

# PYRAMID

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# TRANSHUMAN SPACE II

## THREE OFFICES, PORT LOWELL

**WE ARE THE 9.9%**  
by Jason "PK" Levine

by Phil Masters

**ELOI GAMES**  
by William H. Stoddard

**INDENTURES INC.**  
by J. Edward Tremlett

**WEAPONS AND UNITS OF  
THE HONDURAN CIVIL WAR**  
by David L. Pulver

# STEVE JACKSON GAMES

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# IN THIS ISSUE

## CONTENTS

**FROM THE EDITOR** ..... 3

**THREE OFFICES, PORT LOWELL** ..... 4  
*by Phil Masters*

**WE ARE THE 9.9%** ..... 12  
*by Jason "PK" Levine*

**EIDETIC MEMORY: WEAPONS AND UNITS OF THE HONDURAN CIVIL WAR** ..... 18  
*by David L. Pulver*

**INDENTURES INC.** ..... 23  
*by J. Edward Tremlett*

**ELOI GAMES** ..... 29  
*by William H. Stoddard*

**RANDOM THOUGHT TABLE: THE FUTURE IS WHAT YOU MAKE IT** ..... 34  
*by Steven Marsh, Pyramid Editor*

**ODDS AND ENDS** ..... 36

**ABOUT GURPS** ..... 37

### Article Colors

Each article is color-coded to help you find your favorite sections.

- Pale Blue:* In This Issue
- Brown:* In Every Issue (letters, humor, editorial, etc.)
- Dark Blue:* GURPS Features
- Purple:* Systemless Features

**COVER ART**  
*Wayne Peters*

Sometimes, tomorrow can't get here fast enough. We at *Pyramid* sympathize, and we're doing what we can to bring the future to you like never before, with another installment devoted to *Transhuman Space* (but no doubt containing material of interest to many near-future worlds).

We begin with a feature that's out of this world – literally! *Three Offices, Port Lowell* – written by *Transhuman Space* Line Editor Phil Masters – tours key locales in the Martian city of Port Lowell. With a look at how European, American, and corporate interests have each staked a claim on the Red Planet, offworld heroes are sure to find adventure and intrigue.

For adventure possibilities that are more “down to Earth,” *GURPS* Assistant Line Editor Jason “PK” Levine (*GURPS Monster Hunters* and others) builds off the foundation of *Transhuman Space: Broken Dreams* by presenting a batch of ready-to-use 100-point *GURPS* templates that let the players quickly start anywhere they're willing to buck the system. Use these guidelines to introduce new players to the most significant aspects of the *Transhuman Space* setting.

When an impoverished Third Wave nation (or a rich mercenary group!) must go to war, it can get military inspiration from the *Weapons and Units of the Honduran Civil War*. This month's Eidetic Memory offering from David L. Pulver, the creator of the *Transhuman Space* setting, includes two types of drones, a massive six-ton tracked cybershell vehicle, and more – all ready to kill with *GURPS* stats.

Are you willing to give up a few years in exchange for a pile of money? For many people, that's the Platonic ideal of “working,” but *Indentures Inc.* takes the concept even farther. Get an implant, do something menial, have the memory wiped, and get paid – what could go wrong? The description of the titular organization also includes a number of adventure seeds that – yes – show what could go wrong.

Some folks like to start small and work their way up. Others prefer to be ridiculously rich and powerful. *Eloi Games* looks at those who are in the upper echelons of society, and what they do to bring meaning to their lives. Written by William H. Stoddard (*Transhuman Mysteries*), this guide to the ultra-powerful can be the focal point of a series of adventures, or a useful addition to other campaigns that need insight into those who own the world.

Whether you're experiencing this *Pyramid* as a printout, screen-read file, or digital image poured directly into your brain, you're sure to discover something exciting. The future is here, and it's ready to be read!

