



SESSION

"Canon"

LOCATION

Room One

HOSTED BY

[BF/PF] aparry (Bravo Fleet / Pegasus Fleet)

[BF] greenfelt22 (Bravo Fleet)

TIME

9pm GMT

(all times presented in CST [UTC-6])

[BF] greenfelt22, 3:00:00 PM

== ^ == ^ == ^ == EVENT: CANON == ^ == ^ == ^ ==

Welcome everyone to our session on canon. A quick introduction to me... My name is greenfelt. I answer to green, greenie, Kermit, and frog. No, my legs are not food. I started simming in 2003. I've been running the Squiddie-winning USS Black Hawk in Bravo Fleet since 2013, and I've been a member of the Bravo Fleet Admiralty since 2016. My cohost today is @[BF/PF] aparry. Tell us a little about yourself, aparry.

[BF/PF] aparry, 3:00:55 PM

Greetings I am Aaron those of you who don't know me I started simming in '99 and currently simming in varies sims in BF and command a ship in PF. I am a former member of the PFA and excited for today as I have simmed in all three of the sims that are putting on this project.

[BF] greenfelt22, 3:01:15 PM

Before we dive in, let's make it clear what we're talking about. This isn't a bash-CBS/Paramount session. Despite your feelings on Hobus, JJ Abrams, and Discovery, we're not going to talk about them. In fact, we're not even going to talk about why they could or could not be considered canon. This panel is all about how to create and cultivate canon from a community of writers and games.

So, what is canon? Canon is simply the collective past, present, and future of a sim/organization. It has many forms, the species you discovered last mission, the nebula your sim is exploring, and even the standoff on the Klingon border.

It is taking those events that happened in-game and making them accessible for future and current writers alike.

Let's kick off with a question. Aside from writing on your sims, have you made contributions to your organization's history/canon?

WiseOwlSTF, 3:04:08 PM

Yes we have a library created for that

And we archive all our sins by ships

Sims

[BF] greenfelt22, 3:04:41 PM

Just out of curiosity,

I was going to ask about sins... lol

[STF] BusyBeaver, 3:04:52 PM

lol!

[BF] greenfelt22, 3:04:54 PM

I couldn't type fast enough

WiseOwlSTF, 3:04:59 PM

Sorry on phone

[BF] greenfelt22, 3:05:03 PM

It's okay.

[BF] Camila, 3:05:07 PM

You'll have to forgive him, @[BF] greenfelt22

[BF] greenfelt22, 3:05:09 PM

In a way, they are like sins.

[STF] BusyBeaver, 3:05:31 PM(edited)

We also have a Reference Manual for species/planets people submit, and also tech Manual for all our custom specs

[BF] Kai1701E, 3:05:41 PM

I think I have contributed to BF Canon

[BF] greenfelt22, 3:05:43 PM

So how does one contribute?

[BF/PF] aparry, 3:05:56 PM

yes you have @[BF] Kai1701E

[BF] Leah, 3:05:58 PM

I think I have to Kai 😊

WiseOwlSTF, 3:05:58 PM

We have templates

one fills them out and submits them to the correct department where they are reviewed

[STF] BusyBeaver, 3:06:27 PM

Aside from mission specific records, the rest of it goes through a review process.

Chistery, 3:06:27 PM

well, only one of the TF sims I XO is in the "canon" Task Force (23)

[BF] Camila, 3:06:48 PM

Submit the information to your Task Force Commander and request it be added to the canon area of the fleet site.

Chistery, 3:06:55 PM

TF's TF23 'shares' a common canon to a point

Billy, 3:06:59 PM

Awesome

Chistery, 3:07:05 PM

no

[BF] greenfelt22, 3:07:13 PM

Okay. Great. It sounds like everyone has somewhat of a process.

Chistery, 3:07:17 PM

One is not set in 23's timeline

every sim in 23 has to be the same year. 51 can do whatever it wants

[BF/PF] aparity, 3:08:02 PM

So when we think of canon on a simple level one question you have to ask yourself is how much does each character have to do with canon as a whole and when does their impact start?

