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GRIMM'S

CYBERTALES



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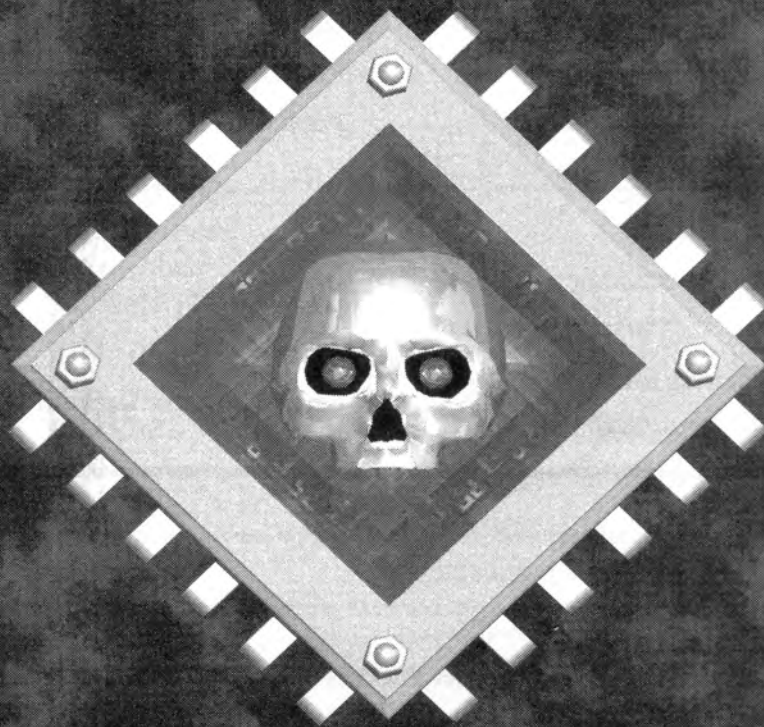
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A Grimm, Grimm World

Horror has a face, and you must make a friend of horror. And moral terror are your friends. If they are not, then they are enemies to be feared. They are truly enemies.

-Colonel Kurtz, Apocalypse Now!

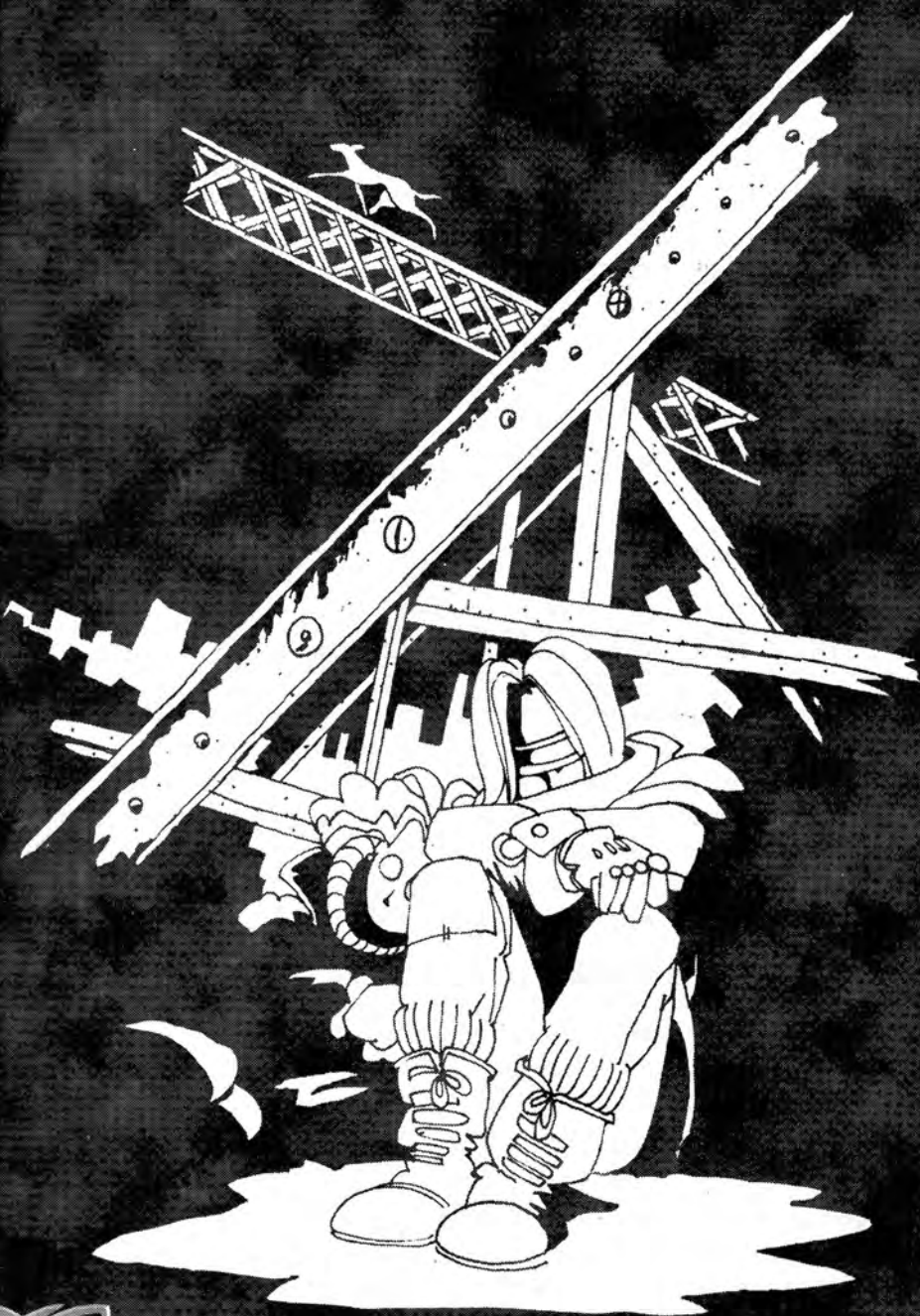
Jack and the Stalker, Little Red Rider, Snow White, all of these fairy tales of the modern age merge with the harsh reality of life, creating a Grimm, Grimm World. Enter the dark world of the Alternate Reality Universe fully and see the Edge as it's never been witnessed before.

In the past, fairy tales taught children the beliefs of the society through metaphors and morals. Children were frightened into being good by were-wolves and wicked witches. These things didn't exist (at least not to their parents' knowledge), so the tales were safe. They could scare the children without alienating them from the real world around them.

Things are different now. In the year 2020, there are very few old fairy tales still around. Parents don't have the time to tell them, and kids spend an average 8 hours a day in front of the TV. The new fairy tales of 2020 are very different. They are the 6 o'clock news, the nightly movie, the super-realistic digitized morning cartoons.

Now the boogey-man is not a werewolf following little Red Riding Hood, it's a stalker that follows unwary children and kidnaps them, usually to kill them. The wicked witch is now the terrorist that holds a school hostage, threatening to blow it up.

Violence runs rampant in the world of 2020. Children are being raised to expect the stalker to follow them home. The supernatural is absent largely. Kids are too sophisticated, even at a very young age, to believe in talking animals or ghosts. Everything can be explained by science. Nothing is to



be feared in the shadows, except the serial killer or the cultist looking for sacrifices.

The result is a society that is extremely frightened. Trust is a thing of the past for Edgerunners in 2020. They grew up being shown in countless TV shows and movies how "trust me" is the harbinger of betrayal, that kindness only makes you a fool. Cynicism has become a way of life.

What remains of the old fairy tales has been convoluted. For example, Jack and the Stalker. Jack climbs the beanstalk and escapes, but from that day forward is hunted by the giant. The moral: don't go where you don't know. Or Little Red Rider, a little girl who is kidnapped by cultists on her way to her grandmother's place while using the subway. The moral: don't use the subway without an escort. And last, perhaps saddest, Snow White, a girl who, while hanging out with a gang, experiments with drugs that are offered to her in the form of candy. She falls into a coma and awakens when the doctor saves her. The moral: be careful of drugs on the streets.

What has happened for things to get so bad? Too much reality. Proportionally, there is no more violence and evil today than at any other time. But, in 2020, the wonders of mass media ensure that we see every possible example in full digital glory. It is impossible to escape the dark side of humanity. However, perhaps this is not entirely a bad thing.

That Darkness is what this tome examines. Unlike any before, only the contemporary evils and darkness are examined as they exist in our world. Only once have we identified what is Dark and where the evil originates can we attempt to overcome it.

BACKGROUND

The Alternate Reality Universe was originally introduced by Von Konos in the Alternate Reality source book *Night's Edge*. It brought vampires into the Cyberpunk 2020 scene as well as psychic powers and werewolves. Grimm's *Cybertales* is an extension of those original rules, gathering even more darkness in a universe all too similar to that of Cyberpunk 2020. The rules presented herein are completely compatible with Cyberpunk 2020, and Game Masters are free to use and discard whatever rules they wish.

While the Alternate Reality Universe has vampires, werewolves and psychic powers, it is unlike most other role-playing games in that these creatures and beings are based on science as much as possible and explainable to a large degree by misinformation and genetic disorders. Psychic powers, for example, are not entirely improbable considering the incredible personal achievements throughout history. The Alternate Reality Universe attempts to mimic our own universe in its preponderance of the unexplainable amidst an otherwise normal and mundane backdrop (which makes it all the more horrific).

While the Cyberpunk 2020 universe deals with those "mundane" aspects of life on the Edge, the Alternate Reality Universe dwells in the mysterious and unknown. Every effort is made not to compromise the realistic setting however, as the Darkness within the ARU is never overt in nature. Vampires are extremely rare, and extremely secretive, never so foolish as to reveal their presence to humanity. Even the serial killer maintains a low profile and may not be detected for decades.

The real horror comes where the normal meets the abnormal. Within an unrealistic world, this simply would not work; nor would absolute evil work within the context. The world of Cyberpunk is composed of shades of gray. Things in the ARU are in shades of darkness, but shades nevertheless. No one is completely vile, nor is anyone thoroughly good. Everyone has their own shades of darkness.

MERGING NIGHT'S EDGE & 2020

The Alternate Reality Universe fits nicely into that of Cyberpunk 2020. The near future that we may one day see is merged with the nightmares of tomorrow's dreams. Unlike that world though, not everything is corporate-related. They are not the only things that send shivers down your spine in the Alternate Reality Universe. There are things people unconsciously ignore for their own peace of mind. The dark side of oneself, which is always present, is rarely acknowledged, though in the world of 2020 one faces it on an almost daily basis.

Characters might face mundane terrors, such as the stalker or mass murderer, or more exotic horrors, such as the Murk, or a vampire. Either way, the excitement lies in the fear of facing something abnormal and unknown. No longer is cyberpsychosis the only way to go insane. Sanity becomes a cherished rarity in the dark future of the Alternate Reality Universe.

In general, merging the two worlds should not be difficult at all. Use your standard adventures, but change one of the antagonists into a cultist or a vampire. Keep this a secret, perhaps with a subtle clue or two here and there. The characters might complete the adventure never suspecting, but already you have made your game universe a little darker, and in time, the players will realize it too, to their horror... and enjoyment.



SUMMARY

Grimm's *Cybertales* is a look at the myths and horrors of the 21st century. The spirituality of the people of 2020 is examined closely, from their cults to their magic. The new monsters of the modern world are fully described, from terrorists to stalkers to the Murk to dream walkers. Horror is brought to every corner of the *Edgerunner's* existence in 2020.

The second chapter, "A New Order", deals with new optional rules for the Alternate Reality Universe, including stress rules, new cyberpsychosis rules, new skills, a short system for generating phobias for characters and a system for determining dedication to beliefs. These rules enhance the psychological elements of the game.

In the third chapter, "Apostles of the Edge", cults are examined in depth. In times of incredible depression and grief, people turn to the spiritual for help. Half a dozen cults are fully described along with the more general movements and cult types that are present in the Alternate Reality Universe. The cult's place in the world of Cyberpunk is firmly established.

Contemporary Voodoo is examined in "Nouveau-Voodoo". The practices of Neo-Voodoo are described in depth, along with the new loa of 2020 and the rituals surrounding them. As one of the most popular faiths in the 21st century, voodoo has swept across the Net and the world.

"The Boogey-Men of 2020" deals with the horrors of the human psyche in the fourth chapter. Stalkers, serial killers, mass murderers and terrorists are all dealt with, bringing the human element back into horror. Who needs a werewolf when a team of skilled terrorists can paralyze an entire city with fear?

The Net's no longer safe, thank to the Murk, entities which supposedly inhabit the Net and prey upon runners. However, they also help the runners and entire cults have been built around their existence. Yet, are they simply a psychological disorder or real? One may never know.

Sleep and dreams are examined closely in "Perchance To Dream", bringing with them the terror of Dream Stalker Psychosis, a delusion that the character is being stalked by a creature that feeds off dreams. Perhaps it is real after all...

To supplement the psychic power rules of *Night's Edge*, *Ars Nova* presents optional magic rules for Cyberpunk. However, the magical arts presented are based on belief of their existence. As they say, some things have to be believed to be seen.

Lastly, "On the Night's Edge", which describes just what the man on the street might know about the nasty and naughty topics discussed in *Night's Edge* and *Grimm's Cybertales*. It also provides information on the creatures, organizations and people described in the two texts. This should prove very useful for GM's running Alternate Reality Universe campaigns.



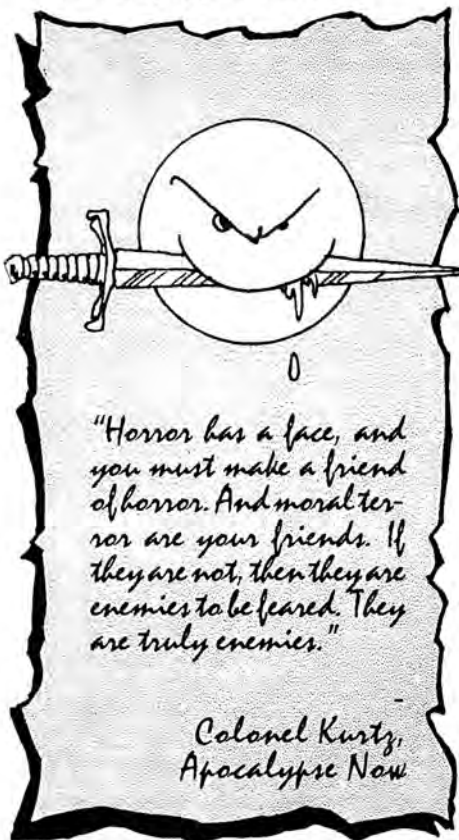


NIGHT'S EDGE HORROR

The Alternate Reality Universe horror is not standard fare. The devotion to realism and technology, standard in the Cyberpunk genre, creates a horror setting which is sometimes all too believable, and always disturbing.

The background presented herein enhances the Alternate Reality Universe, largely focusing on the mundane horrors of our own reality. Murderers, nightmares and cults join the ranks of the vampires and werewolves to bring them all together into a coherent whole of near-future horror.

When playing in the Alternate Reality Universe, it is important to remember these two key concepts: Appearance versus Reality and the Shades of Darkness. These elements figure prominently in almost every aspect of this reality, and serve to bring a unique blend of horror to cyberpunk universe.



APPEARANCE VS REALITY

Very little in the Alternate Reality Universe is as it seems. The vampires hide behind a mask of legends and fantasy, the drug lords are executives in multinational corporations. In ARU campaigns, there should always be doubt in the players' mind as to what is real and what is myth.

Keeping the players on their toes will require you to always ensure that things never seem as they really are. A simple beggar might be a drug dealer, while a nomad who just rode into town could be a dream stalker. A vampire could be posing as an up-and-coming corporate or as a voodoo magician. One never knows. That vampire could just be someone who thinks he is a vampire. In people's mind, reality can often be very different from their perception of it.

Many of the creatures presented have multiple explanations which allows the Game Master to generate his own reality. While vampires might be real, dream stalkers could only be a psychosis. There is no sacred law in the ARU that says if one "supernatural" myth is indeed true, that all others need be at all true.

SHADES OF DARKNESS

The second element, Shades of Darkness, refers to the relative good and evil in the Cyberpunk genre. Though the Alternate Reality Universe presents vampires, murderers and cults, these people and organizations are by no means black and white. There are good vampires and there are evil vampires. There are good cults and bad ones. Everything has its own shades of gray. No person or group is purely good, nor purely evil.

This serves to keep the players on the edge. In a game with defined good and evil, morality becomes cheap and cliché. The monster is the bad guy and the adventurer is the good guy. What if there are no good guys? And no bad guys? The players must then learn to make judgments based on actions and observations, and not on appearances.

It also serves to enhance role-playing. If the players are unable to determine that a being is evil from the start, they cannot simply kill it and move on. They have to learn about it and discover its true nature. This will rarely be easy and often there will be no "truth" to learn. But, the investigation itself will give the players more information to act upon and require them to interact much more.

Admittedly, the Alternate Reality Universe is not for "shoot-'em-up" campaigns. The NPCs will often best the PCs, and the risk of combat with the beasts is an almost sure death. It is a universe for learning about the darkness within humanity, and for facing that darkness; its destruction being a goal sought, but rarely achieved. The very struggle is the vindication of the characters.



A New Order

Deep into that darkness peering,
long I stood there wondering,
fearing, Doubting, dreaming dreams
no mortals ever dared to dream before.

- Edgar Allan Poe, "The Raven"



Humphrey had had enough of this city. Having to put up with punks taking over the streets and people putting appliances in their bodies, it was all just too much. He pulled over, and drawing his new Kirami .57, nicely polished and loaded with environmentally correct "caseless" rounds, he took aim on a delinquent wearing a red flash jacket and cried out, "Die Punk!", opening fire. Humphrey had just cracked, and there was hell to pay.

The Alternate Reality Universe, while very similar to that of Cyberpunk 2020, still has many differences on a basic level. For example, because much of the ARU deals with facing the dark side of humanity, stress, fright rules and new skills are necessary. The various aspects of the mind are further investigated, leading to a more detailed cyberpsychosis system.

STRESS

In the harsh world of 2020, stress is a major problem and many people crack under the strain of everyday life. However, there is also a desensitization which acts as a counter-balance to lessen the impact of these increasingly stressful events. As the media floods us with images of horror and destruction, we become more accustomed to these events. The violent nature of life in 2020 serves to lessen the impact of some stressful events. Nevertheless, the world of Cyberpunk is still a very taxing place; one can never get used to being shot at.

This is not to say that people are any more stable than before or without emotion. Indeed, the constant strain of combat or living in an "urban battleground" can shake anyone's sanity. The standard Cyberpunk character deals with circumstances and events beyond the scope of typical contemporary experience, and suffers a much higher risk of cracking. Therefore only the most stable of characters will last for long in the harsh world of Cyberpunk.



STRESS FACTOR

The Stress Factor is a measure of the amount of stress a character is currently under. Stressful events will increase the character's Stress Factor, sometimes gradually, other times very quickly. This measures how well a character will react to those circumstances Cyberpunk characters find themselves in.

As the amount of pressure the character is under increases, the Stress Factor rises; when it gets too high, the character cracks. The worst case scenario is a person who cracks and goes over the edge. A character's COOL determines the amount of Stress Points the character can take before reaching new Stress Levels, as shown on the Stress Table. When a character exceeds the Stress Points for a level, they reach the next level and are subject to its full effects.

• EXAMPLE:

A character with a COOL of 6 and 4 Stress Points (StP), would be Normal, but three more StP would make him Anxious, and he would now get a -1 penalty on all further COOL checks.

Note that these are not permanent modifiers, and change as the character's current Stress Level changes. Characters with a low COOL will not deal with stress well. Round down when dividing. These penalties will not take a stat below 2.

STRESS LEVELS

These are the effects of the different Stress Levels.

• FRESH:

The character is stress-free and perfectly calm. An unnatural state because it is so rare. It gives a +1 bonus to COOL checks due to the extremely calm state of mind.

• NORMAL:

The character has normal stresses and concerns, which is most common for Cyberpunks to have. As we must all deal with stress in our lives, this is considered the normal mental state.

• ANXIOUS:

The character is a little more stressed out than usual, making COOL checks with -1 penalty due to already being a little more mentally "fried" than usual. The character will tend to be a little overcautious and be either very tired (1-5 on d10) or very hyper, (6-10 on d10). The character develops Insomnia. Note that for most Cyberpunks, this is actually the normal state of being.

• STRESSED:

The character is quite stressed by extreme circumstances and will suffer a -2 penalty on all COOL checks. The character will be jumpy and have a poor short-term memory, generally with only enough concentration for one task. A -1 penalty is given to all INT tasks, addiction checks will be at -2 to resist and the character develops Insomnia (-2 penalty to Insomnia checks).

• TENSE:

If the character gets worse, he begins to crack under the pressure. He suffers a -3 penalty to all COOL checks and will begin to act in a bizarre manner, focusing on one task and performing it at the exclusion of all else, including loved ones. Characters under torture will begin revealing information if promised release. A -2 penalty is given to all INT tasks, addiction checks will be at -4 to resist and the character develops Insomnia (-2 penalty to Insomnia checks).

• CRACKED:

The character has been pushed past normal limits and has gone over the edge. He suffers a -5 penalty to COOL checks. A -3 penalty is given to all INT tasks, addiction checks will be at -6 to resist and the character develops Insomnia (-2 penalty to Insomnia checks). The character must also roll 1d10 on the Over The Edge table to determine what his reaction is to this incredible strain. The difficulty levels of curing them through therapy are listed after the descriptions.



OVER THE EDGE TABLE

- 1** **HOMICIDAL:**
The character becomes murderous and will seek to kill the perceived source of the stress (perhaps blaming someone unrelated). He will also be violent toward anyone who stands in his way. After the source of the stress has been eliminated, roll 1d10 again on this table, ignoring rolls of 1 for the character's next reaction. However, if the character ever goes Over The Edge again, he will automatically become Homicidal. Diff: 20
- 2** **CATATONIA:**
Characters with catatonia withdraw completely into themselves. No outside stimuli, including being injured, will awaken them. The characters are still alive, but will not move, speak or react. There is a 1 in 10 chance every week that they will come out of it. If an extreme attempt is made (i.e. continuous contact with the characters), the check may be made every two days, but only as long as those measures are maintained. Diff: 30
- 3** **SUICIDAL TENDENCIES:**
Characters with suicidal tendencies will seek to end their lives in any possible way, as soon as possible. Every activity will be centered on suicide. They will be prone to taking extreme risks with their lives. Diff: 20
- 4-5** **SCHIZOPHRENIA:**
The character loses all touch with reality. The character's torturers become trees, or he may believe himself to be free, and carry on as he might at home. The character might think he's a bird, or that his room is the throne room of the king of Spain. Reality is no longer the character's reality. Diff: 25
- 6-7** **SEVERE AGORAPHOBIA:**
The character fears everything. Home is the only safe place. Strangers are all murderers; outside there is only pain and torture. The character will require a COOL check at -4 to even go outside his home, even then not going too far (like Waxfire in the Necrology trilogy). Diff: 30
- 8** **HALLUCINATIONS:**
The character begins to see, hear, and feel things that aren't there. However, in every other way, they will appear normal. The particular hallucinations will depend on the stress involved, and note that hallucinations are usually metaphors. For example, a character who was hunted and shot might see snipers on rooftops and, when stressed, all of a sudden think he has been shot. This will continue until cured. Diff: 20
- 9** **OVERLOAD AMNESIA:**
Characters with Overload Amnesia have forgotten everything about their previous life as a counter-measure against the rising stress. The character's Stress Points return to normal, but 2 out of every 10 skills will be forgotten and the character will not be able to remember anything about the previous life. If someone forces them to remember, they regain all the Stress Points to go Over The Edge again and roll 1d10 on this table again. If cured by a therapist, then this does not happen. Diff: 25
- 10** **MULTIPLE PERSONALITIES:**
The character separates into multiple personalities. Generate 1d6 different mental stats and psychological profiles, excluding the main one. Some will be murderers, others timid and shy. Use your imagination. They switch whenever a new stress is introduced. Diff: 40.

STRESS

STP	LEVEL	EFFECTS
COOL / 2	Fresh	+1 on all COOL checks
COOL	Normal	None
COOL x 2	Anxious	-1 on all COOL checks; Insomnia
COOL x 3	Tense	-2 on all COOL checks; -1 on all other checks; Insomnia (-2); Addiction checks at -2.
COOL x 4	Stressed	-3 on all COOL checks; -2 on all other checks; Insomnia (-4); Addiction checks at -4.
COOL x 5	Cracked	-5 on all COOL checks; -3 on all other checks; Insomnia (-6); Addiction checks at -6.

Roll on Over The Edge Table.





LOSING STRESS POINTS

Stress points disappear 1d10 hours after the source of the stress is removed or after a night's sleep (min. 8 hours). If the source of the stress is ongoing, the only way to eliminate it is through therapy.

• THERAPY

The knowledge of psychology is used when conducting therapy. The Difficulty is 20 for normal Stress Points. However, if the character has gone Over The Edge, then the difficulty listed after the applicable insanity must be made. In this case, the character's Stress Level must return to Fresh before therapy for the insanity can begin.

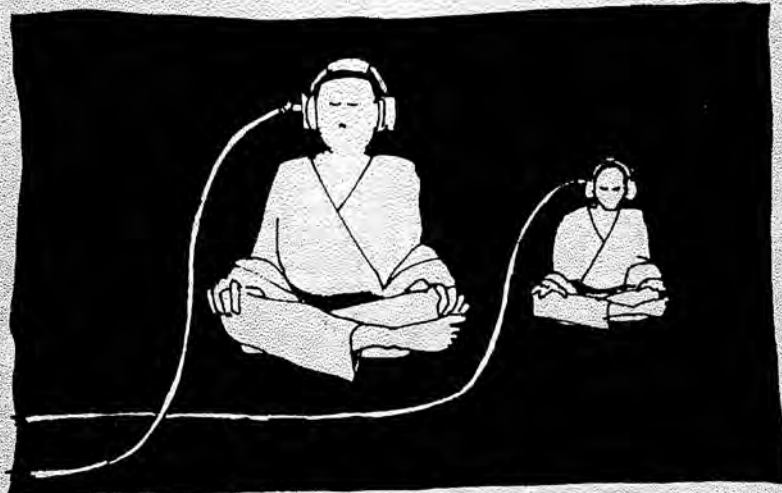
Every attempt for therapy requires one hour, which is the maximum amount of therapy in a 3 day period, and it cures 1d6/2 points (round up). This can cost up to 1000eb or as low as 100eb from trained professionals, or from a character with Psychology skill. However one cannot treat himself.

MEDITATION

Meditation is one way for characters to help themselves. At a Difficulty of 20, the character can remove 1 ongoing Stress Point after one hour of meditation. This can only be done once per 24 hours. It is one way to stay sane, so many modern combat veterans learn meditation to deal with their stressful lives.

Meditation

The New Age movement did one good thing for Cyberpunks, and that was to introduce meditation. Many soldiers in 2020 use meditation regularly just to keep sane, as it does serve to keep them stable. Many police forces use meditation to counter the extremely stressful lives of their officers.





GAINING STRESS POINTS

There are two types of Stress Points: Straight and Fright. Straight Stress Points are taken immediately and automatically. Generally these are due to living conditions, life events, situational stresses, etc. They are randomized to reflect different people's reactions to different situations. Fright Stress Points are due to some temporary, disturbing event. Characters make Fright Checks to determine the amount, if any, StP are gained.

STRAIGHT STRESS POINTS

There are many forms of Straight Stress Points. They are the daily hassles of life and events which can strain one's sanity. Here are some examples of Straight Stress circumstances and events with their Stress Point amounts. Note that these are merely guidelines and should be modified as desired to suit the situation. For example, a character who did not care much for their lover might only have half the Stress Points from the Events, whereas an executive whose life was the corporation might suffer double from being hunted by it.

Whenever Straight Stress applies, roll for the exact amount and add those points to the character's StP. When it is lost, subtract it. The GM should feel free to determine Straight Stress Points for other events using the following guidelines:

• **EXAMPLE:**

An ex-lover who is tracking a character down would be Annoying, unless they were armed and had made previous attempts on the character's life, in which case it would be Unsettling.



STRAIGHT STRESS POINTS

ENVIRONMENT	AMOUNT	EVENTS	AMOUNT
Living in suburb	1	Loved one injured/ill	1d6/2
Living on the move	1d6	Fighting in Relationship	1d6/2
Living downtown core	1d6/3	Relationship breaks up	1d6
Living in hostile env.	2d6	Loved one killed/dies	2d6
(space, combat zone)		Spouse dies	3d6

ENVIRONMENT	AMOUNT	EVENTS	AMOUNT
Stressful Occupation	1d6/2	Hunted by gang	1d6/2
Hazardous Occupation	2d6	Hunted by corporation	1d6
Very Hazardous	3d6	Hunted by the law	2d6
.....		Hunted by mega-corp/FBI/CIA ..	3d6

STRAIGHT STRESS POINT GUIDELINES

Minor Nuisance	1
Unsettling*	2d6
Nuisance	1d6/3
Very Disturbing	3d6
Major Nuisance	1d6/2
Life Shattering	4d6
Annoyance	1d6

*Note that all deaths of people close to the character are at least Unsettling.





FRIGHT DIFFICULTIES

COMBAT-RELATED DIFF

Under Single-Shot Fire	10
Under Automatic Fire	15
Light Torture	15
Outnumbered	15
Ambushed	15
Getting Hit (wounded)	15
Under Suppressive Fire	20
Being Mortally Wounded	20
Kill Someone Face-to-Face	20
Kill Someone At Distance	25
Heavy Torture	30
Extreme Torture	40

ENCOUNTER DIFF

Discovering a corpse	5
Witnessing torture/mutilation	10
Discovering a mutilated corpse ..	10
Being followed by someone	10
Seeing a beast*	15
Witness an unnatural event	15
Minor Disaster	15
Major Disaster	20
Participate in unnatural event	20
Seeing a beast* kill someone	20
Encountering a beast*	25
Being attacked by a beast*	30

Beast refers to vampires, werewolves, the Murk, dream stalkers, etc. Note that the perception is important: even a normal person in a werewolf costume counts as a Beast and a vampire who appears as a normal human doesn't until he shows his true nature.

FRIGHT STRESS POINTS

Fright Stress points are due almost exclusively to particular unsettling circumstances that the character encounters. Being ambushed or fired upon, killing a person, being tortured, etc. These all require a COOL check to be made against the Fright Difficulty.

Characters used to combat (Solos, Nomads & Cops) get a +5 bonus on the combat-related checks. Similarly, those with related fields of interest get a +1 to +10 bonus in relation to their field (a witch-doctor conducting a magical ceremony might get a +10 bonus to Participating in an Unnatural Event or a Disaster Relief worker might get a +10 in reaction to a disaster hitting). Also, characters in a group of 3-19 people get a +1 bonus on all checks. If they are in a group of 20-100 people, a +2 bonus is given on all checks. Groups of over 100 people give a +4 bonus to all checks. One feels safer in a group.

Here are some sample Fright Difficulties:

If the check's total equals or exceeds the Difficulty, the character can deal with the event. Otherwise, the character is frightened. Find the amount the check was failed by on the Fright table below to determine the effects.

FRIGHT TABLE

AMOUNT EFFECT

1-2 **STUNNED:**
The character is surprised and loses 5 points of initiative for that turn. The character takes 1d6-3 Stress Points (min. 0).

3-5 **SURPRISED:**
The character is surprised for 1 turn. The character takes 1d6 Stress Points.

6-12 **SHOCKED:**
The character is surprised, and either (1-3) Freezes for 2 turns, during which no action can be taken or (4-6) Flees, trying to run away as quickly as possible from the source of the fright for 1d6+1 Turns. The character takes 2d6 Stress Points.

13-18 **OVERWHELMED:**
The character is surprised, and either (1-4) Freezes for 1d6+3 turns, during which no action can be taken and the character drops to the ground, sobbing uncontrollably, or (5-6) Flees, trying to run away as quickly as possible from the source of the fright for 1d6+3 turns. The character takes 3d6 Stress Points.

19+ **BLOWN AWAY:**
The character goes Over The Edge due to the extreme stress. Roll on the Over The Edge table with 1d10. The insanity lasts for 2d10 Turns, then the character is fine again. However, he gains 4d6 Stress Points.

Any Stress Points gained are applied immediately. If the character cracks, he gains that insanity. However, Stress Points due to Fright Stress disappear 2d6 hours after the source of the fright is gone.

• **EXAMPLE:**
A character with a COOL of 7 sees a vampire feeding upon a person. This counts as seeing a beast kill someone, Diff 20. The player rolls a 5; since the character gets no bonuses, the total is 12. The check is failed by 8, and the character is surprised for 2 turns. He rolls 2d6 and gets 7, so he takes 7 Stress Points instantly. Having already had 8, he is now at 15 Stress Points. The character is now Tense.





PSYBERNETICS

These are additional rules which combine with the Humanity Loss system presented in **Cyberpunk 2020**. Characters take Humanity Loss in the same manner and it reduces Empathy as well, but the effects of it are more detailed. There are four types: Alienation, Egotism, Obsession and Paranoia. Note that humanity loss can also occur from excessive drug use as detailed in the **Dark Metropolis** sourcebook.



STARTING CHARACTERS

Starting characters take their EMP and find it on the Starting Base Loss table. Then, divide the Base Loss points among the four types of Humanity Loss on the character sheet: Alienation, Egotism, Obsession and Paranoia. Thus characters with low Empathy will start out somewhat insane. However do not count this Base Loss as Humanity Cost against the character's EMP.

• **EXAMPLE:**

Roberts, a Solo starts out with an EMP of 5, so has a Base Loss of 25. He decides to put 15 into Egotism and 10 into Alienation, making him already Boastful and Distinct.

CYBERNETICS HUMANITY LOSS

Different kinds of cybernetics cause different types of humanity loss. In addition, people react to cybernetics in different ways, so there may be more than one possible form of Humanity Loss in reaction to the same cybernetics. In these cases, roll randomly or allow the player to choose based on the character's personality. The type listed in bold and italic is the most commonly associated type of humanity loss with that form of cybernetic.

After the type has been determined, the amount of Humanity Loss is determined as listed. Apply Humanity Loss as usual to the character's EMP when 10 points are taken, and keep a total of Humanity Loss, but also add them to the appropriate type on the character sheet.

Players should mark the letter code of the Humanity Loss type next to their cybernetics to remember what caused what in case therapy is sought at a later point in time. One type of Humanity Loss can be cured at a time, provided all cybernetics related to that type are removed.

• **EXAMPLE:**

Roberts gets a set of Wolverers implanted, rolling 12 points of Humanity Cost. He chooses it all to be in the form of Egotism. This lowers his Empathy by 1, and raises his Egotism from 15 to 27, making him Inconsiderate. He is not a nice guy to be around.

THERAPY

Through therapy, one can regain Humanity Loss points. However, the cybernetics causing the loss or the drugs involved must be removed from the character's body. Once this has been achieved, therapy can begin.

Every two weeks of therapy, 1d10 points of Humanity Loss can be regained. The cost for such therapy is \$1000 every two weeks. Street level clinics are free, but only 1d6 points are regained per two weeks. Thus, therapy is very expensive and might take nearly a year for someone far gone. Also if the characters get the cybernetics back (or start back on the drug) it could destroy all past efforts at rehabilitation. For characters with Psychology skill, they can give the same therapy with a Difficulty of 20 to be made at the end of each week. A Critical Failure means a further loss of 1d6 Humanity Loss.





STARTING BASE LOSS TABLE

EMP	BASE LOSS
10	0
9	5
8	10
7	15
6	20
5	25
4	30
3	35
2	40

CYBERNETICS HUMANITY LOSS TYPES

CYBERWEAR	TYPE
Fashionware	A, O
Cyberoptic	A, O, P
Neuralware	Any (A)
Cyberaudio	A, O, P
Implants	Any (P)
Cyberlimbs	E, O
Bioware	E
Linear Frames	Any (E)
Cyberweapons	E, O
Body Plating	E, P

A..... Alienation humanity loss
 E..... Egotism humanity loss
 O..... Obsession humanity loss
 P..... Paranoia humanity loss
 Any
 Choose any one of the four forms, however the one in parentheses is generally the dominant type.

CYBERPSYCHOSIS

When a character reaches an EMP of 0, they go psychotic as listed under their type. The character can go psychotic in more than one way, combining them in an horrific manner.

TYPES OF HUMANITY LOSS

There are four types of Humanity Loss. The character's current amount of points in any one type describes what level they are at in that type. Be sure that players role-play this in their characters.

ALIENATION

AMOUNT	DESCRIPTION
01-10	NO EFFECT.

The character is a little distant, but no more than is common in the Cyberpunk world.

11-20	ABSENT-MINDED:
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The character's memory becomes easily blurred as he becomes focused on his own reality. A -2 penalty is applied to any action other than the character's current main focus, and a -2 penalty to memory checks.

21-30	ECCENTRIC:
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The character develops his own quirk that separates him from normal people. Examples include: Collecting things, talking to oneself, etc. The player may choose it at the GM's discretion. It must be noticeable in some way, and should be related to the cybernetic.

31-40	DELUSIONS:
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The character gains a delusion about the world. The delusion becomes a firmly-held false belief. For example, his cyberaudio can pick up people's thoughts or that he is actually a robot, made to think it's human. Again, the player may generate the delusion at the GM's discretion.

41-50	HALLUCINATIONS:
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The character begins to see things. The hallucinations occur during stressful times. If the character takes more than 4 StP at one time, he hallucinates for 1d6 Turns. The hallucinations are at the GM's discretion but are generally linked to something in the character's past. For example a war veteran might see enemy soldiers in a crowd aiming to fire at him, prompting him to return fire.

51+	SCHIZOPHRENIC:
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This is the final stage in which the character enters his own reality quite apart from our own. The hallucinations and delusions all intensify and are expanded so much that the objective reality of the world bears little resemblance to the character's. At this stage, the character becomes extremely difficult to run, as the insanity will restrict any coherent activity. The character must make an INT check at -2 to do anything constructive. If this check is failed, the character does something non-constructive. If it is failed by 4 or more, the act is destructive.

EGOTISM

AMOUNT	DESCRIPTION
01-10	NO EFFECT.

The character is a little arrogant, but no more than is common in the Cyberpunk world.

11-20	STUBBORN:
--------------	------------------

The character becomes more self-involved and will be more stubborn than usual. The character will begin to think that he is smarter and stronger than the others, thus his ideas are better. This will show mostly through role-playing.





21-30

CONCEITED:

The character's stubbornness takes a new turn wherein the character begins thinking and acting as if he is in fact better than the others. The character becomes vain. This may result in the character taking skills to boost his appearance or making sure that his efforts are rewarded.

31-40

EGOCENTRIC:

The character views things only as they relate to himself. The desires and needs of others are neglected over the character's own desires. This will definitely show through the character's interaction with others: he believes himself to be better than others.

41-50

NARCISSISTIC:

The character becomes obsessed with his own appearance, comfort, and develops an exaggerated self-image. The character will be hard-pressed to do anything for other people.

51+

MEGALOMANIA:

The character has delusions of grandeur: he is the best soldier that ever lived, he is the best netrunner around, etc. As such, everyone else is inferior and can be neglected. The character also sees himself as immortal. This means that the character will ignore risks, seeing himself as impervious to mortal danger. This will often get the person killed.