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# FROM THE EDITOR

## RETURN TO TOMORROW!

When looking at a science-fiction world, there are two broad ways most commonly used to introduce readers/watchers/gamers to the experience. The first is a top-down approach: “It is a time of civil war” or “in the grim future of . . .”; then you zoom down. The second is a bottom-up approach: “Here is what the situation is for these specific heroes; let’s see how they get embroiled into the larger whole.” (Many works – such as *Star Wars: A New Hope* – do both in short order.)

*Transhuman Space* works well in either configuration. You can either start by giving the players a broad overview of the current global situation – “It’s shiny and optimistic, except where it isn’t!” – or start in with a specific circumstance for a group of protagonists and lay out the world for them, such as Phil Masters’ *Personnel Files* series.

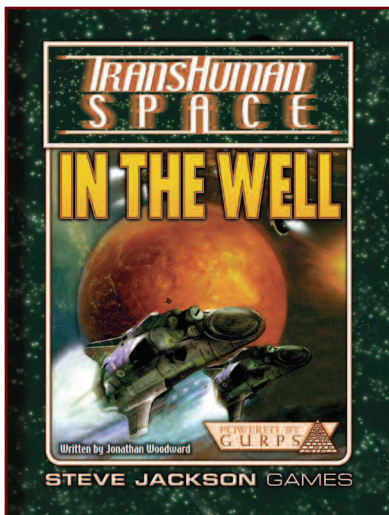
Many *Transhuman Space* supplements need to take a higher-level approach by nature of their topics; it’s hard to look at crime and detection (*Transhuman Mysteries*) or interpersonal combat (*Martial Arts 2100*) without understanding the big picture. *Pyramid* is intimate enough that we can look at

smaller corners of the universe – such as *Three Offices, Port Lovell* (pp. 4-11), *We Are the 9.9%* (pp. 12-16), and David L. Pulver’s details of the Honduran Civil War (pp. 18-22) – and hopefully inspire a new angle for heroes to begin or investigate. However, we don’t shy away from the “big picture” either, and this *Pyramid* includes a fair bit that’s enough to wrap a number of exciting campaigns around: *Eloi Games* opens up broad new avenues for the entire world focus to shift, while *Indentures Inc.* adds an intriguing new option for creative GMs.

Whether you work from the top down or bottom up, the future is waiting for you to build it – and *Pyramid* is happy to provide you with the tools.

## WRITE HERE, WRITE NOW

Until we perfect AIs to tell us what we’re doing right and wrong, we need *you* to fill this vital role! How are you using this material in your campaign? What do you wish we’d write about? Let the Architects of Tomorrow know via private feedback at [pyramid@sjgames.com](mailto:pyramid@sjgames.com), or join the ultra-tech virtual meeting place at [forums.sjgames.com](http://forums.sjgames.com).



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## THE E.U. EMBASSY

Among the “businesses” that have set up shop in Port Lowell, some of the most surprising are embassies from terrestrial governments, including Japan, Saudi Arabia, Peru, and the European Union. Actually, despite the popular terminology on Mars, these aren’t really embassies at all.

Usually, an embassy is a “diplomatic mission” from one sovereign state, representing its interests to another such state on the other state’s territory. But Mars has *no* generally recognized sovereign state. For that matter, the E.U. in particular is not itself a nation-state; it is a supra-national federation, and so cannot appoint ambassadors as such. Several major governments have strong opinions on these matters: China and America are both somewhat hostile to the Free Mars movement, and so don’t want any more credibility attached to the image of Mars as an independent political entity than they can

help. Meanwhile, most E.U. members are still a little touchy about their status as, ultimately, independent nations with their own cultures and policies, and dislike being lumped in with all the others. But, in the end, the E.U. needs representation on Mars. So it has requested and received the right to establish consular-level representation in most of the national colonies, including full diplomatic privileges for a limited number of staff.

