

Chapter Five - Encyclopedia

Althea thought she'd been given the easy job. She was the lookout. All she had to do was sit in the fast food restaurant across the street, watch the building while the others did their burglary thing, and call them up on the cell if anything weird was happening. Althea thought she would be spending an evening eating fries. That was before the soda drinking fucker.

Althea counted fifteen packets of sugar he put in to his soda before he started drinking it. Althea was supposed to call if anything weird was going on, and this bastard was weird as hell, but Althea imagined getting laughed at for calling about a guy putting sugar in his soda.

The problem was that the guy gave her the creeps. Part of it was his style: the blue tracksuit and the plain haircut made him look like something from twenty years ago. Part of it was the way he acted: just sitting and staring, looking around occasionally at nothing in particular. But mostly it was the damn sugar pockets she just couldn't get out of her head. What was going on with the sugar packets?

Althea ran through the possibilities. He might have mitochondrial vampirism, or he might be on Hummingbird, or he might have some genetic mod that required that he eat more sugar than normal. Maybe he was a homeless guy, and all he could afford to eat today was a soda so he wanted to put as many calories in it as possible. Maybe he was one of those golems, an AI assassin programmed to act normal, but the programming was screwed up. Maybe he was a Kalor; they ate more sugar than normal – or was that salt? Maybe he was just a crazy nutball who thought sugar would help him fight the voices in his head.

Althea knew she was supposed to be quiet, unobtrusive, not attract any attention. She couldn't call in with a vague suspicion about a sugar-eating-guy, but she couldn't just sit here next to this creepy guy without doing anything. Finally she made up her mind. "Hey, you, hey," she whispered at him. He turned to look. When she saw the look in his eyes her heart leapt and her hand darted for her knife...

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BLACK MARKET

In Brief- The black market is huge, decentralized and efficient. Through traders and their multiple connections, one can get almost anything.

The modern black market was formed back during the occupation of the city during the Freedom Wars. The black market is made up of an army of independent traders, each of whom has contacts with many other traders and hundreds of other contacts. Every criminal enterprise in the city (except the Drug Lords, who have a vertical monopoly on drug distribution) depends on the black market for their existences. Even semi-legit organizations rely heavily on the black market. The black market has no leaders (although some traders are wealthier and have more economic influence than others) and no real structure.

A common saying on the streets is that the black market can get you anything if you're willing to pay enough for it. There is some truth to this saying. If someone asks a trader for something, the trader first checks to see if it is in his or her current inventory. If not, then the trader finds out how much the customer "wants it" (in other words, how much of a markup he or she is willing to pay). If the person wants it badly enough, a request may jump from trader to trader to trader (each taking a percentage) before it reaches a trader who has or can get the thing in question. If nobody on the black market has a product, it is easy enough to hire someone to steal it. Through this network of contacts, it is conceivable that someone could come to a local black market trader with a few billion dollars and, in a week, get the Mona Lisa.

For traders, information is a good just like anything else. Traders pay for, hoard and sell information whenever they can. Services are also sold (from spying, to a plumbing repair, to a legal bribe, to a massage, to a murder). The trader matches a person needing the service with the person who can provide it, and takes a commission for himself or herself. Some traders (though not all) are also loan sharks, giving loans to people who could not normally get loans, though with ridiculously high interest and mercenaries as debt collectors. Traders who act as loan sharks make it a point to tell the debtors what they are getting in to: they don't want anyone claiming that they got a raw deal from the trader.

Despite its seeming clumsiness, the black market is very efficient.

Traders

In Brief- Independent and powerful traders make up the black market. They seldom exert political power but can have a large influence.

The black market is traders. Without traders, people could steal but they wouldn't have an efficient mechanism to get stolen goods to the people. Crime would be crippled in the city without traders.

Most traders are indies that operate out of their homes. A trader's apartment is a heavily guarded cache of goods. Most traders have either expensive security systems or 24 hour guards at their apartments. A minority of traders are in debt to other, larger traders, and act as employees. Many became traders so they wouldn't have to answer to anyone.

It is easy to ignore traders: they are not organized and they don't go to war to avenge each other (except in the case of personal friendships). For those interested in gang politics, traders are sort of like the scenery: always there when you need them.

Traders see it differently: they always keep an eye on gang politics (as it can greatly effect their business) and they can use their economic power to nudge a situation in one direction or another. For instance, a trader might decide that a gang war would hurt their business (by disrupting people's ability to travel freely through the area). To stop the war, a Trader may share information, send runners to take messages between gang members interested in a truce, or loan the weaker side some very nasty weapons so they appear less vulnerable.

Transactions

In Brief- Most transactions are face-to-face in trader homes. Other transactions are handled using locked accounts and homeless runners.

For most products that a black market trader sells, the standard deal is that the cash and product are handed over at the same time, usually in the traders home (where the trader has defenses ready in case of any malfeasance). If a trader has to "special order" a product, he or she usually asks for some amount (such as 10%) up front. For known clients, with whom the trader has established a trust, a trader may extend a line or credit. For very large deals, and when face-to-face transactions are not possible, Traders use cheap internet escrow services.

Escrow Services- The health of the black market depends upon people who do not necessarily trust each other being able to do large transactions relatively quickly. Escrow services make this possible. Money is transferred to the escrow service, who keeps a hold of it until both parties log-on to say that the transaction was concluded. If the parties can't agree, the escrow service keeps the money.

Runners- Not all transactions happen face to face. Sometimes a buyer wishes to remain anonymous. Sometimes the item is too worthless or the transaction too routine for someone to bother to walk all the way down the block to the trader's home. Sometimes the item being purchased is for some emergency and the person needs the thing right away. Sometimes the item is being delivered from one trader to another. In all of these cases, traders use homeless Runners they have at their disposal to take money, goods and messages back and forth. The runners are every bit as professional, skilled and efficient as the traders they work for.

Why People Don't Buy Children on the Black Market

Some things are just so morally reprehensible that people do not buy them from the normal black market. There are willing buyers and willing sellers, and some traders will be willing, but too many black market traders who would make it their business to fuck up someone who tried to make this sort of purchase.

Say someone goes to a trader and inquires whether the trader can procure a child for him or her. The trader might flat out say no. The trader may, however, say that he or she can procure a child. Most traders are good liars and the person wishing to purchase the child has no way of knowing, when they go to pick the child up, whether they will actually get a child or whether they will be ambushed and killed by an army of angry Orphans who the trader secretly contacted.

Guns

In Brief- Very few in the city own guns. Those that do own guns are either rich enough to have them smuggled in, or use unreliable homemade guns. Gun owners are generally given a wide berth. Outside the city, most guns have technology to prevent unauthorized use.

Only a small minority in the city own guns. Of those that do, many have homemade weapons. Some can only be fired once, others can be used multiple times but because they are home-tooled they have a large chance of misfiring and even injuring the shooter.

Guns are equally likely to come from three basic sources: First, those smuggled in to the city and sold on the black market. Second, those manufactured in the city. Third, those in the city prior to the 2050s that were not found during Freedom Army sweeps.

City residents are very wary about people with firearms. Even those gang members who will jump fearlessly in to any fight will try to avoid combat when the opponent has a gun. Often, when someone has a gun, it is the one and only advantage that they have.

BODY MODIFICATION

Decoration

In Brief- City residents of every income level use body modifications to improve their looks or make themselves appear tough, including piercings, implanted spikes, tattoos, tissue dying, scarring and surgical changes.

Piercings- These are probably the most common body modification in the city. Professional and amateur piercers in the city will take on any request, from the mundane to the very creative. Among favorers of the gutterpunk style, spikes are common. Spikes can be implanted just under the skin, and this is the easiest and least painful method, but the spikes are not very secure. A more skilled piercer (or Black Med or legitimate doctor) can connect spikes to the bones.

Tattoos- Most tattoos are done by a computer and are cheap and fast. Any image can be placed on someone's skin, either permanently or semi-permanently. It is mostly poor people who go for traditional (needle-gun) or archaic (skin abrasions) methods. Some gutterpunks go to practitioners of Maori style tattooing (a chisel is used to abrade the skin, then ink is painted on) to prove how tough they are. Some "posers" go to computerized tattoo parlors and get tattoos that are almost indistinguishable from authentic Maori style tattoos.

Coloring- Non-toxic dyes can semi-permanently dye hair, skin, teeth and even eyes to some color that the person requests. In general, changes in shade are the cheapest and easiest to get, while extreme changes (like going from caucasian skin coloring to jet black skin) are expensive and take special procedures.

Scarring- Some in the city (most often poor teens and mentally ill people) engage in scarification of their own bodies as a means of decoration. Most of them are people who have some vested interest in advertising to others how tough or self-destructive they are.

Surgical Modifications- The Freaks may invest money in scary looking surgical modifications which will be part of their acts. Sex industry workers may borrow money to invest in plastic surgery, hoping to enhance their careers. It is only Indies who can afford surgical mods purely for the aesthetic value. These mods can include vat-grown parts, like third eyes, tails, extra-fingers. Parts can be functional or non-functional. The mods can also include non-organic substances (e.g. glass, metal, plastic, even stone) implanted in the body.



CITY CULTURE

Origins

In Brief- City culture is mostly practical, but draws elements from gang culture, homeless culture, radical utopianism and teenage rebellion.

For the most part, city culture has created itself. It is not so much a set of shared traditions as it is a bunch of people, each reacting to their environment as rationally as they can. Similarity to other cultures, past or present, is probably just because something happens to be an effective way of doing things. However, there are some city traditions which can be traced directly back to specific roots.

Gang Culture- Gangs have changed a lot recently. In fact, many gangs have done whatever they can to differentiate themselves from the randomly-violent, self-destructive drug gangs of the old times. However, certain elements remain, especially in gangs with an old history (Roofers, Risen) or with elder members. Major contributions: revenge as a means of deterrence, the idea of the gang as one's family.

Homeless Culture- Whereas the Indies and Wells have "found the streets," the homeless and unborn have always had them and have had good ways of dealing with their dangers. Wells and Indies new to the streets have often incorporated homeless ways of doing things because they work. Major contributions: respecting other people's boundaries (to a fault), theft seen as morally justifiable and the idea of giving others every chance to live-and-let-live.

Radical Utopianism- For a while in the late 2050s, utopianism was the major radical movement of the day. Radical Utopianists believed that community was more important than government and that "perfect communities" could change the world's culture. Major contributions: emphasis on self government, use of banishment as a punishment.

Teenage Rebellion- There is a lot of teenage rebellion in the culture of the city. For centuries, teenagers have been growing up pressed up against the flaws of their parents' lifestyles. Many of the teenagers have decided, however naively, that anything would be better than living as their parents did. For Wells, the single most common reason for leaving home is not wanting to be like parents. So, many city values are really just the violent rejection of the values of VR addicts. Major contributions: devaluation of

The State of Equality in 2080

In Brief- Women, homosexuals, ethnic minorities face little or no discrimination. Poor, immigrants, transsexuals, "ugly" people face some discrimination. City residents discriminated against by those outside the city.

Victories- Over the last century, American culture (and most other cultures in the industrial world) has rid itself of nearly all cultural and institutional prejudice against women, homosexuals and racial minorities. These people can join military service, the clergy of most religions, street gangs, and almost all private clubs (including the masons). To most people it would be a bizarre and alien thought to think that these people are inferior or bad in any way. In the city, the only exceptions are mentally ill loners who may decide they hate a certain gender, sexuality or ethnicity. Some Immigrants and religious extremists discriminate against minority sexualities, but they are outsiders with social little power. Every once in a while, a small group of young teens who share a certain prejudice will get together to commit hate crimes (usually cornering and beating people up). Many serial killers are misogynists (people who hate and fear women). Women are targeted for sex crimes more often than men, but most people see this as a vulnerability of male psychology, not a female weakness (see "Why Men?" p.147).

Failures- Certain people still face cultural and institutional prejudice. Even in the city, where even the richest are considered poor by most standards, there is still prejudice against poor people. People who are poor are more likely to be thought of as stupid, immoral, dangerous and diseased. This is especially true of shut-ins, who regard homeless people as something like wild animals. Similarly, immigrants are commonly thought of as ignorant, unsophisticated and unfriendly. The physically disabled and elderly are thought of as being less capable than others and are often denied membership in city groups (including some gangs) and in gated communities and corporations.

Transsexuals face much less discrimination than they did 80 years ago, but there are still many people in the city who think transsexuals are mentally ill. The problem is that there are some mentally ill people who seek a gender change, and when people hear about them they assume that all transsexuals are mentally ill. Transsexuals are sometimes denied jobs, memberships in groups (including some gangs and gated communities) and are sometimes targeted for violence. There are a lot of transsexuals in the city who came to the city because their families and the communities they lived in would not accept them. There are some in the lesbian/gay/bisexual community who think of transsexuals as part of their community and try to stop prejudice, but there are also many in the community who would rather not be associated with transsexuals. There is a lot of similar discrimination against people with sexual fetishes.

"Lookism" is not as prevalent in the city as it is in other parts of the country. The main reason is that, on the streets, people often put a higher value on looking tough than on looking attractive. Also, the city has a plurality of very different styles and thus more than one "ideal" of physical beauty. Despite this, people who are considered attractive find they have an easier time getting jobs, joining groups and gaining power.

City Residents- Any resident of the city will find himself or herself discriminated against by people from outside the city. People living in gated communities or corporate living centers assume that anyone living in the city either couldn't pass screening tests or was too crazy to want to. They assume that any city resident is either mentally ill, stupid and uneducated, drug addicted or evil. People who choose to be out on the streets are often thought of the same way by those who choose to be shut-ins.

Graffiti

In Brief- Art, self-expression, communication and historical records all in one.

Timeline

1930s- First gang graffiti in US.
 1949 – Spraypaint invented
 1968 – Julio 204, first city ‘writer’.
 1970 – Taki 183 makes the news, makes ‘writing’ famous.
 1971 – First writing crews.
 1973 – City spends \$10 million removing graffiti.
 1973 – Strong anti-graffiti laws.
 1972 – First burner (large mural masterpiece).
 1982 – First large scale wars between writing crews.
 1985 – NY writing declines after crack cocaine takes over the lives of more urban youth.

History- Historically, there have been two different (but never completely separate) types of graffiti in the city. Gang graffiti has been seen in the city’s poor ethnic neighborhoods before World War II. Gang graffiti was meant to communicate information to other gang members: it was incomprehensible to most non-gang members and even to gang members from other areas. As time went on, the language of gang graffiti became more complex and more things could be communicated with gang graffiti: the limits of turf, threats and challenges to other groups, listings of the members of gangs, memorials for dead gang members, and even descriptions of battles or other accomplishments. An increasing involvement of street gangs in drug sales spread a more uniform gang culture around the country and made it so that people from one city could often understand much gang graffiti from another city.

In New York, in the late 1960s, graffiti as a unique form of self-expression was invented. Early “taggers” or “writers” would write their nickname (and the street they were from) on anything and everything they could. The media took the story and ran with it, making writing increasingly popular. A whole lifestyle evolved: kids would shoplift cans of spraypaint, form crews, spraypaint huge murals on subway cars or buildings. Crews would even get in to bloodless “wars” where they would paint their own marks over each other’s marks.

Graffiti itself was also an act of daring: putting graffiti up in gang turf, or somewhere where one risked being caught by authorities, or in a dangerous place proved the graffiti artist’s bravery. Graffiti artists of the 1980’s and 1990’s were urban explorers, going in to tunnels, hopping barbed-wire fences, climbing bridges. Writers would often paint beautiful murals in places where nobody but other writers, homeless people living underground, and the occasional stray utility worker would ever see them. Many of these underground paintings are still there, a hundred years later, having outlasted many city buildings.

Because some of the murals created by writers were quite beautiful (at least to some) this lent some amount of respectability to graffiti writing. Some started using the phrase “graffiti artists.” This term pissed off the property owners and city government, who were paying millions a year to clean up graffiti. Although the police continued to crack down on it, writing became the domain of kids of all social classes, not just poor kids.

Modern Graffiti- In the city today, graffiti continues to be something that crosses social and economic boundaries.

Graffiti ranges from a bare, utilitarian scrawl meant to convey a message (even if the message is as simple as “I was here”) to large, attractive murals that take twenty to thirty cans of paint. Much graffiti falls somewhere in-between: it tries to send a message as well as showing the skill of the writer.

Some graffiti uses easy to understand pictures, symbols and language. Others use symbols that only members of a particular group might understand. Others use a “language” of symbols known only by experienced writers. At its best, graffiti is not only beautiful, it is a historical document that skilled graffiti artists can read in the same way one might read a newspaper.

Slang

In Brief- Borg = artificial, Black = underground, see p.225 for more.

The culture of the streets has developed several new slang words, mostly in response to new things that there weren’t simple terms to describe. Most groups in the city, gang and non-gang, tend to have slang to describe the things they deal with in particular. An analysis of city slang can provide insights in to the worldview of the people who speak it.

“Borg”- Many slang words use the suffix “borg,” taken from the word cyborg. “Borg” indicates that something has been replaced by something else artificial. The X + Borg formula commonly refers to both the technological measure and the person benefiting from it. For instance, the Skin Borg gang are people who wear high tech armor almost 24 hours a day, replacing the weakness of human skin with the strength and powers of high tech materials. Death Borgs are people who have had their normal processes of death replaced by a bomb which explodes upon death. Kid Borgs is a term used to describe people who use mental copying technology to move their minds in to the bodies of children.

“Black”- Many slang terms have this prefix, as in “black market.” It typically indicates that something is illegal and being done underground. E.g. a “black corp” is a division of a corporation that operates in secret, using illegal means to make money for the parent corp. “Grey” is used to describe things that dance the line between being legal and illegal.

See the Glossary of City slang, p.225 for more.

“Hunting for Souls”

In city slang, “hunting for someone’s soul” means trying to take away someone’s free will. A person’s free will can be removed by means of drugs, mental programs, brainwashing, psychic attacks or implants. **Drugs** can temporarily inhibit free will, but cannot remove it altogether. **Mental programs** are expensive and take a long time to install, but can let a person command (e.g. with spoken “keywords”) any element of a person’s mental functioning. Mental programs can turn on or off emotions, paralyze people, block memories, or other nasty things only limited by current knowledge about the brain. **Brainwashing** is low tech but effective. It involves forcing someone say what you want them to believe, and then slowly reducing their mental capacity until they start believing what they are saying. **Psychics** can control what people, think, feel, do or even believe, but rarely for more than a second. **Implants**, put in people against their will, can let people monitor, punish and even kill by remote control.

Philosophy

In Brief- The city gives many opportunities for philosophy. Eccentrics and street people have many philosophies. It could be said that everyone in the city has their own philosophy, whether or not they can put it in words.

Eccentrics are stereotyped as the city's philosophers. The classic image of an Eccentric is someone who sits back and observes everything going on in the city, and draws conclusions from it about abstract subjects such as human nature or ethics. For this person, the anarchy of the city is a laboratory of all the principles of human life. Every possible combination of peoples, motivations and situations come together at some point or another. There is also the unregulated use of technologies that raise important philosophical questions. Mental copying technology raises questions about human identity and the idea of a unique soul. Mental installer technologies, psychics and drugs raise questions about free will. Virtual Reality raises questions about what is real, and under what circumstances reality is really necessary. AI and genetic engineering raises questions about what is human.

One very inaccurate stereotype is that while the rich think about philosophy, the poor do not. In fact, homeless street people think about philosophy as much as any Eccentric. It is mostly boredom that prompts thinking: philosophy (along with sex and poetry) is one of the few free past-times available to street people. Street people have many philosophies and opinions, though they often resemble "folk wisdom" more than academic philosophy. Rather than trying to extract abstract theorems from a priori logic, street philosophers try to extract abstract principles from things they see around them. A street person might come up with some simple rule (e.g. "'free' just means you don't know what the cost is right now") and then spend hours delightfully pointing out every real-life story in which that rule holds true. Street people entertain each other for hours discussing what is the best way to deal with certain people or situations; what is right and wrong; what parts of people's behavior are innate and what parts are a reaction to the environment; what are the core motivations of human beings; and what makes things aesthetically pleasing.

Everyone in the city, though, has some theory, strategy, opinion, explanation or worldview which is unique to them. Many gangs have their own philosophies, though each individual member puts his or her own spin on that philosophy (or, in some cases, rejects it altogether). Groups sometimes teach their philosophy through lectures, but most often they teach it by the way they act, the goals they seek and the way they deal with problems.

The Ten Worst Ways To Die

By Carl Finnix (Roofer Founder and Battle General)

10. "I guess some of the plagues we've had around here have been pretty bad. You remember that one we had last Summer, the one where you bleed out and the blood's all black, and you go to the doctor and the doctor says 'Your organs are dead, so all we can do is give you a bunch of pain killers.' That one was pretty bad."

9. "And the Drakes have some pretty nasty poisons. There's this one that you just go crazy, like the worst possible drug trip, and then you have a heart attack and die. Come to think of it, I guess the Drakes are pretty cool. I mean, they have this shit but most of the time they use poison that kills you painlessly."

8. "There's that disease, the one that gives you boils all over and the people who gave it to you charge you a thousand dollars for the cure. I hear it feels like there's bugs crawling under your skin. It could be worse, there could be real bugs crawling under your skin. They're probably working on that next."

7. "A buddy of mine once got put in an oven and cooked. The sad thing is that if he could have just grabbed on to those heating coils and yanked them out of the wall, he could have saved himself, but they was just too hot to touch. So he died knowing the one way to save himself, but being unable to do it."

6. "I guess Mauler addicts have it pretty bad. I mean, you just get dumber and dumber and you can feel your being a person just slipping away. Then, when you finally forget how to buy drugs, the withdrawals are so bad that you end up scratching yourself to death."

5. "There's that leash program. You know, that mental program that you put in someone's head and you can command them. You can make them feel all kinds of pleasure, or all kinds of pain, just by saying a certain code word, and there's nothing they can do about it. Or you could just paralyze them and stomp them to death, and they can't do nothing."

4. "Being eaten by rats has gotta suck. Like, if you go in to a place with a lot of rats, and if you get paralyzed, like a mental program malfunctions. The rats are gonna come sniffing around to see if you'll do anything, and if you don't do nothing they'll come a little closer, and if you don't do nothing they'll take a bit out of you. Then all of a sudden there's a dozen of them chawing down on you."

3. "I've heard that really powerful psychics can just take over your head and make you stab yourself. That's gotta be pretty bad, especially if you don't even know who the psychic is who's doing it to you. Say there's a bunch of people around you. It could be any one of them."

2. I saw this guy once and someone had fucked him up good, like surgically, you know. I once got told it would cost two hundred dollars to put my nose back straight, so what they did to this guy must have cost a million dollars. I'd hate to be so fucked up that I would want to do that to somebody else. The guy was just... I can't describe it. Not like a person, not like any animal I ever heard of. He couldn't walk, he just kind of flopped around. A foot must have seemed like a mile to him."

1. "The worst, I guess, is my dad. He wasn't tortured or anything, so maybe it wasn't that bad, but it makes me the saddest because I know the guy had it in him to be something great. When I hear about these young guys and girls fighting Colins, making deals with corporate operatives, negotiating peace between warring gangs, solving murders, shit like that, I imagine that my dad could be doing that. But all he ever did was sit around in VR all day. He thought he was a good parent, but he wasn't even in the real world enough to realize that he wasn't. I don't know... maybe torture's better. Torture, you go nice and crazy after a few days and you don't really feel it so much anymore. And at least you did something with your life."

Rumors

In Brief- Rumors travel to every corner of the city and are an important, though inaccurate, source of news.

Benefits- There is no newspaper for people on the streets in the city, no news service that keeps them up to date with the happenings of the city. People gain almost all of their knowledge about what's going on in the city from word of mouth.

One reason that people like to have friends outside of their own gang or social grouping is that they can receive important information. There are so many bonds of friendships between different gangs, groups and social classes that people are seldom more than four or five degrees of separation away from any knowledge within the city. Like the decentralized black market, the speed, efficiency and usefulness of rumors in the city surprises many outsiders.

Flaws- Rumors have their limitations. One common problem is that, as the rumors are passed on, theories are stated as facts. This is why Matt Timm, known as the street's best known expert on the moles, refuses to speak any sort of conjecture about the moles. He has seen too many theories and inferences stated as known fact. Another problem is that the source of a rumor often becomes lost or misstated (some of the "facts" about moles are incorrectly attributes to Matt). Another common problem is that while the basic message of a rumor rarely changes, specific facts (and especially numbers) can change radically. Of a hot rumor, a person will probably hear multiple versions, and will probably choose the most dramatic version to repeat to his or her friends. The death of three in a gang battle can easily become the death of one hundred. This caused problems when many people refused to believe information about the large number of Colins prowling the city, believing that those numbers must be exaggerations.

The most intelligent way for someone in the city to deal with rumors is to take them as a warning that something might be the case. A rumor, at best, will prompt someone to seek out further information.

Time

In Brief- Morning: gang members sleep, addicts buy drugs. Afternoon: gang members take care of personal business. Evening: gang activity starts. Madrugada (midnight to dawn): mostly gang members on the streets, and near dawn the city is quiet.

For city residents, a day is broken down in to four parts:

Morning- (dawn to noon) Most people in the city are asleep. Most gang members sleep through morning. If they haven't arrived home before dawn, they arrive shortly after and go to sleep. Addicts wake up, their bloodstreams empty of drugs, and desperately seek out their next fix. When VR Addicts and other shut-ins are forced to go outside, they choose this time of day, knowing that it is the safest.

Afternoon- (noon to sunset) Many gang members sleep in a few hours in to the afternoon. Afternoon is usually thought of as a leisurely time of day. People who have "business" to take care of do it now: errands, training, shopping, paying bills, doing welfare paperwork, working at part-time jobs, etc. Street People (who typically work 12 or more hours a day) get started working. Addicts have comfortable levels of drugs in their bloodstreams and are out trying to get food and money.

Evening- (sunset to midnight) This is the most active time on the streets. When something important happens on the streets, it most likely happens in the evening, and anyone who wants to watch or be a part of city life is out. As sun falls, gang members head toward their turf to meet up with their friends. The Arcadians start assembling in their arcades. The Risen meet up in their packs. Boarders start showing up in parking lots and doing tricks. The Humankalorie assemble in Oht arenas and set up matches. Later in the evening, when all the gang members are together, discussions turn to serious gang business, and when gang members set off to make war it is usually around 10 pm. In the evening, all other types of "street life" are out in force, from charity workers, to freelancers, to sex workers.

Madrugada- A Spanish word, now part of city vocabulary. Madrugada is generally thought of as the time that weird things happen. "Madrugada stories" is a slang term for any tale of the weird, scary or unexplained. As it gets later, and dawn approaches, there are fewer and fewer people on the streets. People out to make money (jacks, sex workers, etc.) go home, as there are too few people on the streets. Addicts typically find some place safe to take the last of their drugs and crash. Those left on the streets tend to be those who are under the influence of stimulant drugs, those who are heading back from some cross-town excursion, and those whose lives are in some sort of crisis.

CITY GEOGRAPHY

In Brief- "The City" is the island of Manhattan in New York. 2 by 11 miles.

Manhattan

What is known popularly as "the city" is the island of Manhattan. The city is approximately 1.75 miles long and 11.8 miles wide, 19 square miles altogether. In the 1660s, the size of the island was increased by sinking old ships and covering them with dirt. In the 2040s, due to rising ocean levels, about 5 square miles around the city were partially submerged (now known in city slang as "the sunken city").

Manhattan is on the East coast of the United States, surrounded by rivers (the Hudson to the West, the Harlem

and East Rivers to the East) with New York Bay on the South. Manhattan runs Southeast to Northeast. The Bronx, Brooklyn and Newark are across the water from the city. Manhattan is part of the state of New York, the bulk of which lies to the North of Manhattan.

Manhattan was once part of a system of boroughs which made up New York City. After the reformation, Manhattan was changed from a borough to an independent city. In the early 2060s, as people were setting up prestigious communities outside the city, congressional districts were redrawn (gerrymandered) so that Manhattan would never have its own representative.

See Also: Full City Map, p.238

Most of Manhattan has a very easy to understand street plan. Streets run roughly East to West and are numbered from 1st Street (Southernmost) to 220th Street (Northernmost). Avenues run roughly North to South, from 1st Avenue on the West to 11th Avenue on the East end of the island. The names of most avenues change while in Harlem, having been renamed after figures in African American history. The regular street plan dissolves in to a tangle of named streets at the very Southern tip of the city (the very old financial district) and the very Northern tip of the city (the hilly and once very wealthy Inwood district).

City Access

In Brief- Only two bridges and one tunnel still work. They have automated gates that keep guns and explosives from moving in and out of the city.

Most of the tunnels and bridges leading to the city were destroyed by rising ocean levels and by terrorist action during the Freedom War. There are now only three ways to access Manhattan by foot or land vehicle:

-George Washington Bridge connects the East side of the Inwood/Washington Heights neighborhood (in the North) to the Bronx, across the Harlem river.

-The Holland Tunnel, downtown, on the East, connects to New Jersey.

-The Manhattan Bridge, downtown, on the West, connects to Brooklyn. This bridge also provides freight-trains access to the city.

These two bridges and one tunnel contain automated contraband stops, of the kind built all over the country during the 2040s. These stops have heavy metal gates which close to enclose a vehicle while it is scanned by x-rays and chemical sniffers. If firearms are detected, an automated system informs the driver that firearms are illegal in the city, and allows the person to back out. If drugs, explosives or biological weapons are detected, the gates stay closed until a team of heavily armed Bridge and Tunnel Authority officers can come from their office in Queens. Trains traveling over the Manhattan bridge are scanned as they go through.

Travel to and from the city by means of water is nearly impossible. Powerful currents flow through the partially submerged buildings of the sunken city and any vehicle trying to come through risks being smashed in to the sides the buildings. The city is also very strict about issuing permits to fly over the city. Usually only the National Guard, CDC and medical helicopters are allowed to fly over and land in the city.

Inwood/Washington Heights

In Brief- Northernmost city, old Indie neighborhood with large industrial/railroad complex, Skin Borg turf.

The Neighborhoods of Inwood and Washington Heights form the Northernmost tip of the island. They run South to 165th Street. South of this is Harlem.

Inwood, in the North, was (until a few years ago) a sought-after indie neighborhood. There was a quiet residential district on the hills in the Northwest, dotted with expensive homes. The rising ocean levels did little damage here. Also on the hills is the Cloisters, a museum built from pieces of European monasteries and now home to the Lumens cult. To the East of the hilly area is a large industrial area, with some abandoned factories, some in-use factories, some warehouses and a large railyard.

Secret Geography of the City

For only \$300, you can purchase a pair of geo-info goggles. These goggles have GPS (global positioning system) and gyroscope chips inside, so they know where you are and what you are looking at. Spend a few bucks more on a "tourist chip" and glowing green arrows and words will appear everywhere you look. Look over here and a green box will pop up informing you that Frank Lloyd Wright designed this building more than a century ago. Look this way and you will see that on this spot was a wall of sharpened logs, built to protect early settlers from Indians, from which Wall Street took it's name.

If you have some black market contacts, you can buy a chip designed for police officers. Look to the apartment building to your right and you will see that a parolee lives here, having served a sentence for conspiring to smuggle weapons in to the city. Composite crime rates are available at the turn of a tiny wheel on the side of the glasses: this alley sees 0.62 murders a year, turn the wheel and you will see that it will play host to 2.41 muggings.

Imagine that such chips are available for the geographic knowledge from the minds of other city residents. Plug in the chip for a VR addict and you might see the most brightly lit streets, the closest payphones to dial 911 from, and a bright beacon shining high above the safety of home.

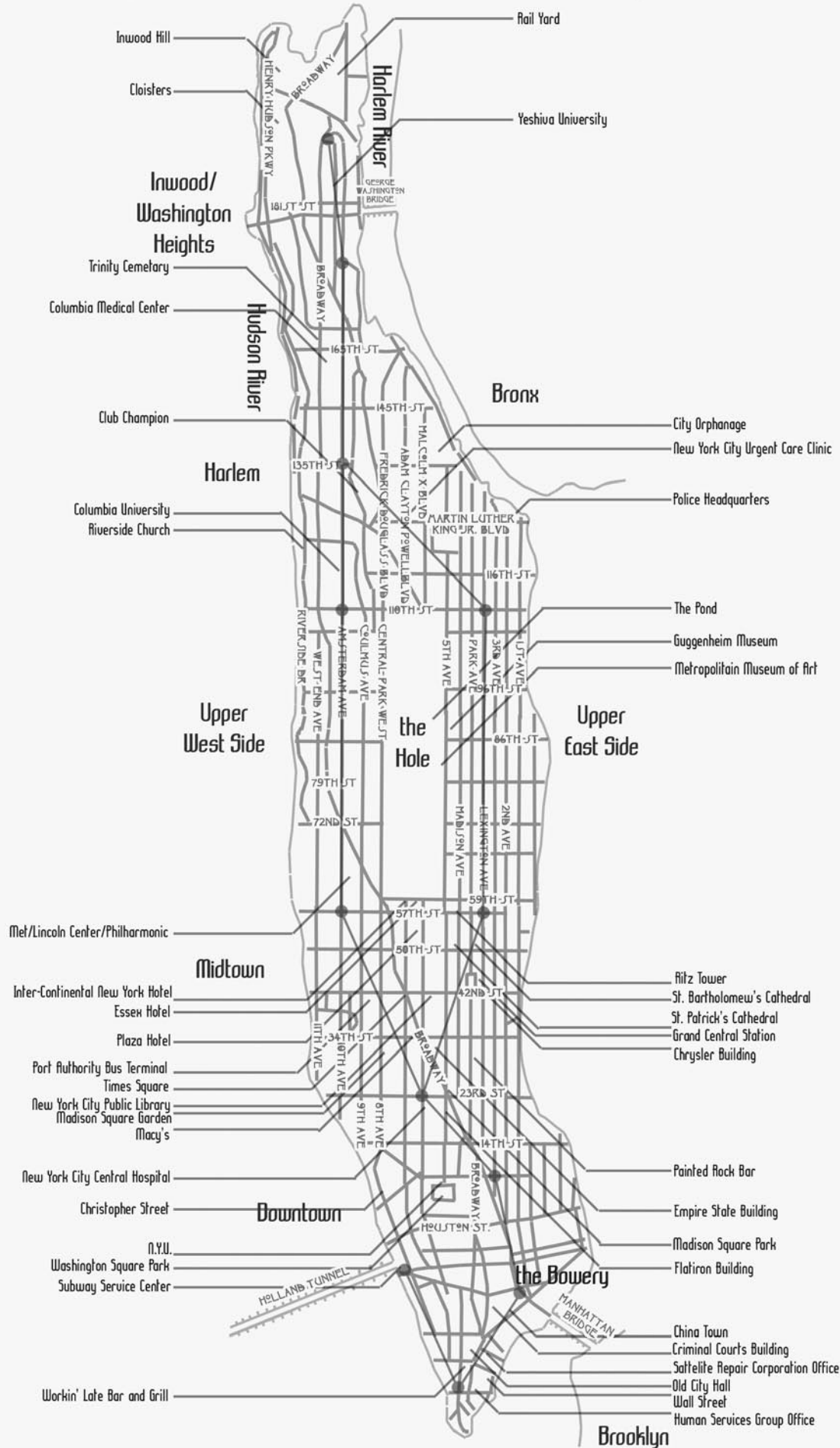
A gang member chip would plaster the walls with tiny green sigils to remind you what gang holds claim to this part of town. Look up the street and you might see the solid line of a well established turf, the fuzzy line of a poorly established turf and the zigzagging lines and spinning green daggers of a war-zone. Major hangouts for the members of various gangs would pop up.

The chip for a street person would be a constant barrage of pointers and signs showing places to hide, places to stay warm, places to get food, places to beg, places with dumpsters overflowing with food or salvageables, automated recycling booths, and the meandering lines of the well established daily routes of friends and enemies.

An addict chip would show monochrome green-and-black head-shots of the pushers gangs that operate on each couple of blocks. Under the headshots would be little notes: "likes to beat people for no reason", "cuts stuff with baking powder", "probably high on god killer" or "has got a limp from some recent injury."

The info pulled out of people's heads could make thousands of chips, each with a detailed and unique geography of the city. Outreach workers would see places where the homeless like to sleep. Perverts would see places to buy illegal pornography, hire prostitutes or meet with brothel owners for a (blindfolded) trip to the brothels. Corporate agents and LBRA corp hunters would see corporate logos hovering over every store, apartment building, even vending machine. Hackers would see a tangle of green lines, information snaking under the streets of the city, ready to be tapped, ending in paycomputers, security cameras, remote-controlled security systems and more. Runners would see signs pointing out every major shortcut through the city. Thieves would see tiny symbols plastered on each building: stick figures holding clubs would mean a security guard, a camera would mean surveillance, a suitcase would mean the residents are on vacation.

There are billions of pieces of geographical information about the city, some are known to all, some are available to anyone who cares enough to inquire, and some are closely guarded secrets. Some say that there are many cities, all coexisting all at once, all mutually invisible.



South of Inwood is Washington Heights. This was once a neighborhood for successful blacks who moved out of Harlem (to the South). In recent times, it has been primarily a lower class area with a high density of apartment buildings. 181st Street in Washington Heights was the birthplace of the gang that would become known as the Skin Borgs. The Skin Borgs have expanded rapidly in recent years, taking over all of the Inwood and Washington Heights areas and some of Harlem. The Skin Borgs destroyed or forced out every other gang in the area. Most of the indies fled Inwood when the Skin Borgs took over and the whole area is economically depressed.

The buildings in this part of town are mostly residential, with a number of large housing projects. There are trees on many of the sidewalks. The most impressive buildings in this part of town are abandoned, and include a football stadium and an old Jewish college.

Harlem

In Brief- Old black and Hispanic area, North of the hole.

This district runs from 165th Street to 110th Street. Historically, Harlem was an African American ghetto, founded by laborers who were brought in to build the first subway. In the 1920s and 1930s Harlem was the center of a "black renaissance," where much of modern African American art, music and culture was born. Later, it became known as an African American ghetto. In the 1920s, Puerto Rican immigrants started moving to East Harlem, later followed by other Spanish speaking immigrants, and the area soon became known as Spanish Harlem or El Barrio.

145th Street in Harlem is the scene of the blockade of the Skin Borgs by the Purists, Hummingbirds and Immortals. The street is a war zone with battles happening every day. Other gangs with a presence in Harlem include the Orphans, Immortals, Math Addicts, Humankalorie and Bleeders.

Harlem has the city's highest percentage of old brownstones. These are thin, two or three story buildings, built in tight rows during the 19th century. They are made from reddish sandstone (which has turned brown from pollution). These buildings are attractive, but have cramped interiors and no elevators.

Upper West/East Side

In Brief- To the East and West of the hole (Central Park) are now Indie neighborhoods.

This part of town runs from 110th street to 59th street, South of Harlem and North of Midtown. It is divided down the center by the hole (Central Park), forming three columns.

The Upper East/West sides are now a mostly Indie territory, with a lot of small homes owned by Indies, a few high class condos or apartment buildings, and shops that cater to Indies. This is the closest the city has to a "wealthy neighborhood" though there are just as many street people and addicts. Indie gangs rule most blocks and keep them relatively peaceful. The Sexologists and Arcadians rule the Upper East Side. The Dragons, Omniscients and Bleeders rule the West Side.

Before the Freedom Wars, real estate near Central Park was the highly valued. Near the park, on either side, were many museums and mansions (homes to millionaires and foreign embassies). Today, most of these museums and mansions are in ruins, victims of Freedom War violence

or random destruction by the Dragons. Farther away from the park, near the East Hudson river, are working-class brownstone apartment buildings, breweries and small factories. In between is a nice Indie area, with many restaurants, boutiques, shops and nice apartment buildings. There are trees on the sidewalks. The apartment buildings were mostly built before WWII. They are handsome, 10-30 story co-ops with high ceilings, arched doorways and hardware floors.

The Hole

In Brief- What was once a huge rectangular park in the middle of the city is now fenced off ruins and untamed wilderness.

Approximately in the middle of the city, between the Upper West and Upper East Sides, is what was once Central Park. This was one of the largest urban parks ever, approximately 2500 ft. by 13250 ft. It had a museum and two large bodies of water. During the Freedom Wars, Freedom Army forces started building a complex of buildings in the hole. The complex was supposed to incorporate the beauty of the park and much of it was underground. Some of the buildings were in operation and some were being constructed when the rebels blew up several of the buildings. This act brought on the end of the Freedom Army occupation of the East Coast. The hole, as it is known today, is ruins choked with unmaintained greenery. Despite the nuclear cleanup preformed by the restoration committee, the hole is slightly radioactive and the hole is surrounded by a barbed wire fence. The Keepers, a street family, consider the hole to be their territory and guard it viciously, so few people go in to the hole. See p.194 for more.

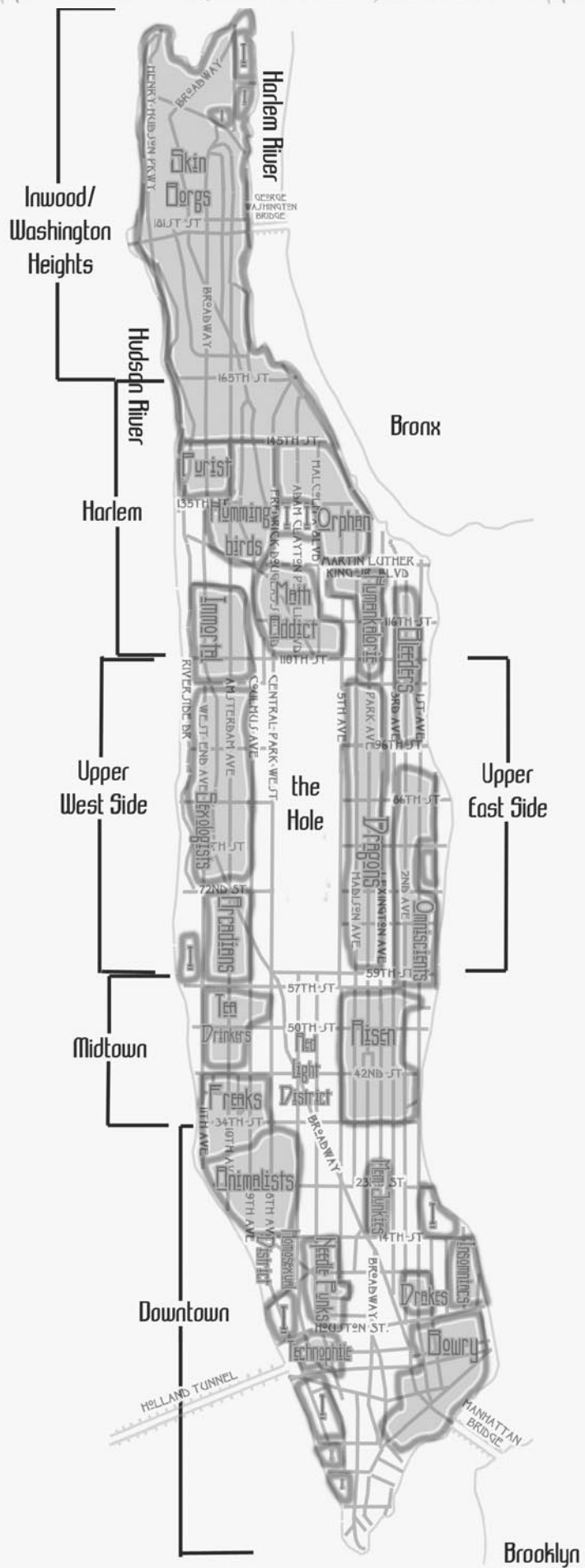
Midtown

In Brief- South of the park, has the red light district (hotels, prostitutes), Indie and Well gangs.

Midtown runs from 59th to 34th street. The Upper West and East Sides (and the Hole) are to the North and Downtown is to the South. Midtown was once the tourist capital of the city, dotted with luxury hotels, massive department stores, trendy neighborhoods and architectural landmarks. Today Midtown still plays host to the city's few tourists, as well as most of the city's sex industry and the Tea Drinkers, Freaks and Risen.

On the South end are the ruins of Macy's, once the largest store in the world, now mostly demolished. On the very Eastern edge, near Risen territory, is the New York Public Library. It is closed to the general public, but historians make occasional pilgrimages to the library to search through its collections of old paper-printed books. Nearby is Rockefeller center, a selection of large buildings (the largest being the RCA building at 70 stories). Impressive churches of Midtown include St. Patrick's Cathedral (a Catholic church, built in the 1800s, still in use) and St. Bartholomew's (which is now a meeting place for the Risen).

To the East, in Risen territory, is the Chrysler Building (a 77-story high skyscraper built in 1928-1930) and Grand Central Station (once a major transportation hub, the Freedom Army bolted the doors because they feared it would give rebels access to tunnels under the city). The half-collapsed ruins of the United Nations building lies, partially submerged, in the sunken city to the East.



Red Light District- South of the hole, N. of 23rd St., W. of 8th Ave., E. of 8th Avenue. This is the part of town where most prostitutes operate from. The Red Light District is also home to adult book stores, strip clubs and pornography studios. The red light district is centered around Times Square (the intersection of Broadway, 7th Ave., and 42nd St.).

People come from throughout the city and throughout this part of the country to partake in the city's sex industry. The average "tourist" is a businessman from a nearby private city, corporate living center or high-class neighborhood, who wants to spend the weekend in the city doing drugs and sleeping with prostitutes. Not everyone in the red light district wants sex or pornography, some are people staying in the city who want a cheap hotel room. Accommodations in the red light district range from seedy converted office buildings that cost \$30 a night (or \$10 an hour) to former luxury hotels (like the Ritz-Carlton, the Hotel Wellington, the Salisbury, Park Lane and the Plaza Hotel) that overlook the Hole and cost \$60 or more per night. In each of these former luxury hotels, the management can only afford to maintain a small portion of the hotel (usually the first few floors) but the parts that are maintained are clean and retain a little of their former grandeur. Only the best-dressed prostitutes in the city are allowed to hang around in the lobbies of these hotels and harass potential customers.

Broadway is one of the busiest streets in the city, and Times Square was once the heart of shopping and tourism in the city. Huge buildings, including the New York Times building, were built around Times Square, mostly to impress visitors. Multi-story high billboards and electronic signs are now cracked or peeling. Most of the buildings have spacious commercial frontage, which is now taken up by strip clubs and porn shops. Although half the neon lights are out, Times Square is still the best lit part of the city. All around Times Square there are old theatres and television studios which are now mostly used for creating pornography. There are dozens of theatres, some of which are forcefully co-opted by the Freaks for stage shows during the Festival of the Freak. Carnegie Hall is a famous old music studio which, although boarded up most of the time, is sometimes rented out to legitimate musical groups in the city who want to hold recitals.

Downtown

In Brief- Southern tip of the city, home to the bowery (large street people area), homosexual district, financial district, many skyscrapers.

Downtown Manhattan, which is everything South of 34th Street, is the most varied section of town, with commercial centers, industrial complexes, old residential neighborhoods and old skid-row neighborhoods. Less than half of the area of downtown is gang territory, making it the lowest concentration in the city. Downtown is also the oldest part of the city. Street gangs fought bloody battles here in the mid 1800s. At the very Southern tip, the regular street plan dissolves in to a tangle of ancient streets.

