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BOARD GAMING MAGAZINE Spring 2017 / #19

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SNEAKY CARDS

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ISLE OF MONSTERS

Game by Joshua DeBonis and Nikola Risteski



Far away in the middle of somewhere, lies a small collection of beautiful tropical islands filled with unusual plants and even more unusual creatures. The natives of the islands, fearless themselves, have learned how to use different combinations of local ingredients to transform the island's animals into delightfully scary monsters. Though harmless, the monsters are used by the natives to keep the outside world afraid and away from their tiny island paradise. As tradition dictates, the natives compete to capture the best creatures, feed them the right foods, and win scare competitions to determine who can earn the job of Island Protector. Can you and your fellow players take on the role of island natives and raise the scariest creatures?

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MSRP
\$30



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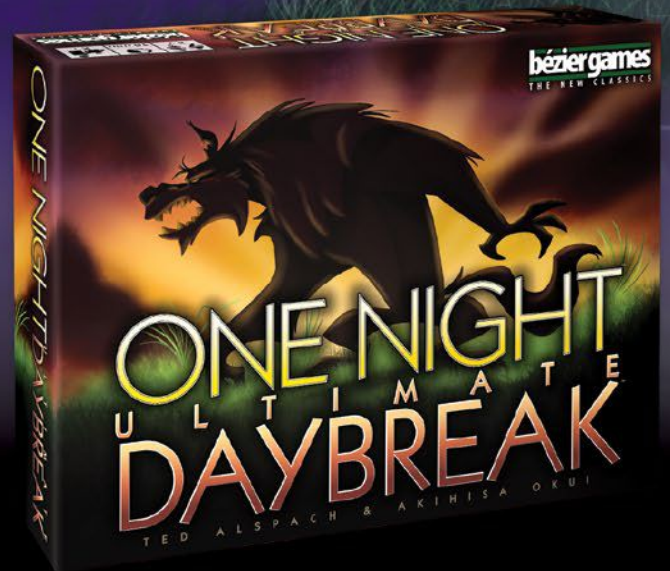


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We have lots of great content in store for you in this and future issues. We hope you enjoy it!





Exploring Dicey Peaks

with Scott Almes

Designer Scott Almes has proven time and again that he is a renaissance man, able to create wonderful games using a variety of themes and concepts. Most recently, Almes has partnered with Calliope Games (*Tsuro*, *Roll For It!*) to reveal the summits of *Dicey Peaks*. In this adventure dice game, players make tough choices in a race to reach the top of a fabled mountain, avoiding the hazards of nature and sinister yetis.





“I’ve played games for as long as I remember,” Almes recalled. “In college, I learned a little game called *The Settlers of Catan* and my love for the hobby just grew!” It was then that he discovered he could actively contribute to his new hobby. “I’ve always been a tinkerer at heart. When I started to get really into the gaming hobby, I felt the need to give designing a try.”

Almes sought a way to meet a demand. “The *Tiny Epic* series developed due to a hole in my gaming collection,” he explained. “I love to travel, but it’s hard to throw big box games into a bag. So, I had a desire to design games that gave a big experience in a tiny box. The game I started with was *Tiny Epic Kingdoms*, and it has grown to many others.” Published by Gamelyn Games, Almes’ *Tiny Epic* series is now a phenomenon, sporting legions of fans. “I love designing in the *Tiny Epic* space, but I also love exploring games outside that space. I find it’s important to keep creative and try different things.”

Almes’ newest title is *Dicey Peaks*. “It’s a push-your-luck dice game where you are managing risk versus reward,” Almes explained. “A major concept is managing oxygen. When you’re rolling, you want to race up the mountain, but climbing uses a lot of oxygen. Deciding when to rest and replenish your oxygen, and when to sprint ahead makes you walk a tightrope. The other twist is the mountain itself. Each space you land on is a tile that needs to be flipped over – for better or worse. Exploring the mountain and avoiding the dangerous parts is a big part of the game.”

The game concept climbed to even loftier heights in the design process. “The track was originally just a scoring track in the shape of a mountain,” described Almes. “My wife had the brilliant suggestion of putting hazards or actions on the track to make it more interesting. If the dice would land you on a tricky space, you knew you had to push a bit further. The folks at Calliope ran with the concept and we started to test face-down tiles that you had to explore. It all came together nicely, and I’m very happy with where it ended up.”

Almes enjoyed the coupling between design and publisher. “*Dicey Peaks* fits Calliope’s brand perfectly. The game is very simple with just a couple rules, and is a great family filler. It’s a game that can be enjoyed by the whole family,” Almes said. “Plus, it works as a nice short game for the more hardcore gaming group to start or end a night with. Those kinds of games fit right into Calliope’s wheel-house, which is why I’m glad they decided to publish it.” 🎲





Ice Cool

School is cool! At least it is when you're a penguin.



Naomi Laeuchli

Game Reviewer and
Casual Game Groupie



Ice Cool is a dexterity game in which you flick your penguin around the penguin school. The game box contains a series of slightly smaller boxes nested inside it, all of which connect to create the penguin school. Each player selects a colored penguin piece, and each round one penguin is chosen to be the Catcher. The goal of the Catcher is to bump into the other penguins (the Runners) and take their student ID cards. The players who control the Runners attempt to collect fish by flicking their penguins through doorways – there are three fish available for each Runner to collect. Once a fish is collected, the player draws a fish card that determines the number of points earned. These cards usually remain secret until the end of the game – however, two one-point cards can be flipped over in order to earn an extra flick.

The round ends after any Runner has collected all his fish or the Catcher has taken the student ID cards from all the players. Every player then draws a fish card for each student ID card that they're currently holding. A new player is chosen to be the Catcher and another round begins. The game ends once each player has been Catcher once (or twice in a two player game). Fish cards are then revealed and the player with the most points wins.

There is a lot of flexibility with how you flick the penguins, and the rulebook gives you tips on how to move them straight, in a curve, or even how to have them jump over walls. Not all the moves are easy to do right off the bat, but part of the fun is that moment when you finally get your penguin to go just where you wanted or the first time you successfully jumped a wall. This can make it harder for new players, but the bit of randomness in the fish cards helps to keep the game a bit more balanced.

Whether you're chasing fish or chasing penguins, the game is fun, a little wacky, and a lot of fun. It's one of those games that reminds you of being a kid while still remaining challenging and having a lot to offer both children and adults.

MSRP: \$30
Designer: Brian Gomez
Publisher: Brain Games
2-4 players, ages 6+, 30 mins.





Valeria: Card Kingdoms

Compete against your fellow Dukes for power over the country of Valeria. But will you gain control through land, through citizens, or by defeating the monsters that plague the country?

In *Valeria: Card Kingdoms*, each player is dealt two duke cards and chooses one, discarding the other. Each duke card gives you special scoring bonuses and you keep it secret until the end. Five monster decks and ten citizen decks are chosen and placed on the table, along with five randomly dealt stacks of domain cards.

Each turn, two dice are rolled. Any citizen activates whose number matches either die or the combined dice result. Each citizen has two activation abilities, one that happens if activated on your turn, and one that happens if activated on another player's turn. If none of your citizens activate after a roll, you may select one resource from the bank.

On your turn, you take two actions. You can choose to buy a citizen or domain, fight a monster, or take a resource of your choice from the bank. There are three resources: strength, gold, and magic. Gold is used to acquire domains and citizens, while strength is used to fight monsters. Magic can be used in place of either, as long as it is played with one of the resources it is supplementing. Each citizen belongs to one of four types. In order to purchase a domain card, you must have a certain combination of citizen types as well as enough gold. Each domain card gives you a perk for purchasing it. The monsters also give you a reward for defeating them.

After all the monsters are slain, all domain cards are bought, or enough of the stacks have been exhausted, the game ends and players count up their victory points. Both domains and monsters are worth a certain number

MSRP: \$50

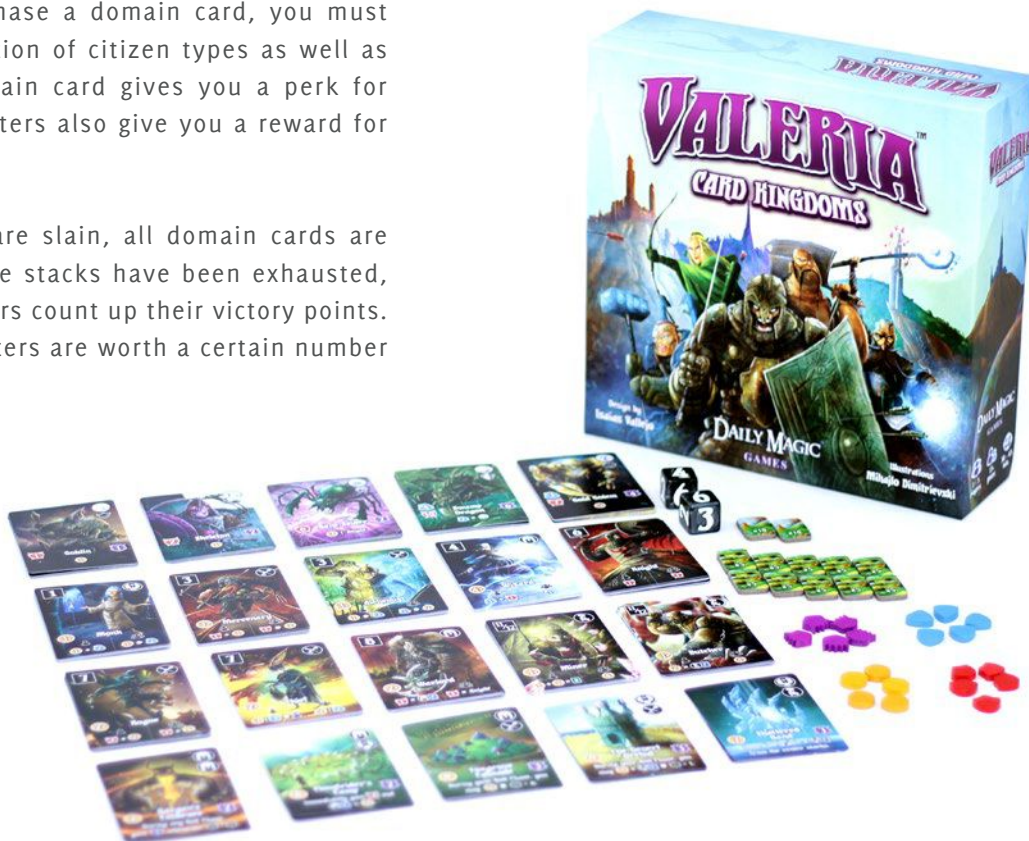
Designer: Isaias Vallejo

Publisher: Daily Magic Games

1-5 players, ages 13+, 30-45 mins.

of points. But your duke might give you a bonus for the number of citizen types you control, or the number of resources you have.