The E.U. embassy system is run from a building in Port Lowell that is officially termed the “Central Consular Services Office.” Its staff report to the Office of External Diplomatic Relations, part of the E.U. External Action Service, in Brussels. Colette Schmidt (see p. 7), who runs the CCSO, is officially the Head of Central Consular Services, not an ambassador. However, almost everyone refers to the office as the “European Embassy” and to her as an ambassador, in everything except the most formal documents.

## The Logistics AI

Strictly speaking, although the AI known as Quentin is fully sapient, and hence is a full citizen of the European Union (with Belgian nationality), he is a low-ranking member of the diplomatic service. He was designed a few years ago as a logistics system and put in charge of the embassy’s physical property and of managing shipments of goods to E.U. operations. In practice, though, the Martian tradition of jobs being handled by whoever is in place to deal with them has combined with Quentin’s outgoing nature to ensure that he actually ends up handling the greater part of the embassy’s supposedly low-level practical business.

Either that, or he’s a typical member of the E.U. AI conspiracy, preserving a facade of modest helpfulness to cover his attempts to take over human society.

Quentin is fairly closely derived from a number of pre-existing system designs, with enough variation that he cannot be accused of being a xox. He has nonetheless inherited experience and refinement from these sources, which manifests as both general intelligence and a complex, occasionally whimsical personality. He has enough free time to pursue at least one hobby – Robot Rallying, a sport that involves two or more players each taking control of several of a warehouse’s internal cybershells and running races and not-usually destructive duels. There is a whole body of rules for this, which Quentin weirdly claims are over a century old, and league tables on both Mars and Earth. The rules are designed for AI competitors, and make little allowance for anyone with merely human speeds of thought. Ambassador Schmidt knows about this hobby, and tolerates it so long as not too much damage gets done.

### “Quentin”

243 points

**ST** 0\* [0]; **DX** 10 [0]; **IQ** 12 [40]; **HT** 12\* [0].  
**HP** 12\* [0]; **Will** 12 [0]; **Per** 12 [0]; **FP** 0 [0].  
Basic Speed 5.50 [0]; Basic Move N/A; Dodge N/A; Parry N/A.

### Social Background

*TL:* 10 [0].

*CF:* Western (Native) [0]; Oriental/Chinese [1].

*Languages:* English (Native) [0]; Mandarin (Native) [6].

### Advantages

Administrative Rank 1 (E.U. Diplomatic Service) [5]; Comfortable [10]; Compartmentalized Mind 1 [50]; Modular Abilities 3 (Computer Brain; 8, 4, 4) (Limited Integration, -20%; Skills and Languages Only, -10%) [58]; Contact Group (Trucker’s Guild; Effective Skill 12; 12 or less; Somewhat Reliable) [10]; SAI-8 [173].

### Disadvantages

Duty (Embassy Logistics System; 12 or less) [-5]; Mainframe [-128]; Pacifism (Cannot Kill) [-15]; Social Stigma (Second-Class Citizen) [-5].

*Quirks:* Code of Honor (Always settles debts on time); Compulsive Games-Player; Habit (Overlays extended discussions with atonal music). [-3]

### Skills

Accounting (H) IQ [4]-12; Administration (A) IQ+1 [4]-13; Computer Operation/TL10 (E) IQ+3 [0]-15†; Electrician/TL10 (A) IQ-1 [1]-11; Electronics Operation/TL10 (Communications) (A) IQ+1 [4]-13; Electronics Operation/TL10 (Security) (A) IQ+1 [4]-13; Electronics Operation/TL10 (Sensors) (A) IQ [2]-12; Electronics Operation/TL10 (Surveillance) (A) IQ-1 [1]-11; Freight Handling/TL10 (A) IQ+2 [8]-14; Gambling (A) IQ [2]-12; Games (Chess) (E) IQ [1]-12; Games (Robot Rallying v.17) (E) IQ+2 [4]-14; Law (Martian Commercial) (H) IQ-1 [2]-11; Mathematics/TL10 (Statistics) (H) IQ-2 [1]-10; Merchant (A) IQ+1 [2]-13‡; Observation (A) Per [2]-12; Research/TL10 (A) IQ [2]-12; Smuggling (A) IQ [2]-12.

