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See Appendix FR – The Fundamental Realities
See Appendix WA – The Wanderers

“When asked what was the greatest political fact of modern times, [Otto von] Bismarck is reported to have responded, that it was ‘the inherited and permanent fact that North America speaks English.’ Whether the saying be authentic or not, the remark is certainly worthy of its reputed author’s keen insight into political fundamentals.”

– George Louis Beer, The English-Speaking Peoples, Their Future Relations and Joint International Obligations (1917), p. 186

Fundamental Realities: Fundamental Realities are a preexisting set of ‘cards’; the Concierge and players do not create or design Fundamental Realities used in a particular game. Fundamental Realities represent the cosmic luck of the draw, the grand joke of the gods (or whomever you want to blame for this mess); they are the ‘existential element’ of the game.

Fundamental Realities affect a position globally, and are the deep-seated historical, physiological, cultural, evolutionary, primal, and environmental imperatives that cannot be easily overcome and that shape the star-faring race coming into the game. For example, as a player, you were born on Earth (theoretically speaking) in a certain place and time, you walk on two legs and wear clothing (most of us do, anyway), you can see certain spectrums of light, hear certain sounds, require oxygen (unless you are a plant), and speak a language, dress and act in certain ways, and conform, or refuse to conform to standards that were all chosen long before any of us were born. This is part of your inheritance.

- ✓ What is language? Language is a massively complex system of arbitrary, agreed upon and inherited assignment of symbols and sounds to objects, actions, existence and concepts. There is no reason at all why the sound we make when we say “tree” should correspond to the object that we know is a tree, except that some group in our distant past agreed to that particular correspondence of sound with the object and everyone thereafter used it. The same can be said for every word in our language and even for the base-10 counting system that we call math. Non-objectivity of symbolic and linguistic representations is the reason why there are so many languages across the Earth. The Tower of Babel story is a recognition by ancients of this inherit non-objectivity in human constructs and an origin myth attempting to link it to the objective truth of God in their religion.

Fundamental Realities are inherited *absolute truths* (in the form of position-specific circumstances) which cannot be directly contradicted or ignored. Fundamental Realities function as axioms for game purposes – that is, they act as uncontroverted starting points for the story and all arguments relating to their position during the game.¹ Fundamental Realities are what happened BEFORE the game that affect the game.

- ✓ “For a creature to act out its own minor part, the rules under which it acts must be either known to it or be such that the rules can become known through trial and error – with error not always fatal. In short the creature must be able to learn and to benefit by its experience.” – Robert Heinlein, Job: A Comedy of Justice (1984).

To the extent that it matters, Fundamental Realities are, by definition, morally neutral and individually blameless on those affected or afflicted by them. Being born of a certain race, class, ethnicity, or species, or in a certain time and place or planet, are no more blameworthy than

speaking English or wearing a shirt, pants and shoes rather than speaking Greek or Latin and wearing a toga and sandals. Now, it is possible that some blame may be attached for certain types of Fundamental Realities to individuals or to the current generation, *by the next generation* who inherits; but in most cases, what does it gain to blame previous generations for parts of our world we dislike or with which we disagree?

- Clothed in our Fundamental Realities: While trying to avoid frostbite on your butt in the northern latitudes, remember the benefits of cold weather on human civilization. Because of cold weather and that humans evolved hairless on a warm continent, people started wearing clothing; there were people in various parts of the world who had never invented clothing before European contact, because they didn't need it.
 - ✓ Once clothing was invented and spread through most of the world, people discovered they had to take a bath and put on clean clothes when available because of illness and vermin.
 - ✓ Clothing also led to fashion, invention of better materials, and a whole economy, displays of wealth, and industry specializations.
 - ✓ Clothing also led to armor, protective cover, and space suits. Science-fiction trope – especially the television and movie kind (even Deanna Troi wore clothes) – almost always portrays sapient aliens wearing clothing. The audience never notices because that's what they expect to see, but there is no reason – other than climate – to assume that aliens would invent clothing prior to space travel. Clothing might come quite late in history, as all biological beings would require at least space or vacuum suits, and protection against environments on any planets they might explore or colonize.
- The Drawing of Thee: During the first step of the setup process, the Concierge will randomly draw for each position ten Fundamental Realities. Positions may not receive duplicates of the same Fundamental Reality, but two or more positions may receive the same Fundamental Reality. Players will be able to view and read only the Fundamental Realities for *their* position during the course of the game.
 - ✓ If a position cannot receive duplicate Fundamental Realities then it would be impossible for a position to have duplicate Fundamental Realities, like a poker game where you are not allowed to hold two or more Aces. GGDM thrives on diversity.
- Casting Out: After examining the Fundamental Realities drawn, each position may choose to discard any of them, but must keep at least four of the Realities drawn and may keep up to seven Fundamental Realities (mulligans and/or re-deals are discouraged). The choice of which are being kept or discarded should be communicated to the Concierge only, within one day of notification that the Fundamental Realities have been drawn. Positions may choose to keep seemingly contradictory Fundamental Realities. There are many possible reasons upon which to decide to keep or discard Fundamental Realities; some might be kept because they might be interesting to play, some might be kept because they are the lesser of two evils compared to what is being discarded, and some will be kept because they (erroneously) appear to provide some strategic or game advantage. The Fundamental Realities chosen by each position are permanent, cannot be substantially changed or discarded during the game, and will be part of and affect the position through the entire game. Positions that keep more Fundamental Realities will receive larger initial Public Spaces and larger Inheritances.

