

The Free State

The Free State is many things, and cannot be easily summed up into few words. Some consider it a dystopian state since privacy is non-existent and disruptive members of society are always exiled or 'recycled.' Others consider it a form of pure direct democracy, since the people vote directly on issues using information networks. Many yet consider it an anarcho-communist state for its lack of official leadership and universally egalitarian policies. Finally, there are those that call it little more than a tribal society on account of its simple starship technology, nomadic society, religious worship, and its predominantly hunter-gatherer means of survival. Regardless, each aspect of the Free State will be explained in the following articles.

The Free State was the de facto nation under which all the [Freespacers](#) once lived.

In recent years, as a result of [Freespacer Massacre and Related Battles](#), it has become a shadow of it's former self. For more information, see: [Complete History of the Freespacers](#).



The Free State Emblem

Local Government

See [Freespacer Fleets](#) for more information.

Though they are united through the digital world, in physical reality they are spread across huge reaches of space due to their nomadic lifestyle. They commonly group together as Fleets, each being composed of a single [Mothership](#) along with dozens of support vessels for mining, production, defense, maintenance and countless other duties. These fleets are effectively mobile city-states, each operating as miniature autonomous nations. The only time they interact with one another (at least politically) is when decisions must be made regarding the entire State, conflict over resource deposits occurs, or decisions concerning the whole Free State must be made, in which case everything is settled either by discussion via [Polysentience](#) until an agreement is reached, or with a referendum where every sentient being has the right to vote. This leaderless, completely democratic decision-making process might seem lengthy and chaotic, but, thanks to the connection to Polysentience, such decisions rarely take more than one minute to be made.

State Government

The Free State is a mix of anarchy (there is no police and no official enforcement of rules and regulations, and any and all activities are purely on a volunteer basis) and direct digital democracy (every choice is voted upon: there are no representatives and no charges).


Information Networks

Freespacers information networks have four key features that separate them from traditional information networks, the importance of which will be made relevant in the next section.

- **Free Information:** Freespacers are advocates of anarcho-communism not only in the physical world, but in the digital one, too. Society dictates that *all* information should be available to *everyone*, making these networks effectively giant repositories for the collective knowledge of the entire race.
- **MMI:** Allows for much more in-depth interaction, such as realistic virtual reality or bulk information transfer to and from the mind.
- **Data Integrity:** Hundreds, if not thousands of Freespaces and Synthetic Intelligence scour the information networks at any given time, dedicated solely to the investigation and eradication of misinformation.
- **Usage:** Freespacers, unless disconnected by chance, damage or choice, are usually perpetually connected. Society is unique in the fact that the digital world is often considered more important than the physical one.

Polysentience

Polysentience is an all-encompassing term used by the Freespacers for their unique communal information nexus, or more specifically the product of it. The interconnected network of thousands of **Synthetic Intelligences** and Freespacers minds acts as a sort of collective consciousness; Its basic principal is not unlike a bureau or think tank, where many individuals come together to form an organization capable of far more than the sum of its parts.

However, all similarities end here. Due to the firm advocacy anarchist and communal ideologies, Polysentience resembles an  **Adhocracy** more than anything else. The combination of thousands of dedicated Synthetic Intelligences, the creative input of the entire Freespacer race, and the free information policies makes Polysentience a highly versatile and effective means of problem solving. Its lack of specialized bureaucracy makes it somewhat less efficient per person than traditional organizations, but because it is composed of the entire population of the State at a given time it can more than compensate through sheer numbers, not to mention flexibility and creativity. This is further supplemented by a network of hundreds of dedicated Synthetic Intelligence. The sheer capacity of Polysentience has made it an ideal core for scientific endeavors on behalf of the race, since the nomadic lifestyle doesn't easily allow for large-scale laboratories or unnecessary bulk.

The Freespacers lack any unified government since anarchism and communism are two of the primary

principals of the Free State, so there can be no true leadership. However, it was found that Polysentience made an effective substitute. It was composed of minds from every corner of the Free State, so digital debate and voting via Polysentience could be used to quickly and accurately determine the will of the people. It is now commonly used as a stand-in for a national government whenever negotiations or State-wide decisions need to be made, or when mediation is needed to solve inter-Fleet disputes.

