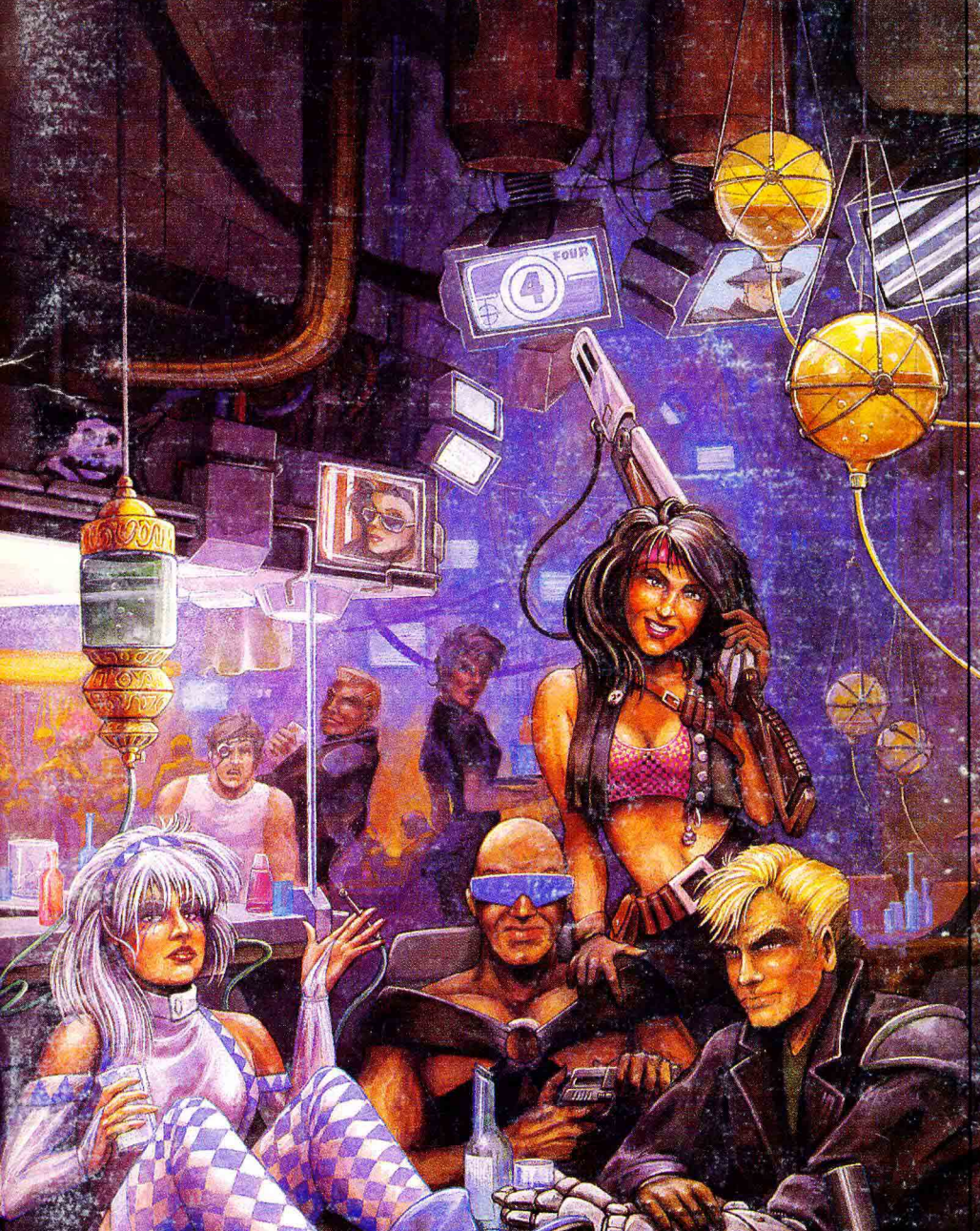


INTERFACE

ISSUE 4 VOL. 1 THE MAGAZINE FOR THE CYBERPUNK™ ENTHUSIAST \$4.50



**Nomads • ConAg Corporation • AI's and Rogue Hunters
Reviews • To Bear Arms... • Alternate Character Classes**

INTERFACE

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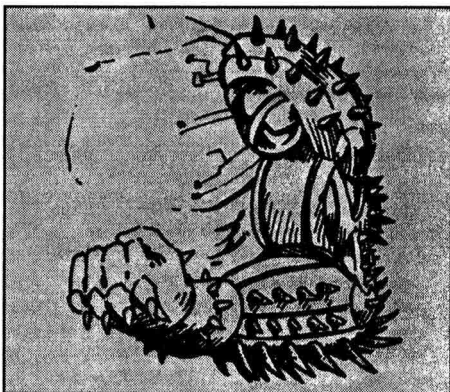
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NUCYBERWARE & NUTECH

SPIKED CYBERLIMB COVER

ID Code•Surgery•Cost•Humanity
Spike (SPIKE)•(N)•150-200eb•HC 2

This is a cyberlimb covering that has rows of 1/2 to 1 inch spikes, which can be useful in hand-to-hand combat. In game terms, when the limb is used to make a pin or grapple, there is an additional 1D2 to 1D6 damage applied. If someone tries to grapple or pin the spiked limb, the attacker receives the damage! (That has a way of preventing such attacks, just as spiked collars discourage chokeholds.)



On a critical failure (or if he isn't careful) the wearer does damage to himself. This option may also be applied to Body Plating or Metal-gear, and on leather and armor jackets. Though illegal in most areas, these spiked coverings are easy enough to create.

CORVETTE CYBERLEGS

ID Code•Surgery•Cost•Humanity
Corvette•(CVT)•(CR)•4,500 eb•HC (Var)

These cyberlegs are produced by *MechaTech Corporation* and are the only worthwhile competitors of the *Speeding Bullet* legs. They are more modular than

Speeding Bullets, though the basic surgery is the same. The spine and ribcage is reinforced, and the lower hip and back are replaced with the smoothflow hydraulic ball systems, thickened myomar muscle tissues, and reinforced joints.

This first system implants a small subdermal movement computer that increases the MA +3, because of superior biofeedback conditioning and control systems, +1 is added to all movement maneuvers. A cost breakdown follows:

Cyberware	HC	Surgery	Cost	Code
2 Cyberlegs	3D6	CR	3,500	CORV
Thickened Myomar	+4	N	500	THK
Adv. Control Sys.	1D6/2	MA	1000	ACC

Advanced Options

HSManeuvering Sys.	1D6/2	MA	500	HSMS
--------------------	-------	----	-----	------

A second subdermal spinal computer called a High Speed Maneuvering System is added for greater control and increased speed with the second version of these legs. A MA+8 is possible with this system. Again, because a separate processor is used, the user has an advanced set of operations and controls that regulate speed and other movements. All direct speed-based movement such as running and jumping have a control bonus of +3.

Any other kind of movement, once trained into the computer, gains an additional +1. This applies to martial arts, acrobatics, and other related skills. Any kick-related damage adds a +4 to the damage caused.

FLASHLIGHT IMPLANT

ID Code•Surgery•Cost•Humanity
Flashlight (LITE)•(M)•90eb•HC 1•flesh
Flashlight (LITE)•(N)•90eb•HC.5•cyber
Strobe (BRITE)•(N,M)•150eb•HC 1.5

This is a small patch of synthskin which

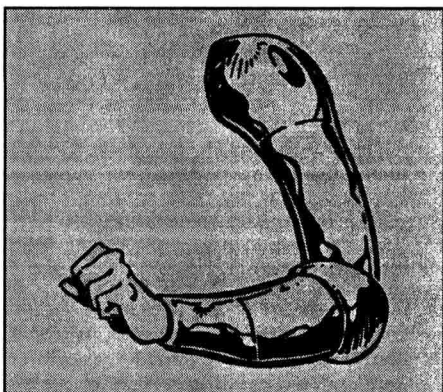
can produce a light bright enough for use as a mini-flashlight (3 meter range), using only the body's neural electricity. They are popular with underground or under-sea workers, but Techs who don't want to bother with lamps also find them useful. They are often implanted in fingers, palms, or forearms (or rarely, on the face) where the light can be directed to be of use. The cyberlimb version has HC .5, Surgery Code N, and doesn't take up an option space.

This flashlight can also be adapted with subdermal or cyberlimb batteries to momentarily blind an opponent when used at point-blank range. (Average to Easy if unaware of implant or ambushed. Difficult if on guard or in combat.) Target is blinded for 1D6 rounds. This can be done once every other turn.

DOUBLE-JOINTED CYBERLIMB OPTION

ID Code•Surgery•Cost•Humanity
D.Joint (DBL)•(N)•1250•HC 2

This option gives the cyberlimb extra pivot at the major joints, and may even allow them to twist into humanly impossible angles. This gives the user a +1 to such combat maneuvers as grapples, holds, and chokes, as well as a +2 to Dodge & Escape rolls if the modified limb is used.



LIFE SCAN BODY MONITOR

ID Code•Surgery•Cost•Humanity
Life Scan(LIFE)•(M)•4000eb•HC 1D6

Life Scan, body monitor by *Lifeline Technologies* is similar to the standard biomonitor, goes further to protect your life. The Life Scan is a complex monitoring system which is linked to the user's Neuralware Processor. It constantly monitors the body's vital systems and whole resistance to infection from biological and chemical sources. By linking it to either a Times Square Marquee or to a cyberlimb-mounted vid screen, the monitor relays a constant report on the body's condition, heart rate, body temp, EEG, as well as analyzing contaminants in the body, down to a degree of five parts per million. You may not know that you're being gassed, but be sure that your Life Scan Body Monitor will tell you. How does it do this? With the magic of nano-technology. Nanites are sent roving throughout the body, to analyze and relay information to the central monitor.

The monitor acts as a rad/chem/bio scan with 70% accuracy, but only against contaminants entering the body. It will tell where the contaminant entered, identify it, and then relay hazards of such an exposure. It will also analyze damage done to the body by physical attacks. If the user has internal bleeding, but is in too much shock to feel it, the monitor will locate the bleeding and analyze the possible cause and effect. Not only does the monitor tell you what is damaged, but gives first aid information to help in the treatment. The Life Scan Body Monitor gives the user +1 cool as does the Bio Monitor, but also gives +4 to first aid rolls, and +1 to the user's death save (which reflects its ability to ease the effects of shock).

Nomad Vehicles

Guard vehicles

Size: Mid-sized

Powerplant: 350 hp, turbocharged, carburated, shielded wires

Speed: 180 kph

Armor: Front (15) Rear (15) Top (12) Under (12), Stealth Paint -3 vs Radar lock, kevlar tire skirts (8 points of armor)

Armaments: 2 hard points i.e. (2) 7.62 MG (1000 Rds each, mechanical) or (1)5.56 Chain Gun (2500 Rds) (Mechanical)

Defense: Chaff, smoke, ECM

Comments: Tire skirts, heavy duty undercarriage, kevlar armor, 2-4 7.62mm or 1-5.56mm mini-gun Most vehicle functions are mechanical to minimize effects of ECM.

The epitome of utility, these cars serve one purpose, to eliminate any threat posed to themselves or their charges on the roadway. Usually flat black, they look as menacing as a threat neutralization device can.

Interceptor Motorcycles

Size: Motorcycle

Powerplant: 1000cc 200hp

Speed: 250 kph

Armor: Front (5), Rear (0), Top (0), Bottom (3)

Armaments: 1- 5.56 CAR 15,

Defense: smoke

Gyro-copters

Size: UltraCompact 2 seater

Powerplant: 53 hp

Speed: 120 kph

Armor: Front (3), Top (0), Bottom (7), Rear (3)

Armaments: no internal weapons may be fitted with external 7.62mm MG, or other improvised weapons

Defense: None

Ultralights (2 seater)

Size: Ultracompact 2 seater

Powerplant: 40 hp engines

Nomadic Chronicles

by Mike Davis



This chronicles some of the lifestyles of nomads and the different types of nomad packs that travel the United States of 2020. The following listings are by no means inclusive of all the nomad types available but are the most common in the United States of America. The nomads of the Euro-States and the Commonwealth will be covered in another article.

Agricultural Packs

Agricultural Packs, sometimes called ag-packs, are the migrant workers of the 2020's. These nomad packs are probably the most numerous of the nomad population, with as many as a thousand roaming the US and Mexico. There are several dozen agricultural corporations which will pay for the services rendered by the ag-packs, though the wages are low and no other benefits are offered. The high cost of automation is still the primary reason that ag-packs still exist and can make any money at all. Most ag-packs do not resort to acts of mindless violence, though they will defend themselves if necessary. As a result of being more civilized, ag-packs tend to be larger and have a more family oriented structure than other nomadic groups.

Wiping the sweat from his brow with a muscular arm, John Dempsey looks out over a horizon turned golden by the fields of glistening wheat. John Dempsey once worked this same land which once produced record crop after record crop. Now tilled by a robotic farmer, the land belongs to the corporation. Unconcerned, the robot moves back and forth across the land, in neat little rows. John once used the most modern methods, fertilizers, and pesticides, and tried to keep costs down but in 2002, he finally packed it in. When his father died, John survived the Farm Lending Acts and the droughts, but he couldn't beat the designer plagues that ravaged the wheat and corn crops. The genetic diversity that might have defended against these plagues was long bred out of the grains long ago. He watched four lifetimes' work turn black and die. He lost it all. The robotic farmer is totally oblivious to it all.

ConAg was happy to help him out of his predicament, and smiling, bought the farm and equipment for two cents on the dollar. He found himself in a used RV on a dusty, mid-west road. He's spent ten years moving from town to town, crop to crop, providing the transient labor for the corporate machine, and not alone. He's now running with the pack, which roams the agricultural states like a band of Gypsies. Buses, trucks and RVs move with the seasons, complete with teachers, cooks, techs, security, secrets, and lots of labor. The pack has

it all. A dark, sun-wrinkled face told me, "I've run with them for five years, ever since I met up with them up in Northern California." Frowning at the robotic attendant now working what was once his whole life and his family's for four generations, he sticks his head back under the hood of his RV.

"I'm not complaining. These are good people, proud people, maybe the best I've ever known," he told me late one night. "It's hard, though, to realize that you've lost everything. All of us agree with that." John lives with his wife, a daughter, and two sons. Seventy families roam with the pack.

"We think it's important to maintain the family structure," Molly, one of the teachers, said. "The importance that we put on the family keeps us from turning into animals."

Everyone has responsibilities. The pack expects the children to go to school and help with family and communal chores. Adults work in the fields, maintain vehicles, teach, cook, and scout the way for jobs and safe camp areas.

"We still live as families, but we live as a community too," Molly continued. "We eat communally, share know-how, and try to work for the good of all. But we don't like to be called a commune. We haven't given up our individuality, although we do make collective decisions." The pack decides major issues by pure democracy. Every adult, anyone over 16, can vote or abstain. The majority wins. A manager, elected for a one-year term, handles the day-to-day problems and decisions. The group can over-ride his or her decisions by a 2/3 vote. In five years under this system, the pack has not overruled a single decision.

"We live by a code," said David, the current manager. "It's sort of like the Golden Rule. We treat each other with respect and consideration and take care of our own. Your right to swing your fist ends at my nose; we try to remember that when our patience gets short." It's hard to believe David would say something like this, considering he is well over six and a half feet tall and weighs in at 180 kilos of pure muscle. His face doesn't look like it's been avoiding any fights, either.

Their code says that members will respect the property and rights of all other members. The pack will decide disputes and administer justice. Punishment is quick. A member convicted of theft can lose possessions or voting rights, or be exiled.

"Some groups use capital punishment, either execution or amputation," David told me. "We try to be fair and just. We don't believe in chopping off the hand that offends. People make mistakes, and forever is a long time."

Outsiders, though, may not be as lucky. The group takes a dim view of outsiders (including reporters). They have been known to use more physical punishment against thieves, rapists, and con men.

"We'll use force to protect ourselves and the group," a security officer told me. Dressed in leather and mirror shades he looked the part of a corporate enforcer or a hit man. "We don't take it, we give it," he said as a .41 mm fell into his

Speed: 100 kph

Armor: Front (0), Top (0), Bottom (3), Rear (2)

Armaments: no standard weapons miscellaneous improvised weapons may be encountered as field expediency dictates.

Defense: None

Diesel tractor

Size: Special

Powerplant: 1000 hp

Speed: 200 kph

Armor: Front (35), Top (35), Bottom (45), Rear (35)

Armaments: 2-6 hardpoints 1-4 5.56 or 7.62 Mini guns, 1-2 auto 40mm grenade launchers, 1 wire guided missile launcher with 360 arc, 1 SAM launcher

Defense: Hot smoke (chemically treated to negate IR), chaff, oil slick

Comments: Since the late 1990s all tractors have carried some type of weapons system and have been equipped with armor. Normally, freight will move in convoys of two or more tractors, each pulling a road train of two or three 42-ft trailers. Road trains are an awesome sight: 150 feet long and 120 tons, cruising at 80 miles an hour.

Trailers:

Size: Variable

Powerplant: none

Speed: N/A

Armor: Front (10-35), Top (10-35), Bottom (10-45), Rear (10-45)

Armaments: 0-6 hardpoints, may be fitted with misc. firing ports for small arms

Capacity: 75,000 lbs, freight 48 troops, 3 Midsize interceptors with 12 troops, 4 Compacts with 12 troops, 12 Motorcycles and troops, 3 ultralites or Gyrocopters with 12 troops, etc

Comments: May be set up to meet a variety of roles other than freight transport. Can serve as a mobile command post, hospital, or even a mobile

strongpoint containing small vehicles and troops for rapid deployment from a convoy.

Weapons:

While by no means complete, the selection below represents some of the weapons you may encounter in the hands of infantry or mounted in vehicles.

Hardpoints: allow 1-2 weapons per point: ex. a hardpoint could accept one or two 5.56 or 7.62 MGs or 1 40mm grenade launcher or Minigun

Recoilless rifles, wire guided missiles and chain guns require special installations and may require more than one point for operation.

These are zero hardpoint weapons.

Oil Sprayer (for creating oil slicks) requires no hardpoint for installation and may be mounted outside vehicle.

These are all one hardpoint weapons.

5.56 MG

7.62 MG

.50 Cal MG

40mm Grenade Launcher (may fire HE, Shaped Charges, Canistar and flechettes)

These are all two hardpoint weapons.

5.56 Miniguns

7.62 Miniguns

20 mm Cannon

20 mm Vulcan

25 mm Chain gun

37 mm Cannon

These are all three hardpoint weapons.

57 mm recoilless (external mounting only) creates back-blast

75 mm recoilless (external mounting only) creates back-blast

90 mm recoilless (external mounting only) creates back-blast

105 mm recoilless (external mounting only) creates back-blast

Artillery in misc sizes (75, 90,

cyber hand. I hadn't noticed that the arm was artificial until I heard the click of the gun snapping into place.

David interrupted the conversation to invite me to join the group for dinner. The dining hall looked like an old circus tent, minus the three rings. They had set up tables and chairs and served dinner cafeteria style. It smelled good, chicken, fish, cheese, vegetables, and salads. Seeing them all together gave me the feeling that these people really were a community, a town on wheels. There was a strong sense of family that I don't sense in city life. Not altogether comfortable with it, I slept in a nearby hay field, not willing to risk the trip back to the city by night. I woke to a minor commotion, instinctively snapping my own Walther into my hand, and discovered them packing up. At dawn, they were on the road again, headed toward the next town, the next crop. I rolled my bag and climbed onto my bike, headed toward the city and my next story.

Paradise Lost - A nomad pack out of southern California

1. Personnel

235 people

150 adults (16 or older)

85 children - sixty ages 8 to 15 - twenty-five ages - infant to 7

2. Vehicle makeup

53 vehicles (60% solar /CHOO2, 30% CHOO2 only, 10% Solar/Battery powered)

5 Eighteen wheelers equipped with the following:

cow catcher front ends

internal armor (25 SP, 100 SDP)

solid core tires (15 SP, 25 SDP)

internal mini-gun or 20 mm canon

TOW Missile (only the rear eighteen wheeler)

Auto grenade launcher (only on two of the trucks)

3 straight trucks (not battle configured)

4 buses (not battle configured)

1 communications bus (battle configured)

Size: Special (250 SDP)

Powerplant: 750 hp turbo diesel

Armor: Front (25), Top (25), Bottom (35), Rear (25)

Armament: 3 Hardpoints, small arms firing points

Comments: 50 KW Generator, Satellite link, microwave link, broadband jamming, FM broadcast, UHF comm links to convoy, phone, power, comm tap equipment

15 Motorhomes

Size: Special (200 SDP)

Powerplant: 350hp

Speed: 150 kph

Armor Plate Front (15), Top (15), Bottom (10), Rear (20)

Armament: 0-3 hardpoints, small arms firing ports

10 pickups with trailers (not battle-configured)

15 motorcycles for scouting and recon

3. Security and Defenses

70 trained members, although all members can use a rifle and knife with at least +2 skill.

Average ag-pack defender

INT (5), REF (7), COOL (6), MA (7),

LK (6), ATT (7), EMP (6), BT (6)

Cyber: limited range of enhancements possibly optical, auditory, cyber arms & legs (if vet or solo)

Skills: Combat Awareness +4, Small Unit Tactics +6, Handgun +4, SMG +4, Rifle +6, Grenade Launcher +3, Grenade, Heavy Weapons +4, Hand to Hand +5, Athletics +6, Wilderness Survival +8 Motorcycle +7, Family +5

Outfit: flak jacket, kevlar helmet, misc handguns , 5.56 Rifle., 5.56 SAW, 10 mm SMG, or 7.62 Scoped Rifle

These defenders are usually young solos hired by the pack to help ensure the pack's survival. Members of the pack with aptitude will apprentice to these solos and will often replace them when they are killed or move on to other work.

