

**Ludicrous Legacies and Legacy Ludology: Studying Legacy Board Games and Their Impact on 21st  
Century Board Games**

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## **Abstract**

This research delves into the study of board games with a particular focus on legacy board games, culminating in the development of a functional legacy board game. The employed methodology encompasses a reflective analysis approach alongside auto-ethnomethodology, involving the iterative process of conceiving a suitable concept for the creative artefact and documenting its development journey. By following this approach, the study gains valuable insights into the fundamental attributes that constitute a legacy board game and their perceived significance in the gaming domain.

Furthermore, the research examines into the transformative impact of crafting a legacy board game on the broader comprehension of contemporary board gaming in the context of the 21st century. The findings and culmination of this research are presented in the form of an analytical review, weaving insights from the creative process and the cumulative outcomes, thereby providing invaluable perspectives on the legacy board game genre and its implications for the wider gaming landscape.

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## Attestation of Authorship

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person (except where explicitly defined in the acknowledgements), nor material which to a substantial extent has been submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution of higher learning.

Signed

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized initial 'A' followed by a horizontal line extending to the right.

31 August 2023

## **Declaration of Collaboration**

The artistic components of the board game were designed in collaboration with Remko de Jong and some components do not have copyright permissions. I did not seek and do not have commercial copyright from the movie *Murder on the Orient Express* (2017) and *221b Baker Street* (1975).

## Acknowledgements

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## Introduction

This exegesis presents a comprehensive literature review that focuses on the historical evolution of board games, followed by an in-depth examination of the relatively understudied domain of legacy board games. Within this context, the scarcity of academic work in the field of legacy board games is highlighted. The exegesis proceeds to elucidate the chosen methodology for the research, which revolves around the exploration and development of a creative thesis. Subsequently, the research delves into the experiential and investigative aspects undertaken during the creation of a legacy board game.

The ensuing sections provide detailed insights into the outcomes derived from this creative process, supplemented by reflective analysis. Two fundamental questions guide this investigation: first, what are the most significant characteristics that define a legacy board game?; and second, how does the development of a legacy board game contribute to our understanding of 21st-century board games?

Throughout this exegesis, readers will gain an in-depth understanding of the research journey, from the initial literature review to the iterative exploration involved in crafting a functional legacy board game. The analytical scrutiny of the creative process serves as a lens through which to address the central research questions, aiming to shed light on the distinct attributes of legacy board games and their broader implications for contemporary board gaming.

## Literature Review

There are many explanations of how to define a board game, but very few of how to define a legacy board game. This review covers a brief history of significant board games from the past, to the current day “Eurogames” and “big games,” and expands on “legacy board games” and how to define one. Although no academic definition exists, the research will primarily focus on what can be deduced from the creators of these board games and the genre. It will then delve into what makes legacy board games a subject worthy of study, and investigate how to study such an artefact in an academic setting.

To give some background to this review, a brief history of board games, citing the most well-known board games, is provided, spanning the evolution of board games, from Senet (3000BCE) to early modern manufactured board games like the Game of Goose (1587), to the current mass-produced and ever-evolving board games like Settlers of Catan(1995) and more.

### Historical Board Games

#### ***Senet***

Senet translates as “game of passing” (Sall, 2020). It was developed in Egypt around 3500 BCE, according to BoardGameGeek (n.d.), with other sources saying it was around 3100 BCE (Solly, 2020). There are hieroglyphics and tomb art that depict the board game being played by the dead and the living. This led to some thinking that this board game depicts the Egyptian’s perception of the soul moving through to the afterlife. Senet is referred to as the game of death (Barras, 2020), and it was akin to modern-day Ouija boards, acting as a conduit between the living and the dead. The basic premise of the board game is that it is played between two people on a board of 30 spaces with five pawns for each player. There is a die system of sticks to indicate the number of spaces a pawn can move, and the goal was to get five counters across the board, similar to backgammon (3000 BCE), with the exception that there were certain tiles that gave the player extra moves or others that sent the player back to the start. In this regard, there is a similarity with the slightly more modern board game of chutes/snakes and ladders (200 BCE). Given its age and the fractured depictions available, only educated guesses as to the rules are available to modern research.

#### ***Chess***

Chess is an ancient board game by all accounts; today's version evolved around 1475 CE. The origins of chess are debated and have been written about extensively, with Murray's (2015) book *A History of*

*Chess* being the most comprehensive. Murray traced a version of chess back to India in the 6th century to a board game called Chaturanga, meaning "four parts," referring to the four types of units in the ancient Indian army. Murray traces the board game through to Persia, to when the Sassanid Empire fell in 651CE and the board game was picked up by the victors (the Rashidun Caliphate practising the newly established religion, Islam). It spread across the Muslim world and into Europe and evolved into the board game we recognise today. It has been established that sultans, kings, caliphs and emirs (Shenk, 2011, p. 54) played chess, and it is understood that the board game was used as a tool to show the importance of military strategy, not just as a board game for pleasure. Furthermore, chess was also used to make a point – all the pieces had value as a metaphor for all ranks of society. It was also a board game of skill and not chance (Geiger, 2020). In current times, anyone can play chess; it has become synonymous with genius and, in competitions, can earn players the lofty title of "Grandmaster."

### ***Game of the Goose***

One of the oldest printed board games is the Game of the Goose (1587). It is a relatively simple board game with many variations produced over time. The Game of the Goose is a simple race board game on a spiral track, played with dice, on themes that mirror much of human activity (Seville, 2019, pp. 13–22). Unlike chess and, to varying degrees Senet, the Game of the Goose is all chance based, with each player's moves being dictated by the outcome of the dice roll. However, like chess, it evolved and spread over time, starting in Italy, then moving to Spain and spreading across continental Europe (Seville, 2008). Similar to Chutes and Ladders (200 CE), any square a player lands on, on the board, can help or hinder that player's progress depending on what is included in that square as an instruction. There have been many iterations over time that can be viewed as a window to the culture of the day, showing prejudices that were openly expressed during the time each iteration was produced (Boulis, 2011). Society used the board game to educate the players on morals, depicting undesirable behaviour with negative consequences for the player who landed on them (Parlett, 1999, p. 99). To this day, there are still variations of this board game, with modern examples such as The Game of Life (1960) and Candy Land (1949) (Boulis, 2011).

### **Modern Board Games**

More recently, board games have evolved into many subgenres. Many board games now utilise multiple mechanics (a combination of dice and cards for example) and more complex storylines. Examples of these are discussed below, along with a brief look at games that influenced the evolution of board

games like role playing games and wargames but would not be considered a board game as such. Another term used interchangeably with "board game" is "tabletop game" although it is important to note that they are not the same thing. However, it's commonplace to use both, with more modern board games being referred to as tabletop games due to their complexity and not always being limited to a "board".

### ***Eurogames***

Eurogames are a classification of board games and although the name suggests they are typically board games originating in Europe, that is not what makes them a Eurogame. There are several elements shared by Eurogames and although a board game does not need them all to be classified as a Eurogame, they should have most of them.

Eurogames are sometimes considered a "designer game," characterised by indirect player conflict, focusing on competition over resources or points rather than combat. Unlike other board games, players are not eliminated during gameplay and continue participating until the game ends. These board games also look to minimise randomness and luck, often allowing players to make decisions after random events occur. While Eurogames may include dice occasionally, they are uncommon. One notable aspect of Eurogames is the prominence of the game designer, whose name is typically featured on the box cover. These board games also prioritise artwork and components, with wood being a common material choice over plastic or metal. Despite having a well-defined theme, the gameplay mechanics precede thematic elements. This means a board game set in space may have similar mechanics to one set in ancient Rome. Eurogames excel in providing strategic depth while utilising minimal mechanics. Furthermore, they offer multiple viable strategies for scoring points or achieving the win condition ("Eurogame," 2021).

A notable example of a Eurogame is *Settlers of Catan* (1995) rebranded in more recent editions as "Catan." Developed in Germany by designer Klaus Teuber, Catan has a different board layout every time it is played meaning that no gameplay will play out the same way each time. The board game itself works on a cooperative system and rewards that action more than confrontations. The player must collect resources and the idea is to have competitiveness in a positive way. Indeed, this idea of cooperative competition is specifically designed by Teuber whose personal interest in Vikings reaching Iceland, and how they would have had to gather supplies and resources to build settlements and cities,

is an overarching theme of the board game (Great Big Story, n.d.). Catan is a globally known board game so much so that there have been world championships for Catan since 2002.

There have been some academics studying Catan to varying degrees and in different ways; some determined board game strategies, testing different models (Guhe & Lascarides, 2014, p. 1) using Catan. Another study looked at the application of machine learning methods in complex computers for the game Settlers of Catan (Pfeiffer, 2004, p. 1). So, it is being used as a vessel but not as the object of study.

### ***Games that influenced board games***

It is essential to note that other genres influenced the advancement of modern board games but do not exclusively use a board or the playing field is not a board. These are wargames like Kriegsspiel (1824), role-playing games like Dungeons and Dragons (1974), and miniature-style gaming like Warhammer 40,000 (1987).

Kriegsspiel is one of the first war games and was developed to simulate the real-world battlefield and was utilised as a tool to teach military strategy and tactics. This tool has several elements in common with board games, role-playing and miniature gaming, such as dice rolls to dictate unforeseen circumstances, objectives, rules, scenarios, players, chance, and luck. Iterations of the game swapped out die rolls to umpires that would determine outcomes from their actual battlefield experience (Books, 2023, p. 32).

The use of an umpire in later versions of Kriegsspiel and the movement from army units to individual men and women units is seen in Gary Gygax's Chainmail (1971), and this move changed things. This change can be seen in the release of Dungeons and Dragons, which picks up from Chainmail and evolves to centre around character creation, classes of characters and rolling of a die to determine abilities (Books, 2023, p. 31).

Kriegsspiel, Chainmail, and Dungeons and Dragons focus on multi-session play and the repercussions of players' actions decades before the first Legacy game was published. Rob Daviau (2017, February, 05:37) credits Dungeons and Dragons with contributing to the inspiration of the legacy board game. These games would be considered tabletop games but would not be classified as board games; they have many similarities and considerable crossover between big games and legacy board games. However, these games are outside the scope of the study except as an acknowledgement that they influenced them.

### ***Big Games***

The emerging big games style games being discussed below takes from the epic campaigns and planning nature of the games in the previous section and puts them back into the format and conventions of a one-box board game.

The style of game referred to as a big game, is a term used to describe a genre of board games that originated with Gloomhaven (2017). The creator of Gloomhaven, Isaac Childres, defined the genre on the podcast *Board Game Design Lab* with Gabe Berrett (2021), stating that it should be aligned with campaign play, much like the episodic legacy board games. Big games can be described as a campaign-based board game that involves a lot of gameplays. This means that a player must spend hundreds of hours to complete the entire game. These campaigns can be replayed over and over but with the addition of extra elements such as retiring old characters and using new characters and monsters that allow the player to create new campaigns, making them different. As new elements are revealed, the balance to play can be artificially set allowing players to choose the difficulty level of play. Because Gloomhaven is a large board game, it has a complex setup; the board game needs and has the functionality to allow players to track their history and progress giving gameplay a “memory.” This is done through a world map and a system where progress is marked along with accomplishments and allows for permanent changes to the board game, allowing the game to remember where it was previously left off. Other examples of big games that fit this genre are Terra Mystica (2012) and A Feast for Odin (2018) (Berrett, 2021).

Before going further, it is important to note that there are other genres that I will not be detailing but which should be mentioned all the same. These include miniature gaming like Warhammer 40,000, where players assemble, paint and create their own play pieces and playing fields with different terrains and topography, there are guidelines on the playing field (board) (Larsen & Zubernis, 2012, p. 121); and Dungeons and Dragons where figures and a gridded map can be used as a visual aid but are not required for play (Hosch, 2023). Both are considered tabletop games; they would not be considered board games, but have many similarities and considerable crossover when it comes to big games and legacy board games.

### ***Legacy Board Games***

The definitions that currently exist for legacy board games are gathered from large board game communities, the designers, and the public. There is no currently agreed academic definition of a legacy board game.

Legacy board games are a comparatively recent development; Risk Legacy by Rob Daviau, released in 2011, is widely considered to be the first legacy board game (Daviau, 2017). However, Daviau has cited the 2004 “Trivial Pursuit: DVD – The Lord of The Rings Trilogy Edition” (Trivial Pursuit LOTR), which he worked on at Hasbro, as a pseudo legacy board game that predates Risk Legacy (2020). BoardGameGeek (n.d.) stated:

Legacy games are board games whose rules and components change over time based on the outcome of each game played and the choices made by the player(s). They will oftentimes make physical changes to the board game by, for example: marking the cards, placing stickers, destroying components, opening sealed packages, and so on.

The changes made in a Legacy game are designed to be permanent. A Legacy game's full experience is played out in a campaign that can only be played once. To replay the full experience again, the player(s) would need to purchase another copy of the game or, if available, a "recharge pack."

Official and unofficial methods to circumvent Legacy mechanics are common in popular Legacy games. (paras 1–3)

Board Game Fight Clubs' Jaime Barriga (n.d.) classified legacy board games as a type of tabletop game that involves a campaign where significant changes are made to the game state and carried over from one session to another. Rules and mechanics are permanently added, modified, or removed throughout the gameplay. Additionally, the game's physical components undergo permanent alterations, and in some cases, they may be destroyed as part of the gameplay progression.

Barriga (n.d.) went further to explain how, if any one of the aspects they outlined were removed, the definition would not work. In this respect, they noted, “If you can't permanently modify the physical components, you lose the psychological impact of permanent change, which is incredibly important to the genre” (n.p.). The key point is that the changes players make should not be able to be undone and that's what gets the players invested in play; the choices they must make carry more weight.

Rob Daviau is the designer of the first legacy board game and several subsequent legacy board games. At the 2017 Game Developers Conference he talked about the covenants of board games and the unspoken expectations, and how legacy board games break those covenants:

1. The player decides how much a game is played
2. Games allow for consequence-free exploration
3. The design controls the materials
4. Games tell you everything that's in the box
5. The game designer isn't lying to you

Daviau stated that when he created the first legacy board game, *Risk Legacy* (2011), he was not trying to make a new subgenre that broke all the covenants, he simply had an idea for a game that grew as it was played. An example was the board game *Clue*<sup>1</sup> (1949), a game where there has been a murder at a mansion and players are exploring the board to find clues and uncover the murder first. The idea Daviau had was if the player knew who the murderer was, why would they then be invited to the mansion the next night/in the next game? The idea was spawned by the intention of gameplay memory influencing the next game or play session. A lot of the revelations that Daviau had are reflections when he looked back: “permanent change, putting stuff on the board, creating factions, games carrying over to the next” (Daviau, 2017) were all done to add interest and touch on tensions like cliff hangers which would draw players in, and make them want to play the game to see what happens next.

Honeycutt (2018), co-creator of legacy board game *Machi Koro Legacy* (2019), who spoke at the 2018 Game Designers Conference, was slightly more direct in his definition of a legacy board game as “Multiple sessions of the same game, that permanently changes with each session, based on choices the

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<sup>1</sup> Known as Cluedo in New Zealand, Clue is the North American name for the same game.

players make collectively or individually and follows a narrative.”(02:45), but added the second bullet point to his presentation of “Or not,” thus expressing that legacy board game design is still evolving.

Urban dictionary (“Legacy game,” 2017), although an unreliable source, as it is maintained by the public without stringent oversight, does offer a glimpse into how the average person defines a legacy board game. “A tabletop game that physically evolves as the players play senario [*sic*] after senario [*sic*]. This can include adding stickers, tearing cards, and making permanent rules changes.”

Though there are many definitions of a legacy board game, it would be fair to say that the commonality that holds true in all the definitions is that legacy board games are episodic play that may have the element of permanent change and are not replayable. Now that we know what a legacy board game is, why should we study them and how can we do that?

### **Research into Legacy Board Games**

Legacy board games are a modern iteration of an age-old template. However, given the young nature of this subgenre, it has not yet been widely researched nor has there been a universally accepted or agreed-upon definition of what a legacy board game is. To that end, this review seeks to understand what, if anything, defines a legacy board game and then attempts to determine a methodology that would allow for further academic research into this subgenre.

### **Context**

As an emerging subgenre, there have been few academic attempts to establish what exactly defines a legacy board game. I consider that there is more to legacy board games than a simple modern twist on a tried-and-true formula, and that, by design, they elevate and expand the board game experience allowing a group of players to invest more effort and time into a game beyond that which would be ordinarily invested in a traditional board game.

### **Methodology**

Undertaking methodological research into a subject as modern, ill-defined, and nebulous as legacy board games requires a novel approach. Of particular use for research of this type is Skains’s (2018) practice-and-research and auto-ethnomethodology approach to the project. This model incorporates several ideas and further refines Flower and Hayes’s (1984) cognitive process model (Figure 1) which it uses as its foundation.

Flower and Hayes's "cognitive process theory of writing," as seen in Figure 1, looks at three main components. Simplified, the first is the writing goals, the second is the writer's memory and stored knowledge, and the third is the process of planning and translating the first and second components into writing. In Figure 2, one can see how Skains (2018) expanded Flower and Hayes's model by including serendipity and disruption to the writing process allowing for unknown or unexpected matters to still play a key role in the research even though they were undefinable at the start of the process. In addition to this, Skains includes the fictional world as an element in the translation process, showing the contrast of constantly shifting between the written world and the real world.

Skains (2018) further expanded on the model to incorporate Finke et al.'s (1996, p. 388) Geneplore cyclical model of idea generation that shows exploration, evaluation, and constraints against the goal. There is also a consideration for serendipity (Makri & Blandford, 2012a, 2012b) which, in this context, is the ability to know when something is important and to have the knowledge/experience to recognise the significance of the moment and the connection to the outcome of a project. The outline of the practice method Skains (2018) proposed is shown in Figure 3 and is based upon the practitioner model of creative cognition (Figure 2) and combines ethnological and analytical approaches; it is an appropriate foundation for creative and practical research.

