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Subject: Bar Rules -- For New and Old Flies alike FAQ 1a

Posted by [theoryman](#) on Thu, 08 Apr 2021 21:46:20 GMT

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These were originally posted by Deann Allen, aka "Silverdrake," and updated in February and April 2021.

WELCOME!

"People are not simple, and one pigeonhole almost never suffices to hold them."  
-- Lois McMaster Bujold

Welcome to Baen's Bar. To make your navigating the Bar easier, here are answers to some of the most commonly asked questions, and the basic rules as set by the founder of this place of camaraderie, Mr. Jim Baen, the Great Editor (GE).

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ETIQUETTE

Rule Number 1 -- Do Not Be A Butthead. All else follows from this.

No Hitting -- No namecalling, insults, slurs, aspersions, insinuations, accusations, or any other ad hominem remarks. Say what you want about the person's argument, but you may say nothing about the person. Misquoting falls under this rule.

"Flames" are not allowed on the Bar. Overly heated discussions move to Blazes. Anything that devolves into actual flaming or starts causing bad feelings gets deleted. The poster's account might also get deleted. (See "Blazes" and "Conduct Unbecoming" in Bar Newbie FAQ 1b.)

Bar Rating is PG-13. Baen.com is a family-oriented website, and there are minors on the Bar. Post accordingly.

Morgen's Corollary of Reasonable Force -- If you see someone saying something ignorant or objectionable, check the responses. Don't jump on the statement with both feet if someone else has already done it.

This is not a USENET newsgroup. The Bar is a community of science fiction fans (Barflies). The purpose of the Bar is discussion of books and the ideas that drive them. The focus is on books and authors published by Baen Books so please keep discussion of non-Baen books and authors to a minimum. If a Baen author has books by other publishers, they can be discussed in that author's conference, or in Books and Authors conferences if that author has no designated conference.

Annoying Topics and Quarantine Zones

The following conferences are corners set aside for discussions that particularly detract from the overall focus of the Bar: books and the ideas that drive them.

Blazes -- controversial discussions that have become, or can reasonably be expected to become,

overly heated. The "No Hitting" rule still applies.

Feelings -- specifically for discussions of personal matters (divorces, financial hardship, personal relations, medical problems, etc.) as these topics have proved annoying when dropped into other discussions.

Future Tech -- the place to discuss non-mainstream technologies such as alternative energy sources.

Politics and Truth vs. Pravda -- for discussions of real-world politics and religion, respectively.

Note: These discussions are \*tolerated\* in their respective purdahs, so long as they conform to Bar rules. They are not the purpose of the Bar. Where these discussions start becoming actively annoying, the tolerance ends. Post at your own risk.

Fan Fiction -- Fanfic (fiction based on a world/characters to which you do not own the copyright) is addressed in the Slush Conferences FAQ. In general, if you do it, don't post it or otherwise distribute it, and especially don't post it here.

Dead Subjects -- see "La Brea Tar Pits" in Bar Newbie FAQ 2.

"The Onion" <http://www.theonion.com/> is SATIRE. So is "The Babylon Bee" <https://babylonbee.com/>

That being said: this place is unlike most internet and USENET fora. There is very little trolling. Often a personal dispute can be vented in Blazes and then everyone cools off and goes on. Plonking/killfilling happens, but is infrequent, and if you hold off you may find it is not needed. A disagreement that gets heated can often be ended agreeably by the participants using private email, or by simply agreeing to disagree and dropping the subject.

Note: The FAQs are a purely voluntary effort and updates come as they come. If you get confused, post your question in the Administrivia or Interface conference. This will help show areas that need updating.

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GETTING STARTED

To access the Bar directly, after you've registered, bookmark <https://baensbar.net/index.php>

If the display font is too small, you may be able to enlarge it with a hotkey. If you can't find it in your browser submenus or Help file, post a message in Administrivia conference and give your OS and browser information. Someone may be able to help you.

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NAVIGATING THE BAR

See HELP on the upper toolbar for detailed information.