Some would say from character creation because they are becoming part of the canon of that ship

[BF] Kai1701E, 3:09:16 PM

In general, and this is probably not going to be popular, but I have found that CO's have the most impact on canon as they choose how/when their sim contributes

[STF] BusyBeaver, 3:09:17 PM

You could think of canon as a heirarchical level then, right?

WiseOwISTF, 3:09:43 PM

What do you mean Linds?

[STF] BusyBeaver, 3:09:48 PM

Individual RP environments ---> Fleets ---> Clubs

[BF/PF] aparity, 3:09:53 PM

you can when people hear canon they think fleet canon but canon starts on the ship.

WiseOwISTF, 3:10:07 PM

ahh

Billy, 3:10:07 PM

Ohhhhh I didn't know that

[BF/PF] aparity, 3:10:22 PM

a ship can not impact fleet canon until the members impact the canon of that ship

[BF] greenfelt22, 3:10:23 PM

I mean, let's face it. We're all players first, right?

WiseOwISTF, 3:10:26 PM

exactly!

Billy, 3:10:40 PM

Right

[BF] greenfelt22, 3:10:44 PM

Each player wants to have value.

WiseOwISTF, 3:10:55 PM

nods

[BF] greenfelt22, 3:11:00 PM

Whether they are the first officer, or the ensign vacuuming the corridor.

[BF] Leah, 3:11:03 PM

right without us there would be not canon 😊

[BF] Kai1701E, 3:11:32 PM

Yes we are, but each CO decides on their sims participation level. Some sims chose not to participate in anything and are simply in a fleet for recruiting purposes.

[BF] greenfelt22, 3:11:44 PM

Ultimately, the CO is the gatekeeper for what is and isn't allowed on the ship, and the best canon environments are collaborative ones.

[BF] Kai1701E, 3:11:47 PM

Or they choose to participate very infrequently

[BF/PF] aparry, 3:11:57 PM

but @[BF] Kai1701E are they not creating their own canon?

[BF] Kai1701E, 3:12:11 PM

they are, but sim canon and fleet canon are very different things

[BF] greenfelt22, 3:12:14 PM

We're not focusing on fleet/org canon at the moment, just canon at the sim level.

[BF] Kai1701E, 3:12:31 PM

my bad

[BF] greenfelt22, 3:12:54 PM

Standby... dirty diaper (I have a 1-year old).

[BF/PF] aparry, 3:12:59 PM

no worries we just wanted to start at the basic level and work our way out

tall_S, 3:13:37 PM

Isn't one big concern with sim canon finding a way to balance allowing people to take their contributions when they leave?

[BF/PF] aparry, 3:13:50 PM

It can be yes

if they transfer they feel like they developed some of the story and want to hang on to it

Billy, 3:14:36 PM

What if you have an organization that puts a band on even what a ship (simm) tries to create as their cannon?

[STF] BusyBeaver, 3:14:51 PM

But you can carry that background with your character as you start elsewhere. It becomes a part of the character's history.

[BF] greenfelt22, 3:15:30 PM

Define "take their contribution"

[BF/PF] aparry, 3:15:33 PM

good point @BusyBeaver I have been doing this a long time and some of my older character hang on to the past simming by putting it in their bio and even reference in posts

[BF] greenfelt22, 3:15:39 PM

Does that mean removing those contributions?

tall_S, 3:17:18 PM

Yep

WiseOwISTF, 3:17:28 PM

In our club its optional, most choose to leave their contribution in the club/sim but are free to take it with them

[BF] greenfelt22, 3:18:37 PM

Those are hard cases. A proactive solution is to adopt a Creative Commons license for your sim. These are free, and while I don't have specifics on hand, the CC 4.0 license allows all contributions to stay with the sim while still retaining author credit.

Of course, that's a legal solution.