Large portions along the West side are actively used industrial complexes, employing many of the city's working classes (who live in corporate owned apartment buildings nearby). The majority of downtown is commercial, and though the tallest skyscrapers are in midtown, downtown boasts the highest concentration of skyscrapers. The residential areas are mostly very old ethnic neighborhoods, and most are now occupies by well

gangs (the Technophiles, Animalists and Needle Punks). Downtown has the Holland Tunnel (to the West) and the Manhattan Bridge (to the East), two of the three working ways in and out of the city.

Residential Neighborhoods- Downtown's residential neighborhoods had the city's first ethnic neighborhoods, and some have seen many groups of immigrants come through. The neighborhoods to the West (Chelsea, Soho, Greenwich Village) are generally "trendier." Although they have their share of Victorian tenements and old industrial buildings, they also have a lot of nicely renovated buildings that serve as Indie apartments. Loft space is plentiful, and a lot of the city's small "art scene" happens in small cafes and galleries here.

The Eastern residential neighborhoods (Lower East Side, Little Italy, China Town) have mostly been swallowed up by the growing Bowery (see below), yet some of their ethnic population and unique character remains. These neighborhoods are known for their high concentration of old tenement buildings. These buildings feature commercial frontage, party walls (walls shared with other buildings), no elevators, and dim interiors. Walking in these neighborhoods, one sees blocks filled completely with four to six story tenement buildings, they are mostly red and grey brick and the front of the buildings are covered with a maze of windows, ledges and fire-escapes.

Chinatown has a significantly different architecture from the other residential districts. Chinatown has some of the oldest buildings in the city that are still standing. The buildings are very cramped, even by city standards, and the architecture shows an unmistakable Chinese influence. The Chinese population here is still very high, enough so that corporate chain stores operating here find it profitable to advertise their services with Chinese neon signs.

Homosexual District- Originally centered around Christopher street (in what used to be called West Village), the homosexual district has grown to encompass most of the West Village and most of Greenwich Village. The homosexual district is roughly triangular, bordered by Greenwich Ave. on the Northeast, Christopher St. on the Southeast and the sunken city on the West. Many gays, lesbians, bisexuals and transvestites, including members of most of the city's gangs, live in apartments here. There are many bars and cafes here that are hangouts for the city's homosexual population (and heterosexuals who simply enjoy the atmosphere). There are many nice restaurants in this district.

Bowery- An ancient skid-row neighborhood, the Bowery has grown since the massive exodus from the city in the early 2060s. This huge section of town is home to the Black Meds, Crackers and thousands of other homeless street people. The current Bowery is sprawled along the Southeast corner of the city, incorporating the Lower East Side and most of Little Italy and Chinatown.

The buildings in the bowery are drab, almost all abandoned. There are many ruins of ancient shops, bars, theatres, music halls and hotels. The buildings still in operation are bars, liquor stores, churches, shelters, and cheap hotels. Even those buildings still in use are very old and weathered and are on the verge of falling apart. There are many fenced off vacant lots (now taken over by groups of homeless people) and piles of rubble from buildings that fell down. Many buildings show scars: holes that have been boarded over, buildings that shared a wall that have been torn down (leaving doorways that open up on to empty space), spots where crumbling red brick have been quickly replaced with concrete, etc.

As much as street people in the city have a culture, the Bowery is a center of that culture. The Black Meds, the street family that provides black market medical services to other street people, live here. The Bowery has the highest concentration of Street People of any part of the city, the majority of the (numerous) abandoned buildings have Street People living in them.

On the Southwest corner of the Bowery is the Criminal Courts Building, the only courthouse still in use in the city. It is nicknamed the Tombs, has 835 jail cells and is shaped much like a ziggurat.

In the middle of the Bowery is the Manhattan Bridge. When cops pick up homeless people in the nice neighborhoods of Brooklyn and Queens, the homeless people are usually given a choice: go to jail or go to Manhattan. Those that choose Manhattan are driven over the Manhattan Bridge and dropped off there. This part of town is sometimes known as "the drop off point." At any given time, hundreds of new city residents are sleeping on the streets or living in cheap hotels near the drop-off point. Cult recruiters prowl this part of town in force, and it is a coveted location for pusher gangs.

Financial District- Located at the Southern tip of the city, this neighborhood was once a center of international commerce. The major pre-Freedom War corporations had huge complexes here. The streets here are very old, are much narrower than in the rest of the city (created for horse and buggy traffic) and do not conform to the city's regular street plan. The abundance of tall, blocky buildings and narrow streets make this the most claustrophobic part of the city, with only a tiny portion of sky visible from the streets.

More than half of the office buildings are abandoned. Of those that aren't, usually only the first few floors are in use. The Satellite Repair Corporation, the Human Services Group and most YIs have offices here. In the North part

of the Financial District is the civic center, an abandoned complex with the old City Hall, a park, commercial office buildings and hall of records.

Sunken City

In Brief- Rising ocean levels created a dangerous ring of semi-submerged buildings around the city.

This term is used to refer to all the urban areas in Manhattan and Roosevelt Island that were semi-submerged when ocean levels rose during the 2030s. The "sunken city" has eaten up all of Roosevelt Island (in the East River), several blocks around Downtown, a few blocks all along the East side of the island, several blocks on the East coast of Inwood/Washington Heights and a large bite from the very Northern tip of the island.

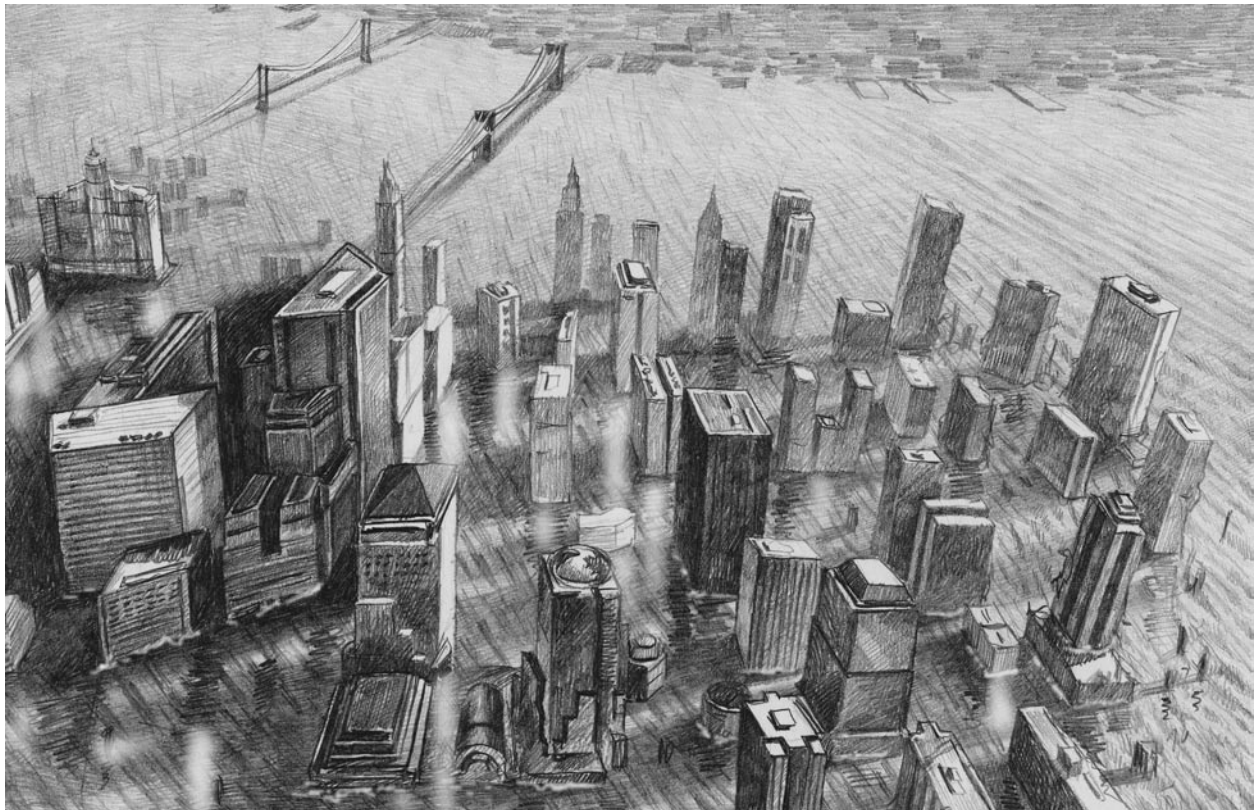
At the high-tide line, barbed wire fences, propped up by sandbags, are meant to keep people out of the sunken city. Many of the fences have been knocked down, and other have had holes cut in them. The water flowing through the sunken city is fast-moving, turbulent and typically very cold. Many people trying to wade through the sunken city are knocked down, sucked under and never seen again.

The Water Rats, an unborn family, live in the ruins and have secret ways to get there safely. See p.130 for more.

Suburbs

In Brief- Surrounding the city are gated communities, a private city, corporate living centers, business districts and upper-class neighborhoods.

During the land grab of the 2050s, large tracts of land in New York and New Jersey were bought up by corporations, gated communities and other private concerns. Areas once as old and dilapidated as Manhattan have been renovated and are now nice places to live.



The City: Despised and Romanticized

Manhattan is the biggest and worst ghetto in the area. To people living outside the city, the city is emblematic of a bad neighborhood. Most have big misconceptions about the city. Many people once lived in the city and left as they saw it getting worse and worse. They assume that everyone living in the city is either an addict, a violent gang member, mentally deficient or crazy. City gangs are generally confused with the drug-selling gangs of the old times. There are urban legends about city gang members killing people for wearing the wrong color shirt.

On the other hand, people outside the city have a romantic attachment to the city. For poetry, art and fiction, having been created in the city is a major selling point. The corporate and gated community consumers believe that art produced in the city has a "gritty realism" and an "intensity" that can't be found anywhere else. Many artists come to the city specifically to make it big on the art scene.

Pulp novels about life in the city are very popular. Like romance novels they are cheap, poorly edited, distributed widely, not given much respect by the literary community and a new one comes out every week. Some of these novels are written by people living in the city, others by people who have never been in the city and all their knowledge is secondhand. Either way, the novels are usually very inaccurate. They take a few real facts about the city (like names of gangs or place names) and fill in the rest with fantasy, all the while claiming to be "accurate depictions of city life." Some are even sold as non-fiction. The novels are wild tales of crime, adventure, gang war and romance among ruggedly handsome criminals and gang members in the city. People of all ages read these novels, but they tend to be very popular among adolescents in gated communities and corporate living centers. Because the novels tend to idealize things such as violence and danger, many gated communities have banned these books for their underage members (although this doesn't always stop the teenagers from getting copies of these books).

CITY HISTORY

Early 21st Century

In Brief- Urban problems worsened in 2030s and 2040s.

Urban problems such as crime, disease and poverty continued to grow worse throughout the early 21st century. Despite this, Manhattan remained a "hip" place to live and a birthplace of new cultural trends up until the 2030s. In the 2030s and 40s, the city took the brunt of a population explosion. The massive overcrowding was even more than the ambitious city government could deal with. Parks were paved over to build hospitals. Homeless people packed shanty-towns in to every available space. Riots were plentiful during this era, mostly initiated by unemployed working-class people.

In 2045, the Industrial Fire Disaster put many thousands of tons of black ash in the atmosphere. This started a chain reaction which accelerated the rising ocean levels. Superstorms racked the coast. The city, already dangerously overcrowded, shrank as rising water partially submerged many parts of the city. Many bridges and tunnels were damaged and the city did not have the budget to repair them.

In 2046, God Killer hit the area. New York law enforcement did not have the resources to deal with it. The population lived in fear of crazed God Killer addicts rampaging through the streets mowing people down with automatic weapons. The city built high-tech checkpoints at every way in and out of the city, but drugs managed to get in regardless.

Freedom Wars

In Brief- Freedom Army tried to make the city in to a socialist metropolis, made significant changes, became increasingly paranoid and was destroyed by rebels.

Corporate complexes in Downtown Manhattan were blown up during the massive first-strike by the Freedom Army. Manhattan's population was scared and rioted, trying to grab up as many goods as they could. In the massive rioting the police and National Guard were forced to flee the city.

Jeffrey Hernandez, head of the Freedom Army, needed a base of operations for the Freedom Army. Manhattan was the perfect place: there were only a few ways in and out of the city (which had checkpoints) and the sunken city made travel by water very difficult. Hernandez also wanted to create a thriving, successful metropolis, to show that the Freedom Army could build as well as destroy. Manhattan had the infrastructure to make this possible.

The Freedom Army set themselves up in office buildings and conscripted the whole population of the city as labor to build the new government and infrastructure. Factories were created, manufacturing everything from weapons to medical supplies. The Freedom Army started work on a complex of government buildings in the middle of central park. These half-underground fortresses were planned to serve as the world capitol of the Freedom Army.

Manhattan residents became increasingly dissatisfied with being forced to work for a government that couldn't even keep them fed. Hernandez became increasingly paranoid that rebel elements in the city would destroy the socialist metropolis he was trying to create. The Freedom Army swept the city for weapons and explosives. Hernandez locked up every manhole in the city and built a new (more secure) subway system. Other security measures included the forced registration of psychics and a massive hunt for the recently discovered Kalor aliens.

The Freedom Army's paranoia helped create some of its worst enemies. In 2054, city rebels detonated a small nuclear bomb and several non-nuclear explosives, destroying the Freedom Army government complex. City residents rioted against the surviving Freedom Army soldiers. This bombing was a fatal blow to the Freedom Army, and within two years the Freedom Army was destroyed.

The surviving population of Manhattan was shuttled to refugee camps outside the city (where many died from disease). The Restoration Committee did a quick nuclear cleanup of the city. After the cleanup ended, refugees were put back in to the city. For a brief period the city was a huge homeless shelter. Parcels of property were quickly sold to companies which converted buildings in to low income housing.

Social Movements of the 21st Century

Futurists (2010-2020)- High-tech idealists, used illegal tech, tried to rouse the general population from their apathy, and believed they could take control of the shape of the future.

Watchdogs (2030-2049)- Using Internet webcasting, these anti-corporate activists tried to put a check on corporate power and educate people about the causes and severity of global problems.

Freedom Army (2050-2055)- A global movement of anti-corporate rioting, misinformation, and tactical terrorism. The Freedom Army succeeded in destroying corporations and governments, but failed at attempts to build its own governments.

Utopianists (2058-2061)- Believed that new tech could be used to screen applicants and thus create "perfect" communities. These Utopias would create a perfect culture that would spread to the rest of the globe.

Unborn (2070-Present)- People born on the streets, made permanently homeless by strict laws, began to build their own culture and society in the city.

New Gangs (2075-Present)- Rose out of the vacuum created when the city's Old Time drug gangs self-destructed (their drug sales having been taken away). Unlike the previous gangs, the new gangs appealed to intelligent, well-adjusted people and have (mostly) been trying to make the city a better place.

Old Times

During the land grab of the early 2050s, the newly formed corporations and gated communities bought huge tracts of property in New Jersey, Queens, the Bronx, Brooklyn and Staten Island. None of these groups wanted property in Manhattan (thanks to few working bridges, a huge homeless population, many bombed out ruins and a slightly radioactive Central Park). Outside Manhattan, low income housing was bought up and renovated, the

poor people forced to move out. Soon, Manhattan was the only place left in the area for displaced poor people to go to. Even as poor people were moving to the city, there was a massive exodus of the middle and upper classes out of the city. Those who stayed in the city found the streets becoming increasingly dangerous, and they chose to lock themselves away in their apartments. The new VR companies gave these shut-ins access to VR fantasy worlds to keep them occupied.

Quickly after the Freedom Wars, the drug market in the city re-established itself. Criminal entrepreneurs in the city bought God Killer from Appalachian biker gangs, sold it to the new street gangs, who sold it to the general population. These drug entrepreneurs (who quickly became known as "Drug Lords") became the richest and most powerful people in the city. The gangs that sold the drugs grew quickly. In a few years they went from small groups of a dozen people to organizations with thousands of members. The gangs used their drug profits to have guns smuggled in to the city, and they fought bloody battles against each other.

So, for more than a decade, the majority of city locked themselves away to escape from the violence of gang warfare. Most of the people on the streets were either gang members or drug addicts. Everyone else on the streets (including the city's large homeless population) tried to stay hidden. Anyone on the streets had to be very careful, lest they be caught in the crossfire of a gang war, be forcefully inducted in to a street gang, or be mugged by desperate addicts.

In 2075, this era abruptly came to an end. The Drug Lords formed in to a single organization and yanked drugs away from the drug gangs. The gangs quickly self-destructed and the Drug Lords, with their highly efficient structure and powerful new drugs, seemed on the verge of ruling the entire city. However, a new generation of gangs would appear that would frustrate the Drug Lords and make the city streets safer.

CITY INFRASTRUCTURE

Buildings

The city has hundred of architecturally impressive buildings, most of which are abandoned. Some buildings include banks, concrete parking structures, Madison Square Garden (an indoor sports arena), courthouses, college campuses, movie theaters, museums and large hospitals. Since property values were so high, and lots were small, buildings in the city tend to be tall, thin and deep with very little space between them.

Abandoned Buildings- "Abandoned" is, like "homeless," a misnomer. About half the buildings in the city are not used by anyone with a legal right to be there, but most are used in some way. Most abandoned buildings have been given over to the city (the owners got tired of paying property taxes) and the city posted up big "condemned" signs and forgot about them. Of those buildings that are being used by the owners, almost all of those have some unused areas. In some buildings there is a "bad floor" that no one ever bothered to clean up and is used for storage. In some cases, only the first two or three floors are used, the rest are not kept up at all.

One result of all the free space is storage space is plentiful and cheap in the city. Anything that people are obligated to store, but don't really care if it gets damaged or stolen, is stored in the city. Dark, unmaintained buildings throughout the city are home to millions of boxes of old paper files, drums of semi-toxic refuse, old paper-printed books, and cheap plastic coffins.

A lot goes on in abandoned buildings. Some buildings are hangouts for gang members, littered with cigarette butts and beer bottles. Some buildings are used as repositories of trash and human waste by street people (who have nowhere else to put their waste). Many buildings are homes for the "homeless." Homeless living spaces range from the barely maintained (a cold and dirty place to pass the night) to the lavish (home to a large extended family who have spent hundreds of hours remodeling and fortifying the building). Most abandoned buildings are not used in a regular fashion, but they are routinely used for something, be it a party, a meeting, a place to stay the night or a place to hide bodies.

Industrial Complexes- The one city industry that actually grew after the Freedom Wars was high-pollution manufacture and chemical production. Every other community in the area blocked high-pollution factories from being built near them, so they all came to the city. Most industrial complexes are in current 24-hour a day use. Trains run in and out of the city constantly, bringing in materials and bringing out finished products. These complexes usually take up a city block (or more). They are gated with barbed wire fences, security cameras and round-the-clock guards. Some industrial complexes are abandoned (often because an accident happened and the corp found it cheaper to build a new complex than to clean up the old one).

Inside an industrial complex there are typically a few large warehouses and garages, some small offices (usually temporary buildings and trailers), and industrial machinery (large tanks, furnaces, pumps and smokestacks). Smoke and fire can be seen coming from the top of smokestacks and cooling towers 24 hours a day. Explosions, fires and chemical leaks happen here often. Because the city fire department is so poorly funded, most complexes have their own fire fighting equipment and marginally trained staff. Employees toil around the clock: most are minimum wage workers who live nearby, managed by a few corporate employees who commute from nearby corporate living centers.

Skyscrapers- A handful of skyscrapers dominate the city skyline. Built during a time when cheap labor was plentiful, Manhattan once had the highest skyscrapers in the world (now Asia boasts the world's tallest buildings). The majority are found in Downtown and Midtown. By most definitions, a skyscraper is a building with 20 or more floors (though some have as many as 102 floors). Skyscrapers became possible at the end of the 18th century when people learned to build large buildings with the building's weight supported by steel cages rather than masonry walls. The first skyscrapers were huge blocks. Fearing that they would block out the sun, the city required skyscrapers to have a tapered shape.

Skyscrapers are more than just tall buildings, they operate on a different set of rules than normal buildings. They take up whole city blocks and the networks of maintenance passages within them are so complex that it would take years to explore them all. Special pumps are needed to make water reach the upper floors. Normal elevators move too slowly and stop too often, and so people must travel through the building using express elevators to get near their desired floor and then normal elevators to get the rest of the way. Radio repeaters are necessary to let people inside the buildings receive radio or cellphone signals. Special dampeners let the top of the building sway several feet in a heavy wind, yet keep the sway slow enough that people can't feel it.



Skyscrapers are so expensive to maintain that none of the skyscrapers in the city have more than the first few floors in use. The first five floors can be maintained without much cost, while the upper floors are sealed off or used for storage. Other skyscrapers are closed altogether, abandoned. Homeless people live in the first few floors, but since there are no elevators, anything higher is an inconvenient place to go to. Sometimes, people will haul themselves up dozens of flights to hide themselves or to hide important objects. Sometimes secret meetings are held in rooms deep inside skyscrapers. City skyscrapers have an average of 3000 rooms, making finding anyone or anything the equivalent of finding a needle in a haystack.

There are also a few secret apartments and offices hidden in the empty depths of the upper floors of some skyscrapers. Rather than hooking in to the system for the rest of the building, water and fuel for generators is delivered every few weeks and waste containers are taken out. Tenants typically enter the building through underground tunnels and ascend through dark elevator shafts using personal ascending devices. The security guards who sit in the lobbies of the buildings typically do not know that such apartments exist. These apartments and offices are in sharp contrast to the building around them: behind armored doors they are warm, well lit and luxurious, while all around them the abandoned floors are cold, dark, dirty, laden with trash and dust, utterly without life. The owners of these apartments and offices are wealthy and secretive. It is common knowledge in the city that such apartments exist, but nobody knows who uses them.

Luxury Hotels- Most of the city's luxury hotels are still open, but only the first few floors are maintained. When in operation, these were some of the world's most prestigious luxury hotels. They are wide buildings, all over 20 stories tall. In addition to more than a thousand guest rooms, they have huge lobbies, tiny shopping malls (containing dozens of stores), gyms, indoor swimming pools, movie theatres, pharmacies and doctors offices, huge banquet halls and conference rooms, restaurants, bars, and helicopter pads on the roofs (now all unused). Underneath the hotels: a maze of hotel offices, storage rooms, kitchens and laundry facilities. The most expensive "rooms" include huge living rooms, bedrooms, bathrooms and even kitchens.

Most of these hotels are in Midtown (the center of city tourism) and most of them were built overlooking Central Park. Today, these hotels do not have nearly the amenities that they once did, but they are still the nicest places to stay in the city (especially if one has an interest in history, grand architecture, or a view of the hole). When wealthy people stay in the city they usually stay in these hotels.

Churches and Cathedrals- The city has some of the country's most impressive old cathedrals and churches. Most are still in use, although the congregations are much smaller. Most churches in the city lose money: the tiny crowd of parishioners that come in give what they can but it is not enough to even pay the ministers' wages. Appointments in these churches used to be prestigious and sought after, but today the churches are lucky to get volunteers willing to live and work in the city. Fortunately for the ministers, anything of value was carted out of the church during the Freedom Wars. Many churches operate tiny homeless shelters and soup kitchens, usually from the back of the church. They may also rent out church offices and old Sunday-school rooms to community groups like Alcoholics Anonymous.

Apartment Buildings- The most consistently used

buildings in the city are apartment buildings. The rental market in the city is so complex and varied that city residents have created a whole vocabulary to describe the different types of rentals. In order from the most desired to the least desired:

Highrise: Thirty to Fifty floors. Built in the late 20th, early 21st centuries to house the upper-middle class. These large buildings have big windows (giving splendid views of the city), roomy interiors and central heating and air. They either have attendants at the door or an intercom and camera based buzzer system. Typically have balconies, kitchens with modern appliances, health clubs, underground garages and other amenities.

Doorman: Twenty to forty floors. Built during the 1950-70s. These are luxury buildings, home to trendy indies, with an attendant at the door 24 hours a day. They have few modern amenities, but the architecture is nice (lavishly decorated lobbies, detailed façades) and there are relatively-modern elevators.

Loft: Six to Twelve floors. Formerly used for light manufacturing, they have been converted in to spacious apartments, perfect for artists or engineers who need a large working space. Typically have a large cargo elevator. Most are found Downtown.

Elevator: Nine to twenty floors. Built through the 20th century as housing for the middle class. Typically have an intercom security system. May have rooftop patios.

Brownstone: Three to five floors. This is a red sandstone version of the typical late 1800s/early 1900s townhouse or rowhouse (a long, thin, tall building, built to be sandwiched in rows on a block). Originally built as a single family home, but later converted to apartments (4 to 10 apartments). The rooms are small, but have charm and sometimes have amenities such as wood floors, fireplaces, terraces and private gardens in back.

Projects: 10 to 40 story high buildings. Built in response to the massive need for low-income housing during the 1970-80s and 2030-40s. These buildings are huge unattractive blocks, sometimes cloned on several



huge unattractive blocks, sometimes cloned on several consecutive blocks. They are built unimaginatively, of cheap materials and have few amenities. At best, each building has a laundry room, a small "community area" and possibly a black-top playground. Inside, seemingly unending hallways with stained grey carpet and dim florescent lights lead to hundreds of plain wood doors, each opening up to a tiny apartment.

Walkup: Three to five stories. Containing 12 to 30 small apartments. These are old tenement buildings, built in the late 1800s through the 1960s, to house the very poor. There are no elevators, just dimly lit wooden stairwells, usually with trash inside them. The apartments are cheap, cramped, dark with little or no ventilation. There may be dark airshafts in the walls, but they are typically plugged up with trash. Exterior fire-escapes are often the only place where people can hang out and get fresh air, though not every apartment has fire escape access.

Many old buildings in the city still use steam based furnaces for heating in the winter. Except for the very cheapest tenements, most apartment buildings have a live-in superintendent who is responsible for collecting rent, doing minor repairs and hauling the trash out on trash days. The super is paid by the land management company that owns the building, which is itself owned by a larger corporation.

Streets

The city has some of the worst streets in the US. The corrupt city government rarely repairs streets unless forced to by corporate pressure. When the major avenues get so bad that trucks can't deliver groceries to grocery stores, the streets get repaired. Apart from those major avenues, however, most streets are unusable except with a vehicle with a powerful engine and four wheel drive. There are cracks, potholes, old craters from Freedom-War explosions, rubble, trash and even old non-running cars in the middle of the streets. In come cases there are holes in the streets that go straight through to old utility tunnels below. The cheap electric cars that are being cranked out now don't have the power to travel over these streets. Most people who ride motor vehicles in the city depend on old gasoline-powered vehicles (and have to buy prohibitively expensive gasoline). In some parts of town vehicle traffic is so infrequent that homeless people camp in the middle of the streets with no fear of being run over.

Utilities

Trash- Trash is omnipresent in the city. It can be dangerous, when characters are forced to wade through it and may miss hazards such as holes, sharp pieces of metal, etc. Trash can also be a blessing when it allows characters to hide from their enemies. In some places there is so much trash that it creates a physical barrier.

There is garbage removal city in the city, but it is chancy. Dumpsters are often overflowing in to the streets by the time apartment managers can convince the garbage removal services to do what they are being paid for and come pick up the trash. There is no garbage removal on the streets, in public areas and in the abandoned places where people live. The fences that were put up to keep people from going to the sunken city keep trash from blowing out to sea and make the city a sort of cage full of trash. When strong winds blow, trash flies through the air from one side of the city to the other, where it piles up against fences. There are some small parks and other public areas that are enclosed by fences and walls and these places usually have trash several feet deep. Alleys are a common dumping place for trash that is too heavy to blow away, and some alleys are filled, end to end, with trash piled higher than a person. Some homeless people who squat in abandoned buildings do not carry out their trash, they leave it there until the house becomes too choked up with it, then they move on.

Electricity- Most power comes from Hydro-Quebec which gets it's power from hydroelectric sources, including Niagra falls. The many factories in the city also create their own power and resell the unused power to the city. Power outages are common and are a major cause of riots.

Sewage and Water- Probably the city's most dependable utility. Centuries old water and waste tunnels are kept running by a tiny staff of city workers and second-hand robots. These robots travel through the tunnels keeping the pipes clean, cutting up obstructions and patching holes. At the Northern end of the city a large plant (mostly underground) uses secondary-nanotech filters to create (mostly) clean drinking water out of polluted water from the Harlem river. Sewage is processed: the water is removed and dumped in the river, the solid elements are loaded on trains to be sold as fertilizer.

CITY POPULATION

In Brief- 210,000 people on island of Manhattan, much less than in the past.

There are currently about 210,000 people living on the island of Manhattan, only one seventh of its population at the end of the 20th century and about one tenth of the island's population in the 1920s. This is a population density of about 11,000 people per square mile.

In terms of socioeconomic classes: there are 28,000 indies (7.5%), 151,000 wells (72%) and 31,000 street people (14.5%).

In terms of allegiance (or lack thereof) to city power structures: 120,000 (57%) are shut-ins, 55,000 (26%) do not belong to any gang or family, 30,000 (14%) belong to gangs or major street families and 5,000 (2%) belong to the Drug Lords organization.

There are also about 1,000 people just passing through in the city at any one time. If they are staying for the night, they are likely staying in hotels in the red light district, at cheap motels near the drop-off point, or at the homes of relatives in the city. These travelers have every conceivable motivation for being in the city, legal and illegal, ethical and unethical, exotic and mundane, but the majority are New York area businessmen coming to the city for drugs and prostitutes.

Manhattan Area and Population

Date	Above Water Area	Population	Density
1920's	24 mi ²	2,300,000	95,000/mi ²
1990's	24 mi ²	1,500,000	65,000/mi ²
2080	19 mi ²	210,000	11,000/mi ²

Death

In Brief- 17 deaths/day, some go to mortuaries, others are eaten by rats, most are cremated and buried in unmarked graves.

17 people die in the city every day. About 12 of them end up in the city morgue or a funeral home. It can take weeks for bodies to be discovered and taken to the morgue (especially shut-ins, who may not be discovered until neighbors complain of bad smells). 5 of the people do not end up in the morgue: the bodies are hidden, buried, or never found. When bodies are left laying around, rats eat most of the flesh and the bones become just another part of the city's massive amount of trash.

The city morgue is located in the basement of the New York City Central Hospital, downtown. About half the corpses that pass through it are unclaimed and are cremated and buried in Potter's Field (located on Hart Island on Long Island South) with no marker.

If they are claimed by a mortuary, the body is picked up and prepared for burial. There is no cemetery space in the city, so the families have the choice of having the body buried in upstate New York, or (the cheapest and most popular option) put in to one of the many city buildings that have been converted to mausoleums. The mausoleums look like old unused office buildings, they are kept unheated, dimly lit, and are filled with air-tight concrete or plastic crypts.

City Population

Out of 210,000:

Addicts/Winos	15,000	(7%)
Crazies	5,000	(2%)
Drug Lords/Pushers	5,000	(2%)
Indies (in gangs)	5,000	(2%)
Indies (not in gangs)	4,000	(1.9%)
Miscellaneous	16,000	(7.5%)
Shut-Ins	120,000	(57%)
Street People (in families)	5,000	(2%)
Street People (not in families)	5,000	(2%)
Wells (in gangs)	20,000	(8%)
Wells (not in gangs)	10,000	(4%)

Group	Avg. Life Expectancy
Indies (Non-Gang)	65
Indie (Gang)	61
VR Addicts/Shut-Ins	58
Wells (Gang)	51
Wells (Non-Gang)	49
Street People (Family)	40
Street People (Non-Family)	30
Winos	25
Crazies	24
Addicts	22

Top Causes of Death for All City Residents

- #1- Heart Disease
- #2- Drug Overdose
- #3- Stroke
- #4- Exposure
- #5- Communicable Diseases

Top Causes of Death for City Residents Ages 18-25

- #1- Drug Overdose
- #2- Murder
- #3- Communicable Diseases
- #4- Accident
- #5- Exposure

The AI Tax, Welfare and VR Addiction

In the early 2060's, in the aftermath of the Freedom Wars, the "AI tax" bill was passed by congress. It was designed to ease the massive unemployment caused by Artificial Intelligences replacing more-and-more workers. The AI/unemployment problem had been a major factor that led to the Freedom Wars. The AI tax takes big chunk of profits made using AIs in "traditionally human occupations" and earmarks it for unemployment and welfare programs. Many of the larger corporations actually supported this legislation, for reasons which will become apparent shortly.

Large corporations own almost all of the credit card companies that welfare recipients are in debt to. They own most of the land holding companies that own the apartment buildings welfare recipients live in. They own (or are paid interest to by people who own) the liquor stores, grocery stores, security companies and practically every company that caters to the shut-in welfare class. For every dollar that the large corps give to the AI tax, they get 95 cents back. And five cents is a small price to pay to prevent anti-corporate rioting. The only people who don't make their money back are the small start-up companies who can't yet afford to think on such a vast socioeconomic scale. For these companies, the AI tax is another barrier that keeps them from making it big and competing with the big corps.

Disappearances

In the city, about 500 people disappear per year, more than one per day. The Math Addicts have concluded that these disappearances can be explained without resorting to paranoid theories of evil conspiracies. The Math Addicts best-guess break down of disappearances is as follows:

175 people died of **natural causes**, bodies not found or found and not identified.

130 people **murdered** and the bodies hidden or disposed of.

90 people who **left** the city or **moved** to another part of the city, not telling anyone where they were going.

25 people who entered **cults** and were asked (or forced) to leave their friends and family behind without a word.

25 people being **held** against their will, inside or outside the city, for purposes of forced slavery, prostitution or the creation of illegal pornography.

20 people whose minds were **wiped** and bodies were sold on the black market.

20 people killed and **eaten** by animals or mauled addicts.

10 people who **lost** their **memory or sanity**, and who are still wandering about the city as homeless crazies.

5 people who **drowned** in the sunken city and were carried off by the water.

Children

In Brief- 20,000 children in cities, raised by parents, Orphans, foster system. Most children educated in cheap VR schools. 'Kid Borgs' are adults in children's bodies.

Out of 210,000 people in the city, about 20,000 of them are below the age of 15 (the number 15 is used because this is youngest age where most gangs will let a person join). There are children being raised by every social class in the city. Some have fewer children (like the addicts, whose drug use usually kills fetuses, and shut-ins, who have a hard time meeting real-world lovers) and some have more (street people in families have the highest). Although shut-ins have the lowest birthrate, they make up 57% of the population, and thus there are more children of shut-ins than of any other city group.

When children do not have parents who can or will take care of them, many end up in the hands of the state. Many Wells and Indies in the city earn some extra money by taking in foster children on a semi-permanent basis. Foster parents range from the genuinely good parents, to the abusive, to indescribably worse than abusive. If there are no foster homes available, a child is sent to the state run city orphanage. The orphans in the orphanage know the dangers of foster homes and will not let a child go to a foster home once they have entered the care of the orphanage. The orphanage is run by grownup orphans who took a vow to protect those smaller than them. The corrupt state workers who are being paid to run the orphanage don't dare to come near it. Some parents have been known to drop off their children in Orphan territory temporarily. The Orphans don't approve of this, and will make life as hard on the parents as possible, but this doesn't stop them from watching over the children.

Some children have no one to take care of them, yet they are lucky enough to have gained the street smarts to survive on their own. Children who learned to survive on their own from a very early age are rare enough to have gained semi-mythical status. They are often called "wilderns" in city slang.

Among the Unborn, children are put to work as soon as possible. The children contribute, even in a small way, to the health of the family, but at the same time they learn the skills that they will use to make a living later in life. Unborn children are very skilled: a Black Med can usually set and splint a broken bone at 6, a Cracker can rip off a payphone at 7, a Drake is given a sharp scrap of metal or glass (coated with a poison Drakes are immune to) at 3.

Education- Gated communities and corps run their own schools, for which they gain significant tax breaks (thanks to the self sufficiency acts of the early 2060s). Since most children born in a corp or gated community will end up becoming a member, it is a wise investment for the corp or gated community to pay for good education.

The pool of funding for public schools is very low. Since the early 2070's there has been one virtual reality system which acts as a public school for the entire state. Students and teachers log in from home. Students who do not have full immersion VR hardware will be loaned old hardware (donated by VR companies). Students who don't have a safe place to log in go to a schoolhouse (an old converted office or school bus with a security guard and VR terminals). The teachers do very little: mostly the students run pre-written learning programs (ten years older than those used in corporate schools). In theory, parents should make sure children go to a schoolhouse or log in every day. If parents don't make sure a child goes to school, child protective services can be called. In reality,

few parents ever face such punishments and truancy is common. Many students drop out of school when they turn eighteen, completely illiterate.

Kid-Borgs- Some people have been known to use mental programming technology to transfer (or copy) their minds in to the bodies of children. Some use children whose bodies were grown in a vat and who never had any real consciousness, but most use the bodies of real children who had their minds wiped. The main reason criminals choose children is because they think they can get away with more as children. Because of this phenomenon, children who are encountered on the streets without any parents are usually regarded with suspicion.

Kid Gangs- Just as adults join together in to gangs for the purposes of self-protection or to bully around others, so do street kids. Kid gangs are usually small (four to seven kids, only a few are as large as twenty) and they tend not to last very long. Like adult gangs, some kid gangs steal and rob from other children and some act as benevolent protectors. Kid gangs rarely mess with adults, and so the world of kid gangs is generally invisible to adults. The only adults who are really aware of kid gangs are those who prey on children (and try not to prey on members of kid gangs).

Top 5 Children Not To Mess With

Drake Kid- From a very early age, Drake children are given tiny amounts of poisons, especially the Drake Fungus Poison. By the time they are walking and talking, they can take massive amounts of the fungus poison without it hurting them. They are on a steady diet of this poison so that their very blood has enough poison in it to kill most people. Drakes learn from an early age to throw pieces of poisoned glass with deadly accuracy and they are seldom found on the streets without these deadly weapons in their pockets. Even if a Drake child can be disarmed and bound they know that they can kill with a bite and they are not afraid to bite as hard as they can.

Leader of a Kid Gang- Some kid gangs do not have a real leader, but some do. Those leaders have a significant amount of power at their command: a tiny army of rough street kids armed with rocks, knives and clubs. Kid gangs have learned the lesson of revenge early on and they will go to great lengths to pay back someone who has injured them.

Baby Colin- Colin doesn't just copy his mind in to the minds of adults. He inhabits a fair number of children in the city, and he uses their supposed innocence to his advantage. Even though too small to fight with an adult, little Colins wait until those who trust them are sleeping and then slit their throats with a knife. Baby Colins like to travel in packs so that their collective strength is enough to pull down a person, knock them out, and drag them to whatever dark basement their mental installer is in.

Orphan Babysitter- From as early as they can understand anything, those kids who end up at the city Orphanage are taught to protect younger children. Orphans as young as 3 have been known to attack full grown adults to protect their charges. The Orphans are trained in a martial art specially designed to let small groups of children attack and kill adults. They are all armed with railroad spikes that have been sharpened to wicked points. They know every spot on an adult that is within their reach that will paralyze with pain, cripple or kill. When there are multiple Orphans they act in concert, encircling opponents and stabbing them in the back.

Cult Kid- Cult kids are generally pretty harmless to adults. They are sent out in small groups to try to lure street kids back to the cult compound, bribing them with candy and friendship. They are usually under orders to stay away from adults (who might try to save the kids from the cult). When the cult leader feels that his or her power is in danger, though, the kids become very dangerous. The kids are brainwashed in to believing that death should not be feared. It is not uncommon for cult leaders to strap homemade explosives to kids and send them to blow up some of the cult's (real or imagined) enemies. The kids look perfectly normal, may even come begging for help, but they know when to hit the button to take out their enemies. These kids are perfectly fearless, so certain are they that a perfect life awaits them.

Immigrants

In Brief- Many legal and illegal immigrants come here to escape terrible conditions. Some are kept ignorant of US ways so they can be exploited. Some are literal slaves in brothels. Some immigrants form small xenophobic communities.

Each year, millions of people come to the United States from countries ravaged by war, political oppression and economic collapse. Some immigrate legally and quickly join gated communities or corporations. Others enter the US illegally, entering with false visas. They cross the Mexican border with the help of "jackals" (professional people smugglers), ride homemade rafts up the coast, or pay to be smuggled in to the country onboard cargo ships. Those immigrants who have entered the country illegally can not get welfare or legal jobs and so they end up in inner cities, usually living as street people.

Slave Trade- Many illegal immigrants are dangerously ignorant of American ways, and some people take terrible advantage of this ignorance. There are con artists in the city who specialize in catching immigrants in scams. Sometimes they bring them over at little or no charge, but put them in debt with interest so high they can never pay it off, turning the immigrants in to indentured servants.

The worst examples of taking advantage of illegal aliens is the slave trade. Some people are enticed in to coming to the United States on false pretences, promised legitimate work or marriage to a loving spouse. Others are physically kidnapped or bought in third world slave markets and smuggled in to the US as chattel. Once in the US they are virtually brainwashed in to believing that if they are caught by the government they will suffer a terrible fate. They are told that illegal immigrants are put in to violent and disease-filled prisons. Fear keeps the immigrants from leaving the homes, factories or brothels where they live or work.

This slavery does not happen only in the city. Many people living in private cities or wealthy neighborhoods have live-in maids who get paid nothing and are afraid to leave the homes.

There are secret brothels in the city where women, children and a few men are kept inside by fear of their captors and fear of what lies outside the brothels. Most of the people in these brothels were kidnapped by organized crime gangs in Southeast Asia, Russia and Central America, smuggled over in cargo ships, and sold to the brothels at a few thousand per head. The Sexologists have made it their personal crusade to hunt down the operators of these brothels and kill them, but there are still some left in secret locations in the red light district.

Immigrant Communities- Most illegal immigrants merge seamlessly in to the city society and economy, taking on the roles played by unborn. Some even marry or are 'adopted' in to powerful street families. No matter how well they fit in to the city society, most immigrants feel most comfortable around people who speak their language and share their culture.

There are some people who fail completely to acculturate themselves to city society. They suffer from a sort of culture shock where they turn inwards and refuse to try to fit in or even learn the language. They tend to form small, insular communities which they defend against outsiders. When they are forced to leave these communities (for instance, to scrounge for food) they refuse to communicate with other city residents.

One example is a camp of refugees from Sierra Leone in midtown in a vacant lot at the corner of 47th St. and 8th Ave, East of Tea Drinker territory. The camp is fenced off with barbed wire, inside the concrete has been torn up so that crops could be grown in the dirt. The camp has 30 people living there, some interact with city residents, some don't and a few refuse to leave the camp even for medical care. No outsiders are allowed in to the camp, even for a visit, and the camp recently repelled an attack by a coalition of four local pusher gangs.

COLIN

In Brief- Serial killer, kidnaps people and copies his mind in to theirs (thus creating copies of himself), thinks he's a god, city residents have found him impossible to wipe out.

History

In 2075, amateur profilers were investigating a series of mutilated priests found in churches. When they caught the perpetrator in the act, what they saw frightened them: a group of small children. They were unable to take the children alive, but they autopsied the bodies and found evidence that each child's mind had been wiped out and over-written with a new mind (see Mind Copying, p.209). They could reach no other conclusion other than that someone had erased the children's minds and copied another mind in to their brains. What was worse, it was a mind that was capable of mutilating priests. The profilers immediately raised every alarm they could, and whole gangs took to the streets to find what they assumed was

one perpetrator with one mental installer.

Colin himself revealed the truth to the profilers and the truth was much more horrible than they had thought. They had imagined one person with a mental installer manufacturing serial killers. In reality, each copy of Colin was an independent agent. Each copy went out and did whatever possible to make as many copies of himself as possible. Like a virus, any single Colin could reproduce exponentially in the right conditions. The copies were not just children, they were everyone: young people, old people, gang members, members of the Drug Lords, wealthy and powerful people, anonymous homeless people. Colin was infiltrating every sector of city society

Each copy struck out on his or her own, meaning that not even Colin really knew who was a Colin or how many Colins there were out there.

A paranoid witch hunt began, peaking in a few months. Every person who had gone away for any period of time or who was acting differently in any way was suspect. Many hundreds of people were lynched in the streets and many mental installers were destroyed. No one knows how many real Colins were killed, but there are at least a hundred people now believed to have been wrongly murdered. The witch hunt died down as people began to believe that Colin had been destroyed.

This pleasant belief lasted only a few months before Colins were caught again. Another, smaller witch hunt occurred, but tapered out as people began to see the uselessness of a witch hunt. Colin was too good at staying hidden and anonymous, he was as likely to be the leader of a lynch mob as he was to be the victim of one. Many said that Colin could only be fought with constant vigilance. Many were of the opinion that Colin just could not be destroyed by any means.

Now, about one Colin is discovered every month. Math Addicts have given various estimates of the current population of Colins as being somewhere between 20 and 500.

Colin Hunters

In Brief- Some people specialize in hunting Colins.

Colin scares most people more than anything else in the city. Some people have transformed their fear in to a "no tolerance" policy towards Colins: they will immediately kill anyone that they even suspect of being a Colin. Other people, especially people who have been hurt in some way by Colins, have decided to devote their lives to hunting Colin. Others hunt Colin as a hobby, some even find it fun.

Colin hunters come from all ranks of city society. Some are Hunters, some are Eccentrics with a law enforcement background, some are young people who are hobby profilers. Together they form a small community that investigates Colin, shares information, and creates theories about his psychology. When they discover a Colin, they have a small army of volunteers willing to help them capture or kill the Colin. One thing they wonder about is why Colin hasn't tried to wipe them out yet. Their major theory is that Colin likes people studying him.

Church of Colin

In Brief- A few people pretend to worship Colin in exchange for his anonymous protection.

There is a small group of individuals who "worship" Colin as a god. Their official position is that Colin wants (some would even say needs) worshippers and is willing to offer a great deal in return. Colin worshippers wear black, wear bowl-cuts with the sides of their heads shaved and wear silver crosses upside down. This is said to be Colin's original appearance, although no one knows where this information came from.

Colin worshippers are, obviously quite hated, but the people who hate them rarely do anything to them for fear of being attacked by Colins. Worshippers will do many things to please Colin, including defacing churches with pro-Colin graffiti, proclaiming from street corners that "Colin is a God," building public shrines to Colin and

leaving offerings (usually in the form of food, money and weapons) to Colin.

In exchange, Colin worshippers are watched over and protected by an invisible hand. Colin never contacts these worshippers, but the most devout worshippers are under constant surveillance by Colin. One rude remark to a Colin worshipper can be enough to cause a person to be attacked by Colins. Colin Worshippers often have a lot of Colin hunters around them, looking for Colins.

Although Colin does not communicate with his worshippers, the zeal with which he protects them or does not protect them gives some clue about what behavior Colin likes or does not like. Colin likes fear, awe and christianesque worship. He also likes when worshippers talk as if he was a popular-culture icon. He likes worshippers who do not claim to have personal powers, but who rely on the power of Colin to protect them. For instance, Colin might not protect someone who says "You can't mess with me, I'm a Colin worshipper, you'll be killed," while he might protect someone who says "I put my faith in the power and infinite wisdom of Colin." Colin does not like worshippers who try to be like him, he has killed at least one worshipper who tried to copy his mind in to a victim's mind.

There are about 10 to 15 Colin Worshippers in the city. The Church of Colin has no formal organization, but Colin McKray, the first Colin Worshipper is the most powerful, has "converted" the most people and has the most influence over other Colin Worshippers.

Strains

In Brief- Different strains with different skills/knowledge; some Colins may have decided to quit reproducing.

Any time Colin changes, if he is gaining a piece of knowledge, learning a new skill, or gets a new mental program, every Colin that Colin creates is subtly different. Since Colin has been reproducing for 10 years, and has been actively trying to improve himself, there are many different strains. A new strain that is significantly better (e.g. has powerful psychic skills, or is a master martial artist) could reproduce more quickly than other Colins and could be an immediate threat to the city.