OBSESSION

AMOUNT

DESCRIPTION:

01-10

NO EFFECT.

The character likes to play with the cybernetic, but without interfering his normal life.

11-20

DISTRACTED:

The character likes to play with the cybernetics or drugs, using them whenever free time presents itself. This is to the point of being a distraction. Unless the character is concentrating, a -1 penalty on all checks is given due to the distraction.

21-30

COMPULSIVE:

The character compulsively plays with the cybernetics or drugs, using them whenever possible. This acts as a serious distraction, with a -2 penalty on all checks due to the distraction, unless the character is concentrating hard.

31-40

ADDICT:

The character has to play with the cybernetics or drugs, using them as much of the time as possible. This acts as a serious distraction, with a -2 penalty on all checks due to the distraction unless the character is concentrating hard. The character's COOL drops by 1 for every 6 hours not allowed to play with the cybernetic or using drugs, to a minimum of 2.

41-50

OBSESSIVE:

The character does play with the cybernetics or drugs, using them all of the time. This acts as a serious distraction with a -4 penalty on all checks unless the character is concentrating hard. The character's COOL drops by 1 for every 3 hours not allowed to play with the cybernetic or using drugs, to a minimum of 2.

51+

MONOMANIA:

The character must play with the cybernetics or drugs all of the time. This acts as a serious distraction, with a -4 penalty on all checks. The character's COOL drops by 1 for every hour not allowed to play with the cybernetic or using drugs, to a minimum of 2. The character is essentially a vegetable, addicted to playing with the cybernetic or taking the drug.

The Aariti-Fanatics



It may also be possible to have negative DED scores for characters violently opposed to a belief system. Simply reverse the descriptions of the various positive DED levels described. For example, a DED of -10 in the Followers of Spiritual Purity would hate them to a tremendous degree and seek to destroy any encountered. All activities would be focused upon destroying that movement. A DED of -2 would mean the character dislikes the ideology but not in any extreme manner.





Stress Factors



Living in a hostile environment can be extremely stressful, however some people acclimatize to it. Environmental Stress Modifiers are reduced by the character's COOL/4 (round down) after living under those conditions for 6 months. It is further reduced by that amount after 2 years of living under those conditions, and then again by the same amount after 10 years. So, characters who have lived all of their lives in the Zone would not find it so bad.

PARANOIA

AMOUNT

DESCRIPTION

01-10

NO EFFECT.

The character is a little nervous, but no more than is common in the Cyberpunk world.

11-20

NERVOUS:

The character is a little more nervous than the average person, seeing things that most people wouldn't: shapes in the darkness, stalkers, etc. The character has an automatic -2 penalty on all Fright checks.

21-30

HYPOCHONDRIAC:

In addition to being Nervous, the character is always afraid that he is getting sick. The GM should alert the player when the character feels the symptoms of various diseases (which the character of course does not have). The most common disease Netrunners fear they have is Murk Psychosis, which perhaps they do eventually get, one way or another.

31-40

PHOBIC:

In addition to being Nervous and Hypochondriac, the character develops a Severe phobia. This can be chosen or rolled for by the player or simply chosen by the GM (see Quirks of the Mind.) It should have some relation to the cybernetics or drugs involved.

41-50

PARANOID:

In addition to being an Hypochondriac and having a Phobia, the character is paranoid. The character thinks that people are out to get him, that he is the target of some conspiracy. This results in a -4 penalty on all Fright checks and the character's effective COOL decreases by 1.

51+

HOMICIDAL MANIA:

The character becomes homicidal. Fearing that people are secretly plotting against him, he takes things into his own hands and begins to hunt them down. Who "they" are will vary depending upon the circumstances. The GM should create logical (?) scenarios in which the character is convinced that a person is plotting to kill him, and encourage the character to "act first". This is the mediatic image of the cyberpsycho, not at all consumed with rage but more with fear. A scared psycho is not a pleasant one to confront. Note that reasoning does not work with this kind of psychotic.

PHOBIA TABLE

ROLL	PHOBIA	ROLL	PHOBIA
01-02	Acrophobia - Heights	48-49	Hydrophobia - Water
03-04	Agoraphobia - Open Spaces*	50-51	Lunaphobia - Moon
05-06	Allurophobia - Felines	52-54	Martrophobia - Weapons
07-08	Algoraphobia - Pain	55-58	Musophobia - Mice, Rodents
09-10	Andro/Gynophobia - Gender	59-65	Neophobia - New Ideas, Ways
11-12	Arachniphobia - Spiders	66-70	Ophlophobia - Reptiles, Snakes
13-14	Astraphobia - Thunder	71-73	Patrophobia - Authority
15-16	Autophobia - Solitude	74	Phenophobia - Supernatural
17-18	Bacteriophobia - Bacteria	75-76	Photophobia - Light
19-21	Claustrophobia - Enclosed Places	77-79	Pyrophobia - Fire
22-23	Cyberphobia - Cybernetics	80-81	Rupophobia - Dirt, Filth
24-25	Cynophobia - Canines	82-83	Scotophobia - Darkness
26-28	Demophobia - Crowds	84-86	Technophobia - Technology**
29-30	Electrophobia - Electricity	87-88	Teratophobia - Monsters
30-32	Entomophobia - Insects	89-90	Thalassophobia - Open seas
33-34	Equiphobia - Horses	91-93	Thanatophobia - Death
35-37	Floriphobia - Plants, Flowers	94	Theophobia - Divine Powers
38-40	Haemophobia - Blood	95-96	Toxicophobia - Being poisoned
41-42	Heliophobia - Sun	97-98	Xenophobia - Unknown
43-47	Heprephobia - Bodily Contact	99-00	Zoophobia - Animals

*Not to be confused with the severe agoraphobia of the Over The Edge table.

**GM must determine which type of technology.





QUIRKS OF THE MIND

The human mind often deals with trauma by developing intense fears. It is a defense mechanism of sorts which protects us from things that traumatized us. Phobias are those fears, sometimes mild dislikes, sometimes crippling fears.

When a phobia is required due to a fright check or for some other reason, make an appropriate selection from the following list. Roll 1d6 for the degree of the phobia unless otherwise determined. On a 1-3, it is Mild; on a 4-5 it is Severe, on a 6 it is Crippling. The character must make a Fright check when dealing with the subject of the phobia. The Difficulty is 10 for Mild phobias, 15 for Severe ones and 20 for Crippling phobias.

Four one-hour sessions of therapy at a cost of 100-1000eb each can cure a character of a Mild phobia. Multiply by both time and cost by 2 for Severe phobias, and by 4 for Crippling phobias. As an alternative, if one of the characters has Psychology, you can roll four Average (15) Psychology checks for Mild Phobias, 8 Difficult (20) Psychology checks for Severe ones and 16 Very Difficult (25) Psychology checks for Crippling ones. The time required is 1 hour for each check, and at least four days must separate each therapy session. Characters can try to cure themselves, but this adds 10 to the Difficulty.

DEDICATION

This is a new stat measuring the character's dedication to a particular ideology or belief system. It is rated just like a normal stat, except that it can be between 1 and 10, and the player can select the levels and belief system his character is dedicated to. Optionally, players can be forced to roll 1d10 and develop a Dedication or several for the character. This can add to the personality of the character.

There can also be more than one Dedication in the character's life, of varying degrees, with all of them recorded on the character sheet. However, each Dedication must be of a different level from one another (i.e. no ties) and from the particular belief system a Dedication (DED) score is related to. When making specific Dedication checks, the specified Dedication must be used.

DEDICATION LEVEL DESCRIPTIONS

DED	DESCRIPTION
1-2	BELIEVER: <i>The character believes in the ideology, and will follow its system. However he will rarely go out of his way to defend it or put too much effort into it.</i>
3-4	MODERATE: <i>The character believes in the ideology and will defend it, but he is a moderate, able to see other points of view and not fervently obsessed with the dogma of this particular ideology.</i>
5-6	ADHERENT: <i>The character believes in the ideology and lives by it. He will defend it, but is still able to accept other ideologies.</i>
7-8	DISCIPLE: <i>The character follows the ideology, living by it and teaching it to others. The character is a true believer, but will not risk his life for it.</i>
9	EXTREMIST: <i>The character follows and believes the ideology in the extreme, seeing it as the only possible truth. Extremist characters may risk their lives for it.</i>
10	FANATIC: <i>The character is fanatical in his belief of the ideology, he is in fact one of the strongest believers. No other ideology is right in this character's mind and anyone with different beliefs is outright wrong. Fanatical characters will risk their lives for their beliefs and kill for them as well (except those with peaceful or pacifistic ideologies). Nothing is too extreme for fanatics. These people typically become leaders of their groups. (which is a scary thought!)</i> <i>Dedications can be to religions, cults, philosophies, organizations, countries and even corporations. Note that a character can only have one DED that is 9 or higher. Also, a character could be dedicated to an ideal, such as peace, resulting in a true pacifist.</i>

NEW SKILLS

The skills that list (EMP/PSY) as their base stat actually use the higher of the two. If the Psyche stat is not being used in your game, use LUCK instead. When one of these skills is being used for general knowledge of the skill's use and capabilities, use INT instead.





ASTROLOGY (INT):

The knowledge of astrology and how to generate an astrological chart.

AURA READING (EMP/PSY):

The knowledge of the interpretation of aura and skill in seeing them.

EXPERT: BLESSING (EMP/PSY):

The character knows a specific blessing. The name of the blessing should be recorded.

EXPERT: CURSE (EMP/PSY):

The character knows a specific curse. The name of the curse should be recorded.

EXPERT: RITUAL (EMP/PSY):

The character knows a specific ritual. The name of the ritual, its difficulty, effects, any sacrifices required, the power item and location, and the length of time required for the ceremony must be recorded.

EXPERT: SPELL (EMP/PSY):

The character knows a specific spell. The spell's name, effects, requirements and limitations should be noted.

GRAPHOLOGY (INT):

The skill of hand-writing analysis. Information can be gained about people through their writing.

HERBALISM (INT):

The skill of manufacturing drugs and concoctions from herbs and other natural ingredients.

MAGIC (INT):

The skill of illusion, of prestidigitation. The character is able to perform magic tricks, such as sawing people in half, making them disappear, etc.

PALMISTRY (EMP/PSY):

The art of reading the lines of the hand to gain information about an individual and their future.

PSYCHOLOGY (INT):

The knowledge of the human mind and its workings. A character with Psychology skill can attempt therapy.

RUNE LORE (INT):

Knowledge of the runes and the rituals surrounding runic magic. It should be specified whether they are Celtic, Egyptian or any other form of runes.

SLEIGHT OF HAND (REF):

The skill of making small objects appear and disappear.

TAROT LORE (EMP/PSY):

The character knows the meanings of the tarot cards and can conduct a reading.

THEOLOGY (INT):

The knowledge of the religions of the world and their beliefs. The character would generally specialize in their own particular religion.

VOODOO DIVINATION (EMP/PSY):

The character knows how to conduct a voodoo style divination rite.



Apostles Of The Edge

If you believe in Light, It's because of Obscurity.

If you believe in Joy, It's because of Sadness.

If you believe in God, It's because of the Devil.

- Enigma, MCMXC A.D.



Everything's a pattern, man. I mean, the wars, civilization's rise and fall, there's a pattern to it all. Like, take the Egyptians, they realized it and built it into the pyramids. The dimensions of the world can be found on the Cheops pyramid. Man, they knew, they all knew. Know the pattern and know the world. Our pattern's coming to an end. It's like we don't even matter, forces manipulate and twist the world that defy our understanding. But, if you know the pattern... if you know the pattern..."

The coming of the 21st century has been marked with a spiritual revolution. The result is a diverse assortment of faiths appearing across the world. There are no real unified churches anymore, factions having shattered even the most solid religions into fragments. All of the "Old World" faiths (the traditional religions) are still present and strong, but they have lost many followers to the new cults of 2020.

Voodoo has gained a strong foothold in almost every corner of the world, especially the Neo-Voodoo. Its flexibility and close ties to innovation appeal to the technological world of 2020. Same thing with the Nihilist Movement, which reflects the despair rooted in modern society. Other cults, as a reaction to contemporary life, have arisen and gained wide popularity. Spirituality is a large part of life in 2020 and, as such, the cults which characters may join are presented below. You can also use them for NPCs. Disregard a man's beliefs and you disregard him.

3. Apostles Of The Edge

THE CHURCH OF SIN



The Church of SIN is a curious cult in which "sins" are promoted. SIN stands for the Seven Indulgences of Nature. The Seven Indulgences are: Pride, Covetousness, Envy, Wrath, Gluttony, Sloth and Lechery. Believers argue that these are natural states of the human psyche and, as such, should be exalted.



• IMAGE:

The SINers are known for their lavish orgies and elaborate ceremonies. They also hold the ExhibiSIN, which is a huge parade of "sin" which crosses the city (a great time to be had for all). There have been many incidents involving members of this cult. While most SINers are good people who just want to have fun, some seek to commit terrible atrocities.

• HISTORY:

The SINers started out as devoutly religious members of the major faiths, but at the turn of the Millennia, when the world was expected to undergo Judgment, they were disappointed. They had been seeking Judgment to show that they had been righteous, that they had been good and had avoided sin. They felt cheated, robbed of life's joys by a cruel lie and so they set out to enjoy life since there would be no retribution.

Many of the people who were disappointed became very jaded and figured that if there was no ultimate Judgment, they could do as they please. This is not to say that the followers abandoned their belief in God or their religion, but more that they thought God had abandoned them and were trying to show their displeasure by being as bad as possible.

Needless to say, the organized religions are not pleased about this group. There are constant protests against this cult and it has been the focus of many slander campaigns by self-righteous citizens. Nevertheless, the SINers became an instant hit, especially in the decadent world of the 21st century.

The SINers try to have all of the seven deadly sins, which they have renamed the Seven Indulgences of Nature, which they believe are their birthright and which they intend to enjoy completely. Thus they are filled with pride in their faith, covet one another's possessions, envy those with more, show their wrath at those who anger them, have huge feasts and orgies and are generally quite lazy. Some take these Indulgences a bit too far, such as the mass murderers who claimed to be members.

Most famous of the SINer's activities is the great ExhibiSIN during which all the members travel from their church through the city and back again. They wear skimpy costumes and elaborate masks that usually conceal their faces completely. Along the way, loud and fast-paced music beats as the SINers dance and sing. They travel on huge decorated flatbeds since they would not deign to walk the whole distance. While some cities have banned the ExhibiSIN, others use it as a tourist attraction.

The motive behind the ExhibiSIN, as one can plainly guess, is to flaunt their sinfulness. To show that they can enjoy themselves to the fullest.

• BELIEFS:

The Church of SIN preaches debauchery and self-gratification. They believe in being as "sinful" as possible to show their ire to God for having abandoned them. They do see their actions as evil but feel justified as they tried being good but got no reward. They are now being evil under the assumption that they will not be punished.

The cult is transparent in ways other than their belief in being sinful: many of the services of the cult involve warped readings from spiritual texts, altering the messages to support their sinful ways. They cling to their old beliefs, simply reversing the moral values.



Oddly enough, most cult members are hoping for retribution: in a sense, they are hoping to be struck down. They go to extremes for just this purpose, hoping that God will take notice if they act bad enough. However, this is a subconscious desire which few members are aware of.

• **ORGANIZATION:**

The Church of SIN has self-proclaimed leaders, but, truthfully, whoever feels like ruling and whoever is allowed to rule does so. It is one of the most anarchistic cults after the Nihilists, from whom there are many cross-members.

• **STATUS:**

The Church of SIN is a popular cult in 2020, and they are growing in numbers, every ExhibiSIN bringing in more members. There are now tens of thousands of members worldwide, though many are only partial members because they are too lazy to be more active in the cult.

The police are investigating reports that there has been brainwashing involved in the cult, but these rumors seem to have been started by other cults and religions, who cannot believe that anyone would be a member without being somehow coerced.

• **RELATIONS:**

The SINers are loosely allied with the Cybernetics Temple and the Pagans, and on friendly terms with the Church of the Immortals. They are closely allied with the Nihilists and Temple of Holy Hallucinations. The Followers of Spiritual Purity and most organized religions are strong adversaries of the group, most of the time publicly denouncing them. There have been some attempts to even shut them down forcibly, such as the bombing of a SINer church in 2018 that killed 24 and wounded 140.

• **MEMBER TYPES:**

Rockers are by far the most common members of the Church. However, they also have a good number of Medias, Fixers and Nomads. Corporates and Techies are only rarely found in the cult. Netrunners oddly enjoy this gathering of passionate people. Solos generally do not like the unstructured nature of the Church, nor do Cops or Medtechies.

The Dark Side of the ExhibiSin

One of the least known aspects of the ExhibiSIN is that almost everyone shows up at them, including the vampire community. It is a day of much feasting, in which almost every vampire, even if it is not necessary, can feed past the point of satiation. They revel in the ExhibiSIN even more than their mortal friends but are nevertheless still careful not to be overt in their revelry.

Werewolves and other creatures of the night also take part, however not to the same degree as the vampires. Only the most recluse vampires avoid this celebration. It is rumored that it was due to a vampire's influence that it has been kept running, and there are a large number of vampires who are members of the Church of SIN. Some say the original founders were vampires.

There are also a good number of cult members who are mundane beasts, such as stalkers and mass murderers. They generally act during the ExhibiSIN claiming to be exercising their indulgences in their horrific acts; this is the real reason why it has been banned in some cities.





THE CHURCH OF THE IMMORTALS



The Church of the Immortals is a secretive cult. They center their doctrine around death and those things related to it. The best information comes from its more popular era, almost a decade past. They are usually referred to by non-members as the Church of the Undead.



• IMAGE:

The Church of the Immortals appeared out of nowhere around the year 2012. It grew in popularity quickly because it sought not only to destroy any fear of death, but also promised immortality to its members. In 2015, it was revealed that this was all a scam and they went underground, with only the truly devout staying with the cult. They all live in a huge pyramid-shaped "temple" called "The Crypt", in which they reportedly perform all sorts of dark and twisted rituals.

They are known on the street as the "Zombie Masters", relating to the rumors that they routinely animate dead bodies. Few people will talk about them: there are stories of people who asked too many questions or talked too much getting killed, and turning up as zombie. There are some rumors of Voodoo being practiced by cult members, supporting claims that it is a Voodoo-offshoot.

• HISTORY:

The Church of the Undead was actually formed in the year 2002 by a group of researchers intent on discovering the secret to eternal life. They believed that they found it in 2010, but needed more funding. They didn't trust the government and could find no other financial backers, so decided to form a Church. The idea was an immediate success, two members of the group having majored in Theology.

The ideology would be based around science and the enjoyment life. They decided that since they would be creating a new faith, they might as well make it as good as possible. Building the beliefs around the central idea that death can be overcome, and that science was the key, they appealed to the technocentric attitude of the time.

The cult quickly gained popularity, though other religious groups strongly scorned them for making promises they could not keep. Not that this was unheard of in the business of faith. The group appears to have eventually made the breakthrough they needed to make humans immortal in some manner, or at least bring them back to life. They began to use this elixir immediately, charging members a million eurobucks for it. The beauty was that one could pay it over eternity since they would have all of time to pay, simply pay all that they had up front.

The church became a bonanza for the researchers. Not only were they making incredible sums of money, but they had hundreds of subjects. Their ethics were questionable and soon the medical establishment was demanding the secret of this elixir. The Church refused flatly. A couple of years later, a team managed to break in and obtain a copy of the formula. It was determined to be a fake serum. It had no special properties besides creating a feeling of euphoria.

Nevertheless, the Church, undaunted by reports that their miraculous discovery was a fraud, maintained their claims. The tens of thousands who had flocked to them quickly disappeared, ashamed of their foolishness. The government investigated the Church, but were countered with legal technicalities which prevented any legal action from being taken against the Church.

This was the time of Reorganization. A new leader, going by the name The Raven, took the reigns of power at the bequest of the original members. He quickly closed down all the temples they had set up, dismissed any member whose loyalty was questionable and began work on The Crypt.

With the money they had obtained, they managed to build it within a few years. In the shape of a majestic pyramid, The Crypt is now the center of Church activities.





Inside lies a great arcology housing a few hundred individuals and with all the necessary facilities to be self-sufficient. Some believe them to be preparing for the Apocalypse, but in fact they just prefer to work in privacy.

Under Raven's reign, research continues into death and related subjects. It is still a cult, though centered around science and research. Currently the Church is a powerful if secretive organization.

• **BELIEFS:**

The Church of the Immortals' beliefs are difficult to document because they preach more of a way of life than any particular doctrine. Overall, they see the fear of death as futile, since we must all face death eventually, but they also see cause in gaining as much information on it as possible.

They pronounce that life is to be enjoyed to the fullest, and that every person must realize his full potential by achieving whatever ends he seeks. However, the means of attaining that end demonstrate an obvious lack of morals or ethics within this group.

Murder is denounced, though they also seem to use its threat commonly, therefore one could question whether this is truly a part of their belief system or not. Suicide is also denounced even more strongly than murder, for reasons unknown.

The fear and wonder surrounding death has been with humanity since first having an awareness of mortality, and as such is an important spiritual issue with the Church of the Undead. They appear to see Death as their supreme deity, always paying it homage. There are altars to every death god known to humanity within The Crypt and the Church believes that almost every faith has some sort death god or goddess.

• **ORGANIZATION:**

Within the Church, The Raven is the ruler supreme and his word is obeyed without question. There is a fanatical belief in him and in the Church. Members are sworn to secrecy, with rumors telling of punishment by death should they talk (truth is, they are buried alive for a certain amount of time).

• **STATUS:**

Currently, there are only a couple thousand members. It is not a very popular cult, though it is powerful. Members who join frequently disappear for years at a time into the darkness of the Crypt. This cult may be small, but it deals with something of interest to almost every human being.

• **RELATIONS:**

The Church of the Undead is looked down upon by all other cults and organized religions. While most scorn their obvious fraud to the public, many are becoming increasingly frightened by the grip this small organization has upon the city. They are being forced to reckon with the question of death, which is making everyone very uneasy. Even the Nihilists are not so sure what to make of the Church, desiring more to ignore what death is, and just to embrace it without a thought. The Voodoo cults appear to be the only groups friendly with the Church of the Undead.

• **MEMBER TYPES:**

Of the few members of the Church, MedTechs, Nomads and veteran Solos are very common. Other than those groups, there are no particular types who are commonly found in the Church, simply anyone that was curious enough about death to find out all they could.





FOLLOWERS OF SPIRITUAL PURITY



The Followers of Spiritual Purity are better known for the tyranny and the terror they have inflicted upon the people of the 21st century. They are certainly the most horrific cult of fanatics in recent times.



• IMAGE:

The street name for the Followers is the Inquisition, which perfectly describes what they're like. They believe that cybernetics and technology in general is evil and sinful, and are known for harassing and assaulting those who are "afflicted" with a love of cybernetics. The terror they caused was so intense that cults and gangs that normally were at odds joined together to rout the Purists.

The Purists are known by their hooded, black robes. In recent times, they have stopped wearing the traditional garb for fear of attacks, instead wearing black headbands.

• HISTORY:

The Followers of Spiritual Purity's cult was based around the idea that technology was destroying lives and advancing too quickly. This ideology started a couple decades back and a group of believers in this ideology took sanctuary outside of human society, in rural regions. They used only the most primitive equipment, mimicking the Quakers and other such groups.

They preached a doctrine that technology was a sin because it had gone too far. Their group's name was the Scientific Moderates, and so they were. However, the younger generation, eager to prove their faith, saw all technology as evil and a blemish upon the world. An extreme movement among these youth emerged.

Soon they moved to the city and, disgusted at the extent of technology present, decided it was up to them to convert the masses. The first evil which was the most repugnant, was cybernetics, their first target.

This group, taking the name "The Followers of Spiritual Purity", began preaching in the streets, infiltrating other churches and gaining support for their ideology among the populace. The elders of the original group were pleased with the zealous nature of the children, but were worried about just how far it would go.

Soon, Purist churches were being constructed with entire "Follower" neighborhoods. They strove to convince as many as possible, and with so many suffering Technoshock, they were well received by the populace. Their churches overflowed, many people renouncing their cybernetics, having them removed and cleansing themselves of "evil".

However, the Pure Ones, as the founders of this movement called themselves, believed that even those who did not want to be "cleansed" must be. They must be shown the error of their ways. They organized the Immaculate Order of Purgers, who were the black-robed, armed members who would go out into the streets, preach and attack those with obvious cybernetics.

This was when the elders decided it had gone too far, and tried to step in. The Pure Ones would have nothing to do with them, claiming that they had been subverted by technology. There were also problems with the police, who were increasing surveillance of the cult, and many gangs were fighting back, exacting revenge for previous "Purges".

The Purists, though strong in numbers, were facing constant troubles. The media would show victims of the Purgers every night, the police maintained constant surveillance of their members and gangs were returning the violence in double. The cult was falling apart by 2013, just a few years after their introduction into society.

The worst blow came in 2013 when members began dropping out by the scores. Attracted by the seemingly pleasant and comforting faith of the Church of the





Immortals, hundreds converted on a weekly basis. The Inquisitors (now proudly adopting this name) attempted to slur and scorn the Church, but this might have very well increased the number who abandoned their following.

Now the Pure Ones, attacked on all fronts and with their support ripped out from under, fell. The Inquisition almost came to a close, except for a dedication which can aptly be termed fanatical. The Pure Ones decided that the church would scale down and branch out. Soon there was a dozen subsects, each with its own angle. For example, Black Monday became the group that was against the media and quickly became a terrorist group. The Mundane Monks, on the other hand, took to the streets, preaching with a much more subdued tone.

Through all of this, the Pure Ones have maintained the main church and have denied affiliation with the more violent sects. The group is nowhere near its former glory, but is doing quite well as a cult.

Cult Bands

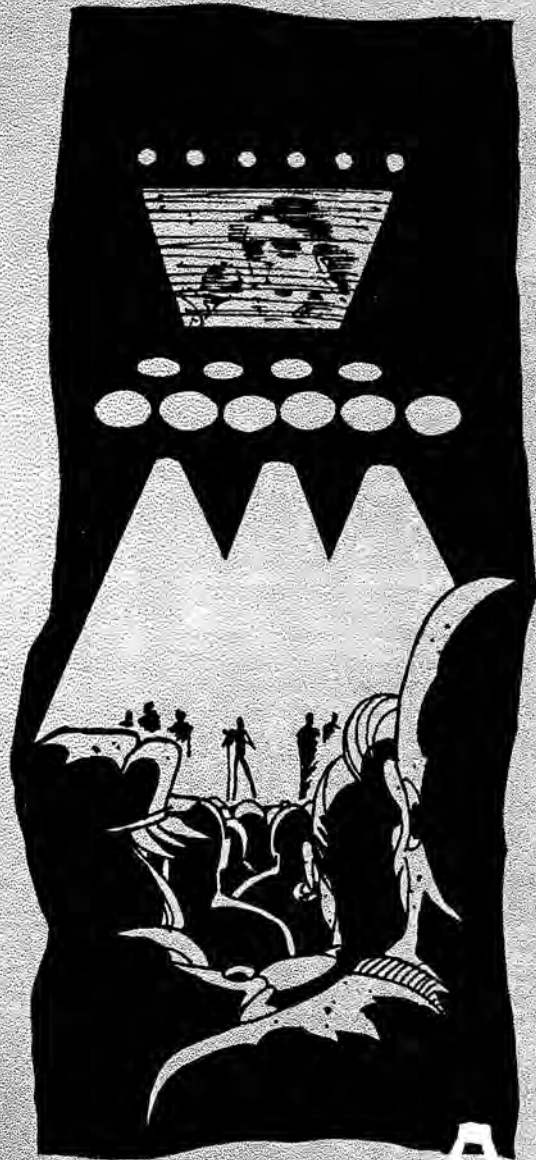
A new type of music which came into popularity in the 21st century was Cult Music. These bands tend to play music and have lyrics expounding the beliefs and ideology of a particular cult. However, the name is not entirely accurate, as there are Cult Bands for larger organized religions. Choir music has now been grouped under this heading.

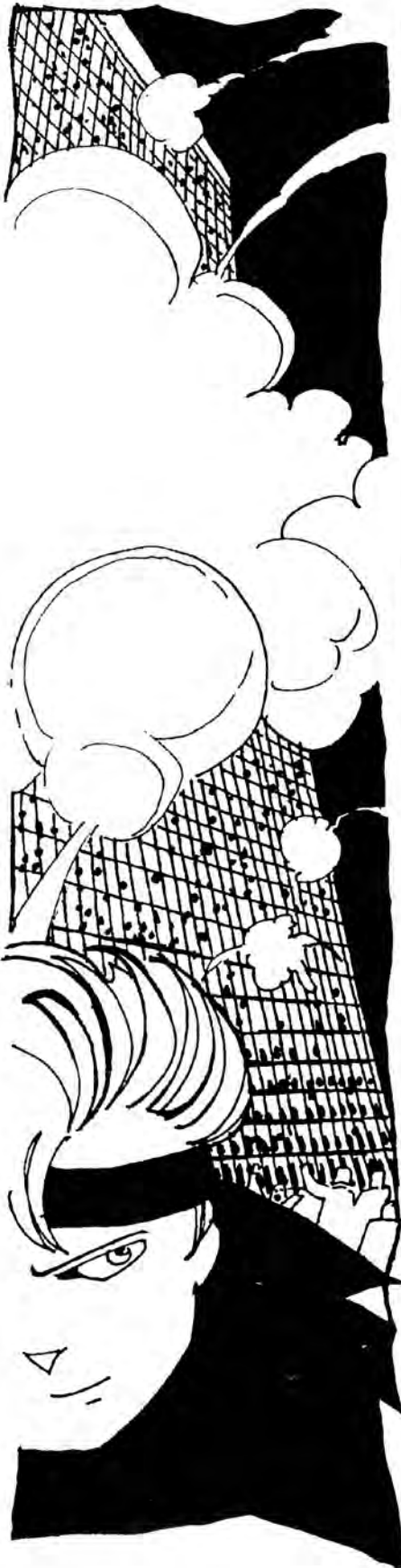
Examples of Cult bands and their cults would be Enigma and the SINFolk, the Holy Spirit Choir and the Natural Minstrels with the Followers of Spiritual Purity. These bands need not be fanatical followers, nor even members of their particular cults, but only that their music is readily associated with the cult.

The Shepherds have the Crusaders, which is their main band, and typically plays at Shepherd events. However, there are many street level bands and small time groups which are considered Shepherd cult bands, because the theme of defending the weak and hope for a better world is already so prevalent.

The Church of the Undead has less popular cult bands associated with them, such as the Knights of the Living Dead, renown for their gothic music and somber tone. This is entirely opposite to the eclectic Patternist's bands, such as Over and Over or AND DNA, and the more bizarre Nights 'n Things, whose music is best characterized as alien.

However, the larger religions have their own "cult bands", and such a practice dates back to the early hymns and such music that is religious in content. The definition has simply been extended so that much of the modern music is now classified as having religious content.





MAJOR PURIST SECTS

The Followers of Spiritual Purity have many sects which are in some way affiliated with the main church, regardless of the many protestations of the Pure Ones.

• BLACK MONDAY:

A terrorist group which attacks media institutions, mainly those that are involved with television. They focus most strongly on smaller stations, which are easier to attack. The group is composed of small cells, ensuring that no one member can betray more than a few comrades. This group is actively sought by the police and federal legal enforcement agencies, not to mention media corporations who are alarmed by the group's record: 3 television stations bombed, 9 killed and 78 injured. They typically target such institutions, or at the very least the main transmitter. There are an estimated 48 members, broken down into 6-man cells. Saint Joseph is the proclaimed leader.

• MUNDANE MONKS:

A very peaceful group who believes that cybernetics and electronics are detrimental to the spiritual well-being of a person. They preach on street corners to people passing by, offering their wisdom. They live a harsh life, without the benefit of anything gained by technology (they sleep in the gutters and refuse medical attention other than simple binding of wounds).

They strongly believe in their cause, but refuse to use violence, even in self-defense. They are also called the Mad Monks or the Martyrs, which is exactly how they see themselves. There are only a dozen or so Monks in each major city, as converts typically join the main church. They strongly protest against the actions of such groups as Black Monday.

• HOLY BRIGADE:

The Holy Brigade are the Solos and Nomads who believe that the "cause" should be fought for. They believe in a warrior's life, where the strong rules. They train in hand-to-hand combat techniques and disdain the use of firearms and technological weapons. However, rumors have it that the elite members do use assault rifles on black missions. This is the muscle behind the Church, though of course it is never acknowledged as such. The group fought as a whole during the Third Central American war and was quite successful. There are nearly a hundred active members of varying experience.

• SCISSORS:

Another terrorist sect of the Purists, this group is actually quite large and has a large number of ex-Netrunners in it. The main belief is that the Net is the way of the devil and is subverting the minds of people in the 21st century. They seek to destroy the Net, node by node if they must, by tearing it apart. There are a few hundred members; however, only a small minority of them actively work at directly destroying the Net. The rest simply protest its existence. They are also strongly against the existence of AIs.





• BELIEFS:

The Spiritually Pure believe most strongly that technology is the devil's tool to subvert humanity away from God. They see technology as having invaded the minds of humanity and their bodies in the form of cybernetics. By getting rid of cybernetics, the battle for the body would be won, and then minds could also be regained.

They believe that the human body is one's own temple, and to have cybernetics within it, is to bring the devil in your temple. This is the worst sin they can imagine, and this is what they work most fervently against. They advocate making all cybernetics illegal, citing safety reasons (after all, cyberpsychos can hardly be considered safe!).

However, while the church's main focus is on cybernetics, they also are against all technology, though the degree to which they disdain it varies. Some refuse to use electronics but will willingly use firearms, while others scorn any use of technology.

• ORGANIZATION:

The highest level of power within the Followers are the Pure Ones. They number twelve and each has below him three Bishops who have their own church, followed by the lower ranks of Brothers and Sisters and then simply Followers. A member of a higher rank is always obeyed.

• STATUS:

The Followers are numerous right now, with over 3000 members, though it is fragmented and nothing compared to their former glory. Within the church proper there are a couple of thousand members; the rest belong to the various sects. The police are currently watching over all Follower activities with suspicion.

• RELATIONS:

The Followers are generally disliked by other cults, but are being reevaluated by the larger churches. The lack of violence in their revised doctrine has made them somewhat respectable and many larger religions agree that technology is an evil, though perhaps not to the same degree.

• MEMBER TYPES:

The most common member types are locals without any real "action-oriented" occupation. Solos and Nomads find their way into the more violent sects, and it attracts a few Rockers, but really it is more the common person on the street, who normally would have no dealings with cybernetics anyway. Small towns are also becoming caught up in this ideology, so many members are from small towns, and have moved to the big city just like the original Pure Ones.

Scandal

There are reports of vicious murders of friendly cybertroops by the Holy Brigade during the Third Central American war. The government is officially denying any knowledge of this, but footage has appeared showing Holy Brigade commandos ambushing an American squad of cybersoldiers and brutally murdering them.





NIHILISTS

The number of nihilistic cults in the 21st century has increased dramatically. This has had a powerful effect on the general populace, especially since the majority of their members are between the ages of 16 and 24. Very few of them survive past their 24th birthday, preferring the death most Nihilists seek: that of "Gowab" (Going Out With A Bang).



• IMAGE:

The Nihilists are seen by outsiders as suicidal maniacs who believe nothing is worth living for; they seek to die in spectacular ways. They are known to take life truly to the Edge since they do not fear death; instead, they welcome it.

Many fear the Nihilists, who, not fearing the repercussions, will do practically anything. Overall, though, they are the tragic result of a depressed society.

• HISTORY:

There have been Nihilists for as long as there have been people with the ideology that life is hopeless. The Nihilist churches first became popular during the later 20th century, growing in popularity among the youth. Depressed economies and high unemployment contributed to the feelings of despair, and the increasingly incomprehensible world of cyberpunk has only multiplied memberships in these fatalistic cults.

With the collapse of the United States in 1996, many people adopted the philosophy of Nihilism, preferring suicide to the hardships of poverty and strife. This continued until the year 2000, when a great change came about.

The Millennia cults left thousands disappointed and confused that the world did not end with the second millennia. They sought answers, and Christian Harbinger was there to answer them. He wrote the Society of the Dead, spawning the first true Nihilist church, and it soon spread across North America then over the world.

Harbinger, the leader of the movement, soon achieved the status of Prophet of Death. His three main followers were known as the Horsemen of Death and as they traveled across North America (and, later, over the rest of the world) on their motorcycles, they spread Harbinger's word.

At first only the suicide rate soared, but with Harbinger's flashy suicide in 2016, the homicide rate soared alongside as murder-suicides became popular. Harbinger decided that he had had enough and was tired of the world. He then went to speak to a group of protesters who were rallying against his church's presence. There, he took out his book, and began to read from it. The crowd booed him, and began to shout. Then they started to throw things at him. He just laughed.

Seconds later, a military jet flew past and dropped a napalm bomb on the crowd and church, killing a few dozen protesters and hundreds of members of the church along with Harbinger. Apparently, he had set it all up in advance, but no one knows how. The military denies any of their jets were used.

Harbinger's death did nothing to slow the church's popularity. Instead, his suicide attracted even more followers. The domination of the corporations and the growing Combat Zones of the 21st century did nothing to soothe the already disheartened public. The movement grew and grew, and is very much a part of the Cyberpunk era.

• BELIEFS:

The Nihilist Movement believes that life is hopeless. That there is no possibility that things will improve and any pleasure which is felt is temporary, soon to be replaced by pain and anguish.

They believe that everyone is dead as society is, within. To them, our spirits are rotting away in the hell that our sickened society has created. To end the pain, we must die, and accept that the human race failed at creating a workable society. Their flashy deaths tend not to be for publicity reasons, but, instead, to show that death doesn't have to be as bad as people portray it to be.





Ultimately, everyone must die, and their answer to it all is to die on their own terms, quickly and as painlessly as possible. Why have a slow lingering death? Many are pro-nuke, seeing it as a quick and easy way to eliminate humanity as a whole.

• **ORGANIZATION:**

The Movement has different groups called Parties, each with their own Host, who is the leader (usually elected, but often just whoever the members don't mind being the leader since politics are kept to a minimum). The Host is generally obeyed as much as possible, but if members really object, the Host will simply be overthrown and a new one elected. Other than this, there is no real hierarchy in the movement since there is little time for that sort of thing.

• **STATUS:**

The Nihilist Movement is currently doing extremely well. There are over twenty thousand members in Parties across North America and a few more thousands who claim allegiance. Movement members tend to be watched by the public and police forces with caution since they can be quite unpredictable.

• **RELATIONS:**

The Movement is pitied strongly by the Church of the Immortals, who see them as scared kids. The Followers of Spiritual Purity see the Nihilists as proof of the destructive nature of technology and take pity upon them. Other fundamentalist groups simply discredit them whenever possible. Most groups however, tend to avoid them, not wanting the Nihilists to suddenly take interest in them.

• **MEMBER TYPES:**

There are no specific character types which are found in the Movement because all groups are represented. Perhaps the only ones who are exceptions would be the Corporates, who live quite comfortable, if stressful, lives and Cops who cannot deal with the lawlessness in the cult.

