http://www.ideabout.com/fan_design/completed/aliens/joker_v05.html
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Cosmic Encounter
Releasing JOKER as a BETA
http://www.ideabout.com/fan_design/completed/aliens/joker_v03.html

We are concerned about the issue of players always playing wild cards as 40s or -7s (which would be boring), but have retained the ability to also use wild card as N and believe there will be a variety of interesting uses for wild cards - the reality of "what will happen" needs to be learned in play testing. The JOKER can be play tested both ways - allowing just wild attacks or allowing wild attacks and negotiates.

Fan Designed Cosmic Expansion Set - JOKER

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Game Setup: Take two Joker wild cards. Shuffle the remaining 8 wild cards into the deck. You will be dealt 6 additional cards as your hand.

Discussion

Bill Eberle New discussion and play test notes for JOKER can go here.

4 hours ago · Like

Bill Eberle Complete text so you don't have to go to ideabout to get it:
JOKER ADDS WILD CARDS TO GAME
You have the power to add wildness.

Game Setup: Take two Joker wild cards. Shuffle the remaining 8 wild cards into the deck. You will be dealt 6 additional cards as your hand.

Play: In an encounter, you may use a wild card as an encounter card. When cards are revealed, you declare it is as any valid encounter card. The wild card you played is removed from the game after the encounter. When you have your power, any other player may use a wild card as any valid encounter card. At the end of the encounter, that wild card is given to you. Whenever a wild card is revealed, you may be zapped. You do not collect the wild card and the player who played the wild card loses. If both players reveal wild cards in an encounter, both players lose and play passes.

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(All Players | Mandatory | Reveal/Resolution)

WILD When you are a main player, before cards are played, you may declare one Encounter Card value to be "wild" for any player who plays such a card during that encounter.
(As Any Player | Reveal/Resolution)

SUPER When you play a wild card it is not removed from the game; it is discarded.
(JOKER | Resolution)

History
The Fun-loving Jokers enjoy humiliating the conceited, mocking the powers that be, and causing general chaos. They seek not to rule, but to satirize the universe.

Text on Wild Card
Top and Bottom: (W) Encounter

Wild Card

After reveal: declare as any valid encounter card.
Two wild cards: Both main players lose.
Use when: Joker is in the game.

Notes
This is a Resource type power.
We are also planning to create rules for a game variant that uses wild cards.

4 hours ago · Like

Bill Martinson What is the *card type* of this card?

2 hours ago · Like

Bill Martinson Now that the wild card itself includes the pick-any-encounter-card effect, the Joker should lose a lot of its text. After the word "Play:", sentences 1, 2, 4, and 8 are all redundant and should be removed.

It appears that Joker's power is now (a) you start with 2 wilds and (b) you collect wilds used by other players, and place wilds you use out of play. Is that right?

Was there a problem with the text I wrote to deal with the sequencing issue at game start?

2 hours ago · Like

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- **Sam Connolly** The indicator for the Wild Flare is all messed up. The text says "When you are a main player", but the indicator says "As any player"; the text says "before cards are played", suggesting Planning, but the indicator says "Reveal/Resolution". And that's to say nothing of the Super flare's indicator saying "JOKER" instead of "As Main Player".

  Also, allowing Wilds to be used as Negotiates really doesn't solve the "they'll almost always be 40s" problem. Negotiates are common, so a player will usually have one available when needed - and even if not, how often will a player need a Negotiate so desperately that they'd be willing to give up what would otherwise be a 40?

  about an hour ago · Like

- **Sam Connolly** *Main Player Only, not As Main Player.

  about an hour ago · Like

- **Bill Eberle** Sam Connolly, re: Wild, you're right, I'll fix that to say Main Player Only
  re: using wild as a Negotiate, there are so many possible games and game situations; we think it makes sense to keep the "any valid encounter card" option open to keep the "wild card" idea surprisingly useful instead of just "obviously useful."

  about an hour ago · Like

- **Sam Connolly** Oh, definitely, leave in the option to use it as a Negotiate. I don't think it's enough to solve the "Wilds are usually funny-looking 40s" problem, but it's a start at least.

  about an hour ago · Like

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Stephen Sloboda The issue about "always choosing 40" is no different than wild cards in any other game. Why would you choose a value other than the one you expect to win? Against Mirror you wouldn't want to choose 40, because it can turn it into 04.

about an hour ago · Like

Bill Eberle @Bill Martinson, the type of this card is Encounter sub type W (wild).

