

GATECRASHING OPS



Source: Entirely Unofficial Gatecrashing Wiki [Link]

WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT THE GATES

Posted by: Sagan Harris, Argonaut <Info Msg Rep>

Point of fact, there is very little that transhumanity understands about the gates. It's easier to classify what we *don't* know. We don't know who made them, what they're made of, how they work, or what their full capabilities are. We suspect they were made by the TITANs, but no one's really sure if that's true or if the TITANs simply found them first. We know that they are composed of some sort of programmable exotic matter, which has so far defied analysis. We think they create a wormhole in the fabric of space, though exactly how they do so is beyond our understanding. We know of five gates within the solar system and *thousands* of extrasolar gates, with the count rising almost daily.

About the only thing that transhumanity *has* figured out so far is how to interface with the gate control systems. We of course have learned how to open and close gate connections, but only after extensive periods of trial and error. The truth is, the vast majority of gate controls are not understood, and for the most part they are left untouched out of fear that some unforeseen event will be triggered. The gates within the solar system are all too highly valued and deemed irreplaceable, so the limited amount of experimentation that takes place with gate control systems is conducted on extrasolar

gates that are suitably remote and considered slightly more expendable.

There is one thing we know with certainty: using the gates is an unpredictable affair. Despite what we have learned from half a decade of gate operations, our mastery of the control systems can be compared to that of a non-uplifted monkey seated in front of a car's manual controls. We might have figured out how to steer in order to go in certain directions, but the car is a mechanism far beyond our intellect and experience, with numerous functions that stymie and confuse us, and ultimately the whole situation is likely to end in injuries and suffering. The gates have an unfortunate tendency to act in ways that we don't understand. Even things we thought we'd figured out often go drastically awry.

Perhaps most significantly in the category of Things We Do Not Know is whether the gates are truly an opportunity—or a threat. Transhumanity has eagerly embraced the chance to expand out into the galaxy and explore new worlds and new life—perhaps too eagerly. Knowing as little as we do, we have no idea what dangers we may be placing ourselves in. We may find out that we have no control over the gates at all. In fact, we may not be the only ones *using* the gates. We strongly suspect the TITANs did, and it is completely possible that they still are. Many fear that the TITANs may one day return, using the gates, and finish the job of wiping us out. What if there is something else out there, however, some other threat? What if one day we open a gate to the homeworld

THE GATES: OPPORTUNITY OR X-RISK?



[Incoming Message. Source: Anonymous]
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You've asked why Firewall doesn't act to close the gates. The answer, of course, is complicated. I don't think any of the proxies are naive enough not to realize that the Pandora gates pose a very real and credible x-risk. They provide an avenue not just for the TITANs to return, but for some as-yet-unknown hostile entity to reach directly into the solar system and attack us. Even if you consider the dubious notion that the gates can be defended as some sort of chokepoints, the expansion of transhumanity into the galaxy is itself worrisome to many. The more we make our presence known, the more traces we leave, the more noise we create, the more likelihood we have of making contact with other forms of intelligent life. Given that there is no certainty that this life will be friendly, we may be setting ourselves up for an unfortunate future encounter.

Make no mistake, there are elements within Firewall who decry the use of the gates and who argue, sometimes

vehemently, that we must avoid using them. There are even rumors of some of these agents going off the reservation and taking up direct sabotage campaigns against the gates. The overriding opinion among proxies, however, is that the gates present a marginally better opportunity than they do a threat. Security is always a trade off, and sometimes you must accept a modicum of risk in exchange for a necessary gain. In this case, the fact that the gates allow us to expand transhumanity outward, making ourselves less centralized and not as easy to wipe out with a single stroke, is arguably the better choice. Additionally, the gates allow us to take a more pro-active approach, to learn from the galaxy around us and even from the ruins of dead civilizations we find. It is quite possible that long-dead species may provide us with answers or solutions to situations that might otherwise spell our doom.

There are no guarantees of course. Every trip through a gate is a potential danger. Keep that in mind, always. ❁

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of some homicidal alien species, thus alerting them to our existence? What if the gates are already being used to spy on and monitor us, tracking all of our interstellar movements and colonies? With such a poor understanding of the gates, we have no way to know what dangers we are placing ourselves in simply by using them.

