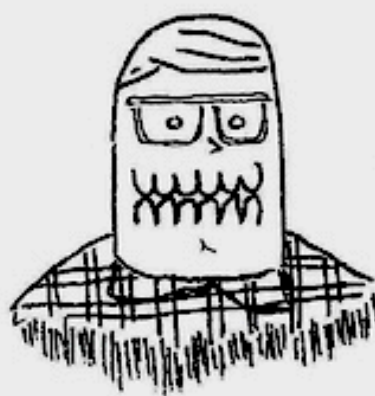


Upkeep



Fall
2026

I used to make comics.



In high school I published them online.

I used to make comics on a daily basis.



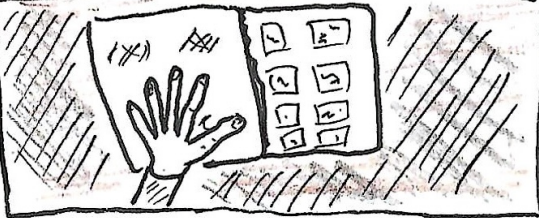
... or close to it.

Now I look at screens.



Constantly.

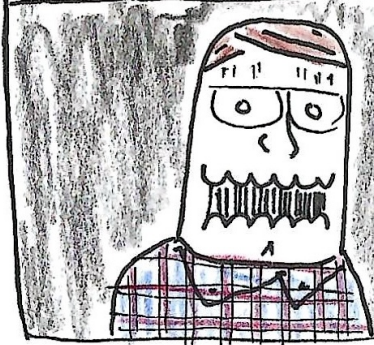
An app has convinced me I'll find joy in doing this again.



A book I am listening to tells me not to believe what I feel from the screens.



Am I deluding myself?



I am deluding myself.

SOME WORDS ABOUT MAGIC: THE GATHERING

by Alex Houstoun

Here are some words about Magic: the Gathering.

Now stop me if you've read me hemming about this in some capacity before, but I find myself somewhat conflicted on Magic in 2026. Wild, right?

This is a situation of my own making basically because I turn to Discord, or Cube Cobra, or Magic related podcasts, in my down time because it can all be a nice white noise. It's a habit of multiple years now and it is hard to break even if continuing with it may cause me some distress or annoyance as well. If I now find gazing into the abyss so unsettling, I should simply stop gazing into the abyss. Well, yes, but have you ever gazed into the abyss? At least I'm not smoking.

It is also a situation which is largely contained within the internet and my own mind. Again, not something terribly unique as everyone seems to suffer some sort of online-induced psychosis these days. Our local community is doing well and no longer needs my constant cajoling and cheerleading. We have cubes scheduled for weekly drafts all the way into December and are getting closer and closer to having a full pod fire each week. I like making one or two discord posts a week to remind people about a draft and then showing up on Thursday evening to simply draft. I don't think about it too much and I don't even feel a pressure to attend every week.

So then what is the issue?

Well, I guess that's it. Doesn't there have to be some issue? Something to struggle with? I mean, I can rattle off a bunch of things I don't like about the current state of the

game but they are pretty abstract and do not actually impact me. I don't play constructed formats, or attend events at stores. I play a niche, non-competitive format in a brewery. Yeah, I think Universes Beyond is pretty stupid as is the current power-level of every card now printed but also I like playing that two-drop Casey Jones card in one of the local cubes. Its existence doesn't really phase me beyond sometimes you just need something to gnash your teeth about online. And even then, whatever.

Maybe the issue is that I look at the Magic cards I actually own—to be more precise, I look at a digital list of them rather than the physical objects right next to my desk—and I feel no real joy. But, are they really supposed to evoke joy in that single moment or is the joy supposed to come from the gathering aspect? I get confused about that sitting at my desk, or laying in bed, or doing the dishes, or wherever else I am when looking at Magic cards online.

I look at my little Cube Cobra page and think “this is all so stupid.”

I think “this is so stupid. . . but if I instead traded all these cards in for a bunch of cards I liked thirteen years ago that could fix everything.”

It is unclear what “everything” may be.

