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Abstract: In the discourse of business ethics, illegal economic undertakings are usually presented as archetypal cases of unethical behavior. This article tries to nuance this view by studying the ethics of an illegal subculture, and particularly its formalized ‘codes of conduct’, as a valid area of inquiry for business ethics. Based on a prolonged ethnographic study of ‘warez’, i.e. illegal games of competitive donation undertaken on the Internet, this article thus argues for a more pluralistic approach to the study of business ethics by showing how formalized ethics can arise out of economic activities that are usually perceived as amoral. By doing a reading of the community’s set of rules and the moralizations entailed in these, the role of codes of conduct is discussed as a general case of ethical argumentation. The article closes with a call for an extended view on business ethics.

Keywords: illegal activities, codes of conduct, gift economies, moralization, software piracy

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Introduction

Surely one of the most formalized and most easily studied aspects of ethics must be the “code of conduct” or the “code of ethics”. Subsequently, such documents have been scrutinized closely in the field of business or organizational ethics (see e.g. Frankel, 1989; Jamal & Bowie, 1995; Preble & Hoffman, 1999), and have been theorized about at great lengths. Some (e.g. Gustafsson, 1988, p. 124-125) see them as little more than window-dressing, whilst others imbue them with quite remarkable normative powers. Still, relatively little has been written on the reasons why we tend to find such documents inherently meaningful, and why the development of such come so naturally to us. Although such a set of ethical ‘rules of engagement’ can be explained by the ever-popular ‘reduction of risk’-argument often used to explain the development of contracts (see e.g. Williamson, 1993), this hinges on a severely atomistic view of the social world. Similarly, as observed by e.g. Gaumnitz & Lere (2002), the discussion regarding codes of conduct within business ethics has often concentrated on three particular aspects thereof, namely their role in organizations, their use in professional organizations, and comparative studies thereof. None of these approach the ‘why?’ of such codes, but take their existence as a given, universally natural, fact. The argument here will be that such preconceptions are insufficiently reflective and further that much of what is written on the subject is implicitly based on the presupposition that only specific kinds of action create such codes – i.e. that codes of conduct are distinctive only to moral and lawful enterprises. This bias towards the generally acceptable is ill suited a reflective social science, and stands at odds with most modern social thought.

Such thought will instead emphasize the profoundly social nature of any system of general acceptance (a fairly good definition of a culture being ‘a system with structured notions regarding what is and what isn’t acceptable’), as in the case of Norbert Elias. In the first volume of his magisterial *The Civilizing Process* (1978) he discusses how manners have developed in the West, with particular accent on the medieval period, and shows how these manners (codified in etiquette guides, true “codes of conduct”!) are inextricably tied to social formations and to a specific pattern of development, one Elias calls “the social constraint towards self-constraint”. Such an approach downplays or even dismisses calculative behavior (such as rationally created expectations regarding dilemmas) as an explanatory aspect, and instead presents a view of regulation and regulations that emphasizes the deeper social roots of such orders. Formalized set of rules such as etiquette or the codes of conduct of professional associations are seen as emerging out of the ongoing moral discussion of the field (an informal level) as a contingent structure, and the moral discussion is in its turn contingent on the greater social order (as discussed by e.g. Foucault, 1990). In order to understand the textual artifact of a code of conduct, we should consequently extend our theorizing to a more fundamental level, i.e. why people and communities create such codes in the first place.

Even if we can state with philosophical certainty that ethics is a necessary aspect of any ordered activity (insofar as we by an ethics can understand a shared notion of how a specific social interaction will be ordered), the codification of such into textual artifacts is not a logical given. We know that pre-literate societies are fully capable to have complex ethical systems (see e.g. Mauss, 1924/1990; Brody, 2002), and are in fact prone to have very articulated (through ritual, for instance) such due to the lack of ‘contracts’, wherefore written records are not proof of anything in particular, except the ability to write. We could therefore think about written codes of conduct in two distinct ways: as an independent phenomenon, i.e. as an articulation of ethics that is exceptional due to the mechanics of transcription, or as a contingent reflection of ethics,