Figure 1

Structure of the Writing Model (Flower & Hayes, 1984, p.125)

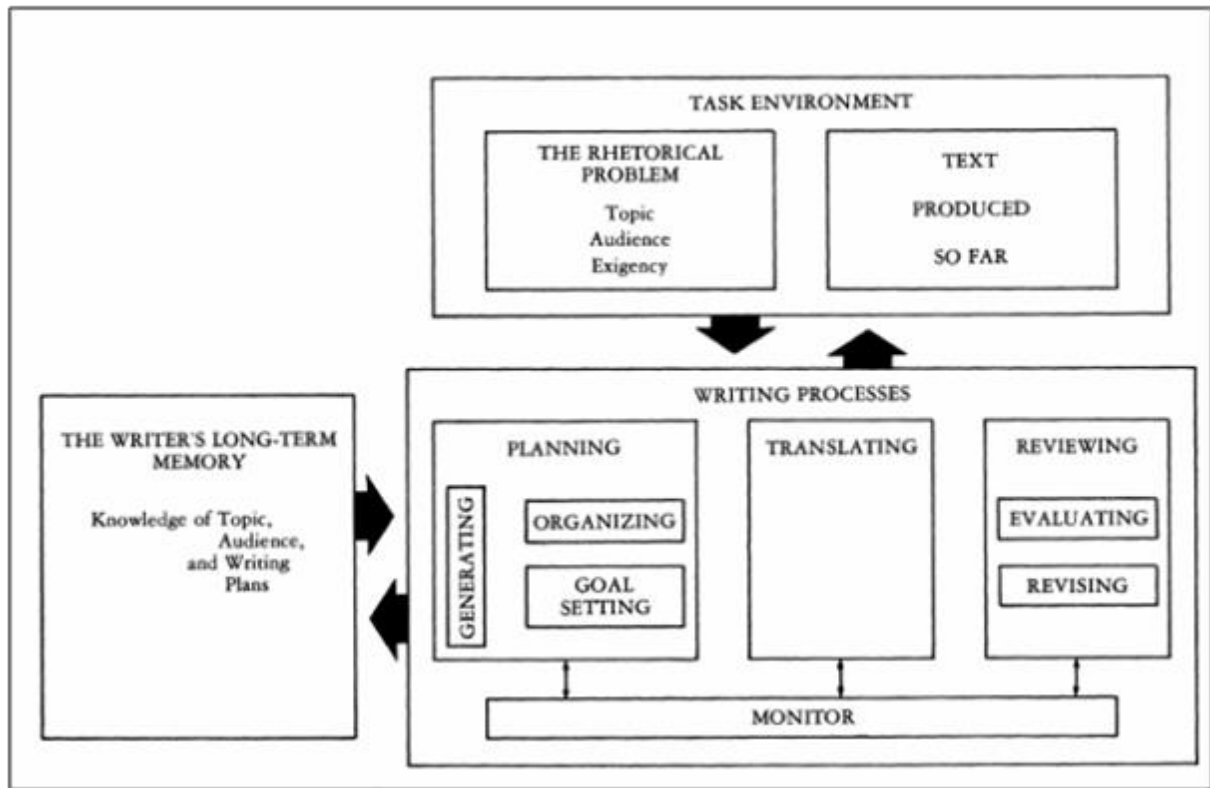


Figure 2

*The Practitioner Model of Creative Cognition (Skains, 2018, p. 91).*

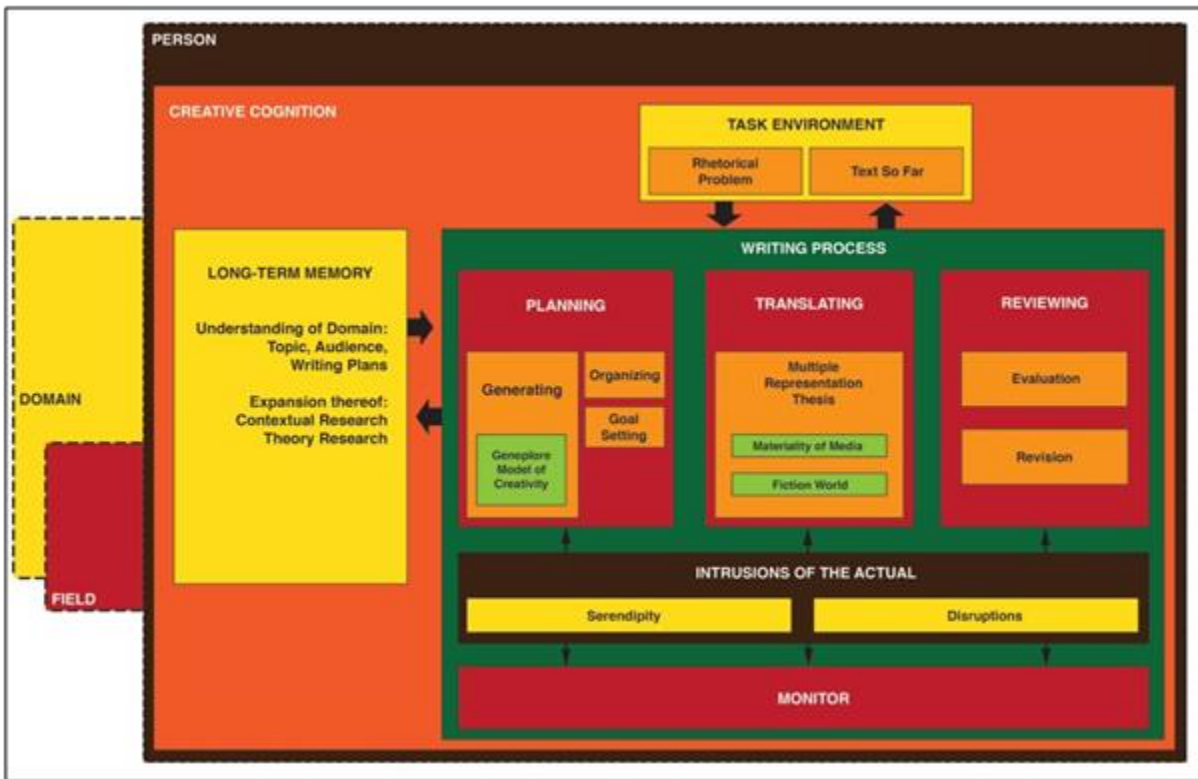
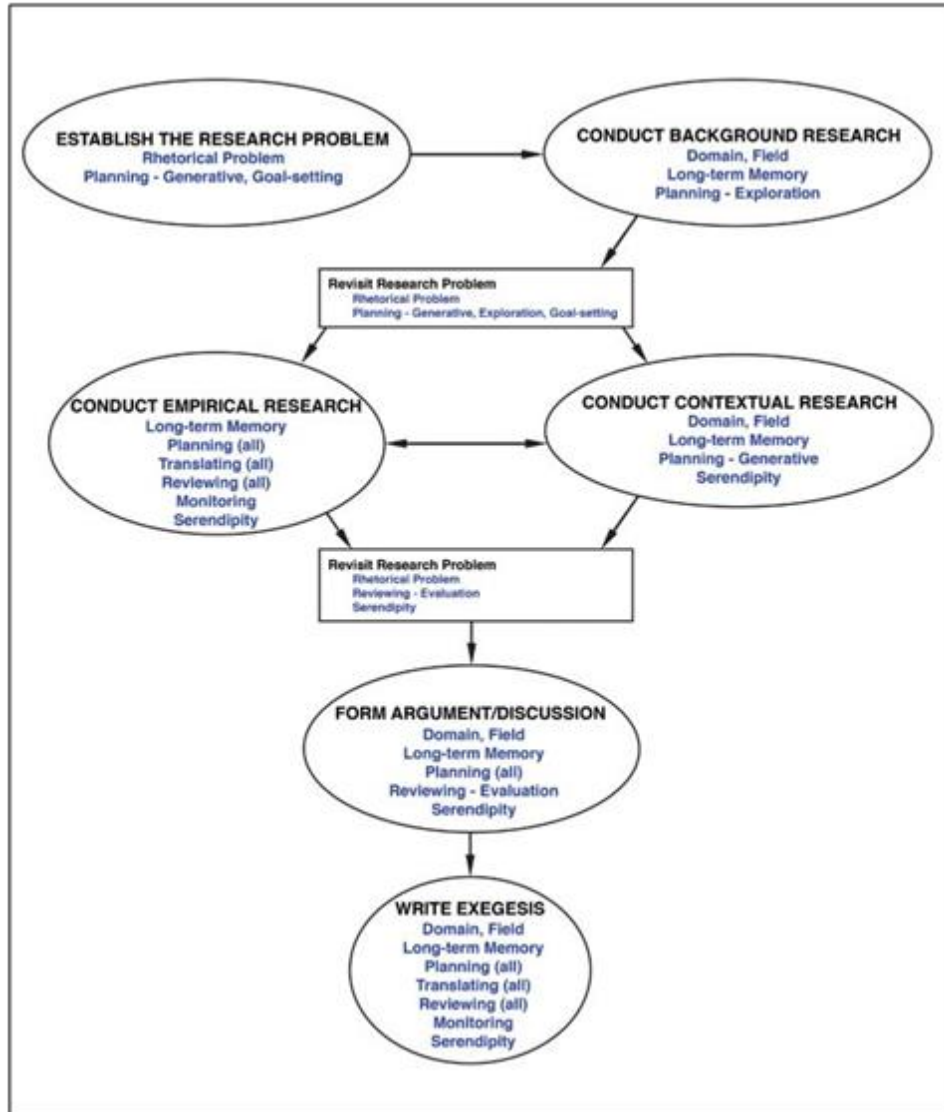


Figure 3

Outline of Practice-Based Research Method. Elements in Blue Refer to the Practitioner Model of Creative Cognition Outlined in Figure 1 (Skains, 2018, p. 94).



Practical research benefits from a reflective analysis approach and auto-ethnology provides a methodological framework for self-observation that allows for that type of analysis. Skains (2018) suggests documenting or journaling in-situ as the creative activity occurs. In this respect, the keeping of a research log, documenting activities related to the project such as discussions or interviews with experts, or exposure to modern media that could trigger thoughts and ideas. Noting what else is

happening that could influence the project, could have a profound impact on the ultimate outcome of the research and thus it is of utmost importance that all dealings with the subject be recorded.

Most importantly, the documentation includes reflection; notes stumbling blocks, obstacles and whether they were overcome and how that was achieved; progress, edits, and revisions; and any internal or external influences. The recording of the date and time of these occurrences as a log is critical to being able to establish a “map” of the process. This enables the ready reference of the material and matters identified to identify themes or emerging patterns for use as evidence for further analysis. Skains (2018) utilises a specific notation directly into text files to record thoughts, comments and other relevant matters as the draft text or story is being created.

With regard to legacy board game board design, it takes many forms from journal entries, research logs, visual notes, and amendments made to the creative artefact as it is being developed. It is anticipated that large external influences, which need to be carefully and analytically considered, will be experienced and gleaned from other legacy board games through playtesting. Consequently, it is imperative that journalling happens as this will provide continuous and historical commentary useful for reflection, which will help to define and guide the creative process without having to rely on simple memories which can become clouded or altered through the passage of time. Because keeping these types of records is typically not natural in one’s normal day-to-day activities, a mixed-media (text, video, and audio) approach will likely be required to give as much flexibility as possible.

## **Conclusion**

There is an over-saturation of literature when looking at historical games with an element of prestige around them, but a significant gap in modern games and even more so when considering legacy board games. We should research legacy board games because they are uncharted and unresearched territory with multiple uncertain and ill-defined definitions. I plan to explore this through the creative process of creating a creative artefact, a legacy board game, to understand it.

## Methods and Exploration

### Introduction

How does one study the unstudied? With a legacy board game, there is insufficient literature on the topic and the board game genre is too new. Currently BoardGameGeek ("Mechanism: Legacy," n.d.) has 127 games listed in the legacy category compared to the number of standard board games sitting at over 140,000. Alongside techniques from game studies and creating a legacy board game I found it helpful talking to experts, and journal my research process.

### Methods and Methodologies

#### *Journalling*

The method needed would have to be borrowed from other areas or academia, predominately creative practice research areas, as previous outlined in the literature review. The use of journalling was identified as the way forward to provide a rolling commentary of how the process of creating a legacy board game went. In addition, as noted by Bacon (2014), the documentation of this process would be both academic and cathartic, showing not only what transpired and how ideas developed but also storing the spontaneous and more personal experience of it all. Journalling was facilitated via Sutori, an online timeline tool commonly employed in educational presentations, which I found well suited for documenting the timeline of this exegesis (see Appendix A).

#### *Expert Interviews*

As a component of this study, expert interviews were undertaken to ascertain the perspectives of esteemed authorities proficient in the development and design of legacy board games and board games. These individuals were sought based on their recognised expertise in the domain. As the consultations sought professional opinions, the Auckland University of Technology's ethical review was deemed unnecessary. I interacted with the experts by email, online and phone, and meticulously documented my correspondence to facilitate reflection and journalling relevant to the research (see Appendix B)

#### *Playtesting*

Playtesting of the legacy board game was documented in the form of note taking; notes were captured mostly throughout the Sutori tool to most accurately log when the results of the testing happened and when any changes or idea occurred because of it. This is all in line with the methodological approach outlined in the literature review. Playtesting was done predominantly through self-testing; this is

deemed the most valuable according to Fullerton et al. (2004, p. 198). There was, however, informal playtesting with family members on an ad hoc basis, for insight and alternative perspectives, but this was not done in a formal or structured capacity.

### **Approach**

The approach consisted of the creation of a legacy board game (using the definition previously supplied) and the documentation of the process. Through this process, what emerged was a deeper understanding of legacy board games and the challenges faced. In my research, I studied current legacy board games and a very popular legacy board game called *Pandemic Legacy: Season 1* (2015). I also interviewed professional board game designers and gathered insights into legacy board games and how to create one.

### **Documentation**

The methodology employed involved utilising the online platform Sutori, which was primarily developed to cater to the needs of educators within physical classroom settings. Notably, this digital tool incorporates a distinctive temporal visualisation component, allowing for information to be organised chronologically. By leveraging this feature, I discovered that Sutori provided me with an uncomplicated approach to articulating my thinking and categorising the various media I encountered. Moreover, this platform afforded me the flexibility to employ colour-coded annotations, incorporate visual imagery, and engage in cathartic and academic ideation, thereby facilitating a comprehensive and visually enhanced means of capturing the journaling necessary.

### **Exploration**

#### ***The Grim Reaper Game***

The initial concept involved the development of a board game centred around the theme of the grim reaper, inspired by the book *Scythe* by Shusterman (2016). The envisioned concept encompassed players assuming the roles of grim reapers collectively responsible for undertaking world population control. This would be achieved through various actions, ranging from small-scale events such as eliminating public figures to large-scale catastrophes like plane crashes, illustrating the differential societal impacts of different tragedies.

To reinforce the idea of maintaining order, scales would be incorporated into the game as a visual reminder, with one side representing births and the other side representing deaths. It was crucial to

strike a balance, as an excessive number of killings or certain actions could lead to unrest among the population. To capture the capricious nature of death, coin tosses would be utilised for certain killings. Additionally, a food element was contemplated, wherein players would consume a bittersweet treat to symbolise the sacrifices necessary for the greater good.

During the initial stages of idea development, as the story and game mechanics began to take shape, challenges emerged. It became evident that despite loosely basing the game on the book, there was a need for a purposeful story that could be effectively paired with mechanics capable of facilitating ongoing gameplay, divided into episodes as characteristic of a legacy board game.

However, as the idea progressed, it became apparent that achieving the intended academic goals would be unfeasible. This realisation was reinforced during interviews with experts, which made clear the disparity between the merits and intriguing nature of the idea and the practical limitations imposed by the time limit and my own lack of expertise in board game design and creation.

### ***Understanding Pandemic Legacy: Season 1***

To enhance my comprehension of the interplay between story and a legacy board game, I embarked upon a detailed analysis of *Pandemic Legacy: Season 1* (2015), currently recognised as one of the most popular titles in the legacy board game genre. This examination aimed to provide valuable insights into the importance of narrative in gameplay, shed light on the concept of branching narratives, and explore the players' perception of choice and the consequential impact of their decisions on both gameplay and the ultimate outcome of the game. By deconstructing *Pandemic Legacy: Season 1*, I hoped to gain a deeper understanding of the intricate relationship between story and a legacy board game experience.

The comprehensive breakdown of the story in *Pandemic Legacy: Season 1* has been extensively documented, thanks to the contributions of @ClimberStephen (2021), a prominent figure and frequent contributor on Boardgamegeek.com. Additionally, @ClimberStephen operates their own website, boardgamehelpers.com.

In summary, the game presents a world in turmoil as four diseases rapidly spread, including one that proves resistant to conventional treatments. Acting as a member of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention team, players are tasked with collaborating alongside specialised team members to develop cures and prevent disease outbreaks. Each month introduces new challenges and objectives, such as

discovering cures, implementing quarantines in infected areas, and locating missing individuals pivotal to the vaccine's development.

As the game unfolds, the true nature of the pandemic gradually emerges, revealing the existence of a malevolent organisation known as Zodiac and their grand scheme for global domination. Each month, players must successfully fulfil various objectives, navigate the evolving situation, and ultimately safeguard humanity from the lethal diseases and the nefarious plots orchestrated by Zodiac. The game reaches its climax with the triumphant eradication of the remaining infections, the apprehension of Zodiac members, and the establishment of a hopeful future for humankind.

Throughout the game, in each monthly segment, players are afforded a single opportunity to retry to accomplish their objective if they initially failed. Additional content is provided based on both successes and failures, but the core storyline remains consistent. While the timing of receiving components may vary, it does not alter the essential plot points and objectives.

Upon completion of the game, the conclusion is determined by the player's score, which encompasses several factors. These include the number of games won and lost, the level of infection in different cities, and potential bonus points for specific achievements or completing tasks unaided. The scoring system allows for a range from 0 to 1000, resulting in five outcomes:

- 0–375: The world tumbles into chaos and takes centuries to recover to its former state.
- 376–525: The world is strong enough to recover, within several generations it's back.
- 526–675: Partial success: the world will face a lot of change and war, but humanity will recover.
- 676–800: It takes time, but the world survives and those responsible for the outbreak face trial.
- 801–1000: Zodiac is destroyed the world recovers within a year and you retire and are celebrated throughout civilisation.

Upon closer examination, it becomes evident that while these outcomes may appear distinct, they convey a shared essence. Regardless of the specific circumstances, the common thread is the survival of the world, albeit with varying degrees of time required for recovery. Considering this observation raises important considerations for the creation of my own legacy board game. The narrative assumes a pivotal role in the game, and while certain elements may suggest the presence of deviation and branching storylines, in reality, the players' sense of control and perception of permanent change are

crucial, whereas the need for a significantly branching narrative impacting the game's conclusion may not be as imperative.

On a personal level, my experience playing the game led me to believe that my decisions held significant weight in shaping the outcome. It was only upon reflection that I realised the varying degrees of impact converged upon the same overarching theme. This retrospection prompted me to contemplate the potential for a more devastating outcome that would have better aligned with the sequel, *Pandemic Legacy: Season 2* (2017), set 71 years later amidst a widespread plague. For instance, an outcome along the lines of "The world plunged into irreversible chaos, fading into a new order where our familiar reality ceased to exist." However, I acknowledge the importance of maintaining a somewhat positive ending given the current and disconcerting nature of the topic at hand. Additionally, it is worth considering whether the development of *Pandemic Legacy: Season 2* was underway during the completion of *Pandemic Legacy: Season 1*. If not, the realisation of a direct connection between one of the outcomes in *Pandemic Legacy: Season 1* and the prologue of *Pandemic Legacy: Season 2* would only have occurred with the benefit of hindsight.

### ***Interviewed Experts***

Fortunate circumstances allowed me to secure interviews with several board game designers who graciously agreed to participate via various means of communication, including phone, and email; one designer even provided a video recording in response to my questions on their area of expertise. The following designers kindly agreed to participate:

- Ted Alspach – Designer of *Werewolf Legacy* and more (see Appendix B.1)
- Rob Daviau – Designer of *Risk Legacy*, *Pandemic Legacy: Seasons 0, 1, 2* and more (see Appendix B.2)
- Matt Leacock – Designer of *Pandemic* and *Pandemic Legacy: Seasons 0, 1, 2* and more (see Appendix B.3)
- Shem Philips – Designer of the *North Sea Trilogy* and more (see Appendix B.4)

To streamline the interview process and respect the time constraints of the participants, I imposed a limit of 10 questions. The questions primarily revolved around game creation, design, and the practical aspects involved in bringing a game to life. Some of the questions were tailored specifically to inquire

about the designers' experiences with the game which piqued my particular interest. The intention was to gather relevant insights while ensuring the interviews remained concise and efficient.

The questions I asked were:

1. What's your creative process when you land on an idea?
2. What tools do you use to prototype your games during the concept and refining stage?
3. What's your favourite board game/legacy board game that you weren't involved with? and what about it did you like?
4. What was your inspiration for XX game?
  - a. Ted Alspach: One Night a Werewolf
  - b. Rob Daviau: Pandemic Legacy
  - c. Matt Leacock: Pandemic
  - d. Shem Phillips: Linwood
5. When converting your standalone game to a legacy what were the main hurdles and surprises?
6. What's your favourite aspect of board game design? or conversely, what do you find least enjoyable?
7. Do you outsource any particular aspects when designing a game?
8. Who else would you recommend I talk to if you were me?
9. Any advice you have for a first timer when designing a game?
10. Where do you see legacy board games going in the future? are they here to stay? or just a phase?

