

RE Mark S. '84

The Next Generation

Many role-players are confused by *Star Trek: The Next Generation*. To some, it seems dull compared to *Star Trek, Space: 1999, Lost in Space, Plan 9 from Outer Space, Dune: The Movie, Robot Monster*, and similar sci-fi epics. What they don't realize is that *ST: TNG* represents a revolutionary advancement in entertainment—antiescapism.

Escapist fiction genres such as westerns, soap operas, and political platforms provide the audience with a fantasy world in which they are exciting, important people in a dramatic, dangerous conflict. Antiescapism provides a realistic fantasy in which slow-witted, confused characters watch 3-D holofilms and argue philosophy while important conflicts are decided by other people.

Mature, sophisticated role players will welcome this opportunity to add new realism to the gaming experience. We therefore present all the details needed to simulate the amazing *ST: TNG* universe.

**To Boldly Go
Where No Man
Has Split
an Infinitive
Before:**

**A Star Trek
Parody**

Sam Bowne

UBERMENSCH

This race is the final product of human physical and sociological development, and the most common race in the next federation. Genetic manipulation and food additives have changed the human race in several important ways, generally improving physical attributes at the expense of mental ones. They personify the following improvements on the 20th-century human race:

Posture: Ubermensch all have perfect parade-ground posture and are permanently in the "attention" position. Clicking boot heels together after walking is optional.

Lean Muscle Mass: Ubiquitous use of the advanced drug "anabolic estrogen" now provides everyone with amazing muscular development and abolishes excess body fat. Unlike steroids, anabolic estrogen does not increase hostility and anger.

Ubermensch Disadvantages: Due to advanced machines and life in low gravity, Ubermensch have much less physical strength than 20th-century humans. Their muscles look good but are actually useless, and they are unable to engage in any physical activity more strenuous than walking or engaging in childish fantasies on the holodeck. Because of this, romance is limited to platonic relationships, and the population of the federation has begun to dwindle to the point that Starfleet Academy now takes only one applicant a year.

Mental Improvements (Meta-Logic): In the 20th century, humans suffered from mental flaws such as anger, superstition, and intuition. Now reasoning has been elevated beyond such irrationalities, beyond clear directed thought, and skyrocketed to the lofty plane of philosophical speculation, known as meta-logic. Players must master this advanced mode of thought to successfully play Ubermensch characters. The following examples illustrate the principle.

Situation One

An armed lunatic blazes into the control room, demanding control of the *Enterprise*.

Old Thinking: By returning violence

for violence, the scene erupts in exciting, confused combat: Gratuitous exploding control panels, Vulcan nerve pinch, cries of "Set phasers on stun!" "Get a security squad up here!" and "He's dead, Jim." The sensibilities of a sophisticated audience are greatly offended.

Meta-Logic: Everyone should immediately form an informal group therapy session to analyze the opponent to find the deep cause of his hostility, perhaps by recreating his childhood on the holodeck. The lunatic's mental wounds are healed, and the audience finds the show enlightening, spiritually elevating, and educational.

Situation Two

The *Enterprise* is caught in an energy-dampening field by omnipotent aliens who claim that humans are worthless worms, from their point of view.

Old Thinking: The commander of the *Enterprise* gives an impassioned sentimental speech about the unique virtues of the human race: capitalism, apple pie, sexual stereotypes, macho hostility, irrationality, and so on, then orders a futile attack. The aliens, realizing that humans are even dumber than worms, release the *Enterprise* and go away.

Meta-Logic: The commander of the *Enterprise* initiates a round-robin free-association session, discussing the merits and flaws of the human race, quoting one to 20 randomly selected Lipton tea bags, fortune cookies, etc., in an attempt to dissuade the aliens from their outmoded notions of good vs. evil. Failing in this, he orders the self-destruct device activated to convince the aliens that the human race deserves to live. The aliens, realizing that humans are even dumber than worms, release the *Enterprise* and go away.