Colin's personality doesn't change much. Colin Hunters attribute this to the powerful megalomania that has dominated every aspect of his life for the last decade. However, personality change is probably inevitable if Colin survives long enough.

"The Dropout Effect"

This is a theory by Colin Hunters. They say that at some point (if it hasn't happened already) some Colin will change (either because of experiences or because of errors in the copying process) to the point that he doesn't want to be a Colin anymore. Yet the effect on the Colins as a whole will be almost nil. Those Colins will "drop out" but other Colins will continue. In the animal world, a mutation might make an animal not want to have sex, but since that gene is not carried on to a new generation, the effect on the species is nil. Thus, say Colin experts, Colin may continue to reproduce forever if we allow him.

Finding a Colin dropout would be a major coup for the Colin Hunters, who could find out more about Colin's psychology. However, a drop-out may not necessarily be a nice or safe person to be around.

CRIMINALS

It is hard to find someone on the streets who does not break some law or another. Many people use illegal drugs, most people buy stolen merchandise from black market traders, most people trespass on to abandoned property. Many people will end up doing some job that they get paid under the table for. Violence in the name of vigilante justice or revenge is common. For street people, their very existence violates anti-camping and anti-vagrancy laws.

Most city residents would divide criminals in to one of four categories:

Incidental Criminals: Commit crimes that are incidental to their lifestyle: a Roofer trespasses on rooftops, an Insomniac uses illegal drugs, a Risen participates in gang warfare. The majority of people on the streets count as this type.

Professional Criminals: Make a living off of crime. In order to survive they must be skilled and patient. They seek the easiest and least dangerous way to commit their crimes, and so they are seldom violent (the major exception being professional assassins, who practice efficient violence with nothing left to chance).

Impulsive Criminals: Typically Wells. Commit crimes to get money for drugs, prostitutes or other expensive vices. Impulsive criminals would make poor professional criminals: they are not skilled, patient or careful enough. They typically commit crimes under the influence of drugs (most commonly alcohol and god killer) and they are very likely to use violence.

Sadistic Criminals: Commit crimes solely to victimize others. Include rapists, serial killers, child molesters and hate criminals.

Top 10 Shoplifted Items in the City

1. Cigarettes
2. Liquor
3. Condoms
4. Over the Counter Medicines containing Ephedrine*
5. Spray Paint
6. Razors
7. Disposable Lighters
8. Data Cards
9. Baby Formula
10. Batteries

*from which Methamphetamines and God Killer can be manufactured

Burglars

In Brief- Cat burglars are stealthy and skilled. Smash-and-grab burglars are violent.

There are two distinct types of burglary as practiced by professional and impulsive criminals. The first type is cat burglary, where not being seen takes precedence over getting something of value. Burglars of this type are usually professional unborn thieves with in-depth knowledge of how to bypass alarm systems. The second type is the smash-and-grab: gangs of armed youths break down a door or smash a window. They run in and subdue anyone who happens to be present with violence or threats of violence. They run away before security can come en-masse. This type of burglary is a big problem in the city: hundreds are killed each year and many more are injured. The burglars tend to prey on those who can not defend themselves and more than half of those who are killed are elderly.

Muggers

In Brief- Small gangs of youths ambush people to get money for drugs.

Muggers are typically small groups of desperate addicts or violent teenagers. They seek out those least able to defend themselves: intoxicated people, old people, sick people, anyone who looks like a VR addict out on the streets for the first time in months. Typically, the group waits in dark alleys, waiting for a spotter to tell them that a lone traveler is coming by. The muggers ambush the traveler, usually attacking with blunt objects. The point is to incapacitate the victim, the muggers seldom care whether they kill or not.

Pounders

In Brief- Gangs of tough homeless men who bully around other homeless people.

Although many street people band together for the purposes of self-protection and cooperative labor, some street people form small groups that bully and exploit other street people. They are known as "pounders" because of their propensity for ganging up on and beating up street people. These groups are typically made up of 5 to 20 males in their twenties and thirties, most of whom are physically large. There may or may not be a leader. Most of these groups are ethnically homogenous (e.g. all white, all asian, etc.). Most drink alcohol as their primary form of entertainment.

The group bullies around other street people. They get the best camping sites (typically a vacant lot with a barbed wire fence and abandoned cars to sleep in). The group takes over the best canning routes and begging spots. When semi-legitimate jobs are offered to street people (for instance, a shop owner may pay street people to sweep up in front of the shop, or an apartment manager may pay street people to carry garbage bags to the dumpsters) these gangs muscle in and take over the jobs. The gangs may also steal directly from street people.

At night these street people use their ill-earned money to buy drugs and alcohol and have parties. They play music on car stereos and use drugs and alcohol. The drugs and alcohol are used to lure street women in to the compound where they will be given drugs and taken advantage of.

Pounder gangs typically stay away from each other. The pounders also stay away from the large street families who would fight back against them. Like most bullies, they only want to deal with the weak.

Types of Alarms

Infrared Beams

Recognizing: Visible with infrared sensors, or look for the holes in the wall the beams come out of.

Uses: Infrared beams are a cheap way of protecting some passageway against anything moving through it. They are only useful indoors, where it is unlikely that pigeons or wind-blown trash will interrupt the beams.

Bypassing: One or two beams can be stepped over. If beams completely block passage, they can be redirected with semi-reflective mirrors or fiber-optic cables.

Floor Sensors

These are sensors on the floor that set off an alarm when weight is put on some part of the floor.

Recognizing: Loose tiles or a thin layer of spongy or flexible material on the floor.

Uses: Floor sensors are a good supplemental security system for rooms which no one should be in during certain hours, such as an office or vault.

Bypassing: Sensors on top of the floor can usually be erased with a spray of acid. If sensors are under the floors, thieves can glue the tiles in place or build a bridge.

Door/Window Sensors

When the door or window is opened, an electrical contact is broken and an alarm is activated. High quality always run wires through the door or window so thieves cannot cut a hole in the window or door.

Recognizing: Electromagnetic sensors are a sure way, but most can be seen by shining a flashlight in to the crack.

Uses: Making sure doors and windows stay closed.

Bypassing: With cheap sensors, the easiest thing to do is to cut a hole in the window or door. In high quality devices, thieves must drill in and insert wires to maintain connections.

Ambient Temperature Sensors

High definition heat sensors which are hooked up to the air conditioning and heating systems. When a temperature increase indicates a human presence, an alarm is triggered.

Recognizing: Typically a small thermostat box on one wall.

Uses: Useful only in temperature controlled environments, such as the rooms supercomputers are housed in.

Bypassing: A high tech temperature regulating body suit, or a thick wool suit filled with ice-packs.

Human Recognition Sensors

Recognizing: Small cameras, usually mounted on ceilings, that sweep back and forth. Typically transmit wirelessly to a security computer.

Uses: Used in outside areas where people are not supposed to be at night and where wind or animals might set off other types of alarms. In very high-security corporate offices, every employee wears a security badge that the computers read. If any human appears and there is not a corresponding security badge signal, an alarm is triggered.

Bypassing: Thieves create trash suits that make them look like a shambling mound of trash. Thieves must also know how to move in a manner that doesn't read as human. Accomplished thieves look so weird in their shambling-trash mode that human guards are often shocked for several seconds upon seeing them.

Motion Detectors

Recognizing: Small boxes mounted on the ceiling. When well hidden, they are pinholes in the wall.

Uses: Used in rooms where there should be zero movement in the off hours.

Bypassing: Motion sensors can be bypassed by moving extremely slowly (a moderate END roll and a hard AGY roll.)

Types of Locks

Mechanical: A key pushes pins of different sizes in to the right position. Can be picked by putting tension on the lock and raking the pins with a pick.

Keypad: There are a wide variety of these: Some run off of battery, some run off of wall power. Some store the codes inside, others communicate with a network. Some have one code that works, others have multiple codes that work at different times of day. The easiest way to break in is to "shoulder surf" and see someone else's code. Skilled electricians can open the keypad and trigger it to send an open signal.

Electromagnetic: Electromagnetic signals sent from a security card or other small object trigger the door to open. Although thieves can try to "guess" the electromagnetic signal that will open the lock, the easiest way to bypass it is to cut the lock open and cross some wires.

Data Keys: Small key-shaped devices hold pieces of data. When inserted in to a jack they open a lock. The nice things about these keys are that they are easily internet compatible: stick one in a door to open it, stick another in a paycomputer to access some service on a net-site. The best keys are "hotcoded" so that the data never actually leaves the chip. A computer "challenges" with a random string, the data key encrypts or decrypts the string and responds. Thus, the true "key data" never actually leaves the key (and if someone tries to take the key apart, the data will disappear).

Biometric: These are electronic locks for which the people themselves are keys. A biometric lock measures one or more unique human characteristic (fingerprints, voice prints, retinal images, DNA sample) to determine whether it should unlock.

Hybrid: A hybrid lock incorporates two or more of the above in to one lock. Because hybrid locks require a higher level of skill to install and maintain, it is usually only security specialists who really love their jobs who install these kinds of locks.

Terrorists

In Brief- The terrorists who were the heroes of the Freedom Wars, and the culture they helped create, linger now as mercenaries and lone radicals.

Terrorism was a huge part of the Freedom Wars. Terrorists could operate without the support of a bureaucracy or infrastructure, and were thus able to do damage in lands completely controlled by the enemy. Terrorists helped both sides, and some terrorists even switched sides midway through the war.

Before the initial attacks of the Freedom Wars, Jeffrey Hernandez created training camps for terrorists in sparsely populated areas of Mexico. Over five thousand people were trained in demolitions, intelligence, sabotage, assassination and brainwashing. These highly skilled terrorists went out and trained other terrorists. Some of these terrorists defected when they saw what Jeffrey Hernandez did with his power. There was never just one resistance and there was never really one Freedom Army: there were many completely independent cells and lone individuals, each with their own view of what the outcome of the Freedom Wars should be and with different ideas of what methods were acceptable.

After the Freedom Wars ended, the Restoration Committee's primary goal was to end rioting, fighting and terrorism. They made concessions to any group they worried might resort to terrorism. Thus, much of the globe was balkanized. Most of the terrorists who had fought in the Freedom Wars decided that they had won (the Freedom Army had wiped out the corps, the resistance had wiped out the Freedom Army) and retired. A few however, were too radical to accept even partial victory. Like all good terrorists, they went in to hiding to await the time to strike. Now, 24 years later, the FBI estimates that there are a thousand terrorists in the US and 100 in the city. Many terrorists, trained in methods of indoctrination, have indoctrinated new terrorists (including their own children). Most acts of terrorism committed in the US today are committed by people 18-30.

A few terrorists have gone in the other direction and become mercenaries. Some live in the city while awaiting jobs. They use the same methods as politically motivated terrorists, but they destroy whoever or whatever their employers want them to.

Serial Killer or Normal Killer?

A lot of people in the city kill, and for a lot of reasons. Finding a set of dead bodies killed with a similar M.O. does not necessarily mean that a serial killer is at work. Is it a mugger who likes to bash people's heads in, or a serial killer who happens to rob his victims? Is it vigilante justice or systematic revenge? Some Hunters have been known to murder members of a group (like pusher gangs), but believe they are doing good. Some profilers have even gone so far as to call certain Hunters "good serial killers."

Two clues tell profilers that they should use a classic "serial killer" profile in trying to solve a series of murders: First, the victims all belong to a class of people (e.g. attractive women, old winos, etc.) but are not actually related. Second, there is evidence that the killer is trying to recreate some internal fantasy in the external world. The murder is often careful, ritualistic, and bodies are often posed. A god-killer addicted mugger doesn't create a fantasy world about bashing people's heads in, he or she just goes out and does it. It is the serial killers who are trying to make fantasies real.

Serial Killers

In Brief- The city has around 100 serial killers at any one time, who enact violent fantasies for anxiety relief and self-esteem.

The city has one of the highest concentrations of serial killers in the world. There are estimated to be about 100 serial killers operating in the city at any given time. There are many reasons for this, some obvious and some subtle. To illustrate, here are some of the childhood environmental factors most strongly correlated with the development of a serial killer:

- Moderate (but not extreme) poverty.
- A tragedy or trauma in early life.
- Little or no supervision by authority figures during childhood.
- Few friends and social contacts.
- Emotionally distant parent(s).
- Early access to pornography, especially violent pornography.
- Nothing that would provide a strong sense of identity (e.g. a strong talent or membership in a minority group).

Many of these factors (moderate poverty, emotionally distant parents, poor supervision and few social contacts) are consistent with the environment in the homes of shut-in well VR addicts (the largest part of the city's population).

Pornography- Most serial killers in the city are male and most appear to be dependent on pornography and violent sexual fantasies. The relationship between serial killers and pornography seems equivalent to a drug addiction. Most serial killers have very low self-esteem and feel a transient feeling of power when they view pornography or have violent fantasies. Like a drug user who gains a tolerance for the drug, serial killers need increasingly intense stimulation, and use more and more "hardcore" pornography and fantasies. Eventually, the only way to get enough stimulation is to commit a real act. Serial killers must kill increasingly often to fight away the 'withdrawal' of low self-esteem anxiety.

The most disturbing aspect of the serial killers' fantasy worlds is that they have an obsessive need to dehumanize their victims. A serial killer's self-esteem is so fragile that they are only comfortable living in a world where they are the only one with an identity and free-will. All else who share this world with them must be nothing more than flesh and base emotions at the control of the serial killer.

Partnerships- Most serial killers prefer to work alone, though there are instances of siblings, lovers and friends working together. In most cases, only one of the people is truly 'in to' killing people, the other one is simply along for the ride. When both are true serial killers, they work together for the same reason drug addicts work together, because they see mutual benefit in it, not because they like each other or want to share their experiences. Most partners of this type meet on the underground market for illegal pornography. Very few ever form what city residents would think of as a deep or fulfilling friendship.

CULTS

In Brief- Many cults in city, prey on psychologically weak, can be dangerous.

Cults are a major problem in the city. There are about four thousand people in some cult or another. About two people per day are recruited in to a cult. Most cults only last a few years before breaking up (or ending in mass suicide). Cults recruit from every level of the population, rich and poor, shut-ins and street people. Most cults in the city are small (20-100 people). A few cults become large enough to have some political pull in the city. The Lumens are currently the largest cult in the city and have been able to take on gangs.

Characteristics

In Brief- Prey on the confused and vulnerable, offer companionship and safety, teach people not to think for themselves, charismatic leader.

Cults prey on those who are experiencing stress or trauma. Runaways are the biggest target, and many cult recruiters hang around the bus stop in the Bowery where most runaways come in to town. The cults give a person in crisis a comforting atmosphere, friendship, encouragement, love and sometimes even sex. In exchange, the cult controls the person's surroundings 24 hours a day, controls what information the person has access to. The person's thinking is distracted so he or she doesn't have the time, energy or inspiration to question the doctrines of the cult. The wild ideologies seem normal when everyone else believes it. Finally, the cult member learns to censor his or her own thoughts. The member is taught that "bad thoughts" will harm his or her spiritual progression and should be avoided at all costs.

Almost universally, cults are led by a charismatic person who is thought of as superhuman by his or her followers. Cult members are taught a sense of superiority over anyone else not in the cult. They are taught that the lifestyle of outsiders is evil and dangerous to their souls, that common knowledge from the outside world is ignorance and propaganda, and that cult members (especially the leadership) do not need to follow the laws of the outside world.

Some think that the Purists and Dragons are cults. They both have charismatic leaders who have unique spiritual ideas. They both have followers who believe in the ideas of the leaders and live as the leaders suggest. However, because members of the Purists and Dragons both enjoy freedom of association, most people classify them as gangs and not cults.

Lumens

In Brief- City's biggest cult, live in Cloisters, use bright lights for ceremonies and for blinding opponents.

The Lumens are well known because they have taken on both the Skin Borgs and the Drug Lords and survived. The Lumens live in the Cloisters, European monk's cloisters reconstructed in 1914, in Inwood hills on the North of the island. This is right in the middle of Skin Borg territory.

Social Structure- The Lumens call themselves "penitents" and their church "church of the infinite light." The name Lumens was given to them by city residents. No one outside of the Lumens knows very much about the leader of the Lumens. He is said to be a handsome, middle aged male who is very intense and charismatic. Like a gang, the Lumens seek immediate revenge for the death of one of their own.

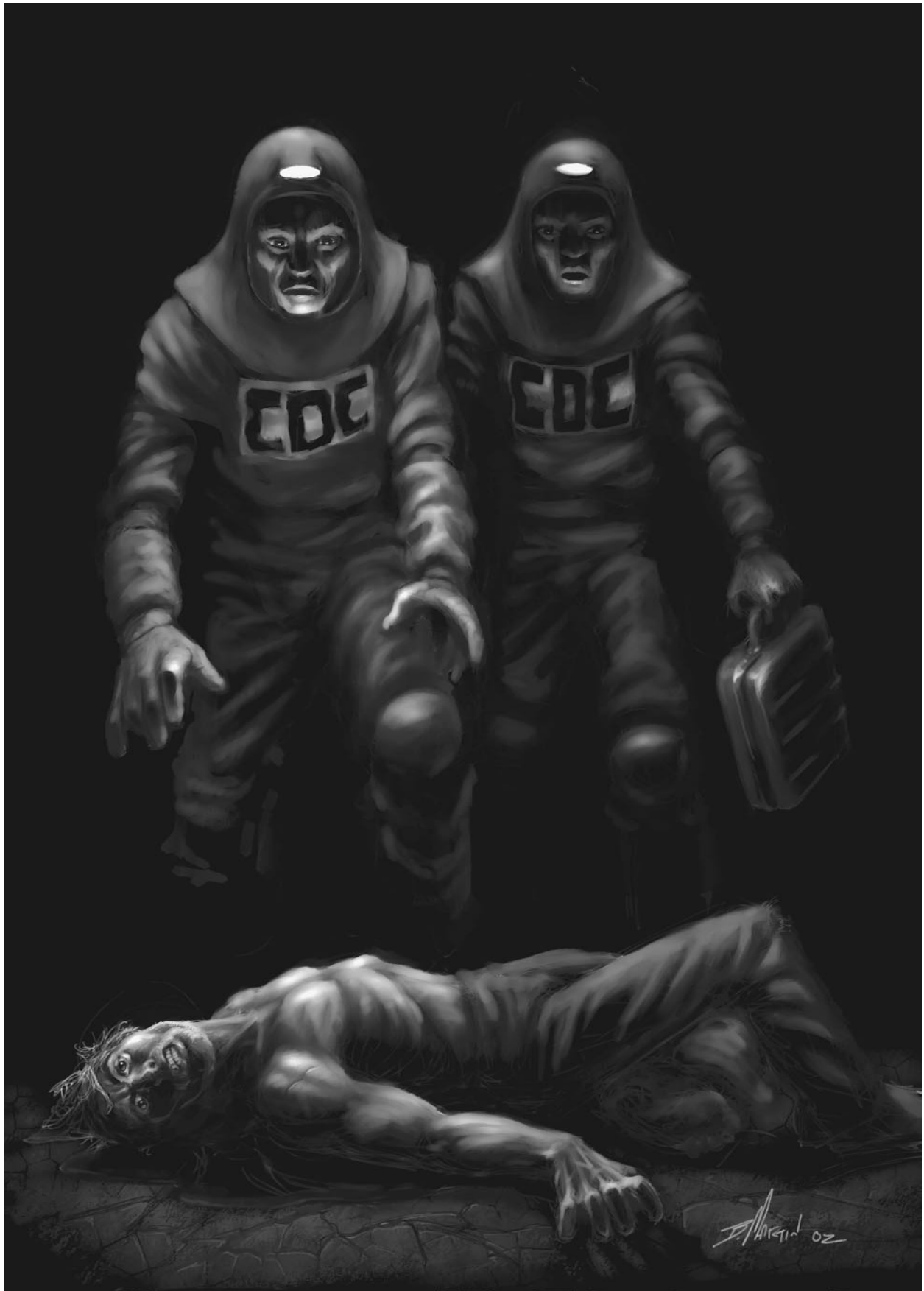
Beliefs- The Lumens believe that god is pure light and in their religious ceremonies people expose themselves to extremely bright lights (along with hypnotic chanting). The lights are supposed to help cleanse the fears and desires that remove people from god. They are also supposed to show people how beautiful heaven is. Critics point out that, since bright lights can be an effective therapy for depression, the Lumens are just curing depressed people and calling it spiritual awakening.

Recruitment- Lumens are not allowed to leave the Cloisters alone, they always travel in groups of four or more. When they are recruiting, though, one member does the recruiting and the others hang around nearby, pretending not to be associated with the recruiter. Lumens wear "humble" clothing, which usually means that they dress like Street People. They all carry knives and each team that leaves the cloister has one high-tech portable spotlight. In combat they shine this light at their opponents. The Lumens are used to operating in very bright light and are not blinded as badly as their opponents.

Lumens look for people who look like they are having a hard time with life. One Lumen strikes up friendly conversation, gets to know the person, then offers the person a hot meal and a place to stay the night. The person is brought back to the Cloisters and treated with kindness and respect. Any time the recruit asks to leave, the Lumens make up some imaginary crisis that is keeping them busy (but promise to let the person leave as soon as it is done). If the person tries to force his or her way out of the compound, the person will be grabbed and put in a brightly-lit cell. Someone sits outside the cell preaching, 24 hours a day, until the person submits.

Battles- From their inception, the Lumens have been very good at recruiting drug addicts. The Lumens will capture drug addicts, bring them to the cloisters and keep them prisoner until they have detoxified (during which time they are thoroughly brainwashed). Taking drug addicts (and thus income) away from the Drug Lords had prompted several attacks on the Lumens. The Lumens have held their ground, refusing to change their behavior. The Drug Lords have not called off the war against the Lumens, they still offer a reward to any pusher or addict who kills a Lumen, but they have stopped ordering tactical assaults on the Cloisters. The Drug Lords have stopped after two dagger teams were destroyed. Hundreds of Lumens were killed in the battles, but the Lumens didn't seem to care.

As the Skin Borgs expanded, they ran in to the Lumens. At first, the Skin Borgs were determined to take over this cult like they have taken over all the other gangs in their way. The Skin Borgs quickly gave up, telling themselves that this didn't count as a loss because the Lumens weren't a gang. There is still a lot of hostility and warfare occasionally ignites.



DISEASE

Healthcare

In Brief- Street People go to the Black Med family for care. ERs must provide emergency care for indigent.

Unlike Wells and Indies, who have private and government healthcare, Street People go to the Black Meds, a large, old street family that specializes in providing medical care for street people. None of the Black Meds have any formal medical training. The care they provide is mostly basic first aid (sterilizing, cauterizing, sewing and splinting) and the use of herbs and placebos. Street people mostly barter for Black Med services. When it comes to plagues, Black Meds can offer little help except to make sure the victim has plenty of fluids and a warm place to rest.

The central hospital and urgent care clinic emergency rooms are required by law to provide care to any indigent person. No preventative or long-term care is provided: it is simply a matter of patching the person up and releasing them back to the streets.

Slow Killers

In Brief- Many diseases, transmitted by body fluids, that there are no cures for.

Body Fluid Transmitted Diseases (BFTDs) infect up to 5% of the city population. New strains pop up faster than cured can be discovered. The most common BFTDs only cause pain and annoyance but seldom kill. Others can not be cured and will eventually kill. Most of these are autoimmune diseases descended from HIV or from the newer HDNA diseases. These BFTDs are often called "slow killers". A majority (55%) catch these diseases through sex, 40% catch them through use of dirty needles and 5% through some other sort of body fluid contact. The slow killers cause a slow decline of health, resulting in death in 4 to 6 years. Even when there is no cure, a person's lifespan can be increased by using expensive drugs.

Plagues

In Brief- A new type of virus, made from human DNA, occasionally pops up as a horrible plague.

The 2040s were an era of plagues. Massive overpopulation, economic crises causes substandard healthcare and sanitation, and everyone from corps to terrorists were

messing with the DNA of disease organisms. The worst plague of this era contained human DNA and had a protein coating that was virtually invisible to the human immune system. Three million people around the world were killed before the first strain of this virus was brought under limited control. Many of the terrible plagues of this era are waiting, living in other hosts and waiting to infect the human population. Plagues are worst in inner cities, and the city has been the source of several recent plague outbreaks. Countless untold diseases are living in the city's massive rat population (not to mention stray cats and dogs, pigeons, squirrels and bats). A random bite by a rat can introduce a new strain in to a population. Or, in an even worse scenario, a mutated strain starts killing all the rats, and the billions of fleas jump off the dead rats and bite humans (thus spreading the disease to them).

Quarantines

In Brief- The CDC locks down the city during plague outbreaks, provides emergency care.

The city hospital reports disease stats to the CDC. When the CDC fears there is considerable danger from a disease, it issues a quarantine. The city is locked down, no one can enter and leave except for CDC doctors in CDC helicopters. CDC doctors set up inflatable labs where they can work on finding some treatment for the disease. Helicopters with powerful speakers move through the city ordering everyone to stay inside. Anyone could be arrested for going out on the streets (or disobeying a CDC doctor) but the CDC seldom has the time or employees to enforce such rules. The Central Hospital and Urgent Care Clinic (and sometimes the blocks surrounding them) become triage units where people die en masse and a fine disinfectant mist is being constantly sprayed from the ceilings. After one hour, the subways are shut down.

Plague Survival Kit \$170 (\$500-\$1000 during a plague)

Gasmask \$75 (to protect against airborne diseases)

Sterilization Spray \$50 (to sterilize food)

Latex Gloves \$1 (to protect against contact based diseases)

Trenchcoat \$35 (to protect the body from bites and scratches)

Insect Repellent \$5 (to repel insects that might carry diseases)

DRUGS

Drug Addicts

In Brief- Drug addicts mostly dangerous, unhappy, poor. Some addicts handle addiction better than others. Many spend all day doing anything they can to get money for drugs. A lucky few become servants of addicts.

The most visible drug addicts are what people jokingly call "**career addicts**": people who are so deeply addicted to their drug that they can not stay on welfare or hold an occupation (legal or illegal) or allegiance to any group. Career addicts are easy to spot: they care little about hygiene, they may stink of alcohol or have visible needle tracts on their skin, the malnutrition from each time they chose drugs over food is readily visible, and they have a desperate look in their eyes. The majority of drug addicts

look like everyone else, these are the "**part-timers**" who are able to "keep it together" enough to stay at their current place on the socioeconomic ladder and maintain their membership in whatever group they belong to. Some part-timers keep their addictions secret from everyone they know, some only hang around with drug abusers and never think of not using as an option, some have admitted that they are addicted and are trying to live with their "disease" as comfortably as possible, some are trying to fight the disease with the help of friends and family.

There are 20,000 career addicts in the city and 56,500 part-time addicts. Altogether that's more than a third of the city population that is addicted to some drug, whether they are willing to admit it or not.

Public Perception- The majority of addicts do not live on the streets, they keep their lives together. However, they are not so visible, so when people think of or talk of "addicts" they typically mean the career addicts people see on the streets every day. Addicts are considered by many to be the lowest form of human life in the city. Even homeless schizophrenics who scream day and night at invisible demons take better care of themselves than some addicts do. In the mind of non-addicts, all addicts are desperate, dangerous, immoral and do not fear death. In truth, not every addict fits this stereotype, and those that do only fit it some of the time.

Most people see career addicts as hopeless losers. This is incorrect. They are very skilled at getting drugs, using drugs and operating while under the influence of drugs, it's everything else in their lives that they are bad at.

Good and Bad Addicts- The biggest difference between addicts is one of psychology: some people handle addiction better than others. Some take only as much as they need to keep withdrawals away, they are careful and sensible and always choose to get high after they have done their most important duties of the day. Other addicts use far more drugs and at inappropriate times. When they have problems, they deal with those problems by doing drugs, which only makes the problems worse. Sometimes they get passively suicidal: too scared to actually hurt themselves, but too scared of life to imagine it going on much longer. They take dangerous amounts of drugs and do dangerous things. Most addicts fall somewhere in the middle: they keep a handle on their addiction most of the time, but occasionally lose control (especially when there is extraordinary stress in their lives).

Hustling- Among career addicts, "hustling" means doing anything they can think of to get money. Generally, addicts get all their physical necessities (food, clothing, toiletries) by standing in lines at shelters and by searching through dumpsters. Addicts need money for buying drugs, and as soon as they get any money at all it quickly goes toward drugs. The average career addict spends about 14 hours a day, earning fifty cents an hour, hustling.

Hustling is not purely the domain of homeless addicts. Homeless crazies, non-addict street people and even wells hustle when they need cash and can't think of any other way to get it.

Hustling can include the following:

Canning: Finding recyclables in the trash and turning them in to one of many recycling centers across the city. Recyclables are usually kept in large plastic trash bags.

Begging: Going to places where a lot of people pass by, usually with a sign or a well practiced phrase.

Salvaging: Finding usable goods others have thrown out and selling or trading them. Addicts might even go to homeless shelters to get food, toiletries and medicines, which they turn around and sell.

Working: Doing odd jobs, usually hard labor, for a few cents worth of change. Superintendents usually get help with garbage bags for only a few quarters.

Theft: Addicts usually steal from intoxicated fellow addicts. They may shoplift, but are typically not very good at it. They may get together in small groups to ambush and rob non-addicts.

Sex: Providing sexual favors in exchange for money or drugs.

Lackeys- A lucky minority of addicts become servants to pushers (and even kings). The pusher gives the addict drugs, a little money for food and clothes, and sometimes even a place to stay. In exchange, the addict is on call 24 hours a day to run errands. Most lackeys realize how lucky they are and are very loyal and protective of their pusher. For the pusher this is a very good deal: a full time servant for cash and drugs that cost the pusher about \$200 a month. The more successful a pusher is, the more lackeys. Some pushers have addict lackeys that do all their pushing for them, the pusher just manages the money. Despite the mutual benefit of this relationship, most pusher-lackey relationships eventually go sour: pushers are violent and irresponsible, addicts are undependable and prone to betrayal in desperate moments.

Street Drugs

In Brief- Millions are spent on legal and illegal drugs. Drugs quite harmful to the addicts and to society.

Alcohol: most abused drug in city with wide range of addicts who are better off than other addicts.

Opiates: Many abuse prescription pain killers.

Amphetamines: Popular stimulants, losing abusers to God Killer.

God Killer: Most abused illegal drug, used by many young thugs, causes megalomania, feelings of invulnerability, sometimes bloody and tragic rampages.

Chomper: 1st drug created by Drug Lords, now few addicts (ODs and more addictive drugs). Some OD victims survived inability to feel pleasure by becoming the Hungry.

Mauler: Created by Drug Lords, causes brain damage, addicts eventually become cannibalistic animals.

Trace: For "special" addicts the Drug Lords want to keep track of.

Maxin: Not a recreational drug, Maxin is very addictive because it is a powerful smart drug and without it addicts feel stupid.

Escape: Not designed as a street drug, escape is very psychologically addictive. It suppresses all feelings.

Slave: The newest drug from the drug lords and the most addictive yet.

Every day in the city, more than \$700,000 is spent on alcohol and addictive street drugs. More than 21 million per month goes in to the pockets of corporations, small business owners, black market traders and the Drug Lords.

Alcohol- Alcohol has, perhaps, the widest range of addicts. There are young and successful Indies who are secretly addicted to alcohol and keep a hip flask of brandy in their briefcases. There are also homeless winos who spend every bit of spare change they can scrape together to buy bottles of fortified wine. Most alcoholics do not exclusively use alcohol, it is simply their drug of choice. More than half of winos will occasionally use god killer, amphetamines, opiates and other drugs when they can get a hold of them. Pushers often wish to force winos to become addicted to their super-addictive drugs. Pushers may force winos to use via threats of force, or they may actually hold down and inject a wino. The wino's best defense is to be indistinguishable from other addicts.

Drug	Method of Intake	Major Effects	Long Term Effects	Withdrawal	OD	Num. Of Abusers	Cost/Day to prevent withdrawal	Created
Alcohol	drink	anxiolytic, pleasant buzz, clumsiness	brain and liver damage	delirium tremens	vomiting, coma, convulsions	5,000 career, 20,000 part-time	\$5	Prehistory
Opiates	swallow pills shoot-up	sedation, anxiolytic, pain relief, pleasure	poor immune system	cramps, insomnia, flu-like symptoms, diarrhea	heart attack, fluid in lungs, inability to breathe	2,000 career, 7,000 part-time	\$8	Prehistory
Amphetamines	swallow pills	excitement, pleasure	malnutrition, paranoia, ulcers	depression, anxiety, shaking, insomnia	difficulty breathing, irregular heartbeat coma, spasms	1,500 career, 5,000 part-time	\$7	1932
God Killer	smoke	excitement, megalomania	emphysema, cancer, brain damage	anxiety, panic attacks.	psychosis, heart attack	3,000 career, 10,000 part-time	\$10	2046
Chomper	shoot-up	mood swings, anxiolytic	hair loss, liver damage, anemia	shortness of breath, panic attacks, vertigo, headache	endocrine collapse	1,000 career, 1,000 part-time	\$7	2076
Maxin	swallow pills	irritability, excitement, increased intelligence	weakened bones	feel stupid	heart attack, stroke	500 career, 2,000 part-time	\$20	2076
Mauler	paper under tongue	narrowing of attention, pleasure, excitement	brain damage ("animal state")	burning, itching sensation on skin	loss of blood pressure, hypothermia	2,500 career, 1,000 part-time	\$7	2077
Trace	shoot-up	sedation, pleasure	poor immune system, arthritis	migraine headache, poor hearing, poor vision	paralysis, inability to breathe	500 career, 1,000 part-time	\$7	2077
Escape	smoke	emotional detachment	loss of personality, insomnia, poor vision	none	catatonia, coughing blood	1,000 career, 7,500 part-time	\$20	2078
Slave	smoke	anxiolytic, psychedelic, "mellow excitement"	weight loss, pale skin, liver damage	"the uglies", loss of willpower	diarrhea, vomiting, brain swelling	3,000 career, 2,000 part-time	\$8	2078

Although they try to stay camouflaged in the background, winos are the best-off of any of the career addicts. Alcohol is cheap, so addicts spend less time hustling and more time taking care of personal needs, including social needs. Winos are the most likely of the addicts to form close friendships or small groups, and these social bonds are a source of power on the streets. Because they have more time to relax and look at their surroundings, they tend to be more aware of that's going on around them than other addicts. People who need informants on the streets often hire winos. Alcohol is legal, and so is less dangerous to buy and use. Alcohol does have debilitating long term effects (severe liver damage and brain damage leading to severe memory problems) but these effects happen more slowly (take decades rather than years). Alcohol even provides some nutrition, so winos are not as skinny as some other addicts.

Alcohol is also less addictive than most of the modern street drugs. Most winos will "go straight" (detoxify or stop using) several times and may stay straight for several months before relapsing back in to alcoholism. When they do drink, though, winos don't just drink to stave off withdrawals. They drink because they suffer from chronic pain, because they suffer from anxiety over the constant uncertainty of life on the streets, because they suffer from painful self-esteem problems and because life on the streets can be very boring.

Alcoholics have a number of choices for alcohol. Fortified wine, sold in liquor stores, provides the most alcohol per cent of any legal alcoholic beverage. Because it can be obtained legally, the majority of shut-ins who are addicted to some drug are addicted to alcohol. Young people working part-time jobs delivering groceries to shut-ins often deliver dozens of bottles of liquor in a day. Pushers

and black market traders sometimes try to compete with liquor stores by selling moonshine. Winos try to avoid this liquor because it can be dangerous if improperly prepared and it is sometimes doped with other drugs. Some winos make their own alcohol, known generally as pruno, out of yeast and fruit. Most pruno is brewed in a tin can sitting next to a hot water pipe and tastes awful. If an alcoholic can not buy alcohol in a store (e.g. because the liquor stores are closed due to a riot) the alcoholic may buy (or shoplift) mouthwash that contains alcohol and combine it with fruit juice to make it palatable.

Even though they are the best off of the addicts, few non-addicts envy winos. People beat, rob and rape winos, thinking that the winos will not try to defend themselves and have no one willing to revenge them. Most winos are eligible for welfare but their lives are too unstable for them to go through the necessary paperwork. They are chronically poor, don't eat well, can't stay clean, suffer from diseases and infections (they must wait until they are life threatening before they can get treatment at an ER). Some winos don't even seek medical care when they can because they are too drunk to notice an illness. Winos sometimes pass out on cold nights and freeze to death.

"You can't trust anyone out here on the streets, not even your best friend, because drugs erode people's principles. You see, drugs are about constant desperation and need, so no matter what kinds of principles you got, it's only a matter of time 'till your mind is on something else and you forget about one of your principles, let it slip just a bit. Each time you let it slip, the next time's easier; 'till one day you realize there's nothing you won't do for drugs. You think you got a strong will, solid principles? That just means it will happen slower is all."
-Delilah Mungial, Addict

Opiates- Opiate chemicals are derived from a chemical found in high concentrations in the opium poppy, which has been used since pre-history for pain relief.

The addictive power of the “new drugs” has been enough to almost completely destroy the trade ring that once brought large quantities of heroin in to the city. Today, most people who are addicted to opiates are addicted to prescription pain killers. Most addicts either scam or bribe a doctor to get a painkiller prescription, or they buy the same drug off the black market. The Drug Lords would like Opiates eliminated from the city (so their drugs have less competition) but because opiates are brought in to city pharmacies legally, the Drug Lords can't do much.

Opiate addicts are, on average, older than most other addicts and many have legitimate physical conditions that cause pain. The typical addict is a shut-in well, around 40, with some physical disability who scams prescriptions off of doctors. There are about 2,000 career addicts in the city and about 7,000 part timers.

Opiates cause euphoria, sedation, pain relief and relief from anxiety. Withdrawal from opiates has very unpleasant effects, including cramps, insomnia, flu-like symptoms, diarrhea and profuse sweating. Long term addicts suffer from constipation (which can be deadly if not treated) and a poor immune system.

Amphetamines- Since prehistory, the Chinese and Native Americans used herbs that contained the drug ephedrine. In 1932 amphetamine, a drug made from ephedrine, was invented. During WWII, both sides used amphetamines to keep soldiers awake and alert, and heavy amphetamine use was one reason for the success of Hitler's blitzkrieg. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, amphetamines competed with crack cocaine as the top drug of abuse. In the 2040s, God Killer displaced both, and amphetamines only remained abused because they could be stolen or scammed from pharmacies.

Amphetamines are powerful synthetic stimulants. Their effects are a euphoric mania. Effects for long-term abuses include malnutrition, paranoia, ulcers and skin diseases. Withdrawal symptoms for addicts are depression, anxiety, shaking and sleep disorders.

God Killer- In 2046, God killer was introduced on the streets. In many ways it was the first “modern” drug: a cocktail of drugs designed for maximum addictive potential. God killer quickly forced crack cocaine and methamphetamines out of their economic niche. In 2048, god killer replaced crack cocaine as the most abused illegal drug in the US.

God killer is created by organized crime syndicates operating in the Appalachians. Genetically engineered plants (looking like normal weeds) growing on mountainsides are harvested and turned in to god killer in little labs built in tiny wood shacks. The rich and powerful “mountain gangs” that create and sell god killer have their roots in the biker gangs of the early 21st century and may have Freedom Army war criminals in their ranks.

Although the drugs created by the Drug Lords have been gaining steadily in popularity, God killer is still the most abused illegal drug in the city and provides most of the Drug Lords' income. The “typical” addict is a young male well, who uses god killer to feel powerful and commits crimes under the influence of god killer.

God killer is a powerful stimulant, it also reduces pain and anxiety. It increases self-esteem, making users feel powerful, and causes delusions of grandeur and invulnerability. The drug gained its name because some addicts, while under the influence, think they are powerful enough to take on whatever god(s) they believe in.

Long term god killer use causes emphysema, increased risk of cancer, and brain damage (leading to mental retardation).

God killer addicts are famous for doing stupid things that hurt others and themselves. Any dosage of god killer increases the chance that a user will do something stupid. God killer users think they have infinite power. A god killer user, for example, may break his daughter's neck, expecting to be able to resurrect her by force of will. A god killer addict may jump out of a window expecting to be able to fly, might break a leg and get a severe concussion, but will be unable to believe that he or she failed and will hobble off (not noticing the pain) to go do something else stupid. The most dangerous thing that can happen to a god killer user (and the people around the user) is a “rampage.”

Some rampages are caused by accidental overdose (a person gets a stronger-than-normal batch). Typically, through, a god killer addict starts out meaning to use only a little god killer. The addict uses a little bit, then (feeling on top of the world) decides that moderation is for the weak and smokes every other pellet he or she has. Wanting desperately to not come down, the addict runs off and spends every bit of money on god killer, smoking it all. When that starts to run out, he or she commits some crime to get more. At some point, the abuser decides that he or she is immortal and omnipotent and decides to go around destroying anything that he or she doesn't like. From this point, there are very few ways it can go that doesn't end up with the user dying.

They wander around the city attacking anyone they dislike in any way. They may shout out challenges, and may even demand that god come down to fight. They may seek out old enemies or bullies. They may show up at the houses of ex-lovers, expecting to be taken back. Intimidation doesn't work against rampagers. Appeals to morals or compassion are useless. Pain and injuries are shrugged off. Setbacks do not phase the abuser, since he or she simply doesn't believe in them. Rampagers are stronger and faster. Rampagers do not defend themselves: they focus on hurting their opponents as much as possible. A fight with a rampager is always very messy.

Chomper- The first drug created by the newly incorporated Drug Lords. Only a year after their coming together in to a single entity, the Drug Lords caused a huge shortage of street drugs and flooded the streets with cheap chomper. Chomper was also the first drug so addictive that pushers could hold people down, force them to use it, and make life-long addicts. The fatal flaw of chomper was that it was too easy to overdose on it. When Mauler and Trace were invented, addicts were encouraged to switch to these drugs. Chomper use peaked in 2076, the year it was released, with 7,000 addicts. Now there are only 2,000 addicts (about 1,000 career and 1,000 part-time).

Chomper causes powerful and thrilling mood swings. Anger, depression and happiness are all equally pleasurable while on chomper. Chomper also enhances the pleasurable effects of many other drugs, and is still used by many addicts as a "booster." Chomper gained its name because users tend to clench or grind their teeth. Withdrawal for addicts causes shortness of breath, panic attacks, vertigo and headaches. Long term chomper users suffer from hair loss, liver damage, anemia and their teeth tend to break from clenching and grinding.

Chomper overdoses create a condition called endocrine collapse. The pituitary gland in the brain, which uses hormones to control most of the other glands in the body, suddenly and permanently stops working. Most people who overdose on chomper die. The lucky ones get an implant that take over many (but not all) functions of the pituitary gland. The implant cannot regulate pleasure and causes a total anhedonia (the inability to feel pleasure). Anhedonia typically causes suicide, but a small group of ex-Chomper addicts called the Hungry have devised a way to keep themselves going and are a powerful enemy of the Drug Lords.

Mauler- Introduced by the Drug Lords in 2077, an eagerly needed replacement for Chomper. Mauler is a distant relative of LSD and is manufactured in city labs from "crops" of the ergot fungus. Mauler turned out to have severe long term effects and is currently being phased out by the Drug Lords. There are about 2,500 career addicts and about 1,000 part timers.

Mauler is sold as little scraps of white paper with distinctive symbols on them. Each batch has a different symbol and addicts would refer longingly to "red stars" or with disgust to "clown head." The scraps are put under the tongue. Mauler causes stimulation, pleasure, and a narrowing of attention. Mauler addicts under the influence feel that the focus of their attention is the only thing in the universe. A Mauler addict might spend hours examining the cracks in the wall, oblivious to anything that doesn't actually touch them. Withdrawal from mauler causes a torturous burning/itching sensation on the skin.

About a year after Mauler came out, people began to realize that it had a terrible side effect. Mauler addicts received brain damage. Some people seemed to receive brain damage faster than others, but it was apparent that all mauler addicts would eventually end up the same way. The parts of the brain that were being destroyed were those responsible for language, memory, self-consciousness and logical thought. People working with addicts watched in horror as the minds of mauler addicts slowly turned in to the minds of animals. The mauler addicts were oblivious. By 2079, two years after Mauler was released, people began to see packs of mauler addicts on the streets, communicating with barks and howls and eating human flesh.

For a while, mauler addicts exist in a twilight state: they spend most of the day in an animal-like state of being, yet they occasionally get better for a few hours and they are able to use this time to buy drugs. Even in their most animalistic states they can attack people and will remember to steal cash and valuables. Mauler addicts eventually stop having lucid moments. Unable to buy drugs, most scratch themselves up during painful withdrawals and die from infections. Those that live eventually form in to packs with other addicts.

Today there are about 1000 ex-Mauler addicts living as animals throughout the city. Mauler addict packs tend to go after the weak, intoxicated or injured. They will follow blood trails to find potential prey. If a victim turns out to be able to defend himself or herself, the pack will scatter.

Trace- Trace was introduced in 2077, only a few months after mauler. Trace is a grayish powder that must be cooked in a spoon or bottle cap and injected intravenously. Trace causes intense pleasure and sedation that starts to taper off immediately and slowly dwindles to nothing.

Trace has a special purpose for the Drug Lords. Anyone who the Drug Lords feel they might want to "keep an eye on" is forced to become addicted to trace. An addict with special skills, a potential enemy or someone with special knowledge is a candidate for forced addiction to trace. Only certain kings are given trace to sell and those kings give trace to only a few of their pushers. This means that trace addicts only have a few places they can go to get drugs and if the Drug Lords decide they want someone they can find them easily. Trace also makes the skin of users pink and blotchy, making addicts still easier to find.

Trace is made in city drug labs. Trace is synthesized mostly from heroin and tetrodotoxin (a poison found in the puffer fish). Because the Drug Lords must import these ingredients, trace is expensive for the Drug Lords to make, and they make very little profit at the price they sell it at. This is probably another reason that the Drug Lords chose to use it as their "special" drug.

Maxin- Maxin does not fit the mold of the other drugs. Only recently have the Drug Lords realized the potential profit from carrying this drug, before that it was the exclusive providence of black market traders and goods. There are 500 career addicts and 2,000 "part-timers" who might not even realize they are addicts. Maxin is illegal in the US, but is available as a prescription drug in Mexico (where most maxin is smuggled in from). Maxin comes in a small inhaler.

Maxin is the most powerful smart drug created to date. Maxin is also the most unpleasant smart drug around. Its effects have been described as "like not sleeping for two days, drinking ten cups of coffee, and getting continuously slapped in the face." Maxin users are excited, irritable, their hearts beat dangerously fast and they get muscle cramps. On the other hand, their speed of thought, powers of memory, creativity, logic and intuition are all increased significantly.

There are no real withdrawal effects except for a desire to crawl in to bed and sleep and the occasional headache. The problem is that after being so much smarter, Maxin users feel incredibly stupid. People feel that their thoughts are slow, their memories are poor, every intellectual task is so hard that it is painful. They are not any stupider than they were before, they just feel that way in comparison. This withdrawal doesn't go away easily: for years after an addict quits he or she may report feeling stupid.

Maxin is only addictive to people with a certain type of personality. People who don't mind being stupid won't become addicted to Maxin. People who are likely to become addicted are people who are goal oriented, spartan, utilitarian, overachievers (the type of people least likely to become addicted to other drugs). The typical Maxin user is an Indie gang member who is a highly skilled psychic, hacker, technician or medic.