The valuable insights provided by all the interviewees left a lasting impression, with certain responses particularly influencing my creative process throughout various stages of game development. Notably, the answers to the question, "Any advice you have for a first timer designing a game?" resonated deeply and significantly impacted my approach. The following snippets highlight key excerpts from those responses and elucidate their influence on my own game-building journey.

**Ted Alspach.** "Playtest as much as possible with as wide a variety of gamers as possible. Ignore everything nice your family says about your game, because they are wired to like anything you do."

The impact of this advice is apparent in my game because I was unable to do playtesting as thoroughly as advised. I was limited due to the scope of this study to myself and family to conduct it in a timely

manner. If I were to take on this endeavour again, I would dedicate a significant portion of my timeline to this aspect.

**Rob Daviau.** “Well, if you're a first-time game designer, don't design a legacy game. It's my advice. It's sort of an advanced manoeuvre.”

Rob did go into more details with his answer, but the above is the part that resonated with me. Initially I thought “I already know this will be hard,” but this answer hit me hard twice throughout the thesis. The first time was when I realised I had to let go of my first major idea, The Grim Reaper game, and, if I was going to do this, I had to pivot. The second time was during the creation of “Murder on the Orient Express” when I was overwhelmed by the sheer number of clues and how to get all the aspects of the story into the game.

**Matt Leacock.** “Avoid large paragraphs of reading at the end make sure it's a satisfying ending.”

I feel I was able to implement some of this advice into my final game giving three good endings, two with what feels like satisfying deviation from the original story.

**Shem Philips.** “Don't sit on an idea too long. Get it to the table, even if it's not a complete game. If you get stuck, try designing something else. It might take 5 or more bad ideas before you land on something that works.”

Shem's advice is exactly what happened: I got stuck on an idea for too long and had to work my way through a few bad ideas before I had to commit to an idea to get the game completed.

### ***Common Themes***

Simplicity emerged as a recurring theme during the interviews, encompassing various aspects such as rules, story, and components. While I believed I had maintained a focus on simplicity throughout the process, upon reflection, it became evident that in the case of The Grim Reaper game, I had inadvertently introduced unnecessary complexities driven by ideas that held personal appeal but proved convoluted in practice. An illustrative instance of this was the inclination to incorporate scales to depict population control, alongside the inclusion of food as a representation of the game's bitter aspect.

### ***Turning Point – Killing Your Darlings***

While conducting the interviews, I was simultaneously engaged in developing the aforementioned Grim Reaper legacy board game. Initially, the interviews did not exert a noteworthy influence on my decision

making. However, as time progressed, they began to shape my perspective. One insight emerged during the first question I posed to the designers, which centred around their creative process upon discovering an idea. Matt Leacock's remark, "Producing an original idea is hard," initially did not resonate strongly, since an idea was already formulated with a solid foundation. Yet, as events unfolded, I discovered that this was not the case.

Another notable comment came from Ted Alspach, who revealed that a substantial portion of his ideas are discarded during the writing phase upon realising fundamental flaws. Moreover, Rob Daviau emphasised the labour-intensive nature of the design process, often involving trial and error. He even suggested that, while a lucky designer might complete a project within a year, it could equally demand 3 years. Despite having accumulated 20 years of experience, Rob expressed that he did not perceive himself to be any faster or more efficient in creating board games than when he first started.

The impact of this key question became most pronounced when I was plotting the story, approximately 6 months into the creative process. It became increasingly evident that due to time constraints and my limited previous experience, crafting an entirely original legacy board game would not be feasible.

### ***What Now?***

The idea that was eventually settled on did not come easily. It was not until February 2022, after revisiting interviews, reviewing *Pandemic Legacy: Season 1*, and reviewing recordings of board game conferences featuring Daviau (2017) and Honeycutt (2018), that it was evident that I needed to abandon the Grim Reaper legacy board game and commence exploring alternatives with haste. During one of the conference recordings, Rob Daviau discussed his initial pitch to Hasbro for *Cluedo*, highlighting the concept that if the murderer's identity was known, one would not continue inviting them over for dinner night after night. This inspired me to delve further into the idea of finding an existing board game and transforming it, as Rob did with *Risk* and *Pandemic*. Consequently, I recognised the need for a captivating story and decided to apply the same approach by selecting an established narrative and merging it with the concept of a legacy board game.

### ***The New Plan***

Following an unsuccessful endeavour to develop an original legacy board game, it became evident that seeking guidance from experts in the realm of legacy board game design would yield the greatest advantage and necessitate a shift in direction. Consequently, the revised approach involved

amalgamating an already established board game, with an existing narrative. By combining these two elements, I intended to forge a new and compelling gaming experience.

### ***What Board Game?***

Selecting the appropriate board game posed yet another obstacle in the development process. Like many other aspects, this task presented its own set of challenges. To address this, I revisited board games I had previously played, feeling a sense of urgency to make a swift decision and regain momentum. Many of these board games exhibited straightforward mechanics, aligning with the advice received during the interviews to maintain simplicity. Rapidly considering and dismissing board games, I employed a method that involved initially focusing on familiar titles and subsequently contemplating how a narrative could be integrated. The board games I explored during this evaluation phase included:

**Wingspan (2019).** In this board game, players assume the roles of bird enthusiasts, aiming to attract and explore avian specimens for their interconnected network of wildlife preserves. By strategically playing bird cards, utilising a birdfeeder dice tower to gather food tokens, and strategically laying eggs, players create powerful combinations within specific habitats. The board game's core revolves around the assortment of unique bird cards, offering players opportunities for careful planning and strategic decision-making. After four rounds, the player with the highest points emerges victorious, highlighting their skills in managing their wildlife preserves and attracting an array of birds (Hargrave, 2023).

I have played this board game many times and although it is exceedingly popular, I have struggled to master the board game and the rules, so this was ruled out because of this factor. But also, I could not think of a story element to apply to it to try to convert it to legacy board game.

**Azul (2017).** In the board game Azul, each player has the role of a tile-laying artist, challenged to embellish the walls of the Royal Palace with them. In this board game, players take turns drafting coloured tiles from suppliers, strategically placing them on their player boards to score points. Clever placement, patterns, and completed sets yield additional points, while wasted supplies can diminish scores. The player with the highest score at the end wins (Kiesling, n.d.).

I love this board game; it is simple and has a pattern element that can trip you up if you are using the “free form” board to collect your tiles. However, it did not feel like there were enough elements and I was very unsure how to weave in a story element. This board game was also quickly disregarded.

**Imhotep (2016).** In this board game, players are builders in ancient Egypt, seeking to emulate the renowned architect Imhotep. Throughout six rounds, players embark on a journey to construct five significant monuments by strategically moving wooden stones via boats. On each turn, players can choose from four actions: acquiring new stones, loading stones onto a boat, delivering a boat to a monument, or playing an action card. Players can interfere with each other's plans and hinder progress. After the six rounds are over, the player with the highest score wins (Walker-Harding, n.d.).

Imhotep is another wonderful board game and this gave me the most pause; as it is based in ancient Egypt, tying in a story element either from history or mythology would work well. But again, I quickly disregarded it as the board game itself is all about the building of Egypt and I would need to try and find a story to work with that theme if I was going to avoid drastically changing the board game.

**221b Baker Street (1975).** In this board game, the players are Sherlock Holmes and his loyal companion Dr John Watson. Players navigate the streets of London to gather clues and solve a case. There are 75 cases represented by a card that describes a crime story, presents suspects, and lists relevant locations. Players then have to visit the 14 different areas, collect the clues, and record them on a checklist. Once that is done, a player has to solve the crime and return to 221B Baker Street with the correct answers (Antler Production & Moriarty, n.d.).

This is the board game I ultimately ended up using, partly because I had played it a few times, it had a very strong focus on story with the case cards, and it also looks and plays in a very similar way to Cluedo, which was the board game that sparked Rob Daviau to explore legacy board games when working at Hasbro (Daviau, 2017).

### ***What Story?***

I needed a story that I could modify, so I could have a branching narrative, as well as something that I found captivating. The story needed to be able to be split into three parts for the legacy board game play sessions. The stories I considered were:

**Sherlock: The Hound of the Baskervilles (2012).** This episode of the BBC's *Sherlock* (McGuigan, 2012), is about Sherlock Holmes and Dr John Watson and a client, Henry Knight, who wants their help in investigating the murder of his father by a gigantic hound on Dartmoor. Intrigued by Henry's story and his choice of the word "hound," Sherlock Holmes and Dr John Watson delve into the legend surrounding the creature in Henry's town. They discover a connection to a Ministry of Defence research base

(Baskerville), and in turn uncover a conspiracy involving hallucinatory chemicals. With the aid of their detective skills, and Sherlock's uncanny mind for crime solving, they expose the true culprit, Dr Bob Frankland, and save Henry from himself.

Thanks to the BBC reboot of *Sherlock*, I had watched a modern take of this story multiple times since its release, so it felt like a perfect match. However, because a board game was already themed on the Sherlock Holmes books, and the cases in the original board game touched on some of the same stories, this didn't feel right, and not in line with the new direction I was going in.

**Agatha Christie: Death on the Nile (2022).** In the film *Death on the Nile* (Branagh, 2022), Detective Hercule Poirot finds himself aboard a luxury cruise ship on the Nile River. When the murder of Linnet Ridgeway (heiress on her honeymoon) occurs, Poirot must navigate through the clues to uncover the truth. With many suspicious characters, each harbouring secrets and motives, Poirot's attention to detail is put to the test. In the end, the detective unveils the identity of Linnet's murderer as Jacqueline de Bellefort, her former best friend, and her motivation is that Linnet stole her ex-fiancé and then married him (Branagh, 2022).

The theatrical release of this movie in 2022 meant that it was top of mind at the time of considering stories. I liked the way Detective Hercule Poirot gathers all the suspects at the end and goes through them all, explaining why each one is or isn't the murderer. I did, however, quickly disregard this one because while watching it I remembered another Agatha Christie story that I preferred.

**Agatha Christie: Murder on the Orient Express (2017).** In the film *Murder on the Orient Express* (Branagh, 2017), Hercule Poirot finds himself aboard a luxurious train where the shocking murder of Edward Ratchett, also known as John Cassetti, takes place. Poirot must work through a complex web of deceit and hidden motives to uncover the identity of the killer. As the investigation unfolds, secrets are revealed, alibis are questioned, and tensions rise among the passengers. Poirot reveals the truth in a surprise twist: every passenger onboard is somehow connected to the murder of a little girl, Daisy Armstrong, some years prior. Ratchett (Cassetti) was the main suspect but, through a miscarriage of justice, got away with it. Mrs Caroline Hubbard masterminds a plan with those affected by Daisy's death, and they band together to murder Ratchett and carry out their own version of vigilante justice (Branagh, 2017).

*Death on the Nile* prompted me to rewatch *Murder on the Orient Express*. I had landed on an Agatha Christie Hercule Poirot, and *Murder on the Orient Express* had the much-added bonus of the murderer being everyone on the train. They all had motives to commit the murder that took place, and although there was one central ringleader, it was a group effort. This meant if I was going to have a branching narrative, which I wanted, this would mean that all characters were viable options if I wanted the murder to be singular.

### **Conclusion**

Using the methods and methodologies previously described, I documented the process of producing an appropriate idea for my creative artefact for this study. This included interviewing subject matter experts, partially developing an original board game with the original story (inspired by the book *Scythe*) that I would have to let go of, and doing a more in-depth review of *Pandemic Legacy: Season 1*. This led to a significant pivot in which I landed on the final idea of combining the already existing story *Murder on the Orient Express* with the already existing board game *221b Baker Street*.

## Results

### Introduction – What I Landed On

As determined in the previous chapter, I decided to turn *Murder on the Orient Express* and 221b Baker Street into a legacy board game. The main step in working with this plan was to break it into parts and work quickly and methodically.

### The Build

#### *Planning Outlines*

The plan entailed dividing the story into distinct segments, each corresponding to a separate play session. This was imperative to encompass the episodic play required in legacy board game play. It was a collaborative decision with my supervisor to target a total of three play sessions for the project. Once the narrative structure was established, the focus shifted towards incorporating elements of 221b Baker Street into the legacy board game design. For more specific information regarding the preliminary breakdown of the story and its corresponding play sessions (see Appendix C.1–C.3) for details. Note these outlines were a starting point and not reflective of the final product.

#### *Play Session 1*

The introductory play session was carefully designed to provide players with a familiarisation period and an opportunity to learn the rules. The planning process involved breaking down this play session into three key components: the introduction to the story, the middle section focused on collecting clues, and the conclusion of the first play session, all with consideration of the connection to the subsequent play sessions.

The goal was to establish the player's identity as Hercule Poirot, divulge the narrative where the player is about to board the Orient Express from Istanbul to Paris. Additionally, it was crucial for players to meet all the characters, with particular emphasis on Ratchett, who later becomes the victim of the murder. Collecting clues is central throughout all three play sessions; there are some specific clues involved, such as players overhearing passengers Mary Debenham and Dr Arbuthnot whispering to each other, "We should be out of this, Mary" and "Not now. When it's all over. When it's done. Then, nothing can touch us." This added an element of intrigue and foreshadowed events that would unfold in later play sessions.

The end of the first play session story aimed to resemble the film adaptation, where all the characters retire to their cabins for the night. However, a disruptive event occurs as the player is awakened and witnesses a person in a red robe. Subsequently, an avalanche strikes while the player is sleeping, leading to the train being stranded for a sizable portion of the story.

**Meet the Characters.**

- Pilar Estravados – a missionary, used to be a nurse; she is sharing a room with Mary.
- Gerhard Hardman – Austrian university professor.
- Princess Natalia Dragomiroff – ill-tempered; has dogs and has her own maid as a travel companion.
- Edward Ratchett – a businessman and art dealer dealing mostly in knock offs and antiques.
- Hector MacQueen – Ratchett's secretary but also a trained lawyer, he has been spending Ratchett's money.
- Edward Henry Masterman – Ratchett's valet and butler.
- Dr Arbuthnot – doctor and a pipe smoker
- Caroline Hubbard – a wealthy widow, husband-hunting for the next one.
- Mary Debenham – a governess.
- Pierre Michel – the train conductor.
- Hildegard Schmidt – Princess Natalia Dragomiroff's maid.
- Biniamino Marquez – a car salesman.
- Countess Andrenyi – traveling abroad with her husband.
- Count Andrenyi – traveling abroad with his wife.

***Play Session 2***

The middle play session assumes a crucial role in the overall gameplay, carrying a substantial load of important clues and initiating the actual detective work that players must undertake. An important challenge in this phase was effectively incorporating additional carriages into the play session while ensuring that the placement of each clue within the scene maintained logical coherence.

In Play Session 2, I made a strategic decision to commence the narrative with the murder of Ratchett and the subsequent immobilisation of the train due to snow. This deliberate choice serves to create a sense of excitement and intrigue, setting the stage for players to embark on their interrogations and further investigations. It enables the integration of characters into the unfolding storyline, leading to the

revelation of the Armstrong case and shedding light on the identity of Ratchett, who is also known as Cassett. By the conclusion of this game, players should possess a heightened awareness of a larger, overarching mystery that awaits unravelling, thereby enhancing their anticipation and curiosity.

### **The Characters' Alibis.**

- Pilar Estravados – only left her room once to get an Aspirin from Caroline Hubbard, she does confess she opened Ratchett's door by mistake where he pointed a gun at her, she is also her roommate Mary's alibi, claiming she is a light sleeper, and that Mary could not have left without disturbing her.
- Gerhard Hardman – Nothing in Play Session 2
- Princess Natalia Dragomiroff – she went to bed and later called her maid to see her and rub her back; during the investigation you find out she was an admirer of Sonia Armstrong's mother and she was Sonia's Godmother.
- Edward Ratchett – Ratchett is dead, real name is revealed as John Cassetti, the real suspect for the Daisy Armstrong case.
- Hector MacQueen – he did everything for Ratchett so he's able to confirm that he saw him at 10 to go through the accounts and then had a drink with Dr Arbuthnot at 2am. He does share some threatening letters Ratchett had received. He goes further to share that his father was one of the attorneys on the Armstrong case that wrongly prosecuted Susanne.
- Edward Henry Masterman – Marquez and Masterman alibi each other.
- Dr Arbuthnot – confirms that he was smoking and drinking with MacQueen until 2am. He shares his pipe cleaner that matches what is in Ratchett's room, but he says he wasn't in his compartment prior to his death. When questioned, he denies knowing the Armstrong case and when pushed vouches for Mary (they seem to be close).
- Caroline Hubbard – claims she was in her room but was woken by someone in her room that night although she's sure she locked it. When asked if she knew Ratchett was Cassetti she seems surprised; she hands over a clue – a button from a uniform – but the conductor wasn't missing one.
- Mary Debenham – it is discovered that her middle name is Hemione and she is left-handed
- Pierre Michel – nothing in Play Session 2

- Hildegard Schmidt – denies the handkerchief found in Ratchett’s room is hers as it's too expensive; she mentions seeing a second conductor when she left her room to see to Princess Natalia Dragomiroff, but that he was short with a beard and a high voice.
- Biniamino Marquez – a lot of photos are discovered of him as a chauffeur with a little boy.
- Countess Andrenyi – her passport has a smudge at the start of her name “Elena.”
- Count Andrenyi – he and his wife were in their room the whole time.

### **The Armstrong Case**

- Daisy Armstrong – the kidnapped child who was held for ransom and killed when the family couldn’t pay.
- Sonia Armstrong – an actress, and the mother of Daisy; dies during childbirth after the grief of Daisys’ death shocks her into premature labour.
- Colonel John Armstrong – died from suicide from the grief of losing his child and wife.
- Susanne – the Armstrong’s nurse maid who was wrongly suspected of the kidnap and murder leading to her being arrested; she committed suicide and was only found innocent later.

### ***Play Session 3***

The concluding play session serves as the final stage where the narrative reaches its climax. Considering the substantial amount of information and clues accumulated by this point, I aimed to make this play session shorter than the previous ones.

The progression towards the conclusion begins with the revelation that assistance has arrived, and efforts are underway to remove the snow hindering the train's journey. To instil a sense of urgency, it is essential for players to recognise that if the train becomes free and reaches Paris before the crime is solved, there is a risk of a murderer escaping unpunished. The original design intended to incorporate branching paths in the ending, contingent upon characters being eliminated during gameplay. However, this objective proved unattainable.

As a result, the end play session focuses on the collection of clues and returning to the lounge cart, where players must announce their theory before the train is fully dug out of the snow. The snow is shown in the form of cards throughout the Play Session 3 in clue envelopes; once five are collected the train is freed to continue its journey. This time constraint was added to create tension, emphasising the need to act swiftly and accurately to prevent the murderer from eluding justice.

