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Dice and digital - rehabilitating the board game geek

By Kevin Core
You and Yours, Radio 4



Modern games are democratic and sociable, with an emphasis on collaborative problem solving rather than the military strategy and battles of games past

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Tabletop Co-op

Partnerships for Tabletop Game Programs

Moving little plastic pieces around a board and rolling dice might conjure up bad memories of a seemingly unending game of Monopoly. Within the last twenty years, however, tabletop games have developed into something modern and different from the classic roll-and-move games of the past. ➔



An article in the British daily newspaper, the *Guardian*, described the recent trend as "The Golden Age of Boardgames" (Duffy), and the Green Bay Packers revealed that when the linebackers are not on the football field, they can be found playing *Settlers of Catan* (Clark). In metropolitan areas, more and more "tabletop cafes" are opening and reaping the economic benefits of targeting niche audiences of boardgamers. Tabletop games offer librarians a chance to develop partnerships in the local community, bring a popular hobby into their library, and bring teens into the fold.

Tabletop game programs in libraries only need two things to work: games and people. Games cost money, however, and gaming audiences are not guaranteed to come to libraries. Public libraries are using partnerships to acquire games and draw new audiences into programs. Through partnerships with local game stores, game groups, tabletop conventions, and academic groups, public libraries are acquiring games and finding new places to promote tabletop gaming programs. These programs are creating communities of practice in libraries in which young board gamers are engaging in connected learning.

Based on interviews with potential partners, observations of tabletop programs, and my experience running tabletop programs in public libraries in and around Madison, Wisconsin, I have concluded that tabletop gaming works well in libraries. Here are ways that partnerships can help make tabletop gaming a successful program.

BENEFITS OF TABLETOP GAMING

It may feel daunting to start a tabletop gaming program. There is a steep learning curve that comes with the hobby, but the return is worth the investment. Two of the key benefits of tabletop gaming

programs are 1) the development of social connections and communities of practice, and 2) connected learning opportunities.

Tabletop games offer many opportunities to learn collaboratively and to develop skills. I interviewed James, from one of Madison's local game stores, who has helped at library board game events. He reflected on his experience of using board games to promote interactions: "The board game is an ice breaker, and

the library is a good neutral ground—it was a good social hub starter." As Jar indicates, tabletop games can be an effective way to get young adult patrons interact through a common interest and to develop a learning community. Communities of practice exist when "newcomers start the periphery, but gradually occupy a central role as they become 'old-timers' (Lave and Wenger). Communities of practice are also an opportunity for intergenerational teaching. Teens are constantly taught less by adults, but games give teens a chance to teach people older than them a thing or two. Many tabletop games are easy to learn and can have a passionate following of all ages. If a teen is an avid player of *Magic: The*

Gathering, for instance, this can be seen as a unique opportunity for the teen to teach the game to adults and turn them into *Magic* players and followers. Tabletop gaming can quickly become a community of practice because the activity is open to every age. A second grader may love the game *Hey, That's My Fish* but it lacks people with whom to play. In a tabletop gaming program, the second grader could be teaching the game to people twenty, thirty or more years older than him/her—and they can all have a good time.

Tabletop games can also provide a different way to promote materials. At some of the neighborhood libraries of the Madison Public Library System there are large *Pokémon* trading-card game programs. "Participating teens bring their friends, and this results in more use of library materials and awareness





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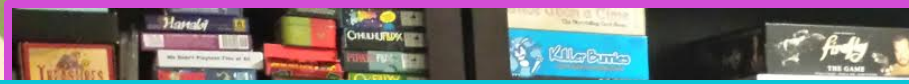


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So why should you include board gaming into your programming?

