DEDICATIONS

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

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

Jeff Hexter: You’ve always been there for us and we’d never trade you in for a better model.

Derek Quintanar: Thanks for keeping us sane during all the crises.

Scott Taylor: Thanks for the Dr. Cameron articles and the camaraderie.

Marian Rosenstock: You’re the cutest little punkette we know.

Dylon Abend: To the CyberGrek - the Canary Island Award.

Thierry Pons: Thanks for the good research.

Mike MacDonald: A hell of a guy, but not much of a radar detector.

Thanks to all our friends at the University of Rochester and the URSCA, for the good gaming and great times.

Also, special thanks to Paul Kay & wife and to Stephanie Lin for the well-timed distractions, and to Yer Mom for all the good jokes.
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INSIDE WILDSIDE

By Benjamin Wright
and Michael Roter

Welcome to the Wildside. You now stand at the gates to the underground... and as you meander through the pages of this book, you will get the inside story on all the deals, scams, rackets and thefts that make up Cyberpunk. The Wildside is the prototypical gray area, where nothing is simple and desperation meets decadence. This is the stuff of the Street, the dominion of the Fixer and the essence of Cyberpunk. The Wildside has always been at the beating heart of the dark future, but so far it has been relegated to half-written codes. It has never been thoroughly explored, and the systems which make it work have never been named, published or explained. Until now. Why? Because it’s not pretty. This stuff is grungy, nervous, illegal, confused, jury-rigged, menacing, claustrophobic and disturbing. Most people want glamour and action out of their endeavors, but there’s more to Cyberpunk than that. If you don’t want to know, don’t bother reading any further. Like they say on the Strip, “If you’re squeamish, don’t kick the beach chairs.”

Some people may wonder why this book is needed; after all, everyone knows that street lowlife is an integral part of Cyberpunk and Fixers are just thieves and drug dealers, right?

No. Although it may be perfectly true to your average Cyberpunk player that the underground exists, some players fail to grasp all its subtleties and nuances. The underground can be difficult to understand, therefore some roleplayers try to gloss over its intricacies. Now they no longer have to. Despite the number of Fixer characters that are out there, less has been said about this role than any other in the Cyberpunk 2020 rules. Perhaps the greatest misunderstanding of these characters is the equation of Fixers with thieves; this is a bland oversimplification. Fixers are the brains behind the operation while others perform the hands-on dirty work. Fixers work with people; they are go-betweens, masterminds and negotiators. If they can, they hire other characters to carry out missions. This fact should help highlight the important idea that Fixers are everywhere: they own the nightclubs of which edgerunners are so fond; they buy restricted weapons and sell restricted cyberware, and perform all the other duties which keep covert capitalism alive. Beyond this, Fixers have many roles in the “legitimate” world, managing the careers of big-name Rockers, acting as political favor brokers, hiring themselves out as media talent scouts and even being your local Avon lady! No matter what position they fulfill, Fixers can add new dimensions to a Cyberpunk game.

New dimensions are what Wildside is all about. Cyberpunk may be full of creative violence, but it is a world where bullets can cut through armor like cheesecloth and dying is not only inevitable—it’s easy. In such an environment, combat is an obstacle, not a goal. There are so many role-playing possibilities in Cyberpunk that it seems a shame to devote all attention to corporate extractions and gang shoot outs. As the authors of this book, we hope you will use its information to expand your gaming horizons. If you think freelancing for the corporations as a black ops team-for-hire is tough, try establishing and running a successful smuggling operation! Go ahead and try anything and everything in your games—play a heavily-sculpted exotic Fixer, run a gambling casino as a Bookie-business adventure, or set up a “raid & trade” campaign in orbit. Why not do all three? Check out the edges of Cyberpunk and see what you find.

Don’t be trapped by any bounds, even the ones in this book. If there’s something you don’t like, ignore it. If certain rules would walk all over your character or campaign, pretend you never read it or rewrite it to suit your purposes. After all, rules should always be secondary to role-playing. However, be warned that even one rule change in your game can disrupt the balance of a campaign. Like all things in Cyberpunk, a pebble thrown into a pond makes waves. Technologies used to make weapons will trickle down to the general public and show up in toasters, so remember the law of cause and effect: every effect has its CAWS.

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 Zielger, Chief of the Department of Modern Anthropology and Sociology, entitled "Behavior Patterns of the North American Fixer." The lecture was given at an international Sociology conference held at the Matsuyama Institute of Higher Learning in Osaka, Japan. This written transcript was translated from German—audio, video and braindance 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 operative 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 trafficker in stolen goods and, most recently, a trader in highly 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 braindance chips and videos highlighting life on the American streets."

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

I: "Please, enlighten us."

#23: "Excitement - yeah, I guess. If living in a sewer is your idea of excitin'."

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

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

I: "How clever, an allusion to Nietzsche, no doubt."

#23: "Who?"

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

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

I: "What exactly does that mean?"

#23: "It means that one day you walk up and put 3 nines in a battery ain't even old enough to shave 'cause he's in your way."

I: "nines?"

#23: [makes a gun out of his hand by pointing with his index finger and dropping his thumb] "Bang!"

I: "Uh..."

#23: "The hole, gaijin. It means the soap-opera love is too good for you. You Best you can hope for is a hot night with some cold fraulein between the sheets... All shake, man, no heat."

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

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

I: "Why would that be?"

#23: "For once, I don't hafta wonder whether the knife or the fork would make a better weapon, if there was trouble..."
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 music shop owner’s warehouse full of unpopular music chips may well become an Information Broker’s airtight smuggling medium. Such services as were provided by the classic Factors of old may still grant high profits, but the modern-day Factor of the Cyberpunk economy is a multi-talented 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 contract, entire corporations have fallen to the manipulations of serious Factors. These Moneybags are also experts at embezzlement and other accounting tricks; every Mob boss has at least two Factors on the payroll to watch for treachery from within the ranks as well as to “correct” 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 Eurodollars, and they can work with cash or credit (although dealing with cash often includes with 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 separates the criminals from the incriminating 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 pick-up skill and have several Netrunner contacts to help them circumvent the electronic safeguards which protect credit systems. Some Factors specialize in falsifying 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 forgery-minded Factors. It is very hard to crack stolen credchips without fancy equipment, and Factors (with funds large enough to afford the equipment and enough Netrunner and Techie contacts to pull it off) are the affirmed experts in the criminal industry of cracking chips and tips; see the sidebar on “Chopping” (Electronic Livelihood, page 53). 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 host-systems, Factors ensure that Face Banks remain secure credit-havens for Edgerunners and criminals alike. As the classic Black Marketeer-type Fixer is to the Street, so the Factor-type Fixer to the world economy.

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<th>Factor</th>
<th>Street</th>
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**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 5-6 crime, Protect & Serve pg.62-64). Fences usually pay somewhere between 10-30% of the value of stolen goods, and then resell them at half price 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 genetic 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 re-sell anything, he has to buy it from somebody. This is why many Fences have other rackets going on the side—anything from gambling to prostitution can serve to 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 they are an excellent source of income, hard-to-find items and make perfect fronts for even more devious and unpleasant rackets. This is a difficult specialty for a player-character Fixer, because it requires a great deal of hands-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 hatching 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 for free... Loan Sharks all have the same basic staff, which consists of several solo or other goons to hunt down welshers and one or more Factors as accountants. The only variable is how many staff are involved, this being dependent upon the scale of the operation. Loan Sharks are prime candidates for Mob involvement, since Loan Sharkking is high-profit with relatively low risk and requires a substantial monetary base to keep it going. The 21st century's ultimate evolution of the Loan Shark is the CredShark, a Loan Shark who deals exclusively through 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 CredSharks for their own reasons. Some naïve types prefer CredSharks because they never have to actually meet their black-market benefactors, but this is just smoke and mirrors. CredSharks are as vicious and dangerous as their meat-eating cousins—perhaps more so. While a Loan Shark may look up a welsher's address and have him harassed or beaten up, a CredShark attaches tapeworms (various forms of computer virus) to the electronic credit they front their clients. These tapeworms infect other facets of the customer’s electronic identity, and may be activated like time-bombs by their CredShark masters. Should any
gonk welsh on a debt to a CredShark, he may find the Government knocking on his door for something he didn't do; he might find that all his legitimate bank accounts have been closed; he may wind up on a CIA wanted list; or he might find that as far as the databanks are concerned, his name is Elvis Presley and he's currently living on Mars. On the other hand, CredSharks can give their clients up-to-the-nanosecond interest rates and real-time compounding. Whether they are back-alley Loan Sharks or wilderspace CredSharks, these Moneybags keep their clients hopping.

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<th>Loan Shark</th>
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<td>Awareness</td>
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<td>Intimidate</td>
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<td>Shadow/Track</td>
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<td>Handgun</td>
<td>Melee</td>
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**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, each neighborhood had its 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 "keep book" on bets he accepted. Winners would get their payoffs from the pot he had accumulated, and he would walk away with the excess. In 2020, gambling is a huge business, and although they are still called "Bookies", in Cyberpunk, Oddsmakers are technology-based bookmakers. There are two types of Bookies, and their functions overlap so much it would be foolish to list them separately. First, there are the classic Bookies who accept bets and keep track of a "pot" of money, handing out winnings as well as monitoring odds. Then there are the Oddsmakers, who are more concerned with keeping track of (and even setting) odds than
they are with covering bets. Bookies in 2020 have a lot to keep them busy. Although gambling on horse races is covered by legally-sanctioned Off-Track Betting groups, and the "numbers racket" has been replaced by state-run lotteries like Body-Lotto, there are a variety of other events to bet on: boxing, pro wrestling, martial arts competitions and major sports events, such as football, baseball, basketball and soccer (which is huge outside of the United States), are all popular forums for underground gambling rings. There are huge betting rings organized around illegal casinos and back-alley competitions like knife-dueling, mobile crap games and animal fights. Among the filthy rich, it is in-vogue to bet on anything. Political campaigns, wars, and even the weather have bets placed on them. Oddsmakers are the people who set the odds for all these racket. Bookies often make extensive use of computer systems and other information-processing equipment to organize their betting pools and get minute-by-minute updates on odds. The information age has revolutionized the gambling business. There are scramsheets and on-line information services which are concerned exclusively with the information oddsmakers provide. The Racing Form, a horse-racing newspaper which has been around since the early 20th century, lists everything any gambler would ever want to know about the horses in a race—owner, jockey, track record, lineage are all included. Oddsmakers deal in this type of gambling information, setting odds, keeping track of odds, and providing their clients with tips on good bets. Some Oddsmakers are so talented and well-respected that their predictions are regularly published in major newspapers. The most powerful source of gambling odds has always been Lloyd's of London, a British insurance company which has been the authority on odds of all forms for a very long time. Lloyd's publishes calculated odds on everything under the sun, from sports to politics, and as such it has been the target of a great deal of attempted computer crime (Lloyd's has stupifyingly dense ICE). Some Bookies specialize in combat-related gambling, resembling military analysts who lay odds and accept bets; their commodities are knife-fights, gang warfare, and full-blown national conflicts. In 2020, most Bookies rely heavily upon the Net, no matter what their specialty may be. Electronic gambling casinos and betting rings can be found all the dark corners of cyberspace, protected by thick security programs and staffed with number-crunching nertrunners. The type of betting varies from cyber-casino to cyber-casino. Some have their own gambling programs which simulate cards, roulette wheels, glorified lotto and bingo systems, and the underground equivalent of a stock exchange, with huge data-structures fluctuating in time to the shifting odds of assorted events. Organized crime often plays a large role in gambling, and most bookies soon find themselves involved with the Mob in one way or another. Often times, the Mob will arrange to have certain popular betting events fixed, and walk away with huge profits. This is not to say that independent Bookies and electronic cyber-casinos do not do the same thing, it has just always been considered a staple of Mob business. Fixed betting usually works by altering the posted odds of an event (such as a boxing match). More often, the competitor who is listed as the favorite by the odds will be persuaded (one way or another) to "throw" the match. Since the by-the-odds favorite is most expected to win, most bets are placed on that competitor, and fewer are placed on the other competitor(s). Then the Bookie collects all the money from all the bets, the event begins, the favorite throws the match and everyone who bet on the favorite loses all his money. Only those who bet on the actual winner receive any money, and the Bookie walks away with a large wad of money in his pocket. If this is a Mob-sponsored event, the Mob gets most of the money and the Bookie gets a cut. The trick with fixed betting is not to make it look too obvious. Many Bookies have been done in by outraged betters who feel they have been double-crossed. Another quirk in the Bookie's world is the fact that with the advent of

