

Can museums make good games and should they?



Roflpillar by Lucky Frame

@marthasadie

Games are **belief engines**. Games are **canvases** for **stories** in motion. Games are a **challenge** and a **learning** activity. Games are **ideas**. Games are **explorations** both intellectual and meaningful. Games are **positive**. Games make life better. Games help you feel **success** when all around you is grey and confusing. Games are **change**. Games are **illuminating**. Games are **insightful**. Games are **irreverent**. Games are very **old**. Games are very **new**. Games are **tests**. Games are **addictive**. Games are **pressure**. Games are **motivational, inspirational** and **educational**. Games are **fun**. Games are **exercise**. Games are **good for body and soul**. Games are **about you**. Games are **projections**. Games are **worlds** which we superimpose on this world in order to **escape** or make **sense** of it. Games are **dynamic, chaotic** and **delightful**. Games are there to be **mastered**, used up and then forgotten. Games are **participatory, cultural** and **shared**. Games are **demanding**. Games are **emotive**. Games are sometimes **indescribable** and yet all too **real**. Games are **made**, but more than the sum of their made parts. Games are a constant source of the **strange**. Games are **risky**. Games are **playful**. Games are one of the key **experiences** that life is for. Games are **brilliant**. Games are **an art form**. Games are **numinous**. Games are **thaumatic**. Games **belong to us**.

– Tadhg Kelly

www.whatgamesare.com





SCORE 141030

PLAYER 1 LEVEL 16

BONUS 8890

TIME 900







home

about me



honey

fun stuff!



They

they

they make

Couldn't

something

be

HALT - MODULE CORE HEMORRHAGE

Control has been yielded to the
SYSTEM PERIL DISTRIBUTED REFLEX.

```
grobe:
seeker > !attach Princess
fail "msg: SPDR-5.14.3

evade evade evade

!probe extern proc 1
rogue proc

!bite rogue proc 1 recurse
clean !splotch confidence 100
```

[Mission Log](#)

[MIA](#)

[Recruits](#)

COUNTDOWN TO WIDE AWAKE AND PHYSICAL:

Make your decisions accordingly.

FAQ

Q: What happened to this site?

A: No idea. Help me out [here](#).



SPACETEAM



• PLAY

Credits

Upgrades

► Engage Primesucker

Hextrack

ON

Starshell

Meteor Kappafra

Epsilonstrap

0 1 2 3



Fuserig

0

1

INVENTORY

124 SILVER COINS

37 OPIUM CHESTS

15 TEA CHESTS

THE MARKETS

BENGAL

BUY OPIUM CHESTS

5 15 30

34 /CHEST

CANTON

BUY TEA CHESTS

5 15 30

25 /CHEST

AWAITING ORDER

(DUE IN 36 WEEKS)



HOW TO PLAY

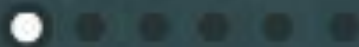
— STEP 1 —
BUY OPIUM



— STEP 2 —
SELL OPIUM



— STEP 3 —
BUY TEA



PREVIOUS

DONE

NEXT

board

gence Beta

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Sources

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Reporting

izations

reports

Segments

ce Beta

ources

s Report

on University

Questions

Export Email

Dashboard

Visits

300,000

150,000



Site Usage

2,741,009 Visits

47,086,758 Pageviews

17.18 Pages/Visit

2.12%

00:14:4

30.82%

Visitors Overview

200,000

100,000

200,000

100,000

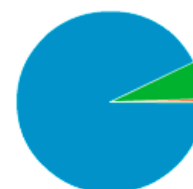
1,432,103 Visitors

[view report](#)

Map Overlay

[view report](#)

Traffic Sources Overview



Direct Traffic
2,540,651.00 (92.69%)

Referring Sites
186,091.00 (6.79%)

Search Engines
14,249.00 (0.52%)

Other
18 (> 0.00%)

[view report](#)

Content Overview

Pages

/YearStarted:1830

/LoadStart

/YearCompleted:1830

/YearStarted:1831

/LoadComplete

[view report](#)



icelord646 13

Feb. 05, 2011

How come I only understood what I'd seen in a museum after playing this game?!



(1)

Wildly entertaining
by Batha
date: February 5, 2011

SCORE **9**

This was an interesting, educational, and all around fun game to play. I loved playing close to the chest as the game went on, having to make bets that I wouldn't get busted just to feed the British Thirst. The only thing is that I think you should be able to sell a ship at any time rather than when you just run out of money. It would have helped me clinch the end in one try rather than 3.

Final winning stats: 128,357,760 Points for final score (retiring wealthy), 696 Billion cups of Tea delivered to the Empire, and 369 Million Chinese lives destroyed. What a terrible period in history. Surprising how it makes such a fun game.

People find this review helpful

And finally...
by dededeledodedo
date: February 6, 2011

SCORE **10**

after shipping 432 billion cups of tea, and ruining 175 million Chinese lives, I finally get to retire a rich man. Great game reflecting the true nature of colonialism - it simply amounts to exploitation. Good work!