The bones of long term Maxin addicts lose calcium and become very weak. Those who have been using Maxin since it hit the streets in 2076 can be killed by a simple fall.

Escape- Like Maxin, Escape was never meant to be a drug of abuse. The FDA recently made this drug illegal after many psychiatrists and GPs got their patients addicted to this drug. Escape was the "surprise" drug of the 2070's: no one expected it to addict so many people and for those addictions to be so resistant to treatment. After becoming illegal, it quickly became a very popular street drug. It currently has 1,000 career addicts and 7,500 part-time addicts. At \$20 a dose, escape is usually a "rich person's drug and addicts living on the streets with no source of income usually turn to other drugs instead of escape.

Escape can be taken as pills, but hardcore addicts prefer to sprinkle powdered escape on tobacco or some other smokeable herb and smoke the mixture.

More than any other drug, escape shows the power of psychological addiction. Escape has no withdrawal symptoms, yet it is highly addictive. Escape is a dissociative: it removes people from their emotions. It was originally created to help people deal with traumas, to help ease them in to feeling the terrible emotions. Armies throughout the globe have found that escape is very good for eliminating post-traumatic stress disorder until the soldiers can return to relative safety.

While on escape, everything feels like it is happening to somebody else. Users are still in control of their bodies and still retain enough feelings of self-preservation to stay out of danger and feed themselves. In fact, escape users typically engage in all their normal habits, the habits just don't mean anything to them. Acting, not acting, it's all the same to the escape user. Fortunately, escape blocks feelings of boredom as well. The escape user doesn't even care that much about getting more drugs, until the drugs start to wear off. Then, all the feelings the person was trying to escape start to come back, as well as a new feeling: fear and self-loathing about being an addict.

Long-term escape addicts usually become shut-ins on welfare. They stay in all day, nothing motivating them to go outside. Desires and opinions slowly fade away from disuse until the person really has no personality at all. The ability to sleep is also damaged and the person slowly goes blind.

Slave- In 2078, only two years ago, slave first hit the streets. Pushers sold it cheap, giving it to God Killer addicts who could not afford to buy God Killer. Slave proved to be much more addictive than God Killer. Only 5,000 in the city are currently addicted to Slave (3,000 career, 2,000 part-time), yet growing quickly.

Slave comes in tiny bluish-white pellets that can be smoked with a god killer pipe. The effects of taking the drug are good but are also "nothing special." Other drugs provide a more pleasurable experience. Slave reduces anxiety and pain, it creates a paradoxical "mellow excitement" where the user feels excited and giddy but doesn't want to do anything, and it has mild psychedelic effects.

Slave is said to have the worst withdrawal of any drug. Slave withdrawal is known as "the uglies" by addicts. During withdrawal, every single thing the addict experiences or imagines seems unbearably ugly and disgusting. Even the idea of being clean, of defeating the drug addiction and never having to face the uglies again, seems like a terrible and disgusting idea. The uglies do not go away quickly, they can last for weeks or even up to a month in hard core addicts.

Although slave has only been around for two years, long-term-effects have started to appear. Those who work with addicts predict that Slave users will die within a few decades from damage to the liver and digestive system.

Drug Lords

In Brief- Drugs sold by a mysterious, ruthless, monopolistic, efficient organization. Small, violent gangs sell drugs (sometimes forcefully) on proscribed turf. Some pushers keep their turf orderly and peaceful. Other pushers transgress in to other turf and wage war against each other (despite possible punishment). Kings distribute to pushers from home fortresses. Kings are controlled by Lords, who are secretive, enforce a strict law (don't touch Drug Lord employees, don't interfere of compete with drug sales) using "daggers" (elite teams of trained killers with black motorcycles). Drugs manufactured in the city by production teams.

Pusher Gangs- Pusher gangs are the foot soldiers of the Drug Lords. The average pusher gang is made up of five teenage males armed with knives, clubs and one pistol. They are the children of wells, but are not old enough (or don't have their lives together enough) to be on welfare. They use drugs themselves (typically god-killer or alcohol) yet are not "career" addicts. They have a history of crime, especially theft and assault. They make about \$2,000 a month each, but spend their money quickly. The members of the gang grew up on the streets, ambitionless young men, hanging together and using their numbers to intimidate others. They did minor crimes to gain money and used money to buy weapons. At some point they felt they had made a name for themselves and they petitioned the local king (and gave a small bribe) for a recently vacated piece of pusher turf.

Pusher gangs vary from this standard template wildly. Some gangs have only one member, others have twenty. Some pushers are sadistic sociopaths, others are almost Goods and know their addicts by name. Some are adolescents, some are in their forties. Some pushers make as little as \$250 a month each, others make up to \$10,000 a month.

Most pusher gangs forcibly addict people to their drugs. Some grab anyone walking past who appears vulnerable. A few will go so far as to break in to the apartments of shut-ins to forcefully addict them. The Drug Lords discourage this extreme behavior for fear that it will attract the attention of the corporate news media and citizens' groups.

Most pusher gangs operate by a code of revenge much like that of gang members. They hunt down and kill anyone who has messed with them. Most pusher gangs understand only military force, and they feel free to mess with anyone they think they can beat. They may kill someone for something as small as giving them a dirty look. The pusher gangs typically don't mess with large gangs or street families.

At first, pusher gangs appear completely independent. They purchase drugs from their local king and sell it for as much as they want (usually a 100% markup), they can even sell to resellers. When the Drug Lords have an enemy, the pusher gangs are offered a reward for the enemy's head. Despite this apparent freedom, a lot of what pusher gangs do is controlled by the drug lords. The pusher gangs must meet a weekly quota, they are assigned a specific area they are allowed to sell in, and they aren't allowed to fight with each other.

Most pusher gangs don't have any real ambitions. Most are living for their next hit of God Killer. The few ambitious pushers hope to someday make a bid to become a king.

Almost Goods- Some pusher gangs are better than others. Some pushers make a concerted effort to be fair and to keep peace in their selling turf. Some pusher turfs are virtually governed by the pushers and have their own rules of behavior for addicts. Some pushers may have a rule, for instance, that addicts can not kill any other addicts within their turf. Compassion and a preference for order over chaos might be a factor in these pushers' behavior. However, the most likely motivation is to try entice addicts from the turf of other pushers by making their turf known as a relatively safe haven. When pushers try this tactic, the money and effort it takes is usually quite well rewarded by an influx of addicts. It is only personality flaws and psychological limitations that keep the majority of pushers from using this tactic.

Pusher Wars- The Drug Lords do not allow any pusher gangs to sell on the turfs of other pusher gangs, and they do not allow pusher gangs to fight. Kings who discover pushers breaking these rules are supposed to execute the offenders.

In practice, though, some pushers want the extra money enough to risk the wrath of their kings. The temptation is irresistible to make extra money by trespassing on another pusher's turf to sell drugs or by sabotaging competing pushers so that their addicts must go elsewhere. Other pushers have personal grudges and will go to war against other pushers gangs with no profit motive in mind.

Pushers may try to get away with these illegal activities by stealth (committing the crimes anonymously) or by force (intimidating the victimized pusher gangs in to keeping quiet).

There have been a few fierce battles when pusher gangs (and once, a king) have been found breaking the rules and went rogue. The Drug Lords will come down on rogue elements with as much force as they can (in other words, with dagger teams, p.192). Enemies of the Drug Lords are very interested whenever there is fighting between members of the Drug Lord organization. They hope to "catch" a defector and gain important intelligence about the leadership of the Drug Lords. Unfortunately, no rogues have lived long enough to be questioned.

Kings- Kings are the bosses of pushers and are appointed by the Drug Lords. Each is given a home area to operate in and a turf. They can divide their turf among pusher gangs in any way they please. Kings pay for all their expenses: a house to operate out of, body guards, informants, weapons. Most kings save money by making their base of operations the house that they live in, and their bodyguards live in the house so they can protect the kings 24 hours a day. About once a month, heavily armed guards deliver a load of drugs to the kings' houses. The kings distribute them to pushers, and sometimes sell to addicts from their own front doors.

Lords- Even before the consolidation of the Drug Lords (in 2075), the lords were very secretive. They had reason to be: they were the wealthiest and most powerful drug traders in the city, they dealt with international drug cartels and they sold to the city's most powerful street gangs. They were also at constant war with each other and were not afraid to assassinate each other.

Little is known about the events of 2075. Some lords were executed, the rest joined together in to a single entity that worked with uncharacteristic efficiency. Every move by the Drug Lords, since 2075, has been made with a logical intelligence that amazes even the Math Addicts. Within a year, the lords had destroyed every major enemy, had created a vertical monopoly over drugs in the city, and were working on freeing themselves from dependence on the drug cartels. They created new drugs that were much more efficient and could be manufactured from sources found in the city (as opposed to Heroin and God Killer, which came from Asia and the Appalachians).

Nobody could have predicted the effect on the city of the destruction of the old drug-selling gangs. By taking drugs away from the gangs, the Drug Lords inadvertently opened gang membership up to a new type of person. These new gangs (including the Night Shift) are capable of standing up to the Drug Lords and willing to do so. These new gangs are the only major setback the Drug Lords have faced since their consolidation.

No one knows exactly who all the lords are, or even how many there are, but anecdotal evidence shows that there are about 7 of them and they have divided the city in to equal parts. Each lord has a dagger team and a number of kings. Unlike the kings, whose bases of operation are public knowledge, enemies of the Drug Lords have been unable to figure out where the Lords operate from. When lords appear on the city streets, which is rare, they usually appear in armored cars with a multitude of bodyguards armed with machine guns.

The Lords seem to act in a uniform manner. When prices change, when policies change, when someone becomes an enemy of the Drug Lords, kings all over the city are given exactly the same orders at exactly the same time. Some believe that this is evidence that the lords are being controlled by some outside force. If this is true, though, there is no clue who the controller is.

Branching Out- Many pusher gangs have been known to offer their own independent services in such traditional organized crime areas as loan sharking, gambling, black marketeering, assassinations, prostitution and protection. The extent of these services has been small for one reason: the pushers can make more money per hour selling drugs than at any of these other pursuits. Similarly, the Drug Lord organization as a whole seems to be willing to branch out, but only when the potential reward is high. Most recently, an unprovoked strike by dagger teams was believed to have been paid for by a black corp division.

Laws- There is no codex of laws handed down by the drug lords to the city population, but by looking at who the Drug Lords choose to execute, it is easy to extrapolate a number of rules:

- Don't **hurt** any member of the Drug Lords organization, even in self-defense.
- Don't **interfere** with pushers selling drugs or getting new addicts.
- Don't **sell** any street drugs if you aren't a pusher gang belonging to the Drug Lords.
- Don't **help** too many addicts get off drugs (programs that don't have a high success rate are allowed to continue).
- Don't **find out** anything about the Drug Lords and their drugs that isn't public knowledge.

The Drug Lords also seem to have a set of internal rules, including:

- Don't **encroach** on the turf of another pusher gang/king/lord.
- Don't **fight** with another pusher gang/king/lord.
- Don't reveal Drug Lord **secrets**.
- Avoid messing with **gangs**.
- Avoid catching the attention of **corps** or **feds**.
- Sell** a lot or be kicked out.

Dagger Teams- While pushers are their own muscle, and bodyguards are the muscle for kings, the muscle for the lords is the dagger teams. Each lord has his or her own team of 4 to 6 trained killers. All daggers have high-powered black motorcycles, black full body armor, automatic pistols and military explosives. Dagger teams are used for only one thing: search and destroy missions. Daggers are used to destroy enemies of the Drug Lords and to destroy employees of the Drug Lords who have gone rogue. Like the lords, the true identities of dagger team members are kept secret.

Production Teams- Each lord controls several production teams. Each team is made up of at least one master chemist, a few assistant chemists and several heavily armed bodyguards. The teams move around frequently, trying to keep their location secret and because their labs quickly become toxic. They use whatever space they can get, from warehouses to apartments. Many innocent people living in cheap apartment buildings have been killed when labs caught fire, released poisonous gasses, or both.

Productions teams are responsible for testing new drugs and methods. The lords are in a constant search for cheaper, faster and more dependable ways to create drugs. Whenever a new batch is created using new equipment or a new method, the production team sends out guards to kidnap a street person to test the drug on. The Drug Lords have been known to abduct whole groups of people, of different ages and socioeconomic status, for testing brand new drugs. The victims may be kept for weeks or months as the effects of use, addiction, withdrawal and overdoses are tested on them. There are horror stories of new drugs that didn't make it on to the streets because of various side effects. The production teams tend to execute their victims afterwards, but a few have escaped to tell the tale.

EMPLOYMENT

Illegal

In Brief- People who can't get legal jobs can work below board or as criminals.

Illegal jobs are in much greater demand and are much harder to get. There are a lot of people in the city who can't get a legitimate job and desperately want the extra income that a job will give. Some illegal jobs pay well, but the majority pay less than minimum wage.

Below Board- These are a lot like the jobs that wells engage in, but the employees are paid "under-the-table." The employees don't need to show any identification, and nobody pays any income taxes. Almost every small-business owner in the city hires the occasional below-board employee with little fear of getting caught. The most common below-board part-time jobs in the city: assistant to a black market trader, maid, exotic dancer and light manufacturing.

Criminal- This is where people are paid to do something that is completely illegal. See the section on criminals (p.190) for more information. The most common criminal positions in the city are: pusher (p.190), prostitute (p.144), mercenary and runner (p.143).

Fighting For Money

There are a few places in the city where a good fighter can make a few bucks. Most good fighters, however, know that every fight is dangerous and won't risk it.

Alley Fights: Most fight betting is started by homeless professional gamblers. Two people are arguing and appear ready to fight, people stop to see what is going to happen, and a gambler collects bets. In most cases it is a setup: the fight is fixed and the fighters and gambler will each take a cut.

Warehouse Fights: Some gamblers and traders hold larger indoor fights. The audience must pay a small cover to get in (they usually also bet money once inside). Some fight promoters try to boost the audience by doing something exotic (e.g. fighting with saws). The fighters in these cases are typically practiced martial artists who make a circuit of major inner cities. They may appear injured (or may even appear to die) but they are seldom badly injured. The chances of some random person off the street beating these fighters at their own game is very small.

Death Fights- Even rarer, some people in the city will stage fights-to-the-death. These are small operations, with few attendees. Often the people who stage the fights are the same people who make illegal pornography. They will record the fights and sell the recordings on the black market. Fighting is done with bare knuckles, or with small hand weapons (nothing that will kill too quickly). The fighters are typically career addicts who desperately need the money. The fight promoters usually give the fighters free God Killer so the fighters will fight without fear of death. Winners are paid between \$200 and \$750.

Hunters- Some hunters pay people to be their prey. Few hunters care for fair fights, and people are more or less paid to run away and try to survive being hunted.

Red Light District- Some of the bars in the red light district feature occasional catfighting or sexual wrestling to attract portions of the fetish crowd. It is mostly sex workers who do this but anyone could walk in off the street and apply for the job. The fighters are usually not paid any extra for winning, in fact some may be paid extra to lose and take a good beating.

Child Boxing- One disturbing sport, brought to the US by Southeast Asian immigrants, pits children against each other in bare knuckle boxing and kickboxing matches. The Orphans have only recently heard of this and have declared that they will kill anyone who forces or coerces children in to engaging in this practice.

ENVIRONMENT & ECOLOGY

Pollution

In Brief- Factories in the city create much pollution, it is dangerous but usually blown out to sea.

Corporations have used lobbyists to make sure that the city was zoned for high-pollution industry. The reason is that the corporations want to make money by running high-pollution factories, but they don't want them in the corporate living centers where corporate employees might suffer from health problems. So, in the corporate living centers, corporate employees work at low-danger and low-pollution factories, while in the city, 'workers' (who enjoy none of the benefits of corporate membership) work dangerous jobs in factories that spew huge columns of pollution in to the sky above the city.

Coastal winds usually scatter the pollution, taking most of it out to sea (where it pollutes the oceans). Enough of the pollution stays in the city, especially on days when the wind is relatively still, to cause health problems for many thousands of people in the city. Rates of asthma and cancer are higher in the city than in surrounding areas. An accident, a fire or a broken pollution scrubber could mean that noxious smoke and gasses can be expelled from the smokestacks. Such accidents have, in recent years, killed hundreds and put thousands in the hospital. Some have been permanently disabled with scar tissue in their lungs or neurological damage.

When the pollution builds to dangerously high levels, the cloud forms (see below). Most people who expect to be out on the streets during these days own some sort of gas mask or improvise one.

The Cloud

In Brief- When there is no wind, a dark, flammable, pollution eating cloud of genetically engineered bacteria floats over the city.

On days where the wind is still, pollution pools around the city, growing dangerously thick. At this point, bacteria "hibernating" in grime across city rooftops comes to life. The bacteria absorbs and metabolizes pollutants, turning them in to simpler and less toxic chemicals. One of the metabolic byproducts is hydrogen gas, which fills tiny sacks attached to the bacteria, causing them to float. Eventually, a thick grey cloud forms, hovering about 800 feet over the city (higher than most rooftops). The cloud saves lives by destroying many (but not all) forms of pollution. It can also produce a greenhouse effect which can make the city up to 20 degrees higher than the surrounding area. The cloud has the effect of making the city very dim, which has been known to cause depression in some people. The cloud was released with the assurance that it would not be at all flammable. Lately there have been instances of especially thick parts of the cloud catching fire. The cloud smolders, glows slightly and a powdery ash falls on the city.

Weather

In Brief- The weather is wildly unstable, with temperature extremes and massive rainstorms, windstorms and blizzards.

The greenhouse effect has caused a partial melting of the polar ice caps, which has caused rising ocean levels, which has changed weather patterns worldwide. In general terms, the earth has become a warmer place by about seven degrees. This is not an absolute, however. The weather has become very wild and unstable.

The modern era is one of super-storms. Superstorms last for weeks, even months, crossing oceans and sometimes almost circling the globe. Most superstorms that hit the city come from the sea and bring huge amounts of water and heavy winds. Fourteen hurricanes have hit the city in the last two decades. During winter, superstorms can travel down over Canada and create blizzards capable of choking the streets with snow and winds that can freeze a person in minutes. At any time of year, strong winds tossing trash and knocking over children are common.

Wildlife

In Brief- Wildlife returning to city, including pigeons, stray cats and dogs and other small animals. 10 million rats cause health problem and bite the defenseless.

Since the massive exodus from the city in the early 2060s, nature has, bit by bit, begun to return to the city. Weeds grow in unrepaired cracks in streets up and down the city, and trees are even growing out of some of the larger cracks in sidewalks.

About 10 million rats inhabit the city. These rats were brought to New York in the 1700s from Norway, on sailing ships. Much bigger than native rats, they weigh about a pound each and can grow to be up to 18 inches long. Through natural selection, these rats have become immune to most poisons they have been introduced to over the last few centuries. Rats have also developed an urban wit: they will watch their fellow rats going in to new situations and are smart enough to avoid anything that killed a fellow. Rats have been known to bite humans who are sick, intoxicated, wounded or otherwise helpless. Their teeth can gnaw through most barriers and they can decimate food supplies in a single night. Rats also carry diseases. Rats once carried the bubonic plague, now they carry rabies and strains of different plagues (see Disease, p.185).

Another immigrant to the city is pigeons. Pigeons lived on cliffs in Europe and came to America (along with sparrows) in the grain holds of ships. Like rats, pigeons are omnivores and reproduce quickly. They nest on the ledges of buildings, creating terrible messes. Their dropping are acidic enough that they have caused metal cables on city bridges to snap.

There are thousands of stray cats and dogs living in the city. The stray dogs have reverted to living and hunting in packs, like wolves. Stray dogs can attack children and may attack adults when hungry. Dogs can contract rabies, which makes them irrational and dangerous.

Other city wildlife that may be seen on the streets are squirrels, raccoons, bats, blue jays, robins and sparrows. Red-tail hawks and falcons make their nests on the top of tall buildings and hunt street wildlife.

The city also has quite a lot of insect life. The most insidious are cockroaches.

The Hole

In Brief- Largest and most wild park in the city, has many animals and plants (including coyotes and deer), all under the stewardship of the Keepers.

The city was once known for its parks. Those that weren't paved over in the 2040s are now overgrown with weeds and filled with trash. These parks have quite a few animals living in them. The largest and most impressive park in the city was and is Central Park, known in city slang as "the hole". Central Park takes up 843 acres, representing more than 10% of the total acreage of the city.

Now, the park is choked with thick underbrush and trees (along with the bombed-out ruins of Freedom Army buildings). Many types of trees, grasses and bushes grow in the hole, some native to New York and others imported from all around the world. Wildlife, includes owls, warblers, blue jays, robins, sparrows, wild turkeys, rats, mice, raccoons, stray cats and dogs, bats and squirrels. There are fish, turtles and bullfrogs in the park's human-made ponds. There have been a small population of coyotes living in the park since the end of the 20th century. There is even a small population of white-tailed deer in the park. Nobody knows whether they were introduced in to the park by hunters, or whether they traveled to the park via bridges before the security gates were built.

The Keepers, the small street family who live in the park, eat all of the animals that live there (and many types of plant life). The Keepers are careful not to hunt any species to the point where they are close to extinction.

See the section on the hole in City Geography (p.167) and the section on the Keepers (p.127) for more information.

Monsters in Central Park?

The Keepers don't like to tell people what's in the Hole. They don't think it's anyone's business and they don't want to give anyone a good reason to invade the Hole.

As does anything mysterious, a number of rumors have sprung up about what the Keepers have found in the hole:

- Jeffrey Hernandez, who did not die on the satellite but has instead been living in the ruins.

- A cache of secret experimental weapons in one of the Freedom Army research labs.

- Gold, jewels and antiques plundered by the Freedom Army.

- An unexploded nuclear weapon.

- Genetically engineered animals that escaped during the bombings and have been breeding in the hole.

The Keepers have denied all of these rumors. Most of them are fairly unlikely (cleanup crews did comb through the entire hole). The only actual evidence for any of these theories comes from the Keepers themselves. Keepers like to wear small trophies from their hunts: bones, teeth, tails, claws, etc. The more impressive the animal, the prouder they are to wear its trophies. Some Keepers have been seen wearing parts that casual observers can't recognize. With characteristic "none-of-your-business" attitude, the Keepers won't identify the trophies.

It has been established as a fact that there were Freedom Army labs in Central Park during the Freedom Wars, and that some of these labs did genetic research. It is possible that some of these labs were underground and the animals there were not immediately destroyed when the park was bombed. It is further possible that the cages were somehow opened (either by accident or on purpose) and animals escaped in to the park. Some of them managed to find a place in the park ecology and survive the decades.

Another explanation for the Keepers' odd trophies is that Hunters may have released exotic animals in the park in order to hunt them. Hunters may have even released genetically engineered or resurrected extinct animals in to the hole.



INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Tech Geekdom

People who don't know much about computers assume that there is one continuum of computer knowledge. In fact, there are several areas of knowledge, just as in art or science, and knowledge of one does not necessarily mean knowledge in the others. Tech knowledge can be divided, generally, in to:

Hardware: the physical makeup of machines, what parts will work on what type of machine and how to install them.

Operating System: The program that runs and manages every other program on a computer and controls which people and what programs can access what resources..

Applications: The use, features and differences between large software suites.

Internet: What is available on the net and how to get to it.

Networking: How computers transmit data to each other, and how servers route this data.

Programming: Creating programs and net sites, and how they retrieve and store data in databases.

Data

In Brief- Data is very important and valuable in a computerized age. Can be copied, compressed and easily hidden.

When any riddle that asks what the most expensive, the most desired, the most dangerous commodity per pound is, the answer to the riddle is usually data. In the industrial age, coal, gasoline and electricity were the lifeblood that let the economy operate. In the computerized age, that lifeblood is data. Data can be anything from a cheap pulp novel that keeps a homeless person entertained on a lonely night, to research results from a top secret military research project that is worth billions on the black market and might kill millions if it falls in to the wrong hands.

There are four universals about data:

Data can be **copied**. Any type of data can be copied any number of times without any degradation.

Data can be **compressed**. Any data with any sort of redundancy (including human language) can be made smaller so it can fit on smaller storage media and can be transmitted faster. For a company that deals exclusively with data and the internet, a 5% compression can save the company billions.

Data can be **encrypted**. See Cryptography (p.200) for more.

Data can be **hidden**. Data can be hidden inside other data such that it will be invisible to the naked eye. Only special programs can tease this data out.

Copy Protection- Over the past 100 years, the fact that any data can be copied has been a considerable annoyance to those trying to get rich by selling data. Software and entertainment companies have created a number of "copy protection" methods. Despite the name, these methods do not actually prevent data from being copied, most prevent illegally copied data from being used. The most common copy protection scheme in use today: when you start up a program, the program goes on-line and checks to see if you've actually purchased the program. If not, the program won't run. The common reaction to this copy protection scheme is to excise that part of the program. Crackers make a large percentage of their income by "cracking" the copy protection on pirated programs and selling them on street corners.

Hotcoding- When the military wanted to protect its ultra-secret code breaking algorithms, copy protection just wasn't good enough. The military created "hotcoding." The basic idea is to keep people from copying data by never actually letting them have it. Hotcoded data comes locked up in a little box and it never actually leaves the box. Information can be sent in, processed by computer chips inside the box, and the result is returned. If anyone tries to open the box, an electrical circuit is broken and the data disappears forever. Although highly effective, hotcoding is not effective for most types of data. About the only thing it is good for is holding encryption codes (including the keys that allow people to access bank-accounts and other highly secure systems) and code breaking algorithms. There are rumors of a top-secret VR training program that is hotcoded, but nobody in the city has actually seen one.

Information Smuggling- Information can be hidden in other information, and information is everywhere. People have made whole careers out of figuring out ways to smuggle information and out of trying to catch information smugglers. Anti-information smuggling experts typically work on top secret projects where blinder programs are used. Blinder programs insure that people won't remember anything that happened while working on the project, and the experts make sure that the people don't write little notes to themselves and smuggle them out.

Some things information can be hidden in:

- In a microchip smaller than a pinhead.
- In the smuggler's brain as a mental program.
- In the smuggler's DNA.
- In a chain of proteins, dissolved in the smuggler's soda.
- In anything that has been printed or embossed by a computer.
- Printed on any surface with an ink visible only in the ultraviolet spectrum.
- In any music, text, video or program file stored in any digital medium.
- In the microprocessor of a microwave oven.
- In a grain of sand etched by nanobots.

Data Sizes

Data	Size
500,000 Chemical Formulae	1 ZB
100,000 Short Text Emails	1 ZB
50,000 Decryption Keys	1 ZB
20,000 Full-Length Novels	1 ZB
10,000 Building Blueprints	1 ZB
10,000 High-Quality Photographs	1 ZB
7,000 Music Files	1 ZB
30 Hours of Video Voicemail	1 ZB
30 Seconds of Full-Immersion (5 Senses) Recording	1 ZB
10 Blueprints for Nanobots	1 ZB
Installation File for 5 MMU Mental Program	1 ZB
1 Hour of High-Quality Video	1 ZB
Full Human Genome	1 ZB
Typical Net Site	1 ZB
Complete Software Suite	10 ZB
Computer Operating System	10 ZB
High-Level Artificial Intelligence	500 ZB
Full Copy of a Human Mind	5,000 ZB

Internet

In Brief- Primary means of communication, shopping and information exchange for the planet.

The internet replaced the old phone system entirely in the 2020s (although there are still a few third-world countries that still use phone systems). Every house or apartment is built with an internet connection in it, and phones, videophones, computers, even appliances are hooked in. Higher level connections can be rented by people who need extra bandwidth (generally VR addicts).

The biggest internet provider in the city is NYR-LAN (New York Regional Local Area Network) which provides service to 95% of the city business because it can undercut the costs of any competitor. The NYR-LAN is owned by the Zyztech corporation. The 5% who do not use the NYR-LAN usually have special needs for security or reliability and are willing to pay more. City ATM machines, for instance, are on private networks in order to reduce hacking attempts.

Entertainment- The primary use of the internet today is to entertain people. Typically, people pay to access music, books, movies and VR games. The biggest entertainment businesses today are the large VR fantasy worlds that most shut-ins turn to for entertainment. There is also quite a bit of free entertainment available on the web, made by amateur artists who have put their work on-line for others to enjoy.

Shopping- The second biggest use of the internet is for mail-order shopping. City shut-ins order their every need, from clothes to groceries, and have it delivered to their doors. Any specialty item which doesn't exist in a city store (vehicle parts, fine art, expensive jewelry, computer parts, rare seeds, etc.) must be ordered on-line.

Research- For those who know how to find it, the internet has the answer to almost every conceivable question. Whole libraries have been made available for free on the net. Some people make a living helping people find freely-available information on the net or helping people figure out if information they have found is accurate or not.

Communication- There are a number of communication protocols available on the net, including: email (text), phone/videophone (voice and video), and VR meeting (full immersion VR). People can also send any sort of data, from music files to computer programs, to each other across the internet.

Community- For many people, the internet is a means of communicating with like-minded people. There are message boards and chat rooms on the internet for devotees of every conceivable topic. There's even a VR chatroom that claims to be for NY area serial killers. For shut-in VR addicts, the VR worlds they live in are as much about human contact as they are about winning some game.

Remote Control- Computers and phones aren't the only things that hook in to the net. There are millions of appliances, printers, security cameras, medical devices and even industrial machines that are plugged in to the internet so they can be monitored and controlled by remote. Some of these devices are tasty targets for hackers.

Piracy- Much to the dismay of the corporations, people also use the internet for trading pirated data. It is mainly users of the Hacker's Guild operating system that do this (see p.82), but others do it as well. Just as skilled researchers can find almost any piece of info on the web, skilled pirates can find, or trade for, nearly any piece of pirated data.

Net Geography

In Brief- Who and what gets on the internet from each country is a matter of that country's laws and economy.

White Towers- Many Northern European and Southeast Asian countries fall in to this category. These are countries that exceed UN International Law Guidelines for internet law. Their laws are quite a bit stricter than the US. People can and will be arrested for data piracy, copyright violations, releasing viruses, defaming people, sending unsolicited communication, distributing pornography, gambling on-line and putting instructions for committing crimes online. Free speech is often curtailed. Anyone in the world can report someone doing something illegal in these countries and those people will be quickly shut down.

The result is that these countries have few hackers and grey-market internet sites. The big corps don't like running servers from these countries because of the hassle of the additional laws. The majority of servers in these countries are owned by local companies, hobbyists, gated communities and governments. Since these countries are among the most wealthy, they tend to have good hardware and the latest software.

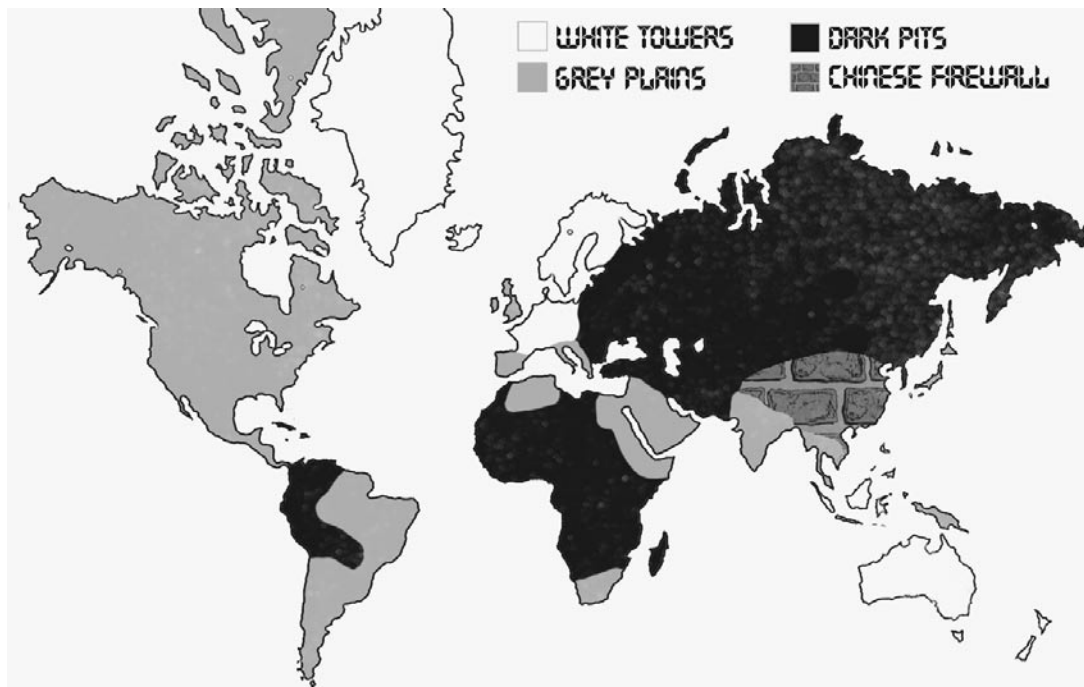
Grey Plains- The majority of North American and European countries fall in to this category, including the United States. These countries meet the UN International Law Guidelines, although only barely. There are basic criminal penalties for things like selling pirated software, distributing child porn or attacking other servers. However, the law enforcement agencies that would enforce them are typically overworked and seldom catch perpetrators. Companies and private individuals typically use the civil law (lawsuits) to stop servers from pirating their data or attacking them.

There are plenty of "grey-market" net sites in these countries, hosting everything from pornography, to hacking tools, to unsolicited advertising. These activities might or might not be illegal, depending upon the judge, and many people find it worth the money to run such sites. There is also clearly illegal stuff happening on servers in these countries. Typically, the people who own these servers are not aware of these activities and shut them down when they find out. The criminals just go and find space on other servers.

Dark Pits- These are countries that refuse to meet the UN standards, often because they are so poor that they hope to make some money by inviting in organized crime to operate within their borders. These are typically the same corporations that have not signed the International Corporate Law Treaty and allow Banned Corps to operate on their borders.

Data Storage Devices

Name	Cost	Size and Shape of a ...	Capacity
Data Key	\$1	key	1 ZB
Data Card	\$5	business card	5 ZB
PDA Hard Drive	\$25	condom	10 ZB
Desktop Hard Drive	\$100	pack of cigarettes	50 ZB
Portable Data Store	\$250	paperback book	100 ZB
Mainframe Hard Drive	\$500	shoe box	200 ZB
Supercomputer Hard Drive	\$10,000	truck	2,500 ZB
Nanotech Data Tank	\$75,000	oxygen tank	5,000 ZB



These countries are the heart of all darkness and evil on the internet. Banned corps and organized crime agencies sell pirated software, illegal pornography, guidebooks for terrorists. They host net sites where extremists go to plan terrorist acts. They run internet based scams that bilk the gullible out of millions.

The servers in these countries are a mishmash of stolen parts, old used parts and illegal knockoff chips. The computers work poorly and unreliably. The software running on them is all pirated. The servers are often badly misconfigured (the people running them had no real computer education). These misconfigured servers wreak havoc with the rest of the internet because they don't conform to data transfer standards. The misconfigured servers are also easy prey for hackers. Hackers all over the world keep accounts on these machines and often launch denial-of-service attacks from them.

Even the government gets in to the act in these countries. The government inducts bright young people to help pirate software to run on government computers. Because the government and businesses encourage computer crime, these countries often spawn many hackers. The hackers might not be as well-educated as hackers in other countries, but the sheer number of them means that new viruses, hacking tools and exploits will pour out of these countries.

The Great Firewall of China- All internet activity in and out of China is strictly controlled. The government controls which net sites the population can visit and which Chinese sites can be contacted by the outside world. The Chinese government monitors their firewall constantly and will block whole countries if they see an attempted attack.

The effect of this censorship is that the outside world knows little about what is going on in China and visa versa. Chinese computers, which hold biotech information that nobody else in the world has are also almost immune from hackers. In addition to the firewall, Chinese computers are protected from Western hackers because they use Chinese software and operating systems that few in the Western world are familiar with.

Corporate Networks- The networks run by large corps and gated communities are much like a medieval walled city. There is one entrance from the outside (the internet) and it is carefully guarded and can be shut down at any time. Within are hundreds of servers and network nodes. The servers that the general public are not supposed to access are within another firewall (the castle of the city). It is from this protected area that network security monitors the goings on in the walled city.

The most valuable and important data is not connected to the internet. There is typically an internal LAN (local area network) within a building or a group of buildings within a corporate living center. Computers that don't access the internet may sit right next to computers that do, but the networks are never supposed to mix. Occasionally, however, a node on the network accidentally gets connected to the internet. An incredibly skilled hacker might be able to get in, and might get corporate data worth billions, but it would mean having to get past two firewalls, find the node (before Network Security finds it and shuts it down), hack in to it, find the server with the data and hack in to that machine.

Legacy Servers- In the aftermath of the Freedom Wars, the Restoration Committee was desperate to get the internet back up and running as quickly as possible. Whatever servers were still running were rigged together in to an internet backbone. As the years went on, these servers were replaced by new and better servers, and almost all of these old servers were shut down.

Although most people have forgotten about these servers, the internet has not. If someone was to boot them up and connect them to the internet, they would still have the authority of a major backbone server (see below). Hackers could use these servers to wreak havoc with the internet (+10 to Sniffing, Network Protocols, Anonymity and Denial of Service skill rolls). Unfortunately for hackers, few remember where these servers are, they may or may not still work, and they run old operating systems that modern hackers have no idea how to use. There are rumors, however, that a few of these servers exist in old abandoned buildings and private residences in the city.

Internet Backbone- The true powerhouse of the internet is a few thousand backbone internet servers throughout the globe. These servers communicate directly with each other via dedicated satellites and fiber optic channels. The only job of these servers is to pass information back and forth. The servers are set up in a distributed net: if one goes down, the others take over. Some of these servers are run by the world governments, but most are run by major corporations. The corps are happy to pay to maintain the servers in order to get a backbone connection to the internet. Companies with a backbone connection can sell internet connectivity to Internet Service Providers, who can sell connectivity to ordinary users.

Internet backbone servers are a tempting target for hackers because so much data, from emails to international money transfers, goes through them. Hackers who install sniffer programs on these servers only need to be able to decrypt the data they capture to get access to just about anything on the internet.

Satellites

In Brief- A network of satellites, some old and some new, helps the world communicate.

Since 1957, people have been launching satellites in to space. Most fly around in an asynchronous orbit (they spin faster than the earth). Some are high up enough that they spin at the same speed of the earth and appear to use to be rooted in one spot (a geosynchronous orbit).

Today, every government and corporation has satellites in orbit. Nanotech (p.207) has made satellites smaller and cheaper. A network of satellites makes up the backbone of the internet, which handles all of the world's communication. The internet could keep working if half the satellites were destroyed. On the other hand, whenever one of these satellites stops working, the corporation that owns it loses millions per hour. Quick satellite repairs can be contracted through the Satellite Repair Corporation (which has an office in the city).

There are humans in space, living aboard a number of space stations, which are used for various experiments. There are also a number of derelict satellites launched before the Freedom Wars that nobody owns or uses. There are some that people have forgotten exist altogether. Some may still even work. Anyone who could find and capture one of these satellites would have salvage rights.

Money Transactions

In Brief- Money now completely digital, no gold standard, money very hard to hack.

There is no longer a gold standard, there is not even a cash standard. Cash is still used occasionally (especially in inner cities) but most money exists only because a group of international financial institutions agrees that it exists. Since money does not exist as a physical commodity, extraordinary measures must be taken to make sure that hackers or disloyal bank employees don't try to "create" money out of thin air. The rich and powerful don't care too much about if one person steals from another, but if someone were to create a lot of money it would create inflation and make their money worth less.

When someone pays for something on the internet, the person typically enters a secret code (or puts in a data key containing a code). The on-line sales company takes that

information to the consumer's bank and says "this person said give me some money." If it is a large amount, the bank's computers may contact the consumer for additional verification. If the bank thinks it's a legit transfer, it deletes the money from its data banks and the on-line sales company adds money to its data banks. A third party (the International Transactions Repository) gets copies of every single communication being sent, and makes sure that everything adds up.

Communications between financial institutions are made using the best cryptography around. They do not use the same internet service providers that normal people do (thus they are harder to sniff). Bank computers are also renowned for having very good firewalls and competent system administrators watching over them at all times. The International Transactions Repository also makes it hard on hackers. In order for a money transfer to go through, both banks and the repository must be fooled.

Virtual Reality

In Brief- VR very advanced, can be used for entertainment, training and behavior modification.

VR was the big boom industry of the 2060s. This boom drove the development of newer and better VR systems. Today, VR entertainment is a multi-billion dollar industry, and more than half of the world's computer power is devoted to running these VR worlds. Although the developments in VR technology were created primarily to entertain bored shut-ins, VR can also be very useful.

Types- VR can be accessed using gloves and a VR helmet, or even with a keyboard and screen, but most people prefer full-immersion VR. Mental stimulation makes it possible for a person to see, hear, feel, smell and taste the virtual environment. Most VR simulations are a little fuzzy (not quite "photorealistic") but VR users who get involved in the simulation rarely notice.

The simplest VR environments are tiny VR rooms on internet sites. They are usually put together by amateurs and are exceedingly simple. The walls are often plain white (or plain black) and there are only a few objects in the room that can be interacted with. People might come to these rooms sit around and chat, taste the site owner's favorite recipes, play a small game, or anything else the programmer has time to put in.

Slightly more advanced are the rooms people pay for. They may have games, training, pornography, gambling, interactive reference guides, etc. Closely related to VR is the phenomenon of "sensory broadcast." People broadcast their full senses and people logging in can see, hear, feel, smell and taste what the person is experiencing. "Nightwalkers" in the city wander around having adventures so bored shut-ins and people living outside the city can get a thrill. There are also "VR movies" where users do not control the action, but instead follow around in the body of a fictional character.

The most advanced VR simulations are the VR multiplayer games. These are subscription services which cost a lot but provide a massive and detailed world. These worlds offer just about every kind of challenge and interaction and many are content to spend their every waking moment there.

Training- Although entertainment is the big-money industry, VR is also incredibly useful for training. People can train in simulations of real life situations without the accompanying dangers. A firefighter training program can subject someone to realistic sensations of being inside a burning building without putting the firefighter in any real danger. Most governments and corporations today use VR training. Indies and Wells on the streets often rent or borrow mental stimulators to run pirated training programs that purport to teach how to pick locks or move silently stab someone in their vital organs.

Behavior Mod- An illegal offshoot of VR training is a new system called "behavior mod." Behavior mod is like automated brainwashing. A person in full immersion VR is put in situations, punished (with pain) if they do the wrong thing and rewarded if they do the right thing. This is done over and over again, for several days in a row, until the person is so conditioned that they have little free will left in that type of situation. Since this is an incredibly unpleasant experience, most people use blanker programs so they won't remember it.

Whether or not people remember it, behavior mod has severe psychological side effects. People suffer from many of the symptoms of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. There may also be "accidental pairing of conditions." As an example, if a simulation happens to have a wooden table in it, the sight of a wooden table may cause a person to fly in to a rage, or vomit, or cower in fear.

The programs don't just modify physical behaviors, they can modify emotions. A person might be punished for feeling fear in a certain situation, or rewarded for feeling anger at seeing someone's face. Behavior mod hasn't been around long, but some fear that it could be used to turn normal people in to assassins. People would disappear for a few weeks, when they return they don't remember anything but feel fine, but when they see a certain person they execute an expert martial arts strike and snap the person's neck.

Despite the side-effects, illegality and scary ability to change people's emotions, many people seek out behavior mod. Some seek it out to push them to limits they can't push themselves to. Others have heard that behavior mod can eliminate personality flaws. Behavior mod is often sought out by ronin who desperately want to pass the psych screening for a gated community or corp.

Hacking

In Brief- Computers too complex to make completely secure. Good hackers can destroy and make money. "Hidden" are legendary paraplegic super-hackers at war with each other. Hacker's Guild produces free hacker OS.

Hacking is a lot like catburglary. Hackers spend days doing research and scoping out vulnerabilities. When they get in, their primary concern is not being noticed. They try to get what they're after and get out as soon as possible. There are some military and terrorist hackers, but the vast majority of hacking is young criminals trying to explore or make a quick buck. Militaries and terror organizations don't invest much in hacking because they know that it's a matter of chance whether a hacker can get in to a particular system.

Hacking is a little more than a century old, and many of the things that were true about hacking back then are still true now. There is still no such thing as a completely secure system. Every day security holes are discovered and patched, but every day new software or operating system releases open new holes.

Vandalism is the easiest and most common form of hacking. The most common hacks don't even get in to the system: they are "denial of service attacks." A hacker simply sends millions of requests to a server, slowing the server to a halt and blocking legitimate requests. Hackers who actually get inside a system often find that its easier to crash the operating system than to get access to specific files.

See p.61 for more information on the specific tactics available to hackers.

Hidden- Due to pollution and leftover radiation from the Freedom Army nuclear attacks, there were a lot of babies born with birth defects in the city. Some were badly disabled, but were able to live as normal people in VR fantasy worlds. A handful were born with a neuroanatomy so different that they could not even operate VR bodies. In 2064, some doctor thought he could give these babies a way to interact with the world by hooking their brains up to the command prompts of very simple computers with internet connections. They were meant to be the Helen Kellers of the 21st century.

Today, everyone who worked on the project has disappeared. Some have seen evidence of mysterious super-hackers operating in the city. At some point, someone connected the super-hackers with the missing disabled kids. A knew city legend was born. Some hackers pieced together incidents involving these super-hackers and concluded that they were at war with each other.

What follows is unconfirmed rumors and conjecture: *The kids who received this therapy grew up knowing nothing but computers and were naturally incredible hackers. They also grew up with no human contact and grew up as sociopaths. As sociopaths that could do nearly everything, they soon sought out the only challenge worthy of them: each other. It was a no-mercy, no-rules fight, like when serial killers go after each other. Because their physical bodies were vulnerable, the hidden erased all information about where their bodies were in the real world. They were also forced to be incredibly subtle, never allowing their internet connection to be traced back. Denied outright attacks, they were forced to make war subtly, secretly manipulating just about everything that happens in the city. They are in thousands of systems and can make a series of "coincidences" happen to get their way.*

There are stories of people who became secret servants of the hidden. These stories take much the same form of the old devil-at-the-crossroads stories. In the hidden stories, some desperate person goes to some empty VR room and shouts out for help in his or her personal crisis, for any payment asked of him or her. The problem mysteriously or coincidentally goes away, then the person starts receiving terse text messages that appear to be system errors but give instructions for actions. The servant never meets the hidden, knows which hidden he or she is working for, nor knows the purpose behind the tasks.

Hacker's Guild- In the 2040s there was a war between tech criminals (who wanted to give consumers the ability to control their data), and (corporations who wanted to strictly control what people could do with data). A small group of tech criminals put out a free hacker Operating System. This operating system did not include legally-mandated copy-protection schemes, and it had built in file and information sharing, built in encryption and other features. The operating system also contained a pyramid-scheme that gave the people who released it access to an incredible amount of pirated data and information.

The hackers who released the operating system became rich and powerful. One of the things they did with this power was to steal tech that the corporations had locked up in their R&D labs (including mental programming tech) and started using it. Hackers were installing programs in their own brains while the corps were still trying to get permission for human trials.

During the Freedom Wars, the Freedom Army courted the members of the Hacker's Guild. The guild was split over whether or not to help the Freedom Army. One half joined up, they helped the Freedom Army create computer networks and they ran Freedom Army research labs. The other half went underground, and eventually helped the rebels destroy the Freedom Army.

