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This article presents a campaign concept for traveling between an infinity of alternate or parallel universes, similar to the "Infinite Worlds" campaign presented in *GURPS Time Travel*. In fact, the concepts of this article can be combined with the Infinite Worlds campaign quite easily. Although the material is presented in *GURPS* game statistics, it is usable with almost any game-system that allows the possibility of travel to parallel worlds, particularly various super-hero and universal RPG systems.

World Walkers

World walkers (or simply "walkers") are unique individuals who are "unstuck in time" for some unknown reason. This gives them certain unusual abilities, like traveling across parallel worlds, and "reaching" into other worlds and taking things from them. Their nature also appears to free walkers from many of the limitations of time and mortality; walkers are virtually immortal and can live for millennia of personal time.

All walkers have the Advantages World Walker (100 points, see below), Snatcher (80 points, CI, p. 45) and Unaging (15 points). Walkers also have great recuperative powers, allowing them to recovery from almost any injury, given enough time and a safe place in which to do it (Regular Regeneration, 25 points). They can be killed just like



anyone else, but most walkers are smart enough to know to cut and run when the situation looks bad.

Walkers have the unique ability to identify other Walkers on sight (in person, not over video) with a successful IQ roll. This ability is automatic and apparently foolproof - - no disguise or means of concealment affects it - - or at least no one has found a means to fool it yet. It is as much a disadvantage as an advantage for most walkers, but they tend to respect each other's privacy and try and avoid attracting attention from "fixed" people.

The "racial package" for being a walker costs 220 points. Walkers should be built on 500 points - - enough to provide them with a wide range of skills and abilities from their travels. Game Masters may want neophyte walker characters to be built on 320 point (base 100 points, plus the world-walker package) with the option for rapid advancement and learning of new skills from other worlds the characters visit.

Their powers of snatching and traveling, coupled with a potentially infinite lifespan, makes most walkers perpetual wanderers, traveling the multiverse without concern for material need and seeking some personal goal, be it enlightenment, a worthy adversary, or simply the biggest and best party in all reality.

World-Walking (100 points)

This advantage is similar to the World-Jumper advantage (CI, p. 48), except where jumpers "jump" to their destination in an instant, walkers have to take the time and "walk" there, across a plethora of parallel worlds.

In order to world-walk, a walker must physically move (at a slow walking pace or faster). He must concentrate for at least 10 seconds and visualize the world he wishes to visit, then make a roll against IQ, at -3 if he is visiting a world he has never been to before, at -5 if the world has major differences he has difficulty visualizing, in the GM's opinion (magic, super-science, etc.). If the walker has an object or person from the destination in his possession, he is at only -2 to IQ, even if he has never been there. If the roll is successful, the world around the walker begins to change to match the destination. A failed roll means the walker wanders for the base time without finding the world he's looking for, while a critical failure sends him to the wrong world! Walkers call this "tripping up."

The time it takes to walk to another world depends on the separation between them. There is a base time of five minutes. For every quantum level separating the two worlds, add another ten minutes. If not using the quantum level structure from *GURPS Time Travel*, the GM decides how "distant" the two worlds are, but no trip takes much more than an hour. The distance between worlds can shift periodically, and there are hazards walkers may encounter "en route" (see below). The time can be reduced by taking a penalty to the IQ roll, -2 to halve the time required (round up each time). A trip cannot take less than the base ten seconds of concentration needed. Walkers call such short trips "side stepping" between worlds.

While world-walking, a walker can carry whatever he can normally carry, up to Heavy Encumbrance. Walkers can also "lead" other people with them, if desired. Another person must be in physical contact with the walker during the whole trip. If they become separated, the other person is lost on a parallel randomly chosen by the GM. Other walkers can follow a walker without the need for physical contact. In fact, other walkers can make an IQ roll to follow a walker's "tracks" across worlds, at -1

for every minute since he passed through.

