

# !RUINED: MONEY AND MAINTAINING A CULTURE OF COMPETITIVE PLAY



UCI Esports Conf | Sean C. Duncan | Dept of Media Studies, U. of Virginia

Image: Vinicius Menezes

# “From !Ruined to NISEI: Organizational Tensions in Competitive *Android: Netrunner*”



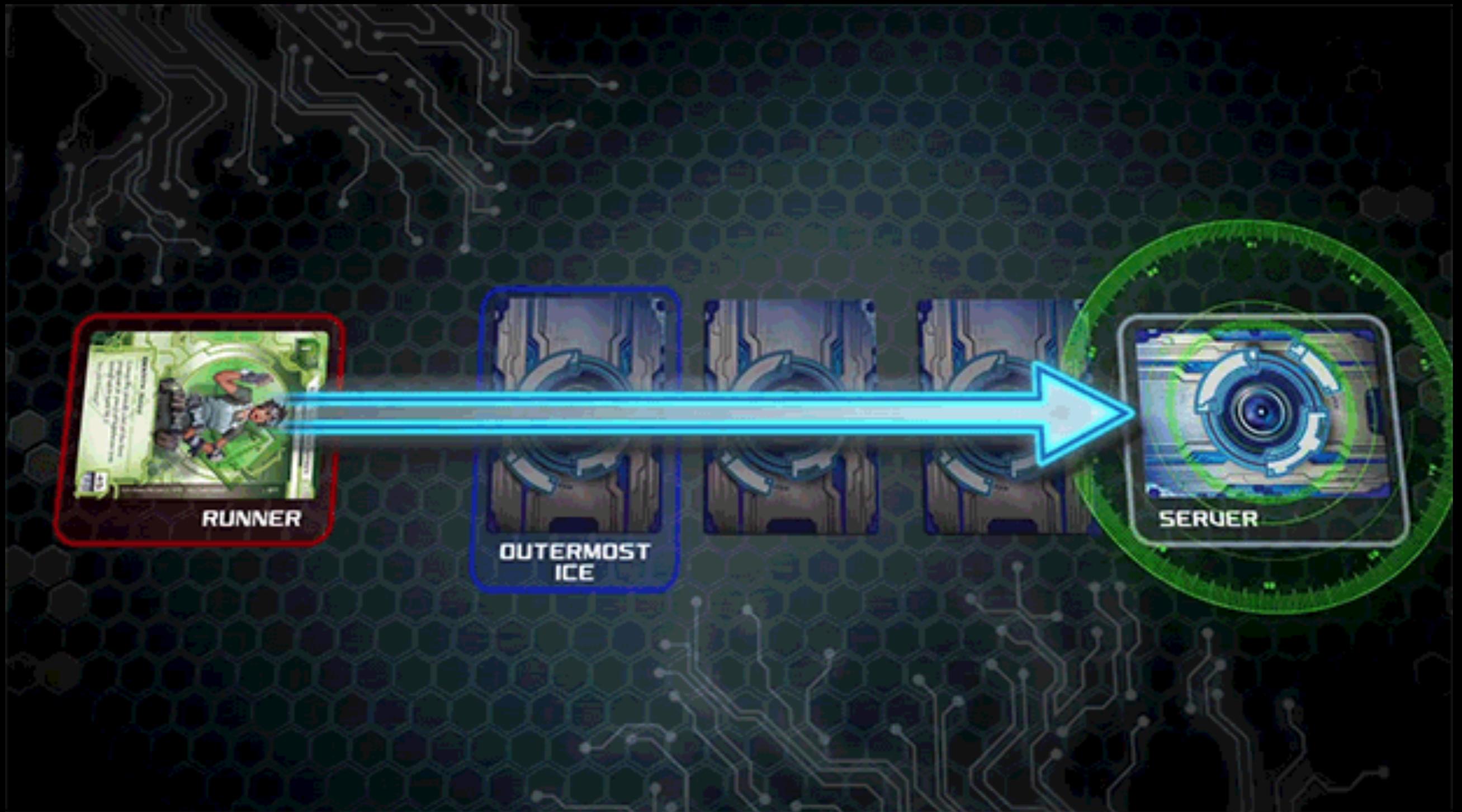
<http://se4n.org/papers/ruined-to-nisei.pdf>