i.e. as manifestations that show us underlying aspects of the general ethics. This distinction might seem scholastic at first, but it goes towards what it is we wish to find out through analyzing ethical codes. If we study codes as textual form, we are interested in what is made discernible and what is not, or more generally, we are engaged in deconstructing a specific text(ual practice) in order to create an image of the underlying moral argumentation. In this paper the interest is somewhat more general. The intuitive assumption that underlies the writing of this is that codes of conduct are, in fact, materializations of a far more fundamental aspect of social figurations. The ‘rule-making function’ is often seen as the creation of calculative, hyper-rational beings, thereby assuming *a priori* that rules are somehow afterthoughts to human action. In such a view, action comes first, dilemmas second, and rules as a distant intellectualized third, as the result of prolonged rational debate. But as Johan Huizinga argued in the seminal *Homo Ludens* (1955, p. 10-11), this is simply wrong. One of the most primal levels on which we find strict rule-formation is, naturally though frequently overlooked, in *play*. Even in the case of small children, prolonged organized activity such as playing Spiderman vs. Venom will almost instantly generate a structure of both informal and explicitly formal rules (Venom might for instance not be allowed to enter into a specific part of the playing area), in the interest of *fun*. Now ‘fun’, as a sensation, is strongly tied to a notion of *fairness*, i.e. a level playing field where possibilities are so to speak structured (Giddens 1979; 1984) through a dynamic of freedom and entanglement created by the aforementioned rules. The creation of rules are in this broader view not tied to an intellectual argumentation regarding problems that have occurred or that are part of ‘rational expectations’, but rather innate in the very existence of social interaction. Formalized rules could thus be viewed only as the manifestation of something more fundamental, enabling us to discuss the formation of ethical structures more generally. By utilizing what Brekhus (2000) has called a “reverse marking”, this paper will thus study rule-formation in a field not normally associated with business ethics.

The Warez Scene

A leading publication in the field of business ethics, the *Journal of Business Ethics*, has defined its scope by stating (from Scope of Journal, 2002) :

The term 'business' is understood in a wide sense to include all systems involved in the exchange of goods and services, while 'ethics' is circumscribed as all human action aimed at securing a good life.

The organizational form discussed here is not an immediately obvious candidate for a study of business ethics. To a great extent it can in fact be characterized as being *anti-business*, as the goings-on within this field concentrate on theft and donation, specifically theft from the industry and donation to a circle of co-conspirators. This in itself raises an interesting question as to what business or organizational ethics should deal with. If we take the definition presented above as a guideline, a number of activities not usually dealt with in the field of management and business could become valid areas of inquiry; drug-dealing, prostitution, babysitting, the tradition(s) of gift-exchange, and so on. Similarly, the 'good life' is at least by those who seriously study different forms of living and social life (sociologists and anthropologists) identified as a dramatically contextual concept, making the playing field inherently ambiguous. Interestingly enough, the field tends to study a rather limited set of all those possible, concentrating on only one form of exchange (legal market exchanges, preferably in a corporate setting) and an ethics that is native to this type of interactions. One could argue that this makes the field itself less rigorous as a scientific discipline, as the choice of subjects is usually based more on sharing a set of values (those of business and an acceptance of the market economy and its tenets as divinely justified) than on their analytical interest. There is nothing that states *a priori* that ethical dilemmas in illegal economic activities are less interesting than those in corporate settings, but even a sweeping glance over the articles normally published in business ethics show that the

latter's dominance is almost total. A more radical version of this critique could tersely be stated by claiming that *business ethics is an ethics rather than a discipline*. By an (perhaps unconscious) delimitation of subject matters, business ethics has managed to create a field that claims a generality it cannot uphold, and that enforces a particular view of the world. By siding with present law and the views of the field one supposedly studies (imagine a chemist taking sides for metals against oxidization, for instance), business ethics is reduced as a field.