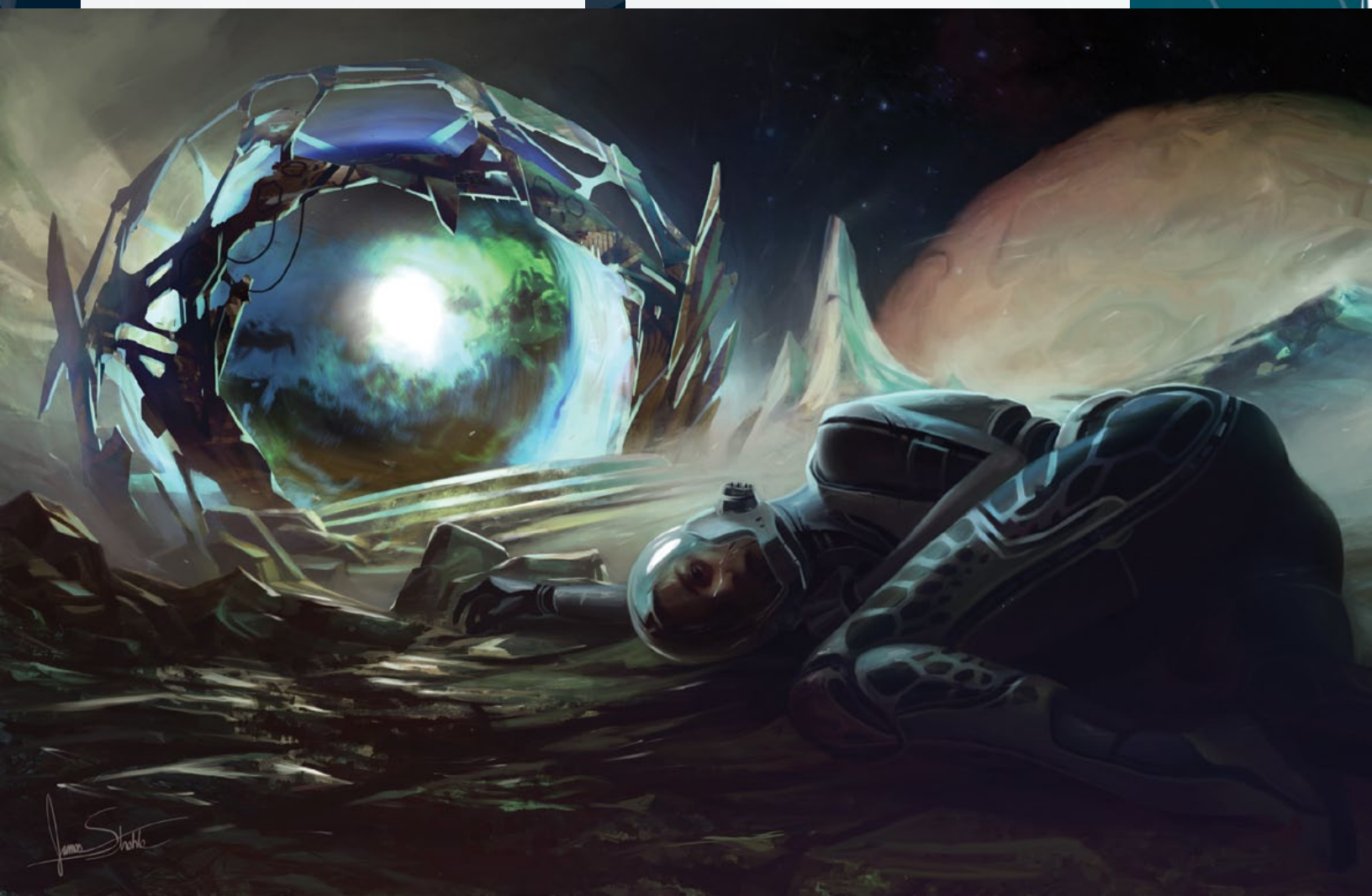
Pushing those happy thoughts aside, we must acknowledge the fact that transhumanity has already adopted the gates as another tool in our technological arsenal, despite the fact that we can't read or even identify the user guide and aren't really sure of the tool's intended purpose. Like many tools of our own devising, we are adept at conniving new and unexpected uses for the gates. Transhumanity is likely to continue to use and abuse the network of gates to its full extent—at least until something nasty comes along and convinces us otherwise. In the meantime, there are very good reasons to exploit the gates to our full advantage, from increasing our knowledge of the universe to expanding transhumanity's population and territory so that we might better survive any unfortunate future catastrophes. If the Planetary Consortium's propagandist memes are to be believed, the gates are the path to transhumanity's destiny as a galactic civilization. Despite the hubris, this is a goal for which many of us are more than willing to charge forth. It sure beats sitting at home.

GATE LOCATIONS

Posted by: Sagan Harris, Argonaut <[Info](#) [Msg Rep](#)>

The vast majority of gates so far discovered are physically anchored to some sort of astronomical body, whether that be a planet, moon, or small rocky asteroid. There are a few notable exceptions, such as the Aerie Gate free floating in the vacuum of space in a tidally-locked orbit around an extrasolar planet or the Vortex Gate that appears to be suspended by unknown means within the crushing depths of a gas giant's atmosphere. This standard placement, in conjunction with their size, implies that the gates are not intended to facilitate spacecraft travel, though some of them may be used for this purpose. (Most asteroid-locked gates, for example, require little in the way of escape velocity.)