KLINGONS

Klingons are nearly extinct, due to the wanton violence and ecological damage inflicted on them by *Star Trek: The Old Fogies*. The only survivors are terrorists, exotic dancers, and those who have joined the Federation. "Caffeine-Free" Klingons are required to take massive doses of anabolic estrogen, reducing their violent instincts, and replacing

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them with a driving emotional need to become bootlicking lackeys. In all other respects, they are identical to Ubermensch. (*A Literary Note:* In *ST: TNG*, the so-called "moral message" of the show has been changed. The Klingons are no longer a racist slur against Russians—they are a racist slur against black Americans).

ST: TNG GAME SYSTEM

In this section, we introduce the revolutionary Trivial Role-Playing System, appropriate to any game. All statistics, skills, and abilities are given as percentages. Performing a task, such as repairing the *Enterprise's* main drives with a Swiss army knife, requires a D100 roll less than or equal to the percentage listed. If the gamemaster judges a task to be very easy or hard, the roll may be modified by +25%, +30%, or more. However, if *ST: TNG* is run correctly (that is, in accordance with the way the show is run), the outcome of skill rolls will have no consequence to the plot.

Combat and other competitions, such as philosophical arguments, require all participants to make an appropriate skill roll. The character making the best roll (furthest below the required percentage) wins. In the case of arguments, the losing characters become even more meek, self-conscious, and submissive for awhile. Losers of combat are knocked out for a while, unless their player gets disgusted and quits the game, in which case they die.

Starship combat almost never occurs, but if it does, the characters on each side make starship combat rolls. The side with the best roll inflicts one hit on the enemy ship. The first two hits to a ship cause the lights to dim, the camera to tilt and the actors to stumble around, and cause one to 20 casualties each. The next hit cripples the ship; it loses warp power and goes to 50-percent impulse

power. One more hit destroys the ship, but this never happens unless *all* the players become disgusted and quit.

SKILLS

The major skills common to all characters are listed below. Individual characters may have special skills listed with the character descriptions.

Starship Piloting: This skill includes navigation, operating impulse and warp engines, and operating all electronic equipment (except for the subskill Open Hailing Frequency, which is a psychic ability available only to women and ethnic minorities).

Starship Combat: This skill includes firing weapons, conducting tactical movements, and announcing the number of casualties after each hit.

Starship Repair: This skill includes the ability to fix broken or battle-damaged systems, exceed the design specs of the *Enterprise*, and invent new ways to break the laws of physics during emergencies.

Personal Combat: This skill includes hand-to-hand combat and phaser use.

CHARACTERS

Following are important character descriptions.

Captain Retard

Race: Uberrnensch. Strength, 35; Dexterity, 35; Intelligence, 50.

Skills: Starship Combat, 30; Personal Combat, 20; Knowledge of 20th-Century France, 60; Ability to Engage in, and Force Others to Join, Endless Metaphysical Discussions, 70.

Special Abilities: Have Identity Crisis, 20; Advance Plot (before each commercial, roll on the following table).

SPECIAL ABILITIES TABLE

Roll	Result
1-15	Assert moral superiority
16-30	Eject saucer section
31-40	Send out away team
41-55	Deliver inspiring speech about human condition
56-65	Call committee meeting in briefing room
66-75	Call committee meeting in control room closet
76-90	Hang out on holodeck
91-100	Initiate autodestruct sequence

Vice-Captain Piker

Race: Uberrnensch. Strength, 45; Dexterity, 45; Intelligence, 20.

Skills: Starship Piloting, 20; Starship Combat, 20; Starship Repair, 35; Personal Combat, 35; Quote Saying from Lipton Tea Bag, 75.

Special Abilities: Antagonize Fellow Crewmember, 60.

Assistant Computer Datum

Race: None. Strength, 90; Dexterity, 90; Intelligence, 90.

Skills: Starship Piloting, 90; Starship Combat, 70; Starship Repair, 70; Personal Combat, 70.

Special Abilities: Recite Endless List of Useless Information, 90; Imitate Historical Figure, 25; Romantic Attraction, 90; Have Electronic Equivalent of Identity Crisis, 40.

Token Minority Worlf

Race: Klingon (Caffeine-Free). Strength, 80; Dexterity, 80; Intelligence, 20.

Skills: Starship Combat, 45; Personal Combat, 80; Starship Repair, 25; Open Hailing Frequency, 40.

Special Abilities: Intimidate Opponent (snarl, etc.), 50; Suggest Wanton Violence as Solution to Problem, 60; Have Identity Crisis, 20.