Consequently the studied community is one that is normally ignored in business studies, or one that is at best referred to as the Other of business. The 'warez scene' is an internal name used among a globally dispersed group of computer aficionados engaging in the so-called computer underground. It exists as the phenomenon of a shared understanding regarding specific ways to interact over the Internet, complete with its own vernacular and channels of communication, and as a network of servers/nodes that the interaction is undertaken on. This community in fact exists in order to compete regarding how quickly one is able to (illegally) distribute commercial software within the network of servers that forms the 'scene' – members act through their own computers by transferring the symbolically important programs to designated release servers. Existing to each others only as names on closed chat-lines, a group of people (whose exact number are difficult to precisely estimate, although the 'hard core' of the global scene is almost certainly comprised of at best a few hundred individuals) have created what could be interchangeably be called a 'game' or a 'market' for status-accretion through competitive donation. Demonized by the global software industry, this community nevertheless exhibits a quite remarkable level of activity, and within it quite staggering 'values' (in scare-quotes, as it is not easy to simply define how the concept of value should be engaged with in a gift economy) are routinely circulated. Almost all commercially available software are in fact spread in some form within this community, and often released as a "warez" version at the exact same time the official software is introduced on the market (a practice that is referred to as 0-day releasing).

What makes the warez scene especially interesting is the fact that releases (software that has been stripped of copy-protection and otherwise manipulated to facilitate distribution without hindering functionality) are not sold or exchanged in any such way as we are used to deal with in business studies or economic theory. Instead they are given away freely to the community at large, in a way that awards status to participants according to how quickly and how much one (although participants usually act as groups) can release/donate. I have conducted a lengthy (spanning approx. 3 years) virtual ethnography of this community (Rehn, 2001), and in doing so described it as a *hypermodern gift economy* (cf. Mauss, 1924/1990). Groups battle over being the best known suppliers of particular kinds of programs, and gain their ‘name’ in the community by being the best at this. Interestingly, this is structured as a game, so that when groups ‘race’ to release a particularly well-known program it is only the first functional release that is accepted by the community, whereas latter versions are deleted from all servers – effectively even hindering optimal distribution. For what is important in this community is not, as one might think, the amassing of software, but the structuring of honor, i.e. the hierarchies of the scene. The participants are often very emotionally attached to these undertakings, and many devote significant amounts of time and resources to be well-known and well-regarded members of this community. Although fundamentally illegal (which of course adds danger to its allure), the participants rarely acknowledge the external moral dilemmas posed by their rampant theft of intellectual property, even though they are capable of discussing it at quite eloquent and informed lengths if provoked to do so. Instead, the members of this community are very prone to discuss the *internal* ethics of the community, specifically issues of fair competition between different releasers. As success in these endeavors is mainly measured quantitatively, but the rewards given are of an immaterial nature (honor, status, ‘name’, identity), it is very important for the participants to assure themselves of a level playing field, their version of ‘value’ being constructed discursively in a continuous and fluid process. With rewards being intrinsic and non-measurable, much of the community’s time is devoted to discussions regarding decorum in an

ongoing discussion that serves the purpose of negotiating these. But as the density of activities increases (a normal day can see more than one hundred (100) individual releases, counting ephemera), this discussion can no longer settle all disputes, presenting even this illegal subculture with the need for a more formalized code of conduct.

The Rules

But what is a code of conduct? We could explain it as a cognitive tool for specific or not-so-specific situations, but this is only a teleological justification, and does in fact not clarify it as a phenomenon, merely shows how its use can be understood (and even then it is not very transparent as an argument). The argument here hinges on a view of such codes as necessarily tied to the context within which they are created, so that any analysis of them must begin not by assumptions of specific aims or rationalities, but observations regarding how they are created and used in a given community. This is a line of inquiry that is closely tied to how anthropologists such as Clifford Geertz (1973, 1983) have called for “thick descriptions” of social phenomena in order to understand how such can be meaningful. Scholastic analyses of codes of conduct, in which the communities they arise out of are merely assumed to exhibit specific rationalities (not argued for in any way), in such a view actually study very little besides the researchers’ own biases. Thus, having already presented the social structure of the scene, the following will try to look at the pre-history of rule-formation within it, and demonstrate the rise of one particular set of codes in this setting. Further on, the argumentation regarding these codes and their specific contents will be discussed.

