

The Real Cyberpunk Fakebook



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START OF THIS PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK THE REAL CYBERPUNK FAKEBOOK

The Real Cyberpunk Fakebook, by St. Jude, R.U. Sirius and Bart Nagel (C)1995 Ken Goffman and Jude Milhon

This file contains the first three and half chapters.

From Michael

I changed a few spaces here and there to make it look better onscreen, >>let me know if you have any suggestions, corrections, additions, etc.

From Jude

orright, michael: i played with the formatting. it's HELL to make things look good in ASCII, but it looks bettah.

okay, michael, stand back... here it comes....

i'm sending cybpunk fakebook as a MIME-encoded attachment AND a paste-in...

look out.... it's terribly silly....

Dear Michael Hart and Project Gutenberg:

This text comes over a little odd in ASCII. Like MONDO2000-- the zine we made infamous-- this book relies on its wacked layout and bizarre illustrations for much of its meaning, not to say charm.

And it was difficult to figure what should be considered the first chapter, for obvious reasons. I think the first chapter really includes Section II, but never mind. Here it is, the beginning of...

* THE

* REAL

* CYBERPUNK

* FAKEBOOK

* By St. Jude, R.U.Sirius, and Bart Nagel

Dedication: For all our parents and lovers and housemates and children and friends, for the Cypherpunks, for Kevin Crow, Nesta Stubbs, The Omega, Phiber, and hackers everywhere.

=====

||| INTRODUCTION to The Real Cyberpunk Fakebook || by Bruce Sterling, || A Renowned Cyberpunk Writer |||

=====

I like this book so much that I'm thinking of changing my name to St.Erling. You couldn't ask for better guides to faking cyberpunk than these two utterly accomplished Bay Area fraudsters. These two characters are such consummate boho hustlers that they make Aleister Crowley look like Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm.

I don't believe in smart drugs, and I've never believed in smart drugs, but I do believe the following. It's genuinely useful to society to have some small, contained fraction of reckless fools who are willing to consume untested and unknown devices and substances. Sure, most of them will have their hearts explode or break out into great purple bleeding thalidomide warts. But who knows, maybe someday one of these jaspers will be eating handfuls of psychoactive crap out of some hippie pharmacy and he or she will suddenly learn to read Japanese in the original in six days. That's not at all likely, but it could happen-- grant me the possibility.

The only drawback to this decentralized, libertarian, free-market regime of biomedical research is that you have to be ruthlessly prepared to sacrifice certain people-- just write 'em off, basically, like a cageful of control hamsters down at the NIMH. And if I ever met a man uniquely suited to this particular cutting-edge role in life, it is R.U. Sirius. R. U. Sirius basically resembles Gomez Addams in a purple fedora with an Andy Warhol badge pinned to the brim. The moment I met R.U., I felt a strong need to pith him and examine his viscera. I'm sure there are many other freelance biomedical

researchers who will feel the same intellectual impulse. Read this book and you'll see what I mean.

Then there's this saint person. Never draw to an inside straight. Never eat at a place called Mom's. And never eat a bag of ephedrine and a pumpkin pie ("the *whip* of vegetables!") from a California blonde who doesn't even have a real name. This female personage is so appallingly cagey that even her main squeeze delights in cryptographically baffling the NSA. If Pat Buchanan ever gets his not-so- secret wish and sets up a domestic American gulag for counterculture thought-criminals, the Judester's gonna be way, way up on the list-- maybe even number two, right after Bob Dobbs. Her trial's likely to prove rather interesting, however, as she only commits "crimes" in areas of social activity that haven't even been defined yet, much less successfully criminalized. A serious legal study of this woman's spectrum of activities would be like a CAT-scan of the American unconscious.

There's also Bart Nagel, who is too nice a guy to be in the company of these people.

Almost everything in this swell book is completely true. Except for everything about me. And my closest co- conspirators. We actual cyberpunks-- by this I mean *science fiction writers*, dammit, the people for whom the c-word was invented, the people who were professionally ahead of our time and were cyberpunks *twelve years ago*-- we never sneer and we never dress like, God forbid, Tom Wolfe. We just laugh at inappropriate times (like when testifying in Congress) and we dress and act just like industrial design professors.