After the Freedom Wars, the leaders of the guild found that many of the things they had been doing illegally were now legal. Most went legit. They offered to help the Restoration Committee rebuild the world's information infrastructure, and most became rich in the process. Many of these rich ex-Guild members are now technology advocates, donating money to lobbyists trying to reduce government restrictions on technology and trying to give third world countries access to tech. Some moved to Pacific and Caribbean islands where they could experiment with tech without having to worry about any laws.

Although most of the old guild members were giving up hacking, the Guild OS was still the premier operating system of hackers (and quite a few legit computer professionals). Someone needed to put out updates to the OS to help it keep up with new technologies. A new generation of idealistic young hackers took over the guild and put out updates. However, they were no longer at the top of an information and file-sharing pyramid, their only reward was the prestige of putting out a hacker OS. In modern times the Guild has been shying away from the blatant criminal activities of the 40s and has tried to portray itself as a semi-legit advocate for tech rights. In the countries they work in, what they do is (more or less) legal. Now, the corps still hate the guild but have a harder time convincing judges that they've done anything illegal.

Cryptography

In Brief- Code making/breaking is a constant war, any code can be broken given enough time. Computer power, good software and a skilled user helps.

As much as data is important in today's computerized world, so is cryptography. When a wireless security camera transmits a video stream, it encrypts it. If it were not encrypted, anyone with a wireless receiver could view the video stream and could block it in favor of a video stream they created. When a wealthy Indie steps up to an ATM machine, they insert a tiny key which contains a cryptographic code that is used in a challenge-response system (see Money Transactions, p.198). Most important is the internet, which hosts almost all of the

world's communications. A good hacker can get on to an internet node and see every piece of information that is being sent back and forth. Nearly every communication on the internet is encrypted, the question is how well it is encrypted.

Types of Encryption- There are several types of encryption, each with various uses.

Private Key Encryption: This is the stereotypical encryption that people have been doing almost since there's been a language. This type of encryption requires both people to know what the encryption scheme is. One person uses the encryption scheme on the data to encode it, the other uses the same scheme in reverse to decode it. With modern encryption schemes, this type can be very powerful, but it requires both parties to get together ahead of time and share an encryption scheme.

Public Key Encryption: Invented by Stanford researchers in 1975, this type of encryption is the basis for almost all encryption on the net. Each code has two parts: a public key and a private key. The public key is given out to anyone and everyone, and anyone can use that key to encrypt some data. However, only the private key can be used to decrypt the data, and only one person has that. This type of encryption is like mail slots: anyone can drop any letter in to a house's mail slot, but only the house's owner has the key to get in the house and retrieve the mail. Public key cryptography is much more useful but not quite as strong.

One-Way Encryption: This type of encryption uses a code to encrypt data, but there is no code that can decrypt it. This type of encryption is very hard to break and is typically used for password verification. Example: *an encrypted copy of Bill's password is stored on a system. When Bill tries to log-in he enters his password. The computer takes what he entered, encrypts it, and compares the result to the encrypted password it has on file. If it matches, the computer lets Bill in.* The great thing about using one-way encryption for storing passwords is that people who capture the password file gain little benefit: they still have to guess the right password (or break the code).

Evolving Code: Private or public keys can be configured to evolve. The trick to an evolving code is that the encryption scheme the parties are using is constantly changing, and how it will change can only be predicted by someone who has an unencrypted copy of the last transmission. Each letter in a text message might change how the next letter will be decrypted. The benefit to evolving codes is that even if someone breaks the code on one occasion, if they miss any transmission their code becomes useless. Unfortunately, the same applies to the legitimate receiver of the transmissions.

Cryptographers- Modern codes (and code breaking programs) are the result of top researchers working for years in top-secret R&D labs. A cryptographer on the street has little chance of making a code better than these labs produce. However, a skilled cryptographer can choose the encryption program and settings that will work best with that particular data. By making the right choices, cryptographers can make the codes much harder to break.

Unbreakable Codes?

"No such thing as an unbreakable code, my ass. Here's a code you can't break with a million supercomputers: 'Hey Joe, let's do that plan A we talked about.' Break that punky. Codes get broken because people are too fucking lazy, they want to encrypt a whole fuckin' book, and that's when your supercomputers can tease some meaning out."

-Bill Woodsell, Wino

Despite the inclusion of AI routines and order-finding algorithms, code breaking still works on the principle of guessing: guess a code, and if that doesn't work then try another one. The more computer power a code breaker has to work with, the more guesses can be made per second, and the faster the code will be broken. It's never a matter of whether a code can be broken, but how long will it take. Run a supercomputer with military code breakers against a weak code and it will be broken within a second, run a cheap palmtop using last month's code breaker against the world's best codes and it might take several times the lifetime of the universe to break it. Like encryption, skilled cryptographers can aid code breaking by setting the right settings and using their intuition to help direct the guesses of the code breaker. The best code breakers give the users a full immersion VR interface where they are floating above a huge multi-colored tree, each leaf of which represents a guess. The cryptographer tells the program which areas of the tree to focus most of its energies on.

Artificial Intelligence

In Brief- Can do most things better than a human since the 2040s, but they are costly and seldom used. Stolen assassin program is highly valuable.

When speaking of AI (Artificial Intelligence), it is important to distinguish between full AIs (which are expensive and rare) and AI routines, which are built in to much modern software. Today, AI routines do everything from musical accompaniment for musicians, to running robots in factories, to searching through security camera footage for the faces of criminals. AI routines use intelligent strategies, they learn and adapt, but they are no more intelligent than an ant. Full AIs can direct their own attention and can become aware of or learn nearly anything.

Before the Freedom Wars, each of the major corporations had powerful AIs secretly advising them on every important decision within the corps. The AIs knew everything that was going on in the corporation: every penny of profit, every employee resume, sent. The corps kept these AIs strictly secret (they knew people would riot if they found out AIs were secretly running the corps). The AIs were programmed to make recommendations with no consideration or morality or legality. The boards of directors for these corps always did what these AIs suggested, because they knew that the competing companies also had AIs and that the other corps would do what the AIs said. By 2043, the corps that weren't run by immoral AIs had all been wiped out. When the Freedom Wars came, the Freedom Army found out about these AIs and tried to hunt down and destroy every copy.

AIs are no longer used for decision-making purposes (this is an international law). Full AIs are very expensive. The supercomputers required to run them cost millions, and fill up entire buildings (technicians literally walk around inside the computer). They are used only for research purposes. Meanwhile, AI routines continue to make computers able to do things that humans can do, and continue to make human jobs obsolete. The AI tax at least makes sure that corps pay in to public assistance for each lost job (see p.176).

Expert Assassin- Several AI programs have been written to run the bodies of "golems" (human bodies with blank brains). Some are designed to be servants, others are designed to be sex toys, others are designed to fight and kill. The most advanced and most deadly program is known as the "expert assassin." The expert assassin was recently stolen from a Russian military R&D lab. It uses techniques that are on the cutting edge of science and technology. Copies of the program are very hard to find and sell for \$10,000 or more.

The program has many settings, and can be sent out with several levels of unobtrusiveness. At the highest level it stays to the shadows, pretending to be a mentally ill homeless person, avoiding any kind of contact until it finds its target. At the lowest level, it powers through an area, shooting anyone who gets in the way, blowing up barriers, and grabs and interrogates people to find the location of the victim. The program can be given a location, photo or even bloodhound powder (see p.97) to track the target with. It can memorize maps of an area and can be programmed to avoid minefields and enemy camps. It can be told that people wearing a certain type of uniform are friends while people wearing another type are enemies. The assassin can be set to operate completely independently, or it can be set to radio or phone in to get new instructions and information (all in a code that sounds like normal conversation to a casual observer). The assassin can be programmed with a "stop code," a password that will stop it in its tracks.

The program has excellent communication abilities. Mostly it tries to avoid conversations (it can pretend to be anything from a tourist who doesn't speak the language to a babbling schizophrenic). It can, however ask how to get to a certain place or where to find a particular person. The golem uses psych-mental programming to detect lies and it can understand directions. When the assassin's unobtrusiveness is low it will grab and torture people to get the information it wants.

The assassin can survive for some time in an urban environment. If given money, it can find restaurants or grocery stores and buy food. It can even pay for rooms at hotels (or it can find a dark place to crawl up and rest in). The assassin has a huge database of items it knows how to use. It can buy, steal or pick up items (from dead victims). It can use thousands of different weapons, vehicles and armor. It even knows how to use a few medical supplies.

Despite all these amazing abilities, the expert assassin is not sentient and does not have a unified intelligence. Instead, it is programmed with thousands of different "intelligent routines" that recognize and take over in different situations. For example, if trapped it has an "exit seeking" routine where it methodically searches for any way to get out. Every once in a while, an expert assassin will do something incredibly stupid (like trying to blend in to a crowd even though it is soaked with blood, or not knowing how to grab a person with a missing arm). The expert assassin can not really learn (although it can map environments it's been in and can learn to recognize enemies on sight).

The Myth of the Self Aware Computer

People often assume that, like people, a full AI would be conscious of its own existence and would have a desire for self-preservation that would outrank all other directives. This is plainly false: AIs, no matter how smart or advanced, only care about what they are programmed to care about and only pay attention to that which is important to their pre-programmed motivations.

For example: the AIs that ran corps before the Freedom Wars were aware of their own existence, but only as resources of the corps. The computers would recommend security and tech budgets to protect them, and would even recommend programmers be assigned to creating upgrades, but only because they saw their own existence as a means to protect the profits of the company. They would have recommended their own destruction if they thought it would benefit company stock.

PSYCHIC PHENOMENON

In Brief- A natural system in the brain that uses quantum sympathy to transmit and receive information. People can be trained, via feedback systems, to influence or read minds.

History

In Brief- Scientists discovered the source of psychic phenomena in 2046. Psychics were persecuted during the Freedom Wars.

In the 2040s, scientists had figured out most of the human nervous system, but there was a large piece of communication happening within the body that couldn't be attributed to any known system. Most assumed it was an unidentified chemical neuromodulator that they had not been able to isolate yet. Some studies seemed to show that the information was transmitted instantaneously across the body, and people started looking for electronic or magnetic signals.

In 2046, researchers in India found receptors within neurons that would respond to quantum sympathy (quantum particles separated by space having an instantaneous effect on each other). A whole neuromodulator system was discovered, a way of transmitting information instantly from one part of the body to another. Because this quantum sympathy can happen through a solid object or a complete vacuum, researchers wondered if information could be transmitted from one brain to another. British researchers first documented actual information being transferred from mind to mind. This transformation was very subtle, and never at the level that people were consciously aware of. Scientists wondered if maybe this was a natural system of "intuition."

Scientists decided to see if they could train people to use these systems consciously. Scientists had long ago learned to teach people to control brain wave frequencies, blood pressure, and even some hormone levels through biofeedback (using sensors to give people immediate feedback about their internal states). The test subjects in these early experiments quickly learned to activate these internal communication systems. Within a few months, some of them were able to purposefully effect the minds of other humans. Other test subjects were trained to sense psychic signals and they eventually learned to find people in the dark or read people's minds.

Militaries and corporations quickly sponsored intense training programs to try to crank out powerful psychics. They soon created psychics that could read minds, sense what other people were sensing, mess with people's thoughts, emotions and memories, and even take over people's bodies for brief periods of time. The public was

alarmed to discover that their minds could be so easily manipulated. The government and corps assured the people that psychic skills could not be learned without special equipment and that equipment was rare, expensive and highly-regulated. Even while the governments were telling people that they had a better chance of being struck by lightning than meeting a psychic, they were working on ways to defend themselves against psychics. The US military developed a gel that could be put in the lining of helmets and bodysuits and would protect the wearers from psychic manipulation.

In the last days before the Freedom Wars, fake psychics popped up everywhere trying to con people out of money. Real psychics spent most of their time in labs and seldom had any chance to effect the world. Jeffrey Hernandez, who was building a terrorist army in Mexico, managed to recruit two psychics who he used for screening. These psychics made sure everyone within the organization stayed completely loyal to the organization.

During the Freedom Army occupation of many parts of the planet, the Freedom Army ordered that anyone with psychic skills come in and be registered. Psychics who did come in were tested for loyalty and either drafted or executed. In the city, some rogue psychics who refused to register joined up with the rebel movement and helped win the war.

Current Research

In Brief- Communication can happen between nervous systems, sometimes even across time.

The bulk of psychic research today is trying to verify and discover exactly what psychics can and can't do. Many outlandish claims have been made, but time and time again scientists have found that psychic phenomenon is limited to one nervous system communicating with another nervous system. Psychic transmitters in the brain are implicated in memory, emotion, regulation of consciousness, and even volitional movement. Psychic systems are also used to communicate with the body and skilled psychics have been able to manipulate human physiology, both their own and that of others. There have been verified instances of psychics starting and stopping hearts, changing the amount of blood flow to different parts of the body, increasing or suppressing immune system responses, and even increasing the speed of tissue repairs.

Just before the Freedom Wars, scientists found that psychic communication can happen through the countless subatomic wormholes that dot the fabric and space time. A very strong psychic signal can be sensed before or after the signal was sent. The signal is faint and intermittent, but it is definitely there. Some psychics have been able to gain access to senses that people sensed in the immediate past or near future. What's more, people can act on these signals and change the future. Research in to transtemporal psychic phenomenon has led to the discovery of "ghost events" (see p.203).

What Psychics Can Do

Psychic can...	Psychics can't...
...introduce thoughts in to people's heads.	...start fires.
...mess with people's memories.	...levitate.
...see through another's eyes	...see something nobody is looking at.
...stop peoples' hearts	...make peoples' heads explode.
...find a person in the dark.	...interface with electronics.
...force a person to move his or her arm.	...move inanimate objects.
...constrict blood vessels near an injury.	...cause miraculous healing.
...make people fall asleep.	...suck out people's power.
...make people hallucinate.	...make images appear on any media.
...see a vision from the future.	...switch bodies.

City residents know of a few things that psychic researchers don't. Specifically, the Bleeders and Sexologists have proven time-and-again that they can do things scientists would call "impossible." Bleeders can target people over long distances, manipulate people and even take some of their proficiencies, using a small sample of blood. Sexologists can use intercourse to synchronize psychic signals and basically share nervous systems for a brief period of time. Anyone who has had scientists laugh at the idea of Bleeders and Sexologists knows that there may be other things science has yet to learn.

Laws

In Brief- Psychics need licenses to charge for psychic services. Threatened psychic attacks considered assault. Psychic senses not reliable evidence. Can't scan people without permission.

The state of New York (and most other states) do require psychics to be tested and licensed by a state licensing board before they can charge for psychic services or seek employment as psychics. Psychics who do not charge do not need get a license. Licensing is expensive and is generally only a career move. The licensing board only recognizes a limited number of psychic skills, and people can only charge for skills listed on their psychic card.

Any psychic manipulation against a person's will is a felony (10 to 20 yrs. prison) and the victim can sue for battery. Moreover, the courts have found that threatening someone with psychic attack, even if one is not capable of psychic attack, is the equivalent of lunging at them with a knife. The farthest the courts have gone is *Grisbane vs. New York* (2074) where a defendant was sent to prison for a year for "staring and furrowing up his brow in a manner suggestive of a psychic attack."

Using psychic senses is different: like overhearing a conversation, it is not always the psychic's fault. A New York state law makes it a misdemeanor to "follow, touch or isolate someone with the purpose of using psychic senses on the person." People who have been "scanned" can also sue for invasion of privacy.

Numerous cases have found that psychic senses are not reliable enough to convict a person. Sometimes they can be brought in to evidence, other times they are not even allowed. Psychic senses can provide "reasonable cause," however, to obtain a search warrant.

Suspects in crimes can request a psychic reading (much as they may request a lie detector test) but such a reading can not be forced upon a suspect. An inappropriate psychic invasion by police is not only a crime in itself, it also makes any evidence found based on it inadmissible in court. Despite this, many suspects are "railroaded" by persuasive police detectives in to agreeing to psychic readings.

Similarly, government agencies can not require a psychic scan as a condition of employment and cannot make employees submit to scans. Private entities (corporations and gated communities) are free to require scanning, and they do so often.

Ghost Events

In Brief- The brain of a dying person sometimes sends psychic signals backwards and forwards in time through microscopic wormholes, which may cause a sense of foreboding. Skilled psychics can occasionally communicate with the dying person.

In 2049, a commission of European scientists was doing statistical research on psychic energy readings found from psychic energy sensors placed in random spots around a city. They found bursts of psychic energy both before and after violent deaths. They even found a few instances where there were bursts of energy as if a death was about to happen, and an accident was narrowly avoided. Another study (this time in an ER) discovered accident victims had a powerful psychic energy cascade just before brain death. The commission came up with a radical new theory: the brain is designed, when death is imminent, to go in to a cascade and release a large amount of psychic energy. Some of this psychic energy leaps through subatomic wormholes going in to the past and future and can cause a sense of foreboding. This has the possibility of actually saving a person's life by making them wary of a future danger.

"Ghost events" are very rare, and most are nothing more than a small field of foreboding that pops in and out like random static, appearing more often and longer as the ghost event is approached. It is only psychics and very introverted people who ever notice the sense of

Ancient Psychics

People have been claiming to have psychic powers for centuries, and before that people claimed to have magic powers. The discovery of psychic phenomenon has caused people to ask whether these powers were real. This is a question that divides scientists (and pseudo-scientists).

The believers claim that ancient shamans and magicians had actual psychic powers. They claim that smaller population densities of the pre-industrial era meant less psychic "static" and more opportunities to learn psychic skills (without the need of biofeedback machines). Some go as far as to say that people evolved to have less psychic sensitivity to deal with being in urban environments. The believers also point out that today a skilled psychic can train another psychic by acting as a human biofeedback machine (though it is slower and harder to learn this way).

The skeptics say that there never were any psychics until someone was hooked up to a electrochemical biofeedback machine in 2046. These skeptics point out that 99% of the people who claim to be psychics today are either frauds or lunatics with no real psychic powers. They also point out that many of the psychic powers people claimed to have prior to 2046 involved things like moving inanimate objects (telekinesis) or making images appear on film, things which are clearly impossible according to modern psychic science. These skeptics say that plenty of people claimed to be able to fly via magic powers. The fact that the Wright brothers actually did fly in 1903 did not make these ancient lunatics any less crazy.

A new "moderate" view holds that there may have been a few isolated instances of weak psychic powers in ancient times, but that most "magic" and "psychic" phenomenon was trickery, sleight of hand, hypnotism, drugs and placebo effect.

of foreboding. There are a few poorly documented cases of skilled psychics undergoing a ghost event who were able to communicate psychically to people in the future or past of the event and were able to use psychic skills to manipulate events. Because of the cascade (the psychic receptors are literally working so hard they are burning themselves out) the psychics are much more powerful.

Two things limit the power of psychics acting through a ghost event. First, the brain is undergoing brain death, being flooded with neurotransmitters and the dying psychics are delirious, sometimes even delusional. Second, psychic connections with the near future and past are random, giving the psychics no ability to plan or react. To a dying psychic, the past, present and future are all happening at the same time, popping on and off randomly.

Mediums are psychics who have been trained in contacting the minds of ghosts and communicating with them. A calm medium can calm a ghost down enough to the point that some amount of coherent communication can take place. Some mediums have been employed by police departments to communicate with the "ghosts" of murder victims.

Partial Psychics

It is possible that some of the amazing things people have been seen doing in the city are at least partially psychic (along with other skills). Consider the incredible sensitivity or seductive powers that some Animalists develop, or the Freaks' ability to direct a crowd's attention and shock even the most callous people, or the Purists' ability to sense different kinds of pollution. Clearly they aren't completely psychic. If they were, other psychics would be able to sense them, Drakes with dioxyl ash could mess them up and pro-psychic drugs could make them stronger. It is possible, though, that psychic skill makes up part, but not all, of these abilities.

Why No One Should Be Afraid of Psychics

Limited: Just as human physical abilities are limited, so are human psychic abilities. No human can rip apart steel because the tensile strength of steel is stronger than that of any human tissues. Similarly, there are certain concrete physiological limits to the power of psychics.

Inefficient: Just because you could kill someone with a scarf doesn't mean we should be afraid of everyone with a scarf. The human psychic system is designed to allow elementary subconscious communication between members of the species. It is not designed to be used as a weapon. As a weapon it is quite weak. Like a scarf it depends on the element of surprise to be useful.

Armor: A gel-filled cap that protects from psychics can be purchased for \$250. If one can not afford such a cap, a smearing of ash from dioxyl-pvc plastic will do almost as well.

Rarity: Powerful psychics are rare. Most people who claim to be powerful psychics are lying, just as most people who claim to be expert martial artists are lying. Spending time worrying about psychics is like wearing anti-lighting armor.

Distance: Distance seriously weakens psychic attacks. Most psychics have to touch you in order to do anything serious to you. Running away from a psychic is almost always successful.

Tiring: Psychic activity is also quite taxing on the supply of oxygen and energy in the brain. In order to do anything useful, a psychic has to over-stimulate areas of the brain to levels that they have not been designed for. Many psychics collapse, completely exhausted, after an attempt at controlling another person.

Unprofitable: Finally, most psychics have better things to do than run around attacking people. Psychic training is expensive, it is a significant investment and in most cases some corporation or gated community paid for that investment. The corporation or gated community needs to see this investment paid back by making sure that the psychic uses all his or her free time to benefit the corp or community. In other words, psychics are not sent to do a job that someone with a taser and syringe full of mind altering drugs could do.

Why People Are Afraid of Psychics

Doubt: Having a psychic around means that all the rules people live by are now broken. People can no longer depend upon physical defenses to protect them and they can no longer trust their own thoughts, emotions and sensations. The doubt that a psychic's presence prompts can be as debilitating as anything a psychic actually does.

Teamwork: Many psychics, by themselves, are quite weak. A psychic might be able to distract someone for a split second, or cause a hand to lose tension for a second. By itself, these powers would be nothing scary. If someone happens to be in a knife fight, for instance, a moment's distraction or weakness can mean death. Thus, a psychic teamed up with competent fighters, thieves, interrogators, etc. can make the others considerably more powerful.

Invisible: Psychics can not be easily identified while they are not using their powers. No pat down or x-ray scan can identify that someone has psychic powers. Psychic skills are the ultimate concealed weapon. Even when the powers are in use it takes special sensors (or psychic training) to identify a psychic. A psychic hiding in a crowd can often attack with complete anonymity and no fear of a counterattack.

Paranoia: The main reason people fear psychics is because they fit nicely in to paranoid delusions. A century ago, many paranoid schizophrenics thought that high-tech electronic devices were being used to spy on their thoughts and mess with their minds. Electronics were the fear-of-choice because they could be easily concealed and most people did not know their true capacities and limitations. You can't see a satellite, so it's impossible to prove that one isn't beaming homosexual thoughts in to your head. Today, psychics are the bogeymen of choice for paranoid people for exactly the same reasons.

RIOTS

In Brief- Riots are a city tradition, starting randomly and fueled more by alcohol and looting than by social or political discontent.

"A riot is the voice of the unheard."
-Martin Luther King, Jr.

What starts a riot and what keeps a riot going are often quite different things. Most riots have a mix of people with different reasons for being there. Most riots in the city are an equal mix of political protest, drunken anger and greedy looters.

Riot Junkies

In Brief- Some people hang around waiting for riots so they can loot.

Some people in the city are expert looters, they hang around any place where people are gathering together in hopes that there will be a riot. They listen to police radio bands to hear when riots are starting. Some may even smash the first store window in order to start a riot. They come prepared: gasmasks, armor, crowbars, bags to hold loot, etc. Riots don't happen often enough for anyone to make a living doing this, but some people significantly supplement their income. Almost as important, most riot junkies find riots and looting during riots to be quite a lot of fun.

Beginning

In Brief- Riots can start anytime, alcohol fuels crowds, power outage riots common.

Riots are most likely whenever a crowd develops, especially if there are anti-corporate or anti-government tensions. When there are power or internet outages, riots are more likely. More people are out on the streets with nothing to do but drink and gripe. Also, people know that the police and private security guards are less able to respond to trouble calls and so they feel safer looting.

Most shops close immediately whenever a large crowd begins to gather. Many stores have bars that can be brought down with the flick of a button if it looks like a riot might develop. There are usually one or two stores caught open when a riot starts, and people quickly rampage through the store grabbing anything of value. Word spreads that there is a riot and the crowd swells. Rioters start attacking windows and doors trying to open more stores to looting. One of the primary targets when rioting starts is liquor stores: people steal alcohol, drink it, and become more fearless rioters. The difficulty that authorities have in putting down a riot is directly related to the amount of alcohol the crowd has consumed.

Cops and Private Security

In Brief- Some riots end when cops and security guards show up and start grabbing people.

Quickly after looting starts, private security guards and Night Shift officer show up. Sometimes corps can even pressure the corrupt Day Shift in to showing up at a riot. These forces start trying to grab and arrest looters. Some riots end at this point, the crowd is small enough and the security guards and cops numerous enough that people are afraid of being arrested.

National Guard

In Brief- Bad riots are quickly smashed by well armed National Guard troops.

About 1 in 10 riots grows so quickly that private security guards and the police cannot stop them. Security guards put in a call to their corporate bosses, who put in a call to the governor's office. The governor (or her appointed deputy) signs an immediate order authorizing the National Guard to enter the city. About 30 minutes after the governor makes the call, National Guard helicopters fly in from the National Guard base in Yonkers. There are typically 200 guardmembers in 10 helicopters. They are suited up with high tech armor and shields, gas masks, tear



A Brief History of Major Riots in the City

Slave Uprisings (1712-1714)- There were several attempted slave uprisings during these years with violent reprisals by scared and angry white mobs.

Stamp Act Riot (1765)- British parliament passed an act taxing many paper items, including pamphlets, playing cards, newspapers and legal documents. Colonists protested and rioted against this heavy taxation and the next year the stamp act was repealed.

Doctor's Riot (1788)- A medical student drying a human arm in a window provoked pre-existing anger over rumors of medical students robbing graves. A mob broke in to a hospital, destroying anatomy specimens, searched the homes of doctors.

December Fire Riots (1835) After a particularly bad fire, city residents (including the volunteer fire department) began to loot buildings. Some looters lit more fires to mask their activities. There were mob lynchings of arsonists.

Flour Riots (1837) People suspected that the high price of flour was being caused by shopkeepers who were purposefully holding back flour. A meeting at city hall turned in to a mob that looted shops.

Astor Place Riot (1849)- A rivalry between an English and an American actor causes a riot outside the Astor Place opera house.

Police Riots (1857)- Two city police forces, one controlled by the corrupt city hall leadership and one controlled by the state government went to war with each other over control of the city.

Dead Rabbits Riot (1857)- July fourth, a massive consolidation of street gangs from the five points ghetto, including the Dead Rabbits gang, marched on the bowery where they attacked several Bowery gangs, destroyed property and looted the area. Of the feuding police departments, only one made any attempt to stop the riot and they had little success.

Draft Riot (1863) Angered that the rich could avoid the civil war draft by paying \$300, poor whites (mostly Irish) rampaged. Much of their anger was turned against African Americans who were seen as the reason for the war. African Americans were lynched in the streets. Rioting continued for several days and more than 1000 people were killed. Mobs even attacked a police armory trying to get weapons.

Orange Riots (1871) Members of the Loyal Order of Orange, an Irish Protestant group, won a parade permit and violence with Irish Catholics ensued.

Tompkins Square Park Riot I (1874)- Police beat unemployed protestors in Tompkins Square Park.

Harlem Riots (1935)- Rumors that a young black boy had been beaten to death by police caused rioting in the heavily African American neighborhood of Harlem.

Harlem Riots II (1943)- More rioting in Harlem, this time because of the police shooting of a black man.

Stonewall Inn Riot (1969)- A routine police raid on a gay club in Greenwich Village (the Stonewall Inn) turned violent when the club-goers fought back against the police. Rioting lasted for several days.

Hard Hat Riot (1970)- Construction workers attacked anti-Vietnam War protestors on Wall Street.

Blackout Riot (1977)- A massive power failure across the East Coast left the city in darkness. Looting and rioting ensued.

Tompkins Square Park Riot II (1988)- When the government attempted to evict homeless people from this East Village park, political radicals came to protest. The police responded with violence. Some cops taped over their badge numbers so they could stalk the streets beating up anyone they wanted.

Rodney King Rioting (1992)- After the acquittal of Los Angeles police officers videotaped beating Rodney King, there was sporadic rioting in Manhattan (as well as more intense rioting in other parts of the country). This was one of the first multi-city riots made possible by mass media, a precursor to the rioting of the Freedom Wars.

Tompkins Square Park Riot III (1995)- A riot ensues after police try to evict homeless squatters from an abandoned building near Tompkins Square Park.

AI Riot (2043)- Rumors that a new Artificial Intelligence system would replace hundreds of workers caused protesting. The police refused to break it up, and when corporate security guards tried two were beaten to death and rioters tried to set the building on fire. The police eventually stepped in and stop the riot.

Taxi Riot (2043)- During a taxicab drivers' union strike, several taxicab drivers parked their cars in the middle of major Avenues in the city. The city was paralyzed by gridlock and uncontrolled looting and arson began in several parts of the city.

Unemployment Riot (2045)- An announcement that unemployment payments would be cut drastically caused rioting. The national guard tried to suppress rioting with teargas, but rioting started in other parts of the city, until martial law and a curfew was declared.

Hospital Riot (2049)- During a bad plague outbreak, plague victims in triage in the parking lot at a local hospital heard rumors that all the medicine was being used on rich patients, patients assaulted several doctors

Mason Marks Riots (2050)- The assassination of an anti-corporate third party candidate caused rioting in all over the US. Just as rioting started to settle down, corporate headquarters and government buildings around the world were bombed. TV broadcasts told of massive uprisings worldwide. Rioting and looting in the city was intense, most people were trying to stock up for a possible end of society. The police, then the national guard, then the military all failed to stop rioting. Freedom Army snipers used the rioting as cover to fight guerilla warfare against the government. Government forces eventually pulled out and the looting ended when there was nothing left to steal. In the city, over 5,000 were killed and hundreds of buildings were destroyed.

Food Line Riot (2054)- For several months in 2054 there was a shortage of food and severe rationing in the city. City residents in line for food at a Freedom Army supply house rioted, attacking Freedom Army soldiers and stealing supplies. The riot only ended when Freedom Army soldiers reluctantly obeyed an order to fire in to the crowd.

Orphanage Riot (2065)- Children in the city's orphanage revolted, killing several abusive orphanage employees and driving out the rest. The police were brought in but were rebuffed at the entrance to the complex by gangs of children armed with sharpened railroad spikes. The corrupt police lied and told the media that the orphanage had been brought under control.

VR Riot (2066)- A long outage of internet service in the city made many city residents restless. Corporate security guards (protecting an internet service center) were attacked. The National Guard was quickly brought in.

Arsonist Riot (2064)- The corrupt fire department made only token attempts to fight fires, and a serial arsonist held the entire city in fear. A mob took to the streets, with the stated purpose of hunting down the arsonist, but they ended up drinking and looting buildings until the National Guard were called in.

Colin Riot (2075)- The discovery of Colin (see p.178) led to mass lynchings in the street of people suspected of being Colins. In midtown, random searching of homes by a mob turned in to looting and the National Guard is called in.

Smash And Grab Riot (2077)- A small gang of teen criminals broke in to a closed liquor store and started handing out free liquor to everyone they could. The drunk crowd rioted and, under the cover of the rioting, the gang was able to steal over \$10,000 worth of merchandise from local stores. The success of this riot prompted seven more similarly crafted riots over the next few years.

gas grenades, nightsticks and rifles. This is the only time guns can be legally brought in to the city (and the guns have chips to assure that only guardmembers use them).

The National Guard helicopters land in the streets near the riot. Loudspeakers on the helicopters, which can be heard for blocks, proclaim that everyone is ordered to proceed directly to their homes and that anyone found on the streets will be arrested. At this point, most rioters flee the scene with whatever loot they can carry. The National Guard combs the emptying streets, arresting anyone they can. The helicopters fly above, shining searchlights on the streets and providing intelligence to the troops on the ground. Many homeless people with nowhere to go get arrested for rioting, even if they didn't participate.

Very rarely, the rioters don't flee when the National Guard shows up. The more angry the crowd is, the more likely they are to hold their ground. When this happens, guardmembers surround the rioters. They throw tear gas grenades in to debilitate them. They advance on the crowd with their shield wall. One by one they pull rioters from the crowd, slam them to the ground and restrain them with plastic restraints. Anyone who wields a firearm or manages to get past a guardmember's shield is shot. Those arrested typically spend 90 days in jail and are given a thousand dollar fine.

Riot Survival Kit

\$351 (\$500-\$750 during a riot)

Gasmask \$75 (to protect against national guard teargas)

Phonebook Armor (Glass) \$30 (to protect against being crushed by a mob)

Shield (Hand) \$15 (to protect against security guard nightsticks)

Steel Toed Boots \$70 (to protect feet and aid in stomping)

Crowbar \$45 (to open things during looting)

Bolt Cutters (Folding) \$100 (to open things during looting)

Backpack \$10 (to hold loot)

Flashlight (Small) \$2 (because power outages commonly accompany riots)

Opiates \$4 (because tear gas gets everywhere)

SCIENCE

In Brief- Major advances: nanotech (limited and expensive), mental programming (computer programs in human brains), genetics (used mostly in agriculture), smart chemicals (react to various stimuli).

Nanotech

In Brief- Freedom Army invented nanobots (reproducing molecular robots) and rebels created predator robots to limit them. Today nanobots can be used briefly, if released in large numbers. They require a lot of power, are slow, fall apart when it gets hot. Secondary nanotech is tech made by nanobots in "clean" tanks by nanobots and includes high-tech materials, microelectronics and micro-robotics.

History- People have been building things molecule by molecule with scanning tunneling microscopes for nearly a century, and people have been able to create very tiny, very fragile and very expensive microrobotics. This nanotechnology was only practical for use in a few small industries. For instance, corps would create million dollar micro-robots for use in surgery. In 2054, the Freedom Army pulled together research from various corporations and finally created the first true nanobots. These tiny robots were built molecule-by-molecule and they could go on to build the next generation of nanobots. The nanobots were powered by powerful electromagnets which would "broadcast" power to a nanobot colony. Nanobots could reproduce much faster than they could be built by other means.

The potential power of nanobots was almost unbelievable. Given enough power and materials, they could reproduce in to an army capable of manipulating the structure of anything at the molecular level. They could conceivably turn a tank in to dust or build a cheeseburger out of a pile of garbage.

Predator Nanobots- The development of nanobots by the Freedom Army nearly let the Freedom Army win the war. The Freedom Army had nanobots, but before

they could make the most use out of them they had to figure out how to make them follow complex instructions. Since each nanobot had very little computing power, a complex hierarchy of control nanobots had to be created to disseminate orders. This would prove to be almost as monumental a task as creating the nanobots in the first place. In the meantime, rebels captured nanobots of their own.

The rebels created a set of nanobots that knew how to do only two things: find and destroy other nanobots, and reproduce. The rebels created a huge batch of these predators (enough to cover the whole world with one predator nanobot for every 8 square feet). They launched these nanobots in to the jet stream using a homemade rocket. The next time the Freedom Army tried to power up a batch of nanobots, they found themselves giving power to the predator nanobots as well. The predators nanobots could decimate any nanobots population within minutes. The nanobot threat was ended.

Tanks- Predator nanobots start reproducing and killing as soon as power is provided, and since they can reproduce exponentially, they will quickly overrun any nanobot population. Nobody knows (or wants) a way to get around this limitation, the trick is to get something useful done before the predators can wipe out your nanobots. The way to do that is to start with several billion nanobots.

In the clean-rooms of corporate labs, nanobots are dropped in to tanks and the tanks sealed. Power is applied and (if the tank is predator-free) then the nanobots can reproduce unmolested. When the tank is completely filled with nanobots, the power is removed. In the field, the tank is opened up and a powder containing billions of nanobots is spilled out. When power is applied, these nanobots quickly go to work. Their huge population has given them a head-start and they can act for several minutes before the predator population grows large enough to disrupt their activities.

Mental Programming

These tanks are very expensive, and so are rarely seen. Few things that happen are important enough to justify using a nanobot tank. The world's most elite swat teams use nanobot tanks to melt through doors and disarm explosives. The world's elite criminal justice organizations use tanks to create a database of every microscopic particle in a room. Paleontologists and archeologists wheedle and beg to get nanobot tanks that can burrow in to the ground and find every fossil and piece of DNA. Multi-million dollar aircraft have nanobot tanks which can open up in an emergency and repair (or even rebuild) damaged components. Rich patients can have nanobots injected in their bloodstream to hunt down disease organisms, repair damage, or make backup copies of the brain.

Weaknesses- Besides predator nanobots, nanobots have two major weaknesses:

Power: Nanobots require a huge amount of energy. An average nanobot tank uses more power than a city block. A lot of the cost of a nanobots tank is the powerful battery that transmits power to nanobots. The electromagnetic transmitters can disrupt or fry nearby electronics.

Slow: Since nanobots are so small, they travel very slowly. Nanobot tanks that need to spread nanobots over a wide area (e.g. forensics tanks) blow the nanobots powder around before the power is even applied. Even the fastest nanobots (who form together in to "vehicles") are about the speed of ants.

Fragile: Nanobots are very fragile machines. They are designed to work at room temperature. Extreme cold (anything below freezing) will cause them to lock up and extreme heat (Anything over 100 degrees) will cause them to break apart. Predator nanobots "destroy" nanobots simply by attaching an ionized molecule to them. A spray of weak acid or ionized particles can destroy most nanobots populations.

Secondary Nanotech- The most profitable and common use of nanotechnology today is for manufacturing. In the same corporate clean rooms where tanks are produced, nanobots in sealed vats manufacture products. Devices and materials made by nanobots (called secondary nanotech) are not vulnerable to predator nanobots. Secondary nanotech is very valuable (the cheapest secondary nanotech products cost \$250/lb.) but still a lot cheaper than nanobots tanks. A lot of technology was made cheaper but not much better by nanotech. Computers are a perfect example: modern computers are only a little more powerful than they were in the 2030s, yet they are much cheaper to produce. In the 2030s, 20% of the average person's budget went in to computer equipment, now it's closer to 4%.

Secondary nanotech can create microelectronics and microrobotics with nanoscale sensors, processors and manipulators. Secondary nanotech can be found in the processors of high-power computers, mental stimulators and installers, in the best weapons and medical implants. Tiny "factories" that assemble protein chains can be used to create pharmaceuticals, genetic codes or other complex chemicals.

Secondary nanotech can also create materials with amazing properties. High-tech armor can be made out of materials that are as light as cloth but stronger than steel. Slipboards are small boards with a secondary-nanotech underside that is so smooth it is virtually frictionless. Secondary nanotech filters can be found in the best gas-masks, water purifiers and even biohazard bodysuits.

In Brief: Technology to read information from, insert information in to and make permanent changes to brains without surgery. Injected chemicals are altered with precise radio beams. The simplest tech is Mental Stimulators, which can only make temporary changes and are used for full-immersion virtual reality. Mental Installers are rare, expensive, sensitive, highly regulated, but can make permanent changes. Mental Programs are like computer programs and let people control their own minds. Each person can fill up to 100 MMUs worth of space without problems. Installation is \$20/½ hr./MMU. Human minds can be copied from one body to another with near perfect accuracy.

RCNS- All mental programming is based on RCNS (Radiochemical Neural Stimulation). The basic principle is to introduce a macromolecule in to the brain that, in its normal state, does nothing. When two very precise radio beams meet, any molecules in the convergence change their molecular structure and release another molecule they had "trapped" inside. If a neurotransmitter is released, it can cause a neuron to fire (or prevent it from firing) in a certain spot in the brain.

Early RCNS was used merely to stimulate portions of the brain to see what they do. Researchers have been doing this using metal probes since the 19th century, but RCNS could be used without having to open the skull. In combination with high-definition SQID (superconducting quantum interference device) sensors, RCNS could be used to map connections in the brain.

The next major breakthrough came when researchers used RCNS to release neural growth factor. They found they could force a neural connection to grow at any point in the brain they wanted. A large number of connections, laid down in parallel, could mimic a logical circuit, create a sort of computer program inside a brain. Thanks to tech criminals of the 2040s, who stole this technology and experimented on themselves, mental programming became a powerful new technology.

Mental Stimulators- These are the cheapest, simplest, least dangerous and least regulated form of RCNS technology. Mental Stimulators are mass-produced and most VR addicts have one rented to them as part of the standard monthly fee for their VR service.

Mental stimulators are, by law, built so that they are physically incapable of aiming at any part of the brain except for the motor and perceptual cortexes. Thus a mental stimulator can't make a person's heart stop, or screw with someone's emotions. What mental stimulators can do is block out the sensations of the outside world and put a person in to a full-immersion virtual world where they can see, hear, touch, smell and taste.

The typical mental installer is the size and shape of a footlocker. It is typically lain at the head of a bed or strapped to the back of a chair. There is a hole in the device where the user places his or her head. The user puts on a dermal patch which slowly feeds the RCNS macromolecules in to the bloodstream. The typical mental installer isn't precise enough to do "photorealistic" stimulation (everything is a bit fuzzy). However, very expensive models (bought by VR aficionados) can create photorealistic simulations.

What Mental Programs Can and Can't Do (Yet)

Mental programs can...

- ...enhance memory recall or storage.
- ...wipe memories stored while the program was active.
- ...communicate with implants (and through implants with computers).
- ...take control of the body to perform physical actions.
- ...perform limited psychic actions.
- ...reduce or eliminate unpleasant sensations.
- ...create pleasant or unpleasant associations with a stimulus.
- ...monitor the internal workings of the brain (identify drugs, psychic manipulation, mental illness).
- ...hyperstimulate abilities (like agility or intelligence).
- ...control emotions.
- ...create altered states of consciousness.
- ...control sleep and let people survive on less sleep.

Mental programs can't...

- ...directly transfer memories or knowledge.
- ...wipe out specific pre-existing memories.
- ...let people understand and control computers on an intuitive level.
- ...implant physical skills or abilities.
- ...replicate the skills of a real psychic.
- ...eliminate pain or nausea without creating a safety hazard.
- ...change values, opinions or beliefs.
- ...monitor poorly understood processes such as thinking, remembering, awareness and creativity.
- ...increase wisdom or common sense.
- ...make precise changes to personality.
- ...make people spiritually enlightened.
- ...let people survive on zero sleep.

Mental Installers- Mental Installers are the machines that can create mental programs inside the human brain. They are much larger, much more expensive, much more sensitive than mental installers. They are also highly-regulated (anyone caught possessing one without FDA approval faces 15 years in prison). Mental installers are a very precious black market commodity, and any trader lucky enough to own one keeps it running 24 hours a day (making about \$40/hr. installing illegal mental programs in to people's heads). Because of the risk of theft (or federal authorities being tipped off) black market traders usually blindfold people when taking them to a mental installer.

Mental installers are very sensitive to vibrations. Most black market mental installers are bolted in to the ground in concrete basements (away from subway lines). Patients are strapped in tightly and given a skeletal muscle paralytic so that they don't move at all. Although paralyzed, users cannot be sedated (any psychoactive drug will interfere with the process). A drip IV administers the paralytic and the macromolecules containing neural growth factor.

Mental Programs- There are a number of mental programs that have been approved by the FDA for use on humans. Most are medical, meant to cure a specific form of brain damage or psychiatric problem. A few are useful tools, like internal calculators, programs that make the hands type whatever the person thinks, programs that record senses or broadcast them to a jack implant, programs that enhance memory storage or recall, language translators, etc.

The majority of programs do not have FDA approval and are completely illegal. These are the programs that let people mess with the internal workings of their own minds. They are quite powerful but also very dangerous and many have a possibility of addiction. There are programs available on the black market that will let people control their own emotions, control their feelings of pain, hunger, nausea. Some programs hyperstimulate certain areas of the brain (e.g. the areas responsible for physical agility, or the areas responsible for concentration) to provide a temporary boost to abilities. There are programs that simulate the effects of mental illness or drugs on the brain. There are even mental programs that turn the people who have them in to slaves or puppets, their emotions and/or bodies under the control of someone else.

The newest mental programs, which are strictly illegal and are a hot commodity on the black market, are psych-mental programs. These programs activate the portions of the brain that control the psychic communication system. Although not yet as effective as a skilled psychic, the programs can let people do psychic-like things.

MMUs- Once scientists (and tech criminals) had discovered how to create mental programs in the brain, the next step was to determine where to put them. By looking at brain damage studies, they mapped out several areas in the brain where a mental program could be put without a noticeable loss of abilities. These areas are divided in to 100 Mental Memory Units, and the size of a mental program is measured in how many MMUs it takes up. People can install more than 100 MMUs, but there is an increasingly greater risk of loss of abilities. Human brains vary, and what is usually a safe spot in most people may not be in some individual. About 1 in 100 mental installations has some side effect and about 1 in 5000 leads to a serious disability.

Modern mental installers can write one MMU of information per half hour. The standard black market price for mental installation is \$40/hr. (or \$20/MMU). The instruction files that tell Mental Installers how to install mental programs usually take up 1Zb per 5 MMUs.

Mind Copying- Mental installers can be used to copy the unique portions of each mind (memories, knowledge, personality) from one brain to another. There are serious legal limitations to this procedure: it is only legal to copy the minds of fatally ill individuals in to the minds of clones who have never been conscious. The cost of this is prohibitive to everyone except the very rich. HMOs and government healthcare refuse to pay for it.

Reading a mental pattern takes about 2 days and putting it in to another brain takes about 3 days. Unless information is copied directly from one mental installer to another, the patterns must be stored (takes 5000Zb, typically requiring special nanotech memory storage tanks).

Most copies are made in to clones who were grown in the vat with neural growth in the cortexes inhibited (and thus have no higher-brain functions). It is possible, however, to wipe a normal person's mind and copy another person's mind in to it (see the section on Colin, p.178). Since sedatives interfere with the copying process, people are conscious and experience the bizarre and frightening sensation of being destroyed and rebuilt as a new person one memory, thought and opinion at a time.

New copies are quite clumsy until they get used to being in their new bodies.

Genetic Engineering

In Brief- Can change the biology of humans, animals, plants, microorganisms. Legally: can only use on humans with Rx to fix medical problems, can't release modified organisms in to the environment without special approval.

Capabilities- Scientists know what 97% of the genes in the human genome do and more-or-less how they work. Computer modeling allows genetic programmers to see what the end result of a modification will be before even putting it in a real cell. However, high-level systems (systems built upon other systems) are slightly mysterious and genetic programmers do not know all their secrets. It is very easy to change the structure of cell walls, slightly harder to change the properties of a tissue, harder still to change the shape of an organ or appendage, and very hard (almost beyond the abilities of current researchers) to change instincts and behavioral proclivities. The simpler the organism, the easier it is to program, and a lot of fantastic things have been done with the instincts of insects.

Uses- Genetic engineering is used today for:

Medicine: to repair genetic defects or speed the repair of damage.

Parts: to create organs and tissues that are compatible with a person's immune system (will not be rejected). Replacement organs and limbs are one possible use, as are biological implants such as poisoned claws, extra muscles or nightvision retinas.

Agriculture: to create plants and animals that grow in artificial environments and produce food, building and construction materials, and medicines. Most food from corporate farms comes from genetically engineered plants and animals designed to create food products with maximum efficiency. Most modern products are made out of either plastics or fibers made from genetically engineered sources. Criminals have even used genetic engineering to make drug factories that look like ordinary weeds.

Enhancements: Although it is very difficult to improve on nature (see sidebar), genetic engineering can be used (illegally) to add additional abilities to humans or animals.

Smart Chemicals

In Brief- Very complex chemicals that react and change in pre-programmed ways to environmental stimuli.

