

# MAKING YOUR OWN METAGAME (Mini-prototype deck, print-and-play edition)

## 1. HOMESTYLE

Print out pages 2-7 of this document (just the cards), preferably in color on white card stock (80lb or heavier).

# OR

## 1. STORE-MADE

Go to your local copy shop and have them print the cards on 80lb or heavier white card stock.

**2. PRINT THE BACKING PAGE** (page 10) on the back of the Discussion Cards so that you can tell them apart from the Culture Cards when they are face-down, like this:



**3. CAREFULLY CUT** out each card with scissors or a fancy paper cutter.

**4. PRINT THE RULES** on regular paper (front and back to save the polar bears).

**5. ENJOY!**

## FANCY TOUCHES

- If you have a corner rounder, go to town rounding the corners.
- Make a hand-crafted velvet-lined wooden box for the cards.
- Laminate the cards so that you can play underwater.

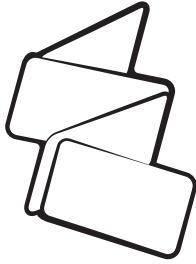
## AND REMEMBER...

This is just a mini-prototype deck of about 50 cards. The final game will have **250 cards!**

## DEBATE CLUB

4 or more players

*This is the basic version of the Metagame. Survive each round by arguing for your clever cultural comparison. If the critics don't like what you say, you are knocked out and become a critic too. The final remaining player is the winner.*



## metagame

**RULES DRAFT**  
for 50-card prototype deck.  
Final game will have 250 cards

## THE METAGAME. DISCUSS.

*Special thanks to: Ida C. Benedetto, Max Temkin and Esopus Magazine.*

<http://metaga.me>

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## DEBATE CLUB MODS

*Variations on the basic game. Feel free to mix and match and come up with your own way to play.*

### **Critic's choice.**

*for the critic that wants just a little more power*  
The critic draws 3 discussion cards and picks one to use.

### **Point out the critic.**

*a way to choose the first critic*  
Rather than starting with a critic in the game, everyone begins as a player. On the first round, draw a random discussion card. After everyone gives their arguments, at the count of 1-2-3, everyone points at the person who did the worst. The person with the most votes becomes the first critic. Then play normally.

### **The hunger game.**

*a strategic mod where you are starved for cards*  
Each player draws a hand of culture cards equal to the number of rounds that will be played that game. Then deal a face-up row of the same number of discussion cards. Each round, the critic picks one of the face-up cards to use as the discussion card that round. Players CANNOT draw any more cards - you have to strategize the best way to use your dwindling hand of cards.

### **Setup.**

Separate the cards into two face-down decks: culture cards (the cards with pictures) and discussion cards (the cards with questions). The player who most recently finished reading a book begins as the critic. The critic deals everyone else a hand of five culture cards.

### **The Debate.**

The critic turns over a discussion card. If it has a blank, the critic decides how to fill it. Everyone chooses the card from their hand that best matches the discussion card and places it face-down on the table. The critic calls on the players one by one to reveal their card and explain why it is the best.

### **The Judgment.**

The critic picks the BEST and the WORST responses. The winning player gets the reward of discarding any one card from their hand and drawing a new one. The losing player is knocked out, discards his or her entire hand, and joins the critic. Surviving players each draw a new card. On future rounds, the growing group of critics makes all decisions together (if there is a tie vote, the newest critic gets to break the tie).

### **Winning.**

The final player remaining is the winner and becomes the starting critic for the next game.

## HEAD TO HEAD

3 players

*A strategic variant for two bitter rivals and a critic. The critic lays out 5 discussion cards and then the 2 players carefully deploy culture cards from their hands. Who. Will. Win?*

### **Setup.**

Pick one player to be the critic. The critic deals a hand of 7 culture cards to the two other players. Then the critic lays out a column of 5 discussion cards face-up. The critic decides how to fill in any blanks on discussion cards.

### **The duel.**

The critic turns her back on the game so she can't see anything. While the critic can't see, players alternate turns putting a content card face-up next to a discussion card. You can only play once on each discussion card. Also, you must avoid playing on a discussion card where your opponent just played - unless it is the only one left.

### **The verdict.**

When both players have played on every discussion card, the critic can look at the cards. The critic decides who wins each comparison without knowing who played which card. The player who wins the most comparisons is the victor and becomes the critic for the next game.

## CRITICS CIRCLE

3 or more players

*Round and round the critic goes... In this version of the Metagame, there is a new critic each turn. There isn't any debate or discussion - the critic picks their favorite response without knowing who played which card.*

### **Setup.**

Pick a starting critic and deal everyone (including the critic) a hand of 5 cards.

### **The Question.**

Each round, the current critic draws a discussion card and the other players submit their best culture card face-down to the critic, who shuffles them, reveals them, and then picks his or her favorite without knowing who played it.