<http://se4n.org/book-project>

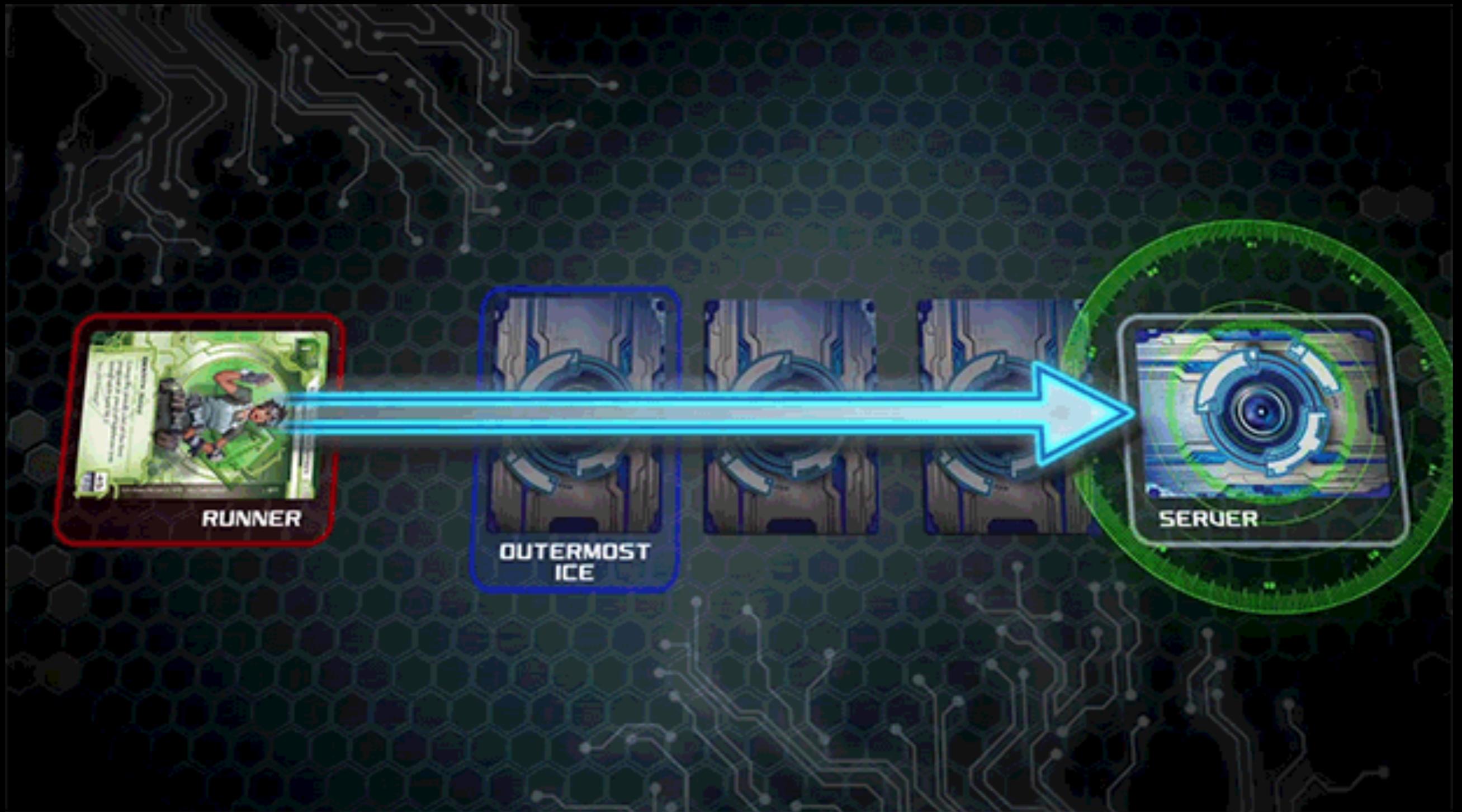
Image: Fantasy Flight Games



Garfield + Litzsinger + Fantasy Flight Games [2012-2018]



GIF: Fantasy Flight Games / fetal.ai



GIF: Fantasy Flight Games / fetal.ai

# Streaming

The image shows a Twitch stream interface. At the top, the Twitch logo is on the left, and navigation options like 'Following', 'Browse', 'Get Desktop', and 'Try Prime' are in the center. A search bar is on the right. The streamer's name 'metropolegrid' is visible, along with tabs for 'Videos 2', 'Clips', 'Collections', and 'Events'. The main content is a video player showing a Netrunner game. The game board is filled with cards, and a player's avatar is visible in the bottom right corner of the video. Below the video, the stream title 'The Métropole Grid · 13 hours ago' and the game name 'Android: Netrunner' are displayed. To the right of the video player is a chat window with a list of messages and their timestamps. On the left side of the interface, there are sections for 'Followed Channels' and 'Online Friends'. The 'Followed Channels' list includes KingGothalion (2,783 followers), Food (241), vttlive (4), BobRoss (Offline), and DarkSphereTwitch (Offline). The 'Online Friends' section shows a network of icons representing friends. At the bottom, there is a 'BASED ON YOUR VIEWING HISTORY' section with three video thumbnails.

**Followed Channels**

- KingGothalion  
Tom Clancy's The Divi... ● 2,783
- Food  
Always On ● 241
- vttlive  
XWing Fighter ● 4
- BobRoss  
Creative Offline
- DarkSphereTwitch  
Magic: The Gathering Offline

Show More

**Online Friends**

Twitch is better together. Add some Friends to see who's online and chat!

**Stream Content**

metropolegrid Videos 2 Clips Collections Events

Chat on Videos

44:12 Hydroponos27 : no pups, I do not approve

44:21 Hydroponos27 : only the big dog

44:35 saetzero : pauglos with the 4/10 pun game

44:42 Hydroponos27 : 6/10 needs more pups\

44:43 saetzero : i see you :neutral\_g:

45:05 DrApathy : The real problem with Film Critic is that it doesn't make sense thematically for any agenda except Explode-a-palooza.

45:21 saetzero : and award bait

46:01 DrApathy : Truth, @saetzero

46:05 Hydroponos27 : what are you talking about?! Meteor Mining is my favorite movie!!

46:07 saetzero : remember that sec testing got errata'd to be optional

46:44 saetzero : it was gonna see with FTT

46:48 Hydroponos27 : Obokata Protocol would be a pretty sweet film, starring Caprice Nisei

46:53 saetzero : if agenda, you decline to sec test and jsut hit the card

**BASED ON YOUR VIEWING HISTORY**

- 50 [Thumbnail]
- 162 the Hbomb Stream~ 3:34:09
- 5 [Thumbnail]

Image: Métropole Grid Twitch Stream

# TEAM USA vs TEAM UK

*Top Deck presents a 4 vs 4 Netrunner Team Showdown  
Team Captains: Josh Wilson (US) & Laurie Poulter (UK)  
January 29th, 12:00 CST / 18:00 GMT*

*Two nations. Two world champions.  
Eight premier players in all will take the  
field in a bloody battle that will forever  
change Netrunner history.*

*Stream: [twitch.tv/topdeckanr](https://twitch.tv/topdeckanr)*

*Video: [youtube.com/c/topdeckANR](https://youtube.com/c/topdeckANR)*

*More information (rules, bracket, & more): [topdeck.emergencyshutdown.net](https://topdeck.emergencyshutdown.net)*

**Image: fetal.ai**



HOLIDAY CHARITY EVENT

# GRUDGE MATCH

DECEMBER 11, 2016

11:00 AM EASTERN TIME

FEATURING SPAGS VS JOSH  
BEST OF NINE MATCHES ON JINTEKI.NET

[TWITCH.TV / TGTHEBIGBOY](https://www.twitch.tv/tgthebigboy)

VISIT [FETAL.AI](http://FETAL.AI) FOR MORE INFORMATION ON CHARITIES, DONATION REWARDS, AND HOW YOU CAN PARTICIPATE DURING THE EVENT

Competition,  
performance, community,  
and **celebrity.**



COVENANT



Gregory Tongue USA  
Shaper: Hayley Kaplan  
Agenda Points: 0

Wilfy Horig AUS  
HB: Cerebral Imaging  
Agenda Points: 5

Fan Production & Crafting

Critical Play+Design

League Organization

Accessibility

Inclusive Representation

Interface Analysis

Incentives + Rewards

Transmedia Storytelling

"Metagaming"

Online/Offline Play



**CARD GAMES**

# MANDATORY UPGRADES: THE EVOLVING MECHANICS AND THEME OF ANDROID: NETRUNNER

🕒 SEPTEMBER 6, 2016   👤 👤 SEAN C. DUNCAN   💬 LEAVE A COMMENT

[Duncan 2016]