The rulebook is a bit thick, but only because it wants to make absolutely certain you understand everything — the rules themselves are fairly straightforward. Earning resources on every turn keeps the pace fast and means you always have something to do when your turn comes around. There are many potential strategies for you to choose from. If you're looking for a slightly heftier game that still feels light and easy to learn, *Valeria: Card Kingdoms* is an excellent choice.



Phone Phever

A trivia game in which you don't actually have to know anything? Where looking up the answer on your phone isn't cheating? Sounds perfect!

Phone Phever is less about knowing the facts and more about being able to look them up quickly. In the game, you roll the die and move your piece that many steps closer to the smartphone store. If you land on a text message, you follow its instructions and move your piece forward or back a certain number of steps. If you land on a red space, a Phact or Phiction card is drawn. These are true or false questions which you must answer without the use of your phone. If you land on a yellow space, you draw a Phun Phacts card and read it aloud to all the other players. Everyone, except you, may use their smartphone to look up the answer to the question. The first player to correctly answer it gets to roll the die next. If a player answers the question incorrectly, he has to wait until all other players have attempted an answer before trying again.

Your piece can also land on a green space, in which case you draw a Phever Challenge card. Everyone participates in the Phever Challenge and the challenge always requires the use of your phone. You might need to be the first player to take a picture of the game and set it

MSRP: \$30

Designer: (Uncredited)

Publisher: WV Games

3+ players, ages 13+, 30-60 mins.

as your phone's wallpaper, or the first to find an image online of a professional athlete holding a phone. The winner of the challenge gets to roll the die next.

The final space on the board is the smartphone store – once you reach it you must win a Phever Challenge in order to win the game.

The roll and move gameplay isn't groundbreaking, but it is nice to find a trivia game that doesn't leave you feeling dumb for not knowing the answer. Also, a nice addition to the game is that it allows you to remove question categories that you don't want to play with. Don't enjoy answering questions about music? Those can be easily taken out of the game.

Though the game works best using smartphones, it is technically possible to play it using laptops or tablets instead. However, you would have to skip some of challenges – you can't, for instance, pass a laptop through one of your shirt sleeves and out the other.

If you want a trivia game without the pressure of actually having to know anything, or you love the thrill of racing other players to complete a task, *Phone Phever* is a lot of fun.





Epic Roll

Take on the role of a brave adventurer, slay evil monsters, and race to destroy the vile Lich in Epic Roll, a press-your-luck dice game with plenty of fantasy.

Each player chooses to be the Wizard, Warrior, or Elf. On your turn, you start with six health points. You move your token one space on the board and roll a die to determine which monster you will be fighting. You then roll one die for the monster and one die for your hero. Dice results can result in a hit, double hit, blocks, or blanks. You and the monster each lose one point of health for each unblocked hit your opponent rolls. If you're both still alive after this, you roll again. The fight continues until one of you reaches zero health points. If you lose, you return to the start. If you win, you draw a treasure card and may choose to move another space on the board or pass your turn. But because you won't regain your lost health until your next turn, you have to be careful not to push yourself too far.

You may only hold two treasure cards at any one point. Depending on the card, you can play it as a hit against a monster or a block, use it to heal one point of damage, or use it to cancel out the effect of another player's card.

Halfway along the board is a level-up space. From now on, the monsters are more difficult to defeat. Fortunately, if you are defeated in battle, you will return to the halfway point rather than to the start. You will also roll a special power die each time you attack. Rolling a star allows you to activate your character's special ability, such as healing one point or delivering an extra hit.

The last space on the board is the Lich, the strongest and most powerful monster in the game. The first player to defeat it wins.

MSRP: \$25

Designer: Jon Nord, Matt Nord

Publisher: Summon Entertainment

2-3 players, ages 14+, 15-20 mins.

A great deal of thought has been put into balancing the classes and making them unique. Not only are the special abilities specific to each class, but so are the dice you roll. For example, the Elf's die has no blanks, but it cannot hit a monster for two points of damage; the Wizard has the highest chance of rolling a double hit, but cannot block. While a lot of luck is involved in the resolution of each battle, players also must make tactical choices as to which cards to play and when, as well as how long to continue their turn.

Epic Roll is light, portable, and easy to learn. Unfortunately, it only supports up to three players, which makes it a little less flexible, but it's a lot of fun and a good fit for smaller game groups. So roll the dice and hunt the Lich!



Spyfall

“Did you see those feathers?” What feathers? Were they on a bird or a costume? Better figure it out fast if you want to blend in. That’s the key concept in *Spyfall*, where one player has to figure out where he is based on the questions everyone else is asking.

There are thirty locations. At the start of each round, a location card is dealt to each player so that they all have the same location, except one player who will secretly receive a spy card. An eight minute timer is set, and players take turns asking one another questions. After you’ve answered a question, you get to ask the next one. You can ask anybody anything, except the player who just asked you. The key is to choose questions that are vague enough that it will not tip off the spy as to the location, but which will make it clear that you know what the location is and also help you figure out which player doesn’t. For instance, if you are on an airplane, you might ask another player how they like the food. If the player is a spy, she might suspect that you’re in the restaurant location and say that the food is great (which, of course, usually isn’t true of airplane food).

MSRP: \$25

Designer: Alexandr Ushan

Publisher: Cryptozoic Entertainment

3-8 players, ages 13+, 15+ mins.

At any point during the eight minutes, each player may stop the timer once to accuse another player of being the spy. Everyone votes (except the accused) and if there is unanimous agreement, then the round ends and the spy reveals himself. The players win if they were right, otherwise the spy wins. The spy can also stop the clock to accuse another player, or to reveal himself as the spy and guess the location.

If the timer expires, each player takes turns accusing someone of being the spy as described above. If every player has made an accusation and there is no unanimous vote, the spy automatically wins.

Each location card also has a special role listed on it. Players can agree ahead of time to play with them, in which case you have to answer questions in the character of these roles. This adds a little difficulty, and spices things up after you’ve already played several times.

Spyfall is a fantastic choice for players who want all the logic, mind games, and people reading of social deduction games without any of the arguments or debates. It’s quick, it’s fun, and it’s truly unique.





Roll For It!

Dice, luck, and fun: *Roll For It!* has it all. It's the perfect game for when you're on the go, or just want a relaxing game session after a long day.

Three score cards are placed in the center of the table. Each card shows what numbers you have to roll with your dice in order to claim it. Every player has six uniquely colored, miniature dice. On your turn, you roll them and may choose to commit as many dice as you wish to the score cards. Each die may only be committed to one card and must match one of the numbers shown on that card. On your next turn, you will only roll the dice you have not committed, though at the start of each turn you may choose to recall all your committed dice. Once a player has matched all the numbers shown on a card, they place that card in their score pile and a new score card is drawn. The harder a card's numbers will be to match, the more points it's worth. The first player to reach 40 points wins the game.

MSRP: \$15

Designer: Chris Leder

Publisher: Calliope Games

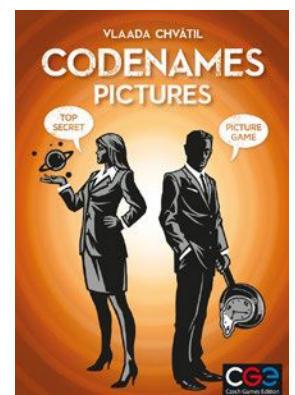
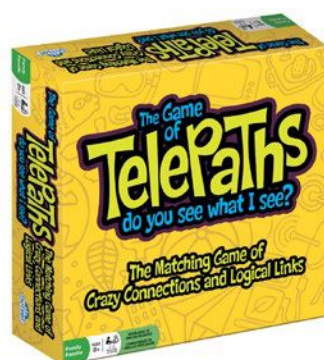
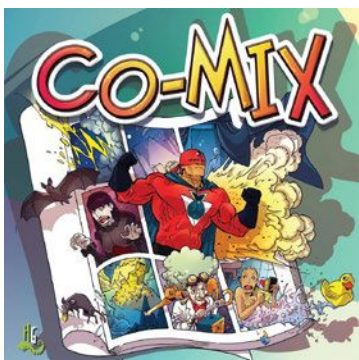
2-4 players, ages 8+, 20-40 mins.

If you have two sets of *Roll For It!* you can play with up to eight players. However, the game is best with a small group, in which you don't have to wait long for your turn and the gameplay is fast. The rules are simple and the varying difficulty of the cards offers some fun strategy mixed in with the rolling fun. 🎲



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How to Tile a Table Top: Ten Categories of Tile-Laying Games



Adam Porter

Game Designer & Keen Curator
of Boardgame Mechanics

In a tile-laying game, players place cardboard, plastic, or wooden tiles onto the table, constructing a “board” as they play. The earliest example, *Dominoes*, with its multiple variant rule sets, dates back to the Middle Ages. The forgettable board game titles of the 20th century were overshadowed by a handful of perennial favorites, *Scrabble* being one of the heavyweights, and a tile-laying game to boot.

For decades, tile laying was reserved for word games and *Dominoes* variants. There were a few exceptions—in the 1990s, I was a frequent player of Games Workshop’s *DungeonQuest*, whereby players explored an emerging dungeon populated with monsters. Tile laying was the core mechanism of the game. But my true introduction to this style of game came from *Carcassonne*, a modern predecessor of the tile-laying genre. In the years that followed, I saw tile laying used time and again in contemporary titles, each of which placed a clever twist on the mechanism.

This article explores the myriad of possibilities that the tile-laying mechanism provides for game designers, and the wide range of experiences it offers players.

1 Real-time Tile Laying

In a real-time game, players race against a clock, sand timer, or other players, taking actions freely without a system of player turns. In *Galaxy Trucker*, we spend the first half of the game building a spaceship, then spend the second half watching it fall apart as it is pummeled by asteroids. The game involves timed tile-laying with players racing to grab the best components from the table and construct the most durable machine. *Mondo* is a game about building a map of the world, again racing to grab tiles before the other players can use them.



2 Route Building

Route-building games incorporate roads, rivers, or paths enabling playing pieces to travel around the board or table. *Tsuro* features players placing tiles representing curved paths which compel the playing pieces to fly around the board. This is a route-building tile game at its simplest. *Sheep & Thief* is a rare example of a tile-drafting game using the same pass-and-play mechanism as games like *7 Wonders* and *Sushi Go!* In this game, cards are used as tiles to form

a network of roads. Sheep move along these roads trying to reach scoring positions and protected areas where they can't be rustled by the thieves.