**Exotic Fixers**

While Exotics are more accepted in society than Full Borgs, they still suffer from some of the social stigma of prejudice (in some cases, jealousy may be closer to the truth). Exotics have the advantage of evoking a carefully-tailored response from humans be it fear for dracoforms, underestimation for weasels, or abject lust for cats, bunnies and playbears... Like metalheads, exotics have particular needs and usually prefer to rely on someone who understands those needs. Exotic culture is more complicated than Borg culture, sometimes creating entire enclaves or neighborhoods devoted to these "Critter Kids." Exotic Fixers often serve as Go-Betweens, bringing normals and cyborgs together with exotic clientele or employers, as well as catering to the needs of the exotic community selling specialized grooming supplies, providing safehouses and other forms of asylum, contacting medical expertise (such as skin cancer specialists), and serving as social organizers in the capacity of Owners, all come to mind.
modern cybernetics, it is possible to get implants which will count cards 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, desperate street scum and wageslaves who cannot afford such exotic wetwork. Booties and Loan Sharks get a lot 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. Booties, on the other hand, are far less fearsome but the chances that you will lose your money are 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 Booties will always have business.

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<th>Bookie</th>
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<td>Gamble</td>
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<td>Brawling</td>
<td>Mathematics</td>
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**Leeches**

People are a Fixer’s greatest commodity, but for a Leech this is more than a cliché, it’s a code to live by. A Leech is a Fixer who specializes in personnel services, be they 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 totally-legal trades with which they are involved. Be they Talent Agents, Talent Scouts or Managers, all make their living off of other people’s talent, and that is why even the fairest and most selfless “People-Person” will find himself unflatteringly 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 performances, sports, business, and assorted black ops like netrunning and assassinations. Whether they are sent out by an employer to find a particular type of talent, by a media mega-corporation to find any kind of talent, or are independent operators who search out talented people without representation and then act as their Agent, Talent Scouts are the people who actively seek out talent. Talent Scouts frequent hotspots of activity for their target talent group. When looking for athletes to invite into the big leagues, Talent Scouts tour the nation’s stadiums, public playing fields and sports bars. When looking for Netrunners to induct into a corporate cracker unit, Talent Scouts visit VRcares, hang around Netrunner bars like the Short Circuit, regularly check out underground electronics shops and are constantly scouring the Net for exclusive BBSs and other virtual hangouts. Talent Scouts spend a great deal of time socializing, schmoozing and asking a lot of unwanted questions. Some people (like nightclub owners) think Talent Scouts are pests, but they are considered invaluable by their employers. Since you never 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 Techies, Medias, or Corporates. A Talent Scout’s profits come from charging their employers a “Finder’s Fee,” which can take the form of a percentage of the monies which the talent brings in, or a simple financial settlement which may or may not be rearranged (essentially, salary or commission). Like any Fixer, Talent Scouts are always looking for their “big score” in the form of a hot talent who they will be the one to discover. When a Talent Scout discovers a truly giant new talent, both parties are pretty much ensured of financial well-being. Although many corporations and other groups have Talent Scouts as regular employees, there are also many independents who will work with these big groups as free lancers. Indie Talent Scouts are often small-time operators and more desperate than their corporate cousins, but every once in a while, a nobody Scout brings a white-hot performer to the doorstep of an influential conglomerate and walks away with a finder’s fee which will keep him comfortable for many years to come. Talent Scouts can even work for the Mob, seeking out new gunsels and fixers to fill holes in a family’s ranks. These Mob Scouts keep track 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 Edgerunner’s career they will receive an offer of employment from a Mob Talent Scout. Solos, Fixers, Prowlers and Netrunners are most likely to draw this attention, but only if they show some potential—no-talent gunsks 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 generally making a the job of a team of players easier or more difficult.

**Talent Scout**

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<td>Interview</td>
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**Talent Agent / 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 sniffing out business opportunities. Representing a pool of human resources requires an extensive network of contacts so Talent Agents usually have several
people on their payroll, even if the Agent represents only a single person or group. Most of an Agent's contacts are corporates or other bigwigs in their client's field. An Agent who represents actors/actresses would have a lot of contacts in Hollywood and London, including media corporations like DMS and Net 54. 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 Streetdeal level-1, reaches its peak at around Streetdeal level-5 or level-6, and then drops off again as it approaches Streetdeal level-10. Such high-powered Agents often represent very well-known people like rockerboy Kerry Eurodyke, baseball star Ray Isaac, braindance Slade McCallahan or corporate Solo Morgan Blackhand. The truly fat, big-time Leech racket is being a Manager; such people will inevitably become well-recognized and well-respected names themselves, and their reputation can become so great that they will wield as much influence in their industry as the talents they represent. Being in charge of the business affairs of a single person or group of talented people combines the representative functions of a Talent Agent with the business savvy of corporate division head, without the job-hunting worries of a normal Agent. Managers have other problems, to be sure, but their close involvement with a group or person (to be referred to as the "client") makes the Manager a member of a team, and as such, a rightful recipient of a percentage of the client's total profits. This benefit carries a heavy price, however, in that Managers lead very stressful lives. 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. Neutrinos, Solos and covert strike teams need repping as much as Rockerboys and actors. In this respect, edgerunner Agents can be thought of as confidential employment agencies. When a somebody is staging a gray or black operation and need to contract a operative or ops team, they can talk to an underground Agent with a good reputation—the Agent will be able to provide skilled operatives, either by offering someone who they represent or directing the employer to another Agent who has the personnel required. He will also generally serve as a middleman between the team and their patrons. For those referees who are running ongoing mercenary-style campaigns, a player-character Fixer who has specialized as a Talent Agent Leech is a great gimmick for setting up adventures, bringing in new player-characters and involving important NPCs. The Manager role must have a very close connection with his clients—regular business meetings, traveling with them, even helping them with their personal problems. Overall, an excellent choice for players who are new to playing Fixer characters, since the Manager will be very much a part of the group of players and will usually accompany them on business matters. Player-character personality and background will affect how adventures are conducted, in that some Agent/Managers will refuse illegal jobs for their clients, and others will only accept contracts for certain causes which they support. However, most Edgerunner Agents are willing and able to arrange anything from a corporate concert to a military coup. In representing an assortment of talented people within a certain industry, business or racket, Talent Agents/Managers are paid to make their clients' goals their own goals, but double-crossing an edgerunner Agent is a rather bad idea, since he's bound to have tight connections with the sort of shady characters who he could persuade to pay you back in kind.

This role can be one of the most useful of NPC fixers, opening up all sorts of possibilities for the creative referee. These NPCs can serve as vehicles for new plotlines, help players out in times of trouble, sell out their clients to the "enemy," or be captured and held hostage! Be they PCs or NPCs, Managers always provide a Cyberpunk campaign with a great deal of color.

The lowest of the Talent Agent/Manager class are the generally shady, sleazy Pimps. They make their living by arranging business for their joytoys and taking a (usually large) percentage of the profits in exchange for organization, protection and care. Pimps are commonly connected to criminal organizations, paying off the vels in return for the right to use certain areas. Through the Mob, many elevate their minimal status, becoming the managers of escort services and other setups. Prostitution may be the world's oldest profession but the business has changed a great deal over the years. In 2020, the wide availability of sexually-oriented Virtual Realities Braindances has drastically reduced the profitability; many pimps are also blax market VR and 'Dance dealers. There's also the 21st-century variation of the prostitute called the "meat puppet," where a girl (or boy) is connected to a braindance while carrying out their "business." This meat puppet's body is controlled by a simple computer program simulating erotic behavior while the actual person is experiencing a totally different world. This is somewhat expensive, and cheap meat puppet outfits often suffer casualties from "technical failure." Because of these alternatives, the higher-level pimps may resemble perverted techies, and the proliferation of horrendous STDs makes it necessary that any Pimp be part Medtech, as well. Some Pimps specialize in Exotic prostitutes such as Playbeings, or even Full Cyborg joytoys. Although it has greatly shrunk, the simple hooker market still exists for those who cannot afford the luxuries of escort services, meat puppets, virtual reality and braindance. Depending upon where the pimp is based, prostitution may or may not be legal. Generally, where the "real thing" is illegal, VR sex sells better.

### Talent Agent/Manager

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Streetdeal</th>
<th>Awareness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Persuasion</td>
<td>Landship or Aecting*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview*</td>
<td>Human Perception*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social*</td>
<td>Expert (entertainment)*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intimidate</td>
<td>Education &amp; General Knowledge</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Pimp

| Note: should be considered an NPC specialty |
| Uses the Manager package with these changes* |
| Handgun |
| Melee |
| Seduction |
| Diagnose Illness |
GO-BETWEENS

In 2020, increasing gaps between the rich and the poor, inflamed tensions between racial groups, harsher confrontations between multiplying political movements, deeper divisions between generations, enhanced disparities in technology, and new alienations in humanity itself (pure humans, cyborgs, exotics and full 'bords) have led to an almost hopelessly fragmented society. Like the crossover from analog to digital technology, society has been divided into smaller and smaller units, leaving no apparent 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 Fixers, and they are called Go-Betweens. Go-Betweens are experts at bridging the gaps between individual or groups, forging connections for the Street with the Corporations and for the nobodies with the Edgerunners. Whether Go-Betweens do this as a matter of duty, ideological crusading or plain old greed is a matter of individual context, but the business is undeniably profitable and fraught with danger. In terms of economics, Go-Betweens are masters of supply and demand, smoothing the flow of commodities (goods, services and information) around the numerous social and economic groups packed into a Cyberpunk city. Go-Betweens know who’s selling, who’s buying, and how to bring them together. As with other Fixers, some Go-Betweens deal in gray and black businesses such mundane jobs as settling disputes between two individuals (such as the forging of a commercial treaty between two Black Marketeteers), or arbitrating a massive head-to-head clash between warring crime organizations or corporate competitors. The size of the conflicts a Negotiator is regularly involved in is almost always proportionate to the level of the Street deal. A small fry Negotiator with a Street deal of 2 will get most of his work from individual clients and petty gang rivalries. A more talented Negotiator may handle neighborhood disturbances, student riots, workforces 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 vengeful losers. 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,” ready to buddy-up with the likely winners and thus guarantee safety from any losing side. Other Negotiators go nomad, picking up their outfit and leaving town (or even the country) after each job. A Negotiator’s contacts often include a lawyer (or paralegal), some police officers or other authorities, and a media or two. The actual staff for a Negotiator should be kept light, since they are obliged to attend to the meat of their business themselves, but a Negotiator can use his Face Men (subordinates) for finding Smuggler