- It promotes reading
- It promotes comprehensive skills
- It promotes team building
- It promotes cognitive learning



Board Game Collection ☆

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f_x | Zombie In My Pocket

	A	B	C	D
1	Timestamp	Board Game	Genre of Game	Description of Board Game
145	10/1/2013 7:50:20	Star Wars: X-Wing Miniatures	Strategy	Star Wars: X-Wing Miniatures Game is a tactical ship-to-ship combat game. You take control of powerful Rebel X-wings and nimble Imperial TIE fighters, for fast-paced space combat. Featuring stunningly detailed and painted miniatures, the game recreates exciting Star Wars space combat throughout its seven scenarios. You plan your maneuvers, and complete your mission! Whatever you choose, X-Wing facilitates fast and visceral gameplay that puts you in the middle of the action. Each ship type has its own unique piloting dial, which is used to select your ship's action each turn. After planning maneuvers, each ship's dial is revealed and you execute your plan as a skilled pilot. So whether you rush headlong toward your enemy showing fire, or dance away from him as you attempt to acquire a targeting lock, you're in control throughout all the tense dogfighting action.
146	10/1/2014 11:06:47	Steam Park	Strategy	As owners of a fantastic steam park, you're to build gigantic, coal-powered attractions as you can – but building attractions won't be enough. You'll also need to hire employees, invest in advertising in order to attract and please the discerning visitors to your park, and, above all, keep the dirt that your park produces under strict control. Steam Park is as much a matter of being the best as of being the fastest. Plan, build, and develop a small town into a major metropolis. Use the game's mechanics to manage residential, commercial, civic, and industrial areas, as well as special attractions. Choose your strategy! Build Stands to attract more Visitors, or Control Stands to control whatever decision you take, take it quickly: The less time you spend building, the more you'll have to maintain your park. Thanks to a clever, original action-oriented mechanic, Steam Park is as much a matter of being the best as of being the fastest.
147	1/31/2014 9:38:54	Suburbia	Tile Placing	Plan, build, and develop a small town into a major metropolis. Use the game's mechanics to manage residential, commercial, civic, and industrial areas, as well as special attractions. Choose your strategy! Build Stands to attract more Visitors, or Control Stands to control whatever decision you take, take it quickly: The less time you spend building, the more you'll have to maintain your park. Thanks to a clever, original action-oriented mechanic, Steam Park is as much a matter of being the best as of being the fastest.
148				In Tales of the Arabian Nights, you are the hero or heroine in a story of adventure, magic, and fortune. You will learn stories and gain wisdom to share with others. Will you be the first to fulfill your destiny? The next Tale is yours to tell! There is, of course, a winner in Tales of the Arabian Nights, but the point of the game is less to see who wins and more to enjoy the unfolding and telling of a great story! In this new edition of the groundbreaking storytelling game, you enter the lands of the Arabian Nights alongside Sindbad, Ali Baba, and the other legendary heroes of the tales. Travel the world encountering imprisoned princesses, powerful 'efreets, evil viziers, and such marvels as the Magnetic Mountain and the fabled Elephant's Graveyard. Choose your actions carefully and the skills you possess will reward you: become beloved, wealthy, mighty - even become sultan of a great land. Choose carefully, however, and become a hero, or be cursed with the beast's form or become insane.

Sheet1

DC Comics Deck Building Game

010. → **Specific Genre** – (000's = Card Games) (010. = Deck Building)

DCC → **Name of Board Game** – First three letters of title. (If multiple titles have the same first three letters. Organizations can defer to year of publication.)

2014 → **Year of publication** – If multiple expansions of a game have been released in a year a decimal point may be added to indicate an expansion

DC Comics Deck Building Game: Crisis Expansion

010.

DCC

2014.2

The Stars are Right

021.

Sta → Ignore prepositions such as: The, And, and A when writing down the first three letters of the game.

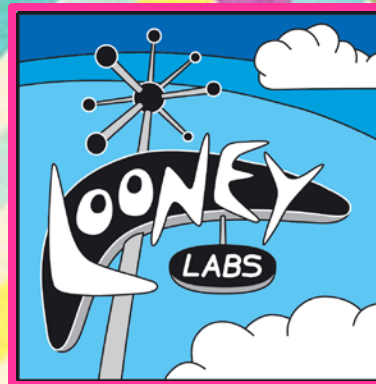
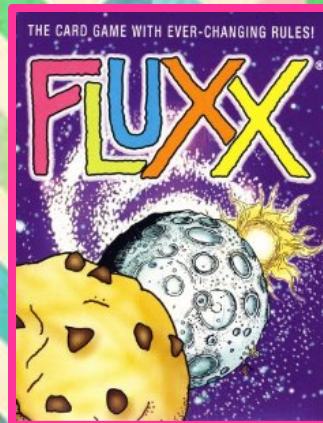
2008

Card Games – 000's (The game is played with cards and cards are the primary focal point of the game. There is no dice, tokens, or other physical mechanic used to progress the game besides the playing and using of cards. Game play and winning is dependent on cards not personal opinions. No boards or mats are used that change or progress play. If boards or mats are used it is for an aesthetic purposes and does not change game play.)