✓ “Sometimes the only choices you have are bad ones. But you still have to choose.” – Dr. Who, “Mummy on the Orient Express” (2014).

- **Major and Minor Realities:** Most Fundamental Realities will have a Major and/or Minor effect described. Each position must have at least three Major Fundamental Realities, and can have up to five Major Fundamental Realities. The effect of each Fundamental Reality is a set of special circumstances affecting the position holding the Fundamental Reality. The effects of the Major and Minor versions of the same Fundamental Reality are separate and cannot be combined. Each position must communicate to the Concierge, where applicable, which chosen Fundamental Realities are desired to be Major Fundamental Realities. Not all Fundamental Realities have both Major and Minor forms, sometimes, a position will be ‘stuck’ with a Major or Minor.
- **Reality Space:** Fundamental Realities do not exist in the Public Space, they do not occupy any part of the Public Space. They are considered to be ‘outside’ the Public Space, but still there nonetheless, and their effects, unless otherwise stated, apply equally to every Monad in the Public Space, if applicable.² It is thus that Fundamental Realities cannot be disrupted or affected by anything that occurs in the Public Space (or in the Galactic Space).
- **The Concierge Cometh:** Major and Minor Fundamental Realities cannot be altered once the game begins. Fundamental Realities will be displayed throughout the game in each position’s non-public information and the Concierge will – and must – be the final interpretive authority on the meaning of the Fundamental Realities during the game. The Concierge may refuse to process Regular Turn Actions or Combat Orders that violate the position’s Fundamental Realities.

“Julio Cabrera, David Benatar ... and Karim Akerma all argue that procreation is contrary to Immanuel Kant’s practical imperative (according to Kant, a man should never be used as a means to an end, but always be an end in himself). They argue that a person can be created for the sake of his parents or other people, but that it is impossible to create someone for his own good; and that therefore, following Kant’s recommendation, we should not create new people. Heiko Puls argues that Kant’s considerations regarding parental duties and human procreation in general imply arguments for an ethically justified antinatalism. Kant, however, according to Puls, rejects this position in his teleology for meta-ethical reasons. ...

Julio Cabrera argues that procreation is a violation of autonomy because we are not able to obtain a human’s consent when we act on this human’s behalf through procreation, and that a rational agent, having reliable information about the human situation and the ability to speak about its possible coming into existence, might not want to be born and experience the harms associated with existence (this is a reference to a thought experiment proposed by Richard Hare, who claims that birth would be undoubtedly chosen).”

– from Wikipedia article, “Antinatalism,” July 31, 2019

Long Distance Voyager: Do you see Immanuel Kant behind Battlestar Galactica and Frankenstein?

Certain existentials are beyond the scope of this game and cannot be simulated. For example, since the concept of zero as a number is so important to computers, modern science and technology, and our understanding of the universe, it would not be possible to have a species that comes into this game lacking the concept of zero. Similarly, it would probably not be possible for a position to enter the game with a Fundamental Reality indicating that the population believes the world is flat and is at the center of the universe, which revolves around their Homeworld. Nor would the game be able to simulate directly the fundamental monogamy-polygamy tension that is the main and usual subject of our love songs.