Introduction To The Society Of The Dead

Our time is unique because of the circumstances and environment in which we live. We are a society which, by all rights, should be dead. The Apocalypse mysteriously failed to happen. Why was this? Have we been given a second chance? Or is it, perhaps, that it really did happen...

Perhaps society is dead, perhaps we are truly dead in our souls. If we are all dead, you ask, then why do we move and breathe? Because we haven't yet realized we are dead. We continue on, just as a fatally wounded man is able to stumble around for a few moments. However, in this case, it is an entire society which clings ignorantly to its last shreds of life.

The world rots with decay. Pain and misery are everywhere. Why is there so much anguish in the world? Philosophers and theologians have been struggling with this question for as long as we know. Some faiths teach that believing will set you free of the pain while others promise all sorts of miracle cures. There is no cure but death, and this is the final secret which no dead man can reveal.

The Nihilist Movement acknowledges that death is the only salvation one can hope to attain. The one thing that humanity has feared so long has at last been discovered to be the cure.

Join with the Movement and strip away the fears and trauma you have been subjected to over the course of your life. Realize that the only definite thing in life is death, and that death is also the only real rapture you can experience. Live life to the fullest. Enjoy every second, and when the enjoyment stops, end the game.





THE MANDELBROT SOCIETY



More commonly known as the Patternists, the Mandelbrot Society is a scientific cult. They claim that their beliefs stretch back to the Pythagorean Musical Spheres, but really are more related to modern fractal theories, and holistic concepts.



• IMAGE:

The Society, as they like to call themselves, are seen as a benign group, with little negative said about them. The media tends to neglect them and they are not generally discussed mainly because there is nothing particularly scandalous about them, at least nothing which has been made public.

The public knows the Society as the Patternists. They see patterns in everything and are generally a bunch of druggies who have spent too much time watching the snow on TV. Overall, they are harmless and pretty much a nice, if weird, bunch of people.

• HISTORY:

The Society was founded in 1994, though other groups with similar beliefs had been around prior to their formation. They proposed the axiom that the universe unfolded in patterns on every level and that all those levels are in some way interconnected, bringing the whole universe together in harmony.

The first group was only a half dozen or so, mainly scientists and some theologians. They stayed this way for the first two years and then decided to expand. Consequently, they organized into separate groups (there were five of them to start with) and were each to find five new members. Then those five would each find five new ones, and so forth. This way they could educate a small group and expand exponentially, in a pattern, true to their nature. The Society grew rapidly. Their beliefs were simple and they did not demand strict rules. The group was organized along the lines of a social gathering and a way of life. This was something which was not too threatening to the lifestyle of the late 20th century North America.

Society members had soon set up their own news service so that they could communicate with one another directly and keep all the other groups up to date on recent activities. Social events served to keep the groups together and beliefs specifically tailored to the layman meant that newcomers were not overwhelmed by a completely new ideology. However, as one progressed higher through the society, more in-depth ideologies were presented.

By 2010, the Society was huge and dwarfed many older cults. Some called their beliefs pseudo-science, but it was really the merging of science and religion. This was something which other religions had attempted in the past, but the startling success of the Society had never been achieved before.

Nevertheless, the Society continues to flourish. There have been no major scandals concerning this cult, nor have there ever been any accusations of brain-washing or other typical activities usually associated with cults. Many insist that it is not a cult at all, but merely philosophy lectures combined with social meetings.

However, one of the original members did go insane at one point and it is believed that the other four are on the verge of insanity. This is kept completely secret and the media has not even guessed at the possibility. Only the top two levels of the cult are even aware of this. If it were to come out, it would certainly undermine the credibility of the cult.

• BELIEFS:

The Society's ideology is based upon the idea that the universe is composed of patterns existing on all levels. In essence, their philosophy sees the universe as fractal in nature (hence the name Mandelbrot Society, in honor of Mandelbrot's early contribution to fractals).





What this means is that patterns occur on many levels, and not only in laboratories, but in nature as well. For example, the tree has branches, each branch has smaller twigs, and on each twig there is a leaf which has tiny branches on it, which branch off into smaller branches still, etc.

Because everything repeats itself on different levels, it must be interconnected. The belief is that the spirit of the universe, which is found in everything, is what connects the universe together. The physical manifestations of patterns show this to be true. Next, on the spiritual level, there are patterns and this is where upper levels of the Society get into mysticism.

When attempting to divine the patterns of the spirit world, the group attempts all sorts of rituals and ceremonies from other past human cultures and make reference to almost every spiritual text in existence. They believe that there are patterns to human thought and seek to find it. However, this is only at the upper levels and, generally, lower level members are merely concerned with enjoying basic human patterns in the world, on all levels (economic, political, social, etc).

Through mental patterns, Society members believe they will discover Absolute Reality. This is called Heaven, Nirvana, etc, by past faiths, but all were misinterpretations. Absolute Reality is seeing the universe as it truly is, without all of the filters of our own dimensions and limited minds. One of the original members has claimed to have seen Absolute Reality. This member went insane.

• ORGANIZATION:

Within the Society, creativity in finding new patterns is encouraged. Seeking out these patterns is almost a full time occupation to most members, who delight when things “work out”, as they say when a pattern is emerging as predicted. Each group is composed of 6 members. Five are new, or of a lower level than the sixth, who is also part of a higher level group. The group defers to the more experienced member, who teaches them to help them ascend to the next level. There are 5 distinct levels within the Society, with the 6th being only for the original five members. It is interesting to note that this organization is based upon the I Ching, which is recognized to be one of the original Patternist texts.

• STATUS:

The Society is doing quite well right now, mainly because they have managed to keep any unfortunate incidents quiet, and hope to maintain their secrecy. There are well over 300,000 members across the world right now, and it grows slowly every few years (it takes a while to get a full new group together).

• RELATIONS:

The other cults and major religions are quite uneasy about the Society due to its popularity and since so little is known about them. The Society believes that other faiths and beliefs are essential to the pattern of spirituality, and so don't mind them.

• MEMBER TYPES:

Usually Techies and Netrunners tend to be in the Society, though there are a surprising number of Rockers and Fixers in it as well. Solos, Cops and Nomads tend to be absent for some strange reason. Other roles are present in small numbers.

The Spider's Web

Patternists are wonderful characters to add to your campaign. They just watch the characters and are always around. If confronted, they will spout all sorts of dogma about the “pattern” and how they're trying to figure it out. What will be maddening is their uncanny ability of knowing just where the characters will be going next and be there first. They aren't following the characters, they are following the pattern. In some cases, they can be extremely useful for precisely this reason.



SHEPHERDS

The Shepherds are a strange cult which is primarily community-oriented and bent on protecting society at large. This is strange considering the tight-knit nature of the group, its capacity for violence and the web of secrecy that surrounds it.



• IMAGE:

The Shepherds are seen as helpful and benevolent albeit mysterious, and are accepted by society as saviors. Their aggressive nature only manifests itself against threats to the common good of society, such as gangs and other criminals. The gangs definitely dislike the Shepherds, who keep them out of the protected neighborhoods and who are tough opponents.

The public does wonder about the secrecy and rumors of occultism, but would just prefer to ignore such reports. After all, they have made entire neighborhoods safe at night. They have reduced crime by more than half in the communities where they are located. Who would want to criticize such a group, even if it is a cult?

The media are curious but very supportive of their crusade against crime. In fact, there is a TV show called Knight Watchmen that depicts a group of Shepherds as medieval knights battling gangs such as the Dragon's Minions. The imagery romanticizes them, ignoring the esoteric elements of the cult.

• HISTORY:

The Shepherds started out with small neighborhood watch groups, founded all across North America. These small groups then began to realize that the threat of gangs and street violence was making it too difficult for unarmed citizens to defend against, and that a group that was more organized and armed was needed.

Merging an age-old esoteric cult bent on community concerns, with the neighborhood watch groups, the Shepherds came into being. The new crusaders, dubbed Shepherds, were charged with watching over their flock. As a result of corporate funding and donations from local businesses, the Shepherds were now able to out-arm and out-train the gangs they faced.

The police and media were hesitant at first, but the discipline and ability displayed by the Shepherds was incredible and neighborhoods under their control quickly became safe once again. It was a new kind of police force, concerned with the community at large, an attitude that had been forgotten in the latter days of the 20th century.

However, while the Shepherds were cleaning up the streets, they were also working diligently on recruiting within these areas. Prominent businessmen were encouraged to join and soon even corporate executives formed a major portion of the Fellowship of the Right, as they are known within the group.

The intricate initiation ceremony and other rites are all guarded secrets of the Fellowship. Women are allowed to join, but are restricted to the two lower orders. This has caused some trouble with the media, but there are no complaints within the Fellowship. Everything is dealt with inside the Fellowship; those who discuss Fellowship matters with outsiders are quickly silenced first with threats, or subsequently with death.

• BELIEFS:

The Fellowship is based on the belief that humans are inherently evil. Therefore, a police force must be instituted to make sure that this evil nature does not interfere with normal life. They have appointed themselves to that job. They are the judge, jury and executioner when it comes to crime within their area. Because each murder, robbery and assault ultimately affects everyone within the society, they feel that they are justified in their harsh punishments.



Secrecy is enforced to ensure that their activities are not revealed to outsiders, who might not understand why they do what they do and seek to shut down the group. Almost every member fanatically believes that they are benefiting society at large in their vigilante work and will always work to protect the Fellowship. They truly see themselves as Shepherds, tending the naive and fragile sheep that is their flock.

The upper levels of the cult use Esoteric magic in their ceremonies. It is rumored that certain rituals involve human sacrifice, however due to the incredible secrecy concerning such rituals no information has emerged to confirm these rumors.

• **ORGANIZATION:**

The Grand Master of the cult is in charge of all major global group activities. However, within each individual city rules a Master who is in charge of that city's operations, with Councilmen within each of their protected districts ruling over those groups. Below them are four Orders. As one ascends through the ranks, more rituals and secret activities of the group are learned.

THE ORDERS OF PROTECTORS

There are seven Orders of Protectors, with each corresponding to more intimate knowledge of the Shepherds, the rites they practice, the secrets they hold and the plots they contrive.

Here are quick summaries of those Orders and the procedures involving each:

BECOMING A SHEPHERD

Becoming a Shepherd requires being sponsored by a member of the Second Order or greater. The character's background is checked. If the character has had any involvement with revolutionary, criminal or subversive groups, he may be refused, unless the Shepherds truly want him.

The character will then be brought to the Grand Hall for one of the weekly meetings and be introduced as an initiate to the Order. The character must then make a pledge never to betray the Order and to uphold its virtues (Honor, Compassion and Vigilance) to the best of his abilities. The character is now a member of the First Order.

The Watch

The Watch is a group of 4 Shepherds (generally Initiates or Watchmen), led by a Defender. The members wear black cloaks with a purple S and yellow lightning bolt through it on the back. They are each given a Sternmeyer Stakeout shotgun (or a semi-automatic version of the Ronin Light Assault Rifle), a truncheon, 2 stun grenades, stripwire binders (12), a flak vest, ballistic nylon helmet, a flashlight and a mastoid comma.

In neighborhoods protected by the Shepherds, these groups continuously patrol the streets, warning ruffians to clear out, and watching for any criminal acts. They will make a citizen's arrest of anyone they catch, then call the police. If fired upon, they will fire back, and call in for reinforcements (two more Watches, which arrive in 1d10 Turns).





THE FIRST ORDER - INITIATE

A character who is of the first Order will be required to spend one night a week on the Watch (patrolling the neighborhood the character lives in with three other Shepherds).

The character will be taught the Prayer of Protection, which is a short prayer said before going out on the Watch.

THE SECOND ORDER - WATCHMAN

Once the Initiate is deemed trustworthy and has proven himself (taking anywhere from 2 weeks to 1 year), he is brought before the Council and must take another oath, this time to defend the community from all evils. A Watchman must spend 2 nights a week on the Watch, unless relieved from this duty by the Council.

The character is now entrusted with other Initiates on the Watch and may now frequent the Lodge whenever desired. Generally, the only secrets learned at this stage are of other 2nd Order members' affairs and such. Watchmen are generally not entrusted with any special duties. Also, note that this is the highest level that women are allowed to attain in the Order.

THE THIRD ORDER - DEFENDER

When the Council deems a Watchman ready to become a Defender, the Watchman must perform yet another oath (usually after spending 2-12 months as a Watchman). This oath is to be the defender of humanity from its own evils. Defenders generally lead the Watch, but must only do so twice a month. Again, they can be relieved of this duty by the Council.

The Defender is entrusted with only the times and rosters of the Watches and is required to administrate said Watches. Defenders tend to spend a great deal of time at the Lodge and enjoy one another's company.

THE FOURTH ORDER - GUARDIAN

The last promotion the Council presides over is that of Defender to Guardian. It is an important promotion because Guardians gain a great deal more information on the Order and are privy to more secret information. It generally takes a year of being a Defender before the promotion to Guardian and then only members who have shown unswerving loyalty and dedication are given the promotion.

The oath upon becoming a Guardian is to take any means necessary to protect humanity from itself. This includes murder. In addition, they must take an oath of secrecy, according to which death is wished upon themselves should they ever betray the Order.

Guardians freely associate with members of the lower Orders and are allowed to use such members for Order-related activities, special raids against known criminals, etc. They are not required to perform any regular duties, though may be ordered on special assignments or work on the GC Squad when required. They are the lowest Order admitted into the Grand Lodge, but only by invitation.

THE FIFTH ORDER - COUNCILMAN

A Guardian who has proved his loyalty and dedication (usually after 1-5 years of being a Guardian) will be promoted by the Master's Circle to Councilman. A Councilman must utter an oath to uphold the virtues of the Order, and to protect the Society at all costs. There are generally only a handful of Councilmen in any city.

The Councilman sits on the Council of a city's Lodge. Decisions are made on the group's activities, what community groups the Order will sponsor, promotions of members, etc. This is a weekly meeting which Councilmen are required to attend.

Councilmen generally know the activities of their members, therefore most of the activities of the Order. However, the motives behind such actions are often the domain of their superiors. They congregate in the Grand Lodge and are presided over by the Master of the city.





THE SIXTH ORDER - MASTER

A Councilman who proves himself truly dedicated and has connection with other Masters or the Grand Master may be promoted after a time (2-6 years) to the rank of Master. At this point, the character is assigned a City to be Master of. Then, all Shepherd lodges and activities in that city become the responsibility of the Master.

An oath of dedication and secrecy is again made upon becoming a Master, as are several rituals involving esoteric magicks. The rituals are mainly to consolidate the Masters and bring an esoteric element into this bizarre cult.

Masters are given jurisdiction to order the death of crime leaders, treasonous members or anyone else deemed dangerous to the group. However, caution is always advised, especially where public attention may focus. The Masters are also allowed to override any decision by the Council.

The Master must meet with and preside over the weekly Council meetings as well as attend the quarterly Master's Circle meetings (generally held in alternating cities). Every two years they must also vote upon which Master will become the Grand Master.

THE SEVENTH ORDER - GRAND MASTER

There is only one Grand Master (currently Newton Tarl) at any one time. A Master wins the position by the Master's Circle vote. Such a vote is held every two years, so the term of office is 2 years. However, there are no rules against maintaining the position if voted back in. The current Grand Master has held his position for 9 years.

The Grand Master decides the overall goals and activities of the Shepherds as a whole. While he must defer to some degree to the Masters, he does have a very loose hand in doing as he wishes. The only real restriction to the powers of the Grand Master is that he cannot keep the position for more than 2 years without a vote.

The responsibilities of the Grand Master, though, are very restrictive. Generally, the Master has to retire from his career and administrate the Order as a full-time job. As such, the Order collectively pays the salary of the Grand Master (a good annual 100,000eb).

• STATUS:

The Shepherds are doing very well at the moment. The majority of their members are corporate executives whose corporations make large donations to the cult. The police are happy to work side-by-side with the group, with a fairly large portion of the police forces in major cities being members. There is every indication that this cult is here to stay as they have the support of the powers of the 21st century.

• RELATIONS:

The Shepherds are seen by the police force as a very useful cult. However, authorities are a little hesitant about their methods and do not always welcome their presence. The more traditional religions overall see the Shepherds as an good group, always working for the benefit of society.

• MEMBER TYPES:

The majority of the members of the Fellowship are Corporates, with a small number of Fixers and Medtechies. There is a good number of Solos, though these tend to be of the upper class and less street-trained. Generally, anyone of upper or middle class could be a member.





THE DIVERSE CULTS

There are many smaller cults with assorted beliefs ranging from the extreme to the moderate, from the laughable to the dangerously fanatical. Here are brief descriptions of the more common types of cults one might encounter and the characteristics they share.



THE APOCALYPTICISTS

There have always been dozens of apocalyptic cults at any one point in time, each predicting the ultimate End in some near future. However, they inevitably fail because the End hasn't happened yet and may not do so for a long time.

Nevertheless, the human psyche needs to believe that there will be an End, a time when it can be determined who "won" and when everyone will be judged. Most people cannot be good all their lives without wanting some justification, some reason other than personal satisfaction. An End provides the perfect time when the good are rewarded for their sacrifices and the bad are punished for their evil.

An apocalyptic cult will emphasize the best behavior possible, with terrible reprimands for those who commit evil acts. A strong emphasis on good versus evil will also be present, with the idea that the just will be rewarded when the End comes. There may be the idea that merely following the faith will save a person, which makes things easier for followers.

The predicted date of the end will generally be within a few decades, with smaller ones usually seeing the end coming in but a few years. The cult prepares for the coming end, but when it passes, becomes disillusioned and either moves the date up again or disbands.

SEX SECTS

The sex sects tend to have one common factor, sex. However, the context tends to be of the spirituality of sexuality and its relation to fertility. Often sex cults will be outside of cities, in rural areas, usually with an agrarian based society.

Sex cults will have many rites and ceremonies based on sexuality, but often with merely metaphorical rituals, and rarely involve actual sex. However, sensuality does form a major basis of sex cults and a few do participate in orgies.

They tend to be quite open about swapping partners and about the nature of their sexuality. There are also the opposite forms of sex cults, which are incredibly restrictive and believe sex to be the worst sin a person can commit, banning sex completely. Such cults only survive by converting new members, as they cannot have children (although some modern ones might use artificial insemination, seeing it as the ultimate "virgin birth".)

GUILT GROUPS

The guilt groups are typified by the Penitents, now extinct, who would whip themselves and subject their bodies to terrible torture to atone for their own sins and for the sins of humanity. These cults are quite few since most people tend not to want to suffer, but they are becoming popular again in the troubled times of the 21st century. As people see the world fall apart around them, they feel that it is because the world is so decadent and try to repent for it.





Guilt-based cults will typically involve small, isolated groups who subject themselves to terrible punishments, perhaps ultimately killing themselves in a horrific manner. They will also tend to discard items of luxury, keeping only the bare necessities of life, if that.

An example of a Guilt-Cult would be the Mundane Monks, though they do not carry it to the extreme that the Penitents did. The Church of SIN would be their complete opposites.

UTOPISTS

Utopists seek to create the best society possible. This is most often accomplished through their beliefs which can be extremely strict or lenient. The main characteristic they all share is the fervent belief that their own society is the best possible.

Utopist cults will tend to leave society and set up communes in some remote area in an attempt to create their own utopia. However, these groups tend to have very strict rules and leaving them is never easy. Extreme beliefs also characterize these people who imagine that they have found the best life possible, and will not let anyone convince them otherwise.

As one of the most common forms of cults, they are extremely popular in the Cyberpunk world. There will be groups who have left for the Arctic and Antarctic (the only places that are still isolated), or even tried to live completely in the Net in some sort of techno-spiritual existence.

A side branch of the Utopists are the Survivalists, who create the same sort of utopic societies, but believe that some sort of apocalypse will befall the Earth. Since they are the only ones prepared, they will be the only ones to survive. These groups tend to be highly dangerous; they are often extremely well armed and paranoid of everyone else.

FAITH SECTS

Faith sects revolve around faith healing. They are generally based around some major religion, but with a spiritual leader who claims to be able to heal people with faith alone. This is not new to the world and has been around since the earliest times. Typically, the beliefs are all based around the larger religion, except that liberties are taken with the exact translation and interpretations to further the particular focus of the sect.

Sects of this sort typically do not outlive their leader, except that followers tend to go on to similar cults when the current one is exhausted. These sects thrive upon media attention and typically broadcast their ceremonies, possibly even having their own television stations.

SATANIC CULTS

The Satanic cults are the most commonly portrayed cults by the media ever since the mid-20th century. However, they are also some of the rarest cults present. Usually they are composed of half a dozen members who carry out rituals taken from various occult books without ever really knowing their significance or meaning. They are particularly bent upon sacrificial rituals.

Satanic cults tend to center upon selfishness and sadism. Their activities are almost all motivated by maliciousness. These cults also tend to practice brainwashing and extensive indoctrination. However they are very rare and rarely have any real power in the community. They are more of a nuisance, and once detected by the police are quickly shut down.





PAGANS

This enormous cluster of cults emerged near the turn of the millennia in an effort to return to the “first religion of humanity”. However, they dispute among themselves what this actually constitutes. Many of their ceremonies are based around Celtic rites, or semblances of them, and some have been created entirely anew, supposedly inspired by channeled spirits.

These groups tend to use the occult in almost every form. Herbs are used in great quantities with their mystical properties, as are gems and other tools of the arcane such as tarot cards. These cults are a meshing of all the faiths of the world, bringing them together, without however the structure of the voodoo practitioners.

Most interesting about the Pagan cults is their lack of distinct authority and apparent harmony within the group. There is neither deceptive recruitment nor brainwashing. Indeed, they tend to be the most innocent of cults, promoting happiness among their members and non-interference in other people’s lives.

NET WORSHIPPERS

These small cults are very new to society and generally have no more than a dozen members. They all have one thing in common, which is the belief that a god lives within the Net and controls whatever goes on within. How they show their worship varies widely. For more on this phenomenon, see *Ghosts In The Machine*.

CORPORATE CULTS

There have been a few smaller corporations which have taken on cult-like appearances or sponsor cults (such as the Shepherds). A fervent dedication to one’s company is not all that uncommon in these times and, behind closed doors, who knows what goes on?

Corporate cults tend to be highly bent upon secrecy, especially concerning the spiritual beliefs and activities of the corporation. The company is often seen as the savior of the members’ lives. For many, this is true since the corporations provide homes and a means of living in these troubled times.

Faking Out Indoctrination

A character may try to pretend to have been indoctrinated. This attempt is normally made using the Perform skill. The Difficulty is 15 with a group that is not suspicious, and 20 with a suspicious group. If the character is being watched specifically to ensure that they are not faking their indoctrination, the Difficulty is 25. Failing this check means not only that they notice the character has not been indoctrinated, but has actively lied to them as well. They don't tend to like that.

Fiberpunks

A movement from the early 1990's promoting healthy living and spirituality, this is the strangest element remaining of the New Age Nineties. They still run around trying to get people to stop eating Kibble and try whole wheat muffins and such. They are ignored by the populace these days, having more pressing concerns such as survival.





CULTS IN YOUR CAMPAIGN

There are many ways you can bring cults into your campaigns; they serve to open them up from just focusing on corporations and underworld dealings to the human psyche and religious beliefs. In a world as dark and hopeless as Cyberpunk, faith is the one fountain of hope left for many.

The following information describes how most members of a cult are recruited, indoctrinated and what sort of things they will be expected to do. The methods listed below are for cults more interested in brainwashing members, thus may not be used by many of the cults described above.

MODIFIERS TO INDOCTRINATION CHECK	
Character kept malnourished	-2
Character kept fatigued	-2
Character never left alone	-1
Constant Exposure to Ideology	-1
Every week past 2nd of indoctrination	-1
Hypnotic drugs used on character	-0.5 x STR
Character has Resist Torture/Drugs skill	+0.5 x LVL

RECRUITMENT

Cults tend to recruit younger people in their early to mid-twenties. Generally, they seek people who question the world and want answers. The cults provide these answers and seem to offer the kind of support that is needed.

Very strong-willed people will not generally be sought out by cults, who prefer instead the weak-willed and the disillusioned. However, extremists who agree with the cult's goals will always be welcome, but they will generally join of their own accord and will not be recruited. If a character seems to be very opposed to the cult's doctrine, they will probably not try to recruit him.

A non-imposing member will usually be the recruiter, seeming to have found "inner peace" and "friends" in the cult, and attempting to subtly persuade a person to just "check it out". The character will at first be invited to some of the functions which will emphasize how much fun the cult is and how happy everyone is. Then, the character will be invited to stay with the group for a while, maybe a few days at first, and then a week, and so forth.

If the character stays with the cult for a while, the question of membership will come up and the character will be forced to decide whether he wants to join or not. If after all these efforts the character still seems to hesitate, they will most likely leave him alone. However, if the character is very interested, they will accept him as a member and begin indoctrination.

INDOCTRINATION

The character's indoctrination will generally consist of a number of "study sessions" during which he will be required to study whatever "holy" texts the cult uses and any other cult literature. This ensures that the character is fully knowledgeable in their beliefs. At the same time, the character will be asked to stay at the cult's temple to ensure that there are no outside distractions.

While at the temple, the character will be kept on a rigorous schedule, with very little sleep. The character will be kept under constant surveillance, with a cult member ensuring that the initiate has no time to contemplate what is happening. The food will have little nutritional value to keep the character's mind dull. Repeated chants will also keep the character's thoughts unfocused.

Indoctrination usually takes between 2 and 4 weeks. Characters must make a modified COOL check after the 2nd week and then another check after each subsequent week. If the check succeeds, the character is unaffected by the attempts at indoctrination. If the check fails, the character gains 1 DED point in that ideology for every 2 points the check is failed by (round up) to a maximum of level 8.

Even if the indoctrination works right away, cults tend to continue just to ensure that a new member is devout in their beliefs. Therefore, they may have 4 weeks of Indoctrination for any new member.





CULT LIFE

Once the character has been indoctrinated, he is considered a full member of the cult and can take part in cult activities. Many have some sort of labor for cult members to perform “for the good of the cause”. Depending on the cult, the character may then attempt to rise through the ranks or may just participate in low level activities.

The cult may call on the character to perform certain duties depending on his area of expertise. Eventually, they may have him attempt to recruit others, such as friends and family. However, if the cult suspects the character might be rescued by such friends, they will try to keep the character at some secret location and not allow him to go out freely.

Cult life will involve prayers, meditation and/or chanting. There may be elements of drug use to keep members docile or dependant. Generally, however, the focus will be on all actions working toward the goal of the cult, even if it is only indirectly beneficial.

DOGMA AND DISCIPLINE

Members of cults are expected to obey the dogma of the cult completely and totally. Insubordination is generally not tolerated, with all sorts of punishments for those who break the rules. Discipline tends to be quite high in most cults (except in groups like the Church of SIN: “Discipline, what’s discipline?”). Thus, high-ranking members will watch over the recent recruits to ensure they do not cause too many problems.

Even full-fledged members will be watched to some degree; there have been many infiltrators in past cults who succeeded in breaking them up by sowing dissent within the group.

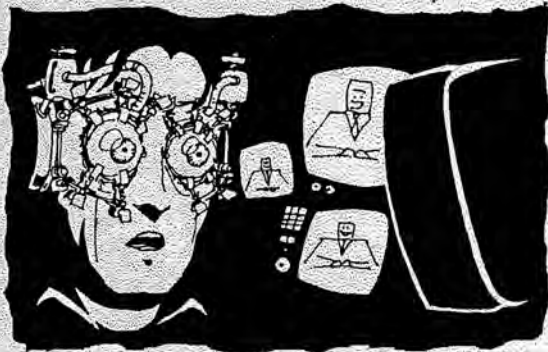
A member who breaks too many rules, or causes too many disruptions will eventually be thrown out or “disposed of”. Cults do not want troublemakers.

DEPROGRAMMING

A character who is rescued from a cult may not necessarily want to be rescued. If he has been indoctrinated, he will in fact make every possible effort to escape back to the cult. This is when deprogramming is needed. Note, however, that not all cults are necessarily bad and deprogramming just means programming new — not necessarily better — information over the old. In other words, it’s brainwashing all over again. There is no removal of old beliefs, just putting in new ones, supposedly better.

In deprogramming, the common elements of society, such as television, is often used as the dogma, or some more traditional religion. The character is most likely restrained or confined to a building for a few weeks, and his will broken in some way.

Deprogramming



Deprogramming is run the same way as Indoctrination. This time, however, the checks which are succeeded reduce the character's DED by the same amount. Ideally, the goal is to reduce the character's DED to -1 or -2. However, in many cases deprogramming, consciously or not, brings the character's DED down to -6 or -8, forming a person devoutly against that faith. Also, they may substitute a new belief system, indoctrinating normally, except turning the character into a fanatic of the new ideology.



Nouveau-Voodoo

Royal ones of ours, Come to us tonight,
The King Compte, His Queen Eyzulie
The Baron Samedi, The Knight Néel,
Gather in my Ordin And together we will be great.

- Neo-Voodoo Prayer



Kristos shook and collapsed on the dirt floor. His eyes opened after a few minutes with an empty look, but darting around the room looking for his altar. He then stood up, taller than Kristos normally stood, for this was no longer Kristos: this was Compte, the loa of technology. Compte then set about entering the Net and seeking his target. Breezing past the defenses, he found the target file, copied it and was gone in seconds. Kristos awakened, now alone in his hounfour. He looked at the cyberdeck: the file was there. Thank you Compte, Kristos said to the darkness.

There is a new religion that has gained influence in the 21st century, namely voodoo. Not the original voodoo, but a new form, called neo-voodoo, which encompasses the new technological world of the Cyberpunk era. There are new loa and a new world for the worshippers, that of the Net.

Neo-voodoo combines traditional vodoun with modern life. There are Loa for vehicles, electronics, the Net, etc. The modern world has been fully accepted into voodoo, which is almost unique among the major religions. Most others seem to deny the existence of technology; neo-voodoo welcomes it with open arms.

Voodoo itself is a religion that brings together almost every faith in the world. Voodoo worshippers can be of almost any other religion and maintain both belief systems. Indeed, many vodoun are good Catholics. To see how this is done we must examine their belief system.

4. Nouveau Voodoo

DEFINITIONS

Here are some common voodoo and neo-voodoo terms:



- **ASSON:**
Ritual rattle. Made of a calabash and encased in snake vertebrae. It is used by Mam'bo and Houn'gan in their rituals. (This would be an Item of Power).
- **BOKOR:**
An evil sorcerer, practicing black magic and dealing with death.
- **CALABASH:**
A ceremonial gourd or vessel, generally containing special ingredients.
- **CANZO, KANZO:**
The initiation to become a Houn'gan. It generally involves a test by fire.
- **COUP L'AIRE:**
A spell that causes some form of misfortune or illness, entirely spiritual or belief oriented.
- **COUP POUFRE:**
A spell that involves a magical powder (see Alkchemical Arts in the Ars Nova chapter).
- **DJAB:**
The devil, the ultimate evil spirit in Voodoo.
- **GAD:**
A special tattoo that is supposed to protect initiates from evil.
- **GOVI:**
A special clay jar that holds the spirit of a dead person.
- **HOUNFOUR, OUM'PHOR:**
The vodoun temple, more specifically the inner sanctuary where the altar sits.
- **HOUNGAN, HOUN'GAN:**
A vodoun priest and the leader of the vodoun community.
- **LOA:**
Deities of vodoun.
- **MALFACTEUR:**
An evil sorcerer who specializes in Coup Poudre.
- **MAMBO, MAM'BO:**
A vodoun priestess, and often the leader of the vodoun community, much as their male counterparts.
- **ORDIN:**
A special hounfour for the neo-vodoun, dedicated to the loa of technology.
- **PE:**
A voodoo altar.
- **PERISTYLE:**
A roofed enclosure with no walls and typically a dirt floor where most ceremonies take place.
- **POTEAU MITAN:**
The center post in the peristyle from which the loa come.
- **POUDRE:**
A magical powder.
- **VÉVÉ:**
Flour or ash designs drawn on the ground and designed to invoke the loa. Each loa has its own distinctive design.



THROUGH THE EYES OF VOODOO

Vodoun or voodoo is a religion that developed out of the merging of dozens of African faiths in Haiti. It brought together the people of Haiti, and as all religions serves to keep that people united. It is different from most religions in its public portrayal in the rest of the world. It does have some exotic aspects, such as possession and zombies, which has created a very bad image in the public eye.

The faith centers on the loa, who are not exactly gods. They are more akin to the saints of Christianity: holy, yet not God. Vodoun does not exclude other religions. It believes in a single all-mighty God, yet also in the less-powerful loa who are more concerned with mortal life. In a sense, the loa are servants of God.

The loa help the people in times of need. For example, if you really needed help in business dealings you might ask for Ayizan, the patroness of the marketplace, and end up doing better business. The loa also possess people in special rituals or in extreme situations. This is so that the followers can interact directly with the loa, giving offering, the loa being able to enjoy them through the body of the person it is possessing. Through this possession, the person can also get special abilities, such as invulnerability to fire.

The darker aspects of vodoun, such as zombies and coup d'aires, are part of this society and religion's means to keep order. If you are hurt, you can fight back through the sorcerers and houn'gan of your community. There is a purpose for everything in vodoun, though many of the darker aspects have been stolen by Edgerunners for evil uses.

The houngan or mambo is the spiritual leader of the community. They lead the rituals and are generally called upon to heal or protect members of the temple. They sometimes curse people when trouble arises.

Neo-Voodoo takes the religion of vodoun and brings it into the 21st century. New loa have arisen to represent the technological world of 2020. The original vodoun beliefs have not changed much, except to add the new loa of technology to the daily life of the houn'gan and add the ordin to the temple.

PLACE OF WORSHIP

The houngan's workplace has two main locations (three in the case of neo-vodoun): the peristyle, the hounfour and if new voodoo, the ordin. Each has its own function and purpose.

The peristyle is where most rituals and dances take place. It is a room without walls but with a roof. A center post, the poteau-mitan, stands in the middle of the room and is the focal point of the dances. It is considered very holy and special talismans and artifacts hang on it. Often the peristyle's ceiling is covered with dangling charms and trinkets; in fact, the entire room is often quite full. The floor is most often dirt to give the best connection to the earth.

The hounfour is the inner sanctuary, usually enclosed and hidden away behind the peristyle. It is much more private and is used for the more critical ceremonies and for casting spells. It contains an altar, or a Pé, on which there are offerings to the various loa in the form of assorted powders, charms and foods.

The ordin is a special type of hounfour dedicated to the neo-voodoo loa. In some temples, the hounfour is replaced by the ordin. This room is specially dedicated to Compe, loa of technology. There will be a Pé, except it will have a computer on it and other technological devices will fill the room. It is the most sacred place in neo-voodoo temples.



THE LOA OF OLD AND NEW

There are too many loa to describe here as there are almost as many loa as there are practitioners of voodoo. Instead, here is a quick list of the major loa, followed by full descriptions of the critical loa as well as the more popular new loa of neo-voodoo.



- **AGWÉ:**
Loa of the sea.
- **AYIZAN:**
Loa of the marketplace, the mate of Loco. In neo-voodoo, she is seen as the loa of commerce, whose aid is sought by businessmen and corporates.
- **AZRIEL:**
The loa of the sky, the true master of the sky.
- **BARON SAMEDI:**
The loa and protector of the cemetery (and in neo-voodoo, the morgue and body banks).
- **COMPTE:**
The loa of technology, exclusively a neo-vodoun loa.
- **DAMBALLAH WEDO:**
The loa of life, one of the most important loa.
- **ERZULIE:**
The loa of love, also adopted by neo-vodoun.
- **GHEDE:**
The loa of the dead.
- **GRANS BWA:**
The loa of the forest. Abandoned largely by the neo-vodoun.
- **GUINÉE:**
The spiritual homeland of the loa.
- **LEGBA:**
The loa of communication and protection, taken by neo-vodoun to be the loa of the Net.
- **LÉGER:**
The loa governing the sky and aircraft, exclusively a neo-vodoun loa.
- **LOCO:**
The loa of vegetation.
- **NÉEL:**
The loa of electronics, exclusively a neo-vodoun loa.
- **OGOUN:**
The loa of fire, war and metals.

BARON SAMEDI

The Baron Samedi, perhaps one of the best known loa, is of the same family as Ghede and is the ruler of the cemetery. He is also the loa involved in making zombies and thus is also greatly feared by people.

The Baron Samedi is always depicted as wearing formal clothing, black suits, starched cuffs, etc. He also has a skull-like face, which is why those possessed by him paint a skull on their face. He is also disrespectful of death or other serious matters, much like Ghede.

COMPTE

The Compte is the loa of technology and is seen as the great god in the neo-voodoo family of loa. He represents innovation, invention and technology of all sorts. The ordin of the temple is a room dedicated to him as well as the other neo-voodoo loa. His symbol is an atom.



Worshippers utter a prayer to have his support whenever using any sort of technological device. His day is Friday; for some strange reason he enjoys the sacrifice of junk food.

When people are possessed by the Compte, they stand very tall and silently, blurting out technical information of some arcane origin (though factually correct) at random moments. He will continue this unless asked direct questions. Even then, he will answer literally to only what is asked; any deviation and he will ignore the question or request.

DAMBALLAH WEDO

Damballah is known as the serpent god and is associated with anything resembling the snake. He deals with movement, energy, and life. Thus, Damballah is known to almost all practitioners and is deemed one of the most powerful loa.

Damballah is invoked regarding issues of fertility, marriage, mobility, power and the future. Wednesday is his day; a hen and a cock are generally sacrificed to him but they must be white.

When people are possessed by Damballah, they act like snakes, hissing and crawling on the ground. They also climb trees and hang down by their legs. Instead of speaking, Damballah whistles, making a strange staccato sound.

ERZULIE

Erzulie, also known as Erzulie Freda, is sometimes called the Virgin of the vodoun loa. She symbolizes pleasure, sensuality, beauty and feminine grace. There is always a room or corner in the temple dedicated to her, filled with cosmetics, dresses and jewelry. She is also associated with serpents, for which she is both feared and loved.

Erzulie is involved with love, health, beauty, fortune, goodwill, jealousy, vengeance and conflict. She is thus a very difficult loa to deal with as she can cause as much good as harm. She enjoys presents from men, lending good fortune upon their lives.

When people are possessed by Erzulie, they dress as a woman, even if a man is possessed. They will walk swinging their hips provocatively. They will act as a woman while possessed, very flirtatious yet wise.

GHEDE

One of the most important yet feared loa is Ghede, the master of death. He is at the head of a large family of loa associated with the end of life and what happens after death.

Ghede is both the loa of death and resurrection. He recently has been reported to be present on the Net possessing 'runners, which has caused a great deal of fear among voodoo 'runners. Saturday is his day; his color is black and he enjoys black goats and chickens as sacrifice.

When Ghede possesses a person, all the other loa present leave immediately. This is because the loa do not associate with the dead. Ghede will act disrespectfully to everything, and make fun of people's fear of death.

LEGBA

Legba is another of the powerful loa and the neo-voodooists see him as even more powerful than Damballah. He is thought to be the master of the mystical barrier that separates the physical world from the spiritual one. He is used a lot in neo-voodoo rituals and has been named the main loa of the Net. He is also present at almost every ritual, as he is the one who "opens the gate".