I, like a lot of people, find myself circling around a desire to return to a “simpler” or “golden” era. You know, “when things were good.” I already did a version of this and added a bunch of cards that “meant something to me” at some point. It didn't solve anything and it's not like things actually rocked that hard in 2013.

Does owning and playing with a copy of Solemn Simulacrum really have more meaning and importance to me than a variation on that theme with a card printed in 2026?

The idea of selling off a bunch of cards just to buy more cards, old cards, seems like such a chore. It's the kind of meaningless busywork I have enjoyed subjecting myself to as a distraction but I am trying to do less of that.

It won't fix “everything;” it won't fix much of anything.

I think maybe what I want is an out. Some action that I feel is tantamount to saying “okay, I am done.”

I am not sure why I want an out.

Maybe what I want is a reason to make a grand gesture. This is what my/modern life has been reduced to: thinking that an interaction with a commodity can take on the significance of a grand gesture.

Or maybe I am bored and restless and annoyed and all I can do is look at digital representations of pieces of cardboard and mentally scream at them to provide me with greater meaning.

If nothing else, it feels nice to write a bunch of words about nothing again.

Anyway, the bird card from the new set looks neat.

HOME

by NateLikeFrogs

I crack open a long, white box. Flatland Games sold it to me for my mowing money—fifteen hard earned dollars in exchange for thousands of cards. From the box, I pull each piece of scuffed cardboard out slowly. I don't really know what is going on. I don't know that most of these cards are bad. I don't know what impact this box will have on my future. I am 14 years old and this is the first time I am seeing many of the words in front of me.

“Conclave. . . deceiver. . . indomitable. . . alabaster. . .”, I note aloud as the pieces riff from one hand to the other.

Nothing makes sense. Yet I read each scuffed, confusing piece of cardboard. Slowly. Gently. I parse every name, every mana symbol, every line of flavor text. I examine every bit of one thousand, one hundred, and eighty-eight scuffed, confusing, beautiful pieces of cardboard.

One piece stands out more than any other. Not the Rhino token, which I played in my first deck as a free creature. Not the elf, that allowed me to tap it to search my library for a land to add to my mana pool. It was The Ogre. A bare 4/3. No legendary name. No ability. No spiraled, psychedelic artwork. But a beautiful poem is bestowed in its text box.

“He didn’t have a word for “home,” but he knew it was something to be defended.”

I find thirty-two of The Ogre in my long, white box. I read the poem each time I see a copy of it. It makes me smile.

I enter the clattering halls of Flatland Games. I catch up with my friends as they sling Lightning Bolts at each other's creatures. Practice games are important to us before Friday Night Magic. I talk with Devon, who is lending me his Tarmogoyfs for the night so I can afford to play Jund. He doesn't need them, he has moved on to the enlightened Valakut deck.

I am 17 years old and I think I know everything about magic. My long, white box has been exchanged for black, plastic deck towers. I jam games four times a week at this local game store. It is paramount in my preparation for Preliminary Pro Tour Qualifiers. One is being held here on the following Sunday. As I shuffle up to face Jake and his menace of a BlueMoon deck, I feel a tap on my shoulder.

"Hey, do you still collect these?", asks Bobby. A good friend and game store employee, Bobby always knows what scuffed cardboard I am in search of.

He holds out a magnificent piece. Not only is it The Ogre, it is a foil. My first foil of the card. I smile and ramble on about how *sick* it is. He smiles and rolls his eyes, questioning my obsession with the card. My smile falters for dramatic effect. My stare bores through him as I recite from memory:

"He didn't have a word for "home," but he knew it was something to be defended."

A buzz fills my ears as I close my eyes, protecting them from the lights overhead. One jagged hand of an old artist grips my arm. His other hand guides a needle against my flesh. His velvety voice helps soothe my anxiety.

"It is going to burn. Especially when we get to the shading. We can take a break at any time. Just speak up, kid."

I think to myself that something must be wrong with me. The hum of the machine and my spiraling thoughts block out any pain I am supposed to be feeling. I feel very little as this kind, old man etches artwork into my skin.

I am 21 years old and I am scared. I am in a strange place, in the southern USA, for Spring Break. I am making questionable choices. My stomach twists as I contemplate whether I should be spending the last dollars in my bank account on a tattoo. On a

tattoo of a magic card. On an image of The Ogre fighting robots. An image that will live on my temporary human body until my brain sputters and my heart gives out.