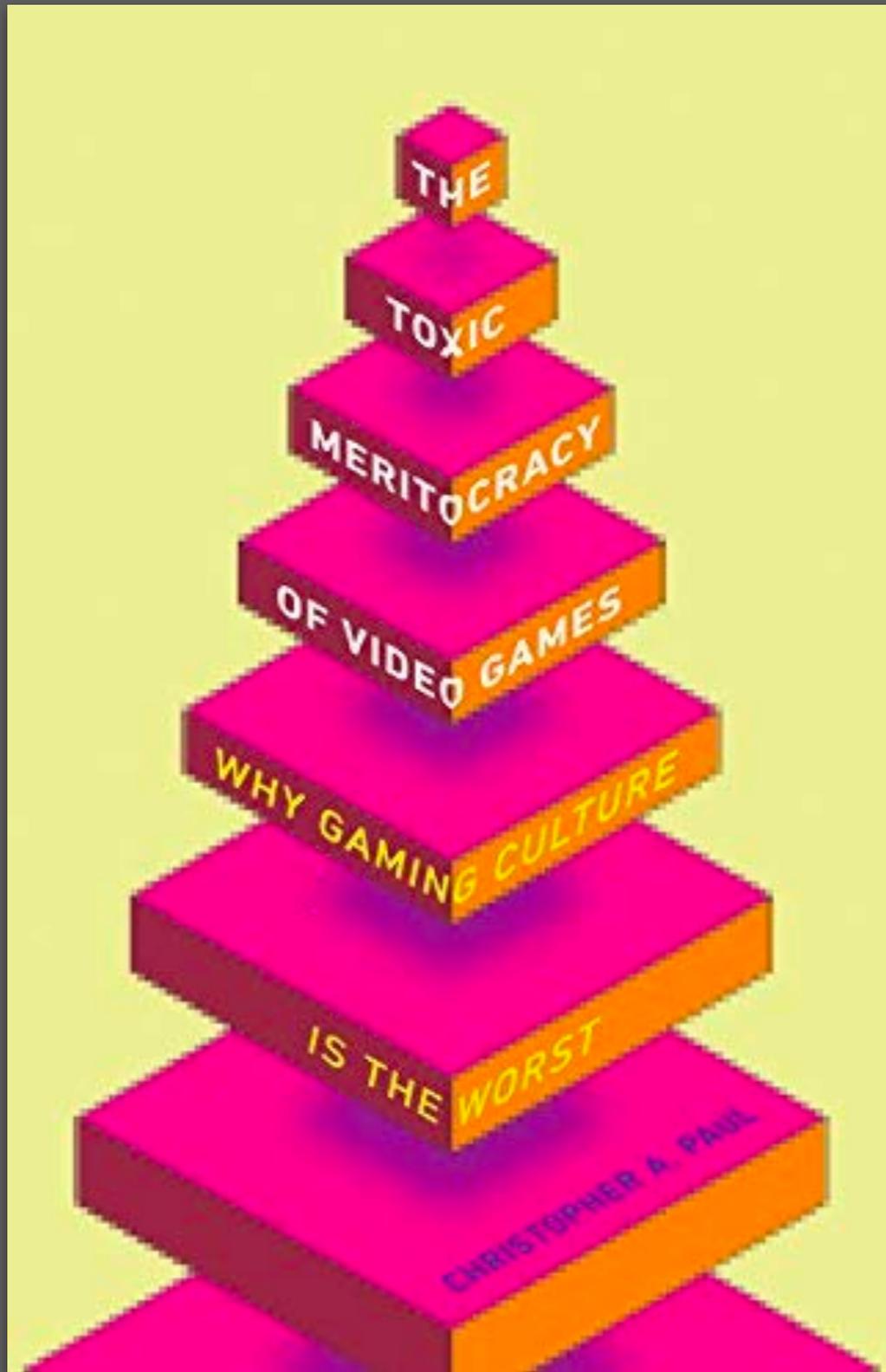


# Interface analysis of jinteki.net

*[a la Stanfill 2014; paper presented at SCMS 2018]*

The 'death' of a living card game [w/ Antero Garcia]





“Addressing toxicity in games requires taking on the meritocratic design and narratives woven within them. Certain games and elements of other parts of culture give a roadmap for how video games can change, which can disrupt what exists now with something new.” (Conclusion)

So, another disruption:

Complicating simplistic assumptions  
we might have about  
*merit, skill, and rewards.*

Image: [gameshelf.us](http://gameshelf.us)



Money.



League Organization

Incentives + Rewards

Accessibility

Money.





Photo: Dave Laird

GAMING | By Daniel Joseph | Nov 25 2015, 3:00am

# What Will it Take For Netrunner to Be Played Like Professional Esports?

The professionalization of esports been led by a game's biggest fans, rather than by the company who designed and sold it.