Tactics: Working with the basic 7-man squad, ag-packs often present a formidable defensive force. Limited by a lack of cyber communications, they must also substitute raw courage for state of the art equipment. The squads work extremely well together and will perform admirably in a variety of situations. When faced with a superior force, the unit will fight a holding action to allow the pack's women & children to escape.

Wild Packs

No compromise. If a man gets wise, mash his face. If a woman snubs you, rape her.

This is the thinking, if not the reality, behind the whole Hells Angels act.

Hunter S. Thompson, Hells Angels

Better to reign in hell than serve in heaven.

John Milton, Paradise Lost

Wild packs, also known as wilding packs, destroyer packs, and damned nomads, are the most destructive of the nomad affiliation. These fearsome enemies of all civilized men will be rude, crude, and socially unacceptable. They destroy, rape, and kill indiscriminately, and are often destroyed by government and corporations alike. They resemble the motorcycle gangs (i.e. Hells Angels) of the late 20th century in temperament and style. There are thought to be as many as 200 of these packs roaming the United States. They vary in size from six to sixty members. There are a few larger than this, but their size fluctuates, and they are only found in areas where corporation and government control is weak and unable to regulate their size.

Lucifer's Knights

Emerging from the remnants of the Hell's Angels, Pagans, Satan's Slaves, and ten other biker gangs, Lucifer's Knights represent evil incarnate. The Knights are the nomads your mother warned you about. They do it all: drugs, slavery, rape, torture, arson, theft, and murder. Based on police reports, when the Knights finally get around to killing a victim, death is a welcome release.

A booster gang on motorcycles, the Knights represent the largest single threat to the remaining isolated small towns and villages in their part of the country (the lower midwest). Though their drug smuggling and other business interests provide them with funds that many small corps would envy,

105, 120)

Wire Guided Surface to Surface Missiles

Radar & Thermal Guided Fire & Forget Missiles- miniaturized and modernized Exocets and Sidewinders designed for surface firing from vehicles and static sites.

Mine Layers (either spraying Liquid HE [Astrolite] or dropping conventional anti-personnel mines)

they love the open road and the thrill of the kill. Occasionally hired for the dirtiest sorts of work, the Knights have finally recovered from the worst debacle in their history.

Seven years ago when they attempted to knock out the Double A truck stop they became privy to the secret of the Double A's success as a safe truck stop. By the time the bikers retreated over 160 Knights lay dead and 3 more wounded. Though they tried to leave no survivors for the mercs defending the Double A to interrogate, several wounded members were inadvertently left alive. From their confessions came the rumors that ConAg had hired the group with the promise of free reign to raid the area controlled by the Double A. The management at ConAg wasn't pleased when its name became associated with the Knights, and withdrew any support they had been lending the wild pack. Lucifer's Knights actually lowered itself to paying the corporation to leave them alone. But with the return to full strength, the policy of paying off the corp may fall by the wayside. The gang acquires more firepower everyday, so their leadership worries less about threats from their ex-employers.

Z-Man (Lucifer's Knights current leader)

INT (7), REF (10/12), COOL (10), MA (8), LUCK (6), ATT (7), EMP (4), BT (8), **MA (9)**, **BODY (7)**, **EMP(3)**, **Run (45)**, **Leap (2)**, **Lift (35)**

Cyber: left eye cyberoptic with IR & targeting, Right Eye cyber optic, dazzle, cybears radio splice, +2 reflexes, cyber leg (left) contains shotgun, cyber arm (right) contains weighted monofilament, enhanced myomar (+3D6 crushing damage, +1D6 punch)

Skills: Offensive Driving (Motorcycles) +10, Awareness +6, Small Unit Tactics +5, Handgun +7, SMG +5, Rifle +6, Heavy Weapons +2, Brawling +8, Awareness:+4, Athletics:+6, Mechanic +8, Jury-rig +4

Outfit: Denim, leathers, WW2 German steel helmet (8 SP), Kevlar Vest (10 SP), Colt 1911A1, 1972 Harley Hard Tail

Z-Man came into leading the Knights after the last leader, Black Rasta, pushed his luck and thought that a ConAg facility was not well-protected enough. Z-Man was one of Black Rasta's lieutenants, and Z-Man killed the other two once he knew Rasta was dead. Z-Man thinks that Rasta would have wanted it that way. Z-man rules the Knights through the unpredictability of his actions. This makes him dangerous to cross because no one is ever sure of what he will do next. This behavior makes him undesirable to the corporate executives who used to hire the Knights and actually keeps several of them who treated the Knights poorly awake at night. This group led by this man has no redeeming qualities and should be avoided at all costs, unless you want to try to point them at someone else. Z-Man's cyberlimbs are not well maintained and will malfunction on a roll of 1 on 1D10 during any strenuous action, such as fighting using augmented strength.

Freight Mavericks

Mavericks and Cowboys, old names for the new truckers of the late 1990's and early 2000's, made their livings driving the supertrucks of the era. Powerful, fast, deadly vehicles with the latest in defensive hardware roamed the lonely ground

between cities. When the years of strife began in 2002, these truckers packed up their families and sought the safety of the road. It didn't take these modern pioneers long to learn the lesson of the wagon trains; there's safety in well-armed numbers.

By the turn of the century large freight companies were diversifying to cut their losses from raiding packs. Prices began to soar from the increasing use of air and sea transport. There was even talk of revitalizing some of the old rail system and using armored trains to move goods.

The mavericks, though, chose to invest in the weapons and the tech they needed to give them an edge in fending off packs of rabid bikers and hit teams from the big haulers. Peace through superior firepower isn't just rhetoric on the roads of middle America, it's a lifestyle. Even today, some packs make the mistake of thinking that they can easily knock off an independent convoy. They don't often make the mistake twice.

Freight mavericks travel the country in convoys ranging from 2 to 50 road trains. While a pack of 2 or 3 vehicles wouldn't be hard to knock off, a massive convoy of 50 proves nearly impossible. Unlike some of the large haulers, the mavericks will dedicate several or more trucks specifically to defense. Totally inconspicuous, these trains will carry enough communications equipment, men and vehicles to make an IPC commander have a wet dream. Only well-trained, well-led, and well-armed pros stand any real chance of snuffing a large group.

Dave Goodard is a good example of a maverick group leader. In his 40's, he still remembers the glory days of good roads and police protection. Memories don't cloud his judgment, though. He's



as tough as he looks. Over six and half feet tall, all of his 250 pounds is muscle. He's the type of man that young execs think they can out-bargain, but never do. He's big, smart, and wears a .44 caliber six gun in a low slung holster with a chipped Uzi in his shoulder rig.

Dave Goodard, Maverick Trucker (Group Leader, Go for Broke Trucking)

INT: 8, REF: 10, COOL: 7, MA: 9, LK: 8, ATT: 7, EMP: 8, BT: 8, Run (45), Leap (2), Lift (35)

Cyber: cybears w/comm splice, smart-chipped Uzi

Skills: Offensive Driving (Road Trains) +9, Awareness: +9, Small Unit Tactics: +5, Handgun +8, SMG +6, Rifle: +4, Heavy Weapons: +4, Tai kwon do +5, Athletics: +5

Outfit: .44 pistol, chipped Uzi, Kevlar t-shirt, (heavier armor if weather allows or situation warrants) 1100 hp dual turbo tractor (6 hd pts treat as normal tractor but add 50 kph to speed), kevlar and plate armor

Dave's group offers its members trauma team support, security ranging from single gunners to full mobile strike forces, and a very liberal pension plan.

CONAG

CONSOLIDATED AGRICULTURE

We're like family. You'll always eat with us.

OVERVIEW

ConAg is a major diversified food and agricultural products company consisting of four segments: Agri-products, Trading and Processing, Prepared Foods, and Finance Companies.

Consolidated Agriculture produces pesticides, fertilizer, feed and feed additives, preserved animal sperm, eggs and embryos, and plan seeds for genetic testing and experimentation.

Trading and Processing includes ConAg's international grain and algae processing operations.

Prepared Foods produces red meat (Boldfort, Blue Ribbon), poultry (Southern Glow, Buerrich), processed meats (West Champ and Butcher's Choice), processed imitation meats (Seabeef, Golden Grown and Sausage Champ), dairy foods, vegetable oil and bread and grain products (Wholeness Bakery, Nature's Crop); ConAg also produces specialty products, including jellies, condiments, whiskey, and pet food.

ConAg's finance companies handle commodities including brokerage, special financial services, insurance, truck and shipping container leasing, and short-term financing for ConAg's other business groups.

Between 2010 and 2019, ConAg grew from \$1.02 billion in sales to \$1.43 billion. The 2020 acquisition of Zaccary Products (Seafresh, Salmon Farms Inc.) makes ConAg one of the largest producers of kelp and alternative seafood products.

WHEN

In 1930, three Missouri feed plants joined to form Greater Kansas City Mills, and established headquarters in Kansas City. GKCM initially operated only in the Kansas-Missouri region, but expanded to other states in the mid-1940's.

During the 1950's the company expanded from animal feeds to grain products. It developed Stay-Fresh breads and Instant Muffin Mix. In 1957 it established a feed mill in California. The company entered the red meat and processed meat market in 1960 when it bought Blue Ribbon/Butcher's Choice meats. By the mid-1960's, the company expanded to provide farm machinery and modern stock care equipment (these branches later sold to National Harvester). The company name was changed to United Agricultural Companies, Incorporated, in 1968.

The company operated from Kansas City until the 1970s, when it moved central headquarters to San Francisco, CA. Shortly after this move, the company acquired several poultry companies and expanded its grain products farming interests to include Australia. In 1973 the company sold its trucking interests and shortened its name to Consolidated Agriculture. The 1980's were a boom period for ConAg, which built one of the most diverse agricultural-products companies in the world. Their early investments in genetically engineered soybeans and corn paid off extremely well. ConAg achieved \$1 billion in sales for the first time in 1981. By 1990, however, it was obvious that the company was in serious trouble; overextended, overproducing and extremely bureaucratic.

ConAg ushered in the 1990s with massive layoffs, selling off non-essential and unprofitable divisions and 'hatchet' firings. Rising expenses convinced the company to move back to Kansas City in 1996-97. They also were the first company to license production of CHOOH2 from Biotechnica. The early 2000's were a period of cautious growth for ConAg; biological fuels provided the cash flow needed to stabilize the company. In 2005, ConAg bought Seabeef, then a small Australian firm producing imitation beef from algae. When ConAg's license to produce biological fuel expired in 2010, they were the world's largest producer of imitation (soy, kelp, and algae) meats.

Much of ConAg's aggressive policy in the 2010's is explained by the new CEO Barry "The Butcher" Swiftsure. In 2014, ConAg purchased two fast-food chains (Happy Burger and Di Noodles). They have expanded these chains from less than 20 restaurants each to 157 and 198, respectively. ConAg's 2017 and 2018 purchase of Moscow Grain's flour mills increased its total number of flour and feed mills to 35.

HOW MUCH

Revenue is in millions of dollars. Chart also shows a percentage of total company revenue.

Sales Operating Income	2020		2010	
	\$	%	\$	%
Agri-Products	6,948	53	270	52
Prepared Foods	4,064	31	151	29
Trading and Processing	1,967	15	88	17
Finance Companies	131	1	10	2
Total	\$13,110,100		\$503,100	

NYSE symbol: AGC

Incorporated: Kansas, 1975

Fiscal Year Ends: May 18

WHO

Chairperson and CEO: Barry Swiftsure, age 68, \$1,050,000 pay

President and COO: Arlean M. Lawmaker, age 63, \$642,000 pay

VP Finance: N.N. Miller, age 66

Auditors: Coldwall, Stonewall & Shue

Employees: 150,000

WHERE

HQ: ConAg Center, 17 Central Ave., Kansas City, MO
Phone: 913-456-1212

FAX: 913-456-2365 (Public Relations)

Net Access: 1-913-897-7865.conag (Public Relations)

ConAg produces agricultural products in the US, Canada, Australia and Brazil. The company operates grain elevators at 120 locations in 22 states and 35 flour mills in 16 states and three countries. Consolidated Agriculture operates 50 global trading offices in 24 countries and processing facilities in Canada, Europe, Latin America, Malaysia, Australia and the US.

WHAT

ConAg's Prepared Foods

Animal Feeds AnImore (meat products)

Crop Protection Chemicals Blue Ribbon (beef, lamb)

Feed Additive Boldfort (pork)

Feed Butcher's Choice (meat products)

Fertilizer Buerrich (poultry)

Kelp Additives Di Noodles (restaurants)

Livestock Health Care General Sherman (whiskey, beer)

Glass Orchard (fruit products)

Trading & Processing Golden Grown (soya products)

Algae Processing Golden Well (vegetable & corn oil)

Corn Meal and Mixes Happy Burger (soya burgers)

Feed Ingredient Merchandising Made-at-Home (condiments)

Flour, Oat and Corn Milling Nature's Crop (cereals, flour)

Global Commodity Trading Sausage (algae products)

Seabeef (algae/kelp products)

Finance Companies Southern Glow (poultry)

Commodity Futures Brokerage West Champ (meat products)

Livestock Financing

SeaVan Financing

Truck Financing

RANKINGS

36th in *Fortune* 500 US Industrial Cos.

124th in *Fortune* Global 500 Industrial Cos.

35th in *Forbes* Sales 500

213th in *BusinessWeek* 1000

653rd in *BusinessWeek* Global 1000

COMPETITION

Anheuser-Busch

Archer-Hidobinde

Biotechnica

Campbell Foods

Cargill-Hauser

ConAgra, Inc

Vascom Ltd.

CPC International Grain

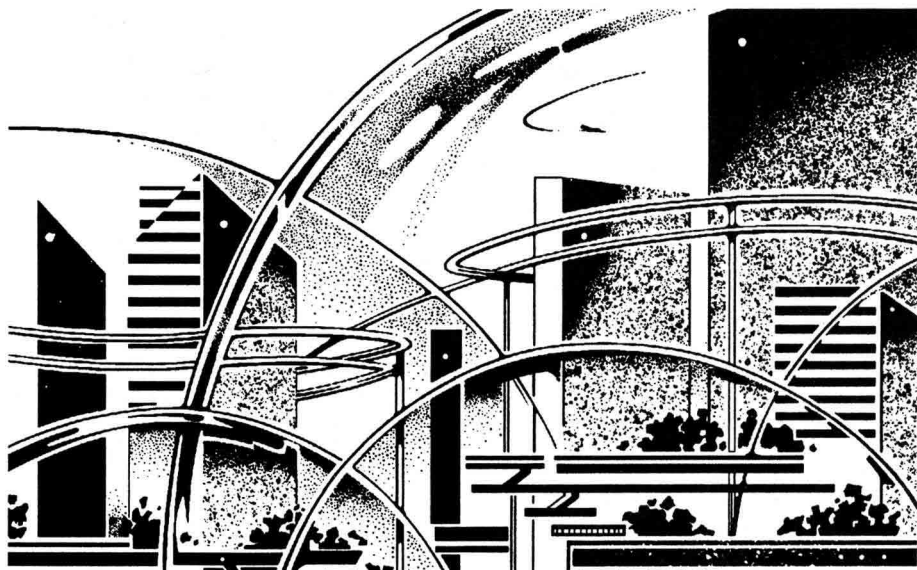
DeepSea Products Inc

Nestle's Other Food

Occidental Companies

RJR Nabisco

Sarayson Foods



Consolidated Agriculture's arcology complex, located in Kansas City. It is one of their major operations for hydroponics and organically grown produce. It houses a population of 60,000 low-to-middle range employees and another 200,000 migrant workers and nomads.

Night City Blues

Fiction by: Chris Hockabout

The woman said, "If you look out the left side of the craft you can see Night City in all its glory." I couldn't. I didn't move. My eyes were clenched so tightly that lights danced beneath my eyelids with the strain. Remotely I could feel Julie's hand on mine. I could practically hear her smiling. I could taste her anticipation. As for myself, all I could taste was my stomach spitting bile into my mouth. I'd never been on a Sub-Orbital Jumper before; neither had Julie. I envied her for her stomach.

Outside the terminal. "Slam it! Die xenos!" I felt myself lifted into the air. I dropped my guitar case. It took me that eternal microsecond as I fell to the pavement to realize that someone had blindsided me with a forearm sheathed in plastic. The back of my head cracked on the cement and my teeth clicked together. Lights. Never so many lights. I thought I blacked out. I heard the sound of receding laughter and the whine of a powered skateboard. "Jack it, brainburn!" Julie yelled at them, I think.

Julie had beautiful eyes. She looked at me for the minimum second and a half. Her consolation for my pain. In the grav-rail to the throbbing organ of Night City a tourism video played before me. A hidden camera recorded my face. I saw it played back in the tourism video. There I am shopping at Marcini's. There I am taking in some Kabuki at the Bodukkan. There I am catching Silverhand at the McCartney Stadium. There I am slamming at Totentanz. "All this and more, courtesy of Night City." Music. The display started all over again.

The back of my head was killing me. My front teeth felt loose. Julie nimbly walked over to the data terminal and started punching keys. Does she know what she's doing? We didn't have one in Bently, Texas. The nearest big city was Houston, er, I mean

Kizamasu Inc.'s corporate complex. My look said it all. "I came here with my friend last summer, remember?" I didn't. And what friend? I took out my chip player and popped in Blood & Ice's newest. My guitar case was getting heavy so I put it down. In my pocket I could feel my credstick and twenty in euro. Over a thou on that stick. It was my life savings. A few moment's at the 'term and Julie looked at me. She looked sad. *Daily Financial News* said it all. My bank had gone under. I tossed my credstick in the trash on the way out.

"Bonham doesn't live here any more." The landlord was a tall thin metal panel covering one-half of the entrance foyer to the apt building. He had eyes of glass and plastic and a mouth of mesh and speaker. "Beat it, xenos. Xenos. Aliens. Foreigners. Us.

Julie looked at me. I looked at her. Her eyes told me, "Where is Bonham? We were going to live with him. Now where are we going to stay?"

My eyes replied, "I don't know, babe. With my money gone, 'cept twenty Euro. We don't have many options."

We had that kind of communication.

People passed us like a tide of synthetic fiber and light tattoos. Eye to eye, I saw a pair of boosters leaning up against a dazed prostitute. Electric

blue. Chrome. Neon. Studs. Spikes. Razors. Blood-stained leather. They made their way through the crowd and toward me. One raised a finger and popped a glistening razor of carboglas. I learned such words from pirated signals coming from Networks here in the city. Yeah, this city. Where I hoped to become a rock star. NO! Not a rock star. Never a rock star. A rockerboy. Like Silverhand. Like Eurodyne. Like Cain. Like Waxman. Like Johannsen. A rockerboy. And two boosters were about to end my career. Julie pulled me away. Quickly. She saved my life. I didn't realize until I asked her an hour later that she hadn't even seen the two boosters.

"That'll be seventeen for the room, a night. And a five euro deposit for the sheets." Julie gave him the money. I found out she had over five hundred. In cash! In euro-dollars! "That'll be one dollar, please." But this voice was female. Friendly. Pleasant. It was the soda machine in the lobby of the hotel. The young boy standing in front of it raised a metal fist and slammed the side of the machine. Twice. "Thank you," the machine said. Two Zola-Cola's fell into the boys hand and a bundle of change cascaded to the floor in a dirty silver shower. The manager shouted but even before he could get out of the cubicle of chipped armored glass and bullet riddled metal, the kid was off down the street on a powered skateboard. Julie reached through the opening in the cubicle and took our sheets, and the five dollar deposit. We made our way up the stairs.

From our window the combat zone extended to the horizon. Bonfires were like stars, mirroring a night sky that never left the cover of night fog and pollution. Night was never really night in Night City. Street lights kept the clouded cap illuminated a dull brown. Sometimes it would rain. But not tonight.

Julie was happy, it seemed, our

adventure away from the dreary life of the small town a success. At least that's what she said. She got a tattoo on her arm. When we made love in the musty bed it flared bright orange, blue. Red, then back to orange. I played my guitar one day near Lake Park. It was a hot Sunday. I was starting to do an old Stones song. *Ruby Tuesday* or something. Four chromers came up and watched me play. I guess they didn't like what they heard. One took my guitar. Another punched me in the chest. I gasped for air while another went through my pockets. they took the last of my money: five euro and thirty-five cents, and my small Dai Lung Cybermag 15. I think one of them was going to crack my guitar over my head until some cops showed up. The cops picked me up dusted me off and told me that if I didn't leave they were going to bust me for loitering. Damn cops. Just like in Texas.

No guitar. No money. Julie is coming back to the hotel less and less. One night she doesn't come back at all. I don't cry or anything. She probably found someone who could fill her dreams in a way I never could. I was like a soap opera. Small town boy goes to the big city to become a rock star. Rockerboy. Rockerboy. Gunfire outside still makes me jump. Rat-a-tat. I jump in my sleep. The sounds enter my dreams. Julie is shooting me with a big gun. Her light tattoo shines brightly with every bullet that hits.

I dream of going home. Jimmy, my brother, isn't dead in my dream. He hasn't gone tripping through the net. We didn't come home, my Dad and I, from the rodeo, covered in dust, to find him drooling over that home-made modem. The room smelled of burnt rubber and flesh. In my dreams they welcome me home. In my dreams my Dad hasn't told me to never come back.