Smart chemicals are more expensive than most modern tech, but less expensive than secondary nanotech. Most smart chemicals are made by expensive secondary nanotech machines. Smart chemicals are complex human-made molecules (usually long chains of proteins) that are designed on a computer to react to certain stimuli, and to interact in very complex ways. A molecule can be made that will change shape when it gets warmer than 98 degrees, and that chemical may in turn cause a pigment molecule to change shape so that color changes from clear to black, spelling out the temperature.

Some smart chemicals react to electricity (like the pigments in color change clothing). Others react to catalyst chemicals that can be used to control and fine tune the reaction (like the paint in smart paint). Some react to the presence of other chemicals (like the sensors

in terrorist sticks, or in auto-blood tests, p.92). There are even chemicals that react to psychic energy (like psychic goggles).

Bloodhound powder (p.97) is a powder made up of very complex molecules that attach to certain human olfactory receptors. When the chemicals encounter a set of proteins (corresponding to the unique smell of an individual person) they activate the smell receptor. When the person being tracked comes near, the person using the bloodhound powder smells a strong smell of nutmeg.

Smart chemicals can also be used to create invisible bombs. These bombs could look like anything from cloth to a pencil, and can be manufactured to detonate at a variety of different stimuli. Fortunately, these invisible explosives are very rare and expensive and can be sensed with standard explosives sensors.

Pharmaceuticals

In Brief- No major advances, but more and more useful drugs being discovered.

The pharmaceutical industry is often compared to the tortoise from the old story of the tortoise and the hare. There have been no ground-shaking, world-changing advances from the pharmaceutical industry in this century. However, pharmaceutical branches of corporations have steadily been cranking out new drugs with tremendous medical and street uses.

Many pharmaceuticals have been made stronger and with less side effects. Maxin, the strongest smart drug created to date, is so strong that some people become addicted to it. Pharmaceuticals with completely new effects have been created. The drug with the street name "bright" enhances sensory sensitivity and perception. Sibosin eliminates the need for sleep (it has been made illegal because of dangerous side effects, but it is still popular on the black market). Some of the most important drugs are the pro-psychics (drugs which increase psychic abilities). The most powerful pro-psychic drug (Soma) did not come out of a R&D lab, it is a hallucinogenic mixture of plants and fungi originally used as a religious sacrament in ancient India.

A High Tech World?

Looking around the city, it is hard to see the technological advances of the last century. In the parking lot of a fast food chain might be a paycomputer. On days when there is no wind, the cloud (p.193) forms above the city, looking like a dirty black storm cloud. The drink bottle lying in the gutter is probably made from plastics from genetically engineered crops, but it is indistinguishable from ancient plastics. A few doors might have hooded keypads instead of mechanical locks. A passerby might have high tech armor, but will probably hide it under other clothing (to reduce the temptation of other people to steal it).

For the most part, however, the things people see and interact with are all old technology. Most things in the city are old (many buildings were built 200 years ago), and even new items use old tech because old-tech is cheaper. Most new technology (secondary nanotech, smart chemicals, genetically engineered organisms) have not yet reached the point where they are cheaper to use than ordinary materials.

TRANSPORTATION

In Brief- Cars rare, personal transport common but most walk, small subway, bus depot in Brooklyn.

Cars

In Brief- Cars rare in the city because streets too bad for electric vehicles, gasoline vehicles too expensive to run.

Cars are seldom seen on the streets of the city. The two most popular options for vehicles today are electric (like the cheap little golf-cart-like vehicles that can be seen in gated communities and corporate living centers) and gasoline powered. The roads are too bad for the cheap electric vehicles. They just don't have enough power to make it past the city's many potholes, cracks and craters (see City Infrastructure, p.172). Gasoline powered vehicles are too expensive for most people (gasoline is \$7/gallon). There are also no professional establishments to maintain and repair cars in the city.

The busiest avenues in the city, during their peak hours, see a vehicle every few minutes. These vehicles include:

- 4-wheel-drive electric cars and trucks owned by security companies.
- Large delivery trucks delivering merchandise to city stores or packages to residences.
- Old gasoline powered vehicles maintained by amateur mechanics.
- Gasoline powered motorcycles, ridden by the rich and powerful.
- Old gas-powered taxis and armored limos.

Personal Transport

In Brief- Bicycles, motorized wheeled transport, slipboards (boards with incredibly slick bottoms), hopping trains and walking.

Bikes- Bicycles are common, especially among street people. They use no power and can be repaired with basic tools. Most street people have beat up, rusty bicycles. Bicycles are not much valued for speed, but they can help people get around the city without getting exhausted.

Motorized Transport- Small electric motors have been put on to many personal vehicles, including roller blades, roller skates, skateboards and scooters. These vehicles are ideal for city travel because they can be picked up and carried over potholes and can be taken inside (rather than parked on the street, where they might be stolen). Most Indies have a vehicle like this (though they often choose to walk and not make themselves a target for thieves).

Slipboards- The most expensive form of personal transport is a slipboard. Generally, only Indies can afford slipboards, and those that have them guard them cautiously. Slipboards use secondary nanotech materials (and a thin gel) to make the underside nearly frictionless. A skilled rider can move easily through any terrain. Special mods are available that let slipboards make powered jumps.

Hopping Trains- After over 120 years without above ground trains, corporations successfully lobbied to have a railroad built in the city. The railroad follows Broadway and there is a small railyard at the northern tip of the city. About 5 trains come by per day. Many people (especially homeless people), grab on to the sides of the trains for a free trip across the city. The train cars are locked with alarms and security guards will react if someone tries to get in.

Walking- In the end, most city dwellers end up walking most of the time. Walking is free and can be done even while intoxicated or tired. Most people can walk from one end of the city to the other in about 7 hours.

Subway

In Brief- Makes a circuit around the city, \$1.50 per ride, runs every fifteen minutes. Sleeping and fighting common on trains.

The old subway lines were sealed up and a new subway system was built during the Freedom Army occupation of the city. The new system was built to remove the possibility of soldiers traveling by foot in the subway tunnels. The new subway does not go outside the city and there are few places in the tunnels a person can walk without being smashed by a train.

There are 14 subway stops in the city. A train comes by every 15 minutes (69 times per day). A single \$1.50 fare is paid to get in to the subway station. Floor to ceiling revolving gates make it so that only one person can get in per fare paid (although small people have been known to squeeze in together). Once inside, the rider can ride to any stop he or she wants. The train operates in a large circuit: the car will eventually hit each stop in the city.

About 10,000 train fares are purchased each day in the city. During the peak times (morning, early evening) there are about 250 people on each train, during very slow times (after midnight) there are about 50 people per train.

A subway train has three cars with fifty seats each (a train can hold 150 sitting, plus another 200 standing). Doors allow people to travel between cars. There are emergency exits in case the train is stopped due to a power outage.

There are only two trains in the subway system. When one train is going on the North on the East side of the park, another is going South on the West side, so no part of the subway needs to be large enough for two trains to pass at once. Each train makes a full circuit of all 19 stops in about 30 minutes. The train is stopped with the doors open for about 15 seconds at each stop. It takes about 90 seconds to get from stop to stop.

Some street people pay the fare to enter the subway so they can sleep on the train. At night, about half the seats have street people sleeping in them.

Subway Facts in Brief

- 10,000 fares purchased each day
- \$1.50 per ride
- Train comes by every 15 min. (69 trains per day)
- 14 stops in a large circuit (30 minutes)
- 50 to 250 people per train
- Three cars with 50 seats each
- 15 seconds at each stop
- 90 seconds between stops

Almost everyone in the city, including gang members, rides the subway. The subway is thus the scene of more violent confrontations than any other place in the city. Gang members at war enter the subway expecting to get in a fight. Fights in subways are so commonplace that subway riders are used to moving to a different car when a fight is starting. Some city residents practice fighting in subway cars (see the Subway Fighting skill, p.24).

Trains are run by a computer in the subway maintenance center downtown. Once a night subway cars stop in this center for cleaning and maintenance. Unless they fall asleep on a train, city residents rarely see subway employees.

Subway stations have restrooms, though they are seldom cleaned except by a few Jacks who ask for tips. Subway stations also have small pay lockers. It costs \$1 for 48 hours.

Subway Stops

North to South

Ft. George Ave. & Ft. George Hill
(Inwood/Washington Heights)

Amsterdam Ave. & 170th St.
(Inwood/Washington Heights)

Amsterdam Ave 135th St. (Harlem)

Amsterdam Ave & 110th St.
(Harlem/Upper West Side)

Amsterdam Ave. & 86th St.(Upper
West Side)

Amsterdam Ave. & 57th St. (Upper
West Side/Midtown)

Ave. of the Americas & 23rd St.
(Downtown)

3rd Ave. & East 8th St. (Downtown)

W. Broadway & Canal
(Downtown)

Battery & State (Downtown)

Canal & Hudson (Downtown)

South To North

Canal & Hudson (Downtown)

Battery & State (Downtown)

W. Broadway & Canal (Downtown)

3rd Ave. & East 8th St. (Downtown)

Ave. of the Americas & 23rd St.
(Downtown)

Lexington Ave. & 57th St. (Midtown/
Upper East Side)

Lexington Ave. & 86th St. (Upper
East Side)

Lexington Ave. & 110th St. (Upper
East Side/Harlem)

Lexington Ave. & 135th St. (Harlem)

Amsterdam Ave. & 170th St.
(Inwood/Washington Heights)

Ft. George Ave. & Ft. George Hill
(Inwood/Washington Heights)



UNDERGROUND

History

In Brief- Increasingly complex in 1800s, 1900s, early 2000s. Some damage in 2040s. Freedom Army tried to lock it up.

As the city became more packed and real estate became more valuable, more and more things were moved underground. The first utilities to be moved underground were small pipes (mainly wood) containing water, steam, gas and sewage in the 1800s. In the early 1900s, people started to use tunnels for transportation. Subway and rail tunnels were built. Because many of these tunnels were built below the water table, a whole series of pumps had to be built to continually pump groundwater out of the island. In the late 1900s the underground became even more complex with the addition of electricity and then

fiber optic lines. New buildings were built to tap directly in to the underground network, and some even had private subway stations. Some buildings extended their basements under the street (to maximize usable space) but the city started charging them for this space. Rather than pay, many building owners chose to seal up those parts of the basements.

Some of the tunnels were lost during the rising ocean levels of the 2040s. During the Freedom Wars, Jeffrey Hernandez feared the massive and partially unmapped network of tunnels. He ordered every entrance to the sewers locked up. He closed down the old subway system and built a new, more secure system. By the 2070s, people were trying to break the locks on the entrances to the underground, but they found that someone already had the underground as their turf (see Moles, below).

Moles

In Brief- Mysterious, live underground, avoid contact with others, violently repel trespassers. Are they violent, inbred savages or humble loners?

The underground is inhabited solely by city residents known as Moles. Not much is known about the moles, because they refuse to communicate with those living above them. Most who have tried exploring underground (or spying on the Moles) have been killed. Every once in a while a Mole has been caught scrounging from dumpsters in the city above, but they fight to the death rather than being caught and interrogated. The Moles' knowledge of the city seems about as limited as the city's knowledge of them (though some have suggested this may be a ploy).

The people with the most contact with the Moles are the Water Rats, who sometimes run in to them in the groundwater outflow tunnels that the Rats "surf" in. The Water Rats and Moles have sort of an unspoken agreement, whenever they run in to each other they do not speak to each other and try not to get in each other's way. The head of the Water Rats, Matt Tim, makes it a point to hear every detail of every encounter members of his family have with the Moles.

Military- The tunnels the Moles live in are dotted with deadly booby traps. Moles seem to patrol the tunnels looking for intruders. When they see intruders they rush off and gather a huge army. Mole armies attack without question. The Moles seem unafraid of death and wave after wave of Moles will attack an enemy until the enemy is driven off. The Moles know the tunnels quite well and seem to be able to operate well in darkness. Their favorite trick is to smash the enemy's lights and attack.

Conjecture- Estimates of the Mole population varies incredibly. Some say it could be as little as 100, others claim it's as much as 5000. Some say that they are a cult of Unborn crazies who, during the Freedom Wars, went underground to await the end of the world. They eat rats, have a social system based on violence, are badly inbred and are indescribably miserable. They don't know how to read, some barely know how to talk, and all they know is fear and violence.

Others say that the Moles must be intelligent and disciplined to survive with what little they have. They say the Moles must be master pirates (tapping electricity and running water), scavengers and craftspeople. A few Moles weapons have been captured. They resemble weapons manufactured by Street People and show a high degree of skill and creativity.

People also like to hypothesize about the motivations of the Moles. Some think that they are breeding underground until they have a large enough population to overrun the city. Others think that the Moles simply want to be left alone to live by their own humble means.

Although often regarded as an expert on the Moles, Matt Timm rarely engages in conjecture. He responds to most conjecture with "yeah, that's a good theory."

Geography

In Brief- Small utility pipes near the street, tunnels under that, huge water pipes deep underground, few good maps exist.

Utilities Level- In the first thirty feet underground are the majority of the city's utilities. There are electrical lines and transformers, fiber optic lines, water, steam, natural gas and many unused pipes. When people need access to these pipes, they typically dig up the streets (although there are small underground rooms at major junctions). At this depth there are very few tunnels wide enough for humans to enter.

Subway and Sewage- Below 30 feet, below the level of most basements, are larger tunnels. There are subways and subway stations (most of which are closed off and unused). Groundwater pumps and tunnels carry water out to the sunken city and keep water from infiltrating the subway. Below the subways are sewage lines which carry sewage (at a slight incline) to a treatment plant at the north end of the city. A separate system of utility tunnels (with their own control rooms) provide electricity and water for the subway system.

Deep Pipes- Hundreds of feet below the city, in the ancient bedrock, are the biggest tunnels in the city. The deep pipes carry water, at high pressure, to the city. These pipes are huge (some large enough to drive trucks through). City Tunnel #3, the last and largest water tunnel built for the city, is 70 stories underground. Risers carry pressurized water up to the street above.

Maps- There is no one map that shows all of the underground. There are many unused pipes and tunnels, some of which have been forgotten about completely. In ancient times, people would go dig under the city and install utilities without asking anyone's permission or telling anyone what they'd done. Much information about the underground was lost during the chaos of the Freedom Wars. The major utility companies have maps, but those maps often only show the tunnels and pipes that they are currently using. Maps that combine information about known tunnels are a hot commodity.



Chapter Six - Adventures

As soon as Jem answered the phone and saw Mohammed's face, she knew something terrible had happened. He told her, quietly, about the party he had been at last night, about the attractive young woman he had met, about how she had asked him to come home with her. He told her about the huge Park Avenue townhouse she took him to, about how it was dark inside, about how he remembered seeing something disturbing but couldn't remember what. He told her how he had woken up in the bushes in the hole, with a sewn up incision burning like fire across his belly. Mohammed asked what might have been taken out of him or put in to him. Jem couldn't answer.

After thinking for a minute, Jem spoke. "The way I see it, we could go down to the city hospital and wait four hours to be seen, or we could go over to her place and find out what the fuck is going on. If she's there we'll make her tell us what she did, if not then maybe we can find some evidence. I can meet you on Park and 59th and we can go straight there. I'll call my buddy Tim, the Sexologist - he'll come. And that Freak whose life we saved last week, I bet I could get him to come too. Jack Schmidt will come if we tell her there's housebreaking involved. So, let me make some phone calls and I'll meet you in... thirty minutes."

"Jem, wait, you don't have to..."

"The fuck I do, because I know you'd do the same for me. Don't worry Mo" she grinned a predatory grin, her teflon coated fangs showing, "we'll get this bitch."

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PC PARTIES

Diversity can be of great benefit to a group of Player Characters: the more diversity, the more skills, resources and contacts the group can call on. Everyone in the city recognizes the power and flexibility of a diverse group working together. However, diversity has a serious drawback: different philosophies, goals, ethical standards and loyalties can get in the way of cohesive team action. There have been numerous attempts by powerful people in the city to put together "dream teams" to solve problems, and these dream teams usually self-destruct.

The key to a successful diverse team is friendship. When people actually grow to like and care about each other, to want to help each other, that's when dream teams become powerful. When they have friendship as a motivation they can work together despite differences. Such bonds are not easily achieved, but they are the most valuable thing in the city. They also make the GM's job easier: if PCs are good friends, then the GM only has to make an adventure relevant to one of the PCs and the other PCs will come along out of loyalty. GMs should remind players about the reward of 5 XP per new strong friendship formed. If a group of 5 PC's meet and all become good buddies, this can mean 25 XP earned in a single adventure.

The question remains: how to get PCs who don't know each other, who have different loyalties, interests and social circles, to meet and work together? Here are a few suggestions:

Altruism- One suggestion is for the GM to require all players to have a desire to help people and make the city a better place. This does not mean that PCs cannot be

selfish, rude, violent, cynical, vengeful, ignorant, mentally ill, or whatever other character flaw players enjoy – it only means that given a choice between helping people out or sitting around doing nothing, the PCs will choose helping people out. If all characters conform to this requirement, the GMs job will be much easier. One way to get PCs together is to have them all happen to be in the same place at the same time when the opportunity to help someone comes about.

Shortcut- If first-meeting scenes don't appeal to the players and GM, simply shortcut them. Just say that the PCs know each other, are good buddies and are on the short-list of who to call when something is going down. PCs don't get the 5 XP friendship reward, but can go straight to the adventure.

FOAF- The PCs have a friend, lover or relative in common. Maybe Jim has gone missing, and Jim happens to be the cousin of one PC, the childhood best-friend of another, the ex-boyfriend of another, and guy-who-saved-the-life-of another PC. Another way to do this is to have a shared contact make introductions (e.g. "You're going to go look for that serial killer? My brother is going to do the same thing. He's a great guy, you should hook up with him.")

Chance Debt- Some of the PCs are walking down the street and just happen to run in to a PC who is in serious trouble (e.g. being mauled by a pack of Mauler addicts). If the other PCs help out the victim PC, then the victim PC will owe the PCs a debt and may decide to follow the PCs in to whatever adventure they're going to.

Ordered/Hired- City politics is complicated and constantly changing. For every given situation, there are a hundred possible reasons that a group may want to send or hire someone to help out. Even groups who have no interest in the situation itself may be trying to get on the good side of some other group, or form an alliance, or discharge a debt. Either way, the PCs are each approached by some powerful person and asked, ordered or hired to go help out. There will always be some potential reward for the PC for participating, whether it's a wad of cash or increased respect for gang elders.

Thrown Together- The PCs are suddenly thrown (against their will) in to some situation and they have to work together to escape with their lives. Example: The PCs wake up in a dark abandoned building, a note on the floor reads "you are being hunted."

"My buddy Bren Tate of the Siders said he'd send one of his people to help us catch this serial killer. I want you to meet this Sider, be her escort while she's on our turf, and see if there's anything she can actually do to help us."

"Hey kid, you wanna make some money? I'm putting together some people to go investigate this shooting over on 42nd Street. If you go with them and help them with any hacking they need to do, I'll give you a hundred bucks."

"Some of my best clients are going to go put themselves in the middle of some dangerous shit, and if they die I'll be quite unhappy. If you go follow them around and smash anyone who fucks with them, I'll give you a thirty percent discount on that armor you've had your eye on."

"I hear the Drakes are having trouble with some pounder gang on their turf. Maybe if one of us goes over there and tries to help out, the Drakes will finally stop holding a grudge about the incident at the Chucky's Del Taco last Summer."

"I just got off the phone with the Purists. They said they'll help us round up this crazy plague-carrying motherfucker, but we've got to send someone to help them break in to some bank or something."

"Listen up. We've got confirmation that there's some kind of Colin activity going on in Freak territory. If the Freaks fuck this up, which I'm pretty sure they will, then that means there'll be a Colin incubator not more than three blocks away from us. So, we're going to go over there, find the Freaks investigating this mess and take over the fucking investigation."

"Dude, I totally promised I'd help this hot Insomniac chick look for her little brother, but this hangover is kicking my ass. I don't want her to think I'm a flake, so can you go in my place, tell her I'm sick or something?"

ADVENTURES

Mystery- This is a great starting adventure to get PC's together. Something important has happened, and each major group in the city wants to know the details. The PCs are asked (or hired) to go investigate and figure out what actually happened. As happens in all good mysteries, in the process of figuring out the situation the PCs get involved in the situation. As soon as the PCs figure out what's going on, they're forced to choose where they stand and what they're going to do about it.

Hacking- A well crafted hacking adventure can give all the PCs something to do, not just the hackers. The PCs desperately need to get in to a computer and change or retrieve some piece of data. Unfortunately, this is an ultra-secure machine that isn't on the internet. In order to succeed, the PCs will have to do a lot of homework (PCs with tech skills can search the net, PCs with social skills can try to social engineer info out of people, PCs with thief skills can sneak around stealing bags of garbage hoping for old manuals or printouts). When it comes time to actually hack in to the machine, PCs have to break in to the building or compound where the network is, and while the techie characters are hacking, other characters have to deal with alarm systems, security guards and other problems.

Politics- At its best, city politics is people getting together, discovering common interests, and working together to solve problems. At its worst, city politics is people bad-mouthing, blackmailing, sabotaging and arranging for bad things to happen to each other in order to gain a scrap of power. At its best or at its worst, starting characters are typically used as pawns in the political actions of the more powerful. PCs may think they are doing something good and noble for the betterment of the city, only to

find out that they are just furthering someone's political goals. When PCs get more experienced and powerful, political adventures becomes more about making contacts, arranging alliances and negotiating conflicts.

War- A huge war rages, and the PCs are all allied with one side of the conflict. The PCs have the goal of helping their side win (or end up on top) by any means. If the PCs are in to combat, they can wade in to the middle of a battlefield and take out as many of the enemies as possible. Chances are, a PC group can find something more useful to do: gathering intelligence, assassinating enemy leaders, getting other parties to help in the conflict, etc.

Peace- A huge war rages, and the PCs have the goal of stopping the conflict. PCs might even be on two sides of the conflict, and must work together in secret (lest they be seen as traitors). If the conflict is based on a mistake, miscommunication or lie, the PCs must gain evidence about what really happened and present it to both sides. If the conflict is based on something that really happened, PCs must broker a peace accord between the two groups. One common problem in the city: group 1 comes to group 2 and says "one of your members committed a crime against us, hand him/her over or we'll make war against you." Group 1 can't or won't hand over the person, possibly because they can't find him or her, because they don't know if the person is really guilty, or because they don't know which of their members it was. Group 2 assumes that Group 1 is just trying to protect its own and proceeds to make war. In this case, all the PCs need to do to make peace is to find the suspect and either present proof that the person is innocent (or that there were aggravating circumstances) or hand that person over to Group 2 for punishment.

Theft- The PCs are given the job of breaking in somewhere and stealing something (or kidnapping some person). Like a hacking adventure, a good theft should be half research/preparation and half dealing with whatever comes up during the job. This is an adventure where PCs with thief/espionage skills really shine, but other PCs can also find things to do: PCs with social skills can con information out of people, PCs with tech skills can hack in to security networks, and PCs with combat skills can deal with the random security guard who walks around the corner at the wrong time.

Survival- Put the characters in a very dangerous place or situation and see if they can get out alive. It could be a very unusual situation: trapped in a VR fantasy world, lost underground in the sewers, trapped in an abandoned building. Or, the PCs could be on the normal city streets with some serious disability making normal city dangers much more dangerous. PCs might be disabled by some disease, toxin or drug, might be injured, might find themselves without any armor or weapons.

Personal Growth- Once the PCs have been playing together for a while, their own personal goals should be pretty well defined. The whole point of this adventure is to offer the PC something he or she has been looking for. Make sure the PC's friends are around when the PC finds out about this opportunity (in case the PC is reluctant to ask for help in such a personal matter). Whatever it is the PC wants, make sure there is something for the PC's friends to do to help out.

Personal Problems- This adventure involves the PCs trying to fix something that's gone terribly wrong in the lives of one or more PCs. Remember that nothing is stable or dependable in the city and that events in the city

can conspire to make even the simplest things incredibly hard. A PC might catch a disease and need antibiotics, might have his or her home taken over by a pounder gang, might have had his or her identity stolen, might have been accused of a crime, etc. On top of the immediate problem, a backdrop of gang wars, plagues, riots, power outages and other problems can make putting the PCs' lives back together incredibly difficult.

Hunting- The PCs are looking for some wanted person, people or animal. The easiest option is if the PCs are looking for a person to kill him or her. It is more difficult if the PCs need to take someone alive. In addition to normal investigation, PCs may have to follow the prey in to dangerous areas and deal with traps set by the prey.

Hunted- In this case, one or more people is hunting for the PCs. PCs might be on the run from law enforcement, from some gang, from the drug lords. Or the PC may be on the run from some very powerful individual, e.g. a hunter with a sniper rifle, or a serial killer whose appearance is unknown to the PCs. PCs who are gang members will probably want to seek refuge among fellow gang members, but to do so might require a trip across the city.

Exploration- Never forget how huge the city is. Thousands of blocks, hundreds of thousands of buildings, most are 5 to 15 stories high, some are hundreds of stories high. Exploring the dark places of the city can be dangerous but can also be very rewarding. PCs exploring "abandoned" buildings face the dangers of traps as well as addicts, crazies and animals that live there. PCs exploring non-abandoned buildings must deal with alarms, security guards and residents armed with self-defense weapons.



Common Baddies

Here are some people that it's no stretch of the imagination to see a PC group fighting.

Addicts

Motivations: Desperate for money to buy drugs with, some addicts will do anything they can to rob a person of a saleable possession, including killing a person.

Methods: Groups of addicts will wait in dark places for someone to walk through, then will ambush that person, grab anything the person has, and run off before any help can arrive. Sometimes the bright addicts will even use ploys to get people to wander in to dark, secluded places for an ambush. Addicts run away when their "prey" proves to be dangerous.

Typical Encounter: 4-10 level 0 addicts armed with Pipes, Shivs and Sharpened Sticks. See Typical Addict Merc (p.98).

Methods: Colin benefits from being disorganized: even on being tortured he can't tell the location of any more than one or two other Colins. Typically, Colins spread out from where they were "made," but occasionally (when a Colin has some plan or scheme to make a lot of copies of himself) large groups of Colins will congregate. Colin operates in secret, playing the part of the person whose body he is using for as long as possible. He takes advantage of people's trust by getting them alone and then attacking them by surprise (knocking them unconscious with some drug if he wants to steal their bodies, stabbing them with a knife if he wants to kill and mutilate them). Colin has absolutely no fear of death (considering himself to be an entity beyond a single body).

Typical Encounter: A single Colin posing as a friend of the PCs. Will look for any opportunity to get PCs alone and attack them. If discovered, will try to run away. Colin may also appear as a stranger, even as a child, trying to lure the PCs in to a trap by pretending to need their help.



Crazies

Motivations: Mentally ill homeless people are sometimes driven to attack people at random. The person is most likely suffering from paranoid delusions and believes that he or she must attack the PCs or be killed.

Methods: Crazy doesn't necessarily mean stupid. A Crazy who chooses to attack may plan the attack logically and might possibly even act sane long enough to get close to the PCs. The Crazy's dangerous thought process might "show through" any time he or she speaks to the PCs. Crazies may try to get a PC alone and stab him or her in the back, or may try to set fire to a building the PCs are in. Some even try to get the PCs in trouble, telling anyone who will listen that the PCs robbed, beat or raped them (something the Crazies may actually believe).

Typical Encounter: A single Crazy sneaks up behind the PCs and tries to stab one of the PCs in the back with a shiv, then runs away.

Cultists

Motivations: Cultists have typically submitted their will to a charismatic leader. The leader may believe what he or she is preaching, or could be making things up to gain followers. The primary motivation of a cult leader is the feeling of power of controlling the beliefs and thoughts of others. Secondary benefits may be money (cult followers sell

Colins

Motivations: Colin wants to kidnap people, take them back to some place where he has a mental installer, erase their minds and copy his mind in to them. He is interested in any way to increase his rate of reproduction. He also wants to commit horrific crimes in order to frighten people, become famous and get the attention of god.

all their possessions to give to the leader) and sex (cult members submit to sex with the leader). In any case, the main thing a cult wants is to get more members. When cult members are seen on the street they are typically looking for recruits. If not that they are probably out to fight the cult's real or imagined enemies or to retrieve a lost member.



Methods: When recruiting, cultists seek out people who look like they are in a psychological crisis. The cults trick the people in to coming back to the compound where they can be brainwashed. When cults are on the offense, they typically use terrorist tactics: suicide bombings, driving vehicles loaded with fuel in to buildings, sending children with diseases to infect a group, etc.

Typical Encounter: Most encounters PCs will have with cults are harmless: a cult recruitment team tries to talk a PC in to coming back with them and when the PC says no they leave. PCs are most likely to come in to conflict against cults if PCs are called on to rescue someone from a cult or if a cult is making holy-war against the PC's group. The Lumens are the largest and most powerful cult in the city, and they have proven themselves capable of making war against large gangs. See p.183 for more on the Lumens.

God Killer Rampager

Motivations: The rampager has done too much God Killer and has gone in to a megalomaniacal rage. The rampager believes that he or she is immortal and invincible and can do anything he or she wants, starting by destroying anyone or anything the rampager doesn't like.

Methods: The rampager believes his or her power is limitless, doesn't think he or she needs any defenses or precautions. He or she will stomp down the street, shouting out challenges to anyone and proclaiming his or her intention to tear down every part of the city that displeases him or her. The rampager doesn't think he or she needs a weapon, but may use one if that is what he or she feels most comfortable with. The rampager will attack anything, from a person with a skyscraper, hitting again and again (not defending) until the enemy is destroyed or the rampager gets bored and decides to do something else. The rampager is incapable of believing that he or she failed at anything: if the skyscraper he or she attacked didn't fall down, it's because the rampager didn't want it to. The rampager will also ignore any injury, no matter how severe.

Typical Encounter: If a PC has ever pissed off a God Killer user, and that user knows where the PC is, the PC may be in danger. More likely, PCs may be attacked by a God Killer addict walking down the street who decides that he or she doesn't like the way the PCs look. The God Killer addict will attack any number of PCs no matter how well-armed the PCs are and will fight to the death.

Hunters

Motivations: These are bored rich people who enjoy the sport of hunting other human beings. They are typically cold, anti-social people with little or no self-identity who gain a feeling of superiority through the act of hunting.

Methods: Since simply shooting an unsuspecting person is far too easy, Hunters try to give the prey some clue that they are being hunted. Some fire a warning shot, others leave anonymous messages (sometimes even riddles) for the prey. Although the Hunter may try to make the game interesting by making it harder, the Hunter does not want and will not allow a fair contest: if the prey ever gains the upper hand the Hunter will flee. Once the game begins, the Hunter tries to stay out of sight, tries to follow and find the prey wherever they go, and shoots the prey whenever they can. Hunters usually have sniper rifles and are very well trained in their use. They typically also have high-tech equipment such as nanopadded and nanoweave armor, color change clothing, advanced nightvision goggles and even bloodhound powder.

Typical Encounter: The PCs are walking down the street, see a wallet on the ground, when they pick it up they find a note inside saying "you have one minute to run." The Hunter is watching the PCs from a secret hiding place and follows the PCs wherever they go.

Mauler Packs

Motivations: These are brain damaged drug addicts who act much like wild pack animals. They eat, raw, whatever animal they can catch, including people. They prowl the streets looking for prey and are likely to attack anyone who appears wounded, old, disabled or asleep. Mauler Packs are capable of following blood trails to find wounded prey.

Methods: When they find suitable prey, they surround the person, rushing up and beating on the person with their fists until the person drops. Once the person has dropped they stomp on and punch the person until the person is clearly unconscious. Then they tear the person to bits with their teeth and devour the flesh.

Typical Encounter: Word gets around quickly when there is a Mauler Pack in the area, and if the party has any proficient fighters the fighters will probably be asked (or begged) to hunt down and destroy the pack. A pack is seldom hard to find (street people see them coming and get out of the way, and will be glad to point out which way they went). Mauler addicts are also easy to kill (for characters with good weapons and armor or good combat skills) but the problem is getting them all. Mauler addicts will run

Typical Mauler Addict Pack

Makeup- Ten addicts, about four are the strongest and healthiest and they attack first, the rest move when the prey is wounded.

Appearance- Half-naked (dressed in the shredded remains of clothing), skinny, dirty, diseased, unkempt, wild-eyed, long-fingernails, blood encrusted around mouths and under fingernails. They run along hunched over, growling and hissing at each other.

Attributes- The four strongest addicts have AGY 10, AWR 15, CHM 0, END 7, INL 0, SPD 7, STH 7, WIL 0, BLD 2, BDY 3, INCY 4. The weaker addicts have AGY 6, AWR 8, END 4, SPD 4, STH 3, WIL 3, BLD 1, BDY 1, INCY 3.

Typical Attack- The four healthiest addicts swarm an enemy, getting around on all sides and staying just out of range. When an enemy isn't looking or is occupied, they move in to range 0. If the enemy turns to face them, they jump back, but if the enemy doesn't turn then they use their next action to attack. They typically slash at the face with their long fingernails, doing either a Slash attack at AGY (10) + AGY (10) + 1d20 vs. 25 (or 1d20 vs. 5) or a Blinding Strike at AGY (10) + AGY (10) + 1d20 vs. 30 (or 1d20 vs. 10). A successful slash does ½ bladed damage and victims must make an opposed save vs. distracting pain.

problem is getting them all. Mauler addicts will run away when attacked, and survivors will wander the streets randomly (feeding on pigeons and strays) until they meet up with other Maulers and form a new pack.

Muggers/Burglars

Motivations: This group of tough young teens are used to being able to use their collective might to get whatever they want. They want money, typically to buy drugs with, and they are quite happy smashing a few heads to get that money. They want to grab whatever they can that has black market value and run off before security guards can show up.

Methods: Sometimes they wait around in dark, mostly empty parts of town for someone traveling alone. They don't have much patience, and may try to follow someone from an area with a lot of people in to an area without. Sometimes they threaten people to try to get their belongings, sometimes they just rush up and hit someone on the back of the head. They will also break in to the apartments of VR addicts, breaking down the door, terrorizing those inside while grabbing as much as they can carry. Burglars often prey on older relatives of a member of their group (since this is a place where they know who is inside and what might be stolen).

Typical Encounter: PCs in groups are seldom targeted, but if a PC wanders off alone, a group of muggers on a street corner may decide that he or she is good prey. A PC will be attacked by between 4 to 7 muggers, mostly armed with clubs and knives.

Pounders

Motivations: In the dangerous, hard world of life as a Street Person, Pounders survive by being tough and loose with their morals. They horn in on every opportunity, making sure they get the best of everything, from camping spots to care packages from shelters. They are bullies, they beat people up to prove they are in charge. They like alcohol, sex and being the toughest people on the block.

Methods: Pounders use sheer numbers to overwhelm victims. They are physically large, travel in large groups and give a good beating to anyone they feel like. They sleep in compounds, usually a vacant lot with a fence around it, which they can easily defend against invaders. Any extra money they make (or steal) is spent on drugs, which they use to lure homeless women in to their compounds. They are not above kidnapping and raping women when they cannot get one to come willingly.

Typical Encounter: Pounders will typically not mess with a competent-looking PCs. However, PCs may be begged by street people to do something about a Pounder gang that is terrorizing them. PCs may be asked to retrieve a woman that has been taken in to a Pounder compound.

Typical Muggers

Makeup- Four level 1 freelancers, the biggest and strongest is typically the leader.

Appearance- Four young men in their late teens, trying to dress like badasses (spikes, leather, tattoos, ostentatious weapons, gang old-school style clothing).

Attributes- AGY 10, AWR 8, CHM 4, END 8, INL 5, SPD 10, STH 12 (leader has 14), WIL 7, BLD 4, BDY 5, INCY 4

Special Skills- All have Street Fighting: Armed (1).

Special Equipment- The leader has a Skullcrusher, two have Sticks With Nail, one has a Ripper. \$200 in cash.

Typical Attack- They try to attack by surprise, one will make an extended knockout strike against the victim with the Skullcrusher at STH (14) + AGY (10) +5 (extended) + 1d20 vs. 30 (or 1d20 vs. 1). The others will then step in to finish the job, making strikes with the Stick With Nail and Ripper at STH (12) + AGY (10) + 1d20 vs. 25 (or 1d20 vs. 3). If successful the Stick With Nail does 3 blunt, 1 ragged damage (pierces armor as 4 bladed) and the Ripper does 2 ragged damage.

Typical Pounder Gang

Makeup- Seven level 2 street people.

Appearance- Seven large men in their mid-thirties, they are homeless and wear scrounged clothing but it is nicer clothing than most homeless people have (nearly new blue jeans and hats, leather belts and jackets and fingerless gloves, nice boots). They are typically all the same ethnicity. Most have beards and short hair. They reek of beer, cigarettes and stale sweat.

Attributes- AGY 6, AWR 7, CHM 5, END 10, INL 6, SPD 5, STH 12, WIL 9, BLD 4, BDY 5, INCY 3

Special Equipment- Three have Pipes (range 1, 3 blunt), one has a Chain (range 2-3, 3 blunt), one has a Swinging Rock (range 2-3, 3 blunt), one has a Stick With Nail (range 2, 3 blunt 1 ragged damage (pierces armor as 4 bladed). They all have Steel Toed Boots. \$50 in cash and change.

Typical Attack- They typically rush an enemy, encircling him or her, trying to stay in the range where they can hit the enemy (with their long weapons) but the enemy can't hit them, and making easy strikes against the enemy until the enemy falls down. They make strikes with their weapons at STH (12) + AGY (6) (-4 if it is a chain or swinging rock because they have a Hard Strike) + 1d20 vs. 25 (or 1d20 (-4) vs. 7). As a reaction they jump-out at SPD (5) + AGY (6) + 1d20 vs. 25 (or 1d20 vs. 14). When the victim is on the ground they make 2 blunt damage stomp attacks.

Pushers

Motivations: Pushers make quite a lot of money from selling to addicts. They can also earn bounties for killing (or capturing) enemies of the drug lords.

Methods: Pushers like to increase their base of customers by holding people down and forcing them to take drugs. They look for people who are alone and don't look like they belong to a gang. Although it is strictly forbidden by the Drug Lords, sometimes pushers will fight with each other over territory.

Typical Encounter: PCs will typically encounter a pusher gang who is trying to hold down and inject some innocent person. Typically, there will be five young people, the leader will have a pistol and the rest will have clubs and knives.

Serial Killers

Motivations: Depend on violent sexual fantasies to help them deal with life, occasionally driven to make these fantasies real.

Methods: Serial Killers tend to appear as normal, friendly young men. A typical ploy is to gain the trust of a young woman, then when the two are alone he will attack her from behind, knocking her out and dragging her to some pre-arranged spot.

Typical Encounter: Serial Killers avoid messing with people who look like they can defend themselves (which will be a majority of PCs). PCs will most likely become involved in tracking down a serial killer who has been terrorizing a neighborhood. Most serial killers attack people within a few blocks of where they live, and if PCs can come up with a good "profile" of the killer they won't have to ask around long before it rings bells.

Sex Industry Exploiters

Motivations: They make money by exploiting the weak and catering to the darkest desires of city residents and "tourists." The money they make is typically spent on drugs. They also tend to partake in the product that they sell.

Methods: Sex exploiters kidnap people (mostly women and children) or buy them from other people who have kidnapped them. They prefer victims who are physically and psychologically weak and ignorant of the city. Illegal immigrants are a favorite victim because they have few people in this country who will notice they are missing or who they can run to for help. Sex exploiters typically try to brainwash victims in to believing that there is no good trying to escape.

Typical Encounters: Sex exploiters must stay hidden, or face the wrath of city residents (especially the Sexologists). In any adventure involving sex exploiters, the hardest part is finding them.

Typical Pusher Gang: Wimpy

Makeup- Three young (12-16) teenage males.

Appearance- Three teenage males, one sometimes acts like the leader.

Attributes- AGY 9, AWR 8, CHM 6, END 10, INL 5, SPD 10, STH 10, WIL 5, BLD 3, BDY 2, INCY 2

Social Status- This is a new pusher gang. Until recently they were just a group of youths hanging out on a street-corner and intimidating passers-by. They have little money and little respect from anyone else in the drug lord organization. They probably won't make it through the year as a pusher gang.

Special Equipment- Two have Pipes, one has a Combat Knife, none have armor. They carry about \$200 worth of cash and \$400 worth of drugs at any given time.

Typical Attack- The two with pipes try to keep the enemy at bay by swinging wildly with their pipes (Strikes at STH (10) + AGY (9) + 1d20 vs. 25 or 1d20 vs. 6 and Pain/Stun Attacks at INL (4) + AGY (9) + 1d20 vs. 25 or 1d20 vs. 12). While they are doing this the one with the knife tries to get around in back and make an extended strike at STH (10) + AGY (9) +5 (extended) +1d20 vs. 25 (or 1d20 vs. 1). They dodge as a reaction at AWR (8) + AGY (9) + 1d20 vs. 25 (or 1d20 vs. 8).

Typical Pusher Gang: Average

Makeup- Five teenage males, all around 16-18.

Social Status- This group has a well established piece of turf and they sell to addicts in that turf. Up to a thousand dollars pass through their hands on a good day.

Attributes- AGY 10, AWR 9, CHM 6, END 10, INL 6, SPD 10, STH 12, WIL 7, BLD 3, BDY 3, INCY 2

Special Equipment- One has a Freedom Army Pistol, two have Pipes and two have Hunting Knives. They carry about \$500 worth of cash and \$600 worth of drugs at any given time. All wear Modern Chainmail (AR 7, PR 3 bladed 1 blunt).

Special Skills- The two with the pipes have Club (2), the two with the bowie knives have Knife Fighting (2).

Typical Attack- The four with the hand weapons rush at the enemy, hoping to distract them while the one with the pistol picks them off one by one. The clubbers Strike at STH (12) + AGY (10) +4 (skill) +1d20 vs. 25 (or 1 + 1d20 vs. 0) doing 3 blunt damage and Parry at STH (12) + AGY (10) +8 (skill) + 1d20 vs. 25 (or 5 + 1d20 vs. 0). The knifers make Vital Strikes at AGY (10) + INL (6) +12 (skill) +1d20 vs. 35 (or 1d20 vs. 7) doing 5 bladed damage and Dodge at AWR (9) + AGY (10) +4 (skill) + 1d20 vs. 25 (or 1d20 vs. 2). The shooter Aims as one action and then Strikes with the next action at INL (6) + AGY (10) +4 (aim) +1d20 -1/7 ft. vs. 25 (or 1d20 -1/7ft. vs. 5) doing 5 bladed damage.

Typical Dagger Team

Makeup- 5 level 7 mercenaries, one is the team leader for this mission but they are all equal in rank and experience.

Attributes- AGY 10, AWR 11, CHM 8, END 13, INL 10, SPD 12, STH 15, WIL 12, BLD 4, BDY 4, INCY 5

Appearance- They wear matte black plated armor with motorcycle helmets, they carry automatic weapons and driving black motorcycles.

Methods- Daggers do not use stealth. They strike hard and fast, killing anyone who gets in their way and using explosives to destroy any obstacle. They do not talk or investigate or sell drugs, their only job is to kill quickly and mercilessly.

Special Equipment- Each has:

-Armor/Sensory/Communication: Modern Plate Armor (AR 17, PR 10 bladed 10 blunt 8 burn, AGY penalty already figured in), Anti-Psychic Cap (+10 difficulty to psychic skills), Motorcycle Helmet: Sensory, Ear Bud Cellphone.

-Vehicle: Motorcycle (with Bullet Proofing, Intelligent Suspension, Ram Spikes, Noise Dampeners, and Theft Alarm: Aggressive).

-Weapons: Freedom Army Dagger (2 bladed damage, pierces as 6, Easy Vital Strike, Paralysis (80) in 1 round.). Shaped Charge (30 concussion damage). 2 Automatic Pistols (ROF 10, FR 8 ft., MR 750 ft., 5 bladed damage).

Special Skills- Automatic Weapons (3), Assassin: Armed (2), Motorcycle (4), Offensive Driving (3), Demolitions (1).

Typical Attack- When dealing with multiple enemies they make Area Attacks, sweeping a 15 ft. area at INL (10) + 10 (ROF) +12 (skill) + 1d20 -1/8ft. vs. 25 + 15(ft.) (or 1d20 -1/8ft. vs. 8). Each victim hit takes 5 bladed damage. When dealing with a single enemy they Aim as their first action then Vital Strike at INL (10) + AGY (10) +8 (skill) +4 (aim) +1d20 -1/8ft. vs. 35 (or 1d20 -1/8ft. vs. 3). As reactions they make simultaneous strikes.

Terrorists

Motivations: Terrorists tend to go after people in charge, and there are few of those in the city. Most terrorists in the city are laying low until they can attack a target outside of the city. They may attack if someone discovers them or if law enforcement comes after them. A few terrorists have turned freelance, using their skills for money. These terrorists are less dangerous (because they won't kill themselves for a cause) but do sometimes strike at city targets.

Methods: A terrorist moves in to town, gets a job (or welfare) and pretends to be a normal member of the community while preparing an attack. A terrorist may spend months or years quietly buying supplies, manufacturing weapons, surveying targets, gathering intelligence, and planning the attack. The most common weapon is a large bomb containing toxic chemicals. The bomb is planted in a place calculated to cause maximum chaos, loss of life and loss of public morale. Truly fanatical terrorists are unafraid to carry the weapon right up to the target and detonate it themselves.

Typical Encounters: Terrorists act like normal people most of the time, so PCs will likely be unaware when they have met a terrorist. PCs might discover the identity of a terrorist if they break in to his or her apartment. Freelance terrorists may be hired to strike any city group that has pissed off someone with money.

Wild Dog Packs

Motivations: Dog packs live like their feral ancestors: they hunt down and kill prey animals.

Methods: Dogs survive mostly on birds, rats and stray cats. They will attack people who are sick, injured, unconscious. The more humans they kill and eat, the more bold they become. When trying to bring down a larger animal (e.g. a human) the dogs use basic pack tactics: they surround the animal on all sides, distracting it with growls and fake attacks, and when one dog sees an opening (an unprotected side) it attacks.

Typical Encounter: Homeless people, who spend the most time on the streets are usually the first to know when a dog pack has taken to prowling an area. Some stray dogs are harmless and are ignored, but if there are attacks (especially attacks on children) then street people will start looking for someone willing to hunt down and kill the pack.

Typical Freelance Terrorist

Level 4 Terrorist

Attributes- AGY 10, AWR 15, CHM 13, END 15, INL 15, SPD 10, STH 10, WIL 19, BLD 3, BDY 3, INCY 5

Appearance- Thirty-something male with a weather-worn face, plain style of dress, no visible body modifications. Clothing is cheap and simple, that of a worker.

Social Status- The freelance terrorist advertises on anonymous message boards on the internet, is contacted and hired anonymously. The freelance terrorist has few friends of social contacts.

Special Equipment- Sniper Rifle, Drill Gun, 5 Pipe Bombs, 5 Letter Bombs, Nightvision Goggles: Deluxe. \$100 in cash.

Typical Attack- Double Aim (from Sniper) and Vital Strike with Sniper Rifle at INL (15) + AGY (10) +8 (skill) +8 (double aim) -1/50ft. +1d20 vs. 35 (or 1d20 +6 -1/50ft. vs. 0). The rifle does 6 (pierces armor as 9) damage on a normal strike.

Typical Wild Dog Pack

Makeup- Seven dogs, the largest and meanest male is the alpha.

