### Dedications

To our Parents: Thanks for your support, encouragement, and understanding (the four years of college education didn’t hurt either).

Mike Ponsford: Thanks for Cyberpunk, and for giving a bunch of white behind-the-scenes college sophomores a chance, even if it took them four years to say thank you.

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Mike Macdonald: A half of a guy but still much of a radar detector.

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WHAT MAKES A FIXER TICK?

The following was downloaded from the files of the School of Human Sciences at the University of Hamburg in Germany. It contains excerpts from a lecture by the University's Dr. Jürgen Ziegler, Chief of the Department of Modern Anthropology and Sociology, entitled "Behavior Patterns of the North American Fixer." The lecture was given at an international Sociologists conference held at the Matsuyama Institute of Higher Learning in Osaka, Japan. This text is translated from German—audio, video and braniadish recordings are also available.

"...North America has always been noted for its high crime rate. A natural but nonetheless disturbing result of this century-long trend of civil rebellion is the evolution of the so-called Fixer. For those members of my audience who may not be familiar with the term, a Fixer is an independent street operator who specializes in the exchange of goods—any type of goods, be they found, bargained for or stolen—for as great a profit margin as possible. This lecture centers mostly on the North American Fixer, but as my honorable hosts can attest, the phenomena is not limited to the Americas...."

"...The subject of interview #23 hails from Quebec. He has spent the last 15 years on the streets of Providence, RI, in the northeastern region of the United States of America. During his career, #23 has been a drug dealer, a thief, and a trader in high illegal software. #23 has told me of his desire to move into the smuggling of stolen human organs."

Interviewer: "Your life style must be very exciting! I've seen many popular braniadish chips and videos highlighting the life on the American street."

#23: "Exciting! I don't think you really understand what's here, gato."

Interviewer: "Please, enlighten us."

#23: "Exciting—yeah, I guess. If living in a sewer is your idea of excitement."

Interviewer: "But, what about the romance, the adventure?"

#23: "Adventure? You want the fairy tale, don't you? Here's the fact: every day you wake up and look out that edge, into that hole in yourself, and every day it grows a little bit larger...."

#23: "I'm a sewer, an allusion to Nietzsche, no doubt."

Interviewer: "Excuse me. You were saying something about a hole."

#23: "Yeah, the hole in your heart—the hole in your soul."

1: "What exactly does mean?"

#23: "It means that one day I walk up and put a few in my brain, it's the only way to save myself."

1: "When."

#23: "(Makes a gun out of his hand by pointing with his index finger—dropping his thumb) "Bang!"

1: "Uh...."

#23: "The hole, gajin. It means something paperless love is too good for ya."

Best you can hope for in a hot night is some cold fruitlein between the sheets."

1: "Shake, man, no beast."

1: "Er... how is your dinner?"

#23: "Well, I'll say this much, not like my usual grub-time.

1: "Why would that be?"

#23: "I know. I don't have the luxury of whether the knife or the fork we make a better weapon, if there was a choice..."
In 2020, corporations and conglomerates compete to direct the cash flow of entire populations, governments struggle to maintain their uneven influence, and crime waves wash back and forth across the cities. While not entirely utopian, this chaotic situation provides an ideal environment for freebooting entrepreneurs; shady characters such as smugglers, freelance negotiators, organizers and information brokers. In Cyberpunk parlance: Fixers.

A Fixer is a power broker of the Street, a man whose mission is to make things happen in the semi-legal swamp that is the cyberpunk's world. A Fixer needs to know many people and have a lot of information; that way, he can bring the right talent and resources together and accomplish something. Perhaps he's trying to run a successful drug ring; perhaps he's putting together a black ops team—it doesn't matter. Smart business is what a Fixer is all about, because business means money.

Most Fixers have a less than glorious past. They commonly start out as small-time punks, little different from the assorted muggers, streetgangers, and Solo wannabes. However, the true mark of a Fixer is a certain knack for figuring out what other people want, and how to get for them, as well as a willingness to do this only if the price is right.

Eventually, a successful Fixer moves out of the nickel-and-dime stuff into big-time action. Most Fixers settle on a particular racket, such as smuggling—there's big Euro to be made moving illegal weapons over the border. Out of necessity, any Fixer worth his salt has a strong talent for making his own opportunities. If you can't break into the gunrunning scene, you might try creating a demand which you can supply, such as stealing and reselling medical supplies from the corporations.

While stealing and selling is good work if you can get it, the true center of a Fixer's power comes from his contacts, so it's only natural that many Fixers find their calling as skill brokers—acting as an agent for talented people. Any major city has a pool of high-priced Solos and Neutrino users who need representation. Agent-type Fixers with wide-reaching influence sometimes hire whole teams to back a client's contract.

In any line of work, people need something: either to avoid damage to their most valuable commodity. A Fixer's contacts and allies can form a potentially vast web of information, intrigue and coercion, allowing him to pull strings without acting directly. Through this network a Fixer can buy and sell favors and make connections in any kind of business deal or even political party. Fixers are ubiquitous characters; they buy into hot nightclubs, smuggle Wulfenius weapons onto the street, and play negotiator between sides if a corporate war is going down (with a definite eye on the main chance). Fixers are, by nature, ruthless, profit-oriented, but it is not entirely unheard of for a Fixer to do a good deed. A Fixer can hide someone who needs to get the heat off, get people hunting when there isn't any, or bring food into blocked neighborhoods. Perhaps these uncommon Fixers are just the idea of helping people in need, but it doesn't hurt that these people will be in the Fixer's debt, and if they can pay for services rendered, well that's even better, isn't it? In the socially fragmented 2000's, Fixers often bridge the gaps that the IPs can't cross on their own.

Fixers stand apart from the rest of the desperate population of the Cyberpunk Wildside.
This "skill" represents their ability to collect information, make deals and have contacts in all levels of society. To truly understand what a Fixer is, one must first understand Streetdeal.

**Streetdeal**

This mysterious and powerful Special Ability called Streetdeal is the one thing that a Fixer cannot exist without. What is Streetdeal, and how is it used? It's the name implies, a competence in those areas where money and the street intersect. In game terms, Streetdeal allows you to locate and acquire a desired person, place or thing with a small cost (for example, Streetdeal can be used to locate people or get valuable information. It is, largely, a reflection of the Fixer's talent for networking with other people. Mastering the ability of Streetdeal is somewhat like the Lifepath event of "making a connection" (pp. 12, 13). Streetdeal is an ability that deals with the underground or shadowy network. Therefore, a Fixer quickly learns the importance of networking and information, finding those things which are in some way connected to the Fixer on the street, picking up clues and ultimately scoring big deals.

The number of points you put into your Streetdeal ability increases your chance of success on a street job, but it does not give you more connections or a better chance of making a deal. A Fixer's Streetdeal ability, the more connections you have, and the more information you can gather about things happening around you. As a Fixer's Streetdeal increases, so does his group of informants, and in turn he can dig up more information, more frequently, and have more people dig up information. A level +5 Streetdeal can find/gain weapons, tools, and people who can carry out minor illegal operations. At level +5, you can gather the secrets of anyone you're likely to come into contact with; only crime families would be able to do this in most settings.

**Streetdeal: The Big Picture**

The information you have just read can be found in the Cyberpunk 2020 rulebook. As it says, the number of points you put into your Streetdeal ability reflects not only your own competence and talent, but also your position in your chosen field. This position is reflected in your reputation and overall status among other Fixers. If your Streetdeal is over 0, you are a street runner, but at level 6 you could lead a small shadowrun gang. At level 7, you could run a multi-faceted operation and at level 8 you could control an entire neighborhood, either for yourself, or possibly as a lieutenant in a crime family. At level 9 you are a powerful New World, known as a crook, but you are in the inner circle of a crime family, while at level 10 you are part of an organization whose resources are at your disposal. Realistically, a Fixer automatically gains a Reputation score (Cyberpunk 2020) equal to one-half his Streetdeal special ability. Therefore, the name of a Fixer with a Streetdeal of 10 will be recognized by others beyond his local area, as being a crime lord or other bigshot. When you answered your Streetdeal question, what about Streetdeal is and what it does? Not surprising. Streetdeal is the most unique, complex and potentially most powerful Special Ability in the Cyberpunk world. Read on and see.

This special ability is so powerful because it is so expansive. Another good name for Streetdeal might be "Networking" because a Fixer's business is totally connected to interacting with other people. Fixers, as reflected by their special ability, have their strengths focused in five main areas: Contacts, Information, Resources, Streetwise, and Dealing.

These five categories make up the many contacts Streetdeal, the resources available to Streetdeal, and the capabilities of Streetdeal. These groups are beyond your reach. At level +9, you are the equivalent of a Mafia crime lord or private detective who's on the street. Generally speaking, the capabilities reflected by your Streetdeal special ability function as a skill added to your COOL stat in game play.

**Contacts**

The use of contacts is where a Fixer's power comes from. However, contacts can sometimes be tricky because (anonymously) they have will of their own. In a roleplaying game, you may or may not have the opportunity, desire or capability to fully explore the complex relationships my contacts are necessitated by having many contacts. For this reason, there are three different approaches to contacts will be offer below, and you may choose which one suits your personality, character, and game best. The first system, called Down & Dirty, is the fastest and simplest way to use contacts in your game. It is best suited to one-shot sessions, such as Con events and nightly one-shots. The second system is called Hot Stuff, and it is an intermediate one that is reasonably simple, roleplayer-friendly, and fast. It is a "standard"-issue system that takes some preparation, and is good for multi-session adventures and shorter campaigns. The Big League is a final system, and it is the most involved. It requires a good deal of preparation and is heavy on roleplaying, so it is advisable that this system be used mainly in long-running campaigns and solo Fixer adventures. The three systems are explained below.

**Down & Dirty**

(Upper & Dirty Bonus: +1/2 Streetdeal rounded down)

When your roleplaying environment is relatively simplified, streamlined or otherwise stripped-down, such as in a one-shot "pickup" game or a Con event, Fixers are best played Down & Dirty. This system requires virtually no prep-planning on the part of the players. All you need to have is your Fixer specialisation (see Specialised Fixers, page 10) and your current level of your Streetdeal special ability. Down & Dirty contacts are represented by a bonus to your Streetdeal roll in your particular field. The bonus is equal to one-half your Streetdeal level (rounded down). If the roll does not involve the Fixer's speciality, then no bonus is awarded. Whether or not the situation is covered by the Fixer's area of expertise depends on the situation and requires the application of a little common sense. For example, Mad Man Mandel is a black market cyberware dealer (a Black Marketeer type of Fixer specializing in cyberware) with a COOL of 8 and a Streetdeal of 8. Let's say a client asks him to get hold of a gold-plated cyberhand with built-in Scratchers. For this request, the Fixer needs to consider the possibilities and decide if he can handle the job. If he can, he then needs to consider the cost. This system is best suited to one-shot sessions and can be used in any type of game.
Hot Stuff (Hot Stuff Network Points: Street Level 200) [2]

When playing Fixer in a "regular" gaming environment, namely as a member of a group or "party" involved in a self-contained but multi-session adventure, your contacts become Hot Stuff. Fixer requires the player spend some time "fleshting out" his character's network at the time of character creation. This procedure is simple enough, but it takes a little thought and attention. As with the Down & Dirty system mentioned above, you will need to know your Fixer's specialization (see Specialized Fixers, page 19) and your hit/level current Streeted level. However, instead of receiving a numerical bonus to your Streeted roll in game play, Hot Stuff provides a Season 2 interaction with multiple sources, snatchers, moles, and contacts by allowing you to make more than one roll for the same task—if you fail to beat the difficulty number with your first roll, just try again! To use the Hot Stuff system, you must square your current Streeted level (multiply by itself) and the resulting number is your Network Points. These points are spent for extra rolls in a specific field or area (such as cyberware, professional society membership, a bank account, etc.), depending on how much the player desires to use the system. Each extra roll costs a base of 4 points, doubled for each extra roll after; therefore, two extra rolls cost 8 points, and three extra rolls cost 16 points, four extra rolls cost 32 points, and five extra rolls cost 50 points. These costs impose two limits on the possible number of rollers: firstly, no one can make more than six rolls, since no player can have 128 Network Points. Secondly, Level 1 Fixers cannot afford to get any extra rolls, since they're just too low to bank, guys. As an example of the Hot Stuff system, we return to our old friend Mad Man Mandel (the cyberware Black Marketeer for a COOL of 8) who has 64 Network Points (8 X 8 = 64). Mad Man Mandel's player, at the time of character creation, must decide how he wants to use his extra points. He could dump all 64 points into cyberware, granting him five extra rolls, but that wouldn't be smart; if he sets off for just one roll less, it would only cost him 32 points—he could afford an extra four rolls in some other area as well (such as Black Clinics, so he could provide installation and repair services to his customers). However, Mad Man Mandel's player decides instead to break up his 64 points like this; he puts 32 points into cyberware, 16 points into Black Clinics, 8 points into Night City Gangs (so he'll be able to find buyers), 4 points into Forged Documents (so he can make his sales seem legal), and 4 points into Police Information (so he'll know when they're coming after him). He has no leftover points, so he's all set, but odd Streeted levels will grant another odd number when squared, so some of you are bound to have 1 point left over. One point is of no use to you since it won't buy any extra rolls. Too bad. Life just ain't fair, is it?

The Big Leagues (The Big Leagues Contact Points (Streeted x 2) x (Streeted - 2))

This is the last word in Fixer roleplaying. If you are involved in an ongoing, open-ended campaign, or if you are playing a solo game (not that kind of Soliton), with your referee, then this is the only way to fly. The Big Leagues is highly specific and totally comprehensive. When playing in The Big Leagues, the Fixer character's creation process becomes almost secondary to the creation of his network of contacts. Roleplaying is stressed in this system, so there are no numerical bonuses or other flashy advantages which are directly attached to the Streeted special ability. Instead, The Big Leagues draws on your Streeted level to generate a broad, opportunity-rich roleplaying envelope. The Big Leagues is basically an advanced incarnation of Hot Stuff. In The Big Leagues, you multiply your current Streeted level (multiply by itself)—the resulting number is your Contact Points. Contact Points are used to buy contacts in the form of your choice at the most Contact Points you have, the more contacts you have and the more useful those contacts are.

Contacts, as full-fledged NPCs, may be any type of character. An expensive contact would be a high-ranking corporate executive, while a cheap contact would be a street-level thug who always has a fix on 'Dorph. Whoever or whatever the contact is, they are there to provide the Fixer with something, be it fake IDs, illegal weapons, cheap thrills or information. Since the player pays points for his contacts, it is assumed that the contact will be on relatively good terms with the character (of course, in Cyberpunk it's a bad idea to REALLY trust anyone). However, they will usually want something in exchange for their help, it may be money, it may be drugs, it may be a favor, but we all know nothing's free. Right, gah?

The type of character the contact will determine what they can provide for you. In general, the Fixer who uses the local Parts N Programs won't be much help with money laundering services, but he'll be very useful for new cyberware. However, even very powerful contacts have their limits. A member of Congress can be highly manipulative in many situations, but you can't get away with anything in front of him. So identifying you custom-designed aphrodisiacs is not possible. It all depends on what the contact's capabilities are. Each contact will have their own resources and skill levels, which are determined when the contact is bought from the Fixer's Contact Points. Before any Contact Points are spent, the Fixer character's occupation must be declared. This need not be one of the Roles from the Cyberpunk rules, although it can be. The descriptions should be limited to one "job," or lifestyle. Perhaps the contact is a Corporate, perhaps another Fixer, perhaps a Cop, Medical or Nomad. Maybe they are a homeless person or an organized criminal. Other options include government employee or official, private investigator, musician, politician, club owner, gang member, dock worker, this construction worker, lawyer, scien
tist, soldier, libertarian, terrorist, college professor, mercenary, or an orbital charac
ter of some kind. The options are infi
nitely more limited to what is available in the Contact Points. You can also buy contact services and be able to collect money, but only if the contact's services are needed. The cost in Contact Points for each NPC contact is based on their level of skill in their occupation, the amount of access and/or influence they have in their given area of expertise, as well as their availability and reliability. All of these determining factors are subject to escalation, so the process of buying contacts should be carried out with your referee. The list of potential contacts is virtually unlimited, so the descriptions listed below are rather general in their nature.

Contact Reputation

The capability of a contact within his occupation determines the base cost of the contact. Once the contact's occupation has been decided, their level of competence and talent in that occupation is bought with Contact Points. A very capable contact will be more expensive than a sub-standard one, so the varying costs determine what the contact can actually DO. When making use of a contact, the ref
erre secretly rolls ID10 and adds the contact's Capability Number. This number stands in for the contact's applicable Skill Total in his area of expertise (that is, his occupation). The referee compares the result of ID10 plus the contact's Capability to the difficulty he has assigned to the task to find out if the contact will be able to help the player. There are five levels of Capability, as listed below:

- Skilled: You meet a lot of people that are 95% useless in the "scene," but when they do manage to do something for you, you cultivate them! Capability of 5+ID10. Cost is 5 points
- Inexplicable: The contact has a Capa
bility of 10+ID10. Cost is 10 points.
- Capable: The contact has a Capabili
ty of 15+ID10. Cost is 15 points.
- Very Capable: The contact has a capability of 20+ID10. Cost is 25 points.
- Super-Capable: The contact has a capability of 25+ID10. Cost is 40 points.

Reputation 0-5: This contact is involved with a wide field within his occupation. An organized crime contact would be acquainted with most of his family's operations, a police contact would be involved with a whole department (like homicide), and a corporate contact would be knowledgeable with most of the corporation's aspects. Cost is x1.5.

Reputation 6-8: This contact is involved with a wide field within his occupation. An organized crime contact would be acquainted with most of his family's operations, a police contact would be involved with the entire local police force, and a corpo
te contact would be familiar with his corporation's operations and those of other businesses in the same industry. Cost is x2.0.

Reputation 9-10: This contact is involved with an expandable field with in his occupation. An organized crime contact would be fully aware of every single aspect of his family's operations and knowledgeable of organized crime around the world, a police contact would be involved with an entire national police force (such as the CIA, Interpol or Netwatch), and a corporate contact would be one of the key people of an entire industry (perhaps a corporate presi
dent or chairman). Cost is x2.0.
Contact Availability

The trouble with NPC contacts is that they have minds of their own! This means that they will not always be available when you need them. It is logical to assume that the more important a contact is (that is to say, the higher their reputation is), the less available they are. This is usually true (just look at the costs otherwise). However, if you have Contact Points to burn, you can buy a contact who is virtually at your beck and call. One aspect of availability is determining how the Fixer regularly contacts this NPC—be it by phone, in the Net, at a favored meeting place, or by carrier pigeon? A contact's availability may also represent how willing they are to talk to you. If they prefer to hear from you once a month or less, that effectively makes them less available. Availability is based on a difficulty versus the Fixer's LUCK stat + 1D10. This roll does not use LUCK points, unless you also decide to dump LUCK points into it. A LUCK-based Availability roll may be made once per day.

- Seldom Available: LUCK+1D10 vs. 18. Cost is x0.5.
- Sometimes Available: LUCK+1D10 vs. 12. Cost is x1.0.
- Often Available: LUCK+4D10 vs. 8. Cost is x1.5.
- Always Available: LUCK+4D10 vs. 5. Cost is x2.0.

Contact Reliability

This is the final aspect of contact creation. Each contact, being an NPC, is capable of letting you down. Maybe they have nothing useful for you this time, maybe they just don't want to help you, or maybe they're lying to you and are selling you out behind your back. You can't always know if such a thing will happen, but you can try to prevent it by paying Contact Points for their reliability. On a case-by-case basis, you can literally buy the contacts reliability by bribing him. This will have to be role-played out, and the referee will decide how much Euro it will take to keep the contact loyal ... and don't forget, whatever you pay your contact, the enemy could be willing to pay him more.

- Unreliable: This contact is untrustworthy. If his Capability roll fails, he'll deceive you (give you bad merchandise, lie, whatever) and if the Capability roll critically fails, he'll backstab you, sell you out to the enemy, or some other treacherous betrayal. Cost is x0.5.
- Reliable: This is a pretty typical contact. If his Capability roll fails, he simply cannot help you and if the Capability roll critically fails, he'll deceive you (give you bad merchandise, lie, whatever). Cost is x1.0.
- Very Reliable: This is a superior contact. If his Capability roll fails, he cannot help you now but suggests you try him again in 1D6+1 days (another failure then means he's no help). If the Capability roll critically fails, he simply cannot help you at all. Cost is x1.5.
- Super-Reliable: This is an excellent contact. If his Capability roll fails, he will DEFINITELY be able to help you in 1D6+1 days. If the Capability roll critically fails, he cannot help you now but suggests you try him again in 1D6+1 days (another failure then means he's no help). Cost is x2.0.

The Big League will create a kind of supporting cast for the Fixer, so that he will come with his own pre-generated network of contacts. Players and referees should endeavor to make these NPC contacts as "alive" as they like, perhaps delineating the history between the Fixer and his contact, the contact's appearance and habits, and perhaps even a few of the contact's contacts. This is somewhat slow, painstaking process, but the rewards are a large cast of characters (read: plot devices) and an effective roleplaying aid for both the Fixer and the Referee.

