Fallout War

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Fallout War is a game of bidding and intimidation. You are the leader of war-torn country and you must protect your survivors. However in order to do so, you must make sacrifices. YOU MUST SACRIFICE YOUR OWN PEOPLE.

Rules

What's in the game?
- You and 3 other people who will shortly no longer be your friends.
- 66 Special Cards
    - Blue cards (survivors/food supplies)
    - Yellow cards (weapons)
    - Purple cards (technology)
    - White cards (Monuments)
- Blocks/Blue dice (survivor dice)
- Purple dice (bidding dice)

How to win?
- The player with the most survivors at the end of 3 rounds wins the game.

Setup
- Start by making sure the deck is thoroughly shuffled.
- Each player takes 2 survivor cards (blue) and 1 weapon card (yellow) at random from the deck.
- Reshuffle the deck of cards.
- Each player takes either 2 blue dice or a number of blocks. The total shown by the faces of the blue dice is how many survivors the player currently has. If playing with blocks, each block represents 1 survivor. Each player starts with 10 survivors.
- Each player takes 2 purple dice to be used during bidding.

How to play?
- Each game consists of 3 rounds.
- Each round consists of a bidding phase, and trading phase, and a fighting phase.
- At the beginning of every round, new resources appear from the resource deck.

- Thoroughly shuffle the deck and draw cards from the top of the deck in order to make 4 facedown piles:
  - 1 pile of 6 cards
  - 2 piles of 4 cards
  - 1 pile of 2 cards

Explanation of Resources:
- There are 4 kinds of resources that appear in the piles at the beginning of every round.
  - Survivor/Food Supply cards (blue)
    - These cards are redeemable for survivors at the end of every round.
    - There are 3 different values of food cards, either worth 1, 2, or 3 survivors. With 1 being the most common, 2 being some-what common, and 3 being rare.

  - Weapon cards (yellow)
    - The cards can be used during the fighting phase to either attack another player, or defend against an attack.
    - There are 3 different values of weapon cards, either worth 1, 2, or 3 attack/defense points. With 1 being the most common, 2 being some-what common, and 3 being rare.

  - Technology cards (purple)
    - There are 3 different types of technology
      - Irrigation
        - Played at the end of a round on a survivor/food supply card. The Irrigation card doubles the value of a survivor/food supply card of your choice. (Ex. a 3 survivor card becomes worth 6 survivors when redeemed).
      - Nuclear Fission
        - Played at the end of an attack by either the attacking or defending player. The Nuclear Fission card doubles the value of a weapon card of your choice. (3 attack/defense points becomes 6 attack/defense points)
      - Bunker
        - Played at the end of an attack by the the defending player if they have lost the fight. The Bunker card prevents one card from being taken from the defending player.
    - These cards are 1 time use, and are discarded after being played.

- ○ Monument cards (white)
    - ■ These cards add 1 survivor at the end of each round, and stay with the player instead of being discarded.
    - ■ At the end of the game, the player with the most Monuments gets a bonus of 6 survivors.
    - ■ If 2 players are tied for the most Monuments, the bonus is split evenly 3 / 3. If 3 players are tied, the bonus is split evenly 2 / 2 / 2. In the case of a 4 way tie, each player will only receive a bonus of 1.

During the Round:
- ○ The Bidding Phase
    - ■ Players bid for resources under a closed bidding system.
    - ■ Each player decides how many survivors they want to send to collect the resources, and then all players reveal their bids simultaneously using the purple dice.
    - ■ All survivors sent to collect the resources die. All players subtract their bid from their total number of survivors, and update their blue dice accordingly.
    - ■ The highest bid then has first pick of what pile they want to take, second highest has second pick, etc.
    - ■ In the event of a tie:
        - ● Tied bids are resolved in a cake cutting style method. The two tied players pick which piles they want to split, then one player decides how to split the two piles, and the other player has first pick.
        - ● If both players cannot reach an agreement on who splits and who picks, it is decided randomly (E.g. through a coin toss or other ways)
        - ● If there is a 3 or 4 way tie, the players shuffle the appropriate piles and deal them randomly amongst each other until each person has an equal amount. If there is an extra card it is discarded. (For example if the random deals are 5 - 5 - 4. the piles become 4 - 4 - 4 instead).
    - ■ Once every player has received their cards, the trading phase can begin.
- ○ The Trading Phase
    - ■ Starting with the lowest bidder, and then going clockwise, each player has the option to propose a trade of any kind with another player.
    - ■ You can offer any of your cards or your survivors to another player for any of their cards or survivors.