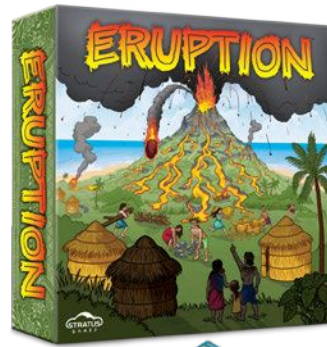
Many of the most popular (and complex) route-building games are train games, frequently using tiles to form railway tracks. Examples are Martin Wallace's *Steam* and many of the games in the 18XX series (*1829*, *1830*, etc.). Wallace revisited *Steam* in 2016, taking the core concepts and creating the very accessible (and beautiful) route-building game, *Via Nebula*.



3

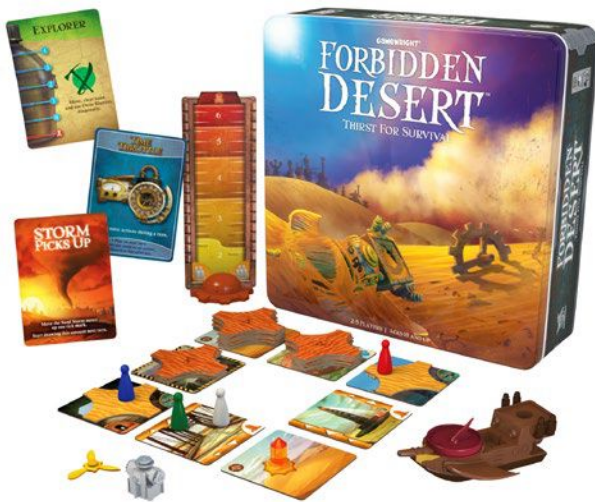
Destruction

However, tile laying can take on darker themes of disaster and destruction. In *The Downfall of Pompeii* and the similarly themed *Eruption*, tiles are used to destroy the board. Players place lava tiles across the board in an attempt to mess up their opponents' plans. *Survive: Escape from Atlantis!* uses a similar mechanism, only in reverse. Here the board is populated with tiles from the outset and they are removed throughout the game to represent a sinking island leaving poor, helpless islander meeples to swim for survival.



4

Living Board



In games which utilize a living board, tile placement creates a dynamic environment where the playing area evolves throughout the game. Tiles might be compelled to move around the board, or stack on top of one another. The cooperative game *Forbidden Desert* features tiles which move with the blowing of the wind. They can even become buried beneath other stacks of tiles representing deep sand dunes, making inaccessible the items players are searching for.

Dominant Species sees players placing different types of habitat tiles, which will be beneficial to some players and detrimental to others. Players can then add resource tiles to alter the desirability of a certain location, or even stack tundra tiles on top of other tiles representing the oncoming ice age. It's a complex, strategic area-control game with a constantly mutating board.

5

Exploration

DungeonQuest is an exploration tile-laying game, where tiles make up a series of corridors, secret rooms and catacombs within a fantasy dungeon. Each turn involves placing new tiles and seeing what lies ahead. However, exploration is not reserved for high-fantasy thematic gaming. *Tikal* is a classic tile-laying game where players explore a jungle placing tiles to reveal treasure and temples.





Pure (Abstract) Tile Laying

In the purest tile-laying games there is no board and generally no theme beyond some superficial artwork. *Bananagrams* is a word game where players produce an interconnected series of words by placing tiles onto the table in the manner of a crossword puzzle. *Qwirkle* was a Spiel Des Jahres winner several years ago. Here, players place tiles into a shared grid, scoring points for matching either color or shape. *Voluspa* works similarly but introduces special powers which activate on the placement of the tiles. *Mops Royal* is a very simple introductory game into the tile-laying genre, with a similar central mechanism to the Spiel Des Jahres nominee *Karuba* — each player is given an identical



tile to work with, but they are creating their own personal grid of tiles, so the players' strategies tend to quickly diverge.



Tile Laying on a Board



In the examples above, there are several games where tiles are laid directly onto the table (*Mops Royal*, *Qwirkle*, *Forbidden Desert*) and several others where tiles are laid onto a board (*Dominant Species*, *Galaxy Trucker*, *Tikal*). Many games which use a board for tile-laying feature particularly desirable spots for players to compete over, for example the “Double Word Score” spaces of *Scrabble*. Others use a board to limit available space. In a game of *Tigris and Euphrates*, the tension comes from knowing that the growing connected regions of tiles are eventually going to have to contact each other, bringing players into conflict.



Individual Tableau

In *Quadropolis*, *Glen More*, *Castles of Mad King Ludwig*, and *Isle of Skye*, players connect their own tiles to create a tableau which is personal to them. These examples all feature activation and scoring of tiles dependent on what other tiles are positioned around them. Such games do not tend to feature interaction between players in the tile-laying portion of the game, but instead they frequently incorporate a dynamic marketplace, or clever drafting mechanism for gathering tiles. *Kingdomino* is a delightfully simple example,



with a brilliant mechanism for selecting tiles without adding complexity; the playful title gives a nod to its *Dominoes* ancestor. *Honshu* introduces a trick-taking phase as the method of obtaining tiles. *Keyflower* sits at the other end of the spectrum, with a complex series of player interactions (auctions, worker placement, resource management) driving the placement of the hexes.

9

Shared Tableau

More direct interaction between players can be achieved in a shared tableau. This is where players place tiles onto a communal grid. The shared-tableau games tend to differ from



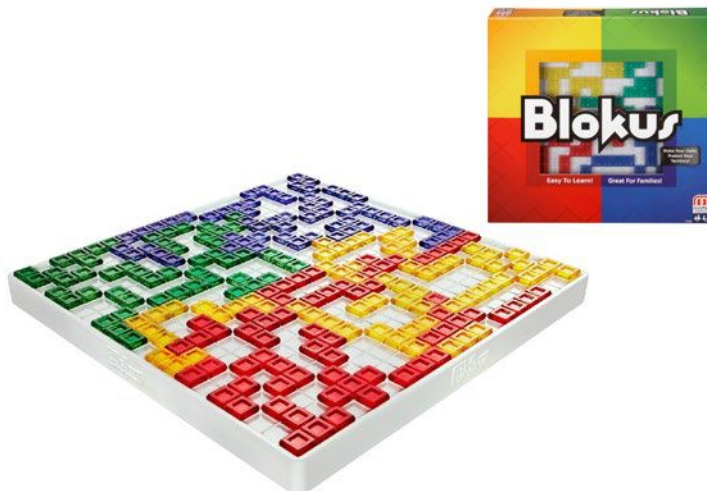
tile-laying on a board, because rules dictate that all tiles must be placed such that they are immediately in contact with the grid, bringing players into competition and potential conflict from the outset.

The most famous tile-laying game within the modern board game hobby, *Carcassonne*, uses this mechanism as do each of its multitude of spin-offs and expansions. *Cacao* is a more recent example of the genre. *Takenoko* is a beautiful game where players build a colorful bamboo garden (home to a hungry panda), placing tiles on a shared grid then activating them to grow bamboo canes by strategic placement of a gardener figure.

10

Tessellation

Tessellation is the use of geometric shapes (think *Tetris*), interlocking to score points in various ways. An example is the abstract strategy game *Blokus*. This is an underused mechanism which occasionally crops up as a minor feature in a larger game, for example the placement of buildings in *Arkadia* or *Princes of Florence*. But it can be satisfying when used as the central mechanism in a game: Uwe Rosenberg's *Patchwork* is a stunning two-player tile-laying puzzle game where players compete to produce the most beautiful quilt! Rosenberg revisited tessellation as a mechanism twice in 2016 – in the heavy strategy game *A Feast for Odin*,



tile-laying is a core feature. *Cottage Garden* revisited the lighter gameplay of *Patchwork*, but this game is playable for 1-4 players with a delightful flower bed construction theme.

Of course, many of the games I have mentioned could fit into several of my definitions – inevitably, categorizing is not an exact system – but it is evident that tile-laying is a versatile tool. It can be used to create a game of high interaction and conflict, or a game of multi-player solitaire. It can be a process of building and construction, or something a little more destructive. It can be used in an entirely abstract puzzle game, or something extremely thematic. Needless to say, we've come a long way since *Dominoes*. 🎲

Adam Porter is a game designer based in Wales, UK. His YouTube channel, Adam's Boardgame Wales, contains vlogs, top 10 lists, and reviews about boardgames. Follow Adam on Twitter at @boardgamewales



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FROM
Minnesota
TO
Madras

BUILDING A BOARD
GAME LIBRARY

I first met Peter Jacobson over 15 years ago. We were both regulars in the *Minnesota Star Wars Collectible Card Game* scene, and we crossed paths at plenty of tournaments. Peter always stood out to me. Some people were there to compete. Others were there to hang out with friends. Still others wanted to continually hone and refine their playing skills. But Peter—possibly more than anyone else in the scene—just seemed intent on having fun.



Dann Albright

*Freelance Journalist and
Lifelong Board Gamer*



Not Your Average Game Library



And not just having fun, but making sure that everyone there was having a great time, too. He's a good-natured guy, always smiling (barring situations where the game hangs in the balance of a particularly tricky play) and talking to players both old and new. He very obviously had a passion for playing games. And that passion has followed him across the world and become a very real part of his professional life.

Peter and his wife, Alli, no longer live in Minnesota. In 2013, they decided that they wanted something new, so they moved from Belle Plaine, a small town where they both had teaching jobs, to Chennai (formerly known as Madras). It's India's fourth-largest urban center, covering over 165 square miles and housing over 7,000,000 people. Calling the change overwhelming is likely a gross understatement.

But the Jacobsons found a new home in India, as well as new positions teaching at the American International School of Chennai (AISC). It's a diverse school that caters to the children of American and international parents living in the city. Classes are conducted in English, and the school places a strong emphasis on multiculturalism. The school is built upon four C's: Collaboration, Courage, Compassion, and Creativity. And nowhere is that more evident than in the library.

The school library at AISC looks nothing like the library you remember from your school years. In fact, it's not even called a library—a few years ago, it was rebranded as the Collaboration & Inquiry Center (CIC). A modern trend for libraries is expanding their role beyond simply books. Now libraries are also maker spaces, robotics labs, and programming centers, helmed by those who take a much more hands-on, collaborative role with students.

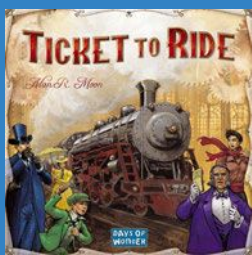
Peter works in the CIC as the high school media specialist, helping the high school students of AISC take advantage of the library's many books, databases, and facilities. And not only that, but he's been expanding the CIC's contents to include something you might not expect to see in a school library, especially in India: board games.



