



Out Here in the Fields

Lessons Learned from a Different Database

The Great ILS-Data Pre-Conference

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Polaris ILS Administrator
Library Systems & Services

Hello, I'm Dan

- I like bright text on dark backgrounds



Hello, I'm Dan

- I like bright text on dark backgrounds
- 30 years in libraries
- Polaris ILS admin for Library Systems & Services
- SQL Hacker





<https://cyberpunklibrarian.com/iug2026>



MARC Sucks, I Know

- MARC... ewwww
- It was fine... for the late 60s
- MARC is 60 years old
 - Old != Broken
 - Obfuscated, obtuse, generally weird



Disclaimer

I am one of those weirdos who believes that all aspects of the discovery tools, processes, and categorizations should be open and understandable to the reader.



And while we're at it...

I also have feelings about the Dewey Decimal System...





Dan

**The Entire
Dewey Decimal System**

Hold on... let the old man reminisce

- Bill Schickling and his team really did something profound
- They “database-ized” MARC
- In Polaris, a MARC record is stored in multiple tables and pulled together through SQL.
 - You can pull a basic MARC record with less than 30 lines of SQL



Connect to MSSQL

```
1 DECLARE @BibID INT = 1863375
2
3 SELECT
4     bt.TagNumber,
5     bt.IndicatorOne,
6     bt.IndicatorTwo,
7     -- e.g. $a Title of the work $b subtitle $c responsibility
8     STRING_AGG('$ ' + bs.SubField + ' ' + bs.Data, ' ')
9     WITHIN GROUP (ORDER BY bs.BibliographicSubfieldID) AS SubfieldData
10 FROM
11     Polaris.Polaris.BibliographicRecords br WITH (NOLOCK)
12 LEFT JOIN
13     Polaris.Polaris.BibliographicTags bt WITH (NOLOCK)
14     ON bt.BibliographicRecordID = br.BibliographicRecordID
15 LEFT JOIN
16     Polaris.Polaris.BibliographicSubfields bs WITH (NOLOCK)
17     ON bs.BibliographicTagID = bt.BibliographicTagID
18 WHERE
19     br.BibliographicRecordID = @BibID
20 GROUP BY
21     bt.BibliographicTagID,
22     bt.TagNumber,
23     bt.IndicatorOne,
24     bt.IndicatorTwo
25 ORDER BY
26     bt.BibliographicTagID;
```

But wait! MARC still sucks...

- And don't even get me started on BIBFRAME
- SURELY THERE ARE BETTER WAYS TO CATALOGUE?!





DON'T CALL ME SHIRLEY

A Better Way[®]

- A database that handles bibliographic data
- Instead of numbered tags, we're going to use descriptive identifiers
 - In other words... words
- ~~020 sub a = ISBN~~
 - We'll just call it an ISBN
- ~~024 = Title~~
 - We can just call it "Title"



Pragmatic Cataloguing



Everything's relational

- Using a relational database
- In use for 19 years
- The system is wide open
 - And customizable
- Because the entire system is free and open source



CALIBRE

Kovid Goyal

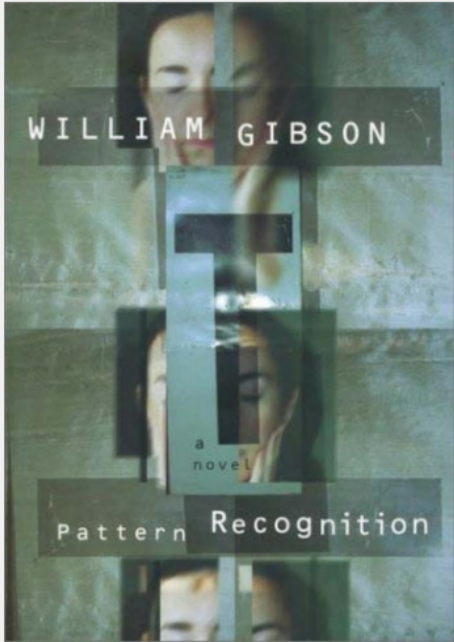


Calibre

- FOSS eBook management system
- Created by Kovid Goyal
- A standard for eBook management