- **Uranium on the Cranium:** Imagine a species that evolved on a planet that has no surface uranium deposits. Likely, they would not discover nuclear power generation until well after they went into space (with luck). This might eventually doom them to extinction when other fuels ran out, or if nuclear power or understanding is required for Stardrive technology.
 - ✓ Nuclear power has not been required for humanity to go into space, of course, but has been helpful as a power source for our probes. But we also have not been successful yet in bringing back large quantities of minerals from anywhere, we have a few moon rocks. Thus, if there were no surface uranium on Earth, we would still be much in the dark about the Sun and the universe; it is really the scientific model that our mineral abundance and diversity provided to the last centuries that is of the greatest value.
 - ✓ It is far less likely though that a planet exists that doesn't have surface deposits of malleable metals, e.g., copper, tin, gold, iron, silver. But if the planet were completely covered in liquid, or had no 'wood' or 'coal' (e.g., fossil fuels) to provide portable heat... well, you get it by now.

Now, suppose that FTL travel (by any means, ships, stargates, witch's broom, psychic projection, spice, etc.) requires some element, either as part of the structure or as fuel, that is not available in our system? How would we ever know? How would we obtain it? Even if we could theorize its existence, it would be "unobtainium" unless it could be manufactured (something like plutonium). Thus, to leave Sol, humanity would depend on generation ships, seed ships, etc. that have already been hypothesized in science-fiction imagination, if not science fact and maybe our descendants will end up in some place where the element exists and they have the knowledge and ability to use it. Would they come back for the rest of us?³

We would only be slightly better off than the species on a planet with no uranium, fuels or malleable metals near the surface.

- ✓ See fuel discussion, Unobtainium, 3 Movement, p. 857, *infra*.

"It is a pity that there are no big creatures to prey on humanity. If there were enough Dragons and Rocs, perhaps mankind would turn its might against them. Unfortunately man is preyed upon by microbes, which are too small to be appreciated."

– T.H. White, [The Book of Merlyn: The Unpublished Conclusion to The Once & Future King \(1977\)](#)

Fundamental Hierarchies: Fundamental Realities are at the top of the logical hierarchy of game rules and concepts in GGDM.⁴ Fundamental Realities drawn during set up generally cannot be changed or contravened during the game; positions are ‘locked into’ the choices made before the game, and the luck of the draw. Changing Fundamental Realities is not impossible within the scale of the game (both time and space), but will be undertaken only with due care for the story arc (the process must include a story arc) and balance of the game.

- ✓ Lasting Peace on Earth. A problem that consumed intellectuals and generated great literature in the 19th and 20th Centuries. Imagine the fundamental changes that would have to occur to human society, economics, and/or biology to achieve lasting peace on Earth. Remove sovereignty, ownership, money, ambition, nationalism, aggression, science, technology, creativity, weapons, politics, government, education, gender and sexuality, natural birth, evolution, remove humanity from humanity.

- “To avoid war, Man had to specialize in nonentity.” – William Tenn, “Null-P” (1950).

Many solutions have been dreamt, all of which tend to be radical, over-simplistic, utopian or dystopian. All would change our Fundamental Realities; none have happened or seem likely to happen.

- Through Rose Colored Shades: The Fundamental Realities in combination change and shape the ‘flavor,’ ‘color,’ ‘feel’ of the game for each position, they give positions ‘character.’⁵ There are 170 Fundamental Realities⁶ divided into five types described below plus five Truly Alien Fundamental Realities for the Truly Alien Primal State.⁷

- ✓ By taking a Fundamental Reality, the players of a position are signaling that they intend to play within its constraints in good faith, just as, by voluntarily participating in the game, they are commonly and impliedly signaling that they will play the game in good faith. The prevalence of computer-controlled gaming has made this less obvious to modern gamers but it is important in a sandbox game like GGDM. Most Fundamental Realities require some level of Concierge manipulation and Intervention on the part of the ‘game universe’ and players should not object or accuse the Concierge of being unfair (which is like accusing the universe of being unfair, I do so regularly).
- ✓ It is an interesting question whether Fundamental Realities are imperative or declarative on the position. See Imperative Game discussion, 1 Reformation, p. 1382, *infra*. On the one hand, most Fundamental Realities are not like ‘giving orders’ to the position players which they must follow – to the extent that there is a choice of how to play the Fundamental Reality, like an actor makes choices of how to play their role, but still has a script – Fundamental Realities in GGDM are probably more declarative than imperative. However, that varies with the type and strength of the Fundamental Reality – Major Fundamental Realities are more imperative, more of a strict script – and with the amount of manipulation and Intervention required of the Concierge. Some might see Concierge Intervention as making the Fundamental Reality imperative, sort of ‘railroading’ the position into a specific course of action.

Players should willingly and enthusiastically embrace and play their chosen positions; the Concierge should not be the big stick forcing positions to conform to their chosen Fundamental Realities. Let’s all just have fun with it.