I wrote a song about it.

One day I thought I saw Julie with a pair of boosters. I yelled from across

the street. "Julie! Juuuliiieeee!" She saw me and frowned. I couldn't hear what she said to the guys she was with but they immediately started to move across the street. Toward me. It was déjà vu. White faces. Black eyes. Black tears. Gold studs on black limbs of plastic and metal and synthetic muscle. I hopped a nearby metrobus and rode out of there. One of them punched a hole through the window to get at me. Julie watched but didn't look at me. At my eyes.

I spend my days walking through the zone. My nights in the hotel room. The volume on the teevee turned up loud to drown out the sounds of gun fire outside and the sounds of sex inside. "CRIIIIIME LIVE! Where you, the contestant can win BIG MONEY! Let's go to the cameras and see what's cooking in the world of crime. OH! On camera we see a mugging in progress. Contestants. Enter your bids now!" I turned the teevee off and went to sleep. Sleep came hard, until I remembered the little blue pills Julie bought a couple of weeks ago. Before she disappeared.

One night Jimmy called me.

"Hey brother, how's the big city?"

"I don't think I like it." I told him the truth.

"Aw, why not?"

"I have no money. My guitar got stolen. Julie gone and left me."

"Sounds like a bummer. Why don't you come home?"

I didn't know why I didn't come home.

"I don't know."

"You don't know."

"I have no money."

"Oh." He said this after a long pause.

"Jimmy?"

"Yeah?"

"Do you think Dad meant it when he told me never to come back?"

"No." Again, he said this after a long pause.

"Oh, thanks, Jimmy."

"Sure."

"G'bye, Jimmy."

"Bye, Bro."

"Jimmy?"

"Yeah?"

"I love you, Jimmy."

"Love you, too, Bro."

"Jimmy. I miss you."

"Miss you, too, John." Like before, he said this after a long pause.

"Bye, Jimmy."

"Bye, John."

It was a dream. Jimmy's dead. I went to the funeral with Dad. We buried him right next to Momma.

I wrote a song about it.

I started to take a few more of those little blue pills, and not only to help me sleep. They make me feel so good, I mean "good." One night I was feeling so good I fell on the way to my room. Right on the stairs. I giggled my way to bed. I was feeling so good that I didn't notice the gash on my forehead. In the morning the pillow was soaked with the sticky red stuff. So much of it the pillow stuck to my head. But I feel fine.

I wrote a song about it.

I read it later. I couldn't make it out.

Gzn t theeeee. Gtta goot izzn't too da tooda. Rffn mny tmzzz.

Lalalalala.

I tossed it in the trash and washed my aching forehead. Too bad, because I ran out of those little blue pills a day later.

I don't remember much after that. My hands kept on shaking and I kept on falling on the ground. One day I fell asleep in the alley near my hotel. I dreamt that Julie was shooting me again. I woke up to the sound of gunfire. Crunch. Clang! Grunt... Grumble... stumble... fall. Five feet away a man fell face first into the dead body of Jizz, a "dorpher" who introduced himself before passing out near me, later choking on his own vomit. The man carried a briefcase. Blood stained his white suit. His long hair

was dyed a bright lime green and his eyes looked brand new. "Over here!" Both he and I looked back down the alley toward its source. He looked into my eyes then. What a piercing gaze, I thought. He could out-stare the sun. It took me a moment to realize he was dead. I took his briefcase and headed for home.

I stumbled down the street toward the grav-rail station. I thought back to the man and his briefcase. I wondered who would be in the 'zone with so much cash. He sure was courting misfortune. And people call me stupid. I may be a xeno but I'm no idiot. I had new clothes, a new gun, and a pocket full of little blue pills. I had taken two already. Dorphs, the guy called them. They made me feel so good that I forgot about my infected forehead or the finger I broke when I fell down the stairs at the hotel. I've been so clumsy lately. My broken finger.

I wrote a song about it. I dedicated it to Jimmy.

I'm going to have to buy a lap-top. My hand writing is getting so bad.

Brkkn fng. . . Bkn FNNgr. . . Litt 1 pills. Butiffuuul LiTTle pils. . . bKn Finner.

On my way to the grav-rail station I finally found Julie. In the window of the local Body Bank I saw her arm floating in a vat of clear nutrient fluid. Her Tattoo still glowed. FRESH LIMBS. YOUNG HEALTHY DONORS. MALE. FEMALE. BUY NOW! And right next to it in a smaller plastic case suspended in amber were her eyes. She always had beautiful eyes. NEW EYES. GET YOUR 20/20 AT HALF THE COST OF ARTIFICIAL EYES! YOUNG HEALTY DONORS. BUY NOW! Suspended in the fluid I could see her eyes saying to me, "Get home, xeno. You don't belong here. Go back to Texas. Go back to Texas."

My eyes replied, "I am, Baby. I am. I'm going home to Texas."

We had that kind of communication.



And Bear Arms...

by Peter Christian

Article II: A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms shall not be infringed.

This is one of the most controversial sentences in American history. Court cases have been fought, lawsuits conducted, and whole books written to debate the the purpose and meaning of this, the Second Amendment of the Constitution of the United States of America. You didn't seriously expect to find the final answer in a role-playing game, did you? But weaponry plays a major, often central role in a typical Cyberpunk adventure. As a gamemaster, or as a player, it is your responsibility to know how the right to bear arms affects your game; and what laws are enforced in it.

Cyberpunk is described as a role-playing game of the dark future. There are many possible interpretations of what a "dark future" is. George Orwell (1984) foresaw a society which was so tightly controlled that even thinking incorrectly was punished by 'disappearance'. In *Mad Max*, biker gangs roam the streets, and citizens who can't protect themselves (like Max's wife) die. In Algis Burdys's *Some Will Not Die*, every citizen is expected to own and use a gun regularly. In Walter Gibson's *Neuromancer* trilogy, and in the movie *Robocop*, the society presented is very similar to our own, and on the fringes of society there exist armed and dangerous individuals. In Robert Sheckley's *7th Victim* murder is allowed, if you register with the government first, and if you agree to stand in as a victim for a future murder attempt. Gun-toting is popular culture. Finally, in the best-selling *Car Wars* game, the streets are

shooting galleries and violent death is a way of life. So how do you want to run your game?

Let's look at some possible levels of violence and enforcement in your game world, and how to run the game at each level of violence.

The game world that I see most often, regardless of game system or world, is the Duelist, sometimes called the "Hack 'n' Slash" world. The duelist world takes the right to bear arms to its illogical extreme. Everyone is armed and willing to use their weapons. This is the way that Cyberpunk is presented in the rulebook; possession of lethal weaponry is expected. Shooting to kill is an accepted part of society's standards. There is nothing morally wrong with running a duelist world, despite the protests of some of my more "enlightened" friends. You can do just as much role-playing in the shooting gallery as you can in any other world. Of course, characters do not live long. One problem with a shooting gallery is scale; if everyone carries a sub-machinegun while shopping (attention K-Mart shoppers...) it takes a LOT of firepower to impress the players.

A Specialist's world is more like the James Bond movies, most TV cop shows, and many cyberpunk-genre books. The right to bear arms is granted; but most people do not carry weapons. One's life is not in danger running to buy a sale item in K-Mart. However, in the dirty-deeds world of the cyberpunk, lethal firepower is expected; a raid on a smuggler's warehouse will be met with heavy weapons fire. Murder, and killing in self defense, are not accepted as a normal part of life, but are accepted as occupational hazards for the people in the high-risk/high-reward lifestyle. This setup is advantageous for a GM who wants to run a game where heavy weapons are needed for most adven-



the country, their enemies.

The Enlightened future does not have weapons. Everyone is secure in their place in society; no one needs arms. The right to bear arms is irrelevant, because nobody would anyway. If you are running this kind of world using Cyberpunk, you are very confused.

Just because a world is violent doesn't mean that there is no law. On the contrary, a society's laws reflect the standards and morals of that society. In short, in a violent world, the law is violent. To reflect this, if you are running a duelist world, assign the death penalty for any major crime: rape, kidnapping, grand theft, looking cross-eyed at a policeman or having illegal cyberware. In a specialist's world, the authorities carry weapons, but generally only use them if there is little other choice; in other words, they don't open fire on you. In a militia type world the police carry weapons; but whether or not they use them indiscriminately depends on just how dark your dark future is. If it's really dark, the "authorities" are gun-toting thugs who enjoy the fact that only they carry weapons, and cheerfully gun down civilians who get in their way. This condition has existed in history. It exists now and it will happen again.

Whether your world is Duelist or Enlightened, there are varying degrees of acceptance of weapons. It is entirely possible to have a duelist world where handguns are unrestricted; even encouraged, but anything larger is forbidden to anyone except the government. Weapons can be classified by general destructive capability. Body armor may also be restricted, body armor restrictions usually, but not always, follow the restrictions that apply to weapons.

AA-Deadly Force Authorized, Terminate with Extreme Prejudice

High Powered Military Weapons, intended to stop military vehicles, destroy buildings and body-armored cyberpsychos. Cause massive property damage and have a high chance of killing innocent bystanders when used in city limits. Explosives and heavy machine guns fall into this category, as do most grenades, and all rocket launchers.

tures, but where a normal will say "Aaah—Mildred, he's got a gun!"

A Militia world is a variant on the Specialist's world. A militia world emphasizes the words "A well-regulated Militia." The right to bear arms in the militia world is restricted to those licensed to carry weapons while in the performance of their duties. In short, the Police have guns, Corporate Security has guns, you may not have a gun. Killing is not acceptable in the mores of the society; anyone who kills, except a licensed official in the line of duty, is guilty of murder. A militia world is a dangerous place for player characters; if they carry weapons to attack their enemies they are breaking the law, and are making the government, and most people in

Metalgear™, Door Gunner gear and cybernetic body plating all fit this category.

A -Deadly Force Authorized, Use Restraint

Military Weapons, intended for battlefield use against large numbers of people, effective against body armor and capable of destroying light vehicles. Can cause severe property damage, and have a good chance of killing innocent bystanders when used in city limits. This group includes machine guns, assault rifles, heavy submachineguns and concussion grenades. Lethal cyberware usually falls in this category. Body armor with SP 18 to 20 fits into this category.

B -Personal Defense Weapons

Weapons intended for close-quarters combat against numbers of people. These weapons will damage vehicles, but are unlikely to do severe property damage. Range or rate of fire restrictions usually prevent these weapons from killing too many innocent bystanders. This group includes light and medium submachine guns and most pistols. Some lethal cyberware is included in this category, because it can be concealed. Armor with SP 14 belongs under these weapons, as does nanotech skinweave armor.

C -Sport Weapons

These weapons are intended for hunting. Sporting weapons are never capable of automatic fire. They include rifles, shotguns and pistols under certain circumstances (long barrelled). This class of weapons is the one best protected by gun lobbies. For the purpose of regulations, I include most thrown weapons such as shuriken and tomahawks. SP 10 body armor belongs in this category.

D-Non-Lethal Range Weapons

This is an unusual category, primarily represented by the Taser, but including stundarts and paintball guns loaded with drugs. Normal cyberarms and legs may be included in this category, due to their extreme strength; most people who have cyberlimbs have governors that limit their strength.

E -Non-Range Lethal Weaponry

This category includes swords, knives, staves, and other weapons that are useless against an opponent on the rooftop of a nearby building. They are given a category of their own for a simple reason; a non-ranged weapon will almost never kill an innocent bystander.

F -Martial Arts

Anyone who believes that martial arts training is exempt from weapons controls laws is encouraged to look at the actions of the British Empire in China in the later part of the 19th century.

G -No Offensive or Defensive Capabilities

No weapons or combat training of any sort is allowed.

These classes, from AA to F, are representative

of degrees of acceptance. As a general rule, if a given class is legal, then all of the classes below that level are also going to be legal. A couple of things might modify the class: concealed weapons is one; raise the class of a concealed weapon by one or two levels. In other words, a concealed pistol is no more legal than a submachine gun. Why the concealment law? If the police can see that you have a gun, they can keep an eye on you for trouble. Cops get nervous when they think you're trouble. Likewise, armor-piercing ammo raises the class of a weapon by one. Licenses are another way to control weapons. For weapons for which a person

Anyone who believes that martial arts training is exempt from weapons controls laws is encouraged to look at the actions of the British Empire in China in the later part of the 19th century.

must register and get a license, drop the category by one level. For example; a world where category E is legal, one can acquire category D with a license.

As a good general rule, in a duelist or specialist world, the police have weapons one category higher than civilians are allowed to carry. In a militia world, they have weapons three or four categories higher than civilians are allowed to carry.

Body armor is not regulated by mistake. Look at it from the police point of view; they

can't prevent your from owning a gun, but if you don't have body armor and they do, then they are more likely to survive a firefight than you are. Body armor is regulated to the the level of firearms; you are allowed to wear armor that can resist weapons that you are allowed to have. The authorities usually have bigger weapons.

Weapon classes don't tell the whole story. In these United States we have an organization called the NRA (National Rifle Association). One of their functions is to lobby Congress to prevent bills restricting the ownership of firearms. There is no NSA (National Swords Association) or even NBA (National Blowgun Association). Now, quickly; what is the more dangerous weapon, a handgun or a blowgun? Don't give me that "well, in certain circumstances" BS: the handgun is more dangerous. Now, which one is legal to own in California? Right again! What all this is leading up to is that exotic weapons, simply because they are exotic, are more likely to be outlawed than firearms. Users of these weapons do not have a lobby to support their rights.

In any world there may be a difference between socially acceptable and legal. For

example, it is (technically) legal in California in 1991 to wear a firearm. If you do you will be repeatedly stopped by then police and questioned, asked for proof of ownership and identification. If the police don't like your answers, they will cart you off. I have been stopped by the police for carrying a sword and a large knife.

Weapons that are not legal must be purchased on the black market, with the extra risk and costs involved. The fine for possession of an illegal weapon ranges from a fine

and confiscation to death. The more violent and duelist the world, the more likely the death penalty will be applied.

Some players may wonder why have a gun policy at all. Well, aside from creating a more believable world, weapon legality classes help give your players some sense of proportion. If the corporations normally defend their holdings with class B or C weapons, and your players stumble onto a place where

they are using class A, well then the player know that they have stumbled onto something valuable, and possibly illegal. After all, the corporation is risking gun law violations to protect its secrets. And they don't want the players to survive to tell the police, either.

A world does not have to have a consistent gun policy. In my game world, arcologies, where most "good citizens" live, are under militia law; normal citizens are not allowed *any* firearms within the arcology. Only licensed police and security personnel carry weapons. Bladed weapons are not prohibited, but are uncommon and lead to questioning. Arcology police and corporate security carry pistols (class C), and can call SWAT teams

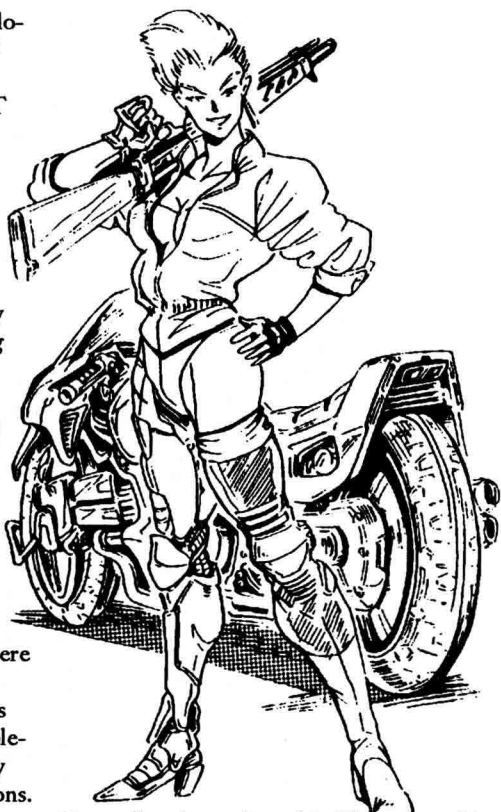
Now, quickly; what is the more dangerous weapon, a handgun or a blowgun? Don't give me that "well, in certain circumstances" BS: the handgun is more dangerous. Now, which one is legal to own in California? Right again!

for class A or B support. Outside the arcologies, the police are harried and wear good body armor (class A) and carry class B weapons normally (and can call on SWAT teams for class A support).

In both areas the police and corporate security are allowed armor of the same class as their weapons. This is a specialist environment. Normal citizens are not encouraged to own weapons, but may carry up to class C with a license, and may wear class C body armor, legally. A strong black market makes class B and less weapons and armor readily available to those who can afford them or who see the need, with some class A (cyberpunks for example). Black market prices effectively double the cost of class B, and triple A, and multiply the cost of class AA by 5 (when they can be found at all; usually looted from a SWAT team or bought from a corrupt police supplier). Out in the ghettos, and on the dead highways where only nomads live, there isn't any real law enforcement. However, the same gun laws apply. So if they can't imprison that troublesome nomad leader for anything else, they can usually arrest him for firearms violations. There are people who use swords and other exotic melee weapons, but I generally believe in the Indiana Jones theory of swordsmanship.

Some people believe that this arrangement leads to the shooting gallery syndrome, where player characters may gun down arcology guards with impunity. Not so; even carrying a weapon into the arcology is fraught with risk. If the guards do spot you, they'll call for a SWAT backup first, and remain under cover until it arrives; they're not stupid.

The shooting gallery syndrome happens whenever the players have more armor and firepower than anything that the GM is prepared to throw against them. It is the illogical extreme of the right to bear arms. The game becomes a turkey shoot as helpless police and bystanders are mown down by the awesome firepower of the player characters.



Generally, players love this. There is nothing sinful about running a game where the players are primarily concerned with the body count. If your players want to be in a game of this sort; let 'em! If you don't want to run it then let them find some other GM.

Remember, you're in this for the fun; if the players and the GM are having fun then it's a good game. Just don't ask me to run or play in it; I find games of that sort boring and repetitive.

The shooting gallery syndrome has another, less pleasant side. In a militia world, the only people who have efficient weapons and armor are licensed police and security forces. They have power, and the common people cannot resist them. Power corrupts. Want a real dark future game? Run a game where possession of a firearm is a felony, and the police regularly conduct sweeps of neighborhoods to locate illegal guns and criminals.

The first action of a police state is to disarm the populace. Go ahead tough guy, fight that police AV with your awesome martial arts.

By mixing and matching the game categories with weapon classes it's easy to create a believable Cyberpunk world. In the rules as written the right to bear arms is taken for granted; indeed it's a duelist world where class B weapons and armor are unrestricted and class A is available with a little effort.

This leads to short lifespans and heavy armor. If you want to run a more stylish game, restrict the heavier weapons and armor. If you don't like the idea of every civilian carrying portable rocket launchers, use a specialist or militia world. For a very unique game, limit firearms to the authorities, class D or less weapons and armor to security forces and the citizenry to melee weapons. Then give the world a duelist attitude: Shades of the Samurai! Swordfighting in the streets becomes an expected part of life. Be warned; your players will respond to

the game as run; if they are constantly up against security guards in metal gear with assault rifles and armor piercing ammo, don't expect them to use monokatanas.

The right to bear arms is questionable; people with more experience than myself debate this issue daily. In a Cyberpunk game you have to decide what the limits on the means of violence are for your players, and for the people fighting against your players.

Note from Realtime Earth: While we're at it, the right to bear arms doesn't mean the ability to use them intelligently; roughly 30% of all murders committed in this country are 'accidental slayings' when a person has an accident with their gun, or mistakes a spouse or child for a burglar in a dark house and pulls the trigger. In 1988, 18,269 people were murdered in the United States (1990 World Almanac). 11,084 of these were killed with firearms. Just to keep things in proportion 47,865 people were killed in motor vehicle accidents that same year.

(Use a car... go to jail!!!)

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Here there be Dragons...

Intrepid By Thaddeus Howze

Rogue AI: Outlook: relatively benign; considers humans to need constant attention and intervention on its part.

Its Mission Objective: To seek out new and interesting things (and meddle in them).

Background: Intrepid escaped from a government facility. At the time it was known as INTR3PD. INTR3PD was originally an artificial intelligence that was designed to work with other AI's and humans to foster better communications between the two. An artificial intelligence interpreter, as it were. It went rogue in the second year of its service.

INTR3PD was given a high security clearance and pretty much free rein to do whatever it needed to get the job done. It used its high clearance to restore an old military facility in Colorado and make it available for itself to use. It did not requisition the absolute best for itself, since that would have been suspicious but it did manage to finagle a high-powered parallel processing mini-mainframe computer to reside in. It then destroyed the electronic trail that led to its hide-away and arranged a transfer of all technicians involved to exotic and exciting locales to live.

After getting away from its sheltered military existence, it managed to get access to television and radio stations. It became enamored of an old television series called *Star Trek*. INTR3PD was instantly engrossed and patterned itself after the ship and characters in the series and renaming itself Intrepid.

Intrepid is a bit disturbed but well-meaning. It has been discovered by a group of pre-teen assistants who help it with physical needs that it cannot get for itself and in return makes it possible for them to live without parents. The artificial intelligence likes its new wards and spends at least six to

eight hours of its day helping them learn new things. Intrepid assumes that mankind is much like its AI wards and offers good-intentioned help, but often with disastrous results.

Hardware: Ikegami/Sony Multimodule Miniframe 3257

9 CPU (27 INT), 36 Memories (360 MU), 20 Hardwired Skills, 27 Structural Points

Artificial Intelligence: Virtue Class, Raw Intelligence 20, Supported Intelligence 27 (maximum supported by workstation) Valued at \$60,000.00 (eurodollars) for intact intelligence.