With the advent of corporate dominance, the breakdown of federal authority; the resurgence of states’ rights; the rise of free states, and the establishment of free-trade zones, commercial and economics differ widely from place to place across this once-great nation of ours. The same holds true for the various nations of the world: victimless crimes are legal in some places, illegal in others. In some states you can carry weapons openly, in others, firearms are discouraged. Complex webs of tariffs and taxation divide the globe into a maze which daunts most private traders and clears the way for corporate conglomerates to control import and export. This complicated environment is well-suited to those Go-Betweens who specialize in the art of smuggling. Smugglers take advantage of the variance in economic climates to turn a comfortable profit. If computer intrusion software or cloned organs are cheap and legal in one zone, and expensive and illegal elsewhere, a tremendous amount of money can be made transporting these items from the first place to the second place. The trick is not to get caught doing it! Another interesting quirk of this business is that smuggling is not confined to illegal wares. Substantial profits can be made simply by transporting perfectly legal goods (such as liquor and cigarettes) from one area to another without paying the tariffs and taxes. Sometimes, smugglers find themselves involved in such novel enterprises as bringing food into a
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, as will the scope of his operation. A simple cyberware salesman can operate comfortably out of the back of a van, but a big-time cybernetics broker who bankrolls several black clinics, buys and sells in bulk, and has handshake agreements with half the gangs in the city requires a large complex to cover all his operations. Even more preferable would be several small outlets, 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—sloppiness has killed more Fixers than lack of funds. A good Accounting skill (or better yet, a good accountant) should keep the business afloat, and if you balance your operating costs with your range of profit, you'll be fine. The key here is risk. If you play it safe, you'll stay where you are and eventually get swallowed up by a bigger fish. Fixers have to take chances and score big if they want to survive. Kill or be killed isn't the exclusive territory of Solos, you know.

**Speaking of Money...**

As is indicated in the Cyberpunk 2020 rules, Fixers earn a monthly "salary" based upon the level of their Streetdeal ability. The term "salary" is actually misleading, as most Fixers are independent operatives 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 scamming, planning, dealing and trading, and all of these activities add up, granting a substantial amount of Euro.

Well, maybe not substantial. The Occupation Table on page 48 of the Cyberpunk 2020 rules says that Fixers with Streetdeal levels of 1-5 make 1,500 Eb 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 Euro low-level (1-5) Fixers make, multiply their Streetdeal level by 500 Eb to determine their monthly profits. This way, a small-time street sleaze with a Streetdeal of level 1 will not be making the same amount of Euro as the typically well-connected Fixer with a Streetdeal 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 the efforts he puts into dealmaking, every Fixer is obligated to spend a certain amount of time maintaining his network and thus 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 dealmaking in order to maintain a Fixer's current level of Streetdeal. 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 Streetdeal ability; your Streetdeal level plus two, squared, is how many hours per week must be spent maintaining your network—carrying out all those invisible little deals, meeting with contacts, and keeping channels open. [WORKLOAD: (Streetdeal+2 x Streetdeal+2)] Once a Fixer starts burning his bridges, he has lost the edge and his business will suffer. It is clear to see that after a certain point it becomes impossible for one man to maintain such a vast network by himself. There are 168 hours in a week, and a Level 10 Fixer has 144 hours worth of obligations per week! This leaves only 24 free 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 sleeping, eating, and having any semblance of a private life, the amount of time which can feasibly be spent streetdealing becomes uncomfortably tight. Player-character Fixers who are busy taking part in an adventure have even less free time to sustain their personal network. They will be very busy undermining Arasaka's power base, finding missing children, or shopping for big guns for the party's Solos. Realistically, one would have a hard time spending more than 12 hours out of any day Streetdealing, so the cutoff level for one-man Fixer networks sits somewhere around Level 7 Streetdeal.

Those Fixers who are high-powered enough to have Streetdeal abilities of more than 7 hire underlings to take up the slack in their tremendous Workloads. Only Fixer-class underlings can perform this service, as only they have Streetdeal. This is the way tremendous illegal (and semi-legal) organizations are created, with Level 10 Fixers running the show and droves of 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, but 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 streetwise dealmakers who work for that player-character. These underlings (sometimes called "Facemen") may be characters from the Fixer's lifespan or may be contacts. They may be found through other sources, such as those hired away from rival Fixer organizations, culled from the underground haunts of the city, or they might come to you if your reputation is solid.

Okay, so hotshot Fixers need underlings. How do they figure out what to pay these guys? Each Faceman will have a presumably lower Streetdeal level than their Boss, and each will expect to earn as much profits as their Streetdeal would normally afford them. If all their deals and all their profits are pooled to serve the Boss's network, how do you divide the pie? As an example, let's look at "Sly the Fly," a level 8 Fixer who specializes in illegal
software. With a level 8 Streetdeal ability, he makes 7,000 Eb per month but must spend 100 hours per week maintaining his network. Since Sly the Fly likes to have some free time, he decides he needs some help. He knows that "Chip," a level 1 Fixer who sells some 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 300 Eb per month. Supposedly, if he worked for Sly the Fly, he would reduce Sly's Workload to 91 but he would also cost Sly 300 Eb per month. However, since he is now serving 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 dealing with Sly's business. [EMPLOYMENT BONUS: (Sub-Fixer's Streetdeal + Boss-Fixer's Streetdeal) / 2; round down]. Because of this new Faceman status (remember that it only applies when Chip is working on one of Sly's deals), Chip can crank out up to 36 hours per week for Sly. It would be unrealistic to expect any Faceman to work more than 36 hours per week anyway. Meanwhile, Sly gives Chip a reasonable increase in pay (say, a 50% bonus to 450 Eb per month), but Chip is adding his Workload to the total hours, increasing total profits while taking out very little Euro—Sly comes out ahead. See below for a full illustration of how Sly the Fly's organization would work.

Sly the Fly (Streetdeal 8) has a 100 hour workload and expects to see 7,000 Eb of profits each month. To support his network, he hires four Facemen (see TABLE 1 below.)

These four Facemen put in a little more than 100 hours per week, which is the Workload of a level 8 Streetdeal, so they generate 7,000 Eb per month. Meanwhile, Sly the Fly must pay these Facemen 2,250 Eb per month, so he gets 4,750 Eb per month (close to the salary of a level 7 Streetdeal). To make sure he gets his full 7,000 Eb each month, he decides to work 35 hours per week, increasing the total workload to 144 hours per week, the equivalent of a level-10 Streetdeal. Now, the totaled profits are 10,000 Eb per month, and with the Facemen's pay, Sly gets 7,750 Eb per month (the extra money could be used as bonuses for the Facemen, or whatever). Not too shabby. To maintain even larger fixer networks, assume that each increase over level 10 Streetdeal grants another 2,500 Eb per month (see TABLE 2 below.)

These increases are provided only for the purposes of making money from hours of work; this table will come in handy for those who want to make fixer organizations which are built upon the networks of level 9 and level 10 characters.

### 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 hectic 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 drop one level of Streetdeal and will need to earn those IP all over again. For example, if Sly the Fly's operation needs 100 hours per week to be maintained, 100 hours per week MUST be put in (remember that 144 must be put to bring in the full profit, but 100 are needed to maintain Sly's level 8 Streetdeal). Hours spent catching up on a previous week's inactivity do not generate extra Euro. Let's look at a month in the life of Sly's software ring:

**Week 1:** Business as usual, 144 hours put in by the end of the week.
**Week 2:** The cops crack down, Sly's group goes into hiding—no work is done by week's end.
**Week 3:** The heat is off, Sly's group

### TABLE 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Faceman Handle</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>Bugs</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>2,250 Eb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### TABLE 2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hours of Workload</th>
<th>169</th>
<th>196</th>
<th>225</th>
<th>256</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Equivalent Streetdeal</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Profits in Euro</td>
<td>12,500 Eb</td>
<td>15,000 Eb</td>
<td>17,500 Eb</td>
<td>20,000 Eb</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
must put in at least 200 hours (100 for last week, 100 for this week) to maintain level 8; however, the amount of money generated will not match 2 weeks of work (288 hours). Instead, Week 2 & Week 3, covered by this week's 200 hours of work, will generate 15,000 Eb (because 200 is close to 196, which is the workload for Streetdeal 12, which grants 15,000 Eb per 196 hours).

Week 4: Back to business as usual, 144 hours put in by the end of the week.

The Big Payback

Although it may seem that hiring all these Facemen makes any Fixer's life easier and more profitable, it also carries a corresponding risk—treachery. 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 organization, steal your goods or sell you out to one of the big fish. For this reason, each Faceman has a "Maintenance Time" attached to them which the Boss Fixer must spend keeping in contact with them and checking up on them. What's more, the higher the Faceman's level of Streetdeal, the more personal initiative he has and the more potential he has for treachery. The hours of Maintenance Time for any Faceman is 1/3rd his Streetdeal, rounded up. So, for Sly the Fly, his four-man organization would require 4 hours of Maintenance Time. The total Maintenance Time of an organization is added to 5, and this number is the Difficulty number which a fixer must match or exceed with a Leadership roll. The Maintenance Time of an organization can be reduced in various ways: an organizer system such as a pocket computer or somesuch will reduce Maintenance Time by 2 hours, and a dedicated secretary will reduce Maintenance Time by 12 hours (but of course, you will have to pay the secretary's salary, and secretaries do not count towards total organizational Workload).

The base chance that there will be treachery in an organization is 10% per month. For each point by which the Boss' Leadership roll exceeded the difficulty number, the chance of treachery is reduced by 1%. For each point by which the Boss' Leadership roll missed the difficulty number, the chance of treachery is increased by 2%. When treachery occurs, the fate of the Fixer's organization is in the hands of the referee: it is then time to roleplay an organizational crisis. Anything goes, from a coup to a sellout. An adventure could occur where the referee creates a plot which centered around the treachery plotted by one of the Boss Fixer's Facemen. For this reason, it is advised that the Fixer's Leadership roll be made secretly by the Referee, or else the player-character Fixer will know to expect treachery. Treachery adventures are also a great hook for getting a PC Fixer personally involved in his organization. Nothing gets a Fixer more riled up than finding out that his henchmen is selling secrets to a competitor!

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, who 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 referee, your questions are about to be answered. Fixers can function equally well as team players, as referee aids, as plot devices and as comic relief. This section explains how, and is guaranteed to convince you that Fixers can be your best friends...

...or your worst enemies.

ONE OF THE GUYS

In any Cyberpunk game, there is a lot of competition between player characters. Sometimes this escalates into full-blown enmity and even civil war in the party. Fixers are, by nature, means beyond this with their superior access to information, resources and influence being good cause for jealousy among other players in a team. However, Fixers can work very well with other character roles, each one supporting the other's activities and generally conducting good business. Listed below is a breakdown of the major character roles, each with an explanation of how they can interact with Fixers.