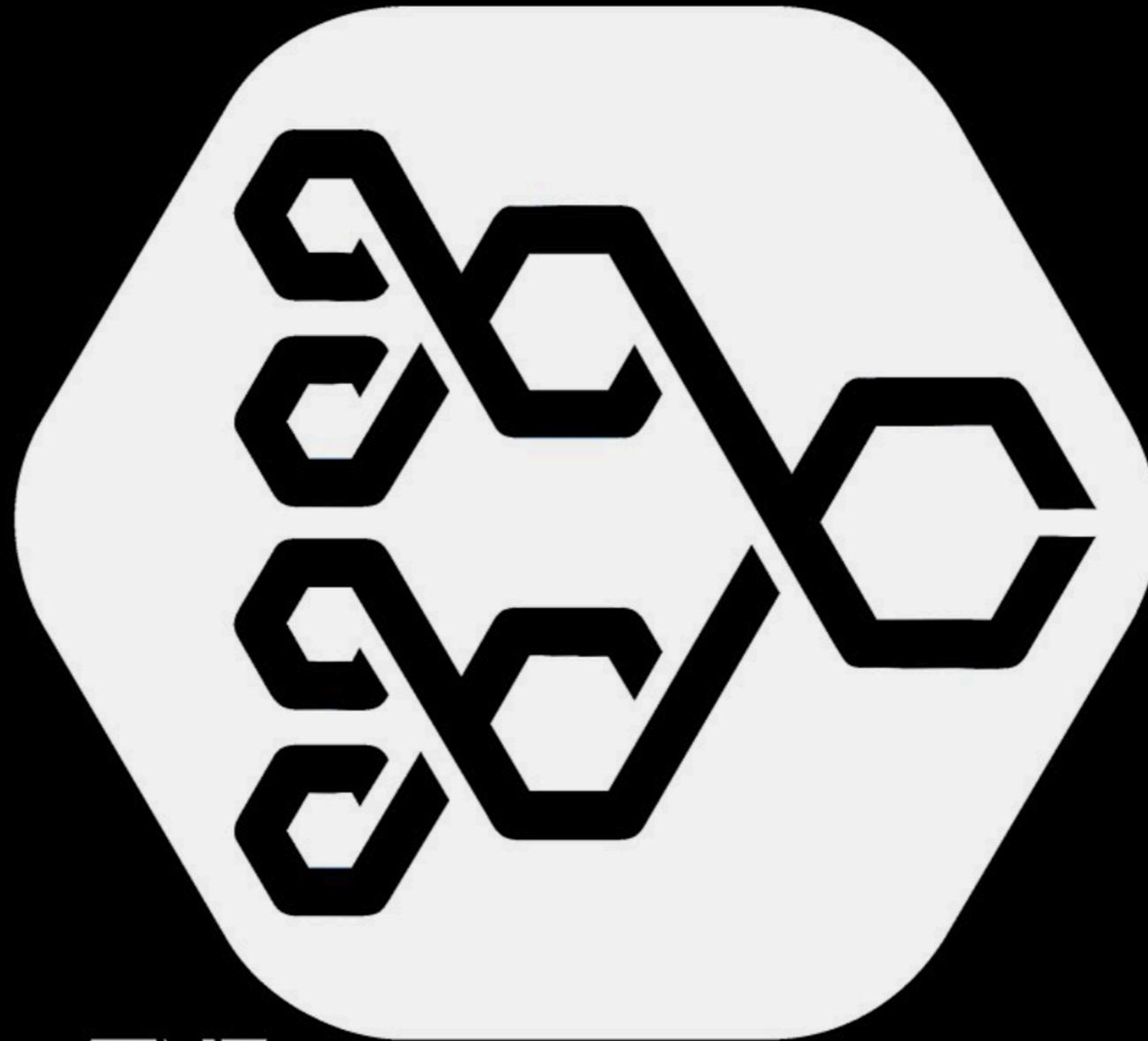
SHARE



TWEET

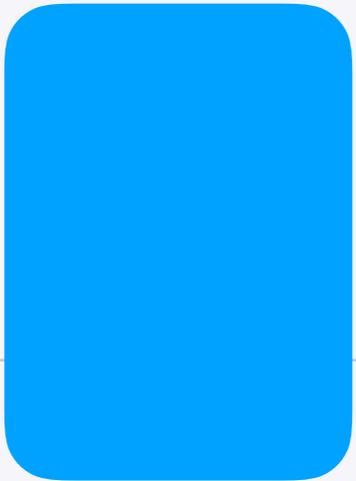


If Netrunner is to truly grow, it will be up the community of players themselves to make that happen



*AT&T*  
*PRO CIRCUIT*

**2015-2017**



**Re: Competitive Scene Upgraded**

Adding cash prizes and creating "pros" can't add anything good to ANR.



Posted Fri Apr 17, 2015 3:13 pm

[QuickReply](#) | [QuickQuote](#) | [Reply](#) | [Quote](#)



Can I add "Professional Netrunner Player" to my resume?

Because I really, really want to.

spags  
(spags)

CHECK IT OUT!

PATRON 16

**Re: Competitive Scene Upgraded**

**wrote:**

Adding cash prizes and creating "pros" can't add anything good to ANR.

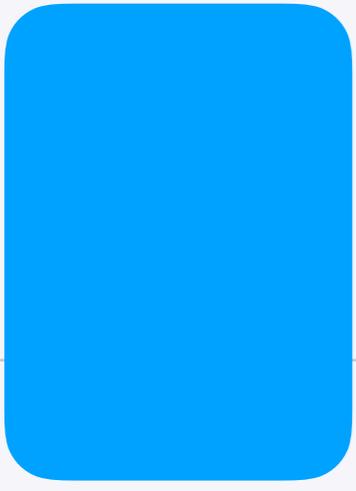


We are trying to do in the States what FFG currently isn't: sending a representative (or two, or three, if the demand is there) from each region to Worlds. If they spend that money on strippers and molly, that's their prerogative. I think they would become persona non grata in the community if they did that.

Would people prefer if we gave away gas cards/airline gift cards/hotel gift cards/FFG Centre gift cards instead? We can put the money on plastic cards, if they prefer, but we are all adults.

We are not trying to create MtG here. We're still small, and just want to reward people who love to play. We all pay to play this, via cards, gas to travel, our time, etc. Why not reward that, and help stores in the process?

If any one has any questions or concerns, please feel free to reach out. We are always looking for help, whether it's organizing a qualifier, your own region, helping us with art and website stuff, etc. Thanx for your time.



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**Re: Competitive Scene Upgraded**

**[Redacted]** wrote:

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0

Joe Schupp - NEH

AVR PRO CIRCUIT

Eric Caoili - Noise

0





**scd** 5:26 AM

!ruined

 Custom response



**slackbot** 5:26 AM

<http://i.imgur.com/rcRF7xQ.jpg> (99 kB) ▾



# slack

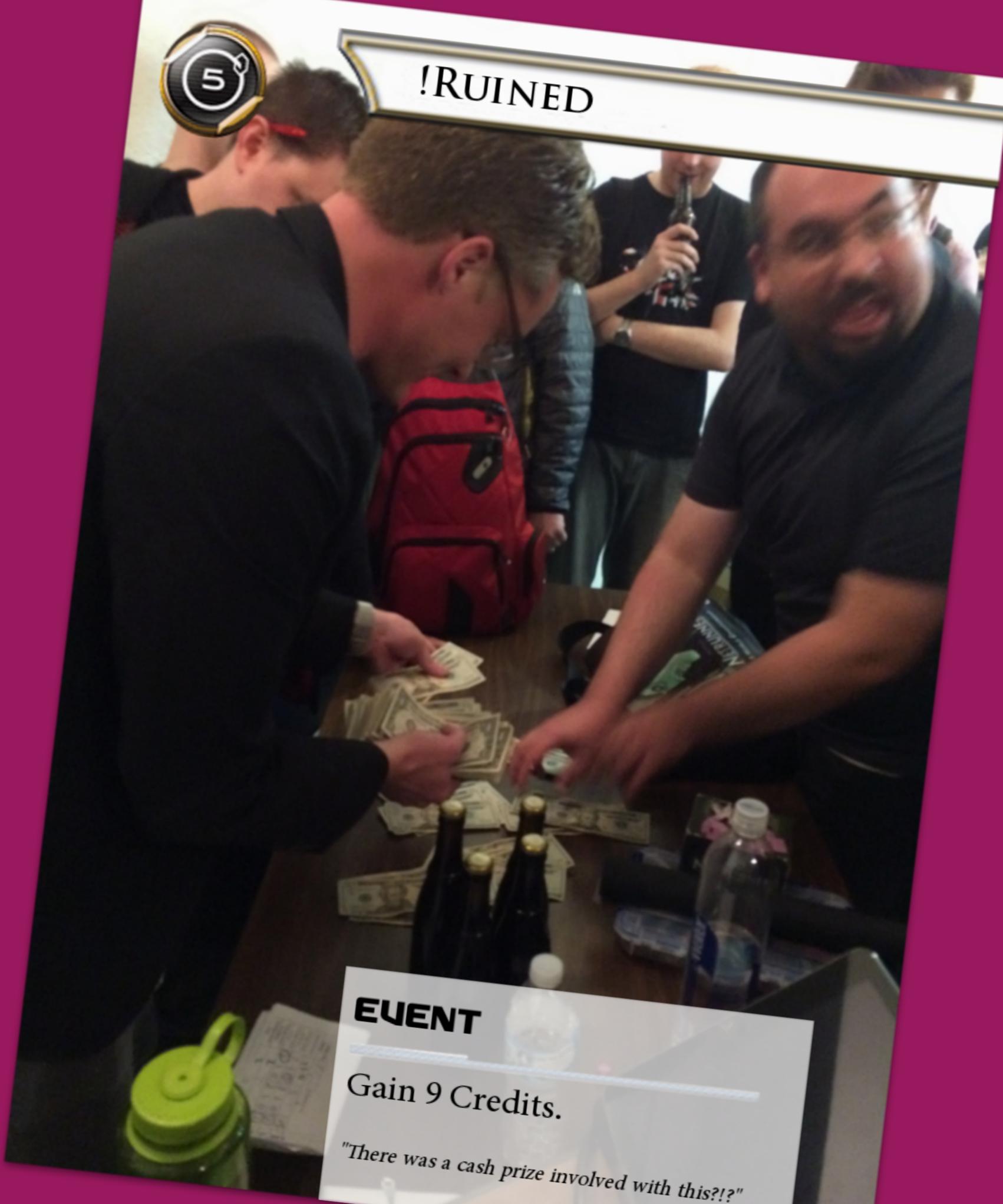


Jot something down





**!RUINED**



**EVENT**

Gain 9 Credits.