- - The player being traded with can make any counter offer, and the two players negotiate until an agreement is reached or the trade is cancelled, at which point it is the next player's turn to propose a trade.
    - At no point do players have to uphold their end of the bargain/tell the truth. (Ex. If you said you were to trade a "3 Weapon" but instead gave a "1 Weapon" during the trade, it would be both a legal move).
    - All trades done must involve the active player. Players are not allowed to trade with each other or make proposals if one of them is not the active player.
    - Once every player has proposed a trade and all negotiating has ended, the fighting phase can begin.
  - The Fighting Phase
    - Starting with the highest bidder this time, and then going clockwise, each player has the option to make a demand from another player.
    - Demands are formed in the style: "Give me _____, or else I will attack you".
    - If the other player accepts the demand, no fighting occurs and the active player is done with their turn.
    - If the demand is refused, the player making the demand must attack the other player.
    - A defending player does not need to play any weapon cards to defend.
  - The Mechanics of Fighting
    - When a fight starts between two players, both prepare to play weapon cards in an attempt to beat each other. They play cards face down one by one in order until each player is satisfied with their attack cards.
    - The attacking player is the first to place down a weapons card.
    - The attacker and defender then take turns placing down cards until one player chooses to stop. The defender may choose to not defend at all in this way.
    - Once both players are satisfied with their attack cards, they flip them up and compare the attack values.
    - The loser of the fight is the one that has the lower value.
    - If players tie in attack value, nothing happens.
    - Nuclear Fission can only be activated after cards are flipped up.
    - Bunkers are used after a winner/loser has been decided
  - The Mechanics of the Winner/Loser of the Fight
    - The loser of the battle calculates the difference between attack values and subtracts that amount from their survivor count
    - The winner then chooses to take one card of their choice from the loser.

- If the winner managed to wipe out all of the losers survivors, they take two cards of their choice instead of one. If a bunker card is played, they only take one.
- Once a fight has been resolved, both players keep all weapon cards used in the battle in front of them. These card serve as a defensive buffer for the rest of the round.
- If a player with a defense buffer is to be attacked, they subtract the attack value difference between the attacker and themselves. The defense buffer does not change.
- The defending player is not allowed to add more weapon cards to their defense buffer
- At the end of the round, all defense buffer cards are discarded
- Once all fighting has ceased, all players must redeem all of their food cards for survivors.
  - Irrigation cards may be played at this time.
  - Players with monuments also gain 1 survivor per monument.
- Once all survivor totals have been updated, the round ends.

At the End of the Third Round:
- Calculate the bonus for having the most monuments.
- Person with the most survivors wins.

Design Document

Our group was given two guidelines to work with while creating our Social Game: Bidding and Intimidation. In order to get a better grasp of bidding mechanics, we played the game RA, an auction game that pushed the players to make smart bids in order to gather points. RA heavily influenced our design decisions going forward.

We all enjoyed RA's bidding structure, clear board state, and different early game/late game strategies. However, we wanted more interaction between players, such as trading and attacking. These ideas became the skeleton of our game; a bidding game where you try to outbid players for resources you can use to gain survivors and attack other players. We also took an idea we liked from Metro 2033. In Metro, high grade ammunition was currency, but you could also literally fire money to deal extra damage compared to standard ammunition. We wanted to use survivors as both points and as the currency you bid to gather resources.

We decided that in order for intimidation to work the game required hidden information. At this point we were thinking of a post apocalyptic setting where food, medicine, weapons, technology and culture would be our resources types. We came up with a tiered resource system

where you would be able to know the type of the resource but not the strength of it. When you grabbed a weapon card it could be a wooden spear or an assault rifle. In this way you could intimidate another player if you were holding 6 weapon cards, even if they were all just spears.

We wanted each resource type to accomplish something distinct but equally valuable. Amassing one type of resource should result in utter defeat. We came up with the following resource types:
- A resource that sustain the survivors
- A resource that would represent fighting power
- A resource that when combined with another resource makes it stronger
- A resource that would be a late game investment

With this in mind we decided to combine food and medicine into one, they would be our support resource. Weapons were self evident. Tech would become our buff cards. We renamed culture to monuments (a throwback to RA) to be our late game investment cards.

We then started testing our game. We took a look at the flow of the game, and decided on a bidding phase followed by a negotiation phase where you could either trade or declare threats. We made the threats mandatory before attacking so the intimidation feeling would be more pronounced.

The first wave of play testing we decided having one pile of resources that everyone bid on was not enough. We created 4 different piles containing 6, 4, 4, and 2 cards respectively, so that all four players would at least receive something for their bid. We also implemented a threat ceiling so that scenarios like "Give me everything or I will attack." would not happen.

The second wave of play testing we changed the bidding mechanic so that instead of losing half of what you bid, you lose all of what you bid. This increased the tension and discouraged people from bidding the maximum amount. We also needed to change attack mechanics, as a player would be completely vulnerable to the other 2 players after attacking someone. One strategy was to play passively which resulted in boring games. We tried a version where you were required to attack with all of your weapons each round, but this idea did not work and was scrapped in the final version.