I hope this brief intro clears up any confusion. If you have any trouble at all with this book, take full advantage of your online d00dship and send email. Don't be afraid to ask "stupid" questions-- that's what the Internet is for! Ask nice, big, broad, open-ended questions. Stuff like "I'm doing a term paper so please tell me everything you know about cyberspace" or "I'm cyberpunk fan from Bulgaria and Enlgish not too good, but please say more what is about Virtual Reality?"

Just don't send the email to me, of course. Send email to them. After this book, they deserve it! I feel sure that you'll get prompt answers that will surprise you.

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||| The || Authors || Explain: ||| A Technical Guide To This Technical Guide |||

=====

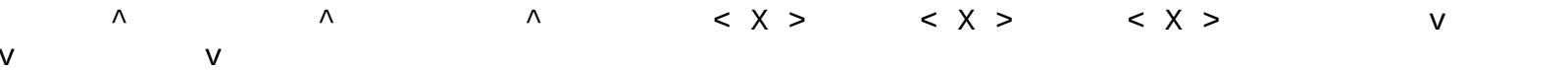
WORDS IN BOLDFACE (enclosed in double <> for the ASCII version)

These are terms that are defined in *Building Your Cyber Word Power*. Check there for anything that baffles you.

Sometimes there's a double-anglebrace-enclosed term in the text that refers to a chapter subheading, and then you must practice your <> in order to find it. If all else fails, you could ask Bruce Sterling at his secret email address-- bruces@well.com. He will know.

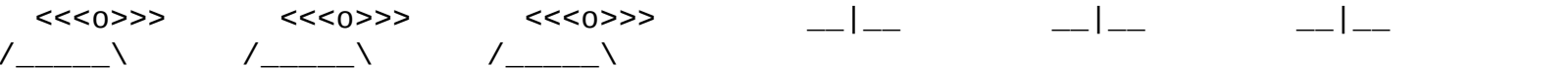
THE SHURIKEN AWARDS

We may sometimes succumb to the temptation to rate things the way snotty critics do, by awarding stars. However, we will award them as *shuriken*, a cyber kinda star:

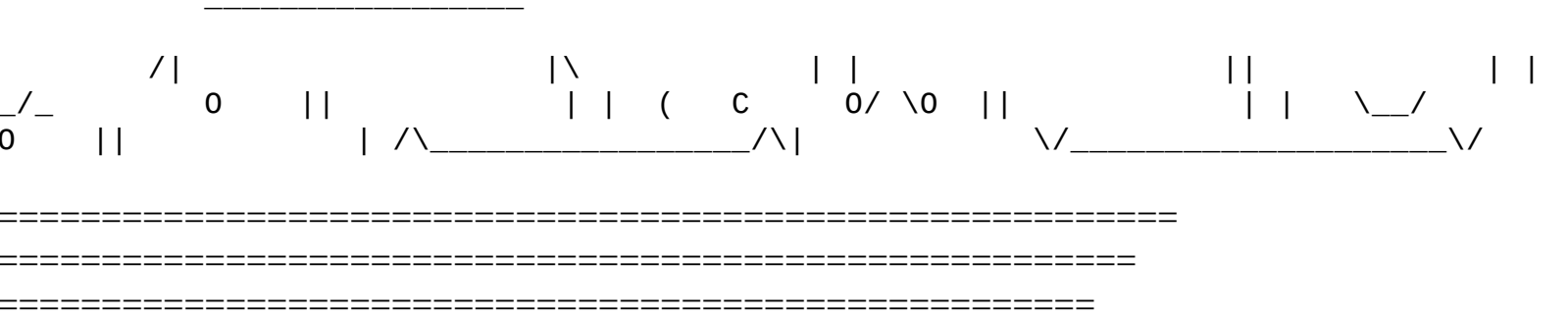


A shuriken is a throwing star-- a shiny-steel, sharp-edged, sharp-pointed weapon from Japan (which is cyberpunk's original home in certain misty urban legends). The shuriken itself as an assault weapon would rate one-half shuriken on a scale of four. A hydrogen bomb would rate five shuriken. You get the idea.

