

Persuasion (D04)

The game of Victorian courtship. Mail intimate letters to woo and marry your perfect match!

Content Warning: This game presents marriage as a win/lose scenario. Although not explicit, cards can be interpreted as representing desperate dependencies and/or unhealthy power dynamics.

Players: 3-8

Play time: 15-30 Minutes

Components:

8 x Letterbox Cards (*1 per crest*)

1 x Host Card

57 x Trait Cards 

8 x Rings  (*1 per crest*)

10 x Desires Cards

40 x Reusable Sticker Trait Seals

(*5 for each family crest*)

Number of players	3	4	5	6	7	8
Number of each suit to build trait deck from	5	7	10	12	14	16
Number of each suit to build desires deck from, based on the more wanted suit.	 2  2  1	 2  2  1	 3  2  1	 3  3  2	 4  3  2	 4  3  2

Etiquette

Suitor's Secrets: All your cards and cards returned to the box during setup are private information.

Discards, rings, and the back of cards in your hand are public information.

All's Fair: Any agreements outside the rules defined here are non-binding.

Setup

First setup your desires and trait cards by performing the following:

1. Separate desires cards by the first more wanted suit, shuffling the three desires stacks.
2. Form a desires deck with a number of cards from each stack, referencing the same table.
3. Shuffle, then deal 1 desires card to each player. Return all other desires cards to the box.
4. Separate trait cards by suit, shuffling the three resulting decks.
5. Form a combined trait deck with an even distribution, referencing the table above.
6. Deal five trait cards from the combined deck to each player, return remaining cards to the box.

Each player then performs the following:

1. Pick a family crest, taking the matching letterbox card, ring, and 5 trait sticker seals.
2. Place your letterbox in an accessible location near you with your ring next to it.
3. Place your trait sticker seals on your starting hand of five trait cards.

Introductions

After setup, pick a host/ess/ex (*Most experienced player, game owner, host of the party/server, etc*).

They take the preface letter, and read the preface to all guests (*Unless they've all heard it before*), then places it in front of themselves afterwards. During the preface, players will mail a face down trait card to both of their neighbors' letterboxes. Take cards on your letterbox into your hand as soon as they arrive.

Conducting a Day (*i.e. Playing a round*)

Clockwise, starting with the host, each player takes turns sending mail.

Send Mail

Perform any number of the following:

- **Write Letter:** Mail one of your own trait cards facedown to any suitor's letterbox.
- **Gossip:** Mail any number of suitor trait cards facedown to any number of suitors' letterboxes.
- **Reflect:** Discard one of your own trait cards faceup.
- **Propose:** Deliver your own ring to a suitor's letterbox. (*Ideally one with your desired suits*)
- **Break Up:** Return your fiance's ring, then take your own ring back.

You cannot hold more than 3 suitor cards at the end of your turn.

Correspondence

Respond to correspondence on your letterbox as soon as it arrives:

- **Read Letters** (*i.e. Trait cards*): Take any trait cards into your hand.
- **Proposals** (*i.e. Rings*): When you receive a ring, you must pick one of the following. If you haven't responded by the time it is the proposer's turn again, they may take back their ring.
 - **Reject:** Return the ring to the owner's letterbox.
 - **Accept:** Deliver your own ring to the ring owner's letterbox. Both you and the proposer are now engaged and each place your fiance's ring next to your letterbox. Reject all other rings.

At the beginning of the host's turn, if all (*but one*) players are engaged, proceed to Matrimony  (see below). Otherwise, the host continues to play at Send Mail (see above).

Matrimony (*Ending the Game*)

1. All players return all cards to their owners, referencing the seal on the back of the cards.
2. Each player places their own trait and desires cards face up in front of themselves.
3. Win if your fiance (*if any*), meets the condition on your desires card!

Multiple players may enjoy victory.

Developer Notes

This is an early stage prototype to vet the rules, base mechanics, and interactions of the game. If these mechanics function effectively on their own, I can introduce trait and desire card effects to give the cards emergent storytelling potential and introduce interesting player interactions and conflicts.

If you played the game, I would love to hear what you thought of the experience here!

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdiYehr_7GbS37PzAXOZNtQND9SkZfwdb4la2NEsO-AQdXdlg/viewform?usp=sf_link

FAQ

If I propose to someone, and someone else proposes to me, can both proposals be accepted?

You can't accept a proposal without sending the proposer your ring, which is being held by the one you proposed to! If they accept your proposal, you'd have to break up with them before accepting any new proposals, otherwise you'd have to wait until they reject your proposal, or it becomes your turn again so you can take back your ring to accept the proposal sent to you.

Can I mail someone else's card to another player?

Yes!

What about using Influence to replace another player's card? Can I do that?

Yes!

Can we openly discuss our cards?

Yes!