Walkers move at their normal rate during a world-walk. If the walker is driving or piloting a vehicle or riding a mount, he can take the vehicle and all of its passengers along by taking a penalty to the IQ roll: -1 for a mount, -2 for a vehicle like a motorcycle, -3 for a car, -4 or more for larger vehicles. Bringing vehicles to other worlds can often be problematic; driving a car into a world with no roads can be troublesome, while flying a plane into a world where planes don't work can be disastrous!

The entire trip costs fatigue equal to the total penalty to the IQ roll, at the end of the trip. Slow trips on foot to known worlds require no significant fatigue, they're just as easy as walking. Faster trips or trips to unknown worlds can be very tiring.

Advantages

Aside from the Advantages they all share, walkers may have any Advantage allowed by the GM. Some Advantages (particularly magical, psionic, and technological ones) may not function in some worlds. If an Advantage is particularly limited by this (in the GM's view) an Accessibility Limitation can be applied to the cost.

Language Talent is extremely useful for walkers, who often encounter new languages and need to pick up strange languages quickly.

Walkers seem more likely to possess Advantages like Magery and Psionics than other people. Some come from worlds where such abilities are known, while others remain unaware of their potential until they visit a world where they can learn to utilize their talents.

Disadvantages

Walkers can have any Disadvantages the GM allows for the campaign. Status as a walker provides no apparent benefits apart from those described above, and walkers come from diverse worlds, background and cultures. Again, certain magical or technological disadvantages may not function on certain worlds. If this is likely to make the Disadvantage too easy to avoid, the GM should disallow it. Walkers also tend to be fairly free of social- and status-related Disadvantages, since they rarely carry over from one world to the next. Enemies with the ability to follow a walker from world to world are the only really significant ones a walker can have.

Note that walkers with Sleepwalking (CI, p. 84) *can* and sometimes do world-walk in their sleep!

Skills

Walkers can have any of the skills natives of their dimension have and many of them pick up skills from worlds they visit. Languages are common; experienced walkers learn a *lot* of languages in their travels. Social Skills are also quite useful in allowing a walker to make friends and contacts on worlds he visits. For the times when Social Skills don't work, Combat Skills tend to be vital. Although many walkers come from worlds with advanced weapons, and carry them, most learn some martial arts and how to use various melee weapons sooner or later. Guns can jam, misfire, run out of ammo and just plain fail to work in some worlds, and magical weapons are notoriously unreliable, but a fist, club, or sharpened piece of steel work in just about

every world.

Race

Walkers are not all human; some of them come from *very* alternate worlds where the dominant life-form is something else entirely. Information about alien walkers is sparse, but rumors abound that they exist and may be closely watching Earth for signs of something. Perhaps the ability to traverse dimensions is an evolutionary leap required to join galactic civilization, or perhaps walking is unique to Earthlings and poses a threat to some alien empire somewhere (or somewhere) else.

Multiversal Features

Drifts

Drifts are places "unstuck" in time in ways similar to walkers. They are to normal geography what walkers are to normal people. These places "drift" through the multiverse, popping up from time to time on different worlds, then fading away to go somewhere else. They are the source of legends and stories about mysterious lost cities and civilizations like Brigadoon, Shangri-la, El Dorado, the Bermuda Triangle, and possibly even Atlantis.

Some drifts appear to follow a fixed "course" through a series of parallel worlds, swinging back through them on a regular cycle, like a comet that appears every century or so. Other drifts float around at random, with no apparent rhyme or reason for their movement.

Walkers can visit drifts and even "follow" them through the multiverse as they move about. Drifts can also serve as "vehicles" for non-walkers to travel the multiverse, provided they don't mind having no control over their "ride," or the possibility they will never see their home world ever again. A "rider" who leaves the drift before it phases out could end up permanently stranded on another world.