WiseOwlSTF, 3:19:04 PM

indeed

[STF] BusyBeaver, 3:19:06 PM

We've got specific terms in our TOS that cover it

[BF] greenfelt22, 3:19:29 PM(edited)

Typically, contributions stay with the sim while the player retains ownership rights over their characters.

[STF] BusyBeaver, 3:20:00 PM

Sounds about right.

[BF] greenfelt22, 3:20:01 PM

Sim not same... sorry.

Billy, not to ignore you, but I do want to circle back to your question.

WiseOwlSTF, 3:20:44 PM

Yes we have that

You can't take what you have given to a sim out of it

But you can take character etc

[BF] greenfelt22, 3:21:31 PM

I know with some fleets, it is difficult to contribute to canon when a fleet itself makes it very hard. The solution there is to work with the CO and see what is feasible.

WiseOwlSTF, 3:22:38 PM

Our ships are all within a Fleet but do not contribute to an overall Fleet canon other than being in same Fleet. Each ship sim are separate

[BF] greenfelt22, 3:22:48 PM

Moving on a bit now. In the simming world, players come and go. It is rare to even have a core group that stays together for years at a time. When new players come into the mix, a lot of effort is made to get them in a "playable" mode, meaning focusing on the mechanics and such.

But do you make it a point to share your sim's heritage?

WiseOwlSTF, 3:23:24 PM

We have info on our Ship pages and links to important events and such

[BF] greenfelt22, 3:23:46 PM

But is it read?

WiseOwlSTF, 3:23:57 PM

By the serious rper yes I would say it is

[BF/PF] aparry, 3:24:04 PM

Many fleets that I am in have an infobase or a Wiki that is available about the past

WiseOwISTF, 3:24:13 PM

by a total newbie maybe not

[BF/PF] aparry, 3:24:24 PM

many ships have missions archived for people to go back and view

[BF] Leah, 3:24:27 PM

that's a good idea really I mean so others know what has happened on the sim without having to read all the posts cause it could be very many posts.

WiseOwISTF, 3:24:46 PM

nods

[BF] Leah, 3:25:09 PM

Well for a fleet as a while ya the wiki, I mean sim instances that's actually not a bad idea though

[BF] greenfelt22, 3:25:33 PM

Alluding back to the unmentionable topics, everyone's saturation with Star Trek is different. Some are limited to movies/tv, others can tout books or STO or tech manuals.

Those ideologies can and do conflict.

Moving to a CO-level now, and again, staying away from the controversial stuff, what are steps you take to mitigate those differing opinions in your environment?

WiseOwISTF, 3:26:46 PM

We have a club wide agreement on our timeline though there are a few ship that are outside it

So most ships are on the same timeline though their canon may differ due to sims played there

[BF/PF] aparry, 3:27:34 PM

I think communication and when you have the difference of opinions it needs to be discussed with the Command team and even the crew and decide on the direction of the sim.

The CO is the leader but if the lines of communication are not there and the people do not like the direction he is taking them then it doesn'y go well

WiseOwISTF, 3:28:16 PM

Hmm ours is set up differently as the Command staff decide the sim...the GM creates it with some input from CP/XO

CO rather

true if the crew don't like it they just stop playing

lol

[BF/PF] aparry, 3:29:12 PM (edited)

its a balance that must be kept

[BF] greenfelt22, 3:29:24 PM

The CO is definitely responsible for the overall environment, but the CO likely doesn't make every little decision. For example, little things like adjusting the deflector dish to improve scanning range might be a small detail worth carrying into further and further missions.

I'm going to wait for aparry to finish there. I've got a new question to ask. 😊

[BF/PF] aparry, 3:31:11 PM

To tell an old war story I remeber a brand new Ensign that just joined simming on a mission once had some system I can;t remeber overload just on a whim. The CO loved the idea that it became a part of the ship and how it acted in battle so that one line that a new crewman added lasted for years

[BF] greenfelt22, 3:32:32 PM

So, let's go a level upward. Star Trek's mantra is exploring strange new worlds and seeking out new civilizations. Because of this, Star Trek is known for "Species of the week" and developing entire species through a single individual, say Phlox on Enterprise. Even though we have 4 years with Phlox, there's still a lot of gray areas. How do you as a CO or Club leader manage further development?