Re: the sequencing issue at game start, I thought the current JOKER text captured that. Peter Olotka and I looked through all of the relevant wording suggestions and thought we had captured the correct wording for this alien's and the wild cards' rules. What did we miss - what does the current wording either allow or disallow that it shouldn't?

Re: I don't think it hurts to have the "how to use a wild card" description on the cards and on the JOKER power card. For the card we used the FFG abbreviated format, it's a reminder of how it works. Full rules on the JOKER power card and in the future wild card game variant rules.

about an hour ago · Like

Bill Martinson @Bill: Encounter is not a card type, and there aren't any subtypes. Each card must have a clear card type for effects like Plague, Hate, Wild Disease, etc. Also, the type will need to be something other than just "Wild" because that term is already used in more than one place throughout the game, and always only as an adjective on another card type. Wild destiny, Wild flare. So if we're going to use "wild" here, it needs to be Wild "something" where "something" is or can be a valid card type. (And it can't be "encounter" -- that is already a higher-level grouping term for multiple different card types.)

40 minutes ago · Like

Bill Martinson Re: the game setup stuff: It doesn't say whether the wild cards go into the deck before or after other players get their hands, before or after Aristocrat would look through it, etc. It needs to nail down a specific timeframe to avoid disputes. "When flares are being added" is probably the most logical time, and if I'm not mistaken I think you guys even used that phrase on something back in the Eon days.

37 minutes ago · Like

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Bill Martinson Re: the redundant text. The problem with redundancy is that when something gets canceled or modified in one place, then you have arfguments about whether it is canceled or modified in the other place. What overrides what? So I argue that it *does* hurt to have it in two places, and is unnecessary. If it's on the card, there is no reason at all to have it on Joker because Joker can't use his power at all without one of the cards being in his hand or on the table in full view.
35 minutes ago · Like

Bill Eberle Thanks for the clarifications Bill Martinson. I've got so much of this game in me, and for such a long time, that I'm "old school" and naturally think of "encounter" as a card type. In FFG terminology, we should say "Cosmic Card" ... I've amended and posted the update at http://www.ideabout.com/fan_design/completed/aliens/joker_v03.html Because it is a semantic change, i.e. a simple wording error, I haven't changed the version.

Fan Designed Cosmic Expansion Set - JOKER

8 minutes ago · Like ·

Bill Eberle @Bill please let me know if the new wording for the type of card one can substitute within with the wild card works.
Re: game setup, I've amended to: "Shuffle the remaining 8 wild cards into the deck before cards are dealt to players."
Re: your point about redundant text . . . let's keep talking about this as a global issue. I'd like to hear what Peter and our other expansion set designers think about this issue. Thanks.

52 seconds ago · Like

Jefferson Krogh

Bill Eberle: The references to "encounter cards" on the Joker power text are indeed correct. Bill Martinson was referring to the "Wild" encounter card added to the deck, and its "type" as regards to powers like Hate, artifacts like Plague,...See More

14 minutes ago · Like

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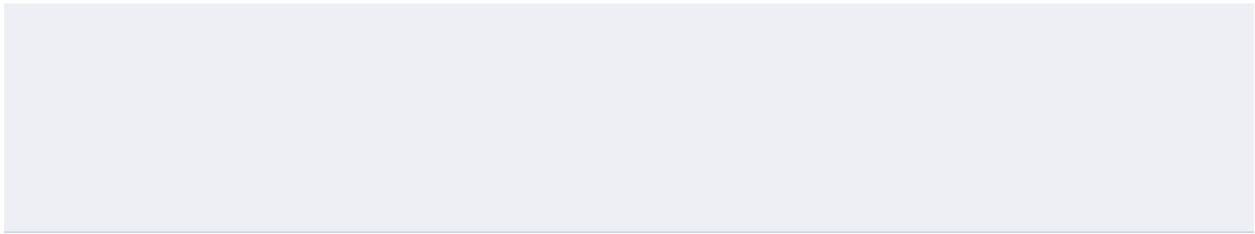
Jefferson Krogh First, we already have a rule that Morph vs. Morph means that everyone loses. Second, the wild cards do change upon being revealed, and that's what Morph does too. Only, the Morph (Joker) turns into a card you name, rather than the card your opponent revealed.