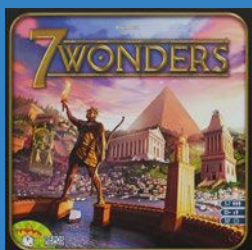
"One of my passions is games," Peter explained. And games are a clear match for the mission of the CIC. They're "highly collaborative and rely on a great deal of problem solving—and, at times, inquiry—to explore the possibilities within a game's rules and parameters." If you've played modern board games, it's probably a sentiment you agree with, even if you haven't thought about it that way before. "The CIC seemed to be a natural fit for including games for students to explore these aspects of their growth and development as learners."



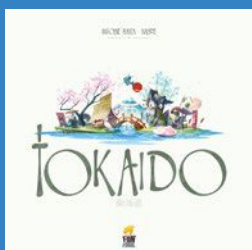
Not Your Average Game Library



Peter focuses on award-winning games that are age-appropriate for the high-school level students. A variety of modern classics are in the Center's collection. Students build cities in *Carcassonne*, settle new lands in *The Settlers of Catan*, plan train trips through the United States in *Ticket to Ride*, and construct great civilizations in *7 Wonders*.



There are a number of more recent titles as well, such as *Pandemic*, in which students strive to defeat potentially world-ending pathogens; *Castles of Mad King Ludwig*, which sees players building castles room-by-room; and *Tokaido*, which offers a tour of Japanese culture along the East Sea Road. When games can integrate with the school curriculum—like using *Civilization* as an example for a social studies class, or *Evolution* for biology—it's even better.



Of course, not every game has to connect with a class. *Fury of Dracula*, *Betrayal at House on the Hill*, *Dead of Winter*, *King of New York*, and the *Game of Thrones* Living Card Game (LCG) might be a stretch for educational purposes, but they certainly reward problem solving, communication, and planning skills.



Learning with Dracula

Looking at the games in the collection as a whole, it's clear that they were all chosen for a reason. They're all quite interactive (at least compared to heavy European-style games, which are often denigrated as "multiplayer solitaire" games) and most have interesting themes that will appeal to high school students—though Jacobson notes that many of the teachers in the school are also board game enthusiasts and check them out for their own classrooms, as well.



While AISC might not be the first institution to see board games integrated into school life, it might be the first to officially include anything other than specifically educational games or more traditional titles like *Monopoly*, *Scrabble*, *Clue*, *Boggle*, and *Risk*. There are certainly lessons to be learned from these classics, but modern board games offer a significantly richer and more diverse platform for teaching.

Monopoly, for example, may teach students how to manage their money, but it also teaches them that ruthlessly bankrupting their opponents is the only way to victory. *The Settlers of Catan*, on the other hand, requires players to engage in trades that are mutually beneficial—and so students learn to calculate whether or not a particular trade is likely to give them more of an advantage than an opponent.

Take *Clue* as another example: the algorithmic problem solving required to win the game is the foundation of myriad other skills, especially in the increasingly programming-oriented world of science, technology, and math education. But *Fury of Dracula*



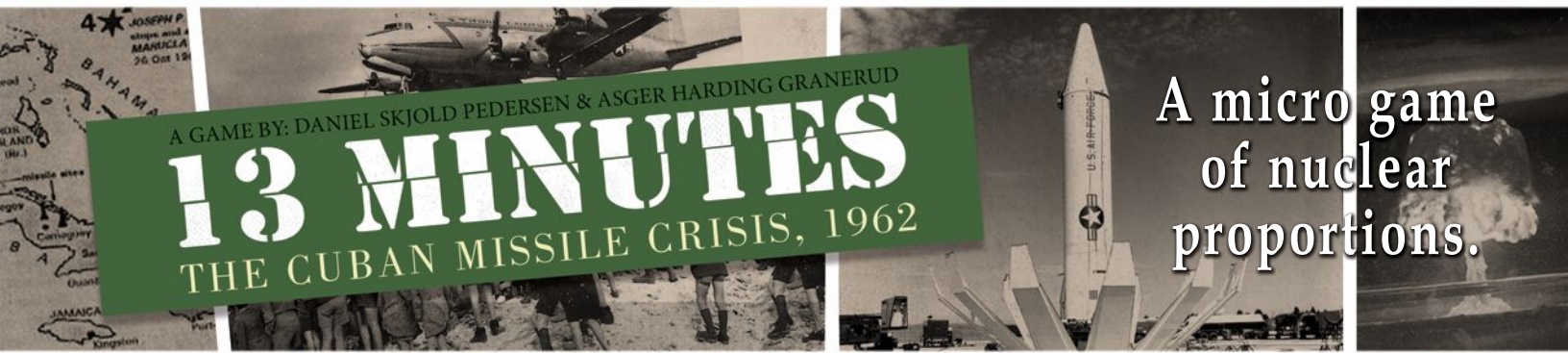


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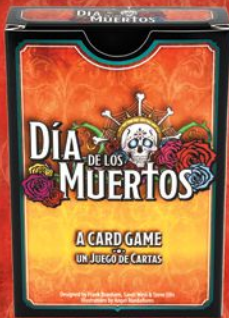
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Not Your Average Game Library:



Jacobson admits that he had to include a few *Star Wars* games, like *X-Wing*, the *Edge of the Empire* and *Age of Rebellion* role-playing games, and the *Star Wars* LCG simply because they're good games—and, in his own words, “c’mon, it’s *Star Wars*!” It’s certainly hard to argue with that.



requires that a number of players work together to uncover information about the hidden movements of the titular bloodsucker, while the player controlling Dracula must do their best to intuit where their opponents will look next based on the information they hold.

Of course, *Monopoly* and *Clue* can be taught to students at younger ages than *Settlers* and *Fury of Dracula*. And not everyone will be interested in highly thematic games—fantasy, horror, and science fiction just don’t appeal to everyone. Which is why having a diverse collection like the one at AISC is so valuable.

The Board of Education

Scholars and teachers are becoming increasingly aware of the value of play in learning, and modern board games offer a space for students to compete, cooperate, challenge, and problem solve in a way few other diversions do. These board games haven’t yet broken into the mainstream of educational materials—I’ve yet to hear of another school working with modern games to this degree—but it’s clear that the idea is gaining traction. There are a number of books on the topic, including *Libraries Got Game*, a treatise specifically dealing with the types of games that Jacobson has assembled at AISC.

Of course, the progressive atmosphere present in Chennai’s American International School made it much easier to introduce games that some teachers and administrators would scoff at. But Jacobson is confident that other teachers and librarians who are passionate about games will have no problem



Tak™

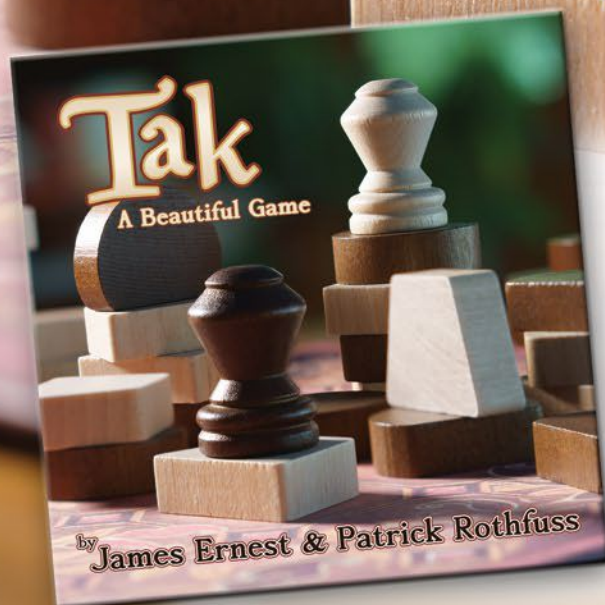
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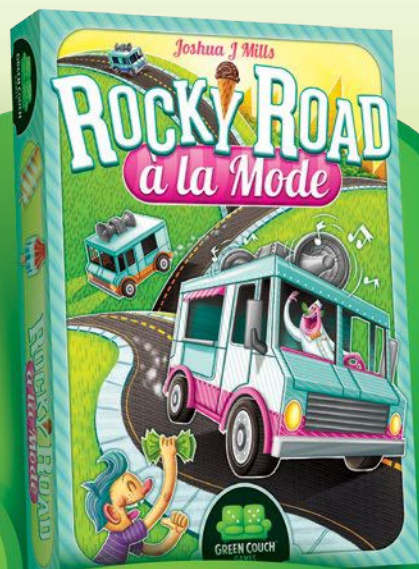
introducing them to their schools. If it's a passion, he says, it's absolutely doable.

It might seem strange when the world's schools seem to be focusing more and more on high-tech teaching methods, electronic tools, and preparation for the digital world, but Jacobson's pet project at AISC speaks to an inescapable fact: we always need to be able to work together with people. Group problem solving, communication, and negotiation are skills that will never go out of style.

And breaking with the current technology trend, maybe board games, no longer a dying analog pastime but a thriving aspect of modern geek culture, are the best way of teaching these skills to a new generation of learners. 🎲

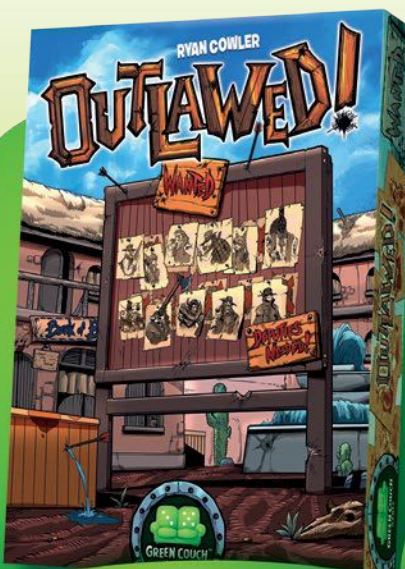
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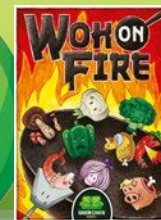
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Cult of the New

Are Gamers Buying More and Playing Less?



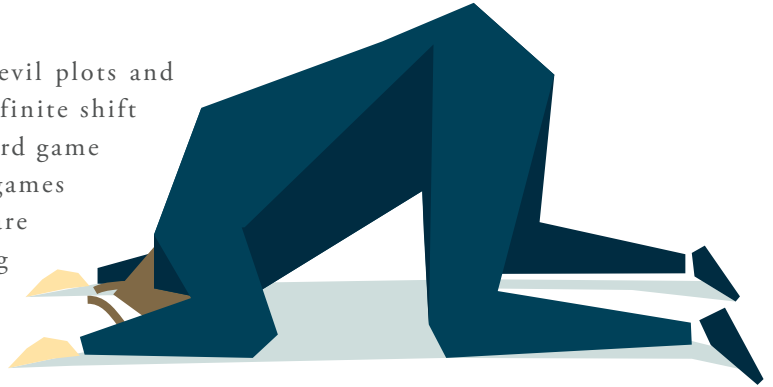
Eric Huemmer

Co-op Connoisseur
and Wordsmith



You may have noticed it before: A whisper on the forums, some shifty looks at your local game store. Whether it started with the consumers or the publishers, no one knows. The signs are there if you look—an incredible title with outstanding reviews heading for game of the year, only to be quickly discarded for a different season’s must-buy a few weeks later. Popular games flying off the shelves one month, only to be shelved the next. It’s as if there’s some **Cult of the New** that needs to buy the latest and greatest, play it once or twice, then sacrifice it to the dusty shelf of obscurity...