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Languages	1	1	Slaughtermatic	Steve Aylett	23 Jun 2022	0.2	Bizarro, Cyberpunk, Humour...	Beerlight 02 [3]	Scar Garden F
Series	14	2	The World of Cyberpunk 2077 Deluxe Edition	Marcin Batylda	23 Jun 2022	154.6	Art, Comics & Graphic Novel...		Dark Horse Co
Formats	5	3	Transcendent	Stephen Baxter	23 Jun 2022	0.7	&WORKING, Fiction, General...		Ballentine Boc
Publisher	52	4	Blood Music	Greg Bear	23 Jun 2022	0.4	Fiction, General, infopump-t...		E-reads/E-rig
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Identifiers	6	8	The Shockwave Rider	John Brunner	23 Jun 2022	0.3	English, Fantasy, Fiction, Fic...		Ballantine Boc
		9	A Clockwork Orange: Restored Edition	Anthony Burgess	18 Oct 2022	0.9	Classics, Dystopian, Fiction, ...		Penguin Book
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		18	The Feelies	Mick Farren	23 Jun 2022	0.6	Fiction, General, infopump-t...		Random Hous
		19	2XS	Nigel D. Findley	18 Oct 2022	0.6	Fantasy, Fiction, General, inf...		Roc
		20	Beneath the Shine	Sarah Fine	24 Jun 2022	0.6	Dystopian, infopump-type-b...		Skyscape
		21	Cyberpunk Trashcan	Randall P. Fitzgerald	23 Jun 2022	0.3	infopump-type-book		CreateSpace I
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Ids [9780425192931](#), [Google](#)
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"Pattern Recognition is William Gibson's best book since he rewrote all the rules in Neuromancer."--Neil Gaiman, author of American Gods "One of the first authentic and vital novels of the 21st century."--The Washington Post Book World The accolades and acclaim are endless for William Gibson's coast-to-coast bestseller. Set in the post-9/11 present, Pattern Recognition is the story of one woman's never-ending search for the now... Cayce Pollard is a new kind of prophet--a world-renowned "coolhunter" who predicts the hottest trends. While in London to evaluate the redesign of a famous corporate logo, she's offered a different assignment: find the creator of the obscure, enigmatic video clips being uploaded

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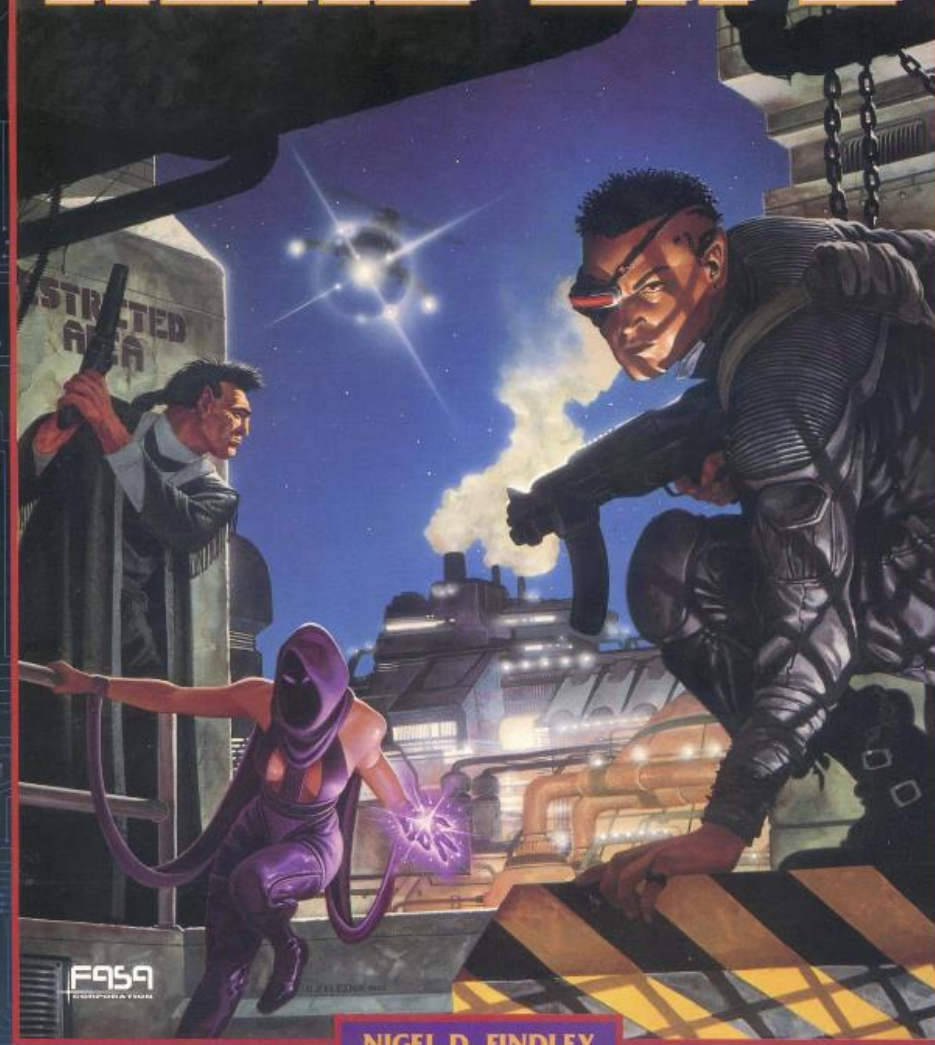
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- Syntax differences aren't too bad