### **Connection to the Armstrong case**

- Pilar Estravados – it is discovered she was the Armstrongs' nurse.
- Cyrus Bethman Hardman – initially pretends to be an Austrian university professor named Gerhard Hardman – he has a police-issued gun from 1927, and its revealed his accent is fake and his real name is Cyrus Bethman Hardman. He was a detective; Ratchett paid to be tailed as he was in fear for his life, Cyrus was nearby and got the job. He watched the hallway by Ratchett's door the whole night and no one passed him; it is later revealed he was Susanne's lover.
- Princess Natalia Dragomiroff – in Russian, the letter *H* is *N*, like *N* in Natalia.
- John Cassetti, alias Edward Ratchett – nothing in Play Session 3
- Hector MacQueen – reveals that few people liked Ratchett
- Edward Henry Masterman – he's tired and dismissive but reveals that he was Colonel Armstrong's batman in the war and later his valet.
- Dr Arbuthnot – Colonel Armstrong's close friend.
- Caroline Hubbard – reveals her real name is Linda Arden, and she was an actress like Sonia's mother, Daisy's grandmother.
- Mary Debenham – Mary was Sonia's personal secretary and Daisy's governess.
- Pierre Michel – confirms he saw no one go in to Ratchett's room that night. The conductor and brother of Susanne, the Armstrongs' former maid, who hanged herself in prison after being wrongly accused of killing Daisy. In the novel, she threw herself out a window.
- Hildegard Schmidt – the Armstrongs' cook.
- Biniamino Marquez – a car salesman and the Armstrongs' chauffeur.
- Countess Helena Andrenyi – she is a user of barbitol; her governess taught her geography and eventually it is revealed she is Sonia's younger sister and Daisy's aunt.
- Count Rudolph Andrenyi – nothing in play session 3

### **Creation of the Legacy Board Game**

#### ***The Board***

During the initial stages of development, a concept was considered wherein a single central board would gradually reveal additional Orient Express carriages as play progressed. This concept began with the placement of Post-It Notes on the 221b Baker Street board and later evolved into separate boards for each carriage. However, a significant challenge arose when trying to adapt the game's structure to the

format of 221b Baker Street, which typically features only one clue per location in London. Although some Orient Express carriages, like the sleeper cart, naturally lent themselves to being divided into multiple rooms, breaking up other rooms proved more problematic. The solution emerged by treating the characters as additional locations within the carriages. This idea was further enhanced much later with the help of a creative designer who suggested treating the characters like rooms and making pathways throughout the board. This would reduce the appearance of the grid pattern and allow for a reduction of spaces it takes to move from clue to clue.

This approach presented new possibilities, yet it still fell short when converting the board into a legacy board game. It was necessary to control the distribution of clues to players in each play session and determine which characters would provide them. Therefore, if a player encountered a character in the dining cart during Play Session 1, that same character would need to offer a different clue if revisited in Play Session 2. This obstacle proved challenging to overcome but was eventually resolved by simply flipping the board, allowing for the movement of characters and the allocation of new clues when the flipped board was in play. The board setup for each play session would be communicated on the campaign cards; this will be discussed further in the section The Campaign Cards.

This design decision was influenced by the board game Azul, where players possess dual-sided playing boards, enabling them to play the board game in two distinct styles. Incorporating this mechanism provided additional space for clues and granted control over the availability of clues in each game.

At a later stage in the development process, a shift occurred regarding the representation of characters in the game. Initially, coloured dots were used on the board, but this approach proved visually cluttered and increasingly challenging to associate clues with specific characters due to the considerable number of characters involved. To address this issue, the board was updated to include characters' images in those locations. It must be noted that the images used are from promotional materials for the movie and are not licensed; because there was no objective to make this legacy board game available beyond this study it was considered acceptable. This change not only reduced the setup of the board but also provided a visual reference to aid in associating clues with characters, which is important for a legacy board game as a short or long amount of time can pass between plays.

### ***The Rules***

The rules of the legacy board game were gradually developed alongside the initial idea; during this process, an important aspect that had to be considered and solved was how to conclude each game. Initially, the intention was to follow a similar structure to the board game Pandemic with “action-based play”, where players have a set of actions to choose from on each turn, with the ability to perform any four actions each turn. However, this approach was later discarded in favour of a more thoughtful examination of the source material.

As a result of this decision, the rules were rewritten to align more closely with the original board game 221b Baker Street, thus incorporating the use of dice to control movement. Additionally, a modification was made for investigating clues, whereby a player would collect a clue when occupying the space or square with a corresponding number. Consequently, the concept of "inquiry tokens" required to purchase certain clues was eliminated, and elements from the original board game such as the Scotland Yard card were brought back. The Scotland Yard card allows a player to lock access to clue, the card can only be removed with a Skeleton Key card. When reintroducing these cards, they were transformed into Padlock cards with the same ability to lock a clue from other players, adding in the Skeleton key card was problematic and was replaced by a dice roll instead with players needing a 3 or 6 to remove the Padlock card.

In the rule book, it was essential to provide an explanation for the method of recording clues, as this differs from the original version. In the original game, players would write down the clues on a notepad and keep their own notes and theories. However, in a legacy version, due to the significantly larger number of clues to collect, it was deemed appropriate to clarify from the outset that players would have a booklet and the clues would be obtained in the form of cards, rather than through notetaking; this avoided a very arduous task of record keeping.

### ***The Clues***

The process of transforming dialogue and actions from the film into play session clues proved to be a time-consuming endeavour. Coupled with the objective of incorporating a branching narrative, particularly regarding the various endings, it became necessary to create supplementary details that would support this structure while preserving the essence of the original story. Achieving this involved repeatedly watching the movie with closed captions while simultaneously referencing a textual copy of

the dialogue. Through careful analysis, I identified and extracted the essential aspects and information required for the clues.

In my commitment to maintaining fidelity to the narrative, a significant volume of clues emerged, necessitating a strategic approach to include them, while streamlining the essential components. Nonetheless, this resulted in a substantial quantity of clues that required management to complete each play session in a timely manner for the purpose of writing this exegesis. Consequently, a firm decision to cut supportive story lines like Mrs Hubbard getting stabbed, and Dr Arbuthnot attempting to shoot Poirot, needed to be removed to reduce clues and proceed with what I had to allow me to move on to subsequent steps.

The incorporation of the branching narrative, unfortunately, occurred after the clue-creation process. In retrospect, I acknowledge this to have been a considerable mistake, as it entailed retrofitting information into the clues, potentially causing the significance of certain clues to be overlooked unless meticulous attention was paid. I worked backward from the alternate ending, identifying and modifying the clues that would subtly indicate its direction.

An example of this branching narrative approach can be observed in the Play Session 3 planning (see Appendix C.3) for the second solution, where Mary Debenham is revealed as the culprit. By working backward from how she could have committed the crime, I introduced a brief window of opportunity during Pilar's absence from the room to retrieve an Aspirin, exploiting the temporary obstruction of the view to Ratchett's room by the door. This required the elimination of a character who played a pivotal role in the original ending (where everyone is the killer), employing a process of elimination to narrow down the list of suspects until MacQueen was excluded. This decision added a twist since most clues pointed toward him. However, it posed an issue as I had no control over when or if the mechanism that eliminates MacQueen would be played, triggering this ending. Moreover, it meant that I had to ensure the clues contained enough information to support all viable solutions, albeit this challenge was only partially resolved.

Originally, I contemplated including "nothing" clues that would impede players' progress, adding additional hurdles. However, upon considering the difficulty level of the clues and solutions, I concluded that such obstacles were unnecessary.

My creative process was heavily influenced by the computer game *Detroit: Become Human* (2018), renowned for its intricate and expansive branching narrative. I initially aimed to incorporate a similar structure, and an alternative ending was developed to facilitate this inclusion. However, it was discarded as it lacked sufficient strength and led to the introduction of numerous confusing clues and misdirection. Given more time, I believe it would have been possible to replace all the clues beyond a certain point to support the alternative ending, allowing for a branching point and narrative divergence. However, during testing, attempting to retain all clues throughout the play sessions resulted in confusion among players ultimately resulting in the removal of the branching narrative from the final legacy board game.

### ***The Campaign Cards***

**Story.** To facilitate the initiation and conclusion of each play session and effectively relay paramount information to the players, certain measures needed to be implemented. To address this requirement, campaign cards were designed to relay this information. Inspiration for these cards was drawn from the setup approach employed in the context of *Pandemic Legacy: Season 1*, wherein pertinent details and objectives were encapsulated within cards that were subsequently read aloud to the team both during the setup phase and upon the completion of the game.

To organise the campaign cards in a coherent manner, I opted to divide their content into distinct sections on the front and back. The primary side would contain clear instructions for setting up the board, as well as guidelines for the arrangement of player components. Additionally, I sought to incorporate a narrative component that would serve as the catalyst for commencing the game, along with the parameters dictating the conclusion of each round. The reverse side of the card featured the narrative elements relevant to the conclusion of the game.

**Ending a Play Session.** Finding a mechanism to conclude the play sessions was a challenge as 221b Baker Street's game-end trigger is to get the clues, get to Baker Street first and announce one's theory on the crime. Because this is a legacy board game, I could only use that end mechanism once and for this legacy board game I could only use it partially. Initially, when I had the inquiry token mechanism this was going to be how I would end the game. For example, using all one's tokens triggers the end of the game. But later, I removed that element because it wasn't working well in gameplay. What next?

The process of determining a suitable mechanism to conclude the play sessions presented a challenge in the context of 221b Baker Street. Upon reflection, I determined that each play session would conclude

when a player had acquired at least one clue from each character and location and successfully returned to the designated "finish" tile on the game board. This approach remained true to the original board game while also ensuring that at least one player would have obtained the majority of clues.

Additionally, I aimed to introduce an element of competition and urgency by incorporating a tactical interference factor. If a player had already fulfilled the objective and was heading towards the finish tile, the other players would be compelled to hastily gather additional clues before the game's conclusion.

This particular design choice was repeated in the second play session game, but, for the final instalment, I sought to introduce a unique element to heighten the sense of urgency. Thus, in Play Session 3, I included snowball cards within some clue envelopes as a timing device to close out the game. These cards could either be the first or last card in the envelope (each envelope containing a card for each player). When players collected a clue, there was a chance of encountering a snowball card. These cards were randomly distributed among the envelopes, and once all snowball cards are collected, it signified that the train had been cleared of snow, and the player who reached the finish tile first would be granted the opportunity to declare a solution.

In summary, the process of determining the game-ending mechanism for a legacy board game involved an iterative approach. By considering the original game's mechanics, introducing competitive elements, and incorporating a unique urgency factor, I sought to create a satisfying and engaging conclusion for the players.

### ***The Special Player Trait Cards***

The concept of special player trait cards originated from a previous idea that got discarded involving the inclusion of "item cards." These item cards would be obtainable by players during the course of a play session and would provide special abilities, such as granting additional moves or allowing players to acquire clues from others. The introduction of item cards aimed to introduce an element of chance, enhance player traits, and influence the game's balance. However, this concept was intricately linked to the now-discarded notion of "action-based play" previously discussed.

Subsequently, the idea of item cards transformed into what became known as "player trait cards." At the beginning of each game, players would have the opportunity to select a special trait to give them additional power beyond the basic rules. This feature served the purpose of allowing players to familiarise themselves with the benefits of their chosen trait in the first game, observe how other

players utilised different traits, and subsequently formulate strategies in subsequent games that would best align with their preferred style of play. The inclusion of player trait cards was not driven by a specific desire to cater to the game's legacy characteristics but rather stemmed from the potential to enhance gameplay dynamics.

### **Conclusion**

The legacy board game design adhered closely to the fundamental elements of 221b Baker Street board game, including its rules, clues, and board layout. Minor modifications were introduced, particularly regarding the transformation of Scotland Yard cards into padlocks and the corresponding adjustments in the mechanics governing their removal. Furthermore, a notable deviation was observed in the presentation of clues, which shifted from players generating them to their provision via prewritten cards. The board layout retained a grid pattern, featuring pathways leading to distinct rooms, and the characters occupying the board were handled in a similar manner.

The idea that needed to be added was the way clues would be collected with the numbers being printed directly on the board. This also meant the boards needed to change over time, which meant the creation of double-sided boards for different games. Special player traits were introduced to negate certain potential scenarios that could impact player enjoyment.

The story was maintained as closely as possible to the movie story line, but due to the sheer number of clues, amendments had to be made to reduce them. To reduce the number of clues, certain supporting story lines had to be removed and the erroneous clues had to be reduced. This also led to the conclusion that the implementation of a branching narrative had to be discarded.

If I were to do this again, I would incorporate the branching narrative into the clues in a more cohesive manner. This was partially achieved but to the detriment of enjoyment of play, which is why it was removed. Other considerations include the clues collection. I had a preferred method that involved peel-away panels that would revealing clues beneath them; however, this had manufacturing limitations and complications.

I would also consider the enjoyability of play more, rather than just the function and meeting the brief of a legacy board game. I think incorporating some of the previously mentioned ideas into the game would have given a more dynamic experience, and, with a branching narrative, would have applied a

new twist to an old classic. See Appendix D for a visual of the finished legacy board game “Murder on the Orient Express.”

## Analysis

### **What Are the Most Important Characteristics That Make a Legacy Board Game?**

Upon evaluating the classification of my creative artefact as a legacy board game, it is important to note that there is no definitive and universally agreed-upon definition for this category. Therefore, the answer to the question whether my game constitutes a legacy board game is not possible. Instead, it is necessary to consider the key components that typically characterise a legacy board game and compare them with the features of my game. In the existing literature, the elements that constitute a legacy board game often include episodic play, elements of permanent change, and the inability to replay upon completion.

In my creative artefact, I placed particular emphasis on achieving episodic play. This was accomplished by dividing play sessions into significant plot points, such as Ratchett's death occurring at the beginning of the second game. I aimed to create a natural flow between each game, with the first play session focusing on introducing all the characters and familiarising players with the gameplay mechanics. The second play session revolved around Ratchett's murder, where players collected clues and alibis. Lastly, the third play session involved delving deeper into the Armstrong case, which was initially revealed during the second game.

While the focus on episodic play aligns with the concept of a legacy board game, further examination is required to determine if other crucial aspects, such as elements of permanent change and limited replay ability, are present in my game.

The concept of permanent change in my creative artefact exists in a loose sense, as the clues are sealed in envelopes, and although opening the envelopes breaks the seal, it would still be possible to reassemble the game. Initially, there was a plan to incorporate a more deliberate approach to permanent change. If I had successfully implemented a branching narrative, which I did partially develop, the idea was to have characters die and to place stickers on their character on the board, accompanied by the destruction of their remaining clue cards. Moreover, while permanent change to game materials is one of legacy board games' most dramatic and controversial aspects, it may be the least necessary.

This brings us to the final characteristic of a legacy board game: the inability to replay upon completion. In many existing legacy board games like *Pandemic Legacy: Season 0* (2020), 1 and 2; *King's Dilemma*

(2019); and My City (2020); it is the use of permanent change that renders the legacy board game non-replayable. However, even in those cases, having knowledge of the game's narrative progression from previous plays could influence subsequent play and decision making, as players would be aware of the objectives and events leading up to the current session, potentially allowing them to leverage that knowledge to their advantage. If the aim is to achieve perfect play or replayability, one could opt for standalone games or computer games.

Considering the game's lack of permanent change, does that make it replayable? I would argue that it is not, and here is why: Even if the legacy board game could be packed up and played again, the story and outcome would remain unchanged because there is no branching narrative. Regardless of how the legacy board game is played or whether different clues are collected, the ending and the purpose of the game—"Find the killer and solve the murder"—remain constant. Hence, this creative artefact cannot be replayed. This perspective broadens the scope of exploration to encompass "Escape room" genre games such as Exit: The Game – The Secret Lab (2016) and Box One (2020), positing them as potential instances of Legacy games. These particular games share a common trait with Legacy games in that they lack replayability owing to their narrative-driven structure and puzzle-solving elements.

The definition of a legacy board game is more fluid than initially thought. It must involve episodic play with a cohesive narrative throughout, and a legacy board game should either feature permanent change which renders it non-replayable, or the story and outcome of play makes it non-replayable.

### **How Can Developing a Legacy Board Game Contribute to our Understanding of 21<sup>st</sup>-Century Board Games?**

The essential attributes that constitute a legacy board game have been established. This prompts the inquiry of how the development of such a board game contributes to our present understanding of gaming dynamics and comprehension of how all these elements work together to create an enjoyable and engaging gameplay experience.

Historically, board game play has been characterised by consequential play, wherein players make choices during the game, culminating in either a victory or defeat based on the cumulative impact of those decisions and those made by their opponents. In the context of traditional board games, each playthrough adheres to consistent rules and conditions, allowing players to acquire strategies for subsequent engagements. The capacity to assimilate knowledge, apply it to future gameplay, and

engage in iterative practices based on observed opponent behaviour are inherent aspects of this process.

In a legacy board game, repetition is absent, and any mistakes or choices made during the course of gameplay persist and carry over to subsequent iterations until the game's completion. Consequently, the learning process becomes continuous, with the accumulation of experiences and insights influencing future gameplay. This characteristic of enduring consequences resonated prominently during the development of my Murder on the Orient Express game, particularly concerning the collection of clues. Notably, failure to obtain certain critical clues could significantly impact deductions and hinder players' ability to make accurate declarations during the resolution phase, although an element of this is addressed to allow players access to those clues in later games under specific conditions. What is learned and applicable to modern board games is the complexity which a legacy board game can have and the intricacies that go with it.

During the development of the legacy board game, careful consideration was given to the dynamic progression and temporal evolution of the gameplay, along with the imperative to retain a coherent memory of past events and the consequential impact of players' actions. This involved implementing mechanisms that facilitated modifications to the game's layout, the transformation of players' abilities, and the introduction of novel rules and components over successive sessions. Practical means employed to achieve these objectives encompassed the utilisation of file folders to preserve pertinent clues and the incorporation of additional game boards (train carriages), thereby affording players the opportunity to explore distinct facets in each successive play session iteration.

In the context of contemporary gaming, it becomes evident that providing players with meaningful decision-making experiences, and effectively portraying and documenting those decisions within the game, assumes paramount significance. As elucidated by Rob Daviau during his GDC presentation in 2017, he acknowledged underestimating the players' inclination to opt for decisions that entail opening boxes, or engaging in activities such as scratching or removing panels from cards. Remarkably, this predilection for such actions occasionally outweighed the pursuit of play session objectives. Nevertheless, players sought the autonomy to exercise this option, and its capacity to influence their decisions was substantial.

The incorporation of evolving mechanics in board game design bears the potential to significantly augment player engagement and engender lasting impressions through the creation of memorable experiences. By integrating dynamic elements that adapt and transform over the course of gameplay, designers can instil a sense of novelty and unpredictability, capturing players' attention and motivating their continued involvement.

This innovative approach may also serve as a source of inspiration for the development of hybrid board games, akin to titles such as *Betrayal House on the Hill* (2004); although this board game was prior to legacy board games, the understanding is keenly present in this example. The initial start is the same but at a certain juncture in play, the game's main objective is revealed and this changes with every play, resulting in each playthrough presenting a distinct narrative, unique objectives, and varied gameplay dynamics. Consequently, players encounter a diverse array of scenarios, fostering re-playability and sustained interest in the game.

Nonetheless, it is essential to acknowledge that the contemporary landscape of board game design tends towards increased complexity. Modern board games often necessitate comprehensive rulebooks and prologue play to familiarise players with the mechanics and intricacies of the game. Moreover, players are expected to leverage their memory skills effectively, recalling past events or decisions and utilising this information strategically within the board game context.

In sum, the integration of evolving mechanics has the capacity to heighten player engagement and generate lasting impressions, culminating in memorable gaming experiences. Moreover, this approach can inspire the development of hybrid board games, characterised by unique narratives and objectives for each session. Nevertheless, it is vital to recognise that modern board games may exhibit augmented complexity, emphasising the importance of comprehensive rulebooks, prologue play, and the ability to apply memory aptitude effectively during gameplay.

## Conclusion

The creative process involved in crafting a legacy board game was characterised by a series of challenges and learning experiences, prompting reflection on the impact of decision making during the development of the creative artefact. The amalgamation of an existing board game, 221b Baker Street, with the renowned narrative of *Murder on the Orient Express* formed the foundation of the idea, with additional mechanics and rules introduced to transform it into a legacy format. The adaptation of the movie version of the story into three distinct games involved condensing the narrative and converting key aspects into collectible clues, mirroring the original game's structure.

Among the key characteristics identified as crucial for a legacy board game are episodic play, where the story develops after each session; permanence, involving either irrevocable physical changes or the game's one-time playability; and evolving mechanics and objectives, leading to a progressive narrative throughout subsequent plays.