13 minutes ago · Like

Bill Eberle Jefferson Krogh Arrgghhh Ok I see that ... I didn't look closely enough ... re: edits "nevermind" re: the Wild card, its type should also be "encounter" ... why was Bill Martinson saying encounter is not a card type - in FFG rules I see, "Encounter Cards" and "These consist of attacks, negotiates, and the morph card ..." What am I missing here?

3 minutes ago · Like

Jefferson Krogh At the bottom of page 13 in the FFG rulebook, there's a short bit that explains what "Card Types" means to them. It's a fairly specific application of the term "card type" that is different from what us humans would use, I think.

6 minutes ago · Like

Bill Eberle Ah ... yes. I see the problem.

2 minutes ago · Like

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Bill Eberle I guess for our purposes, the card is of "no type" (immune to plague) and becomes one of the following when you declare its "encounter card" value: attack, negotiate, or morph.

2 seconds ago · Like

s ago · Like

Jefferson Krogh I submit that FFG's weird definition of "card type" has caused quite a bit of confusion when it comes to expansion possibilities. I have no problem with adding new card types to the game, but give some thought as to making these wild cards correspond to Morphs the way Crooked Deals correspond to Negotiates.

19 minutes ago · Like

Jefferson Krogh I'm off to play some Dune! I hope you guys all have a great night.

18 minutes ago · Like

Bill Eberle Ok for now I have made a version change with some language on the card to deal with the FFG "card type" ... we can tinker with it as needed. Bill Martinson thanks for pointing out the issue. Jefferson Krogh thanks for pointing me to the FFG "card type" text we needed to think about for these wild cards.
http://www.ideabout.com/fan_design/completed/aliens/joker_v04.html

Fan Designed Cosmic Expansion Set - JOKER

Bill Martinson

http://www.ideabout.com/fan_design/completed/aliens/joker_v05.html
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Okay, first we have to get something straight. FFG does not have a "weird definition of 'card type'". They have the same definition that has existed for 30 years; they've just added a few new types to the existing ones. 'Attack' has always been a card type; 'Encounter' has *never* been a card type, not even in 1977. (One look at the original Plague edict proves this quite nicely.) What FFG does have is a "weird card template" because it falsely implies that 'encounter card' is a type. It's an art mistake.

53 minutes ago · Like

Bill Martinson There are still some problems with the latest text. (1) The Game Setup still does not tell me whether the cards are added before or after Aristocrat would take his cards (for example). Again, the recommended way to handle this is to say "when flares are being added to the deck." (2) It is not correct to use a bold-italic "may use" on an alien power sheet for something *other players* are doing. This creates a whole slew of questions. Although the effect you want is *conceptually* a "may use" for the other player, it is actually a MUST use for Joker. He has no choice. This is why the power needs to be a Mandatory power that is required to be used when another player wants to use a wild card. (3) There's also some analysis and design still remaining to be done to make this complexity work correctly with powers like Deuce, Cavalry, Fodder, etc. (I haven't gotten that far yet since we are still struggling to get the basics in place.)

I've given some wording templates that lay things out in correct FFG structure and solve these problems ... would you like me to do that again? (I just don't want to keep wasting my time if FFG structure is not what you want.)

54 minutes ago · Like

Bill Eberle @Bill Martinson Ok, agreed ... but I've always thought of the attack and negotiate (originally compromise) cards as "encounter" cards because they were played in an encounter. On the Plague we made it clear that you lost both, can I say, "kinds" of encounter cards; my original deck has "and a Flare" written on it - we were being specific. I don't think we were specifically trying to nail down a definitive set of legal Cosmic Encounter card types.

Humans often get confused when they set out to define which thing goes in which bin; they are always finding things that could go "in this one or that one or ..." and then trying to redefine the bins ... around and around they go getting all tangled up.