Several hours pass and it is finished. The artist marvels at his own work, requesting to take a picture of my bright red forearm. He goes on about how fun it was to do. He wishes he'd get more *Dungeons & Dragons* or *Magic* requests. As I look at the ink on my skin, I crack a smile. My anxiety fades, if only for a moment. I only have fifty dollars left in my bank account yet I am the happiest I have ever been up to that point.

Before I depart, I show him the poem that is attached to the art he just put on me. We share a smile. I tell him I will find him again when I am ready for the poem to be woven into my body.

A package arrives in my mailbox as I get home from work. I have been waiting for it all week with excitement. I quickly dash into my home office with the parcel. I rip it open and spread out the bounty across my card table. Shining pieces of cardboard reflect my joy. Slobbering creatures from a five-sunned planet. More ogres for my collection. Not The Ogre, but ogres nonetheless.

I am 25 years old and I think I know everything. I am going to build the next *Dan-Dan* and everyone across the internet will know my name. I am living through a stressful period in my life and think popularity can fix it.

My brain whirs and I clack across my keyboard. I want to make a deck of these new ogres. Not for competitive play but for my own enjoyment. To flex my brain muscles. To fulfill my creative desires. I search for all of the artifacts. Then decide I will use no artifacts. I look for efficient spells and value pieces. I look for unplayable things that need a home. I spend hours of my limited life building a pile of cards.

I take a hit of a joint. I am supposed to be quitting them. It's hard. A long pull fills my lungs with a familiar, warm tenderness. A cold wind blows through the open window, contending against the hot smoke that looks to escape through the same passage. I sigh and flick through one of many long, white boxes that clutter my space. Two escape mechanisms to fill my addled mind.

I am 28 years old and I don't really know what is going on. I hear my wife and our cat, Sweets, walking past the closed door I reside behind. Their honeyed tones fill my ears as they speak to one another. I smile as English, purrs, mimicry, and chirps create an adorable dialogue. The smoke, the sounds, and the cardboard in my hands fill my heart with joy. For a brief moment, I am content.

I flick past The Ogre for the first time in a while. I read the poem. I smile.

"He didn't have a word for "home," but he knew it was something to be defended."

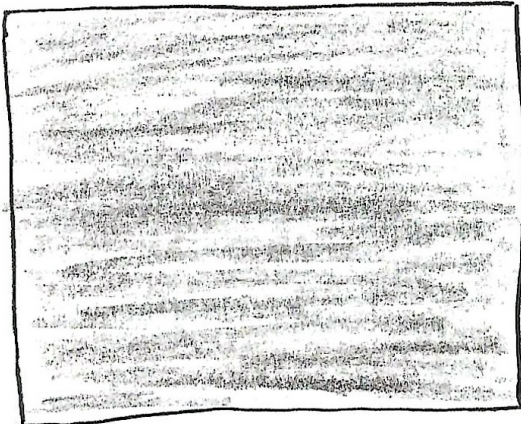
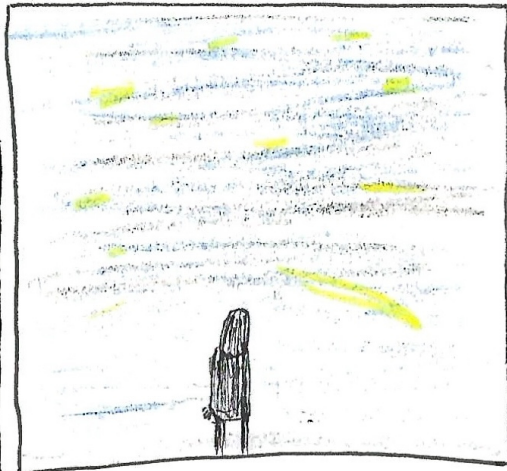
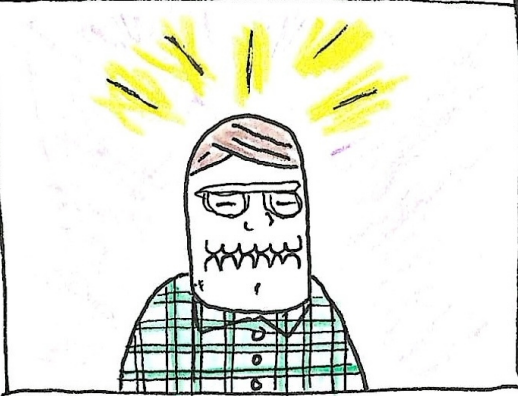
I read it once more. I think about all the copies I have accumulated over the past 14 years. My eyes shift to an abandoned stack of different ogres. The stack that a younger, foolish version of myself thought would bring him happiness. It's been on my desk for several years. I slowly look between The Ogre in my hand and the other ogres in the stack.