Originally, the scene was a pure anarchy, with few explicit rules as to what constituted a release. People/Groups simply released what they got their hands on to certain file servers on the net, and the activity was limited enough for there not to be a need for formalized rules regarding it.

As the warez scene became larger and more active, the easily discernable hierarchy among the participants became more ambiguous, as a number of less fastidious individuals and groups started to try what the ‘market’ would accept, presenting it with clumsy rips (i.e. technically lazy extractions from the original files) and releases of dubious worth (such as releases of a European version of a game that was already released in its American incarnation). This diluted the comparative value of the scene, i.e. the way in which status could be gained through outdoing others in competitive giving, and made assessments harder as to who was a ‘good’ contributor. Several of the predominant groups in the ‘games rip’-scene (i.e. the scene for games releases manipulated in order to minimize the size of the distributed files) reacted to this by forming an alliance known as “The Faction” in 1998, a move that although not totally unique was nevertheless remarkable in the way in which regulatory power was now formalized and presented as universally enforceable. This loose federation concentrated on setting up a formal set of rules (a document with ten points that should be adhered to) as to what was allowed and what forbidden in the creation and trade in games rips, and also acted as an enforcing agency, erasing releases not in accordance with the rules from the scenes file-servers and even engaging in the harassment and/or exclusion of parties that broke these ‘codes of conduct’. Torn apart by internal strife, this grouping (and its proposed set of rules) was rather short-lived, though, effectively disbanding in 1999.

Which brings us to the focus of this article, the NSA rules or as they are sometimes called, “the new rules”. Presented in its entirety in Appendix 1, this is a 1524-word document which in 16 points outlines the codes of conduct regarding game ripping. Simplifying the issue somewhat, releasing can be done in two ways, and in two fields, the latter being games and applications. In games releasing, due to the size of modern computer games, one can do one of two things. It is possible to release ISOs, which are disc images the end-user can burn onto a CD, but these are unwieldy to transport over networks. The other way to go is the ‘rip’, by which is meant the

process of removing any extraneous data from a game, such as introductory movies, multiple texture modes, big sound files and the like. This process is highly regarded, as it makes for far smaller files and often detracts very little from the game experience. The problem is that it also allows for different forms of ‘cheating’, e.g. doing a sloppy rip in order to get the game released before anyone else. In order to combat this, in the eyes of the community unethical, practice, the Network Software Association (aka. the three groups Class, Myth & Divine, superpowers in the business of warez) creates the aforementioned document.

This is the “code of ill conduct” referred to in the title. It is a collection both of previously implicit rules and a clearer definitions of issues. An example of the former kind is the ban on “Kiddie” games (#10), whereas the point on lossy versus lossless compression (#5) is an example of the latter type. Particularly interesting here, though, is that a number of the points in the document clearly outline how the competition to release more than the other groups is being controlled. This is most obvious in the latter points, especially #12 and #14-16. And whereas #12 and #14 outline what should be counted as cheating and what shouldn’t, #15-16 clearly present an ethics. The document then ends with a clear statement:

All appointed HQ (Headquarters) should abide by these rules to the fullest extent permutable. Any group that competes in the gaming rip scene will and must abide by the above rules to allow fair competition among all competitors.

Illegal activities are not generally known for upholding strict rules so as to “allow fair competition”. Quite specifically, such rules and arrangements are in much of economic theory thought to require at least state intervention, and often laws and the possibility of punishment. As much of prevailing theory is in the grip of the fallacy of a *homo aconomicus*, the notion that fair competition could be born out of anything besides a legal system is often ignored, and even

when it is not the assumption is often that people will establish systems of fairness in order to achieve “win-win”-conditions, i.e. out of self-serving mindsets. Ideas of organized crime aiming for profit maximization through the creation of oligopolies (see Woodiwiss, 2002 for a critique of this) would be a good example. Illegality is in fact often seen as a *perversion* of fair competition. This does, however, ignore the fact that certain subcultures do engage in competition of a type that might best be described as being similar to sports, an example of which might be street racing. Such activities will at the same time be illegal and dependent on fairness in order to uphold its internal structure.