People who try to design perfect types and bins for other people often end up both seeming weird to other people and with results that seem weird to other people. It's not easy. Even experienced database and application object designers fall into these sorts of traps when they try to get fancy (translation: when they try to do things that are really new and useful). Human minds can't stop putting things into categories but we're fuzzy about how we do it. And we're fuzzy in different ways. Designers will always have to confront that truth when they have the nerve to try to design things for other people. When the design is done and the "new thing" is created, users just naturally use their own sense of what makes sense to their own "arranger" adding information or organizing objects in ways that makes perfect sense to them that doesn't fit the data or object design at all. And then the designer or someone else has to fix things, etc. On and on. For aliens it must be a hoot to watch.

. . . which is to say that what is a beautiful, perfectly clear rule to some is a "weird definition" to others . . . and, like database and application object designers, we have to do our best to create designs and rule definitions that make sense to as many people as possible.

Lucky us! Game designs represent the worst, and best, possible cases of this human challenge of "defining things" and "making sense." One of the best games is the game of designing games.   2 seconds ago · Like

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Bill Eberle @Bill Martinson FFG structure is what we want to follow.
Re: setup timing, I agree ... should have used "when flares are being added to the deck" as you suggested.
Your other issues need more thinking which I'd like to include Peter Olotka in, plus considering any new comments here.
Thank you for your patience.   a few seconds ago · Like

Bill Martinson We certainly agree that attack and compromise cards both definitely *are* encounter cards, and always have been! What I'm saying is that "encounter card" is not a card type (it can't be, unless we want to break existing cards). It is a higher-level container, a category that *groups* certain card types together for convenience. Just in exactly the same way that "non-encounter card" is a higher-level container that groups together other card types for convenience.

If we try to treat "encounter card" or "non-encounter card" as a *card type*, then things break down. All non-encounter cards would be considered to match each other by type, and clearly this is never what was intended by any of those effects (in Eon or in FFG). A kicker does not match an edict. An attack does not match a compromise. All four of those cards have — indeed, *must* have — different card types. This is not really an issue of personal preference; it is simple logic. Like mathematics, it defines itself for us. So I defend this point not because I somehow don't "want" encounter card to be a type, but because it is what the game itself requires.

Other interpretations/definitions of "card type" certainly would have been possible at design time, but then the relevant cards would need to have been written differently to work under whichever definition was preferred (and very likely requiring more words to explain when all encounter cards did count as a single type and when they didn't).

51 minutes ago · Like

Bill Martinson Maybe it would have been simpler to ask this: Are you and Jefferson really saying that attacks and negotiates are the *same* card type? If so, then you are also saying that kickers and edicts are the same card type, because the logic and the terminology are perfectly parallel. Does that help explain my point?

41 minutes ago · Like

Bill Eberle @Bill Martinson All I'm saying is that "type" is an easily misunderstood word. Because FFG has added a section which carefully defines the Card Types that game effects like artifacts may refer to, I think we should do our best to take care of our language so that we do not contradict their definition:

"Card Types
Sometimes game effects, such as the "Plague" artifact, refer to card types. The different card types are: attack, negotiate, morph, reinforcement, flare, and artifact."

http://www.ideabout.com/fan_design/completed/aliens/joker_v05.html
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And, while I'm also not surprised that careful parsing about which words qualify as a legal Cosmic "card type" word might seem weird or unnatural, I agree with your concern that we should be careful with our language because Cosmic Encounter is, and was designed to be, a game about language and the logic of language. And the game is designed to constantly create unique situations that no one has seen or thought about before. Kind of a perfect logical storm. That's what the board game is about and how we all judge a great game of Cosmic Encounter. And we push it to the extreme by playing multiple power games and trusting ourselves to "figure it out." So, yes, to be fair we should do our best to be consistent in our language and to not create unnecessary conflict.

Remember also, more than anything else, that Cosmic Encounter was designed to be irreverently fun and funny - to be a game players would have fun playing, a game designed to create opportunities for players to laugh at themselves and each other and enjoy absurd logical and illogical situations and the shenanigans they all got up to using their wits and personal persuasive charm to sort things out (Peter Olotka would add "each to their own benefit, of course). It is not a game about "being right" or even "winning" really. It's a game about playing, in an environment of surprising, interesting circumstances, with the logic and nonsense of language and having fun with each other's logical and emotional intelligence and denseness; done right, that sort of play sharpens people, makes them more aware of themselves and their friends, more intelligent and less dense ... and it's wonderful fun.

about a minute ago · Like