All right. Maybe it’s not as dramatic as robed figures, evil plots and insidious chants of “evergreen,” but there has been a definite shift in buyer trends over the past couple of years. As the board game industry and community grow, the market longevity of games seems to shrink, as if the attention spans of gamers are eroding. Are consumers really buying more and playing less? What has changed with the board game markets to explain this shift?



No Chutes, All Ladders

For those following board games as a hobby, it can be argued that the industry has been entering a bit of a renaissance. Thousands of new games are being released annually, filling a growing variety of genres and niche markets that didn’t previously exist. From unique titles to modern remakes of old classics, board game sales have been trending upward across the board.

According to Board Game Geek, an estimated 3,900 new board games were released in 2016 alone. These include games released by large publishers, small designers, and individual passion projects; new games to existing titles receiving expansions, reskins, and updated rules.

Kickstarter was a large contributor to the impressive list of titles that came out. According to Kickstarter,



2,937 board game projects were launched in 2016, while 1,710 projects were successfully funded that year. Not only was there an incredible amount of projects hitting the platform, but Kickstarter had a record number of board game consumers in a year with a whopping 584,568 recorded backers. So what was the total amount pledged to board games? The final count was \$115,321,828 in 2016.

It’s not just the hobby market. According to Euromonitor International, global retail sales for games and puzzles have seen consistent growth annually since 2011, when board game sales were down due to the novelty of tablets and mobile apps. Mass market games have also been shifting to attract new audiences, capitalizing on creative licensing and alternative rules to revive older titles, games such as *Frozen Jenga*, *Star Wars Monopoly*, and recently *Midnight Taboo* (but more on that later).

Whether these games were successful hits or notable flops, the sheer number of games available to consumers can be staggering. It’s a lot to take in for a hobbyist, but that’s only one side of this story. When you see such an increase in supply, it is usually a result of an increase in demand, something that the hobby base alone couldn’t have driven.

All Your Base Are Belong to Us

To track down this Cult of the New, there needs to be a general understanding of the board game consumer base. To simplify things, there are two basic camps: mass market consumers and hobbyists. Mass market consumers (broadly speaking) are people who will only buy games they have played before, or because of the game's licensed theme. Typically they will buy board games as gifts for birthdays or holidays, and only when they find them at a store they were already shopping at. The titles they are usually interested in are your traditional touchstones: *Monopoly*, *Risk*, *Uno*, and an assortment of classic games with which you can enjoy getting mad at your family while playing.



Hobbyists, on the other hand, can be broadly described as those who take an active interest in the industry; reading about upcoming games and keeping tabs on publisher news. They play games regularly, actively seeking out new titles as a source of entertainment, and are willing to trudge through dense rulebooks to play a game that could last well over an hour. The titles they are interested in are usually found at game stores or through crowdfunding platforms. (There's a very good chance that if you are reading this magazine, you are somewhere on the hobbyist scale.)

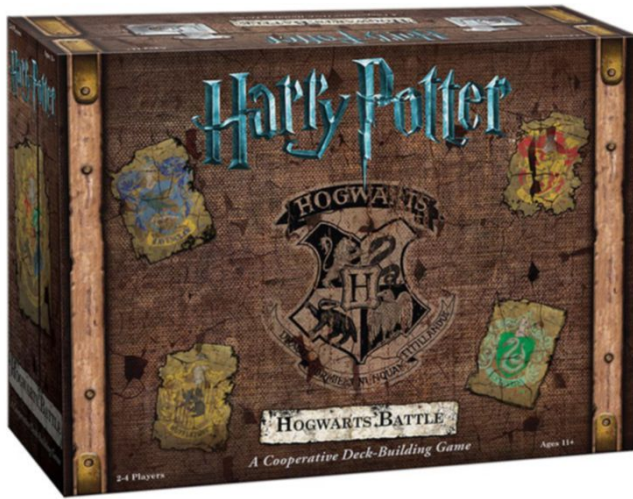
Identifying these two consumer bases is important as it helps describe the recent changes in board game markets and, ultimately, consumer trends. What happens when you have the opportunity to market to both audiences? According to Eric Martin, News Editor for Board Game Geek, the impressive sales growth of board games over the past couple of years has not gone unnoticed by retail chains and publishers.

"The main change [in the industry] has been an increased presence of hobby titles in mainstream markets," explained Martin. "The mass market industry, your Mattels and Hasbros, haven't really changed. But now you're seeing hobby titles like *Sheriff of Nottingham* being carried in stores like Barnes & Noble and Target."

The Whims of Change

The impact of this newfound exposure is twofold: it encourages hobbyists to shop at these mass market stores, and it introduces hobby titles to mass market consumers who normally wouldn't learn of these games otherwise. And it's been successful — stores went from small selections to dedicated aisles as sales noticeably increased. Now games that normally only circulated in the hobby market are being looked at by mass market consumers.

The board game trend has driven publishers of all kinds to increase output. Some titles are releasing store-exclusive expansions, giving certain consumers access to exclusive content if they buy a copy at a specific store. Even mass market publishers aren't relying on their flagships alone to ride the trend headwinds. Many of these mainstays received modern facelifts to attract a blended consumer base. Some examples of this include *Cranium Dark*, *Midnight Taboo*, and *Monopoly Here and Now*.



Harry Potter: Hogwarts Battle blends hobby-style gameplay with a theme that is familiar to mass market consumers

It's at these crossroads where you begin to see something truly interesting: a cross pollination of hobby gameplay and creative licensing to act as a gateway for new consumers. "Take *Harry Potter: Hogwarts Battle*," Martin pointed out. "You have consumers that have never heard the concept of deckbuilding, but the game itself is a hook." The title has been well-received across the board, and it makes deckbuilders like *Dominion* and *Ascension* more accessible to new audiences.

"The key is to overcome that initial unfamiliarity with something they know," Martin continued. "That's why you'll see *Batman Story Cubes* being sold next to *Batman* keychains, as someone will simply pick it up for the novelty."

Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close Releases

Ultimately, we are seeing a steady increase in new consumers entering the hobby market, and an ever-growing number of publishers and retailers racing to sell them their next game. So if you are following the hobby, consumers can appear to be incredibly hyped about a game, only for another title to hit the scene. The regular window for a game's popularity might appear to decrease, when in reality it could be that there is simply a growing list of exciting titles launching around the same time. Marketing campaigns have to be more aggressive for a title to stand out from the others that are just around the corner. James Mathe, owner of Minion Games, echoes this.

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“Since so many new games are coming out, many people are distracted by the new, shiny thing – thus you have a very short window to make an impression and then your game will most likely fade away,” described Mathe. “That window of the most sales is typically only 3 months now, with your game being dead after 9-12 months if it doesn’t achieve ‘evergreen’ (constantly selling) status. 99.9% of games out there don’t achieve that.”

So is it a bad thing that a title will dominate the scene for a shorter amount of time before another equally-awesome game is announced? Martin doesn’t think so. “Before, you sorta had to play what was out at the time. When I got into the hobby about ten years ago, there weren’t many games to choose from. Now you can find exactly what you want.”

Since there are more games on the market, it gives the consumer the freedom to find a title that fits



their tastes. Feel like trashing a city? *King of Tokyo* and *King of New York* have you covered. Want a super-hero co-op game? *Sentinels of the Multiverse* is the perfect fit. The more games there are, the more games you’ll like.

Visiting Your Library

Whether or not there really is a “Cult of the New” is hard to say. Typical consumers aren’t tracking the amount of times games are hitting the table. But the *appearance* that people are buying more and playing less has attracted the attention of the gaming community at large. Hobbyists are now encouraging their communities to revisit their game libraries. Forums like Board Game Geek and Reddit are experimenting with new challenges, including playing ten games ten times in a year to promote collection appreciation.

Sajrainwater, a hobbyist on Board Game Geek, is attempting to play through every game he owns in 2017 and chronicling the attempt. With 180 games in his library, it seems like a rather daunting task, but he’s excited to give it a try. “This exercise is to help me remember that buying games is a great part of the hobby, but playing games is the heart and soul.”

It seems that the increasing frequency of hot new releases won’t fade away any time soon, especially as the community continues to grow. While it’s great to support new game development, do yourself a favor and follow Sajrainwater’s lead – share the table with some of the titles that helped you fall in love with games in the first place. 🎲



“Since so many new games are coming out, many people are distracted by the new, shiny thing – thus you have a very short window to make an impression and then your game will most likely fade away”

**– James Mathe,
owner of Minion Games**



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BOARD GAMES ARE A WASTE OF TIME

(And That's the Point)



Jason P. Pike

*Half-Elf Rogue, Semicolon
Enthusiast, Chicago Writer*

The next time a well-intentioned friend tells you that this hobby of ours is a “waste of time,” consider the following before you reply.



Games are a waste of time, and *that's what makes them invaluable*. Hear me out—more than frivolous escapism, board games contribute in indispensable ways to mental, physical, and social health. They present a unique opportunity: what other area of your life grants you the chance to practice real-life skills with friends, while simultaneously providing a therapeutic effect for your mind and body that is centered on *having fun*?

When we talk about “wasting time” playing board games, we’re talking about **play**. It’s a tiny word with huge implications. The National Institute of Play asserts that play can dramatically transform our

health, relationships, education, and our capacity to innovate. According to research, stress, creativity, and brain function are all improved by play, with the added bonus that play with other people—board games, in our case—fosters trust between individuals.

Most adults don’t play enough. On why play becomes taboo as we become adults, psychologist Kathryn Hirsh-Pasek, director of Temple University’s Infant and Child Laboratory and author of *Why They Need to Play More and Memorize Less*, explains: “We associate play with childhood, and therefore ‘playing’ with childishness. [...] By abandoning play, we’re abandoning an important part of ourselves.”

The Cranium Rulebook

We all scoot around between work, family, errands, and obligations in our daily lives. Our bodies and brains are constantly engaged in the necessary processes that allow us to complete these tasks without dropping dead from stress or exhaustion. When faced with challenges beyond its state of optimum functioning, the brain regulates itself by creating chemicals to maintain a balanced state, known as homeostasis.