The sounds in the hallway still fill my ears. The smoke continues to billow in my face. I sit with the shining, old, dust-covered ogres in front of me. I read the poem from The Ogre once more. I think of all the good times I had with friends. At 14. At 17. At 21. Now. I think of my wife, who has no relation to these pieces of cardboard other than the support she has for me and for them. It all hits me at once. All the ogres shine brighter in the rain of my wistful tears.

I parse the poem once more. I am me and the age I am. I may never know what is going on. But I will always know one thing. What it is. Who it is. Where it is. What it can be.

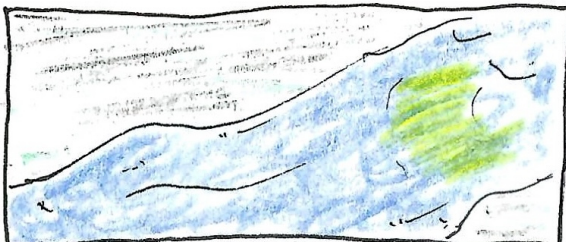
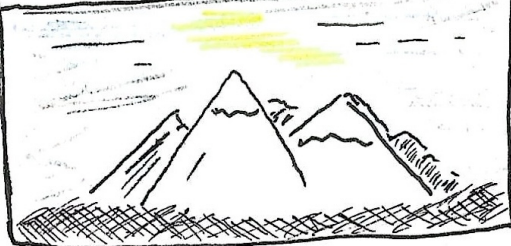
"Home"

I am trying to be mindful.



What does that really mean to me?

High, high the summit peak,
Boundless the world to sight!

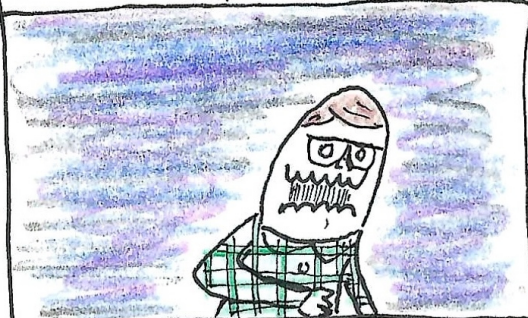


No one knows I am here,
Lone moon in the freezing stream.



In the stream, where's the moon?
The moon's always in the sky.

I write this poem: and yet,



In this poem there is no Zen.
- Han-shan

LOGGING OFF

by Parker LaMascus

“Feel how your brain sizzles as you feed the monster.”

—*Octet*, “Fugue State”

I’ve accidentally quit Magic cold turkey twice in the last year.

Or, maybe a better description is I’ve “circumstantially quit”. I never intended to do it, but job and housing changes have a way of disrupting one’s routine. So it was that June 2025 became a live experiment on a human conscriptee.

Research hypothesis: who am I without my biggest hobby?

The first time I quit, the fall of 2025, I stopped attending my weekly Magic night due to geographical challenges. I played zero Magic, but I still stayed online with my Discord and Signal friends in the hobby.

I hadn’t updated Arena since *MOM* largely because I noticed that anything more than a single draft robbed Magic of all its fun—and the game is designed (through its UI and economy and ease of play) to be impossible to log off after just one draft.

That fall, I began to feel the same way about the rest of the Internet writ large.

The World-Wide Web is an algorithm-fueled attention-monster that gets hungrier the more I feed it, long after it stopped reciprocating with dopamine. It’s hard to quit. What would I even do with all those freed-up hours? What if I get bored? My god, what if I made eye contact with a stranger?