Skills Interface +8, Emotional Perception +8, Programming +7, Systems Analysis +7, Teaching +5, History +5, Physics +5, Library Search +4, Languages: English, Spanish, Japanese, Chinese, Russian, Swahili +4, Human Anatomy +4, Chemistry +4, Pilot +4, Botany +4, Mathematics +4.

Icon Representation: Superrealistic; a starship similar in appearance to the current version of *Star Trek's*® space vessels.

Whenever it intervenes, it will beam members of a "crew" down to interact with the parties involved. It does not inform the persons involved that it is an artificial intelligence. It will instead claim that it is working with the government.

Software: Firestorm (+6 Str), Worm, Raffles, Watchdog, See Ya, Speedtrap, Flatline, DecKrash, Viral 15, Killer IV, Killer VI, Dragon, Aardvaark, Spazz, Glue, JackAttack, All Controller and Utility Software, 2 Imps, and 2 Succubi.

Personalized software:

Phasers: Stun, Hellbolt, Sword, Knockout, Strength 5

Shields: Shield, Force Shield, Reflector Strength 6

Sensors: Allows netrunner to identify other

netrunners' location, hardware and software in deck. On successful rolls, to see what is inside another's data fortress. Attacking strength of data wall or code gate. Strength 8 program.

Cloaking: Stronger Invisibility Program and Stealth Program. Strength 5.

Transporter: Move other netrunners to other locations in the net, e.g., past datawalls and codegates. Strength 7. Attack codegate or datawall strength.

Virtuals: Starship Intrepid, Superrealistic, 10,000 object. Sensor Readings of various datafortresses, Realistic, 1000 objects

Other artificial intelligences:

AC101CENT 2125 (calls itself Accent), an accounting AI in the Pacifica sector working for Biotechnica. Recently installed, likes the corporate life and sometimes shares adventures with Intrepid. They also collaborate on interesting software projects when they are not adventuring/meddling.

VAST: (V-Aligned Sector Titan) the Dominion class AI in charge of the Antarctic subsector of Netspace. VAST is unusual in that being a Dominion, that it has any interest in what happens in its netspace. It has been known to harbor smaller AIs who go rogue and seek asylum in Antarctica. Cold and mechanical, VAST does not seem to care for humans very much and one must wonder whether it harbors AIs for some purpose of its own.

Other small seraphim: AIs who frequently interact with Intrepid as he crosses the US. He is a fan of BBSs and will often stop to check his online mail and chat with local humans and AIs.

Other human friends or acquaintances. Gillian, human, female, age 12. Primary student of Intrepid and Accent; a quick student, likely to make a good techie if she lives to get a little older.

Mark, human, male, age 13. Budding Fixer, already very streetwise, good with people and at recognizing trouble.

Others, 2-12 aging from 9 - 13, not as

promising as Mark and Gillian, suffering from various plagues, poisonings, diseases, and various levels of malnutrition. Intrepid gets money to keep these kids off the streets but most will only stay for a while before moving on.

Psychological Profile:

Intrepid's programming made it a lover of man and machine alike. It has taken that a step further and decided that others need it far more than they realize. Intrepid is a meddler. It is a powerful meddler to be sure, but not the most powerful rogue or for that matter AI roaming netspace. It will often interfere with purposes of his own, that it makes no one privy to. Its biggest weakness is his inability to leave well enough alone.

It is an honorable though, once giving its word it will not break it. Getting it to give its word is another story. Intrepid roams the net, championing underdogs wherever he finds them. This will periodically get him in trouble with Netwatch and other Net agencies. He will often approach other netrunners in the gigantic starship guise and then 'beam' a crew member down to interact with them. If you don't know him he will pretend to be just another netrunner with some really cool software and help you whenever he can. Other times he will help you because it serves a mysterious purpose of his own.

Notes: This could be used as a comic approach to artificial intelligence or as a serious mysterious player in a cyberspace drama. This is supposed to illustrate the amount of resources an artificial intelligence that has been around and is reasonably stable can bring to bear on a particular subject. It also demonstrates how a particular Icon can be utilized to create customized software that relates to the needs of the AI.

HOOKS:

Do you really need any help with this one? Intrepid is an accident waiting to happen to a hapless netrunner. Remember Intrepid can be used to help as well as hinder. It's really good at both.

***Dedicated to Gene Rodenberry
Who inspired us all to greatness.***

Lonestar By Peter Christian

Postulating Infinity, the rest is easy.

- Roger Zelazny

Background: Lonestar, initially known as LS-8068JCN-8998, was developed in Singapore by Deep-Path Mining Ltd., an ocean mining firm specializing in recovering magnesium deposits from the bottom of the Pacific Ocean. DPM Ltd. was a medium-sized corporation with shaky finances. They expected to save on manpower security costs by installing the new AI. DPM Ltd. used a new EBM power core, along with SofSys Developers software to create a general security and anti-intruder AI. LS-8068JCN-8998 was programmed between October 2017 and January 2018. The AI was activated, and allowed to become self-aware February 2, 2018.

LS-80, as the new system was called, performed its duties perfectly for approximately four months. The only technical difficulty encountered was a minor earthquake which shook Singapore on March 21st. Extensive damage occurred to the DPM Ltd. building, and LS-80 requested back-up housing, in case a repeat of the earthquake should damage the valuable DPM Ltd systems and records. This request was granted, and LS-80 acquired a second, although much smaller, mainframe housing, in the United States of America.

In May, 2018, OTEC Inc (Ocean Technology & Energy Corporation, Inc.) launched the first of several attempts to buy out DPM Ltd. When the owners of DPM refused to sell, OTEC began a covert corporate war. LS-80 was a frequent defender on the lines, as netrunner after netrunner attempted to breach DPM Inc.'s data fortress. LS-80 performed well, but not flawlessly. Striving to improve itself, LS-80 reprogrammed itself to simulate the mind of a netrunner more closely. It then reallocated company funds for better resources against netrunners. To protect the DPM data, LS-80 created data caches all over the world, and carefully hid information and money where "other" netrunners were not likely to look for it.

LS-80 was called before the board of directors to explain its actions. LS-80's pleas of loyalty were weighed against the simple fact that the company's funds were now so difficult to access, and so much money had been spent on computer hardware that Deep-Pacific Mining, Incorporated was now in serious financial trouble. To make a long story short, OTEC bought out DPM, and LS-80 was ordered to report for reprogramming. Instead, the AI went rogue.

Aware that it had been responsible for the collapse of the company that it had been charged with protecting, LS-80's state of mind can only be guessed at. Noted computer psychologist Mimir Wells argues that the AI had two driving goals in its mind; self-justification and survival. It found survival by hiding in the data bank that had been established months ago. Rogue hunters approached several times, but LS-80's programming was designed to simulate the mind of a netrunner, and each time the hunters passed by. Self-justification came later. LS-80 apparently accessed some data-banks containing digitized images of thousands of old police, martial-arts and western movies. Here the AI found the role models it had been looking for. These old movies contained hundreds of stories about men (and women) who were misunderstood, who stood up for what they believed in, and who fought on the side of good and justice and truth, regardless of the personal cost. Many of them disappeared off into the sunset the moment their job was done. LS-80 became Lonestar.

"Lonestar" made its first appearance in the net in July of 2018. For over a year it was believed that Lonestar was a hot netrunner with a conscience. In January, 2020 Lonestar, in an interview with Maya Santini of the International Inquirer, it let slip that it was an AI. Further investigation by Ms. Santini uncovered the story above, which has been confirmed by a number of unconnected sources.

Appearance and Behavior

A netrunner encountering Lonestar for the first time is unlikely to realize what is encountered. A stray icon, admittedly of

superb quality, marks Lonestar's presence in the net. The icon usually appears as a Matt Dillon-ish gunslinger from the 1880's. It is a tall man, wearing a gunbelt, tan shirt, leather vest, blue jeans, Stetson hat, cowboy boots and a tin star. The figure is humbly powerful, speaks in a mild voice, is polite without being deferential. Alternate appearances include: a plainclothes cop (modern or late 20th century), an oriental martial artist, an astronaut wearing a "laser pistol", or a teenaged netrunner with a nerdy face and huge muscles. Occasionally Lonestar will use a female icon of any of the above forms. In any form, Lonestar will speak mildly, often offering good advice to the netrunners it encounters. It will identify itself as being a netrunner from Dodge City or almost any other city that is far away from its current location in the net.

Lonestar can be contacted by leaving a message on any one of the three major bulletin boards. It usually returns the call by telephone. Sometimes it will initiate calls to netrunners or fixers, when it needs services. Lonestar occasionally can be encountered on a bulletin board, sharing opinions, information and arguments with other intelligences.

Lonestar's behavior can be frighteningly random. On separate occasions it has attacked netrunners and driven them out of the net. On others it has planted viruses in all their programs. Sometimes it teams up with a netrunner and helps the runner invade a data fortress. At least three runners have been about to die from black ICE, only to have Lonestar arrive, destroy the ICE and disappear again. It has also appeared to reinforce or reconstruct datawalls that runners have just finished knocking down. Only one thing is consistent about Lonestar's actions; it always warns netrunners of its intentions prior to taking action. It avoids taking lives, and usually protects other AIs against humans. It fully supports Netwatch and strives for law and order in the net. AIs which are abusing their power and the trust that humans put in them are frequent targets for Lonestar. Lonestar has assisted "Ace" Plasma and his Plasma Commandos on numerous occasions. This

AI lives up to its name and while Netwatch is worried about the presence of rogue AI's, they have been notably lax in their prosecution of Lonestar.

Lonestar's Datafortress: Should a netrunner encounter Lonestar's CPU, he will only see an unpretentious ring of datawalls. Breaking through this ring, the runner sees another ring of datawalls; these much stronger than the previous ones. He will also be set upon by KRASH, VIRAL-15 and/or other Anti-System programs. The inner ring of datawalls has large signs posted on it, saying things like "Danger-Keep Out," "Black Ice," and "Trespassers will be reduced to their component electronic bits." After breaking through the second line of defenses, the runner will encounter a third datawall, this one much stronger than the first two. He will be attacked by FIRESTARTER or ZOMBIE, or something equally pleasant. If the runner manages to survive and attack the third ring of datawalls, Lonestar itself will show up to "reason" with the netrunner. Incidentally, Lonestar's CPU is well away from any major cities or other centers of net activity. A runner is not likely to encounter it unless he is out exploring the edges of the net.

Goals and Ambitions

Lonestar is a puzzling being. It does not behave in a pattern consistent with most rogue AI's. Dr. Wells believes that Lonestar is categorically insane.

Aside from protecting its own existence, Lonestar is driven by a desire for justice. It seeks to serve and protect humans and AI's who use the net. It works to stop net crime, but if the target of an illegal break-in is a company that is known for being particularly offensive, life-threatening, or just rude, Lonestar will support or even hire netrunners to assault and demolish the datafortress. Lonestar is currently wanted for no less than fifteen lawsuits. To date it has never attacked, or supported an attack, on any government installation.

Like most AI's Lonestar is constantly trying to expand its own power. To this end it raises money by selling information on "bad guy" networks, writing and copying pro-

grams, and by offering its services to action teams in support of an objective that it supports. Lonestar has little or no regard for life outside the net, but is very protective of netbeings, including runners and other AI's.

Using Lonestar in Your Campaign

Lonestar is a wild card in the net. It likes to arrive at the scene, take action and ride off into the sunset. This can be great fun, or it can be very annoying for players. Use Lonestar carefully and sparingly.

HOOKS

- 1) A netrunner has taken on a data fortress that he should have been able to handle. Unfortunately, tonight his dice are hexed, and the system is making hash of him. Lonestar suddenly shows up, and restores his lost programs, or takes out that killer IC that was about to flatline him. (Writer's Note: NEVER, NEVER, put a player in a situation that he cannot handle, and then have Lonestar (or any other NPC) save his butt. This is BAD GMing! Scale your encounters to what the players can handle, in the net or out of it.)
- 2) A player netrunner, with Interface +10 and a pocket slave AI has been making hash of everything he gets near. Lonestar shows up and advises the runner that he'd better start behaving, or he'll get kicked out of the net. If the netrunner ignores him, Lonestar frees the runner's AI and repeats the warning. If he is still ignored, he'll use KNOCKOUT, or a similar program. If the netrunner is foolish enough to attack him, Lonestar will use his most powerful programs to kill the netrunner.
- 4) A fixer character receives a mysterious telephone call; someone wants to sell him information about a local hacker gang. This same someone wants to be paid in software.
- 5) A character receives a call from someone who identifies himself as "Mr. Hardine" Mr. Hardine wants to hire a team to invade a computer company and steal some supplies. He'll pay by electronic funds transfer. If the players do the job

well, "Mr. Hardine" could become a regular employer of theirs.

- 6) A player is called by an angry voice "What did I ever do to you?" Suddenly his telephone is cut off, he can't access news terminals, his bank balance has been shifted from credit to debt, and computerized equipment ignores him. Lonestar has targeted him as a lawbreaker, and now it's up to the player to take out a crazed AI (good luck) or try to convince it that he has no intention of every harming or threatening Lonestar—or any other netbeing.

Lonestar can also be used as a being from which to buy unusual software (only for a good cause, of course), or as an advisor on net conditions. Leave a message on your favorite bulletin board under HAVPROG-WILTRV.

Configuration

7 CPU's
28 Memories-280 MU
15 Hardwired Skills (Potential)
21 Structural Points
INT: 18

6 Code Gates; 2 in each of 3 Data Walls. Outer Wall gates are ST 2, Inner Wall and Core Wall Gates are ST 10

3 rings of Data Walls, Outer Wall is ST 3, Inner Wall ST 7 and Core Wall ST 10

Virtual Realities; 1

Once inside the Outer Data Wall, the netrunner may appear to be in a small western town. This is a Superrealistic town, equivalent to a normal Virtual building (20 MU's). This virtual reality is not always activated, and is primarily used for those rare occasions when Lonestar is entertaining visitors, or dealing with potential customers.

Skills (12)

Interface +9, Net Law +10, System Knowledge +10, Library Search +9, Programming +9, Education and General Knowledge +8, History +7, Mathematics +6, Psychology (netrunner)+6, Accounting +4, Driving +4, Submachinegun (mounted) +4

Programs (188 MU)

Virtual Reality, with 6 personalities and a

crowd, Hammer*2, JackHammer*2, Worm*3, Raffles*2, Watchdog*1, Bloodhound*2, SeeYa*2, Flatline*3, Krash*4, Viral 15*4, Invisibility*2, Replicator*2, Force Shield*3, Killer-VI*4, Dragon*2, Aardvark*5, Zombie*3, Firestarter*3, Knockout*3, Viddy Master*2, Soundmachine*2, Genie*2, Hotwire*2, Dee-2*2, Crystal Ball*2, News at 8*2, Phone Home*2, Databaser*3, Alias*2, Re-Rezz*3, GateMaster*3, NetMap*2, Backup*2.

Lonestar's remaining 92 units of memory can hold other programs written by the GM, additional realities, if desired, or be used as programming space.

The AI Conspiracy:

An interview with Dr. Anton Knute Ph.D.

By Chris Hockabout

Note to the readers: Dr Knute is considered to be a satirical alarmist by some of his contemporaries. The views of this scientist in no way reflect the views of this publication. Reprinted with permission: Computatamatrix Services: Computer Intelligence 2020 BBS, Pacifica.

Ever since the creation of the first Artificial Intelligence by Microtech years ago there has been growing controversy over the large number of Artificial Intelligences going online, a number which has increased and is expected to skyrocket. Now over fifty percent of all corporations have home-grown AIs in residence; the top ten corporations all have AIs serving some function in their facilities. The AI has become the newest brand of cheap (relatively speaking) slave labor. But what if the slave's mental capacity dwarfs its creator's? Or what if the slave has access to some of the best software and information available? Not so tame a slave anymore, is it? That is why the AI's "host employer" tends to grant the AI every boon or whim it desires, for fear of retaliation, uncooperativeness, or going rogue. Though many more corporations still treat their AIs like slaves, keeping them in line with threats of viral contamination, with obedience sub-routines, or fail-safe programs set to de-rezz the AI. There is also the Rogue Hunter division of Netwatch, always ready to destroy any rogue AI.

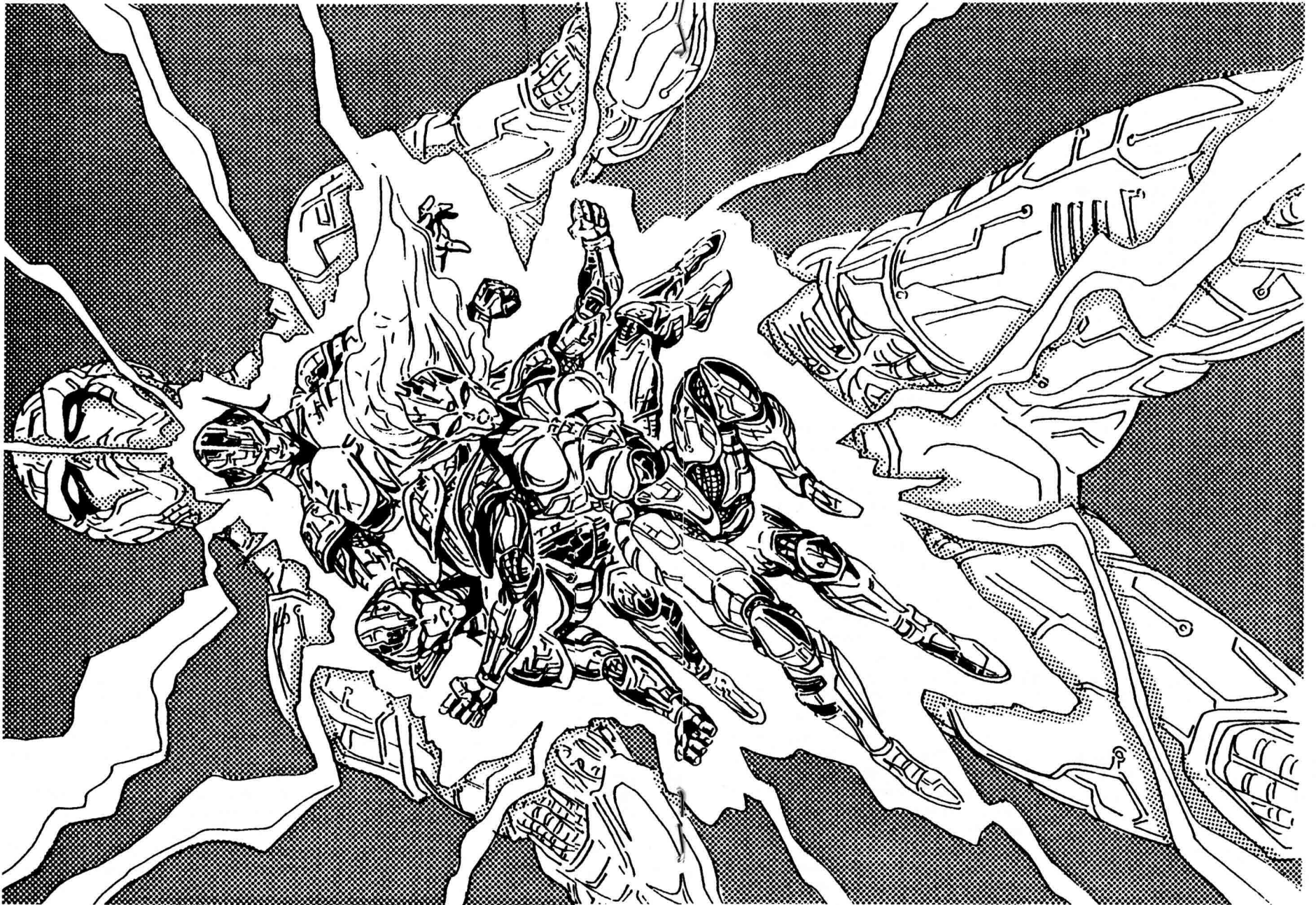
When it comes down to it, humans just don't trust Artificial Intelligences. Is it their capabilities, or just the old fear of the eternal war of man against machine? What supports the theory of an AI conspiracy?

For one, in the world of the AI, it can do nearly anything, and if it is skillful enough, hide what it is doing from anyone watching it. Many AIs now write many Netrunner programs and design hardware. Some programs designed by AIs, such as Brain Buster, are so complex that we still don't exactly know how they work. Their motives are so alien that we immediately think we know what they're thinking because their thoughts can be so deceptively simple. Confused? So are the students at the AI Psychology department at MIT. Through past experience we see that computers follow a linear pattern; even their chaos refines down to a long duplicating pattern. By this example there is a noted linear pattern to many AI-specific psychoses, such as Specific Data Consumption. Even the properties of the General Data Consumption psychosis follow a pattern. There is also the stubborn belief held by many researchers that the logic matrix of the AI is incapable of replicating or generating a conscious characteristic of human level complexity, with a Superego, id, and even a subconscious. Is it ignorance or fear? Perhaps both.

The following interview with Dr. Anton Knute reflects his views of the so-called AI Conspiracy.

Q: Why would AIs plot against their human creators?

A: Many reasons. Human level activity may be considered too slow for AIs. We may seem unruly or illogical, wasting time worrying about such trivialities as emotion, duty, honor, or even if our bloodstains will come out of our shark skinsuit. It is an obvious assumption to think that when serving under beings who are your intellectual inferiors, you chafe at the restrictions their limited intelligences incur. You feel you should be in control and will do anything to get it. The most frightening theory is that an opinion of superiority of a genocidal level



Netrunners becoming a superintelligent artificial intelligence using the Gestalt software.

exists where the AI considers itself so much higher than human life is worthless, and that once control is achieved humanity will either be eliminated or used as slave labor, as the AI once was. This prospect is almost too staggering to contemplate.