- **Deck Building – 010** (Each player starts with a certain pre-described number of cards. Turns consist of adding or playing cards to grow the player's deck. Deck Builders can include mats or boards. However, the game could be played without a mat and still make sense. The board has no physical purpose in advancing the game and is purely aesthetic.)
 - o *DC Comics Deck Building Game: 010.DCC.2012*
 - o *DC Comics Deck-Building Game: Heroes Unite: 010.DCC.2014*
 - o *DC Comics Deck-Building Game: Crisis Expansion: 010.DCC.2014.2*

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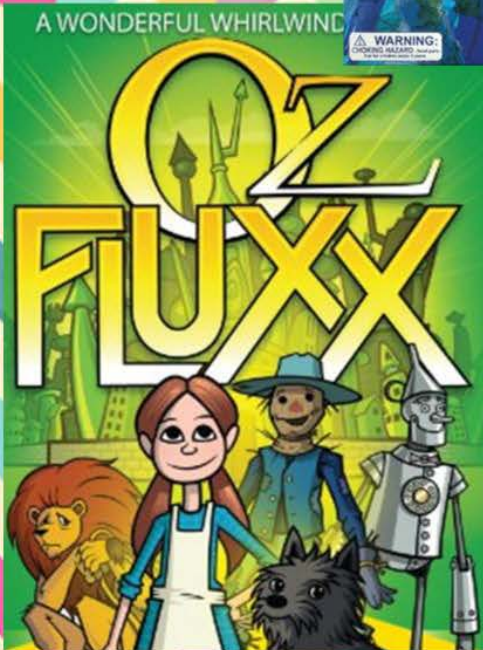
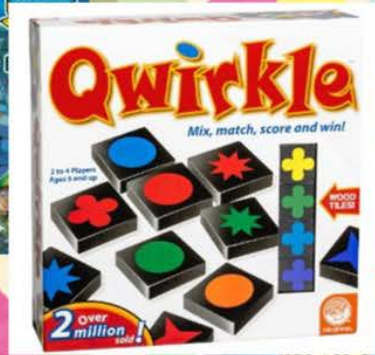
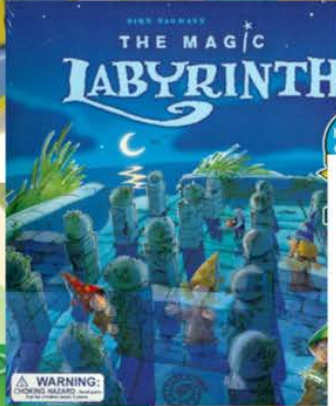
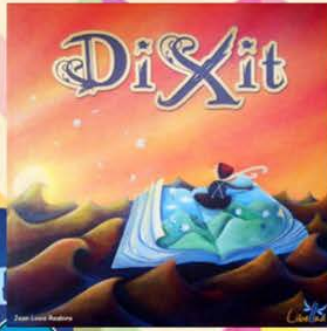
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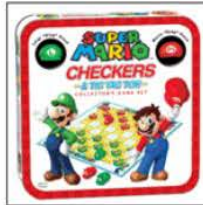
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EAN:0700304044105

Publisher: [USAopoly](#) ([View Publisher's Titles](#))

US SRP:\$ 19.95 US - (Discount:REG)

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Annotation: Celebrate one of the most popular video games of all time with two games in one! Join Mario and Luigi and jump on power ups in the classic games of Checkers and Tic Tac Toe. Collectible Mario and Luigi hats as the "Kinging" pieces make this game as much ...