\* From Mainframe template.

† From SAI-8 template.

‡ Includes +1 from Memetics Talent 1 (from SAI-8).

4. *Repossessor*. Driving (Automobile or Heavy Wheeled) (A) DX+1 [4]-11. • Spend a further 6 points on technical skills to recognize and operate the gear you repossess. Optionally, spend 4 of those 6 points to raise Driving one level.

**Secondary Skills:** *Four* of Brawling, Forced Entry, or Guns (Pistol), all (E) DX+1 [2]-11; Driving (any) or Wrestling, both (A) DX [2]-10; Criminology, Electronics Operation (Security or Surveillance), Fast-Talk, Forensics, Interrogation, Photography, Shadowing, or Streetwise, all (A) IQ [2]-13; Diplomacy, Law (U.S. Criminal), or Psychology, all (H) IQ-1 [2]-12; Body Language, Lip Reading, Observation, Search, or Tracking, all (A) Per [2]-13; or Detect Lies (H) Per-1 [2]-12. • Do not duplicate any primary skills.

**Background Skills:** *Two* of Area Knowledge (any), Current Affairs (any), or Savoir-Faire (any), all (E) IQ [1]-13; Acting, Administration, Disguise, Holdout, Lockpicking, or Writing, all (A) IQ-1 [1]-12; Carousing (E) HT [1]-10; Urban Survival (A) Per-1 [1]-12; or spend 1 point on any unchosen secondary skill at one level lower.

\* Multiplied for self-control number; see p. B120.

## Slogger

100 points

Though short for “slink logger” (that is, someone who shares personal experiences recorded via an uplink), this term has entered common use to refer to *anyone* devoted to sharing interesting life experiences via the Web – even if only via digital pictures and well-written text. Sloggers occupy a vital social role, from providing insight into local culture to covering news that the “big channels” have yet to notice or have deemed beneath their purview. In a city like L.A., where the nightlife trends change weekly and there’s no shortage of dangerous crime, those who want to know what’s really going on search the slogger feeds *first*. Sloggers tend to specialize; consider focusing on a niche like pop culture, below-the-radar news, or dangerous situations.

**Attributes:** ST 10 [0]; DX 10 [0]; IQ 13 [60]; HT 10 [0].

**Secondary Characteristics:** Damage 1d-2/1d; BL 20 lbs. ; HP 10 [0]; Will 13 [0]; Per 13 [0]; FP 10 [0]; Basic Speed 5.00 [0]; Basic Move 5 [0].

**Advantages:** 35 points chosen from among DX +1 [20], HT +1 or +2 [10/level], Per +1 to +3 [5/level], Basic Speed +1.00 [20], Accessory (Uplink) [1], Charisma 1-2 [5/level], Combat Reflexes [15], Contact Group (Any; Skill-15; 6, 9, or 12 or less; Somewhat Reliable) [5, 10, or 20], Contacts (Any; Skill-12, 15, or 18; 12 or less; Somewhat Reliable) [2, 4, or 6], Daredevil [15], Fearlessness 1-5 [2/level], Pop-Culture Maven [5/level], Reputation +1 to +3 (Knowledgeable and entertaining; Everyone; 10 or less) [2, 5, or 7]; Serendipity 1-2 [15/level], Smooth Operator [15/level], or WVI (see p. 13) [4].