I stayed online even when I knew it wasn’t good for me. Until circumstances shifted again. A new job. An hour’s drive to a micromanaged shift and back again. The gig was not my favorite, to put it mildly, but it did have one good outcome: it logged me off by force.

Not only do I like Magic a lot more now, but I learned some things about myself and this game.

1. Magic rules.

To be fair, I already knew this one, but quitting my weekly cube night created a stark contrast, just in case I'd taken my community for granted. Within a week I missed my friends. I missed the Christmas-morning anticipation of every Wednesday night, where we'd meet up and crack jokes and play some dirt-cheap wizard poker. My friends would introduce me to never-before-seen cards—some busted-in-half Suki from *Avatar*, the jaw-dropping art of Mind Swords, a rekindled love for weirdo Howling Mine combos. Nobody really cares about power creep, because our cubes are self-contained and each one handles it in a unique way. Sometimes we'd watch a B-movie afterwards, and if you weren't having fun at Magic you could just head out early to pregame some popcorn.

What else is Magic, if not something fun? These meet-ups are all this game needs to be. Without them, I was left with the worst part of my hobby. The internet parts.

2. 90% of social media enhances the worst 90% of Magic

Magic is great. You wouldn't know it if you only engaged with it online. My apologies to the many true friends I've made through Magic chats and subreddits—the reasons I'm still around online. Unfortunately, the other 90% of my time online, browsing and arguing, was frankly ill-spent.

I probably don't need any examples, but I will elaborate anyways. Most of it boils down to The Discourse™, the worst parts of Magic retweeted until they're inescapable. Agonizingly to-the-minute ban breakdowns and ban predictions and ban complaints. Content creators juicing their algorithms with tantalizing thumbnails and vapid videos. A perfectly good bathroom break, ruined by some insanely pedantic ping from a screenager at their first rodeo. Advertisements, the *raison d'être* for all social media, micro-targeted and macro-dosed. The unending FOMO (cons, Secret Lairs, Top 8s) on the feed, intermixed with cat photos and porn-bots and, to keep you on your toes, fresh horrors in high definition. The Discourse™ never ends.

Even in the little Cube-focused circles where I spent almost all of my screen time, The Discourse™ seeped in. Well-actuals and what-abouts galore. Folks who only visited to brag about something expensive they bought, which isn't to your taste but still makes you feel a sort of jealous ennui. And most of all, the tiny molehills of cube design are amplified until they loom large as the Rockies. UB or not; Vintage Cube or jank; how does a Twobert differ from a two-player cube; how do we fix Golgari; what are the strongest Cube cards from a fake-looking set that will be power-crept in a month; do you owe it to your players to bot-draft a million times on Cube Cobra. The flavor of the month changes but the recipe never does.

And look, maybe I over-exposed myself to the worst of social media by being an active Cube poster with strong opinions. But my social media usage didn't start out that way. It's just an outcome of the medium's profit incentives: hook us on the randomized dopamine drip of pings and thumbs-ups, and as we acclimate, we'll need more and more to get the same rush. It wasn't until I suddenly found myself at this new job with about five total minutes of daily screentime that I reprioritized my hobbies, and The Discourse™ found itself last on my list.

3. Logging off helps.

This year, I've started holding my Discord opinions lightly, posting less often, and ignoring any pedantic pings I got afterwards. I muted the spoiler channels and then stopped checking them. I no longer hopped into others' cube design conversations unless invited (except in the rare cases when my strong opinion that day was RIGHT).

But most importantly, I poured time into other hobbies. Habit-change researcher Judson Brewer writes that new habits don't stick unless we make a bigger, better offer to our brains. For me, that superior status quo meant more fun for less money and FOMO. For example, did you know that birdwatching is completely free and non-monetized?! (You don't need binoculars, but even if you do want a new pair, they're cheaper than a Sheoldred.) Birds don't care if you see them or not, so nobody's keeping score. The measure of birdwatching success, if there is one, is nothing more than the deep attention you pay to the outdoors world around you. If I lost at Magic that day, or if my Discord conversation was getting heated, I had something else to make me happy.