NeoNArchists

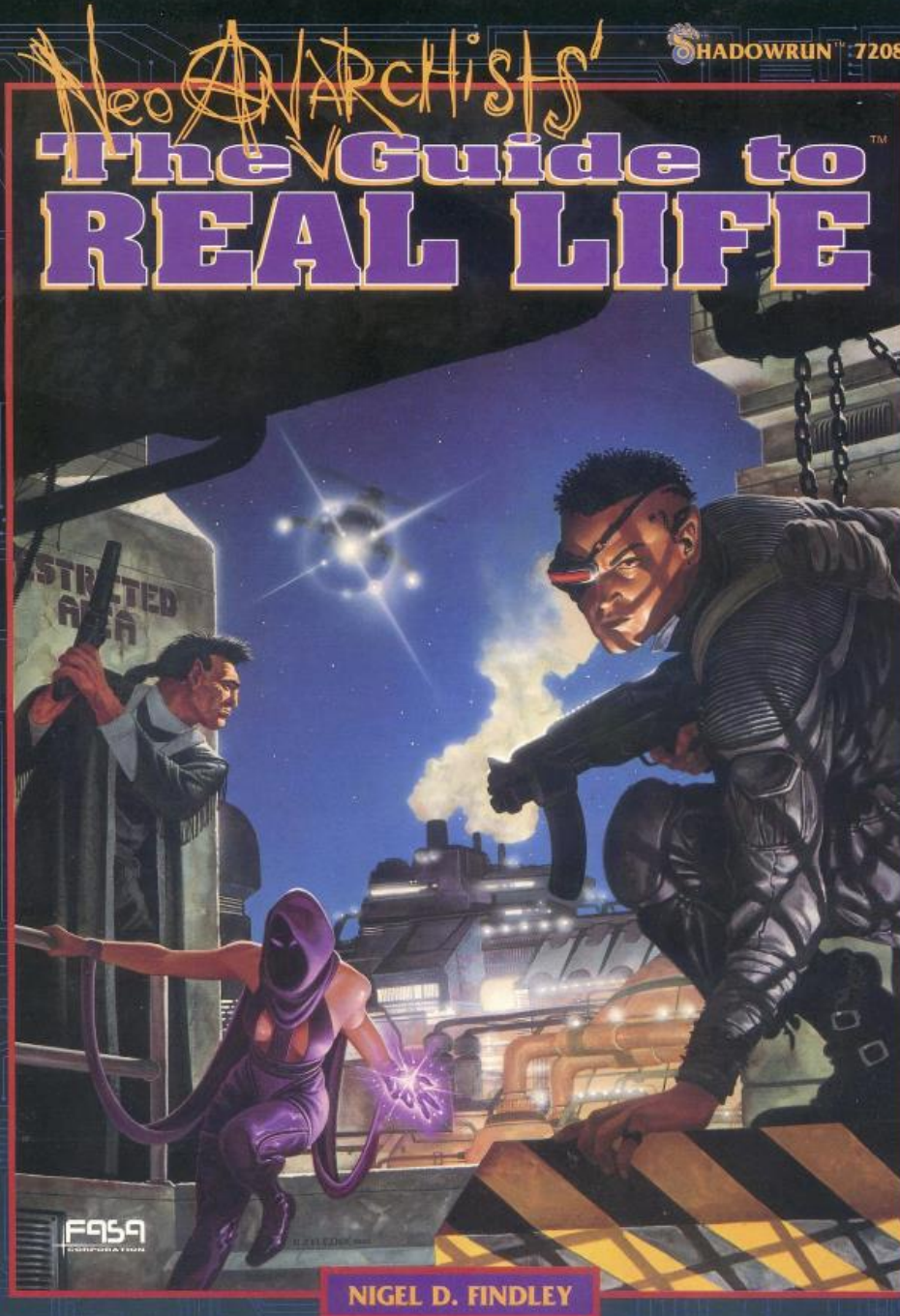
SHADOWRUN™ 7208

The Guide to REAL LIFE™



FASA

NIGEL D. FINDLEY



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Author: Findley, Nigel D.


