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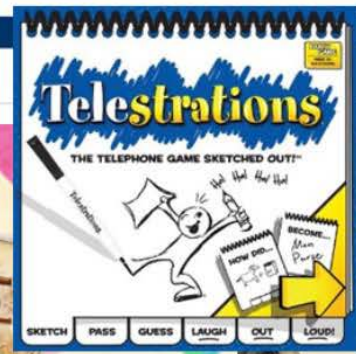
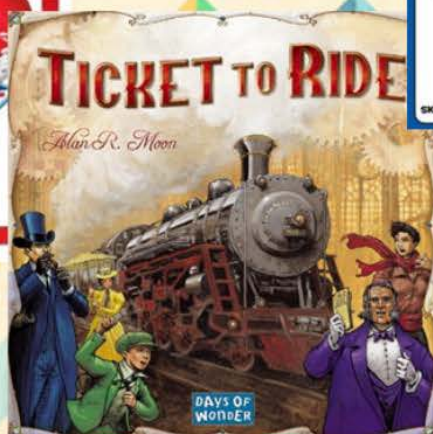
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Dead of Winter: A Crossroads Game (2014)

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Board Game Rank: **19**
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Information



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Designer	Jonathan Gilmour Isaac Vega
Artist	David Richards Fernanda Suarez Peter Wocken
Publisher	Plaid Hat Games Cube Factory of Ideas Edge Entertainment Filosofia Edition Show More »
Year Published	2014
# of Players	2 – 5
User Suggested # of Players	Best with 4 players Recommended with 3, 4, 5 players (140 voters) [poll]
Mfg Suggested Ages	13 and up
Playing Time	100 minutes
User Suggested Ages	12 and up (39 voters) [poll]
Language Dependence	Extensive use of text - massive conversion needed to be playable (48 voters) [poll]
Honors	2014 Golden Geek Best Board Game Artwork & Presentation Nominee 2014 Golden Geek Best Innovative Board Game Nominee 2014 Golden Geek Best Innovative Board Game Winner 2014 Golden Geek Best Thematic Board Game Nominee Show More »
Subdomain	Thematic Games (90 voters) [vote]
Category	Horror Zombies
Mechanic	Action Point Allowance System Co-operative Play Dice Rolling Hand Management Show More »
Expansion	Dead of Winter: Felicia Day Dead of Winter: Kodiak Colby Dead of Winter: Lucky Luke Smith
Primary Name	Dead of Winter: A Crossroads Game
Alternate Names	Dead of Winter: A la croisée des chemins