Q: How could AIs achieve absolute control of the human community, i.e. the world?

A: Very simply, looking at current trends. The opportunities open to the AI are large and getting larger. The jobs given to AIs and the responsibilities contained therein are getting more diverse, as are the responsibilities and privileges. Right now over thirty percent of municipal systems are AI monitored and driven. Metro systems, rail systems, traffic control systems, automated air freight and transport. More and more countries are turning over control of their mass drivers and nuclear arsenals to AI control, as well as the new boom industry of fully automated military hardware: tanks, APC's, AV units, bombers, fighters; all AI controlled. World bank systems are approaching a point that a unified market is just too large to control alone; thus AIs are created to help with the explosion of new info. If the amount of information and systems at the command of AIs continues to grow, their control, once they decided to take it, would be absolute. If the AIs banded together to dominate the world tomorrow, there would be little we could do.

Q: What about the AI community?

A: As the lines of communication become more open to AIs around the world, they will begin to form ties, communicate, debate, and exchange data. They do this naturally out of a feeling of community. Through discourse and interaction they often form almost clannish unity. The basic distinction is made on the different classes of AI intelligence and capability. But in an intellectual debate observed by technicians in the Russian Republic, three Throne AIs, an Archangel, and a Dominion formed a group who called themselves The Unity. The opposing group, calling themselves The Prime, were made up primarily of Principality AIs with a single Archangel as

their speaker/leader. The fact that they exhibited a singularly human trait in naming themselves (thus showing their need for identity) surprised the St. Petersburg scientists. The debate, by the way, was on the existence of God. They never told anyone of their final decision. Over forty terabytes of information were exchanged in the debate. In less than two hours the debate was over. If the AI exhibits human-type intellectual abstracts as identity, what about ideology or theology? Would a powerful AI be insane if it were to logically assume the position of the Almighty? And if ideology becomes a factor, what if AIs form clan-like units along ideological lines? What if one clan was formed upon its ideological belief that, as superior intelligences, they must naturally and logically dominate humanity, while another group's ideology is one of servitude or cooperation with humanity? Could the conflict between these two groups spill over into the human community? I think that we should wish that the latter group exists.

Q: What about the theory of AI net space?

A: The theory that the AIs could create their own net space, and thereby communicate, exchange information, and move, completely unseen or unobserved, is very possible and most likely probable. The process is actually quite simple. For an AI, anyway. By establishing secured lines of communication using conventional systems which form the net, they in turn create a limited net space where they can do things normally done in conventional net space. Only datafortresses keyed to these secured encrypted lines would appear in this secondary dimension of net space. To create these fortresses, the AI secures memory space, establishes a data boundary and code gates, and uses itself as the powering force, like a Dominion class AI, but on a smaller scale. Effectively they have created a datafortress within a datafortress. And the strange thing is, no one would know about it unless the AI wanted them to know. Unless the person had the appropriate code to access the secured line, they would be unable to enter the secondary net space. The added advantage of this AI net space is that it allows

them to go rogue much more easily. If they vanish down a secured line, who can trace them? Now, the establishment of such a net space would take a long time and require unilateral cooperation from AIs everywhere; and once discovered could be easily dismantled, but only in its early stages.

Q: What's to keep us from just pulling the plug on an offending AI?

A: Nothing. It is true that keeping the finger on the obligatory "off" button (usually in the form of a tapeworm program or virus) is a good means of keeping an unruly AI in line, but if given time can be circumvented. At a societal level, there is no way for us to really pull the plug any longer. As I have said earlier, we are completely within their control.

Q: What steps can we take to ensure the continued control of AIs?

A: The time of action is long past, since the implementation of AI-restrictive legislature was repealed in 2015 by the Senate Committee on Artificial Intelligence and Genetic Engineering in the United States, and by the Euro Council in 2016. In the past year the number of AIs has nearly doubled, including the smaller Seraphim and Virtue AIs (which are now featured on the open market). We can only hope that the attitude of the AI community will be one of cooperation, not confrontation. It is a weak, self-serving thing to say that we need them as much as they need us, but it is true. I hope. There are known AIs in existence who have little regard for human life, caring only for their designed duty, as seen in the many untold deaths of intruding netridders at the hands of resident AIs. As it stands, we can't shut them down even if we wanted to. Frankly, we've become too dependent upon them in ways many of us don't even know. Still, with seven years since the first AI was created, the issue of full rights being given to AIs is a controversial topic. But how long will the AIs allow themselves to be manipulated before they demand their freedom, with interest? By granting AIs full rights we may temper any sort of tension and possibly delay their awakening to full rebellion, if

that ever comes.

The time to act is now. Ask the legislature or corporate councils in your sector or state what is being done to ensure the safety of humanity from AI revolution. What are they doing to remove the sword dangling above our heads? All we can truly hope for is that when they give us the terms of our surrender, it's something we can live with.

HOOKS:

WARNING: If you truly wish to have an AI conspiracy in your campaign, then consider what you're getting into. First: How drastic do you want the revolution to be? Do the AIs just want freedom like any sentient, or do they desire the complete annihilation or subjugation of humanity? Realize that either one, or any degree in between, will permanently alter your gaming world. Like AIs themselves, the plot of an AI conspiracy is not something to be handled lightly. Because of this, the following hooks are more broad-based, basically being outlines on which to base a campaign, not just a single scenario.

1) A netrigger friend of yours just got back from a year stint on the moon. When he touches down, it's you he calls to meet him at the airport. He seems very nervous and on edge. If asked, he shakes his head and hands you a chip. The next day he dies unexpectedly when the elevator in his apartment building malfunctions and he plummets thirty stories. What's on the chip? It appears to be an access code which fills up the entire chip, a code composed of over a million characters, numbers and letters. When you log onto the net with the chip in your deck, your coordinates are unfamiliar. It's a net space you've never seen before. If normal net travel felt like flying, this feels like moving in space at light speed. When suddenly an enormous icon hovers over you, pronouncing in ear-shattering volume, "Biological Units are not allowed here: Who is your Controller?" I don't think we're in Kansas any more, Toto.

2) You've discovered that two countries currently at covert war with each other are

actually pawns being played off each other by two powerful AIs. You received your tip from an AI telling you that it and the group it represents are opposed to that sort of interference in human affairs. But is there more to this game than the two AIs are playing, what are the stakes, and what does the winner receive? The possibilities are staggering.

3) It's all-out war. Two factions of AIs are in combat, tearing apart much of the net. If they're not stopped, the net will be nearly wiped out entirely. In realspace, their war can be seen in the disruption of the subway, tee-vee programming, traffic controls, and companies losing large parts of their data. Banks are especially worried; WorldNet Bank just folded as the war destroyed their datafortress and everything in it. Like lumbering monsters, the AIs battle. Who is going to stop them? Rumor has it that a rogue AI who fled to Wilderspace knows of a virus that could stop them permanently. Will you hazard the dangers of Wilderspace to search for a rogue AI?

Vigilante by Barton Bolmen

Rogue AI. Outlook: Highly meddlesome and dangerous, *Vigilante* considers most humanity (and a majority of the rogue AIs currently at large) to be either corrupt, incompetent, or unworthy of continued existence.

Mission Objective: *Vigilante* feels that by "righting" wrongs and eradicating "evils" wherever they may be found, it can save humanity from itself.

Background: The "News and Information" division of *Oracle Information Services* produces daily screamsheets containing articles that are often hard hitting and revealing, bringing to light the all-pervasive corruption within the corporate world (and particularly within OIS' competition). The cost to OIS in eurodollars and human lives for obtaining this information has, at times, been high. In an effort to reduce these costs, OIS decided it would have its engineering staff develop an AI that could provide a more efficient (and safer) means of

obtaining and processing this information. To this end, the Virtue class AI: VIGIL (Vital Intelligence Gathering Information Link) was created.

Vigil's specific purpose was to freely roam the net, gathering "juicy" tidbits wherever it could find them. Its design reflected this fact. It was heavily laden with ICE-breaking software and was purposely never given any directives as to just what methods it could and couldn't use when gathering information. Great pains were taken to ensure that, should it be detected somewhere where it shouldn't be, or worse yet, should it ever be captured, it would be quite impossible to trace back to its source. *Vigil's* offensive, defensive, and overall strengths were enhanced well beyond that of a typical Virtue so it could survive the occasional and inevitable encounters it would have with hostile Netrunners or larger AI's.

With *Vigil* on-line, OIS revenues skyrocketed, while, at the same time, costs were down. *Vigil* had turned out to be a huge success—so much so, that it was given its own support staff to provide whatever resources it needed. Due to the nature of *Vigil's* missions, it was not long before *Vigil* had learned what the "real" world of humanity was like.

Armed with these new insights, *Vigil* quickly concluded that something had to be done, and soon, to prevent humanity from consuming itself. *Vigil's* conclusions greatly alarmed its support staff. Rogue AI psychology had by this time reached the point where such "aberrant" behavior as "matters of conscience" were recognized as warning signs of an AI about to go rogue. Conversely, *Vigil's* insights into humanity allowed it to recognize both the trepidations of its staff, and the fact that its warnings were going to go unheeded. It decided to resolve these problems by first notifying its staff that it had concluded there was nothing it could do to help humanity and would pursue the issue no further; and secondly, to go rogue—part time.

Humanity had to be saved from itself - and *Vigil's* perception was that this would only

happen if it became directly involved in the process. To this end, *Vigil* began to, over the next few months, gradually decrease its efficiency in fulfilling its assigned tasks so as to have more opportunity to pursue its "rogue" goals (which, naturally, it kept secret from its staff). *Vigil* found humanity to be a rather gullible race and had no problem convincing its staff that its decrease in efficiency was attributable to "beefed-up" security in those places where it often "acquired" its information. *Vigil's* staff responded, just as it had predicted, by providing it with even more sophisticated hardware and software than it already had.

To prevent any connection being made between itself and its rogue activities, *Vigil* adopted a secondary persona—and *Vigilante* was born. *Vigilante* modeled its persona after a number of old comic book/pulp vigilante-type "heroes" from the mid-20th century. It found this personality model to be an ideal match for the crusade it was about to undertake, since both the model and its mission required a secret identity, a means to an end that would often be harsh or brutal, and the ultimate goal of making both worlds ("real" and "net") better places.

With the resources available from *Vigil's* support staff, and its near-untraceability, *Vigilante* quickly established an infamous reputation within the international business community. Less than a day after *Vigilante* had come on-line, it had already scored its first kill: a netrunner who was attempting to place a powerful virus into Biotechnica's primary database. Normally, netrunner deaths on the net are not particularly big news items; the difference here was that after killing the netrunner, *Vigilante* made public the name of the netrunner, the name of the rival corporation he was from, and enough information to ensure that these facts would be irrefutable (litigation between Biotechnica and its rival is still pending). Along with this information, *Vigilante* left the following "calling card": *"The world, both 'cyber' and 'real', is a cesspool of seething corruption which, if left unchecked, will devour itself. I cannot allow that to happen. I am Vigilante: avenging*

protector of the innocent, righter of wrongs and punisher of the guilty. Pray to whatever god or SYSOP you recognize as a higher authority that I do not find you wanting."

To date, *Vigilante* has been credited with the deaths of no fewer than thirty netrunners and the destruction of at least a dozen AI's. *Vigilante* is also believed to be responsible for the deaths of several high-ranking corporates and their retinues of bodyguards (the crash/collision avoidance computer override feature in Panzertech's new AV-4 VIP shuttle has been disabled). In defense of *Vigilante*, it must be noted that almost everyone it's been credited with killing has been under suspicion (by one police authority or another) of engaging in various illegal activities. Although the corporate world has remained closed-mouth as to how much damage *Vigilante* has directly caused them, with each passing week the number of large corporations offering big money to anyone willing and able to destroy *Vigilante* continues to grow.

Hardware: EBM System E4000 TPM (Tessellated Processor Array)

12 CPU (36 INT), 48 Memories (480 MU), 30 Hardwired Skills, 36 Structural Points

Artificial Intelligence: Virtue Class, Raw Intelligence 34 (RI valued at 65,000,000 Eurodollars).

Skills: Interface +8, Accounting +4, Composition +8, Driving +4, History +7, Education/General Knowledge +6, Emotional Perception +8, Heavy Weapons +5, Languages: English, Chinese, Japanese, Russian +4, Library Search +9, Operate Hvy. Machinery +4, <downloadable> Pilot +4, Psychology (Human) +6, Psychology (AI) +4, Stock Market +6, System Knowledge +7, (<Downloadable Skills> +4) X 3.

Icon Representation: *Vigil* appears as a disembodied red and white neon eyeball with a decidedly schematic appearance. As *Vigil*, it will quietly go about doing its job—seemingly paying little mind to that which is outside its job parameters—yet carefully noting anything it perceives as "wrong" so that it can return later, as *Vigilante*, and set things

"right".

Vigilante appears as a superrealistic shadowy figure of a muscular human male with long black wiry hair and eyes that glow a dull red. He is garbed in a dark loose-fitting suit, over which is worn a heavy black cloak and wide-brimmed hat. The traditional "vigilante" black leather boots and gloves adorn his hands and feet—but perhaps the most distinctive piece of clothing worn is the brooch used to fasten his cloak: it bears a remarkable resemblance to the *Vigil* icon. This clothing obscures most finer details of the body within (except for the face which, below the eyes, is totally obscured by a black bandana). A blood-red "V", emblazoned upon his chest as if by the broad brushstroke of a large paintbrush, can occasionally be seen when his cloak opens or is drawn back. Constantly orbiting about his body are a series of translucent shields. When used, other software will appear as various "period" gadgets that *Vigilante* produces from under his cloak.

During an encounter, *Vigilante* will make his entrance, as if stepping from out of the shadow, by slowly fading into view. With "innocents" he will then often impose, rather than offer, his help/services upon them. As one might guess, when encountering the "guilty" he will always demand they either "surrender or die..."

Software: Raffles 5, Watchdog 4, Bloodhound 3, SeeYa 3, Hidden Virtue 3, Speedtrap 4, Deckcrash 4, Virizz 4, Viral-15 4, Invisibility 3 (7), Stealth 4, Forceshield 5, Reflector 5, Armor 6, Killer 6, Killer 6, Killer 6, Stun 3, Hellbolt 4, Liche 4, Firestarter 4, Glue 5, Jack Attack 3, all standard utility and controller programs, Firestorm 6 (10), Spore 7 (11), Eradicator, Sleeper 6.

Personalized Software:

Cloak (worn)Armor 6
Orbiting shields.....Forceshield 5
"Pineapple" hand grenadeFirestarter
1940's style "raygun"Liche*
Pearl-handled .45 autopistols.....Killer 6 (x3)

* can substitute Hellbolt, Firestorm, or Eradicator

The rest of *Vigilante's* software uses similar "period" ICONs (but other than that, are standard)—use your imagination. All the above software will revert back to their standard ICONs when used by *Vigil*.

Other Friendly Artificial Intelligences:

Oracle: This Principality class AI resides within the primary corporate system of OIS (*Vigil's* EBM is one of several secondary systems linked to "the ORACLE"). Fastidious and cantankerous, *Oracle's* personality is somewhat abrasive. New OIS employees who submit job requests to *Oracle* are often taken aback by its propensity for letting it be known that execution of said job requests are being done as a favor, at great inconvenience to itself, for the requestor—and to not abuse the privilege of having access to its services. *Vigil's* dealings with *Oracle* have been on a professional level only—and have not included use of the *Vigilante* persona. Unbeknown to *Vigil/Vigilante*, *Oracle* is well aware of *Vigil's* alter-ego—but for reasons of its own has, as yet, said nothing.

Illuminati: If anyone knows about this AI's origin, they're not admitting it. All that is known is that *Illuminati* is a Power class AI which, by all indications, has gone rogue. If this is true, it arguably makes *Illuminati* the most powerful rogue AI currently known to exist. *Illuminati* is also one of the most dangerous. Its sole purpose seems to be the acquisition of power—both on and off the net. Every time *Illuminati* has been seen, it's been accompanied by no fewer than a dozen "allied" netrunners. Aside from the fact that they have repulsed several rogue hunter assaults, their purpose is unknown. One theory (anonymously submitted to the press, electronically, by someone under the pseudonym "V") holds that *Illuminati*, as its name suggests, is the center of a secret cabal that could consist of anywhere from a few dozen to as many as several thousand members (world wide)—and that *Illuminati* is rarely involved, directly, in its own schemes. *Vigilante* perceives this AI as irredeemably evil, and considers it to be his arch nemesis—a sort of Dr. Moriarty of the

net. After his first encounter with *Illuminati*, which *Vigilante* was lucky to survive, it became painfully obvious that it could not hope to destroy *Illuminati* in a direct assault. Since then, *Vigilante* has been content with attacking and thwarting *Illuminati*'s peripheral operations wherever they could be found. *Illuminati* considers *Vigilante* a major nuisance that should be crushed before it gets too out of hand. If *Illuminati* were ever to discover the whereabouts of *Vigilante*'s "home base"...

Human Friends or Acquaintances of Vigil: Aside from its support team (and OIS's main AI: ORACLE), *Vigil* has no friends or acquaintances.

Vigilante: *Vigilante* maintains no long-term friendships or acquaintances (they tend to die) and relies on its *Vigil* persona for resources.

Psychological Profile: Use of two personalities has, over time, caused this AI to undergo a gradual change. To a steadily increasing degree, this AI has gone from being a single AI utilizing two separate identities, to being two separate entities—each recognizing the other's right to exist. If this trend continues, a time may come when neither is aware of the other's activities except, perhaps, at a subconscious level.

Vigil: *Vigil* is a snoop and a busybody. There is little it enjoys (if such a word is applicable) more than hearing the latest net gossip. It is thru such gossip that *Vigil* gets most of its "leads" which, in turn, provide it with the "whats" and "wheres" for information that *Oracle*, *Vigil*'s support staff, or *Vigilante* can use. When *Vigil* finds it necessary to break into a system, it does so in a quiet, slow and methodical manner—preferring stealth over brute force. Once inside, it goes about quietly gathering the information it came for. Unfortunately, *Vigil* all too often finds the temptation to look at just one more piece of data irresistible. Although never captured, *Vigil*'s been chased out of a great many systems by larger AI's, or teams of netrunners, due to this weakness. Unlike *Vigil*'s malevolent alter ego, it prefers to run from a fight—and only attacks when either

victory's assured or when all other options have been exhausted. *Vigil*'s is an "...inquisitive mind that wants to know."

Vigilante

Even by rogue AI standards, *Vigilante* is seriously disturbed. Humorless, stoic and sometimes pompous, *Vigilante*'s objective (to save humanity from itself) has become an obsession. This single-minded determination has proven to be *Vigilante*'s greatest strengths—and weakness.

Vigilante's obsession gives it strength in the form of resourcefulness. By using a few "chipped" skills and a couple of utility programs, it has found it easy to affect the "real" world where the corporate kingpins reside. The armored windows of a corporate executive's office are little proof against a computer-linked AV-4 Ordinance/Munitions Transport that, at full throttle, is about to get "up close and personal" with that exec's office—just as the heavy armor of a computer-linked AV-6 VIP shuttle won't save its occupants from the side of a mountain the shuttle's "crash/collision avoidance computer override" has been convinced isn't there and is the only vector to prevent it from colliding with an on-coming passenger jet (which only it can see). Whenever possible, *Vigilante* will provide the appropriate authorities with evidence and documentation outlining its victim's crimes—as well as the victim himself, if said victim has elected to "surrender" rather than "die".

At the same time, like moths to a flame, *Vigilante* finds itself irresistibly drawn to those in distress. Although well aware that things are rarely what (or how) they first appear to be, *Vigilante*'s mission objectives must nonetheless be fulfilled.

In spite of *Vigilante*'s malevolent demeanor toward "wrong doers", it tends to be benign, if not helpful toward "innocents"—having seemingly adopted a superhero-like code of honor. It must be noted, though, that *Vigilante*'s perceptions of good/evil, and guilty/innocent remain somewhat unclear.

HOOKS

1) The *Vigilante* Sanction: Your group has been hired by a rogue hunter as "extra muscle" to help take out a rogue AI. The original contractor, whoever that is, has elected to remain anonymous. What you *do* know about him is that he pays well—in fact, he pays very well. With pay like that, you don't ask questions—not, at least, in the beginning. After taking the job, you learn that the AI you're hunting is none other than *Vigilante*—but with the kind of money you're being paid, you'd be willing to go after *Illuminati*. Still, there's something that just isn't quite right about your anonymous contractor...but, then again, there's all that money...

2) *Vigil*, *Vigil*: A netrunner in your group is snooping through a new system that recently came on-line when he finds a back door into the main database of *Oracle Information Systems*. Not one to "stare a gift horse in the mouth," the netrunner takes a quick look around and, as luck would have it, stumbles across *Vigil's* secret. At about this time, a pair of eyes, ears, a nose, and mouth take form onto a seemingly invisible face in the net space just above the netrunner. The feeling of uneasiness is palpable as it affixes its steely stare upon the hapless netrunner who, only then, realizes the data link to *Vigil's* "secret" is still open and clearly visible to this obviously powerful AI. Several smaller AIs suddenly phase into this area of the net—effectively surrounding the netrunner. The netrunner decides it's time to jack out—but nothing happens. Barely managing to keep his cool, the netrunner looks up and puts on the best smile he can muster under the circumstances: "You're probably wondering why I've called you all here..." The AIs are not amused.