This study has shed light on several significant insights applicable to 21st-century board game design. Consequential play emerged as a pivotal aspect, emphasising the impact of player choices on gameplay outcomes. The concept of preserving player agency or the actual control they wield over gameplay and outcomes has been recognised as paramount in enhancing enjoyment and playability. Furthermore, the integration of a game's memory mechanism has been identified as essential in creating engaging and immersive experiences for players. Finally, the incorporation of evolving mechanics, imparting surprise and intrigue, has been identified as an enriching aspect of gameplay.

In considering future iterations, the study proposes the inclusion of branching narratives and exploration of alternative means to surface clues, fostering greater play variation between games to accumulate progressive experiences. The possibility of developing a series centred around the adventures of Hercule Poirot has been contemplated, despite the inclination to revisit the concept of the grim reaper game due to personal resonance.

The significance of this study lies in its potential as a foundational resource for aspiring researchers aiming to delve into the domain of legacy board games in greater depth. The creative journey and insights offered herein can serve as a starting point for further exploration and scholarly investigation in this compelling area of game design.

## Glossary of Terms

| <b>Term</b>              | <b>Definition<sup>2</sup></b>   |
|--------------------------|---|
| <b>Action-based play</b> | A game mechanic where a player selects an action to perform from a menu (possibly changing) of possible choices.              |
| <b>Board game</b>        | A game that involves the movement of counters or other objects round a board.   |
| <b>Character</b>         | A nonplayer character that exists to support and enhance the story and game.  |
| <b>Gameplay</b>          | The way players interact with the game.   |
| <b>GDC</b>               | Game Developers Conference  |
| <b>Player</b>            | A person who plays board games.   |
| <b>Playthrough</b>       | Playing the game from start to finish   |
| <b>Play session</b>      | In the context of this exegesis “play session” refers the multiple episodic games that make up a legacy board game.           |
| <b>Rules</b>             | The parameters and conditions of play to which players must adhere to play the game.  |
| <b>Square</b>            | A visual fixed boundary depicted on the board to contain movement around the board.   |
| <b>Tabletop game</b>     | See board game  |
| <b>Token</b>             | A piece that represents the player on the board, or a visual representation of an item, action or object.                     |
| <b>Turn</b>              | A player's opportunity to move or perform an action and influence the game, turns usually alternated equally between players. |

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<sup>2</sup> Definitions are from multiple sources and written in context of this exegesis, such sources are Board Game Geek, Wikipedia and the *Oxford Dictionary*.

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## Appendices

### Appendix A – Journaling

# The Creative Journey

This timeline documents the creative process of making my own legacy board game.

## July 2021

PGR1 was Approved on the 13 July 2021.

The documentation process starts on this day but there will be some influences that happened before this day, that weren't documented, so this is the metaphoric line in the sand of when this documentation process.

**Classification:**  
 Boardgame play - Purple  
 Computer games - Red  
 Movies/TV/Book - Blue  
 Interviews - Yellow  
 Journals - White

[Comment](#)

My Grandma Gemma passed away

[Comment](#)

**Boardgame**  
 Etherfield  
 semi-legacy game from a Kickstarter game

[Comment](#)

**Movie**  
 Black widow  
 MCU movie

[Comment](#)

17 Jul  
 After Reading Scythe I think a grim reaper themed game would be a good idea looking.

[Comment](#)

**Book**  
 Scythe  
 Half-way through a book that looks how we deal with death when the world reaches a point where medicine means we can no longer die where and reset our bodies age and live forever ultimately. Populations would get out of control so how do you control it?

[Comment](#)

**TV show**  
 Castle  
 Writer tags along with NYPD cop for inspiration

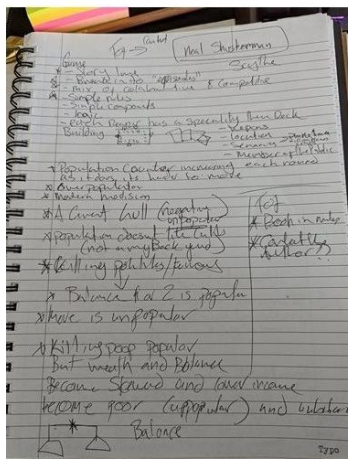
[Comment](#)

## August 2021

**Boardgame**  
 Clank  
 Game where you are trying to avoid making a noise and waking the dragon.

**Boardgame**  
 Shelf stacker

Comment



10 Aug  
After further discussions with my Supervisor on the "Grim reaper" game idea I think there could be something interesting there if you look at it from a population control angle. Having a set of scales or something as part of the board so your constantly reminded of the balance that needs to be kept.

Comment



Date: 15 August

Comment

You need to strategically stack a shelf to win points and avoid losses.

Comment

### Podcast

I'm not a monster

Date: 11-13 August

Story investigating an American family that fled Syria and ISIS binged

Comment

### Podcast

Bad bad thing

Date (started): 13 August

Suicide

Comment

### Movie

The man from UNCLE

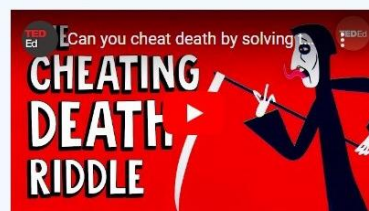
Date: 14 August

Comment



Date: 15 August

Comment



Date: 15 August

Comment

## September 2021

### Computer Game

Lily's Garden (App game)

Date: 15 September - 22 October

Interesting thing is that it's split into days and the goal is to achieve the goal of fixing up your house by the end of the month to win an inheritance

Comment

### Computer Game

Detroit become human

Date: 19 September

This game is what my husband was playing and the branching narrative is extensive and intricate.

Comment

20 Sep

Been thinking after playing Lily garden and Detroit become human that should apply a certain timeline situation to my games (like pandemic with months) then that could create a structure and urgency.

Also Detroit made me think about if it would be cool to have a legacy game, with such an intricate narrative, but i can't think of a way to have a complicated narrative with low wastage when it comes to board game components.

Comment

### TV Show

Brooklyn Nine-nine Season 1

Comment

### TV Show

Vigil Season 1

Date: 19-26 September

BBC show murder on a submarine with the idea that the murder has to be on the boat it can't be anyone else so it's a closed room situation.

Idea- that the murder is a secret and revealed at the end.

Comment

### TV Show

Broadchurch Season 1

Date: 27-30 September

Great UK murder show and the constant guessing as to who it was that did the murder. similar to Vigil.

Comment

### Interview

Rob Daviau

Date: 27 September

Comment

### Interview

Shem Phillips

Date: 29 September

Comment

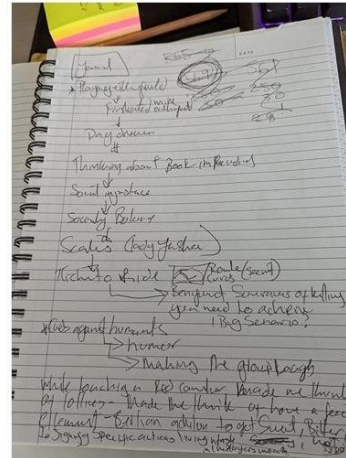
### Boardgame

Pandemic legacy season 1

Date: 30 September

Taking apart the storyline for Pandemic legacy game, isn't influenced by what you do in the game you may get the storyline in different momentum and order but the story points are the same, the only thing that changes on what you do is the ending but still, that's the only story branch.

<https://boardgamegeek.com/thread/2032324/story-season-1-season-1-spoilers>



28 Sept

Been thinking about Etherfield and the grim reaper game and how they might be some mechanics and themes i can borrow from that.

Comment

<https://boardgamegeek.com/thread/2584160/pandemic-season-1-full-storyline-synopsis>  
<https://twooffthetop.com/2019/05/06/pandemic-legacy-season-1-review-w-spoilers/>

Comment

30 Sep  
 Expanding on ideas for Grim reaper game:  
 - If you kill to many of any particular group you could cause social unrest  
 - Thinking i want to avoid to dark an idea there needs to be humor like cards against humanity

Comment

## October 2021

**Interview**  
 Ted Alspach  
 Date: 1 October

Comment

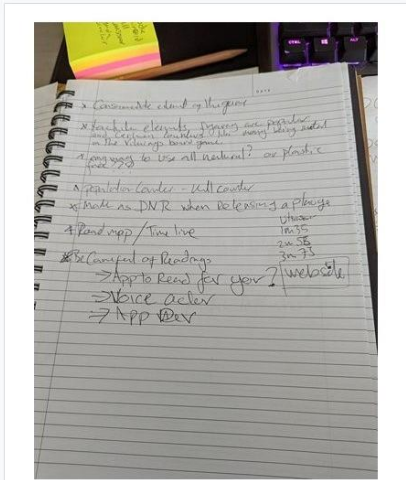
**Interview**  
 Matt Leacock  
 Date: 7 October

Interview notes

Take away: Adjust my idea of re-jig an existing game to be a legacy game. it might be too hard to make an original game and then make it a legacy game.

Thinking of borrowing Rob Daviau's idea of converting Cludo.

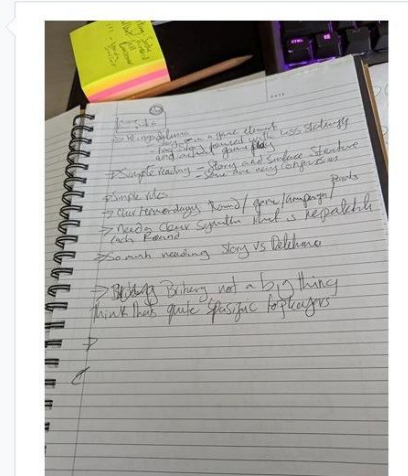
Comment



11 Oct  
 More thoughts and ideas for the grim reaper game, I recently ate a cardamon pod by accident that was rater unpleasant made me consider where food could incorporated in to the game so when a difficult choice has to be made you have to consume an unpleasant sweet the metaphorical bitter pill you have to swallow some times.

Also after taking apart Pandemic Legacy season 1 the perception of control and change was high but the outcome was variations on 1 ending only. So its simplicity when just look at the narrative is quite incredible.

Comment

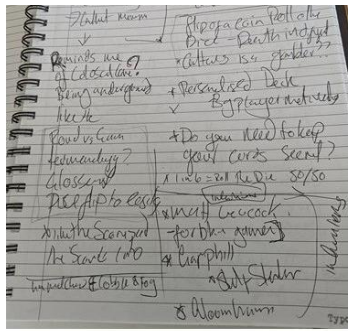


15 Oct  
 Thinking more around how the grim reaper game will be repayable, i think i want to borrow from kings dilemma and add in an element of bribery cause who wouldn't try and cheat death?

Comment



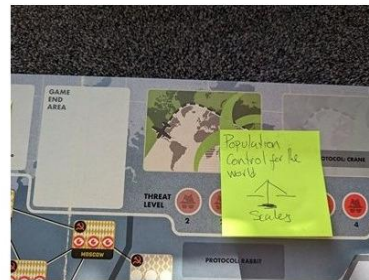
19 October  
 Used the pandemic Legacy: Season 0 to start mapping out ideas.



18 Oct  
 Adding a coin flip when determining certain deaths in the game would be interesting given that fate cant really play a part in this world it would be up to the grim reapers to create that in a way. Could have personalized card decks for each player thats specific to them and there skill set.  
 Wonder if they had to keep there card a secret some time ... like kings dilemma has secret motives?

Comment

Comment



This is where we would the death and birth scale

Comment

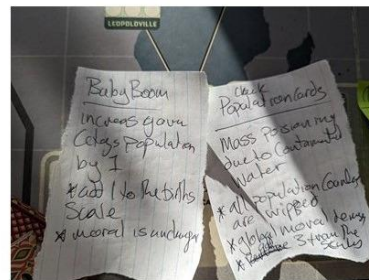
Each city needs a 5 circles 2 for population in decline 1 for balanced and 2 for over population

Comment



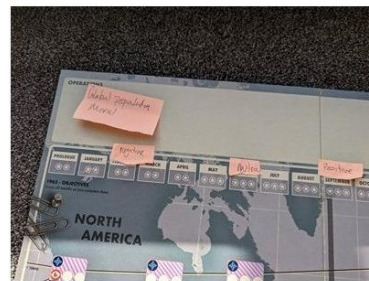
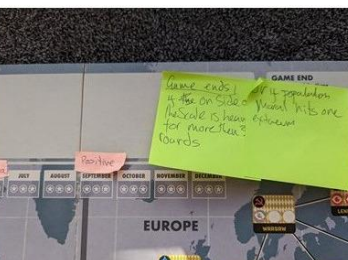
Like pandemic need to randomly increase the population in random cities don't like using this idea .... will use it to continue

Comment



event cards will have big killings an big birth increases both will contribute to moral. If the massing killing event happens in an over populated city, moral dial will increase and the death side of the scale will get heavier

Comment



This im taking directly from Kings dilemma I think it would be the simplest way to show unrest and contentment at the global level  
 This will be influenced by mass destruction cards and population boom cards



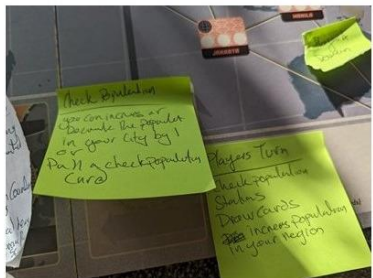
How do we end the game, well I have a bunch of ideas but not sure how this converts in to a continuation/episode the ideas are moving more and more to a standalone pandemic game.....  
 Game ends when one of these things happen:  
 - the scales are tipped in one direction for more then 3 rounds  
 OR  
 - the moral of the world is either to positive or to negative  
 OR  
 - All mass population or population boom cards have been played

[Comment](#)

This is a look at the board with all the previous items on I think I just cant help but make it like Pandemic. Every time I look to add something I natural think of how pandemic solutions it.  
 Example is the epidemic cards to increase population at random  
 This is starting to look like I've re-skinned pandemic to fit a grim reaper style just swapping viruses for population

[Comment](#)

[Comment](#)



Population can be increased or decreased based on whats happening with the scales players might choose to one or the other  
 if you choose to decrease you need to pick flip a coin if its heads you kill a celebrate or beloved public figure. So you will decrease global moral.  
 Tails no impact to global moral

[Comment](#)

Do i add the bitter pill idea to the mass killing cards?  
 is this taking a step to far. maybe let this go for now.

[Comment](#)

## November 2021

### TV Show

Big Bang theory

Season 6

Date: 30 Sep - 29 Nov

[Comment](#)

10 Nov

I dont know how to add more narrative to this game. or how to have permanent changes with out just doing it becoming a slight variation of pandemic. and what would be the changing objectives from game to game? I need enough movement to flow through to 3 games

[Comment](#)

2 Nov

I'm having some serious doubts on the "grim reaper" game after doing the interviews with the experts I think i have chosen the wrong idea, and even more so a potentially unachievable idea. My lack of previous experience making a board game or writing an original story to base a game on is becoming overwhelming and I'm not sure this is going to work anymore. I'm going to take a break over Christmas.

[Comment](#)

29 Nov

[COMMENT](#)

**Movie**  
A time to Kill  
Date: 30 November

[Comment](#)

**Movie**  
Dune 2021  
Date: 30 November

[Comment](#)

Were at crises point now I'm drawing a blank and trying to work in enough mechanics to make the game not pandemic. Even if I manage to make it so its not so similar to pandemic I still don't know how i extend the story. I need to give the grim reapers (players) more purpose maybe it could be like a Sales department if your region is working the best then you win an advantage for the next round?  
this doesn't work cause then it turns collaborative to competitive.

[Comment](#)

**Board Game**  
Imhotep  
Date: 15 nov  
Your a builder in Egypt trying to earn the most points by strategically filling boats with bricks, and taking them to different ports. I like the idea of messing with people by using my turn to move a boat that doesn't have any of my bricks in it, to a port that i didnt want to go to.

[Comment](#)

## December 2021

**Movie**  
Mollys game  
Date: 4 Dec

[Comment](#)

**Movie**  
Divergent  
Date: 10 Dec

[Comment](#)

**Movie**  
American Hustle  
Date: 11 Dec

[Comment](#)

**Movie**  
Panic Room  
Date: 22 Dec

[Comment](#)

**TV Show**

**TV show**  
The movies that made us  
Season 3  
Date: 4 Dec

[Comment](#)

**Movie**  
Chicago  
Date: 10 Dec

[Comment](#)

**Movie**  
Argo  
Date: 12 Dec

[Comment](#)

**TV Show**  
BBC Sherlock  
Series 1  
24 Dec

[Comment](#)

This is a Robbery  
Date: 30 Dec - 2 Jan

 Comment

## January 2022

Board Game  
221b Baker Street  
Date: 6 Jan  
Played this with some friends feels a lot like Cludo but the first game was so hard, we decided we would pair up for the next game and that went better.

 Comment

TV Show  
Murder among Mormons  
Date: 10 - 11 Jan

 Comment

TV Show  
The serpent  
Date: 12 Jan

 Comment

Movie  
Sherlock holmes: A game of shadows  
Date: 15 Jan

 Comment

14 Jan  
maybe I need to lean in to the idea of the base game not being mine? I mean Pandemic Legacy: Seson 1 started with the stand alone game Pandemic? still puts me on the back foot with story.

 Comment

Board Game  
Azul  
Date: 17 Jan  
Middle easter tiles simple rules simple to play two types of boards, really enjoy the ability to mess with the other players can backfire tho

 Comment

TV Show  
Crime Scene - The time square killer  
Date: 10 Jan

 Comment

TV Show  
Evil Genius: the True story of America  
Date: 10 Jan

 Comment

TV Show  
The innocent man  
Date: 11 Jan

 Comment

Date: 13 Jan  
Re-reading expert interviews for ideas on how to progress with the grim reaper game, I'm stuck as the story and the mechanics in mind only have a story structure not a game structure. what is the base level game of this legacy?

 Comment

Movie  
Venom  
Date: 15 Jan

 Comment

21 Jan  
I love Azul its pattern based and has a great simplicity to it. I've been going back over my notes and interviews and re-playing the board games i love to look for inspiration. Looking back at some of the research i did previously Rob talks about having wanted to change the game Cludeo so you didn't invite the murder to dinner the next time you played the game. So there could be something in that idea.

 Comment

## February 2022

### TV Show

Fate: The Winx Saga: Season 1  
Date: 2-5 Jan

 Comment

### TV Show

The Umbrella Academy Season 1  
Date: 5 Feb

 Comment

Date 8 Feb

Re watching the Board game conference presentations with Rob and Honeycuts that I'm using in my lit review, this is making me feel very uncertain with my progress and plan.

 Comment

13 Feb

I've been replaying and re reading pandemic legacy season 1 board game and i think there is something there, I've also been rereading the interview with Matt and Rob i think there's a change i could make with my idea i need to drop the grim reaper game cause that its to big of an undertaking given my skills, times and resources. But i could pick and already existing board game like Rob did with pandemic and turn it in to a legacy game.

 Comment

### Movie

In Time  
Date: 20 Feb

 Comment

25 Feb

I wondering if i could convert an already existing legacy game to a different narrative. Like "My City" where the story is quite simple and lacking when compared to the big ones like pandemic and betrayal. But I'm not sure what this actually proves if i do it? What would i learn from this?

 Comment

### TV Show

The order  
Date: 5 Feb

 Comment

### Conference recording

Re-watching - Game Design Conference 2017 and 2018

8 Feb

<https://gdcvault.com/play/1024918/Board-Game-Design-Day-The>  
<https://gdcvault.com/play/1024259/Legacy-Games-From-Risk-to>

 Comment

### Movie

Red notice  
Date: 12 Feb

 Comment

### Movie

6 underground  
Date: 19 Feb

 Comment

### Movie

Seventh son  
Date: 19 Feb

 Comment

### Movie

Hysteria  
Date: 20 Feb

 Comment

## March 2022

### Movie

What a girl wants

Date: 4 March

[Comment](#)

9 Mar

Definitely changing course I'm going to convert an already existing standard game in to a legacy game. But I don't know what game to convert yet. If I go to simple then the story could be a challenge but expanding or making up an original story to start with would be a challenge. This feels better then before.