Which Is Which?

The three systems for dealing with a Fixer's contacts are interchangeable. Whatever system you choose to use when creating your character, you can always move to one of the other systems if your game calls for it. If you have a Fixer who plays in The Big League, and you decide you want to use him in a one-night pick-up game, you can simply shunt over to the Down and Dirty system. Or, if your referee doesn't want to deal with all the complexities of the Big League, you can compromise with Hot Stuff. Even if your Fixer create a Fixer with the Down and Dirty method, after a few sessions he is bound to interact with several NPCs who would quality as contacts of various calibers. Should you want your Down and Dirty Fixer to graduate to The Big League, just figure out what kind of Contact Points the NPC should be worth, and spend what you have left as you see fit. Then you're all set.

Whatever system of contacts you use, the NPC contacts can complicate the game, if you will. You can have a Fixer who had no idea what the other NPC's powers were or how to use them. The fixes offered above are designed simply to give your character a boost at the start of game play. If you have a mere level as an NPC, you'll probably have less than a Fixer, and you won't have the contacts the NPC has. The Fixer will have contacts that will establish a relationship with the CEO of WorldSat, go with it. You may not have paid any points for him, but he's there for you now, just remember that a tried and true contact is more than a simple acquaintance, it is someone with whom you have a symbiotic relationship. The second type of complication is the issue of Improvement Points. As you play, you will amass IP in your special ability, which will eventually raise you to a new level of Streetedal. In the Down and Dirty method, you get a bigger bonus; in Hot Stuff, you get another roll (maybe); in The Big League, you can afford more contacts. IP affects your game capabiliti-

ties only when you have gone up a full level; 5 IP won't buy you one more life or one more level. Once you have enough IP to move up a full level, you can increase your abilities. It is assumed that when you go up a level of Streetedal, you have another go at making a big enough score that your name has become more well-recognized. In making a big enough score (or enough big scores), you now have a better rep and thus more people will be willing to deal with you. Remember that your Reputation is equal to 1/2 your Streetedal, so if you go up to a 5 in Streetedal, your Rep will go up from 2 to a 3. It has always been true on the Street that your Rep is more important than your credit rating (as any Fixer will tell you).

Information

Everybody knows that information is power. Well, gato, information can also be free. There are a lot of things you can find out if you know where to look...or who to ask. Fixers, as people who know people (who know more people), have plenty of associates who can ask for information. Even if the contacts do not have the information the Fixer wants, the contacts can ask their own contacts. The process may take some time, but it is bound to grant results. In fact, time is an important aspect of information gathering. The longer a Fixer (or anyone, for that matter) spends seeking out information, the better the chances are of success. If you're looking for a streetgang's secret hideout, an hour-long search is not going to be as fruitful as a day-long or week-long search. In essence, the amount of time spent looking for a particular piece of information modifies the difficulty number. In other words, the time spent should be the difficulty of the task (to some extent) on the amount of time spent on the task; the learning of a gang's secret hideout in an hour would be Nearly Impossible (Diff-20), in a day would be Very Difficult (Diff-25) and in a week would be Difficult (Diff-30). This also works in reverse—

Maintenance: A contact with no reliable contacts can be completely useless; a contact with a reliable contact is quite useful and a well-researched contact is indispensable. This is an important point of the campaign. As things unwind, jump-cut the action into some non-adventure/non-battle scenes (another kind of meta-roleplay). The anthology of the campaign. Then, in the synthesis, bring back an episode from one of the earlier adventures into the present day. The time has come.
Fixers in Europe: Some fixers, due to their cool and confident general acceptance of the criminal lifestyle, are more important in efficient (sorcery) Europe; more deal go to Fairy restaurants and well-dressed offices than to alleyways or seedy bars. While-colour crime is the same as the game, in Europe, and gaining some jack is not as easy or as safe as in America. Working in Europe is a language situation. Fixeis usually don't fit into a client's client's expectations, especially in France. Fixeis have a lower chance of being caught, because they are more sophisticated and the police are less involved.

Information gathering is a case where a Fixer's specialization becomes important. If you are an information-oriented character, you will get good bonuses to finding things out. However, your information is only as good as your contacts, so the fixer must be careful in judging the results of any information relayed to the player. It is a good idea to ask if this information is true.

**Resources**

Resources are the special ability of the Corporate character class, but the Fixer special ability of Streetdeal also functions. They are not, however, a specific rule for the Corporate character class. The higher a Fixer's level of Streetdeal skill, the more power and influence he is going to have in his field. He may be a small-time match, he may be a mid-level member of a local crime family, or he may be the force behind a global smuggling operation. Whatever the fixer does, he has access to some amount of resources. Much like a Corporate's special ability, a Fixer's Streetdeal is an index of his ability to command his operation's resources. In this capacity, Streetdeal is used much like a Musicians' skill, with the difficulty proportionate to the scale of the resources desired. This aspect of Streetdeal is almost totally context-based, and is more applicable to Fixer who are members of a crime family than to those who are self-employed. If your Fixer is a market weapons dealers, you have access to weapons in the store. However, you must remember that the resources afforded by Streetdeal are not always material—such as connections, cars, or cash. The resources afforded by Streetdeal may depend on conditions, grant Fixer such benefits as safer places to hide, or favors to protect your position. Sometimes, you must endure a test of luck, and the Streetdeal skill of a Fixer is important in determining whether you pass or fail.

Streetwise

Streetwise is a character skill that is more often used by a character than by a fixer. It is more powerful than a Fixer's Streetdeal skill, and it can be used to get information from people who are not part of any major organization. Streetwise is used to determine the level of the person you are talking to, and the difficulty of the task may change depending on the situation.

Cannon would be closer to 30, and requiring a sportscar would probably be out of the question (since cars are not part of his business). However, a high-ranking member of a Mob family probably would be able to request a sportscar, which would be used for some kind of event or occasion. The Fixer's level of Streetdeal skill, on the other hand, would depend on the amount of resources available. Much like a Corporate's special ability, a Fixer's Streetdeal is an index of his ability to command his operation's resources. In this capacity, Streetdeal is used much like a Musicians' skill, with the difficulty proportionate to the scale of the resources desired. This aspect of Streetdeal is almost totally context-based, and is more applicable to Fixer who are members of a crime family than to those who are self-employed. If your Fixer is a market weapons dealers, you have access to weapons in the store. However, you must remember that the resources afforded by Streetdeal are not always material—such as connections, cars, or cash. The resources afforded by Streetdeal may depend on conditions, grant Fixer such benefits as safer places to hide, or favors to protect your position. Sometimes, you must endure a test of luck, and the Streetdeal skill of a Fixer is important in determining whether you pass or fail.
Giri, the underground economy has a secret code to which everyone is expected to adhere. The central idea is an add-on to this secret code: the borrowing of money or a favor by a person (O.D.) to another person (Giri), a borrowed figure in which the borrower must repay the favor or money with interest and with the understanding that the repayment will be made in the future. If the borrower fails to repay the favor or money, the lender may take action to recover the favor or money. However, it is important to note that the code is not binding on all parties, and that the repayment of favors and money is not always guaranteed.

To illustrate the differentiation between the general knowledge granted by Streetwise and the specific information granted by Streetdeal, take the following example: two characters (O.D., a non-Fixer, and Mad Man Mandel, a Fixer) need to get an illegal weapon (say, a MAC-14). O.D. knows that he needs to go to a rough section of town and see what he can find, while Mad Man Mandel knows that he has to go to Old Downtown. Once in the section, O.D. knows he should look for a small, privately-owned store and ask a few questions, while Mad Man Mandel knows that he should go to Gruvarra's. Should the two characters find themselves facing a group of guards outside the store, O.D. would know that they are combat-gang and probably figure that they are there for the same reason that he is, while Mad Man Mandel would recognize their colors as those of Maelstrom, and he knew that Maelstrom is likely to try to knock over Gruvarra's. To get into the store without trouble, O.D. would have to try to just act cool and not piss off the gang members, while Mad Man Mandel would know the gang's behavior patterns, probably know the gang's hand signals, and maybe even know one of the gang members personally. Armed with this knowledge and experience, Mad Man Mandel is more likely to know how to avoid detection and be allowed to leave before Maelstrom attacks the store. O.D.'s chances of escape would be pretty slim.

The bottom line on the Streetwise-Streetdeal issue is that Streetwise is not a street deal for non-Fixers, it is simply a knowledge of what life is like on the streets. Streetdeal certainly includes that, but it is much more as well... end of story.

Deal making:

Streetwise's name reveals a lot about what the skill is for. It allows you to deal with the Street. However, Streetdeal also covers making deals on the Street. Operating somewhat like an Expert deal, Streetdeal includes an appraisal ability, and much like a Persuasion skill, Streetdeal covers the fine arts of haggling and cutting a deal. When making any kind of exchange or transaction, a Fixer on the buying side will want to appraise the merchandise (if he can) to decide what the commodity is worth. He will then try to talk the seller down and eventually a deal will be made. If a Fixer is on the selling side, he will already have appraised the merchandise and will know what he wants to sell it for. Be it selling or buying, making the deal is a Fixer's bread and butter. The skill of Streetwise also includes a "haggling" ability, but the more refined practices of appraisal and negotiation are the domain of Fixers alone.

A Fixer can appraise the value of a commodity by rolling his Streetdeal and comparing to a difficulty number which is determined by the ref. Generally, figuring the exact price of a commodity rather than a ballpark figure will increase the difficulty number by one level (5 points). The basic rule will depend on the Fixer's area of expertise. For example, Mad Man Mandel, as a cyberware Black Market dealer, would have an advantage in figuring the price of a gold-plated cyberhand with built-in Scratchers as a Pimp or Drug Pusher would. A successful roll for the Fixer the actual value of the commodity. If he is selling, he will probably ask for more than this, and if he is buying, he will probably offer less than this. Such is the law of sales.

Once appraisal has been completed, an exchange usually takes place. Roleplaying out the haggling is recommended, since this is the most gratifying to both the players and the referee. However, some players may not be confident in their own haggling skills and may supplement their roleplaying with a Streetdeal roll; sometimes neither players nor referrs wish to spend the time to roleplay out the haggling instead opting for a simple contest of skills. In such cases, the two characters performing the exchange each roll their COOL+Skill+Bd10. After any applicable modifiers, the character who rolls higher wins. The "Skill" may be either Streetdeal or Streetwise. When the two skills are the same (Streetdeal vs. Streetdeal, Streetwise vs. Streetwise), each 1 point of success results in a 2% change in price in favor of the winner. However, when a Fixer haggles with a non-Fixer character, his advantage becomes 5%, reflecting his greater prowess at haggling and dealing. For example, suppose that Mad Man Mandel (COOL 8, Streetdeal +8) were buying the cyberhand from a ripperdoc with a COOL of 7 and a Streetwise of +6. If Mad Man Mandel rolled a 24 and the ripperdoc rolled a 21, Mad Man Mandel would get the cyberhand for 70% of its actual value. However, if the ripperdoc rolled a 21 and Mad Man Mandel rolled an 18, the ripperdoc would sell the cyberhand for 115% of its actual value. Under normal circumstances, the price will never deviate by more than 50% either way. Sometimes the loser of this contest of skills for the deal may not be happy with the results. This is why Fixers usually have some muscle backup in the form of Solos or other goons on call when cutting major deals.

COMPLICATIONS:

Streetdeal is unique among Special Abilities in that it is so multi-faceted. Fixers have a much broader range of power and influence than most other characters, since their Special Ability combines a status ranking, a myriad of skills, and a network. These combined functions give Fixers advantages in their element, the Street—but there are responsibilities attached to Streetdeal. Having all this ability opens the door for all sorts of potential repercussions. Aside from the large amount of time a Fixer is obligated to devote to his network (see Speaking Of Money, pg. 4), a Fixer's connections can sometimes get him in trouble (not mention other players in party). It pays to be careful and think about all sorts of trouble.

Contacts, as roleplaying devices can sometimes do as much harm as good. Depending upon their reliability, they might be unhelpful to their patron Fixer, even sell him out to the authorites or other Fixers. Contacts can also be taken hostage by "the enemy" (whoevers that might be) and coerced/tortured, brainwashed into handing over PC Fixer and any attached player characters. Similarly, being a reputable Fixer can depend upon being talked about, recognized, and known to some extent...
The grapevine, publicity and advertising are all very closely related, and being known is not always an advantage. It may bring in customers, but it also makes it easier for the "enemy" to find you. There are those who feel that "fame" is a trap, a pitfall that they have to avoid at all costs. In this world, the more people know about you, the more likely they are to find you. This is why many businesses try to keep a low profile, to avoid being "discovered" by their competitors or by the media.

Even if a business is well-known, the grapevine has the curious nature of spreading word around whether you like it or not. They say word travels fast, and in the underground information network, data gets shuffled around at light-speed. There are always young, ambitious, amoral individuals out there who would be more than willing to roll over an established business and hijack all its assets. Fixers are often security-minded to an extreme, investing in electronic security equipment, bug-stoppers, and all the usual bodyguards. Even this is not guaranteed to dissuade the criminal element from making attempts on a Fixer's life and property, hacking their supplies, invading their network and generally being a pain. Once again, anyone who hangs around with a high-powered Fixer long enough is very likely to get caught in the crossfire during such an event. These raids are particularly suited to Fixer-oriented campaigns. Entire subplots can be generated around rivalries between Fixer organizations, the shifting allegiances of local gang leaders, and the ever-present threat of the Big organized crime muscle moving in on your private enterprise.

Mob takeovers are a constant threat in every Fixer's life. In any modern Cyberpunk city, there are numerous Fixers who start up their own rackets, such as gambling, prostitution, smuggling, and assorted black marketeering. Very few of these indie Fixers ever make it to the big league because the Mob doesn't take kindly to small-time operators using their "territory." The Mob, which is a blanket term used to describe the large, well-organized crime groups which control a large part of a city's criminal activities, consists of such notorious groups as the Mafia (from Italy), the Yakuza (from Japan), the Chinese Triads (from the Spanish world of magic), the Russian Mafia (from France) as well as newcomers like the Jamaican Posse and the Organisations (Euro-Russian gangs). Every large city in North America has strong representation by some of these groups, and each are divided up into territories controlled by particular groups with strictly enforced boundaries. Wherever a Fixer operates, he will be hard pressed to find a base of operations which is not on someone's turf. In general, the Mob will ignore the really small-time operators (those with a Streetdeck of less than 5) and concentrate on the big fish who look like they are actually taking money away from the Mob's business. Those who do attract the Mob's attention will find that the way they are approached will depend on which turf they are in. The Jamaican Posse will most likely murder offending privateers outright, while the Yakuza would more likely force indie Fixers out of their turf and the Mob protect their turf by instilling fear into the local organizations. If these situations, even if initially resolved in some way, will probably resurface again. The Mob has a way of moving in on indies quickly. The Mob's actions will treat the boundaries of their territories, the leadership and temperature of the local Mob changes, and the ever-present threat of the Big organized crime muscle moving in on your private enterprise.

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Black Market
Buying/Selling:
The Black Market is a counter-economy; this means that it is not legal. Its prices are based on the demand for goods, and
their availability. Its differences are twofold:
1) It can get you things that you are not supposed to be able to buy in the normal market, and
2) It is cheaper. For example, a Black Market
dealer will take care of your needs.

SALESMEN
Salesmen are probably the most
known breed of this person. Opportunistic,
quick-witted, and cunning, these people
are always looking for a quick buck.

Black Marketeer
This type of fixer makes his money by pocketing a percentage of the sale of things that most people cannot get, either because of legal constraints or lim-
ited availability. The authorities catch on
quickly, but they don't care about the Black Marketeer unless he sells them something.

Information Broker
Of all the salesmen, the Information Broker (or "Info Bro") is the most myste-
rious, respected, and difficult to become. Information Brokers are in the
business of knowing things, which can make them very popular with people
who aren't in the know, but very unpopular with those who are and don't want
others to know. One great advantage that Information Brokers enjoy is that
the authorities usually are not a prob-
lem; it is seldom illegal to know things.

Handdong
A Seat in the House

Black Marketeer
Streetwise
Expert: Brainside/VR
Expert: Brainside Editing
Expert: Cybernetics
Expert: System Knowledge
Expert: Cyberdeck
Expert: Programming
Expert: Wetwork

Persuasion
Intimidate
Melee
Handgun

Awareness
(DRUGS)
Biological Biohazard

Weapons

Pharmaceuticals

Frenzy

FORGOTH

Cryotank Operation

SOCIAL

SLAVERY

Crackhead Operation

PSYCHOLOGY

Distance

Psychopharmacology

Psychology

Emergency

Electronics

WEAPONS

Drugs

Biology

Computer

Electronics

Emergency

Electronics

Hardware

Programmer

Electronics

Wetwork

Burlesq

Weaponeer

Handjob

(Electronics)

Basic Tech

Hack Tech

Basic Tech

Lock

Electronics Security

Electronics

Electronics

Electronics

Electronics

Electronics

Electronics

Electronics

Electronics
ics. Info Bros usually lead intellectually stimulating but physically protracted lifestyles, so they tend to be anything from eccentric to bizarre. This is a highly specialized and narrow field, suited to very specific type of people—many of whom sell information, but few dealt in it exclusively. The biggest threat to Info Bros is posed by those concerns about whom he sells information. White Lion (CP 2020, pg. 218) found out the hard way when he sold information which he did to the downfall of a mob family. She was then being held in the contract they put out on her.

Information Broker
Streetsdeal Awareness
Perception Interview
Forcings Library Search
Investigation Human Perception
Expert: Education & General Knowledge
(your choice)

- The Records Racket

... Info Bros create a demand for real, the public, and information businesses, but in doing so they run across all sorts of laws, which can be very hurtful to them. Many times they have to take the time to ensure that they are not getting into trouble. By working with others, they can ensure that they are not getting into trouble.

Shoemaker

With the modern evolution of the Net, the majority of America’s population are registered in the systems of the Net through their State Identification Numbers (SINs). This number is the citizen’s electronic line, serving as their social security number and tied to their driver’s registration, bank accounts, and more. Information Broker requires some basic computer knowledge. Note access code and even their phone number. While this system has streamlined the collection of the electronic highways, it can also be used by Big Brother to keep an uncomfortably close eye on you (see SIN of Identity, page 62). For criminals and drug dealers, this system can be difficult, and when they need to disappear, they can’t.
Fixer, the package is well-suited to Sleaze, as such low-levelfixers tend to need a variety of hands-on skills.

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**MONEYBAGS**

MONEYBAGS are those fixers who deal in pure currency. Money in 2020 has an almost magical power (a lot like today, actually). The mega-corporate economy has made money the greatest weapon known to man: it can buy people's souls and topple nations. Paper and coins, electronic cash, extended credit lines, expense accounts, personal checks, non-liquid assets, precious metals and jewels, stocks and bonds are the bodily fluids of the capitalist organism which is the world in 2020. Clever entrepreneurs who know how to manipulate currency can make out like bandits and get away with murder. There are generally four types of MONEYBAGS: Factors, Fences, Loan Sharks and Bookies, but they often overlap.

**Factor**

Factors are big-time financial brokers, and as such, are the most large-scale of the moneybags. Factors deal in such practices as money laundering, forgery, ghost accounting and embezzlement. There are two kinds of Factors — the rich and the radical. The classic definition of a Factor is someone who is brought in by a company to resolve inventory problems. This practice still happens in 2020. Sometimes companies find themselves threatened with imminent bankruptcy when they cannot sell all of their inventory, and at these times they employ a Factor. The Factor agrees to buy all of the company's inventory at a discount, thus preventing the company from going bankrupt. The Factor can at least stay afloat, and then it is his job to find buyers for the wares and make some kind of profit. Clearly, Factors need to have access to substantial funds even before they begin such a transaction, but a smooth operator can turn junk into gold. A market-op owner's warehouse full of unpopular music chips may well become an Information Broker's outright smuggling medium. Such services are often provided by the classic Factors of old may still grant high profits, but the modern-day Factor of the Cyberpunk economy is a multi-task individual (this is the point at which Fixers come closest to Corps). Insider trading is as common a practice in 2020 as it was during the 1980s, and with talented Netrunners on board, entire corporations have fallen to the manipulations of serious Factors. These MONEYBAGS are also experts at embezzlement and other accounting magic-tricks; every Mob boss has at least two Factors on the payroll to watch for treachery from within the ranks as well as to "cover" tax returns and bankbooks. Factors are also the Fixers who specialize in pure monetary exchange, and are among the few Fixers who are not only willing but capable of exchanging jewels and precious metals for solid credit. Some Factors even deal in international currencies, which have taken a back seat to the Dollar and Euro, and can work with cash or credit (although dealing with cash often includes a 3-10% processing fee). Some of these MONEYBAGS also provide money laundering services, accepting stolen money from bank robbers and other thieves and moving it through a series of small, innocuous transactions which separate the criminals from the incriminating serial numbers. Money laundering usually costs a hefty percentage of the original stolen monies (as much 50%), but with the advent of electronic cash as the economy's standard currency, electronic money laundering has become more common than the physical shuffling of the last hundred years. Because of this, most Factors take Programming as a pickup skill and have several Netrunner contacts to help them circumvent the electronic safeguards which protect credit systems. Some Factors specialize in faking an account-holder's consent to a transaction, which takes them into the forgery business—faked signatures, fingerprints, voice patterns and retina scans are the wares of forger-minded Factors. It is very hard to crack stolen creds with no fancy equipment, and Factors (with funds large enough to afford the equipment and enough Netrunner and Techie contacts to pull it off) are the confirmed experts in the criminal industry of cracking chips and traps; see the sidebar on "Chopping" (Electronic Librivity, page 55). Ghost accounting, or the formation of black-market banking, is another field which is capitalized upon by Factors. Face Banks (see pg. 55) are complicated arrangements not only from the programming angle, but also from a commercial standpoint. Every Face Bank has several Factors who work as black account managers, making sure that transactions made to and from the Face Bank appear legitimate to outside observers. Routing debits and deposits through front organizations and using legitimate bank accounts as front systems.