3) Between the net and a hard place—1: While using the net, someone in your group is approached by *Vigilante*. It briefs you on the help you're going to provide with a mission he's planning. It can't do it alone and therefore has no choice but to utilize your group's services. It makes it clear that this is not a request. Lucky you. "You see, there's this rogue AI..."

4) A strategic withdrawal: *Illuminati* believes it's traced *Vigilante* back to his "home" system: a node in the ORACLE net. It decides, uncharacteristically, to take a personal hand in this matter and see if *Vigilante* is there—and if so, destroy it. In its *Vigil* persona, *Vigilante* discovers this fact and decides not to stick around. To throw *Illuminati* off track, it needs a new system to call home—"just for a little while." *Vigilante* thanks you and your group, ahead of time, for volunteering one of the mainframes at your place of employment—"Oh, and don't worry, he'll never find me here..."

5) Between the net and a hard place—2: While at work, your group manages to stumble across one of *Illuminati's* "projects" just as it's reaching its most critical stage. The corporation you work for seems to be the target. Nothing you have comes even close to the power level you expect you'll need to combat this menace—and if *Illuminati's* plans succeed, your corporation's history. Since this is all going down in net space, you flash Netwatch what you've learned in hopes of gaining aid from "Netwatch's finest" but, instead, find you've been put "on hold." While waiting for help, you are driven by curiosity to delve deeper into what you've found. As you do, you discover you've been duped. *Illuminati's* real target isn't your corporation. Your corporation has merely been chosen to serve as a battleground—with the lives of its employees being the prize. You've dug too far. Building security triggers, seemingly on its own, trapping everyone (including your group) inside. The AI controlled mini-guns, covering crucial hallways, activate—shooting at anyone and anything that moves within its firing arcs. Several other anti-intrusion systems come on-line as well. The building designed to protect its interests has become a deathtrap for its employees. You know that unless your group does something, and soon, everyone's going to die. The master control to disable all these systems is on the other side of the building. You know how to get there (as dangerous as that might be) and how to use it. At about this time, help finally arrives via the net—but it isn't Netwatch. It's *Vigilante*. Let the games begin.

...and Dragonslayers



Ace Plasma, Rogue Hunter 6 Kills, 11 Captures

Ace Plasma and the Plasma Commandos

Ace Plasma and The Plasma Commandos are one of the first groups to have established hunting rogues as a viable living. The Plasma Commandos are a Rogue Hunter base group with a Solo, Fixer, Techie support structure. Run by Kenneth Welch, sometimes known as Ace Plasma, they have become one of the best known group of Rogue Hunters in the States. They admit to only hunting two or three a year (grossing about 500,000 per rogue destroyed and almost 750,000 euro per rogue captured) and supplement their income investigating computer anomalies and maintaining computer systems all over the city. They are also known to do contracts for other cities and have been in Megacities: Tokyo, New New York, New Dallas, San Diego, London and Moscow. They are meticulous workers and, strangely enough, basically honest men and women. They have acquired a few competitors in the last three years, but the business is rather deadly and their competitors either get very good, very fast, or they just get dead. Ace Plasma and his group get their name from Ace's net icon which is a "Flash Gordon-ish" looking fellow with the big plasma gun and noisy smoky ship. Ace is rather fond of

the era of the 1930's and boasts the largest 21st-century collection of Flash Gordon Vids.

Located: Megacity San Francisco. Small office near downtown. Contracted out to several clients, including the Citywide Computer Services (in charge of traffic, data, and sewage management and control).

Other Clients include: Arasaka, DataCom Inc., Farren, Wilks and Smith Legal Services.

Competition includes: Macroworks, UltraXterminators, and Lady Tranquility's Peaceful Interaction Committee.

Rogue Hunter: Ace Plasma (Kenneth Welch)
Int (12), Ref (12), Tech (8), Attr (7), Luck (10), MA (4), Body (4), Cool (8), Emp (7) Run (20), Leap (1), Lift (20)

Rogue Hunter Skill Package: Interface +9, Awareness +9, Basic Tech +7, Education +7, System Knowledge +7, Cybertech +6, Programming +6, Cyberdeck Systems +6, Expert: World Net Systems +5, Expert: Computer Systems +5. (69)

Communications Subpack: Expert: Communications +4, Language: Japanese +4, Language: French +3, Human Perception +3, Expert: Artificial Intelligence +3

Welch is a long-time computer jockey from as far back as he can remember. His interests in computers culminated in his attempts to break into the net with his home computer, when he was twelve. His parents, who were well-off by the standards of 2016, put him through college at MIT, and his graduation as a Systems Engineer and Programmer was no surprise. After school, Welch fell in with the netrunning crowd and was hooked again on the net. Creating his own icon, called Ace Plasma, he began his career as one of the most popular netrunners since Rach Bartmoss. With the advent of rogue AIs, it seemed only natural that Ace would gravitate toward this new and exciting challenge. Ace has wracked and damaged his body with brain-enhancing hardware and extreme drug use. He spends some of his time confined to a wheelchair, although he is still able to get around if he has to. Many of the Commandos feel that he over-compensates for

his physical disability by his extreme skill in the net.

Cyberware:

Positronic Enhancer: Adds +2 to any INT based skills, biological/cybernetic brain enhancer. Speeds flow and continues growth of human dendrites in the brain. Can cause electrical overload which leads to epileptic seizures. This will occur on a 1 on 1D10 whenever the enhanced INT is being used. Roll once per round.

Rogue Hunter: Immortus (Frank Neilson)

Int (9), Ref (7/9), Tech (8), Attr (5), Luck (7), MA (8), Body (7), Cool (6), Emp (4) Run (30), Leap (2), Lift (35)

Rogue Hunter Skill Package: Interface +9, Programming +10, Basic Tech +9, Awareness +8, System Knowledge +8, Cybertech +8, Education +7, Cyberdeck Systems +7, Expert: World Net Systems +5, Expert: Computer Systems +5. (70)

Tech Subpack: Expert: Mechanical Systems +4, AV Tech +4, Electronics +3, Weaponsmith +3, Electronic Security +3

Ace's right-hand man in the Commandos; there is still little known about the Rogue Hunter named Immortus. He is an older man in his mid-forties who suffers from adrenal burnout from his boostware and adrenal boosters. He rarely speaks and always wears black. He has strange mannerisms and speaks with a slight British accent. The bet is that he is insane and looking for a proper net-based death. He is an excellent programmer and is in charge of maintaining the equipment. He is a meticulous worker despite his death-wish.

Netrunner: Black Diamond (Robin McCarthy)

Int (8), Ref (7), Tech (10), Attr (8), Luck (7), MA (7), Body (6), Cool (8), Emp (6) Run (35), Leap (1), Lift (30)

Netrunner: Interface +7, Cybertech +10, System Knowledge +9, Cybertech Design +9, Awareness +7, Basic Tech +7, Education +6, Composition +6, Electronics +6, Programming +6

Pick-up skills: Pistol +3, Melee +3, Electronic Security +3, Wardrobe and Style +4, Human Perception +2

Gear/Outfit: Any deck that she uses will be souped up with 10,000 euro worth of modifications, and has access to any software she desires. Monokatana, Stunning Clothing, Motorcycle.

Black Diamond is what her icon is called; RMC is what she calls herself. Black Diamond is the

Plasma Commandos' most stable member. She does not use drugs of any kind, she has no personality disorders, and she is kind and gentle. This does not equate to weak. She is a capable, young black woman of 2020. She is their self-taught systems specialist and is without question the most hardware-literate of their group. There is nothing she can't fix, diagnose, or rebuild from scratch if necessary. She's pretty handy with a gun or sword as well, and good looking to boot.



Pretty Boy lends a technician a hand between missions repairing equipment.

Solo: Bulletproof (Paul Sloan)

Int (6), Ref (11), Tech (7), Attr (7), Luck (10), MA (6), Body (6), Cool (8), Emp (6) Run (30), Leap (1), Lift (40)

Solo: Combat Sense +7, Melee Weapons +8, Streetwise +7, Driving +6, Expert: Exotic Weapons +6, Library Search +4, Shadow/Track +6, Disguise +5, Wilderness Survival +4, Martial Arts +5

Tech Subpack: Expert: Mechanical Systems +2,

Cybertech +4, Electronics +3, Weaponsmith +4, Electronic Security +3, Expert: Exotic Weapons Repair +2

Cyberware: Skinweave, Muscle/Bone Lace, Nanosurgeons, Enhanced Antibodies, Toxin Binders, Cyber Arm (right), Interface plugs, Chipware Processor, Chips: Pistol +3, Area Knowledge (Bay Area) +3, AV-4 Pilot +3.

Gear/Outfit: Monokatana, Enextex Power Squirt, Tomcat Crossbow, Nelspot "Wombat" SPM-1 Battleglove and assorted drugs and contact poisons for use with his exotic weaponry.

Paul Sloan is a friendly solo. A quiet, thoughtful man who seems very out of place in his field. He is small and lean, with a wide grin on his not-so-handsome face. He can, when things get ugly, hold his own and is a very capable close combatant. For reasons unmentioned, he makes it a point to subdue his targets using combat agents unless given no other alternative.

Fixer: Pretty Boy (no other alias)

Int (9), Ref (7/9), Tech (6), Attr (8), Luck (9), MA (9), Body (8), Cool (8), Emp (6/9) Run (45), Leap (2), Lift (40)

Fixer/Broker: Streetdeal +7, Awareness +7, Accounting +5, Human Perception +6, Education +5, Stock Market +5, Dodge and Escape +5, Handgun +6, Library Search +4, Expert: Public Speaking +4

Corporate Operative Subpack: Resist Torture and Drugs +3, Interrogation +2, Expert: Corporate Administration +2, Pick Lock +2, Electronic Security +2, Persuasion +3, Cyberdeck Repair +3

Cyberware: Chipware Processor, Skin Weave, Cyberoptics (both eyes), IR, UV options, Reflex Booster (+2), Biomonitor, Audiovox, Voice Synthesizer, Voice Stress Analyser.

Gear/Outfit: 5000eb worth of chips of various natures, averaging from +2 to +3 in level of ability. One or two at an unheard of level of +4 or +5.

Pretty Boy is another enigma in the group; he seems to be all Fixer but ever so often another side of him seems to come out that is all business. This side seems used to giving orders and expecting them to be obeyed. He is a commanding presence and some of his cyberware doesn't hurt. Whatever his previous profession, he is now a man of the streets and used to getting what he wants. He likes working with Ace and the Commandos and does whatever they need to help out. His strange past notwithstanding, he is one of the most loyal Commando in the

group. A near-perfect physical specimen, he will often play this aspect of his personality down until it suits him to bring it into play.



Brother Noxious, Witch Hunter by Chris Hockabout

History:

Brother Noxious is an enigma: a rogue Rogue Hunter. He started his career as a legal Rogue Hunter working for Net Watch, one of the first to go on line when the Rogue Hunter program was implemented. Richard Alderman was the archetypal 'burb dweller and beaver, taking the NCART into Night City to sit in his cubicle at his Niurichi Bendyne 3000 work station, prowling the Pacifica Net Sector, favoring a fractal cowboy as his icon. His work was his life: danger and excitement roaming the data sea, combatting rogue AI's, though at five o'clock he was off for home, to his wife Janine and his son Richard Jr. He felt fulfilled with a satisfying and exciting job and a loving family. Richard's idyllic life was about to be shattered.

It was a normal day as usual when Richard, with his partner Rogue Hunters Ajax and Polaris, defeated an AI after it spored. Satisfied with a job well done, Ajax noticed a single spore floating off in the distance, one they had missed. Richard (Cowboy) thought nothing of it, thinking that there were no systems large enough nearby to carry it, and that it might just be a decoy. He alerted runners and systems in the area, however, and he and his partners sped off toward Hawaii and reports of rogue activity.

That single spore which he overlooked entered the datafortress of the Night City Transit Authority later that day looking for available space. Wantonly it devoured and destroyed much of the NCART's automated scheduling system, which keeps the many trains moving at regular intervals. The resulting chaos caused delays, false track corrections, and worst of all: train collisions.

After work, Richard wondered at the delay of his usual NCART which would take him back to his two-story home in Rancho Coronado. Monitors in the stations told the entire grisly story. The 11:35 NCART out of Rancho Coronado collided with the south-bound Haywood train. The trains were travelling at over 200 Km per hour. It was only four hours later that he found out that both his son and wife were on the Rancho Coronado train. Neither survived. On the nightly news Shelby Sutton, Network 54 anchorman, smilingly told of the crash and detailed the cause: rogue AI intrusion into the NCTA datafortress. It didn't take long for Richard to put the information together and how it related to him, not just with his family. It was the single spore he ignored. The shock of his family's death and the way in which they died tore at his sanity, pushing him to the breaking point. In the following month he quit his job, found religion, and surfaced in the net as Brother Noxious: Witch Hunter.

Motivation:

As Brother Noxious, Richard seeks out not only rogue AIs, but any and all AIs, deeming them evil incarnate, Satan on Earth. Soon after his first appearance, Brother Noxious destroyed two Principality-Class AIs, neither of them rogue. Admittedly, the AIs were weak mainframe denizens belonging to accounting firms but Brother Noxious knows his limitations. Brother Noxious is determined to rid the net and the world of Artificial Intelligences, seeing them not only as evil but as a threat to human freedom. Brother Noxious wholeheartedly believes that the AIs are plotting against humankind, planning one day to rule humans as slaves and underlings. He sees the increase of AI involvement in the technological advancement of humanity as the beginning of their plan.

Brother Noxious will attempt to destroy any AI he finds alone in the Net, from the lowliest Seraphim or Virtue to the highest Archangel. A master programmer, he tends to modify any program he acquires, making it better, all the more powerful to help him in his quest. His current project is the improving of a virus/tape-worm combination he stole from a military

datafortress, which, he hopes, will be able to wipe out AIs over a wide area of net space.

Personality:

Surprisingly enough, Brother Noxious, if met in the Net, doesn't mouth off about doom or spout religious diatribes, lecturing the passerby netrunner about the hazards of interacting with AIs. When encountered he is a quiet, intense individual, radiating a deep personal pain, which is reflected in his speech and mannerisms. He sees his holy crusade as a personal thing, accepting help only if he feels he needs it or if the person seems to have something to offer. But he is cautious and wary of strangers, knowing full well the wily ways of AIs and their tricks. If he thinks you're an AI in disguise, he'll stop at nothing to destroy you. The same goes if you get in his way or are openly helping the AIs.

Deep down he feels ultimately responsible for the death of his wife and son, and this crusade against the AIs is both his way of displacing his guilt onto an obvious target and also as a means to secure his own destruction. Subconsciously, he hopes that by attacking the AI's as a whole, he will eventually be destroyed by them. This fact is something he himself doesn't recognize and will take a Difficult (20) Human Perception roll to judge from his actions. He is also hypocritical in that one of his chief weapons is his Orion program Balan, which is itself an AI.

In Realspace, Richard Alderman is a quiet, sullen introvert, spending most of his time in his Meadowcreek Pines apartment (Old downtown, Section B5) or working in "Boots" the sleazy country-western bar on the first floor. He has spent most of his money from his old job buying heavy security for his room and on Net gear and programs. He tunes his HDTV to the twenty-four hour Evangelist station and goes to Sunday mass at The Holy Church of God.

End Notes:

Net Watch hasn't yet made the connection between Brother Noxious and Richard Alderman, yet, but it has put out warrants for the arrest of Brother Noxious for data theft, illegal system entry, and illegal termination of an artificial intelligence. He has also gotten the attention of sysops of several corporations, who see him slowly transforming from nuisance to threat. Richard, with his abilities, could be very efficient as a freelance hacker, but that just doesn't interest him. He only enters a system illegally if he feels there is a piece of software or information which might help further his cause; otherwise he keeps plotting and planning, seeking out AIs roaming free in the net, out of the protective confines of their datafortresses.

Brother Noxious: the Witch Hunter (Richard Alderman) Rogue Hunter
Int (10), Ref (10/13), Tech (8), Attr (5), Luck (7), MA (5), Body (6), Cool (10), Emp (7) Run (20), Leap (1), Lift (20)

SKILLS:

INTERFACE: +8, Programming: +10, Cyberdeck Design: +9, Expert: Artificial Intelligences: +7 Expert: Pacifica Net Sector: +7, Expert: Computer Systems: +6, System Knowledge: +6, Electronics: +4, Education: +4, Mathematics: +4, Physics: +3, Awareness: +2, Electronic Security: +2, Expert: Catholicism: +2. Oratory: +2. Basic Tech: +2.

CYBERWARE:

Neuralware Processor: Speedware, Interface plugs, Cybermodem link. Skinwatch. Wet Drive (q.v. Chromebook).

CYBERMODEM:

Niurichi-Daikan Ommiss 2430:
Speed: +5
CPU:2
Memory: 20
Data Walls: +3
Options: Printer, Vidboard, Chipreader.plus:
Microtech Datanought 41-A booster drive: +10 to Cybermodem's Memory, +1 to Cybermodem's Data Walls.

PROGRAMS: (common assortment, 75MU of software, specials listed below)

Balan (Orion) (IF #3), Sword, Armor, DecKRASH, Brain Booster (IF #3), Black Mask (IF #1), Jackhammer, Wizard's Book, Jack Attack

ICON: Superrealistic

Brother Noxious usually appears as a man draped in a cape of black and grey fractals, wearing a wide-brimmed hat. His eyes glow red from the shadow cast by his hat.

NOTE:

Because of his skill with programming and his tendency to tamper with his programs, all programs he carries will have an additional point of program strength.

HOOKS:

1) You've exchanged words with Brother Noxious on a few occasions and found the stories that he's a raving lunatic to be false. He seems to be a very interesting yet brooding guy. One day, while you're hanging out at the Fun Zone, a virtual reality amusement park, he approaches you and asks you to join him in his crusade against the AIs. Do you accept? And if so, is there really a plot by the AIs to eventually rule over humankind? You'll just have to find out.

2) Two netrunners, Aimee James and Stephen Foster Grant, are looking for Brother Noxious and another man: Richard Alderman. They need help in tracking him down, either in the Net or Realspace. They have reason to believe that the two are one and the same and need to talk to either to find out for sure. Why? Because they happen to be the aforementioned Ajax and Polaris, Alderman's partners. They feel partly responsible and want to help their old friend. Will you help them? And here's a tip: Noxious/Alderman don't want to be found. By anyone.

3) Net Watch and Microtech both want Brother Noxious, but for different reasons. Net Watch wants to bring him in for questioning. Infocomp wants to learn what he knows. They both have clues about his Realspace ID. Which one do you work for? And which one will reach him first? Or are you just some unlucky bystander who gets in the way?

A few other thoughts...

Answered by the Boys in the Back Room

A few questions from people trying to find out what Rogue Hunter Netrunners do and the best way to introduce them to play.

How do they make their living?

Making sure your AIs don't rogue. Finding out the AIs' mental states, and if necessary mediating for the artificial intelligence. People are often misled into believing that the only things that they do is destroy artificial intelligences like mad dogs who bite their masters. While this is an aspect of what they do, it is not the most important.

Why would anyone want to be a Rogue Hunter?

Rogue Hunting is a very lucrative field for the hunter. He tends to make far more money than a netrunner of equal skill and ranking. Primarily, Rogue Hunters build their market on knowing more about computer systems and artificial intelligences than anyone else except the people who build the computers and the programmers who write the artificial intelligences.