Security Thug Jar

Race: Uberrnensch. Strength, 80; Dexterity, 80; Intelligence, 40.

Skills: Personal Combat, 80; Open Hailing Frequency, 70.

Special Abilities: Intimidate Opponent, 5; Have Identity Crisis, 25.

Counselor Deanna Toy

Race: Obnoxoid. Strength, 20; Dexterity, 30; Intelligence, 50.

Skills: Personal Combat, 20; Open Hailing Frequency, 20.

Psychic Powers: Gain Obvious but Trivial Information, 80; Gain Important Information, 20.

Special Note: Toy's race, the Obnoxoids, have the racial skill Antagonize Everyone at 90 percent. But Toy has been treated with anabolic estrogen since birth, which has eliminated this skill, giving her a physiological/psychological profile identical to Uberrnensch.

Chief Doctor Crusher

Race: Uberrnensch. Strength, 25; Dexterity, 50; Intelligence, 30.

Skills: Medicine, 80; Personal Combat, 20; Open Hailing Frequency, 10.

Special Abilities: Maternal Instinct, 40; Meek Submission to Macho Authority Figures (except Security Thug Jar), 40.

Curmudgeon (McCoy Clone) Polanski

Race: Uberrnensch. Strength, 25; Dexterity, 70; Intelligence, 45.

Skills: Medicine, 80; Personal Combat, 20; Open Hailing Frequency, 10.

Special Abilities: Ridicule Datum, 80; Assert Moral Authority, 40.

Chief Geek Wesley

Race: Uberrnensch. Strength, 15; Dexterity, 35; Intelligence, 60.

Skills: Starship Piloting, 25; Starship Combat, 20; Starship Repair, 95; Personal Combat, 15.

Special Abilities: Antagonize Everyone, 90; Adolescent Megalomania, 50.

Subsidiary Token Minority Gordy

Race: Uberrnensch. Strength, 25; Dexterity, 45; Intelligence, 35.

Skills: Starship Piloting, 50; Starship Combat, 45; Starship Repair, 80; Personal Combat, 40; Open Hailing Frequency, 25.

Special Abilities: Self-Pity, 40; Super Vision, 50*.

*By Super Vision skill we mean mechanically induced extraordinary visual specialty abilities ("If I had any supervision, would I be playing a silly game like this?").

Bartender First Class Whoopie

Race: Uberrnensch. Strength, 25; Dexterity, 35; Intelligence, 85.

Skills: Serve Drinks with Stupid Names, 90; Personal Combat, 20; Open Hailing Frequency, 40; Uberrnensch Psychoanalysis, 60.

Special Abilities: Wear Ridiculous-Looking Hat, 80.

RANDOM ADVENTURE/ SCRIPT GENERATOR

Gamemasters will find that no one can stand to play *ST: TNG* more than an hour every week or so (and in this, too, it is accurate to its prototype). In addition, all plot lines, romances, and conflicts vanish between episodes of the original *Star Trek*, never to be seen again—so why should the *ST: TNG* game be any different? The following charts will permit gamemasters (as well as aspiring screenwriters) to generate adventures that are just as exciting as the original show. Simply roll for one major conflict, one subplot, and as many gimmicks as you can tolerate.

MAJOR CONFLICTS

Roll	Result
1-5	Hostile aliens attack <i>Enterprise</i> .
6-10	Hostile aliens with superior technological powers undermine Federation without directly attacking <i>Enterprise</i> .
11-25	Godlike aliens threaten <i>Enterprise</i> and/or Federation for no apparent reason, then depart equally mysteriously three minutes before end of episode.
26-50	<i>Enterprise</i> is used as a taxi to carry someone else on an exciting adventure which we never see.
51-70	Repeat plot of old <i>Star Trek</i> episode verbatim.
71-85	<i>Enterprise</i> comes upon primitive culture being destroyed, but crew dare not interfere.
86-100	Spend entire episode on holodeck to enable production crew to use existing film set for other series.

SUBPLOTS

Roll	Result
1-50	Identity crisis, determine character randomly.
51-60	Kill off character of departing actor/actress.
61-70	Romantic interest blooms between two crewmembers, then fizzles out.
71-80	Klingon sex is described, discussed, or threatened, but never happens.

