



The Cards We're Dealt

A card game exploring roles of society and implicit advantages and disadvantages

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Message

The Cards We're Dealt is about how society gives people different advantages, limitations, and opportunities based on the roles they are placed into. Even though everyone is playing the same game and trying to gain points, not every player has the same abilities or restrictions.

The game explores themes such as:

- Social inequality
- Power structures
- Privilege and limitation
- Resource access
- Competition within unfair systems
- How people adapt to the “hand” they are given

“Players are competing
in the same system, but
not under equal
conditions.”

Game Setup

Pieces and Cards

16 Character Cards

36 Number Cards

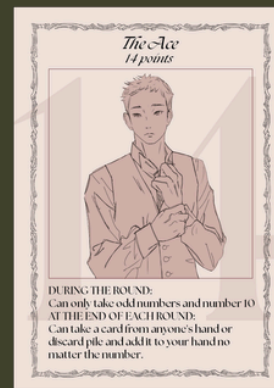
(Can technically be played with a regular deck if your in a pinch)

Dealer deals out all cards to players, separating Character Cards from Number Cards

Players flip top Character card - that is who you become the rest of the game

Abilities and restrictions are written on the cards and in the rulebook

Shuffle remainder of cards together and pass your hand to the next player



Mechanics

& connection to theme

1. Asymmetrical Roles

- Each player receives a Character card with unique rules, some powerful end-of-round abilities while others have stricter limitations during gameplay.
- This mechanic reflects how people in society often operate under unequal conditions.

2. Passing Cards

- Players constantly pass hands around the table.
- This represents:
 - The movement of resources
 - Economic circulation
 - Dependence on systems outside individual control
 - Players cannot fully control what opportunities they receive.
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3. Discard Piles

- Some players are forced to discard cards they cannot legally take which symbolizes:
 - Wasted opportunity
- Some characters benefit specifically from discard piles, showing how people adapt differently to difficult systems.

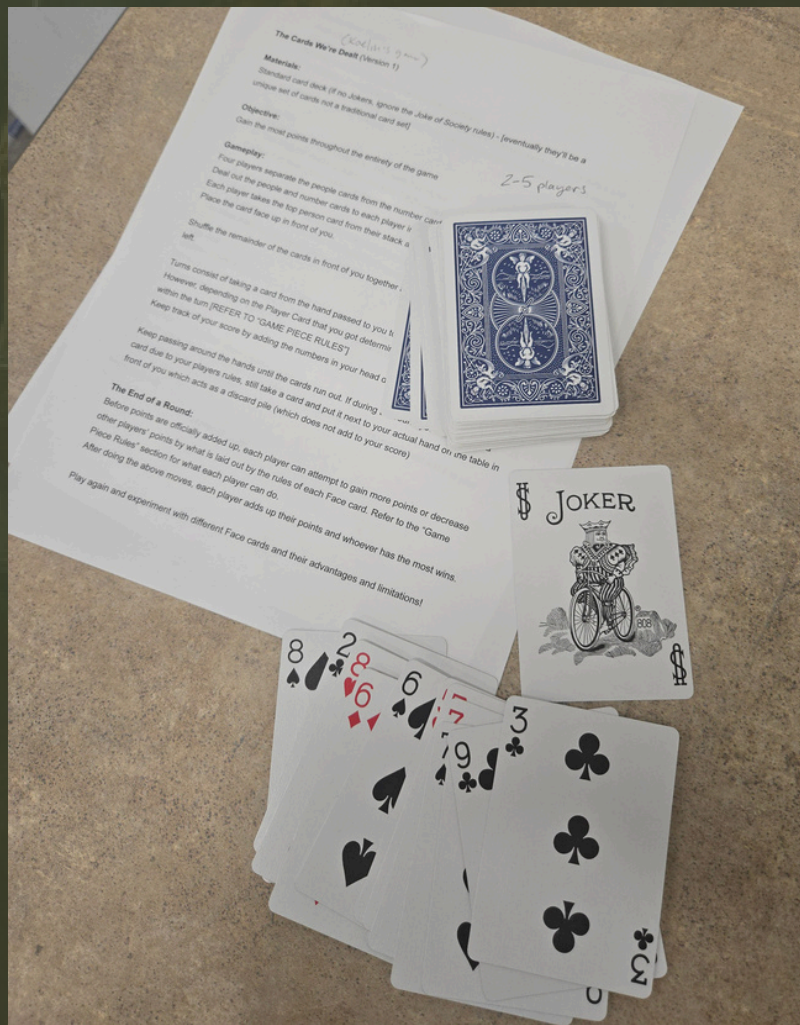
4. End-of-Round Actions

- At the end of the round, players can steal, reclaim, or manipulate cards based on their character abilities.
- This reflects:
 - Power dynamics
 - Influence
 - Redistribution of resources
 - Institutional control
- It also reinforces the idea that success is not always fully visible until systems are evaluated at the end.