The geographical placement of gates has varied widely, with some locations defying logic. Gates have been situated on open wind-swept plains, in cramped caverns, in deep underground tunnels, underwater, at the bottom of crevices, high atop mountains, and in at least one instance, embedded within an ambulatory ocean-surface biomass. They have been found on planets with toxic atmospheres, hidden within craters on remote asteroids, on surfaces ablaze with a nearby star's heat and radiation, exposed to the vacuum of barren moons, and buried within the methane ice of frozen worlds. Several gate locations



GEOLOGICAL STRATA IMPLICATIONS ON GATE AGE



To: Dr. Vargas, Ministry Science Advisory Group

From: Dr. Tiptree, TerraGenesis Geological Research Group 8

Thank you for inquiring into our research. Though our findings have been interesting, they are so far inconclusive. Assessment of the geological composition surrounding over three dozen gates has unearthed contradictory results. In a significant sample of our findings (over 40%), evidence overwhelmingly indicates the gate foundations to be extremely recent additions to their environments. Though exact timing is far too difficult to pinpoint, it certainly remains a strong possibility that these gates were put into place within the past decade, or around the time of the Fall, thus reinforcing arguments the gates were manufactured and located by the TITANs.

In many other samples, however, we have found gates that appear to have been established in time periods that are significantly less recent. In fact, some gates are so old as to be partially or entirely buried by the effects of time. Oddly, however, the dating on these samples varies wildly, ranging from several hundred years to billions. You read that right: *billions*. Some are so old as to predate the Earth itself, which implies that something vastly more ancient than the TITANs created these gates—or that the TITANs discovered time travel.

Naturally this information has wide-ranging implications. We tried to suppress it until the memeticists could find a

good way to spin it, but with the argonauts jointly involved in the project, that was a lost cause. The cat is officially out of the bag, though various Consortium interests are managing the leak by arguing that the TITANs may simply have the means to embed the gates in ways that make them look incredibly ancient. I suppose that's a possibility, though why a vast machine intelligence would want to fuck with our heads like that is beyond me. Maybe it's their idea of a joke. In my mind, however, such arguments run far too similar to the desperate claims of pre-Fall religious creationists who argued that their deity stuck dinosaur bones in the ground in order to keep humans guessing.

A very serious possibility here is that the TITANs—and us—are but the latest in a series of intelligent life forms who have found and used the gates, eventually going on to create more of our own, adding to the network. If the TITANs did indeed discover a gate in our solar system, it is not a stretch to presume that their vast intellects could have found a way to copy it, and both find and create more. The archeological evidence strongly indicates that at least one other alien species, the Iktomi, also made use of the gates. This leads to the distinct possibility that the network of wormhole gates we now use are the relics of not one, but *many* alien civilizations. This position is gaining traction in research media and peer review circles.

The question then, of course, is: where did they all go? 🍀

seem to be completely entombed in stone, with no possibility of actually passing through, even despite attempts to drill.

Most gates appear individually; it is rare for more than one to be found in the same star system. There are exceptions to this rule, however, and several nexus points have been discovered, similar to the solar system, with more than one gate.

GATE FACILITIES

Within the solar system, the Pandora gates are prized and protected, which is no surprise given their strategic and economic value. As the centerpoint of numerous activities, each of these gates has sprouted complex encircling settlements, as if vast bureaucracies, management ecosystems, and security apparatuses were fed and nourished by the entropy pouring from each wormhole. Though the individual setups vary, they share some notable features.

Each of the solar system gates are now housed within shielded artificial structures, sealing off the gates from outside view. While the gates themselves are protected within large warehouses, with plenty of room for operation, observation, and security measures, these are usually connected to larger campuses and structures. These linked buildings are home to prep centers, decontamination facilities, research labs, sensor arrays, armories, supply depots, fab labs, minifactories, repair centers, vehicle pools, medical wings, as well as housing and entertainment

for the hundreds or thousands of staff who man these facilities. The gates used most heavily for colonization projects—notably the Martian and Vulcanoid Gates—feature additional facilities for training colonists and meeting the colonies' logistical/supply chain needs.

These gate compounds are often equipped with internal transportation systems for moving people and goods, potentially including rail lines leading right up to the gates themselves (and continuing at the colonies beyond). Spaceports are also located nearby, but a suitable distance away for safety purposes. The airspace near the gates themselves is universally off-limits and guarded.

GATE SECURITY

Gate facilities are among the most secure places in the solar system. These complexes are blanketed with several layers of sensor systems and defensive nanoswarms. Getting anywhere near them without passing through redundant rings of identity authentication and authorization is nigh impossible. Security guards and sentry bots are sometimes authorized to use deadly force against intruders. Combat shells, mechanized troops, and heavy weapons emplacements will bring major firepower to bear against more serious attacks. Interceptor drones and hunter-killer bots swarm any surrounding airspace, while fightercraft and warships stand guard over nearby orbits and space. Most gate complexes are in fact more heavily guarded than common military facilities.