**Fence**

A Fence buys stuff super-cheap and resells it semi-cheap. Also called Pawnbrokers, these MONEYBAGS are experts at the redistribution of wealth. Fences buy assorted loot (that can be anything), and resell it at a higher price. Most fences are small-time operators and therefore they can get away...
with more and face lesser consequences when caught (a Priority 9 crime, 2nd Degree). Fences usually pay somewhere between 10-30% of the value of stolen goods, and then there's an hour or so. Fences are highly valued professionals in 2020, as there are always shady characters who want to sell off assorted wares they have stolen, scavenged, found, inherited or whatever. Fences are experts in the confidential exchange of assorted goods, from human organs to stolen cars. However, Fences are generally better off buying wares that are easy to sell or otherwise dispose of rather than going for fancy stuff like generic material or atomic bombs. The hotter and more unique the wares are, the more risk they pose to the Fence, both from an economic standpoint and a security perspective. By the very nature of their business, Fences require substantial finances to keep their enterprise going. Before a Fence can resell anything, he has to buy it from someone. This is where many Fences have other racketeers going on the side—anything from gambling to prostitution can help finance a Fence's business. The most common financial support available to a Fence is the ever-present organized crime system. Fences are very popular targets for Mob takeover because there are areas of excellent source of income, hard-to-find items and make perfect fronts for even more vicious and unpleasant racketeers. This is a difficult specialty for a player-character Fixer, because it requires a great deal of hand-on attention and a solid base of operations which cannot be abandoned. It does not require as large a staff as black marketeering rings and prostitution, but it is much more limited in terms of roleplaying opportunities. Fences make excellent contacts and NPC informants, and are the perfect tools for referees who are keen on hacking subplots.

**Loan Shark (CredShark)**

These guys will make a loan to just about anyone, however, their interest rates are very high and a delinquent payment means a broken limb (or worse). Just as Fences sell tangible goods, Loan Sharks sell interest rates. While these interest rates may or may not be affordable, not paying gets your legs broken (or worse). Loan Sharks all have the same basic structure, which consists of several solos or other groups to handle smaller and one or more Factors as accountants. The only variable is how many staff are involved, this being dependent upon the size of the operation. Loan Sharks are prime candidates for Mob involvement, since Loan Sharking is high-profit with relatively low risk and requires a small amount of money by bank account going. The 21st century's ultimate evolution of the Loan Shark is the CredShark, a Loan Shark who deals exclusively with the Net. These electronic Loan Sharks often operate out of Face Banks, working alongside Factors and Netrunners. Their main customers are Netrunners, but all types come to the place to spend money, keep track of their assets and play the Net. CredSharks are as vicious and dangerous as their meet-at-eating cousins—perhaps more so. While a Loan Shark may look up a wether's address and have them harassed or beaten up, a CredShark attaches tawseums (various forms of computer virus) to the electronic credit that they front. These tawseums infect other facets of the customer's electronic identity, and may be activated like time-bombs by the CredShark mastermind. A local gangster has to pay a debt to a CredShark, he may find the Government knocking on his door for some time. CredSharks are very poor at keeping records, and most have no idea how much they actually owe. Fences might find that all his legitimate bank accounts have been closed; he may wind up on a CIC wanted list, or he might find that as far as the databases are concerned, his name is Elvis Presley, he's currently living on Mars. On the other hand, CredSharks can give their clients a good non-standard interest rates and real-time compounding. Whether they are back-alley Loan Sharks or wildcard CredSharks, these Moneyslugs keep their clients hopping.

**Bookie**

The term "Bookie" is a holdover from the middle 20th century, when gambling odds were recorded in simple paper books (talk about low-tech). Back then, the neighborhood bookie had his own bookie, who could be found hanging around the local bar or pharmacy. He would know the odds on boxing matches and horse races and feed the bookie his bets. The bookie would then pay out the odds and pocket the difference. However, bookies are not the only people who take bets, and this practice has spread to other areas of life. Today, bookies are found in all sorts of activities, from sports betting to online gambling. In the digital society, bookies have become even more sophisticated, using complex algorithms to determine odds and make predictions. They also use data from a variety of sources, including public records and private databases, to gain an advantage over their competitors.

**Exotic Fixers**

While Exotic Fixers are more as a class than anything else, they still suffer from some of the social stigma of prejudice in some cases. In reality, however, the Exotic Fixers have the advantages of being carefully selected, respect from human society and the more convenient technology. They can be used to create exotic clients or employers, as well as catering to the needs of the rich and powerful. In contrast, the non-exotic Fixers have to rely on someone who understands their needs. Exotic Fixers are more complicated than normal, and work with exotic clienteles or employers, providing services that are not available to the regular Fixers. This includes specialized gambling systems, providing all kinds of exotic and unusual bets, or offering services that are not available to the regular Fixers. They are also more危险, as they can create a variety of exotic and dangerous situations, such as the Mystic Event (such as a boxing match). Many times the Exotic Fixers are used to provide entertainment, either for the rich or for the less sophisticated clients.

**Fence**

Not to be confused with NPC specially: Streetwise, Awareness/Notice, Intimacy, Forgery, Handgun, Accounting, Basic Tech or Expert skill (in many cases you prefer to buy)

**CredShark**

Streetwise, Awareness, Intimacy, Forgery, Handgun, Accounting, Basic Tech or Expert skill (in many cases you prefer to buy)
modern cybernetics, it is possible to get implants which will count records and calculate odds so efficiently that almost any gambling system can be outmaneuvered by a better with the means. However, most gamblers are small-time, desparate streetcums and wagers that cannot afford such exotic wetteware. Bookies and Loan Sharks get out of business from people who are really desperate for money. Loan Sharks are guaranteed to give you some money, but their draconian interest practices make them somewhat unappealing. Bookies, on the other hand, are far less fearsome but the chances that you will look as equal to (if not greater than) your chances to make a profit. Most gambling is done for fun rather than out of economic necessity, but the addictive quality of gambling ensures that Bookies will always have business.

**Bookeel Streetclub**
- Awareness
- Intimdate
- Persuasion
- Accounting
- Capital
- Human Perception
- Handgun
- Brawling
- Melee
- Mathematics

**LEECHES**
People are a Fixer's greatest commodity, but for a Leech this is more than a cliche, it's a code to live by. A Leech is a Fixer who specializes in personnel services, he be legitimate or illegitimate. A Leech brings employers and employees together, making things happen on the street below and in the corporate world above. Although there are plenty of gray and black services which come under the influence of these Leeches, there are also many total legal trades which they are involved in. Be they Leech, Talents, Scouting or Managers, all make their living off of other people's talent, and that is even the fairest and most selfish "People-Person" will find himself unlaterally referred to as a "Leech."

**Talent Scout**
A Talent Scout is a Leech who goes out on tour in search of people with an unrealized talent for acting, musical performance, sports, business, literature, and any other field. They are the people who actively seek out talent. Scouts frequent hotspots of activity for their target talent group. When looking for students to invite into the big leagues, Talent Scouts tour the nation's stadiums, public playing fields and sports bars. When looking for Neutrums to induct into a corporate crack team, Talent Scouts visit VR cafes, hang around Neutrums bars like the Strong Circuit, regularly check out underground electronics shops and constantly scouring the Net for exclusive BBS and other virtual hangouts. Talent Scouts spend a great deal of time socializing with people of interest, making introductions and answering questions. Some people (like nightclub owners) think Talent Scouts are pests, but they are considered invaluable by their employers. They often can connect you with people you do not know where or when a talented person is going to show up, Talent Scouts are always on the move. They get a great deal of mileage out of their contacts, who are mostly club owners, industry-connected Techs, Medias, or Corporates. A Talent Scout's profits come from charging their employers a "Fee," not by taking a cut of the percentage of the monies which the talent brings in, or a simple financial settlement which may or may not be prearranged (essentially, salary or commission). Like any Fixer, Talent Scouts are always looking for their "big score" in the form of a hot talent who will be the one to watch. When a Talent Scout discovers a truly great talent, both parties are pretty much ensured of financial wellbeing. Although many corporations, such as the Neutrums, have Talent Scouts as regular employees, there are also many independent workers who on their own payroll, even if the Agent represents only a single person or group. Most of an Agent's contacts are corporate or other bigwigs in their client's field. An Agent, just as in the book, is more often than not an influential conglomerate and walks away with a finder's fee which will keep him comfortable for many years to come. Tal- lent Scouting can even work for the Mob, seeking out new gussies and fixing up holes in a family's ranks. These Mob Scouting jobs consist of criminals who are just getting out of prison, and patrol the seedy parts of town looking for young toughs and other capable lawbreakers. It is very likely that at some point during any Edgerton's career they will receive an offer of employment from a Mob Talent Scout. Solos, Fixers, Prowlers and Neutrums are most likely to draw this attention, but only if they show some potential—no talent gons can pester these Leeches as much as they want, but the best they can expect is a beating by the Scout's hired muscleboys. Talent Scouts give referees a great method for bringing PCs together, or for introducing important NPCs, or for generating a job for a team of players easier or more difficult.

**Talent Scout / Manager**
The bulk of the Leech population is made up of Talent Agents, whose job is less trying and thankless than that of a Talent Scout. Talent Agents are paid by their (supposedly) talented clients to represent them to potential employers. Since they are paid to find job for talented people, Agents spend a lot of time schmoozing and networking with people in their clients' industry, keeping channels open and snuffing out business opportunities. When a talent is chosen by another employer, the talent requires an extensive network of contacts so Talent Agents usually have several

**Talent Agent**
-the agent will be able to provide skilled operatives, either by offering some one who they represent or directing the employer to another Agent who has the specific needs, setups, house rules, etc. A Talent Agent would have a lot of contacts in Hollywood and London, including media corporations like DMS and Netty. The number of clients a Talent Agent might have varies widely, influenced mainly by the relative popularity of the client(s). Assume that the number of clients is very low at Streetlevel level 1, reaches its peak at around Streetlevel deal level 5 or 6, and then drops off again as it approaches Streetlevel level 10. Such high-powered Agents often represent very well-known people like rocketboy Kenny Eurodyne, baseball star Ray Isaac, bratdancer Slade McCallahan or corporate Solo Morgan Blackhand. The truly fat, big-time Leech rackets is being a talent manager; such people will inevitably become well-regarded and well-respected names themselves, and their reputation can become so great that they will wield as much influence in their industry as the talent they represent. Being in charge of the business affairs of a single person or group of people, such as managing the Fullsleevees and performing the enticing functions of a Talent Agent with the business savvy of corporate division head, without the job-busting worries of a normal role, is a potentially lucrative business. Talent Agents are, to be sure, but their close involvement with a group or person (to be referred to as the "client") makes the Manager's life very stressful. They have to take care of all the business arrangements pertinent to their client's career. What these arrangements are depends upon the nature of their client's profession.

**Agents/Managers need not always operate within the law. Neutrums, Solos and covert strike teams need repping in much the same manner as well.**

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Go-Betweens

In 2020, increasing gaps between the rich and the poor, inflated tensions between racial groups, harsher confrontation by multiplying political movements, deeper divisions between generations, enhanced disparities in technology, and new alienations in humanity itself (pure humans, cyborgs, exotics and solitude) have led to an almost holistically fragmented society. Like the crossover from analog to digital technology, society has been divided into smaller and smaller units, leaving neonate links which "bind us all together." The resultant future shock has made it critical that there are professionals who serve as living interfaces between people—these people are Nobles, and they are called Go-Betweens. Go-Betweens are experts at bridging the gaps between individuals or groups, forming connections for them to work interdependently, but the business is undeniably profitable and fraught with danger. In terms of economics, Go-Betweens are masters of supply and demand, smoothing out economic inconsistencies around the numerous social and economic groups packed into a virtuality, Go-Betweens become facilitators of the flow of commodities (goods, services and information) around the numerous social and economic groups packed into a virtuality. Go-Betweens deal in gray and black businesses and others with whom they have developed a rapport. There are five types of Go-Betweens, each concerned with bringing people (and products) together. They are Negotiator, Smuggler, Trader, Sniffer and Owners.

Negotiator

These Go-Betweens deal in commodities which are entirely non-material but are always in high demand: arbitration skill. With so many racial, class, economic classes and special interest groups, there is always a conflict of one type or another which an accomplished Negotiator can turn to his advantage. Their skills are applicable to any number of situations.

Smuggler

With the advent of corporate domination, the breakdown of federal authority; the resurgence of states' rights, the rise of free states, and the establishment of the black market, the size of the conflicts in a Negotiator is regularly involved and is almost always proportionate to the level of the Street level. A small, beige Negotiator with a Street level of 2 will get most of his work from individuals and petty gang ringleaders. A more talented Negotiator may handle neighborhood disturbances, student riots, work force on strike, police reliability complaints, and racial disputes. An extremely talented Negotiator may handle full scale warfare between gangs, organized crime, corporations, or even civil wars. The trick for a Negotiator is to remain neutral enough to be acceptable to both parties and removed enough to not get assassinated by vigilante forces. Because of the potential risks involved in being a freelance arbitrator, these Go-Betweens often keep a careful eye on the progression of all sides in their "Conflict of Interest," allowing for deals to be cut with the willing, without making sure of their sources, and thus guaranteeing safety from any losing side. Other Negotiators go nomad, picking up their outfit and leaving town (or even state) after each deal. A Negotiator's impact is based on contacts often include a lawyer (or parasole), some police officers or other authorities, and a media or two. In the actual staff for a Negotiator should be kept light, since they will be a part of their own group's "Conflict of Interest," troubleshooting negotiation proceedings and keeping channels open with contacts and old clients. Sometimes a Negotiator is kept on permanent payroll by certain groups, such as the larger organized crime syndicates, certain corporations, and even the more enlightened governments.

Trader

Traders are a very particular brand of front for dealing in mostly illegal transactions, but also in pure bartering. Very often Traders have an "Import / Export" business as their front, using the pretense of dealing in international goods such as art or antiques to provide a perfect screen for trading black-market commodities through utterance in untraceable handshake deals and mid-night drop-offs at waterfronts and basement loading docks. By exchanging one type of goods for another, Traders do not have to carry actual cash or credit; their operations are therefore much harder to monitor and crack. The only way to trace a Trader's business is to keep an eye on fluctuations in the markets in which he deals—you have to know what a Trader is trying to catch him doing. For this reason, Traders may be on the lookout for fresh commodities that will trade, since common ware attracts little attention, while leased/commodities are comparably high-profile. Traders make their eventual profits by making wise decisions in what they trade. A smart Trader can exchange a load of generic food products for a few home, because smuggling operations are favorites target of Mob takeover. The Mob itself runs numerous smuggling rings, including weapons, drugs, orgs, and other commodities which would interest a Black Marketeer. The most difficult smuggling operation—the covert transport of ware to and from space—is a field which is exploited more by the Mob than any independent Go-Between simply because powerful organized crime families have the resources and the means to get through the layers of intermediaries and the legal loopholes to smuggle their goods. While, besides who else the Mob can afford its own space-worthy delusions and cutters?

Smuggler

Pursue Knowledge

Handgun Forgery or Basic Tech

Leadership Resist Torture & Drugs

Smuggler

Smuggling

Streetdeal Awareness

Persuasion Knowledge (x)

Brassing Human Perception

Social Expert: (field of choice)

Knowledge Language & General

Black Marketeer Jockey (vehicle

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Between, since they run a business which brings people together. Places such as the Grand Illusion and the Night Owl get business from almost every social sector, from partying glitterfolk, to bizminded Edgerunners to becoming streetcucum. Some Owners are one-joint, acting as the full-hedged owner and manager of their own personal establishment, while others are partners, owning parts of numerous bars and clubs all across a city, country or even the whole world. The legality of their businesses will depend on where they are located. Some American free states allow whorehouses and drug parlor as legitimate establishments, while some tought European countries have a curfew which effectivly bans late-night bars and clubs. The Owners of these establishments often have a mixed bag of potential contacts, involving politicians, media stars, corporate mega-honchos, glitterfolk, Edgerunners and bums, and their staff requirements are understandably heavy. Factors to handle accounting, Nettromers or Techies to run lightshows, Solos as bouncers, maybe a Medtech or two to tend bar, and even more. Corporate Nomads and Rockers for live acts in area valuable addition to most roleplaying groups.

Sniffer
This type of Go-Between is also called a "Procurement Person," and these Fixers often find themselves hired to scrimp and providing the physical space to store these wares. Besides, the Mob likes to keep its operations as untraceable as possible. Although establishing a Trader operation requires a large additional amount of capital, once the racket is under way, its operating costs are relatively low and the profits generated can be impressive. This is another reason why the Import/Export business is so coveted with Mafia and Yakuzza enforcers.

Sniffer

Owner
Every city is packed with establishments which cater to public entertainment and congregation. Restaurants, bars, clubs, casinos, VRcades and drug bars are a staple of cyberpunk culture. The proprietors of these establishments are important members of their establishment's community. They have contacts from all walks of life, make their own rules, and wear all sorts of rumors. Sounds like these guys are Fixers, doesn't it? In fact, they are, and they are the second-tier providers (referred to, for convenience's sake, as Owners) are a type of Go-

Sniffer

Sniffer
**Cyber-Vultures:** These scavengers lead only slightly more blameless lives than flesh-eating, garbage piling around the search for cheap, used cyber-pieces. Death may put an end to a human's worth (except for a Vulture), but cyber-eater is too precious to be stolen without its owner's consent. Cyber-Vultures sometimes resort to attacking low-levels and forcibly removing their cyber-eaters. This can be done while the "donor" is still alive and without evidence (this is often harmless to Cyber-players-who don't appear to lose anything). However, any Cyber-Vulture who tries to steal cyber-eaters on his own or attempt to take over someone else's will be considered a threat by the community. The basic idea is that they have been inducted into the hierarchy of the syndicate (some sort of initiation procedure is usually called for). These Vultures are different from the many other roles employed by the Mob in that, instead of running the following particular racket or operation, they serve the Mob leaders, acting as the drivenMARY managers of other Fixers. As has been stressed in the other Fixer descriptions, the Mob employs all breeds of Fixer to handle their rackets. Any kind of Fixer from the Burners to Black Marketers can work for the Mob, the difference is that only "Mated Fixers" are integral parts of the organization's structure. As such, a Mobster's primary role may be that of an enforcer for his rank within his syndicate, somewhat like the special abilities of Streetwalkers, Contractors, and (ironically) Cop. A Mobster with a Streetdeal of 1-5 is a typical suitor or watchdog. Streetdeal level 6 makes a Mobster a ganger, level 7 represents a serious enforcer. Streetdeal level 8 is a sublieutenant, level 9 is a lieutenant, and Mobsters with Streetdeal 10 are full-blown crime bosses. A Mobster's Streetdeal also functions as a sort of Resources skill, indicating how much of the Mob's resources the Fixer can access—this facet of the skill is used like a persuasion skill with Mobsters in accessing those resources.

Most of the low-level Mobsters (level 1-5) oversee the classic protection racket, which sell "insurance" to members of a community (sometimes that community may even be the Net). Nice commodity, that protection... Racketeers are selling insurance to members of a community that has been proven involved in, if not committed, to murder and theft. Reporting on non-Mobsters, that is the usual job of a sublieutenant can be done through sheer merit, but to become a full-fledged lieutenant almost always requires that the Mobster becomes a member of the organization (effectively "adopted" by the family) and can control the operations of an entire syndicate racket (such as drugs, prostitution, gambling, etc.). Most people (including rival Mobsters) will do everything they can to not offend a lieutenant, but the authorities will want to take him down something fierce—but the difference in how they do so will reduce a major operation. If they do catch him, the syndicate will spare no expense in trying to free him. To protect these "mobster" members the Mob can invoke the laws of the city. These laws are the same as those that protect a Mobster, but the laws are not so specific to the situation. For example, a Mobster can call on a small army of goons and hitmen, but remember that police intervention is dangerous to the health of the Mob.