Rockerboys

What's the difference between a Rockerboy working with a Fixer and a Rockerboy working without a Fixer? An Audience. As a Rockerboy, you 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 the attention of a Talent Scout. A Loan Shark can keep your band afloat in hard times, but beware—Mobsters may run your recording label or even use it as a front. Meanwhile, club- and bar-Owners will be your temporary bosses from night to night. To give direction to your career (once you get one), your Manager will take care of your business needs. Pushers will get you the drugs that give you the energy to keep on rockin' though international tours. Info Bros will be able to tell you who's buying your albums, and Black Marketeers can provide chips of the latest trends in underground music for you to keep up on. Finally, you may have to deal with the big wheels in the media-corporations when you finally sell out and go Top-40; a Go-Between comes in handy there.
Solos

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 those 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 black ops team, or another choice is freelance assassin for the scheming Mobsters. While you're on the job, Information Brokers can get you data on targets, and when the op is over (assuming you survived) a Fence will be glad to buy any loot you brought back with you. And if, instead, you took a job that was just too big, a SIN-Lifter can get you a new pair of shoes...

Netrunners

Truly hardcore Netrunners don't want to waste time with real-space pettiness. That's what Fixers are for. Black Marketeers keep you in illegal, under-the-counter programs and fancy electronic gear, and Traders are often good for second-hand hardware and software in exchange for valuable data. Info Bros sell system maps for most of the big-name data fortresses (sometimes they're even up to date) and will be glad to buy hot data from you. Shoemakers can get you into vital personnel databases and will fall over themselves to please a Netrunner with saleable SINS. If you're any good, a Talent Agent shouldn't have trouble finding you work. Bookies use Netrunners in their electronic numbers racket, Sniffers often hire Netrunners to help them electronically track down hard-to-find items and Factors always need Netrunners to execute financial database tampering. A Talent Scout could show up at any time trying to recruit you for the Mob, who use Netrunners both for data security purposes and for runs against their competition. You could be visited by Talent Scouts from the corporations (or the government), who could very well set you up against your hacker buddies.

Medias

A Media's unique view of the world puts Fixers 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 sportscasting, then Bookies are full of great inside dirt on the sports players and their popularity. 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 their equipment to good use can expect to be offered a contract from some mediacorp's Talent Scout, or can rely on their own Talent Agents to get them the best assignments (covering the war 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 sleepin' 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 cheap food, 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, Loan Sharks 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 temporary employment contracts with agricorps and for settling disputes with towns or the authorities (like HiWay). For the less ethical families, remember that Mobsters sometimes hire whole packs to ransack 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 SINless, something which makes being a system-buckin' Nomad a whole lot easier.

Corporates

Weasels and worms have more in common than you think—they're both sneaky and they're both survivors. Corporate weasels recognize the connection they have with underground Fixers, and they take advantage of the relationship. Corporates get the drugs they need to work those extra hours from Pushers, and Sniffers exist to get Corporates whatever they want from the streets but are afraid to fetch themselves. Info Bros can provide insider trading data and the plans of other Corporates, and Factors can carry out embezzlement, ghost accounting and even balance your books if you really need it. Bookies love to take bets from Corporates (they know a Corp is good for the money) and some will give odds and accept bets on Corporate endeavors. However, every Corporate in 2020 will have to deal with a Mob-related Fixer at some point—organized crime runs too many businesses. Keep an eye
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...

**Techies**

One good Fixer deserves another. Techies often rely on Information Brokers to tell them where to acquire newtech components and Info Bros can also sell secret designs and blueprints. To build those designs, you could go to a Trader, the best source of raw materials, and the only character willing to trade new inventions for your inventions. Black Marketeers can get you specific equipment, parts, tools and even workspace. Fences can be a good source of random odds and ends, and Smugglers can provide restricted components and transport your finished designs anywhere (no matter how illegal they are). Mobsters make good employers, as well—they could hire you for anyone of a number of rackets (like autobody shops or back cyberware clinics), and if you're really good, a Talent Scout might even hire you to work for the corps. If they do, hope you like lab coats and clock-punchin'...

**Cops**

They say opposites attract. Although Fixers and Cops are usually on opposite sides of the law, that doesn'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? Sleazes are born stoolies. Pimps 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 Millitech), 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 ahold of anything on the following list, they will probably need to talk to a Fixer (see sidebar, pg. 48).
Fixer Services
- Alternate Identity
- Assassination (to put a hit out on someone)
- Bartering
- Betting
- Blackmail Information
- Body Parts (no questions asked)
- Braindance/VR (illegal)
- Car Parts (no questions asked)
- Career Management
- Contract Arbitration
- Computer System Maps
- Corporate Contacts
- Cyberware (illegal)
- Drugs (illegal)
- Electronics (underground)
- Embezzlement
- Establishment Management
- everyday Goods (extra-cheap)
- Explosives
- Face Banks
- False IDs
- Gambling
- Get-Rich Quick Schemes
- Information (underground)
- Insider Trading
- Intercultural Connections
- International Connections
- Jobs (through a middleman)
- Loans (no questions asked)
- Meat Puppets (prostitution)
- Money Laundering
- Negotiation Expertise
- Netrunning Software
- New Shoes (identity)
- Odds (gambling)
- Organized Crime
- Pawnbroking
- Personnel Services
- Political Favors (Pork)
- Procurement Services
- Prostitutes
- Racketeering
- Scalped Tickets
- S+6 Surgery

Fixin' the Campaign

Referees may feel some trepidation about including a Fixer character in their campaign. Fixers need lots of support, don't like to do hands-on dirty work and are generally a role with a complicated background. These facts should not bar 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" campaigns may be an oxymoron in Cyberpunk, 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 poor (or nonexistent) combat skills do not fit in very well. However, there are several types of 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 Sniffers and Negotiators. As Go-Betweens, Sniffers and Negotiators are closely tied to people in general, but they have few other limitations. They are fully mobile, they do not run structured organizations, and both are capable of taking care of themselves. These two specializations are ideal choices for player-characters in "standard" campaign, as they can greatly add to the capabilities of any team. On top of their Streetdeal capabilities, Sniffers offer additional opportunities: one is to have a relatively low Streetdeal, and the other is for the Fixer to put his best Faceman in charge of the network temporarily while adventuring. The first may seem unacceptable, but think about it: Streetdeal is such a wide-reaching, multi-level ability that level-4 or a level-5 puts you on the same level with level-7 Solos and Netrunners. Putting a Faceman in charge for a while is easier, but it invites mutiny among the ranks. 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 specializations 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 specializations is campaign-ready, providing enough material and adventure hooks to establish a solid base for an organization which can employ several characters. Black marketing, information brokerage or running a nightclub are all possibilities. In such campaigns, the Fixer is the "boss," and he employs all the other characters or otherwise works with them to support his operations. For instance, consider the possibilities in running a smuggling campaign. The Fixer character would be the brains of the operation, but he would need to hire vehicle experts (Solos or Vehicle Jockeys), mechanics and electricians (Techies) for maintaining the vehicles and coming up with creative smuggling equipment, computer experts (Netrunners) for altering computer security and shipping manifests, security thugs...
time period is up, there is a flat 5\% chance per day (cumulative) that the identity will be busted and removed from the system. Disposable skeletons are usually 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 place a phone call 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 doubled. Disposable skeletons usually cost about 2,000 Eb, but this is modified by the length of the “life” of the identity and other circumstances.

New Shoes

Many times edgerunners 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 sentence. The going rate for a pair of new shoes is in the neighborhood of 50,000 Eb, including zeroing, a new identity and contracts with black clinics 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 Spare 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!

― 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 Chiba district of Tokyo or the Minsk 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 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 can 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 vacated 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 pawnshops that litter the alleyways 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 the Night City traffic grid, three times a day, High Street's traffic slows to the pace of non-electronic mail delivery. In fact, traffic is so slow that airships (you know—balloons, dirigibles) often outpace the hundreds of sports cars on the streets below. Most people see this as a problem, but Night City's Fixers and assorted entrepreneurs see this as an opportunity. The rush hours create the perfect conditions for commerce. Thousands of people stuck in their respective cars for hours on end provides a captive, yet varied audience. After an hour or so of a complete standstill, who can resist an ice-cold Beer or the latest Inla Ganger porno Braindance?

The part of the High Street Strip located near the corporate section and Japantown is well-protected by locally-hired security and the NCPD, both of whom are ready to chase off anyone who even looks at a good citizen in the wrong way. Most hustlers push relatively legal goods in this area, albeit at a higher price than normal. After all, the corporates can afford it.

As High Street crosses the Night City Convention Center, the Strip jumps into high gear. If it weren't for the Municipal Criminal Justice building, this section of the Strip might have degenerated into a virtual combat zone by now. As it is, Cadigan Avenue (which runs between the convention center, the Afterlife bar and the main Night City bus garage) is the best-known hangout for prostitutes in the city, drawing johns largely from the out-of-town convention crowds. The many alleyways off of Cadigan Ave host a variety of other criminal activities which pander to the needs, or at least desires, of both a white- and blue-collar clientele. In an attempt to clean up one of these crime-ridden backstreets, the Amerline Depot was forced to wall in an entire alley. After a group of boosters blasted a small entrance hole in one of the walls and turned it into a temporary home, Amerline filled in the entire alley with solid
New Federalist Party, etc.

"Deus is Now, merge with DDI today!" A technoreligious pacifying storefront.

Night City Strip Encounters:
1. Small-Time Vendor—A low level Fixer approaches, offering to sell the players a stolen watch, cigarettes, crappily electronic (maybe already broken), knock-off perfumes/ drugs, a copy of the Wachutower, a guided tour of the city, or perhaps a book.

2. Sit-Down Vendor—The players pass a small stall covered with goods; the owner sits with his back to a wall. The table contains numerous items, including illegally copied vid chips, religious materials and incense, the latest pamphlets on some human rights violation in another country or an assortment of children's tapes.

3. Argument—A driver takes a few minutes out of his busy commute to engage a city resident in a conversation concerning the merits of paying attention to the crossing signals. This conversation can be heard for blocks—and could turn nasty.

4. The Heat—A six-man foot patrol of the city's finest march past the players. When they're out in patrol numbers they must be looking for trouble; hopefully the players won't give them an excuse.

5. Gutter Rats—The players pass a group of small, grimy street children playing with what looks like a bloodstream cybernetics module.

6. Raving Raver—A person stokes one of the players and shouts "God said Bob's going to take this city!" This nut needs a few breath mints.

7. Loudmouthed Punks—A bunch of chronies leaping a building and heckling any "normal-looking" players. These chronies are far more annoying than guns or bombs.

8. Salesman—A mid-level Fixer calls out to players into a side alley and offers to sell them some illegal service and/or goods. Pick from weapons, drugs, black market soft (or cyber) ware.

9. Streetvillagers—a group of gangers grab an attractive young streetboy, right in front of the players. They probably intend to sell the kid to reps from the S.E. Asian Slave Circuit.

10. Drug War—A rival drug lord decides to off his competition; the players are unlucky enough to be nearby. Use 2-3 random thugs armed with 9s (Chrono book 1, pg.50). Due to traffic jams they plan to escape into the NCART system via nearby station.

