

Netrunners

The Cyberpunk Project

In their 1991 nonfiction whodunit, *Cyberpunk: Outlaws and Hackers on the Computer Frontier*, Katie Hafner and John Markoff used the word "cyberpunk" to describe "young people for whom computers and computer networks are an obsession, and who have carried their obsession beyond what computer professionals consider ethical and lawmakers consider acceptable".

Of all cyberpunks, that describes best netrunners. Netrunners are the cosmopolitans of the Net. They live there, using all their spare time surfing the Web, searching info & files, downloading warez, mp3's, pics, ircing, talking, chatting, writing mails & newsgroup postings... Communicating !

Netrunners don't stand any restrictions in the Net, and they don't avoid skirting the law sometimes if it's required to access places and information they want. Thus they are very close to hackers and crackers, and sometimes a netrunner is considered to mean the same as a cracker, or Gibsonian "console cowboy". The difference between netrunners and otakus is also very narrow. They also share cypherpunks' opinions against governments trying to control and regulate the Net. Like always when categorizing people and subcultures, the categories aren't exclusive - a cyberpunk can well belong to many factions.

Like hackers and crackers, netrunners usually have their own Net aliases, nicknames, or avatars - their Net person. It may be totally different from the real person behind the alias, it may even be different gender.

In cyberpunk science fiction, netrunners are console cowboys, the masters of cyberspace, or the Matrix.

Links

[EFF](#)

Electronic Frontier Foundation, civilizing the computerized new frontier of cyberspace. The EFF sets itself the task of engaging and defending public debates on the freedom of cybercitizens, the legal approaches, particularly intellectual property and democratic values in the Net.

[Gender Swapping on the Internet](#)

An essay on genderblending in the Net, by A.S. Bruckman.