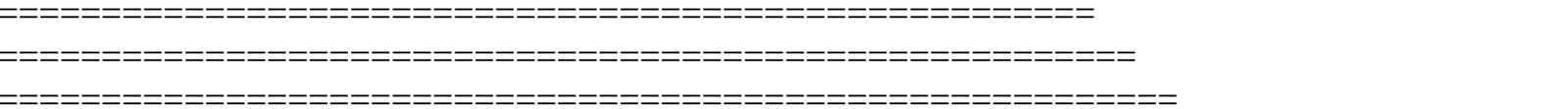
Occasionally we may add Propeller Beanies to the Shuriken:



This indicates nerdly interest over and above a cyberpunk rating. Propeller head is an ancient term for <>. The real name for that key on the Macintosh is not COMMAND, but PROPELLER, and this is why.



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-

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A Cyberpunk Review to Prepare you, and then

****THE FINAL EXAM **** It's Not True/False, We Don't Grade on the Curve, Stop Sniveling.

.....

**** THE OFFICIAL CYBERPUNK HIPNESS CHECKLIST **** You Won't Like This Either But It's for Your Own Good, Punk.

.....

.....-..That Is All..-.....

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APPENDIX A: Cyberpunk Valorized: Careers Under Deconstruction

The Semiosis of Black Leather, Chrome, Mirrorshades and Modems

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APPENDIX B: ASCII Charts

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Now, Welcome to.the Text.....

* THE

* REAL

* CYBERPUNK

* FAKEBOOK

* By St. Jude, R.U.Sirius, and Bart Nagel

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- SECTION I: + + CYBERPUNK...WHY?? + + Okay... HOW??? +
- - ++++++

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Chapter 1: CYBERPUNK: A CHALLENGING POSTMODERN LIFESTYLE CHOICE Why Bother? Big Wins! (and Unexpected Smallstuff)

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Cyberpunk is extremely hip. Being extremely hip is the last hope for people with no money and no power. Being hip gets you big wins in the status game. Hipness can crush your enemies and attract the apposite sex. Best of all, cyberpunk is the next big thing AFTER the next big thing. You can hop on the cyberpunk bandwagon and coast for a long, long time. Think of the money you'll save on wardrobe updates! The worry you'll save on lifestyle decisions!

Cyberpunk has not yet been co-opted. In fact, this handbook is the very first exploitation of this hip new underground trend. This is the ground floor. Get in on it!

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Chapter 2: ACHIEVING CYBERPUNK Being It or Faking It

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What is there to know about being a cyberpunk? Leather jacket, mirrorshades-- that just about does it, right? This kind of patronizing shirt must farking DIE.*

Since we can't afford to offend any parental units who might purchase this book for their family circle, all chancy verbs and nouns have been cleverly encyphered. This is in the spirit of true cyberpunkhood, see <>.

You think cyberpunk is just a leather jacket, some chrome studs, and fully reflective sunglasses? You

think that's all there is? Hah! You can find those on Kansas City bikers and the whole California Highway Patrol. The true cyberpunk might tuck a *cellular-modem laptop* under a spiked leather arm, and a *laser pointer* in the upper zip pocket. Or, a true cyberpunk may look just like YOU. But sHe **who knows doesn't tell, and him who tells doesn't know.**

Pronoun disclaimer: All pronouns in this book started life as intact males-- **he, his, and him.** If **anything bad happened to them** afterwards, blame it on the Riot Grrrls Bobbitt Squad.

The lifestyle and goals of the true cyberpunk are carefully guarded secrets in a life *totally devoted* to coolness and secrecy. We will PIERCE THE VEIL, and REVEAL those SECRETS. We will display for you the INNER CYBERPUNK. We will give you everything you need to know about embarking on this challenging lifestyle. When you have read to the end of this EASY handbook, if you DON'T pass the hipness quiz... well, just read it again. But turn your TV up louder.