- **Type 1:** ‘Type 1’ Fundamental Realities are the usual sort of historical, evolutionary and cosmic events and situations that tend to limit each position operationally.⁸ They affect how the position ‘plays’ or ‘acts’ during the game (i.e. the operation of the position). Type 1s tend to be ‘negative’; the bargain is the acceptance of operational limitations in the game for Inheritance Points (IPs) during set up and Public Space during the game.

Type 1s are inherently negative, satirical. The implication of a Type 1 Fundamental Reality is that the position is accepting some operational hindrance for the duration of the game. This is not always necessary; rather, it is sufficient that the Type 1 make the position operationally different without granting special or bonus abilities (which would be a double gain).
- **Type 2:** ‘Type 2’ Fundamental Realities are the ‘positive’ sort, and opposite of Type 1, in that Type 2 Fundamental Realities do not grant IPs during set up, but grant some special operational characteristic to the position during the game. Type 2 Fundamental Realities do not have Major or Minor forms, however, beyond the benefit, positions are governed by the description (in both positive and negative implications) during the course of the game. Positions may only have one Type 2 Fundamental Reality and players should remember that each position must have sufficient IPs necessary to satisfy the Primal State requirements to begin the game (which is the purpose of IPs).
- **Type 3:** ‘Type 3’ Fundamental Realities grant normal Major/Minor IPs during set up but impose a pregame drive or need that acts as a ‘Supra-Legitimacy’ requirement for whatever government the position chooses. This requirement exists above normal Conflict Checks for Government Titles, and is solely at the discretion of the Concierge when a violation occurs. During the course of the game, the Concierge may receive an Intervention Potential Plus (see Interventions Plus, 1 Disruption, p. 259, *infra*) for each failure to satisfy the drive, need or directive of the Type 3 Fundamental Reality. Positions agree to this by choosing a Type 3.
 - ✓ Type 3 Fundamental Realities differ from Conflict Checks in Government Titles (see Starch & Parchment, 3 Government Titles, p. 613, *infra*) in that they are not objective, fact-of-the-moment checks (despite how the wording may sometimes seem) but rather should be monitored by the Concierge on an ‘overall impression’ of the position’s conformity to the *sine qua non* of the Fundamental Reality – rather like the ‘artistic presentation’ score in competitive figure skating (which always causes controversy) as opposed to the technical elements of whether the skater did a triple-triple axel while eating a peanut butter & pickle sandwich. Additionally, no ‘disruptions’ result directly from the assessment of an Intervention Potential Plus against the position, but rather, the Interventions create or advance the position’s game ‘story.’
- **Type 4:** ‘Type 4’ Fundamental Realities provide an outward ‘persona’ for the position during the game that should be reflected in News Events and in-game diplomacy and communications (i.e. role playing the position⁹). Occasionally, the position may also find it necessary to do specific in-game actions to maintain the persona.¹⁰ Type 4 Fundamental Realities have neither Major nor Minor forms, but instead grant a fixed IP value during setup. Positions may have one Type 4 Fundamental Reality, even if dealt several possibilities.

A position with a Type 4 Fundamental Reality is expected to be ‘in character’ as much as possible during the game (as long as it does not impair vital communications in the game). This does bar other non-Type 4 positions from developing a persona as well.

Perhaps participants might regard Type 4 Fundamental Realities as archetypes; both in the Platonic sense “that all things have ideal forms (aka archetypes) of which real things are merely shadows or copies” and/or the Jungian sense of “an inherited idea or mode of thought that is present in the unconscious of the individual” (from Wikipedia article, “Archetype”).

- ✓ I had an undergrad college course in abnormal psychology with a memorable professor. The course was divided into three parts, with a blue book test at the end of each section; it was both lecture and book (a companion volume to the DSM IV). The first section was about Sigmund Freud and the Vienna Circle and during this part the professor was very Freudian in demeanor, speech, appearance. No one noticed because it was consistent with the general image of a psychologist and a professor. We took the test, came back the next week and I noticed his demeanor and speech had changed slightly as we began the next section on Carl Jung and Jungian psychology. The professor also never took attendance during the course, but when he handed back the tests, he handed each person their test as he went around the room. He explained that when we handed in the test, he looked at our name and our face. After the Jungian psychology section blue book test, he returned, and his demeanor changed again (by this time, he wasn't wearing a suit and tie) as we began the final section on Viktor Frankel's existential theories.
 - And then, 13 years later, Heath Ledger was the Joker.
- **Type 5:** ‘Type 5’ Fundamental Realities represent alternate realities or alternate histories from before the game that can ‘leak’ or ‘ripple’ into the present, overwriting parts of the current position. How or why this can happen will never be known or understood, but it is theorized that perhaps it is caused by the invention of FTL travel (i.e. ‘stardrive’ in GGDM terms) that marks the beginning of the game. There is a 5% chance, plus 1% per Regular Turn processed that an alternate reality ‘leak’ will occur, instantly overwriting some of the position's data at the end of the Regular Turn. When this occurs, there is a 50% chance that *each* Ripple in the Type 5 Fundamental Reality will be applied; the results can range from very bad to very good. The Ripples in each Type 5 are probably somehow connected.

