

plus building fusion reactors

The Whorl list — 2 messages, 2 voices, 30 Oct 1998

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/whorl/560>

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Mark Millman — 30 Oct 1998, 15:41

On 30 October 1998 at 4:46 am GMT, Greg Neyman wrote:
Matthew, you bring an interesting point, about the fact that
chems should be able to build their children, ergo there
should be fusion reactor parts available, especially con-
sidering that chems multiplied a lot less than Pas expected
(according to Hammerstone) ... so why was it that people
couldn't build these reactors ... maybe they didn't know how,
but they could ask chems ... they have the plans hardwired
in them ...

But we're also told that chems have to go through a lot of trial and error to build their children,
and that each chem has only

-half- the knowledge necessary to build children; i.e., no "clon- ing" for chems--they have to be
married (or at least in a rela- tionship) to reproduce. So it might not be so easy just to ask
chems how to build convenient little fusion plants.

Also, the Ayuntamiento's chemical duplicates, which I think
we can all agree aren't quite kosher, must use chems' fusion powerpacks. This suggests to me
that not only should the chems' inherent reproductive rate be lower than that of bios
(something mentioned in the books), it's possible it was slowed even further because they
couldn't find the necessary parts to build their children, because all the parts have been used
up by black mechanics' circles and the like. The fact that we haven't seen a lot of obvious fusion
packs out in the Whorl is far from a suggestion that they're not actually out there. The Lake
Limna sub is a good candidate for fusion power, as are the Flyers' powerpacks (though those
are clearly legitimate).

Nacre

*This is WHORL, for discussion of Gene Wolfe's Book of the Long Sun.

Michael Straight — 30 Oct 1998, 16:07 · follows Mark Millman

On Fri, 30 Oct 1998, Mark Millman wrote:
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Perhaps the program for reproduction is not consciously accessible to the chems. Try asking a computer that runs an automobile factory how to make a combustion engine. A chem may not know how to make a fusion reactor any more than I know how to make a human stomach (other than by making a baby with my wife, that is).

-Rostrum

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