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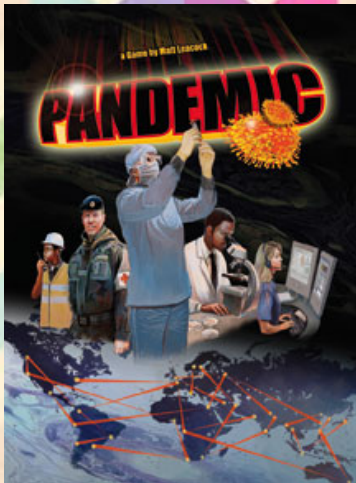
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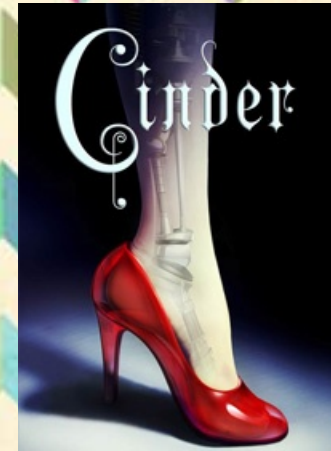
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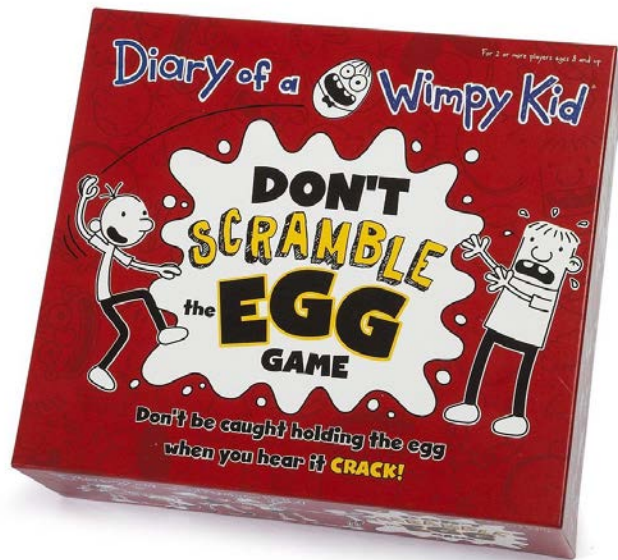
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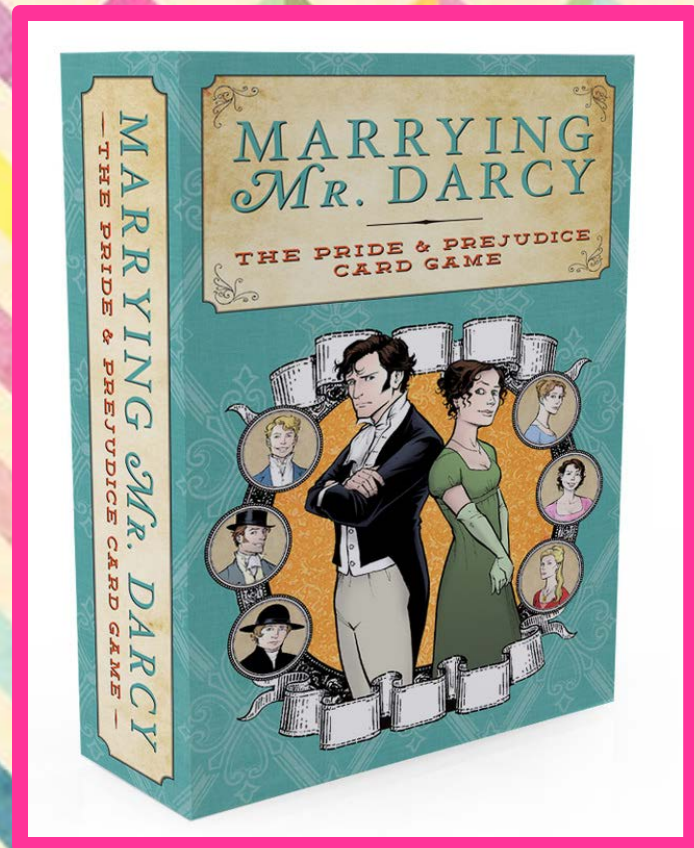