Iterations

+playtesting

1



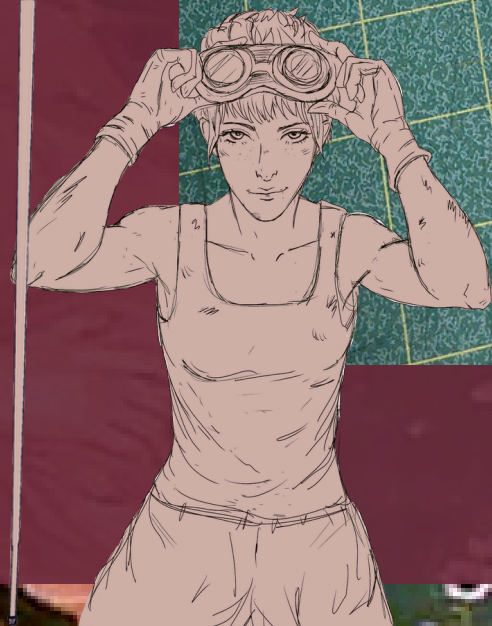
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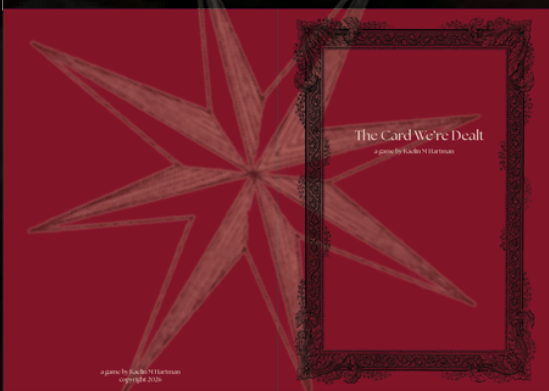


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Current Game





The End of a Round:
Before points are officially added up, each player can attempt to gain more points or decrease other players' points by what is laid out by the rules of each Character card. Refer to the "Game Piece Rules" section for what each player can do. After doing the above moves, each player adds up their points and whoever has the greatest number value wins.

Play again and experiment with different Character cards and their advantages and limitations!

Game Piece Rules:
Character Cards

The Queen Boss [11 points]
DURING THE ROUND:
Can only take even numbers
AT THE END OF EACH ROUND:
Can take any card from anyone's hand except the King's, and add it to your hand no matter the number AND can remove a card from someone else's hand and discard it if they so choose.

King Pin [12 points]
DURING THE ROUND:
Can only take cards 7 or higher
AT THE END OF EACH ROUND:
Can take TWO cards from peoples hands or discard piles but if only a 7 or lower (from two separate players OR from the same player).

The Cards We're Dealt (Version 3)
Number of Players: 3-5

Materials:
16 Character Cards [5 unique characters]
36 Number Cards

Objective:
Gain the most points throughout the entirety of the game.

Gameplay:
Four players separate the Character cards from the Number cards.
Deal out the people and number cards to each player in separate stacks. Each player takes the top Character card from their stack and "becomes" that character that round.
Place the Character card face up in front of you.

Players shuffle the remainder of the cards in front of them (including remainder of...)

Number Cards:
Simply correspond to the number of points

Discover the possibilities!

Jack of All Trades [10 points]
DURING THE ROUND:
Cannot take any cards 8 or higher
AT THE END OF EACH ROUND: Can take TWO cards from anyone's discard pile ONLY but can keep them only if they are an 8 or higher.

The Ace [14 points]
DURING THE ROUND:
Can only take odd numbers and the number 10
AT THE END OF EACH ROUND:
Can take a card from anyone's hand or discard pile and add it to your hand no matter the number.

