

Root Beer

This is *kind* of an assassination tool, maybe? Although it doesn't exactly kill people. It instead changes their personality, positive and negative traits, and skill sets. So, it's pretty nasty stuff: you may not die after drinking it, but after whoever gives Root Beer to you gets done with you you won't be the same person in any real, meaningful sense, either. One of many reasons why it's rather thoroughly banned, except in the most advanced Galactic cultures, under the most rigorous bioethical guidelines.

In appearance, Root Beer is a dark, fairly tasty 'liquid' (actually a small army of nanobots) that -- when coupled with a subsequent intrusive neural reprogramming session -- rewrites a person's abilities and qualities. In game terms, the target can have his characteristics shifted, his mundane, non-social advantages and/or disadvantages switched out for ones of equivalent value, his skill list manipulated, and his psychic signature (should such a thing exist in the campaign) altered. The only other restrictions are that the target's physical appearance will not change, that the character will not gain new skills in any field that he is completely unfamiliar with, and that the character will end up with the same character points/levels

as he started with. The effects are permanent, and extremely difficult to reverse; in some cases (and game worlds), a full revert to a previously-saved brain-tape is all that can be done.

As noted before, Root Beer is rather thoroughly banned throughout the Galaxy. Reprogramming housewives and schoolchildren in hyper-fanatical assassination machines was one of the **less** horrific uses that it's been used for. There has yet to be a successful prosecution in the primary Galactic court system for any violent crime committed in retribution for a failed (and confirmed) Root Beer attack; sometimes there's not even an arrest. Even hardened criminals hate the stuff. *Especially* hardened criminals, in fact. There are fewer protections against the use of Root Beer in the underworlds, and some criminal organizations are vicious enough to use this particular edge. Unless they're persuaded otherwise, of course.

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