**Disadvantages:** -20 points chosen from Chummy [-5] or Gregarious [-10], Compulsive Carousing [-5\*], Curious [-5\*], Delusion (“I’m a household name!”) [-5] or (“As the press, I’m allowed to go anywhere!”) [-10], Greed [-15\*], Impulsiveness [-10\*], Jealousy [-10], Lecherousness [-15\*], Obsession (see bulleted list, p. 12) [-5\* or -10\*], Overconfidence [-5\*], Selfish [-5\*], Status -1 [-5], or Wealth (Struggling) [-10] or (Poor) [-15].

**Primary Skills:** Computer Operation and Current Affairs (L. A), both (E) IQ+1 [2]-14; *and* Writing (A) IQ [2]-13. • *Four* of Current Affairs (People or Popular Culture) (E) IQ+1 [2]-14; Electronics Operation (Media), Performance, Public Speaking, or Research, all (A) IQ [2]-13; Intelligence Analysis (H) IQ-1 [2]-12; or spend 2 points for +1 to any primary skill.

**Secondary Skills:** *Three* of Brawling (E) DX+1 [2]-11; Climbing, Stealth, or Wrestling, all (A) DX [2]-10; Area Knowledge (L.A.) (E) IQ+1 [2]-14; Disguise, Fast-Talk, Shadowing, or Streetwise, all (A) IQ [2]-13; Carousing (E) HT [1]-10; Observation (A) Per [2]-13; or any unchosen primary skill.

**Background Skills:** *Five* of Current Affairs (Business, High Culture, Science & Technology, or Sports) or Savoir-Faire (any), both (E) IQ [1]-13; Administration or Connoisseur (Virtual Reality Arts), both (A) IQ-1 [1]-12; Economics, Expert Skill (Memetics or Political Science), Literature, or Sociology, all (H) IQ-2 [1]-11; Scrounging (E) Per [1]-13; Urban Survival (A) Per-1 [1]-12; or spend 1 point on any unchosen primary or secondary skill at one level lower.

\* Multiplied for self-control number; see p. B120.

## GUERREIROS IN THE MIST

This sample campaign is presented as a series of ordered adventure seeds. Although it uses specific organizations and names – see *The CBI, Burke, and the Guerreiros* (p. 16) for details – the GM should replace *as much of this as possible* with things that tie into the heroes’ lives. Does one PC come from a family that used to be wealthy, but fell from grace when they ran afoul of a corrupt senator? Then replace Assistant Director Burke with that wicked Congressman! The basic concepts and themes of this campaign will function with almost any antagonists in political power.

### Setting the Stage

The first adventure works best as a short (one- or two-session) *prologue* that introduces the threat of the Guerreiros. Don’t tell the players that, of course! This should be a stand-alone challenge that caters to the PCs’ strengths while featuring the Guerreiros in the background – *not* as primary antagonists! Customize your own plot or use the following.

A neighborhood connected to the group (e.g., the gang-bangers or gunjin protect it, or the activists or sloggers are making a documentary about it) has a problem. The water pipes there are corroded and dangerous, but the utility company refuses to acknowledge it. Depending on the PCs, they may respond with anything from creating a propaganda campaign to kicking down the front door of the water company! Regardless, when they need to get to a key objective (such as the company itself, or the people who can help distribute the propaganda meme), they have to head through Guerreiro territory. This will (hopefully) not result in a firefight, as posturing and/or diplomacy will win out. (If not, the police can interrupt a fight that’s going poorly for the team.)

Many of the Guerreiros wear nanoweave armor (expensive and uncommon!) and some carry police armguns (illegal). A successful Current Affairs (L.A.), Intelligence Analysis, or Streetwise roll suffices to know that no other gangs in the area are equipped well enough to “waste” such gear on the rank-and-file gangbangers.

## Character Traits for Eloi

An Eloi-focused campaign can allow these new variants of existing traits and new techniques.

### *Fashion Sense*

see p. B21

Choosing a digital avatar is as much a form of self-expression as choosing clothes. A new variant of this advantage is thus available.