Security

See [Cult of the Network Backbone](#) for more information.

Naturally, no society is perfect. In order to protect the Polysentience from misinformation by the corrupt, political manipulators, and vandals, a group of programmers came together to form the order that would eventually become the Cult of the Network Backbone, more commonly known as the Hacker Cult.

The Hacker Cult operates purely in realm of cyberspace and intelligence, with Cultists not even carry basic firearms. This is partially due to the Freespace policy of preventing the concentration of power, as well as their belief that force of arms only leads to potential for abuse.

Economy

Work is done through volunteer associations, with young Freespace working as apprentices in various trades until they find a single trade they wish to specialize in (though this can be changed at any time). While technically volunteer, anyone who does not work at all is considered a resource drain on the entire community and will often be 'recycled' or exiled so a more productive citizen may be grown to take his or her place. This, however, is an extremely rare event, since Polysentience connection ensures that every Freespace understands that his help is needed and knows the good that will come from his efforts.

Material resources are shared based the ideology of 'each gave according to their abilities, and received according to their needs.' The distribution of resources is regulated through the aesthetic lifestyle of the Freespace; the only recreation comes from the virtual world, and the production of consumer goods and physical luxuries are seen as completely unnecessary. With all basic needs free and no luxuries to purchase there is no point in collecting or bartering resources, thus eliminating the traditional concept of greed. This entire system is monitored over by [Synthetic Intelligence](#), which are incorruptible in the traditional sense since they are not part of the true physical world and have little use for luxuries and wealth. Corruption and waste is virtually unheard of.

Despite the seemingly harsh nature of this system, there is little alternative for them: Certain resources, such as water, are so rare that taking more than one's share is effectively murder. It is believed that if capitalism took root the few material resources would concentrate in the hands of entrepreneurs, leaving vast numbers of the population to die off.

Ideologies of the State

Pacifism & Harmony

“Sentient life has evolved the ability to communicate for one purpose: to work together. If our purpose really was to fight other forms of life as some governments would have you believe, we would have never achieved interstellar travel; it would have been much less work simply to stay back on the ground and cudgel one another with sticks.” – The Art of Never Again, Chapter 186: The Fallacies of War

The Freespace nomadic lifestyle results in a very high mortality rate in comparison to other cultures, from poor ice and water harvests as well as other natural hazards of the galaxy. Internal fighting with their nuclear technology, in addition to the natural threats, almost certainly spelled extinction for the race. So, their ancestors agreed to never take up arms against one another no matter what the disagreement. It is now common practice to use third-party mediation, mostly through Polysentience, in order to resolve disputes.

Over centuries this evolved from simply a survivalist doctrine to their entire philosophy of life. They strongly believe in achieving harmony and balance with not only one another, but the universe around them. Terraforming, weapons, and other means of 'taming the galaxy' are frowned upon at best. The logic is that nearly the entire universe is in a natural state of chaos and entropy, so if a species can survive in the untamed chaos itself they can thrive almost anywhere. While this 'grin and bear it' philosophy can often result in the loss of lives to natural disasters, it also means they can survive in almost region of space without being bound by supply lines or planets.

Community

“If you can discover a better way of life than office holding for your future rulers, a well governed city becomes a possibility. For only in such a state will those rule who are truly rich, not in gold, but in the wealth that makes happiness. A good and wise life.” – Aristotle The Art of Never Again, Chapter 753: The Ascetic Virtues

Freespace society greatly reflects their communistic lifestyle in the fact they are a very community-oriented. They dwell in common rooms rather than having private residences, which offers numerous benefits to the Freespace. Shared dwelling saves energy and material resources on construction and maintenance. This perpetual close proximity also results in a tightly knit and family-like mentality among a starship crews, and even polygamous relationships.