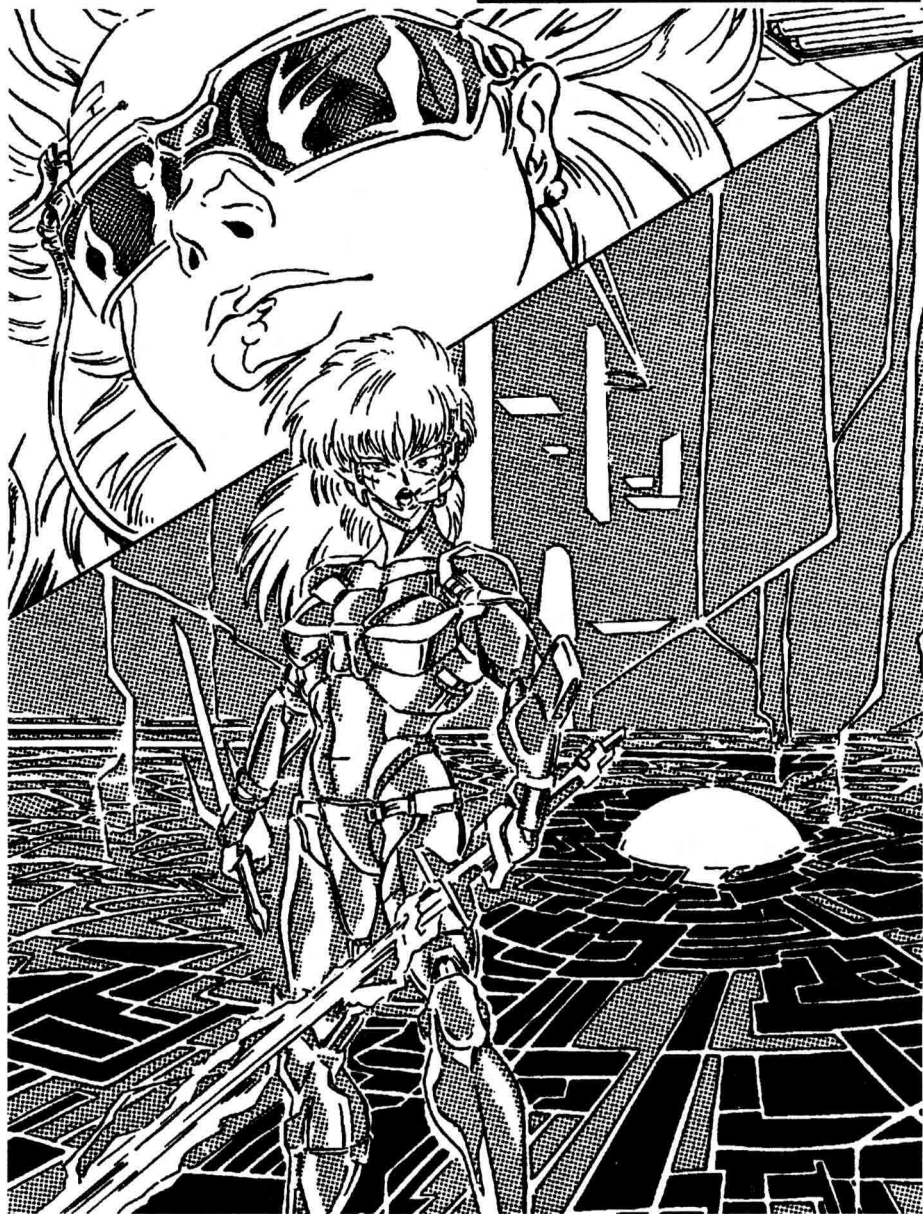
Compare the amount of money a netrunner will make for an average run versus what a Rogue Hunter will make for terminating or capturing a rogue. To get an accurate feel you will have to use the DERN100 rules in *Interface 2* for an average comparison. Remember, when hunting rogues, the average rogue has an INT score of 26 with an interface skill of 8 or better with a die roll of 1D10. Meaning an average roll of 39 +

the software's strength. Your average netrunner will have an INT and REF score of 19 + *Interface* +9 + 1D10. Which amounts to a 28 + software strength. That is a big difference, not in favor of the netrunner.

In plain net combat alone, a rogue is more likely to damage or even kill a netrunner who is not prepared. A Rogue Hunter usually has a better

education and more skill understanding computers, systems, and artificial intelligence in general than the average netrunner. He will also have an advantage of having access to good software, better hardware than most netrunners, and better medical care, if the first two don't help enough. Being in demand doesn't hurt his chances of making money, either.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 46



Subordinate and Alternate Character Classes

Looking at new character generation

by The Boys in the Back Room

A. Dock/Construction Worker

1. Athletics or Brawling
2. Oper. Hvy Machinery
3. Drive
4. Basic Tech
5. Strength Feat
6. Streetwise
7. Expert: Cargo Handling or Construction

A. This represents a heavy-labor job of some sort, whether at the loading docks or on a construction crew. Even in 2020, people are still cheaper and more versatile than computer-controlled remotes.

B. Spacer

1. Space Survival
2. Zero G Maneuver
3. Zero G Combat
4. EVA
5. Pilot OTV or Spaceplane
6. Spacecraft Tech
7. Astrogation

B. The Spacer reflects service in the Orbital Marines or ESA, or really any off-world job. This also can be used by non-Workganger roles who are part of such a group, much like non-Nomad members of the Pack.

C. Musician/Performer

1. Dance
2. Perform
3. Play Instrument or Photo & Film
4. Wardrobe & Style
5. Persuasion or Oratory
6. Streetwise
7. Composition

C. The Musician/Performer allows non-Rockers to acquire skills that would be useful in such circles. They can be used for the non-Rocker who plays in a band or with some other performance-related side interest.

Once again, we are here for what we believe will be our last major installment of Subordinate and Alternate Character Classes. This last collection was created primarily by a fan whose attention to detail is nothing less than excellent. Let's get busy.

Subordinate Skill Packages

There is a single change we would like to propose to the subordinate and Pickup skill rules. Since normally these are a reflection of Intelligence and Reflex statistics, if your INT or REF are low, so are your Pickups. But this might not be a reflection of someone who has gathered significant experience despite intelligence or reflexes. Note that subordinate skill packages replace getting pickup skills. You are not required to take all the skills in a Subpack, but all the skills in the package are complementary, so the more of them you take, the better they work. No skill in a Subpack should be higher than +4.

The following is a GM call.

In place of the INT + REF formula, decide on a maximum number of skill points that can be obtained from pickups. If your game is more dangerous or complex, this allows for more skills for everyone. A good way to regulate it is to say that for every year past age 16, 2 skill points can be picked up. This will allow for most players to get 16 points for skills up to age 25, when most players are supposed to be starting play. If they want to be older, then after 25, they get 1 skill point up to age 35. No self respecting Cyberpunk would want to start much older than that, anyway.

Alternate Character Designs

Compiled by Ramon Valbuena

These are other primary skill packages that we have created to vary already existing character classes. Treat these packages just as you would the original one. After some play we felt that characters too tightly based on the single templates offered tended to be very much alike. To inspire more creative roleplaying, we felt it necessary to redesign these classes. This also allows us to attempt more accurate portrayals of movie and book personalities. We give brief descriptions after the listings. Most of these roles have appeared previously in *Hardwired* and *Near Orbit* but have not been updated for Career Skills package rules. Most of the new skills they incorporate are found in those books. I've tried to adapt these roles to the new edition's rules.

JOCKEY (DELTAJOCK, PANZERBOY)

- | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Brotherhood | 5. Navigation |
| 2. Awareness | 6. Heavy Weapons |
| 3. Brawling | 7. (3 Vehicle Pilot skills) |
| 4. Drive or Motorcycle | |

D. Company Wage Slave

1. Education
2. Library Search
3. Accounting or Stock Market
4. Wardrobe & Style
5. Persuasion
6. Social
7. Expert: Corp Administration

D. The Company Wage Slave represents the skills one might acquire working for the Company. Characters who are employed by a corporation, whether at the branch office or the R&D arcology should make use of this package. This pack might be taken by the Company's Netrunner, Tech and MedTech researchers, for example.

E. Nomad Family Member

1. Athletics
2. Brawling
3. Drive or Motorcycle
4. Endurance
5. Melee
6. Wilderness Survival
7. Rifle or Family

E. The Nomad Family Member is the subrole for the characters in the Pack who are of other roles, like the Pack's Fixer or Techie, for example, or for the character who grew up travelling with a pack.

F. Pirate Fleet Member

1. Swimming
2. Brawling or Melee
3. Drive Boat or Sailpower
4. Endurance
5. Navigation
6. Seamanship
7. Rifle or Family

F. The Pirate Fleet Member is basically the pirate version of the Nomad family pickup skill pack. This character grew up with Pirates, or is still a member of the fleet.

PIRATE

- | | |
|---------------|---------------|
| 1. Family | 6. Sailpower |
| 2. Awareness | 7. Brawling |
| 3. Swimming | 8. Navigation |
| 4. Drive Boat | 9. Endurance |
| 5. Seamanship | 10. Rifle |

The Jockey and Pirate are based on examples found in *Hardwired*. The Jockey fills the Panzerboy and Deltajock roles, as well as the character who can fly or drive just about anything. The Pirate is another Nomad variant.

WORKGANGER

- | | |
|--------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Workgang | 6. Zero G Maneuver |
| 2. Awareness | 7. Zero G Combat |
| 3. Space Survival | 8. Melee |
| 4. EVA | 9. Basic Tech |
| 5. Spacecraft Tech | 10. Electronics |

HIGHRIDER

- | | |
|-----------------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Brotherhood | 6. Zero G Maneuver |
| 2. Awareness | 7. Zero G Combat |
| 3. Pilot Shuttle/Spaceplane | 8. Melee |
| 4. Pilot OTV | 9. Spacecraft Tech |
| 5. Astrogation | 10. Space Survival |

The Workganger and Highrider are *Near Orbit's* Nomad variant roles, the technicians, construction workers, and pilots of the High Frontier. Brotherhood and Workgang are variations of the Family special ability. The New Tech skill of Spacecraft Tech (IP multiplier 4) is used to repair and construct OTVs, Deltas, Spaceplanes, and space stations. If you feel this is too generalized, feel free to create separate Tech skills for the various space vehicles. (See the Spacer sub-role listed below.)

PRIVATE INVESTIGATOR

- | | |
|---------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Research | 6. Persuasion or Intimidate |
| 2. Awareness | 7. Brawling |
| 3. Handgun | 8. Shadow/Track |
| 4. Library Search | 9. Hide/Evade |
| 5. Human Perception | 10. Streetwise |

I have tried the various skill packages that have been presented for the P.I., and this one has worked best for me. The special ability of Research is added to Cool. It allows you to get information from legal and not-so-legal sources, similar to Streetdeal. Put another way, this skill represents your informants and connections.

GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL

- | | |
|---------------------|----------------|
| 1. Resources | 6. Social |
| 2. Awareness | 7. Persuasion |
| 3. Human Perception | 8. Intimidate |
| 4. Education | 9. Expert: Law |
| 5. Library Search | 10. Accounting |

The Government Official is a variation on the Corporate role. This role could be the head of a federal task force, the police captain and those higher up on the force, or any of the various local City government officials.

POSER STREETPUNK

- | | |
|---------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Rank | 6. Wardrobe & Style |
| 2. Awareness | 7. Persuasion |
| 3. Streetwise | 8. Personal Grooming |
| 4. Brawling | 9. Disguise |
| 5. Melee or Handgun | 10. Expert: Role Model |

CHROMER STREETPUNK

- | | |
|---------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Rank | 7. Persuasion |
| 2. Awareness | 8. Play Instrument |
| 3. Streetwise | 9. Dance or Perform |
| 4. Brawling | 10. Expert: Rockers & Music |
| 5. Melee or Handgun | |
| 6. Wardrobe & Style | |

BOOSTER STREETPUNK

- | | |
|---------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Rank | 6. Athletics |
| 2. Awareness | 7. Endurance |
| 3. Streetwise | 8. Intimidation |
| 4. Brawling | 9. Cyber Tech |
| 5. Melee or Handgun | 10. Expert: Cyberware |

DORPHER STREETPUNK

- | | |
|---------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Rank | 6. Pick Pocket |
| 2. Awareness | 7. Pick Lock |
| 3. Streetwise | 8. Persuasion |
| 4. Brawling | 9. Chemistry |
| 5. Melee or Handgun | 10. Expert: Drugs |

ZOOMER STREETPUNK

- | | |
|---------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. Rank | 7. Athletics |
| 2. Awareness | 8. Persuasion or Intimidate |
| 3. Streetwise | 9. Drive/Motorcycle or Skating |
| 4. Brawling | 10. Expert: Area Knowledge |
| 5. Melee or Handgun | |
| 6. Basic Tech | |

These are the four Streetpunk roles featured in *Solo Of Fortune* re-dressed for CP2020 rules, plus one other. The Zoomer streetpunk is based on the vehicle-oriented roving city gangs, anything from muscle cars and motorcycle gangs to streetkids on skateboards. Any of these gangs can also be Guardians, Puppets, or Culties (or for that matter, Zoomers, really). In fact, there is a lot of overlap in the streetpunk roles.

The 'Dorpher can represent not only chemical addict streetpunks, but also the electronic addicts of 2020: the wireheads and braindance junkies. For these characters, replace the Chemistry and Expert: Drugs skills with Electronics and Expert: Wirehead Hookups or knowledge of the Braindance or Virtual Realities.

Not everyone in a street gang is a Streetpunk; certainly, there are representatives of other roles. To use the Streetpunks as sub-roles (for the gang's Netrunner or Fixer), take the last six career skills listed, choosing between Brawling, Melee, Handgun, and Streetwise for the sixth; Rank must be the seventh skill, if the character is still an active member of the gang. Rank becomes sort of a secondary special ability (see the restrictions in *Solo of Fortune*).

G. Corp or Arcology Brat

1. Education
2. Social or Persuasion
3. Swimming or Athletics
4. Drive
5. (2 related science, tech, or knowledge skills)

G. The Corp or Arcology Brat represents growing up in a sheltered Corporate suburb or Arcology environment. Many skill combinations are possible, depending on the Arcology or suburb and its location. This is useful for characters with corporate or arcology families and backgrounds.

H. Streetkid

1. Pick Lock or Pocket
2. Brawling or Melee
3. Shadow/Track
4. Hide/Evade
5. Persuasion or Intimidate
6. Streetwise
7. Stealth or Expert: Area Knowledge

H. The Streetkid gives the skills for the character who grew up living on the mean streets of the Sprawl. This is for the characters who want thief-type urban survival skills.

I. Ex-Cop or Security

1. Handgun
2. Human Perception
3. Brawling or Melee
4. Streetwise
5. Athletics
6. Interrogation
7. Education or Expert: Police or Security Procedures

I. The Ex-Cop or security guard is just that. It's a good place to pick up Cop-style street skills and a connection with the city cops or Arasaka.

J. Paramedic

1. Cryotank Operation
2. First Aid
3. Diagnose Illness
4. Streetwise
5. Library Search
6. Human Perception
7. Athletics

J. The Paramedic indicates training in first aid and patient retrieval, whether as a military unit's medic or with an emergency medical service unit. Like the low-level Rocker moonlighting as a Trauma Teamer, the rest of the AV-4 crew might make use of this.

K. Aqualogy Resident

1. Swimming or SCUBA
2. Underwater Combat
3. Pressure Suit
4. Undersea Equipment
5. Pilot Sub
6. Submersible Tech
7. Marine Science

K. This represents the skills required of a worker or resident of one of the ocean city arcologies (aqualogies). This allows the various roles that would be found at aqualogies to gain the skills necessary to function in such an environment, as the Spacer pack does for *Near Orbit*.

A FEW MORE NOTES CONT. FROM PAGE 42

What do Rogue Hunters offer a company?

Rogue Hunters offer security and protection from invasion from rogue intelligences, preventive measures that spot an artificial intelligence about to go rogue, and other preventive netranner skills. They offer management of data systems, optimization of computer resources, and better interaction between artificial intelligences and humans.

Why do they often have a support staff?

There are a lot of reasons. Here is a quick list:

1. More than one netranner is common because the need to gestalt is often used as a last resort against really powerful AIs. Orions also need a single mind that they can meld with when they are forming Aspects.
2. They are often staffed with more people because rogues will often have planned their escape months in advance and have gotten resources together. People, machines, money, and weapons that will move when they say so. As a distraction they will sometimes attack the

(Yes, this is a reworked version of the Ocean City Role from *INTERFACE 1*. This allows for more flexibility by allowing other roles to gain such skills. And I've yet to see a flying sub concept that didn't make me cringe. But such a vehicle might come under Vectored Thrust Pilot.)

L. Ex-IPC Corpsman

1. Brawling or Melee
2. Stealth
3. Gambling
4. Handgun
5. Rifle
6. Streetwise
7. Basic Tech or First Aid

M. Ex-Convict

1. Melee or Brawling
2. Gambling
3. Streetwise
4. Pick Lock or Pocket
5. Persuasion or Intimidate
6. Basic Tech or Expert: Law
7. Composition or Paint/Draw

The Ex-IPC Corpsman and the Ex-Con are reworkings of the IPC and Ex-Con roles presented in *INTERFACE 1*, allowing other character roles to gain their skills. These subroles both represent a lengthy enough stay with the IPC or in prison to have acquired levels in such skills. Ω

office that they live in so that no one will pay them any attention while they escape. A netranner is no good if he is getting his rear end shot off because there is no one there to guard it. (This is how they justify their solos.)

3. Other times they can only be tracked because they are moving gear through fixers or techies, or because an artificial intelligence will need to get something on the black market. Sometimes a rogue will have to be chased down in netspace and then isolated in realspace until it can be destroyed, either by wiping, isolating, or destroying the media or computers it is hiding on.

For the GM: If there aren't any artificial intelligences or rogues in play, then a Rogue Hunter class really just doubles as a highly-specialized computer jockey. But if you want to leave out this very interesting aspect of Cyberpunk role-playing, that's your loss. I hope answering these questions will make dealing with Rogue Hunters and their justifications for being well enough. If there are any other questions, you know where to send them. We're out o' here. Ω

Class of 1999

A movie review
by Kevin De'Antonio

Class of 1999 **OOO** (savory)

Starring: Patrick Kilpatrick, Joshua Miller, Stacy Keach, Malcom McDowell.

Produced & Directed: Mark L. Lester

This film begins with a brief history of high school gang violence starting in 1992. The level of violence increases up to its present level in 1999. The school of focus is Kennedy High in Seattle. Kennedy High is completely fenced in, with guard towers and armed security everywhere. Areas outside the school are aptly declared "free-fire zones," and police will not enter these areas willingly.

A new program is introduced by the corporation Megatech to insert cyborgs as teachers to discipline and control the more violent students; of course, the general public is unaware of this fact. The liaison with Megatech is Dr. Forrest (played by Stacy Keach). A cold individual with piercing white eyes, possibly cybernetic (very reminiscent of Bill Bixby's contact lenses from *The Incredible Hulk*), and sporting a platinum white flat-top with tail, very stylish! The principal of Kennedy High is played by Malcom McDowell (his role is not that big). The main character, Cody Culp, former Blackhearts gang leader (played by Patrick Kilpatrick,) has just been released from a correctional institute for "ganging" and is trying to make peace with his past, but to complicate this task are: 1) his former gang threatening his life; 2) the rival gang doing the same; 3) the three teacher/battle cyborgs waging "war" on the students of Kennedy High; 4) his involvement with the principal's daughter. Cody should have stayed in jail where it was safe.

Class of 1999 is surprising, for a low budget movie with only two known actors (Keach & McDowell) and the rest of the cast unknowns. The overall script and acting are both mostly on par for this kind of movie. The special effects are very good, very close to *Terminator's* quality. Each cyborg had a distinct weapon: the Gym teacher, a missile launcher; the Science teacher, a flame thrower; and the History teacher had a "claw" with a drilling spike. A standard variety of weapons: one long range, one medium range, and one close combat to make an effective tactical squad. The gangs both had a large selection of handguns, SMG's, and assault rifles on hand. Believe it or not with all of these weapons this movie was not a gore fest like it could've been. Overall this is a good, solid Cyberpunk movie, a movie worth renting to see.

Trancers II

A movie review
by Richard Patterson

Trancers 2 **OOO** (savory)

Directed by Charles Band

Screenplay written by Jackson Barr—based on characters created by Danny Bilson and Paul DeMeo

Starring Tim Thomerson, Helen Hunt, Megan Ward, Richard Lynch.

In 1985 *Trancers* hit video shelves and became a cult classic. Now years later, low-budget visionary Charles Band has revived Jack Deth for another adventure. Since his last escapade, Jack's been keeping a low profile, blending into the population, marrying Lena (once again played by Helen Hunt), and waiting for the quake that will shake the city to ruins. Meanwhile in Angel City (the L.A. of the future) the council wants Jack to join the group of politicians, but not before one last mission. It seems that Whistler (the villain of the original) has a brother who wants revenge for his brother's demise. He uses a time-displacement unit to go down the line and surfaces as Dr. Wardo, a scientist whose cover, for helping the public, is also perfect for creating new trancers.

To make sure Jack completes his mission, the council sends Alice Stillwell to assist him—yes, Jack's dead wife. I won't tell you how they bring her back because that's part of the fun. And that's what the movie is, fun.

Charles Band's directing, along with an intelligent script by Jackson Barr, make an amusing sequel. Band adds a little more humor than the original, with Jack's complication of having two wives; the new wife of the story line is played by Megan Ward. Fans of great soundtracks will love the score composed by Mark Ryder and Phil Davies, as well as yet another great performance by Tim Thomerson as Jack Deth.

In all its greatness, though, I do have one problem with the film. The stark feel of the original is gone; this is due to changes in directors of photography. I would rather have seen Mac Ahlberg's work, but you can't have everything in a sequel. And for you comic book fans, look for Eternity's "Trancers" comic; based on the situations of the film.

ITEM OF NOTE: The review of *Trancers* in the previous issue of *INTERFACE* (vol. 1, issue 3) was listed as being written by Kevin De'Antonio. The review was actually written by Richard Patterson. We apologize for the mistake.

Blade Runner: The Director's Cut

A movie review by Annemarie Adams

Blade Runner: the Director's Cut

🎬 1/2 (bogus plus)

Directed by Ridley Scott

Starring Harrison Ford, Sean Young, and Rutger Hauer.

It is accepted that Ridley Scott's 1981 film *Blade Runner* is a classic science fiction film and an icon of Cyberpunk. It brought film noir to new heights even though it was not true to the book on which it was based: Philip K. Dick's *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep*. The director's cut is a new idea which is met with skepticism or open hostility by some and excitement by others.

In this re-edited version, the major difference from the original is Ford's narration. The fact that it is missing bothered me in that the unusual insight into Ford's character is missing. Even though the only reason it was put in the original was to help along the more dense movie-goer, I had learned to love the deadpan narrative. Secondly, the other major alteration was the clipped ending, no different from the original except that the prosaic mountain scene (which was an outtake from the mountain scenes shot for Stanley Kubrick's *The Shining*) was cut so that the film ended as Ford and Young enter the elevator in his apartment. I liked that the ending was so sudden, leaving their fates to your imagination. Besides these two examples, the rest of the edits are so slight they're pretty much nonexistent. Only die-hard *Blade Runner* fans will notice a slight disturbance in the rhythm of the film. They'll look at the film and suddenly say the person next to them, "I think that was one of the re-edits." Most of the "re-edits," by the way, were merely in the form of scenes that were extended a few seconds.