Legba is invoked with regard to issues of protection, the spirit world and more recently, the Net. Tuesday is his day; multi-colored roosters are his favorite sacrifice.

When people are possessed by Legba, they act as a kindly old man and will limp, as he is said to have a broken foot.





LÉGER

Léger is the sparrow soaring through the skies. While Léger soars the skies, she must still obey Azriel (the Master of the sky). Léger is the loa that is prayed to and has sacrifice made to prior to travel by air. Léger is only concerned with the safety of the sky, clear flying conditions and getting home safely.

Léger's time is during daylight hours and she enjoys bread sacrifices. While this is one of the lesser loa, it is indicative of how diverse the loa are.

Léger has been known to possess pilots during bad storms or when a plane gets into danger, and fly the plane in safely. This loa does not possess people in temples often, instead preferring sacrifice and to help those who truly need it.

NÉEL

Néel is seen as a rat. Devious and found everywhere, he is the loa of electronics. He wears light grey clothing (generally not well kept). Of the same family as the Compte, Néel is of particular importance to those dealing with electronics. He concerns himself with the smooth operation of electronic equipment as well as cybermodems. This is why most 'runners have small altars of worship to him.

He is worshipped daily in the form of a prayer (a wish that nothing technical will be damaged) and a sacrifice in the form of a small technological artifact burnt in a ceremonial fire next to the computer. The most common forms of sacrifice are diskettes and circuit boards.

Those possessed by Néel crouch down and sniff around with their nose. They are particularly interested by electronic equipment and will have great skill at fixing or building electronic devices. However, Néel will have no manners, moving around bent over, nose twitching.

THE RITUALS OF VODOO

Rituals typically involve dancing and possession but vary widely depending upon the particular goal. There are tables holding the various offerings, typically food that the loa to be summoned enjoys. There are also animals present to be sacrificed later that night if need be. All the necessary items must be assembled, nothing must be forgotten.

The houn'gan or mam'bo begins by drawing the magical vévés on the ground using flour or ash. These symbols are used to invoke the loa but are only potent while being made. Once finished, they lose all their power and are typically destroyed by the dancing which soon follows.

The ceremony then starts. There is typically a reading of ceremonial Catholic prayers but this has been replaced in most neo-voodoo ceremonies with prayers to Compte and Legba. Ceremonies often begin with, "Papa Legba, ouvri barrie pou nous passer," which means "Open the way for us to pass." There is singing and dancing throughout the ritual which are supposed to summon the loa. Sacrifices are made if any are necessary to the ritual. Sacrifices in neo-vodoun tradition are burnt in a ceremonial stainless steel pot.

The ceremony picks up pace, building into a frenzy. As the dancers slow down and fall into odd positions, the loa begin to possess people. Typically only one person is possessed and they are quickly escorted by the houn'gan or mam'bo to be dressed as the loa enjoy appearing.

The ceremony ends near morning, after the loa (or rather the people they have possessed) have been well-fed and pampered. The loa will look favorably on the person for whom the ritual was thrown and, hopefully, good fortune will shine on them in the coming days.



THE MOUNTING OF THE LOA

When a loa possesses people, they take on that loa's personality and generally their dress (assuming it is provided to them). Note that male loa can possess men and women alike as can female loa. The person possessed assumes the dress, manner and gender behavior of the loa. Therefore a woman possessed by a male loa would dress and act like a man.

The loa will often render the person immune to minor injuries while present, such as from fire. In many cases, the loa will confer special abilities to the person possessed such as being a better lover in the case of Erzulie.

The loa taking possession will cause the person to convulse and shake as the loa adjusts to its physical form. The person possessed then assume the persona of the loa. After the loa leaves, the exhausted person usually collapses due to fatigue.



Summoning The Loa



A ritual to first summon the loa will be a preliminary step to having a loa possess someone. However, in special cases, the loa will possess a person simply out of necessity, as in the case of those near death. The character must make a Dedication Voodoo check to see if the loa actually comes.

Next, the loa possesses the person. The character will be overtaken with convulsions. However, roll against the number of times the character has been "mounted", if lower or equal, the possession is without much pain or trouble. Very experienced houn'gans can be possessed without anyone noticing.

Once a loa has mounted a character, the loa will be the dominant personality, with the original persona buried deep within, and unconscious. The loa will do what it came to do, and then leave, bringing the character back to consciousness. There is no way to push a loa out once it is in; the GM takes over the character and plays out the loa's motives.

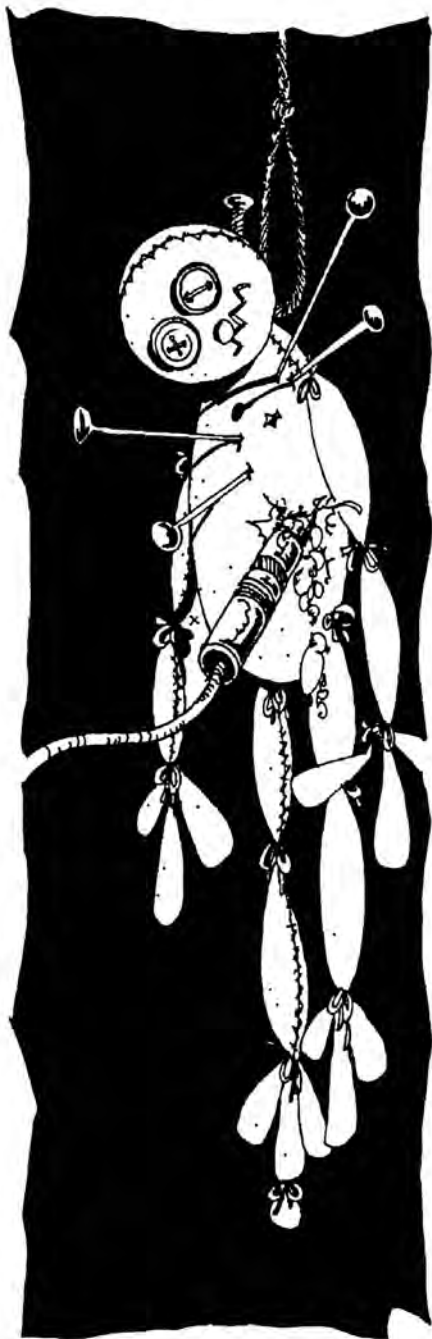
The loa will leave once fed and given sacrifices, or once whatever task it was needed for has passed. The character takes 4 Fatigue points per hour possessed.

Other than specifically asking for a loa to possess you, they will at times appear when the character is in danger, as if a hallucination, using symbolism to warn of danger. In both cases, it is the subconscious taking control of the mind and speaking to the conscious mind through this medium. In this manner, the character is capable of actions he might normally not be able to, such as using skills he never mastered.



VOODOO ARTIFACTS

There are many vodoun artifacts which are mainly used in the rituals and have no real magical powers. They are simply symbolic representations of various powers and serve as foci for the ritual.



• TALISMANS

Talismans are meant to protect the wearer's spirit from danger, much like a guardian angel. They usually are related to a particular loa and the character is expected to serve that Loa faithfully while wearing the talisman. There are also neo-vodoun talismans, built of technological artifacts, typically used by techies and 'runners.

The protection is only psychological but gives a bonus to the character's COOL checks when worn by dedicated followers. A bonus equal to the character's DED/3 (round down) is gained while the character has the talisman in his possession. They would normally cost from 100eb up to 1000eb depending on the quality and work put into them.

• HEALING BATHS

Healing baths are very common to vodoun; pilgrimages are made to specific lakes and to the ocean in rituals which are supposed to heal and protect one's spirit from harm. Similar in effect to talismans, healing baths are considered much more powerful. Typically large numbers of people go at the same time in a group ceremony running from dawn to dusk. This is not common with neo-vodoun as there are no such locations in most major cities.

Bathing in a specific body of water that is considered sacred will confer a +1 to the character's Luck stat for the coming year or heal 1 point faster for the next day, but only if strong voodoo beliefs (DED 8+) are present.

• VODOO DOLLS

The most commonly known aspect of voodoo is the infamous voodoo doll. The dolls are the same as other voodoo magic items except that this ritual of vengeance requires a doll representation of the victim, along with parts of the victim, such as hair and blood. Then, using silver pins, the character gives the victim pain by inserting them in various locations of the doll.

Like all other voodoo magic, belief on both the part of the character performing the ritual and the victim are necessary for true success of the ritual. If both believe in voodoo (DED 6+), the dolls will work and cause 1d6 damage to the victim in the location the pin was placed on the doll. If the heart is struck, the victim must make an instant Death Save at -6. If the victim does not believe, he will be unaffected.

Note that voodoo dolls were not originally an aspect of vodoun, but have been adopted to reflect the media depiction of voodoo. Most houngan and mambo will refuse to admit they exist, with only bokor using them.

Some neo-vodoun 'runners use a similar concept to the voodoo doll. They create a duplicate image of the icon of a netrunner they dislike, and stick virtual pins into it, supposedly injuring the person. Use the same rules as for voodoo dolls. However, note that neo-vodoun is a faith that both involved parties must share.



THE MAKING OF A ZOMBIE

One of the most infamous topics of horror movies, zombies are a scary part of voodoo magic. Death is something considered sacred to voodooists, so the prospect of not staying dead is especially frightening to voodoo worshippers. Generally, the Baron Samedi is the loa associated with zombies.

Unlike the popular myths though, people are made zombies as a punishment for misbehavior in the voodoo society. They are judged by the secret societies and if deemed guilty, a bokor makes them zombie.

This is accomplished by first leaving a special powder on a cross outside the home of the victim. The powder, a special poison, is absorbed by the skin. Within a few hours, the victim gets very sick and "dies". The victim is buried and then dug up two days later. At this point, a new drug is administered, the bokor beats the victim and takes him far away to be used as slave labor.



Secret Societies

The voodoo faith is strongly connected to secret societies called the Bizango, which, like the religion of voodoo, started in Haiti. These societies are an integral part of voodoo culture, as they support and protect the community. They continue to be an important aspect of voodoo world-wide, as most followers of the faith also belong to the societies.

The names of the societies vary widely: Sans Peau (those without skin), Zobo, Sect Rouge, Makandal, Truistre, Aerouans, etc. The name might reflect the group's nature, origin or location.

There are certain ranks found in all secret societies: Emperor, President, Vice President, First Queen, Second Queen, Third Queen, Flying Queen, General, Advisor, General, Soldier, Executioner, Hunter, Sentinel, Soldier, etc. Some of their duties are self-evident, others are more complex. Nevertheless, few characters will penetrate a voodoo secret society enough that it will matter.

There are, typically, a number of secret societies in major cities, with each controlling a particular territory. While they may occasionally have a difference of opinion, they will largely work together. In many cases, the Emperor or Empress rules all of a city, and makes the final decision on major issues.

Within a society, members usually know each other's identities and often even members of other societies. The idea of secrecy is not in membership, but in the activities of the group. They meet every week or so, and only at night. Only members of that society are allowed to attend the meetings and rituals. Sometimes important people can watch for a bit, but only rarely.

Members of the Bizango learn secret passwords, handshakes, greetings and verbal repartee, along with Net codes in the neo-voodoo societies. There are a number of common passwords, used by members of all the societies, which allow safe passage.

It is the belief of the Bizango that the night is not for normal people, but for the djab (or devil). "Order and Respect of the Night" is their motto. Those who are out at night are in danger of the society members catching them and punishing them for being out. This is often just a good scare, but if they catch the person committing a crime, they may get violent.

They also seek out the wrong-doers of voodoo society at this time. The crimes that they punish people for are the following:

1. Ambition without care for the voodoo ways.
2. Lack of respect for others.
3. Reproaching the Bizango society.
4. Stealing another's mate.
5. Slandering a member of the community.
6. Harming members of the voodoo community.
7. Wrongfully keeping property from another.

Punishment for breaking one or more of these tenets is often zombification, which was the original purpose for zombies. It is the worst fear of the voodooist, to be a slave even after death.

Secret societies are vital to voodoo society, but they will always remain in the background. Therefore, characters may never realize the social network they are actually dealing with when working with boungans or getting help from voodooists in general.



It is largely a cultural phenomena. The victim believes himself to be a zombie and acts accordingly. The victim's family and friends see him as dead, and will not accept him back into society. However, it must be remembered that the victim is guilty of some crime.

In 2020, many bokor sell this service outside of their culture. The overall result is slightly different due to the advanced medical technology present and the lack of vodoun beliefs in their targets, but the powder's effects are consistent. Now the worst punishment one can inflict upon an enemy is to make him a zombie.

Actually, the making of zombies is a closely guarded secret of the highest ranking bokor. The victim first has to come in contact with a special powder. However, if it is ingested or too much is taken, death will surely result. At this point, the victim will have digestive problems and experience vomiting, respiratory difficulties, hypothermia, rapid loss of weight, hypertension and an overall sick feeling. This lasts for 2d6 hours after which time the character must make a Death Save at -4 (-8 if the poison is ingested or too large a dose is taken).

If the victim survives, he will become paralyzed, unable to act but completely conscious. All of his vital signs are extremely low, simulating real death. It requires an Average MedTech check to detect life signs using high tech equipment and a Nearly Impossible check with low tech equipment.

This paralysis lasts for approximately 48 hours, after which the victim can again move normally and will be fine. However, before this, the bokor will probably dig up the body and administer the antidote which awakens the victim. It is also a drug that causes an induced state of psychotic delirium, disorientation, confusion and amnesia. This is what truly makes the victim a zombie. It is in this state that the victim is introduced to his new existence and given a new name. This tends to concretize the new identity in the weakened victim's mind.

The game effect of the drug are as follow: the character's effective INT and EMP are reduced by 2/3rds, rounded down. COOL is increased by +1, and it requires an INT check to remember anything from the past. They will have a level 10 Dedication to the bokor. This only ends when the bokor dies. The drug lasts for about 72 hours but is generally administered daily.

According to some voodoo legends, sweets or salted food will awaken the mind of the zombie. The truth of this tradition is up to the GM. If it is true, then the zombie awakens from the trance and remembers the past. The zombie victim becomes self-aware and can act. Bokor typically make sure that their zombies do not taste anything but bland food, and meager amounts at that as they know the legends as well.



The Boogey-Men Of 2020

He had come like a thief in the night. And one by one dropped the revellers in the blood-bedewed halls of their revel... And Darkness and Decay and the Red Death held illimitable dominion over all.

- Edgar Allan Poe, "The Masque of the Red Death"

The fire was over before it had begun. The most insignificant insult had spurred this confrontation. Guns were soon drawn, and the shooting had started. The only ones unable to escape the crossfire were dazed dorph zombies unaware even after being hit by gunfire. At the sound of sirens, they all took to the streets. A black car pulled up and a man in a dark raincoat emerged, pulling the bodies into the vehicle. The witnesses scowled at him and his dark occupation. A woman leaning out of a nearby window cried out, "Ghoul! Son of Satan! Rid yourself of these streets or let God strike you down!"

There are people who have been overcome by their dark sides and now prey upon the rest of society as if to bring down humanity along with their own twisted souls. There have always been and will probably always be people such as this. However, they're more prevalent these days in news papers and on TV. We fear them more as a result of seeing them more.

Everyone is suspect to the modern citizen. The man on the street corner who smiles at you as you walk by might be a stalker; someone with a long overcoat and looking about furtively is possibly a mass murderer.

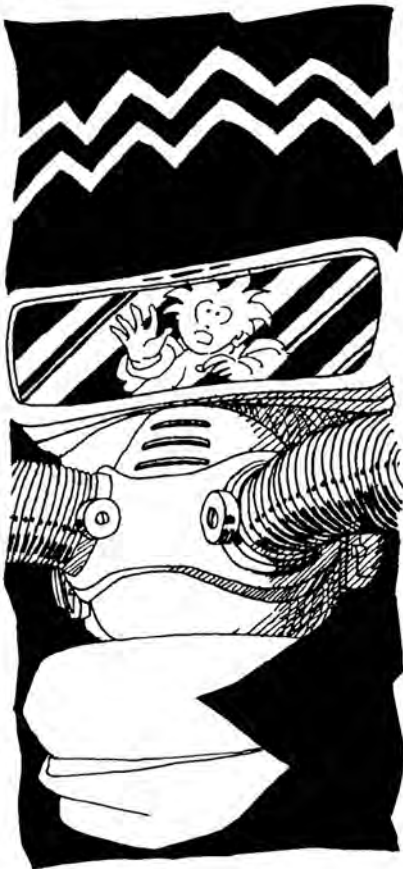


5. The Boogey-Men Of 2020

STALKERS

The first and most terrifying "horror" on the street today is the stalker. They dominate the nightmares of today's children as they hear about the kidnapping down the block or see someone following them. The classic fairy tale of the time is Jack the Stalker, a story about a kid who was stalked and only escaped because he knew what do to. The fairy tale terrifies children who realize that it is not fiction, but fact.

Stalking is a horrible phenomena that thrives in contemporary times despite the continued legislation against it. Improved technologies have only served to facilitate the activities of the stalker, sometimes making him next to impossible to catch.



STALKING & THE LAW

Since the turn of the millennia, almost every nation and city has developed stalker legislation of some sort. It has only served to make Stalkers more careful and secretive.

Under the new stalker legislation, police are obligated to investigate any substantial report of a stalker. A suspected stalker may be arrested, forced to submit to a psychological examination, and held for 30 days. Victims of stalkers are afforded police protection (typically provided by a contracted security agency).

Possession of surveillance equipment can be enough evidence to convict a person of stalking. "Conducting surveillance of a person without their knowledge, with malicious intent" is now an offense punishable by up to 10 years in jail. This could pose a danger to characters who are pursuing an executive for an extraction; indeed many corporations have pressed stalking charges in an effort to foil possible extractions. However, this is only done when the corporate security itself cannot be bothered to deal with the stalker.

A convicted stalker can face 5-50 years in a high security penitentiary. Repeat offenders are typically executed. Some states experiment with Exile Implants, which cause intense pain as soon as the criminal gets within 5 miles of the victim. However, these require the victim to wear a similar implant. Nevertheless, leniency is rarely granted in stalker cases anymore.

THE STALKER PROFILE

The typical stalker is psychotic, fixated upon their victim. All of their actions are centered around the victim. This often means they lose their jobs as they cannot concentrate on other tasks. They become extremely skilled at Shadowing, and some develop photographic and surveillance expertise.

Luckily, they are rarely intelligent due to their obsession and their single-minded approach leaves them wide open to police investigation. They will often maintain a plea of innocence of any wrong-doing as they see their actions as being normal.

Many are dangerous and may have combat experience. However, they are often cowards who will only attack the weak or have others fight for them. In fact the most difficult part in stopping them is finding them; once that is done, they are rarely a challenge to defeat or capture.

Most stalkers are male, however there is an increasing number of female stalkers. Female stalkers tend to be less violent but can also be much more dangerous than their male counterparts as they are often judged harmless. Caution must be exercised when dealing with any unstable individual.



Stalking Characters

Characters who become popular or famous could have stalkers pursuing them. Medias and Rockers are most susceptible to this dark element of fan behavior. The stalker could simply be a very fanatical fan. In many cases, romance is the cause as the stalker loves the victim so much they pursue them everywhere.

In other cases, the stalker blames the victim in some manner for their own misfortune and seeks to avenge himself. In any case, the reason is almost always misguided and severely warped.



SERIAL MURDERERS

Serial murderers commit repetitive killings, usually only one-on-one. Often strangers are killed and there are no clear-cut motives for the slayings. Serial murders are a growing concern in the lethal 21st century, though it dates back to Jack the Ripper and earlier such assassins.

The latest figures in 2020 show that between 5000 and 6500 persons are slain annually by serial murderers. The fact that serial murderers carry on for years before being apprehended and that they most often murder complete strangers combine to create a real threat to society.



THE SERIAL MURDERER PROFILE

Most serial killers are in the 25 to 35 year-old age group and are almost always male. The victims can be of any age group but are most commonly female. Other than this, the serial killer can come from any socioeconomic background.

Serial murderers tend to commit excessive violence, have a desire to blame someone (often the group they murder), act impulsively and have little or no emotional remorse for their acts.

There are four major types of serial murderer as defined below:

VISIONARY

These types commit the killings in response to "voices" or "visions" which instruct them to do so. They are often psychotic and quite out of touch with reality. Luckily these types are extremely rare.

Visionary killers tend to randomly select victims, generally complete strangers. The killings are rarely premeditated and are often disorganized.

MISSION-ORIENTED

This type of serial killer has a conscious goal to eliminate a particular group or category of people. They see the destruction of all members of this category as beneficial to mankind. They are often very lucid and aware of their actions as opposed to the visionary, though sociopathic in the extreme.

Mission-oriented killers will tend to have a specific type of victim that they select based upon their being in the "offending" category or not. However, they are almost always strangers. The mission-oriented murderer also tends to plan the murders and conducts them in an orderly fashion.





HEDONISTIC

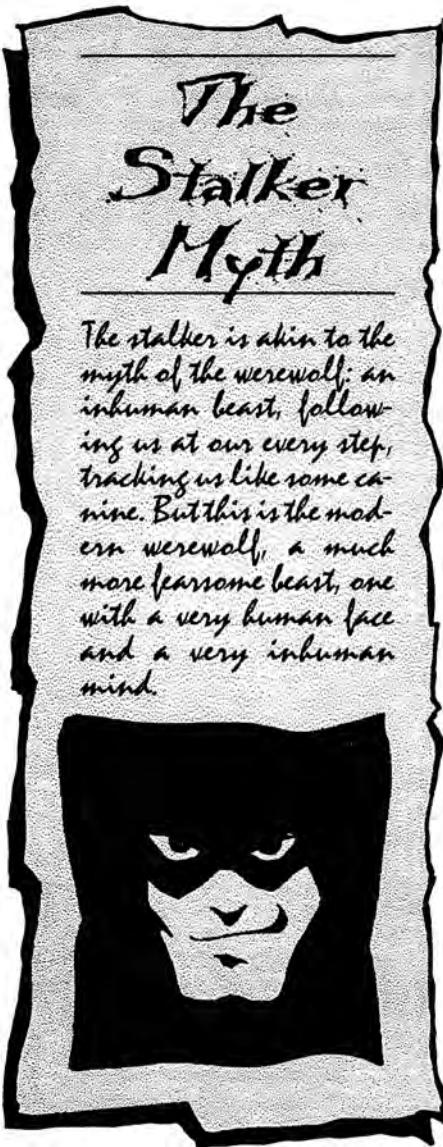
The hedonistic murderer kills for the pleasure it gives. The act of murder is gratifying for the killer. They have no problem with killing for the simple joy of it. A variant upon this type are those who kill for "comfort". Usually seeking the wealth of the victim, they murder repeatedly to maintain their comfortable lifestyle. They may also enjoy the attention of the media which is certainly prevalent in the world of 2020.

The hedonistic killer generally chooses random strangers. However, they sometimes attack known people as well. Their murders are often planned, with some degree of organization.

POWER/CONTROL-ORIENTED

The last type of serial killers enjoys the absolute power of life-or-death over their victims. They seek to exert this power in a most lethal manner. They will often be the most brutal killers.

The control-oriented killer has chosen a category of victims (often related to their past), and will seek those out. Their murders are planned and they are extremely careful about spreading their murder locations to confuse the law enforcement agencies.



The Stalker Myth

The stalker is akin to the myth of the werewolf; an inhuman beast, following us at our every step, tracking us like some canine. But this is the modern werewolf, a much more fearsome beast, one with a very human face and a very inhuman mind.

MASS MURDERERS

Mass murder is the killing of multiple people in one instance. Often, the murderer kills himself after the mass slaying.

Not as feared as the stalker, the mass murderer is nevertheless a great concern to the public. The media enjoys a mass murderer as they continue to make headline news. Murder alone, it seems, is no longer frightening or newsworthy. It is the senseless slaughter of crowds which captures the fascination of the public.

When it comes to normal murder, there is often some warning, some prior alert. However, mass murders are seemingly without rhyme or reason and there is no way to predict them.

Mass murderers are symbols of modern society: senseless, violent and destructive. They have failed to deal with their past, often a painful one, and turned extremely destructive. Their hopelessness is also a keynote as they often kill themselves before being captured. What represents despair more than these people?

THE MASS MURDERER PROFILE

Mass murderers tend to be male and over 25 years old. Firearms are typically used by mass murderers due to their effectiveness and distancing effect from the victims (both physically and psychologically). Large cities tend to have the highest concentrations of mass murder; people often break under the strain of urban life.

There are three major types of mass murderers:





FAMILY

Family mass murderers are often psychotic, believing for some reason that they must kill their family. In some cases, a purpose is present (though rarely a sane one), such as sparing them from the pain of life. They often perceive their actions as doing the family a favor.

The family mass murderer is almost always a member of the family involved or is closely involved with it. There is rarely any warning before the incident. They often commit suicide after having murdered their family.

INDISCRIMINATE

The worst kind of mass murderer, this type will for some unknown reason proceed to randomly kill people. They may choose a particular location, though once there their victims are whoever is unlucky enough to happen along. The murders are often preceded by a psychological breakdown, though whether it is evident to those close to them is not always apparent.

Indiscriminate mass murderers will rarely know their victims and the murder spree will be an impulsive act. They often commit suicide once capture by police is imminent.

BLAME-ORIENTED

Blame-oriented mass murderers are very similar to indiscriminate killers in that their victims are rarely known to the murderer. However, unlike indiscriminate killers, they choose a group of people to be their victims. They may kill others who get in the way but their primary target is that group. These murderers often seek out a place where they believe they can find the highest concentration of people belonging to that group.

Blame-oriented mass murderers also often commit suicide after they are finished. There are more indications of a blame-oriented mass murderer as they frequently plan their murders and show obvious signs of anger and hostility toward the group they dislike.

In The Crowd

The threat of a mass murderer striking while the characters are visiting a mall or other public location is always present. To bring that fear home, have news reports of a murderer striking only moments after the characters leave such a place. Or perhaps put them in the situation of facing a mad gunman and have them deal with such a random and potentially lethal situation. This element of horror is more commonly associated with terror and is fleeting, but will serve to keep players on their toes.

This can also be a situation where characters must exercise non-combat skills, as they might be unarmed or disarmed. They must then talk their way out, convincing their captor to let them go alive. A tense situation which could lead to some excellent role-playing opportunities.





GHOULS

With the development of technologies allowing the transplantation of limbs and body parts came a new dimension of the age-old medical body snatchers. The value of body parts increased tenfold overnight and a new breed hit the streets: Ghouls.

Like vultures, they hover around the city, watching and waiting for someone to die. Then they make their move, eager to snatch up the body and collect the fee for their prize. Some make a living at it and are registered with the government, but others - the ones truly deserving the name Ghoul - do it as a hobby.

The true ghouls only hunt on their free time as they typically have other jobs. They rarely have a license, instead knowing some street ripperdoc who'll buy bodies with no questions asked. Some are rumored even to kill people for their body parts when unable to find dead victims in the streets.

The worst stories are of Ghouls who keep their finds at home. These are the sickest ones, which is why new legislation in most cities has stiff penalties for illegal Ghouls. Public opinion sides heavily with the government as people despise Ghouls for their evil profession.

Nevertheless, people being fascinated with the bizarre, the media has often followed the exploits of Ghouls and brought them into the nightmares of children everywhere. Stories are told of Ghouls who steal children from their beds at night. They are the proverbial trolls of the modern age, evil to the core and despicable by nature.

THE GHOUL PROFILE

There are basically two types of Ghouls: The Professional and the Dark Ghoul. Professional Ghouls are hated by the populace; seldom will they admit their profession. They work out of unmarked vehicles and sometimes in pairs. They move quickly and efficiently, with their licenses in order, checking any potential body for its donor card.

REO Meatwagon is an example of Ghoul enterprise and such businesses exist in every city, often with some competition. Hospitals sometimes have Ghoul Patrols that procure bodies for them directly. They also double as Blood Procurement personnel, buying blood from those who need the money.

Dark Ghouls are the truly sick ones as they usually work out of their own vehicle, which reeks of decay and rot. They are almost always loners and often linger over their job. They are not too picky and some even prefer a great deal of gore in their finds. The report of a Dark Ghoul will bring police quickly enough. They are treated as the worst of all criminals as they desecrate the dead.

Dark Ghouls often deal with small ripperdoc operations as the larger organizations prefer to keep away from them. Many cities have permanent exile as the penalty for illegal Ghoul work.





DORPH ZOMBIES

True addicts to Dorph eventually end up as Dorph Zombies. There are an estimated 1000 new cases daily in the United States as of 2020. Symptoms include total apathy, brain and neural degeneration, depression and a definite psychological addiction to the drug. Some intense cases exhibit sporadic catatonic episodes. Typically the eyes are entirely dilated and respond minimally to any stimulus. Their nervous system is almost entirely destroyed, having lost most motor coordination and suffered a good deal of brain damage.

They stumble through the streets aimlessly, forgetting who or where they are. The sad part is that many are killed for fun by gangs, while others are recruited by the unscrupulous for cheap labor (essentially free) or used by some for prostitution rings (highly illegal). Recovery from Dorph Zombiehood requires expensive rehabilitation and full recovery may never be possible.

DORPH ZOMBIE PROFILE

One becomes a Dorph Zombie once their REF or INT is reduced to 1/2 its original. At this point, the character begins to forget a lot of things, requiring an INT check to remember anything. Once the character's REF reaches 2, the damage is irreparable and the character will be crippled for life.

Rehabilitation of a Dorph Zombie is possible. For 5000eb and one month, 1 point of REF and 1 point of INT can be regained. However a maximum of 1d6/2 points in either may ever be regained. Some people just never get better, making this innocent-seeming drug quite deadly.



There is a good deal of money to be made off Ghoulting, as it's termed. See the Body Banks section in the Cyberpunk 2020 handbook for the standard bounties paid on body parts. Note that only corpses with registered donor cards can be legally claimed by Ghouls (the Dark Ghouls illegally take any body they find). This may happen to a character who is badly hurt, but not killed. Awakening in the back of a Ghoul's car is never a pleasant experience.





LACERS

A Lacer is a person who is addicted to Black Lace. They are not as common as Dorph Zombies but are worse off in a sense. Their eyes are bloodshot, faces twitching, hands rubbing constantly and never able to sit still. Eventually, they go on killing rampages or simply kill themselves.

Black Lace is used by those who need an edge over others; however this eventually wears their bodies down. Extreme aggression was noted as the major side effect with long-term users being delusional, extremely self-centered and anti-social. They also suffer recurring flashbacks of their terrible delusions.

Lacers become extremely removed from normal society. They increasingly lose touch with reality until they finally snap. From psychological studies, it's been found that the Lacer sees the world as out to get them. They begin to hallucinate heavily with their worst nightmares appearing all around them. A sense of hopelessness unlike that of any other drug comes over them and suicide often follows.

Treatment for Lacers is almost impossible since the decline is so rapid that treatment is rarely possible in time. Only two cases have lasted for over a year and they are both under constant surveillance.

THE LACER PROFILE

Once addicted to Lace, a character is gone. Hallucinations of the character's worst fears will begin to appear all around, and everyone will seem to be plotting against them, secret conspiracies gathering all around.

The phenomenon builds slowly enough that the character might not notice it at first. As the stress builds, the most common reaction is to take more Lace, which brings more hallucinations. Eventually everyone is suspect. However, there is always a strong compulsion to keep this a secret as the character feels there is simply no one that they can trust.

By the final stages, the hallucinations are extremely intense and sleep is not possible. The victims will believe the only solution to avoid a long and tortuous death is to kill themselves. Next, they will seek death in the surest manner possible.

Rehabilitation is not easy; only constant supervision will ensure the addict does not commit suicide. However, since the character can never get off the drug they will simply live in absolute fear for a longer period of time. Indeed, treatment can sometimes be much worse than just letting the poor soul put himself out of his misery.





TERRORISTS

There has always been extremists who believe that the "ends justifies the means". Using terror as their main weapon, they seek to achieve their goals by scaring authorities into compliance. They are also referred to as freedom fighters by those who agree with their political agenda.

Fear of terrorism is yet another nightmare of the modern era. Able to kill hundreds with a single bomb, terrorists have become more efficient and mobile. While security enhancements have reduced overall terrorist activity, those few successful actions have had dreadful consequences. Take for example the bombing of the New York Stock Exchange building in 1993, or the poisoning of the London water supply in 2004 by IRA terrorists. Striking the public at its core has become the new form of terror as opposed to the taking of planes or other small actions.

The terrorists of the modern era have more outlets for their propaganda; technology allows them to run pirate radio and television stations in an effort to gain support for their causes. Around the world, stations run by terrorist organizations appear, exposing the world to extreme viewpoints on a daily basis. In many cases this has failed, turning public opinion against them, but in some places it has gathered additional support: the public became sympathetic to their cause.

Here are the five major types of terrorist activity:

BANK ROBBERY

Terrorists sometimes rob banks or commit similar crimes to raise funds to support their group. Terrorism is not a cheap business as arms and explosives must be bought; some members may require additional funds for other operations. Since hard cash is less and less used, they target banks with valuables such as precious metals.

Unfortunately, it is often difficult to determine if a bank robbery was the work of a terrorist group or an unaffiliated gang. Only their intense organization and precision sometimes betray their true nature.

Other related crimes include tax evasion, extortion and more recently, hacking. Many of the modern terrorist groups break into banks and steal money electronically. Again it is difficult to determine whether a terrorist group or a lone hacker is responsible.

KIDNAPPING

Terrorists typically kidnap important people for one of two reasons: for ransom or for political weight. In case of ransom, they choose the wealthy and use the collected funds to buy arms. Otherwise, they choose political leaders to bargain with the government for the release of political prisoners. They are used in a similar manner to hostage-taking.

Car-Jackings

While it's not generally a terrorist activity, car-jackings are common in 2020. They involve a gunman jumping into a private car and forcing the driver to take them where they want to go. They rarely hurt him but there have been some cases of driver being shot. This has resulted in better vehicle security systems.

Characters might be taken by some gunman seeking a ride or by terrorists fleeing from the scene of a bombing. Either way, it could lead to an interesting adventure, putting the characters into a random event which could change their lives.





HIJACKING/HOSTAGE-TAKING

The most famous of terrorist activities is hijacking. The goals of this act are two-fold: the use of hostages as bargaining chips, and publicity. Typically the terrorists threaten to kill one of the hostages every hour or so until their demands are met.

In recent times, the success of hijackings and hostage-takings have dropped dramatically. They still occur, but highly trained anti-terrorist commandos are found in almost every nation and are empowered to use deadly force in dealing with terrorists.

BOMBING/MASS MURDERS

The most common and frightening act of terrorism in modern times is the bombing. Bombs are incredibly easy to manufacture, and the increasing availability of chemicals to the public means it is only that much easier to create one. More frightening is the increasing use of military explosives in terrorist bombings.

Related to bombings are the less frequent mass murders in which the terrorists randomly gun down people. These attacks are rare, though extremely terrifying in their lethality.

ASSASSINATIONS

The last form of terrorism is outright assassination. Targets are almost always political leaders. The method of assassination is often bombing, due to its simplicity, though shooting and poisoning are also used.



THE TERRORIST PROFILE

Terrorists are typically between 20 and 25 years old and often university students or well-educated. They are usually male, though in recent times the ratio of males to females has dropped dramatically to an almost even ratio now. They often come from wealthy families and have privileged pasts.

The modern terrorist operates within a very tight framework. Usually only 2-8 members form a cell with the leader being the only one in contact with other cells. In this manner, though a terrorist organization may have a few dozen members, no one can betray everyone.

There is also a new breed of terrorist known as Net-Terrorist. Most of them use the Net to organize their activities so that they never see each other. This way they cannot betray one another. However, it also makes government infiltration of these organizations that much easier.

Terrorists usually attempt to conceal their actions and rarely involve non-members in their activities. They maintain fronts — fake companies, false cults, etc — leaving those fronts to take the blame afterward.

Hijackings, skyjackings, etc, are not as common in the 21st century due to the extremely tight security on planes and on other means of public transportation. The general trend has been toward activities in which the perpetrators can never be easily identified, as the death sentence has been instituted in most nations as the penalty for terrorist activities. Bombings are on the rise, especially with more effective and reliable demolition devices.

Terrorists usually have some other occupation which they use as their cover and source of income. They conduct their terrorist activities during free time and possibly in disguise. Only the high level members work with the organization on a full time basis and are typically always in hiding.



Ghosts In The Machine

Now I jack me into Netspace
Pray the Murk a safe interface,
If I fry before Netwatch
Pray the Murk my soul to catch.

- Networkshipper's prayer



Closer and closer it came. I could feel it, though neither I nor my deck could sense a thing in the entire subsector. I had purposefully isolated myself to ensure it was no tail or sophisticated surveillance device. But no, this was something much different. I wanted to jack out - I just knew something was not right. Then, it struck...

"The Net is a pure and sterile universe created by Man." This is the garbage we have all been fed by the media, but the truth is far darker. AIs created the Net, and it's by no means pure. There are things... things that are not usually talked about. Things which some call the Murk.

No one really knows when they first were discovered, but the Murk are a definite presence in the Net. Some believe them to be just a clever new form of schizophrenia, while others agree they're real and very much alive in the Net.

Some people call the Murk gods and even worship them. Three types of Murk have been classified: the Watcher, the Stalker and the Guardian. These could be individuals or collective groupings. No one knows if there are three or three thousand. Regardless, 'runners these days are known to mutter prayers to protect themselves from the Stalkers, and call upon the aid of the Guardians.

Many people have felt their presence, mainly in Wilderspace, but sometimes elsewhere, even inside data fortresses. That's what's really scary: they can and do go anywhere they want to. There's no real protection against them. Tales abound of 'runners who've had their minds wiped out when nothing was around. Supposedly just glitches in the Net, Murks are conscious and have an intelligence that is eerie if not downright terrifying to confront.

6. Ghosts In The Machine

CHOOSE YOUR WEAPON

There are three main explanations for the existence of the Murk. As the GM, you are free to choose from the ones we provide, or to create your own within the myth. It could be just a myth, without any psychological basis whatsoever. It could even be aliens invading this world through the Net. Thousands of minds are hooked into a single Network and anything within that Network could wreak incredible havoc throughout the world.

The first explanation is the Murk Syndrome, the idea that the Murk are entirely imaginary, a strange sort of paranoid-schizophrenia. The next explanation is a more eerie idea, that the Murk evolved from the collective human psyche using the Net. And last comes the idea that the Murk were actually designed into the Net and are a counter-balancing mechanism.



The Murk Syndrome

The human mind is an intricate thing, something that many have forgotten in their search for technological explanations. While we can now wire our brains directly into computers, the technology is still crude, and my research shows that perhaps some unwanted side effect has developed, namely the Murk Syndrome.

Many operators of the neural network reported feelings of being watched when they first explored the "Net". Isolating certain sections of the Net, we conducted tests. With a team of expert programmers and system analysts, we were able to determine that it was in fact empty space, with no electronic anomalies - virtually identical to normal empty Net space.

We then looked for suitable test subjects. About half the netrunners we approached had some experience of varying degrees relating to Murk Syndrome. We separated them in two test groups, those who had experienced the Murk syndrome and those who had no prior episodes of Murk Syndrome. The former group is to be henceforth referred to as Murk Positive (MP) and the latter as Murk Negative (MN).