It's not just birding, playing my old board games again (which I'd mostly dropped in favor of Magic during the pandemic), MarioKart with my partner and neighbors. Cooking and baking more, with more intentional process mastery than before. More writing, but only about the parts of Magic that interest me, that truly return psychological rewards to me in proportion to my effort with no diminishing returns (for me, it's Magic's art, ludonarrative, and rules-enforced politics).

It scares me to know, deep in my bones, that I couldn't have quit The Discourse™ without these new hobbies. But the new interests diversified my dopamine sources, making me happy even off my phone. Then, I needed to fill the time left from the absence of my phone-gazing, ideally with something fun (and, as it turns out, learning a new hobby is a perfect candidate). And most critically, I'm not try-hardening any of these hobbies. I am probably bottom 15% birdwatching skill, and bottom 1% of birdwatching gizmos and equipment. I just like paying attention to the backyard birds, and I'm as good at that as I need to be. Nothing to buy, nothing to optimize, no competition to win. Resetting the incentives that rule my life.

And I still play Magic, but only face-to-face. Here, I get a source of Cube design inspiration that is Discourse-free. I don't need to pay attention to the phone conversations because I have real friends to ask, and their opinions are all that matter.



Cal is @MTGCal

Jun 11

this is how liking magic the gathering feels when you stop looking at social media & just play the game & realize it all rules & always has ruled



Jun 11, 2026 · 3:05 PM UTC



Emma Partlow 6/11/26, 11:58

You can just say
"Log off, idiot"

THE ROADS THEY'VE TAKEN

by Kade Goforth

Defining Nostalgia by Asking Questions

In which I, a chronic question-asker, pontificate about the value of inquiry in self-reflection.

Collegium Musicum is perhaps the class I reference most frequently from my time in graduate school. Literally “group of musicians,” we’d read articles and argue about philosophy and theory for three hours a week. One topic that we circled around time and again was historical performance practice, the attempt to recreate a musical work as it existed at the time of its inception. The discourse swirled with questions that I still chew on. Can it actually be done? Do we have enough actionable information to properly recreate something from that long ago? Can we even know whether or not we’re right? If we could reproduce it, does it matter? Is there an audience for period-accurate music?

I’ve naturally carried this line of inquiry into cube design, particularly in the realm of nostalgia cubes. Can we define what we’re aiming to recapture? Can we actually re-create something as ethereal as a play environment? Is there an audience for period-accurate Magic? The answer to the last question has been a resounding “yes” in recent years. Nostalgia-flavored cubes have been consistent high picks at conventions and in playgroups across the globe. Players of all stripes have something they’ve enjoyed in the past.

The big question though—and one we can apply to our design process—is:

What are you nostalgic for?

A sad pleasure experienced in recalling what no longer exists: a wistful or sentimental yearning for a return to or the return of some real or romanticized past period or some irrecoverable past condition or setting

Nostalgia implies the irrecoverability of the object of yearning, but the inaccessibility shouldn't dissuade nostalgists from attempting the pursuit. Elements of the condition can be recovered and an imperfect re-creation can capture much of the prior delight. Cube is an ideal vehicle for nostalgia in many ways too. You build with the actual pieces of the era you're celebrating. If you pine for a certain block you use cards from that block. If you're drawn to a particular frame you set your Scryfall or Cogwork Librarian parameters to pare down the otherwise endless options. Homage is a worthwhile endeavor and you're working directly with the source material.

While nostalgia can be a great catalyst for design, **thoughtfully scrutinizing what you enjoy provides a rich opportunity to create the best possible version of your project.** When you have a clear understanding of what you find appealing about the past you set better defined and more actionable goals. You may discover in your inquiry that you simply want to cast more copies of Venser, Shaper Savant. But you may find that there are tools beyond your initial expectations that will lead to a more fulfilling experience that better achieves your aims.

My friend Jake once suggested that we're all "boomers" for the moment we started playing Magic. The point has its salience but, as with all cube-flavored conversations, there's a nuance that's worth touching on. What we're 'boomers' for is an amalgamation of ideas, a gestalt of imagery, strategies, and circumstances. It's easy to simplify the idea—maybe not incorrectly—to one card, one deck, or one set. Though what shapes the interest and desirability of that idea for us is far more complex. The object of our nostalgia was perceived initially through the lens of our personal understanding and experience, which was in turn impacted by our environment. As our understanding and experience changes, so too does how we perceive our own interests. So while what we enjoyed may not have necessarily changed over time, how and why we enjoy it may have.