During the last playtests, we again attempted to incentivize attacking by letting the winner take a card from the loser. We also incentivized taking monuments by giving them bonuses at the end of every round in addition to the end game bonus. At this point we were ready to clean up the game by making card art. Unfortunately, we had to keep the clunky mechanism of dice for survivors because we had no small blocks.
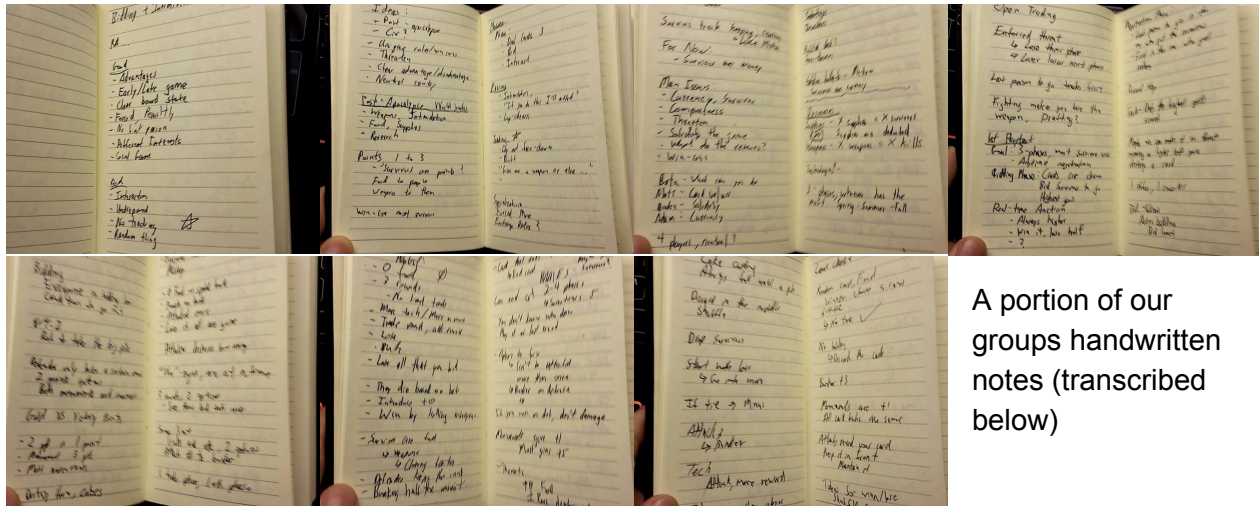
Notes and Pictures from Playtests

During the fighting phase. Two players are playing weapons cards against each other.

During the bidding phase. Showing player's bids for the four piles of resource cards.

The final card art. Food, weapons, monuments, and technology.

A portion of our groups handwritten notes (transcribed below)

Selections from our Notes

Initial Ideas:
-Post apocalyse
-Civilization leaders
-Unique roles/wincons
-Threaten mechanics
-Clear advantage/disadvantage
-Neutral country

<u>1st playtest:</u>
Goal: 3 phases, most survivors wins
       -Free negotiation
Bidding Phase:
             Cards are dealt in the middle
             Bid survivors to go
             Highest goes first
      Real-time auction:
-Highest wins
-Whatever you bet, you lose half of it

      Negotiation Phase:
             -Last person to go, aka whoever bid the least goes first
             -You are allowed 1 trade and 1 counter offer
             -You can choose to attack one person

      Discard Phase:

-Discard food

Need a negative feedback loop

Fix the ties

Fixing the ties by having them shuffle the piles together and split it evenly
Cake cutting

The piles went from 5-3-3-1 to 6-4-4-2
Need a risk to take the big pile

Attacking:
Defender only loses are certain amount of things

Points vs Victory points?
What does a monument do

Possible ideas:
-0 food or spoiled food
-Punish no food?
-Attacked once per round
-Lose if all survivors are gone
-Attackers declare how many, like war, one card at a time
-Trade and atk, 2 options
-FIX THE BUNKER
-Trade/attack phases

Next major playtest:
-3 rounds
-Open trade, no limit
-More tech
-Trade round followed by an attacking round
-Lose ALL that you bid instead of half
-If you hit 0 survivors you lose
-Survivors are still points

Possible things after 2nd playtest:
-Card that ends the game, doomsday card
-Can in in 2-4 phases
-Can't be attacked more than once
-Bunker on defense, nerf it
-If you win on defense you don't lose your weapon cards
-Buff monuments

Possible things after 3rd major playtest:
-Discard everything
-Cake cutting

-Start with less piles, go into more piles in later phases

-Attacking now puts attacking cards in front of you so you still have some defense

-Tech is more rewarding

-Nerf bunker AGAIN