[BF] greenfelt22, 3:34:02 PM

Denobulan is the name of the species I'm missing there. Sorry.

WiseOwlSTF, 3:34:16 PM

The COs on our ships reserve the right to review new species before they join

[BF] greenfelt22, 3:34:58 PM

What about existing?

WiseOwlSTF, 3:35:05 PM

If they join it's up to the player to expand on their race usually. That's for non canon usually

What do mean by existing?

[BF] greenfelt22, 3:35:50 PM

Like the Denobulans, Romulans, or even the Breen?

Yuna [PF], 3:36:13 PM

peeks in

[PF] AlexM, 3:36:17 PM

So show canon

[BF] greenfelt22, 3:36:17 PM

With the Breen especially, our knowledge is extremely limited from a licensed standpoint.

Precisely.

WiseOwlSTF, 3:36:45 PM

We allow all Federation races or allies. Any 'enemy' or unknown has to be okayed by CO

[BF/PF] aparry, 3:37:15 PM

I once played a Brikarian which is very limited in any reference in show or book form and it was fun to help develop that character and its people

WiseOwlSTF, 3:37:23 PM

Then the player is allowed to play within the guidelines as a Starfleet officer

I've done that with Caitians

I have a Caitian character I've played for over ten years and built on her

[BF] greenfelt22, 3:38:20 PM

Let me clarify a bit. I'm not talking about a Breen as a crewmember. TNG gave us some great looks at the Romulan Empire with episodes like The Defector and the one where Geordi was stranded on the planet in the big storm.

Yuna [PF], 3:38:26 PM

Okay, I'm not sure if this has been covered or not, but how do you handle say... Andorian reproductive canon, when it's convoluted, conflicted, and improbable?

[PF] AlexM, 3:38:50 PM

Andorian reproduction probably could have been a panel.

[BF] greenfelt22, 3:38:52 PM

Those episodes were crucial to developing what we know of the Empire. What happens in a situation where a sim has a new and unique interaction with a Talarian raider?

[OF] Sepandiyar, 3:39:00 PM

you handle it very carefully lol

[BF] greenfelt22, 3:39:16 PM

@Yuna [PF] that's definitely a whole topic on its own, but certainly applicable to this discussion!

Our sims aren't always about our characters. Many times, its our our characters interact with the environment the CO has crafted, especially when they work with an antagonist or another species Trek has introduced previously.

Those interactions are just as valuable, if not more, as part of the canon generated by each sim.

WiseOwISTF, 3:40:59 PM

Yes our GMs control the story then like your COs

They define the species

Beautiful Night, 3:41:42 PM

On my sim, If a non federation race wants to be in starfleet, they have to have letters of recommendation, like Nog did, and a good back story to justify it too.

[BF] greenfelt22, 3:41:44 PM(edited)

And then are those situations able to filter up to a higher level after that?

WiseOwISTF, 3:42:08 PM

Yes they can submitted to our archives

Yuna [PF], 3:42:13 PM

And Jayla

WiseOwISTF, 3:42:36 PM

And become part of Fleet history

[BF] greenfelt22, 3:42:54 PM

@Beautiful Night that's a good way to handle that.

[BF/PF] aparry, 3:43:06 PM

and that history is really what canon is

WiseOwISTF, 3:43:20 PM

My friend made the Flea'tan race which is now a race in that entire Fleet which started on one ship

[BF] greenfelt22, 3:43:31 PM

That's pretty cool.

[BF/PF] aparry, 3:43:36 PM

It is a set of events and how the characters shaped those events on a ship or fleet or club level

WiseOwISTF, 3:43:47 PM

Linds has done the same

[BF] greenfelt22, 3:43:55 PM

We have 17 minutes left, boy time's going fast.