Select a conference in the upper left frame by clicking on it. Use the scroll bar to see the full list of conferences. If no messages appear in the right frame after the conference opens, check the "All" box. In the lower left frame, click on a thread name to open it, or the + beside it to expand it. Again, use the scroll bar to see the full list of threads. Click on a post to open that post in the

right-hand frame. To see that post and all replies to it, click the Thread option at the top of the post.

Posts use Greenwich Mean Time as a common reference for time/date stamps. Online, the post will also have the server-local time stamp in the bottom of the header. Email and newsgroup posts will use the poster's local time stamp.  
<http://www.worldtimezone.com/>

## Bar BUTTONS or TOOLBAR

**NEW POST** -- This starts a new thread in the open conference. If you do not have a conference open, start new threads by opening the conference you want, then clicking New Post. Other posting options appear at the top of the reading frame with a message open. See **HELP** in the upper toolbar for details on using these options.

**PRINT** -- Prints the reading frame.

**REFRESH** -- Reloads the Bar. To reload the message frame, change to one of the other views (All, Tree, List), then back.

**SEARCH** -- Allows a search of messages by conference, keyword(s), and date.

**CLEAR ALL** -- This marks ALL messages on the Bar as Read. Period. Dot. End of line. Use this function with care and deliberation. See **Mark Read** below for other options.

**LOGOUT** -- Logs your user ID off the Bar, and takes you to the main Baen webpage.

**PROFILE** -- Set up email alerts (notification when a new post is made in a conference); mailing lists (receive posts from subscribed conferences); change your password, name, and email address; add/change your avatar and signature; give some information about yourself. See **HELP** on the upper toolbar for specifics.

**Note:** For better account security, change your display name to something other than your login. Real names are preferred.

**HELP** -- Detailed information on several topics of interest: Registration and Login, Your Profile, Newsgroups, Message Tree, Mailing List, Alerts, NNTP News reader clients, RSS, Reading, Posting, Search, Differences from the Old Bar.

**MARK READ** -- See **HELP** on upper toolbar, 3. Newsgroups and 4. Message Tree for details on the Mark Read functions.

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## DESCRIPTION OF THE CONFERENCES

The conference descriptions appear when you mouse over the conference name. You can also see them by clicking on a conference and reading the description at the top of the reading frame.

If you're not sure where a topic should go, ask in a similar conference, Baen's Bar, or Administrivia. (See Bar Toolbar > New Post above.)

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## RESTRICTED CONFERENCES

FAQs -- Most comments should go in Administrivia, or be private messaged or emailed to the FAQs coordinator. Unless you're commenting on something like "What the heck is a --onian?" or "Pournelle Political Axes", in which case the comments should most likely go in Politics.

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## FAQs: LEXICON

There are several lexicons of abbreviations, slang, jargon, and nicknames:

Master Lexicon 1a (general terms)

Master Lexicon 1b (military terms)

Master Lexicon 1c (link to explanation of "---onian" tags)

Master Lexicon 2 (off-color terms)

Who Was That Masked Barfly? (nicknames)

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## SLUSH CONFERENCES

Slush Practice

Slush Practice Comments

Slush Practice Synopsis

These conferences are a workshop and critique group. Works posted here are have not been submitted for possible publication. Explanations, rules, etiquette, and posting conventions for these conferences are in

FAQs: Slush Conferences FAQ.

Please read this before posting to these conferences. Much of this FAQ is generally applicable to all slush conferences, but check the specific conference's guidelines for submissions information.

1632 Slush

1632 Slush Comments

For submissions and workshopping of 1632 Universe short stories and articles for possible publication in the Grantville Gazette.

Guidelines [http://1632.org/authors\\_manual/](http://1632.org/authors_manual/)

Baen's Universe Grantville Annex Slush

Baen's Universe Grantville Annex Slush Comments

For submissions and workshopping of short stories for possible publication in the Grantville Gazette Universe Annex.

Guidelines <http://www.baensuniverse.com/postguide.html>

NOTE: Each of these sets of conferences has one conference for posting works and another for commenting on works.