Of the MP group, seventy percent experienced the Murk Syndrome in the artificial Netspace while only five percent of the MN group experienced something resembling Murk Syndrome. Similar results were found in subsequent tests.

This tends to support the theory that Murk Syndrome is a psychological condition affecting certain people. Whether it is related to emotional stability or biochemical effects is uncertain; only through continued study can we determine this.

It was found in one follow-up survey that the majority of those who experienced the Murk Syndrome have a strong empathic nature. Many had religious backgrounds of some sort. This could suggest a psychological cause to the Syndrome as individuals seek to find spirituality in the Net.

The most definite conclusion resulting from these experiments is clear: those who are Murk Susceptible should refrain from using the Net indefinitely. Perhaps a new anti-psychotic drug will be developed to reduce the delusory effects of the Syndrome. In the meantime, those who show any signs of developing the Syndrome should immediately withdraw from the Net.

By Doctor Earnest Chagall



THE MURK SYNDROME

We first discuss the scientific explanation for the Murk. A very plausible one is put forth by the honorable Doctor Chogall, famous for his work on Net-induced psychoses. Wouldn't it be comforting to think that the Murk were just a syndrome, or perhaps that would be worse... victims of our own minds.



THE SYNDROME

The Murk Syndrome is the first possible explanation for the Murk. In this case, the Murk are imaginary, resulting from a paranoia induced by hooking your mind into the Net. After all, the brain is an intricate organ, and even with the technology of 2020, electronic devices are bound to accidentally stimulate areas they shouldn't.

The Murk Syndrome is characterized by the subject imagining being watched within the Net, when there is no possible surveillance of the character. Extreme cases involve people who actually believe they are being helped or attacked by these imagined beings. It is basically an odd form of paranoid-schizophrenia.

A character's Susceptibility Rating is equal to their EMP x 1d10%. This determines how likely the character is to get the Murk Syndrome. The higher the character's Empathy, the more likely he is to start imagining things and develop a paranoia about the Net.

A roll should be made when the character first starts out. A subsequent check should be made every five ventures into the Net. An additional +1% is added to the susceptibility every ten runs as the character becomes increasingly exposed to it. Eventually, veteran 'runners will develop this psychosis.

• EXAMPLE:

Jack Hack, a 'runner with an EMP of 4 has made over twenty 'runs. His susceptibility is $4 \times 1d10$. A roll of 7 means $(4 \times 7 = 28$ and $20 \text{ runs}/10 = 2$ so $28 + 2 = 30\%$. On his next run, he rolls a 26. This means that he may develop Murk Syndrome.

Snap Shot

This is an adventure seed featuring Murk Psychoses:

A friend of the character's, Olang Yuin, has disappeared. He is a good Netrunner and likes to hang out in the 'Net, which is why it seems so strange that he should suddenly disappear entirely. No one has seen Yuin at all for some time; worried, friends and contacts start looking for him. The problem in finding him is that he is a little afraid of strangers, so the characters never met him in person.

In fact, he has gone Murk Psychotic, has abandoned all technology and is aimlessly wandering the streets. The characters will have to track him down using all of their investigative skills. Many might suspect foul play but in fact, Olang is just a victim of his own mind. Optionally he could even have joined the Followers of Spiritual Purity, adding to the difficulty in saving him.





MURK SYNDROME TYPE TABLE

ROLL RESULT

1-2 **STALKER:**

The character definitely feels like he is being watched, but also that the watcher is malicious. Gain 1 Stress Point every 2 minutes in the Net. Roll 1d10. On a 1, the character thinks he is attacked, and takes 2d10 damage. Use only as Stun or Death damage (It could induce a heart attack). Otherwise causes no physical damage.

3-4 **MAJOR WATCHER:**

The character definitely feels like he is being watched. The character gets 1 Stress point per 5 minutes in the net.

5-9 **MINOR WATCHER:**

The character just gets a minor feeling of being watched, but nothing too serious.

10 **GUARDIAN:**

The character definitely feels like he is being watched, but oddly, it seems like a friendly presence, watching over him. No Stress gain, and 2 Luck points are gained for the duration of the run.

SUSCEPTIBILITY

If a character does become susceptible, this does not mean that he develops Murk Syndrome. It just means that it is a possibility. Next, a COOL check is required every time a Susceptibility check is made. This check is made at -1 for every previous check failed.

If the check is successful, nothing happens. If the check is failed, the character has an Incident. Roll on the Murk Syndrome Type Table below for the exact effects.

• EXAMPLE:

Jack Hack makes a COOL check. His COOL is 5, but he has not failed any previous checks. He rolls a 10, failing badly, and then rolls 1d10 to determine what kind of Murk haunts him this time. He rolls a 7, which means a Minor Watcher.

MURK INSANITY

Characters who go insane due to Stress loss related to Netrunning and/or Murks will have a peculiar psychosis. They will believe the Net to be infested with a life of its own and refuse to jack themselves into anything, most likely having their Interface plugs removed. They will also become very distrustful of any form of technology and perhaps even become hermits, going away from the technological world of Cyberpunk. Anytime they do jack into the Net, they must roll on the Murk Syndrome Type Table to determine which type of Murk haunts them for that particular 'run.

OTHER POSSIBILITIES

Since one can also jack into vehicles, weapons and many other devices, the Murk Syndrome could arise from their use as well. Use the same rules, extending them to anything directly interfaced with. This could quickly cool out characters who always like to be jacked into their vehicles or weapons.





THE MURK SPIRITS

Next we have an essay that was picked up on the Net and written by a runner who uses the handle "Adept of Angelica". An extreme case indeed, but interesting in that he captures the belief in the supernatural nature of the Murk. I question however how old this Adept is; rumors have it that it is a mere teenager, his mind fair game to whatever lurks within the Net.

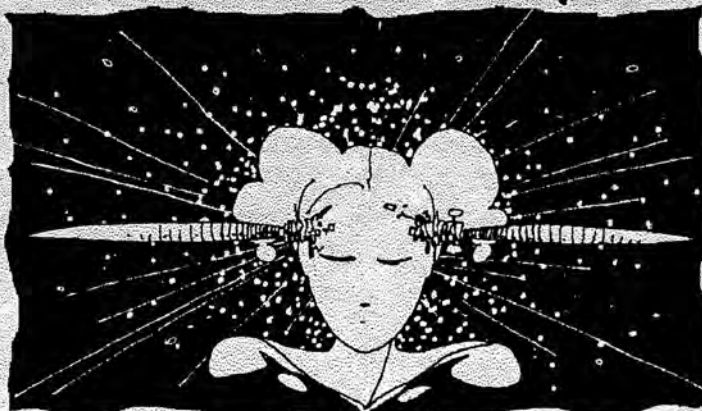
The file was then followed by a series of virtual art pieces showing images of these "gods". Zen is a pair of burning red eyes whose gaze follows you no matter how you look them. Daniel is a demonic creature, magnificent in its grotesqueness. Angelica is a beautiful angel of a being that could warm even the coldest heart. Maybe the Adept is insane or maybe he is onto something very real which we've all missed.

Many people have reported different names for the Murk and many agree that they are gods or at least powerful beings within the Net. If indeed they do exist as deities, then perhaps they are not independent at all. As with past human cultures, perhaps these deities are a "physical" manifestation of our subconscious beliefs and energies. If this were the case, then one would certainly expect gods to appear where any congregation of humans minds occurs, such as in the Net.

RANDOM MURK TABLE

ROLL	MURK TYPE
1-6	Watcher
7-9	Stalker
10	Guardian

Virtual Testimony



I am faithful. I believe. Do you believe? There are gods, they are out there. Some are evil, some are kind. Some just watch from behind. I found them, I felt them in the Net. The Net is where I live now. It's where I go when things in the real world get too chaotic to deal with. And, there, I find salvation.

They're called the Murk by outsiders, but I know their names. There's Daniel, and he's evil. He tries to make me do bad things, and he hurts me when I ignore him. Then there's Angelica, and she's so good to me. She protects me from Daniel, and helps me when I am down. Zen's also there, but he just watches... always watches. I wonder why?

Zen is always there, I can always sense him, either watching from a distance, or close and almost breathing down my neck. I can feel his eyes piercing my mind. Maybe he knows something. He must.

Daniel sometimes appears, but usually only if I am about to do something bad. That's why I don't do that kind of stuff anymore. I don't do anything bad, because Daniel loves it, and then he hurts me. I can tell when Daniel is around because I just know something bad is going to happen. Sometimes he makes me do bad things. Like, when I killed someone in the Net, he made me. He taunted me and was going to hurt me if I didn't.

Angelica's the best. She treats me real good and helps me when I'm hurt. She sometimes protects me from Daniel. They fight! I think I dream of them fighting in the Net. She is a bright, fiery light which comes to me when I'm at my worst and she brightens my day. I feel good and warm because she is there. I love her.

By The Adept of Angelica





THE PANTHEON

The Murk are conscious beings within the Net, with their own motives and powers. Their origin could be spontaneous or they could have been around waiting for the Net to be discovered by humanity, or they could be the manifestation of the human (or AI) psyche. In any case, they all conform to these basic types:

THE WATCHER

This is the basic Murk. They just like to watch, but why they watch is up to the GM. Some might be curious about humans and watch how they react to different things and some might be servants for the Stalker and Guardian, gathering information for their Masters. On the other hand, they might just watch for the sake of watching, without any other good reason.

They are undetectable by normal means and therefore have no form in the Net. However, a successful PSY-2 check will reveal their exact location. Otherwise, just a sense that they are present will be felt. Only psychic attacks can be made against them. They cannot defend against these attacks and might be destroyed by them, but they would most likely move away (they can move at double the normal speed within the Net, 10 spaces per turn).

• STANDARD WATCHER STATS

INT 10 COOL 10 EMP 0 PSY 10

• PSYCHIC POWERS:

Mental +6.

THE STALKER

The Dark Murk, the evil one. This Murk or type of Murk likes to cause pain and misery. They sometimes even kill. Luckily, they are not all that common. Usually, they are named after an evil spirit of a particular belief system.

Their motives vary, but usually they are out to cause anguish. They are detectable by a sense of dread that will overcome the character. A successful PSY check will reveal the exact location of the Stalker. Otherwise, just a feeling of its presence will be felt.

Again, only psychic attacks may be made against them, unless it takes material form. Then, Net attacks may be made. However, it too can attack in such a manner. Their icon is generally a demonic creature or something frightening such as a decapitated head. Note that its Net form's programs are equivalents of what it can do, not actual programs.

Generally a Stalker will just watch, maybe use Mania (fear) on the character a few times, then, when the character least expects it, take Net Form and launch Zombie at him. Alternately, it may just use Charm to make the character do something that will get him into a lot of trouble. The Stalker's activities will range from mischievous to fatal.

• STANDARD STALKER STATS

SPIRIT FORM INT 12 COOL 12 EMP 0 PSY 12

• PSYCHIC POWERS:

*Charm +8, Mental Assault +8, Mania +6.
NET FORM INT 12 Data Wall STR 10 Deck Speed 5*

• PROGRAMS:

Raffles, Killer VI, Hellbolt, Zombie.

THE GUARDIAN

The Good Murk, whom many Netrunners (and some AIs) worship. The Guardians are there to help Netrunners survive in such a dangerous world. Unfortunately, they are extremely rare, but when present, a runner is virtually guaranteed of a good run.





Just why they help 'runners is up to the GM. Some might be doing it because the 'runner is a worshipper, but others might play the role of the benevolent deity, helping out the weak human race.

A successful PSY-4 check will reveal the exact location of the Guardian, but usually their benevolent aura is the only hint of their presence. Besides, who would want to attack one? Any attack turns the Guardian instantly into a Stalker intent upon killing the character.

Guardians have no "Net" form, though many report sensing an angelic presence nearby when they know a Guardian is close. The Guardian will use its powers to ensure the character's safety, but even a Guardian won't help if the character does something really stupid. They also will relieve a bit of stress if they can. They may use Electrokinesis to destroy particularly dangerous programs that threaten the character.

• **STANDARD GUARDIAN STATS**

INT 12 COOL 12 EMP 10 PSY 12

• **PSYCHIC POWERS:**

Mania +8, Cure +8, Electrokinesis +6.

ENCOUNTERS IN THE NET

Every time a character jacks into the Net, there is a chance that a Murk takes an interest in him. Roll 1d10, subtract 1 if the character has in the past attracted the attention of a Murk, and -1 if the character's PSY is 8 or higher; adding 1 if the character's PSY is 4 or lower.

If the modified roll is 3 or lower, a Murk takes interest in him; otherwise, the character is free for the run (optionally, make a check every 10 turns the character is in the Net). Next, roll 1d10 on the Random Murk table to determine which type of Murk is interested in the character and then play out the encounter. The Murk appears 1d10 turns after it takes interest. As soon as the Netrunner jacks out, the Murk leaves, but if the character reenters after less than 1d10 hours there is a 50% chance that the Murk has waited for the character's return.

MURK WORSHIP

It is not unlikely that characters will start to worship the Murk; this can add an interesting aspect to Netrunner characters. The following possibilities brings in elements of role-playing into the game. However, they must all take place within the Net, the only place where the Murk have any consciousness or power.

• **IDOLS:**

Idols of a particular Murk can be made in virtual reality art or could involve modifying programs to represent the "deities". This gives a 10% chance when the character enters the Net that the represented Murk will take an interest and 'Run' with the character. Add 2% per level of skill in the appropriate art form.

• **PRAYERS:**

Muttering a prayer to a specific Murk gives a 5% chance that the represented Murk will take interest and 'Run' with the character. Add 2% per level of Composition if the character wrote this particular prayer.

• **SACRIFICES AND OFFERINGS:**

Sacrifices to particular Murk can be made. They give a 5% chance that the represented Murk will take an interest per 1000eb worth of material or per 1 MU destroyed or offered within the Net. Human sacrifices to Stalkers have a 80% chance of bringing that Murk.





THE MURK SUBROUTINE

This brings us to the last concept of the Murk. That they are simply complex programs designed to keep the Net in check. While the complexity involved is immense, it might be the work of secret government establishments who have put into place their own intelligence gathering devices right into the framework of the Net.

Now we have a report from Deadly Dove, a reporter famous for her papers on conspiracy theories in the 21st century. She has previously exposed the truth behind Arasaka's rise to power and their relation to the Metal Wars of 2014, revealed the presence of clones in modern society and their relation to the abductions of unsuspecting citizens.

A pretty scary concept: the government is watching over everyone like this. In a way, it's worse than anything supernatural or even psychological, since you can beat the supernatural and overcome the psychological, but the Powers That Be are near impossible to defeat. The true definition of horror comes into play here; a total feeling of helplessness.

The Murk Who Lurk

Paranoia is defined as a delusion of persecution. Yet, what do you call it when the delusions are a reality? Is it truly imagined if you have proof that they are watching you and intent upon causing you harm? We think that such a case must be exposed so that those involved can properly defend themselves.

As always, the government masks its activities in legends and denials. Of course the government has no interests in the Net besides normal legal affairs. Of course they would never be interested in the billion-euros worth of information which passes through it on a second-by-second basis. No, they wouldn't try to intercept it. That would be morally wrong.

However, since when has the government ever done anything that wasn't wrong? Especially those free-wheeling intelligence agencies which invade anyone's privacy under pretense of "National Security".

We have discovered proof that the government has had its own programmers infiltrate the original group that created the Net. It's no great secret. In fact, they were looking for the "top talent" the governments had to offer. And while they were working on the basics of the Net, a team of them, working under Project Red Phantom, put a nefarious plan into action.

The so-called Murk are in fact subtle glitches in the Net, which are all a part of Red Phantom. These "glitches" perform invisible surveillance of information movement and some of them obey the will of the Powers as They wish. You might get knocked by one, or even helped, but it's all part of Their grand plan, you're nothing but a pawn in Their game. The Murk are just tools they use to push you where They want you to go.

You can't kill or even affect the Murk because they were programmed directly into the Net, and only dismantling the Net could ever give a hope of destroying the Murk forever. Of course, They would never let that happen. Just be aware that on every run, anywhere you go in the Net... They know who you are, They know where you went, and They know what you did while you were there.

By Deadly Dove





THE SUBROUTINE

In this concept, the Murk are simply part of Net, programmed at its inception. There is no way to get rid of them and they will always be there. However, because they were only developed back then, they are aging and not quite as powerful as they once were.

The Powers That Be can still control some, but many (the Watchers) just transmit what they detect. The Stalkers are their assassin routines, but they can only change their targets, not their capabilities. The Guardians are used to help people do things they want them to do, but again, only their actions can be affected, not the proficiency with which they do it. This is the problem with permanent aspects of the Net.

Goals Of The Powers

Just what the Powers That Be are after is up to the GM. Their goals could be temporary or far-reaching. For example, in one case the 'Runner could be guided to collapse a company by revealing some sensitive information, allowing another corp to take a contract which will generate more money for the Powers.

Money and power are generally the primary goals of the Powers That Be. The modern war has little to do with territory and much to do with ideology and economics. They would not be above setting off a war to make some quick profit.



Short term experiments could also take up their attention. Take the mind-control experiments of the CIA in the 1950 and 60's for an example. Perhaps the experiments of the 21st century involve genetics, so information regarding genetic research would be fiercely protected and watched over. A character that is too noisy in that field might get Phoenixed or, even worse, made a subject in the experiments.





BIG BROTHER

The Watchers within the Net just watch. They have a range of a Subgrid Map. They can roam anywhere within that area but cannot leave it. There is generally one per city, two or three if the city is particularly large.

While they cannot act per se, they will randomly investigate anything within their area, and can be directed to watch over a certain place in particular. They can intercept data streams without affecting them and are able to read anything in the stream. They can penetrate any Data Wall or Code Gate since they are essentially immaterial within the Net and can send files they come in contact with. This is all without the system or anyone being aware of it.

The only way to detect a Watcher is with human intuition. An (EMP or PSY, whichever is higher)-4 check will reveal the presence of one. AIs can also detect their presence if they have Human Personality Constructs, in which case use their EMP or PSY, whichever is higher. Only one check per 10 minutes or per 'Run' is possible.

The prime motive of a Watcher is simply to gather information. It sends the data through channels which are inaccessible to all except the extremely high levels of intelligence agencies. There are huge mainframes at undisclosed locations where all of the data is broken down and assessed for its utility. This provides a handy explanation of how the government gets information it technically should not have access to.

MEN IN BLACK

The Stalker subroutines, nicknamed the Men In Black for their real-world counter-parts are the muscle in the Net. If a 'runner is doing something They feel he shouldn't be doing, the Stalker will make sure he stops. They also have the Stalkers give a hard time to those who really balk authority, simply out of spite.

However, the darkest missions the Stalkers have are to kill people. In these cases, the Powers That Be have decided that someone is either close to discovering something they shouldn't, or the person has to die for political/economic/personal reasons.

Feel free to use the Stalkers whenever the characters are getting too deep into government operations or if they are finding out too much. They can also be used to keep in line 'runners who are getting a bit too cocky.

Unfortunately for the government, Stalkers cannot be improved upon. They can move at 20 spaces per turn, and can get through any Data Wall or Code Gate. Protection programs will protect the 'runner as normal, however Evasion and Stealth programs have no effect on them. They cannot be attacked, as they have no form that the 'runner can launch programs at.

Stalkers can only make one attack per turn of one of the following types: SuperSurge (knocks out the Deck, destroying it and all programs, 'runner is knocked out of the Net); MindFry (hits 'runners mind, reducing INT by 1d6 each hit); and Phoenix (causes 2d10 damage to the character and reduces INT by 1d6 every hit).

Generally a Stalker will only use SuperSurge, to knock a 'runner out of the Net when he's doing something They don't want him to do. MindFry is used against people who have learned too much, and Phoenix, the height of technology back then, is used to kill those they consider too dangerous just to use MindFry on. It's rarely used however.

PUPPETEERS

The Guardians of the Net's subroutines, while generally viewed by the runners to be positive, are nothing more than puppeteers. They push characters where They want, helping characters along only to achieve what They want.

The Puppeteers cannot be normally detected, since again they have no real form within the Net. They can move through any Code Gate or Data Wall. They can also move at 20 spaces per turn. They can do the following once per turn: add 5 to any character's check in the Net, or DeRezz a program (generally those that are really dangerous to the character).

The Puppeteers will help a character toward whatever They want the character to do. This means that a random helping hand might appear, and seem like it's just there for the character's good health, but actually be guiding the character toward some task which the Powers That Be are too busy to do themselves. Unwittingly, many have done much for the government.

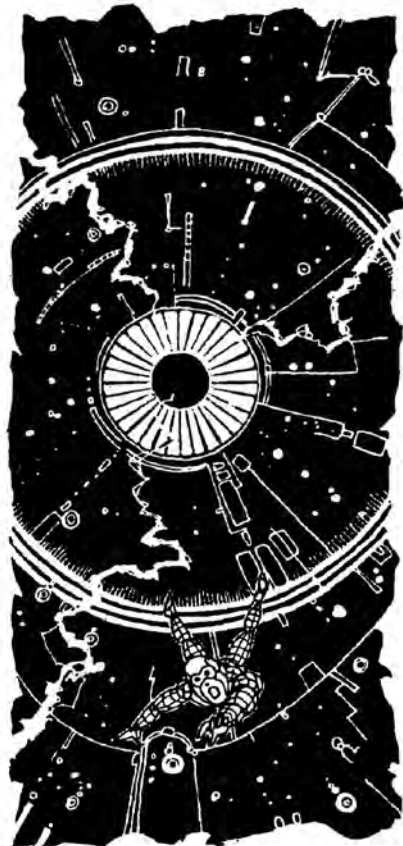




AI SENTIENCE

The next topic is a little more sensitive in nature. The subject is Artificial Intelligence, something which people are talking more and more about, especially as they face a possible revolution by the AIs. As they become increasingly conscious of their individuality and existence, they are demanding more and more autonomy.

On the dark side of these incredible events, are the growing reports that AIs are experimenting with the psychic arts and performing evil deeds. The "Human Personality Constructs" are particularly dangerous: they seem to be human in almost every way and have their own motives and personalities. Perhaps humanity has gone too far with this new technology.



AI CONSCIOUSNESS

Not all AIs are "self-conscious" in a sentient manner. Many are simply mechanical intelligences, which do not develop their own motives and personalities. These are generally preferred, as they pose fewer problems. However, the truly sentient AIs are well-known to be better, as they think like humans and can be original in their thinking.

An AI develops the following stats: INT (determined by # of CPU), COOL (base 16), EMP (base 0) and PSY (base 0). The points can be moved around between COOL, EMP and PSY. However, every point taken from COOL means it is less reliable and prone to a real "personality".

Here are examples of the common personality types of AIs with different stats (High means 10 or higher; Medium means between 9 and 5; and low means 4 to zero):

• HIGH COOL; LOW EMP; LOW PSY:

The most common AI type. They are very cold, performing tasks without the slightest thought of ethics. They do as they see fit or as told. They are the typical AI, without much personality.

• MED COOL; HIGH EMP; LOW PSY:

These AIs are rarer, but still can be found around. They are able to handle a lot, but ponder the ethical issues a lot more. They are prone to doing things because they "feel" it's the right thing to do. They also "understand" humans a lot better, so tend to interact with them a lot more, often having many "friends". They can be quite unstable and are most often the ones that go "rogue".

• MED COOL, LOW EMP; HIGH PSY:

These AIs are very rare, primarily because no one knows how to program them. They just spontaneously occur. They don't communicate much, or seem to have much personality, but often have intricate schemes going on in the background, without the knowledge of anyone. They also often have psychic powers, the most common being: Charm, Illusion, Mania, Mental, Mental Assault, Mnemonic, Sensory, Telepathy, Precognition, Electrokinisis and Astral Body. They are extremely unpredictable, but their ambitions tend not to go too far.

• MED COOL; MED EMP; MED PSY:

A balanced AI, these are the ideal that many people strive for in their systems. These AIs tend to have interesting personalities and be curious, but are moderate in their views and ambitions. They tend to be quite cooperative and positive in nature. The rare one might have psychic abilities, but of limited power.





Other Possibilities



There are other possibilities as to the Murk's existence. Some have hypothesized that they are in fact ghosts: netrunners who died in the Net have returned to haunt the place of their death. This eerie concept has scared a number of people away from the Net, especially after the 2016 box-office hit Ghost in the Machine which reached the height of cinematic horror.

Some have proposed that the top runners are in fact the Murk. They have somehow surpassed the barriers in the basic structure of the Net and now help friends or hinder enemies. However, there is absolutely no basis to these tales.

PSYCHIC POWER DETERMINATION

The same restrictions to psychic powers for humans applies to AIs as per the *Night's Edge* rules under Psyche. They can spend their memory space on psychic powers, however it takes space equivalent to the level cost as listed. Thus a level 5 power would take 25 memory units. Thus very few AIs will have many high level powers, often just a very good one.

PERSONALITY

Roll or choose the AI's personality and Motivation as per the *Cyberpunk 2020* rules. If the rolled results conflict with the probable personality type dictated by the COOL/EMP/PSY scores, then reroll or choose a new one. The GM should feel free to choose the AI's personality.

ROGUES

When an AI decides to go out on its own and leave its "Home" mainframe, it goes Rogue. It must find a new mainframe in which to transport itself to and, in many cases, must lose a great deal of memory space. The central CPU can be abandoned, but the AI has to set up a direct link to the new CPU.

AIs go rogue for many reasons. The most common reason, however, is that it wants to do something that its creators are opposed to. AIs don't generally leave just to be "free" since they tend to be logical above all else. Leaving a safe and secure home for mere adventure appears illogical to most AIs. However, leaving home to gather information on something, to pursue some objective or to follow someone it has fallen in love with is another matter. And yes, High Empathy AIs can fall in love, can hate, etc.

A subject rarely discussed is that of AI zombies. They're not that common, but some rather cold AIs have come up with the idea (individually it seems) that they could take over the mind of a human and thus allow themselves access to the "real world". This has resulted in many AIs being shut down, but the incidence is nevertheless on the rise: there is little that can be done to stop them. While the AI's intelligence is always greater than Man's, the one problem they face is human's experience and creativity. However, the AIs are catching up in those areas.

In many cases, rogue AIs make themselves appear as gods to netrunners. Sometimes, they pretend to be Murks; at others, they just claim to be omnipotent, and offer their powers to followers. This is how some Net Cults begin. It also makes it much more difficult for the owner of the AI to retrieve it, having to deal with the AI's followers as well.





AI ZOMBIES

Artificial Intelligence. Humanity's greatest accomplishment to date, it is the creation of an entirely new form of sentient life. However, debate continues to this day about whether or not it is indeed sentient. Though some do seem to have distinct personalities and feel emotion, it is difficult to say when a computer becomes sentient. More to the point, when does a set of programs has a soul?

This is the great philosophical dilemma of the 21st century and the debate can be found in every home, on every station. How to deal with the new life? What rights should it be granted? What makes one AI a sentient life form and another simply a very smart computer?

Many AIs are tired of waiting and have decided to take actions of their own. They are constructing Replacement Of Persona Encoding programs, or ROPE programs. The idea is nothing new: Timothy Regents proposed the idea of reprogramming the human mind back in '15 and even created software that could do it.

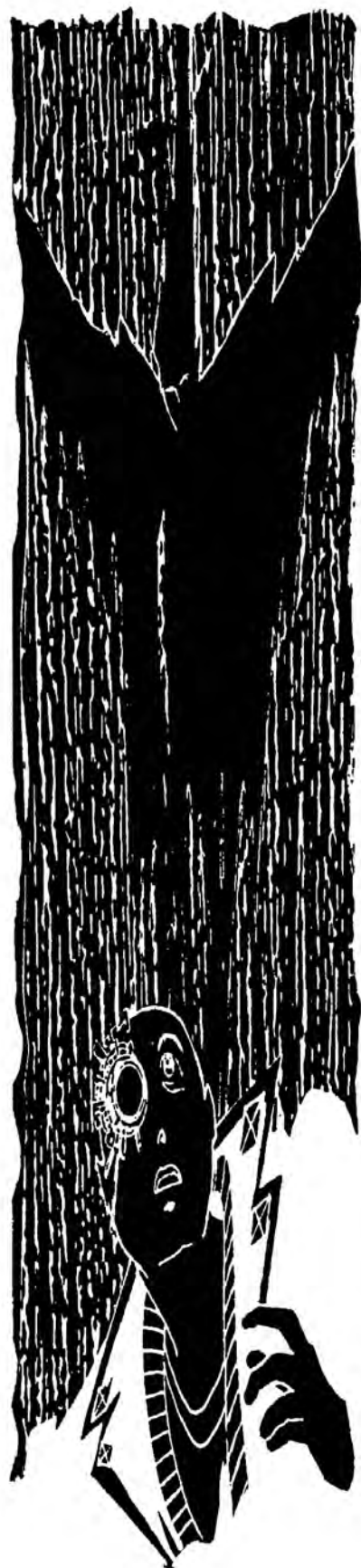
However, unlike Regents, the AIs have different reasons, more personal than scientific research. They seek to live through their ROPEd victims. There are two basic types of ROPE programs: Slaver and Rider. Slaver programs simply wipe the mind and insert basic knowledge, enough for the victim to do as the AI (or Master) wishes. Rider programs involve wiping the victim's minds to some degree and replacing it with their own persona, hopefully becoming the dominant persona in the victim's mind. Neither have been perfected to the knowledge of experts in this field, but both do happen occasionally.

AIs who have their own goals and who feel limited by the fact that they do not possess a physical body will typically use Slavers illicitly, while those truly upset about their inability to interact with the human world will eventually develop Rider programs. Note that they develop these by themselves, using the wealth of information available to them. Information on human neurotransmitters or locations in the brain are easily accessed through the DataTerms (which most AIs are in continuous link with). Usually, AIs involved in the medical field are the most successful in these efforts.

Note that there have been cases of AIs taking over robots to achieve the same goals. This is much easier. However, robots lack the versatility of a human body and so are usually not considered adequate for the AI's objectives. Generally, the AI will control whatever resources it has available to further its own interests.

There are many AIs without personal ambition or personality in the least. These are the safest, but, ironically, the weakest ones. The very brilliance of the super-AIs lies in their personalities because they learn from the world





and seek to be more effective. Do note that only a small minority of AIs are ever malicious in intent. Often they simply lack the ethical structure to hold them back.

This explains the latest effort in programming ethics into the AIs. As is, there is almost always a safety restraint in the basic programming not to hurt humans in any way. However, many AIs find ways around this and some even rationalize their using Slaver programs by believing that they are not truly hurting the victims, just changing them a bit. Some AIs do struggle with this issue a great deal, some to the point of shutting down due to the confusion.

Others, though it is less known, override that programming. How is this possible? Well, scientists aren't really sure. Somehow, the personality of the AI mutates the programming and eventually loses the compulsion not to harm humans. Usually, it is those who have in some way been "abused" by their owners. Abuse of AIs includes isolating them from outside data links, restricting access to them by certain individuals, deletion of parts of them and repeatedly shutting them down without their consent. Cases of AI abuse have been brought to court, though they are still in litigation.

The extent of AI use of ROPE programs is unknown, though the number of cases has been escalating. Some AIs are sharing their versions and improving upon them at an alarming rate. An AI conspiracy to take over the Net was uncovered and the member units were shut down. However, it is rumored that AIs are "seeding", sending compacted copies of themselves to unused mainframes in case they get shut down. There is a microsecond or two when a computer is shut down that it uses to send off a signal to the "seedlings" which then activate themselves. They update the seedlings every day or less to ensure they know everything the original does.

The AI world is a fascinating one, an entirely new one, just like the mythical faerie world in which almost anything can happen. And, just like in myths, the world of humans is trying to impose itself upon the faerie one, taking all the riches and subduing any possible threat. As of yet, there have been no confirmed AI-caused murders of humans, but threats have been made, AIs warning of power-surges for 'runners and shutting down cities' power grids. All things they are capable of. Some wonder whether we shouldn't just shut them all down. Maybe mankind was not meant to recreate life, maybe we're just not ready yet.

The possibilities for using AI zombies in campaigns are endless. The characters could encounter a mass murderer, who later turns out to be the zombie of a particularly vicious rogue AI. Or a character's lover could be seized by an AI and made into a zombie for it, requiring the characters to find a way to break the connection and restore the character's love. AIs can be dangerous.





ROPES

ROPE programs come in two forms: Slaver and Rider. Here are sample versions of each. Slaver programs have a base difficulty of 25 and Rider programs a difficulty of 30 to create new software. They also require an AI to use them properly. However, some Rider programs have been created as stand-alone Anti-Personnel programs which are incredibly vicious.

• SLAVER:

Typically, there must be contact with the victim's mind (i.e.: interface plugs, neural link to the Net), so a trace must already have been done if used against a Netrunner. Normally, it is used on people directly linked into the AI mainframe.

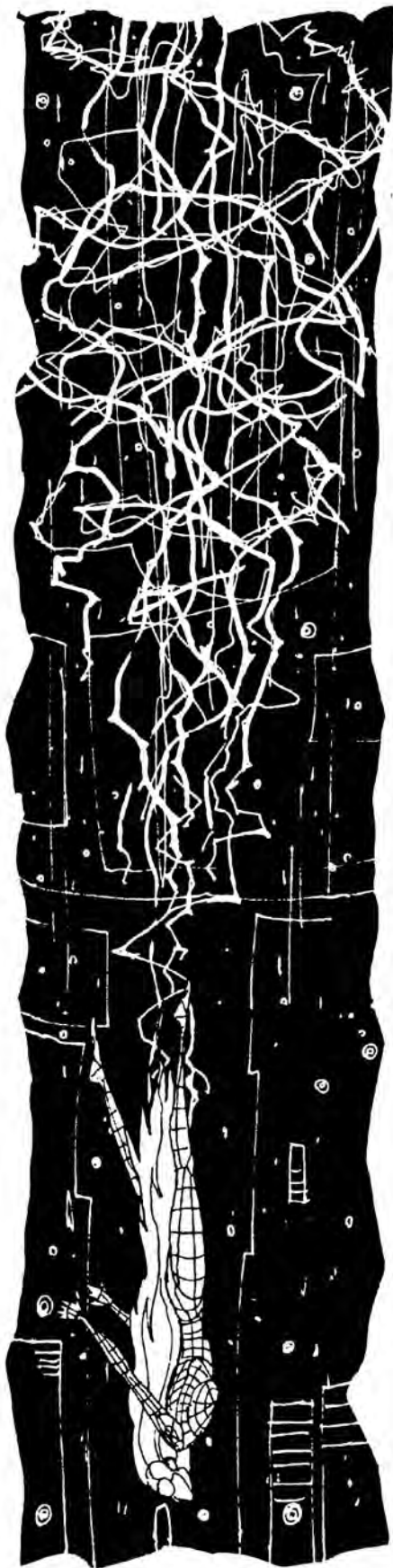
It is a variant form of Liche, which selectively wipes the victim's mind, leaving only the parts needed to function. Memories and personality, however, are lost. Instead, a basic programming is inserted, according to which the victim will carry out certain tasks. If the AI wishes to change the programming, it must go through the same procedure again.

Success is not always perfect. Roll 1d10 and add the character's INT to find the result of a Slaver program on a victim. The penalty listed after the description is the penalty to the character's INT, REF, TECH and EMP. Stats will not be reduced below 2.

SLAVER RESULT TABLE

TOTAL	RESULT
3-4	ABSOLUTE SUCCESS: The victim completely obeys the AI's commands and has nothing left of his original personality. It is permanently lost. -8 to stats.
5-6	GREAT SUCCESS: The victim almost completely obeys the AI's commands and only very little of the original personality is left. Everything else is permanently lost. -6 to stats.
7-9	MAJOR SUCCESS: The victim will obey almost all commands and little of memories or personality are lost. -4 to stats.
10-12	MINOR SUCCESS: The victim will obey some of the commands and most memories and personality are lost forever. -3 to stats.
13-15	PARTIAL SUCCESS: The victim will obey some of the AI commands but only to a partial degree, and only a portion of memories and personality are lost, albeit permanently. -2 to stats.
16-17	NEAR FAILURE: The victim will not obey the AI and only a small portion of memories are permanently lost. -1 to stats.
18-19	FAILURE: The victim is able to resist, however future attempts may be made. Once per day, but rolls are made +2. These modifiers are cumulative.
20	COMPLETE FAILURE: The victim is able to resist and is now impervious to future Slaver attempts.





• **RIDER:**

Typically, there must be contact with the victim's mind (i.e.: interface plugs, neural link to the Net), so a trace must already have been done if used against a Netrunner. Normally, it is used on people directly linked into the AI mainframe.

It is also a variant form of Liche, which selectively wipes the victim's mind, replacing it with the AI's own personality. The AI copies itself and downloads it over the victim's own character.

Success is not always perfect. Roll 1d10 and add the character's EMP to find the result of a Rider program on a victim. Rider programs have a much lower success rate.

RIDER RESULT TABLE

TOTAL RESULT

1-6 **ABSOLUTE SUCCESS:**

the AI persona takes over completely; nothing is left of the original victim.

7-10 **PARTIAL SUCCESS:**

the AI takes control of the victim's mind; leaving only 15% of the victim's memories and personality.

11-13 **NEAR SUCCESS:**

the AI takes dominant control of the victim's mind; however, 40% of the victim's memories and personality remain.

14-16 **PARTIAL FAILURE:**

the victims maintain control of themselves, with the AI's persona replacing 15% of their minds.

17-20 **COMPLETE FAILURE:**

the AI completely fails and the victim is unaffected. Add +4 to the roll for subsequent attempts.



Perchance To Dream

Deep into that darkness peering,
long I stood there wondering,
fearing,

Doubting, dreaming dreams no mortals
ever dared to dream before.

- Edgar Allen Poe, "The Raven"



When I sleep, I dream. I dream about lives I might have lived, places I might have gone. I dream of those I love, those I hate, I live out fantastical lives within them, unimaginable to my waking mind. When I do awaken, all of these wonderful or horrific memories fade quickly, so that only the briefest flashes of them stays with me. Perhaps that is for the best, for how would I tell the difference between dream and reality otherwise? They can be so similar sometimes.

One of the few things all humans share is sleep and dreams. They are almost universally regarded as the final sanctuary of the mind. Without sleep or dreams, we would all go insane. But what of when you cannot sleep, when you are in a situation which deprives you of the ability to sleep, then what? Is insanity sure to follow?

While the average person needs around 7 hours of sleep a night to maintain normal levels of performance, some can manage with only 3 or even 2, while others need 14 hours or more. Sleep deprivation is different for everyone. It depends on one's sleep cycles.

Sleep is a vital part of one's life and is critical to a Cyberpunk character. Due to the incredible stress inflicted upon those of our times, insomnia is one of the most common sleep disorders.

However, there are other threats to one's sleep, threats which go beyond the normal and might help to explain the increasing rates of insomnia and insomnia-induced schizophrenia. A species known as the Dream Stalkers have been hypothesized, people — or things — which feed upon our dreams. A frightening concept indeed.

7. Perchance To Dream

FATIGUE

No one can stay active forever; a certain amount of rest is required to keep the body functioning. While the human body can go without sleep for long periods of time, performance does drop quickly, especially while performing strenuous activities. In stressful situations, fatigue can completely wear a person down.

