

The Theory of The Game

December 24, 2007

[Original link](#)

I have to admit, there's a part of me that gets no small enjoyment out of the fact that the first piece I wrote for a paying publication is nominally a review of a book on pick-up artists that actually ends up spending most of its time on glosses the history of American dating, discussions of foundational experiments in control of the emotions, the history of behaviorism in psychology, and the computer functionalist philosophy of mind. In other words, the typical article for *Other*.

I originally planned to post the review here to my blog, but instead I bumped into Annalee Newitz while I was writing it, she expressed interest in it so I sent her the draft I had and next thing I knew it was getting included in the next issue of the magazine. Reading back over it, I'm not sure I have a more to say in its favor other than it's definitely the weirdest review of *The Game* that will likely ever be published.

A couple paragraphs got removed in the print version I have and the editors added subheads to break up the flow, but here's the original piece as I sent it to them:

[The Theory of The Game](#)

For a couple of weeks, it seemed like all my friends were reading a thick black book with a leather cover and gold-edged pages. "Is that The Bible?" I finally asked them. "It might as well be," said one. "It's a guide to picking up girls," another explained. I scrunched my face. "Oh, no no no," the smartest one there said. "Think of it as an ethnography of a community of pick-up artists." ([More...](#))

If you like this kind of thing, consider picking up [a copy of *Other* magazine](#), available in indie bookstores across San Francisco and thru the web site.

(*Explanation in advance:* I know fans of computer functionalism (what a weblog to have such readers!) are going to attack me for my oversimplification of their views. Well, if you want, I'm happy to attack your views at length and the conclusion comes out basically the same. So bring it on.)