Who we are now is necessarily different from who we were (what a relief!). So when we identify a focus of our nostalgia it's tremendously valuable to drill down on its substance. Not just leaning back in our armchairs to asking "why do I enjoy Bloodbraid Elf" but dissecting specifics. What did I enjoy about Bloodbraid Elf? Did the artwork capture me? Did I enjoy the act of casting the card (and the next card)? Did I enjoy executing the strategies that most benefited from it? Did I enjoy successfully piloting the deck that made it shine? Was it the friends that I shared those games with? Was it the sensation of winning dramatically against the local end boss? Is the card the key element or is it part of the periphery?

The next level down is shifting to the present tense. Does the artwork still capture me? Do I want to cast *this* card *particularly* or am I happy to cast others like it? You quickly find actionable guidelines in your answers to these questions. You can begin to build a framework for your goals that goes beyond a particular card or set. You may indeed find that a more precise group of limitations is best, but you may discover that the experience you want to recreate and share is broader than a card frame.

It's worth a few caveats here. First, the assessments you make during this self-reflection are not a value judgment. Having a deeper understanding of your own enjoyment can only help point to more fulfilling play experiences for you and can't define what's optimal for others. Second, setting parameters can be profoundly helpful in fostering design and keeping the task from becoming overwhelming. Being open-handed doesn't mean eschewing self-imposed limitations altogether. Third, your goals for a project may preclude this type of analysis being helpful. Cube is vast and the structure of a project may point you to other considerations rather than (or before) introspection.

As I consider what this looks like practically, I can't help but think of my conversation with Magdalena about *Twilight A.K.A The Cube Version of The Twilight Saga: New Moon Soundtrack*, still one of the greatest cube titles extant. Magdalena described that the ideal cards for this project were very simple, in some cases doing only one thing. We also talked about initially struggling with power disparity (Forth Eorlingas! vs. Spellstutter Sprite) and navigating cards with drawbacks. Through all of this, the core was that the cube ought to be about cards that she enjoyed playing during

that particular season, which meant that exceptions had to be intentional and necessarily infrequent. In the case of *Twilight*, the parameters worked and the temporal outliers match the rules.

I also think of my conversation with Brandon about his *Dominaria Cantos* project. He recalled being inspired by the retro-frame reprints in Brothers' War to consider new cards that may fit the goals of his nostalgia-driven project. He described the broad appeal of older-frame cards but how trying a new, more experimental design led to some of the most fun games of Magic he's experienced. For Brandon, the rules of that project set the stage and expanding past them (or at least reframing them) caused the project to truly shine.

To borrow from the incomparable Zach Barash, cards in your cube ought to be in dialogue with one another. Often that compatibility comes from proximity of publishing date, but in a game with thirty five thousand unique cards (and counting) there are bound to be more options that fit your goals. Identifying a type or family of cards that resonate for you in a similar vein can open up a world of design possibilities. If your goals don't put hard limits on what resources you can use, allow yourself to test the waters beyond them.

When we ask questions of ourselves the answer itself is not the only outcome. We come away with a more holistic understanding of our own values. We also invariably end up with more questions, but the more completely we can grasp our own foundation and whims the more cohesively we can work toward fulfillment. Being inquisitive and diligent to honestly answer our scrutiny won't cause a fully-formed cube list to burst into existence but it will give us the freedom to design more accurately to our tastes.

As a summary thought, cube lies at a striking nexus in crafting experiences. While drafting (in most cases) I want to feel like I'm discovering and I want to feel comfortable. Both are experience-driven desires. Curating a cube means that you provide the elements that will point your drafters to those desired experiences. Through the lens of nostalgia, revisiting an era can provide outlets for exploration as well as comfort. Shaping a fresh environment that plays like a time you love can be cozy *and* novel.