*"There was a cash prize involved with this?!?"*



**!RUINED**

## **EVENT**

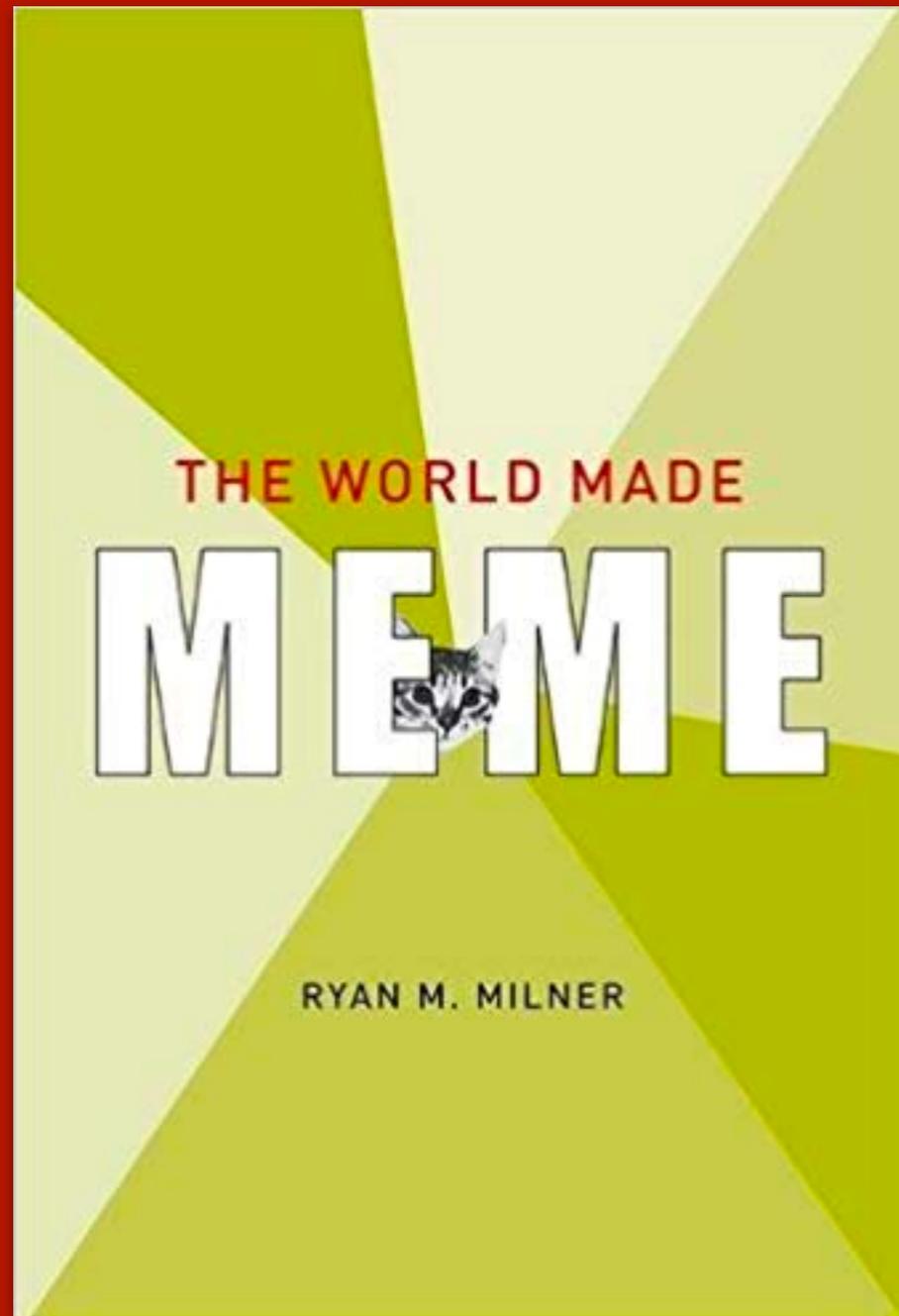
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*"There was a cash prize involved with this?!?"*

## **EVENT**

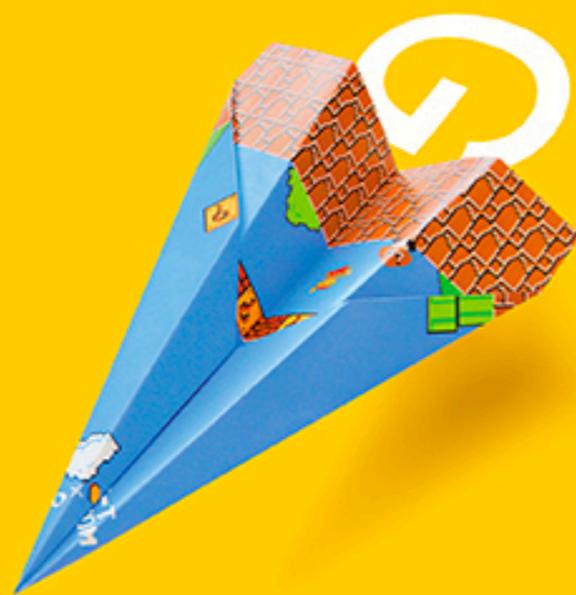
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*"There was a cash prize involved with this?!?"*



“Bricolage and poaching are at their core subtle subversions to dominant culture industries; vernacular creativity is likewise situated within everyday folk practices. Even within an increasingly corporatized and commercialized media ecology, participants can critique the practices ingrained all around them almost as easily as they can implicitly support them.” (Ch. 6)

# METAGAMING



*Playing, Competing,  
Spectating, Cheating, Trading,  
Making, and Breaking Videogames*

STEPHANIE BOLUK AND PATRICK LEMIEUX

"[F]or the past decade metagaming has become synonymous with an untapped ocean of informatic and affective labor. The precarious labor of players is not a form of currency, but an *undercurrency* driving a deluge of vectoralist management strategies... As play accretes within this digital undertow, different forms of metagaming are made exchangeable and flattened into one monolithic unit of measure: productivity." (Ch. 5)

STEPHANIE BOLUK AND PATRICK LEMIEUX

*Making, and Breaking Videogames  
Spectating, Cheating, Trading*



Makes overt this community's recognition of and *communal critique* of this undercurrency by reframing the key measure of productivity as jokes tackling the very idea of *rewards, professionalization, and why one plays this game.*

If Netrunner is to truly grow, it will be up the  
community of players themselves to make  
that happen

**MOTHERBOARD**

# PROJECT NISEI

## Board Member Interview



**Codemarvelous**  
Host



**Austin Mills**  
Organized Play Mngr

SELF-MODIFYING  
CODE

2018 - ?