[Comment](#)

### TV Show

Bridgeton Season 2

Date: 26 March

[Comment](#)

### Movie

Sydney White

Date: 9 March

[Comment](#)

Gallbladder Surgery

[Comment](#)

### Movie

Focus

Date: 10 March

[Comment](#)

### TV Show

Bridgeton Season 1

Date: 28-30 March

[Comment](#)

## April 2022

### TV Show

The White Princess

Date: 3 April

[Comment](#)

### TV Show

The Alienist

Date: 10-14 April

[Comment](#)

### Movie

Charlies Angels

Date: 18 April

[Comment](#)

### TV Show

The White Queen

Date: 3-6 April

[Comment](#)

### Movie

Mask of Zorro

Date: 15 April

[Comment](#)

### Movie

The Bone Collector

Date: 18 April

[Comment](#)

29 April  
House when on the market so I'm taking a break while i Sell.

 Comment

## May 2022

**Movie**  
Jersey Boys  
Date: 7 May

 Comment

**Movie**  
Little Women  
Date: 8 May

 Comment

**Movie**  
Fools gold  
Date: 9 May

 Comment

**Board Game**  
Pandemic season 2  
Date 10 May - 28 Aug  
Start this game in May and it took till Aug to finish. This was different as you started where pandemic season 1 finished but the board was the world map but large chunks had to be discovered over time and big stickers added to reveal the board.

 Comment

**Movie**  
You've got mail  
Date: 14 May

 Comment

16 May  
Been looking back on Betrayal house on haunted hill that i played prior to this thesis and thinking on Pandemic legacy season 2 and thinking about the board pieces in pandemic you get big stickers to build the board in betrayal you got stickers to show destruction when a room be came no longer accessible this is an idea i need to hold on to.

 Comment

**Movie**  
The Interpreter  
Date: 7 May

 Comment

**Movie**  
Inglorious Bastards  
Date: 8 May

 Comment

**TV Show**  
Derry Girls season 1  
Date: 9-10 May

 Comment

**TV Show**  
Conversations with a killer  
Date: 10-11 May

 Comment

**Movie**  
Pride and prejudice  
Date: 14 May

 Comment

**Movie**  
What happens in Vegas  
Date: 14 May

 Comment

**Movie**  
Casino  
Date: 20 May

**Movie**  
Fear  
Date: 21 May

25 May  
But I've been watching a lot of movies, and TV shows and the "conversations with killers" series as made me think that my game should have a "Who done it" feel like back in the 80s and 90s where you went to a murder mystery dinner! this lends itself to Cludo game nicely although it does feel wrong to action the idea that Rob had at the beginning when he wanted to turn it in to a legacy game.

25 May  
House is sold.

**Movie**  
Now you see me  
Date: 27 May

**Movie**  
Death on the Nile  
Date: 27 May

## June 2022

**Movie**  
Notting Hill  
Date: 4 June

**TV Show**  
Keep Sweet  
Date: 9-10 June

**Movie**  
Dreamgirls  
Date: 25 June

29 June  
So what does it mean? what am i creating? I wish i could have achieved the grim reaper idea.

**Movie**  
Murder on the orient express  
Date: 5 June

**Movie**  
The constant gardener  
Date: 25 June

28 June  
I think I'm not going to create an original story I'm going to use Agatha Christie as most of her work has her detective bring all the suspects in to a room where they go through who isnt the murder and why and then reveal the true murder.

## July 2022

Leave of absence

## August 2022

Leave of absence

## September 2022

Leave of absence

## October 2022

TV Show  
House of Dragons  
Season 1  
22 Aug - 24 Oct

 Comment

2 Oct  
My leave of absent was so greatly needed i do feel so much better its been a hectic time for me.

 Comment

Movie

TV Show

Rainmaker  
14 Oct

[Comment](#)

### Computer Game

Grim Fandango

Date: 15 Oct

Have played before just felt like the nostalgia

[Comment](#)

### Interviews

Re-reading - interview notes

24 Oct

[Comment](#)

25 Oct

I've been watching and re watching Murder on the Orient express this is the story i want to covert as all the characters are the murder. so i've been dividing up the characters and the important moments that need to be captured in the game to be true to the story

[Comment](#)

25 Oct

I've been watching and re watching Murder on the Orient express this is the story i want to covert as all the characters are the murder. so i've been dividing up the characters and the important moments that need to be captured in the game to be true to the story

[Comment](#)

### Shadow and Bone

14 Oct - 29 Jan

[Comment](#)

### Movie

The Italian job

16 Oct

[Comment](#)

### TV Show

Brooklyn nine-nine

Season 1

24 Oct - 11 Nov

[Comment](#)

### Movie

Murder on the orient express

Date: 25 Oct

[Comment](#)

30 Oct

Game 1 – Recon/search/meet and greet (Meet all characters)

#### Must happen

- Introducing the characters
- Ratchett (victim)
- Introducing game play
- Explore the carriages
- Meet the characters
- Be offered and declined the job to protect Ratchett
- Ratchett needs to be murdered

[Comment](#)

## November 2022

5 Nov

Feeling on a role with the this splitting the game in to 3 parts or three games is better and using a similar system to 221b baker street where the rooms have clues but because there are so many clues I dont think I can do them specific to rooms so going to look at the simplest solution much like baker street with its number clues in the book. Talked to the gaming communnity for advice and while chatting they suggested the clues be in the a square if im keeping the grid pattern, expanding on this could number the board with the clues so they can be grouped in the locations that are most relevant or next to the character they relate to.

[Comment](#)

### Board Game

Jaws of the Lion

Date: 14 Nov - current day

its a campaign based with a growing story and branching narrative

[Comment](#)

### Movie

Insideman

19 Nov

**Movie**  
The holiday  
19 Nov

[Comment](#)

23 Nov  
Game 2 – There's a murder start investigating (collect characters alibis)

**Must happen**

- Ratchett is murdered
- Revel the Armstrong story (newspaper clippings) and Ratchett connection (Ratchett is Cassetti)
- Explore more carriages
- Interview the characters collecting alibis
- Discover an accounting ledger that shows MacQueen has been stealing from Ratchett

[Comment](#)

19 Nov

**Movie**  
Murder on the orient express  
Date: 23 Nov

[Comment](#)

**Computer Game**  
The Neverhood  
Date: 24 Nov  
Have played before again the nostalgia and the puzzles

[Comment](#)

## December 2022

**Movie**  
Murder on the orient express  
Date: 2 Dec

[Comment](#)

**TV Show**  
Wednesday Adams  
Date: 4-5 Dec

[Comment](#)

5 Dec  
Running in to a problem theres no way to change a story like this. I might have to lean in to the misdirection thats in the story and amend certain aspects so allow for alternate endings. I think i'll have to kill off some of the characters and have that impact the story

[Comment](#)

**Board Game**  
Jaws of the Lion  
Date: 7 Dec - current day  
Its a campaign based with a growing story and branching narrative

[Comment](#)

2 Dec  
Game 3 – Uncover the relationship between the Armstrong case and the passenger's/the big reveal and end. (Connection characters to Armstrong)

**Must happen**

- Confront MacQueen about stealing
- Mrs Hubbard is stabbed (she lives)
- Explore the Royal Suite carriage and meet the count and countess
- Discover the connection between the other suspects and the Armstrong case
- The big reveal, all characters are brought together, and the conclusion is revealed and the murders

[Comment](#)

**Movie**  
Julie and Julia  
Date: 5 Dec

[Comment](#)

**Movie**  
The Mummy returns  
Date: 9 Dec

[Comment](#)

15 Dec

**Documentary**  
Last Breath

Break for Christmas

Comment

Date: 11 Dec

Comment

## January 2023



11 Jan  
started to postit note on baker street board to get an idea on what to do

Comment

### TV Show

Last of us  
Season 1  
16 Jan- 12 Mar

Comment

### TV Show

The Queens Gambit  
20 Jan - 26 Feb

Comment

### Interviews

Re-reading - interview notes  
21 Jan

Comment

### Conference recording

Re-watching - Game Design Conference 2017 and 2018  
21 Jan  
<https://gdcvault.com/play/1024918/Board-Game-Design-Day-The>  
<https://gdcvault.com/play/1024259/Legacy-Games-From-Risk-to>

Comment

### Movie

Glass onion  
22 Jan

Comment

### TV Show

Shadow and bones  
Season 1  
28-29 Jan

Comment

22 Jan  
Putting pencil to paper and drawing on post notes to map out the train and the different compartments. I'm finding it hard to show permanent change and I'm running out of space on the board to accommodate all the clues this story needs. Will need to increase the size of the boards a bit

Comment

29 Jan  
i need help from someone whos built a board game before I'm going to reach out to the board game community and see if anyone is willing to help me.

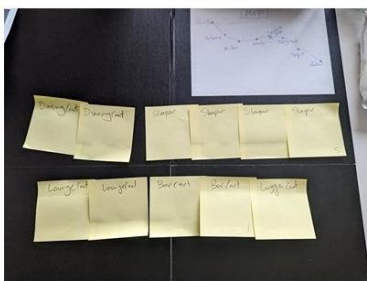
Comment

30 Jan  
I've reached out to the board game community for help and although i didn't like the initial ideas its definitely helped. With the board size issue the suggestion was have multiple boards and swap them out between games. I don't like that but after looking back on Azul i could just have two sided boards its the same thing gives me more space for clues and a way of having difference

and change. Think I could also have a sticker that destroys a cart when the avalanche hits.

[Comment](#)

## February 2023



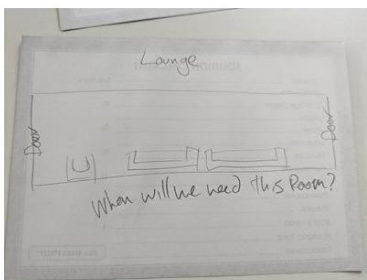
5 Feb

The boards are taking better shape now landing on:

- Dining cart,
- the sleeper cart
- the lounge cart and
- the luggage cart i think

I dont want all of them to be two sided as thats too much. If all carts are in play this would make the board to big ... I could make them snake around but this isnt ideal if im flipping some and i dont want players going back and getting old clues .... hmmm

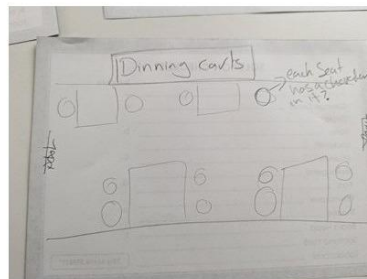
[Comment](#)



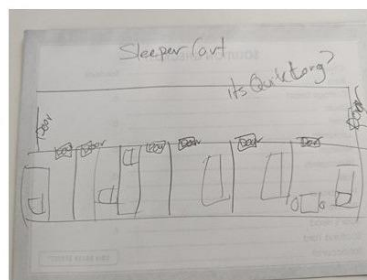
[Comment](#)

11 Feb

Trying work in how a game ends, cause you cant solve the crime at the end of each game only at the end. I might have to tie that to clues cause theres nothing else. That throws up some issue that could mean that not everyone gets every clue. But i suppose thats the same in Baker street its a race to get the clues and solve. Its missing something else. I don't want to use the Key and the Scotland yard cards cause that doesn't fit with the story. So i may need to make something up.



[Comment](#)



[Comment](#)

9 Feb

Chatting again with board game community on how the boards should look. And talked to a designer on how to mock them up.

[Comment](#)

### Movie

Inside man

9 Feb

[Comment](#)

15 Feb

More problems I'm not sure how to manage clue collection. By staying so true to the story (event with the

 Comment

25 Feb

Working on clues got the script and download the captions.

going to develop the board a bit more with some help from the board game community, keeping it super basic and setting up a framework so I can tweak it. Will update on outcome.

 Comment

26 Feb

Think I'll have to use clues to some how end the game or they will all collect everything.

 Comment

## Movie

Murder on the orient express

Date: 28 Feb

 Comment

28 Feb

Definitely warming to the tokens, not i think the possibility if you don't get a certain clue all and the game ends those clues are potentially lost to you. To many clues going to start cutting some story ans see if that helps

 Comment

deviation in endings) I'm stuck with sheets and sheets of clues that i cant image any person wanting to write down let alone read. I don't know what to do here might need to come up with an idea where the player can read the clues and keep the clues but have to actually write them down.

 Comment

25 Feb

The boards are basic as but they are functional thanks to help from board game community so i can improve them slowly. need to focus on function over style.

 Comment

27 Feb

chatting with board game community they suggested that some clues be worth more and the player has to pay for them another added that could be done with tokens that rest each round. this could work nicely, I was planning on having some clues communal like they have to be shared to everyone, and others be dependent on having found a previous clue. This feels a bit to complicated and could result in poor play. But it solves the end game situation and adds another layer which i like.

 Comment

## March 2023



3 Mar

Pademic has Event cards, and country cards that help you to do stuff around the board so I'll do the same. I'll make cards that help players and shape the game. but where to start. With such a big board moves are helpful I was planning to remove dice from the game and have a fixed set of actions so players have to make harder decision but this isn't feeling like a good idea. I'll keep going with out the dice and add them in later if i made

## Movie

Mission: impossible - Rogue nation

6 March

 Comment

## TV Show

Brooklyn nine-nine

Season 1

15 March

 Comment



the wrong choice.

[Comment](#)



17 March

Still working on the card idea and in Jaws of the lion some of the cards are called item cards which i liked so im going to continue with that and borrow with that where the items give you special powers.

[Comment](#)

18 March

Story is becoming easier for me and with the majority of clues down im going to draft out the opening and closing narrative for each game thinking:

#### Game 1

**Open:** Your journey aboard the Illustrious Orient Express has commenced, departing from Istanbul en route to the captivating city of Paris. With excitement in your heart, you anticipate a leisurely trip, as your intention is to meet Superintendent LaStrada from Scotland Yard and seek his consultation on an intriguing case. As supper time approaches in the elegant dining carriage, let us delve into the various compartments and acquaint ourselves with fellow passengers.

**Close:** After a delightful dinner and engaging conversations with fellow travelers in the dining cart, you retire to your quarters, preparing for a restful night's sleep. However, your slumber is disrupted when loud voices awaken you. Curiously, you glimpse a figure dressed in a crimson night robe hastily retreating down the hallway. Initially dismissing it, you return to bed. But once again, your tranquility is shattered by the sound of breaking glass. Peering into the corridor, you spot the conductor, bellboy, or purser, who nods in your direction and inquires if you require any assistance. Politely declining, you resume your interrupted rest. A fitful sleep follows, and upon awakening the next morning, you discover the reason behind your restless night—a snowed-in train due to an avalanche.

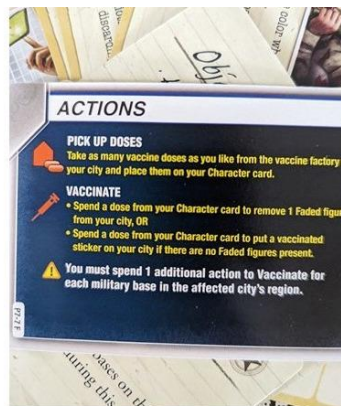
[Comment](#)

## Movie

### The hunger games

24 March

[Comment](#)



16 March

looking at actions closer with pandemic, and translated more clues from the film.

[Comment](#)

## Movie

### Murder on the orient express

Date: 18 March

[Comment](#)

19 March

Drafting continues

#### Game 2

**Open:** A murder has taken place. Rachit's lifeless body lies in his carriage, and the scene is one of chaos.

Belongings are scattered across the floor, and an open window adds to the mystery. With a sense of urgency, you inform everyone about the crime and instruct them to gather in the dining cart for further investigation.

**Close:** Bewildered, you ponder the perplexing situation. Who could be the culprit behind this heinous act? The pieces of the puzzle don't seem to fit together. Suddenly, a piercing scream breaks the silence, drawing your attention to Mrs. Hubbard's carriage. Rushing to the scene, you find her huddled on the floor, a knife embedded in her back. The presence of the murder weapon suggests a connection to Rachit's demise. The plot thickens.

Realizing the gravity of the situation, you gather all the passengers in the lounge cart, emphasizing the need for safety. Given the ongoing snowstorm that has left us trapped, you propose the idea of staying together in one room to conserve heat. Moreover, by staying in close quarters, the chances of the murderer striking again seem significantly reduced.

[Comment](#)

20 March

Drafting continues

#### Game 3

**Open:** In a tense interrogation, you confront MacQueen regarding his involvement in stealing from Rachett. However, the Doctor provides an alibi for MacQueen, seemingly clearing his name. Undeterred, you propose that MacQueen may have a connection to the Armstrong

## Movie

### Murder on the orient express

Date: 24 March

 Comment

24 March

The number of clues is now way out of hand I'm going to need to try and group them. Which means I need to figure out how to work that on a board, if they can keep revisiting a spot or additional info from a passages or a location that could be interesting but how would they know that possible, and how would they know how many times they could do it? hmmmmm  
Dropping Mrs hubbard getting stabbed dont need this

 Comment

case, which could potentially serve as a motive. Just as the discussion intensifies, chaos erupts when Mrs. Hubbard is stabbed. Acting swiftly, you rush to investigate, and to your astonishment, you discover the murder weapon lodged in her back—the very same weapon used to kill Rachett. The plot thickens, and the web of intrigue grows more complex.

**Close:** At this crucial juncture, two possible scenarios emerge, demanding that the players make their votes or guesses. Each participant must determine which scenario they believe to be true. As anticipation fills the air, you reveal a card that unveils the shocking truth—a revelation that all the passengers took turns in committing the murder of Rachett, with Mrs. Hubbard orchestrating the entire plan. It becomes clear that they all had personal scores to settle with Rachett, also known as Cassetti. The mystery unravels, leaving everyone spellbound by the intricate web of deceit and revenge.

This is not my favorite end game close i need something else i dont like it.

 Comment

## Movie

### The hunger games: catching fire

24 March

 Comment

27 March

Snag I don't know who to kill or why, I will have to look for some non pivotal characters but then a different murder would require certain characters to be gone. This is growing in to a larger problem. It might not work.

 Comment

26 March

Continuing on item cards this is how i'll change the narrative, they will have to be taken in order to control this so i'll number them and if they get past a certain then some one dies. This is the simplest way to trigger that kind of change.

 Comment

28 March

It has been pointed out to me that detectives always re-interview suspects in a murder or revisit a crime scene so this should be an acceptable thing to do. This solves the number of clues issue.

 Comment

## Movie

### The hunger games: Mockingjay - Part 1

31 March

 Comment

## April 2023

## TV Show

### Andor

Season 1

2-5 April

 Comment

11 April

Reading my opens and closes for each game with the clues makes me think I'm going to have to re-write and work on the alternate endings. We'll have the actual ending and then pick 2 others. Might be easiest to

9 April

To many clues if you count the nothing clues to make players waste action for no clues. My husband doesn't like this but I do I like the deception so this goes in nicely with the game-end idea of certain clues costing money means you could end the game quickly and mess everyone up cause they miss out on clues. But if you do that too quickly your gona mess up yourself.

 Comment

choose the doc cause he has the means the whole time to do this and Mary cause that's the easiest relationship to reveal thus giving motive. I think im running out of time so i need to commit to this.