Nexus Points

The opposite of drifts, nexus points are "strange attractors" in the multiverse, fixed places where walkers are drawn. They often serve as way stations or gateways between many different worlds. Like drifts, there seems to be no definitive reason why nexus points appear. Some are clearly artificial, created by science or magic, often by civilizations long since vanished. Others appear entirely natural, with no apparent cause for their existence.

Nexus points seem to "bridge" different parallels, making it possible to move from one to another more easily. A nexus might be a network of caves, all hall of mirrors or a house of many doors and passages, each leading to a different world. The Horatio Club from *GURPS Time Travel* is an example of a nexus. The nexus itself exists on all the worlds it reaches, creating a kind of "anchor point" between them. Walkers use nexus points as "landmarks" in the multiversal landscape, familiar places to gather and return to. For this reason, nexus points are usually considered "neutral ground" for all walkers; conflicts are not permitted there.

Reality Storms

The greatest natural hazard of world-walking is the threat of reality storms; violence disturbances in the fabric of the multiverse. A reality storm appears much like an atmospheric storm; violent winds, dark clouds and precipitation, although the rainfall is not always water, it may be blood, wine, honey, copper coins, little frogs or any number of things.

Storms have an effect of "blinding" world-walkers, making it more difficult to reach a destination. The storm imposes an additional penalty on the IQ roll to make the trip successfully, anywhere from -2 to as much as -10 for the most powerful of storms. This penalty also increases the fatigue cost of the trip; walkers who encounter a reality storm often end up exhausted in some strange world far from their intended destination. Some walkers have vanished into a reality storm, never to be seen again.

On occasion, a reality storm manifests *on* a world rather than between worlds. The storm can "pick up" and transport objects and individuals from one world to another (much like the tornado from *The Wizard of Oz*; in fact, some walkers call them "Oz storms"). Walkers can resist this effect with a successful Will roll, modified by the storm's strength, as above. Other people are simply carried off. The Banestorm (from *GURPS Fantasy*) is a wandering reality storm created by a failed ritual spell on the world of Yrth, responsible for transporting many different races (including humans) to that world.

Conflict Between Walkers

Walkers tend to have their own agendas, whatever they might be. From time to time, they come into conflict. There are few actual "laws" of walker society, only some traditions and rules of conduct (like respecting nexus points as neutral ground). Otherwise, walkers tend to do as they please. It is not uncommon for more experienced walkers to educate novice walkers only just discovering their abilities in order to cultivate allies (or for more experienced walkers to kill novices before they can learn too much...). Some conflicts between walkers have become legends and myths on different worlds they visit.

Walkers sometimes draw the attention of cultures aware of the existence of parallel worlds and cross-time travel. They are treated as sorcerers, demons, saints, or superbeings on worlds that lack cross-time travel, either revered or hunted down and killed or enslaved. Worlds with their own means of cross-time travel, like the Infinity Patrol from *GURPS Time Travel*, are interested in recruiting walkers for their cause, or at least ensuring they don't interfere with it. Walkers often end up as mercenaries in interdimensional wars. Gamemasters running another type of Infinite Worlds campaign (such as J. Hunter Johnson's "Banestorming Infinity Unlimited" setting) can use world walkers as another faction of cross-time travelers.

The World Walking Campaign

The easiest way to begin a world-walking campaign is to have a group of neophyte walkers meet up at a nexus point (a tavern, perhaps?) before departing together for other worlds. Perhaps they are all hunted by the same enemy (a powerful walker, interdimensional being or agency). The walkers have to learn to use their abilities and survive long enough to turn the tables on their enemy.

Another variation is the "quest," where walkers make their way across many different parallels seeking the parts of a particular device or legendary item, the clues to

answer a riddle or other important question or simply gathering information and exploring different parallels for an organization like the Infinity Patrol.

A world-walking campaign allows the GM to introduce literally infinite campaign settings, but also requires the ability to come up with new locations and NPCs on the fly, since the world walkers can go literally *anywhere* and find nearly *anything*.

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