**Interview with  
Austin Mills,  
Project NISEI**

“Primary differences from FFG, I think, are going to be accessibility instead of profit. FFG charges a lot of money for certain events, especially ones that they host like Magnum Opus at the FFG Center. And we’re trying to move away from that. Want to obviously cover our costs but being a non-profit organization, we’re not interested in making money from this. We are interested in appealing to the largest player base possible. So another that we’ll be doing kind of in that vein is rotating where the World Championship happens.”

“Really, I think that the end of Netrunner is actually a good thing, this is opening a lot of doors for Netrunner that I don’t think existed in the past.”

“It feels like an event for only ‘elite’ players and I didn’t want that sort of stigma surrounding it. I really hate the casual vs. competitive element of card games and card game communities. I wanted to remove as much of that as possible. I don’t want to keep casual players from attending the World Championship for Netrunner because they think they’re going to do poorly or because they’ve done poorly in other tournaments and just can’t attend. I just don’t want that.”

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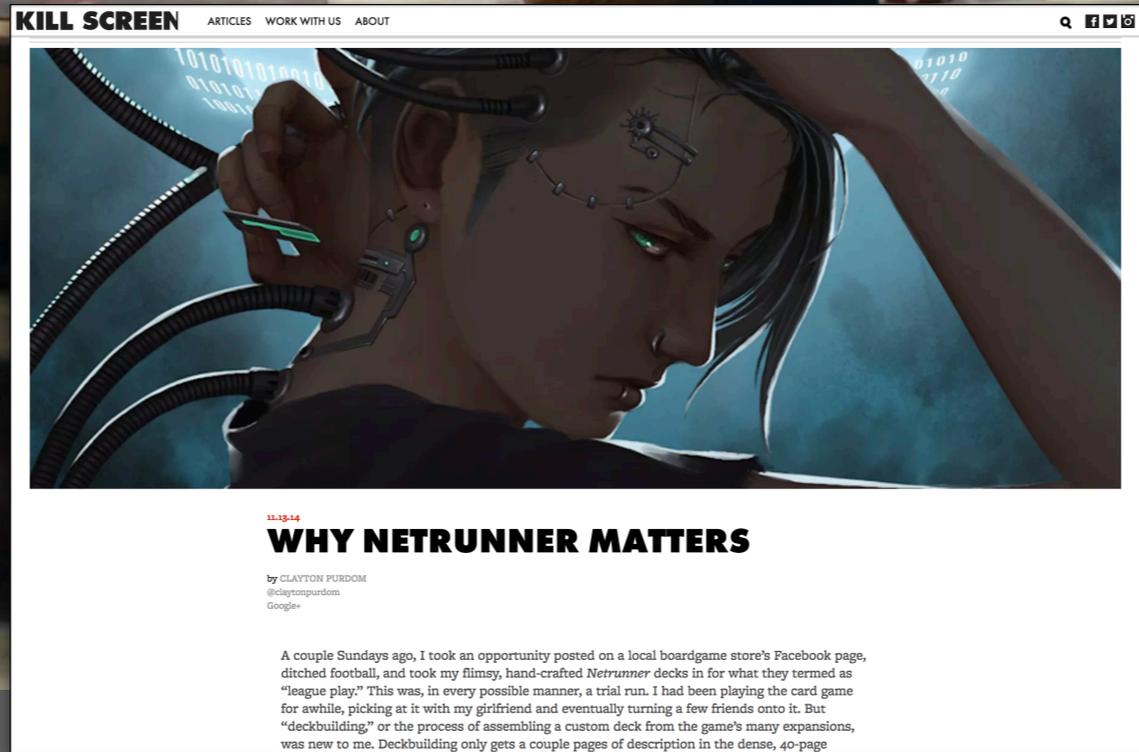
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Reframing as accessibility.



**KILL SCREEN** ARTICLES WORK WITH US ABOUT

11.13.14  
**WHY NETRUNNER MATTERS**  
by CLAYTON PURDOM  
@claytonpurdom  
Google+

A couple Sundays ago, I took an opportunity posted on a local boardgame store's Facebook page, ditched football, and took my flimsy, hand-crafted *Netrunner* decks in for what they termed as "league play." This was, in every possible manner, a trial run. I had been playing the card game for awhile, picking at it with my girlfriend and eventually turning a few friends onto it. But "deckbuilding," or the process of assembling a custom deck from the game's many expansions, was new to me. Deckbuilding only gets a couple pages of description in the dense, 40-page

Expand our conception of "sports." Clark: "golf for game designers"



Reward structures to *motivate play* but not to "git gud."