The ‘leak’ event *paradoxically* does not affect the prior in-game history – GGDM is not designed for retroactive or retconning effects – it only affects the current and future state of the position and game. The Concierge may adjust the percentages before the game to create stronger, more chaotic effects; it is suggested that only one ‘leak’ be allowed in each 10-turn period. By taking a Type 5 Fundamental Reality, the position is accepting a ticking time-bomb (like committing a crime) and should not complain when it goes off unexpectedly.

All Type 5 Fundamental Realities are considered Major for counting purposes, and each position may only have one Type 5 Fundamental Reality, even if dealt several possibilities.

 - ✓ **Doctor Who:** Oh, yes, I am. Very clever. But what use is clever against trees? They don't listen to reason. You can't plead with them. You can't lie to them. They have no moving parts, no circuits. – Dr. Who, “In the Forest of the Night” (2014).
 - Saruman the White had the same problem. He was a very clever guy too.
- **Creator:** Participants may design new Fundamental Realities. The key to designing a Fundamental Reality is that the idea must be expressible within the rules structure of the game (that is, ‘operational’). Fundamental Realities should not be designed like additional, special or

new rules or grant benefits; rather, they are guidelines to be interpreted by the Concierge and applied to the position. Types 1, 3, and 5 Fundamental Realities must be existential (not a temporary condition), must have a concrete operational effect on the position, and should, hopefully, be profound. Type 4 Fundamental Realities are easiest because they have no effect on or interaction with the rules of the game.

*“Come on a voyage with us
Our quest is callin’
All hear the oceans howlin’
Voices of the Fallen
Too long we’ve roamed these waters
We’ve blown our hearts down
Our homeland we’ve forgotten
All we know is gone now.”*

– Xandria, “Voyage of the Fallen” (2015)

Asteres Planetai: The Wanderers are a special set of Fundamental Realities that affect *all positions*. Prior to drawing Fundamental Realities for each position, the Concierge will randomly draw between zero and three Wanderers for the game, and all positions will be informed of the Wanderers drawn prior to choosing their Fundamental Realities. The Wanderers slightly change the way the game plays for *all positions* by imposing universal physical laws and/or changing the underlying assumptions and/or processes of the game rules. The Wanderers are considered Fundamental Realities, but do not count against the number of Fundamental Realities held by each position and do not generate any Inheritance Points (The Wanderers do not have Major and Minor forms). The Wanderers are colored red (‘redshifted’), as they are moving away from the established game rules and procedures.

- ✓ In current board-gaming terms, The Wanderers would be called ‘environments’ which are usually controlled and changed by card draws before and during the game.
 - ✓ There should be a 50% chance of zero Wanderers in the game, and if there are, then the number of Wanderers drawn is 1 to 3.
-

“The past needs to be recognized. But it is an imperfect guide for the future.”

– Daniel W. Drezner, Washington Post, November 3, 2016 ¹¹

Endnotes.

¹ Commentary: The “self-evident” truths of the Declaration of Independence are merely statements that our founding fathers considered axiomatic (see Self-Evident discussion, 1 Beginnings, p. 24, *supra*). Students of humanity might consider it self-evident that war is a product of civilization. Many of the most famous statements of intellectuals and leaders are merely axioms recast in memorable language that makes them so quotable. For example, Max Weber’s observations regarding the necessary state monopoly on the legitimate use of physical force is an axiom of sovereignty; it is certain that others have known and expressed the same long before Mr. Weber, but Mr. Weber’s statement stands out as quotable and teachable because of who he is, and how and when it was articulated.