WiseOwlSTF, 3:44:12 PM

It does go fast:)

[BF] greenfelt22, 3:44:13 PM

Let's take a step onto the fleet/club level.

When managing multiple games under a singular umbrella, such as a fleet, or even a joint mission, what are some good ways to coordinate those actions?

For example, a couple years ago, BF's Task Force 9 held a group-wide event focusing on an organization called The Consortium. We were able to use a series of planned meetings, and a media wiki install to coordinate all of the details from start to finish, modifying and developing our entries as we went along.

[PF] Zerin Rolfe, 3:44:45 PM

What about a sim making a situation that could affect race relations? Like starting a war with another group? That in theory would affect all ships in a fleet if fleet canon is followed.

WiseOwlSTF, 3:44:54 PM

Oh my! Communication and shared google sheets!

Yuna [PF], 3:45:05 PM

Ohhh that's good Zerin

WiseOwlSTF, 3:45:08 PM

We've done that it's a nightmare!

Lol

[BF][118] Kylindra, 3:45:22 PM

Speaking as a member of 118: We have something called fleet-wide plot arcs. A single group set up missions, then handed them off to the various COs who signed up.

Then they sent reports back in so that phase two could be done..

[OF] Becca, 3:45:39 PM

We have a Task Force War game about to happen defo google sheets and having one person coordinating it

[BF] greenfelt22, 3:45:59 PM

That's a great question, @[PF] Zerin Rolfe

[BF][118] Kylindra, 3:46:01 PM

.. it didn't work out in the long run. In 118: the ships are effectively their own canon.

WiseOwlSTF, 3:46:13 PM

Yes we have done the shared story arc among multiple ships

Yuna [PF], 3:46:18 PM

Okay, yeah, that makes sense, but inversely, how do you handle fleet canon on a fleet level when one SIM starts a war without prior notice/discussion?

WiseOwISTF, 3:46:33 PM

Usually Fleet Commander coordinates it

[BF] greenfelt22, 3:46:38 PM

On a fleet level, that does get pretty hairy.

[BF][118] Kylindra, 3:46:39 PM

There's a shared canon, but the captains tend to want to do things on their own. I can't super blame them, though.

[BF/PF] aparry, 3:46:56 PM

@Yuna [PF] then the fleet needs to decide if they honor that as canon or ignore it essentially

[BF][118] Kylindra, 3:47:09 PM

(I prefer BF's approach more, but both have virtues and demerits.)

[OF] Becca, 3:47:37 PM

Defo prefer that approach

[BF] greenfelt22, 3:47:45 PM

Drawing on prior experience, events like that take coordination and approval. In Bravo Fleet, we usually have a handful of sims interacting with major races at the same time. Usually, we're proactive and utilize Discord and other communication methods to coordinate events.

Yuna [PF], 3:48:15 PM

I'm not asking about that. I'm specifically asking if some hotshot CO just DOES IT

WiseOwISTF, 3:48:18 PM

Nods

Yuna [PF], 3:48:27 PM

Because I've witnessed that in the past

[BF] greenfelt22, 3:48:33 PM

But if it's unauthorized like that, then it's likely difficult or impossible for it to become fleet canon as the ripple effect would be rather unpleasant.

[BF/PF] aparry, 3:48:45 PM

Then it can be ship canon but doesn't impact the rest unless the club decides to accept it

[BF] greenfelt22, 3:49:04 PM

I've seen situations where someone has instigated a major issue, and we were able to integrate it into a cohesive storyline.

Ironically, that was destroying a Gorn capitol with a series of torpedoes. >.<

[BF][118] Kylindra, 3:49:53 PM

Yeah, you're pretty much left with "it didn't happen outside ship x." "it didn't happen, it was all a holodeck simulation" (if you can enforce this), "let's yell at them and weave it into something else", "sigh I guess we're doing this now."

