

EVERYONE'S CROOKED

You can't trust anyone in the big city. Those who seem the most trustworthy are the biggest crooks of all.

Every time a new PC is introduced, the DM should roll a D6 to determine the person's honesty.

1-2: Mark: The person is honest, gullible, or transparent. They are ripe for the plucking. In skill systems, their social skills (bluff, diplomacy, sense motive, insight, etc) require a DC 10 to beat.

3-4: Average: In a picaresque game, the "average" person will cheat you if you give them half a chance; will rob a blind man of his last copper; and probably has a couple of nefarious schemes in the works. In skill systems, their social skills require a DC 15 to beat.

5-6: Sharp: These NPCs are actively looking to cheat the PCs if at all possible. They often disguise themselves as Marks. In skill systems, their social skills require a DC 20 or more to beat.

Hypocrisy Modifier: If an NPC acts or claims to be particularly virtuous, add +1 to the d6 roll.



EXPERIENCE IS NEVER CHEAP

Gritty urban crawls are frequently light on monster-slaying. PCs will collect their XP from alternate sources.

Getting Gold: Original D&D and First Edition D&D give heroes XP for each gold piece acquired. This is perfect for picaresque gaming. Even if you're playing in later editions, consider including that rule.

Spending Gold: On his blog, Jeff Rients has suggested "carousing rules" (<http://jrients.blogspot.com/2008/12/party-like-its-999.html>): rules for gaining XP by wasting money on drinking and debauchery (and rules for the possible negative consequences thereof). In many picaresque novels, the hero alternates between riches and poverty, and these rules are a thematic way to bring that about.

Quests: Fourth Edition introduces the idea of "major and minor quests", which are excuses to give XP for accomplishments other than combat. In 4e, consider adding the following permanent quests, which can give XP multiple times:

- **Never Kid a Kidder:** Whenever you cheat someone who's trying to cheat you, you fulfill a minor quest.
- **Carousing:** Once per session, whenever you waste a lot of money (at least 100 GP per level) for no other in-game benefit, you fulfill a minor quest.
- **The Big Score:** Whenever you successfully execute a major heist or con and get rich without having to fight anyone, you fulfill a major quest.

THE LAW IS POWERFUL

Wandering guard patrols are powerful enough to scatter both sides of nearly every brawl. PCs are better off not resisting arrest. If they're wanted, the city gets progressively more dangerous. Increasingly severe crimes will raise