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Not all of these defenses are pointed outwards. The gates themselves are encircled with multiple defensive perimeters, designed to thwart or at least stall any offensive originating from the gates themselves. There is serious concern and worry that some hostile entity might employ the gates as an avenue to attack or even invade the solar system. It is wise to assume that most gates reside in the cross-hairs of orbital strike platforms or that they are mined with “last resort” nuclear or antimatter bombs.

EXTRASOLAR GATE FACILITIES

Outside of the solar system, gate environs are significantly different. Only a few colonies boast gate facilities of any scale, much less anything close to that found within the solar system. Extrasolar gates are very much virgin frontier. Though it is common practice to monitor them with sensors and post robotic sentries, there is little in the way of major infrastructure or defensive installations. On many worlds, in fact, it is quite easy for a gatecrasher to approach a gate and access the control systems without interference. The more occupied an extrasolar site is, the more likely the local gate will be upgraded with supply depots, housing encampments, research labs, communications centers, weapons batteries, and so forth. In colony worlds that make extensive use of indentures, procedures are often put in place to keep conscripted laborers from accessing the gate site and escaping.

GATE DESIGN AND APPEARANCE

Posted by: Sagan Harris, Argonaut <[Info Msg Rep](#)>

Though the Pandora gates are all very similar in look and function, in truth there are many notable differences between individual structures. First among these is size. Some of the gates are quite large, with the main spherical cage having a radius of over 30 meters and a volume of over 100,000 cubic meters, with openings easily large enough to drive a tank or push a shuttle through. On the other hand, most gates are significantly smaller, with the lower end gates having a radius of approximately 2 meters across and a volume of only around 30 cubic meters, just large enough for individual transhumans to pass through one at a time. There is some speculation that the gate sizes may be programmable, though no one has succeeded in reshaping one yet, or at least acknowledged such to the research community. It is possible to manipulate the wormhole size so that it is smaller than the gate; this is in fact standard procedure when connecting to unknown locations. In these cases, the wormhole is intentionally kept just wide enough to stick a microsensor through, while preventing anything larger from coming through.

All gates have the same basic form: a rough sphere of interlocking angled arms, like a round patterned cage. These black arms are solid and composed of an unknown form of stable and programmable exotic

matter. Despite almost a decade of study, the exact composition continues to spur a raging debate in materials science and physics circles, and there seems to be some evidence that different gates may actually be composed of different substances, or perhaps change composition over time. The arms move and change shape when new destinations are programmed into the gate, though it is interesting to note that set destinations do not always produce the same arm configurations.

Physically, gate arms have a polished metal look, and they seem to be impervious to signs of aging or physical damage, having an inherent self-repair function. Aside from the Discord Gate incident, nobody has yet been willing to risk damaging a gate—at least that they’ve admitted—and so no one is quite sure just how resilient to damage these structures are. Analysis of the material properties suggests they can easily shrug off concentrated burns from even our heaviest beam weapons and are all but immune to personal weapons fire.

DISTURBING TO THE SENSES

One documented and much-discussed phenomenon regarding the gates is their unusual visual appearance. To many observers, the gates are odd and difficult to look at, with blurred edges and a seeming resistance to coming into focus—a visual feature that is acutely unnerving and sometimes invokes physiological symptoms such as vertigo and nausea. Various experiments attribute this to some metamaterial quality of the gates’ physical structure, impacting the visual wavelengths. Scanning the gate cage in other electromagnetic wavelengths has produced similar oddities: they are all but invisible to higher and lower frequencies, including radar, microwave, terahertz, x-ray, and gamma-ray scans—which makes them notably difficult to spot with robotic probes and long-range sensor scans. Inactive gates are notably cool on thermal imaging, however, exuding very little thermal radiation, and so can be spotted by their contrast in warmer environments. Strangely, the material composing the gate arms fluoresces and shows up quite brightly in the ultraviolet band.

Most likely due to these metamaterial qualities, many transhumans find the gates to be physically unpleasant to view. As a consequence, the gates themselves are often shrouded from sight within gate facilities, meaning that gatecrashers only see the gates themselves immediately before stepping through.

There have been numerous recorded incidents of visual hallucinations in the presence of the gates, with various accounts describing fleeting images, hazy apparitions, and flickering distortions. The vast majority of these involved biomorphs, and the prevailing theory is that the gates in question vibrate at infrasonic frequencies in resonance with human eyeballs (19 Hz), creating visual illusions. The gates do indeed emit both ultrasonic and infrasonic hums when in operation. Several instances involving similar visual anomalies with synthetic morphs remain unexplained.