Comment

16 April  
nope one ending and its the original ending I'll talk about the alternative but need to drop this idea and end it like 221b Baker street ends keep it in keeping with the original. Gives me stuff to talk about in the exegesis

Comment

TV Show  
BBC Sherlock  
Series 2-4  
22-23 Apr

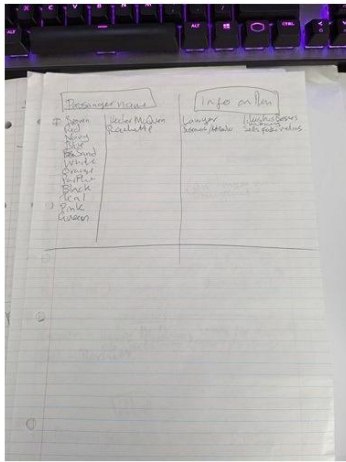
Comment

TV Show  
The Chef Show  
Season 2  
30 Apr

Comment

Movie  
Enola homes  
30 Apr

Comment



Play testing notes

Comment

15 April  
writing up rules including action points and standard game rules not borrowing as much from 221b baker street as i thought i would

Comment

TV Show  
The Diplomat  
Season 1  
20 Apr

Comment

21 April  
Drafting up the campaign book that holds all the clues and the opens and closes for each game plus direction on board set up and any rule changes.

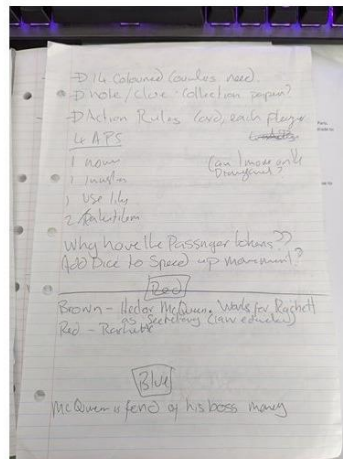
Comment

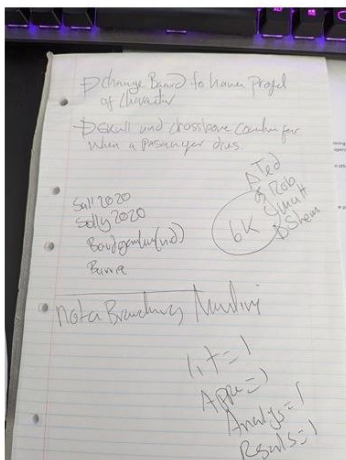
Movie  
Maid in Manhattan  
30 Apr

Comment

29 Apr  
Did some play testing issues are:  
- to many clues  
- unless your familiar with the story like me its hard to keep all  
- item cards are fun but they need to be restricted  
- why do you do inquire tokens  
- Why isnt this more like baker street  
- hard to move around the board

Comment



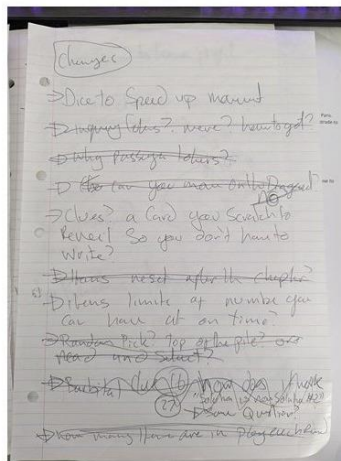


Play testing notes

[Comment](#)

Play testing notes

[Comment](#)



Play testing notes

[Comment](#)

## May 2023

1 May

I did a play through I need Dice and I need to change the rules its to hard to move about through the play through its taking 3 turns to get to a clue in some situations.

[Comment](#)

3 May

the game is buggy if I remove APs I need to re-figure out how to end the game, might need to do this with number of clues discovered? The game play on this is a real concern at this point

[Comment](#)



2 May

I need to remove the action point system if I'm going to add dice? if I do that I need to add in a system to determine getting an item, so roll of the dice again? I need to limit the number of items a player can hold. If AP I remove this I will have an issue with how to finish the game.

[Comment](#)

5 May

Clues maybe on a sheet pre-written with scratch away so now one has to write them down?

[Comment](#)

12 May

Time to work through the structure of the exegesis while I tune the game. I'm disappointing the game is not very enjoyable to play. My husband says it would be for the right crowd but that that crowd would be niche.

Word count: 15300  
 Abstract: 300  
 Introduction: 500  
 Lit review: 3000  
 Methods/Exploration: 5000

7 May

what about i have stickers in a booklet like they do in the king's dilemma and when you get a sticker you add it to you "detective notebook"?

another thought if you don't reach the cards where you lose a character then is there permanent change? is it a legacy game if its repayable? but if you do make it to that then the character is moved from the board and that is permanent change.

 Comment

14 May

to many clues depend on you getting clue 20.2 so that should be a free one that is read out loud?

 Comment

20 May

reaching out to printers on what i can do

 Comment

21 May

if i had more time I would really want to reduce the number of clues

 Comment

Results: 3000

Analysis: 3000

Conclusion: 500

Appendix: Not counted

 Comment

13 May

Lit review is a challenge i need guidance on how to talk about the lit or lack of and go through the 3 things i need to touch on:

- This is what are legacy games a brief history
- Why we should study them
- How we should study them

 Comment

19 May

Maybe i should make this cooperative? and they all have to work together to. Might be to late to change that now but an idea.

The more i play the game to test the more i think i should have changed the story and simplified it way down. But if i had done that i would have changed the story to much and then i wouldn't have been able to stretch it across 3 games.

Maybe i could have done a 2 parts and had 2 murders to solve that were linked the the end solution. This would have required me to have an original story which i couldn't have done.

 Comment

## June 2023

9 June

Hate the sticker and scratch away idea.... wonder if i could do it differently?

clues on cards? maybe scratch away on cards? have the players collect them in a Pokemon style card collection book?

 Comment

12 June

Been doing the writing portion of the thesis and I'm finding myself hating my game more and more. is it even a game?

 Comment

13 June

Trigger the alternative endings with something else ... If you are the last person to ask macqueen this clue role the dice if you get above a 3 read macqueen is dead solution 2 is the new solution. Rewrite the solutions. Item cards could be removed and replaced with special ability for the round.

le if you are with in a 2 moves of another player you can have a look at one of there clues this can only be done x times during the game

You can move extra spaces by a .5 multiplier then the dice role and on the diagonal

You have the ability to collect 2 clues at a time from a character but this can only be six times during the game.

 Comment

13 June

I hate the game, I think the interesting items i added have taken me further away from the original game then i ever inended I've sent my self ideas to pair it back to the original concept

End the first round when the first player has met all the passengers and made it back to there room for the night Warning end to quickly and you might miss a clue go to slow and your opponent might get all the clues

Start in the dining cart

Game 2 start in the dorm Investigate the murder collect the clues Game 3

Additional element the snow from the avalanche means there's only x number of rounds repressed by snow you need to collect more clues and make your deduction before the train it free

Add dice back in

 Comment

[Comment](#)

14 June  
 Add back in the map of the train route to have it show the progress of game 1 2 and 3  
 Can we move the board peices to 1 big peice or to a ...  
 Betrayal house on haunted hill where many peices make the whole train  
 Maybe every time all players collect all of 1 characters clues you sticker over the number so you don't go back?

[Comment](#)

15 June  
 Set up game 1 2 and 3, lable the carriages. Make a glosser for the color characters, choose a start point and end point.Which carriage is poleroes? How do u explain where to end?  
 Car wof sleeves for front page clues.

[Comment](#)

**TV Show**  
**Inventing Anna**  
 17 June

[Comment](#)

18 June  
 Re-writing rules and campaign booklet. I want to take the game back to simple. Sorry Game Community i am removing the suggestions you had,  
 removing item cards  
 removing action points  
 removing inquiry tokens  
 Thank you play testing im  
 reducing clues  
 adding in the "shield" card from baker street to lock down a clue but calling it a padlock  
 no skeleton keys

[Comment](#)

22 June  
 Writing up campaign cars think this is easier then a book so that you dont see any future game details.

[Comment](#)

Remove action points  
 Make item cards something you can pick up at only one spot  
 Limited number of Item cards I'm hand  
 Limited number of item cards in play each game  
 Add back in the skeleton key ... Maybe 🤔 Re right clues  
 remove non clues  
 Make a new paper clipping for the Armstrong case.

[Comment](#)

14 June  
 Players book for clues  
 Sheet with the number of clues to collected so they can be ticked off.  
 One for each game so 3 And a solution guess section  
 The clue number is printed on the bottom right corner of the clue.  
 If you get to look at someone's clue you get to pick which number and get a copy from the envelope.  
 Each clue could have a picture helping out the reader like the characters face. Or the location or a pic of a clue like knife ect

[Comment](#)

**Movie**  
**The card counter**  
 18 June

[Comment](#)

**Movie**  
**Ghosted**  
 20 June

[Comment](#)

21 June  
 I rewrote the rules booklet mapping it off the 221b baker street rules. feeling much better with the removal of the action points the inquiry tokens and the item cards I think these were not necessary and weren't in-keeping with the approach of combining the game and story.

[Comment](#)

25 June  
 The designer helping with the board has suggested we make pathways to each room or clue and we can ditch the grid everywhere. Also removing character colored dots and replacing them with pics of the characters.

[Comment](#)

July 2023

3 July

Play through was better with the changes .... still hate it but i have removed some of the frustrations from it. sticking closer to the Baker street game is making me feel alot more comfortable.

 Comment

### Movie

#### Oppenheimer

21 July

 Comment

### Movie

#### Thirteen Lives

27 July

 Comment

28 July

Armstrong newspaper clipping  
Unsolved Tragedy: The Heartbreaking Armstrong Kidnapping Case  
A haunting tale of loss and unanswered questions continues to haunt the nation. The Armstrong kidnapping case, a devastating story of shattered lives, has left an indelible mark on the Armstrong family and all those touched by its sorrow.  
The innocent young Daisy Armstrong was abducted by the sinister John Cassetti, whose malevolence knew no bounds. Despite the family's desperate efforts to pay the ransom, Daisy's life was tragically cut short, plunging her parents, Sonia and Colonel John Armstrong, into an abyss of grief and despair.  
Sonia, unable to bear the shock of her daughter's death, succumbed to illness and gave birth prematurely to a stillborn baby, deepening the family's anguish.  
Overwhelmed by the loss of his daughter and wife, Colonel John Armstrong found no respite from his torment and chose to end his life, leaving a void that could never be filled.  
In a cruel twist of fate, the family's nursemaid, Susanne, was wrongly suspected of involvement in the crime, leading to her arrest and subsequent suicide in police custody. Tragically, she was later exonerated, revealing the grave injustice she endured.  
Despite the police's relentless pursuit, John Cassetti remained elusive, evading capture due to a lack of concrete evidence, leaving the Armstrong family and the public yearning for justice. As we remember this heartrending tale, we can only hope that one day, justice will prevail, bringing closure to the Armstrong family and solace to those touched by this unfathomable tragedy.

 Comment

15 July

Working on the solutions card to give more closure and lining up the clues to match better.

 Comment

27 July

Landed on the Snowballs being 5 and dotting them through out the clues not always the first in order some and the back so that all players have all clues to end. Issue is if some cant be collected with out them.

 Comment

28 July

Got feedback from Tof so re-arraigning some sections and clarifying and polishing. Mentioned the addition of a ludography.

 Comment

### Movie

#### Murder on the orient express

28 July

 Comment

### Movie

#### Barbie

29 July

 Comment

31 July

Printing is turning in to a challenges no one wants to do a small run that would help and me so this will be manual

 Comment

## August 2023



1 Aug

Pink lime can help but they need the clue files now. So will get them proofed and sent asap

 Comment

4 Aug

Hamish read and commented on my exegesis noted some repetition in my analysis and some casual language that needed to be tweaked.

 Comment

7 Aug

Confirmed the glossery and how to reference in the foot notes.

 Comment

9 Aug

I think i know how I'm going to do the booklets now i just need to purchase the folders and some additional inserts. Would be nice if i could match the files with the tokens but might not be possible with out customization them which feels a little over the top.

 Comment

11 Aug

all items except the boards are at the printers, need to get the last game components this weekend and then its just the boards that i need and they will be printed last min.

 Comment

15 Aug

all printing is in, hoping to pick it all up on Thursday or Friday. Assemble is already happening all is in track \*touchwood

 Comment

19 Aug

Assembled the game for photos and produced the Master copies for markers with the game card, clues, and solution content to assist in case they don't want to play the game of remove all the clues from the envelopes.

Reviewing exegesis in preparation for handing over to the proof reader tomorrow evening.

 Comment

3 Aug

Finalizing and getting all the Campaign cards, solutions and rule books proofed and ready for printing

 Comment

6 Aug

Designer has finished the first mock up of the first board. Looking like the sleeper cart is gona be substantially bigger then the the others due to keep proportions appropriate. Does make it less practical to package up but a concern i can let go of at this stage.

 Comment

8 Aug

Tidying up the terms I'm using in the exegesis and sorting out my ludography. Noticed my planning notes show the starting point and not what i actually did so making sure thats reflected in my writing, so if someone does a comparison they will know it was the 'big' Idea not the actuality.

 Comment

10 Aug

I have done some continuity changes the word game has either been written in full to be board game or legacy board game, or its been swapped to "play session" when talking about the multiple game plays within a legacy board game

All so where appropriate the numbers 1-5 have been swapped for one-five

 Comment

14 Aug

Finalising the boards with the designer, all is looking good. I may have a change to the campaign cards but that should be okay as the printing is minimal to change those.

 Comment

18 Aug

Finished assembly but noticed a couple of errors that need to be resolved.

 Comment

20 Aug

The game is finished

 Comment

## Appendix B – Interview transcriptions

### *B.1 Ted Alspach – Designer of Ultimate Werewolf Legacy and more*

1. What's your creative process when you land on an idea?

It totally varies, but I usually write down everything I can about the concept and see if it's a workable idea. That's when the vast majority of concepts die, during this initial writing phase, when I realise something that's horribly wrong with the idea in one way or another.

2. What tools do you use to prototype your games during the concept and refining stage?

95% Adobe Illustrator, 5% Numbers/Google Sheets (for lists of components, details for each piece, and how they interact).

3. What's your favourite board game/legacy board game that you weren't involved with? and what about it did you like?

The entire Pandemic Legacy Series. It took a game I thought I was done with and made it something new and engaging, more so than the original game

4. What was your inspiration for One Night a Werewolf, the standalone game?

One Night Ultimate Werewolf makes social deduction games much more accessible to non-gamers than the regular Ultimate Werewolf series, and allows players to get in a bunch of short games in the same time as one session of the longer game.

5. When converting your game to a legacy what were the main hurdles and surprises?

By far the biggest surprise was the sheer amount of playtesting time required for the game. Normally a game like Ultimate Werewolf would take a couple hundred hours of playtesting. Ultimate Werewolf Legacy took more than double that.

6. What's your favourite aspect of board game design? or conversely, what do you find least enjoyable?

Coming up with systems that all work together well, and then seeing how players react to that (and if it really works together as well as I imagined) are both really satisfying. Once you either see or hear about

people playing your games and having great, memorable experiences playing them, that's incredibly rewarding.

7. Do you outsource any particular aspects when designing a game?

Most of the time we outsource artwork. In this particular case, we had a team of developers working with us for playtesting and revising the game, because it was such a massive project.

8. Who else would you recommend I talk to if you were me?

Rob Daviau, Matt Leacock, and Jamey Stegmaier are all established designers who have successfully tackled creating legacy games.

9. Any advice you have for a first-timer, designing a game?

Playtest as much as possible with as wide a variety of gamers as possible. Ignore everything nice your family says about your game, because they are wired to like anything you do.

10. Where do you see legacy board games going in the future? are they here to stay? or just a phase?

I think they'll continue to show up occasionally, but given the amount of work required for them, it's unlikely they'll become super common.

**B.2 Rob Daviau – Designer of Risk legacy, Pandemic legacy: Seasons 0, 1 and 2 and more**

Rob sent a video which is transcribed below.

**(00:01)**

Hey, Courtney. How you doing? Alright. I do record some video for you.

**(00:05)**

Have some coffee. There's a chipmunk outside doing this weird thing that they do in the fall. Well, here, so you might hear some weird chirping. Anyway, in New England, it's just going to be easier for me to verbally answer these questions. I'll try to get deeper insights than I would if I was just emailing.

**(00:25)**

So you've got ten questions. Let's see how many we can get through here. Number one, what is your creative process when you land on an idea? I think mine is a little different from other people. Some people talk about mechanics first or narrative first, and if I choose between those two, I'm definitely a narrative person.

**(00:46)**

My games all tell a story. I basically was a role-playing player who accidentally became a board game designer. But I like to basically say how should the game feel to play rather than what the exact story is like? Should be scared, should you be excited? And since you're really talking about legacy games, most of the time I'm working from an existing product, whether it's Pandemic or Betrayal at House on the Hill or Machi Core.

**(01:14)**

Or I say, okay, how does it feel to play this game? Who's playing it? What story can we wrap around that to tell an interesting game? So you want to play again and again? And also, when I play the game, what sort of mechanics feel like either aren't working or could be expanded upon or could have an interesting hook?

**(01:35)**

And that gives us some of the things that you open up in a legacy game from there, it's just a lot of hard work. It's just coming up with ideas, trying it, playing it, throwing it away, trying, playing it. Sometimes you get lucky and it takes with a legacy game. So if you get lucky, it takes a year, and if you get unlucky, it

takes three because you're designing a game, you're designing a story and you're designing expansions and then you're making it work altogether and you're putting them in a box so that they actually can be manufactured and affordable. There's really no shortcut to it.

**(02:07)**

I'd like to think after 20, whatever many years I've been doing it that I'd be faster, but I'm not. So maybe I'm just bad at it and I've just grown more stubborn, but I think it's just a process and a process, and maybe I make fewer mistakes now where I can make games a little bit better. Like my baseline of what I think is good has maybe gone up a little bit, but still take some luck to be great. I can do a real deep dive into it, but it's mostly just make a prototype, play a prototype, get feedback, be sad, get despondent decide you're bad at it, get a good night's sleep, come up, say I can fix this and just repeat, repeat, repeat until you're like, I don't know if I can make any better. I can just make it different or the clock runs out because they want to publish it.

**(02:53)**

What tools do you use to prototype your games during the concept and refining stage? I work with a lot of people when we work digitally, so at the beginning it's a lot of spreadsheets and Google Docs for rules and ideas and data. And you can turn spreadsheets using the Adobe suite and design into cards. So it is the Adobe suite of Photoshop, Illustrator and InDesign, mostly Illustrator and InDesign. And then, like a lot of Google Sheets to record rules and record data, then you print it out.

**(03:26)**

You got a local printer to print stuff out, or in the case of a pandemic or remote testing, you build a tabletop simulator module. It's very tedious and you're like cutting and you're sleeving and you're putting stuff in boxes and you're putting rules together. So most of the time when I'm testing early, it's just going to be me. Maybe I'll handwrite stuff. Although if I'm collaborating with people or if it's a legacy game, I'm going to start recording it digitally right away.

**(03:48)**

So I just have a record of it.

**(03:52)**

I don't need final rules. When I'm playtesting myself or playtesting with a group, I'll say, this isn't a rules

test. I want to see if you like it. Assuming you play by the rules and then I'll wing it. And then as it starts going less about me being there or me explaining it other people, everything just starts to get more real.

**(04:10)**

You need to start paying attention to the nomenclature of cards and are you saying fight here and attack there and do the rules really explain things and you just kind of keep going and get in? Basically, I distance myself from the project, so it has to live more and more on its own without me there. Sort of shepherding it. What's your favourite legacy game that you weren't involved with, and what did you like? I don't have an answer because I haven't played one and I haven't played one because we have this if you follow the news.

**(04:36)**

But we've had this global pandemic that's really made it hard for people to get together on a regular basis. I was just so busy. I was starting a couple of companies, and our Game night has like five or six people. So saying, okay, the four of us are going to play this and the two of you watch. It wasn't great.

**(04:54)**

A lot of my Game might people playtesting my games.

**(04:59)**

And what that means is I just didn't have time. And then life started to slow down. My kids get older. I'm like, I'll have time, and I haven't really gotten together to play games all that often in a year and a half. So I've got King's Dilemma, which I played a couple of games, and I played the opening game of Charterstone.