**THANKS!**

**SPORTS  
METAL**

UCI Esports Conf | Sean C. Duncan | Dept of Media Studies, U. of Virginia

Image: Vinicius Menezes

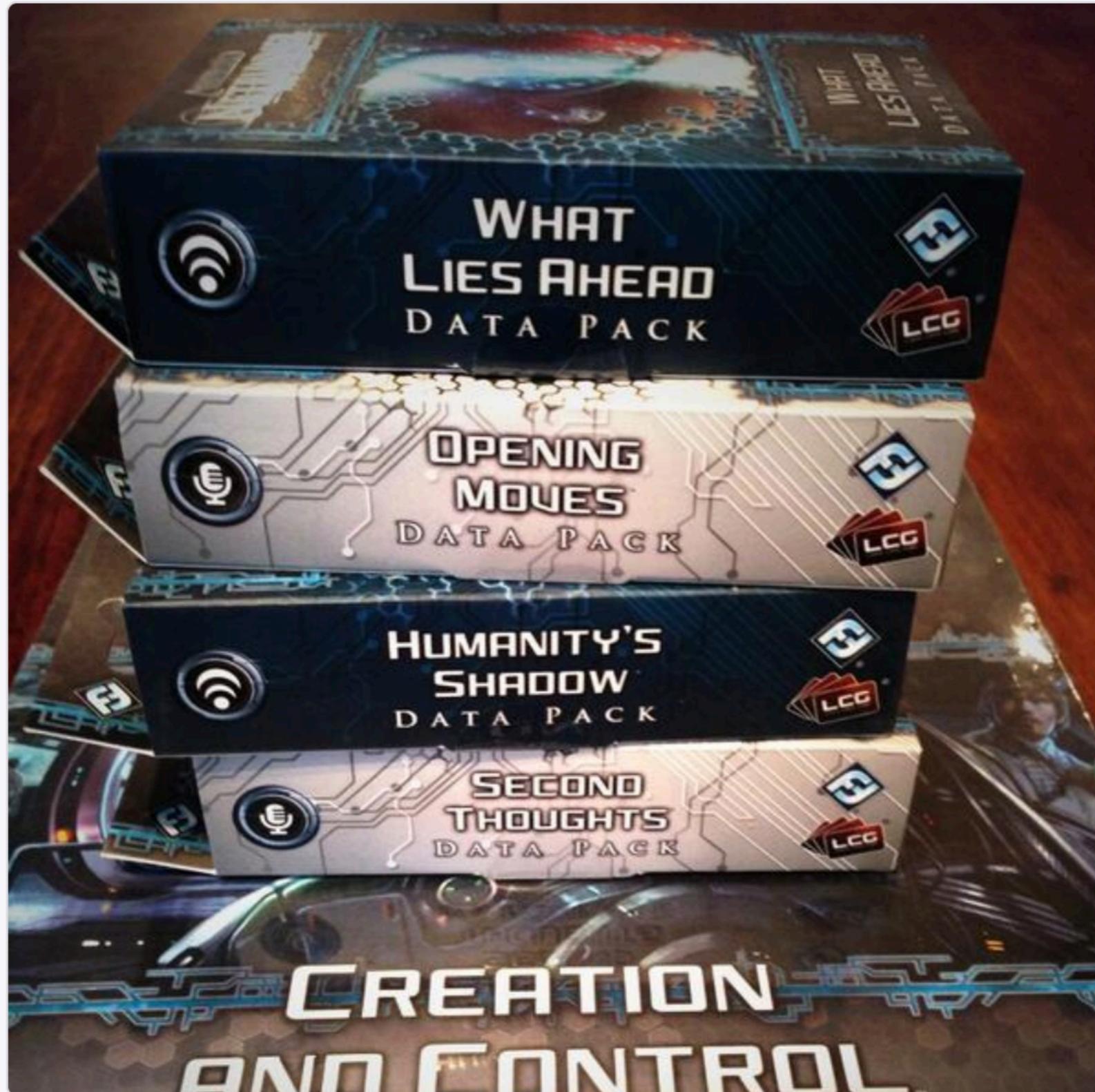


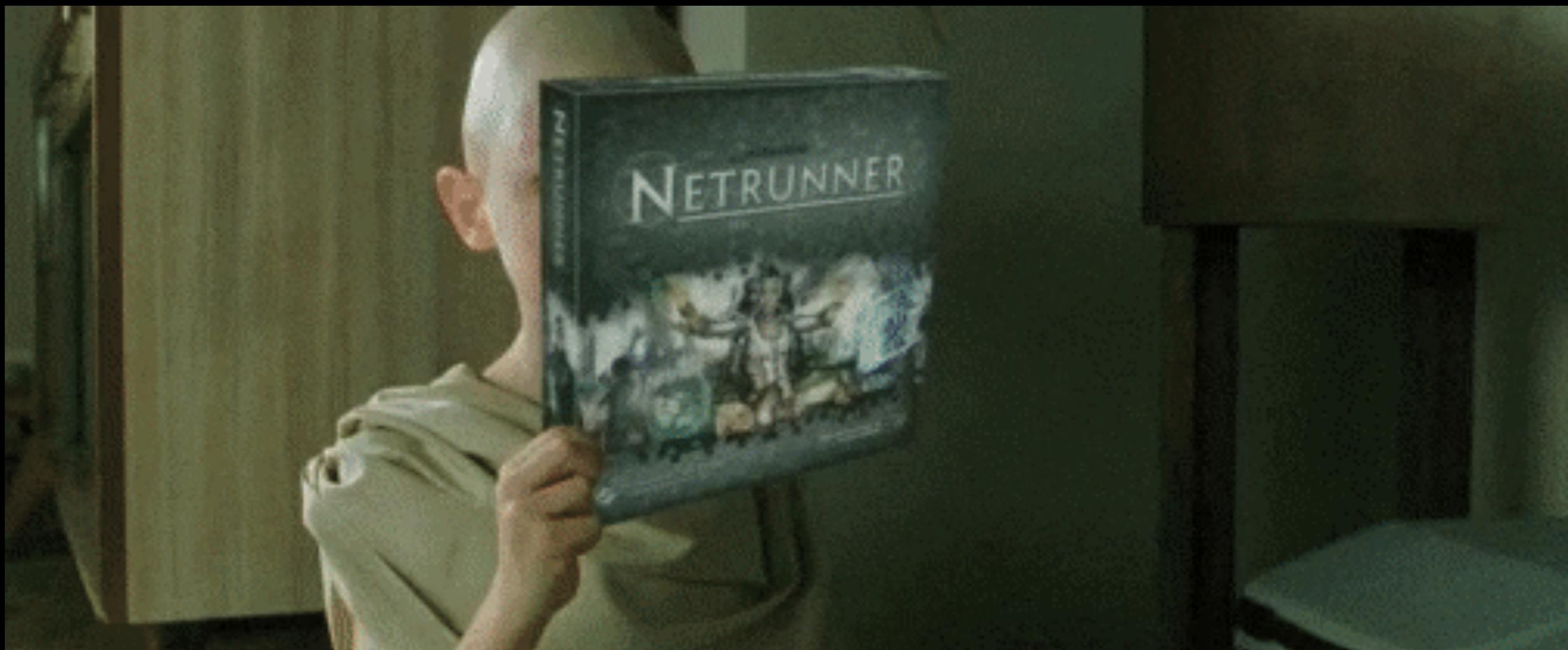




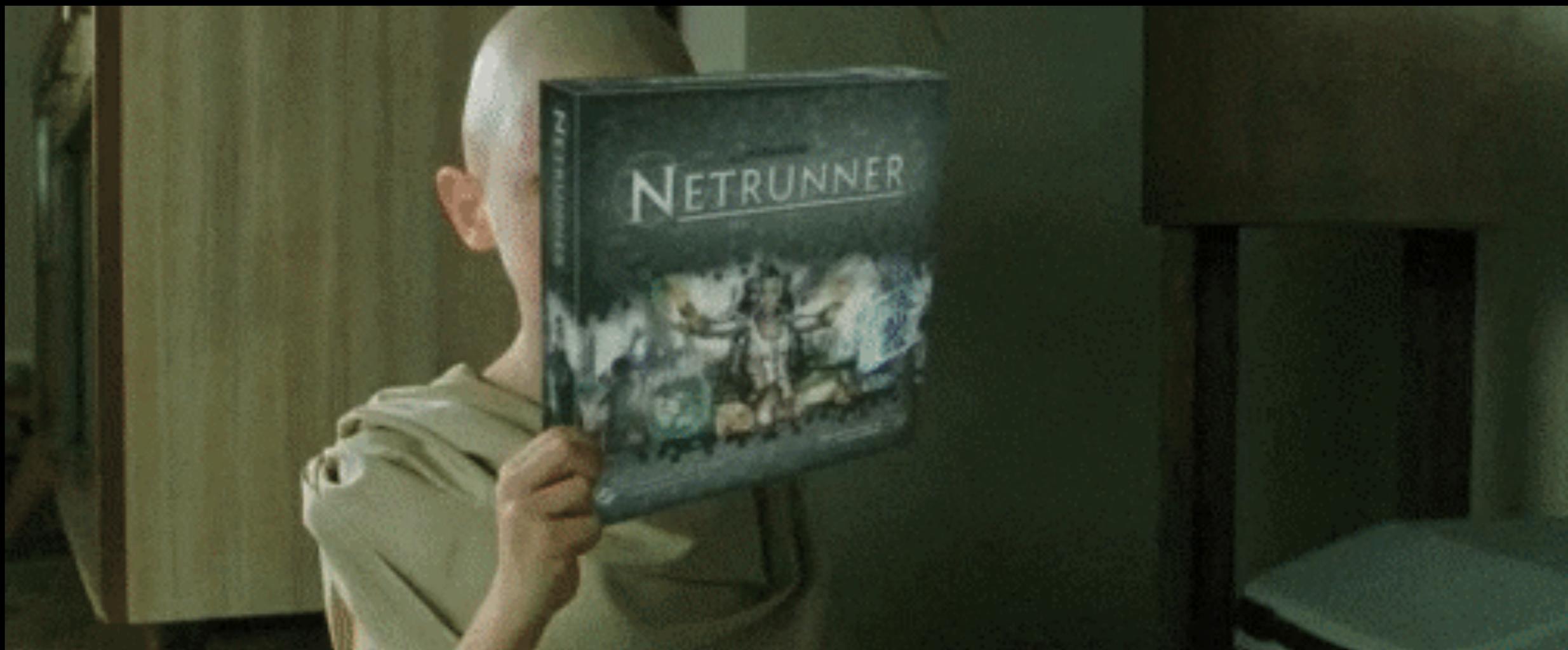
Frank Lantz @flantz · 18 Jan 2014

help me

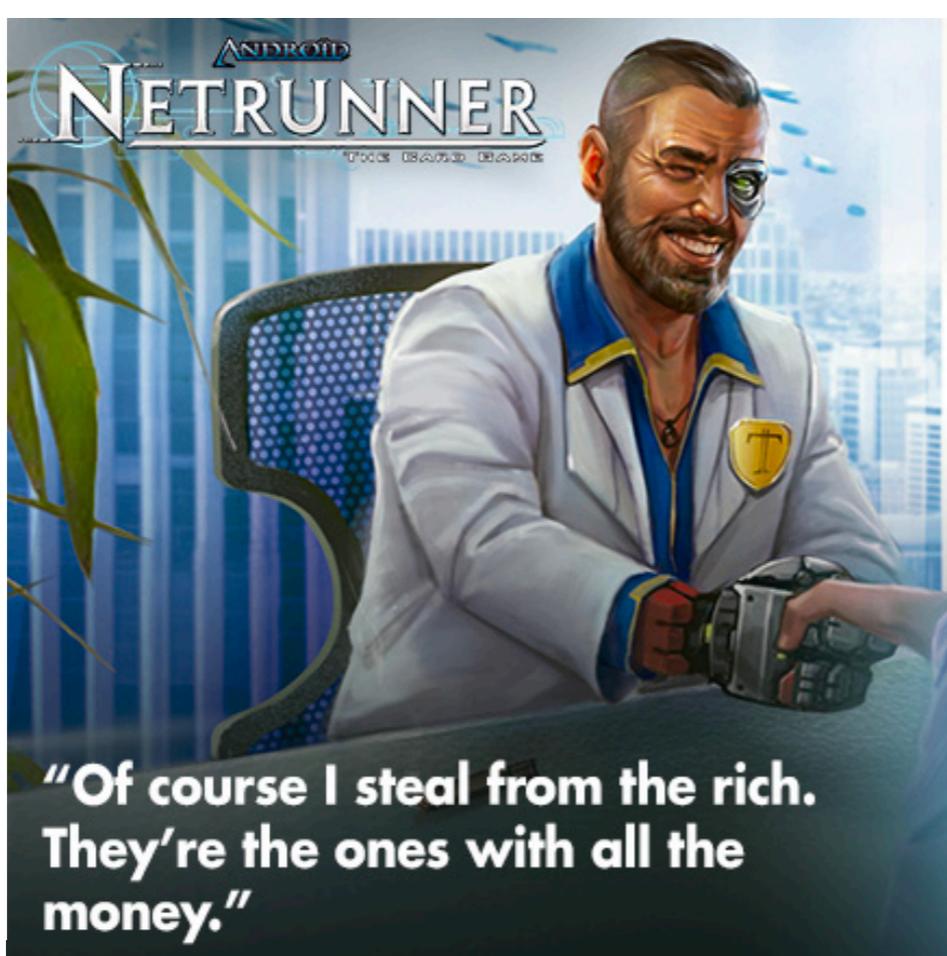




**GIF: Trace Five**



**GIF: Trace Five**



Competitive, **constructed deck** card game.

Grip (5)

Heap (11)

Stack (25)

**infinite**

- 4 Clicks
- 8 Credits
- 3 Memory Units
- 2 Link Strength
- 0 Agenda Points
- 0 Tags
- 0 Brain Damage
- 5 Max hand size

Scored Area (0)

Scored Area (0)

**EIZilcho**

- 0 Clicks
- 17 Credits
- 0 Agenda Points
- 0 Bad Publicity
- 5 Max hand size

HQ (2)

Archives (4↑ 0↓)

R&D (38)

Server 1 (1)



infinite discards **Maxwell James** from their Grip.

infinite is ending their turn 3 with 8 and 5 cards in their Grip.

EIZilcho started their turn 4 with 18 and 2 cards in HQ.

EIZilcho spends to play **Fast Track**.

EIZilcho adds **Nisei MK II** to HQ and shuffle R&D.

scd joined the game as a spectator.

EIZilcho spends to install a card in Server 1.

EIZilcho spends and 1 to advance a card in Server 1.

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Say something

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Heap (11)

Stack (25)

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Say something

The game might have fared better despite Fantasy Flight's mistakes if it weren't for the growth of [fan-made internet platforms](#) that let people play Netrunner online. As these have gotten better and better, we get people playing Netrunner faster and faster, where testing some hot new deck is as simple as downloading a file.