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Pub Year: 1992

Series: Shadowrun; 7208

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Author(s): Nigel D. Findley



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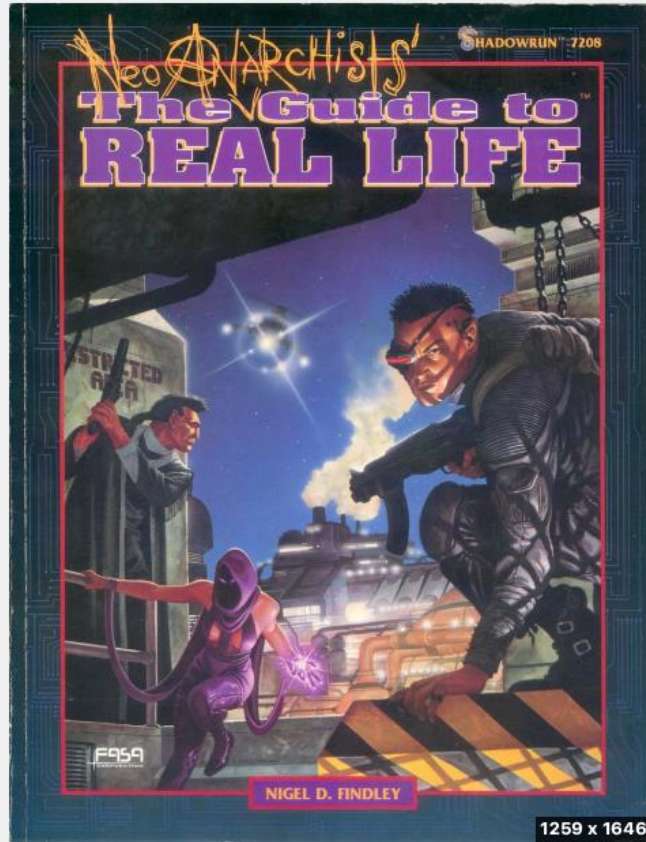
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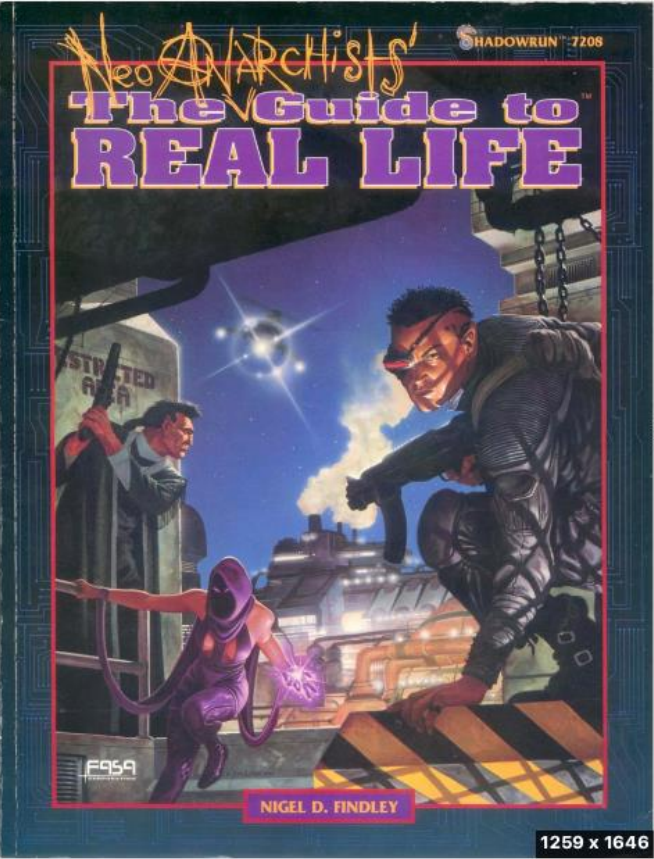
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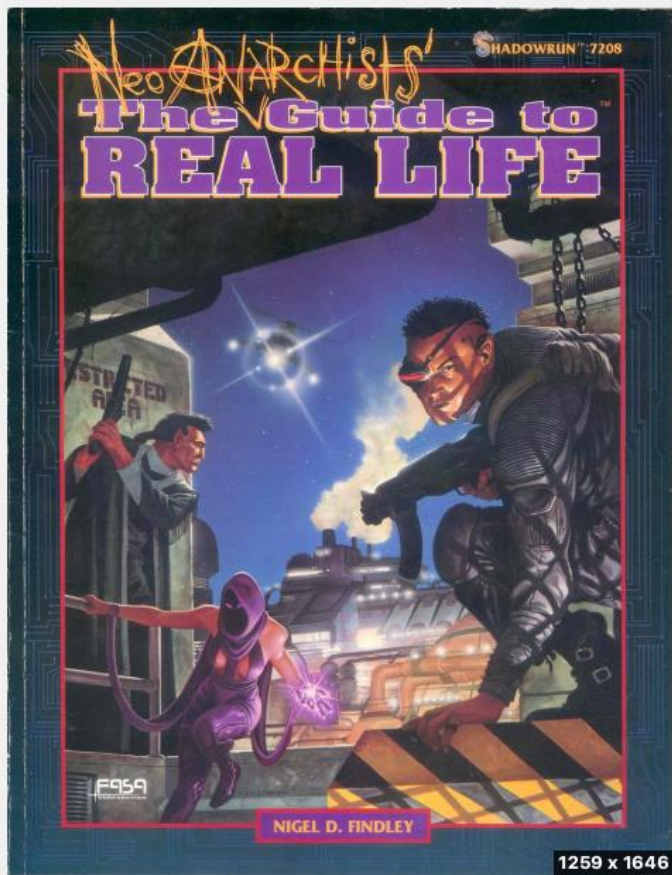
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The Neo-Anarchists are back!

This time, those fun-loving anarchists speak out on everything from transorbital travel and security systems to coffin motels and fast food. Nothing is sacred, profanity reigns, and there's more data than you can shake a chip at.

The *Neo-Anarchists' Guide to Real Life* provides useful information about the SHADOWRUN world in a fictionalized format along with new, specific game systems for each of the subjects covered. This sourcebook is compatible with the original SHADOWRUN rules as well as the newly revised SHADOWRUN, Second Edition.

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