At Streetdeal level 10, the Mobster is a crime boss. In the Mafia, the name is Godfather. In the War, crime bosses are referred to as Oyabun. Crime bosses need the protection of their chief, since they may be facing the authorities, or even some governments (crime bosses have a few politicians in their pockets, even in cases where they are not effectively dominating the country's health). Fearsome, crime bosses know every everything that goes on in their territory (usually an entire city), and major figures such as media stars, corporate officials and politicians vie for your attention and endorsement. They are always powerful and rich, owning vast estates and surrounded by an entourage of secretaries, bodyguards, advisors and assorted stooges who live to serve their master's every whim. Favor, fortunes and human lives are traded with equal casualness of the hand, with pocketknife, and even the police stay pretty much out of the way at this point. A crime boss's voice is as loud as his murder rate is low. Becoming a member of such an organization is a solid choice for someone looking to enter a new field of work or to aid in the fight against evil forces.
Con Man

Throughout the years, the Confidence Man has gone by many names: Hustler, Rip-Off Artist, Greifer, Scammer and Sting Expert all come to mind. This type of character uses his interpersonal skills to set up elaborate schemes (stings) which fool his victims (marks) into essentially giving their money to him. Con Men have the COOL-based special ability of Con, which is the ability to separate the mark out of his or her wallet. They may convince a mark to buy them drinks for hours, or spend money on worthless trinkets (from When Greedy Falls, page 48). Con can be countered by Streetwise, but since the familiarity one has with the Street, the more likely one is to recognize a scam when he sees one. For this reason, Greifers are generally choosier about their marks. A con man needs a high COOL overall, but a high INT is very useful for figuring out good scams, and a high MA is also a valuable asset. Pick Pocket and Sleight of Hand (REF-based, from Hardwired page 22) are strongly recommended as pick-up skills. Con Men use the Media Psyche scale.

Streetpunk

These are the youth of today disillusioned, alienated and angry. They are the restless gang members infesting the city streets. Kicking Fliplocks, the most common breeds are: Posers (identity-copying), Boosters (cyberware-fetishists), Chromers (heavy metal groups), Dopplegangers (punx/junkie groups), Guardians (neighborhood-defense families), Services (supporting streetkids), Skinheads (hate ideologies), Punks (purposeless and wild), Cults (neuro-religious followers), Nihilists (suicide crazies) and Combatants (ritualistic warriors). Others include Frigitives (back-to-nature low-techs), Thrashers (rollerbladers and skateboarders) and Bikers (motorcycle nuts).

Whatever the label, Status Ability is the same: Gang Rank. This ability is much like Family for Nomads, indicating the Streetpunk's level of authority, resources, respect and experience within the gang. A homeboy may be relatively low on the totem pole in his/her own set, but if he is the most powerful set in the city, his/her rank is probably higher than they realize. In fact, the advent of cyberware, exotic full body conversion has created new, previously unheard-of fetishes. Whatever these jouys and habits may be, the Con Men and Streetpunks are sculpted into Strippers and Hookers are rarely independent operators—they almost always work for one type of Fixer or another, be it a Pimp, Owner or even Agent. Dancer/Prostitutes have the special ability of Amp, which is simply another version of Con (see Con Men). Vamps is similar to Con in that it is used to extract as much money from customers (johns) as possible, but it is a sexually-oriented variation, which is why it is based on EMP. Prostitutes use their Vamp to entice johns into "going upstairs" or whichever—they might work on the Street, of an hotel, in a whores’ house or through an escort agency as a call girl/boy. Strippers, when not on stage dancing, use their Vamp to get the scrambled biochip clients to buy them drinks in exchange for friendship. Gang Rank, EMP and Streetpunk are not moonlight as prostitutes, depending on how much money they make, their place in the structure of the legal system, and the legality of prostitution as opposed to stripping. Con Men and Streetpunks are often involved in local crime. Note that because of the risks involved in close association with total strangers, Streetpunks usually have some sort of self-defense skill. EMP is a very important stat for the skittrade, but ATT is at least as key for obvious reasons. In 2000, the age of Leprosy and Contagion, Disease has become imperative: wealthy, dangerous and ugly. In the world of the future, Disease Illness makes a good pick skill. Dancer/Prostitutes use the Media Psyche scale (successful Strippers and Hookers can become impressionable, wealthy if they have real talent).
When making a Fixer character (particularly a player-character), you start in the usual way, namely by rolling 9D10 and distributing the points to the character's nine Stats. Try to have a character concept in mind, and tailor your stats to the concept.

Remember that all Fixers rely most heavily upon their COOL since this forms the basis for their Street deal ability and their all-important reputation. INT is very important as well since it takes brains to support the complex networks Fixers require. Fixers are organizers and as such they must be organized themselves. The other vital stat is EMP, without which people cannot interact with them. Since interacting with people is what being a Fixer is all about, an above-average EMP is key. However, most Fixers do not have top-end EMP, since if you are too empathic, it is hard to remain detached, materialistic and ruthlessly neutral. There are few cybered-up Fixers who are successful—how can you conduct sensitive negotiations if you're a raging cyberpsychos? Fortunately, Fixers have little need for cybernetics other than communications gear, so preserving your empathy is feasible. LUCK is handy but not vital, and the same goes for ATT. REF is not a big concern, as Fixers generally hire other people to handle physical trouble. MA can be important, since deals sometimes go sour, and there are a lot of situations which you would be wiser to run away from than face down. BOD is utterly unimportant to a Fixer, except in terms of personal preference. TECH is generally not a factor, since Fixers will usually hire experts if they need them. However, certain types of Fixers, such as those specializing in high-tech markets, would be wise to have a reasonable competence with their goods (although an Expert Knowledge skill can suffice, or you can even fall back on a chip if necessary).

Once you have set all your stats, go through the Lifepath section and see how scrambled your carefully-chosen stats get messed up by the roller-coaster of 21st century life. Next, decide which type of specialization you want for your Fixer (see the Specialized Fixer section). After this you must set the level of your Street deal. This requires some careful thought. Although you will undoubtedly be tempted to make your special ability as high as possible, beware—the higher your Street deal, the more responsibilities you must live up to. A Street deal of 10 makes you the equivalent of a Mafia crime lord or major underground organizer, and as such you must run an entire network. This doesn't leave much time for campaigning with the rest of the players. A Street deal of 6 or 7 is more powerful than you might think—that's what makes Street deal special. This special ability is so multi-faceted that even +4 gives you street-related powers above and beyond those of mere mortal cyberpunks. Besides, the higher your level, the more time you are obligated to spend maintaining your status, and thus the more Facemen you have to hire (see Forming a Business, page 41). Distribute your remaining 40 career points to the skills which come with your specialization, and then go on to choose your pickup skills. These will be more important than you might think, because as well as rounding out your character and making him/her unique, they will also make your character more capable than all those NPC Fixers out there. (Why do you think PCs always get such exciting jobs, anyway? There are a multitude of skills...
Bureaucracy—INT-based
from PlanetERRY Files pg 46

The safety seat belt is like a system of bureaucratic red tape. At 81, you can find yourself stuck in a desk chair. At 25, you get to call all your shots and know the name (and numbers) of all forms (written or computer) used by your city, county, or state. Given to you through Fixers, you administer strait to the mayor, senator, or your. You also are in a position to ask for things. Slid beneath all secondary forms. A quick in the era of bad government and petty people.

which would be useful to any character, but there are some that apply to Fixers in particular—these largely depend on your specialty.

Certain pickup skills are useful for every Fixer. Human Perception is chief among these, as very few deals in Cyberpunk are purely honest, and it's to your advantage to know what the other guy is thinking. Library Search can come in handy quite often, as 2020's information-based society calls for a certain amount of data-literacy. What's more, many Fixers find themselves in the role of a Private Investigator who sells things; spending a lot of time researching potential markets and looking up buyers. Expert: Economics becomes more and more necessary as your Streetwise grows, since your organization, employees, and financial burdens will grow with it. An assortment of languages are very useful for rough deals, sometimes Streetwise is too vague and translators can miss a lot of nuances. Speaking to an alien in his own language puts his trust in your ability; an NPC in an alternate city puts both of you in your place.

Another useful skill is Law Enforcement, the INT skill of maneuvering through government forms and rules, which is handy for those Sclaremont clients who find themselves involved in the wheeling and dealing of dirty politics (secretarys in the private sector, a very useful skill). For those Fixers who deal with the higher levels of society, Social, and Wardrobe and Style skills are absolute musts. The rich and thin don't associate with unfashionable, unkempt people. On the flip side, those Fixers who expect to find themselves down in the gutter of the action on the street might be wise to choose Stealth and/or Hide and Eaves, just in case. And remember, don't skimp on your Appearance!

One of the unique twists to creating a Fixer character is you learn that you don't really need a lot of cyber or equipment. A Fixer relies most heavily on his mind, his instincts, and his greed. Communications gear is the only truly necessary equipment for a Fixer, they have to keep in contact with their markets and clients. Most Fixers are decked out with all sorts of cellular phones, pocket radios, pagers, and home telephones, even basic home and communication suites. As far as cyberware goes, all the electronic claptrap can be avoided with the implantation of a lip-reader or cyber-audio. Voice Stress Analysis function can be useful, but the corresponding human interview is generally not worth the $2,000 (most cyberware is as useful for Fixers as any other character, so most Fixers are more likely to have a set of plugs and chip sockets than cyber-audio. Other than chipware and/or cyber-audio commlinks, little cyberware is needed. In fact, due to the loss of humanity (and thus Empathy, and thus a degree of Humor and Human Perception skills), the less cyberware a Fixer has, the better. However, Fixers are money-minded individuals and as such they are likely to stock up on all sorts of gadgets. A common choice for Fixers is a pocket computer, which, with the addition of the right Compudock (available for 125 dollars at Compudock, Inc. and other places), can be as useful as the Fixer's electronic needs, from a personal organizer and client database to a translator, drug analyzer and modems for the Net, to a portable voice stress analyser and bug detector. A backup pistol or other weapon is advisable (just in case the hired muscle aren't enough), and some distinctive cloaks to go along with it. If you can afford it, get a few fake IDs and maybe even a full fake identity...and hope you never need to use it.

Once your outfit is complete, keep track of your contacts — gather them with care, and tailor them to your specialty. However, don't forget that there are certain contacts who are useful to any Fixer—a contact in the local police department is always handy and a major figure in the local computer and crime structure is also a near-necessity. A corporate in the dominating company of your area lends, and an Interne executive or media-related contact is also nothing to sneeze at. A few low level gofers or snitches who you can control easily can be a boon, and then there are the Solos (for those tense midnight meetings at the docks). Don't worry about who's happening; who you can trust is your own decision. With Streetdeal, you may need to hire a Solos to support your network (see Forming a Business). Once you've assembled your contacts and your network is complete, you've ready to play. During the course of campaigning, don't forget these roleplaying tips:

- Treat everybody with a reasonable amount of courtesy, since you can never be sure who your next client will be. You can turn down anyone you want to, but don't burn your bridges. Every person you meet could someday need you, or you may need them. Treats and match-ups are the name of the game.

- Keep notes on every person and group that you meet—you never know when they'll be useful, or what they'll be able to use. You may even be able to sell dirt you have on them. Everyone has enemies at one time or another.

- Fixers are organized—they make things happen. They make arrangements, oversee events, and generally run things. A Fixer tries not to get involved in gunfights, but he is very good at setting up and defusing such situations.

- Fixers exist to make situations less dangerous (for themselves at least). In some ways, they're like underground politicians; cutting deals, getting information, and fast-talking their way out of trouble. It goes without saying that Fixers are nonetheless big fans of getting other people into trouble.

- Always ask yourself, "What can I get out of this?" Streetdeal allows you to take a lot of disparate elements and put them together so that you know how to get people what they want (or how to keep it from them), and how to make money out of it.

- Remember the raison d'être of being a Fixer: money. It is duty to remember that business is business, and nothing should be taken personally.

FORMING A BUSINESS

With any luck, your Fixer will be successful enough to establish some kind of business organization. Having an organization requires planning foresight, leadership, personnel, and the ever-popular money. First, determine who forms your client base— you have to understand who your buyers are, what they want; why they buy, and where they are. If you forget to consider these factors such as gigawatts, clothes and equipment, your clients will generally be poor families gang members on supply runs and general down-on-their-luck types. If you sell software, your clients will be students, techies and (mainly) netrunners. If you perform financial miracles such as money laundering, account doctoring and forgery, your clients will be very rich people with something to hide: scheming corporatives, dirty politicians and power-driven organizers. Crime figures. Fixers who understand their clients are more capable of fulfilling their needs, and that's good business. Fixers threaten to corrode— you'll scare them away. Don't be patronizing to gang members—they'll get mad and then your Solos will have to trim them down. Keep everything in context and keep your clients happy.

Knowing your clients leads to knowledge of where the action is and how to carry out the biz. A small-time dodger would do much better in a ghetto area then in a suburban one. A small-time informer would do much better in a small-timinformant.

"Where there's a sick, messed-up thing you can do to yourself there's someone on the street who's willing to do it.

-Mantis, Fixer-at-large
broker might frequent the hangouts of high-powered edgemonks and sneaky corporations, they could just as easily “advertise” through the net, posting cryptic messages on black market sites. There are always certain areas where just about anybody can find action. In a city this is usually the “Strip” (see The Strip, pg. 67). Video, Braintrance and VR Arcades (or VR-cadres, as they are sometimes called) are the home of lots of shady deals, and certain bars and clubs are like second homes to certain segments of the population. Sports events, both institutionalized and underground, are ripe with opportunity, as are racetracks and conference halls. Casinos and other gambling houses are to its customers, and the Net is full of special-interest BBSs, Virtual Malls, meeting areas, and even night-seeing sectors which are full of prospects waiting for you, and your clienteles. To meet, and seek out the action. Once the money starts flowing, you can establish a solid reputation and build a full-time operation to support your business.

The process of forming and maintaining an organization is dependent upon two things: its leadership and its staff. The leadership handles the planning and the money, and selects the staff who will do the dirty work. Consider how many staff you will need and clearly delineate their functions. A stolen car chopshop will need car thieves (Prowlers, mechanics, Tulips, security (Solas) and maybe a Manager and accountant (a lower-level Fixer or an accomplished 1-1)). Determine a system of keeping track of your employees, because betrayal is common in the underground, and your staff will be a lot of profit if you don’t watch your books. And an accountant, secretary, and maybe even a spy to watch the staff are all recommended.

Also necessary for a successful business is an appropriate base of operations. A simple and effective definition of a “Base of Operations” is the place from which the money is controlled and where new business can find you. Your base of operations must be sized to the scale of your business, but there are endless variety of choices available to the enterprising Fixer. Likely options include: a street corner, a booth in a bar or club, a van or other vehicle, a small office or apartment, or a particular region of the Net (such as a BBS, a virtual meeting area, or Netscape landmark). Some of the more secretive or paranoid Fixers prefer to carry out all their business by proxy, always requiring voice-only communication, video-conferencing, virtual meetings, and all transactions be made through middlemen. This method of carrying out business is easier for Information Brokers, Talent Agents, and other such Fixers whose services and commodities are not of a solid, material nature (like drug dealers and fences). The legality or illegality of a Fixer’s business will affect what his available options are, and the type of his operation. A simple cyberware sales rep can operate comfortably out of the back of a van, but a big-time cybernetics broker who assails several black clinics, buys and sells in bulk, and has handshake agreements with half the gangs in the city requires a larger complex to cover all his operations. Even more profeshunale would be several small outposts, all tied in to one relatively secret and secure base of operations.

The operating costs of running any business must be kept under strict control—slippage has killed more Fixers than lack of funds. A good Accounting skill (or better yet, a good accountant!) should keep the books afloat, and if you balance your operating costs with your range of profit, you’ll be fine. The key here is fish. If you give them what they want, they’ll go to safer. Kill or be killed isn’t the exclusive territory of Solos; you can know.

**Speaking of Money**

As is indicated in the Cyberpunk 2020 rules, Fixers earn a monthly “salary” based upon the level of their Steetdeal ability. The term “salary” is actually misleading, as most Fixers are independent operators and as such have no boss and no regular salary. A better term would be “profit”, because a Fixer’s monthly earnings come from the profits he makes on the countless deals, big and small, carried out in the course of a month. Fixers spend a great deal of their waking hours scanning, planning, dealing, and trading, and all of these activities add up, granting a substantial amount of their profit.

The Occupational Table on page 48 of the Cyberpunk 2020 rules says that Fixers with Steetdeal levels of 1-5 make 1,500 Ep per month. This is fine in terms of a player-character’s starting funds, but in terms of typical day-to-day business, it’s more than a little generous. To determine how much Steetdeal level (1-5) Fixers make, multiply their Steetdeal level by 500 Ep to determine their monthly profit. This way, a small-time street thief with a Steetdeal of level 1 would not be making the same amount of Ep as the typical well-connected Fixer with a Steetdeal level of 5. This also becomes very important when you have to hire another Fixer to support your own operations. Since a Fixer’s profits are a direct result of hard work and effort, the Fixer is obligated to spend a certain amount of time maintaining his network and ensuring a steady flow of cash from his deals. This is a set amount of time which must be spent, per week, actively networking and deal-making to maintain a given Fixer’s current level of Steetdeal. Known as the Workload, this time need not be organized into any particular schedule, but must be fulfilled each week, or else the Fixer’s reputation begins to drop. The Workload is determined by the level of a Fixer’s Steetdeal ability. Your Steetdeal ability is, in essence, squared; that is, if that the Fixer’s reputation begins to drop, the workload increases. For example, a Fixer with a Steetdeal of level 1 must spend 500 Ep per week maintaining his network—carrying out all those invisible little deals, meeting with the right people, etc. A Fixer with a Steetdeal of level 5 has 144 hours of work obligations per week! This leaves only 24 hours per week, into which must be crammed 14 hours of sleep (minimum, with a sleep inducer), as well as eating, nature’s call, and random hassles. A clearly impossible task. Once one includes time for watching over one’s business, driving around, eating, and having any semblance of a private life, the amount of time which can feasibly be spent dealing becomes uncomfortably tight. Player-character Fixers are often busy with small tasks, but they have even less free time to maintain their personal network. They will be much too busy undermining Arasaka’s power base, finding missing children, or shopping for big guns for the party’s underlings. Realistically, one would have a hard time spending more than 12 hours out of any day dealing, so the cutoff for one-man Fixer circuits sits somewhere around level 7 Steetdeal.

Those Fixers who are high-powered enough to have Steetdeal aballs of more than 7 hire underlings to take up the slack in their tremendous Workloads. Only Fixer-class underlings can perform this service, as these have Steetdeal. This is the way tangible (illegal and semi-legal) organizations are created, with level 10 Fixers running the shows and lower-level Fixers serving as the lieutenants, sub-lieutenants and enforcers who carry out their master’s business at the street level. Setting up such an organization takes some planning, and for most player-character Fixers the task at hand will not be to form an entire crime family, but rather to put together a small group of street-wise enforcers willing to work for that player-character. These underlings (sometimes called “Faceless”) can be the backbone of your organization, providing your lifeblood or may be contacts. They may be found through other sources, as those hired away from rival Fixer organizations, called for by a lack of contacts in the city, or they might come to you if their reputation is solid.

Okay, so how much will Fixers need underlings? How do they figure out what to pay these guys? Each Fixer will have a presumably lower Steetdeal level than their Boss, and expect to earn as much profits as their Steetdeal would normally afford them. If all their deals and all their profits are pooled to serve the Boss’ needs, do you divide the pie? As an example, let’s set the “$20,000” level 8 Fixer who specializes in illegal...
software. With a level 8 Streetdeal abi-
tuity, he makes 7,000 Eb per month but
must spend 100 hours per week main-
taining his network. Since Sly the Fly
likes to have some free time, he de-

decides he needs some help. He knows
that "Chip," a level 1 Fixer who sells
small-time VR mods is down on his
luck, so Sly decides to offer him a job.
Under normal conditions (that is,
self-employment) Chip's Workload
would be 9 hours per week and he
would make 400 Eb per month. Sup-
predly, if he worked for Sly the Fly, he
would reduce Sly's Workload to 01 but
he would also cost Sly 300 Eb per month.
However, since the Fly is now serv-
ing Sly the Fly, Chip has access to Sly's
resources and contacts; because of this
support, Chip's Streetdeal is averaged
with Sly's, effectively raising the sub-
fixer's Streetdeal to level 4 when deal-
ing with Sly's business. [EMPLOY-
MENT BONUS: (Sub-Fixer's Streetdeal+
Boss-Fixer's Streetdeal)/2, rounded
down]. Because of this new Faceman
status (remember that it only applies
when Chip is working on one of Sly's
deals), Chip can do this to up to 36
hours per week for Sly. It would be
unrealistic to expect any Faceman to
work more than 36 hours per week any-
way. Meanwhile, Sly gives Chip a rea-
sonable increase in pay (say, a 50% in-
crease to 450 Eb per month), but Chip
is adding his Workload to the total
hours, increasing total profits while

Table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Faceman</th>
<th>Original Streetdeal</th>
<th>Increased Streetdeal</th>
<th>Workload Assigned</th>
<th>Monthly Pay</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chip</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>900 Eb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Happy</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>450 Eb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fritz</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>450 Eb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bug</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>450 Eb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>2,250 Eb</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hours of Workload</th>
<th>Equivalents to Streetdeal</th>
<th>Profits in Euro</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>104</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12,500 Eb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>196</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>15,000 Eb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>225</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>17,500 Eb</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What About Lazy Fixers?