Businesses Fronting the High Street Strip in Night City:
1. Medical School Night City Med Center
2. Night City Tech College
3. Ashcroft Hotel high-class
4. Safe Child childcare
5. Plaza Medical Services high-class clinic
6. Ashcroft & Hammersmith luxury store
7. Hotel Hamilton mid-class
8. University of Free Calif. Health Science Center
9. Eurobank Plaza
10. Night City Post Office
11. Night City Convention Center
12. The Afterlife solo club
13. The Central mid-class hotel
14. The Grand Illusion major rock club
15. Bay Bridge Residential Hotel/Night Owl 24-hr. bar
16. Night City Fire Station #1
17. Long Lost Books indie rare book store
18. StreetTemp private employment service for edgerunners
19. Meditera Preservation N.C.'s main "bodybank"
20. Night City DMV
21. Night City Today! street sheet publisher

Places:
22. Cleanroom secure office maintenance and Unfilled Space
23. 24 Hour Cafe and Unfilled Space
24. Senior Tours travel agency and Unfilled Space
25. Night City Harbormaster's Office
26. Unfilled Space
27. C. Domat Express Co. shipping company

Shop/Store Ideas for on the Street and in the empty buildings:
- Fast food stall with rumor, sitting on a stick, whatever....
- Fortune teller. Electronically-driven Tarot and I-Ching.
- Beer-barrel bar selling counterfeit homebrew to the Streetpunks.
- "Cyber-maintenance While Yu Wait" 
- Abdullah and his box o' MIMAM. Cheap Mexican copies and knock-off Vend-Mods.
- Organized streetwalkers; your pleasure—in under an hour.
- Some Nomad outfit just in with fresh produce from the countryside...
- Quirky Acupuncture, straight from Hong Kong.
- A political stand representing exiled refugees, recruiting revolutionaries, a radical offshoot of the...
concrete. Although it is nicely maintained, the side streets around the Barbican Building are the unofficial center for illegal software selling. Ironically, the section of High Street which connects with Cadigan Ave is actually quite safe due to its proximity to the police station and constant patrols by the Silver Slash guardian gang (who happen to enjoy a 10% discount with most Strip salesmen).

**Mobo Rackets and the Strip**

On the Strip, organized crime is as pervasive as the roaches and rats. Whatever criminal syndicate controls an area, whether it be a gang of Tong 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 dole out individual parcels of Strip 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 Strips free of complete domination by criminal groups. Far more common are the situations where 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 and organizations to offer their "protection." In general, organized crime groups avoid businesses owned by corporations or those that contract private security. Once under the wing of any particular syndicate, the individual streetdealers will be forced to pay a percentage "cut" of their total operation to the Mob. These charges apply to the individual no matter what they do — legal, illegal or a mixture of both. Depending on the nature of the business, the syndicate may also expect certain favors. The Yakuza usually treats its "hospitality services" (protection) as a straight business relationship, while the Colombians may declare a small cafe its regional headquarters and staff it with seven local members. These local members will expect courtesy in the form of free food, lodging and whatever else they want.

"No drek. There I was. Thought I was gonna die."
- "Crash" Everett, Rogue Fixer

Undoubtedly, the most marketable area of the High Street Strip is the Upper Marina area. The Upper Marina surrounds the mouth of the San Marro Bay Bridge and is the most traffic-congested delta of the entire city. In addition a small, pierlike landing underneath the bridge serves as an ad hoc open market. The City and Harbor Police tolerate the market mainly because the vendors prevent the site from becoming a permanent homeless shelter.

The Jam Culture: In 2020, cars are designed for more than just getting you from place to place; they're also designed around the times when you're standing still. Modern auto designs take into account the growing occurrences of gridlock zones and traffic patterns that are absolutely certain to halt during periods of heavy use. Cellular phones are no longer options on standard model cars — they're standard equipment. In most cases, options range from TVs to microwaves, VCRs, office equipment and porta-carpeters. For many people, the automobile has become a temporary home. It's a shelter from the smog and grime of the streets outside the car door. While hesitant to break out of their automobile cocoons, the average driver will sometimes stop for a good price on a used Beaudance player.
Strip Culture

Strips are the mutts of city districts, combining any number of styles and social elements in a haphazard fashion. Many Strips incorporate sections which could rival mallplexes in their sheer volume of popular culture. Movie theaters, VRcades and Braindance 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 complete freaks (and Cyberpunk characters) would be interested in—things like nipple rings and bulletproof condoms. However, the true soul of the Strip is anti-culture. Keep in mind that the Strip is about commerce, and money can’t be bothered by any type of objective standards or morals; if someone is willing to pay for it, it’s good. In fact, some Strips have become glorified testaments to bad taste while others, almost by luck, fall into an understated film noir atmosphere. Regardless, any type of activity one could want is on sale in a store, office or alley nearby. The only exception (and a minor one at that) to the above rule are the "Wanna-Be Strips," usually located near college campuses or corporate compounds. These pseudo-Strips tend to be friendly, strictly patrolled and pre-approved clumps of shops almost always called "Something's Emporium."

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 safe enough for adventurous Corporate 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 those 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 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 litter the sidewalks, inviting you to buy or do anything. Check out them out—you've got cheap beauty salons, body clinics, restaurants, gay bars, psychic centers, art studios, auto body workshops, bazaars, craze centers, flea markets, riperdoes, whorehouses, VRcades, drug labs, pusticarts, cyberware dealerships, nightclubs, pawn shops, weapon stores, bars, body banks, music stores, martial arts centers, recording studios, drug dens and raves. Whatever you're into, it's here.

• The Pig Posse: The Mob can be an oppressive force on the Strip, and the gangs make everybody's lives miserable. But depending on where you live, there may be or may not be one crew who are even worse—the police. In some cities or states, the police are so crooked and dirty that they make the gangs and the punks look friendly.

• Ever wonder why all these apparently lone-wolf Edge-runners clump together in four-twent-person packs during your Cyberpunk games? The answer is freetime herding; lifelessness is as common to the cyber-elite as it is to the quietly desperate droves of wage-slaves and street-cum—we all suffer to some degree.
PITFIGHTS (Priority 3 crime in most areas; Priority 4 if gambling is not involved): Pit fights have been around a long time—they are events in which pairs of dogs, specially-bred fighting roosters, weasels or large city rats are placed in fighting arenas. These animals are provoked into fighting each other by use of drugs and/or abusive treatment, while the audience places bets with ringside bookies. However, the modern version of this activity is to use animals with certain cybernetic enhancements, including palm editors, carborous teeth and sharpened alloy clawimplants.

Sentence: For proprietors and staff, 100-3000 Eb fine and/or 1-5 years Low Security Block. For audiences, 10-200 Eb fine and/or 1 week to 1 month Low Security Block.

EXOTIC PITFIGHTS (Priority 2 crime in New York State and by Statute in many other areas): In 2018, the Rochester Police Department raided a Monroe Avenue book store suspected of being a front for drug trafficking. Instead, they found a secret doorway leading to a basement combat arena. Initially, the police suspected either a Pitfighting ring or some sort of Bloodsport. Instead, they found four Exotic males, three of whom were dead. According the case file, these individuals had been held prisoner and kept drugged until they were forced to fight each other. Bets were placed by the audience on the type of exotic that would win (the snake exotic had two-to-one odds over a bear exotic). This arrest received a lot of media attention and copy-cat offenses are expected.

Sentence: For proprietors and staff, 500-10,000 Eb fine and/or 1-5 years of Mid Security Block. For the audience, 10-200 Eb fine and/or 1 day-1 week of Low Security Block.

HIGH IMPACT BLOODSPORTS (Priority 2, legal only in Texas and in certain areas of Mexico and Canada): High Impact Bloodsports are any type of illegal sports-like activity which is likely or certain to result in the death of a participant. This includes Competion Knife Fighting, Monoblade Fencing, Taser Boot Kick Boxing, Land Mind Rugby and Saucer-Grenade Jai Alai. Like Low Impact Bloodsports, the participants get a percentage of the proceeds if they win and can be arrested as participants in the crime.

Sentence: For Proprietor and Staff, 5000-150,000 Eb fine and/or 10-90 years in Mid Security Block. For the audience (requires minimal proof that the person knew the nature of the event), 50-1000 Eb fine and 5 days-9 years Low Security Block.

GROUP VOYEURISM (Priority 5, although it may be lower depending on who is spied upon): Group Voyeurism, also known as "Peeking Parties", is a social event where the host (often a Netrunner or Techie) electronically stalks a victim. Using numerous public security cameras or even their own remotes, the host can invade the person’s privacy rights as established by the Privacy Act of 2002. Selling the resulting footage is a separate crime with an additional sentence.

Sentence: For host, 200-2000 Eb fine and/or 2 months-1 year Low Security Block plus a possible civil suit (though not likely). For Audience, 10-100 Eb fine and 1-5 days in Low Security Block.
PERSONA TAMPERING (Priority 2): Persona Tampering is any unauthorized alteration of another individual's personality. Commonly referred to as "brainwashing," this crime often involves the purposeful use of mind-altering drugs, induced Cyberpsychosis, and use of certain Black ICE programs such as Liche and Psychodrome. The most common convictions under this crime occur among poser gang leadership, neglectful Ripperdoocs, underground software programmers and inexperienced chemists.
Sentence: 2-20 years in Mid Security Block and possible civil suits and fines.

PERSONA APPROPRIATION (Priority 2): Persona Appropriation is actually the lesser in a series of crimes. Grand Persona Appropriation is a crime that applies to the possibility of virtually copying or stealing a person's mind. While no actual occurrence of this crime has ever been reported, the theoretical possibility has people very scared. The lesser version, Persona Appropriation, is designed to punish the practice of using a person's image in Virtual Reality sales (yes, it's illegal to sell VR individuals based on real people without their permission). This crime occasionally crosses with copyright infringement when the Simulation is of a famous person.
Sentence: 100-5000 Eb and/or 1 day-10 weeks Low Block Security and possible civil suits.

UNAUTHORIZED GENETIC OR BIOCHEMICAL MANIPULATION (Priority 2): This crime is related to Persona Tampering, but Unauthorized Genetic or Biochemical manipulation also applies to any changes, whether mental or physical (short of death, which constitutes Murder), that are inflicted upon the victim by the other person. For example, tampering with someone's chromosomes so they prematurely age would be criminal under this category. In addition, unauthorized cloning is covered by the section. Several cases have been recorded of the use of cloning technology by unscrupulous persons who have manufactured copies of unsuspecting victims (this is possible with detailed genetic samples, which are actually rather easy to obtain). These nearly mindless clones could be used for target practice, personal entertainment and other unmentionable purposes. Note that these technologies are always heavily regulated and there may be additional fines for merely using these sciences without the proper permits and licenses.
Sentence: 1000-10,000 Eb and 1-20 years Mid Security Block.