The point of highlighting a document of this nature lies thus in introducing a certain amount of pluralism into how business ethics should be perceived. Even if we were to reach a consensus regarding the fact that the activities on the warez scene are immoral (although this could conceivably be contested), this does not mean that there is no ethics involved. The notion of fairness can be existent in crimes of an economic nature just as it can in normal business.

The Arguments

And, importantly, the set of rules created by the NSA did not come into being out of the blue. Rather they were the direct result of the ongoing moralization on the scene, a constant discussion and debate regarding what should be thought of as correct behavior in the ripping of games. Part of this was undertaken in the newsletter written by scene members, one of the most influential being the Netmonkey Weekly Report.

Well that was the second week of June. The blockbuster titles have started to come out, but fewer and fewer of them are being ripped well. This could be the beginning of the end of the rip scene (or at least the 50 x 2.88 limit). Ripping of 3DFX has in effect raised

the disk limit anyhow, so perhaps it is time to make the change. A disk limit of 60 x 2.88 prohibiting the ripping of 3DFX would go a long way towards eliminating the “cheating” of the disk limit that we are seeing now. The games with graphic drivers ripped are going to be more and more prevalent as time goes on. Perhaps a new meeting of the Faction council is in order. Origin should be brought into that body this time around anyway. Their constant use of their non-membership to circumvent the rules of common sense has become an annoyance. Surely their leaders can respect the idea that even an essentially illegal hobby such as ours needs some guidelines to ensure fair play. Origin’s use of the faction rules to denounce other group’s releases, and their use of their own non-membership to shield themselves from criticism should not be allowed to continue. Netmonkey Weekly Report; Issue 51, June 26th 1999 (emphasis added)

The emphasis is crucial. The guidelines for how “the good life” (referring, again, to the term used by the Journal of Business Ethics) can be attained, i.e. how one can exist and interact within a structure in a way which conveys a sense of meaning both to oneself and those one interacts with, are the *result* of the undertaking, *if* the undertaking is defined both as a set of actions *and* the ongoing chit-chat about these actions. Such chit-chat (I’m consciously using a less solemn term, although I could talk of dialogue or discourse) will normally revolve around the everyday, including input regarding perceived or real moral dilemmas. In this case, such chatting often concentrated on the question who’d ‘won’ a specific release and in which way such victories were achieved. Claims and counter-claims regarding cheating and releasing abound, and some specific arguments slowly solidified into ‘truths’ – such as the right way to handle disk limits, i.e. specification regarding the allowed size of releases (a point of some concern for those without broadband connections).

Now lets get one thing straight. Despite some confusing wording, these rules were devised by Myth, although many of the ideas were proposed by other groups. Neither CLS nor any other group has agreed to them. So this set of rules is a mute point. What Myth has done is set a course of events in motion – they’ve acted as a catalyst. You can expect, within a week, that an official set of rules will be adopted by all groups.

So there’s not too much to debate here. Some of these rules are decent, some are a bit off – 70 disks is a tad large for any game if you’re a modem user, as is 35 disks for an addon, however the re-rip rule if used correctly could prevent abuse of the inflated limit.

Netmonkey Weekly Report; Issue #78, March 29th 2000

The formalized rule-set is not meant as a ‘law’, and in a number of its decrees it consciously leaves room for interpretation. Common sense is alluded to, as is ‘high regard’ connected to particularly fastidious behavior. Sizable parts of the rules are written in a manner that clearly shows these to be the result of negotiations and ‘common practice’ within the scene. Insofar as this is the case, the rules are not based on an imagined absolute ethics, but more like a transcription of common threads of ethical argumentation as such have emerged out of the behavior and ongoing discussions on the scene. For the participants, the scene is inherently meaningful and, importantly, fun. In order to uphold such feelings, it is imperative that the scene at least *seems* as a fair place. And in order to structure such feelings of fairness, textual artifacts can play an important role, regardless if these texts exhibit ways to be good externally (such as in the case of upholding a professional identity) or internally (as in the case of playing fair while one misappropriates intellectual property).