What happens when a Fixer does
not fulfill his weekly Workload? First of
all, people understand that there are
times when a Fixer's life becomes so
burdensome that he cannot put in as many
hours as he should. For this reason, there
is a week's grace time during which a Fixer
may let his obligations slide. However, if the Fixer does
not make up his lost hours after that week, he will have one level of Streetdeal and
will need to earn those FP all over again. In any case, if Sly the Fly does
not maintain his 7,000 Eb per month, he
decides to work 25 hours per week, increasing the total work-
load to 144 hours per week, the equiva-

The Big Payback

Although it may seem that hiring
all these Facemen makes any Fixer's
life easier and more profitable, it also

carrys a corresponding risk— trea-
chery. Anyone who works for you can
double-cross you. Fixers are constantly
watching their Facemen for all sorts of
backstabs. They might try to embezzle
your funds, sell your contacts to other
Fixers, attempt to usurp your organiza-
tional position, or even try to leave you
as one of the big fish. For this reason,
each Faceman has a "Maintenance Time" attached to them which the Boss
Fixer must spend in keeping in contact
with them and checking on them. What's
more, the higher the Faceman's level of Streetdeal, the more personal initiative he has. Each Faceman has a rea-
sonable amount of maintenance time for treachery. The hours of Maintenance Time for any Faceman is 3rd level of Streetdeal, rounded up. So, if
Sly the Fly, his Faceman organization
would require 4 hours of Main-

Fitting Fixers in

With all the information you have
read about Fixers, you may be gasping
for breath by now. "Okay, Okay! So
what do I do with this stuff?" We hear
you. The previous sections covered
what Fixers are, where they are and what
they do—this section deals with what
they're good for. Whether you are
reading this book as a player or as a re-

...or your worst enemies.

ONE OF THE GUYS

In any Cyberpunk game, there is

Rockers

What's the difference between a
Rockerboy working with a Fixer and a
Rockerboy working without a Fixer? An
Audience. As a Rockerboy, you
can rely on your Talent Agent to get you
new gigs or he can find you new talent
for your band. If you don't have a
recording label yet, you need to get
one. You can't just be the best. The
Loan Shark can keep your band afloat
in hard times, but beware—Mobster
may run your recording label or en-

end their business. Pushers will get
the drugs that give you the energy
to keep on rockin' through interna-
tional tours. Info Bros will be able to
tell you who's hot and who's down.
Black Marketers can provide chips of
the latest trends in underground
music for your band to keep up on. Fin-
ally, you may have to deal with the
big wheels in the media-corporations
when you finally sell out and go Top-
40. Go Between comes handy there.
Solos and Fixers go together like bullets and guns. The ever-familiar Black Marketeers can get you all that fun, illegal cyberware, as well as guns, armor, explosives, and vehicles. Equally useful are the slimy little Pushers, who can nonetheless get you those handy combat drugs and painkillers, and Smugglers can bring you foreign weapons (or sneak you into restricted areas). Once you're outfitted, your Agent will do his best to get you the good jobs (the ones that aren't suicide missions). If you're a true professional, a corporate Talent Scout may try to hire you into a corporate ops team, or another choice is freelance assignment for the scheming Mobs. While you're on the job, Information Brokers can get you data on targets, and when the op is over (assuming you survived), a Fencer will be glad to buy any loot you brought back with you.

Medias

A Media's unique view of the world puts a sharper in the same context as everything else—a story. The Masters of storytelling are Information Brokers, so Medias tend to spend a lot of time with them. Info Bros give Medias all sorts of leads in hunting down their stories and will also pay for certain information collected during reporting. If your specialty is sports casting, then Bookies are full of great inside dirt on the sports players and their popularities. Some Bookies will take or even set odds on how your stories will do in the ratings game. Sniffers can go places that you, as a high visibility Media, can't or won't go, and when the plot starts to thicken, Black Marketeers can get you the necessary surveillance equipment. Freelancers who put in good work can also be offered a contract from some media corp's Talent Scout, or can rely on their own Talent Agents to get them the best assignments and covering the world in the Philippines, an anchorman's seat, etc.). On top of being perfect subjects for docudramas, Smugglers can also get you into some very secure areas if paid well enough. Mobsters have always been Media favorites, but they are very bad sports—if you refuse to suppress your stories, you might end up sleeping with the fishes.

Nomads

Fixers know that people who have nothing need lots of things. Nomads understand this too, although they may not like it. Nomads buy supplies in bulk, but are on a very strict budget. Traders are their best bet for getting affordable supplies, usually by bartering things such as salvage and services. Black Marketeers can also sell the pack cheapikut, clothing, and supplies, and even Fences can provide cheap goods (if you don't mind the fact that they're probably hot). Smugglers can bring Nomad packs "imported" foodstuffs and other regulated commodities, and will sometimes help them sneak across state borders. If things get desperate, Lookman could give the pack a boost—as long as the pack can repay the debt. Every Nomad pack should have a Negotiator, who is invaluable for acquiring and jockeying for profit and position while fronting for your neighbor in the office down the hall.

Corporates

Weasels and worms have more in common than you think—they're both sneaky and they're both survivors. Corporates are a mix of the two; they have underground Fixers, and they take advantage of the relationship. Corporates get the drugs they need to run those operations, and pushers and Sniffers exist to get them. Corporates can provide inside trading data and the plans of oth-

out for well-dressed Talent Scouts, who might try to hire you away to work for another company; and if it happens, a Negotiator can get you better contract arrangements. Negotiators also have the annoying habit of representing disgruntled workers. Even in the middle of cutthroat business deals, Fixers will show up, jockeying for profit and position while fronting for your neighbor in the office down the hall.

Tec" sometimes hire whole packs to ramjack or destroy towns, if you like that kind of work. Nomads can also use the services of Shoemakers (if they can afford them) to become SHINee, something which makes being a system-buckin' Nomad a whole lot easier.

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Cops

They say opposites attract. Although Fixers and Cops are usually on opposite sides of the law, they don't mean they can't cooperate. Every police officer has a few informants who keep him updated on Street news, and who would make a better informant than a Fixer? Slateen are born stoics. Fins and their charges are a perfect way to have eyes and ears on the Street. And Info Bros are the best informants around (when they cooperate). In addition to information, Black Marketeers can get a Cop the hardware that he needs but his department can't (or won't) pay for. If you need a quick bust to fill your quota, Pushers are always good for a collar, and there is an ever-present enemy in the form of the Mob. If you're skilled, or the type to sell out, corporate Talent Scouts might try to hire you away to a private security force (like Arasaka or Militch), but beware—various Managers will often try to control you. But then again, who doesn't?

In conclusion, if a player-character (or anyone else, come to think of it) wants to get aholt of anything on the following list, they will probably need to talk to a Fixer (see sidebar, pg. 48).
Referees may feel some trepidation about including a Fixer character in their campaign. Fixers need lots of support, and are generally a role with a complicated background. These facts should not deter Fixers from campaigns. A Fixer's complexity makes him an asset. This character role can function quite well in a "standard" Cyberpunk campaign, and opens up whole new gaming possibilities in the form of Fixer Campaigns.

"Standard" campaign may be as easy as epiphanies, but what is meant by the term in this context is a game which has a team of players, one of which is a Fixer, and all players have roughly equal status and importance in the adventure. These campaigns can often involve a lot of traveling around, double-crossing corporate employers and a healthy amount of combat. In such campaigns, Fixers with large networks, numerous employees, extensive obligations and (or nonexistent) combat skills do not fit in very well. However, there are two Fixers who do not fit this bill and there are ways around any Fixer's obligations.

Certain Fixers are well suited to "standard" campaigns, particularly those of the Fixer and Negotiator. As Go-Betweens, Sniffers and Negotiators are closest tied to people in general, but they have few other obligations. They are fully organized, and when they don't want to be organized, or they are capable of taking care of themselves. These two specialties are ideal choices for player-characters in "standard" campaigns, as they can greatly add to the capabilities of any team. On top of their Streetable capabilities, Sniffers bring the information gathering powers of a Private Eye to the team, and Negotiators are as good as having a PR firm, ambassador and professional bullshit artist all in one team member. To round out the characters, those characters can amass more combat skills (or whatever is needed) as pickups. To solve the problem of not having enough resources to undertake a competition, in which case a Compu-<br>ting character could provide a powerful, network-<br>ing ring that could effect in Brain-<br>dancer, Music chips or other entertain-<br>ment media, in which case Rockers and Medfex would not fit. Such a campaign would be a real challenge and a great deal of fun. The players would have to plan their operations, cultivate contacts with the authorities and pay out a lot of bribes. If a Fixer walks away from his operation for a few weeks, when he returns he may find that the operation is no longer his!

Sniffers and Negotiators fit quite well into a team, and with a little work almost any type of Fixer can be worked into a "standard" campaign. However, the numerous specialties available to Fixers provide ample material for Fixer-oriented campaigns. These Fixer Campaigns are based around a Fixer's operations, and need not be single-player games. Fixer operations almost always require additional staff with varied skills. Each one of the Fixer's specialties are cam-<br>paigns of this type of game. Fixer operations almost always require additional staff with varied skills. Each one of the Fixer's specialties are cam-<br>paigns of this type of game. Fixer operations almost always require additional staff with varied skills. Each one of the Fixer's specialties are cam-<br>paigns of this type of game. Fixer operations almost always require additional staff with varied skills. Each one of the Fixer's specialties are cam-<br>paigns of this type of game. Fixer operations almost always require additional staff with varied skills. Each one of the Fixer's specialties are cam-<br>paigns of this type of game. Fixer operations almost always require additional staff with varied skills. Each one of the Fixer's specialties are cam-<br>paigns of this type of game. Fixer operations almost always require additional staff with varied skills. Each one of the Fixer's specialties are cam-<br>paigns of this type of game. Fixer operations almost always require additional staff with varied skills. Each one of the Fixer's specialties are cam-<br>paigns of this type of game. Fixer operations almost always require additional staff with varied skills. Each one of the Fixer's specialties are cam-
Being a Fixer demands that your work be your life; the reverse must also be true. Once you realize that your life is your work, you have to step back and take a look at the big picture.

There are areas of knowledge which, while seemingly mundane, are vital to understanding the way the Underground works. If you don't have a decent grasp of these concepts, you'll never make it as a Fixer. This is equally true for any other character role, and the concepts in question are common to all characters.

The following section deals with these areas of knowledge, outlining how they work and how to use them. First it explains interpersonal skills, from seductions to intimidations, and then it goes straight to the bottom line: how to get money. After the section on credit and cash, the ever-popular act of theft has its consequences explained in the finishing section of "If You're Paying Too Much..."

Finally, there's a section on signs and identity, where you'll learn what to do if you just blew that 2 Million Ec deal. Although the understanding of these topics is essential to a Fixer, it is important that everyone knows the score.

There's something to be learned here for other characters as well. In 2020, overpopulation is too large a problem to let you get away with ignoring people entirely. Like they say, if you can't recycle 'em, join 'em.

**Chilling Out**

The most important element in interpersonal relations is COOL. Although your EMP is necessary to figuring out what the other guy is thinking, his COOL is what determines how tough a nut he is to crack. Whether you're haggling with someone, seducing them or intimidating them, your problem is their COOL. More specifically, your problem is their Stability.

Stability is a Difficulty Number which represents how difficult a person is to sway, confuse, frighten or otherwise befuddle. Stability is equal to COOLx2, rounded down. Being based on COOL, it is simply a Difficulty Number for overcoming their coolness with your skills. The Stability rating is consistent with statistical spreads common to the distribution of both Stats and Difficulty Numbers; if you do the math, you will see that a person with a COOL of 2 (as uncool as a person can be without being some...
kind of mutant reject) has a Stability of 5, which is essentially an instant success in terms of skill rolls. However, someone with a COOL of 6 (the numerical average for every star) has a Stability of 15, which is an Average skill roll. Meanwhile, a character with a COOL of 10 (maximum cryo-chilled nano-coolness) has a Stability of 25, which is Very Difficult skill roll to overcome.

The Stability of a character is important in the application of the following skills: Authority, Charismatic Leadership, Intimidation, Seduction, and Intimidation in Practice. In practice, the character who is actively using the skill (the actor) to alter the opinions or behavior of the other person (the subject) rolls his skill against the subject’s Stability. Take the following situation as an example:

Nelson Davids (aka “Captain Gingham”) has a corporate contract out on his head. Through the grapevine he has heard that one of his contacts, a creep named Yang, plans to rat him out to the NMF corporation. Nelson draws his favorite machete in an attempt to intimidate Yang into keeping his mouth shut. Yang’s COOL is 7, making it a Stability 17. Nelson is bigger than Yang, and is brandishing a melee weapon, so he gets +3 to his roll. Nelson rolls an 18 (+3 = 21) — Yang is successfully intimidated, and Nelson won’t need to call in any backup.

| Subject humiliated if they give in: | 1 |
| Subject holds a “trump card” in the situation: | 2 |
| Subject has a melee weapon: | 3 |
| Subject has a gun: | 4 |
| Subject has a psychic weapon: | 5 |
| Subject has a weapon (STR or STRE of Drug, depends on the drug) | 6 |
| Subject is a cyberpsycho: | 7 |
| Actor on his home turf: | 8 |
| Actor bigger than the subject: | 9 |
| Actor brandishing a melee weapon: | 10 |
| Actor brandishing a gun: | 11 |
| Actor has a scientist (big gun): | 12 |
| Actor on a cyberpath (STR or STRE of Drug, depends on the drug) | 13 |
| Actor has a Reputation for X: | 14 |
| Actor’s ATT (for Seduction): | 15 |

**Interpersonal Skill Modifiers**

These modifiers add to the actor’s skill roll against the subject’s Stability. Use your judgment as to what applies, and apply your best judgment in the situation. (See TABLE 1 below.)

**If You’re Paying Full Price, You’re Paying Too Much**

In 2020, haggling is a necessary interpersonal skill. Everyone wants to get the best deal, and nobody wants to get taken. Knowing how to talk a dealer down (or bleed a sucker for all he’s worth) is an important to Cyberpunk economics as having a group of friends and a strong grip on the world. Haggling, however, is the two skills performing the exchange each roll their COOL+Skill+10. After any applicable modifiers, the character who rolls the highest wins. For example, if a deal is made, the haggling character who rolls the highest wins.

The “Skill” may be either Streetwise or Streetfight. When the two skills are the same (Streetwise vs. Streetfight, Streetwise vs. Streetwise), each 1 point of success results in a 2% change in price in favor of the winner. However, when a Fixer character with a non-Fixer character, the Fixer’s advantage becomes 5% per 1 point of success, reflecting his greater prowess at haggling and deal-cutting. For example:

Page is a Fixer representing a group of player-characters who want to dispose of 50,000-round boxes of stolen weapons. He offers an amnesty and pag”s the Lobo acting as the Fence. In the exchange roll, Page rolls his Streetwise and gets a 2, while Izzy’s Streetwise roll is 18. Page beat Izzy by 4 points, so the players get Izzy to buy the ammo for 62% of the market price. However, in another unrelated exchange, a group of player-characters want to move 30MU of hot data through a Fence named Pagan. The characters have no Fixer in the team, so their Nemecue, Cobbe, represents them in the deal. Cobbe rolls her Streetwise and gets a 18, while Pagan rolls a 20; Pagan slips the players, giving them only 20% of the actual value for the 30 hard-earned MU. This should tell player-characters that they need a Fixer (ideally, a Negotiator) representing them in such deals.

A note on dealing with Fences: The base price for any wares is 50% of its actual price. If the fence wins the haggle, the percentage still won’t go below 10%. If the person selling the wares wins, the percentage will still go above 50%. No matter what, you’re gonna make some profit.

**Electronic Livelihood**

It is a common expression among the filthy rich that “your life is only as good as your credit.” This is somewhat of an overstatement, but not by much. In 2020, it is arguable that the most important factor of your personal life is your credit history. With the advent of the worldwide Net, electronically-based finances have become a necessity, with EMP for Seduction’s set base, then roll vs. Stability.

**Getting Credit Where Credit is Due**

Most corporate employees have credit in one form or another. Credit Chips (most commonly known as Credi-chips, or “Chop”) are usually issued to all corporate employees free of charge, with the chops’ liquid glass matrix (see Credi-chips, below) being imprinted according to the personal information the corporation has on its employee. Assorted subscriptions to magazines, bulletin boards and other services can be attached to a credit account, and employees’ salaries are automatically credited to their account, with taxes, insurance, and medical coverage (if applicable) deducted automatically. The major players in the credit business of 2020 include Wieselerhauft Bank, American Express-World, Citibank, Sumitomo, Euro-WorldBank, and Drakos Worldwide Fund.

Anyone who is not a corporate employee must pay for the privilege to attach credit (usually a fee of about 50 Ehs, and then a monthly 10 Ehs service charge). To open an account, financial institutions require the applicant to present their State Identification, the section on Banks and the SINs in

**Skins Of Identity,** pg. 62 (and usually expensive information concerning medical records, career history, and psychological profiles. Individuals may, as a penalty, have multiple chops representing multiple accounts at different institutions, although some people carry just one chop for convenience’s sake. If an applicant cannot provide all the required information (which will be checked upon), s/he will be denied credit and may be held for further questioning if they are especially suspicious-neering.

The only other option is to carry cash.

**Cashing Out**

Cash is, in fact, locked down upon in most circles as being old-fashioned and “low-tech,” as it is less convenient than other methods. This is, of course, due to the rapid increase in the use of credit and electronic transactions. It is still in use, however, as a means of payment in the rare case of no credit or electronic funds available. Cash is hard to carry, it is easily stolen, difficult to trace, and needs to be physically secured at all times.
cred vulnerability

Credchips

Almost universally preferred over cash are Credchips: also known as Chips, IDs, Keychips, credit cards, cred-keeps, and expense cards. These are electronic cash tickets stored on a card, similar to a credit card, but with a unique identifier that allows them to be used for transactions. They are protected by a PIN number and a secret key. The value of a Credchip is determined by the credit limit associated with it, and it can be used to make purchases in a variety of locations, including restaurants, retail stores, and online transactions.

Face Banks

Face Banks are the newest type of financial institution, and they are becoming increasingly popular. They are different from traditional banks in that they do not require a physical location. Instead, transactions are conducted entirely online, using a secure network. Face Banks are supported by the latest in technology, including advanced encryption and identity verification methods. As a result, they offer a high level of security and convenience for their customers.

Credit Transfer Devices (CTDs)

CTDs are a type of financial device that allows for quick and easy transactions. They are similar to credit cards, but they are used to transfer money from one account to another. CTDs are particularly useful for large transactions, as they can transfer large amounts of money in a short amount of time. They are also useful for people who need to make frequent transactions, as they can be used to make a variety of payments, including rent, utilities, and groceries.

Forging Credchips

Since Credchips are a type of financial instrument, they can be used to forge other financial instruments. This can be done by using the information on the chip to create a new card that can be used to make transactions. This can be done by using a special type of printer that can create a chip with the same information as the original. This can be a serious problem, as it allows people to make illegal transactions using fake cards.

In summary, Credchips are a type of financial instrument that can be used for a variety of purposes. They are protected by a PIN number and a secret key, and they can be used to make purchases in a variety of locations. Face Banks are the newest type of financial institution, and they are becoming increasingly popular. They offer a high level of security and convenience for their customers. CTDs are a type of financial device that allows for quick and easy transactions, and they are particularly useful for large transactions. Forging Credchips is a serious problem, as it allows people to make illegal transactions using fake cards.
Bad News: Most muggings end in murder in 2020, usually because the victims are not fast enough.  This year, at least one mugger has been shot and killed during a robbery, ending the crime spree that left the streets of the city in chaos.  The mugger, a 25-year-old male, was shot in the head and died at the scene.  The police are still investigating the case, but it appears that the victim had just entered a convenience store when he was approached by the mugger, who demanded his wallet.  The victim pulled out his gun, and the mugger shot him.  The victim was pronounced dead at the scene.

You and Your Chop: Credit cards in 2020.  Even in a world where the electronic chip is ubiquitous, some people still choose to carry paper money and coins.  Credit cards and debit cards are still popular, but they require a physical card to use.  Some people prefer the convenience of electronic payments, while others prefer the security of cash.  The choice is yours.