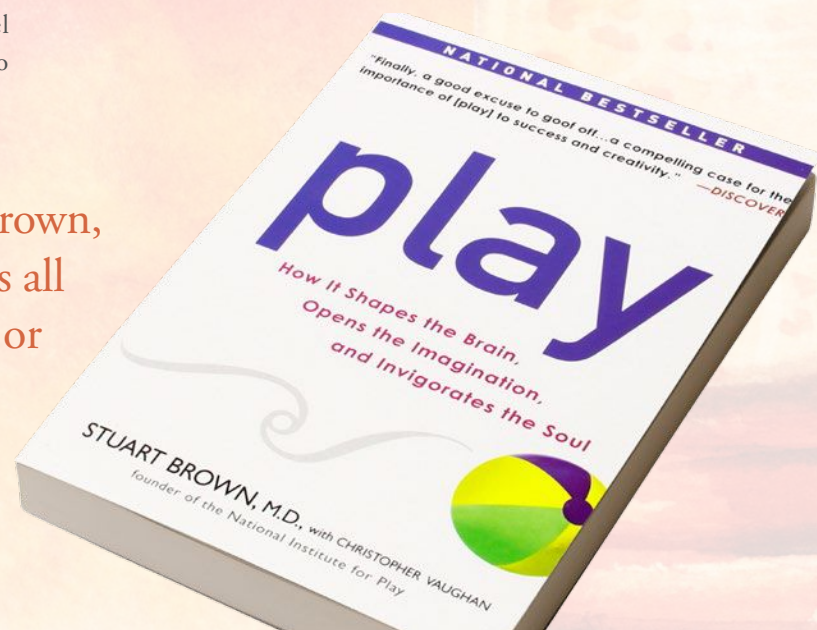
Alternatively, overloading the brain with stress affects our capacity to process information, can affect our mental health as well as our circulatory and digestive systems, and ultimately results in overall decreased ability. It’s well-documented that long-term disruption in homeostasis can cause illness, depression, even death. As we age, the need for play only increases, and the amount of play we experience decreases.

If we treat our bodies as machines, there is an optimum level of functioning. If this level is not reached, usually due to

excessive amounts of stress caused by the demands of a busy lifestyle, we begin to feel unmotivated, anxious, less able to tackle real life. Board game naysayers are then arguing that we “waste time” exploring a dungeon or trading wood for sheep, when in reality it helps us operate at peak conditions.

“We don’t lose the need for novelty and pleasure as we grow up,” describes Scott G. Eberle, PhD, vice president for Play Studies at *The Strong* and editor of the *American Journal of Play*. It just gets shoved aside by the twin brutes of personal and professional responsibilities. When we waste time, we take part in a voluntary, extremely flexible necessity—play—that momentarily pushes important life stuff aside and creates a temporal space for our brains to upload information and cool off. Play is healthy.

In his book *Play*, psychiatrist Stuart Brown, MD, compared play to oxygen: “...it’s all around us, yet goes mostly unnoticed or unappreciated until it is missing.”





The Benefits of Wasting Time

Of course, while we sit down to waste time, life continues to oscillate just beyond the tabletop. Socially speaking, when an adult in the 21st century is asked, “How are you?” the expected reply is, “Busy.” There’s a stigma surrounding play: if you were busy enough, you wouldn’t have time to waste in the first place (e.g. board games attract lazy or unproductive people).

The subtext of referring to playing board games as “wasting time” is grim: games don’t offer anything useful. They are, pardon the pun, a trivial pursuit. But the opposite is true.

Board games, while facilitating play that healthy adults require, also engage us in the development of important skills: critical thinking, resource management, cooperation, reading comprehension, role-playing, calculated risk-taking, strategy and tactics, and spatial reasoning. Be it working together to cure a worldwide outbreak of disease, or vying against rival nations to build the most flourishing empire, games challenge us to work within a system of rules and consider solutions for the obstacles that stand between us and victory. We gain opportunity to practice failure. Board games serve as a simulacrum for scenarios we might encounter in our lives outside the game, furnishing players with a simulation in which they can practice very real—and very useful—abilities, free of consequence. “Wasting time” then becomes a way for us to grow. This all takes place in real time, with real people sitting across the table. The invisible rule of every board game is that players must *be present*. This is the ultimate differentiator

“We don’t lose the need for novelty and pleasure as we grow up”

— Scott G. Eberle, PhD





between “wasting time” playing board games and “wasting time” engaging in other, perhaps less scrutinized, forms of socializing. Board games are tactile, social, kinetic things, and playing them requires face-to-face interaction and connectivity between players.

The barrier to entry for board games is usually quite low, because explanation of the rules is an integral part of the social ritual. Everyone gathers, understands the objective, and agrees to play within parameters. Typical factors like age, size, ability, socioeconomic class, gender, sex, or sexual orientation that might affect accessibility in other social scenarios don't really exist at the tabletop. If someone brings the game (or you're lucky enough to have access to a local board game shop that lets you play whatever you want), you're in. The rest is just details. The act of playing a board game is blatantly an act of socialization. The only distinct difference between it and, say, attending a baseball game or going to a nightclub, is that

the social ritual takes place over cardboard. Plato is rumored to have written, “You can discover more about a person in an hour of play than in a year of conversation,” and nowhere is it more true than over a game board. Board games are a perfect example of using play as a catalyst for reviving the social and fostering community. “Wasting time” is how we can connect and, frankly, board games are an exciting way to do just that.



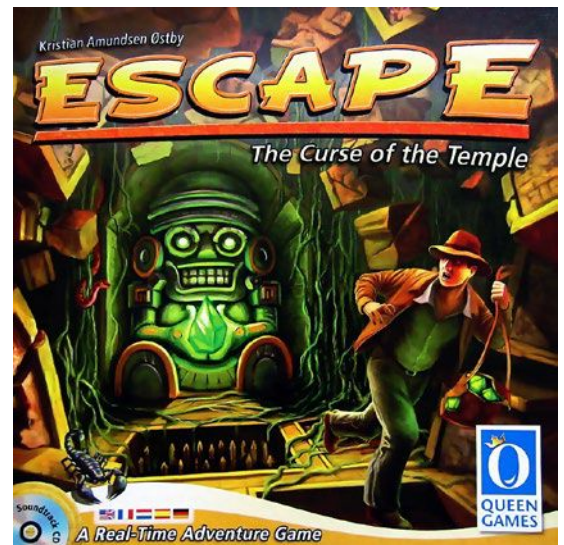
Want to practice some important skills while wasting time? Check out these games:

Cooperation

Game: Escape: The Curse of the Temple
Time wasted: 10 minutes



It's only a matter of minutes until the cursed temple collapses, trapping you and your exploring party forever. You'll face opportunities to help your teammates, but time spent doing so means less to save yourself. Oh, and everybody has to make it out alive or you all lose.





(games for wasting time, continued)



Reading body language



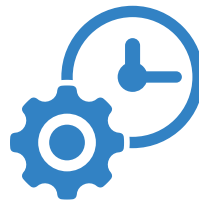
Game: The Resistance
Time wasted: 30 minutes

You're either a loyal member of a corrupt futuristic government, or a freedom fighter. Your true identity and agenda must be kept a secret at all costs as you work side-by-side with your opponents who might actively want you dead.

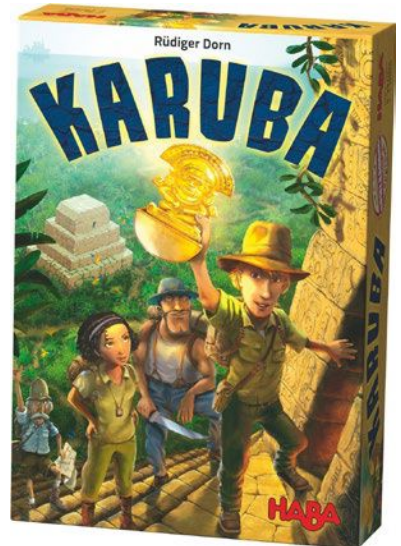


Time management

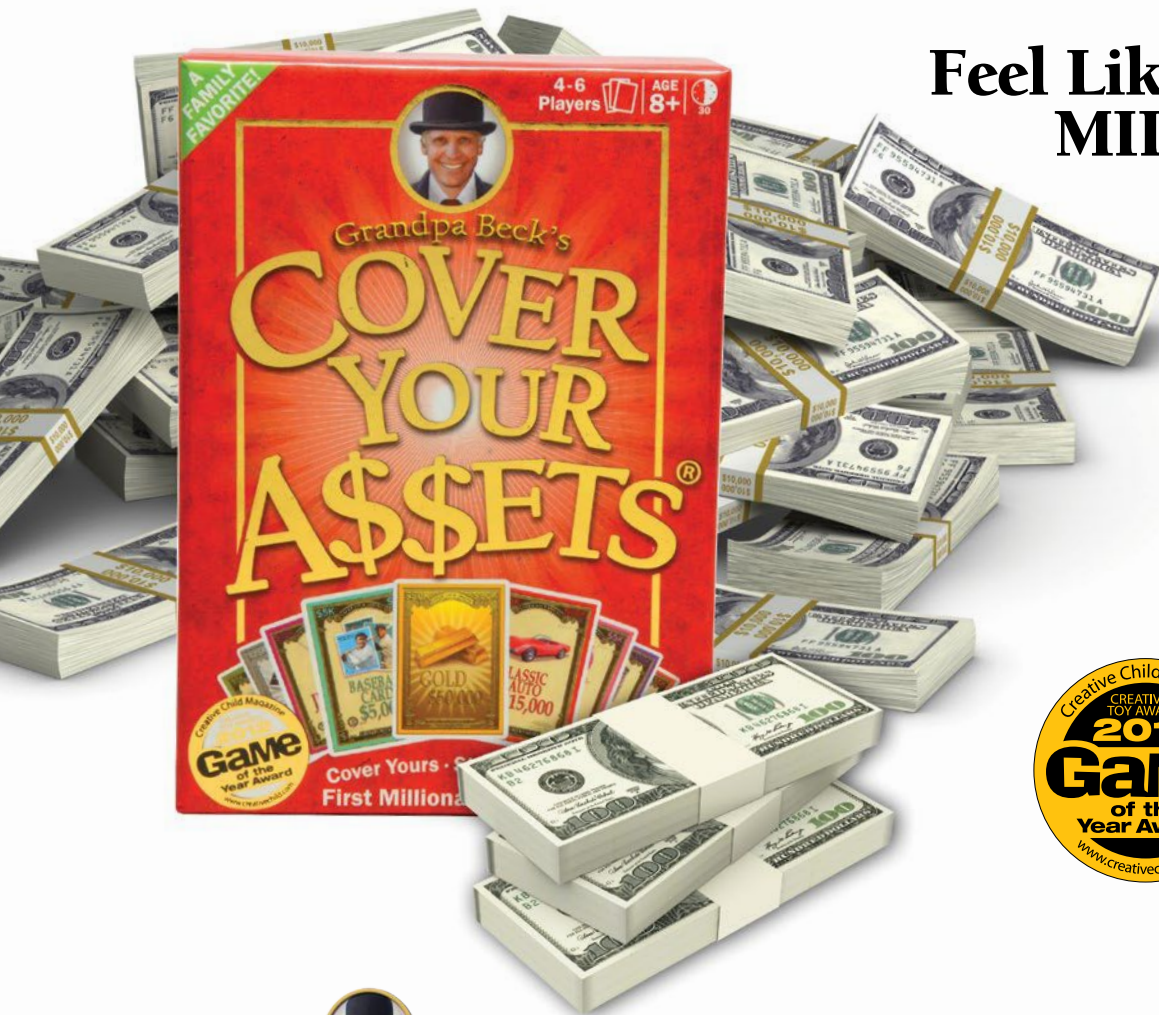
Game: Karuba
Time wasted: 40 minutes



A group of intrepid explorers find themselves on the beaches of a mysterious jungle island, and suddenly it's every man for himself. Players slash new, winding paths through the wilderness, hunting treasure while they race to discover and ransack a hidden temple. The faster they reach their goal, the more points they score, but there are only so many ways to navigate this no-man's land.