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Chapter 3: A STYLE GUIDE TO THE CYBERTYPES Recognizing Them and Fitting In

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While a cyberpunk is commonly a middleclass white male with way too many electrons, there are varieties of cyberpunk. Underlying all the types and genres is Basic Cyber Style, which breaks down to physical gear and mental attitude:

--->Basic Cyberpunk Gear is simple. Black leather jacket. Boots. Mirrorshades. Laser pointer. (We don't know why all cyberpunks need a laser pointer, but it's mandatory.) We'll give you a more elaborate guide to basic cyberpunk gear. Later.

--->The Basic Cyberpunk Attitude is quiet assurance. Subdued swashbuckling. Maybe a little menace.

With these cyberpunk basics you can navigate through all the sub-genres. But if you want to pass as a native in a particular cyber sub-scene without getting jeered at or beaten up, you gotta accessorize, and pay close attention to detail.

Motorpsycho Maniacs Cyberbikers pack the mystique of both worlds-- high tech, and big greasy loud engines. Standard cyberpunk costume is ideal for riding motorcycles, and a mirrorshades helmet is a big plus for the cyber look-- mega robotic coolness. Motorcycles are dangerous and can kill you. This is also cool.

Goths, Deathcore, and Vampire-Wannabes Ideally, for this sub-scene, you should know about The Cure, which is a band. To fit in, grow your hair big and dye it blueblack. Spray it with <> to make it stick out, medusa-like. Go to a kidshop and buy plastic fangs. (The kind that glow in the dark are funny. Funny is NOT the object here.) All sexes should wear a Victorian shirt-- blouse-- white or black only--- that gapes to show flesh. You must practice looking tormented, tall and thin. The ideal is chalk-white face makeup with blueblack eyesockets. Blueblack makeup with white eyesockets is untested, but might work very well, if you avoid a minstrel look. At all times think intensity and torment. Torment...and ironic

bitterness. No giggling or snickering, no kidding.

Riot Grrrls! These are fierce girls who like tech. This is a sexist category, but there we are: girls only. A grrrl can be called "d00d" and "guy" at all times, but a non-female guy is not a grrrl. This is just the way things are. If you're a grrrl, you can wear anything you want to, because you're there to defend it. This is true for anybody, really-- look as tough as you wanta be, and be ready to back it up. Fierce is good. Grrrls with tech expertise are irresistible. NOTHING is more attractive than a fierce, blazing, ninja-type grrrl right now, and if she knows UNIX or phone-freeking, the world is hers. Hrrrs.

Technopagans/Ravers/Neohippies Don't worry about this one. This scene is free, loving, nonconforming, spontaneous. You can dress any old way and fit right in... Unless you don't look cool.

Maybe you should stick to basic cyberpunk. Dancing in leather is hot as h*ck, but sweating is better than not looking cool. Non-cyber ravers favor floppy hats, five kinds of plaid 'n' paisley, and multiple organ piercings. They sometimes take raver drugs. These drugs make you fonder of other people than you really want to be. (The morning- after Revulsion hangovers can be nasty.) In this scene, pretending to be on raver drugs is recommended, and easy, too. Unfocus your eyes and smile lovingly. In black leather you won't have to worry so much about getting hugged.

Academic Cyber-Wannabes Students, teachers, whatever, dress down. Like you're always en route to a garage sale...maybe to donate what you're wearing. Casual. Jeans, black leather jacket, laser pointer. No tweed, notice, and no Birkenstocks. If you flash paperbacks by Arthur Kroker, Paul Virilio and Jean Baudrillard, it means you're serious. Paperbacks by Mark Leyner and Kathy Acker means you're *way past* serious.

Cybercowboys/grrrls Some of these people come from Texas or Oklahoma. In this crew, to yr cyberbasics you add a cowboy hat, cowboy boots, and grow any hair you've got really LONG. Males should try to get hair somewhere on their faces.

Science Fiction Writers Full-steam straight-ahead hard edge, with a permanent sneer. Just to twist heads, some males writers go for the Tom Wolfe effete look-- blue blazer and wing-tips. Still they sneer.

Web Crawlers and Other Bourgeois Types You don't really care about this one, do you? You do? Subscribe to WIRED. Next.