M. Cameron, an Associate Professor at Harvard University, that examines the consequences and effects of 2020's electronic economy.  Dr. Cameron is a well-known expert on the workings of the cyber-secure counter-economy.

MONEY IN 2020

Your credit history is vitally important in this day and age.  Money is quickly becoming a strictly electronic medium (why not...it hasn't been backed by anything more solid than a promise for over one hundred years anyway), and hard cash is a subject that most upscale stores won't even discuss, and many other stores will only accept when you specify cash register any other.  A credit card can get you just about anything you want, and it's a good way to build your credit score.  But don't abuse it.  Check your accounts regularly, and don't lose your card.

Hey, Wait a Minute...

Smart cyberpunks who have read this far are probably thinking, "There's more going on here than meets the eye, isn't there?" Yes. Big brother watches us all, and the electronic economy brings him a lot closer to home. The following is a chapter from the dissertation of Dr. Richard

Token Credit Card Chip: A new development in credit card security, the token credit card chip is designed to provide an additional layer of protection against credit card fraud.  The chip contains a unique token number that is encrypted and cannot be read by unauthorized devices.  When a transaction is made, the token number is sent to the bank, and is never stored on the card itself.  This makes it difficult for hackers to steal the card's information, even if they were able to access the card's magnetic stripe.  The chip is also designed to work with existing credit card readers, so no changes are needed to the current system.
one or more underground barter banks. The Corps never know when they may have to dump some stuff on the black market quickly... for whatever reason.

**The Black Market**

Also known as the counter-economy, the Black Market springs up anywhere that people want goods which are made illegal, taxed into disappearance, or are just hard to find on the open market. In the 20th century, that mainly consisted of illegal drugs, firearms and sex, so drug lords, gun runners, fences of stolen goods and pimps made up the majority of the Black Market. All of these nasty individuals still make up a good portion of the Black Market but many more have joined in (see Black Marketers, pg. 20).

Surgeons, sick of dealing with corporations, medical insurers, and government regulation, sell illegal surgical centers or do cybernetic installation procedures on the side, alongside Info Bros selling the most precious commodity of all. The few independent farms sell a large portion of their produce and meat on the black market. (Some people are still getting paid to die; the credit scoring system is by no means Midwestern states!) Whether it’s explosives or eggs, memory or meat, the Black Market is the place to go.

**Agoras**

Agoras, coming from the Greek word for “Market,” are the ultimate in Black Markets. Believed to be founded by a radical Libertarian underground movement, the Agoras are large, organized Black Markets which are preferentially referred to as “Free Markets” or “Counter-Economies.” In essence, they are secret marketplaces which serve a private agenda and have their own subversive philosophy. Agoras are always centered in some hidden location, and entrance to these exclusive havens usually requires a running of a gauntlet of passwords, recognition signs, secret handshakes, frisks and identity checks. Once admitted, an Agora’s customer finds himself in an environment which resembles an underground convention center. There are believed to be over a dozen recognized Agoras in the United States and Canada. The Agoras utilize gold as a purchasing standard; all official forms of cash are unusable in an Agora. This serves two purposes: first, it provides a small measure of protection for the clients (gold is not legal tender in the US); so they are in fact bartering, not buying... just so happens that everyone in an Agora is in the market for gold). Second, using a gold standard goes along with the basic economic ideas behind the Agoras of old, which are underground markets which utilized a gold-backed economical...
my. The Agoras’ organization has yet to be cracked, although assorted authorities have tried. The task is believed to be so difficult that some corporations have given up fighting and started selling in the Agoras market (such as the cybernetics giant, Raven Microcity). Meanwhile, other corporations (like Aranka) have redoubled their efforts to shut the group down. Several Agora’s have been closed down, but always at great cost of money and life for the attacking force. During raids, Agor’s casualties are light, but final; no Agoras’ operations have ever been captured. Their losses don’t seem to have bothered the Agoras much—it is believed that the structures are looked on as being disposable. They are certainly, by all accounts, profitable.

**Hard Currency**

Just because the Eurodollar is the world’s standard of hard don’t mean one uses Eurodollars exclusively. The United States Government doesn’t print Eurodollars, they print American dollars. And since 30 years ago, the main American dollars and FDIC-backed banks (the few left) are required to stay in dollars. Even though a lot of businesses use Eurodollars, others still pay in American dollars. Listed below are some of the major currencies in the world market:

**American Dollar ($):** Also known as Deads Presidents, Preczets, Leaves and Grass, the American dollar has changed little from that of the 20th century. It is a little harder to counterfeited, thanks to holograms, and is made out of a plastic that looks and feels like flannel paper but is immune to most mundane methods of destruction (this cash you can wash, chomp, etc.). American dollars are less stable than before gone to wild fluctuations due to inflation and the quirks of a credit-based economy. In such cases, the holder of a bank of dollar bills can hold his own pluck in the face of a financial disaster.

**Japanese New Yen ($):** Also called Yen, Characters and Tea Leaves, the New Yen is supported by governmental control and a very strong economy, meaning the New Yen is a growing currency. It is widely accepted in Asia (about equally popular as the Eurodollar), and thanks to favorable exchange rates it is also accepted in American businesses as well, even though not an official American currency. This kind of unofficial backscratching reflects a growing alliance between the two countries. The New Yen is still a funny currency requiring about 100 of them to equal the buying power of an American dollar (200 to a Eurodollar), but since everyone in Japan is supposed to be a millionaire, who cares? Just remember that if someone offers you a million New Yen for the job, that’s not as much as it sounds.

**Russian Federal Ruble ($):** Also referred to as RedDucks, Junk and Rubbles. While the old Soviet government was in charge, it didn’t matter how much money the Ruble was worth. Now it all means something. The Ruble is a real, screwed-up, real currency. There is a thriving black market throughout the country selling rubles for American dollars. All you’ve got to remember is that if someone offers you a million Rubles for the job... they aren’t paying you nothin’... but it’s cheap.

**EuroDollar (€):** Sometimes called Eurobucks, Ebucks and Smuglies, the Eurodollar is the result of the ECU (European Common Union) treaty, signed by all of the major European nations (with the exception of Scandinavia in 1997). At the same time that the EDF (European Defense Force) was formed, it also came up with a common currency based on the dollar, the Eurodollar. Since its creation, it has become the currency of the world. (By the way, the money is not available to the public at large; only banks can access it.)

Corporate Scrip

Notes

The first CorpScirp was printed clear back in the 17th century, when many private banks printed their own scrips. This money was accepted everywhere, even by other banks (usually at a discount, depending on how difficult it was to get their money back on it), and by any business that had bank this money. As you can see, CorpScire is in use throughout the world.

A Corporation’s scrips value is dependent on the company’s reputation. The value of its scrips, its current relations with other corps, governments and its own employees, and even its public image. This makes CorpScire one of the most flexible forms of currency.

Edgerunner Economics

Freelance operatives and modern day privateers can still demand payment in hard stuff—weapons, drugs, gold, microchips, data or ‘wares of the hard, soft, wet, or cyber-variety. Most corporate employers don’t mind when the whole job is deniable anyway. What’s more, there are enough talented Netrunners and Factors out there to find loopholes in the creditors’ system—the Cyberpunk revolutions’ weapons against the establishment aren’t limited to guns and grenades. It’s not easy, and it’s not legal, but it can be stolen, forged, and manipulated. It can be sold through the underground to serve people instead of the system. And as everyone knows in 2020, with credit comes credibility.

**SINS OF IDENTITY**

The Net has been hailed as a boon to humanity, the greatest tool for intercultural understanding the world has ever known. In some ways, this is true. However, the potential for the Net as a route to universal harmony has been overshadowed by its unmatched power to cater to specialized interests, groups, the serve the big business, and make information the ultimate weapon. One of the creepier manifestations of this aspect of the Net is the ability to track people through their electronic identity. This information represents all the data collected on a person and stored in various databases throughout the Net. The information which makes up a person’s electronic identity (or Skele-
SIN-SURGERY

Alternating a person's electronic identity takes a lot of work. You need to access a tremendous number of data forresses (all well-protected), go through their files to find all material pertaining to your client, change data in ways no one will notice, and create new documentation, chaos and SINcar-ds. All of this is made a lot easier if you have contacts inside the organizations that run those data forresses. Shoemakers are the only people specialized enough to make all the right moves. Sure, they may hire a lot of Netrunners and Facemen to help them do the job, but they are the brains behind the operation and it is their contacts which make SIN-surgery possible. For this reason, whenever a character contracts for a Shoemaker, the Shoemaker's services, the completeness and reliability of the new shoes is, for game purposes, based on the Fixer's Streetdeal roll.

This data, when collected into one block of information, can create a reasonably thorough and accurate profile of the person. A Skeleton exists in the Net almost like a data-only clone of a real person, living its life exclusively in bank databases and government records computers. Knowing that this entity could be "interrogated" or even "killed" by a powerful criminal group or government can very easily make a person nervous. As the saying goes, "Forget Big Brother. Everyone's watching you!"

A likely person (such as an edgerunner) gets nervous enough, he'll want to start tampering with his Skeleton and even his SIN. When the desire (or the necessity) arises, these edgerunners seek out Shoemakers to perform their SIN-surgery. Sometimes they want to be zerosed, having their SIN and all information pertinent to their Skeletons completely purged from the Net. Sometimes they will want more, altering the person's identity and getting their Skeleton rebuilt to suit their needs. Still others want to lead double lives, and will pay to have a second, possibly secret identity created for them. SIN-letters provide these services, and this is how they do it.

TABLE 1. Streetdeal Roll

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Streetdeal Roll</th>
<th>Reliability</th>
<th>Difficulty to Spot Fabrication</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30+</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>Diff 30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29-24</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>Diff 25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23-22</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>Diff 20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-20</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>Diff 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-19</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>Diff 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-17</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-15</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14-13</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Listed below are the various services a Shoemaker can perform, as well as other variations on the classic parameters of identity:

Zeroing

This is the process of having your SIN and your Skeleton erased from Net. Once this is done, you no longer be part of the system and join the ranks of the disenfranchised.


Identity: Equipment

> When you contract this service from a Shoemaker, you are given an extra identity which you have complete control over; your SIN, retina scans, fingerprints, and voice patterns are registered under two names, and you have two sets of licenses, passports, birth certificates, as well as credit cards and bank accounts. Remember, although you will be given new bank accounts, you still have to fill them with scratch yourself. Space skeletons can be handy (if not vital) to anyone involved in shady or illegal activities. In the world of black ops and cyberpunks and edgers, you can contract as many space skeletons as you want, giving you a whole portfolio of identities. But this can get expensive fast. In terms of government or corporate surveillance, if a background check is made on you using only your prints (without knowledge of your name or face), there is a 50-50 chance that either of your identities (one of many!) will be matched. This means you can be caught. The authorities have a good reason to suspect that you have other skeletons in your closet. If they keep on searching, they will eventually find your other identity(s) and you're busted—once they figure out who you really are, they'll zero your extra identities and expect a fast ride to the Brindane tanks or the firing squad. One way to avoid this problem is to have your alternative identity use a fake set of prints. In such a case you could access this identity only with the use of finger boots, voxbox systems, and a mask that the transportation system and encoded with the fake prints and patterns. It is safer but harder to use this type of alternate identity, since even if you always have all the fancy gear with you, on or in your person, and you can't easily use such illegal stuff in public. The price for a space skeleton is about 20,000 Ek, plus the costs of creating phony prints and the equipment to use them, and whatever else the situation warrants.

Disposable Skeletons

When you contract a space skeleton from a Shoemaker, you can have it designed to be used with phony prints and patterns (requiring the use of some fancy equipment—see New Shoes), since the identity will be cracked, and you don't want it to be traced back to you! Disposable skeletons often have a Watchdog-type program built into them, which will punch your name to the owner of the identity, warning him when it is cracked. For double the standard price, a skeleton can be set up as a "sleeper," only becoming active inside the system with a prearranged signal. Because of the complicated set-up involved in a sleeper ID, the "active life" of the identity is usually halved, or the post-life discovery chance double. Disposable skeletons usually cost about 20,000 Ek, but this is multiplied by the length of the "life" of the identity and other circumstances.

New Shoes

Many times edgers need to actually switch their identities, which involves having a set of "new shoes" created and having their original identity zeroed. This is heavy-duty SIn-surgery, and often requires that the new identity be based on completely new physical characteristics—your appearance will have to be resculpted, and all identifying aspects of your body will have to be altered. Your fingerprints, retinal pattern, and vocal pattern will need to be nanotechnologically tweaked. SIN-Lifters are experts in providing new shoes, but it is very complicated, hideously expensive and super-illegal. Shoemakers and their clients usually receive life with no parole, or death sentences. The going rate for a pair of new shoes is in the neighborhood of 50,000 Ek, including zeroing, a new identity and contracts with black clients for the surgery procedures (arranged by the Shoemaker).

Secret Identity

This is a fictional "person" that is used for actions and operations which you do not want to be linked to your "real" life. This isn't a Space Skeleton or new shoes. A secret identity doesn't necessarily need any false records backing it up (this depends on what you use it for). You don't need a Shoemaker to have a secret identity—anyone who wants to can say they're someone else. Having a secret identity is not technically illegal, but always be aware of the potential repercussions if you are exposed.

"Information is the ammunition. Your mind is the target."  - Billy Idol, Cyberpunk.
Every city on the face of the planet has one bad section of town, a place where anyone can buy anything at anytime—that place is the Strip.

Whether it's High Street in Night City, the Ohta district of Tokyo, or the Meathook goods market, on the Strip the action runs full steam around the clock. This action, sometimes called Biz, is pure, concentrated capitalism. Funny thing about capitalism: being a concept, it's not reliant on a physical location. This means that Strips are more of a mental state than any particular physical environment. A Strip could be a sprawling outdoor bazaar just as easily as it could be a black market complex hidden in a secret location. Most commonly, a Strip will manifest itself in a heavily trafficked part of a large city.

How a Strip gets started is largely a mystery. Sometimes a Strip will spring up from the remnants of old commercial zoning. Other times, it seems like a sort of economic bonsai tree: someone cuts off several branches of a growing economy and the Strip manages to develop with a mind of its own. However, the majority of Strips are landmark-oriented. A tourist attraction, a spot with an impressive view, or any other area of that draws people in metamorphose into a Strip. The transformation starts with an increased presence of common street vendors and the hustlers. As the Strip's reputation grows, more and more people go there to move their wares. Eventually, the big-time Fixers move in, buying and selling nearby property at greatly inflated prices. If they can, the Mob tries to move in and exploit the area for its own purposes. Edgerunners start hanging around, and a Strip is born. These market zones fall in and out of fashion—the big ones rarely die, but new Strips can burn themselves out, like fleeting stars. The remains of a dead Strip is a promenade of vacant shops and burnt-out husks...the combat zone of tomorrow.

No matter what shape the Strip takes, there is always something to buy and someone to sell it. Like sharks, Fixers prowl the Strip, searching for an opportunity; they're rarely disappointed. The same holds true for those shoppers seeking rare goods. When characters need to find the impossible, the Strip is where they go.

In a sense, the Strip is the center of any city's economy. While not nearly as glamorous as the corporate towers, the streets of the Strip house the same kind of businesses. As a sidewalk mall, the Strip presents nearly infinite opportunities to sell and buy all types of commodities. In effect, every city needs a Strip because this is one of the few socially acceptable places for the classes to mingle (even if only for a short time); on the Strip, Corporates and other wage-slaves can buy hand-crafted goods made by families of Nomads or squatters, view art videos made by local street performers, and feed their various addictions. Occasionally, the exchange of goods goes both ways and a shipment of experimental corporate products will hit the Street. In addition, the majority of any city's stolen goods re-surface within its Strip. Local merchants seem to have an uncanny ability to stumble upon the most interesting of the city's hot wares. Moreover, the pawshops that litter the alleys of the Strip insure a constant recycling of all products, no matter who they originally belonged to.
A SAMPLE STRIP: NIGHT CITY’S HIGH STREET

For those unfamiliar with Night City, High Street is a large, busy thoroughfare which begins at the fringes of Japantown (at the corner of Williams and 16th) and runs all the way to the San Morro Bay Bridge. Because of the bridge’s proximity to the heart of Night City, traffic is steady at all times of day, and High Street’s traffic slows to the pace of non-electronic mail delivery. In fact, traffic is so slow that the bus line (you know—balls, dirigibles) often passes the hundreds of sports cars and trucks on the streets below. Most people see this as a problem, but Night City’s Fixers and assorted entrepreneurs see it as an opportunity. The rush hours create the perfect conditions for commerce. Tens of thousands of people walk in their respective cars for hours on end and provide a captive, yet varied audience. After an hour or so of a complete standstill, who can resist an ice cold beer or the latest Infa Ganger porno?
Mobo Rackets and the Strip

On the Strip, organized crime is as pervasive as the Sin City natives and rats. Whatever criminal syndicate controls an area, whether it be a gang of Toei thugs in service of the Triads, or the local branch of the Mafia, it collects its profits by supplying "protection" to the local vendors. The stronger and more organized groups keep a stranglehold on the Strip. They do not care about the individuals of the local territory in exchange for an unfair percentage of the business' profits. In some cities, such as Las Vegas, the criminal syndicate has been recognized as being the actual government. Las Vegas' Strip is highly organized, with drug dealers kept away from the Mafia's nicer casinos and prostitutes operating out of special hotels near the large convention centers. Only in rare exceptions, such as Night City, are the Triads free of complete domination by crime. Groups are more common in the decades-long balances of power allow independent vendors and operators to play the larger criminal syndicates off each other.

When an organized crime group moves into a region, they target individuals or organizations to offer their "protection." In general, organized crime groups avoid businesses owned by corporations or those that contract private security firms. However, under the wing of any particular syndicate, the individual street dealers will be forced to pay a percentage "cut" of their total operation to the Mob. Many shops specialize in goods that only smuggled drugs (and Cyberpunk characters) would be interested in—things like ilegal weapons and bulleproof condoms. However, the true soul of the Strip is anti-culture. Keep in mind that the Strip is a hub of commerce, and money cannot be brokered by any type of objective standards or morals; if someone is willing to pay for it, it's good. In fact, some businesses have become glorified testaments to bad taste while others, almost by luck, fall into an undeniably film noir atmosphere. Regardless, any form of activity one could want is on sale. The Strip also contains all the conventional criminal activities such as houses of prostitution and drug dens. In some cities where the local police are weak or totally corrupt, these activities are advertised openly and sometimes even legalized. However, the competitive spirit of the Mob means that the Strip has recently lead to the creation of new, more exotic criminal pastimes. The following is a selection of these modern crimes:

Strip Culture

Stripers are the mutants of city districts, combining any number of styles and social elements in a haphazard fashion. Many Stripers incorporate sections which could rival mallplexes in their sheer volume of popular culture. Movie theaters, VRcades and Bravery parlors abound. Even more common are the trappings of counter-culture. In its simpler forms, counter-culture mentality reflects a variety of diverse tastes. On the Strip, counter-culture is just another source for sales. Many shops specialize in goods that only smuggled drugs (and Cyberpunk characters) would be interested in—things like ilegal weapons and bulleproof condoms. However, the true soul of the Strip is anti-culture. Keep in mind that the Strip is a hub of commerce, and money cannot be brokered by any type of objective standards or morals; if someone is willing to pay for it, it's good. In fact, some businesses have become glorified testaments to bad taste while others, almost by luck, fall into an undeniably film noir atmosphere. Regardless, any form of activity one could want is on sale. The Strip also contains all the conventional criminal activities such as houses of prostitution and drug dens. In some cities where the local police are weak or totally corrupt, these activities are advertised openly and sometimes even legalized. However, the competitive spirit of the Mob means that the Strip has recently lead to the creation of new, more exotic criminal pastimes. The following is a selection of these modern crimes:

Modern Crimes for Modern Times

Wherever or whatever it is, the Strip houses certain criminal activities that could be held in few other places. Because the Strip balances illegal services and conventional goods in an atmosphere that is just right enough for adventurous Cyberpunk types, many moderately-priced illegal services can be made available to an audience with sufficient funds to pay for it. Obviously, the Strip also contains all the conventional criminal activities such as houses of prostitution and drug dens. In some cities where the local police are weak or totally corrupt, these activities are advertised openly and sometimes even legalized. However, the competitive spirit of the Mob means that the Strip has recently lead to the creation of new, more exotic criminal pastimes. The following is a selection of these modern crimes:

- Steppin' Out: The Strip is packed with interesting establishments. Shops and hangouts cater to the underworld, offering everything from illegal drugs to services such as a "Steppin' Out" to buy or sell anything. Check out all the buildings and streets to find the right contacts. You'll find anything from drugs to illegal weapons for sale.

- The Pig: Feel the thrill of the illegal underground as you explore the Pig's den. Full of secrets and secrets, the Pig is a place where you can find anything from illegal drugs to illegal weapons. The Pig is also a great place to find underground contacts who can help you with your illegal needs.