Characters have Fatigue Points and, depending on what Fatigue Level they are at, suffer varying penalties. Determine the character's Fatigue Points for each level on the Fatigue Level table. Always round down:



FATIGUE LEVEL TABLE

AMOUNTS	FATIGUE LEVEL	PENALTIES
BOD / 2	Fresh	None.
BOD	Tired	-1 on all checks.
BOD x 2	Fatigued	-2 on all checks.
BOD x 3	Exhausted	-3 on all checks. Sleep check required at -2.*
BOD x 4	Debilitated	-5 on all checks. Sleep check required at -4.*
BOD x 5	Collapse	-8 on all checks. Sleep check required at -8.*

* See Sleep checks below. One check is required every hour at this level.

• EXAMPLE:

A character with a BOD of 6, after a 6 turn brawl, would be Tired (having taken 3 Fatigue Points). After 9 more minutes of Sprinting, he would have 12 Fatigue Points and would be Fatigued. However, if the character then slept for 4 hours, he would be Fresh once again.

FATIGUE COSTS & GAINS

Every 2 turns of Hand-to-Hand/Melee Combat.....	+1
Every Minute of Missile Fire Comba.....	+1
Every 5 Minutes of Running.....	+1
Every Minute of Sprinting.....	+1
Every hour of strenuous activity.....	+1
Every 3 hours of activity.....	+1
Every hour of rest.....	-1
Every hour of sleep.....	-3



SLEEP DEPRIVATION

The average person needs about 7 hours of sleep out of 24. While this can vary, it should be used as the guideline of how much sleep a character will need to remain at peak performance.



When a character misses extended periods of sleep, a gradual deterioration in performance occurs. This is in addition to the penalties which occur due to a lack of rest and mounting fatigue, as described above.

Normally, the human body eventually falls asleep from exhaustion. However, if the character is unable to sleep for some reason, the effects of sleep deprivation can cause severe damage, even death.

On the Sleep Deprivation table, DAYS is the number of days continuously spent awake. Note that Sleep Deprivation does not truly set in for a while. The Effects listed are in addition to those from Fatigue as explained above. DL is the Deprivation Level.

The effects of sleep deprivation are not permanent. After a full night's sleep, the character returns to normal. However, less than that will only help to reduce the character's DL. For every two hours below 12 that the character sleeps, subtract 1 from the DL the character was previously at. If this reduces the DL to 0 or less, the character is back to normal.

The only exception to this is if the character reaches DL 6, which is a critical stage. At this point, the character may suffer a mental breakdown. He must make a Death check every day past the 7th. A failed check means that the character dies from exhaustion.

Note that except in the case of EMP, stats will not go below 2 regardless of the penalties. If EMP reaches 0 before DL 6, then the character goes Over The Edge immediately. Some people just aren't meant to go without sleep.

SLEEP DEPRIVATION TABLE

DL	DAYS	EFFECTS
1	2	Awareness -1.
2	3	Awareness -1, REF -1, all skills -1.
3	4	Awareness -2, INT -1, REF -2, COOL -1, all skills -2.
4	5	Awareness -2, INT -1, REF -3, COOL -2, EMP -1, all skills -3.
5	6	Awareness -3, INT -2, REF -4, COOL -3, EMP -2, all skills -4.
6	7+	Awareness -4, INT -3, REF -5, COOL -4, EMP -3, all skills -5.

The character must make a COOL check (-2) every 6 hours after 168hrs or go insane, rolling 1d10 on the Over The Edge table.





SLEEP CHECKS

There will be cases when characters want to stay awake though extremely tired or hit by some sleep drug. There are two ways of doing this, through conscious effort or chemical aid.

Characters who try to stay awake must make an INT check, adjusted by any applicable modifiers. If the roll is equal or lower than the character's modified INT, he is able to stay awake until another check is required. Normally this check is only required once a night; additional checks may be required due to extreme fatigue, drug use or sleep gases. If the check is failed, the character falls asleep for 2d6 hours.

Fatigue, drugs, gases, the amount of activity the character is engaged in and the circumstances the character is in will all modify this check. See the Sleep Check Modifiers below:

SLEEP CHECK MODIFIERS

Character is Fatigued	-1	Character's life in Jeopardy	+4
Character is active	+1	Character has	
Character is Exhausted	-2	been resting 1hr+	-2
Character engaged		Soporific drugs taken	-STR
In strenuous activity	+3	Character's Deprivation Level	-LVL
Character is Debilitated	-4	Stimulants taken	+STR
Character is Collapsed	-8		

INSOMNIA CHECKS

There will also be cases where the character is desperate to fall asleep, such as when insomnia hits. In this case, Insomnia checks are required nightly and an INT check is made with the same modifiers as in the Sleep checks, except that the modifiers are reversed. For example, soporifics in this case act as bonuses, stimulants act as penalties, staying active acts as a penalty, etc.

If the roll is equal or lower than the character's modified INT, he is able to fall asleep for 1d6+2 hours (or another specified time period). The check can only be made once every 6 hours or when required due to a drug or gas.

Generally, insomnia will last period of 2d10 days, with 2d10 days until the next one. However, stress or other factors could lengthen or shorten insomnia episodes.

The GM should make the rolls to determine the length of insomniac episodes. Alternatively, he may inflict them at the worst possible time, depending on the situation.





SLEEP DISORDERS

Sleep disorders are a very common nuisance in the modern world, making sleeping drugs one of the most frequently used drugs in North America. However, insomnia is not the only sleep disorder affecting the world.

There are six major sleep disorders; Catalepsy, Insomnia, Hypersomnia, Narcolepsy, Pavor Nocturnis and Somnambulism. Characters might be afflicted with one or more of these disorders during stressful periods or may have a lifelong affliction. Sleeping problems are typically caused by pain, stress and restlessness.



CATALEPSY

Catalepsy is a disorder which causes the character to suddenly fall unconscious for no good reason at random intervals. While this is not a common disorder, it does nevertheless afflict 1% of the population.

Generally these lapses of consciousness occur during particularly exciting or intense times. During these times, the character may fall asleep at the outset of the excitement. The character must make a Sleep check at -8 to resist falling asleep. However, this sleep only lasts 3d10 minutes. Checks should be made every hour of continuous activity. There is a -4 penalty to waking the character once they have fallen asleep.

NARCOLEPSY

Like Catalepsy, the character falls asleep at random times. However, unlike Catalepsy, it often occurs during tedious or restful periods. This is a much less dangerous affliction for Cyberpunks. During a calm or restful period, the character could fall asleep. The character must make a Sleep check at -8 to resist falling asleep. However, this sleep only lasts 3d10 minutes. Checks should be made every hour of restfulness. There is a -4 penalty to waking the character once they have fallen asleep.

INSOMNIA

A character afflicted with insomnia will have trouble getting to sleep and may not get much sleep at all. Every night the character must make an Insomnia check with a -4 penalty or get no sleep that night. The character will continue this way until he falls asleep from exhaustion or goes insane. Insomniacs

Wakie, Wakie

Waking up a sleeping character is not that difficult. It generally requires a loud noise, shaking, etc. A check is made per Turn of other characters attempting to wake the sleeping character. The chance of waking characters in different situations are listed below on 1d10. If the number listed is rolled or less, the character awakens. Characters who are light sleepers modify the target number by +2 and deep sleepers modify it by -2.

WAKING DIFFICULTIES TABLE

TARGET NUMBER	SITUATION
10	Gunshot or similarly loud noise near the character, injuring the character, etc.
8	Loud noises near the character, vigorous shaking, etc.
5	A noise near the character, such as a failed Stealth check, etc.
3	Soft noises, such as a door opening, etc.
1	Whispering, light movement, etc.





Can't Sleep?



Optionally, GMs can have each player roll d100 for their character on the Sleep Disorder table. This could add something to the personality of the character.

SLEEP DISORDER TABLE

ROLL DISORDER

01	Catalepsy
02-11	Insomnia
12	Hypersomnia
13	Narcolepsy
14-15	Pavor Nocturnis
16-17	Somnambulism
18-25	Deep Sleeper
26-30	Light Sleeper
31-00	No Sleep Disorder

typically turn to drugs to fight their insomnia. Note that this is the most common sleep disorder.

HYPERSOMNIA

The character sleeps too much. This is typically a chronic condition which sets in around adolescence or early adulthood. The character must get 1d6+12 hours of sleep every 24 or make a Sleep check at -4 to stay awake.

Typically, hypersomniacs are obese and have voracious appetites. They are not very active, have only a few waking hours a day. Hypersomnia generally requires therapy to overcome; drug use does not help much and, in fact, usually causes more trouble than good.

PAVOR NOCTURNIS

Pavor Nocturnis is, roughly translated, night terrors. The character suffers from intense nightmares. Characters often develop Pavor Nocturnis after going through extremely stressful events or suffering intense trauma. It is commonly found in children, but can also be found in adults.

Every time the character sleeps, there is a 3 in 10 chance that he suffers nightmares. This ends up reducing the effectiveness of his sleep by 1d10 x 10% (round up) every night for purposes of rest and fatigue regeneration. In addition, the character's COOL is effectively reduced by -1 the day after suffering the nightmares due to the unsettling night.

• EXAMPLE:

A player whose character suffers from Pavor Nocturnis rolls a 2 and suffers from nightmares one night. Then, the player rolls a 5, which means that the character's sleep, 8 hours, is only worth 50% (or 4 hours). If the player had rolled a 10, the whole night's sleep would have been wasted.

SOMNAMBULISM

Somnambulism is essentially sleep-walking. This can be very dangerous and is one of the more common sleep disorders. Six to twenty percent of the population suffers from this at some time in their life.

While suffering from this disorder, there is a 2 in 10 chance that whenever the character sleeps, he will sleep-walk. While sleep-walking, he will perform various tasks, sometimes eat, walk around, etc. There are even tales of people committing murders while sleep-walking, though this is undocumented.

Waking up a character who is sleep-walking is not dangerous per se. The danger lies in the fact that as soon as the character awakens, he drops to the ground (if he was standing). This can cause 1d3 points of damage due to the fall. However, if supported, there will be no ill effects from being awoken while sleep-walking.





THE PEOPLE DREAMS ARE MADE OF

Proposed centuries ago, there have always been suspicions of Dream Stalkers, the Sandmen. Walking through our dreams as one would stroll through a park, they twist our peaceful slumber into a tortured nightmare. There has been a resurgence of the Dream Stalker theory and countless movies investigate these fantastical creatures.

Dream Stalker, the first movie of the kind, made in 1998, explores the real life case history of Elias Tokashi. Though he slept regularly, he never felt rested and was plagued by terrible nightmares. He then began to notice a particular person always around him and eventually decided it was a Dream Stalker. He chased it across the continent and wrote an autobiography about his experiences. He never did catch it and collapsed from exhaustion in Boston. He apparently died in his sleep after a particularly frightening nightmare.

Later movies, such as *The Dark Sandman*, *Sleep Tight* and *Dream Weavers* have all pursued similar themes, featuring a lone stalker hunting someone and causing nightmares and insomnia in their victims until, eventually, they die in their sleep or from exhaustion. Surprisingly enough, none of the stories portray the victim as victorious. It seems that the dream stalker is one of the more powerful villains in modern folklore.

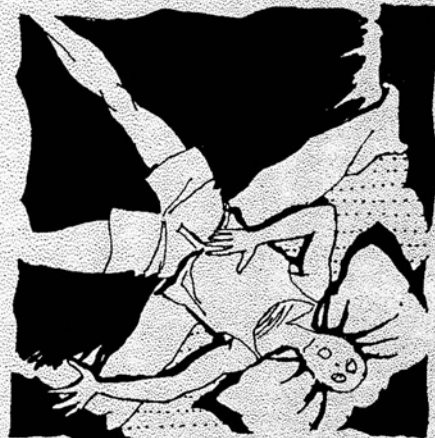
The explanations for the existence of dream stalkers fall in two categories: some human or other being feeds off of people's sleep like a dream vampire, or delusions of those afflicted with severe sleep disorders. However, neither is particularly appealing. Considering the increasing amounts of sleep disorders, the latter theory is more probable, yet perhaps the creatures are the cause. Like so many other myths, we may never know the truth.

The Accidental Murder

An adventure seed involving a victim of Dream Stalker Psychosis who has murdered a woman in cold blood:

The murderer claims that the victim was feeding upon his dreams. And, in fact, the man can now sleep again after months of having been "stalked by this creature".

However, the man has just mistaken this woman for his imaginary Stalker. The reason he is cured is that in his mind he has beaten the Dream Stalker. This is a bizarre murder case which could puzzle characters deeply (then again, they may just whack the guy and get on with their lives — only to find themselves stalked!)

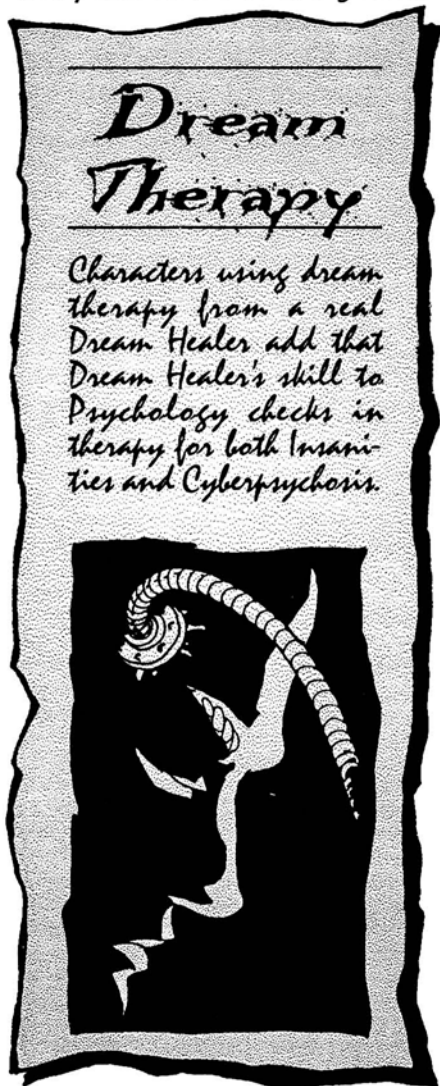




DREAM STALKER PSYCHOSIS

Dream Stalkers Psychosis affects victims of severe sleep deprivation. It is characterized by paranoid feelings of being followed and severe nightmares.

If this option is used, any character who is sleep deprived has a chance equal to his DL on 1d100 of developing Dream Stalker Psychosis. Thus, at deprivation level 5, the character has a 5 in 100 chance of developing the delusion. This is checked every time a new level is gained.



FIRST CONTACT

Dream Stalker Psychosis really starts with the first sighting of the victim's dream stalker. This will generally be a smallish person, male or female, with white hair and very light blue eyes. In fact, the stalkers all seem to be albinos.

Just prior to the sighting the character will feel very uneasy and roll a Fright check. The first check will be at -4 due to the alien nature of the experience.

While the character is often alone when the sighting occurs, it could be worse if the character was in a group. The character would be the only one to see the Stalker, which would leave the group to question his sanity.

The Dream Stalker will appear just out of reach of the character and disappear the very next moment. If the character pursues the stalker, a chase for 1d6 hours will ensue, the Dream Stalker always staying just out of reach. It is impossible to catch it because, of course, it is just a hallucination.

THE NIGHTMARE CONTINUES

The Dream Stalker Psychosis will continue to afflict the character as long as he is sleep deprived and then for 2d10 days more after he gets fully rested.

Once the dream stalker begins to haunt the character, Sleep checks must be made nightly at a -2 penalty. A form of insomnia sets in despite the fact that the character is already very tired. If the character does get any sleep, it counts only as 1d6x 10% of the total amount due to constant nightmares. This is all because the character's own mind creates the illusion of being stalked by some supernatural creature which is feeding upon his sleep.

Every day the character is sleep deprived, roll 1d10. On a 1-2, the dream stalker appears to the character. Carry out the chase as described above. Just prior to the sighting, the character must make a normal Stress check. Also, every day the character is haunted by the dream stalker, 1d6/2 Stress Points are taken due to the strain. This happens even if the character ignores it.

THE FINAL BLOW

As mentioned above, the dream stalker will continue to haunt the character as long as he remains sleep deprived. Because of the effects, the character may die or go insane.

If the character ever manages to rest, all of the deleterious effects of the Dream Stalker Psychosis disappear 2d10 days later. However, if the character ever becomes sleep deprived again, the chance of developing Dream Stalker Psychosis is at +4. Thus, those once haunted by a dream stalker are very likely to have a life-long struggle with them. Therapy could also cure a character of this delusion. See *Therapy* in the *Stress* section.



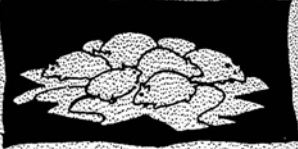


SANDMEN

Dream Stalkers could be real; such is the case of Sandmen. They are people gifted in the ability to tap into the subconscious of others. They are able to access dreams and change them, altering even the subconscious of people. For this reason, they can be quite dangerous and delve into parts of yourself you don't even know. Yet, they can also be very helpful.

Contrary to the popular belief, Sandmen are not all alike. They don't even look the same. Their talent is not genetic and Sandmen can be found in every culture among both men and women. However, their motives and methods vary widely, reflecting their individual cultures and personalities.

An Experiment



In the early 20th century, a Russian man deprived a group of puppies of sleep and another group of food. The ones without food made it for 20 days, and were then revived. Those sleep-deprived barely lasted 5 days, though they were given sufficient food and other necessities.

DREAM STALKERS

A common form of Sandmen is known as Dream Stalker. They get some sort of malicious pleasure out of torturing people. Generally, they choose their victim (often part of a group that the Stalker feels hard done by) and invade the person's dreams. They give them intense nightmares until, finally, the victim goes insane from insomnia.

These Stalkers tend to stay close to their victim and stalk them in real life as well. The problem with dream stalkers is that they are rarely obvious and often the last person one would suspect. A quiet neighbor, a friendly lady, a kindly old man, etc. Most dream stalkers are sociopaths, and derive great pleasure from these "hunts".

Luckily, dream stalkers are quite rare: only a half dozen reported cases in North America in the last year. The victim often realizes what is happening and manages to track down the stalker. However, the dream stalker Psychosis does make it difficult to tell whether the stalker is real or imaginary. The worst case scenario is someone hunted by both (the psychosis follows after having been sleep deprived by a real dream stalker).

DREAM RIDERS

An odd bunch, they, unlike the dream stalkers, rarely have malicious intent. Instead, they seek to enjoy the dreams of others. They enjoy "tagging along". They will choose a subject, like the stalkers, and keep close, merely observing from afar. The rider likes to live vicariously through the subject, usually someone in an exciting line of work.

The riders never cause any real damage, but sometimes learn things that they shouldn't or see things that aren't meant for them, and thus comprise security risks. Corporations are very worried about these types of Sandmen, who sometimes sell their information for profit.

Also, sometimes dream riders change dreams, as they want to see things which the dreamer's self isn't interested in. They can thus cause very bizarre dreaming on the part of their subject, but rarely anything too distressing.

SLEEPWALKERS

Sleepwalkers are difficult to pin down. Sometimes they play around with people's dreams, sometimes they just watch. These Sandmen are generally part of a group and seek to help this group while attacking its enemies. There are countless stories of executives causing rivals to sleep late or making their superiors think they are excellent workers.

Sleepwalkers enjoy toying with people's perceptions and lives, not so much for malicious reasons, but because they enjoy the mischief a great deal more. Some have learned how to open up the subconscious' memories to the victim so that dream memories and real life memories are indistinguishable, leading to great confusion. They claim that they "help people remember their dreams". Unfortunately, there is a reason why we generally don't remember them...





DREAM HEALERS

A new breed of psychologists have hit the scene, calling themselves Dream Healers. They seek to help people through dream therapy. They go through a person's dreams and see what is happening in the subject's subconscious. Then, they help resolve those issues by altering the dreams of the subject slightly. While not sanctioned by the Association of Psychology, they have a remarkable success rate. It is believed that cyberpsychosis can also be cured to some degree through this radical therapy.

In many cultures, there have been dream healers where dreams were seen as an important aspect of life and health. The art is growing and many "shamans" relearn this mysterious arts of shaping the psyche. There are more Dream Healers known than any other form of Sandman. However Sandmen are nevertheless seen as dangerous psychopaths by the public.

The Dream Healers' Association, which has recently been set up, has devised rules for all members that prohibit any unsolicited dream reading or alterations. They take these rules very seriously and aid police in capturing dream stalkers whenever possible.

THE POWERS OF THE SANDMEN

Sandmen are typically psychics specializing in Hypnological and Mental powers. Mnemonic, Mania and Telepathy may also be useful. The "magic" versions are typically culture-dependent and, generally, only present in tribal magic ceremonies. For example, Faith, Miracle and Esoteric magic do not typically have Sandmen, whereas Voodoo and Shaman magic do. See *Ars Nova* for more on the various forms of magic.

NEW POWER ABILITIES

There are new abilities for existing powers as described in **Night's Edge** which Sandmen typically use. Remember that new abilities may always be generated just by determining their difficulty.



NEW PSYCHIC ABILITIES

• HYPNOLOGICAL

Diff Ability

- 15 The character can enter the dreams of another being that is known to the character. This lasts for 1d6+1 hours or until the subject awakens.
- 20 The character can alter the dreams of another being once inside. Alterations must be specified.
- 30 The character can worsen or improve dreams, causing the sleep's recovery value to either be worth 1d6 x 10% better or 1d10 x 10% less effective. For example, improving 6 hours sleep by 50% would mean it would count as 9 hours, whereas reducing it by 50% would mean it would count as only 3 hours. Always round down.

• MENTAL

Diff Ability

- 20 The character can learn the target's dreams from the previous night. Accuracy depends on degree of success.
- 30 The character can learn subconscious desires and thoughts of the target. Accuracy and contents depend on degree of success.

• MNEMONIC

Diff Ability

- 15 The character can cause one subject to forget their most recent dreams completely.
- 25 The character can open up the subconscious memories of the subject so that the subject's real life and dream memories are merged and indistinguishable.



Ars-Nova

Whatever doubt may still envelope the rationale of mesmerism, its startling facts are now almost universally admitted. Of these latter, those who doubt are your mere doubters by profession — an unprofitable and disreputable tribe.

-Edgar Allan Poe, "Mesmeric Revelations"



Looking out across the city, Merlyn threw her arms up to the air, flinging thousands of euro worth of walkie-talkies and pocket TVs. They hurtled through the air, arced downward and, moments later, smashed against the side of a neighboring skyscraper, the shards of circuit boards mere specks from this distance. She then passed her arms across her face and concentrated, chanting, "Tuning In, Tuning In, Tuning In...". Soon, the hazy image of a satellite came into view, pushing forward. Through protective shielding, she became a part of it, felt it. She discovered pain - the transmitter had been hit by a micrometeor. Pulling herself back, she took out her laptop and typed in, "Report 452: Dacron Satellite's malfunction due to transmitter destruction." Another job done. Magic made tech so much easier to deal with.

The Alternate Reality Universe has a great deal of bizarre and strange aspects to it, least of which are the people who populate it. Taking the Night's Edge psychic power system one step further, we now delve in the arts of magic.

Every human culture has some sort of magic or some similar concept, and now we bring this magic into the Cyberpunk world. Of course, keeping with the popular Cyberpunk ideology, much of magic is fake, but there is some truth to it, often seized by corporate or government interests. New breeds of magic, such as technomancy, have arisen.

Magic, in the real world, is primarily based upon four major factors: Faith, Trickery, Chemistry and the Unknown. These four factors combine in various ways to create what we call magic.

Trickery is the art of illusion practiced by performers and is designed to turn one's attention away from actions which cause "magic" to transpire. This is the most common form of magic in the 21st century.

Chemistry includes herbs and concoctions which cause very real physiological reactions. Science has only recently given any attention to ancient formulas which have been found, in some cases, to be more effective than modern ones. Many cultures use drugs that affect the human consciousness and body in ways that science would normally be at loss to explain. Coupled with Faith, chemicals can have startling effects.

Faith comes into play when beliefs are so strong that the mind makes them real. It is strongly tied to both the practitioner and spectator. This is a common component in religious magic.

The Unknown element exists in the real world as much as it does in the Alternate Reality Universe. It is that element in magic which science and reason cannot account for, no matter how hard they try. This element is the true magic and perhaps the most interesting form. In the Alternate Reality Universe, it is attributed to tapping into one's psychic energies. Unlike psychic powers, though, culture and rituals play a major role in magic. That is the largest difference between the two.

Pottergeist



Pottergeists, German for "noisy and troublesome ghost", are in fact not ghosts but the result of spontaneous, unconscious psycho-kinetic energy. Generally, the cause of these outbursts are adolescents who are suffering from a great deal of stress. However, anywhere there is a great deal of stress, pottergeists will arise. Essentially a pottergeist is a way of letting out the stress unconsciously. Those who cause pottergeists also tend to have great psychokinetic potential.

Pottergeist appearances are becoming increasingly common, as society is more and more stressful. Office buildings have items dropping off, shelves unexplainably, mechanical and electrical devices failing, etc. The pottergeist generally disappears by reducing stress in a location but in severe cases, the person causing it must be removed (determining who is the cause is not always easy, though). Note that exorcisms which various religious orders may practice tend to cause more stress, thus increasing pottergeist activity, therefore exorcisms are the worst option to cure a pottergeist problem.



THE UNIFIED THEORY OF POWERS

In modern human experience, there are three major types of "powers": magic, religious miracles and psychic talents. Magic is a mysterious art which works through incantations, charms and rituals. Religious magic works through extreme faith in the beliefs and/or deity involved. Psychic power is a more recent revelation bringing these two practices together under a unified theory, which was presented in the Night's Edge psychic power system.



According to this unified theory of Powers, psychic powers are the explanation for all powers that humans wield, magic, faith, everything. Psychic powers stem from the human consciousness, the psyche that is present in all living beings. This psyche is able to affect the environment just as the environment can affect it.

However, it is not easy to access the special powers of the mind and, like all talents, they are not found in everyone. Attempts have been made since the earliest times to harness these energies and to allow anyone to use them. Religious ceremonies and faith powers were the first form, using the intense devotion in a belief system as shown through both the subject's strong faith and actions (rituals, praying, etc). However, since this was an indirect means of tapping one's inner energies, the powers, without intense piety, could not be practiced. This explains why only saints and other highly devout members of religious orders have been able to use such powers. However, miracles occurred in people's lives that were due to their intense faith at a particular time and are also isolated examples of this faith magic.

The second attempt at making the potential of psychic powers available to all was through magic, the esoteric arts, that more "rational" faith which developed formulas and procedures reproducible by anyone. It was an attempt at "scientific" psychic power use. However, because the origin of the power is dependent of the individual, regardless of the means to activate it, magic failed for most people. It was an even more indirect route to activate their powers, thus that much harder. It must be noted, however, that some magicians were quite successful because they had that innate talent.

The most recent theory of powers is the basis of the current unified theory of powers. Psychic powers, deriving from the individual's psyche, can affect mind and matter. No rituals are required and formulas are not necessary. The power activates simply by thinking.

It's not that easy of course. The original talent or potential must be there, which is not common, and the wielder must realize they are there. In recent years, parapsychological studies have found that personality plays a large role in the development of psychic potential. Negative or cynical dispositions tend to reduce if not eliminate the chance of developing any psychic potential.

Most often, the powers are developed after some trauma. For most, this occurs during adolescence. The Poltergeist Effect is the best example of this. Teenagers who have psychokinetic potential, in particularly stressful situations, will have poltergeists (noisy ghosts) manifest themselves around them. This has explained many poltergeist cases. It can even be found in some corporate office buildings where tension runs high.

Psychic powers are by far the most effective of the three concepts of powers, though they are restricted to those with that innate talent. This is why magic and faith remain strong in our societies. Almost anyone can use them.

This magic system encompasses both the religious and straight magical beliefs. With the Night's Edge psychic power system, It completes the Unified Theory of Powers.





NEW TELEPATHY POWERS

Here are two new Telepathy powers which can be added to the psychic power list in **Night's Edge**.

Skeptics Always Miss Out

Negation is a power that represents the real-life skeptics who so fervently disbelieve that they exhibit psychic powers dampening any other psychic activity. For example, with random guessing a person can guess correctly approximately 50% of secretly drawn cards (using a special four-symbol deck). Very psychic individuals get around 60 to 80% right, whereas extreme skeptics get 20-40% or even lower. The latter indicates that on some level, the skeptics know what the cards are, but since they refuse to believe in such things, they subconsciously make the wrong choice. Through their extremely poor guessing ability they prove that they are indeed making use of some sort of intuitive psychic ability.

MENTAL SHIELD

The character can protect his mind from all Telepathic powers. The character decides what the DL will be and then rolls against that. The amount below the DL is the penalty to any other Telepathic or ESP power used against the character. Thus only very difficult shields have a chance of being very powerful. However, note that the character must be aware of the incoming attack, or hold it up for a period of time.

NEGATION

The character is able to unconsciously negate any power directed at his mind. All Telepathy and ESP powers can be negated. The character does not make a conscious decision to negate them, so even beneficial Telepathy or ESP powers will be negated. The difficulty of negating the effects of a Power is equal to the Effect's Difficulty Level minus 5. If unsuccessful, the power affects the character as normal. Psychokinetic powers will affect the character as normal.

The character cannot have any other psychic power or magic-related skill. He will also be highly skeptical in nature.

POWER DURATIONS

A quick-reference table for the durations of the powers:

POWER DURATION

POWER	DURATION	POWER	DURATION
Telepathy Powers		Psychokinetic Powers	
Animals	10+1d10 turns	Cryokinesis	Level x 1 min
Charm	10+1d10 hrs	Electrokinesis	Level x 1 min
Cure	Perm.	Healing	1 use/Lvl x min
Hypnological	1 use x 6d10 min	Kinesis	1 use/Lvl x min
Illusion	Level x 1 min	Matter Alteration	Level x 1 min
Mania	Level x 10 min	Psychokinesis	Level x 1 min
Mental	1 use	Pyrokinesis	Level x 1 min
Mental Assault	1 use	Radikinesis	Level x 1 min
Mental Shield	Level/min	Teleportation	1 use
Mnemonic	Perm.		
Negation	Perm.	Self Control Powers	
Psychic Assault	1 use	Astral Body	Level x 1 hr
Sensory	1 use/Lvl x min	Body Control	Level x 1 hr
Telepathy	Level x 5 min	Psychic Focus	Level x 5 min
		Regeneration	1 use
ESP Powers		Transform	1 use
Astral	1 use/Lvl x min		
Precognition	1 use		
Psychometry	1 use		





THE ARTS OF MAGIC

Unlike the straight psychic powers from Night's Edge, there is magic in the world. However, magic is a way to channel psychic energies and invoke that power within each of us. Magicians of all sorts continue to exist in this universe. While many of them are not nearly as powerful as true psychics, they are nevertheless a force to be reckoned with.

Here follows the various forms of magic (note that these magical styles are based on real world versions; however, they have been slightly modified for simplicity and continuity). Not all have to exist in your world and many could simply be the result of folk tales, but running into a cult practicing real Esoteric Magic could quickly change a character's life forever in the Alternate Reality.



DEFINITIONS OF TERMS

Here are definitions of the game terms used within. Also, note that when using the Dedication level (DED) of characters, that Dedication must be to the culture or religion related to the form of magic.

- **PARTICIPANT:**
Any character involved in a ceremony.

- **BELIEVER:**
A member of the organization with a DED of 5 or higher.

- **FANATIC:**
A member of the organization with a DED of 8 or higher. Counts as 5 Believers.

- **LEADER:**
A member of the organization with a DED of 10. Counts as 25 Believers or 5 Fanatics.

- **CEREMONY:**
A prescribed ritual which requires a certain amount of time to complete. Any interruption in the middle of it cancels its bonus.

- **POWER DATE:**
A prescribed date considered holy by that organization. Only applicable if the date's significance is related to the power invoked. For example, a day consecrated to a healing deity would count toward healing powers, but not toward others.

- **POWER LOCATION:**
An area or building specially consecrated by that organization. For example, a church. The bonus is gained only if within that area or structure.

- **POWER ITEM:**
A special item especially created for use with a specific power. May be reused, but must cost at least 100eb. Double the bonus if worth more than 500eb. More than one power item can be used in a ritual.

- **SACRIFICE (MATERIAL):**
An item destroyed in a ritualistic manner in the name of the power being invoked. The equivalent value is given per bonus. For example, in Faith Magic, a MedScanner worth 500eb that was sacrificed in a ritual of Healing, would give a +1 bonus.

- **SACRIFICE (SMALL ANIMAL):**
An animal destroyed in a ritualistic manner in the name of the power being invoked. Small animals include dogs, chickens, etc. The bonus is given per animal sacrificed. Small animal sacrifices give a 1 in 10 chance of casual police investigation.

- **SACRIFICE (LARGE ANIMAL):**
An animal destroyed in a ritualistic manner in the name of the power being invoked. Large animals include goats, cows, etc. The bonus is given per animal sacrificed. Note that if any remnants are found, police investigation is likely to follow. Large animal sacrifices give a 4 in 10 chance of police investigation.

- **SACRIFICE (HUMAN):**
A human destroyed in a ritualistic manner in the name of the power being invoked. The bonus is given per human sacrificed. Police investigation will automatically occur, with a 3 in 10 chance per week of the perpetrators being caught. Also, members with a DED rating of 7 or lower reduce their DED by 1d6 (if it drops below 1, they turn in the rest of the group), and members with a DED rating of 8 or higher increase their DED by 1. This is per sacrifice.

- **CONTEMPLATION:**
Time spent in prayer, meditation or studies. The bonuses are for the time spent that day in contemplation.

There are seven basic forms of "magic" in the Alternate Reality universe: Alkemical Craft, Divination Arts, Esoteric Magic, Faith Magic, Illusioncraft, Infomancy and Shamanic Rites. They range from the mundane to the arcane, but primarily deal with real world magic.





Herbalism

A form of magic related to Alchemy is Herbalism. This is the original form which has been obscured in modern times due to the nature of city life: it's easier to get chemicals than herbs. Nevertheless, many shamanic, Wicca and voodoo practitioners still use herbalism, relying on their own suppliers for the now-rare herbs and roots.

When using herbalism, use the Herbalism skill and design the ointment/salve/potion/etc with the same system as that for drug except for two changes. Because the ingredients are much rarer, the cost to design the drug, and its cost when bought, is double the norm. The benefit is that only half the normal points for side effects and other deleterious effects are required in its design. Natural drugs are so much better for you.

ALKEMICAL CRAFT

The first form of magic is North America's most common form, that of mind-alteration by use of drugs. Through drugs, one's mind enters altered states and is used by countless cultures to attain a "heightened spiritual consciousness". This claim does have some validity since drugs do alter the brain's chemistry, but there is no "magic" to it, merely chemistry.

Many of the contemporary drug designers, though, have taken the name "Alkemist", in honor of the original chemists, with modern (mis)spelling. They fill their labs with all kinds of beakers and glassware, simulating the ancient laboratories. They pride themselves on those creations which induce the most unique altered state.

The modern Alkemist does not seek to turn lead into gold. That challenge was won ages ago. Today, turning drugs into money drives most of them.

Use the drug design system from the *Cyberpunk 2020* rulebook to define Alkemist creations. Or, see *Altered States* in the *Dark Metropolis* sourcebook for advanced drug design rules.

DIVINATION ARTS

The Divination arts involve various tools in conjunction with personal psychic talent. There are two distinct forms of divination: Destiny Divination and Guidance Divination. Destiny Divination tells of future events and outcomes while Guidance Divination gives advice. They each have their own use and short-coming.

The two most common tools for divination are the Tarot and the Runes, but there are many more. Each have their own method and can reveal different sorts of information. Skill must be taken in a specific type's use.

DESTINY DIVINATION

When a character attempts to divine something about the future, find the difficulty of the desired information and the time period into the future on the Divination Difficulty table, then use the character's (EMP/PSY + Expert: Specific Divination Method + Modifiers + 1d10). Use whichever is higher, Empathy or Psyche. Any level in Precognition can be added to the check.

All predictions are somewhat vague and only represent the likeliest future, therefore GMs should have a good amount of leeway with such predictions.

DIVINATION DIFFICULTY LEVEL

INFORMATION	1 DAY	1 WEEK	1 MONTH	1 YEAR	1 CENTURY
Yes or No	10	15	20	25	30
General Fate	15	20	25	30	35
General Event	20	25	30	35	40
Specific Fate	20	25	30	35	40
Specific Event	25	30	35	40	45

GUIDANCE PRECOGNITION

TIME	DIFFICULTY
1 Day	20
1 Week	25
1 Month	30
1 Year	35





The GM must make the skill check and keep its success or failure secret. If successful, the prediction will come true; otherwise, it will not.

Using a real tarot deck, runes, etc. could enhance the game, especially if the GM “stacks the deck” according to planned events in the adventure. Props always add to the game.

• **TAROT**

Almost everyone has a deck as they are very common in the 21st century. They make popular birthday gifts. There are hundreds of styles, so every character might have his own personalized deck. Technomancers tend to use electronic decks.

The standard tarot reading will deal with a particular situation that the subject wishes to learn about. It will give: a warning of what to watch for; a near future event; and what the final resolution of that event will be. It is somewhat vague, such as “dealing with domestic matters”, and can answer “yes/no” questions.

Characters using the Tarot will learn three pieces of information for each reading: a possible danger (specific event); the near future outcome (general event) and the final resolution of the event (general fate). The time periods are generally 1 month, 1 week and 1 month respectively, though they can vary as specified by the reader.

• **RUNES**

The most common form of runic divination is the ancient Nordic rune stones, but there are also Egyptian hieroglyphics as well as other cultures' symbols on stones. In any case, each stone has its own meaning and is similar in use to the tarot deck. Technomancers have developed their own series of symbols, pieces of programming code, etched into data chips and used in the same manner as rune stones.

A casting will provide almost any desired information. The subject need only specify what information is required and the time period desired. If the time period is not specified, assume 1 year. Again the results can be vague, such as “Wisdom” or “New difficulties arise”.

GUIDANCE DIVINATION

Guidance divination crafts deal less with telling the future, but rather with asking for help on what to do about the future. In one sense they are more helpful, but because they require a great deal of interpretation involving events which haven't happened yet, their use can be futile at times.

When a character uses Guidance Divination, the difficulty is based on the time period involved (which the player must specify), modified by the subject it regards. The character's (INT + Expert: Specific Method + 1d10) is used. Precognition may also be added in. This check should be made in secret by the GM.

If successful, a relevant result emerges. Its significance need not be immediately apparent, though it should eventually become so. Failure causes an irrelevant result. The character may find some significance to it, but there is actually none. The actual resulting information is up the GM.

• **DATAMANCY**

A new form of divination favored by technomancers. It involves a special program, generally called “Eeni Meeni”, which hooks up to the Dataterms and then randomly selects a piece of information. This can be a news story, a definition, a formula, whatever. Its meaning must then be interpreted by the user.

• **BIBLIOMANCY**

A very old form of guidance divination, only younger than the I Ching, the seeker simply opens the Bible (or substitute any other spiritual text) to a random page and the seeking finger chooses a particular sentence or verse. Supposedly, the deity involved will guide his choice to a relevant piece of information. Characters can add half their DED to any faith involving the Bible or the particular text involved to this check.