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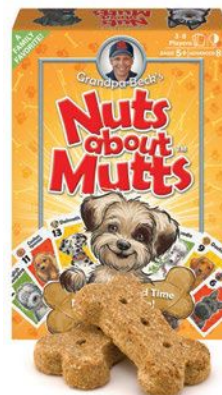
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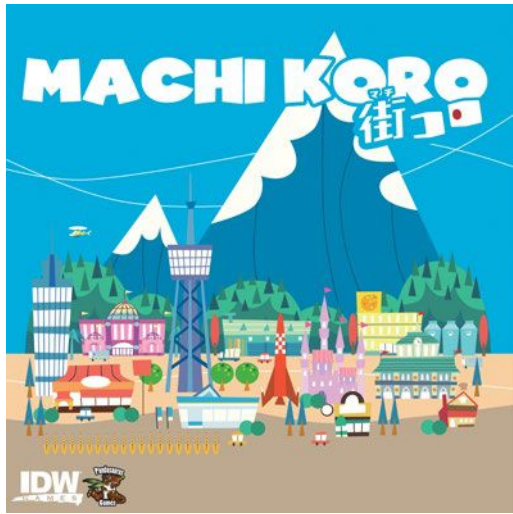
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(games for wasting time, continued)



Strategic Planning



Game: Machi Koro
Time wasted: 30 minutes

You're the newly elected mayor of a burgeoning city, and your citizens have some big demands. Balancing basic needs with long-term schemes isn't as easy as it seems. Financial planning, taxing your opponents, and choosing the right time to build key establishments all require foresight.

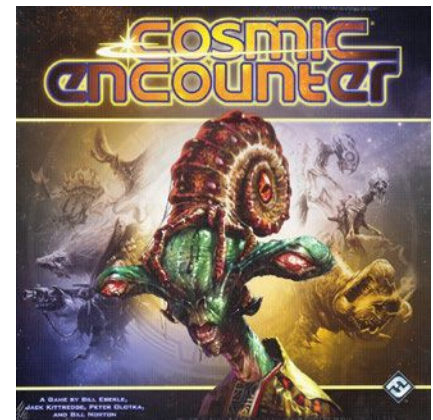


Negotiation



Game: Cosmic Encounter
Time wasted: 60+ minutes

A game of cosmic proportion, rife with opportunity for diplomacy, bluffing, alliance, and backstabbing, players must seek individual dominion while simultaneously working with (and against) their fellow galactic explorers. With tons of options for customization, every trek into space is a different experience, but knowing when to help and when to hunt is central to a winning strategy.



Conclusion:

Perhaps there are deep-seated reasons that play for adults, even in this golden age of board games, is viewed by some as superfluous. That's another article for another time. The benefits of play, on the other hand, are obvious: wasting time is a productive and vital behavior. It's not ALL fun and games. 🎲

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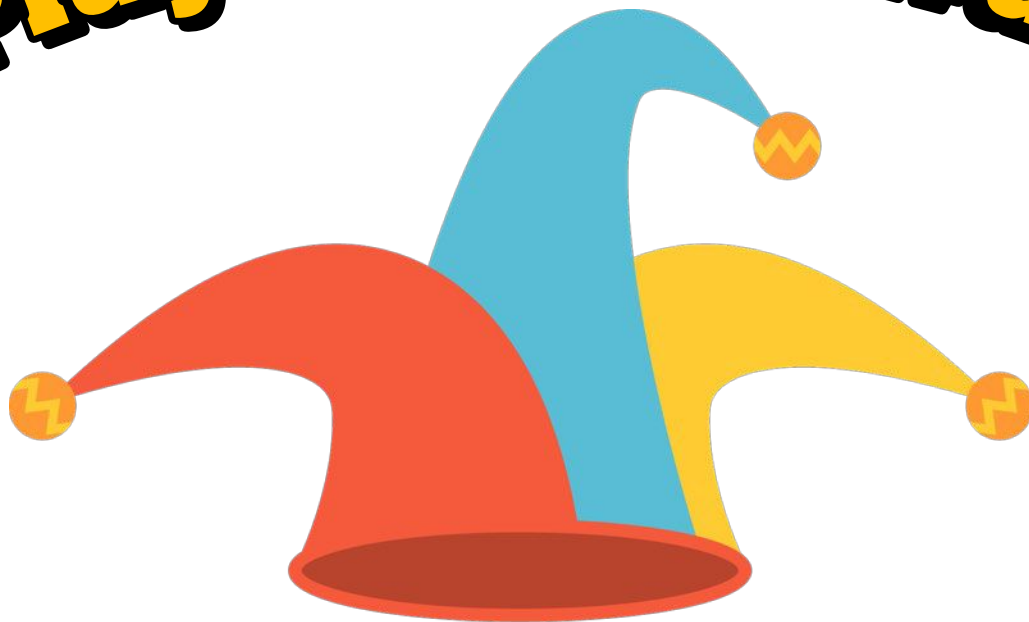
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Playing it Forward



The Gamewright Experience



Matt Thrower

*Freelance Board and
Video Games Journalist*

Let's admit to a truth, because it's a happy truth and not an elephant in the room that's squashing us. "Casual games" often equates to "family games." That almost anyone anywhere can and will play small, engaging titles is a key part of their appeal. Yet it feels like a market that's more limited than it ought to be. Regular folks choose well-known games while gamers tend to opt for things from specialists. So it was a delight to see publisher Gamewright's mission statement pitched squarely in the middle: create the highest quality family games with outstanding play-value.



I asked Jason Schneider, Gamewright's Vice President of Product Development, why the publisher focused on family titles. "It's well reported that families don't spend enough quality time together," he replied. "Both parents and kids have so many distractions in this frantic-paced modern world. Games, and in particular, non-screen focused games, are wonderful catalysts for face-to-face family time. I always say that families who play together, stay together."

However, these are well-worn truths. They don't justify the genre needing a dedicated publisher. To Jason, it's a matter of marketing, and of trust. "When you buy a Gamewright game, our hope is that adults will find that it's full of rich content that will appeal to both parents and kids," he explained. "While, at the same time, not talking down to young gamers at the exclusion of their parents."

Getting Social to Get Sneaky

Odd as it may sound, you could describe *Sneaky Cards* as a solitaire social game. Each copy consists of a deck of cards with a variety of challenges for the player to complete. Many of the challenges are social in nature and involve passing the card on to a stranger. The hope is that they will then complete the challenge and pass the card themselves in an ever-increasing circle. One card, for example, instructs you to take a selfie with an unfamiliar person and then give them the card.

There's a wide range of difficulty, from finding someone who makes you smile to getting a celebrity autograph. According to the designer, this is deliberate. "I believe that the challenges needed to target different people," Cody told me. "What might be easy for some may be hard for others. This is how the game can help everyone grow in new ways. Trying new foods, learning new skills, solving puzzles, meeting new people. Getting out of their comfort zone to experience the world around them in a new light."



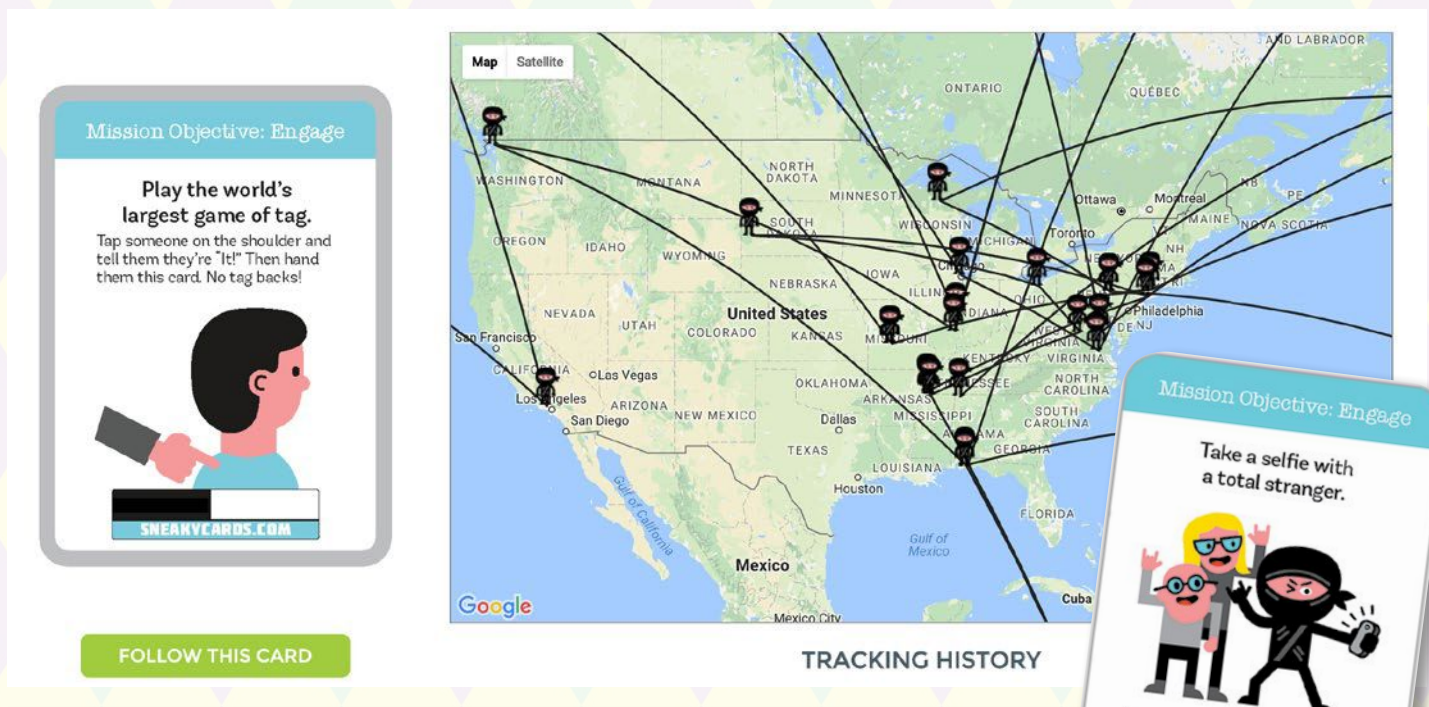
When you dig into Gamewright's history, it's not hard to see where this focus comes from. Two sets of parents founded the company in 1994, specifically to try and improve the kinds of games families played together. It's a dream that's done well enough to keep the company in business for 23 years. But of course that's not the only thing that keeps Jason going. "We feel continually humbled by all of the people who come up to us at shows and events," he told me, "to tell us that our games were touchstone moments of their childhoods and/or family gatherings."