When my friends and I started going to meet-ups, everyone in the scene was playing around five games a week, which means the refinement of our decks was a magical, personal process. Today, when you and your friends can test the same deck six or seven times a night, with no tedious sleeving and unsleeving cards, you end up with brutal decks that are more science than art.

As my friend Tim puts it, when we started playing Netrunner we could design a deck and think it might just work. "There is always hope." By the time we got good, the best decks in the world were in such rapid circulation in our local meets that to play anything else felt silly. We'd get new cards, design a deck on our lunch break... and feel that we'd wasted our time, because the deck wouldn't stand up to the world's best. Our prize for getting good at the game was realising that every deck we made wasn't competitive.

So, in order of damage done, I think an enormous pool of cards is bad for any game. I think internet play was harmful to Netrunner's long-term ecosystem. But maybe the most crippling thing for our enjoyment of the game was that we became good players, which felt like a one-way door. We couldn't go back to playing amateur decks, but we didn't enjoy the competitive game, which by the time we left barely resembled the game of Netrunner that we fell in love with.

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**“We get people playing *Netrunner* faster and faster, where **testing... is as simple as downloading a file.** ... When you... can test the same deck six or seven times a night, with no tedious sleeving and unsleeving cards, **you end up with brutal decks that are more science than art.**”**

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Affordances produce **norms**, which have implications for the evolution of the play community.