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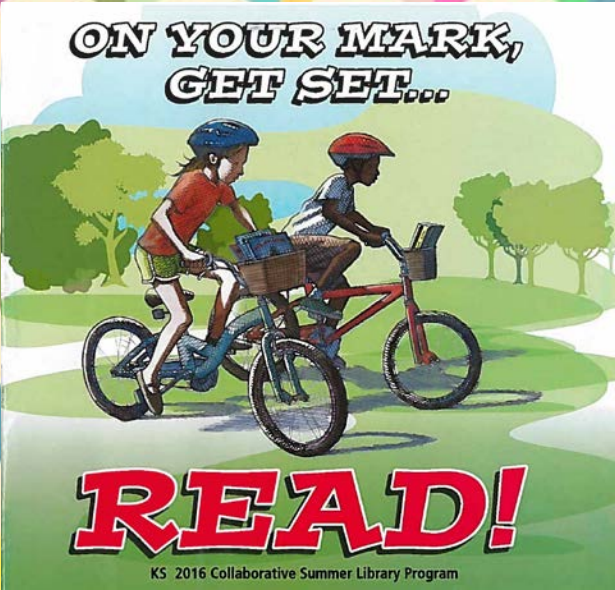
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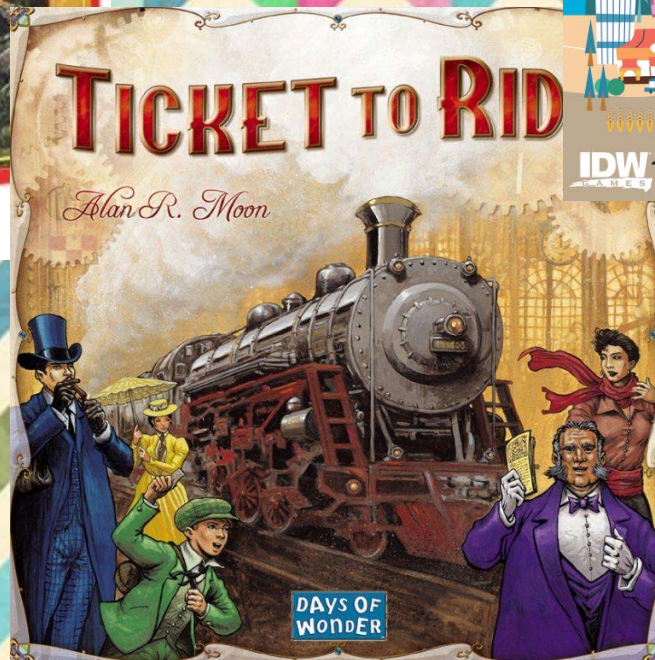
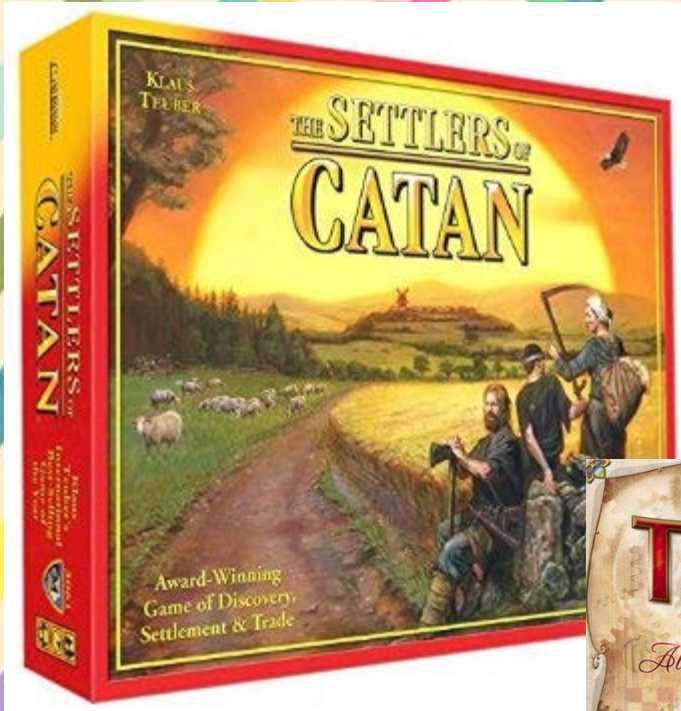
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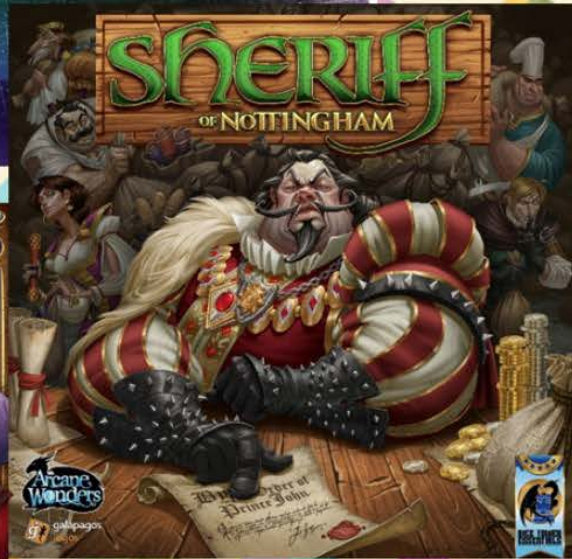
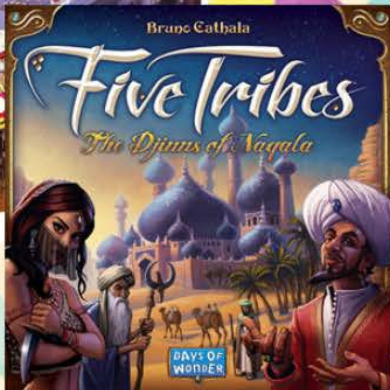


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