Discussion

Drawing the argument together, we can now argue that *codes of conduct are not summarizations of how to be good, but inherent in any kind of prolonged interaction*. Even the setting up of formal codes of conduct (structured etiquette) is not a proof of any universal ethic of ‘being good’, but can instead be viewed as the explicit ordering of a social figuration, even one which is illegal and can be described as ‘immoral’ (cf. <http://www.bsa.org>). Codes of conduct consequently do not tell us anything about the underlying universal morality of the endeavor in which they are formulated (such as is often implicitly assumed in the discussion on professional codes of conduct), but instead show us a provisional sampling of rules that are ambiguously adhered to within that community. An aspect of this, poignantly referred to as *honor among thieves*, is synonymous with general sociality, i.e. the fact that ethics rather than being a given set of prescriptions is a necessary and constantly re-emerging element of any social interaction. The “good life” is also constantly under discussion, as is the way to attaining it. For the participants on the warez scene, the good life lies in “a more fair and competitive scene while ensuring a quality-minded environment”. Such an organization, complete with the continuous exchange of ‘values’ (which here includes both computer software and intrinsic values such as status and honor) and structured norms as to how exchanges should be conducted, is in a very fundamental sense economic, even though it can be described as ‘anti-business’. A tentative conclusion would be that the discipline of business studies could benefit from being extended into a discipline of *economic ethics*, i.e. the study of ethics in economic activity (even when this isn’t synonymous with the market economy), something which could productively be coupled with a deepened collaboration with modern economic anthropology (cf. Rehn, 2001). In such a perspective, business ethics is an ideological construct in trying to find an ethics when the ethical basis is already assumed to be stable. Observed from a perspective of a general economy (cf. Bataille 1967/1991, see also Styhre 2002), the ideology of the market that an unreflective business ethics

is founded on is always already a limiting of the ethical project. An ethics of a general economy would then act as a counterpoint to this.

We could say that this specific code of conduct, less than a description of what is true and right, is the local fixing of the ambiguous concept of fairness. In the games that take place on the warez scene, no-one expects there to be faultless participants. Still, there is an expectation about people 'playing fair'. Virtue lies not in doing well by others, but rather in creating the possibility for a fun competition, in the way the activity can be upheld as ongoing and balanced. In this way, notions about the innate properties of playing (Huizinga, 1955) such as organized participation and a clearly delimited field for such playing are part of how this specific economic activity can be structured. It is thus possible that it could be here, in the basic idea of how a game is played, we might find some of the very roots of the ethic in the economic. And as this would not be in relation to any specific form of business, it would allow for an analysis of ethics in economic activity that is founded not on a belief in the innate moral justification of the market, but on the notion of even economic interaction as being a case of organized sociality – or more succinctly put, as being structurally identical with a game.

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Appendix 1: The NSA rules for games rips

[Group News]

In 1998, three people decided the future of how the scene should shape itself and released a 10-point information document stating how a game release should be conducted. In the past year, many of these rules have been broken by its founding members and other groups have purposely broken the agreement. In lieu of recent events, the deciding figures of three groups, Class, Myth & Divine, have converged and agreed upon a new set of rules based on the original Faction rules and Myth's recent proposal and have been updated, modified and agreed upon by a consensus to a new standard to better suit the scene in this millenium.

These groups have been active participants in shaping the scene in the last 6 months, and were given active participation in voicing their point of view. These new rules will allow for a more fair and competitive scene while ensuring a quality-minded environment for the scene. These deciding figures have bestowed themselves to be called the N.S.A., Network Software Association. These rules have been ratified and approved among the three groups and will be recognized and followed immediately on this date, March 26th, 2000.