Deep Geek: Supernerds, Hackers, Wizards, Phone Phreakers Things get difficult here. Deep geekware is unstandard. Very heavy Wizards can look like accountants, or like streetpeople. Facial hair and Goodwill Casual happen a lot. Chubby happens too, since these guys don't do enough dancing in leather pants. To get along in this scene, you really need to be very smart, very funny, or very sexy. To work yourself up to smart at least, learn UNIX. Or carry the 2600 zine in your back pocket and read that. Practice being technical. But until you get good, wear your cyberbasics and never leave home without your laser pointer. This will draw the

admiration of people who don't know any better, which has its own rewards.
Leading us inevitably to the final category...

Phonies, Poseurs and Pretenders: Taking the Easy Way In Don't think: scheme!
Forget about reading books, buy no computers or widgets. Don't do or buy
anything. Save all your money for clothes and art materials. Make your
girl/boyfriend help you assemble your hi-tec models-- you're gonna need mockups
of a laptop computer, a personal communicator, a beeper, maybe even a fake stun-
gun. Realism is key. Then wear them all with *attitude*. You're better than real.
Strut. Sneer. Remember the 3 disses: distrust, disrespect, distroy. Wait, that's not
right, is it?

We know there are going to be mutterings about this category. Grumblings that being a poseur is not
as easy as we think. A poseur has a lot of overhead-- in worry, just for starts-- what if you're exposed
as <>? And staying locked to the HOTWIRED Website to catch what you should be imitating? Dang.

| | | |

[Photo of Billy Idol Goes Here]

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- SECTION II: + + CYBERPUNK... +
- +
- KNOWING ABOUT IT! +

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Chapter 4: Building Your Cyber Word Power

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Part 1: A Dictionary of Terminally Hip Jargon and Useful Expressions

XX <>: A
word made from the initials of a name or phrase. Such as TLA. Three-Letter Acronym. Right.

<>: As far as I know. An <>, in <>.

<>: Artificial Intelligence. The next best thing to real.

<>: Also known as. An acronym coined by the FBI in its popular Most Wanted lists.

<>: Among <>, a former AT&T trademark which refers to teleconferencing systems.

<>: Somebody who feels that governments are an unreasonable restraint on free humans' being.

<>: An anarchist who hopes to bring down the established order by persuading everybody to <> their email.

<>: There's no handle like NO handle. Being completely unknown means you can't be traced. Maybe. You can be anonymous online by bouncing your email or postings through <>. Who are you? Only penet.fi knows for sure.

<>: This is the most intense hairspray on the planet, for that BIG <> hair. Since you're being so attentive, here's a bonus goth haiku:

Sun! Hide white skin, run-- Burning, cloaked, I run... day sky!...
Must... find... Aquanet

<>: An <> for... well, nobody remembers what it's an acronym for, but it means just plain keyboard characters, like your <> is made of. This is a portrait of R.U. Sirius rendered in ascii art:

#####

__/=\$==_) # # //-OO-\ # # >>(_)>>\ /<<<L #

So he comes out looking something like the cartoon character Cathy-- yeah, but that's the nature of the medium. St.Jude would look exactly the same, only no hat. Being subtle or elegant in ascii is a real challenge.

<>: Strutting. Sneering. Being BAD. Attitude is what all primates do to make their enemies feel inadequate. Keep it in mind.

<>: Expresses the whole range of haqr negative emotions, from dysgruntlement up through horrible contempt, as in response to <>.

<>: A haqr evil laugh. Other common evil laughs are BYaa-hahah and pchtkwaaahahahaha.

<>: Old haqr term for exclamation point. Sometimes bangs are a series of characters to add emphasis: w00t@%\$%\$@!

<>: A computerized bulletin-board system. Imagine a bulletin board in the sky. It's subdivided with topic labels. The cards displayed under each topic are email postings. You read them to follow the conversations. You can add your own comments or rebuttals. Some boards have a chat area where you

can talk real-time, sort of like ham radio. The underground BBS chat areas are hangout places where bored hacker/phreaker types exchange quips and insults. Good H/P boards have libraries of up-to-date info on tools of the trade.