**(05:17)**

We had all these great plans in fall of 2019 and sort of winter of 2020 that just got put on hiatus. But I'll pick them up. I got My City by Reiner Kennedy and I want to play Clank Legacy. If you have any others that you like, let me know. It's a huge gap right now because I sort of came up with this genre and then I'm not playing with other people do, which is just sloppy on my part because quite honestly, I'm just a little overworked.

**(05:46)**

What was your inspiration for Pandemic, the standalone game? My inspiration was Matt Lee Koch, who

designed this game. I had nothing to do with it. Matt came to me and Pandemic had been out for five or six years at the time. He said, do you want to make a Legacy version?

**(05:58)**

This game has some legs. And I said, yes, Matt. So I had nothing to do with it, which is too bad. So Matt and I brought the Legacy and he brought the Pandemic. And then once we start working out together and I can connect you with Matt if you want to do a deeper dive into Pandemic or you can just Google, he's given a lot of talks about it.

**(06:21)**

What's your favourite aspect of board game designer? Conversely, what do you find least enjoyable? My favourite thing is when something finally clicks and you got to look for those because there's going to be a lot of things that don't click and it's easy to get despondent and just be like, I can't do this. And it requires this weird ego lessness. When you put a game on the table and say, I don't care if none of this works, when you do care because you work on it, and then when it doesn't work, you have to be like, okay.

**(06:43)**

And then you have to get an incredible echo the next day and go, yeah, I can fix it, even though I thought I had it all 100% correctly before and then I didn't, I can fix it. So when it does work, when it does click, when people are having fun, when people are like, this is a good game or you read a review or something and you know that all your hard work paid off, that's a really good feeling. Or when you just think of a clever idea, it's taking a walk around the woods like, Man, I got this problem and this problem, this problem solves my brain. I don't know where it comes from. This oh, hey, I can solve all three of those problems with this solution that no one thought of.

**(07:15)**

And when that happens, it's cool. You just feel clever. One of the least favourite things is if you do it full time, you get business that goes around it. There's contracts, there's reviewing, proofing, marketing. It's all the stuff to make sure that this idea that I have turns into a good game and then that the good game has good marketing and it has a good name, but it's not my favourite part, but it's important.

**(07:40)**

Cutting and sleeving prototypes is not that fun. It's basically a day of just putting TV shows on or YouTube standup comedians and just doing this very precise cutting and making sure that all your piles stay in the

right place because you don't want to make three prototypes and double stuff up. And it's just not my favourite part of it. But most of the time I'm making games. Well, not most of the time.

**(08:01)**

Certain percentage time I'm making games, the stuff that comes with it is not all that bad. It's just not my favourite thing.

**(08:10)**

Do you outsource any particular aspects when designing a game? Yeah, I'm following up on the next one. I'm 51 years old now and I've been doing this for a while and have two companies, so I've got some junior developers and designers to either collaborate with or they help. I say, okay, we got this game. I will pay you to turn these into files and turn it into TTS (table top simulator) because I just don't want them.

**(08:29)**

I've just done it for 20 years and I have a different person who helps organise the Google sheets for the playtest data. Sorry, coffee is getting cold.

**(08:43)**

I basically work with people where people work with me and I say, okay, great, can you take this and I'll pay them. Can you go play test this and record the data? Or can you take a look at the rules or we've done ten cards and we need 20 more. Can you take a first crack at it and then I can go in and look at them and sometimes it's because I'm busy and sometimes it's because there's someone there who can do it and I can go in and edit it and it's great not to have a blank page staring at me. I still like doing it myself and sometimes I just do it myself.

**(09:13)**

But the reality of the situation is one brain only has so many ideas in it and you get more people involved, you get good ideas, and I get to be sort of the creative director of the editor and be like, yes, no, I like what you did and what you did, but let's put it together and do this. And it's a different skill set that I sort of evolved into. Just as you get older and do this longer is sort of pulling together other people's ideas and making, which is a little bit what playtesting is, because play testers have a lot of ideas and often they aren't that good, but they're trying to articulate a problem that they can't quite figure out. So part of what

you see in Playtech, everyone keeps complaining about this or these three things and it's all the same underlying problem. And then coming up with a unified solution for also I outsource some.

**(09:57)**

Well, yes, about designing it, but there's some printing too. I could just print everything and cut it, but there's a printer down the street and I can pay a little more money to just get printed in cut cards and saves me 5 hours. And right now it's worth it for me. How do you determine the commercial viability of the legacy game? Well, how did the original game go? Has it been around for a while? What's its base of users? How many units has it sold? How many expansions? Are people tired of it? Does it feel like it could have a good story around it? Do I feel like I have a good idea for it? Some people come to the games and I say, yes, it probably is a legacy game, but I've thought about it for a week and I just can't figure out what to do. Rather than spend a year and a half to give you something, that's fine. I just don't think you'll be happy with it.

**(10:44)**

So let's sort of move on. But most of the time when people come in, it's not much. These days, legacy games kind of run their course, at least as far as people coming to me. I'm usually excited. I'm usually like, I can make that work. And often I've had to say no to them, just because of time, because they just like, oh, we need it done in six months, and I'm working on eight projects, and I can't drop everything to do it. But yeah, I mean, to do this full time, you need to apply business metrics. It'd be nice to make a game, and if it works out, it works out. You can do that if you're doing it part time, if you're doing friends, or if you're ready to retire and you just want to do it for the joy of games. But I'm sort of in the middle of the business portion, which is, is this worth my time, or should I be doing a different project because I need to pay my mortgage and stuff with these games? And so you have to kind of put on the business hat and it's not bad. It's just a reality. I'm not an artist, I'm a creative professional, and so you have to factor money into it.

**(11:57)**

Who else would you recommend I talk to if you were me, try to find some other people who've done legacy games, just go on board game Geek and look at them and email them and just say you're doing some research into them and see what do the same thing you did to me. You can just basically look for games at the legacy mechanic onboard, [gamegeek.com](http://gamegeek.com). Get a list of those, click on them, find the designers. There should be an email link to their name. From there, most of them will probably be very

happy to talk about their work. You may want to talk to that's about it. I was going to say the publishers and stuff, but if you're looking for the design angle, just talk to the designers, the people who are down in the trench for nine to 24 months trying to figure them out. Do you have any advice for the first time or designing a legacy game? Well, if you're a first time game designer, don't design a legacy game. It's my advice. It's sort of an advanced maneuver.

**(12:53)**

You really have to have a good understanding of production because you're going to be hiding a lot of components and manufacturing and doing stickers and things. And I hate you kind of need to know what you can do in and out of the game. I would say, though, if you're a game designer and you kind of have done some games, if you're making your own game, make sure the first game is pretty simple, pretty straightforward, plays cleanly, so you have room to grow and make sure that you're not putting too much in legacy game introduces new rules, new cards, new concepts. It's very easy. I do it all the time to be like, wow, I got so many ideas and I put them in. I realise I just got to throw away half because the player just gets overwhelmed. Right. They're just rule after rule on card after card, and they're like, they need time to sort of learn a rule, play it, digest it, and then get another rule and digest it. They always feel like they're learning something new and they're getting a moment to master it before something new comes out. And that pacing and balances is real tough. And the last thing I would say is don't do quantitative testing on legacy games. Sending out 50 games in a Google form is not going to work because it's experience design.

**(14:05)**

You're better off sending out two games and having the groups play through the whole campaign and video everything, opening the box, learning the rules, putting it away, and then taking diligent notes. That's what Matt and I did on Pandemic. Like I said, his system, you get so much more out of that where people are like where they're confused or not confused or the rules and things like that. What cards are working, how people are actually working with your game when they get bored? And that's just vitally important with these because you're trying to connect a series of games rather than just make a game.

**(14:38)**

And finally you say, where do you see legacy board games going in the future? They here to stay or just a phase? Probably a little both. I don't think there's as many that are going to come out in the next ten years as the past ten years, but I don't think they've gone away and they will evolve and change. They're just going to be different. But the idea of a campaign game where you're making some changes that carry

through and maybe they're permanent or maybe there's some stuff that unlocks. I think that's a new tool that people will be able to use and they'll use in different ways. They will say like, oh, it's not really a legacy game, but I like the idea of halfway through a game opening something new and maybe there's five boxes in every game, you open a different box depending on how the first half of the game goes. Actually, I like that idea and they'll be around, but no, they won't be like they used to.

**(15:24)**

I mean, I can see now from my sales and people asking me like they've done their thing and people are busy and, well, people were either isolated or they're going to come back. And before the Pandemic, they're busy. And I just don't know after the fad wears off if people want to sit down and play 14 games in a row of something. So maybe there'll be many legacy games, a little like long weekend, six games, six packs or something like that that gets the same idea but in a shorter time frame.

**(15:50)**

I think that's it. If this was not particularly helpful or you want different answers or you want to follow up, just drop me an email. I'm on holiday next week and it may take me a week or two to get back. After you send it but I'm happy to follow up. Actually, it's really cool that you're doing this sort of academic study of it, and thanks.

**(16:12)**

I came up with an idea, and here someone kind of doing a deep dive, and that feels cool, so I'll be as much help as you need me to be. All right, thanks.

### ***B.3 Matt Leacock – Designer of Pandemic and Pandemic legacy: Seasons 0, 1 and 2 and more***

1. What's your creative process when you land on an idea?

Sketching in journals but move to a rough prototype as fast as possible so you can play it and start improving it. – Producing an original idea is hard

2. What tools do you use to prototype your games during the concept and refining stage?

Early its sketching but keep that short and get it in to Adobe Illustrator as fast as possible so revisions are easier. It sucks throwing away a paper prototype because you can't make a change you want and starting again is disheartening.

3. What's your favourite board game/legacy board game that you weren't involved with? and what about it did you like?

LOTR campaign game

4. What was your inspiration for Pandemic, the standalone game?

LOTR cooperative game and SARS the idea of Winning or losing together was good

5. When converting your standalone game to a legacy with Rob Daviau what were the main hurdles and surprises?

Surprise – Rob thought it would be hard to turn a cooperative game in to a legacy

Challenge was giving it structure and the Timeline helped to give it a backbone, treating each game like an episode helped

6. What's your favourite aspect of board game design? or conversely, what do you find least enjoyable?

Thrill for the design to see it brings joy to the play testers and inanimate cardboard mock can be emotive

Worst is Dead ends and having to realise there's no elegant solution

7. Do you outsource any particular aspects when designing a game?

More like working with Co-designers and going away to your corners and coming back to share seeing where the strengths lie and then having prototypes to publisher and having the finalised polished and editor is kind of outsourced

8. Who else would you recommend I talk to if you were me?

Jerry Stegmeier - Charterstone

9. Any advice you have for a first-timer, designing a game?

Avoid large paraphrase of reading at the end make sure it's a satisfying ending

Think of cliff hangers or presenting a problem and the end of a game give a solutions of have a solution be discovered.

Start simple, keep it simple and tune game 1 before you move to the next game then replay game 1 and 2 and so on and so forth so, they did that with Pandemic so game 1 was played so much when testing that it was slick by the end as it had had so much more work done on it. The first game needs to be good to hook in the player - doesn't mean that the others don't have to be good but that the first has to get them wanting more

10. Where do you see legacy board games going in the future? are they here to stay? or just a phase?

Hard to say, yes as in the "carrying forward consequences" is here to stay but what could be a phase out of the irreversible change and have it so we can undo changes so the game is re playable.

#### ***B.4 Shem Phillips – Designer of the Games in the North Sea Trilogy and more***

1. What's your creative process when you land on an idea?

It depends on where the idea comes from. If it's based around an interesting mechanism, my process is usually to test and refine that mechanism, while thinking how it might work in a larger game (in most cases). If the idea is a particular theme, then my process will involve a lot of research into that theme. I'll be seeking as much inspiration and understanding as possible, while jotting down ideas for potential mechanisms that might fit.

2. What tools do you use to prototype your games during the concept and refining stage?

Traditionally I have tried to use methods that don't involve me needing to leave the home. With cards, for example, I will use plastic card sleeves, with any random card thrown in there, and my card, printed onto regular paper, slipped in front of the card. That makes changes easy and cheap to implement. I use thick sticker paper for boards and tiles, which I can print onto before mounting to some black board (1-3mm works well). All my digital design work is done using the Adobe suite (Photoshop, Illustrator, InDesign). More recently, I am doing a lot of testing in a digital space. Specifically, on Tabletop Simulator. This is essentially a digital environment with realistic physics - you can roll dice, hold cards, move pieces around, etc. This makes changes even faster, and free!

3. What's your favourite board game/legacy board game that you weren't involved with?  
and what about it did you like?

My best experience so far would still have to be Pandemic Legacy: Season One. I am already a big fan of regular Pandemic, which helped. But what I loved about the legacy component was how it told a simple, yet compelling story with plenty of twists and turns - a real emotional roller coaster.

4. What was your inspiration for the North Sea trilogy?

That all started with me wanting to make a game about building ships. After some research, I landed on Viking longships. I never set out to create a trilogy - or multiple trilogies! But, after

releasing Shipwrights of the North Sea, I saw there was demand for more games with a similar aesthetic, which led me to work on the two follow up games, Raiders and Explorers.

5. What were the main hurdles and surprises you came across when designing and producing Linwood?

Back then I just wanted to make a game for a bit of fun and a creative challenge. I knew nothing of modern board games at the time. So the biggest hurdles were trying to source all the materials, and to find potential customers. The biggest surprise was discovering that there was a huge community of board gamers out there - even in Wellington, New Zealand.

6. What's your favourite aspect of board game design? or conversely, what do you find least enjoyable?

My favourite part is once the game starts taking shape. You can see the mechanisms working. From there it's all about refining and making minor adjustments - turning a good game into a great one. I also love receiving new art files from the illustrators I work with. That always feels like Christmas. The least enjoyable piece has to be writing rulebooks, but that does get easier with each project.

7. Do you outsource any particular aspects when designing a game?

For the first ten years or so, I did everything, aside from the artwork. More recently, I have another designer working alongside me - the very talented Sam Macdonald. We co-designed the West Kingdom trilogy together. Sam will often carry more of the load at the beginning of a project, with creating first prototypes, and testing new ideas. My skills are more in game development, and other things such as product development, art direction, publishing, etc.

8. Who else would you recommend I talk to if you were me?

There are a number of designers and publishers in New Zealand. The first place I like to point designers to is [www.gameartisans.nz](http://www.gameartisans.nz) - it's a Facebook group with hundreds of people, all with unique backgrounds and experiences.

9. Any advice you have for a first-timer, designing a game?

Don't sit on an idea too long. Get it to the table, even if it's not a complete game. If you get stuck, try designing something else. It might take 5 or more bad ideas before you land on something that works.

10. Where do you see legacy board games going in the future? are they here to stay? or just a phase?

I think they are definitely here to stay. We'll just see a wider range of games coming out - we already are. Everything from a small \$20 game like Exit, to massive campaign games like Gloomhaven.

## Appendix C – Play Session Planning

### C.1 Play Session 1 Planning

#### Play Session 1 – Recon/search/meet and greet (Meet all characters)

##### Must happen

- Introducing the characters
  - Ratchett (victim)
- Introducing game play
- Explore the carriages
- Meet the characters
- Be offered and declined the job to protect Ratchett
- Ratchett needs to be murdered

##### Game structure

- Case Card
  - Outline the situation

You have secured your ticket on the orient express and all are aboard, leaving Istanbul for Paris. You're looking forward to a relaxing trip to Paris to meet Scotland yard superintendent LaStrada to consult on a case.

It's supper time in the dining carriage let's explore the carriages and meet the others aboard

- Objective
  - Unlock the first 3 carriages
  - Meet all aboard in the dining cart
- Solution Card
  - Each room you go into you get a clue (piece of the story)
  - Every person you meet you get a clue
  - The round ends when the first person is finished
  - Murderer you can guess but you make your choice at the end
- Need a way to show when a player is close to finishing the Objectives

When the first player is finished, they must go back to Poirot's carriage to finish Game 1. When that happens, the winning player gets to open a package:

- Play session one end Card

- Will read after a wonderful dinner and meeting some of the other passengers in the dining cart, you retire for the night and prepare for bed.

You are woken by loud talking and when you poke your head out into the hallway and see the back of a person in a red night robe quickly walking away from you, you think nothing of it and goes back to sleep. But you are woken again by the breaking of glass this time when you look out the hallway all you just see the conductor/bellboy/purser. And they nod to you ask if you need anything, you say no and go back to bed. You have a fitful sleep and in the morning you find out why. Snowed in train avalanche.

- Stop at this Point Continue to Game 2

## **C.2 Play Session 2 Planning**

### **Play Session 2 – There's a murder start investigating**

**(collect characters alibis)**

#### **Must happen**

- Ratchett is murdered
- Revel the Armstrong story (newspaper clippings) and Ratchett connection (Ratchett is Cassetti)
- Explore more carriages
- interview the characters collecting alibis
- Discover an accounting ledger that shows MacQueen has been stealing from Ratchett

#### **Game Structure**

- Case Card:
  - Outline the situation:
    - There has been a murder, Ratchett is found dead in his carriage. The window is open, all his belongings are on the floor and it's in disarray. You tell everyone there has been a murder and everyone must go to the dining cart and await your interview.
  - Objective
    - Get everyone's alibi
    - Explore more of the train
- Solution Card
  - Each room (old and new) you go into you get a clue (piece of the story)
  - Interview/interrogate the passengers on the train
  - The round ends when the first person is finished
  - Murderer you can guess but you make your choice at the end
- Need a way to show when a player is close to finishing the Objectives

When the first player is finished, they must go back to Poirot's carriage to finish Game 3. When that happens, the winning player gets to open a package:

- Play session two end Card
  - All is not what who could the murderer be? This does not make sense. You hear a scream, you run towards Mrs. Hubbard's carriage you find her crouched on the floor

with a knife in her back the good doctor is there to assist. On closer inspection you suspect that the knife in her back is in fact the murder weapon used to kill Ratchett. The plot thickens so you gather every one in to the lounge cart, and suggest it is safer that we all sleep in the same room conserve heat as were still snowed in but also its less likely the murderer will strike again.

New board pieces

- New train carriages

### ***C.3 Play Session 3 Planning***

**Play Session 3 – Uncover the relationship between the Armstrong case and the passenger's/the big reveal and end. (Connection characters to Armstrong)**

#### **Must happen**

- Confront MacQueen about stealing
- Mrs. Hubbard is stabbed (she lives)
- Explore the Royal Suite carriage and meet the count and countess
- Discover the connection between the other suspects and the Armstrong case
- The big reveal, all characters are brought together, and the conclusion is revealed and the murders

#### **Game Structure**

- Case Card:
  - Outline the situation:
    - You are confronting MacQueen about stealing from Ratchett, during the interrogation the Doctor gives him an alibi, but you suggest that MacQueen may have a connection to the Armstrong case that gives motive. Mrs. Hubbard is stabbed, you rush in to investigate and find the murder weapon that killed Ratchett in her back. The plot thickens.
  - Objective
    - Continue collecting alibies
    - Piece more of the passengers past and the connection with the Armstrong case
    - Solve the case
- Solution Card
  - Each room (old and new) you go into you get a clue (piece of the story)
  - Interview/interrogate the passengers on the train
  - The round ends when the first person is finished
- Need a way to show when a player is close to finishing the Objectives

When the first player is finished, they must go back to Poirot's carriage to finish Game 3. When that happens, the winning player gets to open a package:

- Play session three end Card

- There are two possible scenarios where players must vote/guess which one they think it is. Once that happens you read the card that reveals that there all the murder taking turns to kill Ratchett explaining that Mrs. Hubbard was the ringleader and organised it all as they all had scores to settle with Ratchett aka Cassetti.

#### New board pieces

- New train carriages
  - Sleeper carriage 2
    - Mrs. Hubbard's room
    - MacQueen's room
  - The Royal suite carriage
    - The countess and count

Appendix D – Visual of Murder on the Orient Express legacy board game

