, trusting that you will send them someplace beneficial for the both of you? And when is the right moment to shatter that trust?

March 26 at 1:13pm · Like



Bill Martinson Sorry, I left this out: Note that Wild Instigator is a self-protecting flare. Even if the other player decides to take cards from you instead of the person you implicated, the flare is on the table (out of your hand) while the cards are taken and then returns to you hand afterward. Like Wild Miser, it's more difficult to capture than your average bear.

March 26 at 1:26pm · Like · [1](#)



Peter Olotka Martinson unleashed!

March 26 at 6:55pm · Like

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Gerald Katz Here is a more detailed version of Clown:

CLOWN Destiny/Expert

Destiny Determines Offensive Player

You have the power to fool. When it is not your turn, when destiny is flipped use this power to have destiny determine who is the offensive player. If the player does not have encounter cards he gets a new hand. The player whose turn it is becomes the defensive player. If the destiny flip is wild or a special destiny, the player whose turn it follows the rules normally, except the player he designates is the offensive player. If the defensive player wins his first encounter he may take a second one if he wishes and is not out of encounter cards.

HISTORY: Laughter is the best medicine, and the Clowns excel at it. Adept at the practical joke, the Clowns easily turn the tables on everyone. As everyone laughs at the Clowns' antics, some begin to wonder why they feel they just got hit in the face with a pie.

Do Not Use With Machine

FLARE

All

Wild: After agreeing to a deal, you need not fulfill your part of the bargain. You do not lose ships or suffer any other particular consequences.

Destiny

Super: On your turn, if given the opportunity to have an encounter in your system, engaging in an encounter there does not count against the number of encounters you may have. You may have another encounter even if you lose.

March 27 at 12:06am · Like



Gerald Katz Instigator is effectively Dictator + Parasite to me.

March 27 at 12:12am · Like

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Bill Martinson I like the concept of Clown but always find it a little difficult to absorb. You can probably get pretty close to first-read comprehension by recasting it. This is a nicely pithy concept: it's basically a Changeling or Sorcerer that swaps roles instead of powers or cards, so let's see what happens if we try to write it that way:

CLOWN (Red Alert)
Switches Encounter Roles

You have the power to Fool. When you are not the offense, after the defense is determined, /*use*/ this power to switch the main players' roles. The offense becomes the defense and vice versa. If the new offense lacks encounter cards, he or she must immediately draw a new hand. At the end of the encounter, the roles switch back: the new defense becomes the offense again and his or her success or failure affects turn continuation normally.

(Not Offense) (Mandatory) (Destiny)

WILD CLOWN: After making a deal, you need not fulfill your part of it. You do not lose ships or suffer any other penalties and it still counts as a success.

(Main Player Only) (Resolution)

SUPER CLOWN: As the offense, after you have an encounter in your own system, you may declare it a "free" encounter that does not count toward the number of encounters you may have and does not prevent you from continuing your turn if unsuccessful.

(Offense Only) (Resolution)

Commentary: Technically, I should have included a (Launch) icon on the base power because of Will (FFG has Will making his decision in the wrong phase, so without that icon, he can prevent Clown from using his power). However, since this is at least the third or fourth concept I've seen now that has to be "written around" that mistake, I think it's time to just state that Will really makes his decision in Destiny instead of Launch, to avoid making everything else work around this error. (It needs to be fixed for other existing effects anyway.)

I also recommend changing the Super to play at the end of the encounter. This keeps it simpler and self-contained, and avoids telegraphing your intentions to the others. Also, since the opportunities for its use are few and far between, and FFG limits you to one flare per encounter, it would be good to not have to use that up before you even know whether you need it or not.

March 27 at 9:46am · Like



Peter Olotka Lots of aliens are hybrids of others combined

March 27 at 10:18am · Like

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Jonathan Gilmour New play mode: Overlord- for large groups with even numbers. Two players are chosen randomly as the overlords, the remaining players are divided as servants to each overlord. A team wins by securing their overlord 5 colonies outside of their teams systems. The overlords have separate alien powers from the base aliens, that allow them to reward/punish their servants. They also have a hand of cards that allow them to follow or feint their servants. After destiny is chosen on a servants card, the overlord decides to follow or feint their servant. If they follow and the attack is successful, they get the colony. If it fails, they must use a punishment power on their servant. If the defense is successful, that overlord may use a reward power. Maybe to add internal team strife, only the overlord and his "pet" win the game, which is the servant who pleased the overlord the most (or displeased the least).