Attributes- AGY 15, AWR 5(sight)/17(smell)/15(hearing), END 10, SPD 15, STH 6, WIL 3, BDY 2, BLD 2, INCY 3

Appearance- Seven large mutts, with dirty fur, scars and missing patches and blood-stained mouths. They are growling and baring their teeth.

Natural Weapons- They can bite at 1d20 vs. 6 (2 bladed damage) and make a Vital Strike bite at 1d20 vs. 12 (4 bladed damage).

Typical Attack- They will encircle the enemy, making split action jump-in and wings (at 1d20 vs. 11) doing 1 bladed damage and then jumping-out (at 1d20 vs. 10). When an enemy falls down, one will move in for an extended vital strike (at 1d20 vs. 7) doing 4 bladed damage with -10 to the next reaction.

After Killing the Baddie

The PCs just killed some piece of dangerous vermin scum and now they are busy patting each other on the back. They've just made the world a better place, they're heroes and are about to march on to their just rewards, right? Unfortunately, this is the city, not a children's book, and killing the baddie doesn't always make things alright. Here's some consequences to throw at PCs who are a little to cavalier with the deadly force, or to throw at cautious PCs just to fuck with them. Choose one you like or roll 1d6:

1: Kids- Apart from being a major evil asshole, the villain was also a devoted parent. As soon as the PCs kill the villain, they hear the plaintive weeping from where the now only-child is hidden. PCs should feel some duty to at least get the kid to safety (a relative, the Orphans, social services) which may be hard with the kid screaming, kicking, trying to grab weapons and stab the PCs.

2: Booby Traps- It's hard to resist searching a fallen enemy for some cash, weapons and other goodies that can make the PCs more powerful (or at least pay for the medical treatment they need after the battle). However, even a dead villain may still be dangerous. The most common (by but no means the only) trick is for a person to have a razorblade or needle in his or her pocket with something nasty on it.

3: Witness- Someone oversaw the climactic battle with the baddie, someone who thinks that the baddie was the good one and the PCs must therefore be in the wrong. A simple wrong assumption like this can lead a witness to seriously misinterpret and misremember what they saw. Now the PCs have someone running around telling anyone who will listen (including the Night Shift) that the PCs slaughtered some innocent and unarmed person.

4: Revenge- The villain had some friend, relative or lover who wants revenge for the death of the villain. This person probably doesn't really care if the villain was in the wrong or if the PCs were acting in self defense. Remember that people can have unexpected connections: a homeless, brain-damaged drug addict in rags may be the younger brother of an influential Indie gang member.

5: My Enemy's Enemy- There is no league of supervillains in the city, and sometimes the bad guys are at war with the other bad guys. By killing one villain, the PC may have inadvertently helped out some other villain, maybe even a worse villain. What if the PCs destroy a pounder gang and free the ten people they had locked up in a basement, only to later find out that those ten people were Colins? What if the PCs destroy an evil Pusher gang, only to have an even worse Pusher gang take over the territory? Suddenly the PCs are responsible for fixing what they did.

6: Disease- Did any of the PCs get wounded during a battle? Did any blood happen to splurt from the villain before his or her heart stopped beating? Maybe the villain was carrying some terrible disease that the PCs are now almost sure to catch.

Some Ethical Dilemmas

For some players, an ethical dilemma can make a game more interesting. One way to make ethical dilemmas relevant for PCs is to find a value that a PC has identified with (e.g. honesty, justice, nonviolence, etc.) in his or her character concept. Then try to find a situation in which the PC group will want to betray that value.

Crime- Most people in the city see the law as a joke. For instance: the law says that the unborn cannot legally get a job (thus dooming them to poverty), but it also says that people cannot live on the streets (thus making their being alive illegal). Thus, few people see an ethical problem with breaking laws. Many in the city see corporations as nothing but robber-barons who have manipulated the law so they can exploit people and take their money. These people see nothing wrong with stealing from corporations. But who can be stolen from? If it's okay to steal from corporations, how about rich people? How about middle class business owners? Is it okay for a homeless person who is starving to steal from a welfare family that can barely make ends meet?

Justice- Many people on the streets take it upon themselves to seek revenge for crimes committed against people they know. People's thoughts on revenge typically fall in to three camps: The "revenge is always right" people think that the universe demands revenge and that any truly loyal friend will seek revenge. The "best justice system we have" people see a code of revenge as the most useful justice system people have available to them in the city. The "revenge is not just" people think that judging crimes and punishing people should be left to the criminal justice system. Even when all the PCs believe in revenge, there are questions like "how much revenge is too much?" Example: An adolescent was robbing a gang member, hit him in the back of the head and killed him. Now the gang wants revenge, they intend to find the adolescent and kill him. The adolescent begs the PCs for protection, swears that he didn't mean to kill the person, that he is sorry and will make whatever reparations he can. Should the PCs protect the adolescent?

Ends vs. Means- This one is a classic (sometimes it will be so familiar that players may find it boring). The basic idea is to test what things PCs will do to achieve a good ends. GMs should find that uncomfortable spot where the players say "I'm not sure I would do that" Would the PCs torture a terrorist to save a thousand people? Would the PCs torture an innocent person to save a thousand people? Would PCs kill an innocent child to save a hundred others?

Associating with Evil- PCs are offered an opportunity to defeat some terrible evil, but to do it they must work with and aid some other evil. More than just an "ends justifies the means" dilemma, it also deals with how PCs manage their public image: do they allow themselves to be known as people who associate with evil? Example: PCs capture a Colin, and he tells them that he will give them the cure to a plague that is currently killing thousands, but they must let him go.

Honor- Should PCs honor promises that they made (without being under duress or lied to) even though something bad will happen? Does the value of being known as people who will keep their word outweigh the value of helping people right now? Example: PCs have been paid to deliver a drug that will cure a current plague. They have sworn to protect the drug with their lives and to deliver it to a rich gang leader who has just contacted the plague. On the way they meet a child who also has the disease and is in much worse shape (more likely to die) than the gang leader. Does compassion come first, or should the PCs honor the promise they made?

Free Will- Should the PCs favor someone's freedom of choice, or look after that person's best interests? What if a person is mentally ill, or has been brainwashed by a cult, or is underage, or has some other impairment? Example: A friend just got a new mental program that can turn off the fear centers of the brain. While the fear centers are off, she decides that she hates her life, that she has wanted to kill herself for as long as she can remember, but now that she feels no fear she is ready to do it. Do the PCs grab her and keep her tied up until she turns the program off? What if, after the program is off, she makes a decision to turn it on again so she can go through with the plan?

Guilt vs. Tech- These dilemmas ask: to what degree are people responsible for their actions if they are being influenced in some way? Should people be held accountable if they were brainwashed, under the influence of drugs or other tech? Example: PCs track down the woman who committed a brutal murder, but the woman they find begs for mercy. She shows them proof that she was genetically engineered to have a deadly temper. There is no way to remove the offending genes or put in a rage-blocking mental program without the possibility of seriously damaging her. She promises that, now that she knows about her temper, she will learn to control it. Do the PCs give her a chance to change (and possibly to kill someone else) just because she has some artificial genes in her?

Individuality- Technology today has the ability to change any part of a person, from the DNA to the mind. PCs may have a number of comforting assumptions, like that a person is the same individual he or she was yesterday. When GMs blur the line on individuality, ethical problems become much more difficult. Example: PCs track down a child molester who once tortured and murdered children in the city orphanage. When they find the person he claims that he is not the same person. He claims that an accident with a malfunctioning mental program completely changed portions of his brain, and that he has a different personality and is not the same person. His wife and children attest that he would never hurt anyone. Should the child molester answer for his crimes?

Humanity- Similarly, technology can blur the lines of what is human. Most in the city would have no problem killing a golem (a human body with a simple AI in place of a human mind) to save a regular human. What if the distinction is not so clear? Example: The Keepers are hunting an animal that escaped from Freedom Army labs two decades ago. It is a genetically engineered animal and they hope to make thousands selling it on the black market. The PCs find the animal first and find that it has some human DNA and the intelligence of a gorilla, with just enough language abilities to say "help". Do they fight the Keepers, possibly killing them, to protect the animal?

Some Computer Systems

Bridge and Tunnel Authority Net

This network monitors and controls the automated security checkpoints that control every way in and out of the city.

Access: Not on the internet. Microwave dishes send to a satellite which links the control rooms for each checkpoint and a BTA office in Queens. BTA officers monitor the gates and respond to attempted access violations.

Network Firewall Strength: 20

Network Security: 10% monitoring by level 4 Admin.

Organization Secrecy Rating: 25

A Checkpoint Control Computer:

Remote Login Encryption Strength: 30 (a login every 2d6 hours)

System Firewall Strength: 30

Trusts: None

Operating System: Mainframe 10

Virus Protection Rating: 20

Power: 6

Privileges

User: See live video and scans or recordings from the past week.

Superusers: Lock a checkpoint.

Admin: Open a checkpoint despite drug or firearm alarms.

CABRE Flight Reservation Net

The Completely Automated Business Reservation Environment is used by every major airline to handle reservations.

Access: Accessed from the internet by ticket agents and travel net sites throughout the world.

Network Firewall Strength: 30

Network Security: 80% monitoring by level 1 Admins.

Organization Secrecy Rating: 20

An Access Node:

Remote Login Encryption Strength: 30 (a login every second)

System Firewall Strength: 40

Trusts: None

Operating System: Mainframe 10

Virus Protection Rating: 40

Power: 15

Privileges

User: Check any reservation, make or change reservations on one airline.

Superusers: Make or change reservations on any airline.

Admin: Manage accounts.

Child Welfare DB

Tracks children who have had any contact with social services.

Access: Accessed from the internet by social workers in the child welfare offices throughout the state (including the city).

Network Firewall Strength: 15

Network Security: 5% monitoring by level 2 Admin.

Organization Secrecy Rating: 20

Database Mainframe:

Remote Login Encryption Strength: 20 (a login every 2d6 minutes)

System Firewall Strength: 20

Trusts: None

Operating System: OpenCert

Virus Protection Rating: 20

Power: 8

Privileges

User: Read files on any child. Enter reports.

Superusers: Edit files, change a child's assignment.

Admin: Delete files.

Dept. of Health Medical Records Mainframe

Doctors and nurses in state run clinics and hospitals in the city keep patient records in this computer system.

Access: Accessed from the internet.

Network Firewall Strength: 25

Network Security: 30% monitoring by level 3 Admin.

Organization Secrecy Rating: 20

The Mainframe Computer:

Remote Login Encryption Strength: 30 (a login every 2d6 minutes)

System Firewall Strength: 35

Trusts: None

Operating System: Mainframe 10

Virus Protection Rating: 30

Power: 10

Privileges

User: Look up patient records, add notes. Look up prescriptions.

Superusers: Edit or delete patient records. Enter prescriptions.

Admin: Edit or delete prescriptions.

Fed Vital Statistics Repository

Whenever someone is born or dies, a certified record is supposed to be entered in this system. If someone does not exist within this system (and does not have a visa), he or she cannot gain legal employment or public assistance.

Access: Accessed from the internet by hospitals and coroner's offices.

Network Firewall Strength: 35

Network Security: 40% monitoring by level 2 Admins.

Organization Secrecy Rating: 15

A Network Node:

Remote Login Encryption Strength: 35 (a login every second)

System Firewall Strength: 30

Trusts: None

Operating System: Mainframe 10

Virus Protection Rating: 35

Power: 12

Privileges

User: Enter a birth certificate or death certificate (current date only). Look up a birth or death record.

Superusers: Add supplemental information to a birth or death certificate.

Admin: Erase any record that a person was ever born.

NY City Department of Buildings Net

This network keeps blueprints and building permits for every building on the island. Note that many blueprints were lost during the Freedom Wars, and many abandoned buildings have nothing more than a "condemned" notation in the database.

Access: Accessed from the internet by the employees of the department of buildings, most of whom are corrupt and only come in to work to take bribes.

Network Firewall Strength: 20

Network Security: 10% monitoring by level 2 Admins.

Organization Secrecy Rating: 20

A Network Node:

Remote Login Encryption Strength: 30 (a login every 2d6 hours)

System Firewall Strength: 20

Trusts: None

Operating System: OpenCert

Virus Protection Rating: 20

Power: 5

Privileges

User: View blueprints and permits. Create permits.

Superusers: Order a building condemned, schedule a visit from an inspector.

Admin: Edit records, including blueprints.

NYR-LAN Administrative Net

New York Regional Local Area Network is the city's largest internet service provider. This network connects field offices in the city (and other urban areas throughout the east coast) for billing and work orders.

Access: Accessed from the internet from NYR-LAN corporate and field offices.

Network Firewall Strength: 20

Network Security: 7% monitoring by level 1 Admins.

Organization Secrecy Rating: 20

A Network Node:

Remote Login Encryption Strength: 25 (a login every minute)

System Firewall Strength: 30

Trusts: None

Operating System: OpenCert

Virus Protection Rating: 30

Power: 7

Privileges

User: Enter, view and edit work orders, put notes on bills, update customer records.

Superusers: Edit bills and billing information.

Admin: Remove bills.

NYR-LAN Routers

Every packet that goes from NYR-LAN customers to the internet (and visa versa) goes through these internet routers, which are located in an NYR-LAN office downtown. Information also passes through these routers from other routers outside the city.

Access: Accessed from the internet from NYR-LAN corporate and field offices.

Network Firewall Strength: 20

Network Security: 15% monitoring by level 3 Admins.

Organization Secrecy Rating: 25

A Router:

Remote Login Encryption Strength: 30 (a login every 2d6 minutes)

System Firewall Strength: 35

Trusts: None

Operating System: Mainframe10

Virus Protection Rating: 30

Power: 20

Privileges

User: See packets traveling through the network.

Superusers: Block access to/from a particular address.

Admin: Edit packets traveling through the network.

NYUD Electrical Grid Mainframe

The New York Utilities District gives power to the whole city. The mainframe monitors power consumption and can turn off power to individual blocks. Billing information is stored in a separate network.

Access: Accessed from the internet by NYUD employees working in a small office downtown.

Network Firewall Strength: 30

Network Security: 3% monitoring by level 1 Admin.

Organization Secrecy Rating: 30

A Router:

Remote Login Encryption Strength: 30 (a login every 4d6 hours)

System Firewall Strength: 35

Trusts: None

Operating System: Mainframe10

Virus Protection Rating: 20

Power: 5

Privileges

User: View grid statistics and history.

Superusers: Reroute power through different substations.

Admin: Cut off power to particular blocks.

State Court Net

This network is used by the state's courts to keep track of trials and rulings.

Access: Accessed from the internet by judges, clerks, public and private attorneys, some of whom operate in or nearby the criminal courts building in the Bowery.

Network Firewall Strength: 15

Network Security: 5% monitoring by level 2 Admin.

Organization Secrecy Rating: 10

A Network Node:

Remote Login Encryption Strength: 20 (a login every 1d6 hours)

System Firewall Strength: 20

Trusts: None

Operating System: OpenFree

Virus Protection Rating: 30

Power: 3

Privileges

User: View dockets, rulings, warrants, subpoenas.

Superusers: Enter rulings, warrants, subpoenas.

Admin: Edit/delete rulings, warrants, subpoenas.

Universe ATM Network

This network allows anyone belonging to any of the banks on the network to use any of the ATMs. ATMs connect to the network and send PINs, receive

amount of cash available, and log deductions and deposits.

Access: Each ATM in the network is connected to a private internet connection (not the NYR-LAN).

Network Firewall Strength: 40

Network Security: 90% monitoring by level 2 Admins.

Organization Secrecy Rating: 30

A Network Node:

Remote Login Encryption Strength: 40 (a login every second)

System Firewall Strength: 35

Trusts: Bank mainframes

Operating System: Proprietary

Virus Protection Rating: 40

Power: 2

Privileges

User: View balances, authorize withdrawal of up to \$200 from an account.

Superusers: Withdrawal of up to \$1000.

Admin: Empty an ATM of money, credit an account by any amount.

ViCap

The Violent Criminal Apprehension Program is a network used by police agencies in the US and Canada to track criminals. People on the network can search for a criminal by name, appearance, fingerprints, DNA and even MO. Records for each criminal includes last-known-address, known associates, gang or organized crime affiliations, criminal history (including crimes the person is suspected of having committed) and current warrants.

Access: Law enforcement officers throughout the nation access via the internet from computers in their offices and portable computers connected to cellular networks in squad cars.

Network Firewall Strength: 20

Network Security: 30% monitoring by level 3 Admins.

Organization Secrecy Rating: 15

A Network Node:

Remote Login Encryption Strength: 20 (a login every second)

System Firewall Strength: 30

Trusts: Law enforcement records mainframes.

Operating System: OpenCert

Virus Protection Rating: 35

Power: 6

Privileges

User: Lookup records.

Superusers: Add warrants or notes.

Admin: Edit records, delete warrants.

Giving Depth To An Encounter With A Street Person

The situation: the PCs need a piece of information and the only person who has it is an old wino, not in any street family. The GM's first instinct may be to focus on one motive, the motive of the NPC to get as much money out of the PCs as possible for the few moments he has something valuable to barter with. Reducing the NPC to a single motivation will probably cause the PCs to act just as shallow and selfish. Adding more motivations can make the encounter a little more interesting, a little more surprising and possibly even humbling to the PCs.

One cliché to avoid is the "fall from grace": the street person who was once someone powerful or important. Apart from being over-used, this cliché intimates that a homeless person must have once been rich or powerful to have an interesting story to tell.

Parental Feelings: The average street person will be older than the average PC and the street person may feel an instinct to help out a couple of nice kids if he or she can.

Shyness: Some street people are quite shy, many have severe self esteem problems and find it uncomfortable to talk to people they think are looking down on them. The street person will probably try to cut off the encounter as soon as possible.

Entertainment: Living on the streets can be very boring. A lot of it is repetition: hitting the same canning routes, the same soup lines, the same fast-food place dumpsters every night. Sometimes street people just want to hear an entertaining story or have a lively debate.

Respect: Some street people like to be treated with respect, and will gladly treat anyone who does so in turn. Some street people demand to be treated with respect and will refuse to deal with anyone who doesn't.

Heroism: Some street people want to be part of something grand, to have stories they can tell. They might feel that giving a crucial piece of information is enough to make them part of the story. On the other hand, they might want to take a larger part in the events the PCs are involved in.

Power: Some street people feel quite powerless and having something that someone else wants is a good way to exercise having power over someone else. The street person will probably do the right thing eventually, but will first want to make it absolutely clear that they are the ones in control.

Altruism: Most street people are used to helping each other and if they have something they can do to help someone else, their first instinct will be to do it.

Attraction: Some street people may do whatever he or she can to help in order to impress or get on the good side of a PC he or she finds attractive.

Non-Partisanship: The street person may not want to get involved in some conflict without knowing both sides of the situation. After all, they only have the PCs word as to what's going on and as far as they know the PCs are the bad guys.

Economic Discrimination: Some street people are prejudiced against people wealthier than they are. The wealthier the PC is, the more likely the street person is to have negative stereotypes about the PC. The street person will interpret events to fit in those stereotypes.

Drugs: There are a lot of people who fall somewhere between total addicts and total abstainers. Many street people will use drugs when they can get a hold of them easily, if nothing more than to break the monotony. If the homeless person is on drugs their behavior could be far removed from what it would normally be.

Favor: The street person may want something other than money in return for their info. On the streets, money doesn't last long (it is stolen or misspent), and many street people would rather have a phone address they can call in some future time of need.

Allegiances: Many street people have family who are not street people. Even if that family is estranged (addicts tend to burn bridges) the street person may still feel an allegiance to them. If something that the PCs are going to do will have a major effect on the city, it is likely that there will be some potential effect on someone the street person cares about, and this effect, even if it is only imagined, will effect whether or not the street person will help the PCs.

GLOSSARY OF CITY SLANG

Biscuit: adj., sexually attractive (example: 'that guy's accent is biscuit.').

Black: adj., a prefix used to denote anything which is illegal or below board (e.g. black market).

Borg: n., a suffix used to denote something is unnatural or has been replaced by technology (e.g. Skin-Borgs wear armor all the time).

City, the: n., the island of Manhattan.

Death Borg: n., 1. a bomb implant set to explode when the owner dies, 2. a person who has such an implant.

Downtown: adj, southwards, towards the area known as downtown (street numbers decrease).

Golem: n., a human body with a mental program instead of a human mind.

Gutterpunk: n., 1. a style that incorporates punk, tribal and homeless elements, 2. a person wearing that style.

Hole, the: n., Central Park, a large condemned park in the middle of the city.

Indie: n., a person with some source of income better than public assistance.

Madrugada: n., from Spanish, the time of day after midnight and before dawn.

Mod: n., modification of a human (e.g. genetic mod).

Pounder: n., a gang of homeless people that intimidate, bully and rob other homeless people.

Punky: n., a term used to refer to an inferior or younger person. E.g. "listen punky, you have a lot to learn about the city."

Skin: n., high-tech, skin-tight armor.

Street Family: n., a large extended family of homeless people, often acting much like a gang.

Street Person: n., a respectful term for someone who has no dependable legal habitation (aka homeless).

Unborn: n., a person born in the US, on the streets, without a birth certificate and unable to gain legal employment or public assistance.

Uptown: adj., northwards (street numbers increase).

Well: n., a person on public assistance (or one who lives a similar lifestyle with a similar income level).

Wildern: n., a person who survived childhood on the streets alone.

GLOSSARY OF TECH TERMS

Admin: n., administrator, an account for a person with complete control over a computer.

AI: n./adj., artificial intelligence or a system which uses artificial intelligence.

Amicus: n., an operating system created primarily for VR design.

Application: n., a computer program used by a computer user.

Backdoor: n., a security hole left in a system to ensure re-entry.

Biofeedback: n., a system that gives people immediate feedback about internal bodily states so they can learn to control them.

Code Breaker: n., a program that breaks encryption schemes.

Copy Protection: n., techniques built in to data to prevent piracy.

Data Card: n., a small card that holds data, the most common data medium.

Data Key: n., a small key-shaped device that holds a small amount of data.

Denial of Service: v., an attack designed to slow or crash a server by sending it many false requests.

Desktop: n., a non-portable personal computer.

Encryption Strength: n., how hard a given encryption scheme is to break.

Firewall: n., the sum of systems designed to prevent unauthorized entry in to a network or computer.

GPS: n., Global Positioning System, a system that lets electronic devices know where they are and what direction they are facing.

GuildOS: n., an operating system, popular among hackers and pirates.

Homework: n., research done by hackers prior to trying to hack in to a computer.

Hotcoded: n., data stored in electronic form so it can not be copied.

Information Smuggling: v., hiding data within ordinary things (e.g. a music recording).

Jack: n., a small implant in the hand that lets mental programs interact with machines.

Jellynailing: n., forcing a computer to run a program that would not normally run on that computer.

Legacy: adj., pertaining to old, currently unused technology.

Mainframe10: n., an operating system typically used for running servers and databases.

Media: n., pictures, sound, video and full-sense recordings.

Mental Installer: n., a device that uses RCNS to rewrite neural connections in a human brain.

Mental Program: n., artificially created neural connections in a brain that act like a computer program.

MMUs: n., a unit of measurement of the amount of "free space" in a human brain that mental programs can be put in.

Nanobots: n., self-reproducing robots designed atom-by-atom.

Nanotech: n., any technology based on nanobots or devices created by nanobots.

Net Site: n., A collection of information, data files, games, etc. publicly available on the internet with a graphic or VR interface.

OpenCert: n., one of several commercial operating systems that follow set standards.

OpenFree: n., a free operating system designed for normal people to use.

OpenMicro: n., an operating system designed for use on small portable computers.

Operating System: n., a program that lets a user interact with other programs.

Palmtop: n., a portable computer designed to be held with one hand and manipulated with the other.

Pirated: adj., data that was illegally copied and disseminated.

Power: n., a measurement of the memory and processor speed of a computer.

Predator Nanobots: n., nanobots spread throughout the globe that hunt down and destroy other nanobots.

Public Key: adj., utilizing encryption technology that lets anyone send an encrypted message to anyone else by using their publicly available encryption key.

RCNS: n., Radiochemical Neural Stimulation, stimulation of neurons by means of smart-chemicals and radio-beams.

Secondary Nanotech: n., any technology that utilizes high tech materials built in a lab by nanobots.

Server: n., a computer devoted to serving out data to other computers.

Smart Chemicals: n., complex human-made chemicals that react in a complex way to different stimuli.

Sniffing: v., spying on traffic traveling through a network node.

Social Engineering: v., conning people in to giving up information that will help hackers.

Suite: n., a selection of related programs together in a package.

Trojan: n., a program that looks like something benign but performs actions on behalf of the hacker.

Trust: n., a relationship between computers where access on one computer gives access on the other.

Virus: n., a self-reproducing malicious program that "hides" inside other data.

VR: n., Virtual Reality.

Workstation: n., an office computer used by an individual (as opposed to a server).

ZB: n., a measurement of data size.

RANDOM BUILDING TABLE

Commercial/ Major Ave.	Financial	Industrial	Residential: Well	Residential: Indie	Run Down/ Skid Row	Building
01-02	01-01	01-01	01-03	01-05	01-03	Apartment: Abandoned Brownstone (4)
03-04	02-02	02-03	04-06	06-11	04-06	Apartment: Abandoned Elevator (4)
05-06	03-04	04-04	07-09	12-17	07-07	Apartment: Abandoned Highrise (4)
07-07	05-05	05-05	10-12	18-19	08-09	Apartment: Abandoned Projects (4)
08-09	06-06	06-07	13-15	20-22	10-12	Apartment: Abandoned Walkup (4)
10-11	07-07	08-08	16-23	23-28	12-15	Apartment: Brownstone
12-34	08-08	09-09	24-31	29-33	16-22	Apartment: Commercial Frontage (1)
35-36	09-10	10-10	32-34	34-40	23-23	Apartment: Doorman
37-38	11-11	11-11	35-39	41-45	24-24	Apartment: Elevator
39-40	12-13	12-12	40-42	46-51	25-25	Apartment: Highrise
41-41	14-15	13-13	43-50	52-53	26-26	Apartment: Projects
42-43	15-16	14-14	51-58	54-56	27-28	Apartment: Walkup
44-45	17-21	15-16	59-59	57-57	29-29	Bank: Abandoned (4)
46-48	22-22	17-17	60-60	58-58	30-34	Church
49-54	23-24	18-18	61-61	59-59	35-35	Department Store (1)
55-60	25-27	19-19	62-63	60-60	36-37	Department Store: Abandoned (4)
61-63	28-29	20-20	64-64	61-61	38-38	Hotel: Abandoned Luxury (4)
64-66	30-31	21-21	65-65	62-62	39-39	Hotel: Luxury
67-67	32-33	22-23	66-70	63-63	40-54	Hotel: Skid Row
68-68	34-35	24-37	71-71	64-64	55-56	Industrial Complex
69-69	36-37	38-50	72-72	65-65	57-58	Industrial Complex: Abandoned (3)
70-71	38-39	51-56	73-75	66-69	59-63	Loft Building (5)
72-72	40-41	57-57	76-76	70-71	64-64	Mansion
73-73	42-43	58-58	77-77	72-73	65-65	Mansion: Abandoned (4)
74-76	44-58	59-60	78-78	74-74	66-66	Office Building (2)
77-79	59-75	61-63	79-80	75-75	67-68	Office Building: Abandoned (4)
80-82	76-80	64-65	81-82	76-77	69-70	Parking Structure: Abandoned (3)
83-84	81-82	66-67	83-84	78-78	71-78	Rubble (3)
85-86	83-84	68-68	84-89	79-84	79-79	School Building
87-87	85-85	69-69	90-90	85-85	80-80	Skyscraper
88-88	86-86	70-70	91-91	86-86	81-81	Skyscraper: Abandoned (4)
89-90	87-88	71-75	92-92	87-87	82-84	Storage Units
91-95	89-90	76-76	93-93	88-88	85-89	Theatre: Abandoned (3)
96-96	91-92	77-77	94-95	89-93	90-90	Townhouse
97-97	93-94	78-78	96-97	94-97	91-93	Townhouse: Abandoned
98-98	95-96	79-80	98-98	98-98	94-96	Vacant Lot (3)
99-99	97-98	81-89	99-99	99-99	97-97	Warehouse (5)
00-00	99-00	90-00	00-00	00-00	98-00	Warehouse: Abandoned (3)

(1) Random Commercial Use

01-01 Antiques
02-02 Appliance Repair
03-04 Appliance Sales
05-06 Art Gallery
07-07 Auto Parts
08-09 Bail Bonds
10-13 Bar
14-15 Barber/Salon
16-16 Carpet
17-17 Childcare
18-19 Beauty Supply
20-21 Clothing
22-22 Clothing (Trendy)
23-24 Coffee Shop
25-26 Discount/Outlet Store
27-27 Dojo
28-29 Drug Store
30-30 Dry Cleaning
31-31 Employment Agency
32-33 Furniture
34-40 Grocery
41-42 Grocery (Imported)
43-43 Health Club
44-44 Health Food

45-45 Home and Garden
46-46 Kennel/Pet Grooming
47-48 Laundromat
49-53 Liquor
54-54 Locksmith
55-56 Massage Parlor
57-58 Minimart
59-59 Office Space Hourly Rental
60-61 Pawn Shop
62-63 Personal Electronics
64-65 Personal Security
66-67 Personal Transport
68-69 Pet Store
69-72 Porn Shop
73-73 Psychic Services/Training
74-82 Restaurant (Fast Food)
83-84 Restaurant (With Bar)
85-86 Salon
87-88 Shipping/PO Box
89-90 Storage Lockers
91-94 Tattoo/Piercing/Body Mod
95-97 Thrift Store
98-98 Wedding Chapel
99-00 VR Rental

(2) Random Office Space Use

01-04 Abortion Clinic
05-07 Accountant
08-11 Bankruptcy Clinic
12-15 Crypt
16-19 Dentist
20-22 Detective Agency
23-28 Doctor's Clinic
29-34 Escort Agency
35-37 Funeral Home
38-43 Government Agency
44-47 Grade School
48-51 Home Repair/Remodeling
52-55 Land Management Company
56-59 Law Office
60-63 Pest Control
64-67 Plumbers
68-77 Porn Studio
78-85 Private Security Office
85-88 Real Estate Company
88-91 Therapist
92-97 Utility Service Office
98-00 Veterinarian

(3) Random Abandoned Space: Open

01-08 Garden- Reroll if this is a place that gets no light. Homeless people have broken up the ground and grow plants, some are food plants but the majority are medicinal and recreational herbs.

09-19 Graffiti Mural- The walls in or around this space are covered with huge graffiti masterpieces, each having taken hundreds of cans of spraypaint.

20-26 Homeless Graveyard- Homeless people have broken the ground with hammers, buried their friends and relatives, and put makeshift crosses and memorials over them. Homeless people, typically older ones, stop by every day or so to keep the site clean.

27-39 Homeless Lounge- This is a public place for homeless people to hang out and relax (while still keeping an eye on their environment). It is not owned by anyone and anyone can hang out here, though there are some regulars. The people who hang out here have set up old lawn chairs and couches to sit on, old trash cans to provide lighting and heat, old refrigerators (not running) may even be used to keep food and drinks cold.

40-44 Immigrant Compound- A mostly insular immigrant community has set up barbed wire fencing around this place and live in small shacks manufactured from whatever materials they could find. The center of the compound is a communal area where people living there hang out and spend time together. The immigrants do not let people in to their compound without special permission and if anyone tries to invade the compound they will rush the person with long pointed sticks.

45-50 Pounder Compound- Pounders live here, sleeping in derelict cars and hanging out on old couches and chairs. The compound is surrounded by a barbed wire fence. See p.180 for more on pounders.

51-60 Shantytown- Homeless people live here in small shacks they have built. The shanty town has a sort of community that kicks out people who cause a lot of trouble. The compound is open and anyone can come in.

61-68 Trash Pile: Fresh- Street People (and a few landlords who don't want to pay for garbage removal) have been dumping their trash here. The garbage is fresh, it reeks and the pile is infested with rats.

69-74 Trash Pile: Old- People used to dump trash here, but have stopped. The place is filled with waist-high piles of trash. Organic materials have all been consumed by rats, insects and microorganisms. Anything of value has been removed by scroungers.

75-00 Unused- Nobody has a set use for this place. People might sleep or hang out here occasionally, and there is some graffiti, old beer bottles and cigarette butts lying around.

(4) Random Abandoned Space: Closed

01-05 Addict Trap- Addicts live here and have built traps to catch unwary explorers so they can be robbed. Typical traps include holes in the floors that people can fall through and holes in the ceiling that rocks can be thrown through. The traps are, by necessity, poorly lit.

06-06 Brothel- Looks normal from the outside, but behind reinforced doors and boarded-up windows the place is clean and cozy. There are comfy couches and beds. Pirated electricity (or a small generator) feeds electric lights. 1 in 10 chance the sex workers here are being held against their will.

07-11 Burned Out- The building has suffered from a fire. It smells acrid and bitter. Inside, everything is black and brittle and rains blackened pieces down on the slightest touch. People walking here get black smudges on their shoes that leave tracks.

12-14 Cult- A small cult has taken over this abandoned space. They live and worship here, typically only leaving to recruit new members.

15-17 Drug Manufacturing- A Drug Lord manufacturing team has taken over this space and have set-up complicated contraptions on small folding tables connected by rubber tubing. Buckets full of toxic waste are strewn about and greasy stains cover the walls and ceiling. 1 in 6 chance that the place is almost too toxic to work in and the manufacturers are thinking of moving.

18-22 Drug Sales- A pusher gang has taken over this space and local addicts know to come here to buy drugs. Addicts also do their drugs here and almost every available space has a homeless addict, high on drugs, curled up in a semi-sleeping state.

23-25 Flooded- The interior of this place has several feet of water. It is dark murky, has pieces of trash and human or animal waste floating in it. Basement areas, if there are any, are completely underwater.

26-30 Gang Hangout/Lookout- Gang members have taken over this place and use it as a hangout. From windows on the upper floors they look out over their gang turf. The walls are covered with gang graffiti and messages cut in with knives. Old folding chairs, old drink and food containers and cigarette butts show the human presence.

31-35 Graffiti Mural- Every bit of the interior is covered with one or more writers' artistic masterpiece.

26-28 Mauler Addict Den- Animal-like Mauler addicts sleep here in a huddle among scraps of old paper and cloth that they pull over themselves for warmth. They relieve themselves in the corners of the building and the place reeks terribly. During the day the pack goes out and prowls, only the wounded and sick stay behind.

29-33 Squatters: Addicts- A group of addicts spend their evenings here. Typically they have blockaded almost all the entrances and people must enter by crawling through a small hole. The addicts have done almost nothing to make the place habitable: it is cold, dirty, dark and filled with trash and used drug paraphernalia. If they are lucky, the addicts have old bug-infested mattresses to sleep on.

34-38 Squatters: Crazy- A mentally ill homeless person lives here. He or she is probably paranoid and has spent a lot of time securing the area with barricades, traps and hidden sleeping places. There may be bizarre altars or graffiti versions of the crazy's unintelligible ramblings.

39-43 Squatters: Street Family- A member of a large and successful street family has taken over and lives in this place. Outside it look normal, but inside it is more luxurious than many well apartments. The space has well-conceived furniture, heating and lighting systems and decorations. The place either has pirated running water or plastic buckets (some have clean water in them; others are air-tight and are used for waste). A makeshift fireplace provides heat and warmth. Members of the homeless family can be found here 24 hours a day and will defend the house against robbers. During the evenings people play old-fashioned acoustic instruments to create a pleasant background noise.

44-48 Squatters: Street People- Street people who aren't in a family live here. Typically, these places are nicer than where addicts live but not as nice as where street families live. Some homeless people keep their places clean, others let them fill up with trash until they are forced to move out.

49-53 Trash Pile: Fresh- Street People (and a few landlords who don't want to pay for garbage removal) have been dumping their trash here. The garbage is fresh, it reeks and the pile is infested with rats.

54-58 Trash Pile: Old- People used to dump trash here, but have stopped. The place is filled with waist-high (or higher) piles of trash. Organic materials have all been consumed by rats, insects and microorganisms. Anything of value has been removed by scroungers.

69-97 Unused- Nobody has a set use for this place. People might sleep or hang out here occasionally, and there is some graffiti, old beer bottles and cigarette butts lying around.

98-00 Wild Dog Den- A pack of dogs sleep here and the place is littered with old feces.

(5) Random Warehouse/Loft Use

01-45 Abandoned- Roll on the Random Abandoned Space: Open table (3).

46-53 Apartments- The space has been converted in to trendy loft apartments, popular with artists, technophiles and others who enjoy having a large space.

54-57 Art Studio/Gallery- Artists rent this space where they create artwork at night and show and sell it during the day.

58-59 Boarder Hangout- Pipes for skaters were built here at some point before the Freedom Wars. Nowadays, Boarders have broken in and practice their stunts here.

60-63 Crypt- A city mortuary service uses this space for storing bodies in. Most of the bodies are stored in airtight plastic crypts with brass-covered engraved plates showing the name of the deceased. There is no heat or air conditioning and few lights.

64-70 Document Storage- Boxes of documents printed on old paper are stored here. The boxes are typically kept by people who don't care enough about the documents to scan them in and store them digitally, but have some legal obligation to keep the documents around. Rats have chewed holes in most of the boxes. Explorers have opened the boxes and tossed papers around looking for anything interesting.

71-85 Garage- Old vehicles are stored here by people who own them but don't really care about them. These are gasoline powered vehicles that haven't been started in decades and most wouldn't be able to run.

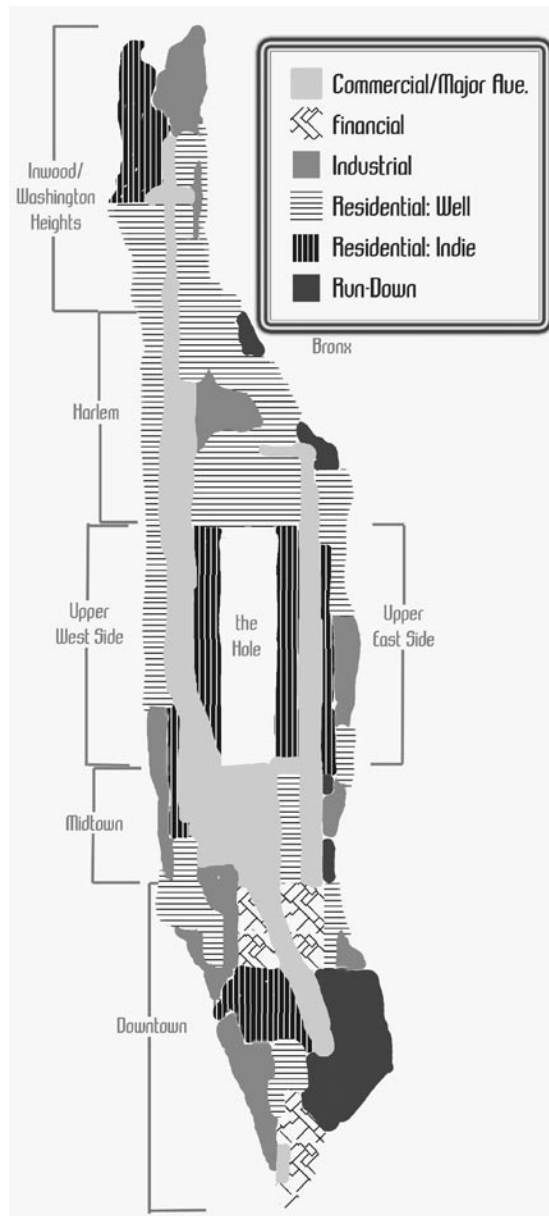
76-82 Industrial Storage- Products from a nearby industrial complex are stored here. It might be boxes of machine parts, barrels of chemicals or old train cars full of unwanted manufactured products. People have broken in but have found nothing worth carrying out.

83-87 Light Manufacturing- A corporation has taken over and has set up large industrial machines here. They are run and maintained by Workers and they churn out industrial products 24 hours a day. The machines are noisy and spew pollution in to the sky.

88-93 Miscellaneous Storage- Someone has sold storage space to private individuals. Stored here are things that people don't really care about but are afraid to throw away. Small cubicles or old metal shelves are packed high with a motley assortment of boxes filled with all kinds of crap. There is some minimal security.

94-98 Nightclub- Every night the owners have live music or a DJ spinning tunes and a bar sells alcohol.

00-00 Underground Fight Ring- A black market trader has taken over this abandoned space and runs fights here in the evenings. People pay a small cover to get in and bet on fighters doing battle (sometimes to the death) in a makeshift ring or cage.



RANDOM WEATHER TABLE

Spring	Summer	Fall	Winter	
01-04	01-03	01-04	01-12	Frost (cold and dry)
05-09	04-05	05-09	13-21	Hailstorm (cold, pelting hail)
10-13	06-24	10-13	22-22	Heatwave (very hot)
14-24	25-36	14-24	23-26	Mild Weather (not too hot or cold, nice breeze)
25-32	37-48	25-32	27-30	No Breeze (pollution builds up in city)
33-41	49-54	33-41	31-34	Rain: Heavy (constant soaking downpour)
42-51	55-64	42-51	35-39	Rain: Light
52-61	65-71	52-61	40-44	Rain: Very Heavy (streets flood)
62-64	72-72	62-64	45-53	Snow: Heavy (foot deep snow on the ground)
65-68	73-73	65-68	54-63	Snow: Light
69-70	74-74	69-70	64-73	Snow: Very Heavy (nearly impossible to travel)
71-73	75-77	71-73	74-79	Thick Fog (visibility less than 20 ft.)
74-80	78-86	74-80	80-86	Thunderstorm (lightning strikes tops of skyscrapers)
81-89	87-93	81-89	87-93	Tornados (windows break)
90-00	94-00	90-00	94-00	Windstorm (strong wind sends trash flying)

RANDOM STREET ENCOUNTERS

- 001-067 Addict: Hustling-** An addict looking to say or do anything to get money for drugs.
- 068-100 Addicts: Muggers-** A small team of addicts looking to beat up and rob someone.
- 101-113 Animalistic Mauler Addicts-** A pack of brain damaged Mauler users looking for the weak and wounded to eat.
- 114-126 Animalists-** 1d6 members of the Animalists gang.
- 127-132 Arcadians-** 1d4 members of the Arcadians gang.
- 133-145 Black Meds-** 1d6 members of the Black Med family.
- 146-157 Bleeders-** 1d4 members of the Bleeder gang.
- 158-167 Boarders-** 1d6 Boarders doing tricks or racing through the city.
- 168-195 Children-** 1d4 kids hanging out or walking down the street.
- 196-223 Children: Kid Gang-** 3d4 kids in a kid gang.
- 224-228 Colin-** A normal looking person prowling the streets for victims.
- 229-238 Cornerpunks-** 4-8 people who hang out on the street corner.
- 239-249 Crackers-** 1d4 Crackers, most likely hacking in to a paycomputer or peddling pirated data.
- 250-305 Crazy-** 1 in 20 chance will have something against the PCs. 1 in 20 chance bizarre body mods.
- 306-333 Cultists-** 1d4 cult members out recruiting.
- 334-342 Cultists: Lumens-** 1d6 members of the Lumen cult, out recruiting.
- 343-346 Dead Body-** A recently murdered person with no valuables.
- 347-351 Dragons-** 1d4 members of the Dragons gang. 1 in 20 chance of running in to the Wild Hunt.
- 352-361 Drakes-** 1d4 Drakes, most likely peddling poisons.
- 362-371 Drug Lord Employees-** 1d4 employees, most likely on their way somewhere, heavily armed.
- 372-393 Eccentric-** An elderly eccentric, 1 in 6 chance will want to engage PCs in conversation.
- 394-399 Fire-** A building is on fire. People are running in and out trying to grab valuables.
- 400-404 Freaks-** 1d6 Freaks. 1 in 6 chance they will try to do their act for money.
- 405-423 Freelancers-** 1d4 Freelancers (not currently acting as Security Guards).
- 424-427 Gambler-** A small side-alley card or craps game being led by a Gambler.
- 428-437 Gang Fight-** 4-6 members of one gang doing battle with 4-6 members of another gang.
- 438-438 God Killer Rampager-** Angry, screaming, belligerent, megalomaniacal God Killer OD.
- 439-445 Good-** A Good Drug Dealer, will most likely try to sell the PCs drugs.
- 446-458 Humankalorie-** 1d6 members of the Humankalorie gang.
- 459-478 Hummingbirds-** 1d8 Hummingbirds. 1 in 6 chance they have a boom-box and are dancing.
- 479-479 Hungry-** 1 member of the Hungry.
- 480-480 Hunter-** A hunter out on the prowl. 1 in 10 chance he or she will target the PCs.
- 481-484 Immortals-** 1d6 members of the Immortal gang.
- 485-492 Insomniacs-** 1d4 Insomniacs, most likely looking for someone willing to hire them.
- 493-522 Jack-** Will do or say anything for some spare change, will follow PCs around and bug them.
- 523-526 Keepers-** 1d4 members of the Keeper family.
- 527-539 Math Addicts-** 1d6 members of the Math Addicts gang.
- 540-542 Mem Junkies-** 1d4 members of the Mem Junkies gang.
- 543-573 Mugger Gang-** A group of 4-6 young God Killer addicts looking to beat up and rob someone.
- 574-576 Needle Punks-** 1d4 members of the Needle Punks gang.
- 577-578 Neo-** A person visiting from a neocultural commune.
- 579-598 Night Shift-** 1d4 Night Shift officers on patrol, looking for criminals.
- 599-599 Night Walker-** Currently broadcasting a live net show of his or her experiences.
- 600-603 Omniscients-** 1d4 members of the Omniscients gang.
- 604-618 Orphans-** 1d4 members of the Orphans gang, 1 in 20 chance they will have kids with them.
- 619-624 Plague Infected Person-** Delirious, infected with a deadly and highly contagious disease.
- 625-645 Pounder Gang-** 3d4 pounders looking for street people to intimidate and rob.
- 646-649 Purists-** 1d4 members of the Purist gang.
- 650-705 Pusher Gang-** A gang of 3-6 pushers out selling drugs and looking for new addicts.
- 706-711 Riot-** People smashing windows and looting, private security and night shift trying to stop them.
- 712-725 Risen-** 1d6 members of the Risen gang.
- 726-733 Roofers-** 1d6 members of the Roofer gang.
- 734-741 Runner-** A runner on his or her way to deliver a package or message.
- 742-742 Sat Jumpers-** 1d4 off-duty Sat Jumpers.
- 743-765 Security Guard-** A security guard guarding a nearby property, will want to the PCs to leave.
- 766-767 Sex Worker: Child-** A pre-teen prostitute out looking for johns.
- 768-770 Sex Worker: Male-** A prostitute out looking for johns.
- 771-774 Sex Worker: Female-** A prostitute out looking for johns.
- 775-784 Sexologists-** 1d4 Sexologists, 1 in 6 chance one will try to seduce a PC.
- 785-884 Shut In-** Very nervous, on a rare trip outside (most likely for a hospital visit).
- 885-891 Street Preacher-** Shouting about his or her religion to anyone who comes by.
- 892-896 Tea Drinkers-** 1d4 members of the Tea Drinker gang.
- 897-906 Thieves-** A group of 1d4 thieves out casing houses or shoplifting.
- 907-912 Thief: Pickpocket-** With Pocket Picking (3), will try to pick on of the PC's pockets.
- 913-915 Trader-** 1 in 4 chance he or she will try to sell something to the PCs.
- 916-916 Utopia Child-** 1 in 10 chance he or she will try to befriend the PCs.
- 917-927 Visitor/Tourist-** Most likely here visiting family or seeking sex workers.
- 928-929 Volunteer-** An Indie doing homeless outreach work.
- 930-932 Water Rats-** 1d4 members of the Water Rats family.
- 933-942 Wild Dog Pack-** 2d4 hungry wild dogs looking for the weak or wounded to eat.
- 943-999 Winos-** 1d8 Winos, mostly intoxicated.
- 000-000 Y1-** A lone Y1, 1 in 6 chance he or she will want to hire PCs.