1. The disk limit is as of now 65 x 2,915,000 bytes. This equates to a total of 189,495,000 bytes of compressed data. Groups may not go over the total size to prevent any future cheating. Acceptable compression formats at this time are ACE or RAR or any future compression that supports multiple volumes and long file names, followed by the traditional PKZIPing.
The limit for standard game add-ons is 35 x 2,915,000 bytes for any add-on that includes Music, Speech, Commentary or Play By Play for the original release. Any add-on that does not fit this criteria will be restricted to 25 x 2,915,000 bytes. Only the group that won a game release is allowed to release the add-ons for the game.
2. To prevent sloppy rips, a re-release of a game is allowed to make groups release proper and respectable releases. The following provisions include:
 - a) it can be ripped in >=10 disks less than the previous release by using only lossless compression methods. Lossy compression will not be permitted to compromise the release to fit under this condition.
 - b) it can be ripped in >=15 disks less of the size of the previous release by using mp3-compression while not downgrading any wavs or mp3's sound quality using lossy compression.That means all the essential gamedata must be still included in the re-release. No essential data is allowed to be removed to be considered a valid re-release. A re-release from a competing group may not use tools, original crack or any other files from the previous release that were modified for the original game rip.
The re-release of a rip can be done by any group and must be done in at most 48 hours after the release of the original rip, as possibly every game is rippable in a smaller size if enough time is spent.
3. Every release under this limit MUST be a functionally and playable complete game with no essential data missing to complete the game. This means that included will be every component necessary for the successful completion of the game e.g.:
 - all game executables that are needed,
 - every level (single AND multiplayer),
 - every track (including practice),
 - all actor graphics & models etc,
 - sound effects
 - registry settings to play on the Internet (e.g. Zone/DirectPlay)
4. Any lossless compression method to reduce the size of selected game data is ALLOWED (e.g. uharc).
5. Lossy compression is ALLOWED for sound, videos and non-texture graphics (e.g. jpeging of menu screens) but lossless compression is encouraged before using lossy compression. Lossy compression of textures is explicitly FORBIDDEN to prevent the many problems inherent to that.
6. Sound effects WILL and MUST be included. To reduce the size of rips when possible, standard waveformat files (PCM) should be mp3-compressed if possible in a reasonable state of time and is over the size of 20 disks. If the soundfiles exist inside a bigfile its highly regarded when time is invested to extract those files to compress them. Groups are not to be required to index bigfiles though. Downgrade of sound quality to sound files to allow the game to fit the limit will not be permitted.
It is allowed to rip music, commentary/speech and ambience files as long as the game remains playable. Speech files MUST be included if there exist no on-screen subtitles. It is okay to remove commentary from a release if size does not permit it.
It is highly regarded when all sounds, speech and music are included in a rip and not intentionally put out as addons.
7. It is allowed to remove gamedata that exists in multiple resolutions or formats as long as the game remains playable on a typical system which is defined by a PII-300 with a D3D-card and soundcard.
 - high-resolution textures for highend systems.
 - low-resolution textures for low-end systems if there is no possible options to include the high-resolutions in the release.If size permits, it is expected that high resolution be released as an add-on.
 - high-screen resolution graphics data standard of 800x600 (or 640x480 if other than 800x600 is not applicable)
 - at least one hardware-dependent data must be included, and must be in Direct3D mode or any other hardware data modes that are acceptable (e.g. Glide textures). A release of software mode only with all hardware-dependent data and textures removed will not be allowed in future releases.