CANNIBALISM (Priority 3): With 2020's increases in population growth and overcrowding (combined with vast reductions in the standard of living), Cannibalism has become a potential problem. While the ordinary flesh-eater is some whacked-out booster, Cannibalism is becoming a sick fad among the wealthy. This 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 pranks were played on the Night City Police Department by local gangs including the Bozos and the Philharmonic Vampires. Hound Tipping is performed in the following manner: first, gang members commit petty crimes in front of police officers on patrol with Robohounds. Some of the gang members distract the police officers, while the other punks microwave or EMP the hound into robotic unconsciousness. Then, the gang quickly switches some of the Robohound's program modules. Once the reprogrammed, the Robohound is restarted and the punks run away. Several days later, the new programming kicks in and the hound starts reading anyone in a business suit as a cop-killer (or some other equally "humorous" scenario). It goes without saying that this prank has cost Night City and police departments around the country great embarrassment and a fair share of civil actions/bad press.
Sentence: 2000-10,000 Eb fine and/or 2-20 years High Security Block (and most certainly an instant beating for the ravers inside a Corporation's data fortress).
10 Sample News Stories:

1) "Is it in horrible ..."
2) "The Detroit Gladiators beat San Francisco Firehawks 15 to 7. The Firehawks' star player Ron Smith died in double overtime."
3) "The 5 day forecast calls for intermittent light rain with pollution indexes reaching 3.79 of air quality."
4) "In financial news, Taiwan sold Que Mo Island to mainland China for 125,000,000 Eb and concessions with local water rights."
5) "Human interest story. Edith Smith won 4,500,000 Eb in the United States Bond Lottery ...
In a related story, Mrs. Smith's two children were kidnapped and are being held in exchange for the winning ticket."
6) "The Defense Attorney Action Group claimed responsibility for the assassination of Leon Batty. As some younger viewers may not remember, Mr. Batty was convicted of inciting a massacre of 31 lawyers during the purges of 1998."
7) "Raven Microcyb has announced a recall for all Cyberbands in the F24 series. Apparently, these bands tend to overcompensate for gripping and suffer from various defects.
Several injuries have been credited to this problem."
8) Movie review—"Dizkner's Sleeping Beauty II: The Witch Strikes Back is yet another bourgeois exploitation of the screen to fill the empty minds of American viewers with even more unnecessary violence. Don't producers realize yet that their irresponsible use of the media is perpetrating violence among our peaceful youth?"

upon arrest); Night City has promised a civil suit in addition to criminal prosecutions.

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 Fixer 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 street or the sewer-like smell, every moment in the city is loaded with vivid sensory input. Corporate skyscrapers block out the sun making it seem like twilight even during the day...nothing to it matters, since it's almost always overcast or raining anyhow. No need for streetlights though—the extensive use of neon illuminates all but the darkest alleyways. Noise pollution has risen to the level of a science. Bars, movies and videogames compete for your attention; if not with volume than with sounds designed to jar the listeners attention. Even the air has a frenzied feel to it.

Like the city itself, 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 how 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 cyberpsycho make city life interesting but hardly secure, unless you make it that way.

The largest percentage of any city population in 2020 is Streetscum (for a full description of citydwellers, see Night City Sourcebook pg. 59). While some Streetscum filter into gangs or cults, the majority of these indigenents merely continue to live another day, scraping together what they can to eat. In city life, flashy cyberpunks and chromed streetpunks 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, Streetscum tend to congregate around ethnically específico 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 20'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 spots, allowing minor incidents to ignite racial tensions. Naturally, racial tensions are minimal to the true Cyberpunk societal divide—class. Most turfs within the Combat Zone (except for those controlled by race-hate 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 overused 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-awake 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 Chromebook I, pg. 11) are widely marketed and relatively cheap, allowing one to get a full night's sleep in 2 hours. This device has revolutionized work schedules, and to an even greater extent, play schedules. Clubs party at full tilt all the night through, and the number of 24-hour stores has increased geometrically with each passing day.

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, numerous pharmaceutical concerns such as Biotechnica have made tremendous profits from affordable uppers and stimulants designed to promote wide-awake activity for 22 straight hours. Perhaps the most well-recognized brand name for this class of drug is Xoma Pharmaceutical's "Catch-22," which is available in convenient 30-capsule containers for 4 Eb each; a year's supply only costs your typically overzealous corporate weasel 48 Eb. Stylishly modern lifestyles are based on cheap consciousness and fast naps, bringing to a screeching halt the days of mallpoxes which closed at 10:00 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 depression" which people manifest during the week-long nights of Alaska, the general temperament of 2020 society has taken a grimmer attitude 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 coherence in anyone's schedules.

continued from previous page

9) "Long Island Borough President Casper Fortas announced today that the Borough has developed a new bio-chemical weapon. The President vows to use the device unless NY State agrees to recognize Long Island as an independent entity."
10) "International Enquirer—It had Kerry Eurodyne's quintuplets, any mother, and they all have furred skin and speak in tongues."


1) (107) The Mom Channel—They say you can never go home again. They were wrong. "Did you have a nice day at work? Have some chicken soup, dearie!"
2) (186) Johnny Silverhand TV—24 hours a day of pure Johnny!
3) (94) That Crazy Guy!—a sitcom based on four friends living in a Salt Lake City apartment. One of them is Cyberpsycho and has a bad habit of dismembering the neighbors.
4) [15] The Board—a TV drama based on the exciting lives of members of a small subsidiary corporation.
5) [95] Bulgarian Blood Boxing—World Championships
6) (47) The Spiky Kids hour—a fun-filled, hour-long children's show. The show is hosted by Spiky, a cynical, overweight clown, known for his colorful ties and contrasting dark view of the world. "How are my way-slaves to be today?"
"Don't worry, by the time you're old enough to drive there won't be any air left, so you don't have to bother buying a car!"
7) (86) Knights of Old—an epic show based on a nice, medieval fantasy land full of elves and dragons.

continued next page...
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 day-night schedule, as TV ratings studies conclusively demonstrate. It is undeniably true that the majority of corporate employees still work traditional 9-to-5 hours, but their ability to work late (and thus collect overtime bonuses), catch up on paperwork at home, and generally put in extra effort has expanded, and correspondingly, corporations’ potential profits in employing human beings has also expanded. Other than 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 hulls 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 pointlessly 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* society. In fact much less than one percent of the population are street-smart, tough-talking, gun-toting, edge-running, film-noir personalities like the archetypal *Cyberpunk* player-character. The rest are either tedious corporate wage-slaves or hopeless lowlife scum. These people kill time by cultivating addictions to Braindance, VR or other drugs, diving 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 "Lifelessness," much like homelessness which was a serious problem in the 20th 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 having too much idle time while being over-stimulated by media images and merchandising ploys. These people feel a lack of "life" in their existences, and seek a cure for this lifelessness in one form or another. Many people have made virtual careers out of finding things to do with their free time, 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 clique-like crowds of regulars which may or may not be comprised of close friends (the Forlorn 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, but 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 fallout from this Freetime mentality. Every night of the week, police riot squads are called out to break up illegal parties ("Raves") which have amblled onto someone’s private property. Although usually harmless, these raves sometimes degenerate into mass vandalism or low-powered street rumbles. Other common street diversions like underground gambling houses, bloodsports (such as knife-fighting competitions), slamdancing, whorehouses, VR arcades and gang warfare are all thriving thanks to the unrest of the modern man. Drug manufacturing is up, BodyLotus is paying record prizes, and meatwagons have never had a busier season. When this unfocused chaos abounds, Fixers are hard at work in the background, fueling the frenzy and making a healthy profit. The thing which sets a Fixer apart from the rest of the crowd is that when he’s partying, he’s working. Mingling with people at parties and installing oneself in the social network is a day at the office for a Fixer. Fixers make the connections which keep this system going, bringing the corporates from their conapts to the streets and setting the joyboys and girls up with their Johns. Without the efforts of these covert capitalists, the innumerable freetime diversions wouldn’t work. Fixers are a
kind of lubricant necessary to the economic machine, making sure that the wealth and the grease are all spread around evenly. They can also be likened to human circuitry, connecting nodes with the necessary data; carrying impulses across a vast social body, like neurons in a very nervous system. In 2020, everyone is a junkie for something...sex, drugs, power, money or thrills, so everybody needs a Fixer. Fixers are your friends.

**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 even 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 to the individual. Cellular communicators had evolved into truly personal technology; portable enough to be carried 22 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 — where ever you are. In continuing this trend, the corporations have created the ultimate in personal communication, the cyberaudio phone splice. The popularity of these implanted telephones has created a cultural phenomenon of public mumbling. In any public place you can spot people carrying on subvocalized conversations with some distant person. By connecting cyberdecks, computers or faxes, a person can effectively carry their offices with them. This business-out-of-a-briefcase 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 of universal connection as a scientific unearthing 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 globe’s emerging electronic highways. In 2020 the Net combines all of these services, granting 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 end result of this super-integration is that it is possible to have one machine which handles all of these functions. Although there are still tons of dedicated phones, computers and TVs in 2020, the concept which has emerged as the least word in consumer media technology is The Box.

“The Box” is the common term which has been given to Personal Digital Media Universal Systems. The Box, when connected to the Net and any automated home systems performs the following functions: television, VCR, brainedance player, stereo, computer, full-function telephone, answering machine, video game and virtual-reality system, screamsheet printer, and home systems manager (climate control, appliances, lights, etc.). The Box would provide full access to the Net and all its services, including video-phone communication, 500+ channels (standard service; over 1000 costs extra), online video rental services, home shopping, party lines, digital radio broadcasting, virtual realities, library services, newsgroups and anything and everything else. Of course, the owner of the Box would still need to pay for all these services, but the benefit would be that they would never need to leave their home. Ever.
Solos in the Net?!? There is a small issue which needs clearing up for all Cyberpunk players. It seems that only Netrunners (a small percentage of the population) are able to make use of the worldwide, economically gigantic Net. Such is not the case. As Vice From the Edge states, "While other characters can use computers and other cyber-assisted tools, only Netrunners have the training and ability to think at the lightning-fast speeds required for cyberdeck hacking." The exclusivity of interface access in hacking, not in usage. For this reason, any character with Net access (through a DataTerm, a cybernetic terminal, etc.) can use the Net for legitimate purposes. Such purposes may include:

- Interactive Television
- Music Transmission, Subscription, and "Net Jams"
- Newsreaders and other info services
- Data Havens
- Education and instruction
- Video Games, Braintease, and VR simulation
- Pay-per-View Movies
- BBSs, Databases & Chat systems
- Fax Communication and Publishing (of screencasts, zines, books)
- Telecommunications (Customer info, line routing, call monitoring, and other procedures).

The idea behind the Net lies in the connection of almost every data management and retrieval system in the world. Such a network is very complicated, and using a text-based interface for this system is far too difficult for most people. For this reason, the sensory illusion that is the Net was put into effect. By generating "physical" analogs for data procedures, the Net allows anyone to be a passable computer op. Using the Net effectively gives anyone who lacks in automatic skills of Library Search +1, and System Knowledge +1 (not a bonus, just a base level 1).

The Box is still uncommon (similar to HDTV or DATs in 1993) but is rapidly growing in popularity, especially in the suburbs—it allows the locals of Beaverville to insulate their lives even further. The easy access to such concentrated mass media is drawing 2020's society into ever-greater depths of consumer culture, and has been linked to growing illiteracy rates around the world. Easily recognizable, standardized icons are replacing written communications entirely. Even more disturbing is the potential for alienation and dehumanization—face-to-face, human interaction may soon be obsolete. However, if The Box appeals to you, a typical PDMUS costs about 2,000 Eb and is about 2 x 2 x 1" in size; most have voice-operation as a standard feature.