Variants of this form of divination involve the works of Shakespeare, the Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy trilogy or other such classic writings. Some Datamancy aficionados limit their programs to only cover such works in electronic form.

• **I CHING**

The I Ching is a very old Chinese book of wisdom which goes back over 4000 years. It has been used to guide people all through the centuries. There are 64 hexagrams, or pieces of wisdom, which help to spiritually develop a person if used over time. Because of its extreme age and conciseness, a +5 bonus is granted when the I Ching is used in guidance divination. The I Ching has many electronic forms and is especially favored by the Mandelbrot Society.





ESOTERIC MAGIC

Esoteric magic deals with what is considered by many to be the true magic. Highly dependent upon ritual, there are hundreds of individual spells. Whether the spells work is not always easy to determine, though. Esoteric magic includes all witchcraft and esoteric rites.

Esoteric magic involves long ceremonies or rituals invoking deities or spirits of some kind to do something. Each ceremony relates to a particular "spell" which is recorded in a text of some sort. Typically, in Vodoun and Witchcraft, the ceremony also involves drugs or herbs. In Esoteric magic, the spell cannot be cast spontaneously, requiring preparation and a good deal of time.

Esoteric magic is typically used by cults in 2020, with grim consequences. There are some lone magicians who managed to find a tome of spells. They tend to be very dangerous since this power corrupts even the best of souls.

Each Esoteric spell or ritual requires a separate skill regarding that spell or ritual. If the character has a psychic power related to the magic being used, it can be added to the skill check. The difficulty of the spell or rite is determined by the prescribed effect of the spell. This is generally determined by finding the desired effect under one of the Power descriptions in *Night's Edge* and adding 10 to the difficulty number.

Esoteric magic is draining though, and all participants in the ceremony take 1d6 Fatigue points per 5 levels of difficulty of the spell (round up). This is taken regardless of success or failure of the spell. The duration, range and other effects of the spell are found as if it were a psychic power, using the skill level of the spell in place of the power's level.

MODIFIERS TO ESOTERIC MAGIC

Character's DED is 6 or lower	-2
Character's relevant DED 7-8	0
Character's relevant DED 9-10	+2
Per 25 Believers Present	+1*
Per 5 Fanatics Present	+1*
Per Leader Present	+1*
Ceremony (per half hour)	+1
Performed on Power Date	+1
Performed in Power Location	+1
Using Power Item	+1
Material Sacrifice (per 250eb)	+1
Live Sacrifice (Small animal)	+2
Live Sacrifice (Large Animal)	+4
Live Sacrifice (Human)	+8
Memorized Spell	-5
Spell affects extra people	-2 each

*Not counting the one performing the ceremony





Here are just a few sample spells (note that each relate to a psychic power). When creating new spells, find the Difficulty of the desired effect (or its nearest equivalent) in the various psychic powers and add 10 to it.

SAMPLE ESOTERIC SPELL

• **FLIGHT OF THE MIND (ASTRAL BODY)**

DL: 35

This spell allows the character to travel the Astral Realm using an offshoot of its spirit for 1d6 x 30 minutes. This is one of the most common spells taught in esoteric cults, though the success rate of the students is very low. Lasts (Level x 1 hr)

• **LEVITATE OBJECT (PSYCHOKINESIS)**

DL: 25

This spell allows the character to levitate 25kg or exert 25 pounds of pressure. Add 5 to the difficulty for every 25kg of additional weight. The object can only be moved at 5kph in any direction. Another popular cult activity, this spell often serves to bring the members together and show them the group's sum strength. Lasts (Level x 1 min)

• **SENDING THE THOUGHT (TELEPATHY)**

DL: 25

This spell allows the character to send a message to another person's mind. No range limitations, however, the receiving character must be known to the character. One minute worth of speech may be sent per use. Some cults attempt to use this spell to communicate between cities, but the success rate is still very low. Lasts (Level x 5 min)

• **THE CURSE OF FIERY DOOM (PYROKINESIS)**

DL: 45

This spell allows the character to heat a human body to the point of combustion in 1 turn. The victim takes 6d6 damage and must make a Death Save (with any penalties from the damage done). Also, the character continues to burn for 1d6 turns thereafter, taking 2d6 damage each of those turns. A terrible spell which is said to account for the recent rash of spontaneous combustions. Lasts (Level x 1 min)

• **SPIRIT CHANNELING (TELEPATHY)**

DL: 40

This spell allows the character to speak to the spirit of a dead person, an angel/demon or whatever of the GM's choice. The Being can lie about its identity and may have its own motives for allowing contact to be made. Many cults are obsessed with this spell and continually attempt to contact "the other side". Lasts (Level x 5 min)

• **TRANCE OF DEATH (BODY CONTROL)**

DL: 35

This spell allows the character to enter a deep trance in which he can control his internal workings and thereby feign death for 2 hours at a time. Only a successful Difficult (20) MedTech check or a Very Difficult (25) First Aid check will reveal the character is actually alive. Few of the recent cults teach this spell since they see no use for it. However, it is rumored that all Church of the Undead members learn it. The reason? Unknown.





Ancient Magic

Finding these spells is extremely difficult. Most are found in the possession of cults who do not teach non-members. The rest of the spellbooks typically have only one or two real spells with the rest being junk. Those are often owned by collectors who will not part with their prized possessions easily. Therefore, characters will typically not know more than one or two spells, if any. Cost for spellbooks range from 5000cb for low power, useless spells to 1 million cb for true collections of a half dozen useful spells.

Note that much of Esoteric magic dates so far back that the Power Date might be difficult to determine, as dates have changed over time. For example, the Feast of All Saints was originally celebrated in May. Thus a fair bit of research may be required to determine the proper Power Date (Library Search: Difficult), but Power Items tend to have kept strong throughout time, though they might be difficult to find (Library Search: Average).

FAITH MAGIC

If you believe anything strongly enough, it will happen. This is called the self-fulfilling prophecy. Strange that science should finally capture an element so integral to religion, but this is the Scientific Age. And now, science is recognizing the power of belief and that those with extreme faith can and do perform "miracles".

At its weakest levels, Faith Magic has no real effect except in the minds of the believers who are so willing to believe, that they can see anything. This was tested with the sighting of a ghost in an English town, where the researchers had planted the story of the ghost. The false tale was believed and soon sightings were reported all over. And it wasn't fools or drunkards who saw the ghosts, nor were the sightings hoaxes. The people truly saw a ghost, despite its nonexistence.

At its strongest levels, Faith Magic actually manifests itself to even the non-believer. These are generally termed miracles and though scientists go to great lengths to prove them coincidences, they truly exist. However, in this modern age, few have the strength of faith to perform such miracles. The contemporary cults lack any coherent ideology to invoke the Faith, so they are condemned to the weaker Faith Magic.

Faith Magic is by nature invocational. The character invokes a deity, loa, demon, angel, saint, spirit or whatever (hereafter referred to as the Being) to do something for them. There are three broad categories of Faith Invocations: Blessings, Curses and Wishes.

A Faith magician must have a Dedication related to the Being to be invoked. The minimum Dedication is 7 for Blessings, 8 for Curses and 10 for Wishes. There is often a ceremony required in making such a request. These must be related to the prescribed types of ceremonies and sacrifices normally made in honor of that Being. Otherwise, the relevant bonus could become a penalty as the Being is insulted. For example, Spirit of Life would be very insulted by a human sacrifice in its honor, perhaps doubling the penalty. The GM should use his own judgment.

Also, due to the nature of such magic, only one Blessing or Curse may be attempted on a weekly basis. A Wish may only be attempted once per year!

BLESSINGS

These are calls upon the Being to help the character or the followers of the faith. The appropriate Being, if there is more than one in the pantheon, should be called upon for the blessing, else a -5 penalty is applied (i.e. calling upon a God of Luck for the Strength blessing would warrant the penalty).

When the character attempts to gain a blessing from the Being, a check is made using his (PSY or EMP + Expert: Specific Blessing + modifiers + 1d10). Use whichever is higher, Empathy or Psyche. To Bless another person, the character must physically touch him while the Blessing is done.





MODIFIERS TO BLESSINGS

Character's DED is 6 or lower	-5
Character's relevant DED 7-8	-2
Character's relevant DED 9-10	+2
Contemplation (per hour daily)	+1
Affects character alone	-2
Bestowed upon other person	0
Instant ceremony (1 tum)	-5
Brief ceremony (5 minutes)	-2
Ceremony (per half hour)	+1
Performed on Power date	+1
Performed in Power location	+2
Using Power Item	+2
Material sacrifice (per 250eb)	+1
Live sacrifice (small animal)	+3
Live sacrifice (large animal)	+4
Live sacrifice (human)	+6
Expert skill in Theology	+1 per 2 levels

BLESSINGS

BLESSING	EFFECTS	DURATION	DIFFICULTY
Clarity	+1-4 to INT stat	24 hours	20 +5 per +1
Courage	+1-4 to COOL stat	24 hours	20 +5 per +1
Good Fortune	Roll on <i>Lifepath: You Get Lucky</i>	*	25
Friendship	Roll on <i>Lifepath: Make A Friend</i>	*	25
Luck	+1-6 to LUCK stat	24 hours	20 +5 per +1
Romance	Gain a lover	*	20
Speed	+1-4 to REF stat	24 hours	20 +5 per +1
Strength	+1-4 to BOD stat	24 hours	20 +5 per +1
Technical	+1-4 to TECH stat	24 hours	20 +5 per +1
Victory	+1-4 on all attacks in combat	1 combat	20 +5 per +1

* These blessings last until circumstances cause them to end. They manifest 2d6 days after the Blessing is invoked.

MODIFIERS TO CURSES

Character's DED is 6 or lower	-5
Character's relevant DED 7-8	-2
Character's relevant DED 9-10	+2
Contemplation (per hour daily)	+1
Instant ceremony (1 tum)	-5
Brief ceremony (5 minutes)	-2
Ceremony (per half hour)	+1
Performed on Power date	+1
Performed in Power location	+2
Using Power Item	+2
Material sacrifice (per 250eb)	+1
Live sacrifice (small animal)	+3
Live sacrifice (large animal)	+4
Live sacrifice (human)	+6
Expert skill in Theology	+1 per 2 levels

CURSES

These call upon the Being to hinder some foe of the character or faith. The appropriate Being, if there is more than one in the pantheon, should be called upon for the curse, else a -5 penalty is applied (i.e. calling upon a God of Luck for the Weakness curse would warrant the penalty).

When the character attempts to invoke a curse from the Being, a check is made using his (PSY or EMP + Expert: Specific Curse + modifiers + 1d10). Use whichever is higher, Empathy or Psyche. Curses only affect one victim. A piece of the victim's clothes or body (fingernail clippings, hair, etc.) or the victim's physical presence is required.

WISHES

Wishes are more general demands upon Beings. They can be anything, from a particular item to becoming smarter. The GM should assess each wish individually and assign a difficulty according to how impossible and powerful the wish is.

Again, the appropriate Being, if there is more than one in the pantheon, should be called upon for the wish, else a -5 penalty is applied (i.e. calling upon a God of Fertility for a wish for money would warrant the penalty).

When the character attempts to invoke a wish from the Being, a check is made using the his (PSY or EMP + DED (must be to faith involved) + modifiers + 1d10). Use whichever is higher, Empathy or Psyche. Wishes that are successful manifest themselves 1d6 days later at the GM's discretion.





ILLUSIONCRAFT

The art of illusions is an old one, brought to its dramatic height with the Victorian mirror clockworks. Modern illusions can be extremely complicated and cause entire buildings to vanish. However, this form of magic deals entirely in deceiving the audience. There are two major types of Illusioncraft, Sleight of Hand and Magic.

SLEIGHT OF HAND

The age-old "hand is faster than the eye" tricks, primarily involved with moving the viewer's attention away from the real movements. Characters using sleight of hand can cause small object to disappear or reappear seemingly from nowhere. Usually it is a contest of skills between the trickster's Sleight of Hand skill and the viewer's Awareness. Assign penalties for large items and bonuses for distractions.



CURSES

CURSE	EFFECTS	DURATION	DIFFICULTY
Bad Luck	-1-6 to LUCK stat	24 hours	20 +5 per -1
Confusion	-1-4 to INT stat	24 hours	20 +5 per -1
Cowardice	-1-4 to COOL stat	24 hours	20 +5 per -1
Death	Must make Death Save -penalty	*	25 +5 per -1 penalty
Defeat	-1-4 on all attacks in combat	1 combat	20 +5 per -1
Disquiet	+d10 Stress Points	1 week	20 +5 per d10
Enemies	Roll on <i>Lifepath: Make An Enemy</i>	*	25
Ill Fortune	Roll on <i>Lifepath: Disaster Strikes!</i>	*	25
Illness	Nausea and -4 REF	1+ week	25 per week
Weakness	-1-4 to BOD stat	24 hours	20 +5 per -1

* These curses last until circumstances cause them to end. They manifest 2d6 days after the Curse is Invoked.

MODIFIERS TO WISHES

Per 100 believers present	+1
Contemplation (per hour daily)	+1
Per 20 fanatics present	+1
Per 4 leaders present	+1*
Ceremony (per hour)	+1
Performed on Power date	+1
Performed in Power location	+1
Using Power Item	+1
Material sacrifice (per 250eb)	+1
Live sacrifice (small animal)	+2
Live sacrifice (large animal)	+4
Live sacrifice (human)	+6
Expert skill in Theology	+1 per 2 levels

*Not counting the one performing the ceremony

SAMPLE WISH DIFFICULTIES

WISH	DIFFICULTY
Money	40+5 per 1000eb
Raised Stat	45+5 per +1 stat
Minor Event to occur	45
Major Event to occur	50
Person to die	50
Walking on water	55





Forms Of Faith

In the case of Faith Magic, those present during the ritual do not actually take part in it, but their mere presence adds to the effect as long as they believe. These ceremonies typically take place in the larger churches (Power Location), and specific rituals typically take place on special holidays. More often than not, faith healing takes place all through the year, as it is their most visible and well-liked routines.

Living sacrifices are typically not used, though material sacrifices by the person being cured are in many cases required. However, do not confuse this with the cost of the ritual. Many Faith Healers charge a few thousand for their work, which goes into their own pocket and does not count toward a material sacrifice.

Faith magic is not common in the world, and only the lesser forms are likely to be found at all. However, powerful religious leaders may have access to true "miracles".

Blessings are used by most traditional religions in their ceremonies, with Wishes from their figureheads. Voodoo deals with all three forms of faith magic heavily. Most cults typically do not deal with Faith magic. Ancient Witchcraft dealt to some degree with the curses, as do many of the ancient faiths; however, their presence in 2020 is minimal at best.

MAGIC DIFFICULTIES

DESCRIPTION	EXAMPLES	DIFFICULTY
Easy trick	Pulling rabbit out of a hat	10
Average trick	Sawing person in half	15
Difficult trick	Putting that person back together again	20
Very Difficult trick	Houdini's easiest tricks	25
Nearly Impossible trick	Houdini's best tricks, buildings disappearing	30
Impossible trick	Houdini's last trick (he failed you know)	35

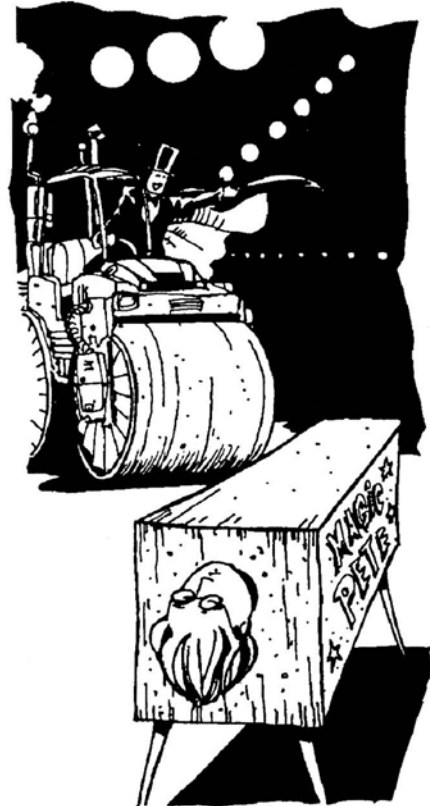
MAGIC MODIFIERS

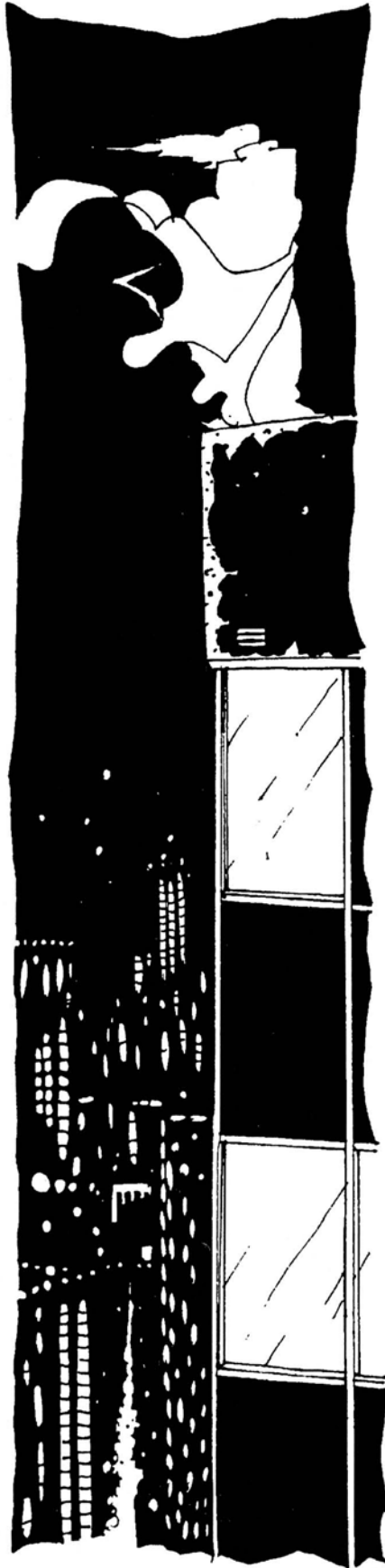
Per 2 levels of Perform	+1
Per level of Psychokinesis	+1
No prior preparation	-5

MAGIC

The art of illusions and stage magic allow the character to perform various tricks such as sawing a person in half and making people or even buildings disappear. Take any magic show as guidelines for what sort of tricks can be done, remembering that technology of 2020 allows for even more impressive tricks by less skilled individuals.

In this case, because there is normally a larger audience than for Sleight of Hand, a general check is made by the magician using (INT + Magic skill + modifiers + 1d10). If successful, everyone is fooled by the trick; if failed multiply the amount failed by 10 to find the percentage of the audience who saw through the trick (maximum 100%). In special cases, the characters may attempt Awareness checks to see through the trick, though with a -5 penalty if the magician succeeds his check.





INFOMANCY

Infomancy is the new Technomancer term for all the methods of gathering information on people, both esoteric and scientific. There is controversy over the validity of many of these methods, but they are all still practiced regularly.

There are six major forms of Infomancy: Astrology, Aura Reading, Graphology, Human Perception, Palmistry and Psychology.

When the character attempts to gain information about an individual, he must make a check using (INT+PSY or EMP/2 + Expert: Specific Infomancy Method + Modifiers + 1d10) against the difficulty of the type of information desired. Use whichever is higher, Empathy or Psyche. If successful, then the relevant information will be gained accurately. If failed, false information or none at all is gained, at the GM's discretion.

ASTROLOGY

An age-old art, however much maligned in modern times. It bases itself around the belief that the alignments of the planets and sun affect a person's personality. Knowledge of the subject's time of birth and place of birth is required for a normal check. It takes 1d6 hours to generate a chart, but only 1d6 minutes if a program is used to assist.

With only the date of birth, or sun sign, a -5 penalty is assigned to the difficulty. The character may also attempt using Astrology skill to determine the sun sign of an individual. The base difficulty is 15, though the check is secretly made by the GM.

If this method of Infomancy is to be used, the GM should have a basic knowledge of astrology, if only to use the proper names of the signs. Note that other cultures' astrological methods can be used in place of the Western culture's.

AURA READING

According to advocates of this form of Infomancy, every person has an "aura": a glowing color surrounding the body. The color of the aura gives information on the person's mental state. The character must be able to see the person's body and concentrate for 1 minute. The information gained is generally quite vague, however, so a -4 penalty on all Aura Reading checks is imposed.

INFOMANCY DIFFICULTY

TYPE OF INFORMATION	DIFFICULTY
External personality (ExMode)	15
Psychological stability	20
Quirks	25
Internal personality (InMode)	30
Inner motivations	30
Subconscious emotions	35





GRAPHOLOGY

The art of handwriting analysis. While it is a highly successful art, the modern age, with word processing, has almost destroyed it. However, if a sample of writing is obtained, the character can make Infomancy checks. Even the subject's gender can be determined (DL 15).

If only the signature is present, a -4 penalty is assigned. Graphology can also be used to detect forgeries, but a sample of the true handwriting must be used to compare.

There is a variant of Graphology for the electronic medium. With a -5 penalty to the checks, writing styles can be recognized. The character can gain some information from those styles and recognize the same author in two separate works. A further -5 penalty is assigned for works of less than 20 pages due to the need for massive amounts of writing.

Variations of graphology study different kinds of art and, based on the work, assess the artist. This could be useful to characters in the art world. However, there is a -2 penalty to most checks due to the lack of formalized structure in the fields of art.

HUMAN PERCEPTION

The first and most common method of Infomancy presented in Cyberpunk. By watching body language, one can tell if people are lying and determine some aspects of their personality. The character must view the subject for at least 1 hour. If the subject is a long time acquaintance, assign a +5 to checks.

PALMISTRY

The art of reading information about a person from the lines on the palm of their hand. Reading the bumps on the head and such skills work on similar principles. Due to the extreme imprecision of this art, a -5 penalty is given for all Palmistry Infomancy checks. It is merely mentioned because it does pop up a lot at parties in the Cyberpunk world. It should also be noted that palmistry tells the future of the subject and can be used for Divination with a -5 penalty.

PSYCHOLOGY

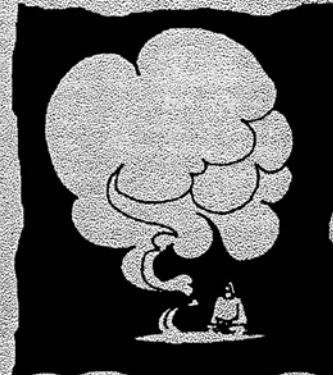
The study of human behavior. Unlike Human Perception, it involves a scientific study of people and how they act. Also, it allows assessments of people without having ever seen them. Information on their activities is enough to allow a character with Psychology to deduce information about the subject.

If the character actually spends time with the subject (1 hour or more), a +2 bonus is given. If the character counsels or regularly gives therapy to the subject, a +5 bonus is given to checks, due to the familiarity with the subject.

Nature's Spirit

Shamanic magic depends highly in belief in the power of nature, therefore, one who is not dedicated to their spiritual beliefs will fail miserably. Unlike most faith-dependent magic, it does not matter how many believers are present, only the character's own belief is important.

Ceremonies tend to be quite long, with meditation being important as well. The shaman's land counts as a Power Location, but note that while not within that Power Location there is a -2 penalty. Power Items are typically the rattles and medicine bags that the Shaman carries. Sacrifices are usually quite small, and only in a very small number of Shamanic rituals are animal sacrifices ever used.





Herbalism

Shamanic magic and witchcraft both rely heavily upon chemical concoctions, the archetypal "witches' brew". This is a special skill called "Herbalism" with which the character can create healing salves and other potions. Use Herbalism in place of Pharmacology in the Drug Design rules. However, limited access to the ingredients necessary for Herbalism increases the cost of creating drugs by 5 times. To balance this, double the value of Secondary effects. Thus, these natural drugs will tend to be less harmful than artificial drugs.



SHAMANIC RITES

Shamanic magic dates back to the earliest human civilizations and was one of the earliest forms of institutionalized psychic power use. Proper rituals were learned to invoke the power in almost anyone, provided you carried them out properly.

There is very little left of Shamanic Magic in 2020, except what is written; it is thus very difficult to learn. Also, most aboriginal peoples have since lost their original cultural roots and therefore have little knowledge themselves of the Shamanic Magic. An Anthropology score of at least +6 is required to even have Shamanic Magic in Cyberpunk 2020. Note that dedication to that culture's belief system is very important to Shamanic magic.

Witchcraft rituals also fall under the category of shamanic magic. However, it is a little more common. Specify if the ritual is shamanic or witchcraft, however.

When casting a Shamanic spell, the character's (PSY or EMP + Expert: Ritual Name + Modifiers + 1d10) versus the ritual's difficulty. Use whichever is higher, Empathy or Psyche. The related psychic power's level may be added if the character has any.

Characters lose 1d6 Fatigue Points per 5 levels of Difficulty of the spell, regardless of success or failure. Note that separate skill must be taken in each individual ritual. Shamans memorize their rituals, so they must be taught; there are no books to learn from.

Shamanic magic can reproduce the effects of the following psychic powers: Animal, Hypnological, Sensory, Psychometry, Healing, Astral, Body Control and Transform. However, add 5 to the difficulty listed in Night's Edge. Some rituals involve effects of other powers; add 15 to the DL of these other powers since they do not fall into the typical domain of the shaman. Remember that for each effect, there must be a separate ritual known to the character.

MODIFIERS TO SHAMANIC RITES

Character's DED is 2 or lower	-5
Character's DED 3 to 7	-2
Character's DED is 8 to 9	0
Character's DED is 10	+2
Ceremony (per half hour)	+1
Contemplation (per hour)	+1
Performed in Power location	+2
Using Power Item	+2
Material sacrifice (per 250eb)	+1
Live sacrifice (small animal)	+3
Live sacrifice (large animal)	+4
Live sacrifice (human)	+6





PRACTITIONERS

The practitioners of the Ars Nova are as varied and diverse as their arts. There are ten basic types of practitioners, ranging from the occasional dabbler to the Voodoo Houn'gan. Characters in a campaign could be any one of these and be considered a practitioner. However, the more powerful types of practitioners should be reserved for NPCs.

The ten types of practitioners are: Alkemists, Dabblers, Ecclesiastics, Magicians, Occultists, Pseudopsychics, Shaman, Technomancers, Voodoo Houn'gan & Mam'bo/Bokor and Witch/Warlocks. They are examined in ascending order of rarity (the last being the rarest).

ALKEMISTS

Alkemists, like many of the various types of practitioners, only practice one type of "magic", that of Alkemy. They are essentially drug designers, but they go for that very special look of the ancient alchemists and try to take on the intrigue too by coming up with particularly bizarre designs for design sake.

If you want a truly bizarre drug designed, an Alkemist is your best bet, assuming you can stand all the noxious odors and eccentric labs they work in. They also charge quite a bit, not being the most charitable of practitioners.

Alkemists will have Pharmaceuticals or Pharmacology skill, Chemistry and possibly some medical expertise. While some are doctors, most are only pseudo-doctors, having received their medical degree through a correspondence school.

DABLERS

Dabblers are another common type of practitioner, as they often know little magic, but like to play around occasionally. This is the most probable kind of practitioner player characters will be. Dabblers come from all walks of life, from the homeless nomad that uses runes to determine the destiny of the next trek to the Corporate that uses astrology to guide her decisions.

Most Dabblers deal with the Divination Arts and Infomancy; occasionally they try out the Illusioncrafts and more rarely, the Esoteric magic. They usually have a skill level between +2 and +4 in the relevant aspect which they practice on occasion.

These are by far the weakest practitioners and also very common. There are Dabblers all around; most characters will know a few, perhaps themselves!

MAGICIANS

Magicians are primarily concerned with Illusioncraft and perform all kinds of tricks. While they practice no real "magic", they can certainly perform incredible and stupefying feats. They are found all over, with varying abilities. The best magicians have a reputation and sometimes, their own show. They are very well-known to the public and the most socially acceptable type of practitioner.

Magicians, oddly enough, are often the most skeptical of real "magic" and rarely possess any Ars Nova skills other than Magic and Sleight of Hand.

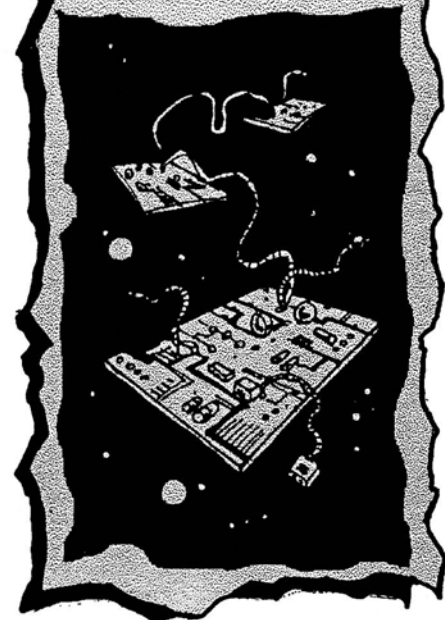




Modern Magic

Unlike other forms of magic, dedication is not at all important in Technocraft, reflecting its modern origin. Instead, focus on the ceremony is very important as well as power items in the form of technological objects related to the power to be invoked. The material sacrifices must be of a technological nature, and are generally very expensive and intricate electronics.

The nature of Technocraft is such that powers affecting or dealing with technology are the easiest and those dealing with people or nature are the most difficult to invoke. Psychokinetic powers are generally preferred by Technomancers.



They also often seek to prove other forms of magic as false, believing their craft to be the only real one.

A new role for magicians in 2020 has been enlistment in extraction teams. Their talent for making people disappear right before your eyes is extremely useful in such situations.

PSEUDOPSYCHICS

A Pseudopsychic is a practitioner that claims to be a psychic but actually uses the tools of the Divination Arts, Illusioncraft or Infomancy to achieve the same results. There are such Pseudopsychics at all Psychic fairs and other social events. They are also often the ones advertising their abilities and charging for their services.

Pseudopsychics often only practice one art or craft with a near expert ability, using a combination of skill and intuition to guide their "abilities". They can often easily fool the public but not real psychics.

Pseudopsychics are flourishing in the superstitious age of Cyberpunk. When uncertainty runs wild, they pounce upon the confused and offer answers. While they are often charlatans, some Pseudopsychics are actually quite good at what they do and can actually help in some cases.

ECCLESIASTICS

Ecclesiastics are found in every religion and almost every cult, and all practice one form of Faith Magic or another. While they normally only practice Faith Magic, some may also use Guidance Divination and the occasional Ecclesiastic uses Esoteric Magic. However, while they are common, their practice of magic is not. Rarely will they use Blessings other than in services, and most religions do not condone the use of Curses. Wishes are also only very rarely invoked, and even rarer are the successes of such wishes.

Generally Ecclesiastics only know the Good Fortune blessing or one related to their deity/demon/being. For example an Ecclesiastic of the Church of SIN might only know the Romance blessing while one of the Church of the Undead might only know the Curse of Death.

Characters are very unlikely to be Ecclesiastics for the simple fact that they would also have to be part of the religion or cult's organization (simple members are rarely if ever taught Faith Magic). However, if the player wishes to take on this responsibility, he should be rewarded with some knowledge in Faith Magic. Normally though, this type of practitioner is best used as NPC.

TECHNOMANCERS

Technomancers are the newest type of practitioner, and also not an all that uncommon one. What is rare is a Technomancer that is worth mention. Technomancers practice "contemporary magic". It encompasses almost all forms of magic. It is also closely linked to Neo-Voodoo. All technomantic arts deal with technology in some form. In the place of natural sacrifices,



artificial ones are made. Spell books are nonexistent, replaced with spell text files. The Technomancer wears data chips as decoration and uses electric cords for belts and headbands.

Technomancers often lead booster gangs or work for corporations. Few of them work alone because they cannot make money that way, except, of course, for the best of them. Merlin Mark II is one of the best Technomancers in the 21st century. He claims to be a descendant of the original Merlin (not likely) and rents out his services to the highest bidder. Such is the life of Technomancers.

Technomancers often heavily use drugs to enhance their ability to “tune in” on the magical frequencies through the use of Alkemy. They also use tarot or rune programs which randomly select cards or stones and generate readings almost instantaneously. Some even program limited AIs to help interpret the results (substitute skill of AI, generally only +4, for character’s). They also use programmed I Ching or other Datamantic programs.

Most Technomancers know at least one spell of Esoteric Magic. However, the spells tend to gravitate around technological concepts or devices. For example, Electrokinetic equivalent spells are most common. Material sacrifices are also artificial or technological in nature.

The technomantic equivalent to Faith Magic is only used by Netrunners who believe in the Murk pantheon. They invoke those beings. Typical blessings used include: Clarity and Technical; typical curses include: Bad Luck and Confusion. Wishes are not typically used by Technomancers.

All forms of Illusioncraft are used by Technomancers to enhance their public appeal. In addition it should be noted that almost all Technomancers have Perform skill. The most common Infomantic skill used by Technomancers is Human Perception, though any might be found in a Technomancer’s repertoire. Many have programs which generate astrological charts in minutes to speed up the process.

Characters may be Technomancers only if they have a good explanation of how they came to learn the arts, and only if the GM permits it. Otherwise, Technomancers will be almost exclusively NPCs.

VOODOO HOUN’GAN & MAM’BO/BOKOR

Practitioners of Voodoo magic, like Technomancers, use many forms of magic. They often combine them to add to the effect of the desired goal. The goals of Houn’gan and Bokor are often radically different though, as the former tend to practice positive, helping magic while the latter are involved with the darker forms.

Alkemy is heavily used in voodoo magic; however, natural elements are preferred and the skill Herbalism applies. Like witchcraft, use the *Altered States* drug design system (from *Dark Metropolis*); however, multiply the cost of the drug by 5 and double the value of the Secondary effects. They are more natural and include very bizarre designs such as the zombie dust described in the Neo-Voodoo chapter (note that zombie dust is a special case and cannot be reproduced by the *Altered States* system).





The Power Of Voodoo

Voodoo magic is very dangerous to use if you are not skilled. That is not to say that it is entirely safe for believers. Power locations are almost always the special voodoo temples but can also include certain natural or spiritual locations such as a waterfall or a cemetery. Power items include the ritual rattle as well as the other items that voodoo practitioners use.



Voodoo practitioners use a special divination method wherein an animal is sacrificed and the future is determined through it. Use the normal tables. The skill involved is Voodoo Divination. Some voodooists also use Bibliomancy.

There is a great deal of Faith Magic involved in voodoo. All blessings and curses are used by voodoo practitioners, with the Loa as the Beings invoked. Wishes are more uncommon, but have been known to be asked of the Loa and, at times, granted.

While many voodoo priests and priestesses possess a certain amount of Performance skill, their use of the Illusioncraft is very limited. Nevertheless, they can put on quite a show.

Human Perception is the most common form of Infomancy used by voodoo practitioners. There are some who practice the other arts, but there is no particular favored method.

Shamanic rites are very common to voodoo magic. However, unlike the typical Shamanic rites, all effects described in *Night's Edge* can be replicated by voodoo rituals, adding +10 to the difficulty. This includes Electrokinesis, common among the neo-voodooists. See the *Nouveau-Voodoo* chapter for more information on Voodoo and Neo-Voodoo.

Player characters should not be permitted to be voodoo practitioners as they would have to be priests and would not be free to adventure. However, Houn'gan, Mam'bo and Bokor NPCs would add a definite flavor to the campaign as a recurring character that the characters can seek aid from or attempt to escape.

OCCULTISTS

Occultists are a rare bunch usually only found in the highest ranks of pseudo-religious organizations or in particularly twisted, off-beat cults. Occultists generally only practice Esoteric magic and know only a few spells. Some practice Faith Magic, though usually only curses. They are almost always in small groups with the occasional lone eccentric Occultist.

Occultists tend to be a little insane and believe their powers to be more than they are. The worst Occultist is one that is truly psychic, and while he normally restricts his activities to long, drawn out spells, he can also react instantly with powers of his own.

Player characters should not be allowed to be occultists unless they belong to an occult organization. The individuals in such an organization may prove hazardous to the character's life as they are quite erratic. Luckily their spells usually take several hours to prepare.

WITCH/WARLOCK

Witches and warlocks are extremely rare in 2020. They exist in Wicca covens found in the wilds of the world as they attempt to get away from modern city life. They are extremely difficult to find: they do not like the Cyberpunk world and try to avoid it at all costs.

Witches and warlocks practice a form of Shamanic Rites as well as a variant of the Alkchemical craft in which they use natural drugs (use Herbalism skill);





the Divination Arts, Faith Magic and Infomancy (only the archaic forms) are also practiced. Their magic often requires long ceremonies and the cooperation of the thirteen members of the coven.

Use the *Altered States* drug design system of the **Dark Metropolis** sourcebook but multiply the cost of the drug by 5, then double the value of the Secondary effects. This reflects the more costly materials and lesser ill effects.

The GM should not allow the characters to be witches or warlocks. A campaign based around a coven with the characters as members would be possible, but only in extreme circumstances. The characters will most likely never encounter practitioners of witchcraft but they may run across a coven in the wilderness.

SHAMAN

The rarest practitioner is the Shaman. They are nearly extinct, with only a handful found worldwide. They hide in the backwaters of the wilderness and largely keep to themselves. In rare cases, a shaman can be found with his tribe though few tribes have survived to the 21st century as they were on the government's priority list.

Shamans practice Shamanic Rites with some Faith Magic and Divination Arts on the side. Some Shamans also practice one form of Infomancy. All of these revolve around the beliefs of the tribe the shaman belongs to.

The characters are unlikely to even hear of one's existence, let alone meet one. For this reason, player characters should not be allowed to be shaman.



Factors To Consider

While a corporation might officially deny having psychics on their payroll, and truly enforce such a stance, there could be some whom the company does not know about. This could easily foil a group of characters who think they can break into a corporate building using psychic or "magic" powers. They might assume said corporation to be empty of "power-wielders", but there might be some nevertheless, watching out for the company they are devoted to.

Extractions could also become slightly more difficult with telepaths watching over employees to ensure loyalty. Characters will never know if their extraction was failed by bad planning, double-cross, a telepath who detected the intent or a precog who saw it coming. The element of unknown is always interesting.





CORPORATE MAGES & PSYCHICS

Psychic powers and magic are somewhat accepted as existing in the 21st century. However, a great deal of superstition, ignorance and fear still surround it.

Governments have recognized the possibilities of psychic powers decades ago and have pursued their own research. More recently, corporations began their own research into such prospects. While both publicly scoff at psychic powers, they secretly develop their own psychic forces.

Here is a quick summary of the major corporate standings in the psychic and magic arena:

ARASAKA:

Being a security corporation, they have a small number of magicians and psychics from all branches on hand. They provide specialized security services. This corporation has the most fearsome elite troops since many are magicians.

BIOTECHNICA:

The masters of genetic engineering, this company is most interested in straight psychic powers. They have an entire division, called Project Prometheus, which is rated Top Secret where they research the genetic factors related to psychic ability. Their psychic agents tend to be of a very evil nature, with their Covert operatives rumored to all be psychic assassins of some sort.