DO NOT POST COMMENTS IN THE WORKS CONFERENCES.

Post them in the associated Comments conference. The author/artist will usually start a comment thread with the title of the work. If you don't see it, go ahead and start one if you wish to comment.

#### Official Novel Submissions

Baen Books Manuscript Submission Guidelines

<http://www.baen.com/FAQS.htm#Manuscript%20Submission%20Guidelines>

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#### POSTING MECHANICS

QUOTING -- Do quote messages. Without proper quoting, participants have a hard time following the thread. This is the default when using the web interface; the Reply button at the top and bottom of each message will copy the message you're replying to into your post. If your software doesn't auto-quote, copy and paste the relevant portion(s) with proper attribution. If the software cuts off the quoted person's name, or changes it to "you wrote," etc., you will have to manually insert the person's name (See Forbidden Quoting Formats below.)

Note: Many browsers consider it a "security feature" to disable right-click copy and paste. The standard control key combinations should work: Cut = Ctrl-X, Copy = Ctrl-C, Paste = Ctrl-V.

Interspersed Replies -- If the post you're responding to has several points you want to address individually, put "interspersed" or "at [specific character]" at the top and insert each comment below the quoted text it addresses. With block quoting, everything ends up in the "quoted" format, so clearly marking your new text is very important. Leave a blank line between quoted text and your reply and mark your reply with a short string of specific characters (###, @@@, etc.), or add proper attributions at the top of each block of text, quoted and new. (Some recommend using a different font or color for new text, but that has been shown to not carry over in email or newsreader.)

The easiest way to make interspersed replies is to use a newsreader or email client that strips out the block quote formatting.

If you feel comfortable manipulating the html...

Edith Maor wrote:

When you hit "Reply" the post you're responding to appears with html markup. The commands to watch for are blockquote and /blockquote, both enclosed in angle brackets.

#### PAY ATTENTION TO THE ANGLE BRACKETS!

If you use < and immediately follow it with anything other than a space, it is interpreted as html, and none of it is shown until a corresponding > appears. OTOH, stuff you intended as a command will not be processed as such unless it is enclosed in angle brackets.

Obviously, the quoted material begins with blockquote and ends with /blockquote. If you want to

intersperse your comments within the quoted text, put /blockquote before your addition and blockquote to return to the quote. In angle brackets every time, of course.

SNIPPING -- Delete quoted text that is not relevant to your reply.

When snipping, use some sort of indicator that portions have been removed: [snip], ..., \*chomp\*, etc.

Most especially, snip all signature blocks (unless you're commenting on one), and all message tails (message id/reply-to).

Note: DO leave enough quoted text to maintain context with the thread. Over-snipping so as to remove context can constitute trolling, and will be treated accordingly.

EDITING POSTS -- EDITING POSTS -- There is no edit function. If you made a substantial mistake and need to edit your post, you have one choices: Reply to your post and detail the corrections there -- what you originally said, followed by what you meant to say.

The reason there is no edit function is simple. The moment your post hits the server, it is sent out to email recipients and may be downloaded by newsgroup clients.

It is best to use the Preview function in the posting frame toolbar (at the bottom, between Cancel and Post) to look at what you are posting before clicking Post Message. Make it a habit to preview before posting.

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## FORBIDDEN QUOTING FORMATS

DO NOT cut off the quoted person's name. If the software cuts off the name or changes it to "you wrote," highlight-copy-paste or type in the name.

DO NOT post in such a manner that your text can appear to belong to someone else. Your response should be either entirely above (or rarely, below) both the other person's name and their quoted text, or interspersed between blocks of quoted text.

DO NOT put your text directly below the other person's name, with their text quoted below yours.

DO NOT put editorial comments inside another Barfly's quoted material. Use only interspersed format for your comments.

Square-bracket comments may be used when posting quoted cites (article excerpts, etc.), with the commentor's initials or other identifier included [Like this -- DEA].

Each of the above has led to complaints of misattribution and misquoting, and is therefore a forbidden format. (See "Conduct Unbecoming" in Part Ib.)