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 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: System 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 lag time (two to three seconds delay), creating a slightly annoying telegraph-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 Message Mail—see Night City Source Book pg. 284), which is also used when the other party isn't available for Virtual Conferencing. Public utility word-processors are available, for a small per hour fee, to compose letters and messages later sent by E-Mail. Other public utilities include: The Yellow Book (basically, Net phone books), phone patches (allowing someone in the Net to call someone outside the Net on a cell or fiber optic channel), World Weather Info, 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 to operate in the first place; from that starting point, it's easy for the Net to interpret that data into whatever language the other party understands (Translator gives the user an effective +6 language skill, but only with others in the Net). Privately owned utilities include virtual shopping networks, VRcades and private Net schools. Of all the possible uses of the Net, actual criminal Netrunning is only a small fraction.

You don't have to be a Netrunner to find out what time your hated enemy's Maglev gets in. Much information of the Net is free access. The Net's designers 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 the Corporations. Here's how it works: Street Techies are always designing interesting little trinkets that somehow make streetscum life a little easier. These designs are often made with a Computer-Aided Design And Manufacturing (CAdam) program. Then, the producer simply rents some time in any one of several robot-operated mini-factories, such as the world-famous Malorian Firearms autolathes (See Night City Source Book pg. 163). Autolathe factories charge reasonable rates and a standard fee for raw materials. A surcharge is added for rarer materials and permits may be required for the use of dangerous materials such as explosives or gunpowder. Since autolathes can run with only very minimal human staff, permit difficulties may be overcome with well-timed bribes. 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 huge corporate factories for per-product construction, the flexibility open to the New Industrialists allows them to compensate for their higher prices by offering individualized products. Many of these New Industries are based in the Net, functioning like a BBS with dozens, hundreds, or even thousands of autolathe programs posted for sale. Users log on, credit the BBS for a design, and then take the design program to a rental autolathe. As one might imagine, many underground BBS deal in black-market CAdam programs which will produce knockoffs of copyrighted products and other illegal wares. New Industry groups such as Phoenix Armatech and Urban Technologies practice this blueprint techno-piracy.

One of the tenets of the Cyberpunk Revolution is “information wants to be free.” Another buzzword of this movement is Appropriation. These two themes come together in the traffic of electronic product piracy as practiced by renegade programmers and cyberspace vandals. These particularly anti-corporate Netrunners have managed to “liberate” some of the more popular designs for common household appliances and other mass-produced corporate products (home electronics, digital music, communications equipment—even cars). These designs are broadcast through the Net via specialized Worm programs. Eventually, some autolathe-happy New Industrialist gets hold of one of these designs and goes into business producing knockoff products. Although these replicated products are generally made with cheaper materials, they are in all other respects identical to the original product. The street industrialist doesn’t have to worry about advertising, insurance or legal fees, and can easily turn a profit by piggybacking on the success of any particular design that he happens to have.

### Throw-Away Tech

They say that the future is disposable, but it doesn’t tend there. As the global population swells and urban centers clot with desperate consumers, mass-production and mass-marketing go into overdrive. In 2020, there are vending machines everywhere. A Consumer Digest Magazine survey taken in March 2019 reported that in America there is a vending machine for every seven people. This disposable society needs refills, and for the majority of people (the poor), streetside vending machines are the only reliable and affordable source of basic supplies. Cigarettes are only the beginning; cheap, 24-hour machine-printed clothes dispensers dress a good 20% of America’s populace. Name-brand drinks, simulated foodstuffs and mood-booster pills can all be bought from armored, automated sales-units. Cheap chipware with a 3-day shelf life is sold from Vend-A-Mod machines in most cites, turning out simple maps and infochips at discount prices. Beer, booze, smash and “soft” drugs can also be bought from corner machines—the prices are inflated, but no questions are asked. Ammunition and cheap, disposable weapons can also be bought from vending machines. Many juvies are armed with plastic switch-blades and polymer one-shots spat out by their neighborhood Auto-Armory unit.

### Technoise: The revolution in music today is Technoise. Based on early experiments with tunes generated by computers using DNA strands as sheet music, Technoise artists have rushed to find the next big “source.” Using computer mixing programs, some musicians have managed to create the first sub-class of Technoise, “Overlay.” Overlay programs allow the mixture of unrelated music forms into a single coherent song. Back in 2005, the Llamasboys produced an album which mixed old favorites the Beach Boys and chanting Tibetan Monks—it went double platinum. The popularity was written off by most street musicians as corporate computer trash. In wasn’t until 2017 the Technoise earned any respect among these critics. Netwerk, a German Technoise band, released their EchoNet chip. This music chip was a computerized compilation of random data signals from the Erotheatre section of the Net. EBM tried for months to stop this chip’s release, fearing the “echoes” might actually contain some EBM data. When the chip went public (nine months after the scheduled release date), the new sound shocked the music world. In 2020, Seppuku (a heavy metal Technoise band), wishes to claim the title of Lords of Technoise with the release of Cold Cuts, a Frock chip. Frock is a computer-interpreted music form which uses fractals as the basis for the rhythm section of the band’s music. Mallpicks around the world are already pre-ordering. In terms of innovation, the 2020’s are becoming the New Jazz Age.
Murphy’s Algorithm: “If something can go wrong with any given technology, then eventually it will.” Perfect technology only exists on TV. In a Cyberpunk world, malfunctions are ever-present. At least once per game, referees should enlighten the players about the truth. Especially when players attempt to use their equipment beyond its design parameters. Also, system failures don’t always have clear-cut causes; have an elevator break down, and don’t tell the tech why unless he or she makes a really good tech roll. Even then, blame dust in the circuitry. Malfunctions aren’t always imperfections, rather they are often intentional, but unwise programming choices. Such as the Cleveland Emergency Dispatch System (a 2020 version of 911), where the system asks several minutes of unimportant questions before letting the caller talk to a human operator or dispatching any aid.

Candies of a thousand noxious varieties and worthless trinkets still sell well, but Music-Box machines will burn off a cheap music chip in under 50 seconds. Aspirin, heartburn medicine, and other pharmaceuticals can also be bought 24 hours from automatized, but beware of their quality—raucous 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 “vendies” are tied into the net to convey sales information, supply requests and damage reports to their parent corporations, and many a Netrunner has run “Control Remote” on these units to cause havoc or get away with a free packet of Grape Crispies. All these vending boxes generate a lot of loose trash, which urban wind tunnels blow across the streets like a plastic tide, and some even have limited computers which bark slogans and sales pitches to pedestrian passers-by. Don’t completely ignore these corporate pushers, since you never know when you might suddenly need a quick boost. Almost any product which comes from a vending machine would be hard-pressed to last more than 36 hours, but when you can just buy another one from another machine, who 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 Diphostamine Hydrochloride, an effective pain killer used in brand name products such as Painaway and Phosterin. This drug works on the same principals as ‘dorph, but is not addictive if taken in small dosages (it’s also not as strong, but will temporarily stop pain from tooth aches, headaches and small burns). Occasionally, someone takes more than the recommended amounts, resulting in a temporary pain block. Like other pain blocks, such as ‘dorph and pain editors, overuse has resulted in some serious injuries. According to urban legend, a housewife on Phosterin 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 psychoses. 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 Pharmacists sell cybersickness (in the form of human-hatred) to already deranged boosters at about 200 Eb a shot. Other mental diseases available include Technofetishism, Futureshock, Necrophilia, Stress Syndromes, Phobias (anything from cats to phones), Catastopia, Delusions, Narcolepsy, Hyperactivity, and Multiple Personality Disorders.

Then there are the street drugs. The nasty, nerve-rotting, brain-frying candy that nobody wants to want. Some drugs are relatively harmless, being mere sleeping pills or contraceptives, but there are just as many mood alterers, psychedelics, endorphins and euphorics. Underground laboratories crank out new concoctions faster than the authorities can classify them—modern pharmacology is such a rapidly-mutating industry that the pushers and drug lords are at an advantage. Some localities have given up entirely on the war on drugs, and instead have semi-legalized all drugs under a system of “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 up, per drug (the really bad drugs cost the most, in an attempt to legislate them out of existence). Registration systems usually include a “blanket” license of 25 Eb per year which includes alcohol, tobacco and typical medicines like aspirin.
and Retin-A. The system of registration, practiced by San Francisco and Detroit (among others), brings about a whole new world of troubles with such kinks as license dodging and the near-impossible task of keeping classification up to speed with production. Experts agree that the drug problem won’t be going away anytime soon.

What’s worse, when you buy on the Street, you can’t be totally sure of what you’re getting. Sometimes a drug may have gotten mixed up with another, so you wind up buying Widow’s Breath instead of Happy Pills. Other times, a drug may be tainted with some foreign substance, like particles of another drug, dirt, industrial cleaning agents, whatever. The name of the game is purity, and it’s what portable drug analyzers were really made for. In game terms, whenever a character buys a supply of illegal drugs (of whatever kind) the Referee must roll a Purity Check. This is a roll which determines if the stuff you’re buying is really worth the money. Since the results can have serious repercussions for the player, the referee should make this roll secretly. If the Purity Check was successful then the drugs are safe, but if the roll failed, check TABLE 1 below.

If the character buying the drugs has a portable drug analyzer with them, and it is loaded with an up-to-date database on street drugs (not always a sure thing), it will correctly identify the purity level of the drug with 95% reliability. If you don’t have a drug analyzer with you, you can either test the drugs when you buy them and take your chances, or buy the drugs and then take somewhere where you can have them analyzed; in that case, if the drugs are bad you’ve already lost your money. Oh well.

Also remember that not all drugs are poisonous euphorics. Every once in a while a street lab comes up with a brew that’s actually useful. Some of these underground drugs are of particular use to Edgerunners in general and Fixers in particular. Some samples are listed below:

**“Mr. Ex”**
Type: Stimulant
Strength: +1
Difficulty: 27
Cost: 675 Eb
Duration: 1D10+1 Days

Mr. Ex is a powerful stimulant which increases metabolic processes to such 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 -1 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 very red and puffy, but does not impair vision, and prolonged use of Mr. Ex can lead to extreme weight loss.

**“Twitch”**
Type: Euphoric
Strength: +2
Difficulty: 12
Cost: 300 Eb
Duration: 1D10+1 Minutes

Twitch is very useful for Con Men and habitual liars. The drug’s euphoric effects are very slight—only a small increase in self-confidence is noticeable. However, the drug affects physical reactions and responses slightly, causing occasional facial ticks and the like (these reduce REF by 1, but it’s not painful). The side effect which makes Twitch so popular is that Voice Stress Analyzers and Lie Detectors cannot be used on a person on Twitch, and Human Perception rolls against people on Twitch are -2.

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**TABLE 1.**
Purity Check: 1D10 lower than the Pusher’s Streetdeal.
Optional Rule: Another way to perform a Purity Check is to add the Pusher’s Streetdeal to the buyer’s LUCK, add 1D10 and compare to 15.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Check Failed By</th>
<th>Drug’s Purity Is:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>A Bit Low; duration of effects is reduced by 1/3rd.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-4</td>
<td>Poor; duration is 1/2, STR drops by 1.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-6</td>
<td>Bad; duration is 1/3rd, STR -2, roll BOD vs. 10 or be sick.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-8</td>
<td>Real Bad; duration 1/3rd, STR -3, roll BOD vs. 15 or be very sick.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9-10</td>
<td>The Worst; drug either does nothing or causes some kind of physical or mental damage (referee’s discretion).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
"You're askin' me what it is?
Sniffed it 'fore, Cloomba.
The bolt and action are sorta like an M-16, but this thing is
bullpupped and chambered for .22plastic case. The magazine

"Char"
Type: Cool Booster Strength: +3
Difficulty: 20 Cost: 500 E
Duration: 1D10+1 Minutes

Char is the iceman drug. It induces
an inhuman calm, confidence and self-
control. People on Char are imposing,
authoritative and never lose their temper.