- Modern Crimes: The Strip is a place where anything goes. From illegal drugs to illegal weapons, the Strip is full of illegal activities. The Strip is also a place where you can find underground contacts who can help you with your illegal needs.
PERSONA TAMPERING (Priority 2): Persona Tampering is any unauthorized alteration of another individual's personality. Commonly referred to as "reversing" or "rewriting", this offense affects memory, personal identity, and any other mental characteristics that characterize the individual. Such tampering is illegal and seeks to undo the purposeful use of mind-altering drugs, used to induce a victim's altered state of mind. In extreme cases, it has been reported to cause unbearable psychological trauma. Mephit is a王府 most common means of tampering, and there may be additional fines for merely using these substances without the proper permits and licenses.

Sentence: 2,000-5,000 Eb and/or 1-2 years High Security Block.

CANNIBALISM (Priority 3): With the increase in population growth and overcrowding, cannibalism has become a potential problem. While the ordinary flesh-eater is some wacked-out shocker, cannibalism is becoming a sick fad among the wealthy. The crime's definition has been changed to include human flesh from cloned bodies.

Sentence: Psycho Block, Personality Adjustment or Death depending on the extent of the meal.

HOUND TIPPING (Priority 3 on paper, but actually Priority 2): Hound Tipping is a crime placed in the books after several pranksters were played on the Night City Police Department by local gangs including the Bozon and the Phíligh. Hound Tipping is performed in the following manner: first, the pranksters commit petty crimes in front of police officers on patrol with their Night City Police department. A group of pranksters distracts the police officer, while the other pranksters run away, screaming for help. The pranksters run away while the Night City Police department is distracted, and the pranksters receive the fine.

Sentence: 2,000-5,000 Eb and/or 1-2 years High Security Block.
UPSIDE DOWN TOWN

The Strip is just one urban location where the players may find themselves. Although the Strip serves as an excellent setting (especially for Fight Campaigns), Cyberpunk action is by no means limited to that one setting: the Edge is where you find it! A group of players might find themselves on the Street, in a corporate boardroom or even in Low Earth Orbit. However, the “classic” Cyberpunk setting is the concrete wilderness of the city. In these types of “classic cyberpunk” campaigns, the Referee should constantly try to paint the players an image of the modern cityscape.

City Texture

A city is more than just a place with too many people in it. Cities have a type of “texture.” Whether it’s the grainy feel of the streets or the sense-like smell, every moment in the city is loaded with vivid sensory input. Corporate skyscrapers block out the sun making it seem like twilight, the wind whips through the dark streets that it is almost always overcast or raining anyhow. No need for streetlights though—this extensive use of neon illuminates all but the darkest alleyways. Noise pollution has risen to the level of a science. Bars, movies and video games compete for your attention; if not with volume then with sounds designed to jar the listener’s attention. Even the air has a frenzied feel to it.

Like the city tonight, urban dwellers have their own flavor to them. The sheer density of city populations creates a learned defensiveness. Those who travel the urban pathways on a regular basis know just where to look when they walk. They know to look at others low enough so that they don’t make eye contact, but high enough to see if the person is going to suddenly change his direction. These defenses come in handy—crime, disease and the occasional cyberpunk make city life interesting but hardly secure, unless you make it that way.

The largest percentage of any city population in 2020 is Streetcrawls (for a full description of citycrawls, see Night City Sourcebook pg. 39). While some Streetcrawls filter into gangs or cults, the majority of these indigents merely continue to live another day, scraping together what they can eat. In city life, flashy cyberpunkers and chrome-streepunks are rare exceptions, not the rule. Many more people are just struggling, but these mass poor have become the outcasts of the modern era. In Cyberpunk games, plenty of “Yonos” (poor) are always around, but a Cyberpunk character may not even notice their existence.

As always, Streetcrawls tend to congregate around ethnic-specific areas like Combat Zones and ghettos. Names like “Little [ethnic group name here]” or “The [ethnic group name here] Quarter” litter the unofficial maps of most cities. In the 30’s, this trend still holds true although overcrowding has caused these ghettos to become inflated. In 2020, these ghettos and racial turfs can intersect and even overlap at some points, allowing minor incidents to ignite racial tensions. Naturally, racial tensions are minor to the true Cyberpunk societal divide—class. Most ghettos are partitioned by race, but except for those controlled by race-baiting groups are at least marginally open to all races, but if a Beaver or Corporate enters the Zone, he’d better be packing.

TECH EFFECTS

Technology doesn’t exist in a vacuum. In fact, quiet the opposite—IT reshapes the world to fit its needs. A Cyberpunk city should not only follow this rule, but exemplify it. Cities, especially Cyberpunk ones, literally digest new technologies and inventions. In the process, new applications and uses for the tech are found. The impacts of new technologies on city society are described below.

The City Never Sleeps

"It’s always daytime somewhere." This expression is used in 2020 as a rationalization for the irregularity of people’s sleep schedules. Nightlife is practically an obsolete term due to the advent of such modern technologies as cheap but powerful stay-away drugs and sleep inducer systems. Besides, with pollution the way it is, it’s hard to tell the difference between night and day anyway. Fixers in particular know that action can be found any time of the day or night; biz knows no downtime. Sleep inducers (see Chronology pg. 11) are widely marketed and relatively cheap, allowing one to get a full eight hours in 2 hours. This device has revolutionized work schedules, and to an even greater extent, night clubs. Clubs now play all the time through and through, and the number of 24-hour stores has increased geometrically with each passing year.

Despite modern technology’s best efforts, humans are still biologically designed to go to sleep every sixteen hours or so, rather than every 22. For this reason, humanistic pharmaceutical concerns such as Biotechica have made tremendous profits from affordable uppers and stimulants designed to promote wakefulness for 22 straight hours. Perhaps the most well-recognized brand name for this class of drug is Xoma Pharmaceuticals’ "Catch-22," which is available in convenient 30-capules containers for $4 each; a year’s supply costs the typical overzealous corporate wusel $46. Stylish modern lifestyles are based on cheap consciousness and full maps, bringing to a screeching halt the days of malapropia which closed at 1000 PM and waited for banks to open. However, staying awake longer is not all convenience and customer service. Sociological studies have found a correlation between exposure to darkness and psychological unrest. Much like the well-documented “light deprivation” effect which people manifest during the winter months of Alaska, the general temperament of 2020 society has taken a gloomy outlook thanks to its increased exposure to the night. The effects are felt all the way down to the family level, where there is no standard time for rise or rest—no morning breakfasts, no family dinners, all due to a lack of compliance in anyone’s schedule.
The fragmentation of society (diagnosed as another facet of "Future Shock") has been accelerated by this artificial separation from time, but most people still adhere to a daily schedule, as TV ratings studies conclusively demonstrate. It is undoubtedly true that the majority of corporate employees exist in work-traditional 9-to-5 hours, but their ability to work later (and thus catch overtime bonuses) is on paper workable at home, and generally put in extra effort has expanded, and correspondingly, corporations’ potential profits in employing human beings has also expanded. Only then being able to cover more work-related ground, the common man can also play longer and thus harder. Having to sleep, so little grants people much more free-time—perhaps too much free time. Most clubs, bars and restaurants stay open 24 hours and see few lulls in business at any time during an evening. Larger and larger segments of many people’s lives are lacking in purpose or direction, so they pointless waste energy, in a desperate search for direction...any direction. Those who do manage to find their own direction become the true EdgeRunners of Cyberpunk. In fact, much more than a quarter of the population are street-smart, tough-talking, gun-toting, edge-running, film-noir personalities like the ones we see in Cyberpunk player-character. The rest are either tedious corporate wage-earners or hopeless lowlife scum. These people kill time by cultivating attitudes of apathy to Braindance, VR or other drugs, driving into the depths of drunkenness, partying themselves into a frenzy, participating in no-holds-barred orgies, and committing random acts of violence.

The social malady of "Lifeliness," much like homelessness which was a serious problem in the 19th century, has ballooned into a kind of plague for the 21st century. Whether they are facing monotonous corporate jobs or wallowing in unemployment, the majority of the population suffers from too much idle time while being over-stimulated by media images and merchandising plays. Most people feel a lack of "life" in their existence, and seek a cure for this lifelessness in one form or another. Many people have made virtual careers out of their virtual lives: a phenomenon such as turning to the various pointless diversions mentioned before. Only the lucky ones find some sort of niche, slowing down and developing a kind of schedule. Most bars have clientele crowds of regulars who may or may not be comprised of close friends (the Forbidding Hope in Night City is an example of this phenomenon), and many clubs develop very long, but very specific, guest lists. This phenomenon of "Freetime Herding" is especially common among young corporates, who get together to drink and relax, while kissing each other on the cheek are planning to stab each other in the back.

Much of the distinctive color which characterizes the Cyberpunk streets of 2020 is the result of this Freetime mentality. Every night of the week, police riot squads are called out to break up illegal parties ("Raives") which have ambled into someone’s private property. Although not usually violent, T20s sometimes degenerate into mass vandalism or low-powered street stunts. Other common street diversions like unattended pigeons or gawking at weird, weird-sports (such as knife-fighting competitions), stampeding, whorehouses, VRades and gang warfare are all thrive- ing, following the same trends. The following activities have created the ultimate in personal communication, the cyberaudio phone splice. The popularity of these implants has propelled it to a cultural phenomenon of public mumbuing. In any public place you can spot people carrying on subcultural conversations with some distant person. By connecting cyberpunkers, computers or faxes, a person can effectively carry their offices with them. This business-of-a-lifetime mindset allows corpo- rate types to perform their business anywhere. Occasionally, the screamsheets report on a multi-million dollar deal completed in a building's bathroom or during a subway ride. Sociologists and psychologists have even classified this growing phenomenon as universal connection as a scientific underdeveloping of the group subconscious; a kind of cybernetic telepathy.

**Cordless Contact**

Cellular technology has changed the communication patterns of modern society. In the old days of stationary phones, communication was tied to a particular location. If you weren’t home you might miss your messages; therefore people paid more money to get answering machines or services. But even machines and services tended to be too much of a delay for some people. As cordless phones became cheaper and smaller, the emphasis changed from the individual. Cellular communications had evolved into truly personal technology: portable enough to be carried 24 hours a day and in any situation. No longer would someone try to catch you at home or in the office, but rather they would call you directly—wherever you are. Taking the next step, the following developments have created the ultimate in personal communication, the cyberaudio phone splice. The popularity of these implants has propelled it to a cultural phenomenon of public mumbuing. In any public place you can spot people carrying on subcultural conversations with some distant person. By connecting cyberpunkers, computers or faxes, a person can effectively carry their offices with them. This business-of-a-lifetime mindset allows corporate types to perform their business anywhere. Occasionally, the screamsheets report on a multi-million dollar deal completed in a building's bathroom or during a subway ride. Sociologists and psychologists have even classified this growing phenomenon as universal connection as a scientific underdeveloping of the group subconscious; a kind of cybernetic telepathy.

**The Box**

As the concept of an Integrated Services Digital Network (ISDN) blossomed into the establishment of the world-spanning Net, many previously unrelated media were blurred together. Telephone lines, cable television, satellite broadcasting and computer networks all became components of the global emerging electronic high-speed highway. In 2020 the Net combines all of these services, providing universal access to almost any form of electronic media. Television, cable, pay-per-view, home shopping services, telecommunications and computer information services are all available through one cable. The result of this super-integration is that it is possible to have one machine which handles all of these functions. Although there are still some dedicated phones, computers and systems in existence, the concept which has emerged as the last word in consumer media technology is The Box.

The Box is the common term which has been given to devices which can access any form of information at any time. The Box allows a user to access any form of information at any time. The Box is the common term which has been given to devices which can access any form of information at any time. The Box allows a user to access any form of information at any time. The Box is the common term which has been given to devices which can access any form of information at any time. The Box allows a user to access any form of information at any time. The Box is the common term which has been given to devices which can access any form of information at any time. The Box allows a user to access any form of information at any time.
If This Is A Book
About the Street,
Why Are We Talking
About the Net?

Because the Net is only a video screen's distance from the Street. In Cyberpunk information is the key to all the things, whether you're the president of EBM or a common street thug. The Net represents access to all forms of data, instantly. Whether by use of a DataTerm, computer workstation, cyberdeck or telephone, almost everyone uses the Net on a regular basis. Regardless of the individual's choice of interface, the Net's icon-based system allows even beginners to easily operate basic systems and to find requested information nodes. In game terms, the virtual icon system gives every user regardless of experience a basic knowledge in the following skills: Senses Knowledge and Library Search. (These bonuses are the equivalent to a +1 chip and do not add to any skills that the person may already have.)

The Net is used for all kinds of communication. Virtual Conferencing allows one party to communicate instantly with others no matter where on the face of the planet they are. Only communication outside of earth's orbit has any real long time (two to three seconds delay), between the parties, like conversation: "How's the weather down there? ... stop ... O.K. ... stop ...."
The preferred method for communication with outer space is the use of Electronic Mail (usually under the trade name 'see Night City Source Book pg. 184', which is also used when the other party isn't available for Virtual Conferencing. Public utility 'Mail processors are available, for a small per hour fee, to compose letters and transmittal agents via EMail. Public utility includes: The Yellow Base. (basically, Net phone book), phone patches (allowing someone in the Net to call someone outside the Net on a cellular or fiber optic channel), World Weather, and Translators. The last utility is only available to people jacked into the Net. It allows near instantaneous translation of languages among individuals in the Net. The Net translates human brainwave patterns into machine language. As the first program at that starting point, it's easy for the Net to interpret what data into whatever language the other party understands (Translator gives the user an effective language skill, but only with others in the Net). Privately owned utilities include virtual shopping networks, VReaders and ultra-detailed virtual reality. Virtually all of these uses of the Net, actual criminal Nertuning is only a small fraction.

You don't have to be a Netrunner to find out what time your beloved Maglex gets in. Much information of the Net is free access. The Net's designer wanted public data to be organized so that it would be easy to get at (although they didn't always succeed). How one uses the information is what sets the powerbrokers above the world's goons.

The New Industry

Perhaps the single greatest economic force to emerge from the Street is the New Industry. Using rental autolathe technologies, many clever entrepreneurs have built street-level companies with profits large enough to attract the attention of large corporations. And once the corporations move in, the Net runs like a snowball gathering speed. Street Techies are always designing interesting little trinkets that somehow make streetcruising life a little easier. These designs are often made by the Use-Aided Design and Manufacturing (CADAM) program. Then the producer simply rents some time in any one of a number of robot-operated mini-busineses, such as the world-famous Malorian Firearms autolathes (See Night City Source Book pg. 165). Autolathe factories charge reasonable rates and a standard fee for raw materials. A surcharge is added for rare materials and permits may be required for the use of dangerous materials such as explosives or some substances. Since autolathes can run with only minimal human input, permit difficulties may be overcome with well-tuned tribus. The entire process is quick — even complex machines can go from disk to final product in a few hours.

While autolathes still can't match the corporate factories for per- product construction, the Flexibility open to the New Industrialists allows them to compensate for their higher production for entertaining and productive projects. Many of these New Industries are based in the Net, functioning as a BBS with dozens, or even hundreds, ofautolathes. Sometimes a single person operates the Net. Many of these uses of the Net, actual criminal Netruning is only a small fraction.

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Candles of a thousand nothing varieties and worthless trinkets still sell well, but Music Box machines will be a charming music chip in under 50 seconds. Aspirin, heartburn medicine, and other pharmaceuticals can also be bought 24 hours from automated vendors, but beware of their quality—rascal vandals and gangers sometimes mess with AutoRX supplies just for fun. Often urban predators will hang around the vicinity of a machine just to pick on its customer, but this depends on the unit's surroundings. The lobbies of corporate towers, hotels, and transit stations are all well-equipped to meet almost any short-term need with an army of autonomous sales outlets. Many "vegetables" will be handed out in convenient sales information, supply requests, and damage reports to their parent corporations, and many a Neutron has run them "control remove" on these units to cause havoc or get away with a free packet of Grape Jellies. All these vending boxes generate a lot of loose trash, which urban wind whips blow across the streets like a plastic tide, and some even have limited computers which bark slogans and sales pitches to pedestrian pushers. Don't completely ignore these computer pushers, since you may suddenly need a quick boost. Almost any product which comes from a vending machine will be worth the effort of getting more than 36 hours, but when you can just buy another one from another machine, which gives a byte? And you can't beat the prices.

Life on the Pharm
Pharmacology (chemtech) is the promise to future generations, or so Biotechnica would have you believe. To date, the greatest chemtech success has been DIPhenothine Hydrochloride, an effective pain killer used in brand name products such as Painway and Phosertin. This drug works on the same principals as dophen, but is addictive if taken in small dosages (it's also as strong, but will temporarily stop pain from toothaches, headaches and small burns). Occasional persons take more than the recommended amounts, resulting in a temporary pain killer. Like other pain killers, such as dophen, overuse has resulted in some serious injuries. According to urban legend, a housewife on Phosertin accidentally cut off one of her fingers and didn't notice until her husband found it in the chopped salad.

On the Street, chemtech is present in the common form of designer drugs. Pharm programs allow street chemists to synthesize innovative drugs for almost any purpose. The latest street craze is buying chemically-induced psychedes. These mental disturbances are produced by purposefully creating bio-chemical imbalances which the body usually corrects in 2-11 hours. Paranoia is the top seller, with an average cost of 100 EB. Despite the potential for the death penalty, some Pharmacies sell "spices" in the spirit of humanist to create degenerated boosters at about 200 EB each. Other mental diseases available include Neurofeedback, Psychocosis (anything from cats to phones), Catastrophe, and Narcotics, Hyperactivity, and Multiple Personality.

Then there are the street drugs. The nasty, nerve-rotting, brain-frying candy that nobody wants to want. Some drugs are so common they have given up entirely on the war on drugs, and instead have semi-legalized all drugs under system "registration." Under this system, one must pay a fee to the local government to be licensed for a particular drug. Licenses cost anywhere from 10 EB per year and per drug (the really bad drugs cost the most, in an attempt to legislate them out of existence). Registration system usually include a "blanket" license of 25 EB per year which includes alcohol, tobacco, and typical medicines like aspirin. Mr. Ex, a powerful stimulant that mixes metabolic processes to a level that the character may stay awake for very long periods of time. It is used primarily by busy Corporates and Netrunners, but it is gaining in popularity across the board. Its side effects include -3 to COOL for the duration of the drug's effects and psychological addiction. Mr. Ex also induces a ravenous case of the munchies. Users are always stuffing their faces with kibble and soyburgers. The drug causes eyes to become red and puffy, but does not impair vision, and prolonged use of Mr. Ex can lead to extreme weight loss.
Appropriationist Technology

From A Dissertation on the Counter-Economy (Chapter 6) by Dr. Richard M. Cameron, an Associate Professor at Harvard University.

"The street is alive and humming, a vital place that gets you what you want if you can afford it. A lot of people can't afford to go to upscale weapons stores, upgrade the right interface, or can't afford to feed their Polynesian rifles that are very expensive. You have to be very careful when you're dealing with the wrong people. Even if you're just a petty throttle trying to scratch-build your own weapons, be aware of the law's definition of persons. You have to be able to work with the law's definition of persons. You have to be able to work with the law's definition of persons."

"There's also the concealed, cloak-and-dagger style stuff. The armored car is a briefcase, the Stealth fighter is a briefcase. You have to be able to work with the law's definition of persons. You have to be able to work with the law's definition of persons."

"That doesn't just go for weapons; almost everything found on the streets can be and is used in a malicious manner. The law is often lenient to those who work on the streets, but they are frequently the ones who are most vulnerable. It's important to understand the law's definition of persons. You have to be able to work with the law's definition of persons."

City folks speak their own language. They have to. As mentioned before, the ghettos of many areas lead to a city make up of many small groups who communicate in their own languages. These trends are reinforced by the reliance on gangs, local educational systems and religious organizations to educate the next generation of Street Nuns and urban youth. However, these individual groups are not self-sufficient and not completely isolated. Members of these ethnic quarters travel into other areas to trade, steal or purchase goods, they have to communicate with other groups; that's where the street language comes in handy. Street slang has helped to preserve the language of the street, and it is an essential part of the street culture. It is a way of life, a way of communicating, and it is a way of resisting the mainstream. It is a way of defining oneself, a way of defining the street. It is a way of defining the community, a way of defining the world.
New Skill: Hand-Twist

[Paragraph about the Hand-Twist skill.

Streetgangs and Fake Street Fashions

Streetgangs are the new trend in fashion. These gangs, known for their distinctive style, are becoming more popular among younger generations. They often wear unique clothing and hairstyles, often incorporating elements of their regional culture.

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Urban Legends

Like the campfires of earlier times, the Net and mass communication systems have given birth to a series of stories. Urban Legends—new campfire sto- ries. No one knows where these stories come from or if they are true or not. The classic Urban Legend is the infamous "coconuts that live in the sewers of large cities." In 2020, urban myths have become more important and more direct. In an age where VR images are indistinguishable from reality, the old down-to-earth gossip can be a lifesaver. For example, people still remember the Kibble Scare of '16 and consequently everyone knows a friend's fourth cousin who ate some kibble and had a kid with some awful disease. Other Urban Legends border on philosophy. Some examples include the widespread belief that God lives in the Net, President Kress is a VR simulation, and Cyberware sometimes has a mind of its own. Whether or not any of these legends are true is, of course, unknown and in most cases unprovable. Very often, these street legends descend into the realm of pure rumor mill and tabloid stuff. As technology and the belief in this is in the Net, the people of the Net are more likely to believe the stories.