### **The Answer.**

Whenever you win a round, take the discussion card from that round as a scoring token and place it in front of you on the table. The winner becomes the critic for the next round. Everyone draws back up to five cards.

### **Winning.**

The first player to accumulate enough discussion cards in front of them wins. Play to three cards for a quick game, four cards for a serious brawl, or five cards for an epic contest.

### **Critics Circle Mod: Think fast!**

Slam your chosen culture card as quickly as possible on the table. The last player to put down a card does not get to play that round.

## MASSIVELY MULTIPLAYER METAGAME

10 to 1000 or more players

*This large-scale version of the game is good for big parties or events. Once it gets going, it can last for hours or even days.*

### **Setup.**

Give everyone who arrives a random hand of 4 culture cards and 2 discussion cards.

### **The Challenge.**

You can challenge any other player by showing them a culture card and a discussion card. If they accept, the challenged player responds with one of their own culture cards.

### **The Debate.**

Both sides make arguments about whose culture card is the best match. Any nearby bystanders vote on the winner, who randomly draws a card from the loser's entire collection of cards.

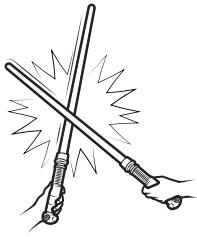
### **The End.**

At the end of the event, count your cards. The player who has collected the most cards is the winner.

### **What if a player runs out of cards?**

You decide. You might refresh players that run out of cards, or give everyone new cards at set intervals. Or maybe you invent silly things players can do to "earn" cards. It's up to you - it's your party!

## THE STAR WARS FRANCHISE



George Lucas' epic 1977 space opera gave us Luke Skywalker, R2D2, and enough action figures to fill a Death Star.



## STARRY NIGHT



Vincent Van Gogh painted this in 1889 from his sanitarium window.



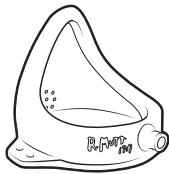
## WORLD OF WARCRAFT



Blizzard's definitive 2004 massively-multiplayer online game. Horde or Alliance?



## FOUNTAIN



In 1917, Marcel Duchamp shocked the world by exhibiting a urinal as art.



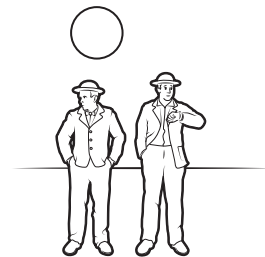
## CATS



Singing cats in spandex. Andrew Lloyd Webber's 1981 Broadway smash.



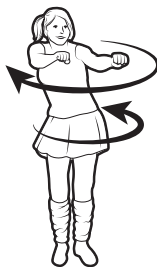
## WAITING FOR GODOT



Samuel Beckett's 1952 play about the absurd futility of existence. Spoiler: Godot never comes.



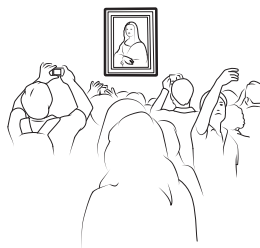
## THE CABBAGE PATCH



1987 dance craze involving circular fist-churning. Transitions into a Running Man or an Alf.



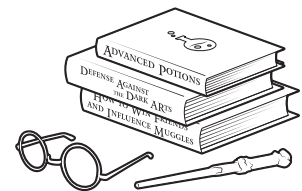
## MONA LISA



Leonardo DaVinci's 1506 portrait: the world's most mysterious smile.



## HARRY POTTER



A seven-part series begun in 1997 by J.K. Rowling about young wizards learning life lessons and battling trolls.



## THE BIBLE



Either the direct word of God or written over thousands of years by a bunch of dudes (accounts vary).



## 4' 33"



Signature 1952 work by composer John Cage. Four minutes and thirty-three seconds of silence.



## WEST SIDE STORY



1957 Broadway hit by Bernstein, Laurents, Robbins and Sondheim. #sharksrule



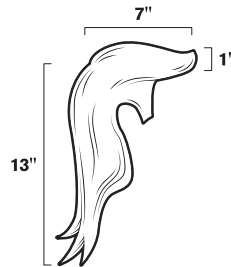
## THE IPHONE



Apple's 2007 camera, music player, game console, internet communications device, and occasionally, cell phone.



## THE MULLET



1980's hairstyle. Business in the front, party in the back.



## CROCS



"It looks like a plastic hoof. How can you take that seriously?"

-Tim Gunn on the 2002 foam shoe



## WORLD TRADE CENTER



Built in 1973 by architect Minoru Yamasaki and destroyed in 2001, the Twin Towers were first hated, then beloved, and now are missed.



## THE BIG MAC



Iconic 1967 McDonald's burger. Two all-beef patties, "special" sauce, lettuce, cheese, pickles onions - on a sesame seed bun.



## COMIC SANS

Comic  
Sans

Microsoft's 1994 typeface by Vincent Connare. Hated by all people with eyes.