Cube is malleable, scalable, open-source, expressive, portable, limitless. I encourage you to approach your next nostalgia-driven project with intentional scrutiny and an open hand. At worst, you learn. At best, you remember, and you guide others to remember as well.

Praxis (or SO WHAT?)

In which I attempt to turn this into more than just blowing hot air

In an effort to offer something more than my long-winded musings, here are some introductory questions to consider when working on your own cube projects. Feel free to use as many or as few as are helpful to you. You'll also (hopefully) come up with many more along the way!

Questions for Defining / Refining a Nostalgia Cube

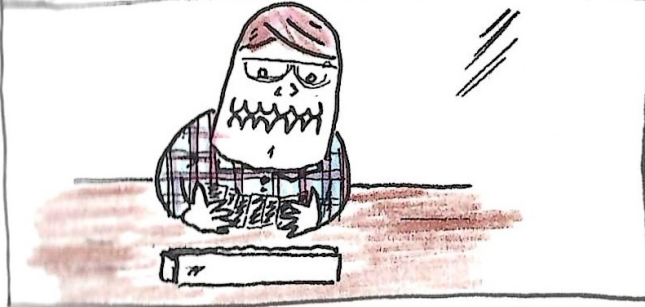
- Have you? Have you defined your goals in an actionable way?
 - Are your goals clear and consistent?
 - Do my goals include design parameters? (*Sets, card frames, print years, etc.*)
 - Do they have to? Do those parameters contribute to my enjoyment?
- What specifically have I enjoyed in the past?
 - Aesthetics? Gameplay? Structure? Something para-MtG?
- What contributed to that enjoyment?

- People? Patterns? Opportunities?
- What detracts from that enjoyment now?
 - Aesthetics? Gameplay? Structure? Something para-MtG?
 - Compare your past experience to current parallels—what's different?
- Can a detraction be remedied?
 - Through design? Through a change of mindset?

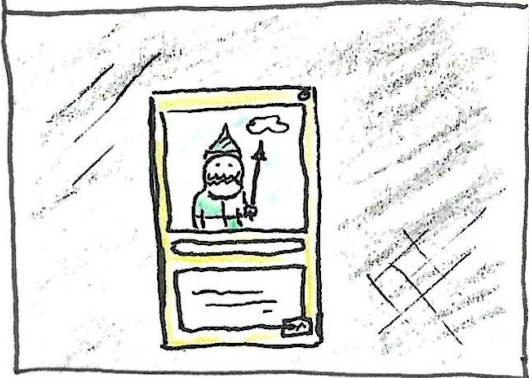
Questions for Evaluating Play Patterns in Cube Design

- Which cards or decks define your goals?
 - Which cards or themes should be the headline experience?
 - Upper bounds: what should the most powerful cards in the cube be?
 - Lower bounds: is the floor playable? Inconsistent dreams to chase?
 - How would the environment need to look to accommodate these cards or decks?
- What do you want games to look like?
 - How quickly should games end?
 - What is the density and speed of interaction?
 - What is the consistency and power of card advantage?
 - Should players run out of things to do?
- How should individual cards play?
 - Should single cards define the play experience?
 - At what cost should a card be game-ending on its own?
 - How do cards compare on rate to other similar cards?
 - How complex should a card be?
 - How much should each card do? (*Incredibly subjective!*)
 - On its own? With other cards?
- How should cards compare to one another?
 - Largely similar? (Low variance, narrow power / complexity band)
 - Potentially disparate? (High variance, wide power / complexity band)
 - How replaceable are particular effects? (Effect density)

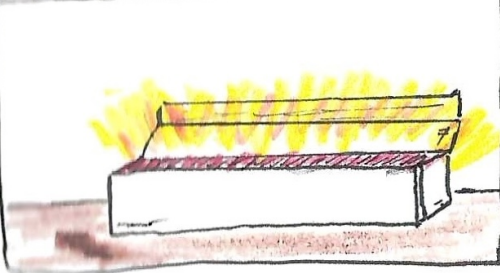
Trying to make sense of what meaning there may be in a collection of game pieces in a cardboard box.



I don't have any clever observations.



Mistaking commodities for comfort.



Consumption for culture.



It doesn't really matter.



And that is okay.

CONTRIBUTORS

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