People find this review helpful

There are 19 pages of reviews. [1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19]

Sort by: (date rating)

YouTube high tea game

Let's Play - High Tea (Web / Flash)

magmawik Subscribe 1,177 videos

00:11 / 1:24

861 views

4 likes, 1 dislikes

Uploaded by magmawik on 4 Feb 2011

Buy low, sell high... very high.

Join magmawik as he goes back in time when the British were still on their

Show more

MetaFilter
community weblog

Home FAQ About Arch Login New User

Opium => Silver => Tea
February 13, 2011 7:20 PM Subscribe

Recreate a part of history in **High Tea**, a game Wellcome Collection.

Via Reddit.com/r/Webgames, where every d posted by [mccarty.tim](#) (39 comments total) 22 users



Tormsy

Feb 4, 2011 11:47pm

- While you are at it, make a game selling African slaves and small pox infected blankets you insensitive @sshole.
comment | delete
- skpsbrother** Feb 5, 2011 2:39am | delete
fudge ju
- Ddaziel** Feb 5, 2011 3:50am | delete
you all do realise that this is a museum, yeh? And this goes with their high society show at the moment? It's a history education game
- gamer3d** Feb 5, 2011 9:20am | delete
You guys have problems...
- frappeman** Feb 5, 2011 9:45am | delete
you know your a little too sensitive you retarded mother f*cker
- Your_Energy** Feb 5, 2011 12:36pm | delete
... and you are oversensitive - time to grow up, kid.
- Thanatosider** Feb 5, 2011 5:55pm | delete
Yeah right, selling African slave's blankets is more interesting than drinking silver, as\$holes!
- greengreg418** Feb 6, 2011 6:12pm | delete
Really? This game is for entertainment and is historically accurate. Its a good game and what happened in it actually did in the 1830's. Grow up, and realize that if you think this is bad, half ...
show more
- atled3** Feb 7, 2011 12:21am | delete
I feel the need to point out that they gave away the smallpox blankets.
- jjackrabbitt** Feb 7, 2011 3:42pm | delete
Hahahaha, the comment that started this chain is just too good.
Great game.
- Tipthejester** Feb 7, 2011 4:46pm | delete
Historically accurate yes, but then again, a slave trading game would also be historically accurate. It's still in bad taste, moron. And no, they didn't give away smallpox blankets, they...
show more
- MillyS** Feb 10, 2011 12:39am | delete
I agree - of course we should censor all of human history that makes some people uncomfortable, that way we won't be making the same mistakes again, they'll be all new shiny mistakes...
show more
- Kleos** Feb 10, 2011 9:04am | delete
well yeah, brits was the super power of 19th century, conquering half the masses of the world, and just like any superpower countries today, they would do anything they like, including selling opium t...
show more
- LionelHutz** Feb 10, 2011 8:11pm | delete
This horrifying game was made by someone who is either a jerk or a moron. Then again, I'm an optimist, so the person could very well be both a jerk AND a moron.
- Laurapalooza** Feb 10, 2011 11:52pm | delete

MULTIMEDIA | NEUROMANCE

'High Tea': Reflex Economics, or a Twitch-Based Economy



"Boy low and sell high," and other frightening necessities for profiteering on addiction.

Economies are based on need. Need leads to demand. And what can be more needful than addiction?

Top rover today



0275m

00000m



00067m



< Back

Use your finger to draw around the motor. This will be your rover's body sh_



Clear





only within the past year have I learned to **love** myself



△ √ √ √ √ √ √
NOW PLAY THIS



The Sleeper Wakes

If you're in bed with someone who's sleeping,
get a point for each time you manage to make
them rotate ninety degrees.

You lose if they wake up

– Holly Gramazio



How to make *bad* museum games

- Decide exactly what you want the game to be before you've spoken to any game designers
- Fail to match the ambition to the budget
- Fail to match the mechanics with the objectives
- Require every decision to be signed off 18 people
- Don't allow time for testing and development
- Fail to identify and understand your audience
- Forget to tell anyone about it and assume it will "go viral"



How to make good museum games

The iterative game design process

- Identify objectives (DO NOT SKIP)
- Identify mechanics that fit
- Draft a game
- Prototype and test it
- Revise
- Test again
- Revise
- Test again
- Revise
- Test again
- Revise
- Etc etc

LINKS

- Board game geek <https://boardgamegeek.com/>
- Game confs <http://www.gameconfs.com/>
- Steam <http://store.steampowered.com/>
- Rock Paper Shotgun
<https://www.rockpapershotgun.com/>
- Museum games wiki
<http://museumgames.pbworks.com/w/page/38863237/FrontPage>
- Board game cafe <http://boardgamecafe.hu/>
- My website www.marthahenson.com



Thank you!