<>: Not ready for prime time. This comes from the beta phase of program testing, when bugs are collected from patient users up for major <>. "In beta" can describe anything unpleasing or forked up. If it's really <>, it can be called ALPHA-release, which is software still being tested in-house, by programmers and unlucky affiliates.

<>: Used to refer to the place you went OUT to, with one big bright light up there or else many small ones, you know? Now means the place you go INTO, the new Big Room--Cyberspace.

<>: Untrue. Unreal. A spoof. Also, bogosity, which is the state of being bogus, and bogon, a unit of bogosity. Then there's the bogometer...

<>: Bohemian. Means like, counter-cultural. Underground. Alternative, with people in black clothes.

<>: Using a gadget to get free phone calls. The Red Box plays the tones of coins registering in a pay phone. The Rainbow Box incorporates many previous boxes in one diabolical widget, thanks to our Dutch buddies.

<>: A <> into the phone company itself, allowing multiple <> to cross-talk, like a high-tech, illegal party line. Appropriating the phone company's own <> systems is considered good <>.

<>: By the way, in <>.

<>: Making purchases on a phony or stolen credit account. The card as a physical chunk of plastic has become more or less irrelevant.

<>: Non-hacking hacker. Sometimes this is a haqr who has been <>.

<>: (by analogy from "a homeless"??) One who doesn't get it and is doomed.

<>: Phone numbers and authorization codes that allow you to make phree fonecalls.

<>: A person whose purpose in life is finding ways to make phree fone calls. This is a terrible thing to call someone. Much worse than <>.

<>: Shortlist for oblivion. By analogy to hotlist.

<>: Convention, or maybe it was Conference-- nobody cares any more. A Con is a

gathering of haqrz. There are several every year. The most famous is Hacking at the End of the Universe, held by the former Hac-tic in Amsterdam. Next is Hacking On Planet Earth, HOPE, and two infamous Cons are in Austin TX-- SummerCon, in the summer, and HoHoCon, figure it out.

<>: Haqr wannabes who don't figure out how to do things for themselves. They copy down procedures for hacking computers or fones and follow the instructions, like using a cookbook. Everybody has to start out this way. Get over it.

<>: A pirate whose raw material is the society itself. A <> specialist, who takes the <> of the culture on wild detours.

<>: Somebody who breaks the copy protection on computer games or intrudes into other people's computers. Or invades cyberspace in strange ways. Or pirates any of the media. See <> and <> and <>.

<>: Freezing your body (or just your head, in the budget plan) so that you can be revived (or provided with a whole-body transplant) at some time in the future when 1. they can do that sort of thing, and 2. they really WANT to do that sort of thing for frozen heads like you. See <>.

<>: Cryptology is the study of <>. Cryptography is doing it. See <> for a full rundown.

<>: 1. A citizen of cyberspace. 2. A citizen of cyberspace who wears mirrorshades indoors, at night.

<>: The planetary Net linked by phonelines and satellites, whose nodes are computers and human beings. An online metaverse that's now realer than what's outside your window.

<>: A tourist on the info highway. A <>, a Web Browser. If artists and nerds are sort of squatting or homesteading their homepages, cyber-yups create theirs as investment property.

<>: A guerrilla in the war for privacy and lots more encryption>>.

<>: A <> of people interested in cryptology and cryptography.

<>: Antisocial. Evil. Weird. Someone who dares things you wouldn't, or couldn't.

<>: This is supposed to be plural. These data. If you don't wanna deal with that, see <>.

<>: What cyberpunks in NEUROMANCER typed on and jacked in through... like a keyboard with phonejacks that plug into YOU.

<>: For the specs for deep geek, see Chapter Three.

<>: <> to the <>.

<>: Cultural hijacking. Taking something that has a usual meaning and making it play your way. A detournement is a cultural <>.

<>: Wrangling over standards and protocols, as in the <>. Dharma is Buddhist for the principles of operation for the universe. Lots of <> are Buddhists, Buddhist-wannabes, or jack-Buddhists.

<>: The Philosopher's Stone of the nineties. Or maybe the Brooklyn Bridge. And good luck with it.

<>: Do it yourself. A part of haqr mind, see Chapter Eight.

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