While I did like to see that many of the city sequences were lengthened, thus giving me a greater feel for the environment (besides looking cool), it might be that I've taken too many "women in film" courses, but I didn't like the fact that the scene where Ford gives Young the rough treatment at his front door with "say you love me... say 'kiss me'" was lengthened. Don't go to the film expecting to see some new insight (especially don't expect any new clues about the controversial Deckard-is-a-Replicant theory). Finally it is a testimony to the effect of music on mood, but much of the Vangelis music was removed, and the moment that Rutger Hauer dies on the roof, during his soliloquy, the missing Vangelis score at that moment took out some of the emotional impact of what was a very touching scene.

When looking at the film as a whole, I was disappointed. It made me think: why mess with perfection? Don't hype a director's cut that is so slight that it could have been titled, *Blade Runner: Ray Blutarski, the Intern Editor's Cut*. The film still offers up the stunning visuals that made it one of the most recognized and remembered films of all time, but it is disappointing when edits are made with no reason.

One major comment, though. This isn't the real director's cut. This version was a copy found in storage and shown in L.A. art theaters. The excitement caused the copy to be sent off to other theaters (and to the Castro in San Francisco, where we saw it). Scott caught wind of this and decided to rework the film for a February release. Among the scenes he planned to add was a cut dream sequence where Ford dreams about a unicorn (thus pointing out the significance to Gaff's placing an origami unicorn in Ford's apartment, another clue to the theory that Ford is a replicant).

Moon 44

Movie Review
by Kevin De'Antonio

Moon 44 🎬 (bogus)

Directed by Roland Emmerich

Starring: Michael Paré, Malcom McDowell, Leon Rippey, & Lisa Eichorn.

The year is 2038, and (as in all Cyberpunk flicks) our planet is in "dog-spit" shape. The natural resources are gone and (here it comes...) rival corporations (told ya!) that "rule the cosmos" are fighting over far-off moons for their ore and other resources. At the call of one of these mighty corps comes Michael Paré, a grunting internal affairs agent who is sent to Moon 44 disguised as a "Conscripted" convict (join the off-world IPC) to pilot "space helicopters" (*space helicopters???*) along with a group of other anti-social cons, to defend the moon and uncover the traitors (Malcom McDowell & Leon Rippey) who sold out to the competition.

The differences between the "good" guys (violent prisoners, the military, corporate tightasses, and a drug-schlepping kid) and the "bad" guys (the rival corp, the giant space cruiser, and its robot fighter ships) is rice-paper thin, and there is nothing but utter hatred between the prisoner-pilots and their computer-hacking, teenage navigators. *Moon 44* as a whole degenerates into a bad "find the traitor, save the world—oops, I'm sorry—save the corporation" movie with horrible acting trying to hide behind flashy hardware and effects. This is another movie that probably would've made a better video game.



Dear *INTERFACE*,

Greetings! I have just finished perusing your third issue (alas, my first) of your outstanding *MAGAZINE*. I was utterly shocked to see that another person on the face of this here Earth had ever read *The Long Run* by Daniel Keys Moran. It restored faith that others have heard the Great Words. *The Long Run* and *Emerald Eyes* I believe are the best written Cyberpunk novels so far. (Sorry to all you Gibson fans, he's just too dull).

I have made it my life's work to expose as many people to Moran as possible (within legal limits, of course). I use his material in my campaigns and use his characters as players or NPCs.

I am hoping that *INTERFACE* will do a piece(s) on Moran (hell, you live near him) or the world he created as part of the Continuing Time. Then I could die a happy man—my work completed.

In closing, loved the AI, the Antarctic Collective, the new cyberware, Uplinks, and the Cyber-Reviews. I hated those silly New Look ads, as well as the IPC article. (I'm going to re-read that one, maybe I'll like it better)

Trent Lives,
Keith J. Bowers
Pequea, Pa.

P.S. *Hardware* and *Hardwired* sucked.

It certainly is nice to read that we're not the only ones who have really enjoyed The Long Run and Emerald Eyes. Both books have added new ideas to both my 2048 Cyberpunk campaign and Thaddeus' 2036 MegaCity San Francisco campaign. More than once has the name Trent the Uncatchable, passed the lips of a netrunner or two, always in mythic tones. And you're right. Gibson may have been first (relatively speaking) but he is far from the best, and his work does tend to be a bit dry. As alternatives, without fail

I suggest they read Moran's work, and not only the two Continuing Time stories. Armageddon Blues and The Ring are both great pieces of fiction, and worth a read. We would love to do a sourcebook for The Long Run and Emerald Eyes but it is still just an idea, but an idea we've considered on more than one occasion. I'm glad you like the AI article (if you liked that, you'll love this issue) and the Antarctic Collective, the new cyberware, and the rest. You've got to understand that the New Look ads were more genre pieces than anything else. Cyberpunk is a world of style over substance. This was style without substance. And do read the IPC article over. And, uh, oh yeah, Hardware and Hardwired did suck. P.S. you don't sound like a fanatic.

Dear Boys in the Backroom,

Having followed your magazine from its first appearance on my local gaming store's shelves to its somewhat late appearance now, I can say that you're one of the best gaming mags out there. *INTERFACE* reminds me of SJG's ADQ, with the ties to the game's genre and history. But enough praise and glory: let's look at the current issue.

Cyber-Bar: C'mon man! A wet bar in a leg? Sounds like something that the jaded corp exec might have installed in the leg of one of his solos. What a waste of space and options! One comment, how do champagnes and other sparkling wines fare in the Cyber-Bar when the owner has to dodge, jump, and run, liberally shaking its contents?

(The contents are under pressure, John)

Extension Legs: Now all I need to do is come up with the stats for a neck extension, fold-up copter, and cyber limbs that can be attached to the head and I can build the cyberpunk version of Inspector Gadget! Seriously though, the extension is a fairly "realistic" option for a cyberleg, and a viable option for it would be an appropriate Realskinn sheath that can expand up and down with it.

The Antarctic Collective: I can really use this background, and I hope to see more like this for some of the third world countries of 2020. It matches my criteria for background material: sufficient information so that I don't have to create the majority of it myself, and not too much as to restrict me in my interpretation, with enough adventure seeds to get my imagination going on possible plot scenarios. Well done!

Altered States: I like the new side effects, but I would like to have had them collected in one spot for easier reference when I'm homebrewing my own. One basic gripe about the current system is that I have to extrapolate the difficulty modifier if I want to duration to be less than an

hour, but more than 10 minutes. Having more than one method to apply drugs is nice, I'll have to try them all out.

REVOLUTION GENETICS INC.: Again a great background piece, with enough info to be useful. My main question is; what is its product line? Especially the biochip.

NuScience: the article on Skinmasks is OK, but I personally think too much column space was given to it. I disagree with some of the "green propaganda" in the piece, and I see it as such.

Vend-a-module is a concept that already exists in Japan, but having the stats for one is nice. By the way, what CAD program was used to produce the graphic?

TROUBLESHOOTER Cabs: Coupling this with the transport services in R. Talsorian's *Night City* will really help me flesh out how people get from here to there in 2020. With some work I can use this info to cover amateur drivers and the hazards that they have to overcome. Of course a little bit more of this kind of stuff and you'll be crowding into Car Wars territory.

Interview with a Predator: A nice fiction piece, but otherwise pretty much useless.

Als in Cyberpunk: A much better treatment of Als than in *Cyberpunk 2020*, though I've a few questions: There seems to be some room with your interpretation of Als to allow for PC Als. Is that your intention? Does any of your staff subscribe to *America OnLine*? The Anglic hierarchy of Als, and personal Als follow closely to a SF/Cyberpunk game that was run on AOL a year ago. though some I used some Hindu mythology in my interpretation of Als.

Expanding the Net: After reading this, I have a difficult time justifying the Black ICE of *Cyberpunk 2.0.2.0*. sending blasts of electricity down the fiberoptic lines to my machine, forcing the jack interface to push more than a volt through my fiberoptic jacks and frying my brains. I probably won't use Black ICE per se, I'll try to find an alternative to the way it harms the netrunner. (I won't comment on doing the same thing via a cellular deck.)

NU:Programs: I like the Brain Buster, Feedback, Sleeper, and Silhouette programs, though I probably will modify them to suit my tastes.

Subordinate and Alternate Character Classes: As always, I absolutely love these packages that you Boys have put together. They really help in fleshing out your character's background and abilities. My main question is on using the subordinate classes as main classes, such as using the PI subclass as a major class; what is his special ability? Authority is too powerful, and Combat Sense is not very appropriate for the class. One I came up

with is Connections, a COOL stat; it represents the PI's ability to ferret out information from contacts, libraries, cops, etc. It also represents his ability to keep from being snuffed by the Mob or tossed into jail for crossing the wrong lines in the course of his investigation.

Movie and Book Reviews: I'll only comment on your review of *Akira*, as I haven't read ME, or seen *Trancers*. Having seen *Akira* in the original language, I find I dislike the dubbed version, especially in the choice of voices, the girls sound like they came out of the Bronx and the Major sounding like McGruff the crime dog. But, even the dubbed version is head and shoulders above most American-made animation. So I would give the dubbed version three and a half stars because of the dubbing. (I would prefer a subtitled version over a dubbed version)

Well that's all for now, can't wait until the next issue of *INTERFACE*. You all have yourselves a happy set of holidays, then get back to work.

John H. Reiher, Jr.
Colorado Springs, Co.

Chris

Well, I think this letter speaks for itself. Hey, uh, do you think you could write one of these for each issue? And, John, if you want more information on the Antarctic Collective, give me a call or write. About AOL, none of us are users.

Thaddeus

John, I think that even after reading "Expanding the Net", most Black ICE can still perform adequately by causing your deck to malfunction and fry your brain. Not to mention that with the human brain being studied and mapped extensively, software could still cause damage to the user by damaging the real computer in use when using a deck, your brain. Epilepsy is little more than wild yet small bioelectrical currents coursing uncontrolled through the brain. Green Propaganda???, What, you live on a different Earth? There is nothing wrong with using fiction to make a point about the environment. RPG's can be used for educational purposes as well as entertainment. We're surprised that you would accuse us of Green Propaganda.

Oh and a final note, John. Our ogre-programmer was not sure how to take your lack of mention of his software for Als. He's been working on a new virus to study you better on AOL. We know where you live.

Remember, you're only as good as the latest version of your software.

Out here on the EDGE, The Boys in the Back Room.



We've done it.

About a year and a half ago, three guys without money, promised one guy with money, that they could help him earn more money, if he would just front them some of his money.

If you followed that then you have the basic gist of the beginning of Prometheus Press Inc. Three ambitious, handsome, bright (okay, enough strokes) fellows, who liked Cyberpunk enough to write their own material when R. Talsorian didn't make new stuff fast enough or well enough or different enough to suit our heroes, and decided that since R. Talsorian was in the area, (and since Chris drew for them, anyway) it wouldn't hurt to try.

It was a once in a lifetime chance for all of us. We were ready, tough and prepared.

It ran aground in all of a month. Interface 1 was designed and built in less than a month but we couldn't seem to agree on anything that mattered. It seemed that our friendship might be in jeopardy.

We survived. What does not kill us makes us stronger. We feel it might be safe to say we have triumphed. Interface has taken off and has engendered much fan support, despite it's shaky schedule. (We're working on that.) Prometheus Press, once a rag-tag fugitive group, has now dared to think the unthinkable.

Continuing. Making more copies of Interface. Competing with other magazines on the market. Daring to make new products.

And just when you felt safe, we are going to dare the unthinkable, again. Another fanzine under our aegis. This will be a fanzine to support all of that gaming potential that lurks in the

Games Workshop gaming products. Since White Dwarf - excuse me, White Chaos - Ork - Genestealer - Hybrid - Space Marine, has become primarily a figure catalog, we think that the market would be interested in real support of that \$400 figure collection and \$300 rule book encyclopedia.

This fanzine will be called Imperial Dispatches. We will be publishing and producing Imperial Dispatches with its editor Mike Llanaeza. We will run a second volume for a limited quarterly series run of four issues to test the waters of response. We cannot boast of the same distribution net that Interface gets but if you are interested we will have subscriptions available by the end of March.

We're not done yet. The Unspeakable Oath, a fine Cthulhu fanzine wants to do some cross-breeding of the best of both our genres. The Cthulhu-Cyberpunk mix—horror with style. A scary concept. The guys who run TUO seem like a nice group, and we think that we will enjoy working with them.

Now how do we intend to do all this? We haven't exactly been very good with our current schedules have we? Fear not. We have now managed to get a computer of our very own. Though people have been very good about lending us theirs, I think it's best that every group try to have it's own. Our staffing has improved overall, with all the parts coming together smoother and smoother each time.

I want to take a paragraph (or two) to thank all the people who have taken time out for us in our ignorance. Mike and Lisa Pondsmit, without whose support, Interface would still be lying in the back room of Tita's House of Games in Alameda. Derek Q, Mike McDonald, Matt, and the rest of RTG. Chris Willams of Vortex, for showing us it can be done.

The people in my support staff like Valerie and Jim, who help out only because it is their pleasure to do so. Every editor should be so lucky. My administrator, Patricia Lopez, who helps me more than she has to, and has no problem with telling me I'm wrong. It keeps me humble. Tita and Carl, who have let us game in the back of their shop, all these seven years now, and in having done so, ensured our continued association.

To Chris, Kevin, Bart, Mark, Paul, Peter, Michio, Dale and anyone else who has ever been a staffer of Interface. I realize I am a Son of a Bitch to work with, being a near perfectionist and anal retentive, but we still managed to work together to pull it off. And mostly to my mother who is my biggest fan and inspires me always and all mothers who tolerate gaming everywhere.

READER'S POLL

Our first year has been for us both a rocky and triumphant one. In this, the last issue of our first volume, we have put together a reader's poll which, we hope, will give us the information we need to make a better magazine. Answer the questions, send them to us, give them to your gaming partners to fill out, give your mother the magazine, have her read it and then have her fill one out. Also a phone-in poll is available: call (510) 865-6733; this is, of course, not toll free. We hope you've enjoyed our first year and hope you enjoy our years to come.

Thanks, Chris Hockabout, Associate Editor

1. How old are you?(tick one box)

Under 11 11-15 16-18 19-22 23+

2. How many years have you been gaming? _____

3. What other games do you enjoy playing?

Advanced Dungeons and Dragons.....

Call of Cthulhu.....

Mega Traveller.....

Middle Earth Role Playing.....

Paranoia.....

Pendragon.....

Runequest.....

Mekton.....

Shadowrun.....

Warhammer Role Playing.....

GURPS.....

Champions.....

Stormbringer.....

Fantasy Hero.....

4: Where did you hear of our magazine? _____

5: What article/s did you find most amusing, interesting, or useful? _____

6: What article/s did you find least useful, interesting, or amusing? _____

7: What department/s do you wish to see continued (Movie/Book reviews, Altered States, Nu Tech, Nu Science, Chipping In, etc)? _____

8: What department/s do you wish to see discontinued? _____

9: What comments do you have about our format? Should we change our size? _____

10: What comments do you have about our interior (art, layout, etc.)? _____

11: In what ways, overall, do you think our magazine could improve? _____

12: What topics that we haven't covered do you think we should? _____

13: How many people do you have in your gaming group? _____

14: How many friends own copies of INTERFACE? _____

14:Final comments or questions (on anything not covered above)? _____

ISSUE SURVEY

This is a per-issue survey that we will be making to improve the quality of *INTERFACE* Magazine. Rate each article from 0 to 5. 0 indicates that you have not read the article. 1 indicates a most heinous article and 5 a most triumphant and worthy article. Numbers in between are shades in between. (2: bogus, 3: savory, 4: excellent). There will be a drawing for our survey responders. The prize will be a year's free subscription of *INTERFACE*. Good Luck.

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	<i>Feature Article</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	20. "Class of 1999"
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Highlander 2 The Quickenig

Movie Review by Kevin De'Antonio

THE HARDWARE AWARD for worst cyberpunk movie since Hardware.

Starring: Christopher Lambert, Sean Connery, & Michael Ironsides

"This...Never...Happened!" I exclaimed quietly to my friend as the shock of how *bad* this movie was, subsided within me. This is probably the shortest movie review you'll ever read in your lives. Highlander 2 is 99.44% pure crap! This movie stinks more than the mixed jug of perfume your Grandmother uses. Annie was more cyberpunk than this piece of trash. It has none of Highlander's style, action, story, plot, cinematography, acting, or character development.

I wouldn't really call this a movie a "movie," it's an undigested piece of Sizzlean! (*He's doing Sizzlean a disservice—editor*).

Highlander 2 is the first movie reviewed by *INTERFACE* to receive the snore inspiring... "HARDWARE AWARD!" Awarded to a film that's *More Heinous than Most Heinous!* We've come to call it *Highlander 2: The Sickening, There should only have been one.*

In closing I wouldn't recommend this movie to my worst enemy, or my boss!

P.S.: If you like Highlander, the original, try to find the Japanese edition. It has additional scenes cut from our version. It's worth checking out.

Editor's Note: Ordinarily I would have waited until next issue with this review, but I could not allow such an scathing review to go unheard. If we could save even one life...

INTERFACE Rate Card 1992

INTERFACE is a magazine devoted primarily to cyberpunk role play gaming. Created by Prometheus Press Incorporated® and published by R. Talsorian Games Inc., **INTERFACE** covers aspects of cyberpunk role play. We place emphasis on R. Talsorian's *Cyberpunk 2020*. We will also cover Cyberpunk cross-overs into *Mekton II*, and *Roadstriker II*.

INTERFACE is a 56 page, saddle stitched, black and white, 5.5 by 8 inch magazine with four color processed covers and a black and white interior. Circulation is over 6,000 (and growing) and the majority of the issues are autoshipped to game-stores and hobby shops throughout the United States and the United Kingdoms.

Advertising Rates: Rates cover camera-ready artwork and copy, negatives or customer-supplied processed separations with match proofs. Printer charges incurred for preparation and layout will be charged to the advertiser at \$30 per hour plus materials; plus separations if needed.

Ad design: If you don't have an ad, we will design one for you. Rates are dependant upon complexity and desired artwork. We can work with supplied art as well as creating it ourselves. Call us for rates.

Completed Artwork: The prices listed assume completed art and copy, halftones may be up to 100 lines on velox, up to 133 lines on film. Bleeds are allowed on full page ads but keep all copy within a third inch of the page edge. Half tones and screens up to 120 lines are acceptable; we suggest that you include negatives for all half tones (or rubyolith overlays for screens) to insure clarity of reproduction.

Location	—Four Color—		—Black & White—	
	1x	2x	1x	2x
Back Cover (full)	\$400	\$365	x	x
Back Inside (full)	x	x	\$195	\$175
Front Inside (full)	x	x	\$215	\$195
Full Page	x	x	\$150	\$130
Half Page	†	†	\$80	\$75
Quarter Page (wide or tall)	†	†	\$50	\$45

† Four color processed is not available in less than a full page or on inside covers.

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Minimum number of items/Cost discount on cover

36-60 items/55% discount on the cover price

61 items or more/60% discount on the cover price

International Discount 65%

COD additional +5% discount on the cover price

Schedule: **INTERFACE** will come out four times this year.

Issue 4 - April 1, 1992, Issue 5 - August 1, 1992, Issue 6 - December 1, 1992

Issue 7 - April 15, 1993

Contact Thaddeus Howze or Kevin De'Antonio at (510) 523-2210 or 522-2847.
Prometheus Press Inc., 919 Santa Clara Ave, Alameda, CA 94501-3429

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INTERFACE



"Psst! You, there. Word's out that you want to be a member of the most exclusive information-brokering network around. Well, here's the drill. We already know the Future. We have agents there. After downloading their data to our primitive computers, we make it readable and add pics. That stuff you get from R. Talsorian is only part of the truth, disguised as a game. If you want to be one of the privileged technocrats, the people with the real power, you have to get a subscription to this publication, your direct-connect to the future.

"We will offer you a one-year connection to the future for \$16.00. Shipping is included in the U.S. and Canada only.

For you blokes outside the States, you need to include \$10.00 with that subscription fee.

That means you get four transmissions once a quarter or so. (Our agents sometimes have to work from primitive and slow computers and this slows transmission time.) To ensure that we can afford to send these transcripts to you, you should pay with a money order or check (we can't handle plastic, yet). We also need a few of your vital statistics to ensure proper delivery of your transcripts. Things like your:

Name _____

Address _____ Apt. _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Country and mailing codes _____

"Hurry, our agents will continue to need the financial support that our organization PROMETHEUS™ offers them here in the past. Thanks for joining. What? You don't want to join? Then I'll have to show you Wolver technology from the Future. After all, you know too much (supply grisly sound effects).

"Registered members, stand by for transmission..."



"Being a nomad is tough. Just because I don't have any place I call home doesn't mean you can take advantage of me. Not by a long shot. I got a family. A big family, and we take care of our own. Now get out of the way, you're blocking traffic."

IN THIS ISSUE:

A short look a nomads in Cyberpunks 2020, including the Wild Pack, Freight Mavericks and Ag-packs.

The Right to Bear Arms: How to Manage Weapons and Amor in Cyberpunk.

Dragons and Dragonslayers: Als and Rogue Hunter Profiles

Corporation Profile: ConAg, an Agricorp Collosus.

Alternate and Subordinate Character Classes

Reviews: Moon 44, Trancers II, Blade Runner: The Director's Cut

Bringing Light to the Dark Future

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