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Optional Rules

When using Streetgangs in a for- eign country, the 2 skills are 1 in 6 uniformly rolled down to their level.

Optional Language Rule

I language can be used as a level greater than the speaker's skill in that language.

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The International Fixer

The Cyberpunk Fixer of 2020 knows no bounds, literally. A typical well-connected Night City Fixer's day would consist of such trifles as diagnosing a broken car, answering some Email to near orbit, having a virtual meeting in the Net with crime lords from Hong Kong and London, sending an overnight package of rare chromosomes to a medical acquaintance in Bonn, and doing lunch at a nice little Biuro in San Francisco. Any connection between your business and the ground beneath your feet was severed the day you were dragged into the 21st century. Traversed Long Distance? Nowhere. Your only limit is your credit limit.

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Around the World in Eighty Nanoseconds

The 91st century saw the mushroom- ing of information technology into a mono-dimensional enterprise. The coalescence of the Net and the galvanization of a mega-corporate political environment has led to a "shrinking" effect on the global community. Corporations have taken on much, if not more, character than most sovereign states, so that national political allegiances, philosophies, and ideologies are no longer defined primarily by geography. For example, American cities and Japanese cities bear a close resemblance to each other in most ways. Consider Night City and Tokyo. They are both harbor cities, centers of light industry, information and business, and they share common ties in terms of social and political systems. They have similar, if not identical, architectures (such as the architecture of 2010's architect, Thomas Yang Chin), corporate influences (most notably Arakawa, but also Internet WNS and WorldSat), and criminal elements (such as the Yakuza). The amount of international trade, immigration and refugees has made an ethnic hodgepodge of both cities, creating Night City's Japantown and Tokyo's alien neighborhood. The Chiba Strip and the High Street Strip are, at least visually, almost identical. The number of languages spoken in both cities is beyond counting, and the Eurodollar is their common standard currency.

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The International Fixer: A Redundant Term

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About the World in Eighty Nanoseconds

The 91st century saw the mushrooming of information technology into a mono-dimensional enterprise. The coalescence of the Net and the galvanization of a mega-corporate political environment has led to a "shrinking" effect on the global community. Corporations have taken on much, if not more, character than most sovereign states, so that national political allegiances, philosophies, and ideologies are no longer defined primarily by geography. For example, American cities and Japanese cities bear a close resemblance to each other in most ways. Consider Night City and Tokyo. They are both harbor cities, centers of light industry, information and business, and they share common ties in terms of social and political systems. They have similar, if not identical, architectures (such as the architecture of 2010's architect, Thomas Yang Chin), corporate influences (most notably Arakawa, but also Internet WNS and WorldSat), and criminal elements (such as the Yakuza). The amount of international trade, immigration and refugees has made an ethnic hodgepodge of both cities, creating Night City's Japantown and Tokyo's alien neighborhood. The Chiba Strip and the High Street Strip are, at least visually, almost identical. The number of languages spoken in both cities is beyond counting, and the Eurodollar is their common standard currency.

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Thanks to the evolution of the Net and universal communication standards, the global community shrank to the global village, and in 2000 it was more accurate to refer to it as the "Global Metropolitan." The Net allows access to any other part of the world as if you were walking into another room. Telephones and videophones long ago made face-to-face conversations a nonissue, while e-mail and portable computers allow anyone to get connected and STAY connected. Fax and electronic bulletin boards allow uninterupted exchange of images, stories, and ideas, with online travel agents programming you to inter-topical areas that can occur. Seemingly hyperactive corporate communications have largely replaced government mail systems, so that automatized response time on the Internet is sometimes the only thing that differs from the need for complex broadcast mail messages. It is all too easy to offend someone from another culture without even knowing that. This one has broken your social taboos; for instance, it is generally considered rude to ask for directions in India or to wear a miniskirt in Japan. To deal with situations such as these, one uses the next INT skill of Culture. Culture functions much like the basic skill of Social. It is often used in unfamiliar situations and is the one that you do not have to leave the country to need a Culture skill—it could be handy when you have to deal with a local in China, for instance. The INT skill of Culture is a skill which must be specified, exactly like the INT skill "Know Language." In fact, the rules in the sidebar show the abilities of the Cyberpunk 2020 base rules for Linguistic Skills apply here as well. If you have Culture (Bantu), you also have other African cultures at 1/2 level and some of them, if you break down the limitations of language, there are many times in which one will also need to make a Culture roll. The different number of the Culture roll is determined by the disparity between your own culture and the cultural level of the other party. There are four categories into which all cultures can be grouped, and it is advised that the referee use his best judgment (and perhaps even a little research) in such matters. Using American culture as a standard against which other cultures will be judged (how typical!), the differences would break down as shown on the next page (TABLE 2).

When in Rome...

However, there are times when a simulation won't do. Whether you're a Corporate with an international lifestyle or an orbiting suborbital spaceship, you will have to interface with different cultures and languages sometime. To simulate language differences in game play, the blanket rule is that when communicating in another culture you cannot use your interpersonal skills at a level higher than your language level. The interpersonal skills affected by language are: Charismatic Leadership, Credibility, Streetwise (in terms of dealing), Intimidation, Leadership, Social, Persuasion & Fast Talk, any INT skill which would involve the translation of material from or into your language (Composition, Library, Library, Library, etc.), Teaching and Finesse.

As important as knowing a language is knowing that a language's culture is different. In this case, the American Corp would probably be trying to satisfy the Japanese customer. The example might be a meeting between an American imposter and a Japanese Yakusa. In this case, the American Corp would probably be trying to satisfy the Japanese customer, but in many cases both parties might be trying to satisfy each other. Once one has decided a Culture roll is needed, the roll is put into effect by (1) determining the difficulty number, (2) making an INT+Culture+1D10 roll, (3) checking to see if the roll was successful, in which case everything is fine, or subtracting the amount the roll was failed by (up to 6) to any subsequent skill rolls used in the dealings, such as Persuasion or Streetwise.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 2. CULTURAL SIMILARITY TABLE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SAME CULTURE (0)</td>
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<tr>
<td>American</td>
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<td>English</td>
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<td>Australian</td>
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<td>Canadian</td>
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<th>TABLE 3. FAUX PAS TABLE (ID10)</th>
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<td>1-4</td>
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<tr>
<td>5-7</td>
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<tr>
<td>8-10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Optional Rule:** Referees may decide to grant their player's culture skill which match their own language. We suggest playing at leveling the language, but sometimes the skill level may be more appropriate (such as for natives of a foreign culture campaigning in America) than the skill level of the Yakusa.
APPENDIX A: RELIGION AND POLITICS
Two things that affect the Street, but are not of the Street.

GODS IN THE GUTTER

As technology makes the world too diverse and complex to deal with, religion and politics have become important stabilizing factors in many people's lives. 2020's epidemic of Future Shock has lead many to seek refuge in religion. Religion allows one to order his or her life and gives the person an automatic "family" within the church. This influence is especially evident in cults and religion-oriented gangs. The other side of the same coin is, that as technology moves, even religion gets caught in the waves. Many religions of 2020 incorporate societal and technological changes, forming new dogmas. Those faiths that can't adapt often split. It is in these fissures that many of the small cults take root.

Religion in America as found within Home of the Brave (pg. 55) covers most of the major religions and even a few fringe groups. Included below are additional religions and some updated notes to tie some of the previously explained groups more closely to the Street.

Islam

Islam has spread rapidly through many American cities. However, it currently faces a serious theological question which reaches to the base of the Muslim faith. During the Middle East Meltdown in 1997, Mecca was cut off, and many of the other important sites of Islamic worship were destroyed. One of the basic tenets of Islam is that worshipers perform (if not constrained by poor health) a pilgrimage to Mecca (Hajj). For the last two decades, the Hajj hasn't been possible except with expensive decontamination cautions; the radiation levels surrounding the city are still lethal. There has been much debate amongst the religious leaders of the Islamic sects on the proper interpretation of this terrible situation. There has been talk of moving the Kaba (the cube building containing the black stone given to Abraham by the Angel Gabriel). But no clear-cut decision has been reached. However, the few surviving fundamentalists wandering through the irradiated sands believe that Mecca's near-destruction is a clear demonstration of God's displeasure. They swear to redouble their efforts to do what they believe will restore His faith in us. The Jihad continues...

Voodoo (Vudon)

Despite its reputation as mysticism, many people in the western hemisphere practice Voodoo and related religions, such as Santeria. Although Voodoo and Santeria are based in Brazil, other South American states and even Africa, its influences can be felt in modern cities around the world. These faiths are often based on concepts of a spirit world controlling various aspects of nature and humanity. Ritual dances allow believers to ascend into a state from which Voodoo spirits may enter and take over the dancer's body. Once contacted, these spirits are asked to perform services for their followers, in the form of spells. As popularized in film and television...
Voodoo is a system of religious beliefs and practices that includes the worship of spirits, the interaction with the dead, and the use of spiritual remedies. It is characterized by a complex cosmology and a rich tradition of oral narratives. Voodoo is practiced in various forms throughout the Caribbean, particularly in countries such as Haiti, the Dominican Republic, and Trinidad and Tobago. The religion is known for its dynamic and fluid nature, with beliefs and practices evolving over time to accommodate the needs and experiences of its practitioners. Voodoo is often associated with local deities, ancestral spirits, and the natural world, and its practitioners seek to maintain a balance with these forces to achieve harmony and well-being.
The Independent Party

Commonly referred to as the "People Party", the Independent Party began in 2003, during the political realignment period. The founders of the Independent Party decided the previous political party system was obsolete and that the cause needed to be expanded. They rejected the use of state financial support and decided to form a new political party. The Independent Party is the first grassroots party in the history of the United States to gain access to the Federal Government.

The Neo-Monarchists

Ging the ever-growing gridlock inherent to democracy, Neo-Monarchists rally around the concept of returning to a monarch. Supported by historians, political scientists and sociologists, the Neo-Monarchists suggest that a benign monarchy can be sustained by psychological testing, genetic screening and sensitivity training. Because the group's final goal is far from being accepted by the general public, the Neo-Monarchists work towards re-establishing a strong executive branch as an intermediate step.

The New Federalists

The New Federalists, allies of the Neo-Monarchists, wish to re-establish the sovereignty of the Federal Government. This group sees most of America's problems stemming from the lack of central decision making. They believe that with a strong centralized power, the U.S. can attain its former greatness and revert its influence over the rest of the world. The New Federalists recruit their members from corporate circles, usually from those who are interested in the continuation and support of corporate culture. The New Federalists are career politicians; joining the individual agencies on the ground floor and through years of work moving into positions of power.

The One World Party

The One World Party (also called "Simons") are the graduates of the elite business schools around the U.S. Their guiding principal is business does not stop at the border. Strongly internacionalist and pro-corporation, this political group advocates an international free market. Simons don't make good media images; most Americans don't trust people who use words like "Kensian Marketing Heuristics" and who actually wear bowties. However, what the One World Party lacks in votes, it makes up for in political appointments. Simons are indispensable to the modern workings of the cabinet and remaining bureaucracy, because elected officials realize it still takes people who use words like "Kensian Marketing Heuristics" to run the ground floor operations of government.

The Constitutionals

The Constitutionals are radical libertarians willing to fight and die for individual freedoms and self-autonomy. This party sometimes acts as the voice for existing free states and encourages other states to take the same route. The Constitutionals' image is a reference to the suspended federal currency stock, usually from the American 20th Century. The New Federalists have almost no support in the "free states" and only slightly more in the other states. This group's power base comes from their bottom-up approach to the bureaucracy. Many New Federalists are career politicians; joining the individual agencies on the ground floor and through years of work moving into positions of power.

The Humanity Party

The Humanity Party is the closest thing to a party for the homeless there has ever been. It hasn't really won any major victories, but in the political world it's known as a perpetual photo-op. Just about any political party can temporarily boost its popularity ratings by appointing a Humanity member, Dog Catcher. Despite these failings, the Humanity Party does occasionally manage to squeak some supplies down to Nomad families in need.

Galas's Guardians

Founded by the survivors of the Two Year Armistice (from 1996-1998), the Corps clashes with conservationists for control of protected lands. This group is fiercely protective of the environment. They have connections with European 3000 and other "green" groups throughout America. This group is so radical that its political influence is considered dubious. Openly supportive of Eco-terrorism, Galas's Guardians are involved in battles with the One World Party. Their greatest sphere of influence is in the Free State of Northern California.

The Vanguard of the Protectorate

The Vanguard is the strongest of the Communist political parties, drawing partial support from the Wyoming Senators. The Vanguard has had little success pushing its agenda; conversion of the U.S. to a Communist political, economic and social system. Instead, the Vanguard is a constant dissembler. Any elected member of this party given a chance to speak turns a simple introduction into a thirty minute speech on the flaws of capitalism. Reminiscent of the Russian at the height of the Cold War, the Vanguard often uses SOT-style intimidation strategies. These forty-year-old techniques are seriously outdated and often result in the unopposed arrest of the participating members.

APPENDIX B: REFERENCE MATERIAL

Below is a partial list of sources for the Rails, the Street, and other things from the Wildside.

Films & TV

The Cop, Catch 22, Operation Petticoat, The Third Man, K99 Wagon 2 (for Joe Pesci), Goodfellas (for Mobsters), the Geffehar series (for Mobsters), Crassan (for Owners), Wall Street (for Factors), Deep Space Nine (for the character Quark, a Fixer through and through), Other People's Money (for Factors), the Geffen (for Con Men), the Sting (for Con Men), Sneakers (for Browsers), Dr. Detai (for Managers/Agents), Zombie Dogs (for Mobsters). Most of John Woo's Hong Kong Gangster films have a Fixer as main or supporting character, with plots involving deals gone sour (and what to do about it).

Novels & Comics

The first few chapters of Neuronauts, Hardwired, the "When Gravity Fails" series, Churchill's Kingdom and Langshanda Night (for the Agg), Ragnor, Crying Freeman (a translated Japanese comic), SenseMary (another translated manga).

APPENDIX C: STREETSLANG

Cyberspace live in cynical times. The influence of interna
tionalism and the pervasion of technology have created new expressions for new ideas. Foreign word
tech slang and general colloquialisms are the earmarks of 2020's slang.

2020 Hindsight
Allen
Beneice
Bogo
Borg
Bourge or
Bourry
Braincrout
Bridge &
Tunnel Crowed
Chap
Chopping
Chucking
Corr
Coope

The wise act of watching your back
Derogatory earther term for someone who lives in space (a higrider)
A counterpart (see Gaia)
Vogue, that is inflection (from the Spanish),
Common, low class (adj., from bourgeoisie)
A creditchip
The process of cracking a stolen creditchip
Eating on the run, as a secondary activity
A Corporation, an executive, a CORPorate Sleaziness Expert
A Media, used as and sounds like "seca", stands for "CoverYour Ass"
A lo-tech (derogatory)—pencils, paper, etc.
A Netrunner
Low tech (derogatory)—pencils, paper, etc.
Free time, time off the job (also Freetime and Pwntime)
Someone who is wearing too much armor (an SPV overclock in July)
Expensive (from the Hungarian), a strip, a gray area, an area of potential coolness; Dinford's Edgernce Hypothesis defines an Edgernce as the area between two other areas (anything in between)
A sip_FIXer in the employ of a boss_FIXer, supporting the boss network
A derogatory term for an alien, and outsider (from the Japanese)
A smooth operator, a cool person — also a Fixer (from the Spanish)
Honor, duty, obligation (from the German)
An idio, foot in the door
A flattering term, like cool, hip, def, tough, etc.
The Urban Milieu

Below is a list of elements of modern life that a Cyberpunk character might encounter in a city, particularly while on The Strip.

1. Neon—In Cyberpunk, you just can’t have too many neon lights.
2. Solar panels—On every roof and window sill, even on car roofs.
3. Steam—Billowing from rooftops vents and rising from grates in the street (or any other type of obstruction, such as fog, cigarette smoke or smog).
4. Video screens—Advertising boards, commercial airships, computer screens and TVs everywhere.
5. Gastronomia—Taking the form of crowds, sleeping coffins and traffic.
6. Internationalism—Everything comes from somewhere, why not somewhere else?
7. Brand Names—It’s a corporate world and everything is copyrighted. New names are becoming increasingly scarce as ideas are recycled for the umpteenth time. ‘I Can’t Believe It’s Not Fruit Juice!’
8. Squall—From dirt to grease, rust, or garbage, and those who have to live in it. Cyberpunk ain’t tidy.
9. Hyperventilation—Focused and unfocused energy from desperation, always one nanosecond away from bursting out.
10. Technology—“It’s the technology, stupid!” That’s been our motto.

Scraping the Bottom of the Barrel

Below is a quick random chart of junk or garbage a cyberpunk character might encounter in everything, from cracks in the sidewalks to the glove compartment of your car.

1. A small TV with the screen smashed in.
2. A half eaten bag of Kibble.
3. A soda can
4. Used drug paraphernalia
5. A corpse
6. A discarded scrap of metal.
7. A few old brass cartridge casings.
8. A fast food wrapper.
10. A burnt out data chip.

A Hot Night in the City Tonight

Here’s a list (or a random table if you want) of things that can happen to a city which may either mess up things for the players or give them a great opportunity.

1. Riot, Protest or Ramp
2. Really Bad Weather—such as Monsoons, Thunderstorms, Earthquakes, and Tornadoes.
3. Big Fires
4. Parades (Araska Appreciation Day!?)
5. Power outages and mass public technology failures (perhaps a section of the Net, god forbid!).
6. Spontaneous concerts or demonstrations
7. Drag Races—Usually at night, but one never knows...
8. Gang recruitment drives and raids.
9. Corporation-sponsored events (Large street demos of new products and even an occasional hand-out or sneak preview)
10. Street performances and Soap-Box Orators

Things That Go Bump in the Night City

Use this random noise generator any time you want it to be slow, it’s designed to depict one of the more annoying facets of city life. Wait for one of the players to start talking to another, and then abruptly interrupt him...

1. “Vroom!” An AV passes overhead.
2. “Honk! Honk!!! Sireeche! Crash!” Player’s witness a nearby traffic accident.
3. “Meow! Clatter!” Alley cats foraging around in some trash cans.
5. “AAAaaaah...” Someone falling off a building, either from jumping or being pushed.
7. “DGP$&#!” An argument between two street vendors — the volume and cursing knows no bounds.
10. “THE FUTTERER EXECUTIVE BRIEFCASE FROM ARASKA...CARRY OUT YOUR BUSINESS WITH STYLE AND SECURITY...” A video billboard advertisement with audio on maximum.

APPENDIX D.
ATMOSPHERE TABLES

Chromed nights and neon lights, that’s what good Cyberpunk games are made of...

Cyberpunk is a unique genre. It is not just guys with guns who happen to have parts of their bodies replaced with cybernetics. It’s a mood...an attitude. In a good game, both the referee and the players are in the Cyberpunk mind set. Atmosphere is the key. As a referee, atmosphere will help you and your players get into this attitude. The list by no means completely comprehensive and as always the referee’s imagination should guide the game.

(1) Setup: (Describe this list to the players at the beginning of the game.)
- Date (Year, Month, Date, Day of the Week, Time (at beginning), Weather.
- Broad Location (the Strip), A city (perhaps, specify State, the Combat Zone, the geographical area when in other unknown, less familiar countries)
- Mode of transportation (Car, Plane, driving etc.)
- Elapse or changes in the Setup
- Random Encounters
- Problems that may arise from transportation—Traffic, Breakdowns, Random Events

(2) The Scenes: (Describe to players at every new important location or where necessary)
- Any Changes in the Setup
- More specific location descriptions. If indoors, describe the dimensions, decor and occupants. In the city, describe Video Screens & TV’s, Environment, Cultural landmark (Churches in religious areas, etc.)
- City people, Random Junk, etc.
- Other atmosphere may be necessary depending on the location (for example, desert - sand and lots of sunlight or the sewers — muck up to your waist, little visible light except through grates and man-holes, etc.)
- Cybernetics (seeing beyond the normal senses due to cyber-enhancements)
- Any particularly strong smells (Sewers, Dead People, Rotten Foods, etc.)
- Noise: Random Noise generator
- Music (Technoise)
- Differences in Language (or dialects), Culture, etc.
- Cyberaudio (hearing beyond the normal audio range of humans due to enhancements)
- Distinction between kibble, some and real food. (If you do this more often, players will actually try and buy real food)
- Exhaustion, nervous shakers, alcohol/drug-induced reactions, the “depression” and quality of the air, etc.

* Indicates that the subject material is explicitly covered within Wildside.

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