² Commentary: In the first versions of the idea of Fundamental Realities they were ‘outside the game space’ – I originally envisioned them (back around 1999-2000) as being placed around the outside and projecting chess-like

‘lines of force’ across the board – anything in the lines of force of a Fundamental Reality would be affected by it. I went to Homestead and bought a used electric typewriter to make the Fundamental Realities and a paper cutter board, but the idea fizzled and morphed with the game into the current form. I eventually donated the typewriter to a charity, I don’t know what happened to the paper cutter board.

³ Citation: “Oh, I see. The old geranium to the cranium!” – Sassy the cat (voice of Sally Fields), *Homeward Bound 2* (1996), as she knocks a flower pot off the ledge and hits a dog on the head.

⁴ Citation: Professor Peter Suber’s “Nomic,” a game about self-amending systems, was an influence on GGDM.

⁵ Commentary: I was fascinated for awhile by *Cosmic Encounter* and its predecessor, *Eon*. I learned to play *Cosmic Encounter* at GenCon 2001, and spent much of the weekend playing and talking with grey-haired Peter Olatka, the designer, and the *Cosmic Encounter* web design crew. Although there was no conscious effort to imitate *Cosmic Encounter*, *Fundamental Realities* probably owe some debt to that weekend of playing *Cosmic Encounter*. *Cosmic Encounter* was later, retroactively cited as an early example of intentional emergent game play in tabletop gaming.

⁶ Commentary: “Michel-angel-oh, was give’in a one man show...” – Dr. Hook, “*Michelangelo*” (1978).

⁷ Commentary: The number of possible combinations of *Fundamental Realities* is probably mindboggling.

⁸ Commentary: When I created the first 100 *Fundamental Realities* in 2007, there were three types, Historical, Evolutionary and Cosmic. The original types were vague and general with no other meaning in the game and many *Fundamental Realities* had overlapping types. Each original *Fundamental Reality* was written as a special rules subset for the position that held them; rather than the current ‘guidelines format.’ Most of the original *Fundamental Realities* rolled into Type 1 and Type 3 categories, with some few going into Type 2 and 4.

⁹ Commentary: The majority of any role-playing game is the interpretation of die roll results within the context of the characters, circumstances, and rules. A lot of fudging goes on behind the GM screen. If a RPG session is nothing but a bunch of interpretations and group storytelling, then what is the purpose of the dice? The dice are used to eliminate a large number of possible interpretations (e.g., a miss or a failed task or failed saving throw) or to create the opportunity for extraordinary results (e.g., three consecutive ‘20’ results on a d20), so that the story can move along. Some RPGs have tried other methods, being diceless, using cards and drama points, but generally all to the same effect. Thus, role playing game design is very much a matter of die rolls and numbers crunching (or other systems), and RPG characters are – as agents of heroic storytelling – endowed with greater abilities than normals (i.e. ‘blips,’ NPCs).

¹⁰ Commentary & Citation: Participants who are really into their positions may sometimes do or say unsavory or morally repulsive things *within the game* as part of playing their part in the story arc or position advancement. This should not be automatically taken as a moral indictment against the position’s players, ***and the position’s players should not have to break the fourth wall to explain.*** Like an actor who makes a career playing memorable and/or anonymous bad guys (e.g., Alan Rickman, Jack Palance, Lord Humungus). Although she was commenting broadly on writing fictional character dialogue, Ms. Beth Hill’s comments can also apply to playing positions in GGDM:

- ✓ “Putting your pet theory or your political, religious, or social beliefs into the mouth of a character and letting the character pontificate on and on is a sure way to keep readers from coming back to your books... But fiction is not the place for preaching the party line. If your character has a position to defend, *let him do it*. And make him convincing. Remember, however, that *your* position has no place in his mouth. This isn’t ventriloquist school. This is fiction, where truth is revealed, not force fed. Write your treatises if you want to, if you need to. But let characters be characters, not your ideal Mini-Me. Some of your characters, some of the solid ones who defeat the bad guys, won’t be just like you. They won’t hold the same positions. They won’t have the same values. They might never choose you for a trusted friend. But they can still be the perfect character for your tale. And you’ll have to be the one to make them believable. And solid. And good. Yeah. Sometimes you’ll have to make them good, those characters who don’t agree with your positions. Are you writer enough to create them?” (emphasis in original).

- From “Bad Dialogue – Bad, Bad Dialogue,” November 3, 2011, at <http://theeditorsblog.net/2011/11/03/bad-dialogue-bad-bad-dialogue/>.

¹¹ Citation: “What Game 7 of the World Series Teaches Us about Foreign Policy: What lessons can be applied from the great game to the Great Game?” *Washington Post*, November 3, 2016.