8. Movies (intros, cutscenes) should be removed if they aren't game-related. Movies must be ripped in a way so that the gameplay experience is not compromised, e.g. framing of movies is highly regarded. It should always be avoided to create situations in which user-input is necessary on black screens because the video normally shown has been blacked out.
9. Other allowed add-ons for games include:
 - cutscenes/movies
 - commentary/speech
 - music
 - manual/documentation
 - editorIntro and Outro add-ons are EXPLICITLY FORBIDDEN. Not more than 2 add-ons should be released for a game release.
10. Children's games (aka Kiddie games) and Edutainment software do not qualify under these rules guidelines for acceptable releases. Kiddie games are usually defined via the game target audience of '5-12 years' as stated by the game's producer. Common sense should be based on common sense by all groups to identify what really is a kiddie game. Platform games are not to be considered kiddie games.
11. Levelpacks, game add-ons etc. for rips are only allowed if they are officially released/authorized by the same company/developer/publisher that put out the original game. If possible by its size, the add-on should be made as a standalone and not needing the original game release. The original missions may be removed to allow the game add-on to become standalone if not size can not permit the original game. It should be explained in the NFO if and why a game add-on isn't made to be standalone.
12. In regard to games distributed in the United States that are LATER distributed in Europe or vice versa under the same or different name/publisher. These games if released AFTER another group's release are counted as DUPES unless it can be proven that there is a clearly noticeable PLAYABLE difference in the latter release (more than just tiny differences in graphics or sound). Differences in filedates and Game Titles between Euro and US releases are NOT a good enough reason to re-release the game.
13. A brief outline of what has been stripped from the game should be clearly stated in the game-release .NFO, as well as information as to whether or not Add-Ons can be expected.
14. Fully cracked Update Patches and Trainers are highly regarded, though they are not the responsibility of any group (including that of which released the original game). If 2 trainers from the same or different groups are released for 1 game, this does NOT qualify as a dupe unless the latter trainer provides no new features over the prior trainer. Beta update patches will not be considered a valid release among any game group. No group shall release a cracked patch for a game if a generic patch exists for a particular game in the scene. If a generic crack exists, a new patch-release must specify that the generic crack does not work anymore.
15. If two or more rips of the same game get released, the first working rip wins. Sites should not nuke any release until the winning rip has been proven to work correctly and follows the above ruleset.
16. No group shall do a rip using another's groups work, be it an iso crack or tools written by another competing group. Any third party tools shall be acceptable. A crack from an ISO or past release (even in other languages) shall not be used unless permission is given from the cracker/creator of the original release group. All appointed HQ (Headquarters) should abide by these rules to the fullest extent permutable. Any group that competes in the gaming rip scene will and must abide by the above rules to allow fair competition among all competitors.

Signed,
Leaders, Council Members and Seniors of Class, Myth & Divine.

Pink Machine is the name of a research project currently carried out at the Department of Industrial Economics and Management at the Royal Institute of Technology, Stockholm. It aims to study the often forgotten non-serious driving forces of technical and economical development. We live indeed in the reality of the artificial, one in which technology has created, constructed and reshaped almost everything that surrounds us. If we look around us in the modern world, we see that it consists of things, of artefacts. Even the immaterial is formed and created by technology - driven by the imperative of the economic rationale.

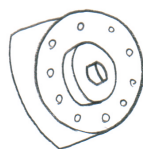
As Lev Vygotsky and Susanne Langer have pointed out, all things around us, all these technological wonders, have their first origin in someone's fantasies, dreams, hallucinations and visions. These things, which through their demand govern local and global economical processes, have little to do with what we usually regard as "basic human needs". It is rather so, it could be argued, that the economy at large is governed by human's unbounded thirst for jewellery, toys and entertainment. For some reason - the inherent urge of science for being taken seriously, maybe - these aspects have been recognised only in a very limited way within technological and economical research.

The seriousness of science is grey, Goethe said, whereas the colour of life glows green. We want to bring forward yet another colour, that of frivolity, and it is pink.

The Pink Machine Papers is our attempt to widen the perspective a bit, to give science a streak of pink. We would like to create a forum for half-finished scientific reports, of philosophical guesses and drafts. We want thus to conduct a dialogue which is based on current research and which gives us the opportunity to present our scientific ideas before we develop them into concluding and rigid - grey - reports and theses.

Finally: the name "Pink Machine" comes from an interview carried out in connection with heavy industrial constructions, where the buyer of a diesel power plant worth several hundred million dollars confessed that he would have preferred his machines to be pink.

Claes Gustafsson



www.pinkmachine.com

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