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## FORMATING

Do not add a line break (enter) at any point except the end of a paragraph or list item.

Avoid long paragraphs or posts with no line breaks. It makes your post hard to read, and email recipients can find the post arbitrarily cut short by their mail readers after about twelve continuous lines.

Note: For emphasis, use text indicators like `_underline_`, `*bold*`, and `/italics/`. Many email and newsreads will convert these to the actual effect. Avoid using html coding and upper ASCII characters (umlauts, "curly quotes," etc.) Users who access the Bar through email and nntp will often see the CODE, not the special effect you intended. Sometimes this is unavoidable, but try to stay with pure text.

Note: When showing html strings, you can insert spaces in the command and it will show up as text. Example: `< b r >` (spaces added).

Note: Do not use angle brackets `< >` or square brackets `[ ]` around emotes or actions. It may be treated as HTML or BBC code, making it disappear or do strange things. Use `{curly brackets}`, `::double colons::`, or something similar. When posting sarcasm or other easily misunderstandable statements, use emoticons or pseudo-html emotes like `"{sarcasm} statement {/sarcasm}."` Using text emotes or ASCII emoticons is important. Most people don't write well enough to get their tone across in a purely text medium. Don't start a flamewar when a smiley will prevent it.

One of many Internet dictionaries of emoticons:  
<http://www.cknow.com/emoticons.txt>

Japanese emoticons:  
<http://club.pep.ne.jp/~hiroette/en/facemarks/>  
<http://www2.tokai.or.jp/yuki/kaomoji/>

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## POSTING LINKS

Type/paste in the full URL (<http://...>). The Bar software and most news and email clients automatically convert it to an active link.

While the Bar's software allows embedded links (a link under a clickable word or phrase), email and news clients may not convert it properly and your readers will have no way of knowing what link you intended them to follow. Therefore, it's best to put the link into your text by itself rather than embedding it. It may not appear smooth, but your readers will all know where you wanted them to look.

**POSTING LINKS TO GRAPHICS:** Add a question mark to the end of the URL so the Bar doesn't load the image. This shortens download times and prevents the image from showing up in quotes.

Note: Long urls can break word-wrapping on the Bar. Break the url into strings of sensible length, and add a note below to remove the line breaks to reconstruct it.

Note: Do not use "tinyurl" redirects. These links expire quickly. Your post might be read weeks or

months later, with the reader left with no idea how to find the website. (See Posting a News Article or Similar Item, below.)

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POSTING CONVENTIONS

POST ON TOP, QUOTE ON BOTTOM -- Bar standard is to put the response at the top. Editors and authors, in particular, do not have time to waste scrolling down (and down, and down!) trying to find the new text. Bottom and interspersed posting is allowed, but new text must show on the first visible screen. (Do not put "see below," then quote multiple pages of text to add a very short reply at the bottom. This gets into being a butthead.)

NOTE: Snip extraneous material! Don't waste server space and download time.

SNERKING/SPOILING -- (See entries in Master Lexicon) The Snerkers Only conference was specifically set up for discussion of books and stories not yet available to the general public -- advance reader copies (ARCs), Baen E-Books, etc. -- and for new releases. Snerking is frowned upon (people prefer to read the book rather than have someone tell them about the juicy parts beforehand), and is generally held to be the sole prerogative of the author (See "snippet" in Master Lexicon). Spoiling is much the same as snerking, except that the book has been released. In general, take the discussion to the Snerkers Only conference if the book is not yet out in paperback. If the book has not been out in paperback for at least six months, use "spoiler space" (see "spoiler" in Master Lexicon) when discussing plot details and character incidents in any conference except Snerkers Only.

THREAD DRIFT -- Thread drift is as inevitable as the change of the seasons. To think otherwise denies the laws of thermodyposting. So when the topic of a thread changes, or you post something that is clearly off-topic for the subject header, but pertinent to a previous post, please put a new Topic/Subject name in front of the existing one: "New Topic (was: Old Topic)". For example: Men's Gymnastics (was: Quilting).