## HELVETICA

# Helvetica

The 1957 typeface by Max Miedinger. So elegant it's almost invisible.



## GOOGLE



Google.com/search?q=google



## LATEX CONDOM



Keeping sex safe since 1920.



## VIETNAM VETERANS MEMORIAL



Maya Lin's 1982 Washington DC monument makes a powerful statement with only names and dates on a wall.



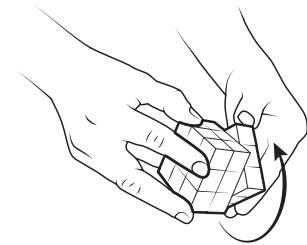
## DOOM



id Software's revolutionary 1993 first-person shooter. idkfa.



## RUBIK'S CUBE



Ernő Rubik's 1974 puzzle has 43,252,003,274,489,856,000 possible combinations.



## PRIDE AND PREJUDICE



Jane Austen's 1813 novel chronicles Elizabeth Bennet's coming of age in British polite society. Featuring Colin Firth.



## BASKETBALL



The triple-double of sports. Invented by James Naismith in 1891.



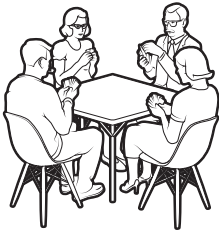
## DODGEBALL



Darwinian playground game where the strong eliminate the weak by clobbering them with rubber balls.



## BRIDGE



Hardcore card game formalized by Harold Stirling Vanderbilt in 1925. Recognized with Chess as one of two "mind sports" by the Olympics.



## HUNGRY HUNGRY HIPPOS

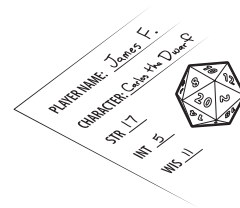


"It's a race, it's a chase, hurry up and feed their face!"

-Jingle for Fred Kroll's 1978 game



## DUNGEONS & DRAGONS



Groundbreaking 1974 role-playing game by Dave Arneson and Gary Gygax. Nice charisma.



## TWILIGHT



2005 book series by Stephenie Meyer about brooding teenage vampires.



## CITIZEN KANE



Orson Welles' critically-acclaimed 1941 film about power, corruption, and a sled named Rosebud.



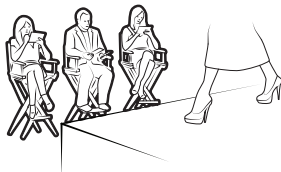
## THE DAILY SHOW



News spoof that demonstrates how fake the real news can be. Comedy Central, 1996.



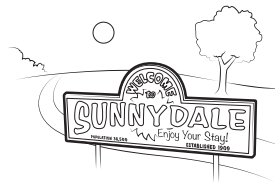
## PROJECT RUNWAY



Fashion reality series, premiered on Bravo 2004. Like a cooking show for clothes.



## BUFFY THE VAMPIRE SLAYER



Joss Whedon's 1993-2007 series where high school students fall in love, cram for exams, and destroy ancient hellspawn.



## LOLCATS



2007 online meme proving once and for all that cats are funnier than dogs on the internet.



**WHICH FEELS  
LIKE FIRST LOVE?**



**WHICH SHOULD  
BE REQUIRED  
IN SCHOOLS?**



**WHICH WILL  
SAVE THE  
WORLD?**



**WHICH BEST  
REPRESENTS  
AMERICA?**



**WHICH HAS  
BEEN MOST  
INFLUENTIAL?**



**WHICH IS  
SIMPLY THE MOST  
BEAUTIFUL?**



**WHICH WOULD  
YOU WANT TO  
FIND IN BED?**



**WHICH WILL  
GET YOU LAID  
IF YOU  
MENTION IT?**



**WHICH IS  
RESPONSIBLE FOR  
THE FRAYING  
OF OUR  
MORAL FABRIC?**





IF YOU DON'T  
KNOW WHAT  
THIS IS, YOU  
ARE CULTURALLY  
CHALLENGED.



WHICH IS  
THE BEST ICON  
FOR THE \_\_\_\_\_  
CENTURY?



WHICH GOES  
PERFECTLY WITH  
A DASH OF  
\_\_\_\_\_?



WHICH WOULD  
MAKE THE  
IDEAL BIRTHDAY  
PRESENT FOR  
\_\_\_\_\_?



YOU CAN FIND  
THIS UNDER  
THE DICTIONARY  
DEFINITION FOR  
\_\_\_\_\_.



THIS IS THE  
LAST THING  
THAT \_\_\_\_\_  
THINKS ABOUT  
BEFORE GOING  
TO SLEEP.



THE PERFECT  
SYMBOL FOR  
PEOPLE WHO  
\_\_\_\_\_.



WHICH IS  
WHISPERED IN  
AWE BY BROOKLYN  
HIPSTERS?



WHICH WOULD  
WIN IN A FIGHT  
TO THE DEATH?