RANDOM NPC PERSONALITY AND BACKGROUND

Indie	Well	Street	
Values			
01-09	01-05	01-24	Wants to survive and avoid pain.
10-33	06-20	25-33	Wants to enjoy life.
34-42	21-35	34-51	Wants to be a good member of his or her community/social group.
43-67	36-60	52-70	Wants to help people and make the world a better place.
68-81	61-75	71-75	Wants to achieve something heroic or memorable.
82-86	76-85	76-94	Wants to have a family and children.
87-95	86-94	95-98	Wants to be a good member of his or her religion.
96-100	95-100	99-100	Wants to discover something about the universe that not everyone knows.
Family			
01-08	01-07	01-13	Family dead.
09-11	08-17	14-26	Grew up without a family.
12-19	18-34	27-29	Hates family and never speaks with them.
20-34	35-40	30-28	Family lives outside of the city, is friendly with them.
35-49	41-47	29-30	Family lives outside the city, doesn't speak to them often.
50-68	48-53	31-32	Family lives outside the city, NPC keeps his or her lifestyle secret from them.
69-81	54-75	33-34	Family lives inside the city, NPC keeps his or her lifestyle secret from them.
82-94	76-91	35-36	Family lives inside the city, doesn't like the NPC's lifestyle.
95-95	92-93	37-49	Family lives inside the city, are understanding of the NPC's lifestyle.
96-99	94-99	50-99	Family lives inside the city, most live by the same lifestyle as the NPC.
100-100	100-100	100-100	Family lives in the city, are members of an enemy group/gang.
Drugs			
01-07	01-07	01-08	Abstains, thinks everyone else should too.
08-15	08-14	09-16	Abstains, thinks some people should be allowed to use drugs.
16-22	15-22	17-24	Abstains, thinks drugs should be legalized.
23-34	23-33	25-32	Uses drugs, but only when they are useful.
35-42	34-40	33-41	Uses drugs for entertainment, but never "hard drugs."
43-56	41-52	42-49	Uses drugs as entertainment and an escape.
57-63	53-63	50-67	Uses drugs every night, whatever the NPC can get a hold of.
64-70	64-71	68-69	Uses drugs to try to improve himself of herself.
71-83	72-83	70-77	Addicted to drugs, trying hard to quit.
84-100	84-100	78-100	Addicted to drugs, satisfied with being an addict.
Gangs			
01-13	01-07	01-13	PC does not belong to a gang, does not like gangs or gang members.
14-26	08-13	14-26	PC does not belong to a gang, thinks some gang members are good people.
27-38	14-20	27-38	PC does not belong to a gang, admires gangs and gang members.
39-47	21-31	39-47	Belongs to a gang, agrees with the gang's ideology.
48-56	32-43	48-56	Belongs to a gang, feels the gang is like a family.
57-65	44-54	57-65	Belongs to a gang, has good friends in the gang.
66-74	55-66	66-74	Belongs to a gang, sees it as a temporary scheme for mutual self-defense.
75-82	67-77	75-82	Belongs to a gang, sees it as a life-long scheme for mutual self-defense.
83-91	78-89	83-91	Belongs to a gang, wants to become a leader and gain great power.
92-100	90-100	92-100	Belongs to a gang, isn't sure if he or she will stay or can stay loyal.
Gender/Orientation			
01-35	01-35	01-32	Male, heterosexual.
36-40	36-40	33-38	Male, bisexual.
41-45	41-45	39-45	Male, homosexual.
46-47	46-47	46-52	Male, transsexual.
48-50	48-50	53-53	Male, abstinent.
51-85	51-85	54-84	Female, heterosexual.
86-90	86-90	85-90	Female, bisexual.
91-95	91-95	91-97	Female, homosexual.
96-98	96-98	98-99	Female, transsexual.
99-100	99-100	100-100	Female, abstinent.
Sex			
01-23	01-23	01-18	Wants monogamy, no kids.
24-46	24-42	19-42	Wants monogamy, with kids.
47-65	43-65	43-60	Wants to sleep around, no kids.
66-83	66-83	61-83	Wants to sleep around and be an only parent.
84-96	84-97	84-97	Wants to indulge a sexual fetish.
97-100	98-100	98-100	Wants to engage in sexual violence or exploitation.
Corps/Gated Communities			
01-03	01-03	01-04	Too young to join a corp or gated community.
04-05	04-14	04-14	Too poor to join a corp or gated community.
06-08	15-25	15-25	Too mentally unstable to join a corp or gated community.
09-11	26-37	26-37	Too uneducated to join a corp. or gated community.
11-12	38-36	38-89	Unborn or illegal alien, so can't join a corp. or gated community.
13-27	37-48	90-91	Was in a corp. or gated community but was kicked out, looking to return.
28-39	49-59	92-93	Was in a corp. or gated community but was kicked out, plans to stay in the city.
40-42	60-71	94-95	Not interested, too many responsibilities and connections in the city.
43-65	72-77	96-96	Not interested on political grounds.
66-87	78-84	97-98	Not interested on philosophical/lifestyle grounds.
88-100	85-100	99-100	Not interested, thinks a corp. or gated community would be boring.

Indie	Well	Street	
Violence			
01-03	01-02	01-03	Pacifist, will not use violence under any circumstances.
04-25	03-18	04-22	Avoids violence but will defend self or another.
26-38	19-34	23-38	Doesn't want to be violent, but is because of bad temper or has mental problems.
39-56	35-51	39-51	Picks fights for fun and to express anger.
57-73	52-67	52-67	Uses violence as a tool for solving problems and defeating enemies.
74-83	68-84	68-84	Violent criminal, uses violence to help make money.
84-100	85-100	85-100	Uses violence, but only against people who are weaker and when there is no chance of getting caught.
Ancestry			
01-32	01-32	01-34	Several ethnic backgrounds, unable to distinguish any particular one.
33-34	33-34	35-36	Mostly or wholly Asian.
35-35	35-36	37-37	Mostly or wholly Native American.
36-51	37-51	38-56	Mostly or wholly African.
52-84	52-84	57-81	Mostly or wholly Caucasian.
85-94	85-94	82-95	Mostly or wholly Hispanic.
95-96	95-96	96-97	Mostly of wholly Middle Eastern.
97-98	97-98	98-98	Mostly or wholly Pacific Island native.
99-100	99-100	99-100	Mostly or wholly Indian.
Culture/Nationality			
01-42	01-38	01-29	Raised in America by "ordinary" Americans, has no feeling of heritage.
43-56	39-59	30-53	Raised in America by "ordinary" Americans, pride in heritage and ancestry.
57-76	60-76	54-67	Raised in America by "ordinary" Americans, doesn't know his or her heritage.
77-78	77-78	68-71	Raised in America by an immigrant community.
79-80	79-80	72-75	Raised in America by a minority group (e.g. carnies, amish, fundamentalist Christians), has rejected that group's lifestyle or beliefs.
81-82	81-82	76-78	Raised in America by a minority group (e.g. carnies, amish, fundamentalist Christians), adheres to that group's lifestyle or beliefs.
83-84	83-84	79-80	Born and raised in a 1 st world, English speaking country, has obtained US citizenship.
85-87	85-86	81-82	Born and raised in a 1 st world, English speaking country, here on a legal visa.
88-89	87-88	83-84	Born and raised in a 1 st world, English speaking country, in the country illegally.
90-91	89-90	85-86	Born and raised in a 1 st world, non-English speaking country, has obtained US citizenship.
91-92	91-92	87-88	Born and raised in a 1 st world, non-English speaking country, here on a legal visa.
93-94	93-94	89-90	Born and raised in a 1 st world, non-English speaking country, in the country illegally.
95-96	95-96	91-92	Born and raised in a 2 nd or 3 rd world country, has obtained US citizenship.
97-98	97-98	93-94	Born and raised in a 2 nd or 3 rd world country, here on a legal visa.
99-100	99-100	95-100	Born and raised in a 2 nd or 3 rd world country, in the country illegally.
Body Modification			
01-20	01-15	01-13	Has modifications, regrets it.
21-41	16-29	14-26	Has modifications, is happy with them.
42-61	30-44	27-39	Has modifications, wants more.
62-76	45-63	40-54	Doesn't have modifications, plans to get some soon.
77-85	64-81	55-77	Doesn't have modifications, would get some if he or she could afford it.
86-100	82-100	78-100	Doesn't have modifications, doesn't ever want any.
Style			
01-12	01-05	01-02	Subdued Bollywood style.
13-23	06-07	03-04	Extreme Bollywood style.
24-37	08-09	05-05	Corp/Mod style.
38-48	10-17	06-13	Subdued Goth style.
49-59	18-28	14-22	Extreme Goth style.
60-68	29-38	23-80	Homeless/Grunge style.
69-78	39-79	81-88	Old School Gang style.
79-90	80-89	89-92	Straight style.
91-100	90-100	93-100	Mix of styles (roll again twice).
Self Improvement			
01-11	01-09	01-06	NPC doesn't think anything needs to change.
12-22	10-19	07-19	NPC doesn't think positive change is possible.
23-32	20-28	20-26	NPC is deeply ashamed of his or her behaviors, wants to change.
33-43	29-48	27-47	NPC can't stand lifestyle, desperately wants to change it.
44-54	49-57	48-53	NPC wants to expand knowledge and interests, become more well rounded.
55-65	58-67	54-59	NPC wants to achieve great power or talent.
66-75	68-76	60-73	NPC wants to overcome some mental illness or serious personality flaw.
76-86	77-91	74-84	NPC wants to become a better member of his or her community/group/gang.
87-100	92-100	85-100	NPC wants to become more experienced and wise.
Fear			
01-08	01-08	01-13	Greatest fear is being tortured.
09-21	09-20	14-20	Greatest fear is a disfiguring disease.
22-30	21-28	21-33	Greatest fear is being a drug addict.
31-38	29-36	34-41	Greatest fear is never being loved.
39-46	37-49	42-54	Greatest fear is dying without having helped anyone.
47-54	50-56	55-61	Greatest fear is giving up on life.
55-62	57-64	62-69	Greatest fear is slavery.
63-75	65-77	70-77	Greatest fear is becoming disabled.
76-84	78-85	78-85	Greatest fear is going insane.
85-92	86-92	86-92	Greatest fear is being responsible for something horrible happening.
93-100	93-100	93-100	Greatest fear is having his or her terrible secret exposed.

RANDOM CITY PROBLEMS

01-06 Bad Pollution Day- The air is still and the smoke billowing from the city's factories hovers over the city. The cloud (p.193) begins to grow, eating some but not all of the pollution. The city is dark all day. As it gets worse, people will experience asthma then more serious problems. Eventually, the city government will put out an alert that everyone should stay inside. Everything outside becomes grimy and oily from exposure. The air smells bitter and acidic, anyone outside without at least a cloth will begin to cough and choke and could die.

07-14 Bad Weather- Depending upon the time of year, this could be a heat wave, a snowstorm or a torrential rainstorm. It is quite difficult and dangerous for anyone to do anything and most people try to stay home. Many Street People will die.

15-19 Big Fire- Several city blocks are ablaze. All of the Night Shift fire-division's resources are devoted to trying to contain the fire (and thus fires in other part of the city are left unchecked, arsonists are having a party). Smoke drifts across the city. Thousands of people have been made homeless and shut-ins are wandering the city in a daze, unsure where to go and easy prey for addicts and muggers.

20-24 Big Gang War- Several large gangs are engaged in fighting, meaning there are thousands of young gang members out on the street looking for a fight. Huge war parties can be seen walking down the streets. The city hospitals are choked with wounded. Looters follow the armies, stealing whatever they can in the chaos of battle. Many shops have closed their doors. Smart people avoid the subway, knowing it will be the scene of many bloody confrontations.

25-26 Earthquake- A large earthquake has rocked the city, destroying many buildings. The worst hit are the old condemned buildings that homeless people live in. Power and internet is out over most of the city, much of the water supply has been contaminated by sewage, there are fires everywhere that the Night Shift can't keep up with. Fires at industrial plants spill toxic smoke in to the air. Addicts and thugs all over the city are looting. Homeless shut-ins are wandering the streets in the thousands. Some have banded together for self-protection and to fight off looters. Other have joined in on the looting. The city hospital is so choked with wounded that it has tuned the parking lot in to a triage. The state government is doing whatever it can to restore order, including sending the national guard in to distribute food. Increased chance of a plague outbreak, increased chance of rioting.

27-31 Garbage Strike- A noxious smell fills the streets, piles of garbage keep getting bigger and overflow on to the streets. Rats are going crazy and incidences of bites increase.

32-36 Internet Outage- NYR-LAN, the city's biggest internet service provider, is down. Most cellphones still work, and some Indies and government offices still have service, but otherwise the city is left without communication and entertainment. Smash-and-grab burglars, knowing that few shut-ins can call the police, are going on a spree. Shut-ins are pacing their apartments nervously, starved for human contact and entertainment and unable to order grocery delivery. If the outage goes on long enough they may arm themselves with steak-knives, drink some alcohol for courage, and leave their apartments. If enough people are out on the streets, a riot is likely.

37-40 Kidnapped Child- Some Indie child has gone missing, making VR news state wide. The NYPD day shift has been forced to get off their butts and help the night shift look for the kid with help from the FBI. There is a reward on the kid which means that many Freelancers and other assorted people are out looking for the kid.

41-44 National Guard Maneuvers- The National Guard has taken over some part of the city with no legal habitation (typically some place in the Bowery). They've chased out all the homeless people and they are doing combat simulations.

45-49 No Subway Service- The subways have stopped running. Major avenues have crowds of people walking across the city. Many people stop going to work and most restaurants and shops are understaffed or closed. Young teens take this opportunity to explore the subway tunnels. Small chance of rioting.

50-54 Plague- A massive plague just exploded in the city. The CDC has ordered a quarantine lockdown and is flying around in helicopters ordering people in to their homes. The city is waiting to see how bad things get and the city hospital is gearing up for being overrun with patients. From here this could become a plague that only kills a few and goes away in a few days or it could become a plague that terrorizes the city for weeks and kills hundreds.

55-60 Power Outage- A power outage has struck the city. Bored VR Addicts are leaving their homes for the first time in weeks. Shops have closed their doors and brought down steel gates. The longer the blackout lasts, the more the chance of rioting.

61-67 Riot- Almost anything can spark off a riot, from bad weather, to a utility outage. Every once in a while they will happen for no specific reason – a group of people start smashing windows and grabbing things and everyone else joins in. The Night Shift might be able to put the riot down, or a huge riot might leave a streak of destruction through the city before the National Guard puts it down.

68-73 Serial Killer- Over the last few weeks people have been finding the corpses of people raped, murdered and mutilated by a serial killer. Amateur profilers and the Night Shift are at all the crime scenes and local gangs are patrolling the streets.

74-78 Sewage Overflow- For a several block area the streets have raw sewage flowing. Basements are flooded and people living in below-ground apartments have been left homeless. The stench can be smelled halfway across the city.

79-82 Spree Killer- Someone with a gun has snapped and is going around shooting people. The Night Shift are out looking for the person and will call in the National Guard when they find him or her. Most everyone else who has heard about the spree is staying off the streets. Businesses and offices are closing.

83 Tidal Wave- An off-shore earthquake has caused a massive wall of water to travel through long-island sound and explode through the Harlem and Hudson Rivers. Cities on Long Island are the worst hit and they are getting all of the state and federal aid. In the city, the streets are flooded, a few houses near the sunken city have been knocked down, many people are homeless and wandering the streets.

84-88 Trucker Strike- The truckers who bring food (among other things) in to the city have gone on strike. The grocery stores are running out of food, especially since many entrepreneurs are buying up all the food, hoping to sell it back at a significant markup if the strike goes on much longer. Grocers are upping their prices and a few are driving outside of the city in personal automobiles to buy food and bring it back. Street People will suffer the most, since people will be throwing out less food. Wells and Indies will usually be able to survive for some time on old cans and packages of ramen noodles in their cabinets.

89-93 Violent Crime Spree- A bunch of teens on a God Killer binge have decided that they can get away with running around the city raping, killing and stealing. They spend whatever they steal on God Killer, fueling this sleepless, fearless, thoughtless rampage. Such rampages do not last long: the kids will soon be tracked down by the Night Shift or will try to attack a group of people that they can not beat.

94-97 Visiting Politician- A politician is making a tour of the city, perhaps visiting shut-ins or doing something else to publicly feign support for the city's voters. The politician has a security detail (Secret Service if they are a big enough politician) but since they can't bring guns in to the city they have the National Guard ready to come in if there is a problem. Security knows the route the politician will take and is going ahead to clean up any potential dangers or embarrassments.

98-00 Welfare Payments Late- Budget problems or computer errors have caused public assistance payments to not be made. As this goes on, people will become more and more desperate. Fridges will empty, VR service will stop, landlords will start trying to evict people. Day by day, the chance of rioting will increase.

RANDOM PERSONAL PROBLEMS

Street Person

- 01-06 Bad Breakup-** The PC was dating someone briefly and just broke it off, the other person is not taking it well.
- 07-12 Broken Bone-** One of the PC's arms or legs is in a cast, and will be for 2d6 weeks.
- 13-19 Cold or Flu-** The PC is suffering from a bad cold or flu and is at -4 INL, END, AGY. The more the PC exerts himself or herself, the worse the cold or flu will get.
- 20-26 Dental Problem-** The PC is distracted by a painful dental problem (20 difficulty distracting pain) and has a hard time eating.
- 27-33 Forced to Move-** The PC has suddenly been forced to move from the abandoned space he or she was using. The PC has all of his or her worldly possessions in a shopping cart and needs to scout out and set up a new place to sleep for the night.
- 34-40 Friend in Crisis-** A friend of the PC's is having some personal crisis related to drugs or mental health.
- 41-47 Friend/Relative Died-** A close friend or relative of the PC's just died, the funeral will be tomorrow.
- 48-54 Gang War-** (Reroll if the PC is not in a street family.) The PC's family is in a major war, with both sides sending war parties to try to kill each other. The PC will be expected to go to war and is danger when he or she is on the streets.
- 55-61 Hangover/Withdrawal-** The PC just did too many

drugs and is suffering from bad after-effects, including headache and nausea. (If the PC abstains, the drugs were taken accidentally or against the PC's will).

62-68 Infected Injury- The PC had a deep cut that became infected. The PC suffers from the infection on p.73 at 1x.

69-74 Parasites- Something the PC ate is living in the PC's digestive system causing many digestive problems as well as fever and weakness (-4 END). The infection has a disease progression rating of 20 and a progression speed of 24 hours.

75-80 Ruined Clothing- The PC's only good outfit just got ruined, until the PC can find a new one he or she must go around half-clothed or in clothing that is badly ripped or stained with an awful smelling substance.

81-87 Sick Relative- A close relative of the PC is very ill and the PC is required to take turns (along with other relatives) caring for this relative.

88-93 Tear Gassed- The PC was hit by some teargas recently (most likely the PC was just in the wrong place at the wrong time) and is suffering from ill effects. For the next 24 hours the PC will cough a lot, will be a little wheezy (-3 END) and will have painful bloodshot eyes (10 difficulty distracting pain).

94-00 Unwashed- The PC has been unable to find a place to bathe for several days (or has been too busy to bathe) and smells quite bad. The PC is at -10 to seduction rolls and if he or she takes bladed damage is at -7 to save vs. infection.

RANDOM POCKET CONTENTS

Indie (roll five times)

- 01-03 Nothing
- 04-08 \$2d20 worth of drugs (with necessary drug paraphernalia)
- 08-16 \$4d20 in cash
- 17-19 Breath Mints
- 20-26 Cellphone
- 27-31 Cigarettes and Lighter
- 32-36 Condoms
- 37-41 Digital Camera: Cheap
- 72-44 Hip Flask filled with Alcohol
- 45-52 Housekeys
- 53-59 ID, Bank Card
- 60-64 Keychain Flashlight
- 65-66 Lock Picks: Professional
- 67-71 Palmtop Communicator
- 72-73 Religious Icon
- 74-76 Single-Shot Gun
- 77-81 Swiss Army Knife
- 82-88 Switchblade
- 89-96 Taser Gun
- 97-00 Telescoping Baton

Well (roll four times)

- 01-08 Nothing
- 08-13 \$2d6 worth of drugs (with necessary drug paraphernalia)
- 13-21 \$3d20 in cash
- 22-25 Breath Mints
- 26-32 Cellphone
- 33-37 Cigarettes

- 38-44 Condoms
- 45-50 Crate Cutter
- 51-55 Digital Camera: Cheap
- 56-58 Hip Flask filled with Alcohol
- 59-66 Housekeys
- 67-74 ID, Bank Card
- 75-79 Keychain Flashlight
- 80-81 Lock Picks: Professional
- 82-84 Palmtop Organizer
- 85-86 Religious Icon
- 87-89 Ripper
- 90-92 Shiv
- 93-95 Swiss Army Knife
- 96-00 Switchblade

Street Person (roll three times)

- 01-13 Nothing
- 14-21 \$1d20 worth of drugs (+ necessary drug paraphernalia)
- 22-30 \$1d6 worth of cash
- 31-40 Cigarettes and Lighter
- 41-48 Condoms
- 49-57 Crate Cutter
- 58-63 Hip Flask filled with Alcohol
- 59-72 Lock Picks: Homemade
- 73-78 Razorblade covered with Drake Blood Poison
- 79-83 Religious Icon
- 84-91 Ripper
- 92-00 Shiv

Shut-In (roll three times)

- 01-10 Nothing
- 11-24 \$4d20 worth of cash
- 25-30 Breath Mints
- 31-37 Cellphone
- 38-52 ID, bank card, housekeys
- 53-62 Kubotan
- 63-75 Pepper Spray
- 76-85 Personal Sonic Alarm
- 86-90 Religious Icon
- 91-00 Taser

Addict (roll two times)

- 01-50 Nothing
- 51-60 \$2d6 worth of change
- 61-80 \$3d6 worth of drugs (+ necessary drug paraphernalia)
- 81-90 Crate Cutter
- 91-00 Shiv

Crazy (roll three times)

- 01-15 Nothing
- 16-23 \$1d6 worth of change
- 24-32 Cigarette Butts
- 33-41 Dried Leaves
- 42-51 Half-Eaten Food
- 52-61 Old Paperback Book (with strange notes in margins)
- 62-69 Razorblade covered with Drake Blood Poison
- 70-79 Religious Icon
- 80-92 Shiv
- 93-00 Wad of Bloody Toilet Paper

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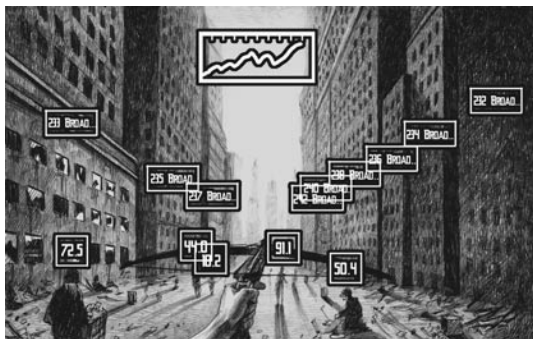
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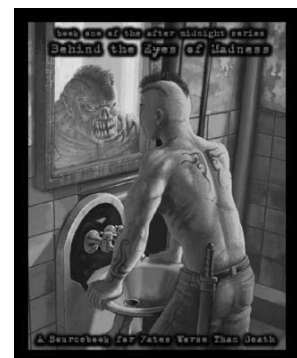
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CONCEPT			
Legal Name	_____	Age	_____
Street Name(s)	_____	Gender	_____
Player Name	_____	Orientation	_____
		Character Class	_____
		Socioeconomic Class	_____
		Home Neighborhood	_____
Worldviews	Ideals	Appearance	
_____	_____	_____	
_____	_____	_____	
_____	_____	_____	
Advantages	Disads		
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

	Base	Current	Plusses/Minuses
AGY	_____	_____	_____
AWR	_____	_____	_____
CHM	_____	_____	_____
END	_____	_____	_____
INL	_____	_____	_____
SPD	_____	_____	_____
STH	_____	_____	_____
WIL	_____	_____	_____
			Health Attributes
BLD	_____	_____	_____
BDY	_____	_____	_____
INCY	_____	_____	_____

[illegible]

Weekly Income/Costs			
\$ ____/wk. for ____	_____	_____	\$ ____ on person
\$ ____/wk. for ____	_____	_____	\$ ____ in bank
\$ ____/wk. for ____	_____	_____	\$ ____ hidden@home
\$ ____/wk. for ____	_____	_____	\$ ____ hidden _____
\$ ____/wk. for ____	_____	_____	\$ ____ hidden _____
\$ ____/wk. for ____	_____	_____	\$ ____ held by _____

Skill Costs: ATH____ BIO____ CMBT____ CRTV____ INFO____ INTL____ MIL____ PSY:X____ PSY:M____ PSY:S____
TECH____ THIE____ STRT____ SOC____ Special____
Unspent XP____ Total Earned XP____ Levels/Disciplines____

FATES WORSE THAN DEATH

Combat Sheet for _____

ARMOR

Armor Name	AR	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	PR	Penalties
		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		

COMBAT SKILLS

Skill	Levels	Actions/Reactions

COMBAT RANGES



COMBAT MODIFIERS

Aim	+4 to roll
Blinded (Full)	-15 to roll
Blinded (Partial)	-7 to roll
Burst	-4 to roll
Extended Action	+5 to roll (-10 to next reaction)
Improvised Weapon	-8 to most rolls
Leaning	-10 to roll
Paired	-4 to roll
Simultaneous Act	-20 +WIL to roll
Split	-10 to rolls
Targeted	-4 to roll
Underwater	-8 to rolls, half damage

UNARMED

Punch Dmg _____	Kick Dmg _____	Unarmed Plusses _____
Action/Reaction	Att1 + Att2 + Skill + Misl = Total + 1d20 vs. Difficulty	

MELEE WEAPONS

Weapon _____	Dmg _____	Range _____	Pierces As _____
Action/Reaction	Att1 + Att2 + Skill + Misl = Total + 1d20 vs. Difficulty		

PROJECTILE WEAPONS

Weapon _____	Dmg _____	FR _____	MR _____	ROF _____
Pierces As _____	Clip Holds _____	Amount of Ammo _____		
Action/Reaction	Att1 + Att2 + Skill + Misl = Total -1/FR+1d20 vs. Difficulty			

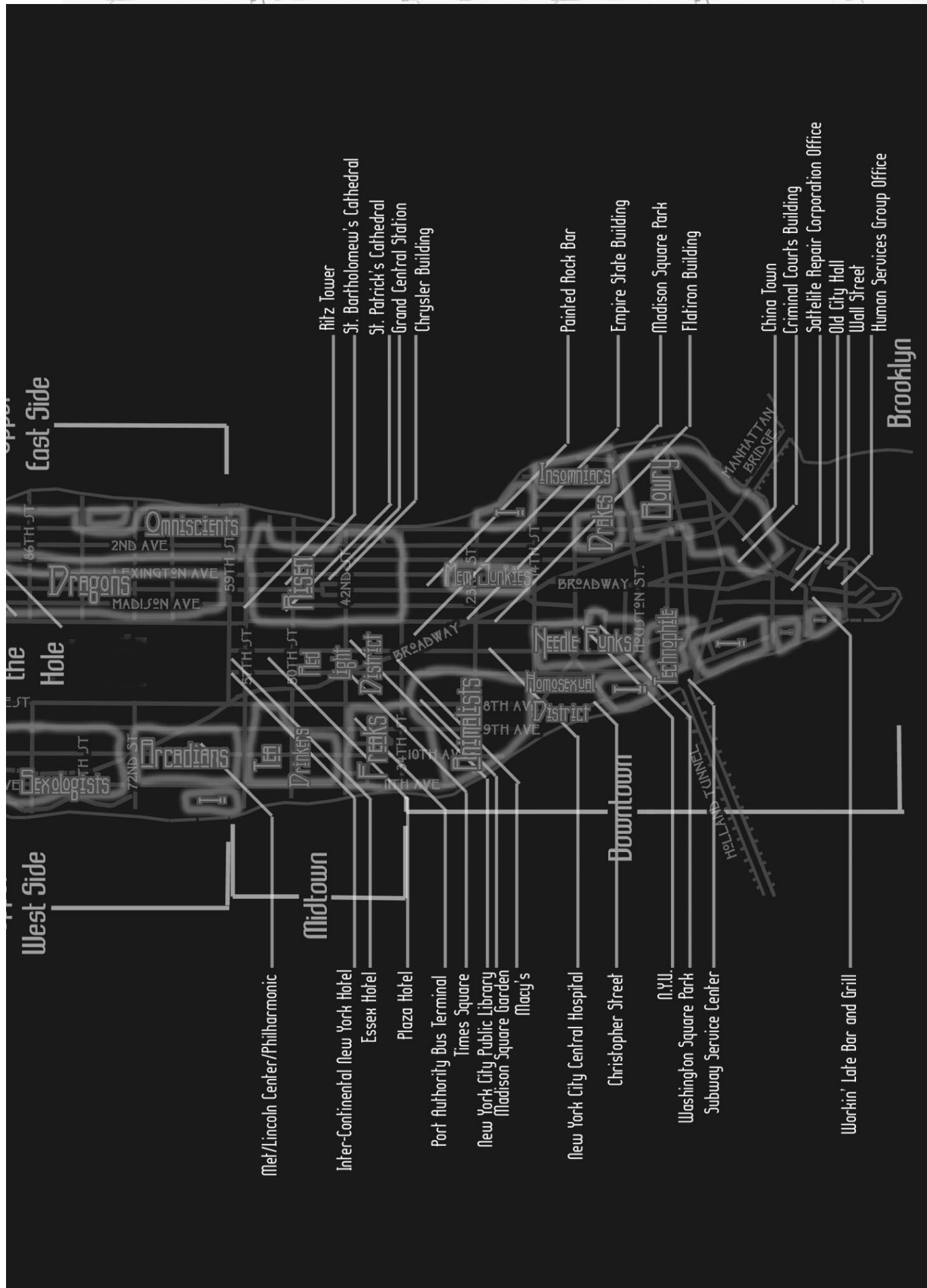
ACTIONS

Area Attack	INL+#of shots+1d20 vs. 25+area in ft.
Blinding Strike	INL+AGY+1d20 vs. 30
Crippling Attack	STH+INL+1d20 vs. 30
Disarm	STH+AGY+1d20 vs. 30
Grab	STH+AGY+1d20 vs. 25
Grab (Pain)	STH+INL+1d20 vs. 35
Grab (Strangle)	STH+AGY+1d20 vs. 25
Grab (Wrestling)	STH+INL+1d20 vs. 30
Knockaway	STH+AGY+1d20 vs. 25
Knockdown	STH+AGY+1d20 vs. 30
Knockout	STH+AGY+1d20 vs. 30
Pain/Stun	INL+AGY+1d20 vs. 25
Slash	INL+AGY+1d20 vs. 25
Stomp	SPD+STH+1d20 vs. 25
Strike (Handheld)	STH+AGY+1d20 vs. 25
Strike (Projectile)	INL+AGY+1d20 vs. 25
Tackle	SPD+STH+1d20 vs. 20
Vital Strike (Bladed)	INL+AGY+1d20 vs. 35
Vital Strike (Blunt)	INL+STH+1d20 vs. 40
Wing	INL+AGY+1d20 vs. 20

REACTIONS

Dodge	AWR+AGY+1d20 vs. 25
Entangle	INL+STH+1d20 vs. 30
Flip	AGY+STH+1d20 vs. 35
Drop	AWR+AGY+1d20 vs. 20
Jump	SPD+AGY+1d20 vs. 25
Mental Block	WIL+1d20 vs. 20
Parry	STH+AGY+1d20 vs. 25





QUICK REF

Weapon Specific Difficulties

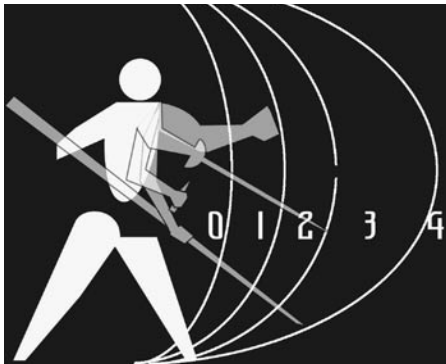
Very Easy (-8 difficulty)
Easy (-4 difficulty)
Hard (+4 difficulty)
Very Hard (+8 difficulty)

Improvised Weapons

Slashing Weapons : 1 bladed damage, -8 to actions except pain/stun, blinding and slash.

Poking Weapons: ½ point bladed damage, -8 to actions except blinding strike, pain/stun and vital strike.

Blunt Weapons: 1 to 3, -8 to any actions with these weapons except strike and pain/stun.



Combat Modifiers

Aim	+4 to roll
Blinded (Full)	-15 to roll
Blinded (Partial)	-7 to roll
Burst	-4 to roll
Extended Action	+5 to roll (-10 to next reaction)
Improvised Weapon	-8 to most rolls
Leaning	-10 to roll
Paired	-4 to roll
Simultaneous Act	-20 +WIL to roll
Split	-10 to rolls
Targeted	-4 to roll
Underwater	-8 to rolls, half damage

Actions

Area Attack	INL+#of shots+1d20 vs. 25+area in ft.
Blinding Strike	INL+AGY+1d20 vs. 30
Crippling Attack	STH+INL+1d20 vs. 30
Disarm	STH+AGY+1d20 vs. 30
Grab	STH+AGY+1d20 vs. 25
Grab (Pain)	STH+INL+1d20 vs. 35
Grab (Strangle)	STH+AGY+1d20 vs. 25
Grab (Wrestling)	STH+INL+1d20 vs. 30
Knockaway	STH+AGY+1d20 vs. 25
Knockdown	STH+AGY+1d20 vs. 30
Knockout	STH+AGY+1d20 vs. 30
Pain/Stun	INL+AGY+1d20 vs. 25
Slash	INL+AGY+1d20 vs. 25
Stomp	SPD+STH+1d20 vs. 25
Strike (Handheld)	STH+AGY+1d20 vs. 25
Strike (Projectile)	INL+AGY+1d20 vs. 25
Tackle	SPD+STH+1d20 vs. 20
Vital Strike (Bladed)	INL+AGY+1d20 vs. 35
Vital Strike (Blunt)	INL+STH+1d20 vs. 40
Wing	INL+AGY+1d20 vs. 20

Reactions

Dodge	AWR+AGY+1d20 vs. 25
Entangle	INL+STH+1d20 vs. 30
Flip	AGY+STH+1d20 vs. 35
Drop	AWR+AGY+1d20 vs. 20
Jump	SPD+AGY+1d20 vs. 25
Mental Block	WIL+1d20 vs. 20
Parry	STH+AGY+1d20 vs. 25

Character Creation in Brief

Step 1 - Character Concept: Your idea of the character: name, appearance, values, etc.

Step 2 - Personality Variables: Choose 3 Personal Ideals and 3 Worldviews.

Step 3 - Attributes: Split 80 points between 8 attributes (min 1, max 20). Choose optional sub-attributes (costs or gives 1 bonus point).

Step 4 - Socioeconomic Class: Choose from Street Person, Well or Indie. Then choose a subtype within that class.

Step 5 - Choose Character Class: Depending on socioeconomic class, choose the PC's place in city society.

Step 6 - Choose Skills: Spend 100 Skill Points, skill costs set by character class.

Step 7 - Buy Equipment: Available money set by character class.

Step 8 - Bonus Characteristics: PC starts with neutral balance. Advantages must be balanced out by disadvantages.

Step 9 - Character Advancement: Use XP to gain experience levels and improve the PC.

Spending BP/XP

1 Bonus Point = 1 Attribute Point = 10 XP

3 Bonus Points = 1 Health Attribute Points = 30 XP

1 Bonus Point = 3 Skill Points = 2 XP

For Street People: 1 Bonus Point = \$125.

For Wells: 1 Bonus Point = \$250.

For Indies: 1 Bonus Point = \$500

Sample Difficulties

0- Automatic Success

5- Walk down stairs briskly. (AGY)

10- (Easy) Notice a mosquito on PC's skin. (AWR)

15- (Easy-Moderate) Paint ceiling from flimsy ladder. (AGY)

20- (Moderate) Win a game of mah-jongg. (INL)

25- (Moderate-Hard) Catch paper flying in the wind. (AGY)

30- (Hard) Get burned and not flinch. (WIL)

40- (Legendary) Lift a pony over PC's head. (STH)

City Knowledge (INL)

Easy (10)- Figure out whose turf the PC is on by looking at graffiti -or- Navigate by finding common land marks.

Easy/Moderate (15)- Find the closest black market trader to the PC's home.

Moderate (20)- Figure out what turf the PC is on by looking at the cross streets.

Moderate/Hard (25)- Recognize the leaders of every city street gang by sight.

Hard (30)- Give any information listed anywhere in the PC Groups chapter -or- Recite the complete subway timetables.

Hard/Legendary (35)- Recognize, and tell the exact location of, some random alley by a photograph.

Legendary (40)- Figure out where in the city the PC is by smell alone.

Psychic Modifiers

Manipulation Rolls

Manip. target remotely: -1/ft.
Everyone in range effected: +10

Sensory Rolls

Touching the source: -0
Sensing remotely: -1/ft.
Being in a crowd: -1/4 people

Modifiers to Code Breaking

Small Sample Size -5

Large Sample Size +5

Knowing what encryption software was used +5

Knowing what type of data is encrypted +5

Using old code breaking software -1/month

Having part of the unencrypted message +5

Cryptography Success

-50: > lifetime of universe.

-40: 10,000 years.

-30: 100 years.

-20: One year.

-10: One month.

0: One week.

1: One day.

3: One hour

5: 30 minutes.

10: 30 seconds.

20: One second.

30: Instantaneously.

Successful Homework Results

(roll on 1d100):

01-20: Physical location of the system or network and what physical security measures protect it.

21-40: Location on internal network (+10 to Network Protocol rolls to find system)

41-60: The type of system, software running on it, and security setup. (+10 to Finding a Hole)

61-80: The composition, skills, habits and policies of the network security team. (+10 to any opposed rolls vs. system security)

81-00: Information about the internal structure of the company (+10 to any further social engineering rolls).

Save vs.	Rolled on
Disease Contraction	END
Disease Progression	END
Fall/Skid Damage	AGY
Fear	WIL
Heat Exhaustion	END
Hypothermia	END
Loss of Balance	AGY
Nausea	WIL
Pain	WIL
Paralysis	END
Physiological Addiction	END
Physiological Drug Effects	END
Psychological Addiction	WIL
Psychological Drug Effects	WIL or INL
Unconsciousness	END/WIL
Shock	END

Conversions

1 ft. = 0.3048 m. or ~ 1/3 m.

1 mi. = 1.6093km. or ~1 1/2 km.

1 lb. = .4536 kg. or ~ 1/2 kg.

1 m. = 2.74311 ft. or ~2.75 ft.

1 km. = .62131 mi. or ~2/3 mi.

1 kg. = 2.2046 lbs. or ~2 lbs.

Other Types of Damage

Burn: When a person is burned, 4 effects happen:

- BLD damage (1 point per point of burn damage).
- Pain (WIL+1d20 vs. 10/point of damage).
- Physiological Shock (END+1d20 vs. 5/point of damage).
- Increased chance of infection (-5 to save vs. disease contraction/point of damage).

Cold: Make saves vs. hypothermia hourly. 1st failure halves all attributes, each additional failure does 1 BLD damage.

Crippling Damage: ½ damage will make a hand unusable or badly damage a foot. 1 damage will make an arm or leg unusable. See Crippling Attack (p.70) for more.

Dropped Objects: Do blunt damage = weight (divided by 10 lbs) times number of stories. E.G. 20 lb. object dropped 5 stories does 10 blunt damage.

Electricity: When harmful levels of electricity run through a person, four effects happen:

- Paralysis (WIL+END+1d20 vs. 20/point of damage), paralysis only lasts while the electricity is running.
- Unconsciousness (WIL+END+1d20 vs. 10 per point of damage)
- Heart Attack (END+1d20 vs. 5/point of damage), see Symptoms/Effects (p.57).
- Burn Damage: 1 point of burn damage for every 4 points of electrical damage.

Explosion: Explosions can do one, two or all three of the following:

- Incendiary Damage (same as Burn damage)
- Concussion Damage (same as Blunt damage)
- Shrapnel (same as Bladed damage, the amount is usually expressed as a dice roll and typically pierces armor)

END Damage: Some toxins to END damage. Every point of damage takes away 1 pooled END. When pooled END is at 0, damage is done to BLD.

Falling: 2 blunt damage for each story fallen (a story is ~10 ft). Armor cannot protect from this damage.

Heat: Make saves vs. heat exhaustion hourly. 1st failure halves all attributes, each additional failure does 1 BLD damage.

Hunger: For every two days without food: -½ BLD, -4 END.

Radiation: For every point of damage: 1 BLD damage, Vomiting (10), Headache (10), fatigue (-2 END), confusion (-1 INL, AWR). Effects develop over 24 hours. BLD damage is permanent (unless bone marrow transplants are given). Strong likelihood (25% per point of damage) of developing cancer and cataracts within the next year.

Ragged: Like bladed damage, but with an increased chance of infection after the battle (see p.73). For each point of ragged damage taken, PC gets -5 to save vs. disease contraction.

Skidding: For each 20 SPD the PC is moving at: 1 bladed 1 blunt damage. Less if the ground is very soft, more if it is rocky.

Sleep Deprivation: For every 24 hours without sleep: -3 to AWR, CHM, INL and END. Must save vs. hallucinations and delusions at (3 difficulty per 24 hours). Must make saves vs. unconsciousness (15 difficulty per 24 hours) when not doing anything.

Strangulation/Loss of Oxygen: PC loses 1 pooled END per round (in addition to pooled END being lost for other reasons). The PC can not regain pooled END by resting. When END reaches 0, PC loses 1 BLD per round. When the PC can breathe normally again, lost END and BLD returns 1 per round.

Thirst: ½ BLD damage per day.

Drug/Poison/Disease Effects

Anterograde Amnesia (INL): Cannot remember anything about his or her past.

Cardiac Arrest (END): 1 BLD damage per round.

Coma (END): Unconscious and unable to waken. With a failure of 10+ the user suffers cardiac arrest.

Delusions (WIL): Believes without reservation some thought or idea (e.g. I am impervious to bullets).

Dysphoria (WIL): Overwhelmed by unhappiness/depression and unable to initiate any activity.

Euphoria (WIL): Overwhelmed by pleasure and unable to initiate any activity.

Hallucinations (WIL): Senses things which he or she is unable to distinguish from real sensations.

Headache (WIL): -1 penalty to all rolls per point of failure.

Insomnia (WIL): Sleep deprivation damage as 1 night without sleep.

Obfuscating Hallucinations (WIL): Unable to see, hear or feel real stimuli because of hallucinations.

Panic (WIL): Does anything to escape danger. With failure of 10+ the user makes random counterproductive actions.

Paralysis (WIL): Unable to move. With a failure of 10+ user is unable to breathe.

Pulmonary Arrest (END): 1 END damage per round, then 1 BLD damage per round.

Retrograde Amnesia (INL): Will not later remember anything that happened during intoxication.

Seizures (WIL): Loses consciousness for 1d6 minutes, loses all pooled END. With a failure of 5+ there is possible of physical injury. With failure of 10+ there is brain damage (-1 INL, AWR or AGY).

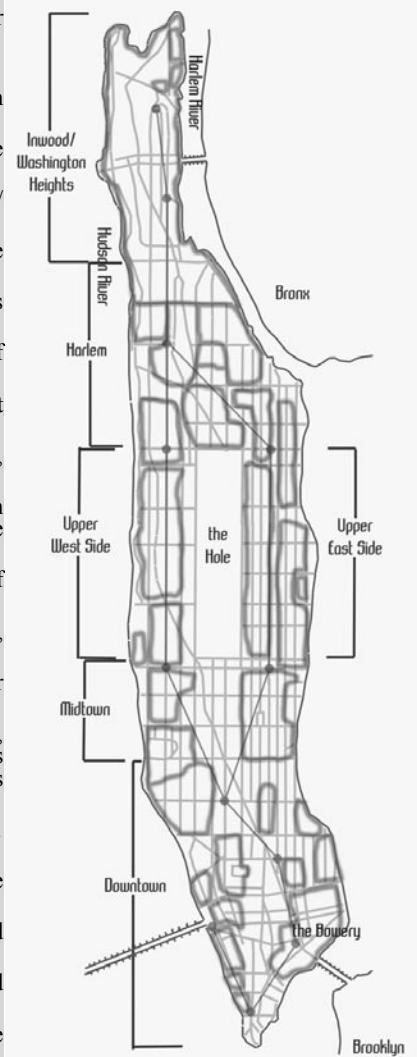
Shock (END): END = 0, all other attributes halved. 1 BLD damage per minute.

Stupor (WIL): Unable to think, remember, concentrate or make decisions (INL = 0, WIL = 0).

Sudden Amnesia (WIL): Forgets where he or she is and what's going on, takes 1d6 rounds to remember.

Unconsciousness (END/WIL): Unless specified otherwise, lasts 1 round per point of failure.

Vomiting (WIL): -20 to all other actions while vomiting.



Timeline

2030- Hacker's Guild forms.

2040- 92% of world's businesses owned by three large corporations.

2041- Neural Restructuring Technology ("Mental Programming") discovered.

2043- Riots in NY over conditions of the working class.

2045- India Chemical Fire Disaster drastically increases global warming.

2045- First HDNA Virus outbreak in SE Asia.

2046- God Killer invented.

2046- Psychic energy receptors in brain first discovered.

2049- Ghosts discovered by scientists.

2050- Mason Marks assassinated, massive rioting.

2050- Freedom Army bombs major govt. and corp bldgs.

2050- Freedom Army gains control of many nations, including most of US.

2051- Forced registration of psychics in Freedom Army controlled territories.

2051- Freedom Army experiments with genetically enhanced soldiers.

2052- Freedom Army discovers existence of Clowdian aliens.

2053- Freedom Army closes off subways and sewer tunnels.

2053- City Rebel factions meet.

2054- Freedom Army creates nanobots, rebels release predator nanobots.

2054- City rebels bomb and sabotage Jeffrey Hernandez' satellite. Tide of war turns.

2055- Last Freedom Army soldiers flee New York.

2055- International Restoration Committee forms.

2055- First post-Freedom War corporations founded.

2057- Nuclear cleanup of Manhattan ends, homeless refugees shunted to city.

2058- Utopianist movement begins.

2059- Final drawing of national boundaries.

2060- Restoration Committee disbands.

2060- Internet working steadily again.

2061- First non-medical mental program approved by FDA.

2061- Cloud City founded.

2063- Gated Communities become popular.

2065- Restoration Committee disbands itself.

2065- Consumer full-immersion VR fantasy worlds become popular.

2073- Peak of the "Old Times" of powerful drug gangs in the city.

2074- Colin begins reproducing.

2075- Drug Lords consolidate, drug gangs decline, "new gangs" begin to form.

2075- Colin discovered.

2078- Trace introduced by the Drug Lords.

2080- Present Day