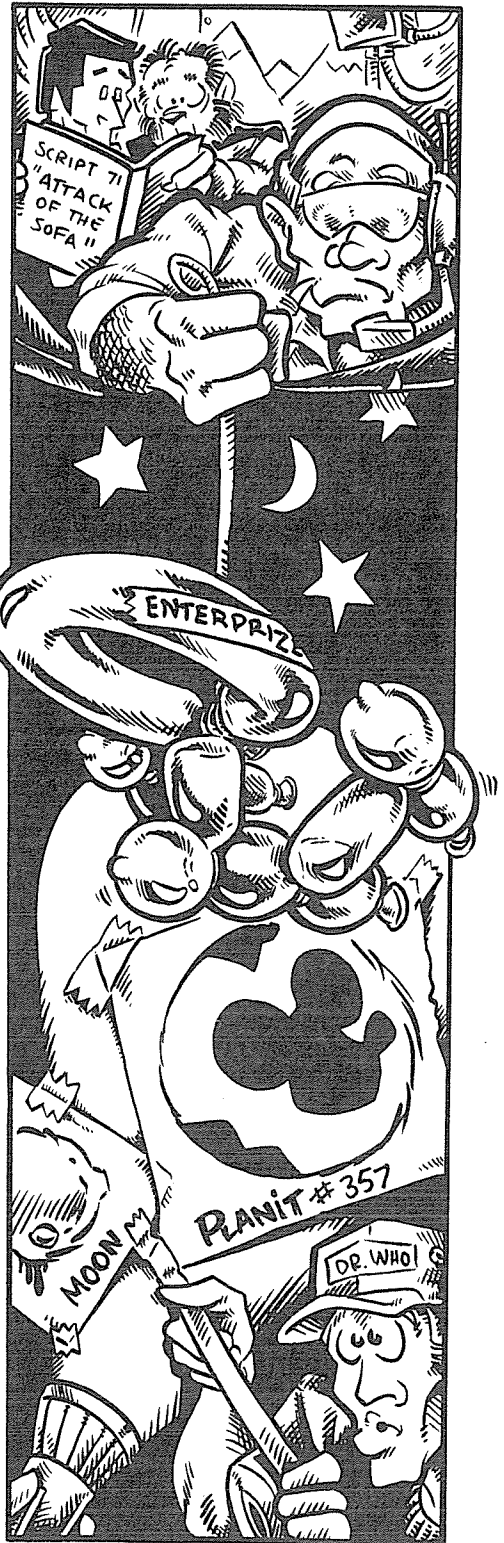
81-90 Naive/blatantly obvious moral message (such as "War is bad," and "People are still people even if they are slime monsters," etc.).

91-100 Hypocritical moral message (such as "TV is bad," "Feminism is best promoted through lower necklines," "Racism is bad," etc.).

GIMMICKS

Roll	Result
1-10	Open admission that plot was solved by original <i>Enterprise</i> crew.
11-20	Fading celebrity guest star with little or no plot justification.
21-25	Reference to thousands of <i>Enterprise</i> crewmembers (who are never seen).
26-30	Costume change for female crewmembers.
31-35	Crewmember has pointless encounter with old friend/enemy.
36-40	Teleporter gains new godlike power (raising dead, matter duplication, cure fatal disease).
41-50	Endless parade of female crewmembers in background.
51-55	Put male crewmembers in skimpy skirts as an excuse to put female crewmembers in skimpy skirts.
56-60	Top six command personnel execute "The Exxon Valdez Gambit" by leaving bridge deserted (also known as "The U.S.S. <i>Stark Maneuver</i> ").
61-65	Special effects cribbed from <i>Star Wars</i> out-takes
66-70	Close-ups of plastic models cribbed from <i>2001: A Space Odyssey</i> out-takes.
71-75	Disgusting aliens cribbed from <i>Alien/Aliens</i> .
76-80	A crewmember nearly has sex, but then calls it off at last moment.
81-85	Holodeck-generated characters which are smarter than anyone else on the <i>Enterprise</i> .
86-90	Ugly aliens which are even dumber than the crew.
91-100	Cute, furry aliens suitable for merchandising, without plot justification. Ω

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