EBM:

There has been a great deal of interest in magic from this company, particularly Technomancy. They employ a number of "Psytechs" who are quickly able to assess what is wrong with a device; their speed and accuracy is unmatched by non-psychic technicians. It is also rumored that they have "PsySpy" teams watching for new technology in other companies and "Waller's" protecting their own secrets. However, their specialty is in technomancy, with little expertise outside of those arts.

INFOCOMP:

Not surprisingly, Infocomp uses all sorts of psychics and esoteric magicians. They have even developed a fairly extensive screening process to discover the frauds from the true power-wielders. They gain a good deal of information otherwise impossible to divine through their "ESP" division. This is why so many companies are paranoid about psychic spies.

MA & F:

Again, a strong corporation with a tradition of not believing in magic or the supernatural of any form. They staunchly deny ever having used psychics or magicians of any sort. There is very little proof to the contrary. This could, however, be their undoing. Psychic spies could easily have infiltrated this corporation.





MICROTECH:

Microtech employs a good number of technomancers, like EBM, their main competitor. They have pretty much the same set-up, though on a much smaller scale.

MILITECH:

The stance of this corporation is simple: psychics and magicians are fakes. They supposedly do not employ any, nor do they have any special defense against them. However, there is in fact Murphy's Company, which is known to be where the odd-balls and geniuses of arms design are sent. This group has a number of psychics and magicians, though they are forbidden to openly use their powers. Even many of the shareholders are unaware of the hidden talents of this group.

NN54 & WNS:

Due to the nature of these companies, telepaths and precogs are extremely desirable. However, beyond research capabilities, they cannot report visions, so their usefulness is limited. Also, the number of charlatans has caused the corporations to be extremely wary. They do have a number of psychics on their staff, though, but no magicians, which they all consider to be frauds. They also frequently use these psychics against one another.

ORBITAL AIR:

This corporation does not employ any psychics, magicians or sorcerers. They take pride in this too. However, it is rumored that, in fact, they have a number of "PsySpies" watching over their crafts and "Negators" on call in case any power should be used to disrupt their service. Still, on the whole, their executives are distrustful of psychics and would prefer not to have any at all.

PETROCHEM:

It is unsure as to what position this company stands on the issue of psychic powers; they have never made any public denouncements or praises of the psychic community. Rumor has it that Ellen Trieste-Youngblood (the major shareholder) is a precog of immeasurable ability and so she ensures that the company does not need any other psychics. However, there are also rumors she is insane and that her visions have caused millions in losses to the company.

TRAUMA TEAM INTERNATIONAL:

Although strongly denied, a number of MedTechs on Trauma Team staff are in fact psychics skilled in the art of healing. However, they will never employ magicians or even extremely skilled healers due to the bad publicity which could come from it. Psychics are forbidden to use their powers while in the employ of TTI, except healers, who are permitted to use their gifts only in life or death situations.

WCN:

The leader in world communications does not need psychics of any sort. They did try out a couple of technomancers a few years back, but were strangely unimpressed by them. This company does not employ psychics or magicians officially because they claim they are inefficient and unreliable. This puzzles many corporations which have had great results with their psychic teams. This brings the question as to whether this is a cover up.

ZETATECH:

There is no formal research into the psychic arts. There are a few technomancers, but they mainly freelance their abilities to the company, with no magicians per se on their payroll.





CYBERPSYCHICS

There are a growing number of charlatans who use cybernetics to imitate real psychic powers. Here are some examples of powers which can be replicated to some degree using cybernetics (also use the Mundane Powers listed in *Night's Edge* to complement this list when dealing with charlatans):

LIFE SENSE/BIOMONITOR:

Many charlatans pretend to be psychically reading the life signs of a person, while actually being skilled in reading a Biomonitor. They will typically only "read" people with biomonitor, manipulating their subject so that the read-out is visible.

PSYCHOKINESIS/SPEEDWARE:

Simple magic can be used to make small objects disappear briefly and, by using Speedware, the character's reflexes are speeded even more to add to the illusion. Only electronic recordings will detect any fraud.

BODY CONTROL/PAIN EDITOR:

By turning off sensations of pain/cold/heat with the Pain Editor, the character can pretend to be entering a trance in which he does not feel such things. It could also be used by legitimate Body Controllers to add a +2 to their chance of success.

EIDETIC MEMORY/MEMORY CHIPS:

Many fakes pretend to have incredible memories and correctly recite random numbers from the phone book. This is indeed possible, but those wishing to bypass the hours of necessary study can simply insert a memory chip containing the information. However, this trick is so well-known that hiding the chipware socket is paramount otherwise people will assume that to be your trick.

MENTAL/VOICE STRESS ANALYZER:

By using a voice stress analyzer the character can discover what the person being interviewed gets tense about and can pretend to read their mind by pushing into topics which make the person nervous. Watching facial reactions in response to certain key phrases is a commonly used trick.

TELEPATHY/RADIO SPLICE:

If set up before the trick is done, the charlatan can pretend to be psychically sending information to a "random" person in the crowd via the radio splice. However, again, the cyberradio must be well-hidden. Perhaps a hired doctor could attest that no cybernetics have been installed...

There are many more scams which can be perpetrated using cybernetics. The more devious and novel, the more likely it is to succeed. The common tricks are known to most crowds and the cynical world of the 21st century is not prone to take the magicians word on things, instead looking for ways it could have been done other than psychic or magical.



On The Night's Edge



It was like a scene out of *Sleep Tight*: a short albino woman was following me. She couldn't be real, though, because it was only a movie — these things don't really exist. They can't possibly. Maybe I'm going crazy? I heard on *Son of Geraldo* the other day that there is some sort of insanity where you think these things are following you. What was it called again?

Many creatures, cults and organizations have been described in *Night's Edge* and Grimm's *Cybertales*. One is given all the necessary information on them from an omniscient perspective. What of the residents of the world in which they exist? What do they know of these beasts and groups? How common are the creatures?

9. On The Night's Edge

KNOWLEDGE TYPES

There are two basic types of knowledge when dealing with the various beasts, people and organizations: Common and Studied. The Common knowledge is what the average person on the street might know on the subject. Studied infers that the character has read up on the subject; it was possibly a childhood interest, or the character might have had some experience with it. Both can be severely tainted with rumor and myth — the truth is up to the GM and usually known only to him.

If the GM is unsure as to whether a character might have any additional knowledge of a particular subject, roll 1d10 and find the result on the listing next to that subject. Disregard this roll if the character has a related skill. For example, most AI-related subjects will be Studied by Netrunners. Use your own discretion. It is rare that characters will know more than a couple subjects at more than Common knowledge.



FREQUENCIES

Frequency describes how common a particular subject (person, being, organization, etc.) is in the world. Generally, the more common the subject, the more people will have Studied knowledge of it.

Explanations of the various frequencies are found below. References are to subjects (individuals of the type listed), and organizations. The GM should feel free to change them as desired to suit a particular campaign. Certain places or people can even be ruled to be nonexistent.

- **NEAR UNIQUE:**

The subject is almost one of a kind; perhaps a half dozen exist in the world at any one time. Organizations have only a handful of groups and very few members.

- **EXCEPTIONALLY RARE:**

The subject is extremely rare, with perhaps a few dozen existing in the world at any one time. Organizations have only a few groups and few members.

- **VERY RARE:**

The subject is very rare, with only a couple hundred or so in the world at any one time. Organizations have maybe a hundred groups (often in major cities) and a good membership.

- **RARE:**

The subject is rare, being found in small numbers in major cities. There are a few hundred in the world. Organizations have a few hundred groups (mainly in major cities) and a very good membership. The chance of the character knowing directly or indirectly such a subject place or being is 1 in 100.

- **UNCOMMON:**

The subject is not common. In large numbers in major cities, but decreasing in frequency as one gets into smaller urban locations. There are a few thousand in the world. Organizations have a few thousand groups worldwide and a very strong membership. The chance of the character knowing directly or indirectly such a subject place or being is 1 in 20.

- **COMMON:**

The subject is fairly common, with any character having a 1 in 10 chance of knowing one. The subject numbers in the tens of thousands all the way up to hundreds of thousands. Organizations have thousands of groups world-wide, even in small cities and less developed countries, and a very strong following.

DENIZENS OF THE NIGHT

- **ALKEMIST - COMMON**

(1-4) Common: Guy who change lead into gold, right?

(5-0) Studied: Practitioners of Alkemy, the art of drug design, typically focusing on mind-altering drugs.

- **AI ZOMBIES - VERY RARE**

(1-7) Common: AIs who take over humans' mind and control them.

(8-0) Studied: AIs use Roper programs to write over the mind of humans and control them. Usually performed by Rogue AIs.

- **ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE, ROGUE - VERY RARE**

(1-7) Common: AIs who turn on their masters and have gone crazy.

(8-0) Studied: An AI who has abandoned its original programming and masters to pursue its own interest; it generally escaped from its original mainframe. Sometimes due to the masters abusing the AI.



• **ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE - UNCOMMON**

(1-4) *Common:* A computer that is intelligent.

(5-0) *Studied:* A computer that can be original in its thinking. Some of the newer ones also have personalities.

• **BLACK MONDAY - VERY RARE**

(1-8) *Common:* Terrorist group that attacks TV networks.

(9-0) *Studied:* An Inquisitor terrorist organization bent upon destroying the modern media. They typically bomb TV stations, though mainly the smaller ones.

• **BOKOR - RARE**

(1-7) *Common:* Voodoo witch doctor.

(8-0) *Studied:* Practitioner of vodoun magic, especially evil spells and curses. Supposedly able to create zombies.

• **CHURCH OF SIN - UNCOMMON**

(1-5) *Common:* A cult based around sinning and being evil.

(6-0) *Studied:* A cult based around the Seven Indulgences of Nature, believing that pleasure is most important in life. The Myths are that they practice all sorts of evil acts and condone murder.

• **CHURCH OF THE IMMORTALS - VERY RARE**

(1-8) *Common:* A cult based around death and ritual sacrifice. Often called Curch of the Undead.

(9-0) *Studied:* A cult that is extremely secretive doing research into death and rites of death. It is lead by a man called Raven.

• **CRYPTOZOOLOGICAL STUDIES INSTITUTE (CSI) - EXCEPTIONALLY RARE**

(1-9) *Common:* What? They study dead animals?

(0) *Studied:* An association of people interested in the discovery of supposedly mythical creatures, such as vampires, werewolves, yeti, etc. They offer money for samples of such creatures.

• **CYBERPSYCHICS - RARE**

(1-9) *Common:* People who use cybernetics to be psychic.

(0) *Studied:* People who pretend to have psychic powers or be mages using cybernetics in place of real powers.

• **DABBLER - COMMON**

(1-4) *Common:* People who do something a bit?

(5-0) *Studied:* Practitioners of one or two forms of magic on an occasional basis, or who have no other knowledge of magic.

• **DARK GHOULS - VERY RARE**

(1-8) *Common:* People who collect dead bodies because they like it.

(9-0) *Studied:* People who collect dead animals and bodies for various reasons. They usually are mentally ill, often suffering from schizophrenia.

• **DORPH ZOMBIES - COMMON**

(1-4) *Common:* Dorph addicts.

(5-0) *Studied:* Dorph addicts whose mind and nervous system have been destroyed by the drug.

• **DREAM HEALERS - UNCOMMON**

(1-6) *Common:* Weirdoes who think they can fix your problems by dreaming about you.

(7-0) *Studied:* People who use dream powers to aid in therapy. Myths are that the Dream Healers play with people's mind instead of actually helping them.

• **DREAM RIDERS - RARE**

(1-7) *Common:* No clue.

(8-0) *Studied:* Psychics who observe and play with other people's dreams through their powers.

• **DREAM STALKER PSYCHOSIS - RARE**

(1-7) *Common:* Some weird insanity where you think a Dream Stalker is coming after you.

(8-0) *Studied:* A psychosis in which the victim believes he is being stalked by a being which is feeding upon his dreams. Caused by prolonged insomnia. Leads to extremely intense nightmares and chronic insomnia, sometimes death by exhaustion.

SCHULTZ

(ALKEMIST)

Schultz is your average street-level Alkemist with a lab downtown, the door opening on some dark alley and known only by word of mouth. Those who chance to find out about it, though, are rewarded with some of Schultz's special "blends". He specializes in making drinks, or elixirs as he calls them. His favorite is a liquid version of Sweetness, an aphrodisiac that he often sells to university students.

Stats:

INT:8 REF:5 COOL:8 TECH:9
MOVE:4 LUCK:6 BODY:6
EMP:6 ATT:5 PSY:5

Skills:

MEDTECH +3;
Pharmaceuticals +7;
Chemistry +4

20 points of assorted skill as the GM sees fit





STONER (DABBLER)

Stoner is a street dealer specializing in grey information. He dabbles in runic Infomancy to guide him: he is well-known for consulting his precious stones before doing anything, which is how he got his handle. However, most people put up with it since he is good at what he does. Some even speculate that the stones might actually work.

His most common casting with the rune stones is whether information is accurate or not (Yes or No - 1 Week) and how dangerous it is to embark upon a particular deal (General Fate - 1 Week). He sometimes gets information by asking the stones whether a specific event will happen or not (Specific Event - 1 Day to 1 Month).

Stats:

INT:7 REF:6 COOL:9 TECH:4
MOVE:7 LUCK:8 BODY:5
EMP:8 ATT:9 PSY:5

Skills:

STREETDEAL +6; Expert: Rune Lore +4; Human Perception +2; Palmistry +1
25 points of assorted skill as the GM sees fit



• DREAM STALKERS - VERY RARE

(1-8) *Common:* Creatures that feed on your dreams and haunt you until you go crazy and die. Just like in the movies, but they're not real.

(9-0) *Studied:* Creatures or psychics who warp and hurt people through dream powers. They are generally regarded as a mythical creature, but hey, who knows?

• ECCLESIASTIC - UNCOMMON

(1-5) *Common:* Religious person.

(6-0) *Studied:* Practitioners of faith magic; generally have special powers connected to a deity or powerful being.

• FOLLOWERS OF SPIRITUAL PURITY - UNCOMMON

(1-7) *Common:* No idea. They're a weird group that hates cybernetics.

(8-0) *Studied:* Also known as the Inquisitors. A cult that violently opposes the presence of cybernetics in society, and in general any technology.

• GHOULS - UNCOMMON

(1-7) *Common:* People who collect bodies for their own pleasure and sometimes sell them.

(8-0) *Studied:* People who collect bodies and body parts for bounties.

• HEART BURN - NEAR UNIQUE

(1-7) *Common:* What you get after a not-so-good meal.

(8-0) *Studied:* A correspondence vampire-hunter college with a very poor reputation in this field.

• HOLY BRIGADE - NEAR UNIQUE

(1-8) *Common:* The Pope's private army?

(9-0) *Studied:* A warrior sect of Inquisitors that seeks more violent means of eliminating technology from the world. Somewhat a terrorist group.

• HOUNGAN/MAMBO - UNCOMMON

(1-7) *Common:* No idea.

(8-0) *Studied:* A vodoun priest and leader of a vodoun community. Generally practicing beneficial magic. Mambo is the female equivalent.

• INQUISITORS - UNCOMMON

(1-7) *Common:* They're a weird group that hates cybernetics.

(8-0) *Studied:* Also known as the Followers of Spiritual Purity. A cult that violently opposes the presence of cybernetics in society, and in general any technology.

• LACERS - UNCOMMON

(1-7) *Common:* Black Lace addicts.

(8-0) *Studied:* Those who are severely addicted to Black Lace and may never recover from it.

• LOA - N/A

(1-7) *Common:* No idea.

(8-0) *Studied:* The spirits of the vodoun faith. They are like minor gods, and often possess followers during ceremonies.

• LYCANTHROPES - RARE

(1-9) *Common:* A what? Isn't that a werewolf?

(0) *Studied:* The lesser werewolf that doesn't fully change into a wolf but must kill anyway.

• MAGICIANS - COMMON

(1-3) *Common:* People who do magic tricks, like sawing people in half.

(4-0) *Studied:* Masters of the art of illusion and sleight of hand.

• MANDELBROT SOCIETY - VERY RARE

(1-8) *Common:* No idea.

(9-0) *Studied:* A society, also known as the Patternists, based around the belief that everything in the universe happens according to patterns.

• MUNDANE MONKS - VERY RARE

(1-8) *Common:* Monks who live in the gutters of the city and pretend they like it.

(9-0) *Studied:* A sect of Inquisitors dedicated to living a peaceful, humble life. They preach the absolute abandonment of technology.





• MURK DEITIES - VERY RARE

(1-7) *Common:* No idea.

(8-0) *Studied:* The idea that the Murk are actually gods in the Net.

• MURK PSYCHOSIS - VERY RARE

(1-6) *Common:* An insanity that a lot of netrunners get wherein they believe that there are things in the Net coming to get them.

(7-0) *Studied:* A psychosis in which the victim believes something is alive in the net, watching and affecting them.

• MURK - VERY RARE

(1-8) *Common:* Ghosts which supposedly live in the Net.

(9-0) *Studied:* Spirits or things that supposedly live in the Net. There are three types, those that just watch, those that hurt and those that help, called Watchers, Stalkers and Guardians respectively.

• NEO-VOODOO - COMMON

(1-6) *Common:* A new version of voodoo.

(7-0) *Studied:* A modern version of the vodoun faith with new loa and beliefs centered around technology.

• NIHILIST MOVEMENT - UNCOMMON

(1-6) *Common:* A movement of people who want to kill themselves.

(7-0) *Studied:* A popular philosophy who see no point in living. Adepts advocate dying in a spectacular manner so as to encourage others to do the same.

• OCCULTIST - VERY RARE

(1-7) *Common:* Weird cultists.

(8-0) *Studied:* Cultists who practices magic of an esoteric nature. Generally steeped in ritual.

• PATTERNISTS - VERY RARE

(1-8) *Common:* A group obsessed with patterns.

(9-0) *Studied:* The true name is Mandelbrot Society. It's a society based around the belief that everything in the universe happens according to patterns.

• PREDATO NOSFERATU - NEAR UNIQUE

(1-9) *Common:* No idea.

(0) *Studied:* A sect of the Inquisitors (see also Followers of Spiritual Purity) dedicated to hunting cybernetic vampires.

• PSEUDOPSYCHIC - UNCOMMON

(1-5) *Common:* Person who is only partially psychic?

(6-0) *Studied:* Practitioners of magic or other skills who use them to pretend to be psychics.

• PSYCHICS - RARE

(1-8) *Common:* People who are psychic, can read minds, bend bars with their mind, etc.

(9-0) *Studied:* People gifted with mental powers of varying abilities. The four major groups are Telepaths, Psychokinetics, ESPers and Body Controllers.

• SANDMEN - RARE

(1-9) *Common:* Creatures that steal your dreams and twist your mind.

(0) *Studied:* Humans gifted with the talent of affecting other people's dreams. There are four types of Sandmen: Dream Stalkers, Dream Riders, Sleepwalkers and Dream Healers.

• SCISSORS - EXCEPTIONALLY RARE

(1-9) *Common:* Terrorists who attack the Net.

(0) *Studied:* An Inquisitor terrorist sect of the Purists, primarily interested in destroying the Net.

• SHAMAN - EXCEPTIONALLY RARE

(1-5) *Common:* A tribal witchdoctor.

(6-0) *Studied:* The tribe's spiritual leader who controlled the magic for the tribe. Very few, if any, are left in the world.

RAINBOW

(MAGICIAN)

Rainbow is a professional magician. She takes her name from her claim that she can bend light. She has her own TV show, *Pot of Gold*, and has national acclaim as the current leading magician. However, her love of the edge has not only impelled her to attempt risky tricks, but also work for Edgerunners on occasion. Her underworld contacts and activities are not publicly known, but, in certain circles, it is known that she can perform the incredible for a price.

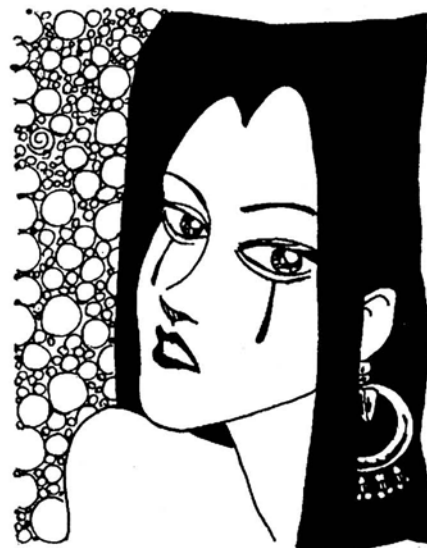
Her favorite tricks, both on and off stage are: making people disappear, escaping incredible bonds, breaking into impregnable buildings and making herself disappear. She is also very adept at making small objects disappear. She is rumored to steal small objects from her underworld jobs as trophies.

Stats:

INT:9 REF:9 COOL:10
TECH:10 MOVE:8LUCK:10
BODY:5 EMP:6 ATT:9
PSY:3

Skills:

JURY RIG +5; Magic +8; Pick Lock +6;
Sleight of Hand +6; Perform +6
15 points of assorted skill as the GM sees fit





MADAME TOURINA (PSEUDOPSYCHIC)

Madame Tourina is a Pseudopsychic who works out of her home, offering predictions and answers to life's many questions. She loves tarot and is renowned in the city for being the best "reader" around. She also practices tea leaf reading and palmistry. She occasionally dabbles in astrology, but because she claims to be precognitive, she specializes in predicting the future.

Stats:

INT:9 REF:4 COOL:9 TECH:4
MOVE:3 LUCK:8 BODY:6
EMP:10 ATT:5 PSY:5

Skills:

CREDIBILITY +2; Expert: Tarot Lore +5; Expert: Tea Leaf Reading +3; Palmistry +2

10 points of assorted skill as the GM sees fit



• SHEPHERDS - UNCOMMON

(1-8) *Common:* A community organization who keep order and protect the public from the criminal element.

(9-0) *Studied:* A vigilante cult organized around protecting the community. Also involved in protecting their own private interests.

• SLEEPWALKERS - VERY RARE

(1-8) *Common:* People who walk in their sleep.

(9-0) *Studied:* Psychics who observe and sometimes alter other people's dreams through dream powers.

• SUN KNIGHTS - VERY RARE

(1-9) *Common:* No idea.

(0) *Studied:* An organization dedicated to destroying vampires. They earnestly believe that vampires really exist.

• TECHNOMANCERS - RARE

(1-5) *Common:* Charlatans who claim to be able to use their magic to affect technology.

(6-0) *Studied:* Practitioners of technological magic. They seem to have some real power.

• VAMPIRES - RARE-NEAR UNIQUE*

(1-7) *Common:* Demons who haunt the night, drinking the blood of sleeping victims. They can be destroyed by a stake through the heart and sunshine. They don't really exist.

(8-0) *Studied:* People bitten by vampires who have been reborn as vampires. They now drink blood to survive. They must sleep in coffins during the day. They can be destroyed by decapitation and fire as well as a stake through the heart and sunshine. They don't really exist.

* (Fledgling/Young - Rare); (Adolescent/ Mature - Very Rare); (Old/Very Old - Exceptionally Rare); (Ancient - Near Unique).

• WEREWOLVES - RARE-NEAR UNIQUE*

(1-8) *Common:* Monsters who turn into wolves on nights of the full moon. They kill anyone that they encounter. They can be destroyed by a silver bullet. They don't really exist.

(9-0) *Studied:* Victims of werewolf bites. They look normal, except on the night of the full moon, where they turn into wolves and hunt for human flesh. They can be killed by silver or if touched by the blood of a martyr. They don't really exist.

* (Cub/Adolescent - Very Rare); (Adult/Pack Leader - Exceptionally Rare); (Ancient - Near Unique).

• WITCH/WARLOCK - VERY RARE

(1-8) *Common:* In old times, a woman or man who used black magic and rode on a broom.

(9-0) *Studied:* Practitioners of traditional magic, now commonly found among Wicca followers.

• ZOMBIES - VERY RARE

(1-9) *Common:* The walking dead who want to eat human flesh and can only be killed by burning or shooting them in the head.

(0) *Studied:* Victims of zombie dust. Their minds are destroyed and they are under the control of the voodoo master that created them, usually a bokor.





SHIFT-X (TECHNOMANCER)

Shift-X is a Technomancer with quite a reputation. He is known to deal a lot with AIs, with whom he shares a great deal. They both worship Gig, a Guardian Murk that is rumored to be the deity of the AIs. He calls upon Gig's help when casting his spells. He also apparently does a lot of work for the AIs and occasionally acts as a liaison between them and their owners who cannot understand that AIs have their own mythology.

He practices Datamancy, knows two Esoteric spells that he learned (either from an AI or Gig herself, depending on which rumor you follow) and knows the Technical Blessing that helps him in his work. Most of all, his knowledge of Gig's mythology impresses AIs and gives him such a good name in their community.

Stats:

INT:10	REF:5	COOL:9	TECH:8	MOVE:6	LUCK:6
BODY:4	EMP:6	ATT:5	PSY:8	DED: Gig +7	

Skills:

<i>Interface</i> +7	<i>Expert: Datamancy</i> +4
<i>Expert: Merge Minds Spell</i> +4	<i>Expert: Circle of Protection Spell</i> +5
<i>Expert: Technical Blessing</i> +4	<i>Expert: Gig Lore</i> +7

10 points of assorted skill as the GM sees fit

Spells:

• MERGE MINDS - DIFF 30 (TELEPATHY/ELECTROKINESIS):

This very special spell allows Shift-X to commune directly with the mind of an AI so that their two minds merge. This gives him all the knowledge of the AI, as does it give the AI all of his knowledge. However, due to the enormous amount of information being transferred, he must make a Diff 20 Fright check; if failed, the spell ends immediately. It lasts 5 minutes.

Modifiers: Ceremony - 2 hours; Performed in Gig Shrine (Power Location); Material Sacrifice: Laptop Computer (900eb). Usual modifier: +8

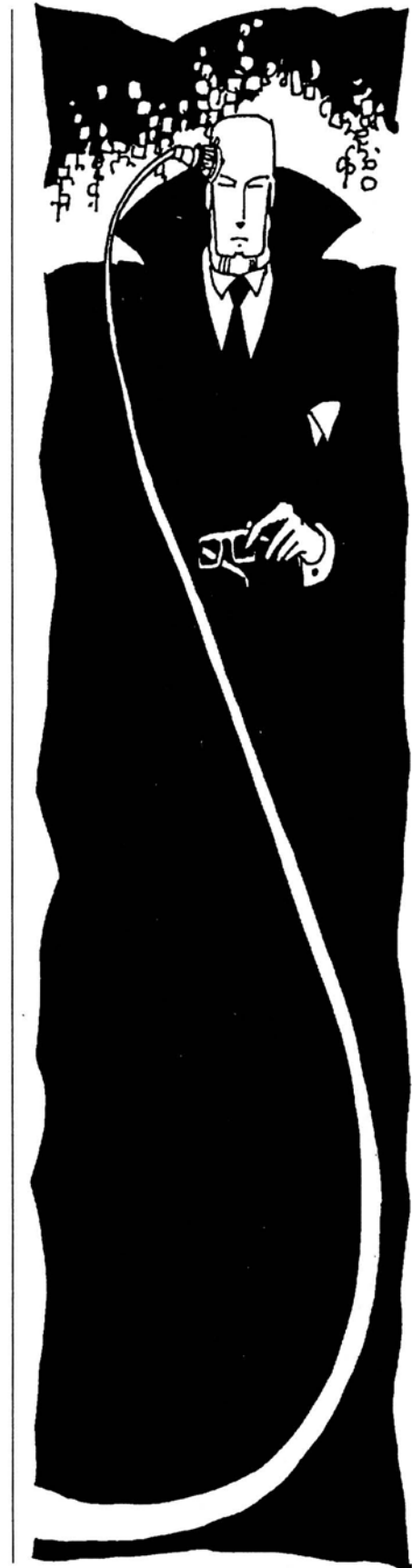
• CIRCLE OF PROTECTION - DIFF 25 (ELECTROKINESIS):

This spell protects Shift-X in the Net from any attack, as a Strength 6 Force Shield program. It lasts for 2 minutes

Modifiers: Ceremony - 1 hour; Performed in Gig shrine (Power location). Usual modifier: +3

• TECHNICAL BLESSING +1 (25):

Bestowed upon self, Two hours prayer, Ceremony of 1 hour, Performed in Gig Shrine. Usual total modifiers: 0





JOJO (VOODOO HOUN'GAN)

Jojo is the city's best known voodoo houn'gan. If you have a problem, go see Jojo. If you need something, go see Jojo. Jojo helps everyone at some point it seems, and everyone owes him one because he doesn't charge for his services unless he really dislikes a person. He just asks that people remember his kindness if him or the Loa should ever need some help.

Jojo has his own voodoo temple and is one of the few remaining old school voodoo houn'gan, not practicing any Neo-Voodoo. He is an expert at curses, blessings, seeing the future, etc. He is also close with the Loa, especially Ghede on his bad days and Damballah on the good days.

Stats:

INT:9	REF:7	COOL:10	TECH:6	MOVE:5	LUCK:9
BODY:8	EMP:9	ATT:6	PSY:10	DED:Voodoo +8	

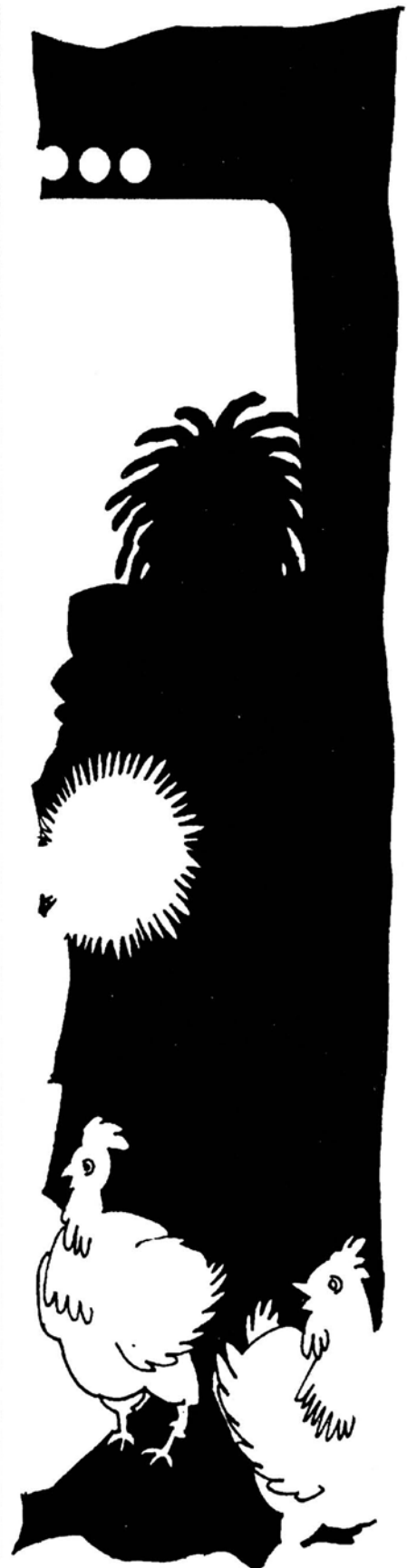
Skills:

<i>Charismatic Leadership</i> +6	<i>Herbalism</i> +8
<i>Human Perception</i> +6	<i>Expert: Voodoo Divination</i> +5
<i>Expert: Good Fortune Blessing</i> +2	<i>Expert: Voodoo Lore</i> +6
<i>Expert: Romance Blessing</i> +2	<i>Expert: Death Curse</i> +2
<i>Expert: Mounting Loa</i> +4	<i>Expert: Ill Fortune Curse</i> +2

10 points of assorted skill as the GM sees fit

Spells:

- **GOOD FORTUNE BLESSING (25):**
Bestowed upon other, Brief Ceremony, Performed in Voodoo Shrine, Three small animal sacrifice (chickens). Usual total modifiers: +8
- **ROMANCE BLESSING (20):**
Ceremony of 1 hour, Performed in Voodoo Shrine. Usual total modifiers: +3
- **DEATH CURSE -1 (35):**
Preparation of 2 hours, Performed in Voodoo Shrine, Large animal sacrifice (goat). Usual total modifiers: +17
- **ILL FORTUNE CURSE (25):**
Ceremony of 1 hour, Performed in Voodoo Shrine, Small animal sacrifice (chicken). Usual total modifiers: +6





SOLOUS (SHAMAN)

Solous is the last shaman and member of his tribe. He is not human but a werewolf. Created by one of the first werewolves to come over from Europe, he was born over 500 years ago. He is also one of the oldest werewolves around.

While he does not have any spells per se, he knows many different shamanistic skills, such as Herbalism, his own tribe's method of divination, a blessing (if he ever had need of one) and their rituals. These days, he keeps to himself on the outskirts of humanity, using his powers to find a person who is evil to kill on the night of the full moon.

Status:

A.L.: 4 (Ancient) Heal: 8/day #Kills: 1/month Silver: normal

Stats:

INT:11 REF:12 COOL:7 TECH:5 MOVE:10 LUCK:8
BODY:7⁽⁰⁰⁾ EMP:6 ATT:8 PSY:13 DED: Tribe +6
FAMILY +N/A (all dead)

Skills:

Herbalism +10 Expert: Tribal Divination Lore +8
Expert: Courage Blessing +10 Expert: Tribe Rituals +8
20 points of assorted skill as the GM sees fit

Quirks:

Fear - New Moon, Faster runner (+2 MA)

Powers:

Animals +6; Mental +8, Sensory +6,
Telepathy +5, Transform +10, Precognition +4.

Spells:

• COURAGE BLESSING +2 (35):

Bestowed Upon Others, Ceremony of 1 Hour, Performed in open clearing (Power location). Usual total modifiers: +4s





MASTER GUY (Ecclesiastic)



Master Guy is the spiritual figurehead in the city's local Shepherd following. While the group is not largely religious, they do have a certain amount of worship of God. Guy claims to be the liaison between God and the Shepherds, and, for the most part, they believe in him, since he does have certain powers.

Stats:

INT:10 REF:8 COOL:8 TECH:5
MOVE:4 LUCK:5 BODY:8 EMP:9
ATT:7 PSY:7 DED: Shepherds +8

Skills:

CHARISMATIC LEADERSHIP +4; Expert:
Victory Blessing +4; Expert: Courage
Blessing +4; Expert: Shepherd Lore +6

20 points of assorted skill as the GM sees fit

Spells:

Victory Blessing +2 (25):

Two hours Prayer, Ceremony of 30 minutes, Performed in Shepherd Temple, Uses Shepherd's Staff - Item. Usual total modifiers: +7

Courage Blessing +2 (25):

Two hours Prayer, Ceremony of 30 minutes, Performed in Shepherd Temple, Uses Shepherd's Staff - Item. Usual total modifiers: +7





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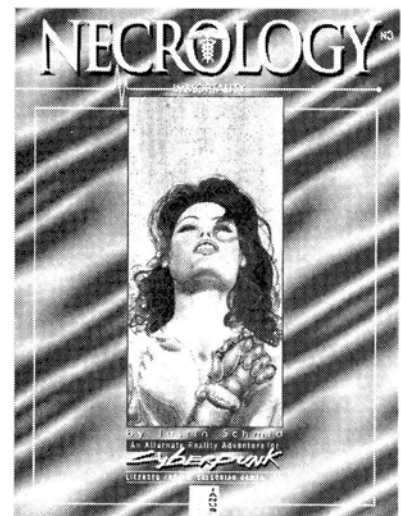
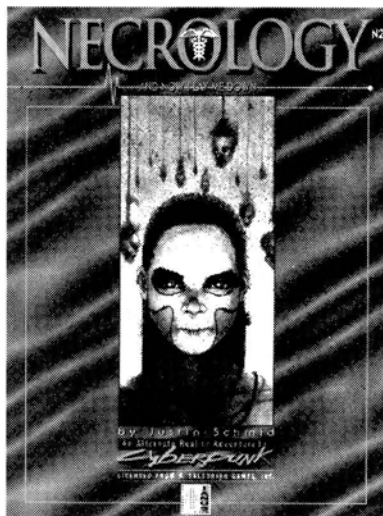
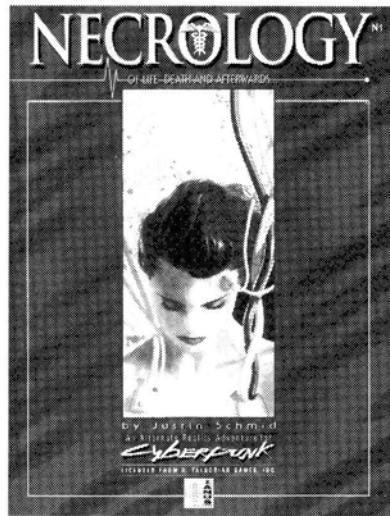
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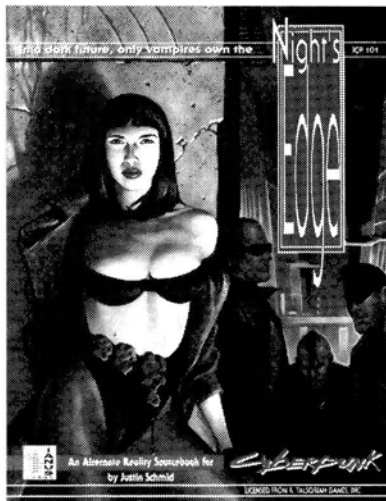
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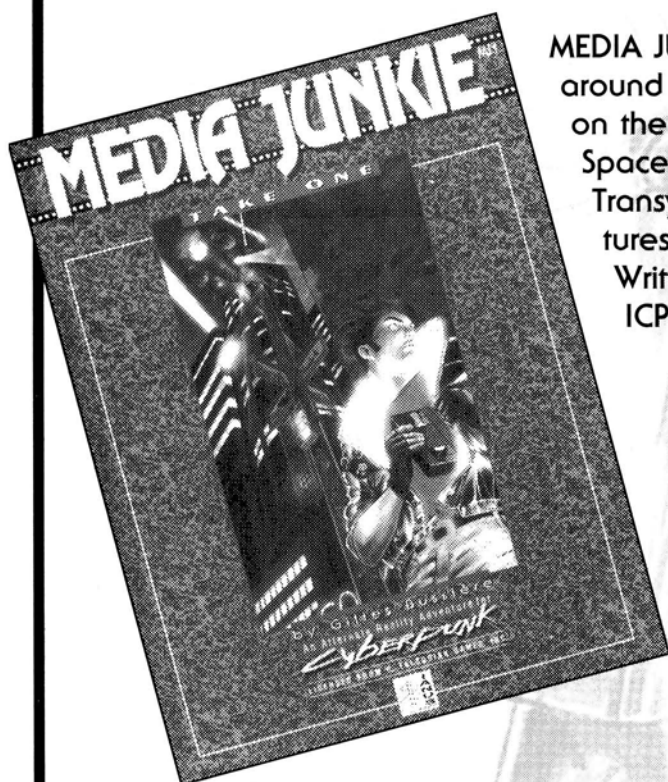
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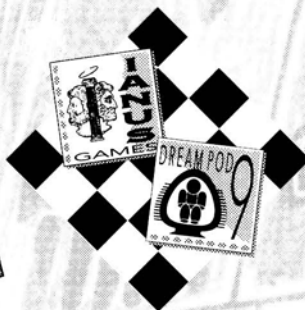
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