March 27 at 10:44am · Like



Jonathan Gilmour Setup variant: cosmic auction - player reveal 2 x players worth or flairs. Players bid on the option to pick their flair, and alien. High bidder pays his bid in ships sent to the warp in setup, and takes his choice of flair, and alien card. Players bid until all players have an alien power. Flairs get shuffled in. Remaining aliens go into the box. If an alien benefits from having ships in the warp, the player keeps his bid instead.

March 27 at 10:49am · Like



Bill Martinson There was a lot of discussion of these kinds of bidding ideas on BGG. One challenge to overcome is that defining the cost as "ships sent to the warp" is highly variable, depending on which alien you get. A phrase that quickly emerged as a humorous illustration of the difficulty was "I bid 20 for the Masochist!", but of course there are similar problems with Warpish, Zombie, Healer, and others. You recognize this, obviously, and attempt to address it by having those aliens keep their ships, but this destroys the bidding mechanism (it's still just a race to call out "twenty!" since you're bidding with money you don't have to pay), and it raises arguments about exactly which aliens truly "benefit" from having their own ships in the warp.

I'm not saying the idea can't work; I actually like the basic concept quite a bit. But the implementation is very challenging. There were other ideas along the lines of having multiple "forms of payment" (ships removed from the game, reductions in hand size, etc.), but they all had their own difficulties as well. Too bad Lucre has been outlawed.

It might be simplest to just ban a certain list of aliens from the bidding variant, which might not be all

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that different from how many folks play anyway: Masochist is already pretty well disliked, and Zombie is so neutered these days that it tends to stay in the box.

March 27 at 11:24am · Like



Jonathan Gilmour Yeah, I brought this up on bgg quite awhile ago, and it had a lot of discussion. We've used it several times since then, and had a blast. It feels like it speeds up the game a bit.

March 27 at 11:51am · Like



Jonathan Gilmour It seemed that we started right into "everyone's committing as few ships as possible because they are low" phase

March 27 at 2:45pm · Like



Gerald Katz The intention of the Wild Clown Flare was not main player only. Usually deals are made as main player, but I had also wanted the Flare to be available when a deal was made via Wild Diplomat Flare. It's not a big deal to me, just mentioning my original intent.

You did get the Fantasy Flight language conversion better than I did. :)

March 27 at 6:01pm · Like



Bill Martinson That's cool. I wasn't actually trying to change Wild Clown, just following the template. In cases like this it's hard to decide whether 'tis better to follow the template or make it Any Player/Any Phase. On the one hand it's nice if the effect can work during stuff like Galactic Council, but on the other hand AP/AP has the appearance of a mistake, and FFG has never done it that way. Not that they are consistent, of course: things like Wild Mutant, Wild Vulch, and Super Pacifist are indeed Main Player/Resolution like one might expect, but then Wild Empath has the bewildering combination of Main Player/Any Phase — meaning, I guess, that you can use it for Galactic Council but only if you happen to be a main player?? (Of course then you have to argue about who the "other player" is. Another nice mess all the way around.) I guess crashes like that are a good reason to stick with Main Player/Resolution.

March 27 at 7:39pm · Like

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o

[Peter Olotka](#) Are we ready for a BETA?

March 30 at 5:34pm · Like



o

[Jonathan Wolf](#) How about an alien based on Quantum mechanics? Not that I have any idea how to do that

March 30 at 5:39pm · Like



o

[Peter Olotka](#) It was suggested that the Quantum alien could be in two places at once

March 31 at 7:13pm · Like



o

[Peter Olotka](#) I am on the road for 7 days visiting Greg in Atlanta. Will check in from time to time. Do we like the above candidates enough to send one or more into BETA?

April 2 at 5:57pm · Like



o

[Peter Olotka](#) Also as "filler" are there any Artifacts that come to mind that do not deal with ships or cards?

April 2 at 5:58pm · Like