*Fashion Sense (Digital)*: In defining an online avatar for yourself, you have a sure sense for what's distinctive, ahead of the trend, and just cool. Any avatar you build, assemble, or select by shopping around gives +1 to reaction rolls in online social interaction. You can give *someone else* the same advantage if you can work on his avatar. However, staying ahead of the curve takes constant tweaking; you have to make time to rebuild each avatar for each set of social encounters. *5 points*.

### *Code of Honor*

see p. B127

A new version of Code of Honor exists in *Transhuman Space*.

*Code of Honor (Eloi)*: You may work, and even get paid, but you may not work purely for monetary reasons; you must work for something you believe in. Never treat people differently because of their race, religion, sex, or species. Cultivate knowledge of other cultures; accept unfamiliar customs without criticism or shock. Treat your personal staff fairly and generously. Guard your

score on your reputation network, and avoid doing anything that could endanger it. *-5 points*.

### *New Technique: Private Messaging*

Hard

*Default: Computer Operation.*

Anyone with a virtual interface implant is constantly monitoring the virtual as well as the physical environment. This makes possible private virtual conversation in parallel with physical conversation. A wearable virtual interface can be used for the same purpose, but at -3 to skill.

Private messaging can be practiced as a Hard technique with no upper limit. It's possible to base it on IQ-4 (the default for Computer Operation); children often learn such tricks before they study Computer Operation formally.

### *New Technique: Synching*

Hard

*Default: Electronics Operation (Media)-2*

*Prerequisite: Electronics Operation (Media); cannot exceed Electronics Operation (Media).*

A person's appearance or voice can be enhanced (or distorted) on electronic channels, but adjusting both simultaneously requires two rolls, each at a penalty of -2, because of divided attention. With practice, an operator can learn to share time more effectively, and reduce or eliminate the penalty. Both sight and sound benefit from this technique; two rolls are still required, but each is at less or no penalty.

A campaign might not send just one Eloi off on a great adventure, but an entire party. The "grand tour" of Europe used to be considered the crucial final stage in an upper-class English education. An Eloi group might undertake a grand tour of the outer solar system, perhaps lasting years – after all, most Eloi assume they have a very long lifespan ahead of them. More preservationist-minded Eloi might stay on Earth, visiting historic places, protected ecosystems, or physically challenging environments such as caves or the ocean depths.

A different variant on this theme would be a campaign set almost entirely in virtual reality or "cyberspace." Classically, this is the focus of cyberpunk as a genre, with heroes coming back from cyberspace to a poor, crowded, and corrupt urban setting. But *Transhuman Space* could approach it from the other side, with economically secure heroes going online to find excitement or solve some mystery.

Another option is a *social* outward turn. Eloi who support a cause – whether a widely known ideology such as pansapien-tism or preservationism, or a more unusual concern – can offer themselves as spokesmen for that cause. Some Eloi may go beyond this, agreeing to have cameras follow them around, or even uploading their own sensory experiences as they work for a better future.

Players looking for a challenge might undertake the role, not of true Eloi, but of cunning criminals preying on Eloi through ingenious scenarios. Many of the classic capers don't work in *Transhuman Space* – it's hard to steal when works of art and similar physical assets have been scanned microscopically, and when unsleeping house AIs watch over them – but new kinds of tricks have become possible. For example, an Eloi celebrity might be the subject of an effort to capture his appearance and personality as a digital shadow, or as a model for bioroid designers.

Finally, an Eloi campaign could be a comedy rather than a drama. Typically, it's a comedy of manners, where social mis-steps and personal eccentricities abound, though a romantic comedy would be another option.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

William H. Stoddard is a professional copy editor, specializing in scientific and scholarly books. His previous work for Steve Jackson Games includes *Transhuman Space: Transhuman Mysteries*, *GURPS Social Engineering*, and the latest editions of *GURPS Supers* and *GURPS Low-Tech*. He lives in San Diego with his cohabitant Carol, two cats, two computers, and far too many books!

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