[OF] Becca, 3:50:23 PM

Seen it too. People take go big or go home as the motto. I've seen things like that successfully integrating with the help of a time ship and it being ship cannon only.

Yuna [PF], 3:51:00 PM

10 minutes left

[SB118] Quinn Reynolds, 3:51:14 PM

I think we tend to go with the idea that it would often take a lot more than a single sparking incident to take the Federation and/or other powers to war.

[BF] greenfelt22, 3:51:18 PM

Careful, @Yuna [PF]. I'll draft you into being a Moderator.



[BF][118] Kylindra, 3:51:28 PM

Yeah, I've seen that too..

Yuna [PF], 3:51:34 PM

@[BF] greenfelt22 I'm not above volunteering next time xD

[BF/PF] aparry, 3:51:56 PM(edited)

A key take away for everyone is whether you are a Admiral, Captain, or a Petty Officer we all build canon at some level that is why we are here. We want to tell a story

[BF][118] Kylindra, 3:51:57 PM

.. but honestly, it doesn't. A lot of wars have happened due to one stupid incident, and it's rather.. jarring to see one ship at a near war status and the rest of the fleet not

[BF] greenfelt22, 3:51:59 PM

That is definitely a great way to handle it, @[SB118] Quinn Reynolds

[BF][118] Kylindra, 3:52:28 PM

On the flip side, a single incursion shouldn't cause a major war, true.

[SB118] Quinn Reynolds, 3:52:34 PM

A lot of wars have, but there's a huge amount of momentum to generate to take, say, the Romulans and the Federation to an all-out war.

[BF] greenfelt22, 3:52:56 PM

There's always a Ferdinand to assassinate.

[BF/PF] aparity, 3:53:03 PM

always

Yuna [PF], 3:53:07 PM

Always

[BF][118] Kylindra, 3:53:10 PM

True, but if say, the USS Custer went and blew up Rator III, you should expect it to matter to ever sim.

[BF] greenfelt22, 3:53:19 PM

We have 7 minutes left. Are there any questions?

[BF/PF] aparity, 3:53:23 PM



[BF] greenfelt22, 3:53:33 PM

Truth, @[BF][118] Kylindra

Did we miss anything?

[BF][118] Kylindra, 3:53:50 PM

That's why I tend to think at some point, it's up to the captains to talk to each other and go "We did this, so you should keep it in mind"

WiseOwlSTF, 3:53:59 PM

I have to head out but thx guys! These discussions have been great:)

[BF/PF] aparity, 3:54:11 PM

Thank you @WiseOwlSTF

[BF] greenfelt22, 3:54:28 PM

Agreed! Thank you, @WiseOwlSTF!

Yuna [PF], 3:54:37 PM

Thanks for hosting this.

And, you know, having your stuff together.

[BF] greenfelt22, 3:54:42 PM

Communication is definitely essential.

[SB118] Quinn Reynolds, 3:54:44 PM



[BF/PF] aparry, 3:54:48 PM

Thank everyone that stopped in this was fun and informative I hope

Yuna [PF], 3:54:48 PM

cough

[BF] Leah, 3:55:08 PM

It was very informative and interesting to see everyones point of views on canon.

[SB118] Quinn Reynolds, 3:55:17 PM

I did kick about an idea about a galactic affairs tracker/forum/thing. Perhaps we should revisit.

[BF] greenfelt22, 3:55:30 PM

No matter what. make sure you keep those lines open. It's amazing how much further you can get by getting people involved at the ground level before blowing up Rator III and then telling someone about it.

[BF/PF] aparry, 3:55:30 PM

that could be fun

[BF] greenfelt22, 3:55:42 PM

That could be fun indeed.

Well, if there's nothing else... grab a drink, go to the bathroom. Avoiding Batman Syndrome is next!

[BF/PF] aparry, 3:56:14 PM

I love canon and always have my sims involved however I can its nice to know that the stories matter outside of just my sim