OFF-TOPIC POSTS -- Posts are off-topic if put in the wrong conference. For instance, you probably shouldn't post a rant on gun control in Miles To Go. Or the benefits of a Marxist society in Ringo's Tavern. (Although in either case, you'll probably get an interesting response.) Yes, politics can come up in any conference,\* but usually as a result of thread drift. The same with questions about authors and books -- if the question isn't germane to a specific author's conference, there are other conferences ("Authors" and "Books").

\*NOTE: John Ringo has specifically banned politics from Ringo's Tavern. Any thread that wanders into political discussions must be moved to Politics (or Blazes), or dropped.

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COPYRIGHT OF POSTS

Barring any specific arrangement to the contrary (forex: most newspapers have a copyright policy statement somewhere in the small print in regard to letters to the editor), copyright remains with the author of a letter or a post. Making something available to the public does not negate



copyright.

Note: This is derived from general copyright law; there has not been a test case regarding posts to electronic message boards.

See also Posting A News Article... below, and Etiquette: Fanfic above.

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## POSTING A NEWS ARTICLE OR SIMILAR ITEM

Post the exact title and author's name, the source, and URL. (Giving full source and identification information allows readers to search for the article if the original URL goes dead.) Say why you find it interesting, and post a paragraph or two. (So we know why we should go read it.) Posting the whole thing eats server space, makes the Bar download very slowly, and violates copyrights held by the article's author or source. If the article appears on a restricted-access website, or one not accessible by the general public (military, etc.), paraphrase the article and use selected quotes for parts you can't reword well, or for speech quoted in the article. This brings it under Fair Use laws and should avoid copyright violations. You may also be able to find it on an open-access site (forex: NY Times articles are sometimes mirrored on Yahoo! News).

See <http://www.templetons.com/brad/copymyths.html> item 4 for more information on Fair Use.

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## BOOK TITLE ABBREVIATIONS

When abbreviating titles for books in general discussion, nouns, pronouns and other words are represented by a capital letter. Articles ("in," "the," "and," etc.) are usually represented by a lower case letter or omitted, unless it's the first word of the title. Examples: HotQ = Honor of the Queen (Weber), AHBB = A Hymn Before Battle (Ringo), RBV = Rats, Bats, and Vats (Flint and Freer). If the abbreviation isn't clear, check the author's title list under Catalog on the Baen website. If it still isn't clear, ask. Smile

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## CROSS-POSTING AND SPAM

Spam is forbidden.

Cross-posting is seldom done and, most times, is actively discouraged. Check the Conferences listing, or click/mouse over the conference name to find out what is relevant for what conference. If your item pertains to a specific author, put it in that author's conference. Rarely, a subject pertains to multiple conferences. Post your message in the most valid conference, then post short notifications with the same topic title in the others directing attention to the main post. Do not abuse this. You will hear about it.

Finally, this place is for readers of Baen Books. Common courtesy requires that most of the book-related conversation should be about Baen releases or out-of-print. Chatting up the latest release of another publisher is not proper, if overdone (except for discussing a Baen author's non-Baen release in that author's conference.)

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GENERAL INFO

BAEN'S MAIN SITE -- <http://www.baen.com> This site contains lots of useful information, including Baen's publishing schedule, authors' calendars, authors' websites and sample chapters.

Read Assist Program -- <http://www.readassist.org/>

SNIPPETS COLLECTION -- Joe Buckley maintains a collection of various snippets posted by Bar authors  
<http://thefifthimperium.com/>

David Weber FAQs -- Pearls of Weber <http://infodump.thefifthimperium.com/alt.books.david-weber> newsgroup FAQ <http://www.warriorgoddess.org/weberfaq.html>

Lois McMaster Bujold Home Page -- The Bujold Nexus <http://www.dendarii.com/>  
and <http://www.dendarii.co.uk/Bujold/>

Eric Flint's 1632 Universe  
1632 Series Research Material -- FAQs, research materials, other information  
<http://homepage.mac.com/msb/163x/>  
Official Fan Site -- 1632 Tech references, Slush Pile stories, Author's Manual:  
<http://www.1632.org>

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