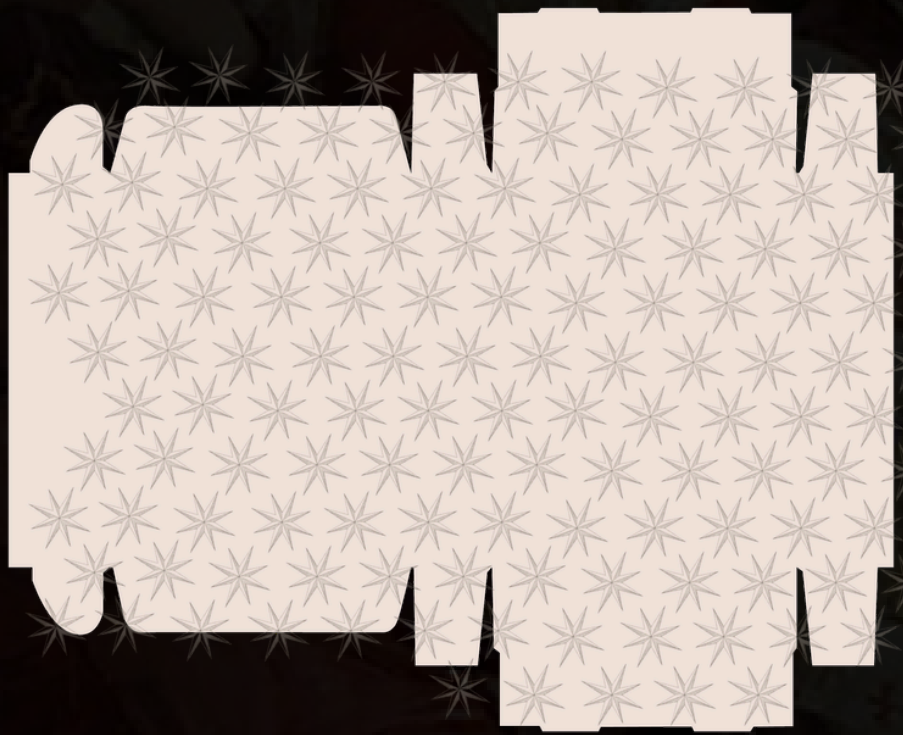
Joke of Society [1 point]
DURING THE ROUND:
Can only take cards 5 or lower
AT THE END OF EACH ROUND:
Can take a card from anyone's discard pile and add it to your own hand no matter the number.

Character cards and all pass them to the player to the left of each other.

Turns consist of taking a card from the hand passed to you to place face down in front of you. However, depending on the Character card that you get determines your limitations or advantages within the turn [REFER TO "Game Piece Rules"].

Keep track of your score by adding the numbers in your head during the round. Character cards also have their point value displayed on their cards.

Keep passing around the hands until the cards run out. If during the round you cannot take a card due to your players rules, still take a card and put it next to your actual hand on the table in front of you which acts as a discard pile (which does not add to your score)



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1 point

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The Ace
14 points

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King Pin
12 points

DURING THE ROUND:
Can only take cards 7 or higher
AT THE END OF EACH ROUND:
Can take TWO cards from peoples hands or discard piles but if only a 7 or lower

Queen Boss
11 points

DURING THE ROUND:
Can only take even numbers
AT THE END OF EACH ROUND:
Can take any card from anyone's hand except the King's and add it to your hand no matter the number AND can remove a card from someone else's hand and discard it if they so choose.

Jack of all Trades
10 points

DURING THE ROUND:
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AT THE END OF EACH ROUND:
Can take TWO cards from anyone's discard pile ONLY but can keep them ONLY if they are an 8 or higher.

Rule Card

Players: 3-5

Materials:
16 Character Cards • 36 Number Cards

Objective:
Highest total points wins.

SETUP
Split Character & Number decks.
Deal both to each player.
Reveal top Character = your role.
Pass remaining cards left.

GAMEPLAY
Take 1 card from hand passed to you + place face down.
Follow Character rules.
If you can't take a card = discard (0 pts).
Continue passing until cards run out.
Track points (Number = value).
END ROUND
Use Character ability and then total points.
Highest wins.

Character abilities are on the cards

2

7

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7

2



8

8

9

6

10

10

Next Steps: the future

1

Fully develop illustrations - the solid color is a vibe but I'd like to experiment more with them

2

I think paying with variation in the gameplay, especially for the abilities and restrictions of the players could be cool. Maybe even adding more players outside of classic deck of cards

3

Balancing the gameplay for different player counts, like 2-3 players vs. 5 players and adjusting the rules could make gameplay more dynamic

4

continue to take feedback and improve upon it from there



Thank You
for listening