Freespace tend to be much more direct and forward than other species, often saying exactly what they think about a situation even if it may offend others. This is often attributed to their short lifespans, which discourage time-consuming rituals and protocol. This is especially true when it comes to relationships; their short lives rarely give them the luxury of playing complex emotional games or courtship rituals, so they tend to move much more quickly than other races. Their very strong sense of community and lack of greed (therefore jealousy, at least for the most part) in society also causes them to be quite polyamorous.

Anarchy

QUERY: 20.5802.4036 » What is anarchy? EXPLANATION: 82.1268.9023 » Anarchy is when those that have been oppressed finally break the chains that bind them. It is the fire of freedom that blazes throughout the galaxy, consuming old orders and tyranny in its wake. QUERY: 20.5802.4036 » And what is oppressed? EXPLANATION: 82.1268.9023 » Oppression is a forgotten memory. Something you'll never need to know. - The Art of Never Again, Chapter 754: Conversations with Younglings

While historical records are foggy at best, much evidence points to the Freespaceers being direct descendants of a rebellion of some sort fleeing from an exploitive government. For example, the Art of Never Again, so-called encyclopedia of their species, was originally a military doctrine for decentralized and guerrilla warfare specifically against a larger empire. Many speculate that it was their forerunners' hatred of imperial government that has cultivated their heavy bias against bureaucracy, hierarchy, or dominance of any sort. To this very day the Freespaceers still hold great resentment for any sort of nation that shows hints of being even slightly dictatorial or imperialistic.

Yet it is not external empires they fear the most, but internal political manipulation. All aspects of the Free State abolished bureaucracy and became decentralized so that there was little chance of power concentrating in any group. Even politicians themselves were completely removed from the system as the Free State turned to direct voting via information networks. They went even further by making the Free State completely transparent; all political, personal, and industrial privacy was made non-existent: through Polysentience, even privacy of thought has mostly disappeared from Freespaceer society, the reasoning being that if you have done nothing wrong, then you have nothing to hide from others. This stifled innovation and caused some discontentment, but at the same time completely wiped out corruption and crime and created a far more tightly-knit society. This supposedly flawless political integrity of the Free State is a great source of pride for the Freespaceers, proving once and for all an egalitarian society is an achievable thing.

Ascetic Virtues

"Happiness is just an electrical impulse away..." - Syntelligence Kornephoros Six Seven 67-8448-1895
The Art of Never Again, Chapter 544: Dreamsmith Virtual Engineering

The Freespaceer life was not always a happy one. There is no privacy from the eyes of community or the ever present scanners of digital sentries, a necessary price for a corruption-free State. Motherships commonly suffer from overcrowded conditions, as building entirely new ones are discouraged by their enormous production costs. These conditions are made even more uncomfortable because all material resources were diverted to starship construction and necessities, with little left over for consumer goods.

Many believed all these sacrifices were necessary to improve resource efficiency, because every scrap of material wasted on material goods or more luxurious ships would equate to killing future lives; If each person had a larger share, less people could be supported with the resources available. But on the other hand, who was to say that a thousand unhappy lives weren't worth a hundred content ones? Was it possible to go too far in pursuing physical survival over happiness? They fiercely argued over the ethical calculus of this dilemma, each Fleet attempting to strike its own perfect balance. Then came the [MMI](#).

They found their perfect answer in virtual reality. Neural implants had to be installed to educate the workers anyways, so the equipment to interface with the digital world would cost nothing more. Yet these

simulations could make even the most extravagant fantasies come to life in great detail for absolutely no material cost. The citizens quickly embraced this new technology would willingly work an entire day in hell for just a few hours in paradise. Productivity and efficiency skyrocketed and unhappiness plummeted, as heaven became an electrical impulse away.

Population Demographs

Free State population by caste and race

Caste	Organic Population	SI (Machine) Population
Freespacer Types	200,000	1,000,000
Freespacer Types	250,000	600,000
Freespacer Types	n/a	50,000
Type Five	n/a	700,000*
TOTAL	400,000	1,600,000

Note: Type Fives do not have physical bodies in the traditional sense, therefore are not factored into the total population count.

OOO Notes

This article was created by [Strangelove](#). It was approved by [Wes](#) on February 5, 2007:[Approval Thread](#)

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