Rather than creating games in-house, Gamewright publishes titles from a variety of freelance designers. These include luminaries like Reiner Knizia (*Loot*), Phil Walker-Harding (*Sushi Go!*), and Matt Leacock (*Forbidden Island* and *Forbidden Desert*). But there's room for first-time designers, too—like Miranda Evarts with *Sleeping Queens*. Another such is Cody Borst who created the unique "pay-it-forward" style game, *Sneaky Cards*.



Sneaky Cards is a social game where players complete challenges and pass the cards along to new players

Indeed, talking to Cody it becomes clear that he made the game as something of a personal mission. "I'm an introvert, someone who has struggled with social anxiety," he revealed. "I wanted to create a game that would serve a dual role. Helping individuals like myself overcome natural fears and also help build stronger communities through fun, kind, and inspiring interactions. I believe that it is through the understanding of struggle that you find the tools needed to grow a better world."



Taking social games to a whole new level — each card in *Sneaky Cards* has a unique ID that can be tracked online.

In spite of the similarities between Cody's goals for the game and the movie *Pay It Forward*, he claims there's no relation between the two. "*Sneaky Cards* spawned its original concept from a 'Digital Open' contest in 2009," he explained. "A game based on index cards called *The Sneaky Card* by Harry Lee won. After the contest, the idea was submitted to the public domain where it remained until I found it in 2013. Once I saw the idea for the first card I knew I had to develop it into a fully playable card game."

One of my favorite things about *Sneaky Cards* is the way that it uses the internet to build a community from those who've encountered the cards. Each card has a tracking number and a web address where you can register and track it. You can then join in with an online community of other people who, often unknowingly, have become part of the game.

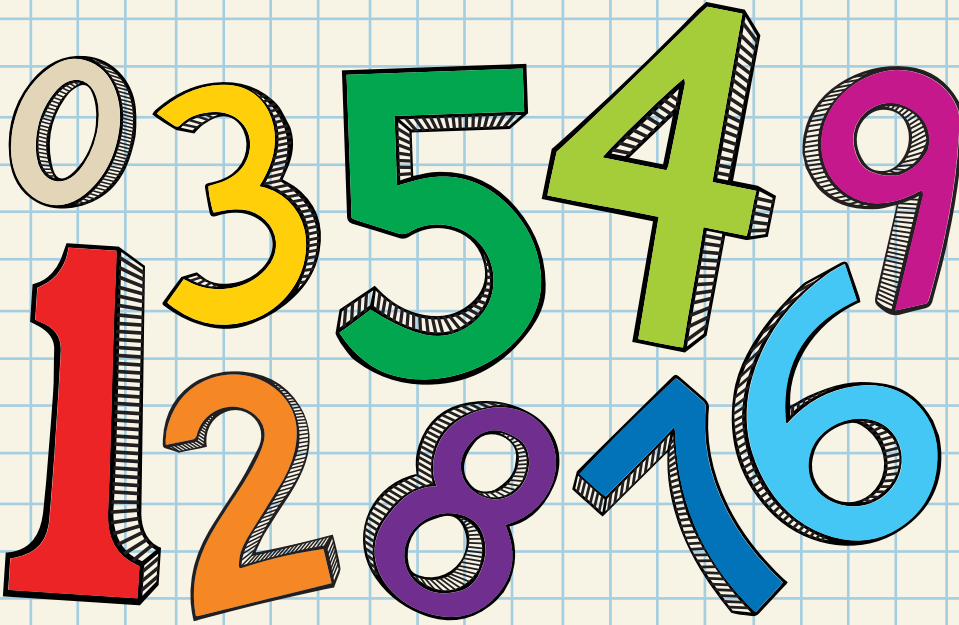
I had my doubts that many people, especially strangers, would bother. But it seems everyone else is as intrigued as I was by the concept. "We have seen over forty thousand members sign up," Cody told me. "They share their experiences, invent new cards, and track their decks." Online tracking also offers the potential for each card to build up a unique story. Cody has had instances where single cards have had over a hundred registrations from different parts of the globe.

The Right Games for Gamewright

To make it as a Gamewright game, *Sneaky Cards* had to pass through the publisher's evaluation process. Deciding whether a game is worthwhile or not is always a tricky process, but Jason made it clear that Gamewright looks for particular things. "Of course it has to resonate with our testers in regard to theme, ease-of-play, and repeat play value," he explained. "Most of our games also have some kind of humorous or unique twist to them. But then there's also this certain indefinable 'Gamewright' nature to the games we publish. It's hard to describe but let's just say that we know a Gamewright game when we see one."



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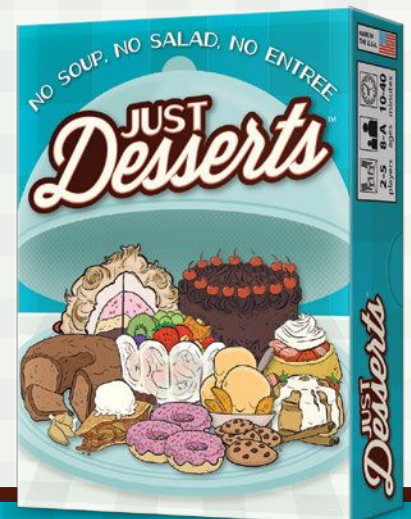


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The Results are In

The results speak for themselves. Games like *Sushi Go!*, *Forbidden Island*, and *Forbidden Desert* have garnered popular and critical acclaim. But just like many titles that are accessible to a younger audience, some commentators have opined that they are perhaps a bit too simple for long term enjoyment. Even for casual or family gamers. I asked Jason if he felt this was a fair criticism.

“We aim to make games that have a broad appeal among a wide range of families,” he replied. “We’re also aware that some of the more experienced game-playing families may find some of our games on the ‘light’ side of the spectrum. That being said, I’d challenge you to find many people who have beaten *Forbidden Desert* on Legendary!”

Joking aside, he feels that even the lightest games in the publisher’s stable have an important role to play. “If someone plays one of our games and then jumps into another of the company’s games that offers more depth, I’d say we’ve done our job,” he said. “As we all know, for many families, it’s a big enough challenge just to sit down and play a game together. If we get people to do even just that simple act, our efforts have paid off.”

With their laser-like focus and impressive dedication to family gaming, it was inevitable the company had plenty more in the pipe.

“We’ll be releasing *Go Nuts for Donuts!* in 2017,” Jason revealed. “It’s a great simultaneous bidding and set collection card game with a delectable theme. We’ve also got two new installments to our *Cardventures* interactive storybook game series. And I’m really excited to bring back one our favorites from the past.”



Forbidden Island, *Forbidden Desert*, and *Sushi Go!* are some of the perennial favorites for casual gamers offered by Gamewright

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He wouldn't reveal any more, in spite of my cajoling. And I can't say that I blame him, particularly. Gamewright has settled into its unusual niche and filled it with creativity and style, as evidenced by unique titles like *Sneaky Cards*. Whatever you think about the depth of the company's games, that's one which defies classification and works across the world to bring gamers together. Who knows: maybe one day you and I might be connected through the passing of a Sneaky card. And if we do, it's Gamewright and Cody Borst we'll have to thank for the privilege. 🎲



Go Nuts for Donuts! is a new family game debuting this year from Gamewright

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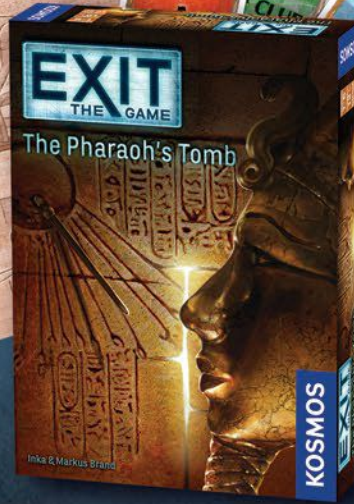
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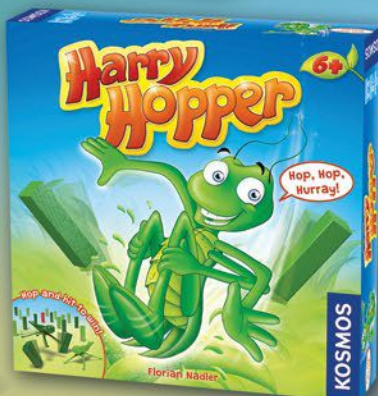
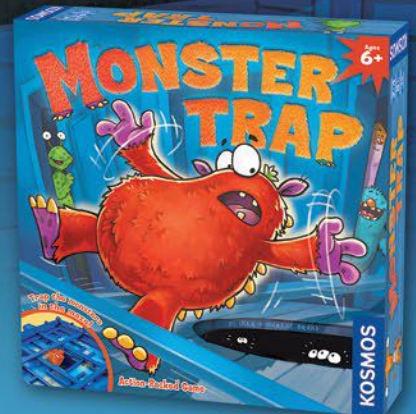
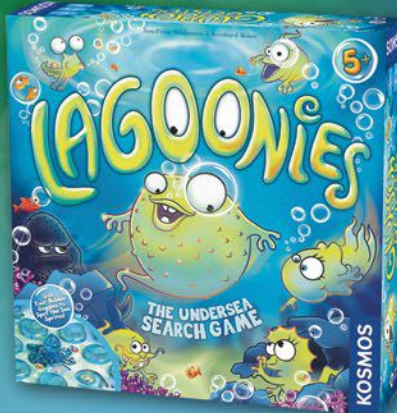
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