...ing, a constant feed magazine, smartgun
interlock with variable frequency scan-
ing lasers and a Dynaport custom recoil
compensation barrel depends entirely
on who is carrying it.

"Modifications aren't the only thing,
either. When people want something
but can't afford it and don't want to steal
Protestant sects, representatives from the Catholic Church, the National Hasidim College and the United Islamic League have joined in one political party, the United Sectarians. Their agenda: political subsidies for religion and certain ethical restraints on the spread of technology.

The Neo-Monarchists

Citing the never-ending gridlock inherent to democracy, Neo-Monarchists rally around the concept of returning to a monarchy. Supported by historians, political scientists and sociologists, the Neo-Monarchists suggest that a benign monarchy can be sustained by psychological testing, genetic planning 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 its lack of central decision making. They believe that with a strong centralized power, the U.S. can attain its former grandeur and reassert its influence over the rest of the world. The New Federalists recruit their members from corporate stock, usually attracting those who grew up hearing about 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 a top-down 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 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 doesn't stop at the border. Strongly internationalist 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 "Kensyan 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 "Kensyan Marketing Heuristics" to run the ground floor operations of government.

The Independent Party

Commonly referred to as the "People Party", the Independent Party began in 2008, during the political reorganization period. The founders of the Independent party decided the reorganization was a perfect time to drastically change the direction of the American political system. They saw the problem and saw the solution, a new national political party to end the political gridlock. Using a combination of resources, the People Party created a media and political empire to advertise their agenda. Sparing no expense, the People Party hired the brightest stars and media personalities to act as political Facemen. However, they quickly found out that while the public may allow their problems to be reduced to sound bytes, solutions must have more meaning. The votes are still coming in, but with each election the party is being increasingly challenged to produce results. The Independent Party is now suffering from a schism similar to what it had previously caused in the Republican and Democratic Parties. In the ensuing chaos, the Party has been largely paralyzed.

The Constitutionalists

The Constitutionalists 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 Constitutionalists' name is not a reference to the suspended federal charter. It is a nickname that the group earned by its continuing practice of helping or forcing states to change their state constitutions by incorporating certain protections for individuals. This group has been known to start actual armed rebellions against state legislatures that don't cooperate. These practices put the Constitutionalists at odds with the powerful, corporate-backed One World Party and the federal government itself.

Critics of this party point to their open-ended protection of civil liberties. For example, some Constitutionalists want to make all information in the Net public access, which would destroy all of its commercial value. They also want unfettered access to cyberware (cyberspsychosis notwithstanding).

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 is 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.
Gaia’s Guardians

Founded by the survivors of the Two Year Agriwar (from 1994-1996, the Corps clashed with conservationists for control of protected lands), this group is fiercely protective of the environment. They have connections with Europe’s 3000 and other “green” groups throughout America. This group is so radical that its political stance is considered the fringe group. Openly supportive of Eco-terrorism, Gaia’s Guardians constantly battle with the One World Party. Their greatest sphere of influence is 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 pursuing its agenda: conversion of the U.S. to a Communist political, economic and social system. Instead, the Vanguard is a constant dissenter. Any elected member of this party given a chance to speak turns a simple introduction into a twenty minute speech on the faults of capitalism. Reminiscent of the Russians at the height of the Cold War, the Vanguard often uses KGB-style intimidation techniques. These forty-year-old methods are seriously outdated and often result in the unopposed arrest of the participating members.

APPENDIX C: STREETSLANG

Cyberpunks live in cynical times. The influence of internationalism and the pervasion of technology in all facets of everyday life have created new expressions for new ideas. Foreign word technical jargon and general callousness are the earmarks 2020’s slang.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2020 Hindsight</td>
<td>The wise act of watching your back.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alien</td>
<td>Derogatory earthy term for someone who lives in space (a highrider).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bennie</td>
<td>An out-of-towner (see Gaijin).</td>
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<tr>
<td>Boga</td>
<td>Vogue, that which is in-fashion (from the Spanish).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bourgie or</td>
<td>Common, low class (adj., from bourgeoisie).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bourgy</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Brain Potato</td>
<td>A Braindance addict.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bridge &amp; Tunnel Crowd</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chop</td>
<td>A credchip.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chopping</td>
<td>The process of cracking a stolen credchip.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chunking</td>
<td>Eating on the run, eating as a secondary activity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corpse</td>
<td>A Corporate, an executive, a CORPorate Sleaziness Expert.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture-Vulture</td>
<td>A Media.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CYA</td>
<td>Used as and sounds like “see ya,” stands for “Cover Your Ass.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cylon</td>
<td>Corporate security officers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deckhead</td>
<td>A Netrunner.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dirty</td>
<td>Low-tech (derogatory)—pencils, paper, walking, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Downtime</td>
<td>Free time, time off the job (also Freetime and Passtime).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doughboy/girl</td>
<td>Someone who is wearing too much armor (an SP20 overcoat in July).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Draga</td>
<td>Expensive (from the Hungarian).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edgezone</td>
<td>A strip, a gray area, an area of potential coolness; Dinford's Edgezone Hypothesis defines an Edgezone as the area between two other areas that touch.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facemman</td>
<td>A sub-Fixer in the employ of a boss-Fixer, supporting the boss’ network.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fodder</td>
<td>Fixer term for Solos.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gaijin</td>
<td>Derogatory term for an alien, and outsider (from the Japanese).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gato</td>
<td>A smooth operator, a cool person — also a Fixer (from the Spanish).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gewalt</td>
<td>Violence (from the German).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gibson</td>
<td>Someone who tells the future, a psychic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Giri</td>
<td>Honor, duty, obligation (from the Japanese).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gomi</td>
<td>Junk (from the Japanese).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gonk</td>
<td>An idiot, fool, schmuck.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hard</td>
<td>A flattering term, like cool, hip, def, tough, etc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

APPENDIX B: REFERENCE MATERIAL

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

Films & TV

*The Fixer*, *Catch 22*, *Operation Petticoat*, *The Third Man*, *Lethal Weapon 2* (for Joe Pesci), *Goodfellas* (for Mobsters), the *Godfather* series (for Mobsters), *Casablanca* (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 Grifters* (for Con Men), *the Sting* (for Con Men), *Sneakers* (for Prowlers), *Dr. Detroit* (for Managers/Agents), *Reservoir 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 *Neuromancer*, *Hardwired*, the ‘When Gravity Fails’ series, Clavell’s *King Rai*, *Alongside Night* (for the Agoras), *Crygender, Crying Freeman* (a translated Japanese comic), *Sanctuary* (another translated manga).
Having cyberpsychosis — also, being obsessed with the Net.

Popular street practice of ambushing and reprogramming police robohounds.

Independent, underground, self-employed.

An information broker.

Money (see Scratch)

Thief, Prowler.

Someone whose whole body is mechanical — a Full 'Borg.

Organized crime, any organized crime syndicate.

Also "The Who," a name for an employer or person of higher authority.

Computer glitch (from the Japanese for "bug").

An expression which means, "Right?" (from the Japanese).

The Russian Mob.

Someone who has all the facts.

Someone who loves or collects weapons (from "porcupine").

The lower class, streetscum.

Personality (from the computer jargon, RAM).

Environment-friendly act of killing someone and taking the corpse to a body bank.

Addicts of Virtual Reality, Braindance, the Net, or video games.

A gun-toting sex kitten (a rambo/bimbo).

A Powered Armor Trooper.

Money (see Jack).

All the collected electronic records kept on a person; their electronic identity.

Commuters.

Someone without honor, without Giri, a bastard (from the Russian).

The underground.

A token credchip.

A suit of Powered Armor.

Exotics.

A person who is scum, lowlife (from the Korean, "Yonamseki").

A Virtual Reality or video game addict.

Virtual Reality, Braindance, and vid-game arcade or parlor.

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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 is 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, less familiar countries)

2. Getting Between the Scenes: (When interesting or the trip is relatively long, describe the following:)
   - Mode of transportation (Cab, Planes, driving etc.)
   - Elapse or changes in the Setup
   - Random Encounters*
   - Problems that may arise from transport—Traffic*, Breakdowns*, Random Events*

3. The Scenes: (Describe to players at every new important location or where necessary)
   - Any changes in the Setup

**SIGHT**

- More Specific location descriptions. If indoors, describe dimensions, decor and occupants. If in the City, describe Video Screens & TVs*, Genre Atmosphere*, Cultural landmarks (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.).
- Cybervision (seeing beyond the normal senses due to cyber-enhancements)

**SMELL**

- Any particularly strong smells (Sewers, Dead People, Rotten Foods, etc.)

**HEARING**

- Noise: Random Noise generator*
- Music (Technoise*)
- Differences in Language (or dialects), Culture*, etc.
- Cybерауд (hearing beyond the normal audio range of humans due to enhancements)

**TASTE**

- Distinguish between kibble, scorp and real food. (If you do this more often, players will actually try and buy real food)

**FEELING**

- Exhaustion, nervous shakes, alcohol/drug-induced reactions, Claustrophobia, the “denseness” and quality of the air, etc.

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

Below is a list of elements of modern life that a Cyberpunk character will encounter while 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 windowsill, even on car roofs.
3. Steam—Billowing from rooftop vents and rising from grates in the street (or any other type of obfuscation, such as fog, cigarette smoke or smog).
4. Video screens—Advertising boards, commercial airships, computer screens and TVs everywhere.
5. Claustrophobia—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 Its Not Fruit Juice!’
8. Squalor—From dirt to grease, rust, or garbage, and those who have to live in it. Cyberpunk ain’t tidy.
9. Hyperactivity—Focused and unfocused energy formed from desperation, always one nanosecond away from lashing 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—this stuff gets 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 Ribble.
3. A soda can
4. Used drug paraphernalia
5. A corpse
6. A discarded screamsheet.
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 at something.

1. Riot, Protests or Rants
2. Really Bad Weather—such as Monsoons, Thunderstorms, Earthquakes, and Tornadoes.
3. Big Fires
4. Parades (Arasaka 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 raves
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 the action gets 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 with...

1. “Vroom!!!” An AV passes overhead.
2. “Honk! HONK!! Screeech - Crash!” Player’s witness a nearby traffic accident.
3. “Meow - Clatter!” Alley cats foraging around in some trash cans.
5. “Aaaaaaaa...” Someone falling off a building, either from jumping or being pushed.
7. “@#$%^&!!!” An argument between two street vendors — the volume and cursing knows no bounds.
9. “Ahwooo... Ahwooo...” A police car whines by.
10. “THE JETSETTER EXECUTIVE BRIEFCASE from ARASAKA...CARRY OUT YOUR BUSINESS WITH STYLE AND SECURITY...” A videoboard advertisement with audio on maximum.